

D&D[®] Frequently Asked Questions

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About the FAQ

If you have a question about the D&D game rules, you might find them within this FAQ. Any new additions or major corrections in a version are provided in red text for your convenience. Red text changes to black text in the next version.

This version of the D&D FAQ uses the 3.5 revision of the core rules and also contains questions covering material from a variety of books (such as *SS* and *EL*). If you haven't yet adopted the revision, don't worry—in the rare instance that the answer is different between 3rd edition and the 3.5 revision, we'll bring it to your attention with a call out that says "Revision Alert." If you have a question that isn't answered here, please contact us via the following URL and ask away: <http://wizards.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/wizards.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php>. Or you can send an email to askdnd@wizards.com instead!

We will be updating this FAQ over time, and each version will have a date stamp on it so that you know which version you have.

Product Abbreviation Key

<i>AE</i>	<i>Arms and Equipment Guide</i>	<i>MP</i>	<i>Manual of the Planes</i>
<i>BE</i>	<i>Book of Exalted Deeds</i>	<i>MH</i>	<i>Miniatures Handbook</i>
<i>CAd</i>	<i>Complete Adventurer</i>	<i>MM</i>	<i>Monster Manual v.3.5</i>
<i>CAr</i>	<i>Complete Arcane</i>	<i>MM2</i>	<i>Monster Manual II</i>
<i>CD</i>	<i>Complete Divine</i>	<i>MM4</i>	<i>Monster Manual IV</i>
<i>CM</i>	<i>Complete Mage</i>	<i>OA</i>	<i>Oriental Adventures</i>
<i>CW</i>	<i>Complete Warrior</i>	<i>PG</i>	<i>Player's Guide to Faerûn</i>
<i>Dr</i>	<i>Draconomicon</i>	<i>PH</i>	<i>Player's Handbook v.3.5</i>
<i>DM</i>	<i>Dragon Magic</i>	<i>PH2</i>	<i>Player's Handbook II</i>
<i>DMG</i>	<i>Dungeon Master's Guide v.3.5</i>	<i>RD</i>	<i>Races of Destiny</i>
<i>Du</i>	<i>Dungeonscape</i>	<i>RE</i>	<i>Races of Eberron</i>
<i>ECS</i>	<i>Eberron Campaign Setting</i>	<i>Rac</i>	<i>Races of Faerûn</i>
<i>EL</i>	<i>Epic Level Handbook</i>	<i>RS</i>	<i>Races of Stone</i>
<i>XPH</i>	<i>Expanded Psionics Handbook</i>	<i>RDr</i>	<i>Races of the Dragon</i>
<i>FF</i>	<i>Fiend Folio</i>	<i>RC</i>	<i>Rules Compendium</i>
<i>FCII</i>	<i>Fiendish Codex II: Tyrants of the Nine Hells</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Savage Species</i>
<i>FRCS</i>	<i>FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting</i>	<i>Sto</i>	<i>Stormwrack</i>
<i>HH</i>	<i>Heroes of Horror</i>	<i>TB</i>	<i>Tome and Blood: A Guidebook to Wizards and Sorcerers</i>
<i>LM</i>	<i>Libris Mortis: The Book of the Dead</i>	<i>ToB</i>	<i>Tome of Battle: The Book of Nine Swords</i>
<i>MIC</i>	<i>Magic Item Compendium</i>	<i>TM</i>	<i>Tome of Magic</i>
<i>MoE</i>	<i>Magic of Eberron</i>	<i>Una</i>	<i>Unapproachable East</i>
<i>Mag</i>	<i>Magic of Faerûn</i>	<i>Und</i>	<i>Underdark</i>
<i>Moi</i>	<i>Magic of Incarnum</i>	<i>UA</i>	<i>Unearthed Arcana</i>

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Player Character Races

I'd like to know just how intelligent a human character with an Intelligence score of 3 is. What is the character's approximate IQ? Is the character considered mentally handicapped or just slow? Can he carry a normal conversation or does he have problems speaking?

A character with an Intelligence score of 3 is smarter than most animals, but only barely. Any creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher can understand at least one language (*MM* 7). A human with an Intelligence score of 3 can speak Common but doesn't have a good vocabulary (perhaps a few hundred one- and two-syllable words), and the character doesn't have a good grasp of syntax and grammar. The character speaks and understands only simple subject-verb sentences and probably has problems with things such as past and future tense.

Intelligence also affects memory and reasoning, so the example character doesn't have much of a head for facts, and the character is not very good at arithmetic.

Ten points of IQ per point of Intelligence is a good rule of thumb, so your example character has an IQ of about 30. How others perceive and treat the example character depends on social conditions in the campaign. Most cultures in a D&D world are pretty tolerant—they have to be just so they can get along in a place that contains the wide variety of creatures that inhabit most D&D worlds. In such cultures, terms such as “dull” and “slow” probably don't get much use, at least in respect to a person's mental capacity. When your own Intelligence is about average (10) you're “slow” compared to a dragon, beholder, mind flayer, or other creature that might live right next door or lurk beyond the next valley. Still, elitism and a sense of superiority can exist just about anywhere.

It is a good bet, however, that the example character's associates, relatives, and neighbors know the character's mental limitations, and that they adjust their expectations for that character accordingly.

Does the powerful build racial trait allow a character to take advantage of feats for size Large or larger creatures, such as Awesome Blow? Would a half-dragon goliath qualify as Large for determining whether it has wings?

No and no. The powerful build racial trait (found in the goliath entry in *RS* and the half-giant entry in *XPH*) spells out exactly when the character is treated as one size larger than normal:

1. Whenever subjected to a size modifier or special size modifier for an opposed check. This includes grapple checks, bull rush attempts, and trip attempts.
2. When determining whether a creature's special attacks based on size can affect him. This includes improved grab and swallow whole.
3. When determining what size of weapons the character can use.

That's it. The character isn't treated as one size larger when determining space, reach, Hide check penalty, or for the purpose of qualifying for anything that requires size.

Some feats, prestige classes, or other game elements can specifically allow a Medium character with powerful build to qualify as if he were Large. Such examples are specific and intentional exceptions to the normal rule.

Does the powerful build racial trait change the damage the character deals with unarmed strikes and natural weapons?

No. The powerful build racial trait allows the character to “use weapons designed for a creature one size larger without penalty” but doesn't say anything about changing the damage dealt by his unarmed strikes or natural weapons.

Okay, I'm confused by the current alphabet soup of abbreviations dealing with exactly how tough a monster or a character is. What are character level, class level, EL, ECL, and CR? How do they relate to each other? Are they interchangeable? If not, what are they used for?

The terms are not interchangeable. You can find definitions of most of these terms in the *PH* glossary or in *SS*, but here's an overview.

Class Level: The total number of levels you have in a particular class. A 5th-level fighter has 5 class levels in fighter. A 5th-level fighter/5th-level wizard has 5 class levels in fighter and 5 class levels in wizard. Class level affects so many things it would be tedious to list them all in detail. The most important include number of Hit Dice (1 per class level), base attack bonus, base saving throw bonuses, and number of skill points, all as shown in the description for the class. If a class gives you bonus feats, it's your class level that determines when you get them.

In addition, most level-based variables for a class feature depend on your class level, as does any level-based variable for a spell you cast as a member of that class. Powers from clerical domains are class features, and any level-based variables they have depend on your level in the class that gives you access to the domain.

Character Level: The total number of class levels you have in all your classes, plus any racial Hit Dice you have. A human 5th-level fighter/5th-level wizard has 10 character levels. An ogre 5th-level fighter/5th-level wizard has 14 character levels (because it has 4 racial Hit Dice). Character levels determine when you gain feats and ability score increases (see Table 3–2: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits in the *PH*). Any feat you get by virtue of your character level is in addition to any bonus feats from your class levels.

In addition, your character level determines how much experience you earn when you defeat a foe and how many experience points you need to gain your next class level.

Effective Character Level (ECL): Effective character level is character level plus the level adjustment for the character's race. Races that are more powerful than the standard races in the *PH* have level adjustments to help promote some equity among the player characters in a campaign, and to help DMs decide how much danger a party containing members of those races can handle. For example, a drow has a level adjustment of +2. Many people (and even one or two rulebooks) say “ECL” when they really mean “level adjustment.”

Use the character's ECL to determine starting equipment and how the character earns and benefits from experience (including when he gains an epic attack and save bonus; *DMG* 209), as noted on page 5 of *SS*. Use the actual character level for everything else.

Encounter Level (EL): Encounter Level is strictly a tool for the DM to use when deciding if a particular encounter is too easy, about right, or too hard for a particular group of characters. It has no real effect on play. Some people think that Encounter Level determines how much experience characters gain from an encounter, but that's not so (read on).

Challenge Rating (CR): Challenge Rating reflects a game designer's best judgment about how tough a monster will prove in a fight. The CRs of all the creatures in an encounter help to determine the encounter's EL (see Chapter 4: Adventures in the *DMG*). When characters defeat a creature, its CR determines the basic experience award, which in turn is adjusted according to the party's character levels or ECLs (see Chapter 7: Rewards in the *DMG*).

It is perhaps unfortunate that an NPC who belongs to a standard *PH* race has a CR equal to her character level, because it implies that CR, character level, and ECL are the same. They aren't—CR and character level just happen to have the same values sometimes. CR and ECL have nothing to do with each other, because they measure two different things. See the next question.

I have been flipping through SS, and I have become confused about the use of ECL. Would a 1st-level mind flayer wizard be an appropriate challenge for a party of 16th-level characters or for a party of 8th-level characters?

Effective character level (ECL) is a measurement of a character's impact as a player character in a campaign, and that usually differs from how dangerous it is as an NPC during a single encounter.

To determine the challenge your example character presents, ignore ECL and use the rules for determining NPC Challenge Ratings in Chapter 7: Rewards of the *DMG*. The example character has a CR of 9 (base CR of 8 for a mind flayer, +1 for its character level). All by itself, the example character is a challenge for a party of four 9th-level player characters.

The example character's ECL, however, is a whopping 16 (racial HD 8 + character level 1 + level adjustment 7).

Why the difference?

It has to do with the impact the character would have on a campaign as an ongoing PC, as opposed to the much lower impact it has during a single encounter (which is what CR measures). A party of four 9th-level PCs can reasonably expect to dispatch the mind flayer wizard NPC in a few rounds. As a player character, however, the mind flayer is much more powerful, since it uses its *mind blast*, psionics, and deadly tentacles against a succession of foes, encounter after encounter, adventure after adventure.

When is a monster character considered epic level? Do you "go epic" when your total class levels equal 20 or when your total Hit Dice equal 20? Is a monster character eligible for epic-level feats (such as Epic Toughness) when its character level is 21+ or when its ECL is 21+?

A monster becomes an epic-level character when its character level hits 21, just like any other character. A monster's character level equals its racial Hit Dice + class levels. (See the second sidebar on page 25 of the *EL*.)

A creature's ECL has no effect on when it becomes an epic character, although once it becomes an epic character, its ECL continues to affect how much experience it earns and when it can add a new level.

The text for level adjustments on page 11 of SS says that if the monster gains multiple attacks in a single round before a fighter of equal level, or if the attacks deal more damage than a one-handed martial weapon, then this is a level adjustment of at least +1. By "multiple attacks," do you mean two claws, or two claws and a bite, such as the Multiattack feat requires? Say a monster has two claws, each dealing 1d4 points of damage. Would that still be a +0 level adjustment, since the two claws do not exceed the damage a longsword can deal?

Having more than one natural attack gets you a +1 level adjustment (no matter how much damage those natural weapons can deal) if a fighter of equivalent level does not have as many attacks. If you have one natural weapon that deals more damage than you could deal with a one-handed simple or martial weapon (more than 1d8 for a Medium creature), you also have a level adjustment of at least +1.

Do anthropomorphic felines lose their pounce abilities?
Yes; see the Special Attacks entry on page 215 of *SS*.

If you make a character with the reptilian template and the base creature is a human, do you still get the extra feat and extra 4 skill points at 1st level, or do you lose these due to the benefits gained from the template? I suppose this applies to any template.

When applying any template, treat racial traits as special qualities. If a template says the new creature retains the special qualities of the base creature, then any racial traits also are retained. Humans retain their extra feats and skill points, elves retain their skill bonuses and weapon proficiencies, dwarves retain their saving throw bonus, and so on. Thus, when you apply the reptilian template to a human, the base creature retains its human racial traits: an extra feat and 4 extra skill points.

How do racial Hit Dice factor into the computation of a multiclass character's uneven class and a favored class? Are they ignored completely? For example, a thri-kreen has 2 racial Hit Dice (thus 2 levels of the thri-kreen monster class) and has a favored class of ranger (as listed in SS). If a thri-kreen character wished to take rogue class levels, would this cause an automatic -20% experience point penalty when the 4th level of rogue was taken because of the existing 2 levels of thri-kreen?

Ignore racial Hit Dice completely when calculating experience penalties for multiclass characters. The example character has no experience penalty.

How do you determine the starting gold for a 1st-level monster class character (such as from SS)?

The easiest method is simply to assign standard starting gold for any character who doesn't have a value already listed. The Sage recommends 4d4 x 10 gp (or 100 gp average).

If you want some variety between the monster-class characters in your game, try assigning a starting gold value for a *PH* class that's similar to the monster in flavor. An ogre or minotaur, for instance, is pretty similar to a barbarian (4d4 x 10 gp), but a mind flayer is more like a sorcerer (3d4 x 10 gp). Ultimately, it doesn't matter much—the difference between the various values in the *PH* disappear within a couple of adventures when compared to the character's overall wealth.

If a half-elf mates with a human, what race would the child be? What about other half-humanoid races?

While the most common origin of a half-elf mentioned in the *PH* is a union between a human and an elf, it also mentions that “second-generation” half elves are possible—the children of parents who themselves are partly human and partly elf” (*PHB* 18). The Sage thinks it reasonable to conclude that any half-elf parent is capable of parenting a half-elf child when mating with a human (or with an elf, for that matter).

Similar language doesn’t appear in the half-orc description, but it seems a reasonable extrapolation for that and other, similar races. Two half-orcs likely have half-orc children, and a half-orc mating with either a human or an orc probably also generates half-orc offspring.

Of course, the DM is free to rule that one side or the other occasionally breeds true—that two half-elves might have an elf child or a human child, for example.

Changeling

Can a changeling take the form of a warforged?

The changeling’s minor change shape supernatural ability uses the rules for *disguise self*. This spell allows a human caster to look “like any . . . human-shaped bipedal creature,” so it stands to reason that a changeling could take on the appearance of a warforged (within the normal size limitation of the *disguise self* spell). Of course, the changeling wouldn’t gain any of the actual benefits of being a warforged, even though the racial trait isn’t an illusory effect.

Doppelganger

Does a PC who uses the doppelganger monster class from *RD* receive a +4 racial bonus on Bluff and Disguise checks and additional disguise bonuses from the change shape and detect thoughts abilities?

Yes; since the bonuses from change shape and detect thoughts abilities are both circumstance bonuses (*RD* 95), the bonuses stack. Keep in mind that with the detect thoughts ability, your target must first fail the Will save on the third round of using the ability in order for you to gain the bonus (as the *detect thoughts* spell, *PH* 220).

Dragon

I was reading *SS*, and its discussion of caster level confused me with the example of a young gold dragon. If you are a young gold dragon, you have spells as a 1st-level sorcerer and can also pick clerical spells (and some spells from some domains) and cast them as arcane spells. Suppose you then take 3 levels in sorcerer. *SS* explains that you derive spells per day, spells known, and caster level from the sum of your caster level as a dragon (1st) plus your caster level as a sorcerer (3rd), so you are a 4th-level caster. My question focuses on the cleric spells you can learn as arcane spells. Can you take 2nd-level cleric spells and cast them as arcane spells because you are a dragon? Also, is your caster level for the cleric spells you can cast as a dragon 4th or 1st? Can the dragon cast any cleric spell as an arcane spell? What about monsters that cast spells as clerics? What would happen if the dragon added cleric levels?

When a dragon, or any other creature that can cast spells as a sorcerer, adds sorcerer levels, those levels stack when determining how the character casts sorcerer spells.

The example dragon casts spells as a 4th-level sorcerer. The dragon’s innate caster level doesn’t stack with its sorcerer levels for other class features. If the example dragon has a

familiar, the familiar has abilities from a 3rd-level master as shown in Table 3–19: Familiar Special Abilities in the *PH*.

A dragon that can cast cleric spells as arcane spells casts such spells as though they were part of the sorcerer class list. If the example dragon wanted to cast *cure moderate wounds*, it would have to choose *cure moderate wounds* as one of the 2nd-level spells it knows. It would cast the spell as a 4th-level caster (and heal 1d8+4 points of damage when casting it). It cannot simply cast any 1st- or 2nd-level cleric spell.

If the example dragon adds a level of cleric, it would cast sorcerer spells as a 4th-level sorcerer (including any cleric spells it has added to its list of spells known) and would prepare and cast cleric spells and turn undead as a 1st-level cleric. When preparing cleric spells, it could choose any 1st-level cleric spell, just as any other 1st-level cleric could.

Are the epic rules for advancement by prestige classes different for dragons? Some prestige classes for dragons in *Dr* effectively require the dragon to be epic but still list base attack bonus and base save progressions. Are those values used instead of the epic attack and save bonus progressions described in the *DMG*? And if so, does this let dragon characters (or half-dragon characters) break the normal limit of base attack and save bonuses?

The prestige classes in *Dr* are special exceptions to the normal limits on base attack and save bonuses listed in the *DMG*. While they are designed for monsters, any character of the dragon type who meets the prerequisites is technically allowed to take levels in these classes, and thus exceed the normal limit on base attack and save bonuses.

DMs who want to avoid this headache are encouraged to adopt either or both of the following house rules:

1. The classes are available only to true dragons (not simply to creatures of the dragon type); or
2. The base attack and base save bonus progressions listed apply only to characters who haven’t already reached ECL 20. In some cases (such as the bloodscaled fury, which requires the creature to already have a base attack bonus above +20), this means that the entire progression is effectively eliminated.

Drow/Duergar

Can a duergar or drow gain the Aberrant Dragonmark feat?

Yes. The Aberrant Dragonmark feat is available to any character with one of the dragonmarked races as a subtype, even if that character is a member of a subrace.

Do drow and other creatures with light sensitivity or light blindness count as “creatures to which sunlight is harmful or unnatural” for the purpose of *sunbeam* and *sunburst*?

The Sage is leery of extending the definitions of light sensitivity and light blindness beyond the wording of those two qualities. Each one specifically states its effect, and arbitrarily adding corner-case effects usually isn’t in the best interest of game play (it tends to create arguments and slow down the action).

That said, it seems like a reasonable house rule to say that sunlight is “unnatural” to a creature with light sensitivity or light blindness. It’s certainly not unbalancing to the game.

Dwarf

Can a dwarf wearing medium or heavy armor or carrying a medium or heavy load use the Tumble skill?

Yes. Thanks to the dwarven racial ability to move at full speed even when armored or encumbered, the character's speed hasn't been "reduced by armor, excess equipment, or loot" (*PH* 84), so he's free to use the Tumble skill. Of course, he still suffers an armor check penalty for either the armor or the load (whichever is worse).

My dwarf character fell into a pit of alchemist fire. Although he survived, the fire burned his beard away. Does dwarf facial hair re-grow at the same rate as human facial hair?

While a dwarf's facial hair grows at roughly the same rate as human facial hair, a dwarf's beard is cultivated from the time a young dwarf's first facial hair sprouts on his chin. It can take a decade or more of careful care and grooming for a beard to feel (or be recognized by other dwarves) as full as it once was.

Goliath

Do goliaths (from *RS*) have darkvision? The *MM* says that monstrous humanoids have darkvision unless stated otherwise, but *RS* doesn't say one way or the other.

Yes. Ideally, the goliath description should have reiterated this, but since it doesn't state otherwise, you can assume that goliaths have darkvision.

Minotaur

A player of mine wants to create a minotaur character. The average party level is 15. He says he can just make a 1st-level barbarian/14th-level fighter minotaur and be equal to the other player characters. I say he can have only a 7th-level character (say 1 barbarian level and 6 fighter levels) because of the minotaur's ECL of 8 (8 minotaur + 1 barbarian + 6 fighter = 15th level). Who's right?

You're on the right track. You've figured out the right number of class levels the character can have, but a minotaur has 6 racial Hit Dice and a +2 level adjustment. Your example minotaur character does have an ECL of 15 (6 HD, 7 class levels, and a +2 level adjustment), but it is a 13th-level character with skill points, base saves, feats, and ability score increases as a 13th-level character. The minotaur character starts with 15th-level equipment, however, and earns experience as a 15th-level character.

Warforged

Is a warforged considered to be wearing armor for the purpose of using special abilities, such as a monk's fast movement?

The composite plating of a typical warforged doesn't count as armor. Certain warforged feats, such as Adamantine Body (*ECS* 50) specifically state that the character is considered to be wearing armor, and thus would limit use of such abilities.

Can a warforged swim? Should I double its armor check penalty when applying it to Swim checks?

Although slightly denser than most other characters, warforged can swim about as well as any other race. A warforged has a penalty on Swim checks, but this isn't an "armor check penalty" and thus isn't doubled for such checks.

Can a warforged go to any depth underwater?

A warforged has no need to breathe (and can thus survive underwater without drowning). However, warforged are just as vulnerable to the pressure exerted by deep water as any other

character. See "Water Dangers" on page 304 of the *DMG* for details on this hazard.

How long can a warforged run? How long can it hustle? How long can it make a forced march?

A warforged can't run any longer than a normal character (*PH* 144).

A warforged suffers all the effects of hustling (*PH* 164) except for the fatigue (since warforged are by definition immune to fatigue). Unless the warforged has access to healing, eventually it can hustle itself to negative hit points.

The same is true of a warforged making a forced march. While it can't become fatigued, it still suffers the nonlethal damage caused by a failed Constitution check.

Do warforged have a scent?

The rules are silent on whether constructs (and by extension living constructs such as the warforged) interact any differently than other creatures with the scent special quality. For ease of play, the Sage recommends that warforged be treated as having a scent just like any other creature.

If the Sage were an oenophile, he might describe this scent as woody, with a hint of warm, rain-spattered iron, and a pleasant gravelly finish.

Thankfully, he isn't, so he won't.

Is it possible to salvage any materials from the body of a warforged? What if it has a feat such as Adamantine Body?

The rules are silent on this issue, but it has been suggested in other sources that materials stripped from the body of a warforged quickly degrade and become useless. The Sage strongly recommends that the DM adopt this as a house rule, as treating fallen warforged as repositories for special materials is rather distasteful, to say the least.

Does a warforged take the Constitution damage of a wounding weapon every round, even though it doesn't have blood?

Yes. Warforged are not immune to Constitution damage, nor are they immune to critical hits (which, as the wounding property states, provides immunity to its effect). Even though a warforged isn't a "flesh and blood" creature, its body still shares many of the physical qualities of such creatures. It's not clear, for instance, that the "fibrous bundles" that make up the body of a warforged wouldn't ooze some sort of life-giving fluid when damaged.

A warforged who reaches 2nd level in the warforged juggernaut prestige class is immune to the effect of a wounding weapon, since it is now immune to critical hits.

Is a warforged with the Adamantine Body feat (*ECS* 50) able to bypass adamantine damage reduction with its natural attacks?

The Adamantine Body feat does not turn the warforged character's slam attacks (or any other natural weapons) into adamantine weapons.

How would the various warforged "Body" feats (such as Adamantine Body) affect a warforged's weight?

These feats (found in the *ECS* and in *RE*) do not list any effect on a warforged character's weight.

That said, in the "Dragonshards" web column found at [wizards.com](http://www.wizards.com), *ECS* coauthor Keith Baker suggested some (optional) weight variants for such characters. DMs interested

in adding some variety to their warforged characters might find these useful as a house rule.

Feat	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Adamantine Body	320 lbs.	×6
Darkwood Body	180 lbs.	×2
Mithral Body	180 lbs.	×2
Unarmored Body	225 lbs.	×3

Is a dead warforged character’s body subject to sunder attacks, since it is now just an object of wood and metal?

A dead body of any creature (warforged, human, dragon, whatever) is treated as an object, and thus it can be damaged using the rules for “Smashing an Object” (*PH* 165).

There are no rules for determining the hardness or hit points of a corpse. Most dead bodies don’t have a hardness score, but the creature’s DR (if any) should continue to apply against attacks. Use Table 9–9: Substance Hardness and Hit Points and Table 9–11: Object Hardness and Hit Points in the *PH* to estimate hit point values for corpses should such situations arise in your game.

Since a warforged paladin is much heavier than a fully-armored human paladin, what paladin mounts do warforged get to choose from?

A warforged paladin can choose any mount available to a normal paladin. Be sure to consult your prospective mount’s carrying capacity to ensure that it can carry your character.

Without gear, an average warforged character weighs about 300 pounds, or about 75 pounds more than an average male human character wearing full plate armor. A heavy warhorse can carry up to 300 pounds as a light load, 600 pounds as a medium load, and 900 pounds as a heavy load. That means that, fully equipped, the warforged paladin probably qualifies as a medium load for the heavy warhorse.

No bonus languages are listed in the racial description of the warforged. What bonus languages are available to a warforged character with a high Intelligence score?

None. According to the *PH*, bonus languages from a high Intelligence score are selected from the list found in your race’s description (page 12). Since the warforged has no such languages listed, it cannot gain bonus languages from a high Intelligence score.

Some classes offer bonus language options over and above those granted by your race. A warforged cleric, for example, could choose Abyssal, Celestial, and Infernal as bonus languages if it had a high Intelligence score.

Does a warforged taking racial substitution levels for paladin or fighter get only the listed class skills (with standard class skills being counted as cross-class for these three levels)?

Yes. (In those cases, it was easier to present a complete list of the substitution level’s class skills than describe what the character didn’t get from the normal class list.)

Does the Improved Fortification feat (*ECS* 55) and the 2nd-level ability of the juggernaut prestige class (*ECS* 84) grant a warforged immunity to coup de grace, sneak attacks, and similar effects as well?

Yes. The wording’s not as clear as it could be, but immunity to “extra damage from critical hits” means the same

as “immunity to critical hits” for the purpose of the sneak attack class feature, as well as similar abilities that don’t function against creatures immune to critical hits (such as the coup de grace action).

Is a warforged juggernaut affected by the class features of the quori nightmare prestige class (*RE* 148)?

At 3rd level, the warforged juggernaut becomes immune to all mind-affecting abilities (due to his construct perfection II class feature). As the disturbing touch, nightmare touch, terror, and embodiment of nightmare class features of the quori nightmare are mind-affecting abilities, the warforged juggernaut becomes immune to them beginning at 3rd level.

Note that since warforged characters do not sleep, they are by definition immune to the harmful effect of nightmare touch (which requires its victim to attempt to sleep).

Can a warforged juggernaut gain levels in the reformed prestige class (*RE* 161)? If so, what happens to a warforged juggernaut’s class features if that character chooses to advance through all three levels of reformed? What about going the other direction (a reformed becoming a warforged juggernaut)?

There’s nothing stopping a warforged juggernaut from qualifying for the reformed prestige class. In general, the class features from both prestige classes would apply normally, but note that the character would lose his Adamantine Body feat upon reaching 3rd level as a reformed.

The only tricky interaction is between the 3rd-level warforged juggernaut’s healing immunity class feature and the reformed’s magical healing class feature. In this case, the warforged juggernaut’s immunity takes precedence. That’s because the reformed’s class feature is an adjustment to the normal warforged limit to magical healing, while the warforged juggernaut is a blanket immunity to all such effects.

As far as a reformed becoming a warforged juggernaut, the character could do so but would have to begin progression as a juggernaut before reaching 3rd level as a reformed. That’s because at 3rd level, a reformed loses any warforged feats he possesses, including the Adamantine Body feat required for the warforged juggernaut. Thus, such a character could never qualify for the warforged juggernaut prestige class.

If the character already had one or more levels in warforged juggernaut before reaching 3rd level as a reformed, he would retain all warforged juggernaut class features (even the armor spikes gained at 1st level, since these aren’t the result of a warforged feat) but could not gain any additional levels in the prestige class.

Can a warforged have its brain extracted by a mind flayer?

Yes. His brain might not look like the illithid’s normal meal, but a warforged is a living creature and thus is just as vulnerable to that dreaded attack as any human or dwarf. (That said, the Sage expects that warforged brain likely isn’t a commonly appreciated meal among mind flayers. Probably an acquired taste at best.) The same is true of other effects that might not apply to constructs (such as a vorpal weapon, which doesn’t have much effect against most constructs), unless otherwise stated in the living construct subtype.

Does a warforged barbarian become fatigued at the end of a rage?

No. Since all warforged are immune to fatigue, a warforged barbarian doesn't become fatigued when the duration of his rage ends.

Can a warforged character use a graft, such as those in *MoE*?

Yes. Unless a particular graft states otherwise, any creature capable of paying the sacrifices (if any) required to accept it (such as the Constitution sacrifice for the deathless flesh graft; *MoE* 128) can use a graft.

Does a warforged with the Adamantine Body feat need to have Heavy Armor Proficiency in order to avoid suffering penalties for wearing heavy armor?

No. The Adamantine Body feat resembles heavy armor in many ways, but it doesn't require you to have any special proficiency.

What, if any, templates can a warforged have applied? Does it lose any of its racial traits when its template changes its type?

As a general rule, if a template can be applied to a construct, it can be applied to a warforged. Thus, most of the templates in the *MM* are out.

Three notable exceptions are the half-celestial, half-dragon, and half-fiendish templates, which can be added to "any living, corporeal creature." Technically, that excludes most constructs, since creatures without a Con score aren't considered living creatures. However, a warforged has a Constitution score and is thus considered living (as suggested by the "living construct" subtype it has).

A warforged with one of these templates changes its type (to outsider or dragon, depending on the template), but retains the living construct subtype (and all features and traits thereof). It gains the traits of its new type, and it would lose any construct traits it possessed. However, since the living construct subtype basically supercedes the construct type, the warforged doesn't really have any construct traits to lose.

A warforged that changes its type wouldn't lose its racial traits (such as its composite plating or slam attack), just like a half-dragon human retains his bonus feat and bonus skill points.

Can a warforged become a dragonborn of Bahamut, and if so what are the racial traits it keeps from the warforged list?

Despite the misleading entry in the dragonborn racial traits that suggests that all dragonborn are humanoids, the only prerequisites for being reborn in this manner are a non-evil alignment and an Intelligence of 3 or better. Thus, there's nothing stopping a warforged from undergoing this ritual and dedicating himself to the service of Bahamut.

A warforged who becomes a dragonborn would be a construct with the living construct and dragonblood subtypes. He'd retain his warforged ability score modifiers and favored class.

He'd also retain all traits derived from the living construct subtype, including immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, disease, nausea, fatigue, exhaustion, and energy drain; inability to heal damage naturally; vulnerability to certain metal- or wood-affecting spells; and half effect from healing spells. He'd still become inert at -1 to -9 hp, and he still wouldn't need to eat, sleep, or breathe.

However, he would lose his composite plating, light fortification, and slam attack.

The next logical question, of course, is whether the dragonborn warforged can select feats that would improve his now-absent composite plating. Technically, these feats don't list composite plating as a prerequisite, so it appears the answer would be yes.

The Unarmored Body feat (*RE* 120) supports this ruling, as it indicates that other feats that adjust the character's armor bonus could be selected later, even though he technically doesn't have the composite plating's armor bonus any more.

What would happen to a warforged who wanders into an *antimagic field*? Paralysis? Instant Death?

The Sage can't help but wonder if a warforged has been kicking your cat or stealing your newspaper—it's a pretty big leap from *antimagic field* to instant death.

Sorry to disappoint you, but an *antimagic field* doesn't have any special effect on a warforged. Any magical effects on the warforged (active spells, magic items, and so on) would be suppressed as normal, but he'd still remain fully functional.

Do brilliant energy weapons affect warforged?

Yes. Warforged are living creatures, despite their appearance, and are thus affected normally by brilliant energy weapons. Of course, the warforged wouldn't gain the armor bonus normally granted by its composite plating, since the brilliant energy weapon property ignores armor bonuses to AC.

Is a warforged considered to be wearing gauntlets, and therefore always armed?

A warforged always threatens squares within its reach, but not because it's considered to be wearing gauntlets. A warforged has a natural slam attack, and thus always threatens squares within its reach (just like any other creature with a natural attack). These are slam attacks, however, not gauntlet attacks.

Does a warforged benefit from the *vigor* spells in *Spell Compendium*?

Yes, but the warforged would get only half the normal value of fast healing, rounded down. Thus, the *lesser vigor* spell would be useless to a warforged (fast healing 1 halved, rounded down, is fast healing 0). *Vigor* or *vigorous circle* would provide a warforged with fast healing 1, while *greater vigor* would grant fast healing 2 to the warforged.

Can a warforged be animated as or transformed into an undead?

A warforged isn't immune to necromancy effects, so it can be animated as or transformed into an undead, as long as the effect, template, or monster description doesn't otherwise bar it. For example, only humanoids and monstrous humanoids can become vampire spawn (according to the vampire's create spawn special attack), so a warforged couldn't become a vampire spawn. Another example: The zombie template states that it "can be added to any corporeal creature . . . that has a skeletal system." (*MM* 265) A warforged is certainly a corporeal creature, but it doesn't seem like a warforged has a skeletal system, so it couldn't be animated as a zombie.

Can a warforged be afflicted by lycanthropy? Warforged are immune to disease but it never specifies in the *MM* that lycanthropy is a disease.

No, they can't. Though not technically a disease (it is a curse that acts like an affliction in some ways), only humanoids and giants can be afflicted with lycanthropy (see "Creating a Lycanthrope" *MM* 175). Warforged are neither, as they're living constructs.

Does a warforged monk deal extra damage with his unarmed strikes?

No. Even though a warforged has a slam attack, that's a particular kind of natural weapon, not simply a replacement for your unarmed strike damage. A warforged monk deals the same damage with his unarmed strikes as any other monk of his level.

Is a warforged character affected by exposure to extreme weather?

In general, warforged suffer the same effects from extreme weather as any other character. For example, they're just as prone to suffering nonlethal damage from heat or cold as anyone else. Of course, the normal warforged immunities still apply. For example, a warforged doesn't become fatigued due to nonlethal damage from heat or cold, since they're immune to fatigue.

Does a warforged druid using wild shape look like a warforged version of an animal?

No. A halfling druid and a human druid who both take the form of a wolf both look just like a wolf, and so would a warforged druid.

Can a warforged use the Craft skill to recover ability damage?

No. A successful Craft skill check can repair hit point damage suffered by a warforged, but not any other kind of damage or injury.

Can a warforged character attach an armor augment crystal (*MIC* 221) to his own body?

Yes, but only if the warforged A) has some sort of composite plating (either the base version or an augmented version from a feat such as Adamantine Body), and B) that plating has a sufficient enhancement bonus to accept the crystal. For example, a warforged whose plating has a +1 enhancement bonus could attach a least or lesser augment crystal to his own body. Without at least a +1 enhancement bonus, the warforged couldn't even use least armor augment crystals, since his body isn't considered a masterwork suit of armor.

When applying a template to a warforged, what are they treated as?

A warforged is a construct with the subtype living construct, and it selects templates as a construct. For the most part, any template that can be used by a construct can also be used by a warforged. A few templates such as half-dragon require a living corporeal creature. Normal constructs are not living so they cannot select this template, but a warforged could—thanks to the fact that they are living constructs.

Wild Elf

Can a wild elf gain a dragonmark available to elves (such as the Mark of Shadow)?

No. In the *ECS*, subraces are not eligible to select a specific dragonmark associated with the parent race. Since these

dragonmarks appear only among the members of "one large extended family" (*ECS* 63), subraces are considered too unrelated to manifest such marks. For example, despite having the human subtype, illumians (from *RD*) are not eligible to select any of the dragonmarks available to humans (Mark of Finding, Mark of Handling, Mark of Passage, and Mark of Sentinel).

Only hill dwarves (known in the FORGOTTEN REALMS as shield dwarves) can select the Mark of Warding.

Only high elves (known in the FORGOTTEN REALMS as moon elves) can select the Mark of Shadow.

Only rock gnomes can select the Mark of Scribing.

Only lightfoot halflings can select the Mark of Healing or the Mark of Hospitality.

Only half-elves of high elf parentage can select the Mark of Detection or Mark of Storm.

Classes

What class features do my character's bloodline levels (from UA) stack with? Do they stack with only one class or with all my classes? Do they stack with other class levels for the purpose of meeting prerequisites?

Your bloodline levels stack with your normal class levels “when calculating any character ability based on . . . class levels” (UA 19). The key word here is “calculate”—it means when you use the level as part of some mathematical determination of the class feature's power or uses. Abilities that say “add your class level” count, but abilities that say “a character of level X gains this effect” don't.

Examples from the *PH* where bloodline levels would stack with normal class levels include the bard's bardic knowledge and uses of bardic music per day; the cleric and paladin's effective turning level; the druid and ranger's wild empathy; the druid's HD limit for wild shape; the monk's wholeness of body, abundant step, diamond soul, quivering palm, and empty body; the paladin's smite evil and lay on hands; and perhaps most importantly, caster level.

Many class features improve as you gain levels but aren't specifically calculated with class level. A rogue's sneak attack, for example, improves at a fixed rate, but it doesn't specifically use your class level to calculate its value in the way that the abilities listed above do. The same is true of a monk's unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed bonus, of a barbarian's number of rages per day, and so on. Similarly, it doesn't add to the power of your animal companion, familiar, or special mount.

Your bloodline levels never actually grant you new class features. A 2nd-level bard with one bloodline level doesn't gain inspire competence (although he can use his bardic music three times per day).

Your bloodline levels stack with all of your class levels for this purpose. A 2nd-level cleric/2nd-level druid with one bloodline level has a caster level of 3rd for both classes, turns undead as a 3rd-level cleric, and adds +3 (plus his Charisma modifier) to wild empathy checks just as a 3rd-level druid.

Bloodline levels don't stack with class levels for the purpose of meeting prerequisites (such as the minimum fighter level for selecting Weapon Specialization).

Does uncanny dodge protect a character from losing his Dexterity bonus to AC to a successful feint?

No. Uncanny dodge doesn't protect you from all situations that would deny you your Dexterity bonus to AC. It only lets you retain your Dexterity bonus if “caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker.” A feint doesn't render a target flat-footed, it just doesn't allow him to use his Dexterity bonus to AC against your next melee attack made on or before your next turn.

If my character gains evasion from two different classes, does he now have improved evasion?

No. A 2nd-level rogue/2nd-level monk has evasion from two different sources, but does not have improved evasion.

Can a meldshaper bind a single soulmeld to more than one chakra at a time to gain multiple chakra bind benefits?

No. A soulmeld can be bound only to the chakra it occupies. Even if a soulmeld lists more than one chakra, it occupies only one at a time (chosen when you shape your soulmelds), and it can be bound only to that chakra.

The totemist class provides a specific exception to this rule. Since soulmelds can't occupy the totem chakra (*Mot* 51), a soulmeld bound to the totem chakra must actually occupy a different chakra (and can't be bound to both chakras until the totemist reaches 11th level).

Can the weapon created by the incarnate weapon soulmeld be enhanced like a normal weapon?

No. An incarnate weapon is a manifestation of magical energy, not a real weapon. Its enhancement bonus depends entirely on the quantity of essentia invested in it.

Can a soulmeld or its chakra bind allow you to meet the prerequisites for a feat or the requirements for a prestige class?

Yes, but you only gain the benefits of the feat or prestige class as long as you continue to meet its requirements. If you unshape the meld or change the chakra bind, you would lose the feat or prestige class benefits and wouldn't be able to advance further in the prestige class.

Does the soulmeld count as a magic weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction?

Yes. As long as the attack granted by the soulmeld has an enhancement bonus of +1 or greater, it counts as a magic weapon for overcoming DR.

What exactly is the difference between the ninja's sudden strike ability and the rogue's sneak attack?

Sudden strike is almost the same as sneak attack . . . except for one very important difference. Flanking an opponent, or attacking an opponent that is denied his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, allows you to use your sneak attack damage. With sudden strike, you can use it only if the target of your attack is denied his Dexterity bonus against your attack—so flanking would not allow a ninja to use sudden strike.

Does the Armor Class bonus ability from the monk, swordmage, and ninja stack?

No, each of these abilities provides the same bonus. You are not able to benefit from multiple sources that have the same name more than once.

Archivist

The archivist's prayerbook ability (HH 83) states, “An archivist can also add spells found on scrolls containing divine spells to his prayerbook.” Does this include domain spells found on scrolls?

Yes. The archivists are masters of drawing power from esoteric holy sources. By definition, there are few things more esoteric than a cleric's domain spells.

Can an archivist (HH 82) use a scroll from the druid spell list without making a Use Magic Device check?

In the Sage's opinion, the archivist should be treated as having a spell list that includes all cleric spells as well as any

spell he has added to his prayer book. So, if he had obtained a scroll and was able to add it to his prayer book, he would not have to make a Use Magic Device check. However, if he had not learned the spell previously, he would have to make that check just like any other character.

Artificer

When an artificer scribes a scroll, is it an arcane scroll, a divine scroll, or neither?

Actually, it's neither.

According to the official errata for the EBERRON campaign setting, the magic items crafted by an artificer are neither arcane nor divine. This has no bearing on the artificer's ability to use the scroll, but it means that the scroll is useless to any other character without a successful Use Magic Device check.

Are artificers required to use arcane material components or arcane foci for infusions that simulate spells? What about a divine focus?

No. An artificer is neither an arcane spellcaster nor a divine spellcaster, and thus isn't required to use a material component or focus that's normally required only of casters of those types.

The artificer can ignore any component listed as an "arcane material component," and can ignore any focus listed as an "arcane focus" or "divine focus." For example, even though the 1st-level artificer infusion *identify* is listed with M (indicating material component), the artificer need not supply the component as part of imbuing the infusion, since that spell lists the component as an "arcane" material component.

Effectively, this allows the artificer to ignore any "Components" line listed as "F/DF" or "M/DF" (see "Components," on page 174 in the *PH*, for an explanation of these entries).

Can an artificer craft psionic items?

No. The artificer doesn't gain any of the "psionic" item creation feats as bonus feats and doesn't have any ability to emulate the manifester level prerequisites for those feats. The psionic artificer variant class (*MoE* 42) gains psionic item creation feats in place of the normal item creation feats and can emulate psionic powers rather than spells.

Barbarian

The barbarian's fast movement does not list a bonus type. Is it meant to stack with other movement-increasing effects?

Yes. The barbarian's increase to speed is an untyped bonus, and thus it stacks with all other effects that improve speed.

Does a raging barbarian lose the effects of his rage (including the extra hit points from his increased Constitution) when he falls unconscious?

No. Nothing in the rage class feature indicates that the effect ends if the barbarian is rendered unconscious. The Sage shudders to think how many more dead barbarians would be lying around the battlefield if being reduced to -1 hp meant that the barbarian instantly lost additional hp equal to twice his HD!

As a general rule, activated effects remain active even if the activating character is rendered incapable of acting (paralyzed, unconscious, dead, and so on) unless the effect stipulates otherwise.

Does a dwarf barbarian wearing heavy armor retain the fast movement ability?

No. The class feature only cares about the type of armor you wear (light, medium, or heavy), not whether your speed is actually reduced by the armor. A barbarian wearing heavy armor—whether a dwarf, human, or frost giant—loses the fast movement gained from that class ability.

Bard

Can a bard use bardic knowledge anytime a Knowledge skill check called for?

Bardic knowledge is not a substitute for Knowledge checks. The *PH* doesn't give a lot of detail about this class feature, indicating only that a bard can make the check "to see whether he knows some relevant information about local notable people, legendary items, or noteworthy places."

By its nature, bardic knowledge represents stray knowledge and random bits remembered from stories, not encyclopedic details. Compare that to the definition of a Knowledge skill, which describes it as "a study of some body of lore, possibly an academic or even scientific discipline." This is a narrow distinction, but one that the DM should keep in mind.

Asking the DM if your bard knows anything about the demon prince Orcus (whose cult the PCs are fighting), or what the local duke's favorite delicacy is, or if there are particularly interesting legends concerning the so-called haunted forest just outside town, are all reasonable uses of bardic knowledge.

Bardic knowledge wouldn't, on the other hand, enable the bard to provide details regarding a particular demon's vulnerabilities, rattle off a complete list of all the kings and queens who have ruled a particular country, or identify a particular species of fern—all those answers would be more appropriately derived by Knowledge checks.

If the vagueness of bardic knowledge doesn't suit your tastes, the bardic knack variant class feature (*PH2* 35) provides a much clearer way to mimic a wide range of minor talents and knowledge.

Can a bard use oratory, that is speaking and storytelling, for his bardic abilities?

Yes. The bardic music class feature (*PH* 29) lists a variety of options other than singing, and while oratory isn't specifically listed, it's close enough to "reciting poetry" that it's an acceptable option.

If my bard has the rage ability, can he use bardic music while raging?

You can't use any ability that requires concentration while raging, nor can you use any Charisma-based skill other than Intimidate (so Perform is out). Thus, only a few of the bardic music abilities are available to a raging bard:

- Countersong: No (Perform check required).
- Fascinate: No (Perform check required).
- Inspire Courage: Yes.
- Inspire Competence: Only lasts 1 round per use (concentration required).
- Suggestion: No, because you can't use fascinate.
- Inspire Greatness: Yes.
- Song of Freedom: No (requires concentration).
- Inspire Heroics: Yes.
- Mass Suggestion: No, because you can't use fascinate.

How many times can a bard use the suggestion ability against a creature he has fascinated?

The suggestion entry in the bardic music class feature doesn't appear to list any limit to its use, which suggests that the bard could use it as often as he wished while the fascinate effect lasted.

Do bards have the Armor Proficiency (Medium) feat? The class description and feat description don't agree.

No, they don't. The class description takes precedence over the feat description.

What type of action does it take for a bard to keep singing or reciting poetry?

Unless the ability states that it requires concentration (a standard action), it doesn't require any kind of action to maintain a bardic music effect. Technically, a bard incapable of taking any actions wouldn't be able to maintain a bardic music effect, so it's probably safest to describe it as a free action (like talking).

Beguiler

The beguiler's surprise casting class feature (PH2 7) states that the beguiler must "remain in melee with the target." What does that mean?

The beguiler must remain adjacent to the target from the time he feints until the time he makes the attack or casts the spell to be affected. If either the beguiler or the target moves so that they are no longer adjacent, the beguiler loses the benefit of surprise casting.

The beguiler (PHB II, 6) has 0-level spell slots but no 0-level spell list. How do they learn 0-level spells?

The beguiler's spell list appears on page 11, and it includes 0-level spells. The spell list on page 97 only includes new spells presented in the PH2.

How obvious are the beguiler's verbal and somatic spell components? Can he cast spells without looking or sounding suspicious?

The beguiler's verbal and somatic spell components are the same as any other caster's. If your beguiler wants to avoid drawing suspicion, he'd best cast his spells from hiding. Later (under charm spells in the Spells section), the Sage answers the question of whether a character can conceal such components as normal gestures. (Short Answer: No.)

At 20th level, the beguiler (PHB II, 6) automatically overcomes the spell resistance of a foe denied its Dexterity bonus to AC. Does this allow him to overcome spell immunity as well?

Ah, the old irresistible force versus immovable object argument rears its head once again. In this case, the Sage must come down on the side of the immovable object—spell immunity trumps the beguiler's class feature.

How does the ignore arcane spell failure class feature of the spellsword prestige class (CW 79) interact with the armored mage class feature of the beguiler (PHB II, 6) and other classes? For example, can the former class feature reduce an armor's arcane spell failure chance low enough that it qualifies as light armor for the latter?

The two abilities don't have any cumulative effect when combined—they're really two different ways of accomplishing a similar effect.

For example, a beguiler/spellsword can either take advantage of his armored mage class feature (and ignore the arcane spell failure chance of light armor) or his ignore arcane spell failure class feature (and reduce the total arcane spell failure chance of his armor and shield by 10%), but having both doesn't do anything extra.

He can't, for example, put on a breastplate, reduce its arcane spell failure chance by 10%, and then argue that because it's down to 15% it becomes the equivalent of wearing studded leather armor.

Cleric

If a cleric's turning check results in a "Most Powerful Undead Affected" Hit Dice of 0 or less, does that mean the cleric's turn attempt failed, or is 1 HD always the minimum?

There is no minimum HD result of a turning check. If a 1st-level cleric rolls a total turning check of 9 or less, he can't turn any undead (since the most powerful undead affected would be 0 HD). In general, unless the rules specifically state that a minimum value exists, it doesn't.

How do I know when my cleric can prepare spells? Does he need to rest first?

Divine spellcasters who prepare spells (such as clerics and druids) choose and prepare their spells at a particular time of day. Unless the character's deity or faith specifies a particular time, the character can choose his spell preparation time when he first gains the ability to cast divine spells. Dawn, dusk, noon, and midnight are common choices. If something prevents the character from praying for his spells at the proper time, he must do so as soon as possible or else wait until the next day to prepare his spells. Unlike wizards, divine spellcasters need not rest before preparing spells.

My DM says that my cleric has to drop his morningstar to cast spells. Is he right?

Yes and no. To cast a spell with a somatic (S) component, you must gesture freely with at least one hand. (PH 140) A cleric (or any caster, for that matter) who holds a weapon in one hand and wears a heavy shield on the other arm doesn't have a hand free to cast a spell with a somatic component (which includes most spells in the game). To cast such a spell, the character must either drop or sheathe his weapon.

Another simple option is for the cleric to carry a buckler or light shield instead of a heavy shield. The buckler leaves one hand free for spellcasting, and you don't even lose the buckler's shield bonus to AC when casting with that hand. The light shield doesn't give you a free hand for spellcasting, but since you can hold an item in the same hand that holds the light shield, you could switch your weapon to that hand to free up a hand for spellcasting. (You can't use the weapon while it's held in the same hand as your shield, of course.) The rules don't state what type of action is required to switch hands on a weapon, but it seems reasonable to assume that it's the equivalent of drawing a weapon (a move action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity).

Can a cleric turn undead while under the effects of greater invisibility? Page 159 of the PH says only that the cleric must present his holy weapon to attempt to turn undead. Does "present" imply that the holy symbol must be visible or just held forth?

Concealment is irrelevant when determining whether a creature is affected by a turning check: “You don’t need line of sight to a target” (*PH* 159). Just as an invisible lich could be affected by a visible cleric, a visible vampire could be turned by an invisible cleric.

It bears mentioning that turning or rebuking undead counts as an attack for the purpose of ending an *invisibility* spell. Of course, using a turn/rebuke attempt for some other purpose—such as powering a divine feat (see some examples in *CD*)—might or might not count as an attack, depending on the effect of the feat.

I assume that my lawful good cleric of a lawful neutral deity must opt to turn undead and not rebuke. If he later becomes lawful neutral, can he opt to start rebuking instead of turning? What if he then becomes lawful evil? What if he is a lawful good cleric of Wee Jas who becomes lawful neutral?

You can’t voluntarily change whether your character turns or rebukes undead. If your new alignment would require a change—such as a turning cleric who becomes evil, or a LG cleric of Wee Jas who becomes LN—the change is applied automatically.

When a cleric has a temporary bonus to his Charisma score, does it affect his turning check or turning damage? Does it change the number of times he can turn or rebuke per day?

Unless otherwise stated, a temporary bonus to an ability score has the same effect as a permanent one. For example, a cleric with a temporary +4 enhancement bonus to Charisma (such as from *eagle’s splendor*) adds 2 to his turning check and to his turning damage while the spell was in effect, since his Charisma modifier is 2 points higher than it was before.

Things get a little stickier when talking about powers with daily limits, such as turn/rebuke undead or lay on hands. (Hold on, because this gets worse before it gets better.) In this case, a change to the key ability score indeed affects the daily limit—in the example above, the cleric would gain 2 additional turn/rebuke attempts per day—but these aren’t just “free” uses. Here’s why:

Assume the cleric above has a normal Charisma score of 12, granting him 4 turn attempts per day (3 + 1 for Cha bonus). Casting *eagle’s splendor* increases his Charisma to 16, which would grant 6 attempts per day. At the end of the spell, however, his daily limit would drop back down to 4 attempts. At that point, the player must compare the number of daily uses expended to the daily limit to see if any still remain.

Here’s how that might work in play. Our cleric turns undead twice, then casts *eagle’s splendor* right before a big fight with a horde of zombies. During the duration of the spell, he makes four more turning checks. When the spell ends, he compares his new daily limit (4) to the number of attempts used (6)—whoops, no turns left. Hope all the undead have been destroyed, because even if the cleric cast *eagle’s splendor* again, he wouldn’t have any more turning attempts available, since he’s already used all 6 of his allotted attempts. If he could increase his Charisma to 18, he’d “gain” one more turning attempt (since he has now used 6 out of his allotted 7 daily attempts), usable only during the duration of the Charisma-boosting effect.

The same is true of the paladin’s lay on hands ability. If the paladin gains a temporary Charisma boost, her total capacity of healing via lay on hands improves accordingly, but she must

keep track of the healing “used up” to see if any remains after the boost ends.

Temporary ability reductions (such as penalties or damage) work similarly. When applying a reduction, do the math as if a bonus had just elapsed to see if any daily uses are left, and reverse that when the reduction goes away to see what (if anything) the character regains. If our cleric is hit by *touch of idiocy* and suffers a –4 penalty to Charisma, his daily limit of turning attempts is reduced from 4 to 2; if he’s already used 2 or more, he has none available as long as the spell’s effect lasts.

This seems more complicated than it actually is. As long as you remember that the important number to track is not uses remaining, but uses expended, everything else should fall into place.

Can a cleric/wizard lose a prepared wizard spell to spontaneously cast a cure spell?

No. The cleric or druid’s spontaneous casting option applies only to spells from the same class.

Does the +1 caster level bonus from such domains as Good, Knowledge, and Law apply to all spells (of the appropriate school, subschool, or descriptor), to divine spells, or only to cleric spells?

Unless the domain’s granted power specifically states that it applies only to a limited range of spells, the bonus applies to all spells the cleric casts, regardless of their source.

If a cleric commands a shadow, and that shadow then spawns other shadows, is the cleric also in control of the newly spawned shadows?

Strictly speaking, the cleric does not have “mental control” over any shadows spawned by the one he commands (and so on down the chain), since he didn’t use rebuke undead to command them. He can indirectly control these undead by issuing instructions to the one he does command, but if that creature isn’t present, the cleric would have no influence over the newly spawned shadows.

This trick shouldn’t allow a cleric to bypass the normal limits for commanded undead. The Sage sees two reasonable house rules for handling this situation:

1. Count these indirectly influenced undead toward the cleric’s limit of HD commanded (*PH* 159); relinquishing command of such a creature renders it no longer under control of its creator.
2. Rule that newly created spawn aren’t under the control of the commanded undead; they’re immediately free-willed.

Crusader

If a crusader (*ToB* 8) has damage reduction, does that apply before or after damage goes into my steely resolve damage pool?

Apply damage reduction or any other effect that would reduce the incoming damage before it goes into the damage pool. If your DR reduces the incoming damage to 0, no damage goes into your damage pool.

If my crusader (*ToB* 8) receives more healing from an effect that he needs to return to maximum hit points, do I have to apply the remainder to my damage pool?

No. You can split the amount of incoming healing between your hit points and damage pool however you wish. You can even apply more healing than you need to either category.

For example, imagine if you had 26 points of damage and 10 points in your damage pool, and the cleric cast *cure critical wounds* to restore 28 hit points. Since reducing your damage pool by even a point would lessen your furious counterstrike bonus, you could apply all 28 points of healing to your hit points, even though 2 points of that healing is wasted.

Could a crusader (ToB 8) choose to learn or ready fewer maneuvers than he or she would be entitled to?

No. You must learn and ready the full number of maneuvers entitled to you by your level. Otherwise, you'd be able to cycle through your favorites faster, which defeats the purpose of the crusader's unique recharge mechanic.

Can a crusader (ToB 8) delay learning a new stance to a later level? If not, how can he ever learn an 8th- or 9th-level stance, since his last stance is gained at only 14th level?

As a general rule, you can't ever delay gaining any feature that comes from reaching a new level, whether that's a feat, skill points, class feature, or anything else. The crusader's stances are no different; at 14th level, the crusader must select a new stance of 7th level or less. However, at 15th level the crusader could select the Martial Stance feat (page 31) in order to choose an 8th-level stance. At 18th level, he could use that feat to choose a 9th-level stance.

When a crusader's maneuver recovery mechanic (ToB 9) activates, what happens to any maneuvers he still had ready and granted?

If at the end of the crusader's turn he cannot be granted a maneuver because he has no withheld maneuvers remaining, the process starts over from scratch. All maneuvers (whether expended or not) once again become withheld, and two of those maneuvers are randomly granted.

If a crusader (ToB 8) of a good-aligned deity were to "fall" and become a blackguard, would he gain blackguard powers in a manner analogous to a fallen paladin who becomes a blackguard?

That falls squarely into the domain of "house rules." It certainly seems like a cool variant of that aspect of the blackguard, but you would need to work with your DM to come up with appropriate changes to the list of special blackguard features to make them match the crusader class.

Dragon Shaman

Can my dragon shaman (PH2 11) choose a totem dragon that isn't included on the provided list, such as a shadow dragon or planar dragon?

The list of true dragons provided on page 13 is intended as the only options available in a normal D&D campaign, although DMs wishing to alter this list are, of course, free to do so in their home campaigns.

The Sage recommends against simply creating entries for every true dragon in the game. Not only does that dilute the different "flavors" of dragon shaman by creating too many options, but some dragons don't lend themselves to filling out the various totem-related class features. For example, the shadow dragon from *Dr* doesn't have an energy type associated with its breath weapon, and giving the PC a negative-level-bestowing breath weapon is likely too powerful.

Can a dragon shaman use his touch of vitality (PH214) to restore a level lost to energy drain?

No. The touch of vitality can remove a negative level (at a cost of 20 points of healing), but once a negative level has become permanent (that is, resulted in actual level loss), touch of vitality can't help.

If two dragon shamans (PHB II, 11) both project the same draconic aura, do the effects stack?

No. This is an example of two identical effects being in place simultaneously, and only the higher bonus applies to any character with the area of both auras.

When a dragon shaman (PHB II, 11) gains the ability to project an additional draconic aura from another source (such as the dragon lord prestige class; DM 38), would the new aura use the same bonus as his existing auras? Could he project an aura from each class simultaneously?

The new aura would use whatever bonus is described for it in the text of the source that grants it. In the case of the dragon lord prestige class, it indicates the bonus of the aura. Contrast this with the Draconic Aura feat (*DM* 16), which indicates that the new aura's bonus scales with the dragon shaman's level.

Such a character couldn't project two different draconic auras separately. Each time a character learns a new draconic aura, it's simply added to the list of options that he has (possibly with a different bonus).

A 6th-level dragon shaman/1st-level dragon lord knows six total auras: five from his dragon shaman class levels (each of which grants a bonus of +2) and one from his dragon lord class levels (which grants a bonus of +1).

If two dragon shamans (PHB II, 11) both project the same draconic aura, do the effects stack?

No. This is an example of two identical effects being in place simultaneously, and only the higher bonus applies to any character with the area of both auras.

Does an attacker have to damage a dragon shaman (PHB II, 11) to be affected by the energy shield draconic aura, or just hit him? And if so, if the attack roll is enough to hit his touch AC, should that also trigger the energy shield?

The attack must hit the dragon shaman successfully—that is, the attack roll must equal or exceed your AC—to trigger the effect of the energy shield. Dealing damage isn't necessary.

If the attack is a melee touch attack, it need only hit your touch AC, but a normal attack that hits your touch AC but not your normal AC doesn't trigger the energy shield.

Does the dragon shaman's power draconic aura (PHB II, 13) affect nonweapon attacks? What about attacks that deal ability score damage?

Yes and yes. The draconic aura text doesn't limit the effect to melee weapon attacks, nor does it apply only to attacks that deal hit point damage.

Does the dragon shaman's vigor draconic aura (PHB II, 13) affect warforged? Is the healing halved?

Yes and yes. The draconic aura is a supernatural ability, and warforged gain only half the normal healing from supernatural abilities that heal hit point or ability score damage.

This means that a warforged is completely unaffected by the vigor aura until its bonus reaches 2 (since half of 1 rounded down is 0). While damage rolls and hit point rolls have a

minimum of 1 (*PHB*, 304: “Rounding Fractions”), no such general rule applies to healing effects.

Dragonfire Adept

Do dragonfire adepts (*DM 24*) gain breath effects when they take levels in a prestige class that gives them caster levels, like pact-bound adept (*DM 46*)?

Dragonfire adepts do not gain any breath effects when taking prestige classes that give bonuses to caster level, but they do gain several other benefits. These are discussed in the sidebar on page 24 of *Dragon Magic*.

Can dragonfire adepts (*DM 24*) use the Breath Channeling feats (*RDr 101*) or the Metabreath feats (*Dr 66*)?

A dragonfire adept can't use a Metabreath feat with his breath weapon because it does not have a recharge time. Having a recharge time is one of the prerequisites for Metabreath feats. They can use the Breath Channeling feats as long as they meet all other prerequisites for the feat.

Can a Dragonfire Adept (*DM 24*) use his breath weapon while in a grapple?

Page 60 of the *Rules Compendium* outlines a series of maneuvers that can be used while you are in a grapple. Unfortunately, using a supernatural attack is not one of them. Some Dungeon Masters might allow you to use your breath weapon in the same way you would cast a spell while in a grapple, but you will need to check with your DM to see how they want to handle it.

Can the dragonfire adept (*DM 24*) use any of his noncombat invocations such as Draconic Knowledge, Energy Immunity, or Aquatic Adaptation?

Buffing invocations such as Draconic Knowledge, Energy Immunity, and Aquatic Adaptation can give the dragonfire adept himself a bonus, but this bonus can't be given to others.

Can a dragonfire adept (*DM 24*) apply her breath effects to breath weapons other than the breath weapon gained from the dragonfire adept class?

The dragonfire adept section assumes you have only that breath weapon when discussing breath effects. In the Sage's opinion, you would use the dragonfire adept breath effects only with the breath weapon granted by the dragonfire adept class.

Druid

When you add Hit Dice to a druid's (or ranger's) animal companion as the master's level goes up, does the animal get any bigger? For instance, when a druid has a wolf companion, the wolf starts out with the standard 2 Hit Dice and is size Medium. By the time the druid is 3rd level, the wolf has 2 bonus Hit Dice. According to the wolf entry in the *MM*, an “advanced” wolf with 4 Hit Dice would be Large. Is the example companion wolf also Large?

An animal companion doesn't get bigger when it adds extra Hit Dice for the master's levels. The advancement entries for creatures, and the rules for advancing monsters, refer to unusually powerful specimens that are simply tougher (and perhaps bigger) than normal for their kinds.

In 3.5, it appears that druids lose their abilities only when using metal armor or shields, but not when wielding

nondruid weapons (as was previously true). Is this the case? For instance, could a barbarian/druid wield a greataxe without losing his abilities?

Beginning with version 3.5 of the D&D rules, druids have no restriction regarding which weapons they can wield. A druid could wield a greatsword, halberd, or repeating crossbow without any ill effect (other than the normal penalty for nonproficiency). This is a specific change from previous versions of the game.

The *PH* says that a druid loses his abilities if he “carries a prohibited shield.” Can a druid carry such an item (say, in a backpack) without actually using it and not lose druid abilities?

The druidic restriction against using certain kinds of armor or shields applies only to wearing or carrying them in a functional manner. Simply holding such an item, or carrying it in a backpack or *bag of holding*, has no effect on the druid's abilities.

In the animal companion sidebar (*PH 36*), it says that animal companions have good Fortitude and Reflex saves, which are also the good saves for all regular animals. However, dire animals have good progression in all three saves. Thus, what happens when a dire animal becomes a druid's animal companion?

The line in question simply reiterates the normal rule for animals for ease of play. Dire animals use their normal good saves, even after becoming animal companions.

My druid wants to take an animal companion that isn't listed in the *PH*. How can I figure out what druid level is required for the animal I want?

The list of eligible animals in the *PH* isn't exhaustive, even if you include only the animals from the *MM*. (Plenty of weak animals, such as the bat or raven, aren't included because they are such poor choices for animal companions.) If you want to select an animal that isn't included, compare your animal to other animals to find the closest equivalent then place it at the same level as the equivalent creature. As long as your new animal isn't strictly better than the best other option(s) at that level, you're probably okay.

If your animal is strictly better—that is, its hit points, attack modifier, damage, and other statistics are generally better than any others at the same level—consider bumping it up to the next-higher level (such as from 7th to 10th). Conversely, if it seems much worse than all other creatures available at the same level, consider dropping it to the next-lower level, such as from 7th to 4th, but only if this doesn't make it the best choice of that level. (It's better for a new choice to be a little bit worse than existing choices than a little bit better, since that prevents it from becoming the default option of all druids.)

For example, the dire toad is a CR 3 animal from *MM2*. It's clearly better than the druid's best choices for 1st level (such as the wolf), so let's start by comparing it to 4th-level options. Its hit points and AC (15 and 26) are similar to the ape (14 and 29), boar (16 and 25), and crocodile (15 and 22). Its attack bonus (+5) is also comparable to other creatures in that category, although its damage (1d4) is pretty low in comparison. However, its bite has a potent poison (1d6 Con/1d6 Con), which more than makes up for this low damage. It also has improved grab, just like the crocodile. That suggests that 4th level might be a good minimum level for a druid to

select a dire toad as an animal companion. It's definitely too weak to make a 7th-level option (compare its statistics to the brown bear, dire ape, or tiger).

As with any instance when the DM makes a judgment call, review the decision after a few sessions. The animal might be far better (or worse) than the original evaluation indicated, and the DM should feel free to adjust a previous ruling.

When a druid reaches the equivalent of 3rd level, do his wolf animal companion grow to Large size (with all of the benefits and penalties associated with size increase)? Does the wolf continue to gain bonus Hit Dice, even though a wolf's advancement normally maxes out at 6 Hit Dice? Finally, does a wolf automatically become Large if your druid of 3rd or higher level acquires it as an animal companion, granting it bonus Hit Dice?

The animal companion rules—or, for that matter, pretty much any other effect that grants a creature bonus Hit Dice—don't use the monster improvement rules presented in Chapter 4 of the *MM*. The rules in *MM* are for creating tougher versions of existing monsters, not for increasing the statistics of creatures who gain Hit Dice.

An animal's normal advancement line has absolutely nothing to do with the benefits it gains from being an animal companion, and vice versa. A wolf animal companion doesn't become size Large when its Hit Dice increases to 4, nor is it limited to the "normal" Hit Dice cap for wolves.

Can a druid cast *awaken* on a plant that isn't a tree? What about on a shambling mound, treant, or other creature with the plant type?

No to both, as revealed by the "Target" line of the spell's entry on page 202 in the *PH*. The spell clearly states that it affects only the "animal or tree touched," and plant creatures by definition are not trees.

Can a druid cast *awaken* on an already *awakened* tree?

Yes, although the effect of a second *awaken* spell doesn't stack. The tree would use the better result of the Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores rolled by the two *awaken* spells. Note that the caster can't know the result of these rolls until after the Will save required by the effect has been determined (which means that the spell might unintentionally reduce the tree's mental faculties).

Are the additional languages an *awakened* tree or animal gains based on the Intelligence of the caster or on the new Intelligence score of the *awakened* creature?

The number of languages gained is based on the *awakened* creature's Intelligence score, although it can select only from languages that the caster already knows. This might result in the *awakened* creature being unable to fill all of its known languages slots (if its Intelligence score is too high).

Can a druid (or other character) take an *awakened* tree or animal as a cohort using the Leadership feat? If so, how do I figure out how powerful the cohort is in terms of level?

To select an *awakened* creature as a cohort, the player must work with the DM to set a level adjustment (LA) to add to the *awakened* creature's Hit Dice to find its effective character level (ECL). Most animals have better-than-average ability score modifiers, so level adjustments of 1 or higher should be the norm. Compare the *awakened* creature to other creatures with similar Hit Dice, attack modifiers, damage, and special

abilities to find starting values and work from there, remembering that setting a level adjustment is as much art as science.

SS has more information on setting LAs for unusual creatures.

If an *awakened* animal's type permanently changes back to animal (from magical beast), can it then become an animal companion, familiar, or special mount?

Two very large obstacles stand in the way of this request.

First of all, there aren't any simple methods of changing a magical beast's type to animal. By definition, an animal has an Intelligence of 1 or 2, both of which are outside the range of Intelligence scores granted by the *awaken* spell. Even permanently reducing the *awakened* animal's Intelligence score to 2 or less doesn't automatically change its type (note that several magical beasts have Intelligence scores of 2 or less).

Second of all, unless the DM grants special permission, you can use only "stock" versions of creatures animal companions, familiars, or special mounts. A druid, for example, can't voluntarily take a 4-Hit Dice wolf as an animal companion, nor could a wizard claim that the cat she's using as a familiar was the beneficiary of several *wish* spells from a previous owner and therefore possesses ability scores beyond the norm. Even if an *awakened* animal somehow qualified to become an animal once again, it would have a higher Charisma score and more Hit Dice than a typical animal of its kind, making it ineligible for such use.

If a druid casts *awaken* on her animal companion, can the *awakened* animal take levels in place of the Hit Dice it would normally gain when the druid then goes up in level?

Actually, if a druid casts *awaken* on her animal companion, the creature ceases to be an animal and becomes a magical beast. A druid cannot have a magical beast as an animal companion, so at this point the creature is freed of the bond and loses all benefits of being an animal companion. However, the druid could keep the *awakened* creature as a cohort if she takes the Leadership feat.

Does a druid's trackless step ability function even when she's using wild shape? What about her other nonspellcasting class abilities, such as woodland stride or resist nature's lure?

The recent errata to the druid's wild shape states that it functions like the alternate form special ability (*MM*, page 305), which asserts that the creature "retains the special qualities of its original form." Nature sense, trackless step, woodland stride, resist nature's lure, and venom immunity are all special qualities, so the druid would retain these even while wild shaped.

A druid with trackless step doesn't leave tracks. Is this because she doesn't exert any weight on the surface she walks on, and if so does this mean she wouldn't break through thin ice or similar surfaces?

No. Trackless step only allows you to avoid being tracked—it doesn't have any other effect.

The Sage imagines this as the grass springing instantly back after the druid lifts her foot away, or branches returning unbroken to their original position after being pushed aside.

Is the benefit granted to an 18th-level shifter druid with the beast spirit class feature (*RE 127*) cumulative with the

9th-level class feature of the moonspeaker prestige class (RE 143)? If the character had already taken the Extra Shifter Trait feat (ECS 53), would she then have four shifter traits?

Yes and yes.

At 18th level, a druid who has selected shifter druid 1 as a racial substitution level gains the Extra Shifter Trait feat as a bonus feat (even if the character already has it).

At 9th level, the moonspeaker prestige class also grants the Extra Shifter Trait feat as a bonus feat (even if the character already has it).

Remember that only one temporary ability score bonus (from the character's first shifter trait) applies while shifting.

As per the errata for wild shape, despite an altered Constitution score the character's hit points do not change accordingly. Does this mean that regardless of Constitution changes while wild shaped a character's hit points are unaffected?

No. Any changes to a wild shaped character's Constitution score that occur after the change (such as a timely *bear's endurance* spell or a Constitution-damaging poison) would have the full normal effect (including altering hit points).

If a wild shaped character takes Constitution damage or drain, which Con score do I use to determine when the character is killed by being reduced to 0 Con—the original score or the new one?

Use the character's current Constitution score, just as you would for any other character. If a 6-Con druid wild shapes into a 17-Con dire badger and takes 8 points of Constitution damage and/or drain while in that form, the character would instantly die upon returning to normal form.

How does the animal companion advance for a druid after she obtains epic levels?

As described in the official errata for the *DMG*, the animal companion continues to increase in power as the druid gains levels above 20th. "At every three levels higher than 18th (21st, 24th, 27th, and so on), the companion gains +2 bonus Hit Dice, its natural armor increases by +2, its Strength and Dexterity increase by +1, and it learns one additional bonus trick."

If a druid takes the shapeshift alternative class feature in PHB II, does he get additional attacks as his BAB goes up?

No. A high base attack bonus doesn't grant extra natural weapon attacks, so an 8th-level druid shapeshifted into a wolf would still only get one bite attack.

Does the duration of the druid's wild shape class feature apply to each form separately, or to the entire ability as a whole?

It applies to each form separately. A 6th-level druid could take the form of a wolf for up to 6 hours, then later in the day take the form of a badger for up to 6 hours. She could even take the same form more than once in the day, though each use counts as one of her daily limit.

The errata for the druid's wild shape class feature indicates that you don't get the new form's special qualities. Does this mean that a druid wildshaped into a bat would not have blindsense or low-light vision?

Correct. The druid's wild shape ability allows him to take the form of an animal, but doesn't allow for the perfect mimicry of all of that animal's capabilities. A druid who wants access to blindsense (an awfully potent ability to grant as a side effect of wild shape) must acquire it via a feat (such as the Blindsense feat in *CAd*), spell, or magic item.

Can a druid have more than one animal companion?

No. A druid is only allowed one animal companion. (In previous versions of the rules, druids were allowed multiple animal companions, but in practice this generally leads to one player taking way too much time at the table.)

Can a druid currently wild shaped as a wolf change directly into another animal form (such as a bear)?

The druid can go straight from one animal form (or plant form, or elemental form, depending on her level) to another. She doesn't need to wild shape back to her normal form first.

Duskblade

I am probably just thick-skulled, but does the duskblade gain only one new spell per level?

Well, the Sage can't really answer the first part of your question, but thankfully he can help with the second part.

It's true that the duskblade learns one new spell every time he gains a level. This spell can be of any level that he can cast, chosen from the duskblade spell list (*PHB II*, p. 19).

In addition, at 5th level and every odd-numbered level thereafter, the duskblade can learn a second new spell in place of a spell he already knows.

PH2 says that the duskblade casts spells from the duskblade spell list. But the example starting package characters have spells from the general wizard/sorcerer list that are not on the duskblade list. What gives?

It's easy to miss, but the actual duskblade class spell list is on page 24. The spell list that appears in Chapter 4 includes only new spells presented in *PH2* (just like all the other spell lists appearing in that chapter).

If a duskblade scores a critical hit when channeling a spell through a melee attack, is the spell's damage multiplied just like the weapon's?

The rules aren't as clear as they could be, but the Sage is inclined to say no. Here's the key sentence, from the *PHB II*, page 20: "If the attack is successful, the attack deals damage normally; then the effect of the spell is resolved."

If you score a critical hit, the attack deals the normal (critical) damage. Then the spell resolves normally, but it's just a rider effect applied due to the successful attack roll—you're not actually using the spell in the normal manner, so it can't score a critical hit.

Can a duskblade channel divine spells with arcane channeling? What about arcane spells gained from other classes?

Yes and yes.

Can a duskblade (PH2 20) using arcane channeling channel ranged touch spells through his weapon attack or is the ability limited to melee touch spells only?

"Touch" spell refers to spells that require a melee touch attack to deliver. The duskblade can't use arcane channeling to deliver a spell that requires a ranged touch attack.

When a duskblade (PH2 20) uses arcane channeling to deliver a spell but misses with the weapon attack, is the spell discharged or can he try to deliver the spell again on his next turn?

This follows the normal rule for touch spells; that is, a melee touch spell that misses its target is not discharged.

However, when using the improved version of this class feature gained at 13th level, the spell is discharged at the end of the round regardless of whether you hit or not (as described on page 20).

How does the duskblade's arcane channeling class feature (PH2 20) work with spells that allow multiple touch attacks, such as *chill touch*?

For a spell that allows you to make multiple touch attacks against separate creatures (such as *chill touch*), you only channel one touch of the spell through your weapon attack, regardless of the number of touches allowed by the spell. If the spell's duration is instantaneous (as *chill touch*), its effect is expended by a single weapon attack, even if the spell would normally allow multiple simultaneous touches.

If the spell allowed you to make multiple simultaneous touch attacks against the same target, treat it as if you had targeted the enemy struck by your weapon with all the eligible attacks.

At 13th level, the duskblade's arcane channeling class feature (PH2 20) says "you can cast any touch spell you know as part of a full attack action, and the spell affects each target you hit in melee combat that round." If you hit the same creature more than once during the full attack action, does the spell affect it each time you hit?

No. The spell affects each target only once.

If a 13th-level duskblade (PH2 20) applied a metamagic feat to the touch spell he channeled through his weapon, would the feat's effect apply to each successful attack made as part of the full attack action?

Yes. Unless somehow indicated otherwise by the spell or effect, the full effect of the spell (including metamagic feats and any other effects) would apply to each and every target hit as part of the full attack action.

The duskblade's armored mage class feature (PH2 20) allows you to cast spells while wearing a shield with no arcane spell failure. If the duskblade has a sword in one hand and a shield in the other, can they still cast spells? If not, why carry a shield?

You need a free hand to cast a spell with a somatic component, and to cast a spell with a material or focus component, you need that component at hand (which usually means you need a free hand to manipulate it). The buckler and light shield both allow you to use your shield hand for such activities.

A duskblade using a heavy shield and holding a weapon or other object in his other hand can only cast spells that don't include the components listed above, despite the fact that he ignores the arcane spell failure chance for the heavy shield.

When a duskblade uses arcane channeling to deliver a touch spell with a somatic component, does he require one hand free?

According to a strict interpretation of the rules, the duskblade would still need to perform any components required by the spell. If the spell had somatic components, the duskblade would need a hand free.

Factotum

When playing a factotum (Du 14), what happens to inspiration points unspent at the end of the encounter?

Unspent inspiration points are replaced when the factotum returns to his full number of points once an encounter ends.

Does the factotum (Du 14) meet the requirements for activating spell trigger or spell completion items, such as wands and scrolls?

The factotum lacks a spell list. While he chooses spells from the sorcerer/wizard lists, this is not the same as having a true class spell list. Thus, a factotum cannot use spell trigger or spell completion items without Use Magic Device or some similar ability.

Can a factotum (Du 14) use his "cunning insight" to boost his save outside of combat (for example, against a poison trap)?

Yes, you can use such abilities outside of combat. An "encounter" is more than a combat, but it also includes any other significant event in the game such as stopping to bash down a door, navigating a rickety bridge, or dealing with a trap. If the characters have a minute or two to catch their breath and rest, assume that the last encounter has ended and all per encounter abilities refresh.

I have two questions related to the factotum (Du 14) and sneak attack:

1. Can a factotum spend more than one inspiration point on cunning strike to gain more than 1d6 points of sneak attack damage?

2. Can a factotum of 19th level use cunning brilliance to emulate a rogue's sneak attack ability?

Answering your questions in order:

1. Yes, you can use multiple inspiration points to gain additional sneak attack damage.

2. It's reasonable to assume that sneak attack is an extraordinary ability. When in doubt, the DM should decide if an unmarked ability qualifies. Anything that lacks a clear, supernatural element should be fair play.

How many spells does the factotum (Du 14) get per day? The table seems to list just the maximum spell level he can prepare/cast, but not the number of spells that can be prepared or cast per day.

The wording of text for arcane dilettante seems to imply that the factotum can prepare and cast each spell chosen no more than once per day but that he gets to use the spell as a spell-like ability if he chooses to use 1 inspiration point. Is this correct?

The factotum gains 1 spell per day at 2nd level, 2 at 4th, and so on. The number of spells is hidden under the Special header of table 1-1, page 15 of *Du*. The arcane dilettante ability is listed again each time the factotum gains another spell.

To use a spell, you must spend 1 inspiration point. Once you use a spell in this manner, you cannot use it again for the day. A factotum always uses his spells granted by arcane dilettante as spell-like abilities.

Favored Soul

How does a favored soul or other spontaneous divine spellcaster ready his spells for the day?

Unless stated otherwise in the class description, favored souls, shugenjas, and other purely spontaneous divine spellcasters ready spells each day just as sorcerers do, and they require 8 hours of rest beforehand and 15 minutes of concentration.

The spirit shaman's spellcasting entry (*CD* 16) states that the character needs only 1 hour of quiet meditation at a particular time each day to regain her spells (much like a cleric).

(This is a correction to an earlier Sage Advice answer, which erroneously stated that spirit shamans required rest to ready her spells.)

Does the favored soul's resistance to energy class feature stack with resistance to energy gained as a racial trait?

No. Resistance to energy from multiple sources doesn't stack—it's simply a set value. A 5th-level aasimar favored soul who chooses resistance to acid would have resistance to acid 10 from his class levels and resistance to acid 5 from his race, so he'd use the higher value.

It's theoretically possible for a special ability (whether from a class, race, or other source) to improve a character's existing resistance to energy, but it would have to state that specifically as the effect.

Hexblade

Can you clarify the effect of the mettle class feature of the hexblade (*CW*)? For example, would the hexblade's mettle eliminate both the stunning effect and the damage of *sound burst*? What about *chaos hammer*? Does it differ at all from the mettle ability gained by the pious templar (*CD*)?

If a character with the mettle class feature succeeds on a Fortitude or Will save against an effect that allows a save to reduce it, the effect is negated instead of merely reduced. Essentially, any saving throw entry of Fortitude half or Fortitude partial becomes "Fortitude negates," while any save entry of Will half or Will partial becomes "Will negates."

A hexblade with mettle who successfully saves against *sound burst* would not only avoid being stunned but would also take no damage from the spell. A successful save against *chaos hammer* would negate the slow effect and also negate the damage.

The mettle ability works the same way regardless of the class that grants it.

If my hexblade gains mettle again from another class, are the abilities cumulative in some way?

No. You either have mettle or you don't—gaining this class feature a second time has no additional effect.

Incarnate

When my incarnate activates the bloodwar gauntlets' arms chakra bind power, the meld unshapes. When can I reshape the meld?

It doesn't matter how or why a soulmeld becomes unshaped; you can't shape it again until you have a clear mind (8 hours of sleep) and meditate for 1 hour (*Mol* 49).

You can't even use your rapid meldshaping power to reshape your bloodwar gauntlets, since the power only allows you to unshape a meld and reshape a new one. (You could

unshape a second meld and reshape it as your expended bloodwar gauntlets, but you're still down one meld total.)

Knight

The knight's code (*PH2* 27) says that a knight cannot strike a flat-footed foe, but aren't all foes flat-footed in the first round of combat if their initiative is lower than yours? Does this mean that a knight cannot strike an opponent in the first round without violating his code?

Yes and yes. A knight who routinely rolls high initiative scores should consider readying attacks to be triggered by an enemy's action. Once the enemy's turn has begun, he's no longer flat-footed (even if your readied action interrupts the first action of his turn).

If a knight (*PH2* 24) gains the sneak attack class feature by multiclassing, is there any way he can use it without breaking the knight's code?

A knight can deliver sneak attack damage when flanking an enemy without breaking the knight's code. (Even though the knight doesn't gain the normal bonus on attack rolls due to flanking, he's still considered flanking for all other purposes.)

What exactly does the knight's bulwark of defense class feature (*PH2* 28) do? Does an adjacent enemy have to make a Balance check to remain standing?

This class feature simply makes it difficult for an adjacent foe to move around you, since all squares you threaten are considered difficult terrain (and thus cost 1 extra square of movement to enter). The most significant benefit is that an enemy that begins its turn in a square threatened by you can't use a 5-foot step to move to another square threatened by you.

It doesn't prevent an enemy from backing away from you normally (assuming you don't have extraordinary reach), and it certainly doesn't require any special skill checks to navigate the affected squares.

Does the knight's shield ally class feature (*PH2* 28) apply only to one attack or does it mean he takes damage from every attack on his ally? And what does "physical" attacks mean?

Once you've activated shield ally, it applies to all attacks made against the chosen ally before the start of your next turn. You don't even have to activate it in response to an attack—you can activate it literally at any time you want during the round. The phrase "physical attacks" is a poor one; it means to say that shield ally only allows you to absorb half the damage from weapon attacks (whether manufactured or natural), but not from spells, supernatural abilities, or other nonweapon attacks.

If a knight makes a fighting challenge (*PH2* 25) to an opponent, will that opponent get in harm's way to get to the knight? If the enemy stands behind a portcullis, would he raise the portcullis to attack even if it would mean letting the knight and his allies inside the room where he is well protected?

First of all, the fighting challenge doesn't provoke an opponent to attack you—it just grants you a bonus on Will saves, attack rolls, and damage rolls against the target.

Technically speaking, even the test of mettle (*PHB II*, 26) doesn't force a foe to attack you—it just forces the foe to attack you "in preference over other available targets." Specifically,

this means that if the target attacks, he must target you with the attack or include you in the effect's area.

If the target doesn't want to attack you, he doesn't have to attack at all.

Alternatively, the enemy in your example could just pull out a ranged weapon and attack you—melee attacks aren't mandated by the test of mettle.

Lurk

Does the additional sneak attack option available from the 1st-level lurk augment class feature (*Complete Psionic*, page 14) apply only if you already have the sneak attack class feature?

Yes. That means that this option is useless to a 1st-level lurk (but becomes quite useful at 2nd level, when the lurk gains psionic sneak attack).

The list of lurk augments (*Complete Psionic*, page 15) includes "Reach Attack," but no definition of that augment exists. What does it do?

No such augment exists. Ignore the reference on the list.

Monk

I've been reading the new *PH*, and I'm confused about the monk. The new monk class description says a monk gets an extra attack from the flurry of blows ability by taking -2 on all of her attacks. Additionally, she gets an additional attack at her full attack bonus at 11th level. The table for flurry attacks shows this progression through 3rd level, but then the progression breaks down. At 5th level, the monk's base attack is identical to 4th level, but her attack bonuses for her flurry attacks increase by one, and this keeps happening. Also, is the additional attack at 11th level taken at the monk's full base attack bonus? Or is it taken at base attack -2, as with the other flurry attacks? Assuming the text and not the table is to be followed, a 20th-level monk should either attack at +13/+13/+13/+8/+3 or +15/+13/+13/+8/+3. Which is correct?

All the extra attacks a monk gets as part of a flurry are at the monk's highest attack bonus, less any penalty the flurry imposes. The penalty starts at -2 at 1st level, drops to -1 at 5th level, and drops to 0 at 9th level (see the Flurry of Blows section in the monk class description). Table 3-10 in the *PH* gives the correct attack bonus for a flurry at each level. The numbers on the table reflect both the extra attacks the monk gets from the flurry and the correct flurry penalty (or lack thereof).

A 20th-level monk using a flurry attacks 5 times at a basic bonus of +15/+15/+15/+10/+5, just as shown on the table. A base attack bonus of +15 gives three attacks at +15/+10/+5. A flurry grants two extra attacks at the monk's highest attack bonus of +15 (for being level 11+), and there is no attack penalty for the flurry (for being level 9+).

Exactly how often can a monk attack with a single manufactured weapon when using the flurry of blows ability? For example, if I have a +1 alchemical silver dagger, and I'm allowed three attacks in a flurry, how many of those attacks can be dagger attacks? What if I have two daggers? How about with natural weaponry, such as a claw or bite? For example, if I have a vampire monk, can I flurry with a slam attack and drain energy multiple times from one living foe? If natural weaponry doesn't work with a flurry, why not?

You can't use a dagger with a flurry of blows at all. When you use the flurry ability, you must attack with either unarmed strikes or with special monk weapons. Only six of the latter are included in the *PH* (kama, nunchaku, quarterstaff, sai, shuriken, and siangham). A natural weapon (any natural weapon) is neither an unarmed strike nor a special monk weapon, so you can't use it along with a flurry.

If you have one (or two) special monk weapons, you can freely substitute attacks with those weapons with unarmed attacks in the flurry (see the flurry of blows description on page 46 of the *PH*). If you're allowed three attacks in a flurry, and you have a +1 alchemical silver sai (or other special monk weapon), you could use the sai up to three times in the flurry. The examples given in the flurry of blows entry don't make that completely clear because they don't cover all the combinations of weapon attacks and unarmed strikes that are possible.

If you have two special monk weapons to use, you can use either or both of them in the flurry. For example, if you're entitled to three attacks using flurry of blows, and you're armed with a +1 alchemical silver sai and a cold iron sai, you can make three attacks with one sai and no attacks with the other, two attacks with one sai and one attack with the other, one attack with each sai and one unarmed attack, or any other combination of three attacks. Note that having a sai in each hand won't prevent a monk from making unarmed attacks. A monk with her hands full can still make her full complement of unarmed strikes (see the unarmed strike entry on page 41 of the *PH*).

It might seem a tad strange that you cannot use a natural weapon, such as a slam or a claw when you can use a monk weapon such as a sai or a kama. However, natural weaponry isn't as handy as manufactured weaponry. You never get extra attacks from a high base attack bonus with natural weaponry, and the monk's flurry ability is another way to get extra attacks from your base attack bonus. Please note that a vampire monk using its unarmed strike ability is not using its slam attack and cannot drain energy.

The description of the flurry of blows ability says there's no such thing as a monk attacking with an off-hand weapon during a flurry of blows. What does that mean, exactly? Can the monk make off-hand attacks in addition to flurry attacks?

Actually, the text to which you refer appears in the entry for unarmed strikes. When a monk uses her unarmed strike ability, she does not suffer any penalty for an off-hand attack, even when she has her hands full and attacks with her knees and elbows, using the flurry of blows ability to make extra attacks, or both.

The rules don't come right out and say that a monk can't use an unarmed strike for an off-hand strike (although the exact wording of the unarmed strike ability suggests otherwise), and no compelling reason why a monk could not do so exists. When using an unarmed strike as an off-hand attack, the monk suffers all the usual attack penalties from two-weapon fighting (see Table 8-10 in the *PH*) and the monk adds only half her Strength bonus (if any) to damage if the off-hand unarmed strike hits.

To add an off-hand attack to a flurry of blows, stack whatever two-weapon penalty the monk has with the penalty (if any) from the flurry. Attacks from the flurry have the monk's full damage bonus from Strength, but the off-hand attack gains only half Strength bonus to damage. If the off-hand attack is a

weapon, that weapon isn't available for use in the flurry (if it can be used in a flurry at all, see the previous question). For example, a 4th-level monk with the Two-Weapon Fighting feat and a Strength score of 14 decides to use a flurry of blows and decides to throw in an off-hand attack as well. The monk has a base attack bonus of +3 and a +2 Strength bonus. With a flurry, the character can make two attacks, each at +3 (base +3, -2 flurry, +2 Strength). An unarmed strike is a light weapon, so the monk suffers an additional -2 penalty for both the flurry and the off-hand attack, and the monk makes three attacks, each at an attack bonus of +1. The two attacks from the flurry are primary attacks and add the monk's full Strength bonus to damage of +2. The single off-hand attack adds half the monk's Strength bonus to damage (+1).

If the monk in our example has two sais to use with the flurry, plus the off-hand attack, she can use both in the flurry (in which case she must make the off-hand attack with an unarmed strike) or one sai for the off-hand attack and one with the flurry. The sai used in the off-hand attack is not available for the flurry and vice versa.

Can a monk fight with two weapons? Can she combine a two-weapon attack with a flurry of blows? What are her penalties on attack rolls?

A monk can fight with two weapons just like any other character, but she must accept the normal penalties on her attack rolls to do so. She can use an unarmed strike as an off-hand weapon. She can even combine two-weapon fighting with a flurry of blows to gain an extra attack with her off hand (but remember that she can use only unarmed strikes or special monk weapons as part of the flurry). The penalties for two-weapon fighting stack with the penalties for flurry of blows.

For example, at 6th level, the monk Ember can normally make one attack per round at a +4 bonus. When using flurry of blows, she can make two attacks (using unarmed strikes or any special monk weapons she holds), each at a +3 bonus. If she wants to make an extra attack with her off hand, she has to accept a -4 penalty on her primary hand attacks and a -8 penalty on her off-hand attacks (assuming she wields a light weapon in her off hand).

If Ember has Two-Weapon Fighting, she has to accept only a -2 penalty on all attacks to make an extra attack with her off hand. Thus, when wielding a light weapon in her off hand during a flurry of blows, she can make a total of three attacks, each at a total bonus of +1. At least one of these attacks has to be with her off-hand weapon.

A 20th-level monk with Greater Two-Weapon Fighting can make eight attacks per round during a flurry of blows. Assuming she wields a light weapon in her off hand, her three off-hand weapon attacks are at +13/+8/+3, and she has five attacks (at +13/+13/+13/+8/+3) with unarmed strikes or any weapons she carries in her primary hand. If the same monk also has Rapid Shot and throws at least one shuriken as part of her flurry of blows (since Rapid Shot can be used only with ranged attacks), she can throw one additional shuriken with her primary hand, but all of her attacks (even melee attacks) suffer a -2 penalty. Thus, her full attack array looks like this: +11/+11/+11/+11/+6/+1 primary hand (two must be with shuriken) and +11/+6/+1 off hand.

I have a question about the unarmed damage of an enlarged 20th-level human monk who has Empty Hand Mastery (from *Oriental Adventures*). In my understanding, this monk deals the same damage as a Huge monk. My

question is how much damage does a Huge monk deal with her unarmed strike?

A monk's unarmed strike damage follows the normal rules for weapon damage when the wielder's size varies from the normal range, as described in Table 2-2 and Table 2-3 (*DMG* 28). A Huge 1st-level monk deals 2d6 points of damage with her unarmed strike, since her size category is increased two steps from Medium, the baseline for damage values.

A 20th-level monk with Empty Hand Mastery deals 4d8 points of damage with her unarmed strikes, and 6d8 points of damage when enlarged.

I wish to make a monk/soulknife, and I am wondering if the damage from the monk's unarmed strike stacks with the damage of the mind blade. If not, why not?

A soulknife's mind blade is not an unarmed strike. It is treated as a weapon and has its own game statistics (*XPH* 27). The monk's unarmed strike damage doesn't stack with a mind blade any more than it stacks with the damage from a quarterstaff or any other weapon wielded by the monk.

Can a monk who has natural weapon attacks (such as a centaur monk) attack unarmed and still use his natural weapons? For example, let's say he's a 4th-level monk. Can he use a flurry of blows and attack at +5/+5/+0 unarmed (plus other bonuses) and then at +0/+0 for 2 hooves?

If the creature normally is allowed to make both weapon attacks and natural weapon attacks as part of the same full attack routine, the monk can do the same (making unarmed strikes in place of weapon attacks). Since a centaur can make two hoof attacks in addition to his longsword attack, a centaur monk can make two hoof attacks in addition to his unarmed strike attack (or attacks, depending on his base attack bonus). The monk can't use his natural weapon attacks as part of a flurry of blows, but he can make natural weapon attacks in addition to his flurry. Such attacks suffer the same -2 penalty as the monk's flurry attacks in addition to the normal -5 penalty for secondary natural attacks.

An 4th-level centaur monk has a base attack bonus of +7 (+4 from his 4 monstrous humanoid Hit Dice, and +3 from his 8 monk levels). If he performs a flurry of blows, he makes three unarmed strikes, at +5/+5/+0. He can add two hoof attacks at -2/-2 (-5 as secondary weapons, and -2 from the flurry).

Can a monk make disarm, sunder, and trip attacks during her flurry of blows? What about grapple checks? What about bull rushes, overruns, or other special combat maneuvers?

As long as every attack is made with one of the monk's special weapons (that is, weapons allowed as part of a flurry), the monk can perform any special attack that takes the place of a normal attack. She's free to disarm, sunder, trip, and grapple to her heart's content.

She couldn't bull rush or overrun (since those don't use special monk weapons), nor could she aid another (which requires a standard action) or feint (which requires a move action).

If a creature with multiple natural attacks (such as the standard two claws and a bite array) takes levels of monk, how do flurry of blows and its natural attack progression interact?

You can't use a natural weapon (claw, bite, or whatever) as part of a flurry of blows—only unarmed strikes and special monk weapons can be used in a flurry of blows.

If a creature can use one of its natural weapons as a secondary attack in conjunction with manufactured weapon attacks, it can do the same with that natural weapon in conjunction with a flurry of blows. Any penalty assessed on attacks by the flurry of blows would also apply to the natural weapon attack.

For example, a typical lizardfolk can attack with a club and its bite as part of a full attack. Normally, a creature would take a -5 penalty on an attack roll made with a secondary weapon, but since the lizardfolk has Multiattack, the penalty on the attack roll is reduced to -2 and adds only half the lizardfolk's Strength bonus on the damage roll.

If it were a 1st-level monk, it could make a flurry of blows (using unarmed strikes, not claw attacks), then add a bite attack as a secondary attack. Each unarmed strike would have a -2 penalty (from flurry of blows), and the bite attack would have a -4 penalty (-2 from flurry of blows and -2 from being a secondary weapon, reduced from -5 by Multiattack).

Does the monk's *ki* strike (magic) only allow her to overcome damage reduction or does it make her natural attacks count as magic weapons for all effects (such as affecting incorporeal opponents)?

The *PH* states that *ki* strike affects the monk's unarmed strikes "for the purpose of dealing damage to creatures with damage reduction," but says nothing about any other effects. Thus, the monk's unarmed attacks aren't considered magic weapons for any other purpose, including affecting incorporeal foes.

Does the monk's spell resistance class feature stack with spell resistance gained as a racial trait?

No. Spell resistance from multiple sources doesn't stack—it's simply a set value. A 13th-level drow monk would have SR 23 from her monk levels and SR 24 from her drow race, so she'd use the higher value.

It's theoretically possible for a special ability (whether from a class, race, or other source) to improve a character's existing spell resistance, but it would have to state that specifically as the effect.

When a monk reaches 20th level and becomes an outsider, does she stop aging? Does she still die when she reaches the maximum character age or does she live forever?

Outsiders aren't necessarily immortal or ageless, so a 20th-level monk still ages as normal for her race.

Can a monk get her unarmed strike enhanced as a magic weapon?

No. Even a magic gauntlet or spiked gauntlet isn't the ideal answer, since these aren't listed as special monk weapons (and therefore aren't as versatile as unarmed strikes).

The *amulet of mighty fists* (*DMG* 246) grants the wearer an enhancement bonus on unarmed and natural weapon attacks, which would include the monk's unarmed strike.

Does a monk/soulblade deal her unarmed strike damage with the mindblade, or do the damage values stack?

No, no, and no. A monk/soulblade deals unarmed strike damage with her unarmed strikes, and mindblade damage with

her mindblades. The two attacks don't add to each other at all. Unless the monk gains some ability to treat a weapon of the mindblade's equivalent (such as a short sword, for the basic mind blade) as a special monk weapon, she can't use flurry of blows with the mindblade.

When I use flurry of blows, how many attacks do I get?

A 6th-level monk gains one extra attack when using flurry of blows, and all her attacks take a -1 penalty. Thus, your character would have five attacks (+16/+16/+11/+6/+1, plus other modifiers).

How would a monk's unarmed damage be modified by natural attacks, or vice versa?

A monk's natural weapons (claws, bite, and so on) don't have any effect on the damage dealt by her unarmed strikes, nor does a character's unarmed strike damage have any effect on her natural weapon attacks. A razorclaw shifter monk could deal either claw damage with a claw attack or unarmed strike damage with an unarmed strike, but couldn't combine the two.

Can a monk use a +5 gauntlet in an unarmed attack, gaining all of her class benefits as well as the +5 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls from the gauntlet?

Gauntlets are indeed a weapon. If a monk uses any weapon not listed as a special monk weapon, she does not gain her better attack rate. She would, however, gain the increased damage for unarmed attacks.

Does the monk's fast movement class feature apply to all forms of movement?

Since the entry doesn't limit the bonus to just the character's land speed, it's fair to apply it to all speeds the character possesses.

Do wearing *bracers of armor* prevent a monk from using her AC bonus class feature?

No. *Bracers of armor* grant an armor bonus to AC, but they don't count as armor worn and thus don't interfere with a monk's special abilities. The phrase you cite simply explains what an armor bonus is, pointing out that you don't get the AC bonus from the *bracers* and also from armor you wear.

Does a monk with a *monk's belt* and the Superior Unarmed Strike feat benefit from both, or does just the highest benefit apply?

In this case, the better benefit will prevail. These effects technically do not have a bonus, so they would not use the stacking rules. One effect will end up overshadowing the other.

Ninja

Can a good-aligned ninja use poison without violating her alignment? In other words, is using poison considered an evil act?

Nothing in the alignment information in the *PH* or the poison entry in the *DMG* specifically describes the use of poison as an evil act. Of course, the purpose to which you put the poison might well be an evil act: Using poison to murder the local constable is just as evil as knifing him in a back alley.

It's possible that using poison might violate a character's personal moral code, or the moral code of his faith or cause. For example, if local laws restrict the use of poison, its use would be considered an unlawful act, which would violate a

paladin's code (which includes "respect [for] legitimate authority"). The DM is the ultimate arbiter of what is or isn't legal in his campaign.

Remember, a character's alignment isn't a set of rules to follow—it's a player's declaration of an intent to play a character a certain way. Declaring your ninja is lawful good doesn't mean she can't act in a manner considered either unlawful or evil (or both). Repeated behavior of this sort can and should be construed as a decision on your part that your character's actual alignment—that is, the way you've chosen to play the character—doesn't match her stated alignment. In this case, the DM is fully within his rights to suggest or even impose an alignment change on your character. For most characters, this has minimal mechanical impact, although some classes impose alignment restrictions.

How does the ghost step ability of the ninja (CA d) work? Does the invisibility effect end if the ninja attacks, like with the invisibility spell, or does it continue after an attack, like with the greater invisibility spell?

The invisibility granted by the ninja's ghost step class feature lasts until the start of the ninja's next turn, regardless of whether she attacks or not. Thus, it's more like *greater invisibility* than like the normal *invisibility* spell.

Can a ninja use her ki dodge ability to require the miss chance roll after an attack hits, or does she have to activate it before the attack?

The ninja's *ki* dodge ability (CA d 8) is used as a swift action, so it can be used only during your turn. The opening description of the ability is a bit misleading as it implies that you can use it on an opponent's turn.

I was curious about the speed climb class ability for the ninja (CA d 9). When you are using that ability, would a person need to roll a Climb check to travel up the surface?

The speed climb ability changes only the speed at which you climb; it does not remove the need to make the appropriate Climb check. The climbing rules (PHB 69 or RC 90) normally allow a character to move a quarter of her normal speed while climbing (or possibly half her normal speed if she uses the accelerated climbing option).

When a ninja expends a ki use to become invisible for 1 round, does that invisibility immediately expire upon the ninja's first attack just like the spell would?

Unlike the *invisibility* spell, the ghost step ability does not state that you lose the invisibility when making an attack, so the ninja could make a full attack action and remain invisible. You use the rules for invisibility presented in the DMG 295.

Can a ninja use a gnome battle cloak without penalty, or will she still lose her AC bonuses?

If a ninja were to wear a *gnome battle cloak* (RS 155), she would indeed lose her AC bonus from high Wisdom and the bonus gained at 5th, 10th, 15th, and 20th level. The *gnome battle cloak* does count as a shield, so it cancels the AC bonus (and several other abilities of the ninja class). Anything that counts as armor or a shield would have the same drawback. *Shadow veil* and *ghost shroud* (LM 76) also cancel these bonuses in the same way that the *gnome battle cloak* does, except they count as armor instead of as a shield. Look for something such as *bracers of armor* (DMG 250), which provide an armor bonus but do not actually count as armor.

Ogre Mage

In looking over the ogre mage class in SS, I noticed that regeneration is listed twice in the class advancement chart. Is there a separation of what abilities the ogre mage derives from advancement? The text on the regeneration class feature doesn't say if the character gains

all the abilities of regeneration at 6th level (for example reattaching limbs) or at 11th level. Help!

At 6th level an ogre mage has regeneration 1; at 11th level an ogre mage has regeneration 2, just as shown on the class chart.

That is, an ogre mage character regenerates 1 hit point per round starting at level 6, and 2 hit points per round starting at level 11. Starting at 6th level, an ogre mage character gets all the general benefits of regeneration, including the ability to reattach or regrow organs and limbs.

Paladin

Does a cloak of Charisma, an eagle's splendor spell, or other Charisma enhancements increase the saving throw bonus from a paladin's divine grace class feature?

Yes, use the paladin's current Charisma modifier, whatever it might be. Temporary Charisma increases also increase the saving throw bonus from divine grace. On the other hand, temporary Charisma decreases reduce the saving throw bonus from divine grace as well.

Do I have to use the Leadership feat or the Dragon Cohort feat for my 15th-level paladin to gain a juvenile celestial bronze dragon (CR 9 + 2 with celestial template) as his mount? Or can I gain a draconic mount without making him a cohort?

There's nothing stopping your DM from allowing you to gain a draconic mount (or any other kind of cohort, follower, or ally) without spending a feat. The feats are there to provide mechanical guidelines for DMs and players who aren't comfortable adjudicating such things on the fly.

Does a paladin's mount share the paladin's nonspell special abilities, such as immunity to fear?

No. A paladin's mount can use the paladin's base save bonuses, and the paladin can have any spell (but not any spell-like ability) she casts on herself also affect the mount, but this doesn't extend to other special abilities.

Does a paladin turning undead use his paladin level or his turning level (three below his paladin level) to see if he destroys undead?

For all effects related to turning, a paladin is treated as a cleric of three levels lower than her paladin level. To destroy a 2-HD zombie with a turn undead attempt, a paladin must be at least 7th level (and thus effectively a 4th-level cleric).

Regarding a paladin's lay on hands: the name of this ability implies a paladin must have both hands free to use it. The description does not make this clear, though; it implies the paladin just needs one hand free. Could you please clarify this?

The description states, "a paladin . . . can heal wounds (her own or those of others) by touch." Despite the literal name of the ability, we presume the touch can be delivered by a single hand (or for that matter, through a gauntlet, and so on). Thus,

one-armed paladins are no less effective in this regard than their two (or more!) armed brethren.

Does a paladin who gains a special mount other than a warhorse (such as a hippogriff or unicorn) need to train the creature for combat with the Handle Animal skill, or is the special mount automatically considered combat trained?

According to page 75 in the *PH*, you can't use Handle Animal on a creature with an Int higher than 2, so it's impossible for the paladin to use this skill to train her special mount (since they typically have an Int of 6 or higher). Instead, such creatures are intelligent enough to follow your commands by normal communication. You don't have to train a creature of this Intelligence for combat; you can simply ask it to do what's needed.

Ranger

Does a ranger still deal extra damage to a favored enemy immune to critical hits (such as constructs or undead)?

Yes.

If the ranger uses the Manyshot feat against a favored enemy, does the favored enemy damage bonus apply to all arrows fired in the attack?

Yes.

Can a ranger take lycanthropes or humanoids (shapechangers) as a favored enemy?

Yes and no. A ranger who takes favored enemy humanoid (human) gets its favored enemy bonus against humanoid lycanthropes that have the human subtype, and a ranger who takes favored enemy giant gets the bonus on lycanthropes that are of that type, and so on, but there is no type or subtype combination available to rangers that encompasses all lycanthropes.

I'm DM'ing a campaign where a ranger recently turned to an evil alignment. I then allowed him to cast *charm animal* on a hell hound. He's an 8th-level ranger, and since he still has no animal companion, he wanted to know if he could use the hell hound—is this possible?

Strictly by the rules, a hell hound could not be charmed with *charm animal* in the first place because it is not an animal, it is an outsider. Along the same line, a hell hound could not be turned into an animal companion because it is not an animal. However, if you're making an exception to this rule, you'll want to look over the stats and abilities of the hell hound to determine which level grouping for alternate animal companions (*PHB* 36) it would belong in. Comparing it to other creatures, it might either fall into the 7th level or higher group, or the 10th level or higher group. In the end, you'll need to make the decision on whether or not this is balanced for your campaign.

Rogue

Can a rogue deal nonlethal damage with a sneak attack using a normal weapon if she takes a –4 penalty on her attack roll? What if the rogue tries to deal lethal damage with a normally nonlethal weapon; can she make a sneak attack then?

You cannot make a sneak attack to deal nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage; see the sneak attack entry in the rogue class description. You can deal

nonlethal damage with a sneak attack with an unarmed strike or if you use a weapon that normally deals nonlethal damage, such as a sap.

If you choose to deal nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage, such as a sword, you're assumed to wield the weapon in a less-than-efficient manner, such as striking with the flat of the blade or swinging a blunt weapon with less than the usual force (*PH* 146). Such methods prevent sneak attacks, which require especially well-aimed blows.

You can make a sneak attack when you use a weapon that normally deals nonlethal damage to deal lethal damage. The penalty for doing so is –4, but in this case, it represents the difficulty you have finding and hitting a vulnerable area (*PH* 146). This extra exactness in your attack doesn't interfere with sneak attacks.

One of my players, who has a rogue character, was reading the rogue class description and found an explanation of a rogue using a sap or unarmed strike in a sneak attack to deal nonlethal damage. He was wondering, since a sap is a martial weapon, should it have been listed as one of the martial weapons that a rogue is proficient with, or should it be listed as a simple weapon? Or, is it assumed in the class description that the rogue took the Martial Weapon Proficiency (sap) feat? What happens if a rogue isn't proficient with a sap and tries to make a sneak attack with it? Do you have to be proficient with the weapon you're using to make sneak attacks?

A sap is a martial weapon and proficiency with a sap is indeed a feature of the rogue class (as noted in the *PH* errata file).

The sap is mentioned in the sneak attack description primarily to make it clear that you can make sneak attacks with nonlethal weapons (such as saps and unarmed strikes), even though you cannot make sneak attacks when you decide to deal nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage (see the previous question).

While a sneak attack requires deadly accuracy, you don't have to be proficient with a weapon to make a sneak attack with it. A rogue can suffer the –4 penalty for using a weapon with which she is not proficient and make a sneak attack. The situation here differs slightly from the one examined in the previous question. When you aren't proficient with a weapon, you have difficulty using it well, but you aren't deliberately using it in a less than optimal manner (as you are when trying to deal nonlethal damage with a lethal weapon). The two situations both impose a penalty of the same size, but for different reasons. Note that the two penalties stack. If you're aren't proficient with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage, and you try to deal nonlethal damage with it, you suffer a –8 penalty on attack rolls.

I have a multiclass barbarian/rogue. I was wondering if he can sneak attack while raging?

Yes, provided the character's attack meets the requirements for a sneak attack—you must have the foe flanked or the foe must somehow be denied its Dexterity bonus (if any) to Armor Class against your attack. A sneak attack requires precision (see the two previous questions), but not much in the way of patience or concentration.

How many Hit Dice does my 1st-level pixie rogue have? What would his effective character level be?

Unless noted otherwise, all 1-HD creatures lose their racial HD when they gain class levels. Thus, your pixie would have 1 HD (from his rogue level).

His effective character level (ECL) would be 5 (1 for his HD, plus 4 for his level adjustment), unless he also possessed the *Otto's irresistible dance* spell-like ability, in which case his ECL would be 7 (1 HD +6 level adjustment). This value shows how powerful a pixie is in campaign play (and is used to determine how many XP he needs to gain levels, as well as the pixie PC's starting wealth), but it has no bearing on most in-game effects.

If a rogue gets multiple attacks in a round (such as from a high base attack bonus or the Rapid Shot feat), can she make sneak attacks for all of them?

Yes, but only if each attack meets a requirement to be a sneak attack. For instance, a rogue who flanks an enemy can deliver a sneak attack with every melee attack she makes. A rogue under the effect of a *greater invisibility* spell treats every attack as a sneak attack, since she remains invisible despite attacking. If later attacks in a round no longer meet any requirement to be a sneak attack, they aren't sneak attacks. For example, a rogue under the effect of an *invisibility* spell would deal sneak attack damage only with her first attack in a round, because she turns visible as soon as she makes the attack.

Can a rogue feint in combat, take a 5-foot step, and use a ranged attack against the target of his feint in order to make a sneak attack?

No. The rules specifically state that a feint only applies to your next "melee attack" (*PH* 155).

Can a rogue with skill mastery take 10 on a Use Magic Device check?

No. The rogue's skill mastery class feature states that "she can take 10 even if stress and distractions would normally prevent her from doing so." This only applies to skills that allow a character to take 10 in nonstressful situations; if a skill simply doesn't allow a character to take 10 under any circumstances (such as Use Magic Device), skill mastery provides no benefit.

Does a rogue apply sneak attack damage when throwing alchemist fire or casting a spell such as *acid splash*?

Yes. The bonus damage from sneak attack, skirmish, or sudden strike applies to any attack that requires an attack roll, even touch attacks.

Can a rogue deliver lethal damage in a sneak attack using an unarmed strike?

No, unless she is otherwise capable of dealing lethal damage with an unarmed strike (for instance, if she has the Improved Unarmed Strike feat).

Would a sneak attack work on a creature affected by the *blink* spell?

Yes. *Blink* doesn't provide concealment, so sneak attack functions normally against a target affected by that spell (though such attacks would have a 50% miss chance, as normal for the spell).

When a rogue with the Telling Blow feat (*PHB II* 83) deals a critical hit against a flat-footed enemy, does she add her sneak attack damage twice?

No. The feat simply adds another criteria that "activates" your sneak attack or skirmish damage; it doesn't allow either of those values to be added twice.

If a rogue has successfully hidden behind some bushes and fires an arrow at a target less than 30 feet away from her, does she deal sneak attack damage?

Yes. The rules don't come right out and say this, but a character who has successfully hidden from an opponent is considered invisible for the purpose of rendering that foe flat-footed, and thus deals sneak attack damage.

Since uncanny dodge doesn't prevent you from being flat-footed, does that mean that a rogue can use sneak attack against a flat-footed character who has uncanny dodge?

No. Rogues don't get to use sneak attack because a target is flat-footed, they get to use sneak attack because the target is *denied its Dexterity bonus to AC* (italics added), which is a normal side effect of being flat-footed. A barbarian (or any other character) with uncanny dodge retains his Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. Therefore, being flat-footed doesn't render a foe vulnerable to enemy sneak attack.

Can a rogue who has been swallowed whole by a monster use sneak attack against it? And does this damage apply to the monster's normal hit points?

Yes and yes, though that first yes has a qualification attached. Since a creature that has used swallow whole to gulp down a foe is effectively denied its Dexterity bonus to AC, it's potentially vulnerable to a sneak attack. (Intuitively speaking, this makes pretty good sense. It's hard to imagine a better place to attack a monster's vulnerable parts than from inside the monster itself.)

However, keep in mind that the inside of a stomach is almost certainly pitch-black, and therefore the critter has total concealment against attacks. The rules indicate that a rogue can't use sneak attack against a creature with concealment, so unless she's packing a light source in there she's probably out of luck vis-à-vis sneak attack. (The Sage imagines that most DMs ignore the 50% miss chance in such situations, which seems like a reasonable house rule.)

Damage done to a creature to cut your way out is applied to its hit points as normal.

Can a rogue/monk deal sneak attack damage while unarmed?

A rogue (even one who hasn't multiclassed as a monk) can deal sneak attack damage with any attack that requires an attack roll, including unarmed strikes. The extra damage from the sneak attack is of the same kind (lethal or nonlethal) as the unarmed strike itself. For example, a normal person would deal nonlethal damage with a sneak attack with an unarmed strike; a monk could deal either lethal or nonlethal (depending on the kind of damage she chose for that unarmed strike).

Can you use a sneak attack while grappling?

You can't use a sneak attack in conjunction with a grapple check (such as a grapple check made to damage your opponent), since that isn't an attack roll. You also can't deliver

a sneak attack with the touch attack made to grab the target, since that attack doesn't deal any damage. If, however, you make an attack roll while in a grapple (for instance, to attack your opponent with an unarmed strike, light weapon, or natural weapon), you'd deal sneak attack damage if your attack met the normal criteria for delivering a sneak attack. Remember that grappling characters lose their Dexterity bonus to AC only against opponents they aren't grappling, so a rogue grappling with another foe wouldn't benefit from that.

If a rogue delivered a sneak attack with the vampiric touch spell, would the extra damage from the sneak attack also give her extra hit points? And could the sneak attack dice allow her to exceed the maximum damage allowed by the spell?

Yes and yes. The spell simply says that you "gain temporary hit points equal to the damage you deal." The spell doesn't seem to care how you get to that value (Empower Spell, sneak attack, and so on), so a rogue who delivered 50 points of damage with *vampiric touch* would gain 50 temporary hit points. The maximum damage listed for the spell only applies to the damage gained by your caster level; it doesn't take into account any other benefits the character might have, such as sneak attack damage.

Suppose a rogue intends to poison a glass of wine with arsenic. This rogue is not an assassin yet, so he has a 5% chance of exposing himself to a poison when readying it for use. If he did expose himself, how would that work?

It is still possible to poison yourself with an ingested poison while getting it ready for use. I would imagine the rogue accidentally wiped some on his face or carelessly licked his fingers. (Or perhaps, thirsty from his work, he absentmindedly sips from the wine . . . okay, perhaps not.)

Scout

A scout has trapfinding but not Disable Device as a class skill. Was this intentional?

The errata to *CAd* (found at <http://www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=dnd/welcome>) indicates that Disable Device should be considered a class skill for the scout.

Soulknife

Can a soulknife (XPH 26) with the shape mind blade ability (page 28) create his mind blade as one of the alternative forms, or must he first create it as a short sword and then spend a full-round action to shape it?

When the soulknife spends a move action to create his mind blade, it appears as a short sword regardless of whether he also has the shape mind blade ability. Once created, a soulknife with shape mind blade can then use a full-round action to change the mind blade's shape. He can't initially create it in any other shape.

Does the soulknife's psychic strike ability (XPH 28) apply separately to both mind blades if he has used shape mind blade to create two short-sword-sized mind blades?

Yes. Each blade is imbued separately with psychic energy (requiring two separate move actions).

If a soulknife with a psychically imbued mind blade uses shape mind blade to separate it into two mind blades, only one (the soulknife's choice) would be so imbued. Similarly, if the soulknife turned his two mind blades back into one, that

weapon would be imbued with psychic strike if either of the original weapons were.

When a soulknife uses *bladewind* (XPH 29) with a mind blade imbued with psychic strike, how many targets take the psychic strike damage?

Only one blade is imbued with psychic strike, so only one target takes the psychic strike damage (chosen by you before you roll the attacks).

What if the soulknife also has the Mind Cleave feat (Complete Psionic 56) and drops a foe with one of the bladewind attacks? Wouldn't he get to apply the psychic strike damage again?

Yes he would, since Mind Cleave automatically recharges psychic strike when you drop a foe.

Does the bonus damage from the soulknife's psychic strike class feature (XPH 28) bypass damage reduction?

No. Psychic strike adds to the damage dealt by the weapon itself (and thus shares its damage type). Creatures immune to mind-affecting effects are immune to the damage dealt by psychic strike.

Spellthief

Can a spellthief steal divine spells?

Yes. A spellthief can steal a spell from his target regardless of the target's casting class.

If the divine spell a spellthief steals requires a divine focus, does he need to use the same holy symbol as the original caster?

Not exactly. The steal spell class feature states that you must supply the same focus required for the spell. It's easiest to rule this as meaning "you need a holy symbol—any holy symbol—for cleric or paladin spells, or a sprig of mistletoe or holly for druid or ranger spells." Spellthieves are masters at cheating the system; it's not crazy to suppose they can use another deity's divine focus to cast a rival's cleric's spell.

Of course, if the player likes the idea of his character running around with thick chain of holy symbols and other divine focuses (a la Beni from *The Mummy*), that's fun too.

Can a spellthief steal spells from a creature immune to sneak attacks?

No. A creature that is not vulnerable to sneak attacks is also not vulnerable to any special abilities activated by you scoring a sneak attack on it (since you can't do so).

Spirit Shaman

Can a spirit shaman (CD 14) chastise a quori? If so, can she chastise such a creature that has control over a host body?

Quori are considered spirits for the purpose of being affected by the spirit shaman's powers, as well as by any spells or effects that affect spirits. However, a quori spirit within another creature (such as an Inspired host) is immune to all powers that affect spirits except for exorcism.

Swordsage

As part of his discipline focus class feature, the swordsage (ToB 16) gains the benefit of the Weapon Focus feat for a set of weapons. Does he also gain proficiency in the listed weapons?

According to a strict reading of the rules, no. A swordmage who wants to avoid the nonproficiency penalty for such weapons must gain proficiency in those weapons normally.

Does the discipline focus class feature of the swordmage (ToB 16) apply just to maneuvers gained from that class?

No. The benefits of this class feature apply to all maneuvers of the chosen discipline, regardless of how you acquired the maneuver.

Can the swordmage (ToB 16) apply the insightful strike benefit of his discipline focus class feature to the same discipline twice?

No. When you gain this benefit a second time at 12th level, you must apply this to a second, different discipline.

How often can a swordmage (ToB 16) use his Sense Magic class feature on a particular weapon or armor?

A swordmage can use Sense Magic on a particular armor or weapon only once. You can think of this as similar to using a Spellcraft check to identify a spell that's already in place, or to identify a potion. At the DM's discretion, you can try again after you gain a new level.

Can my swordmage attack while using ring of fire maneuver (ToB 55)? What if I have the dervish dance class feature (CW 26)?

Almost certainly not. The ring of fire maneuver requires a full-round action, so the only other actions you could take in conjunction would be free actions and up to one swift action. Thus, making any kind of attack while using the ring of fire maneuver would be extremely difficult. The dervish dance also requires a full-round action (because that's what a full attack action requires), so you can't use both simultaneously.

Warblade

Can a warblade's weapon aptitude class feature (ToB 22) be applied to . . .

- 1) The Weapon Supremacy feat (*PHB2*, page 85)?
- 2) The Weapon Focus benefit gained by a swordmage via discipline focus (*ToB*, page 16)?
- 3) The Axe Focus racial substitution level benefit (*RS 147*)?

1) Yes. Weapon Supremacy is a feat that "applies only to a single weapon" so it can be affected by weapon aptitude.

2) Yes. Discipline focus grants the swordmage multiple iterations of the Weapon Focus feat, and any or all of them can be changed by the weapon aptitude class feature.

3) No. This benefit doesn't actually grant the Weapon Focus feat, it just says that it counts as the feat for the purpose of requirements or prerequisites.

Warlock

Since the warlock's powers are innate, does he still have to train every level to gain his invocations (like a wizard learning new spells) or does he just get them automatically when he gains a level?

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS assumes that all characters are constantly training in their abilities, and that new class features, spells, feats, and so on are automatically gained upon reaching a new level without the need for special training costs. The *DMG* provides options for DMs who wish to require formalized training for characters to improve their abilities (*DMG 197*). It's perfectly reasonable to require a warlock to

train in order to master a newly gained spell-like ability just like any other arcane caster. Ultimately, however, it's up to the DM to decide how to apply this optional rule to classes not found in the *PH*.

Are all of a warlock's invocations "self only," or can a warlock use his beneficial invocations on allies?

Most invocation descriptions indeed refer to "you" or "yourself," indicating that the invocation only affects the warlock. A warlock can't use *devil's sight* to grant another creature the effect of that invocation, for example. Obviously, not all invocations only affect the warlock. *Baleful utterance*, for example, affects any object or area as the *shatter* spell—the warlock doesn't have to target himself.

When a warlock's invocation emulates two different spell effects with different durations (such as with *entropic warding*), what duration should the invocation use?

Apply each duration separately, just as the spell emulated by the invocation. A 10th-level warlock who uses *entropic warding* gains the *entropic shield* effect for 10 minutes, but gains the *pass without trace* effect for 10 hours. (Since the warlock can use his invocations at will, this duration isn't really significant unless he's prevented from using the invocation again.)

Can a warlock dismiss an invocation that emulates a spell that can't normally be dismissed?

Normally, a warlock can dismiss any invocation "just as a wizard can dismiss a spell" (*CAr*, page 8). The quoted text indicates that the warlock must follow the same rules as a wizard (or, one would assume, any other normal spellcaster).

This strongly suggests that a warlock can't dismiss an invocation that emulates a spell that can't normally be dismissed (such as *curse of despair*, which references *bestow curse* in its effect, or any invocation with an instantaneous duration).

A warlock's invocations include "relatively simple" somatic components. Can you use them while grappling? What about while your hands are full or bound?

No and no. Even though the somatic components are simple enough to allow a warlock to ignore arcane spell failure while wearing light armor, they're still considered somatic components. Thus, you can't use an invocation while in a grapple or while pinned (because you can't cast spells with somatic components in those situations; *PHB 170*). Since you must have one hand free to cast a spell with a somatic component (*PHB 174*), you can't use an invocation if your hands are full, tied, or otherwise occupied.

Does a warlock lose one of his highest level invocations while suffering the effects of a negative level?

No. Though a spellcaster effectively loses one spell slot while afflicted by a negative level, a warlock doesn't have spell slots to lose. The warlock's effective level is still reduced by 1 for the purpose of calculating caster level and the like.

How often can the warlock (from *CAr*) use his *eldritch blast*?

The warlock can use his *eldritch blast* at will. He has no daily limit to its use (nor to his other spell-like abilities).

Does the warlock's *eldritch blast* require a standard action to use or does it take the place of an attack (thus making it possible to fire multiple *eldritch blasts* in a round if you have multiple attacks)?

As a spell-like ability, an *eldritch blast* requires a standard action to use. Having a base attack bonus of +6 or greater does not allow the warlock to use his *eldritch blast* multiple times per round.

Can a warlock use Rapid Shot to fire two *eldritch blasts* simultaneously?

No. Using *eldritch blast* requires a standard action, not an attack action (unlike using a weapon). If something requires a standard action (as opposed to an attack action) to use, you can't use the full attack action to gain extra uses of that ability, even with the Rapid Shot feat.

Can a warlock use his *eldritch blast* in conjunction with Shot on the Run? What about *hideous blow* and Spring Attack?

No and no. Using *eldritch blast* requires a standard action. The Shot on the Run and Spring Attack feats only let you use an attack action (that is, a specific kind of standard action) in conjunction with their allowed movement, not any kind of standard action.

What kind of damage does the warlock's *eldritch blast* deal? Does damage reduction or resistance or immunity to energy protect against the blast?

In its basic form, the *eldritch blast*'s damage has no type. Since it is a spell-like ability, damage reduction does not protect against the *eldritch blast*. Since it does not deal energy damage, resistance or immunity to energy has no effect on the *eldritch blast*'s damage.

Certain *eldritch essence* invocations change the type of damage dealt by the *eldritch blast*. For example, *brimstone blast* makes the *eldritch blast* deal fire damage, which means that resistance or immunity to fire would apply against this *eldritch blast*'s damage (as would vulnerability to fire, such as that possessed by a frost giant).

Does *eldritch blast* damage count as "weapon damage" for the purpose of inspire courage and other effects that add to weapon damage rolls?

No. Even though the *eldritch blast* is treated as "weaponlike" for the purpose of certain feats, it's not a weapon.

The warlock's *eldritch blast* description states that it causes half damage to objects. Can a wielded weapon or worn armor be the target of an *eldritch blast*? Does an *eldritch blast* cause half damage to constructs?

The *eldritch blast* can target an object, including a wielded weapon or suit of armor. A construct is a creature, not an object, and thus suffers normal damage from the *eldritch blast*.

What kind of action is required to apply an *eldritch essence invocation* or *blast shape invocation* to the warlock's *eldritch blast*? How long do these invocations last once applied?

No action is required to apply an *eldritch essence* or *blast shape invocation* to the *eldritch blast*; it's done as part of using the *eldritch blast* itself.

Eldritch essence and *blast shape invocations* affect only the *eldritch blast* to which they are applied. The warlock can apply them again to later blasts as desired.

Is the warlock's *eldritch blast* considered a natural weapon? After all, it's derived from his fiendish heritage.

No. A warlock's *eldritch blast* is not a natural weapon; it's a spell-like ability.

A warlock's *eldritch blast* is treated like a spell in all regards, and is also a ray. Thus, could a warlock use the Split Ray metamagic feat to hit two opponents instead of one?

No. First of all, a warlock's *eldritch blast* isn't "treated like a spell in all regards"—it's a spell-like ability that also shares some special characteristics of a spell (for instance, being subject to arcane spell failure and requiring somatic components). As *CAr* points out, the warlock can't apply metamagic feats to his invocations; however, he can apply feats that emulate metamagic effects specifically for spell-like abilities, such as Empower Spell-Like Ability (*CA* 7). Thus, you can't use Split Ray to affect an *eldritch blast*.

Does the *eldritch blast* of a warlock give off a flash of light or other noticeable visual effect?

The rules are silent on this issue (just as they are for most magical effects), so it's up to the DM to determine how obvious the effect of an *eldritch blast* is. The Sage recommends that the *eldritch blast* be easily visible to any onlooker. The precise nature of the visual effect isn't terribly important, but a warlock should have a very hard time indeed in camouflaging his *eldritch blast* attack.

Are golems immune to the warlock's *eldritch blast*?

Since it is a spell-like ability that allows spell resistance, golems are immune to the warlock's *eldritch blast*. The warlock who faces a clay golem with nothing but his *eldritch blast* is in just as much trouble as the sorcerer with nothing but *magic missile* and *lightning bolt* in his arsenal. The *vitriolic blast* *eldritch essence invocation* (*CAr*, page 136) allows the warlock to overcome this problem, since *vitriolic blast* ignores spell resistance.

Does a warlock's *hideous blow invocation* (*CAr*, page 134) require one standard action to use the *hideous blow* and another round to strike with a melee weapon, or can the *hideous blow* and the melee weapon attack be done as a single standard action?

Making an attack with *hideous blow* is considered part of the same standard action as using the *hideous blow invocation* (much like the casting of a touch spell allows an attack to be made as part of the spell's casting).

A warlock using *fell flight* (*CAr* 134) gains a fly speed equal to his land speed. If an effect later increases (or decreases) the warlock's land speed, does his fly speed change as well?

Yes. For example, a human warlock under the effect of *fell flight* who activates *boots of speed* could fly at a speed of 60 feet (rather than his normal land speed of 30 feet) for as long as the boots' effect lasted. If that same warlock were in a later encounter affected by a *slow* spell, both his land speed and fly speed would drop to 15 feet (half the normal 30 feet). If he then

picked up a heavy chest (bringing his encumbrance to heavy), he'd walk or fly at a speed of 10 feet (half the normal 20 feet).

Does *hideous blow* provoke an attack of opportunity?

Yes. As a spell-like ability, using *hideous blow* provokes attacks of opportunity just as any other spell-like ability would. A warlock who relies on this invocation should consider investing ranks in the Concentration skill so that he can use it defensively.

Note that the act of using the invocation, not the act of making the attack, draws the attack of opportunity, since the warlock delivering *hideous blow* is considered "armed" (just like a spellcaster delivering a touch spell).

The warlock's deceive item class feature (CAR 8) allows him to take 10 on Use Magic Device checks "even if distracted or threatened," but the Use Magic Device skill says you can't ever take 10, regardless of distraction. Does deceive item also let the warlock ignore this restriction?

This class feature really does two things. First, it allows the warlock to take 10 on Use Magic Device skill checks (a boon all by itself). Second, it allows him to take 10 on such checks even in conditions where that would normally not be possible.

Since a warlock does not possess spell slots, can he qualify for the epic feats Master Staff and Master Wand (CAR 192)?

Having spell slots is not a prerequisite to select either of these feats, so the warlock is free to choose them if he meets the prerequisites. However, since using either feat requires the character to expend spell slots, these feats are useless to the warlock. Just because you meet the prerequisites of a feat is no guarantee that you can use the feat to any beneficial effect. (For example, Empower Spell has no prerequisites, but a character who can't cast spells of at least 2nd level will find it useless.)

What effect would the Practiced Spellcaster feat (CAR 82) have on a warlock?

A strict reading of the feat's benefit indicates that the warlock would gain no benefit from Practiced Spellcaster. The warlock is not a spellcasting class for normal purposes—the exception noted on page 18 of *Car* applies only to prestige class benefits—and thus it could not be selected as the class to be affected by this feat.

Can a warlock qualify for the Supernatural Transformation feat (SS 39) and change one of his invocations into a supernatural ability?

No. The warlock's spell-like abilities are learned (from class levels), not innate (that is, part of his racial traits).

What happens to a warlock who changes his alignment to LG, LN, NG, or N?

A warlock who isn't evil or chaotic can't gain any further levels as a warlock, but doesn't lose any class features or suffer any other penalty.

If a warlock is using *spiderwalk* to climb a wall, can he stop climbing and free up a hand to use *eldritch blast* or another invocation, or does *spiderwalk/spider climb* require you to have both hands on the wall even if you're not climbing?

A warlock using *spiderwalk* or a spellcaster using *spider climb* needs to have both hands free only in order to move at

the granted climb speed. That said, a warlock could use an *eldritch blast* or other invocation while clinging to the wall (as long as the warlock wasn't also somehow climbing as part of the same action).

I am trying to understand the mechanics of using *eldritch blast* and applying a shape (or essence) invocation. In *Car*, it states that *eldritch blast* requires a standard action, and that each invocation requires a standard action. Does this mean that if a shape and essence is applied to an *eldritch blast*, it will require three standard actions? Or can a warlock imbue his *eldritch blast* with both an essence and shape as part of his standard action *eldritch blast*?

The entry for applying a shape or essence invocation to a warlock's *eldritch blast* does state that these invocations are standard actions, but more accurately they happen as a part of the same standard action that it takes to use an *eldritch blast*. So a warlock could apply an essence invocation and a shape invocation to an *eldritch blast*, and still use the *eldritch blast* all as part of the same standard action.

Since a warlock's *eldritch blast* is a ranged touch attack, can it deny the foe a Dexterity bonus and allow sneak attack damage if the warlock has levels of rogue?

Using a ranged touch attack does not deny a foe the ability to apply his/her Dexterity bonus to their armor class—in fact, the Dexterity bonus is one of the few things that is applied to a character's touch armor class. In order to use an *eldritch blast* and still gain sneak attack, the warlock's target would need to be within 30 feet and something else would need to be denying the target its Dexterity bonus, such as being grappled or paralyzed.

As I've read and interpreted the description, a warlock's *hideous blow* shape allows you to release *eldritch blast* with a melee attack. Does this mean that when you make a melee attack with the warlock's weapon, he or she can choose to release the blow energy into the attack, or does he have to prepare the *hideous blow* and then make the melee attack to deliver the extra damage?

Hideous blow is a shape invocation that you apply to your *eldritch blast* in the same standard action that it takes you to use the *eldritch blast*. So the warlock uses *hideous blow* to shape the *eldritch blast* and then makes the melee attack with that *eldritch blast* in the same standard action.

It should be noted that even though *hideous blow* allows you to make a melee attack, using an *eldritch blast* in this way still provokes an attack of opportunity from any enemy that threatens you.

Can a warlock make a critical hit with an *eldritch blast*?

Yes—just like a spell or spell-like ability that requires an attack roll, a warlock can critically hit with an *eldritch blast*.

Warmage

The warmage class description in *Car* indicates that he gains Sudden Enlarge as a bonus feat at 10th level, but the feat isn't in the book. Where can I find this feat?

Sudden Enlarge first appeared on page 28 of the *MH* and was erroneously left out of *Car* when the warmage was included in that book.

The feat allows you to apply the Enlarge Spell feat to any spell you cast, once per day, without increasing the level of the spell or specially preparing it ahead of time.

If a warmage (CAr 10) gains access to all the cleric spells though the rainbow servant prestige class (CD 54), does he really have all those spells to choose from each time he casts a spell?

If a warmage takes ten levels of rainbow servant, he adds all of the spells from the cleric spell list to his own spell list and can choose from all of them when he casts spells.

Can the warmage (CAr) benefit from the Extra Spell feat?

No. Extra Spell lets you add one spell to your list of spells known, but the spell must be taken from your class spell list. Since the warmage already knows all the spells on his class spell list, this feat has no effect.

Wilder

Can a wilder (XPH) under the effect of *timeless body* use his wild surge ability? If yes, is he still overcome by psychic enervation?

No. A wilder under the effect of *timeless body* “ignores all harmful (and helpful) effects,” which would include both the benefit and potential drawback of wild surge.

Wizard

Can a wizard cast a spell directly from his spellbook? If so what effects on the spellbook are there?

No, you cannot use a spellbook like a scroll. A spellbook contains notes for preparing a spell, but it’s not a precast spell just waiting to be activated as a scroll is.

Can a wizard carry her familiar, or must they be at least three size categories apart to share the same space? How do I determine if the familiar is affected by an attack against the master?

The rule against two creatures sharing the same space doesn’t apply in any situation where one creature is carrying the other, whether that’s a horse carrying a knight or an elf wizard carrying her raven familiar. As clarified by the answer to the “Which square is a rider in when on horseback?” question, a familiar carried by its master is treated as sharing the master’s space. However, the familiar is in no danger of being accidentally struck by a melee or ranged attack made against the master. If the familiar is visible to an attacker, the attacker could choose to target it with an attack as if it is a carried object (see the sunder rules, PH 158); the familiar should use either its own Dexterity modifier or its master’s, whichever is better.

Of course, as long as the familiar is Tiny or smaller, a wizard doesn’t have to carry her familiar at all. Tiny and smaller creatures can enter or share the space occupied by a Small or larger creature (they must do so to attack, after all). This is a specific exception to the normal restriction against two creatures sharing the same space.

(Technically, a Tiny or smaller creature can also occupy a square occupied by another Tiny or smaller creature, but in such a case they aren’t really occupying the same space—they’re occupying fractions of the overall square. If you have a lot of Tiny vs. Tiny combats in your game, consider subdividing any square occupied by such creatures into four quarter-squares to help visualize this.)

If my character’s familiar dies (and my character loses experience points for it) but a cleric resurrects the familiar, does my character get back the XP he lost?

No. On the bright side, you do get your beloved Fluffy back.

The PH says a wizard can scribe a spell from a spellbook or scroll into her spellbook. Can she scribe a spell from an arcane scroll that isn’t on the wizard’s spell list?

No. A wizard’s spellbook is limited to spells from the wizard class spell list.

Does the wizard’s instant daze alternative class feature (PH2 70) render an attacking creature dazed before its attack is completed, making it incapable of finishing the attack?

Yes.

If a specialist wizard gains levels in a different spellcasting class, does her choice of forbidden spells affect her spell choice for the new class?

No. Though the School Specialization sidebar (PH 57) is not explicit, the forbidden schools pertain only to spells gained from the wizard class.

Can a wizard prepare and cast arcane spells that are not on her spell list?

To learn a spell, it must appear on your class’s spell list, so a wizard can add only spells from that list to her spellbook.

Wu Jen

Some of the wu jen spells in CAr, such as *commune with lesser spirit* and *spirit binding*, refer to “spirit creatures.” What are spirit creatures?

The simplest answer is that a spirit creature is a creature with the spirit subtype. The spirit subtype is a creature subtype introduced in OA (the original source of the wu jen class).

The spirit shaman class in CD expanded the definition of spirit creatures to also include incorporeal undead, fey, elementals, and a few other specific creatures (such as the spirit folk and telthor from page 74 of *Una*). If you have access to that book, use that definition.

Multiclassing

How does a multiclassed druid/ranger determine the statistics for her animal companion?

Use the sum of the character’s “effective druid level” for the purpose of determining animal companion statistics. A druid’s effective level is her class level, while a ranger’s is equal to one-half his class level.

A 5th-level druid/6th-level ranger, for example, would have an animal companion as if she were an 8th-level druid (5 plus one-half of 6).

Prestige Classes

In the previous version of the D&D game, having levels in a prestige class never caused you to pay the experience penalty for being a multiclass character without uneven class levels. (The prestige class levels didn't count when checking to see if you had a penalty.) The section on prestige classes in the new DMG no longer mentions that you don't suffer an experience penalty for having levels in a prestige class. Is this a change or an error?

It's an error. Having levels in a prestige class won't give you an experience penalty.

If a prestige class doesn't specify whether an increase in spellcasting applies to an arcane or divine spellcasting class, is the player free to choose? For example, if my cleric/rogue/wizard takes a level of arcane trickster, am I free to apply the increased caster level to his cleric spellcasting ability, even though it was his wizard spellcasting ability that qualified him for the prestige class in the first place?

Yes. If the prestige class does not limit the type of spellcasting you can improve, you are free to choose any of your spellcasting classes.

Can a character use a psi-like ability to qualify for a prestige class that requires: a) the ability to manifest a particular psionic power, b) the ability to manifest psionic powers of a particular level, or c) a manifester level?

A) Yes, B) no, and C) yes. *XPH* doesn't clearly describe how psi-like abilities interact with game prerequisites. However, the discussion of spell-like abilities on page 72 of *CAr* provides a useful precedent:

"[S]pell-like abilities that generate the relevant effect meet the requirements for specific spell knowledge."

Thus, a psi-like ability allows you to qualify for a prestige class that requires the ability to manifest that power.

"[R]equirements for feats and prestige classes based on specific levels of spells cast . . . cannot be met by spell-like abilities."

Simply having the ability to manifest a 5th-level psi-like power doesn't meet the requirement of being able to manifest 5th-level psionic powers.

"For feats or prestige classes requiring a minimum caster level, creatures that use spell-like abilities . . . instead of spells use . . . their fixed caster level . . . to determine qualification."

A psionic mind flayer has a manifester level of 9th, so it would meet any prerequisite that required manifester level 9th.

Does a 1st-level wizard/4th-level rogue with Practiced Spellcaster qualify for a prestige class that requires "Spellcaster level 5th"?

No. This prestige class requirement doesn't refer to your caster level (a value which can be modified by many feats, class features, and even temporary effects) but to your actual level in a spellcasting class. (If it helps, you can think of this requirement as "Spellcaster, 5th level.")

The same applies for characters whose caster level is less than their class level. A 5th-level paladin meets the "Spellcaster level 5th" requirement, even though her actual caster level is only 2nd.

Does the rainbow servant (CD 54) and sacred fist (CD 59) gain spellcasting levels for every level of the class or just levels shown on their table?

In the Sage's opinion, these classes gain spellcasting as their tables indicate. Normally, if there is a difference between what a table says and what the ability indicates in its written explanation, we suggest you use the written rules. This exception, however, maintains a good game balance for these classes within the larger game.

Does the anointed ancestral weapon class feature of the anointed knight prestige class (BE 49) stack with other special weapons, such as an ancestral relic or a kensai's signature weapon?

Unless one system or the other indicates that such combinations would be forbidden, they should work just fine in conjunction with one another. For example, since the effects created by the anointed knight don't have a gp value, they don't have any impact on the maximum relic value for the Ancestral Relic feat (*BoED* 39). They also don't have an enhancement value, so they don't limit what a kensai (*CW* 49) can do with his signature weapon class feature.

On the other hand, the rules for legacy weapons (*Weapons of Legacy*) indicate that the weapon's powers can't be enhanced except by temporary effects, so the anointed knight's class feature shouldn't have any effect on such a weapon.

What can or can't an assassin do while studying a victim for his death attack ability?

The assassin's death attack indicates that he can undertake other actions while studying a target. No specific action is required to maintain the study (for example, it doesn't require concentration), although the class feature lists two rather vague restrictions placed on the 3 rounds of study. Both of these require DM adjudication.

1. The assassin's attention must remain focused on the target. The assassin has to keep his victim in view, but can perform any other action he wishes (as long as the action doesn't break the second restriction). The assassin could even attack another creature while studying a target!

2. The target might not detect the assassin or recognize him as a threat. Note that detection isn't limited to vision only; being invisible isn't enough if the target hears the assassin sneaking up behind him. Similarly, if a hidden assassin cast a spell that was overheard or otherwise detected by the victim, the studying would be wasted.

What happens when an assassin becomes non-evil?

A character who no longer meets the requirements of his prestige class not only can't advance any further in that class, but he also "loses the benefit of any class features or other special abilities granted by the class." (*CW* 16) You retain Hit Dice (and the hit points derived from), base attack bonus, and base save bonuses granted by the prestige class.

The rules don't specifically list skill points (and class skills) as falling into either category; the Sage recommends that the character retain these functions even if he no longer meets the class requirements.

So your repentant assassin would lose his sneak attack, death attack, poison use, save bonus against poison, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, and hide in plain sight class features, as well as his assassin spellcasting and any weapon and armor proficiencies gained from the class. He'd keep the skill ranks he bought with his assassin levels, as well as the hit points, base attack, and base save bonuses gained from those class levels. He also couldn't gain any more assassin levels until his alignment returned to evil (at which point he'd also regain the various features he lost when his alignment changed to non-evil).

If my character becomes an assassin, then later changes his alignment from evil to neutral, can he still use the skills he learned as an assassin?

A character who no longer meets the requirements of his prestige class not only can't advance any further in that class, but he also "loses the benefit of any class features or other special abilities granted by the class," (CW 16). You retain Hit Dice (and the hit points derived from those Hit Dice), base attack bonus, and base save bonuses granted by the prestige class.

The rules don't specifically list skill points (and class skills) as falling into either category; the Sage recommends that the character retain these functions even if he no longer meets the class requirements. So your repentant assassin would lose his sneak attack, death attack, poison use, save bonus against poison, uncanny dodge, improved uncanny dodge, and hide in plain sight class features, as well as his assassin spell casting and any weapon and armor proficiencies gained from the class. He'd keep the skill ranks he bought with his assassin levels, as well as the hit points, base attack, and base save bonuses gained from the class levels. He also couldn't gain any more assassin levels until his alignment returned to evil (at which point he'd also regain the various features he lost when his alignment changed to non-evil).

According to *Complete Scoundrel*, assassination can be the last resort of even the most righteous character. So why must an assassin prestige class be evil?

There is a vast difference between using assassination as a last resort and making a career out of it. The alignment system generally accepts that you will occasionally have to do something outside of your alignment but becoming an assassin is completely different.

Does the "mysteries/spellcasting" class feature of the child of night and noctumancer prestige classes (TM 117 and 125) allow you to qualify for access to the initiate or master mysteries?

Yes. The text isn't entirely clear, but the intent is that a character advancing in these prestige classes continues to improve their mystery-casting abilities as if they were advancing as a shadowcaster.

Does the deepwarden's Stone Warden ability (RS 105) still have a maximum Dexterity bonus to his Armor Class, and does that maximum still apply to his Constitution?

The maximum Dexterity bonus should be treated as the maximum ability bonus given by the armor, so if you were playing a deepwarden wearing full plate, you would only add 1 to your Armor Class from your Constitution.

One of my players plays a half-celestial sorcerer, and he wants to take the dragon disciple prestige class. What happens to his character's creature type when he reaches the 10th level of dragon disciple? Is he still an outsider (from his template), is he a dragon, is he both, or is he something else? Should he gain a level adjustment from becoming a half-dragon?

A creature can have only one type (although some templates retain a creature's original type as an "augmented" subtype). The dragon disciple prestige class has no limitations on the character's type other than "can't be dragon," so it's perfectly acceptable for a half-celestial character (or any other outsider who qualifies) to take levels in the class. At 10th level, the character's type would normally change to dragon. According to page 143 of SS, the outsider type applied by the half-celestial template overrides the dragon type applied by the prestige class, so the character's type would remain outsider. The character still gains all the class features of the dragon disciple prestige class though, so this is mostly just an issue of nomenclature.

A dragon disciple ignores the normal level adjustment applied from the half-dragon template; in effect, he's already "paid" for the template through the 10 levels of his prestige class. This is true of any prestige class that applies a template or otherwise changes the character's type or subtype.

Does the scorn earth class feature of the elocator prestige class (XPH 142) allow her to avoid taking damage from a fall?

Actually, the character wouldn't fall at all. An elocator is effectively in a constant state of levitation (as the psionic levitate power). An elocator could walk out over an open pit without falling (though her speed would be reduced to 10 feet per round). Even a trap door opening beneath her feet wouldn't drop her—she'd just hang in space, levitating as if she'd intentionally stepped out over the pit.

The class feature suggests strongly that its effect is created voluntarily: "she *can* float a foot above the ground" (EPH 143, italics added). Thus, if for some reason she didn't have this effect active, she'd be as vulnerable to falling as anyone else. As a supernatural ability, it requires a standard action to activate scorn earth, so she probably wouldn't have time to save herself from a (short) fall.

The enlightened fist prestige class (CAr, page 34) allows the character to improve certain monk class features. Does the class grant the character the monk's increasing number of attacks with flurry of blows? The list of class features not gained doesn't include this item.

The improved monk abilities gained by the enlightened fist are limited to the list of abilities affirmatively described in the first sentence of the class feature (class-based AC bonus, unarmed damage, unarmored speed bonus, and uses of Stunning Fist). The second paragraph specifically uses the phrases "such as" and "or other special abilities" to indicate that it isn't providing a definitive or complete list of other not-improved class features, it is merely providing examples.

I have two questions about the warding class feature of the initiate of the sevenfold veil (CAr, page 44).

1. Personal warding says that it affects "any creature striking at" the initiate. Does the attacker have to hit the initiate for this effect to occur?

2. Area warding says it affects any creature entering the warding. What about creatures who remain inside—does it affect them every round?

1. No. “Striking at” means “attacking,” so any melee attack against the initiate would trigger the *personal warding’s* effect.

2. No. It affects a creature only as it enters the *warding*. Once inside, it doesn’t suffer the same ill effect each round. However, once inside and adjacent to the initiate, the creature is then protected by the ward.

Can a kensai (CW 49) select unarmed strike as his signature weapon? If so, does this allow him to take Vow of Poverty while still retaining all the benefits of his signature weapon class feature?

A kensai can select unarmed strike as a signature weapon. The class feature even includes guidelines for how to adjudicate such a choice (see “Imbuing Natural Weapons” on page 51).

As far as both abilities working together, a strict reading of the rules would appear to allow it. (Of course, the enhancement bonus of the exalted strike ability from the Vow of Poverty wouldn’t stack with any enhancement bonus granted by the signature weapon class feature.)

That said, the Sage would fully support any DM who felt this to be an unfair abuse of the spirit of the Vow of Poverty. One of the reasons that *BE* is a “mature audiences” book is that many of its options are intended to allow players to create interesting roleplaying opportunities while not unduly hindering their characters’ ability to participate in adventures, not as avenues of abuse to create the most powerful character imaginable. If the DM felt that the kensai in question was trying to take advantage of the wording of Vow of Poverty to subvert its spirit, he’d be well within his rights to disallow the character from selecting the feat.

A better solution, though, would be for the DM to work with the player to find a middle ground that both can find fair and reasonable. As a start, the character might give up the exalted strike benefit of the Vow of Poverty (since he still “owns” a magic weapon, in a manner of speaking, and doesn’t need that benefit). If the weapon granted other abilities that overlapped or resembled benefits derived from the Vow of Poverty, it’s probably fair for the character to give up those benefits as well. As long as the character doesn’t seem to be netting significantly more from the combination of signature weapon and Vow of Poverty than a typical character would get from the vow alone, it’s probably okay.

The same is true of any character whose identity or class features are largely defined by a single possession. If, for example, a samurai from *OA* wished to pursue a life of poverty but didn’t want to dishonor her family by discarding her ancestral daisho, it seems reasonable for the DM to work with the player to find a reasonable middle ground (as described in the previous paragraph).

If a kensai (CW 49) selects a weapon as his signature weapon, and that weapon already has an enhancement bonus, do the bonuses stack? What if it already has other magical properties?

A weapon’s existing enhancement bonus doesn’t stack with the effect of the kensai’s signature weapon class feature. The weapon bonus appearing on the “Signature Weapons” table on page 50 of *CW* indicates the maximum effective enhancement bonus of the signature weapon.

A 5th-level kensai who chooses a +3 *keen longsword* as his

signature weapon could increase the weapon to a +4 *keen longsword*, but no higher (since his maximum weapon bonus at that level is +5). He’d pay the difference in XP cost between a +4 weapon (the weapon’s existing effective enhancement bonus) and a +5 weapon (the end result), which is 360 XP.

Can a kensai select a legacy weapon as his signature weapon? Can he select an ancestral relic? What about a legendary weapon or item familiar from UA?

Weapons of Legacy indicates that a legacy weapon’s powers can’t be increased by any “regular process” (see page 11), which strongly suggests that a kensai couldn’t use his signature weapon class feature to improve a legacy weapon.

The Ancestral Relic feat (*BE* 39) provides an alternative method for improving on a weapon’s powers; as long as the character obeyed both the maximum relic value indicated for the feat and the maximum enhancement bonus for the signature weapon as indicated by the prestige class, it seems that these two methods would be compatible.

The legendary weapons and item familiar variant rules from *UA* aren’t designed to work with other systems of enhancing weapons. For these systems (and indeed, for any other alternative method of improving weapons), the DM must use his best judgment to ensure that a character isn’t gaining benefits without paying a reasonable cost (either in gold, XP, or any other resource available—which might include feats or class levels, for example).

Can a warlock/kensai select *eldritch blast* as his signature weapon?

The Sage advises no. *CAr* indicates that “weaponlike” spells or spell-like abilities (such as the warlock’s *eldritch blast*) can benefit from certain combat-enhancing feats (such as Weapon Focus). The book is silent on other combat-enhancing benefits, so there’s no clear support for treating the *eldritch blast* as a weapon in such cases. Therefore, it falls to the DM to adjudicate such corner cases based on the intent and flavor of the benefit.

The intent of the kensai prestige class seems clearly to indicate that a real, physical weapon is required for the signature weapon ability (even if it’s a natural weapon, such as a claw). Thus, it seems inappropriate to treat the *eldritch blast* as an eligible choice.

What is the duration of the wild shape class feature of the master of many forms prestige class (CAAd 59)? What about the maximum Hit Dice of the form?

Technically speaking, the master of many forms doesn’t grant the wild shape class feature; it only improves the character’s pre-existing wild shape class feature. Thus, the character would use the normal rules from whichever class she got her wild shape class feature (probably from the druid class) to determine duration and similar effects. Her prestige class levels stack with class levels from the original source for determining both the duration of the effect and the maximum HD of the assumed form.

What kind of action is required for the assume equipment class feature of the psion uncarnate prestige class (XPH 148)?

This doesn’t require any action at all. You can change the designation of which equipment is affected whenever you want, even when activating the shed body feature.

Is the sacred fist (CD) supposed to wear armor? None of the class abilities are inhibited by wearing light armor, and as long as he's wearing armor he might as well carry a shield, too, since he'd be losing his AC bonus only.

You've correctly determined that the sacred fist is allowed (even encouraged) to wear light armor. Whether or not a specific sacred fist wears light armor probably depends on what class features he might have from other classes. For instance, a sacred fist with monk levels (a strong likelihood) gives up his AC bonuses (including his Wis bonus to AC), his flurry of blows, and his fast movement. Still, for a sacred fist with only one or two monk levels, that might be worthwhile—his light armor's AC bonus might make up for the lost AC bonuses from the monk class, and he hasn't yet gained a speed bonus. As to whether the sacred fist might as well carry a shield, that's up to the character. Some sacred fists might prefer having their off hand free (such as for climbing). Also, a sacred fist's AC bonus applies even against touch attacks, which is more than can be said for a shield's bonus to AC.

When a war mind (XPH 155) uses his sweeping strike class feature, does he roll separately for each of the two creatures attacked, or does the same roll apply to each?

Resolve each attack completely separately, applying modifiers as appropriate for each. For example, you might be flanking one target but not the other; you'd only get the +2 bonus on the attack roll against the flanked foe.

Does the sweeping strike class feature of the war mind prestige class (XPH 155) apply to martial maneuvers from ToB? What if the maneuver already allows multiple attacks (such as the flashing sun maneuver)?

Yes. Each and every time the war mind makes an attack, the attack applies to creatures in two adjacent squares. A maneuver that allows more than one attack would apply this effect to each attack allowed by the maneuver.

Skills

Are there no skills that are exclusive to certain classes in new version of the D&D game? For instance Decipher Script and Use Magical Device were exclusive to the rogue in the earlier version of the game.

Exclusive skills are a thing of the past.

If a character levels up after taking Intelligence damage does the number of skill points he receives for the new level depend on his normal Intelligence score or his damaged score? What if he takes ability drain instead of damage? What happens to his existing skill ranks?

As noted on page 58 of the *PH*, only permanent changes to Intelligence affect the number of skill points you gain when taking a new level. A character with Intelligence damage gains skill points based on his normal (undamaged) Intelligence score, while a character with Intelligence drain gains skill points based on the adjusted score.

Either way, this has no effect on his existing skill ranks. Permanent changes to Intelligence don't retroactively change your number of skill ranks from previous levels.

Suppose I have a 1st-level wizard/1st-level rogue with 4 ranks of Tumble. When I reach 3rd level and take another level of wizard, how many additional ranks of Tumble can I purchase and how many skill points does that cost?

The maximum ranks that a multiclassed character can have in any class skill (regardless of which of his classes has that class skill) is equal to his character level +3. A 2nd-level wizard/1st-level rogue can have up to 6 ranks in any wizard or rogue class skill. Since Tumble is a rogue class skill, your character can purchase up to 2 additional ranks in that skill (for a total of 6 ranks).

Whenever a multiclassed character purchases skill ranks, he spends skill points using the class and cross-class skill lists of a character of the class level he has just gained. In this case, your wizard/rogue who gains another wizard level must spend his skill points using the wizard's class and cross-class skill lists. Since Tumble is a cross-class class skill for wizards, each rank costs 2 skill points, for a total of 4 skill points for your 2 ranks.

How can I tell whether or not I can take 20 on a check, and what constitutes "failure" on a check?

Taking 20 is simply a time-saving short-cut that avoids requiring a player to roll and roll until he gets a 20 on a check that everyone knows he'll simply retry until he either succeeds or is convinced he can't.

Ultimately, whether or not you can take 20 relies on only three criteria:

- The check allows you to try again. Each skill has a "Try Again" entry that lists whether you can attempt the same task again. If you can't retry the task, you can't take 20 (since taking 20 involves retrying the task). You can't retry a Decipher Script check, so taking 20 is out of the question.
- Failure does not carry an inherent penalty (that is, a consequence). If something bad happens when you fail a check, you can't take 20, since the DM needs to know exactly when or how often failure occurs. When you're halfway up a wall and fail a Climb check, you might fall and take damage. That's an inherent consequence, so you can't normally take 20 on Climb checks.

- You have available time equal to making the check 20 times. If you have only 1 minute until the walls of the room slide together and crush you, you obviously can't take 20 on a Search check to find the hidden off switch (since that takes 20 rounds).

There's no perfect list of which checks do or don't allow taking 20. For example, you can retry Spot checks, and it doesn't seem like a failed Spot check carries any inherent consequence. Does that mean you can take 20 on Spot checks when keeping watch for monsters sneaking up on your campsite?

Well, yes and no. If you stare at the same sight for 2 minutes, you can absolutely take 20 on a Spot check to get a really good look at it. But if an assassin is sneaking through the shadows toward you, he's probably not there for that whole 2 minutes. Thus, you couldn't take 20, since you don't actually have available time equal to making the check 20 times against that enemy. You'd have to roll your Spot check normally (opposed by the assassin's Hide check) to notice the enemy.

Similarly, if a check's success or failure depends on another character's opposed roll, both sides have to roll when that opposition occurs—you can't take 20 and "save up" the maximum result. If you hide in the bushes to attack a group of orcs that will walk by later, you can't take 20 on the Hide check, since the success or failure of your Hide check isn't resolved until the orcs make their Spot checks. You can't take 20 on a Use Rope check to tie someone up, since you don't really know how successful you've been until that enemy tries to struggle free.

If you're having trouble with the concept, try ignoring it and instead allow characters to retry failed skill checks until they roll 20. You'll soon recognize what checks are appropriate for taking 20—they're the ones during which everyone sits around bored while one player rolls and rolls and rolls.

Imagine a game without the "take 20" rule:

- After defeating hordes of monsters, the PCs stand before a strong wooden door blocking entry to the treasure room. The break DC is 23, which the 20-Strength Regdar shouldn't have too much trouble getting eventually. The DM knows that there's nothing left in the dungeon to harm the characters, so time (and noise) isn't an issue. However, everyone has to sit around and wait until Regdar's player rolls an 18 or better on the d20.

- Once inside, the PCs discover a locked chest. Wary of a trap, Lidda's player rolls a 16 on her Search check. She finds nothing, but that doesn't allay her suspicion, so she wants to keep rolling her Search check until she gets a 20. (She might as well, since the party has plenty of time and nothing bad happens to her if she fails the Search check.) If she's lucky, this takes only a few rolls, but we've all played with players who couldn't roll a 20 with a hundred tries.

- After finally determining that the chest seems safe, Lidda now turns to the lock. Her first Open Lock check garners a d20 roll of 11, which fails to open the lock even with her prodigious +14 modifier. Again, the party has plenty of time, so she tries again but rolls a 6. The DM knows the DC 30 lock is well within Lidda's ability to unlock, but has to wait until she rolls a 16 or better on the d20. Meanwhile, the rest of the players are wandering off to check what's on TV.

In the Sage's experience, over 90% of all "take 20" checks are made for one of the following four reasons. Even if you

only limit yourself to these few examples, you'll save valuable game time:

- Strength checks to open doors
- Listen checks at closed doors
- Open Lock checks
- Search checks

The text for synergy under the Diplomacy skill on page 72 of the PH states: "If you have 5 or more ranks in Bluff, Knowledge (nobility and royalty), or Sense Motive, you get a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks." I'm assuming that means if a character has 5 ranks in Bluff, Knowledge (nobility and royalty), and Sense Motive that the character would receive only a +2 synergy bonus on Diplomacy checks. Or would the character receive a +6 synergy bonus (+2 for each)?

The bonuses listed in the synergy section of a skill description are unnamed and so they stack. (There's no such thing as a synergy bonus in the current edition of the D&D game.) The character in your example would receive a +6 bonus on Diplomacy checks.

How does the Disable Device skill work? Say my rogue has spotted what looks like a pressure plate. How does he go about disabling it? How can you disable a trap if you don't know what it does? Or is figuring out the trap part of disabling it?

In play, Disable Device works just like any other skill: You make a skill check and you succeed if your check result meets or exceeds the check DC; if you fail badly when attempting to disable a trap, you might trigger the trap (see the Disable Device skill description in the PH).

The DM is free to decide exactly how much information you get about a trap you're trying to disable. In most cases, you'll discover just enough about the trap's workings to disable it. In the case of the pressure plate in your example, you'll discover that the plate triggers a reaction of some type if depressed, and a successful Disable Device check allows you to somehow jam the plate so that it cannot be depressed or it is otherwise rendered nonfunctional. It's best to assume that a successful Disable Device check cripples the trap in the simplest and most straightforward way possible. With a pressure plate, that probably means using some kind of wedge to keep the plate from moving. You can certainly disarm a trap in this manner without ever figuring out exactly what the trap does.

A Disable Device check does reveal a trap's workings if the check beats the Disable Device DC by 10 or more. Even so, you might not completely understand the trap's workings, but you'll know what kind of nastiness the trap can dish out and exactly where the trap dishes it out. That knowledge can allow you to bypass the trap without triggering it.

Can a character use Disable Device to sabotage nonmechanical items? For instance, could he rig armor so that straps break the next time the wearer is hit, or a bowstring so it snaps the next time the bow is drawn?

The Disable Device skill specifically states that it applies to a "fairly simple or fairly small mechanical device" which suggests that nonmechanical devices are beyond its reach. You can't sabotage a piece of parchment, or a shirt, or a pane of glass—you can only break them.

That said, the two items you describe are most certainly "mechanical devices"—most suits of armor include buckles,

clasps, and the like (comparable to locks), while a bow is expressly designed to convert potential energy into kinetic energy (perhaps the very definition of a simple mechanical device).

Ultimately, the Sage thinks it'd be fair to use Disable Device to sabotage pretty much any item with moving parts. Treat them as either simple or tricky devices, determined by comparison to the examples given in the Disable Device skill.

However, you couldn't time the failure as precisely as you describe in your question. The Disable Device skill suggests that you could rig such items to fail after 1d4 rounds or minutes of use, so it'd be up to the DM to determine exactly when failure occurs.

When using a Ride skill check to claim cover from your mount, exactly when do you start claiming cover from your mount? When must you stop claiming cover from your mount? The skill description says you react instantly to claim cover, and it doesn't take an action. Does that mean you can do so anytime, even when it's not your turn? The skill description says you can't attack or cast spells while claiming cover. Why is that significant if you can claim cover anytime without using an action?

You can make a Ride check to claim cover from your mount anytime, even when it's not your turn. Make the check before your opponent makes his attack roll. If your check succeeds, you have cover against your opponent's attacks. If several different opponents attack you during the same place in the initiative order, one Ride check determines if you have cover against all those attacks. If you're attacked again, you must make another Ride check to claim cover again. You cannot claim cover while you're casting a spell or making any kind of attack. So, for example, if you cast a spell while mounted, you can't use your mount as cover against any attack of opportunity you might provoke. You also cannot claim cover from your mount while making a charge attack (not even during the movement portion of your charge).

Can a character use the Tumble skill from a prone position? Specifically, if my character is prone, can he use Tumble to move out of a threatened square without provoking an attack of opportunity?

According to a strict reading of the rules, no. The key phrase in the Tumble skill description is this: "Tumble at one-half speed as part of normal movement. . . ." You can't move "normally" while prone, thus you can't use Tumble in this manner while prone.

The only "normal" movement allowed while prone is to crawl 5 feet as a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity. I don't think it stretches the rules unreasonably to allow a character to use Tumble while crawling, but since you can't crawl at half speed (half of 5 feet is less than a full square), you'd have to take the -10 penalty on the Tumble check for using accelerated tumbling. Thus, a character could make a "crawling Tumble"—think of it as an "action roll" if you prefer—to move 5 feet as a move action without provoking attacks of opportunity; such an action would require a DC 15 Tumble check with a -10 penalty.

When a character tumbles (at half speed) during a move action, does that mean he is moving at half speed for the whole move, or just in the squares where tumbling?

Although it's easiest to apply the half-speed penalty to the entire move action, it's not strictly necessary to do so.

If the player and DM can handle this additional level of complexity, it's perfectly okay to rule that you pay an extra movement cost only for each square that you use Tumble to exit without provoking an attack of opportunity (as well as for each square of an enemy's space that you enter using Tumble).

For example, imagine Ember begins her turn 10 feet from an orc and wants to use Tumble to move through its space and end up 15 feet away on the opposite side.

- Her first square of movement wouldn't provoke attacks of opportunity (since she's not leaving a threatened square), so she doesn't use Tumble or move at half speed.
- Her second and third squares of movement take her through the orc's space, so these effectively cost twice normal (that is, they each cost 1 extra square of movement), and this movement requires a DC 25 Tumble check. (If you're using this system, it's much easier to think of tumbling as costing extra squares of movement rather than actually changing your speed.) Ember has now paid a total of 5 squares of movement (out of the 8 allotted to her for her speed of 40 feet).
- Assuming that check succeeds, Ember now moves from a threatened square (adjacent to the orc), which requires a DC 15 Tumble check and costs twice normal (or 1 extra square of movement). She's now paid a total of 7 squares of movement.
- Finally, Ember moves one last square, ending up 15 feet from the orc on the opposite side from where she began. She's not leaving a threatened square, so she doesn't use Tumble or pay any extra movement. Ember has paid for 8 squares (40 feet) of movement, and has covered a linear distance of 5 squares (25 feet).

Can you tumble during a charge to avoid an attack of opportunity?

As per the rules on page 27 of the *RC*, you can tumble during a charge as long as you continue to meet all the other criteria for making the charge.

Does the benefit of jumping down (from the Jump skill) and the falling from Tumble stack?

The Jump check and the Tumble check to avoid taking falling damage do stack. So if a character makes both, he/she would effectively reduce the distance fallen by 20 feet as far as damage is concerned.

In my campaign, a rogue (with the Tumble skill) who has been knocked prone uses it to instantly stand up again to move out of the way. When using the Tumble, does she incur an attack of opportunity? Is there a Tumble DC check needed to get out of the threatened area without incurring an attack of opportunity?

A character can use Tumble to stand up without provoking an attack of opportunity only if they have an ability that allows them to do so. Back on Your Feet and Nimble Stand, skill tricks out of *CS*, are two ways a character can do this. Using either of these skill tricks does not require any Tumble check and does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Are the effects of tumbling and the effects of hindering terrain stacked? That is, if someone is tumbling in light forest (sparse forest, which has light undergrowth and the squares costs 2 points of movement, thus raising the Tumble DC by 2) does a square cost 4 points, or 2?

Tumbling does not normally bypass the penalties caused by moving through rough terrain. So with this example, it would cost the rogue 4 points of movement to tumble through each square of rough terrain unless she wanted to take the -10 penalty to tumble at normal speed. In that case, the rogue would apply only the movement penalty of the rough terrain and use 2 points of movement for each square of rough terrain through which she tumbled.

If a character has 5 ranks in the Tumble skill, he gains a benefit to AC when fighting defensively and in total defense. Is there any benefit when using the feat Combat Expertise?

Tumble does not give any bonus to the Combat Expertise feat. However, keep in mind that the bonus from Combat Expertise stacks with the bonus from fighting defensively, which can be enhanced if you have 5 or more ranks in Tumble.

Feats

Page 39 of BE it states that exalted feats are supernatural abilities and not extraordinary abilities like other feats. Does that mean that I lose the benefits from my exalted feats in an antimagic field?

Correct. Unless specifically stated otherwise, the benefits granted by exalted feats are considered supernatural abilities and thus don't function in areas of antimagic.

Some of the special abilities granted by the Vow of Poverty (and described under "Voluntary Poverty" on pages 29–31) are specifically described as extraordinary (such as the natural armor bonus gained at 8th level). These abilities are retained in areas of antimagic, even if other abilities from the same feat (or from other exalted feats) are not.

Can any of these feats (Psionic Shot, Psionic Fist, Psionic Weapon) be attached to powers or spells? For example touch spells/powers/effects? Ranged touch spells/powers/effects? If so, what type of damage is it?

In general, the rule of thumb for such things is that the most recent effect applied takes the place of any previous effect, unless specifically noted otherwise (such as the hunter of the dead's smite undead ability, which is specifically noted to work with his smite evil ability on the same swing). *But*, a DM might decide to allow two effects to work together if it seems reasonable for her game, even if not specifically noted.

Are psionic feats available to creatures with a power point reserve who can't manifest psionic powers (such as an élan fighter)?

Yes. Effectively, there are three ways of meeting the basic requirement of all psionic feats:

- Ability to manifest a psionic power;
- Ability to manifest a psi-like ability;
- A power point reserve.

A creature that meets at least one of those requirements can select psionic feats.

How does a reserve feat (CM) work with spontaneous casters since they could have a *fireball* as a known 3rd-level spell but they might use that spell slot for a different spell?

As long as the spontaneous caster knows an appropriate spell and has at least one unused spell slot of that spell's level or higher, he gains the full benefit of the reserve feat.

A sorcerer with the Fiery Burst feat who knows *fireball* can use its primary benefit as long as he has at least one unused spell slot of 3rd level or higher.

The reserve feats (CM) allow you to use their ability as long as you have a spell of a particular type and minimum level prepared. So if I have a maximized *fireball* prepared, does that mean the Fiery Burst feat deals 6d6 damage since it is now in a 6th-level spell slot?

No. Even though a metamagic feat changes the level of the slot occupied by the spell, it doesn't actually change the spell's level (except for the Heighten Spell feat, or any other effect that specifically changes the spell's actual level). The reserve feats care about the spell's actual level, not the spell slot it occupies.

A sorcerer needs at least a full-round action to cast any spell modified by a metamagic feat. Does this mean the spell

takes effect in the following round, or does it go off at the end of the round in which it is cast?

Despite the similarity in wording, a spell that requires a "full-round action" to cast (such as that required by a metamagic-affected sorcerer spell) isn't the same as a spell with a "1-round casting time" (such as that of a *summon monster* spell). The former takes your entire turn to complete, while the latter takes your entire turn as well as the time between the end of your turn and the start of your next turn.

A full-round action, such as the run action or the withdraw action, requires an entire round to complete but ends on the same turn that it began (although you can split it between two consecutive turns, as described under the "Start/Complete Full-Round Action" entry on page 142 in the *PH*). Thus, a spell that requires a full-round action to cast is completed at the end of the caster's turn.

If a spontaneous spellcaster applies two metamagic feats to a spell does the casting time increase to 2 rounds?

Applying additional metamagic feats to a spell does not further increase the casting time of the spell. A sorcerer casting a still, silent *fireball* requires only a single full-round action to cast the spell.

Do Empower Spell and Maximize Spell affect d20 rolls made as part of a spell's effect (such as an attack roll or dispel check)?

No. Any attack roll, saving throw, skill check, dispel check, or any other d20 roll required to adjudicate a spell's success or failure is not considered a "variable, numeric effect" of the spell and thus is unaffected by feats such as Empower Spell or Maximize Spell.

Back in *Dragon Magazine* #308 you suggested that a sorcerer could make use of the Heighten Spell and Improved Counterspell feats to counter just about any spell. A sorcerer couldn't use any spell modified by metamagic as a counterspell, could he? A sorcerer needs a full-round action to cast such a spell, and you couldn't prepare such an action, could you?

The Sage didn't do his homework on that question and you caught him. A sorcerer needs at least a full-round action to cast any spell modified with a metamagic feat, and that makes the spell useless for counterspelling. As you point out, you can't ready a full-round action and you must ready a counterspell ahead of time.

A sorcerer can work around this problem in a couple of ways. The Spell Preparation feat from the *FRCS* and the old *TB* book let sorcerers and bards prepare spells and cast them with their normal casting time, even with metamagic feats applied. The Reactive Counterspell feat from *Mag* allows you to counter a spell without preparing an action. A sorcerer or bard using this feat can use Improved Counterspell and Heighten Spell to counter a spell, but need a full-round action to do so.

If my wizard applies Energy Admixture (CAr, page 78) and Maximize Spell to the same spell, does he get a spell that deals double its maximized damage (maximum normal damage in two different energy types)? If he also applied the Twin Spell feat (CAr, page 84) to the same spell would it duplicate the entire effect?

Yes and yes. Assuming your character can cast 13th-level spells—the slot required by a 2nd-level spell affected by these metamagic feats—a *scorching ray* so affected would create two sets of three rays each, with each ray dealing 24 points of fire damage (4d6, maximized) and 24 points of a second energy type (as appropriate for your Energy Substitution feat), for a grand total of 288 points of damage . . . assuming all six rays hit their target.

Can I use my normal 3rd-level *fireball* to counterspell a *fireball* spell to which the caster applied a metamagic feat, or would I need to use a version of the spell with the same metamagic feats applied to it?

Your normal *fireball* works just fine to counter a metamagic-affected *fireball* (and vice versa). As stated on page 170 of the *PH*, metamagic feats “are not taken into account when determining whether a spell can be countered.”

This also applies when using the Improved Counterspell feat (*PH* 95): Only each spell’s original level is used when determining the success of the counterspell attempt. A heightened, maximized *fireball* still counts only as a 3rd-level spell (both for the caster and the counterspelling character).

Can I counterspell a quickened spell? What if I use the Reactive Counterspell feat (*PG* 42)?

Yes. A quickened spell isn’t any more difficult to identify than a normal spell, despite its reduced casting time. As long as you’ve readied an action to counterspell (or you have the Reactive Counterspell feat, which allows you to counterspell without having readied an action), you can counterspell a quickened spell as normal.

Can a warlock apply Empower Spell-Like Ability or Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*MM* 303–304) to his *eldritch blast*? What level would he have to be to do so?

Thanks to the official errata for *CAR* (which established that an *eldritch blast* is “the equivalent of a 1st-level spell”), the answer to this question is yes.

The chart on page 304 of the *MM* describes the caster level required to empower or quicken a spell-like ability. A warlock needs to have a caster level of 6th to empower his *eldritch blast*, or a caster level of 10th to quicken it.

If the warlock applies an *eldritch essence* or *blast shape* invocation to his *eldritch blast*, the blast’s level equivalent (and thus the required caster level) increases. Empowering an *eldritch cone* (the equivalent of a 5th-level spell) requires the warlock to be 14th level, while quickening a *frightful blast* (the equivalent of a 2nd-level spell) requires a 12th-level warlock.

I noticed that the Ability Focus feat in *SS* is listed as a general feat instead of a monstrous feat. To me, that implies that some class abilities are considered special attacks. Which qualify, if this isn’t a typo?

You can use the Ability Focus feat with pretty much anything that you can use to hurt or hinder a foe and that allows a saving throw. A short list includes the monk’s stunning attack, the assassin’s death attack, and the bard’s fascinate ability. Things that don’t allow saving throws, such as sneak attacks, aren’t affected.

If a warlock selects Ability Focus (*MM* 303) and chooses for it to affect his *eldritch blast*, does it still apply when he uses a *blast shape* or *eldritch essence* invocation?

Yes. Whether the warlock is using a *frightful blast*, an *eldritch cone*, or an *utterdark eldritch doom*, Ability Focus (eldritch blast) increases the save DC by +2.

Does the Ability Focus feat (*MM* 303) apply to spell-like abilities?

Yes, although each selection of the feat applies only to a single spell-like ability. A dretch could select Ability Focus (*scare*) or Ability Focus (*stinking cloud*).

Can a character with Acrobatic Strike (*PH2* 71) claim the +4 bonus against multiple targets in the same round if she uses Tumble to avoid attacks of opportunity from more than one enemy?

Yes, as long as the attack roll takes place before the end of your current turn.

For example, a dervish (*CW* 26) could gain the +4 bonus on attack rolls against each enemy that she attacked during a dervish dance, as long as she had successfully used Tumble to avoid attacks of opportunity from that enemy during that turn.

Can a character with the Adaptive Flanker feat (*PH2* 73) and a spiked chain flank an enemy all by himself (since he can choose to count as occupying the square opposite the enemy as well as his own square)?

No. This feat doesn’t let you get around the basic rule of flanking, which is that you need an ally to accomplish it—it just lets you pretend to occupy an extra space when figuring out if you’re actually flanking an enemy with your ally.

If a character uses the Adaptive Style feat (*ToB* 28) after he has expended some of his readied maneuvers, does he choose new readied maneuvers equal to the maximum number he can ready, or equal to the number he hasn’t yet expended?

Using the Adaptive Style feat completely resets the character’s readied maneuvers, making them all available for use. If you’re a crusader, you also reset your granted maneuvers.

Can epic-level characters benefit from the Ancestral Relic feat (*BE*), and if so, what is the maximum relic value for such characters?

Since the rules are silent on the issue, extending the chart beyond 20th level would be purely up to the DM. As long as you’re playing epic-level characters, though, the Sage sees no harm in allowing the character to continue to benefit from this feat.

As far as the maximum relic value goes, note that this value is exactly one-half the expected character wealth for that level. Thus, if one were to extend the chart beyond 20th level, the Sage would advise continuing that progression by consulting “Creating Characters Above 20th Level” on page 209 of the *DMG*. For example, a 21st-level PC with the feat should have a maximum relic value equal to one-half of 975,000 gp, or 487,500 gp.

If a character with Arcane Thesis (*PH2* 74) applies multiple metamagic feats to the chosen spell, is the spell’s slot reduced by one level, or by one level per metamagic feat applied?

Arcane Thesis reduces the total spell level of a metamagic-affected spell by one, regardless of the number of metamagic

feats applied. An empowered (+2 levels), still (+1 level), silent (+1 level) *fireball* would be 6th level.

Can the Arcane Thesis feat (PH2 74) reduce a spell's level below the normal level for the spell?

No.

If I have the Arcane Thesis feat for the *fireball* spell and memorize it using Energy Substitution (cold), what level spell slot does the "*frostball*" use?

The intent is to make adding metamagic feats to your favorite spell easier, not to reduce the level of the spell. In the Sage's opinion, the Arcane Thesis feat will not allow you to reduce the spell slot for a spell lower than the spell's level. So the "*frostball*" discussed above would still use a 3rd-level spell slot.

What effect does the Augment Healing feat (CD 79) have on *lesser vigor* (CD 186) and similar spells?

Augment Healing adds twice the spell's level to the total healing it provides. The simplest method is to have the spell apply the extra healing to the first round of fast healing. Thus, *lesser vigor* (a 1st-level spell) would cure an extra 2 hp of damage in the first round, for a total of 3 hit points. Each round thereafter it would heal the normal 1 hp of damage. *Mass lesser vigor* (a 3rd-level spell) would cure an extra 6 hp of damage to each target in the first round (for a total of 7 hit points), and would heal 1 hp of damage each round thereafter as normal.

Can you use the Chain Spell metamagic feat on a spell with the ray effect type?

To use the Chain Spell metamagic feat, the spell you are applying it to must have a target entry in its spell description. Most rays do not have a target entry and cannot have the feat applied to them.

The Cleave feat states that the extra attack is "at the same bonus as the attack that dropped the previous creature." Does this really mean that all bonuses and penalties on the first attack roll—aid another, smite evil, flanking, true strike, and so on—apply to the second?

The "bonus" referred to by Cleave means "base attack bonus," not "total bonus." If a 6th-level fighter drops a foe with his second attack, he makes the extra attack using his base attack bonus -5 (the same "bonus" as he used for his second attack).

If you aren't flanking the new foe, it's absurd to claim that you'd get a +2 bonus on the attack roll just because you were flanking the dropped foe. Any lasting bonuses or penalties—such as from the *bleed* spell, a high or low Strength score, being fatigued, or the like—apply to the extra attack just as they would to any other attack you make.

When a character with 0 hp and the Cleave feat drops a foe with an attack, does he drop to -1 hp before or after he makes the extra attack? What if he has Great Cleave?

The extra attack granted by the Cleave feat counts as part of the same action used to drop the foe. Therefore, the character can make the extra attack before he drops to -1 hp. If this extra attack also drops a foe and the character has Great Cleave, the additional extra attack is still part of the same action and can be made before the character drops to -1 hp.

If an attack of opportunity drops a foe, can the attacker then make a follow-up Cleave attack?

Yes. The Cleave feat doesn't say anything about the attack that triggers it having to be made on the attacker's turn.

The Clinging Breath feat (Dr 67) states it can be applied multiple times to the same breath weapon, and each time it increases the duration of the breath by 1 round. How does this affect the time until the dragon breathes again? Does the dragon have to take the feat more than once for this to work?

A dragon with Clinging Breath can choose for its breath weapon to cling for 1 or more rounds after it is used. This number must be chosen at the time the breath weapon is used. Each round of clinging damage adds +1 to the number of rounds the dragon must wait before using the breath weapon again. For example, a dragon that chose for its breath weapon to cling for 3 rounds would roll 1d4+3 to determine the number of rounds it must wait before breathing again.

The dragon need not take the feat more than once to add more than 1 round of clinging damage. In fact, it's not possible to take the feat more than once (a standard rule for feats unless stated otherwise).

When fighting with two weapons, does the Combat Expertise feat apply to both weapons individually or together? For example, do I take a -2 on attack rolls for both weapons to add +2 Armor Class? Or do I take -2 on attack rolls for both weapons for a +4 bonus to Armor Class?

You get the AC bonus once. The attack penalty applies to all attacks you make until your next turn. If you use two weapons to make extra attacks, the penalty applies to the attacks from both weapons. It also applies to any attacks of opportunity you make before your next turn.

When using Combat Expertise or Power Attack, does the penalty you take also apply to opposed attack rolls (such as when you are involved in a disarm or sunder attempt)? What about on grapple checks?

Yes and no. Anything described as an attack roll (even an opposed attack roll) can be affected by Combat Expertise or Power Attack. A grapple check isn't an attack roll, so you can't use Combat Expertise or Power Attack in conjunction with it.

Does the Deadeye Shot feat (PH2 78) trigger when a particular ally's strike is successful or when any ally's strike versus the named enemy is successful? If the ally misses his attack, does the enemy use its normal AC?

Your readied ranged attack is triggered by any ally striking the particular target.

If the ally misses the attack, your readied ranged attack is not triggered. Since you're not making the ranged attack, the target's AC against that attack is moot.

Deflect Arrows requires that you be "aware" of the attack. What qualifies as "aware?" Hearing the attack? Hearing and pinpointing the attack? (And what's the DC to Listen for a twanging bowstring?) Seeing the arrow just as it leaves an invisible attacker's possession or just as it exits an area of total darkness?

In general, any time you see the phrase "aware of the attack" it simply means you must not be flat-footed against the

attack. Hearing an invisible bowstring isn't enough if you can't see the attacker.

In the case of Deflect Arrows, the phrase is redundant (since it's followed by "and not flat-footed").

Can a cleric with Divine Metamagic feat apply a metamagic effect to a spell whose level would ordinarily be too high to gain the metamagic effect from his metamagic feat?

Yes—applying a metamagic effect in this manner has no effect on the spell's level. For example, a 9th-level cleric with Divine Metamagic (Empower Spell) could spend four turn/rebuke undead attempts to empower a flame strike spell, even though empowered *flame strike* would normally require an 8th-level spell slot to cast.

Can the turning abilities granted by the Air, Earth, Fire, Plant, and Water domains be used to power Divine Metamagic (CD 80) or other divine feats?

No. Unless stated otherwise, a divine feat requires (and can be powered only by) the ability to turn or rebuke undead. Some feats (such as Elemental Smiting, CD 81) use elemental turning (rather than undead turning); these are specific exceptions to the general rule.

Can you use the Divine Metamagic feat to create a scroll or wand with the metamagic effect without changing the spell level? If so, how much would it cost to make?

You can use Divine Metamagic in item creation; the cost to create the item is just as if you used the regular metamagic feat. For instance, using your Divine Metamagic feat to create a *scroll of empowered flame strike* costs as much as a scroll of a 7th-level spell (which is what an empowered *flame strike* is). The act of creating the scroll or wand expends three daily uses of your turn/rebuke undead ability, just as if you had cast the empowered *flame strike spell* using Divine Metamagic, but you don't have to expend a 7th-level spell slot (only the normal, 5th-level *flame strike*).

Do you need to have the specific metamagic feat you wish to apply to a spell to use the Divine Metamagic feat? For example, to quicken a spell with Divine Metamagic do you need to have the Quicken Spell feat?

Yes. This was clarified by the official errata to CD published in September, 2004, (new text underlined): "When you take this feat, choose a metamagic feat that you have. This feat applies only to that metamagic feat." You can find all official errata at <www.wizards.com/dnd>.

Does the ability to spontaneously cast domain spells granted by the Domain Spontaneity feat (CD) fulfill the spell requirement of the reserve feats from CM?

Not technically. Since you don't have a list of spells known, only a list of spells prepared and the ability to cast some spells spontaneously, having the ability to spontaneously cast domain spells that fulfill the requirements for reserve feats does not fulfill the reserve feat requirements.

That said, there's probably no harm in allowing it, and an unflinching DM confident in his ability to challenge you at every turn can have no problem hand-waving the technicality away.

When you create an astral construct using an Ectopic Form feat (Complete Psionic 50), does this replace the

normal menu choices allowed when creating an astral construct?

Yes. For example, a character with Ectopic Form (Agile Loper) can use the astral construct power either to create an agile looper astral construct, which uses the base astral construct statistics adjusted as listed for the agile looper entry of that level, or to create a normal astral construct (selecting options from the menus as appropriate).

Can I use the Expanded Knowledge feat (XPH 46) to select a power from another class's list if it's also on my class's list at a different level?

Yes. You'd manifest the power at the selected level, not the normal level for your class. For example, if a 5th-level psion used Expanded Knowledge to select *body adjustment* from the 2nd-level list of psychic warrior powers, he'd manifest it as a 2nd-level power, paying 3 power points to do so.

The vigor series of spells (CD) raise an interesting question. Does the built-in maximum duration of each spell limitation override the effect of the Extend Spell feat?

Yes. Extend Spell still increases the spell's duration, but only up to the spell's listed maximum duration. Use either the normal maximum duration or the doubled duration, whichever is less. If a 7th-level druid used Extend Spell on her *vigor* spell, the duration could not increase beyond 25 rounds.

Can you take spells from spell lists other than your own with the Extra Spell feat (CAR 79)?

The Extra Spell feat allows you to choose a new spell, but it does not remove the restrictions of how you would normally pick your spells—so they must be picked from your own spell list.

Can you use *sanctum* to pick a higher level spell than normal with the Extra Spell feat?

No, you would need to use your class's spellcasting progression when picking the new spell learned via the Extra Spell feat, not including the benefit of the *sanctum* spell or similar effects.

Page 282 of the DMG says an item that requires a specific class or alignment to use cuts the cost of the item by 30%. The Extraordinary Artisan feat (ECS 53) says when determining the cost when creating an item, reduce the base price by 25%. Do these reductions stack?

Effectively, yes. Extraordinary Artisan cares only about the actual base price of the item, however the DM has determined it. It doesn't care how that value was determined.

If the DM determined that a new magic item would normally have a price of 10,000 gp, but that by adding a restriction on its use its appropriate price dropped to 7,000 gp, a character would normally have to spend 3,500 gp of raw materials in order to create that item. A character with Extraordinary Artisan would spend raw materials as if the base price were 25% lower than 7,000 gp (or 5,250 gp), which would result in only 2,625 gp of raw material cost.

Remember that the DMG only provides pricing guidelines, not strict rules. The sidebar on page 282 suggests a few rough adjustments that might help in finding an appropriate price, but whenever you create a new magic item, be sure its price is reasonable based on comparison to other magic items of similar power level and utility. The DM is strongly encouraged to adjust the price of any player-created magic item to ensure that

it is appropriate for the campaign. This is particularly true of player-created items with a restriction on who can use them, since that restriction often isn't significant in play. (Creating a magic rod that works only for good-aligned characters doesn't really prevent it from being passed around in the party as needed, so it probably shouldn't result in much—if any—price reduction.)

If I use a reach weapon to strike someone who has activated the Fiery Ki Defense feat (PH2 79), do I still take the 1d6 points of fire damage?

Yes. While this feat's effect is similar in many ways to *fire shield*, it does not include that specific exception.

Does using the Fiery Ki Defense feat (PH2, 79) also activate the Fiery Fist feat (PH2 79), since your entire body is covered in flames, including hands and feet?

No. Each feat must be activated separately.

The Holy Ki Strike feat (BE 44) lists “Ki strike (holy)” as a prerequisite, but that ability doesn't exist in the book. Is that a typo or is it in a different book?

This looks like an error, since no such ability exists. Sanctify Ki Strike (page 46), a prerequisite for Holy Ki Strike, lists “Ki strike (lawful)” as a prerequisite. This suggests that Holy Ki Strike's prerequisite should be the same. While no official errata for *BE* exists, this seems like a reasonable conclusion for DMs who use the feat.

The Improved Manyshot feat appears to have absolutely no benefit over Manyshot, and I need clarification. Manyshot has a maximum of four arrows at base attack +16 and higher. Improved Manyshot limits the number of arrows only by your base attack bonus: two arrows plus one arrow for every 5 points of base attack bonus above +6. Page 6 of the *EL* says base attack bonus does not increase after level 20. That means the maximum base attack bonus any character could possibly have is +20. With a +20 base attack bonus, Improved Manyshot is still limited to four arrows.

Your epic attack bonus improves your base attack bonus for all purposes except your number of attacks with the full attack action. Add your base attack bonus and your epic attack bonus when using Improved Manyshot. If, for example, you have a base attack bonus of +20 and an epic attack bonus of +10, you can shoot six arrows as a standard action.

If an ultimate magus (CM) with the ability to cast 9th-level spells as both a wizard and a sorcerer takes the Improved Spell Capacity feat (EL), does he gain a 10th-level spell slot as a wizard, as a sorcerer, or in both classes?

The Improved Spell Capacity feat applies to only a single class. You'd choose to improve either your wizard spellcasting or your sorcerer spellcasting with each selection of the feat.

If I use Mighty Throw (ToB 73) or another maneuver that allows me to trip a foe, does the Improved Trip feat grant me an extra attack against that opponent?

Yes. The Improved Trip feat applies any time you trip a foe in melee combat, even if that trip comes from a special power.

Is the force attack produced by the Invisible Needle reserve feat (CM) actually invisible? If so, does that mean the target is flat-footed and the attack gains a +2 bonus on

the attack roll? Nothing in the feat's description indicates this, but the name of the feat suggests it.

The feat description is unclear as to the precise visual effect accompanying its primary benefit, so on that topic you're free to decide either way. Regardless of your decision on the visual effect, however, the force attack doesn't gain any benefits of invisibility (unless the attacker himself is invisible, of course). The visibility or invisibility of a magical effect doesn't have any bearing on whether the defender is flat-footed. A visible attacker who casts a spell without a visible effect doesn't render his target flat-footed.

Note: For a discussion of the visual effects of spells, you might consult the *Design & Development* website article: Proud Nails Feedback.

Can a monk take Improved Natural Attack (MM 304) to improve his unarmed strike?

Yes. As stated on page 41 of the *PH*, a monk's unarmed strike “is treated as both a manufactured weapon and a natural weapon for the purpose of spells and effects that enhance or improve either” which includes feats such as Improved Natural Attack.

Barring multiclassing, the earliest a monk could take this feat would be at 6th level (due to the base attack bonus prerequisite), at which point her unarmed strike damage would improve from 1d8 to 2d6 (which represents an average increase of +2.5 points of damage). The same monk at 20th level would deal 4d8 points of damage with her unarmed strike.

Suppose a character with the Improved Trip feat uses the Bluff skill to successfully feint in combat and uses his next melee attack to trip the duped opponent. It seems clear that the character ignores that opponent's Dexterity bonus to Armor Class for the touch attack to initiate the trip. Assuming that the trip attempt is successful, Improved Trip provides an additional attack as if the character hadn't used her attack for the trip attempt. Does this mean that the character continues to ignore the tripped opponent's Dexterity bonus to Armor Class for the additional attack granted by Improved Trip feat? How do other “next attack only” effects (like the true strike spell) work with the Improved Trip feat?

In each case, the initial attack in trip attempt is the “next attack,” not the extra attack that you get from the Improved Trip feat. That is, if you've made a successful feint, your foe is denied any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class when you make the initial melee touch attack to start your trip attempt, but not when you attack him after a successful trip. Likewise, if you use the true strike spell, the +20 attack bonus applies to the touch attack, not to the free attack.

The Improved Trip feat description says that you get an extra attack after a successful trip attempt “as though you hadn't used your attack for the trip attempt.” That, however, is just a shorthand way of explaining what part of your normal attack routine you use for the extra attack; it's not meant to imply that you enter some kind of strange time warp when you make trip attacks.

Both *CAr* and *PG* include a feat named Innate Spell, but the prerequisites and uses per day differ. Which version is correct?

Unless stated otherwise, any time that a rule appears in two different sourcebooks (other than the *PH*, *DMG*, and *MM*), the most current sourcebook is considered correct and all previous

sources are superseded. A book's credits page lists its publication date (typically near the bottom of the page).

In this case, *CAr* (published in November 2004) supersedes *PG* (published in March 2004), and thus its version of Innate Spell should be considered the official version.

Can I apply the Innate Spell feat to a spell improved by another metamagic feat?

No. Innate Spell applies only to actual spells, not to spells affected by metamagic feats and the like. Just because you're capable of applying, say, the Empower Spell feat to a *fireball* spell, that doesn't make "empowered *fireball*" a spell. The spell is still "*fireball*" and thus Innate Spell applies only to the normal version of that spell.

If a character uses the Linked Power feat (*Complete Psionic* 63) to manifest powers from two different classes, which manifester level should he use to determine the maximum number of power points he can spend?

Use your highest manifester level as the maximum total of power points you can spend on the linked powers. Of course, each power still uses the manifester level from that class as its limit.

When do I activate Mad Foam Rager (*PH2* 80)—before or after I know the effect that I'm delaying?

After. Effectively, activating the feat "interrupts" the effect, delaying it until the end of your next turn.

Does activating Mad Foam Rager (*PH2* 80) allow me to delay rolling a saving throw (which might let me activate some effect that grants a bonus on the save)?

No. The feat doesn't delay the save, just the effect of the save's success or failure.

If an enemy cleric casts *sound burst* next to you, you'd roll the save normally, then choose whether or not to activate Mad Foam Rager to delay the effect of the spell until the end of your next turn.

The Mage Slayer feat (*CAr*, page 81) states that acquiring this feat drops your caster level by 4. Is this only for arcane caster levels or also for divine caster levels? If it also applies to divine caster levels, why? Why would a paladin or cleric be less in tune with his or her deity by being better at attacking arcane spellcasters?

The drawback of the Mage Slayer feat applies to the caster level for all spells, both arcane and divine (and to spell-like abilities). Despite the feat's name, the benefits apply against both arcane and divine spellcasters—this feat isn't specifically intended for use by divine casters against arcane casters.

One of the players in a campaign that I run took the Manyshot feat from the *EL*. His character gets three attacks if he takes the full attack action, from a base attack bonus of +6/+1 and the Rapid Shot feat. He claims that with Manyshot he can fire six arrows as a full-round action. I say he can't, since the feat applies only to standard actions. I think that the feat allows him to fire two shots during a standard action as opposed to the usual single shot that is allowed. Does Manyshot apply to full attack as well as standard actions? I would greatly appreciate it if you could shed some light on the situation.

You're right about Manyshot. It allows the character to shoot two or more arrows as a standard action. It does not allow

the character to fire two or more arrows in place of a single attack. Standard actions can't be combined with full attacks, nor are they part of a full attack.

The example character has a base attack bonus of +6; with the Rapid Shot and Manyshot feats, the character has the following options:

- Fire one arrow as a standard action (at +6).
- Fire two arrows as a standard action (at +2—the second printing of the *EL* says the penalty for Manyshot is -4, not -2 as stated in the first printing).
- Fire two arrows as a full-round action (+6/+1).
- Fire three arrows as a full-round action (+4/+4/-1, with Rapid Shot)

What is considered as "precision-based damage" for the purpose of the Manyshot feat?

Unfortunately, "precision-based" isn't a term defined in the rules, so this answer relies on extrapolation from the example given in the feat's description (sneak attack damage).

Comparing the language of sneak attack with the language of various other special abilities that increase damage, two abilities stand out as being extremely similar: skirmish and sudden strike (appearing in the scout and ninja classes, respectively, from *CAAd*). All three abilities require the attacker to strike a "vital spot." More importantly, they rely on some level of precise visual perception of the target: both sneak attack and sudden strike don't apply if the target has concealment, and skirmish says that you "must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot."

Whenever extrapolating in this manner, it's best to err on the side of being conservative. When in doubt, the answer should be "no, this doesn't count as precision-based damage."

Can an Order of the Bow initiate (*CW* 68) use Manyshot (*PH* 97) in conjunction with his ranged precision class feature?

No. Both of these options require a standard action to use, and thus can't be used in conjunction with one another.

When you use Manyshot, does your Strength bonus from a mighty composite bow apply to each arrow's damage?

Yes, as would the enhancement bonus from a magic bow.

Can you use Manyshot with a sneak attack? If so, do all the arrows deal sneak attack damage?

You can sneak attack with Manyshot. If you do, only one arrow in the volley deals sneak attack damage.

Does the bonus from Melee Weapon Mastery (*PH2* 81) stack with bonuses from Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization?

Yes. A character with Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword), and Melee Weapon Mastery (slashing) would have a +3 bonus on attack rolls and a +4 bonus on damage rolls with longswords, and a +2 bonus on attack and damage rolls with all other slashing weapons.

If a weapon deals two different types of damage (such as a dagger), could I take Melee Weapon Mastery (*PH2* 81) for both types of damage? And if I did, would both bonuses apply when using a weapon that dealt both of those types of damage simultaneously (such as a morningstar)?

Yes and no. A character with Weapon Focus (morningstar) and Weapon Specialization (morningstar) could take Melee Weapon Mastery with either bludgeoning weapons or piercing weapons (since the morningstar deals both types of damage), or he could take it once for each.

The feat's bonus wouldn't stack with itself, however, even if the weapon deals both types of damage simultaneously.

Does the Pierce Magical Protection feat remove Armor Class granted by your new Dexterity when you have *cat's grace* cast on you?

No. The Pierce Magical Protection feat eliminates only the Armor Class granted by a spell. *Cat's grace* is granting a higher Dexterity score and that higher Dexterity score gives a higher Armor Class. For the Pierce Magical Protection feat to eliminate Armor Class, the spell must directly give a bonus to Armor Class, such as *mage armor* or *shield*.

Can I use Power Attack when fighting with two weapons? How does it work if my off-hand weapon is light?

You can use Power Attack or similar feats when fighting with two weapons. Whenever you choose to use Power Attack (or Combat Expertise, or any similar effect that applies a penalty on your attack rolls), the penalty applies on all attacks with both weapons made until the start of your next turn, even if the benefit doesn't apply to one of your weapons.

For example, a fighter wielding a longsword and short sword who chooses to take a -2 penalty on attack rolls from his Power Attack feat applies that penalty to all his longsword attacks and all his short sword attacks until the start of his next turn. However, the bonus on damage rolls applies only to his longsword attacks, since a light weapon can't benefit from Power Attack (see page 98 in the *PH*). This can make Power Attack a poor choice for a fighter using two weapons.

Does the bonus to caster level from the Practiced Spellcaster feat (from *CAr* and *CD*) apply before or after other caster level bonuses (such as those from the Good or Healing domains)?

The bonus from Practiced Spellcaster applies whenever it would be most beneficial to the caster. A 4th-level cleric/4th-level fighter with the Healing domain and Practiced Spellcaster would cast Conjuration (Healing) spells as a 9th-level caster (base caster level 4th, +4 from Practiced Spellcaster, +1 from the Healing domain). A 4th-level cleric/4th-level rogue with Practiced Spellcaster who activates a *bead of karma* (from a strand of *prayer beads*) would cast her spells as a 12th-level caster (base 4, +4 from Practiced Spellcaster, +4 from *bead of karma*).

How does Practiced Spellcaster interact with the wild magic class feature of the wild mage (from *CAr*)?

The -3 penalty and +1d6 bonus to the wild mage's caster level are applied as a single step in the process of determining the wild mage's caster level. Since Practiced Spellcaster's bonus is always applied when it is most beneficial to the character (see previous answer), a wild mage with Practiced Spellcaster would typically apply the wild magic class feature first (subtracting 3 and adding 1d6 to her caster level) and then add the Practiced Spellcaster benefit, up to a maximum value equal to her character level.

For example, if a 5th-level wizard/4th-level wild mage with Practiced Spellcaster rolled a 1 on the 1d6 bonus to her caster level, her caster level for that spell would be 9th (base 9th, -3

from wild magic penalty, +1 from wild magic bonus, +4 from Practiced Spellcaster up to a maximum equal to her character level). If she rolled a 6, her caster level would be 12th (base 9th, -3 from wild magic penalty, +6 from wild magic bonus; the Practiced Spellcaster bonus would not apply since it would increase her caster level above her character level).

On the other hand, imagine a wild mage whose caster level (before applying the effects of the wild magic class feature) is less than her character level, such as a wild mage with levels of rogue or other non-spellcasting class. She might well choose to apply the Practiced Spellcaster bonus first, before applying the wild magic modifiers. A rogue 4/wizard 5/wild mage 4 would have a base caster level of 9th before any other modifiers are applied. Adding Practiced Spellcaster's bonus would increase this to 13th, at which point the penalty and bonus from wild magic would be applied. The Sage recommends that players averse to frequently recalculating caster level avoid playing a character with this combination, as it is likely to cause headaches.

I have a sorcerer 1/wizard 3 with the Practiced Spellcaster feat affecting his sorcerer spells, which gives him a sorcerer caster level of 4. He gains a level in ultimate magnus. Which class counts as the lowest level arcane class for purposes of the +1 spellcasting bonus?

The ultimate magnus allows you to add a caster level and spells known to your class with the lowest caster level. In this example, your wizard caster level would be 3 and your sorcerer level would be 4, so you would add the bonus to your wizard class.

Can other feats like Precise Shot and Rapid Shot be used in connection with Manyshot?

Precise Shot, yes; Rapid Shot, no. The latter requires the full attack action, and using Manyshot is a standard action.

If a 1st-level character takes the Precocious Apprentice feat, can he cast 2nd-level spells for the purposes of qualifying for a prestige class or meeting the prerequisites of a feat?

In the Sage's opinion, the Precocious Apprentice feat would not help you qualify for a prestige class or feat because it gives you a *chance* at casting a 2nd-level spell, not the inherent ability to cast 2nd-level spells.

Can you use the Psionic Weapon feat with a thrown melee weapon? What about a soulknife that throws his mind blade?

No. The Psionic Weapon feat functions only for melee attacks. A thrown melee weapon is a ranged attack.

Does Quick Draw (*PH* page 98) allow you to sheathe a weapon as a free action?

No. Quick Draw clearly states that it allows you to "draw a weapon as a free action." Nowhere does it suggest anything about sheathing a weapon more quickly than normal (a move action).

You might be confusing Quick Draw with the ability of any character with a base attack bonus of +1 or better to draw or sheathe a weapon as a free action as part of movement (*PH* 142). While these functions are similar and overlap to some extent, they are different.

Can a character with Quick Draw and a base attack bonus of +6 or better make a melee attack with one weapon and a ranged attack with another weapon in the same round? What if the melee weapon requires two hands to wield?

Yes. There's nothing inherent in the full attack action that requires all the attacks to be made as the same kind of attack or with the same kind of weapon.

A character with a base attack bonus of +6 or better holding a longsword, for example, could make a melee attack with the longsword (using his full base attack bonus), drop the longsword (a free action), use Quick Draw to draw a dagger (another free action), then throw the dagger (using his base attack bonus -5). If the character had both hands free (for instance, if he didn't carry a light or heavy shield in his off hand), he could even use Quick Draw to draw a bow (free action), draw and nock an arrow (free action) and then shoot the bow (using his base attack bonus -5).

This situation is actually improved if the melee weapon is a two-handed weapon. A character can hold a two-handed weapon in one hand; he just can't attack with it while it's held like that. Thus, he wouldn't even have to drop the weapon in order to draw and throw the dagger. If Krusk the 6th-level barbarian had Quick Draw, he could swing his greataxe (using his full base attack bonus), then leave the axe in his off-hand while drawing a javelin with his primary hand (free action), and finally throw the javelin (using his base attack bonus -5). If Krusk were drawing a ranged weapon that required two hands to use (such as a bow), he'd have to drop his greataxe.

Is it possible to use the Shot on the Run feat in conjunction with the Manyshot feat? Some people I know insist that you must use the attack action with Shot on the Run, and they further claim that Manyshot is a standard action and not the attack action. But there isn't any such thing as an attack action, is there? The text on actions in Chapter 8 of the PH (page 138) describes many kinds of actions (standard actions, move actions, full-round actions, and free actions); it even describes things that are not actions and mentions restricted activity. Nowhere, however, do the rules describe attack actions. So, what's the correct answer?

No, you cannot use Shot on the Run and Manyshot together.

It is true that no category of actions is called "attack actions" in the D&D game, but there is an action called attack—it's the first action described under Standard Actions on page 139 in the PH.

It might seem that the folks who say no Manyshot with Shot On the Run are slicing the baloney a little thin, but the letter of the rules is on their side, and so is the intent behind the letter of the rules. The Manyshot feat description could say you fire multiple arrows with the attack action, but it doesn't.

Manyshot is a standard action, not a variant on the attack action (see the feat description on page 97 in the PH).

Likewise, the Shot on the Run feat could allow you to make any kind of ranged attack while moving, but it doesn't. When using Shot on the Run, you must use the attack action with a ranged weapon (see the feat description on page 100 in the PH). This rules out using spells, most magic items, or special standard actions such as the Manyshot feat when making a Shot on the Run. That's because casting a spell would require the cast a spell action (described on page 140 of the PH), using any magic item except for some use-activated items would require

the activate magic item action (PH 142), and, as already noted here, using the Manyshot feat is a standard action. Most magic weapons are use activated and don't require any action to activate at all (see page 213 in the DMG), so you can use these weapons along with the attack action. For example, you could use a +1 longbow or +1 arrow (or both) with the attack action, and thus you also could use these items with Shot on the Run.

Can Silent Spell be used when attempting to remain quiet as well as to bypass the effects of a silence spell?

Yes. Silent Spell does not require that a caster be incapable of speaking—it simply removes the verbal component of the spell.

Can I apply the Skill Focus feat to a cross-class skill?

Yes. The same is true of Acrobatic, Alertness, and any other skill-boosting feat, unless the feat specifically states otherwise.

Can a monk use the Snap Kick feat (ToB 32) as part of a flurry of blows?

Yes. Apply both penalties to all attack rolls made during the flurry of blows.

Can a wizard with the Southern Magician feat qualify for prestige classes that require you to be able to cast a divine spell?

The Southern Magician feat does not allow you to cast divine spells *per se*. It only allows you to change the spells into divine spells once they have been cast. Thus, you won't qualify for prestige classes that require you to be able to cast a divine spell. The Southern Magician feat only gives the bonuses specifically listed in the feat's description.

Does Speed of Thought (XPH 51) increase all my speeds, or just my land speed?

The insight bonus granted by this feat applies to all modes of movement.

Does Spell Focus increase the DCs of spell-like abilities? Can I apply metamagic feats or effects to spell-like abilities? What if the feat doesn't change the spell's level?

No. Although spell-like abilities function mechanically like spells (a *fireball* spell-like ability duplicates the mechanical effect of a *fireball* spell), they are not spells and don't benefit from feats or other effects that specifically affect spells. This is true even if the metamagic feat effect doesn't change the spell's level (such as the metamagic rods from the DMG). Sudden metamagic feats are a specific exception to this, as detailed on page 71 in *CAr*.

Feats specifically designed to add metamagic effects to spell-like abilities appear in the *MM* (Empower Spell-Like Ability and Quicken Spell-Like Ability) and *CAr* (Heighten Spell-Like Ability and Maximize Spell-Like Ability).

Do feats that grant spell-like abilities, such as Spell Hand (CAr, page 83), have to be taken at 1st level? If not, how is this rationalized in game terms—how does a character suddenly learn to use spell-like abilities?

No. If this were the case, the feat's description would clearly state it (see Precocious Apprentice on page 181 for an example). As for explaining it in terms of the game world, the Sage advises thinking of it as a sudden manifestation of a latent (but until-now unknown) ability—only now has the character

realized his innate magical talents, even though they were present and hidden beforehand.

Can a character with Spring Attack who begins her turn hidden move up to a foe, attack him, then return to a position of hiding? Is she considered to be hiding (that is, invisible to the foe) when she makes the attack? What if the character has the camouflage or hide in plain sight class features?

Normally, a character can't make a Hide check right after attacking a foe, since that foe's attention is now focused on her (even if the attacker started her turn hidden or invisible). The sniping option (on page 76 in the *PH*) allows a character to make a move action to hide immediately after making a ranged attack against a foe at least 10 feet away, but this doesn't apply to melee attacks (even those made with reach). Even if the character has Spring Attack, she simply can't make a Hide check while she is being observed.

As far as your second question goes, unless the character's approach remains entirely in an area where she can hide (that is, an area with sufficient cover or concealment to attempt a Hide check), the character is not considered to be hidden still when she makes the attack. Conceivably, your character might begin her turn hidden in overgrowth, move up through the undergrowth to attack a target, then move back to a hiding place within the plants, having never left the area of concealment. In this case, she'd be considered hidden when she made the attack, although she'd have a -20 penalty on her Hide check.

The third part of your question changes the situation entirely. Separately, both the camouflage and hide in plain sight class features make this tactic more useful, but together, they're incredibly effective.

A character with the hide in plain sight class feature (described on page 48 in the *PH*) can make a Hide check even if she's being observed. This doesn't require any extra action to accomplish (unlike the sniping maneuver). The character could attack a foe, then move to a place with sufficient cover or concealment to allow a Hide check, making the Hide check as part of movement. The character doesn't need Spring Attack to pull this off, although that feat would allow her to move (potentially from a place of hiding, although that's not necessary), make an attack, and then move again to a place of hiding. Still, unless the character has cover or concealment for her approach, she's not considered to be hidden when she delivers the attack.

The camouflage class feature (also on page 48 in the *PH*) allows the character to make a Hide check in any sort of natural terrain, even if it doesn't provide cover or concealment. This means that the character could begin hidden, move up to a target across open terrain, and make an attack while still being considered hidden (although she'd still suffer the -20 penalty on her Hide check). Even if the character has Spring Attack and moves away after the attack, she can't make a Hide check to hide after the attack.

Put all three of these elements together—such as in the hands of a high-level sneaky ranger—and here's what you get:

1. The character begins his turn hidden (as long as he's in natural terrain, he doesn't even need cover or concealment).
2. He moves up to a foe across natural terrain and makes an attack (making a Hide check with a -20 penalty to be considered hiding when he attacks).
3. He then moves back from the foe and makes a new Hide check to disappear from view (again, he doesn't need cover or

concealment while in natural terrain).

4. The foe then, if still standing, says, "Hey, what hit me?!"

Can a rogue using Spring Attack to . . .

1) Gain an extra attack against his foe in the middle of his move?

2) Deal sneak attack damage on both attacks if his target is caught by surprise or flanked?

While it is certainly possible to use the Spring Attack feat to put your opponent into a position where you might sneak attack them (whether they are flat-footed or flanked), you could take only a single attack as a part of this action, since Spring Attack specifies that it is done "using the attack action." You can't make a full attack as part of a Spring Attack, nor can you even use any standard action—you can make only a single attack.

Can Still Spell be used when entangled to allow the caster to avoid a Concentration check to cast the spell?

No. Being entangled makes it difficult to cast a spell, but the condition says nothing about it applying only to spells with somatic components. Thus, Still Spell doesn't make casting while entangled any easier.

What does "innate spell-like ability" mean for the purpose of qualifying for the Supernatural Transformation feat (SS 39)? Does the Innate Spell feat create an innate spell-like ability?

"Innate," for the purpose of the Supernatural Transformation feat, means "gained normally as part of the creature's race, type, subtype, or kind."

A duergar's *enlarge person* and *invisibility* spell-like abilities, a tanar'ri's *summon tanar'ri* spell-like ability, and a juvenile gold dragon's *bless* spell-like ability are all "innate" spell-like abilities. A warlock's invocations, a paladin's ability to call her special mount, and any spell-like abilities gained from your class, feats, or similar sources are not.

Despite its name, even the Innate Spell feat doesn't create an "innate" spell-like ability for the purpose of the Supernatural Transformation feat. This is simply an unfortunate case of the same word being used for two different purposes.

If a character with the Telling Blow feat (PH2 83) scores a critical hit against an enemy in a situation where his skirmish or sneak attack damage would already apply, does he get to add that damage twice?

No. You only get to add your skirmish or sneak attack damage once, even if you meet more than one prerequisite for adding it. (For example, a rogue who flanks a flat-footed enemy doesn't get to add sneak attack damage twice.)

If you have the Trample feat, and you perform a mounted overrun, your target cannot choose to avoid you, and if you knock your opponent prone with the overrun, your mount can make one hoof attack against your opponent. Suppose you're mounted on something other than a horse. Should the mount get one attack with its primary natural weapon (a hoof attack is the horse's primary attack), or does a creature without a hoof attack get no free attack to attack against the trampled and prone opponent?

The free attack for the mount in a trample represents the mount literally knocking down the foe and stepping on him as he falls underneath the mount's churning feet. The feat

description specifies a hoof attack, but the kind of natural weapon is not limited only to hoof attacks. Any attack that is delivered with a foot, such as a claw or slam attack, also works. If the quadruped mount has natural weaponry on all four feet, use the weapon on the front feet. (For example, if your mount is a big cat, use the claw attack for a trample, not the rake.) Mounts that don't attack with their feet don't get the free attack. For example, if your mount is a riding dog, it won't get a free attack from a trample; it can't use its bite, and it has no natural weaponry on its front feet.

If I use the Twin Spell metamagic feat (CAr, page 84), do I use up twice the normal material components or XP component?

No. The feat causes the spell to take effect twice, but it doesn't actually require you to cast it twice. Thus, you only expend the spell's components once.

A feat sometimes requires you to have a certain ability score, which is the case with Two-Weapon Fighting (it requires Dex 15). A character has, say, Dex 13, but wears an item, in this case *gloves of Dexterity* +2, and now her Dex score is 15. Can she take the feat and have it be active only when she wears the item?

Actually yes, she could take the feat, but she would lose the use of the feat if, for whatever reason, she loses the bonus from the item.

Can a sorcerer combine Versatile Spellcasting with a metamagic feat to cast a spell whose level is higher than the level of spells he'd normally be able to cast?

This is possible. For example, a 1st-level sorcerer using the Versatile Spellcaster feat can give up two 1st-level spells to cast *extended shield*.

What exactly is a "pain effect" as described by the Vow of Nonviolence feat (BE 47)? Would the Pain Touch feat (CW 103) count as a pain effect?

Although Vow of Nonviolence uses the phrase "pain effects" in limiting the character's options, that term is (unfortunately) not defined in the game rules. Thus, it's up to the DM to determine what effects fall into that category. At the simplest level, the Sage would suggest that any ability whose name includes the word pain, or whose flavor or rules text clearly spell out the infliction of pain, should fall into that category. Examples would include the *symbol of pain* spell ("each creature . . . suffers wracking pains;" PH 290) and, yes, the Pain Touch feat ("victims . . . are subject to such debilitating pain").

For example, a monk with Pain Touch who chooses to take Vow of Nonviolence has voluntarily forbidden herself from using her stunning attack against humanoid or monstrous humanoid foes (since her vow requires her to abstain from causing harm or suffering to such creatures), even if the attack itself deals only nonlethal damage.

When in doubt, ask yourself, "does the effect 'have the immediate potential to cause death, suffering, or great harm'" (the definition given in the Vow of Nonviolence feat)? If the answer is yes, the effect is off-limits to the character with Vow of Nonviolence.

I have a monk with the Vow of Poverty feat (BE). Does the exalted strike bonus apply to grapple, sunder, disarm, and trip attempts?

The exalted strike bonus gained by a character who has taken Vow of Poverty applies only on attack and damage rolls. Unless something is described as an attack roll or a damage roll, the bonus doesn't apply.

- The touch attack made to start a grapple is an attack roll (so the bonus would apply to this roll), but a grapple check is not an attack roll, and thus the bonus wouldn't apply to the grapple check. Likewise, the touch attack made to start a trip attack would gain the bonus, but the Strength check you make to trip the defender is not an attack roll and wouldn't gain the bonus.
- To attempt a disarm attack or a sunder attack, you make an attack roll opposed by the defender's attack roll, so the exalted strike bonus would apply.

How do the equipment restrictions put on a character by the Vow of Poverty feat affect class-defining items? (Examples include a cleric's holy symbol, a wizard's familiar, a samurai's daisho, and a paladin's mount.)

The Vow of Poverty feat is very specific about the items that a character can own while gaining the benefits of the feat (BE 48). It specifically disallows ownership of masterwork or magic weapons, and thus a samurai who chooses this feat must give up the possession of his daisho (his pair of masterwork weapons). A holy symbol does not appear on the list of eligible items, and thus a strict reading of the feat would disallow the item.

A familiar, special mount, or animal companion isn't a material possession, and thus a character with Vow of Poverty isn't restricted from gaining the benefits of such creatures.

Remember that the Vow of Poverty feat, like most of the material found in BE, is intended for mature campaigns that are capable of handling difficult role-playing issues—it's not intended for most hack-and-slash games. A cleric who must give up his holy symbol (effectively preventing him from turning undead or casting any spell that requires a divine focus) could be a very interesting challenge for a player who's "done it all" and wants to try something unusual.

Can a character avoid breaking the Vow of Poverty feat's restrictions by declaring his weapon to be an ancestral relic, signature weapon, legacy weapon, or other special kind of weapon?

No. The Vow of Poverty feat (BE 48) very clearly states that you cannot own or use any material possessions, with exceptions listed in the feat's description.

The Sage strongly suggests that if you're trying to find ways around the various Vow feats in BoED, you might be missing the point of the feats. (The book doesn't bear the mature audiences warning just for subject matter, but also for approach to character creation.) These feats are intended to open up interesting roleplaying opportunities without unduly punishing a character's playability. In the case of the Vow of Poverty, the intent is to allow what would otherwise be a severely underpowered character (one without possessions) to retain viability in the game. Finding ways to retain one's possessions while still benefiting from the feat defeats the entire purpose of the feat!

How does Vow of Poverty apply to a tattooed monk (CW 82)? Are tattoos considered material possessions or are they more like spell-like abilities?

Despite their physical “presence” on the body, the tattoos of a tattooed monk are class features, not possessions, and thus not restricted by Vow of Poverty in any way (just as a rogue’s evasion class feature or a barbarian’s fast movement class feature).

Do grafts (such as those from *FF*) count as possessions for the purpose of taking a Vow of Poverty? If so, what happens to a creature with grafts who wants to take the feat? Should he cut off his arm or leg in order to take the feat?

The Sage recommends that grafts be considered “possessions” for the purpose of adjudicating the Vow of Poverty (to avoid abusing the spirit of the vow). Some grafts specifically describe how they can be removed (such as the aboleth grafts on page 208). In other cases, physical removal of the graft—which might well require amputation or the like—is almost certainly necessary.

For a variety of reasons, the game rules don’t go into detail about the effects of such “surgery.” Unless the DM is comfortable creating a set of house rules to handle such situations, the Sage recommends that the DM not worry about the grisly details, instead assuming that the PC survives the procedure without any long-term effects other than the obvious (a character without eyes is blind, for example, while a character missing a hand can’t wield a two-handed weapon). Of course, a *regenerate* spell solves even these problems.

Normally, you have to use a light weapon to benefit from the Weapon Finesse feat. You can also use a rapier or a spiked chain with Weapon Finesse. You cannot use the Power Attack feat with a light weapon. Can you use a spiked chain or a rapier and benefit from both Weapon Finesse and Power Attack at the same time?

Yes. A rapier or a spiked chain made for a creature of your size is not a light weapon, even when you’re using the weapon with the Weapon Finesse feat. If you have both feats and use a rapier or a spiked chain, you can manage power and finesse in the same attack.

Do you gain the benefits of Weapon Finesse (*PH 102*) while fighting with two light weapons simultaneously? What if you wield a light weapon and a one-handed weapon (such as a short sword and longsword) simultaneously?

Weapon Finesse applies to all qualified weapons you wield

(including all your natural weapons, such as claws) regardless of how many you wield. It doesn’t matter if you also wield weapons that don’t qualify for the benefit—while the benefit of Weapon Finesse doesn’t apply to such weapons, it still applies to any light weapons or other weapons that qualify (such as rapiers).

Does a spear count as a melee weapon or a ranged weapon for the purpose of qualifying for the Weapon Mastery feats (*PH2 81–82*)?

Both, actually, although you can gain the benefit of only one feat or the other at any one time, and only when using the weapon in the appropriate manner.

For example, if you have Melee Weapon Mastery (piercing), you’d apply the feat’s benefit only when using the spear in melee, not when throwing it.

The Weapon Supremacy feat (*PH2 85*) lists Weapon Mastery as a prerequisite. Does this mean Melee Weapon Mastery or Ranged Weapon Mastery?

Weapon Supremacy requires either Melee Weapon Mastery or Ranged Weapon Mastery, depending on whether the weapon is a melee weapon or ranged weapon, respectively.

A character who wishes to select Weapon Supremacy (longsword) must have Melee Weapon Mastery (slashing); to take Weapon Supremacy (longbow) you’d need Ranged Weapon Mastery (piercing).

Do feats that affect damage, such as Weapon Specialization, increase the amount of ability damage done with an attack such as a shadow’s touch attack?

Although they do use the same word, damage and ability damage are completely different. Feats and other sources that give bonuses to damage do not affect ability damage unless they specifically say so.

Can a character wearing heavy armor use Whirlwind Attack (*PH 102*)? A character cannot use Spring Attack (*PH 100*), a prerequisite for this feat, in heavy armor.

Just because you’re barred from benefiting from a feat doesn’t mean that you don’t have it any more. A character incapable of using Spring Attack due to wearing heavy armor still has the feat, and thus still meets the prerequisites for Whirlwind Attack.

Equipment

Each equipment question falls into one of several categories, starting with general questions about items (including magic items), then following with specific equipment questions. Questions about specific items fall under the same subcategories that you find in the *DMG* and are alphabetized by the item's name where possible.

General Equipment

The equipment section in the *PH* says hemp rope can be burst with a successful DC 23 Strength check. Does this mean that a bound character, no matter how cleverly tied up, can simply escape by making a DC 23 Strength check? A character with a Strength score of at least 16 (+3 bonus) could do that automatically by “taking 20” on the check.

The DC to burst a single strand of rope is 23. If one is tied up, one is dealing with multiple strands of rope and not in the best position to exert leverage. Though the rope's ability to resist breakage would be a factor if someone were trying to break bonds, the skill with which the character was bound is more important.

A quick look at the Escape Artist skill description shows that escaping from bonds requires an Escape Artist check opposing the Use Rope check from whoever tied up the prisoner, and the character that tied the bonds gets a +10 bonus. If the prisoner just tries to break out through sheer Strength, add the break DC for rope (23) to the Use Rope check instead of +10.

If you use this method, it's possible (though not likely) for a truly inept captor to tie bonds that have a break DC of less than 23. That's somewhat realistic, because any knot, especially when badly tied, can weaken a rope.

To activate a spell completion or spell trigger item, the spell in the item must appear on your class spell list. How do you handle a cleric's domain spells? Most deities have three or four domains, but a cleric chooses only two of them. Are only the spells from the domains the cleric has chosen on his class spell list for the purpose of activating these items? Or are the spells for all domains associated with the cleric's deity on his class spell list? Also, which spells are on a specialist wizard's class spell list? Do all wizard spells remain on the wizard class spell list, even when the wizard has chosen a specialty and his prohibited schools?

If you're a cleric, spells from the domains you have selected are part of your class spell list. Spells from domains you could have selected, but did not, are not part of your class spell list (unless you get them on your class spell list some other way, such as by gaining another domain or adding another class).

Spells from a specialist wizard's prohibited schools are not part of his class spell list.

The section on page 159 of the *PH* that covers using a weapon to make a trip attack says some weapons can be used for tripping, and then it lists a few weapons. Is the list the complete list of weapons that you can use to make trip attacks, or are there others? Can a character use, say, a quarterstaff to trip?

The list on page 159 is not intended to be a complete list; you can use several weapons described in Chapter 7 for trip attacks, and new weapons get added to the game from time to

time. To determine if any particular weapon is useful for tripping, read the weapon's description. If you can use the weapon to make trip attacks, its description will say so. If a weapon's description does not specifically say you can make trip attacks with it, you cannot make trip attacks with it. Weapons from the *PH* you can use to make trip attacks are bolas, spiked chains, dire flails, heavy flails, flails, guisarmes, halberds, gnome hooked hammers, kamas, scythes, sickles, and whips.

You cannot use a quarterstaff to make a trip attack, because tripping isn't one of a quarterstaff's properties.

In the D&D game, a trip attack involves grabbing a foe and somehow yanking him off balance. All the *PH* weapons that allow trip attacks have some kind of hook that can snag a foe or some flexible portion that you can wrap around an opponent's limb or body.

Suppose I have a weapon that is bane vs. constructs and it is not made of adamantine. If I attack an iron golem with this weapon, does the weapon bypass the golem's damage reduction? In general, will a bane weapon bypass damage reduction when you use it to attack a designated foe?

The bane property doesn't bypass damage reduction. If you hit a designated foe, however, the extra damage you deal helps you overcome any damage reduction the foe has. For example, if you have a Strength score of 16 and you hit an iron golem with a +1 *construct bane longsword*, you'll deal 1d8 +1 (base damage from the +1 sword) +2 (extra enhancement bonus against your designated foe from the bane property) +3 (Strength bonus) +2d6 (bonus damage against your designated foe). On average you'll deal 17 or 18 points of damage to the golem, which is enough to get a few points of damage past the golem's damage reduction of 15/adamantine.

You can get a host of benefits from wielding a two-handed weapon, such as 1–1/2 times your Strength bonus on damage (and twice your damage bonus from the Power Attack feat) and a +4 bonus on your opposed attack roll if someone tries to disarm you. So when is a weapon “two-handed?” For example, a lance is a two-handed weapon, right? But you can wield it in one hand when you're mounted. Since the weapons table shows that a lance is a two-handed weapon, I get all the two-handed benefits no matter how I wield the lance, right?

Wrong. Table 7–5 in the *PH* lists weapons as light, one-handed, or two-handed strictly as a matter of convenience. These size categories are always relative to the wielder's size, as explained in some detail in the section on weapon size on page 113 in the *PH* (also see next question).

When the combat rules speak of “two-handed” weapons, they're referring to how the weapon is being used. A Medium character using a Medium longsword in two hands is using a “two-handed” weapon. The same character using a Medium lance in one hand while mounted is using a one-handed weapon. Light weapons are an exception. If you wield a light weapon in two hands you get no advantage on damage (see page 113 in the *PH*). Likewise, you always take a –4 penalty on your opposed roll when you're wielding a light weapon in a disarm attempt (when someone tries to disarm you or you try to disarm someone) regardless of whether you wield it one- or two-handed.

Do flasks of holy water hurt tieflings? Would a bane weapon against evil outsiders get its increased enhancement bonus against tieflings and deal extra damage against tieflings?

An outsider is “evil” if it has any evil alignment (chaotic evil, neutral evil, or lawful evil). For the purpose of resolving any effect whose results depend on subject’s alignment, an outsider also is “evil” if it has the evil subtype, no matter what its alignment actually is (see the evil subtype description in the Glossary of the *MM*).

Holy water deals damage to undead and to evil outsiders that it strikes. An evil outsider bane weapon is more potent against evil outsiders. Since a tiefling is an outsider with the native subtype, it is susceptible to holy water or to the increased effects from an evil outsider bane weapon only if it has an evil alignment.

How long does it take to activate a scroll with an *identify* spell on it? How about a scroll with any of the *summon monster* spells or a *wand of summon monster*? This has been a serious debate for some of us. Page 213 of the *DMG*, under Using Magic Items, says “Activating a magic item is a standard action unless the item description indicates otherwise. However, the casting time of a spell is the time required to activate the same power in an item, whether it’s a scroll, a wand, or a pair of boots, unless the item description specifically states otherwise.” Yet, the very next section (spell completion items) states: “This is the activation method for scrolls . . . Activating a spell completion item is a standard action and provokes attacks of opportunity exactly as casting a spell does.” The *PH* section on scrolls also says it’s a standard action, yet the *DMG* spell storing weapon ability on page 225 says “This special ability is an exception to the general rule that casting a spell from an item takes at least as long as casting that spell normally.” Which set of rules is correct?

Activating any magic item is a standard action, unless the item duplicates a spell effect that has a longer casting time or unless the item description specifies a different casting time. The sections on spell completion and spell trigger items should include the caveat that activating the item takes as long as casting the stored spell would take. Thus, it takes 1 hour to activate a scroll with an *identify* spell on it. A scroll or a wand with any of the *summon monster* spells in it takes a full round to activate, just as casting a *summon monster* spell does.

A command word item takes a standard action to activate, no matter what the casting time of the spell it duplicates. In general, command word items don’t duplicate spells with long casting times.

Use-activated items typically don’t have any activation times (because they function continually or because you activate them automatically as part of the action you take to use the item). Like command word items, use-activated items usually don’t duplicate spells with long casting times. Activating a scroll (or any other spell completion item) is “like casting a spell for purposes of arcane spell failure (such as from armor)” (see “Activation” on page 238 of the *DMG*). An armored rogue who activates a scroll with Use Magic Device suffers the normal arcane spell failure chance.

I’m trying to find out if my rogue, wearing leather armor, can make a Use Magic Device check to trigger a wand containing an arcane spell. What is the DC for doing

so? It appears from the rules that the armor will cause a 10% chance of arcane spell failure, if the spell being cast has a somatic (S) component (*PH* 122). Is it true that casting a spell from a spell-trigger item, such as a wand, removes the requirement for the somatic component, and thereby eliminates this 10% chance of failure?

The Use Magic Device skill is for using magic items that you normally could not otherwise activate. Activating a wand has a DC of 20, as shown on the table in the Use Magic Device skill description. However, this assumes that you already know what spell the wand stores. If you don’t, you have to activate the wand blindly (DC 25). If you successfully activate a wand blindly, you know what spell it contains, and your subsequent attempts to activate that particular wand are at DC 20.

There’s no arcane spell failure chance for activating a spell trigger item, for a command word item, or for a use-activated item. There is an arcane spell failure chance for activating a scroll (a spell completion item), provided the spell stored on the scroll has a somatic component.

Who can use a wand or other item that is activated with a spell trigger? I would think that you would have to be able to cast the stored spell. That is, you must have levels in a class that can cast the spell, have enough levels in that class to cast the stored spell, and have an ability score sufficient to cast that spell. If you’re a fighter with an Intelligence score of 9, you can’t just pick up a level of wizard and start using a *wand of fireball*, can you? Wands and other spell trigger items are for dedicated spellcasters who use them to carry around a few extra spells in case they run out, right? These are not items that allow dabblers to mimic true spellcasting ability. Still, some of my friends insist that you can use any spell trigger item (wand or staff) if you have at least one level in a class that could possibly cast the spell. They point to the term “spell list” in the description of spell trigger items in the *DMG*. Surely, that refers to the list of spell you can conceivably cast, not to a class’s entire spell list. After all, the *DMG* does not use the term “class spell list” when talking about spell trigger items. Please preserve play balance in our local campaign by telling me that I’m right.

Sorry, but your friends are correct. If you’re a member of a class that has spellcasting ability, you can use any spell trigger item that stores a spell that’s on your class’s spell list, even when you don’t have the class level or the ability score to cast the stored spell. This even applies when you don’t have enough class levels to cast any spells at all. For example, a paladin of 1st, 2nd, or 3rd level has not yet gained any spellcasting ability, but she still can use spell trigger items that store spells on the paladin class list. If you’re a specialist wizard, spells from your opposition schools aren’t part of your class spell list, and you can’t use spell trigger items that store those spells.

It’s true that the spell trigger text on page 213 in the *DMG* does not use the words “class spell list,” but it should because having a spell on your class spell list is what’s required to use spell trigger items. Membership in a class gives you a smattering of magical knowledge, and that is sufficient to use a spell trigger item, even when you could not hope to cast the spell on your own or even read it correctly from a scroll—the character who made the spell trigger item has done all the hard work for you.

Your example fighter/wizard could indeed lob fireballs out of a wand (provided the character is not a specialist wizard with evocation as an opposition school). Doing so isn’t much of a

threat to the play balance in a campaign, nor will it make single-classed wizards or sorcerers in your world irrelevant. *Fireball* spells from dedicated spellcasters will, on the whole, deal more damage, penetrate spell resistance more readily, have higher save DCs, and have better range than fireballs from wands. The D&D game also includes other balancing factors, such as the experience penalty for multiclassing (although one can get around that by choosing the right race). Someone also has to make or pay for the wand, and that will prove an impediment to characters if the DM follows the *DMG* guidelines for character wealth and awarding treasure. Your example character would be far better off packing wands that boost fighting abilities (*shield* and *true strike* are some the Sage's favorites here).

Is a character wielding a two-handed reach weapon (such as a long spear) and wearing spiked armor threatening all squares within 10 feet? Assuming he has Combat Reflexes, can he make an attack of opportunity with his long spear and then with his armor spikes in the same round?

A character wearing spiked armor threatens all squares within his normal reach (5 feet away). If he also wields a long spear, he would also threaten all squares 10 feet away.

Any time a character wielding more than one weapon is allowed an attack of opportunity, he can use any weapon that threatens the opponent who has provoked the attack. In this case, imagine an enemy who charged the character and then tried to disarm him. The charge attack would provoke an attack of opportunity from the long spear as the enemy moved out of a threatened square (in order to move adjacent to the character and deliver the charge attack). Then, the disarm attempt would provoke another attack of opportunity (assuming the enemy didn't have Improved Disarm). This attack of opportunity could be made only with the armor spikes, since the long spear doesn't threaten an adjacent enemy.

On page 217 of the DMG, it states that "the cost of the masterwork quality and any magical enhancement remains the same" regardless of a creature's unusual size or shape. Adamantine and mithral both state that items made from such material are masterwork quality and the masterwork cost is part of the material cost listed. How much would a set of mithral chainmail barding for my warhorse cost?

A strict reading of the rules indicates that in such a case the masterwork cost for armor should be subtracted from the special material price before applying the multiplier for any unusual size or shape of the intended wearer.

For example, according to the Armor for Unusual Creatures chart on page 123 of the *PH*, a set of chainmail barding for a warhorse (a Large nonhumanoid creature) would normally cost 600 gp (four times the normal cost of 150 gp). A set of mithral chainmail barding would cost 16,000 gp: 600 gp for the chainmail barding plus 15,400 gp (the cost of mithral medium armor [4,000 gp], minus the masterwork cost for armor [150 gp], times 4).

The description of the game effects of thinaun (CW 136) suggests that it would work as long as the person was in contact with the alloy when death occurred. This implies that if (for example) a ring were made of thinaun, and the wearer of the ring died, his soul would go into the thinaun ring. What would the cost of a thinaun nonweapon object be?

The effects of thinaun apply only to weapons touching a creature when it dies. Other items made from thinaun have no effect.

Can a kalashtar soulknife use quori embedded shards (ECS 264)? The shards draw on the bearer's psychic energy—which both kalashtar and soulknives demonstrate.

A kalashtar soulknife has no manifester levels and thus can't use quori embedded shards. Neither the kalashtar's *mindlink* psi-like ability nor the soulknife's mental powers actually grant a manifester level, and thus the character is ineligible to use quori-embedded shards.

Can you activate magic items within the area of a silence spell?

A *silence* spell or similar effect prevents the activation of any magic items that require a command word or other verbal form of communication. In general, an item's entry indicates whether a command word is required, although a few categories of items bear special mention.

Scrolls and other spell completion items require you to "perform the simple, finishing parts of the spellcasting (the final gestures, words, and so on)" (*DMG* 213). It's reasonable to conclude that any scroll of a spell that has a verbal component requires spoken words to activate, and thus wouldn't work in the area of a *silence* spell.

Staffs and wands are spell trigger items, which require "a single word that must be spoken" to activate (*DMG* 213). Thus, they don't work in areas of *silence*.

If I attack from inside an antimagic field (PH 200) using a magic weapon, do I gain the benefit of the weapon if the target is outside the antimagic field? What about if I attack from outside against a target inside?

In neither case does the weapon's benefit apply. Both the attacker and the target must be outside the *antimagic field* for any magic of the weapon (or other effects) to apply. (If you made a ranged attack across an *antimagic field*—that is, from outside the area, across some part of the spell's area, against another target outside the area—the attack would resolve normally.)

How many darts, arrows, and so on, does one dose of poison cover?

One dose of poison affects a single weapon—longsword, dagger, dart, arrow, whatever. The weapon's size doesn't matter (no, this isn't entirely realistic, but it's significantly easier for gameplay purposes).

When a character applying poison to a weapon exposes himself to the poison, does it waste the poison?

No. A poisoned weapon retains its toxicity until it scores a hit or the poison is wiped off (*DMG* 296). Exposing yourself to the poison during application doesn't "use up" that dose of poison.

You didn't ask about what happens if the character accidentally poisons himself with the weapon (by rolling a natural 1 on the attack and failing the DC 15 Reflex save), but the Sage believes the answer is the same. Again, you haven't technically "scored a hit" on yourself (you don't damage yourself with the weapon, for example), so this accidental poisoning appears to be a freebie.

When do “add-on” effects such as poison occur? For example, if an assassin delivers a death attack with a weapon bearing wyvern poison, does the poison take effect first, thus potentially reducing the target’s Fortitude save against the death attack?

As a general guideline, whenever the rules don’t stipulate an order of operations for special effects (such as spells or special abilities), you should apply them in the order that’s most beneficial to the “controller” of the effect.

In this case, the assassin is the “controller” of both the poison and the death attack, so he’d most likely choose for the poison to take effect first, and then the death attack.

If a PC wants to use multiple doses of an ingested poison, do their effects stack? Are multiple saves needed, or does this just increase the save DC or damage dealt?

Ingested poisons follow the general rules for poisons (*DMG* 296). They differ only in their method of application. Each dose of a digested poison requires its own saving throw and does its own damage.

Do mind-affecting spells work against intelligent magic items?

No. Technically speaking, any intelligent magic item can be considered a creature (*DMG* 268). The book doesn’t specifically list what type of creature an intelligent magic item is, but it seems safe to consider them constructs, which makes them immune to all mind-affecting effects.

What’s the difference between a magic item and a psionic item? How does the former interact with *detect psionics* and the latter with *detect magic*?

Items created with the item creation feats requiring spellcaster levels, or that use spells as prerequisites, are typically called “magic items.” Items created with item creation feats requiring manifester levels, or that use psionic powers as prerequisites, are normally called “psionic items.” Mechanically, however, there’s really no difference between the two categories of items.

Both magic and psionic items interact with *detect magic* and *detect psionics* in the same way. A psionic item reveals its discipline to such effects, while a magic item reveals its school. If you create an item that uses both spells and powers as prerequisites, you should decide whether its aura is identifiable as a school of magic or a discipline of powers.

What kind of magic item slots does a dire wolf or rhinoceros have? I’ve heard animals can wear amulets and sometimes even cloaks. Would it be able to wear boots? If so, would it only need one pair of boots or would it need two pairs (like horseshoes)?

An animal can wear whatever items the Dungeon Master deems appropriate for his or her campaign. Necklaces and amulets seem to be the most common since it’s easy for most of us to picture animals wearing something akin to a collar. With barding in the game, armor for animals is also feasible. Plus, bracers or bracelets are fairly easy to imagine on a creature. I would suggest drawing the line here, since it keeps things simple and prevents people from worrying too much about equipping their animal companions. However, if you have a player who wants to focus on her animal companion, or you have an idea for a heavily equipped animal NPC, there’s no reason why you couldn’t adjust magic items to have animal-specific versions of magic gloves, boots, cloaks, and so on.

Can you counterspell a spell cast from a wand, stave, or scroll with a spell?

Generally, you cannot use the rules for counterspelling against magic items. That said, because of the unique rules for casting spells from a scroll, you can counter a spell cast from a scroll the same way you would any other spell.

Do effects that allow you to use larger than normal weapons, such as the Monkey Grip feat or the Powerful Build racial trait, stack with each other?

These effects do not stack with each other. If you have an effect that allows you to use a weapon one size category larger than you and then gain the same benefit from another source, you are still limited to weapons one size category larger than you.

Armor

Does the armor check penalty for nonproficiency with armor and shields stack with the standard armor check penalty for wearing the armor or shield, or with the check penalty for encumbrance?

No. The armor check for nonproficiency overrides the normal armor check penalty (effectively adding Open Lock, Ride, and Use Rope to the list of penalized skills), while also applying an equal penalty on Strength checks, Dexterity checks, and attack rolls.

If you have a check penalty from encumbrance that is higher than your armor check penalty, use the encumbrance’s check penalty on skills penalized by armor check penalty, and the nonproficiency penalty on all other checks and attack rolls.

For example, if Devis (Str 10) wore a breastplate and carried a total of 100 pounds of gear, he’d suffer a –6 penalty on Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble checks (and a –12 penalty on Swim checks) from his heavy load of encumbrance, but only a –4 penalty on attack rolls, Strength checks, Dexterity checks, and other Strength- or Dexterity-based skill checks (from his nonproficiency with medium armor). If he carried no more than 66 pounds (a medium load), he’d just suffer the –4 penalty on attack rolls and on all Strength-based and Dexterity-based ability and skill checks (or –8 on Swim checks).

The description of the magical bashing property for shields says it can be added only to light or heavy shields. Does this exclude shields with shield spikes? That is, can you have a +2 *spiked light shield of bashing*?

You can add the bashing property to a spiked shield. If you do, the damage dealt by the shield bash increases from normal by 3 steps (2 for the bashing property and 1 for the shield spikes), and the weapon becomes a martial piercing weapon. The example +1 *spiked light shield of bashing*, if made for a Medium character, would deal 1d8 points of piercing damage from the bash. (Normally a light shield bash deals 1d3 points of damage, but the spikes improve that to 1d4 and the bashing enhancement increases that to 1d8.)

What happens when you make a shield from adamantine or mithral? The adamantine description says you can make a shield from the metal, but there’s no cost given. What is the price for an adamantine shield? What benefits do you get from an adamantine shield? Do you get damage reduction? If so, how much? What if you have an

adamantine shield and adamantine armor? Does the damage reduction stack? When you make a shield from mithral, what benefits do you get? If you had a mithral heavy shield, would it have the properties of a light metal shield? (A light shield's weight lets you carry other items in that hand, although you cannot use weapons with it.) What would the damage rating be for a shield bash with a heavy mithral shield? Also, the mithral heavy shield listed on page 220 in the DMG weighs 5 pounds, less than half of what a heavy steel shield weighs. The text for mithral on page 284 says a mithral item weighs half what a normal item weighs. Which one is correct?

An adamantine shield costs an extra 5,000 gp (the same as the extra cost for adamantine light armor). Adamantine armor gives you some damage reduction (how much depends on the kind of armor; see page 283 in the *DMG*) but an adamantine shield does not. An adamantine shield is always a masterwork shield, so its armor check penalty is reduced by 1 (–0 for a buckler or light shield, –1 for a heavy shield). An adamantine shield also has a hardness of 20 and one third more hit points than normal (6 for a buckler, 13 for a light shield, 26 for a heavy shield). A tower shield is made from wood, so you can't make one from adamantine.

The basic properties of a mithral shield remain unchanged. For example, a mithral heavy shield is still a heavy shield. If you're size Medium and you shield bash with a heavy mithral shield, you deal 1d4 points of damage (or 1d6 if the shield has a shield spike). You can't use your shield hand for anything else when you're using a heavy mithral shield.

Any mithral item is masterwork, but the –3 armor check reduction for a mithral item already includes the adjustment for a masterwork item. Any mithral item has a hardness of 15, but it has no extra hit points.

In general, mithral items weigh half what their normal counterparts weigh. When you find a specific listing for a mithral shield or armor, however, use the weight listed for it, not what the formula gives you. A mithral chain shirt, for example, weighs only 10 pounds (see page 20 of the *DMG*), not 12 1/2 pounds (half the normal weight of 25 pounds).

Can one use a tower shield while mounted?

Nothing in the tower shield description implies that you can't use it while mounted. If you claim cover from the shield, your mount gets no benefit.

Can a character make a shield bash attack using the shield as a primary weapon or can it be used only as an off-hand weapon?

While the rules describe a shield bash as an off-hand weapon, that's simply an assumption (that your primary hand is holding a weapon). There's nothing stopping you from declaring your shield bash as your primary weapon. Of course, that means that any attack you make with your other hand becomes a secondary weapon.

If you don't have the Tower Shield Proficiency feat, you suffer the shield armor check penalty (–10) on all your attack rolls. The tower shield description, however, says anyone using the shield as a normal shield has a –2 penalty on attack rolls. If you're not proficient with the shield, do you get the –10 penalty instead of the –2?

Penalties in the D&D game stack. Whenever you use a tower shield, you suffer a –2 on attack rolls. If you aren't

proficient with the shield, you suffer the armor check penalty (–10) as well, for a total penalty of –12.

Ghost touch armor is supposed to protect you from attacks by incorporeal foes, but all these creatures have incorporeal touch attacks, and touch attacks ignore armor, so ghost touch armor is really worthless, right?

Wrong. Incorporeal touch attacks and touch attacks aren't the same thing. If they were, they would not have different names. An incorporeal touch attack actually resembles a slam attack (battering the foe with a fist or other appendage), except that it passes through physical armor or shields. The term incorporeal touch attack simply serves as a reminder that most armor bonuses aren't effective against these attacks.

Armor and shield bonuses from force effects, such as the mage armor spell, shield spell, and bracers of armor are effective against incorporeal touch attacks, as is ghost touch armor or a ghost touch shield.

Like a ghost touch weapon, an incorporeal creature or manifested ghost can wear ghost touch armor and get an Armor Class benefit from it. Such a creature also can pass through solid objects while wearing ghost touch armor.

Do ghost touch armors and shields function like force effects? It says that the armor and shield bonuses apply against incorporeal attacks, but most incorporeal creatures have a touch attack, to which armor and shield bonuses specifically do not apply.

Ghost touch armor or a ghost touch shield protects you against incorporeal touch attacks, which are not the same as touch attacks. Ghost touch armor and ghost touch shields don't protect you against regular touch attacks.

Does the glamered armor property (DMG 219) change any of the statistics of the armor it affects?

No. The glamered property clearly states that "the armor retains all its properties (including weight) when glamered" which includes its armor bonus, maximum Dexterity bonus, armor check penalty, and so forth.

I have a bard in my game who has a bit of money to spend. She buys a set of bracers of armor +3 and a suit of +3 leather armor. If the bard wears both at the same time, the armor bonus from the bracers (+3) overrides the armor bonus from the leather armor (+1). Our question is, does the +3 enhancement bonus from the armor still get applied for a total of +6, is it subsumed by the magic of the bracers, or is it just ignored completely? Since the enhancement bonus and armor bonus are different types of bonuses, the bard thinks her total Armor Class bonus should be +6.

The magic leather armor's +3 enhancement bonus applies to make the armor's armor bonus bigger (+4 in this case). The example character uses only the larger armor bonus (+4) when wearing both the armor and the bracers.

The overlapping +3 bonus from the bracers is still there, however. (It is just irrelevant most of the time.) If something bypasses the +4 bonus from the magic armor, the bracers might still prove effective. For example, an incorporeal touch attack bypasses the whole armor bonus from the magic armor. Since the bracers provide a force effect, they protect the bard against the incorporeal touch attack. The example character still has a +3 armor bonus against the incorporeal touch attack.

Just how and when can you use armor spikes? If you're using two weapons already, can you use armor spikes to make a second off-hand attack? What if you're using a weapon and a shield? Can you use the armor spikes for an off-hand attack and still get a shield bonus to Armor Class from the shield? What if you use a two-handed weapon? Can you wield the weapon in two hands and still make an off-hand attack with the spikes? What are your options for using armor spikes in a grapple? Can you use them when pinned? If you have another light weapon, can you use that and your armor spikes when grappling?

When you fight with more than one weapon, you gain an extra attack. (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting and greater Two-Weapon Fighting give you more attacks with the extra weapon.) Armor spikes are a light weapon that can be used as the extra weapon.

If you attack only with your armor spikes during your turn (or use the armor spikes to make an attack of opportunity), you use them just like a regular weapon. If you use the full attack action, you can use armor spikes as either a primary light weapon or as an off-hand light weapon, even if you're using a shield or using a two-handed weapon. In these latter two cases, you're assumed to be kicking or kneeling your foe with your armor spikes.

Whenever you use armor spikes as an off-hand weapon, you suffer all the penalties for attacking with two weapons (see Table 8–10 in the *PH*). When using armor spikes along with a two-handed weapon, it is usually best to use the two-handed weapon as your primary attack and the armor spikes as the off-hand weapon. You can use the armor spikes as the primary weapon and the two-handed weapon as the off-hand attack, but when you do so, you don't get the benefit of using a light weapon in your off hand.

You cannot, however, use your armor spikes to make a second off-hand attack when you're already fighting with two weapons. If you have a weapon in both hands and armor spikes, you can attack with the weapons in your hands (and not with the armor spikes) or with one of the weapons in your hands and the armor spikes (see the description of spiked armor in Chapter 7 of the *PH*).

When grappling, you can damage your foe with your spikes by making a regular grapple check (opposed by your foe's check). If you succeed, you deal piercing damage to your foe (see Table 7–5 in the *PH*) rather than the unarmed strike damage you'd normally deal when damaging your foe with a grapple check. Since you can use armor spikes as a light weapon, you can simply use them to attack your foe. You suffer a –4 penalty on your attack roll when attacking with a light weapon in a grapple (see page 156 in the *PH*), but if your foe is bigger or stronger than you, this might prove a better tactic than trying to deal damage through a grapple check because there is no opposed roll to make—you just have to hit your opponent's Armor Class. You can't attack with two weapons when grappling, even when one of those weapons is armor spikes (see the section on grappling in Chapter 8 of the *PH*).

You can't attack and damage your foe if he has you pinned. If you break the pin and avoid being pinned again, you can go back to attacking your foe. If your attack bonus is high enough to allow multiple attacks, you might break the pin and then use your remaining attack to damage your foe. To accomplish this, you must first use an attack to break the pin. You can break a pin using the Escape Artist skill, but trying to do so is a standard action for you; once you use the standard action to

attempt escape, you can't make any more attacks during your turn.

Can I add both armor spikes and armor razors (*Und 65*) on the same suit of armor?

Yes. You can attack with either one, but not both at the same time.

If my shield and my shield spikes are made from different material, what material counts when making a shield bash attack?

Use the material of the shield spikes. An adamantite shield with cold iron shield spikes would count as a cold iron weapon when making a shield bash attack.

If a character wearing spiked armor is swallowed whole, does the monster take damage? Can I use the spiked armor to escape?

No and yes. Armor spikes don't automatically deal damage to a monster that grapples you, constricts you, or swallows you whole. Armor spikes deal damage only when used as a weapon or to deal damage in a grapple.

On what kinds of successful grapple checks do armor spikes deal damage?

The damage from armor spikes is dealt when you make a successful grapple check made for the purpose of dealing damage (the "Damage Your Opponent" option, *PH 156*).

Just how fast can a dwarf barbarian, or other race with a speed of 20, move in medium armor? There are two prevailing opinions on this: 25 feet (10 feet more than that of a typical dwarf in medium armor) or 20 feet (the result of consulting table 7–6 for a creature with a speed of 30 feet). What is the intent of the statements on page 122 of the *PH* regarding table 7–6: "Dwarves, gnomes, and halflings have an unencumbered speed of 20 feet. They use the second column." That is, where should the emphasis be placed, on the mention of race or on the inclusion of unencumbered speed?

Table 7–6 uses base speeds, not races. Always apply any speed increases a character has before applying the effects of armor (see page 147 in the *PH*). A halfling or gnome barbarian in medium armor has a speed of 20 feet. A dwarf barbarian in medium armor has a speed of 30 feet because medium or heavy armor doesn't reduce a dwarf's speed (see page 14 in the *PH*).

Is a character proficient with light armor, such as a rogue, considered to be proficient with mithral breastplate? What about a character proficient with medium armor, such as a barbarian—is he considered proficient with mithral full plate armor?

The description of mithral on page 284 of the *DMG* is less precise than it could be in defining how it interacts with armor proficiency rules. The simplest answer—and the one that the Sage expects most players and DMs use—is that mithral armor is treated as one category lighter for all purposes, including proficiency. This isn't exactly what the *DMG* says, but it's a reasonable interpretation of the intent of the rule (and it's supported by a number of precedents, including the descriptions of various specific mithral armors described on page 220 of the *DMG* and a variety of NPC stat blocks).

Thus, a ranger or rogue could wear a mithral breastplate without suffering a nonproficiency penalty (since it's treated as

light armor), and each could use any ability dependent on wearing light or no armor (such as evasion or the ranger's combat style). A barbarian could wear mithral full plate armor without suffering a nonproficiency penalty (since it's treated as medium armor), and he could use any ability dependent on wearing medium or lighter armor (such as fast movement).

The same would be true of any other special material that uses the same or similar language as mithral (such as darkleaf, on page 120 of the *ECS*).

If you cast *resurrection* on dragonhide armor does the dragon come back to life?

Yes. The *resurrection* spell states that "so long as some small portion of the creature's body still exists, it can be *resurrected*" and that "the condition of the remains is not a factor." It would be up to the DM to determine the age and kind of the dragon resulting from such a spell, using the guidelines for minimum size required to make the armor in question (see page 284 in the *DMG*).

The same would apply to any object crafted from part of a living creature, such as leather or hide armor, a necklace of boar tusks, or a cloak made from the fur of a dire weasel.

Weapons

Is it possible to fire a repeating crossbow with one hand like a modern semiautomatic pistol? A friend of mine says you need only one hand to fully operate a repeating crossbow, and that you could hold a repeating crossbow in each hand, firing both of them in the same round. I argued that repeating crossbows didn't work like that. Real-life repeaters were lever-action jobs invented by the Chinese. You pull back the lever with one hand while holding the crossbow with the other. The lever drew the string back and dropped another round in from the magazine. So it required two hands to operate. My friend countered that the repeating crossbow presented in the *PH* was not based on the real weapon and instead worked on a clockwork principal with a crank-wound spring pulling back the string after each shot. The idea is preposterous (the force required to cock a crossbow is powerful indeed). Such a device would require a massive and heavy spring which would be almost impossible to wind or it would be far too weak to be effective (not to mention being heavy as heck). The description in the *PH* does not mention any kind of spring wind system. Therefore, it must be assumed that the weapon works just like its real-life counterpart. So what is it? Is it a semiautomatic completely one-handed weapon? Or is it a simple, realistic two-handed lever-operated device? And if it is a spring-wound weapon, how many shots can it fire between windings, and how long does it take to wind?

Ah, the joys of rules debates! Anyone can try to shoot a heavy or light crossbow one handed as noted in the heavy and light crossbow entries in Chapter 7 of the *PH*. As these entries point out, however, one-handed reloading is not possible.

You're right about the repeating crossbow. (So is your friend, up to a point. The game's repeating crossbow works a lot better than the Chinese original did.) The weapon has a lever (and the lever is shown in the picture of the weapon in the *PH*), but it's a cocking/reloading lever, not a windup lever for a clockwork mechanism. Your friend ought to read the description of the weapon: You reload the crossbow by pulling the lever after each shot, and that takes two hands, also as noted in the weapon description.

Is a double weapon considered a two-handed weapon or a one-handed weapon plus a light weapon, for the purposes of feats such as *Weapon Finesse* and *Power Attack*?

A double weapon can be wielded in two ways, either as a one-handed weapon and a light weapon, or as a single two-handed weapon. Either way, it follows the normal rules for using such weapons.

Wielding as Two Weapons: The primary end (the "one-handed weapon") adds your Strength modifier to damage, and the secondary end (the "light weapon") adds one-half your Strength bonus to damage. When using *Power Attack*, bonus damage applies only to the primary end. If you have *Weapon Finesse*, you can add your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier to attack rolls with the secondary end (but not with the primary end).

Wielding as One Weapon: Add one-and-one-half your Strength bonus to damage rolls. When using *Power Attack*, double the bonus damage granted by the feat.

The Sage strongly recommends that characters who wield double weapons record attack and damage values for both methods of use, to speed play.

Is it possible to make slashing attacks with a rapier, perhaps at some kind of penalty? This is particularly important for my swashbuckling character, for doing things like sundering necklaces without harming the wearer, and so forth.

Technically, no, a rapier is a piercing weapon, not a slashing weapon.

Unofficially, your DM might allow slashing maneuvers with, say a -4 attack penalty and perhaps a damage penalty (perhaps also -4).

A flaming burst, icy burst, or shocking burst weapon also is a flaming, frost, or shock weapon, respectively. What happens when the burst power is triggered? Does the burst damage augment or replace the damage from the energy power?

Damage from a burst weapon is in addition to any damage from the weapon's energy power. If the energy power is activated, you deal 1d6 points of energy damage from the energy power, plus extra energy damage from the burst power (see the power descriptions). For example, a confirmed critical hit from a +1 *flaming burst longsword* deals 1d6+1d10 points of fire damage in addition to the weapon damage from the critical hit itself.

The flaming burst, icy burst, and shocking burst weapon powers require a critical hit to trigger the burst. What happens when you attack a foe that isn't subject to critical hits? What happens if your critical hit is negated by fortification?

In either case, the burst effect doesn't occur.

If an effect is negated, it is invalidated, prevented, or ended with respect to a designated area or target. That's true whether the negation is automatic (such as from immunity) or contingent upon a roll or check (fortification).

If another effect is contingent on the success of a root effect (like, say, any of the burst weapons in the *DMG*, which are triggered on a successful critical hit), and the root effect is negated, the contingent effect is also negated. In the case of these burst weapons, if the critical hit is negated so is the burst weapon's critical-dependant effect, since it is triggered on a

“successful critical hit” (*DMG* 224 Flaming Burst entry and *DMG* 225 Icy Burst and Shocking Burst entries).

There are exceptions to this rule, but they are called out specifically in the effect’s description. For example, some weapon properties in the *MIC* state “this effect activates even if the target is not normally vulnerable [or subject to] to extra damage from critical hits.” In these cases you would roll to confirm a critical hit, and with a successful critical confirmation you would apply the damage or effect for the special effect, though you would not add the extra weapon damage for the critical hit.

Here’s an example of how this works: If a fighter with an 18 Strength with a +1 *desiccating burst greatsword* (*MIC* 32) rolled a natural 19 on an attack against a water elemental (and hit the elemental), you would roll to confirm the critical, even though water elementals are immune to critical hits. On a confirmed critical, the weapon does 2d6+7 plus 3d8 points of damage from the desiccating property to the water elemental.

Note: This FAQ entry is a correction of an older FAQ entry that allowed all of these types of weapons to burst even if the target was immune to critical hits or the critical hit was negated in some other way.

Since a vorpal weapon needs a successful confirmation roll to confirm a critical before its attack lops off someone’s head, can the successful use of the fortification armor ability stop a vorpal weapon critical from taking off a head?

No. A vorpal weapon’s trademark effect is triggered on a special kind of critical—on the roll of a 20 (and a confirmed critical) it cuts off a head. Creatures without a head are, of course, immune to this effect, but the description calls out a number of creatures immune to critical hits, but that have heads, as subject to the weapon’s effect. Furthermore, it states that while these creatures can be subject to a vorpal weapon’s decapitation ability, the decapitation might not kill or destroy them. These statements create an exception to the normal critical hit rules in a way similar to (though not as clear as) some of the weapon burst powers featured in *MIC*.

Because of these exceptions, being immune to a critical or having an ability that negates a critical has no effect on the vorpal’s head-taking properties. Only the lack of a head makes you immune to the vorpal’s decapitation, and only in the cases where a head is not necessary for the creature to be alive (or it does not destroy creatures that are not alive) can a creature survive its decapitation effect.

The new descriptions for the flaming, frost, and shock weapon special abilities say that these weapons’ energy effects work only on command. Why was this changed in the revision? Does that mean that their wielders must use a standard action to activate them for each attack? Or do the energy effects last awhile? If so, how long do they last? What’s the chance that you burn (or freeze or shock) yourself when holding onto an activated weapon? Can you put away an activated weapon without damaging the scabbard where you store it? What happens if you have ammunition with these effects? Do you have to activate each piece of ammunition separately? What happens if you have a flaming, frost, and shock weapon? Logically, such a weapon couldn’t exist, but what if it did? Would you have to activate each property separately? Finally, how does all this affect flaming burst, icy burst, and shocking burst

weapons? Do you have to activate these weapons’ flame, frost, and shock properties for the burst powers to work?

The flaming, frost, and shock weapon special abilities always have been command activated; the revision just clarified that.

Activating an energy power requires a standard action, but once you activate energy power, the power works until you use another action to deactivate it. You can activate or deactivate one of these powers on up to 50 pieces of ammunition at the same time, provided that all the ammunition is in your possession, all the ammunition is the same kind, and all the ammunition has the same power.

Any attack you make with an activated weapon deals energy damage to your foe if you hit—you don’t have to do anything special to deal energy damage with it.

A burst weapon’s burst power is use activated and it works even when the weapon’s energy power is not activated (see the last sentence in each power’s description).

The energy from a flaming, frost, shock, flaming burst, icy burst, or shocking burst weapon never harms you while you’re wielding or carrying the activated weapon (see the power descriptions), and it will not harm your equipment. If you lose or set down an activated weapon, the energy it produces will harm other objects it touches, so it is best to deactivate it first.

There’s nothing illogical about a flaming, frost, shock weapon (at least not within any framework that allows weapons to generate energy in the first place), and there’s no rule against such weapons (think of the weapon as having fiery, frosty, shocking flames). The character creating such a weapon decides how it can be activated. Most such weapons probably are made so that the wielders can activate all three powers simultaneously, or activate them one at a time, as desired.

My stonechild (from *RS*) fighter wields a fullblade (*AE*). If he increases the weapon’s size by one category, can he still wield it, and would it give him reach?

First of all, your stonechild couldn’t wield such a weapon. While a stonechild (as a Medium creature) can wield a normal fullblade as a two-handed weapon thanks to the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (fullblade) feat, he couldn’t wield a fullblade of a larger size category at all, even with the feat.

(Although the fullblade is described in *AE* as a “Huge” weapon, this is a reference to the 3.0 rules for weapon size. Using the 3.5 rules for weapon sizes, the fullblade used by Medium creatures is actually a Large two-handed weapon with a special rule that allows a Medium creature to wield it with two hands.)

Normally, the smallest creature that could wield a Huge fullblade (that is, a fullblade sized for two-handed use by a Huge creature) would be a Large creature. A Medium creature with the powerful build racial trait, such as a goliath or half-giant, with the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (fullblade) feat could also wield a Huge fullblade.

As to the second issue, regardless of the wielder’s or the weapon’s size, a fullblade is not a reach weapon. Even a Medium creature with powerful build who wields a Huge fullblade can use it only against creatures at a distance of his natural reach (typically 5 feet), but no more than that.

How do reach weapons work if they are of a different size than the creature wielding them? Say, an ogre wielding a Small or Medium glaive, or a human with the Monkey Grip feat wielding a Large ranseur? What is the reach for each situation?

A reach weapon doubles its wielder's natural reach, but only if the weapon is at least of an appropriate size for the wielder. Wielding a "too-small" reach weapon grants no reach.

An ogre (Large) wielding a Medium or smaller reach weapon gains no reach from the weapon, and could thus attack foes either 5 feet or 10 feet distant (as normal for a Large creature wielding a non-reach weapon).

A human (Medium) wielding a Large or larger reach weapon could attack a creature 10 feet away (but no further), and could not use the weapon to attack a creature 5 feet away (as normal for a Medium creature wielding a reach weapon). A human wielding a Small reach weapon would gain no reach from the weapon.

The *PH* isn't as clear on this as it could be, although an example of reach in action on page 113 in the *PH* provides pretty strong support: "A typical Large character wielding a reach weapon *of the appropriate size* can attack a creature 15 or 20 feet away . . ." [italics added]. While this reference doesn't mention the ability to wield a reach weapon larger than the appropriate size, allowing such a weapon to grant reach to its wielder is a reasonable extension of the spirit and intent of the rule.

Exactly when is a weapon light, one-handed, and two-handed? And when do you take the -2 penalty for using a weapon of the wrong size? How does the system of weapon sizes work with exotic weapons such as the bastard sword and dwarven waraxe, which are one-handed exotic weapons, but two-handed martial weapons? If my dwarf wants to use a dwarven waraxe in one hand, how big a dwarven waraxe can she wield? Suppose my dwarf wants to fight with two weapons and use a dwarven waraxe as a light weapon in her off hand. How big a dwarven waraxe can she use then?

When you're talking strictly about a weapon's size (as opposed to how one uses the weapon, see the previous question), the designations light, one-handed, and two-handed depend on the kind of weapon and on the size of the wielder for which the weapon was made. According to page 113 in the *PH*, a weapon has a size category, such as Small, Medium, or Large, that indicates the intended wielder's size. So, a Medium longsword is a longsword made for a Medium wielder. When a weapon's size category matches the wielder's size, Table 7-5 shows whether it is light, one-handed, or two-handed for that wielder. When the intended wielder and the actual wielder

Weapon and Wielder Size

Weapon	Wielder Size								
	Fine	Diminutive	Tiny	Small	Medium	Large	Huge	Gargantuan	Colossal
Fine Weapon									
Light	L	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
One-handed	1-H	L (-2)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Two-handed	2-H	1-H (-2)	L (-4)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Diminutive Weapon									
Light	1-H (-2)	L	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
One-handed	2-H (-2)	1-H	L (-2)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Two-handed	—	2-H	1-H (-2)	L (-4)	—	—	—	—	—
Tiny Weapon									
Light	2-H (-4)	1-H (-2)	L	—	—	—	—	—	—
One-handed	—	2-H (-2)	1-H	L (-2)	—	—	—	—	—
Two-handed	—	—	2-H	1-H (-2)	L (-4)	—	—	—	—
Small Weapon									
Light	—	2-H (-4)	1-H (-2)	L	—	—	—	—	—
One-handed	—	—	2-H (-2)	1-H	L (-2)	—	—	—	—
Two-handed	—	—	—	2-H	1-H (-2)	L (-4)	—	—	—
Medium Weapon									
Light	—	—	2-H (-4)	1-H (-2)	L	—	—	—	—
One-handed	—	—	—	2-H (-2)	1-H	L (-2)	—	—	—
Two-handed	—	—	—	—	2-H	1-H (-2)	L (-4)	—	—
Large Weapon									
Light	—	—	—	2-H (-4)	1-H (-2)	L	—	—	—
One-handed	—	—	—	—	2-H (-2)	1-H	L (-2)	—	—
Two-handed	—	—	—	—	—	2-H	1-H (-2)	L (-4)	—
Huge Weapon									
Light	—	—	—	—	2-H (-4)	1-H (-2)	L	—	—
One-handed	—	—	—	—	—	2-H (-2)	1-H	L (-2)	—
Two-handed	—	—	—	—	—	—	2-H	1-H (-2)	L (-4)
Gargantuan Weapon									
Light	—	—	—	—	—	2-H (-4)	1-H (-2)	L	—
One-handed	—	—	—	—	—	—	2-H (-2)	1-H	L (-2)
Two-handed	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2-H	1-H (-2)
Colossal Weapon									
Light	—	—	—	—	—	—	2-H (-4)	1-H (-2)	L
One-handed	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2-H (-2)	1-H
Two-handed	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2-H

L: The user treats the weapon as a light weapon.

1-H: The user treats the weapon as a one-handed weapon.

2-H: The user treats the weapon as a two-handed weapon.

—: The user is too big or too small to use this weapon.

aren't the same size, you have to compare the two creature sizes to determine how the actual user can wield the weapon. If the actual user is much bigger or smaller than the intended user, she can't use the weapon at all. The *Weapon and Wielder Size* table shows weapon sizes vs. user sizes.

For example, a frost giant (a Huge creature) collects a greataxe, a warhammer, and a light hammer made for a dwarf (a Medium creature). The greataxe is a two-handed weapon for the dwarf, but the giant treats it as a light weapon. The giant suffers a -4 penalty when using the greataxe. The giant cannot use the warhammer (a one-handed weapon for the dwarf) or the light hammer (a light weapon for the dwarf).

For the example character to wield a dwarven waraxe as a light weapon, the waraxe would have to be made for a Tiny character, and the dwarf would have a -4 attack penalty.

As noted in the previous question, you can decide to wield a one-handed weapon in two hands and get the benefits of a two-handed weapon in combat. To do so, the weapon has to be designated a one-handed weapon for you. The giant in the previous example could not get two-handed weapon damage with the dwarf's greataxe because that weapon is a light weapon for the giant.

The bastard sword, lance, and dwarven waraxe are all two-handed weapons that can be used in one hand under the correct circumstances (the bastard sword and dwarven waraxe are shown on Table 7-5 as one-handed exotic weapons, but they're really two-handed weapons). Treat all three of these weapons as two-handed weapons when determining who can use them and how. For example, a Small character cannot use a lance or bastard sword made for a Medium creature, even when mounted (in the case of a lance) or when the Small character has the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword) feat.

The description of the spiked chain states that it is a reach weapon that can be used against adjacent foes. What if a Large creature wields a Large spiked chain? Can it attack the squares that are 10 feet away? What are the adjacent foes of a Large or larger creature?

As with the vast majority of examples in the *PH*, the spiked chain description assumes that the wielder is a Small or Medium creature wielding a spiked chain appropriate to her size. What the description really means is that a character wielding a spiked chain can attack creatures that are within her natural reach (in addition to those at the normal range of a reach weapon). For a Medium or Small creature, that means creatures that are 5 feet away (i.e., "adjacent").

A Large creature wielding a spiked chain (or similar reach weapon that also allowed attacks against adjacent creatures) could attack creatures within her natural reach (that is, who are either 5 or 10 feet away), in addition to those at the normal range of a Large reach weapon (15 or 20 feet away).

A Huge creature wielding a spiked chain could attack creatures 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, or 30 feet away. A Gargantuan creature wielding a spiked chain could attack creatures 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, or 40 feet away, and a Colossal creature wielding a spiked chain could attack creatures anywhere from 5 to 60 feet away.

Can I throw weapons with both hands? What happens if I also use Rapid Shot?

The two-weapon fighting rules allow you to use thrown weapons in both hands. As described on page 160 in the *PH*, a dart or a shuriken is treated as a light weapon for the purpose of two-weapon fighting, while bolas, javelins, nets, or slings are

treated as one-handed weapons. For other thrown weapons, compare the weapon's weight to those listed here. Generally, a thrown weapon that weighs less than 1 pound (at Medium size) is effectively a light weapon for this purpose. Weapons already defined as light weapons are also considered light.

As long as you can draw additional thrown weapons as a free action (such as from the Quick Draw feat), there's no reason you can't also use the Rapid Shot feat to get an extra throw with your primary hand. For example, if a 4th-level fighter has Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, and Two-Weapon Fighting, he can throw two daggers with his primary hand and a third with his off hand. His adjusted base attack bonus is +0 with each dagger (+4 base attack bonus, -2 for using a light weapon in his off hand, -2 for using Rapid Shot).

The DMG says that only a magic weapon with the same or higher enhancement bonus can sunder another magic weapon or a magic shield, but the text for the sunder attack in the PH doesn't mention this. Also, the DMG says a magic item gets one extra point of hardness and one extra hit point per +1 of enhancement bonus. The PH, however, says it gets +2 hardness and +10 hit points per +1 of enhancement bonus. Which is correct? Finally, what happens when a weapon or shield has a special quality that increases the item's price as an additional enhancement bonus? Does the item gain hardness and hit points for that extra enhancement bonus? What about magic items that don't have enhancement bonuses? Do they get any extra hardness or hit points? When a special material gives a nonmagical enhancement bonus, such as adamantine, does the item gain any extra hardness or hit points from that bonus?

You can sunder a magic item with any kind of weapon; you don't need something with an equal or higher enhancement bonus. Text to the contrary (found on page 222 of the *DMG*) is erroneous. A magic item gains +2 hardness and +10 hit points per point of enhancement bonus, as noted in the *PH* (page 165). Both of these corrections are noted in the *DMG* errata file.

A magic item gains extra hardness and hit points only for the enhancement bonus that it actually has, not for the effective enhancement bonus used to calculate its price. For example, a +1 flaming burst longsword costs as much as a +3 longsword. A +1 flaming burst longsword has hardness 12 and 15 hit points whereas a +3 longsword has hardness 16 and 35 hit points.

Magic items that have no enhancement bonuses—which is almost everything except weapons, shields, and armor—have no extra hardness or hit points. For example, a paper scroll has a hardness of 0 and 1 hit point, no matter how many spells it contains.

Adamantine itself doesn't provide a nonmagical enhancement bonus; an adamantine item is always a masterwork item, so an adamantine weapon gives you a +1 enhancement bonus on attack rolls. Masterwork items don't have any extra hardness or hit points.

Are weapons made from cold iron resistant to spells that provide an enhancement bonus or a special ability, such as magic weapon or align weapon?

In a word, no. You have to pay extra to make cold iron magic items, but temporary effects such as the spells you name have their normal effects when used on cold iron items.

The descriptions of ghost touch weapons on pages 224 and 225 of the DMG says that a ghost touch weapon functions as either a corporeal or an incorporeal object, whichever is more beneficial to the wielder at the time. Does that mean that ghost touch weapons also ignore armor and natural armor bonuses to their target's AC in the hands of corporeal creatures?

No, it does not. Ghost touch weapons allow corporeal wielders to strike incorporeal targets (and manifested ghosts) with no miss chance. They also allow manifested ghosts to make normal attacks (not incorporeal touch attacks) against targets on the Material Plane. An incorporeal creature or manifested ghost can also pick up and move a ghost touch weapon and can carry it along when the creature moves through a solid object. It is the latter property that's being described in the text you're quoting.

Does the sun power of a sunblade (DMG 228) count as sunlight for the purpose of affecting vampires or other creatures vulnerable to sunlight?

The *sunblade's* description notes that this "bright yellow radiance" is "like full daylight." This indicates only the brightness of the illumination, but not any other effects. A vampire within the area of the radiance therefore suffers no ill effects. To be deadly to such creatures, the description would have to say something like "this radiance is treated as sunlight for all purposes" or the like.

When buying ammunition using the special materials from Chapter 7 in the DMG, is the cost given to upgrade a single piece, or do you get twenty pieces, as you do when buying nonmagic ammunition? For example, do twenty adamantine arrows cost 61 gp (twenty arrows for 1 + 60 gp for adamantine ammunition), or 1,201 gold pieces (twenty arrows for 1 +60 gp per arrow for adamantine ammunition)?

The ammunition prices for special materials are per piece. A single adamantine arrow costs 60 gp + 5 cp (the price for a single arrow). Twenty such arrows would cost 1,201 gp.

In the question above the Sage states, "The ammunition prices for special materials are per piece. A single adamantine arrow costs 61 gp. Twenty such arrows would cost 1,220 gp (not 1,201 gp)." Does that apply to all special materials, or just those that are automatically masterwork, or just those that have an addition to the cost rather than a multiplier?

Unless stated otherwise, any time an item cost modifier is provided for ammunition, it applies to each piece. Each adamantine arrow costs +60 gp. Each cold iron arrow costs 1 sp (twice as much as a normal arrow). Each alchemical silver arrow costs +2 gp.

Does ammunition made with a special material, such as adamantine, break after use as with magical ammunition?

Yes, ammunition made from a special material breaks if it hits the target, and it has a 50% chance to break even if it misses the target. Mundane ammunition (neither magical nor made of a special material) has the same breakage chances.

For creatures that have damage reduction bypassed by epic weapons, does the weapon have to be a +6 or greater weapon, or can it just have enhancements that push it into

the epic category (like a +5 keen shocking burst vorpal longsword)?

To be considered an "epic" magic weapon, the weapon's actual enhancement bonus must be +6 or greater. Special properties such as keen are treated as equivalent to enhancement bonuses only for the purpose of pricing and for the maximum power of a weapon (for non-epic gaming). A +5 *keen shocking burst vorpal longsword* is still only a +5 *weapon* for the purpose of bypassing damage reduction, and thus wouldn't overcome DR 10/epic.

Can you use a whip with two hands, thus gaining 1.5 x Strength bonus?

Given that the whip is a one-handed weapon, while it might appear awkward, the rules of the game are clear that this is certainly possible.

Can you use the Power Attack feat in combination with a whip?

Actually yes, this is also possible, since the whip is listed as a melee weapon.

Because the Pyrokineticist's Fire Lash creates a whip of fire that requires only a touch attack, can you apply a Str bonus to the damage? Can you power attack with this special weapon?

It would seem so. The wording in the description of this psi-like ability indicates that you can take advantage of any feat that would apply to the use of a standard whip. Since one of those feats is Power Attack, then by reason, you must be able to apply your Strength bonus to the damage of a fire lash as well.

Regarding the Mau-Jehe, the mind blade of legacy, should a soulknife be able to apply all of his mind blade class features to it? These include the size changing, both the direct +X bonus and the special quality bonuses, the +Xd8 psychic damage, and others. I know it counts as a mind blade for the purposes of Weapon Focus, but it seems that without the rest it is weaker than the real mind blade.

All class features should be allowed—this counts as a mind blade in all ways.

When releasing a dancing weapon (DMG 224), what attack modifier does it use? Does it attack on the round it is released?

The dancing weapon uses its owner's base attack bonus and its enhancement bonus, but it doesn't get any of its owner's other attack modifiers (such as his Strength modifier, Weapon Focus, and so on).

The dancing weapon makes a full attack (with multiple attacks if the owner's base attack bonus is +6 or higher) each round, starting on the round it is released.

The seeking property for ranged weapons says it negates "any miss chances that would otherwise apply" (DMG 225). Does this also negate the AC bonus from cover, since that creates a chance that your attack will miss?

No. The phrase "miss chance" specifically refers to percentile rolls used to determine whether an otherwise successful attack actually misses. Concealment is the most common effect that creates a miss chance, but it would also apply to similar effects such as the *displacement* spell (PH 223), but not to incorporeality.

Does the intelligent legacy ability (in *Weapons of Legacy*) grant the legacy item the lesser and greater powers and special purpose an intelligent weapon normally gains?

No. Giving a legacy weapon sentence in this manner grants it the benefits listed for the intelligent legacy ability (see *Weapons of Legacy* page 191 for an example), but not any powers not listed there (such as lesser and greater powers and a special purpose).

Can a player add a weapon property to a nonweapon wondrous item? For example, can I add the *shock* property to my *quiver of Ehlonna* to let it grant that benefit to all the arrows stored in it?

By definition, the weapon properties are designed only to be added to weapons. Simply adding the *shock* weapon property to a *quiver of Ehlonna* doesn't necessarily mean the quiver now imparts that property to its arrows—by definition, it would apply only to attacks made with the quiver itself, which is pretty ludicrous.

The Sage can certainly imagine a wondrous item that bestows a benefit resembling that of a weapon property—the *scabbard of keen edges* is a good example—but simply making it exactly the same effect and price would almost certainly be a mistake.

As with any new magic item, the DM must balance the item's effect and price with similar effects in the game—a quiver that granted the *shock* property to every arrow it fired is significantly more efficient than simply crafting a batch of *+1 shock arrows*, and just using the existing “plus equivalent” price would be significantly cheaper than adding the *shock* property to your bow (since your bow likely has an existing enhancement bonus and/or other properties).

If a character gains a negative level by picking up an unholy weapon, and this results in her negative levels equaling her current level, is she killed even though the negative level goes away as soon as she releases the weapon?

Yes. The negative level gained from picking up an unholy (or similar) weapon is just like a normal negative level in all ways, except that it can't result in actual level loss and can't be overcome in any way while the weapon is held.

If the negative level gained by picking up such a weapon results in the character's death from negative levels, she stays dead even after the weapon drops from her lifeless hands (just like a character killed by an *enervation* spell's negative levels stays dead even after the duration of the spell elapses).

Rings

I'm looking at the descriptions for the various command-activated magic rings in the *DMG*, and I can't find any mention of how long these powers actually last once activated. For example, how long do you blink when you activate a *ring of blinking*? How long can you turn spells when you activate a *ring of spell turning*? What happens if I activate a ring twice? Do the durations stack?

In the case of a ring (or any other item) that duplicates a spell effect, one activation functions for the same duration as the duplicated spell cast by a character of the ring's caster level. For example, when you activate a *ring of blinking* you will blink for up to 7 rounds since the ring's caster level is 7th. Since *blink* is a dismissible spell, you can use a standard action to deactivate the effect sooner if you like. In some cases, an item's description specifies a different duration for a spell

effect. For example, when you activate a *ring of spell turning*, the ring turns the next nine levels of spell cast on you, no matter how long that takes.

If you activate an item again before a previous activation runs out, the two durations overlap, they do not stack. For example, if you activate a *ring of blinking* and blink for 3 rounds, then activate it again, you wind up blinking for 10 rounds in total. In the case of a *ring of spell turning*, a new activation would mean the ring would turn the next nine levels of spells cast on you after the second activation (any unused turning from the previous activation would be lost).

Can a *ring of counterspells* counter a *fireball* spell or other area effect if the wearer is in the affected area?

The *ring of counterspells* counters spells that are cast on you only, not necessarily a spell that affects you. So if you were the target of a *fireball*, then the ring would counter it; however, if you were just standing too close to the intended target, you would be affected normally and the *ring of counterspells* would not come into play.

What is the duration of the *invisibility* granted by a *ring of invisibility*?

In general, you should assume that any spell effect mimicked by a magic item treats all variables of the effect as if it were the spell cast with the item's caster level. In this case, the duration of the ring's ability is the equivalent of an *invisibility* spell cast by a 3rd-level caster (the ring's caster level): 3 minutes. Of course, nothing prevents a character from activating the ring's power more frequently than this (thus ensuring a constant invisibility), as long as he's willing (and able) to spend the actions to do so.

If you are playing a monstrous character with four arms, can you wear a magic ring on each hand, or are you still limited to two rings?

The limit is two rings per character, number of hands not withstanding. Magic item locations aren't just about where items fit on the body, they also relate to how magic flows through the body.

Does the shield of force created by the *ring of force shield* (*DMG* 232) require a free hand to use, or can I use it when wielding two weapons or a two-handed weapon?

The item is silent on the issue, so the Sage believes it appropriate to assume that the ring's shield functions just like a normal heavy shield (except for the lack of armor check penalty or arcane spell failure chance). Thus, it requires a free hand to gain the shield's benefit.

Of course, a character wielding a weapon in that hand could activate the ring after making his attacks for the round (thus gaining its benefit while enemies attack) and deactivate it at the start of his next turn (allowing attacks with that hand). While you wouldn't be able to use the shield hand to make attacks of opportunity while the shield was active, you'd otherwise be nearly as effectively protected as if the shield were active continuously.

The description of the *ring of sustenance* says the user gets all the benefits of 8 hours of sleep in 2 hours. How does this affect a bard, sorcerer, or wizard who wants to regain spells? Specifically, how does this interact with the casting limit rule in the *PH*?

In the case of a *ring of sustenance*, “all the benefits of 8 hours of sleep” means the character sleeps for 2 hours and regains 1 hit point per level (see the rules for natural healing on Chapter 8 of the *PH*). If the ring wearer is fatigued, 2 hours of sleep removes the fatigue.

A wizard must have 8 hours of rest before regaining spells. If the wizard doesn’t have to sleep for some reason, she still requires 8 hours of rest to regain any spells (see Preparing Wizard Spells on page 177 of the *PH*). A *ring of sustenance* doesn’t change that.

A bard or sorcerer regains spells only once a day, and a *ring of sustenance* doesn’t increase that.

A *ring of sustenance* also doesn’t exempt the wearer from the casting limit rule. Whenever a spellcaster gets a new set of spells, any spell slot she used in the last 8 hours is not available. This rule has nothing to do with how much sleep the spellcaster gets; it reflects how long a spell slot must remain empty before the character can refill it. The ring doesn’t make 8 hours pass, so it doesn’t help the character refill the used spell slot.

Rods

Does a wizard (or other spellcaster who prepares spells) with a metamagic rod (*DMG* 236) activate it when preparing spells (thus preparing three spells with a metamagic effect without paying the extra spell level cost) or when casting spells (allowing her to apply the metamagic effect to any three spells she likes)?

The latter. The metamagic rods function the same for any spellcaster—they allow her to apply a metamagic effect “on the fly” when casting the spell to be affected. The exception is the sorcerer (or by extension, any other spontaneous spellcaster) who must still use a full-round action to cast the affected spell.

Scrolls

If you aren’t of the right level to read a scroll, you have to make a caster level check to actually use the scroll, right? If this fails, you have to make a DC 5 Wisdom check to avoid a mishap. What happens to the scroll if you fail both checks? Does the failure erase the scroll? What happens if you fail the caster level check, but make the Wisdom check? Is the writing on the scroll still there?

If you do not succeed in activating a scroll spell, the spell is not used up. If you suffer a mishap when you fail to cast the spell, however, you activate the scroll after a fashion and the scroll is wasted. You likewise lose the spell on the scroll if you fail any Concentration check you might have to make while using the scroll. You also lose the spell from the scroll or if you fail any arcane spell failure roll you might have to make when using the scroll.

Can you take 10 or take 20 when attempting to activate a scroll?

No. If you need to make a check to cast a spell from a scroll (see page 238 in the *DMG*), you must make a caster level check to do so. You can never take 10 on a caster level check (see page 65 in the *PH*). Since there is a chance for a mishap when you fail to activate a scroll, you can’t take 20 on the check (also see page 65 in the *PH*).

To use a scroll created by an artificer, what ability score is required?

Scrolls created by an artificer do not have an ability score linked to them and so it is not required to make a Use Magic

Device check to emulate an ability score in order to use them. Keep in mind that you might need to make a Use Magic Device check to emulate other requirements of the scroll.

Staves

When you use a staff, you use your own relevant ability score and feats to determine the save DCs for the spells cast from the staff, and you can use your own caster level for those spells too, if it’s higher than the staff’s caster level. Does this mean you can apply metamagic feats you know to spells you cast from a staff?

You cannot use metamagic feats on spells you cast from a spell trigger item (wand or staff) or spell completion item (scroll). As the introductory text for staves on page 243 of the *DMG* says, your ability score and relevant feats determine the save DC for any spell you cast from a staff. From the core D&D books, “relevant feats” are Spell Focus and Greater Spell Focus. These feats apply to spells you cast from a staff, provided the staff spell is from the school to which you have applied the feats. Also as noted on page 243, the Spell Penetration and Greater Spell Penetration feats apply to spells you cast from a staff.

When you use a staff, you use your own relevant ability score and feats to determine the save DCs for the spells you cast from the staff, and you can use your own caster level for those spells too, if it’s higher than the staff’s caster level. So, suppose you’re an archmage. Can you use the archmage’s high arcane abilities, such as mastery of elements or mastery of shaping with a staff?

The only high arcane ability that works on a spell cast from a staff is spell power, which increases the archmage’s caster level.

Wands

Can I make an *eternal wand* (*ECS* 265) of *cure light wounds*? Can a wizard use such an item?

Yes and yes. The *eternal wand* entry states that it can hold any arcane spell of 3rd level or lower. The *cure light wounds* spell appears on the bard spell list and is thus considered an arcane spell.

Furthermore, the entry states that “any character who can cast arcane spells” can use an *eternal wand*. The spell need not appear on the user’s class spell list (a conclusion supported by the example, which describes magewrights wielding *eternal wands of magic missile*, a spell that doesn’t appear on the class’s spell list).

Can my cleric of Pelor activate a *wand of holy smite* if he doesn’t have the Good domain? After all, it’s on his deity’s list of domain spells, so that’s the same as being on my character’s spell list, right?

Wrong. Your character’s domain spells are indeed treated as being on your class spell list for the purpose of using wands, scrolls, and similar items, but that applies only for spells in domains that your character has actually chosen. If you haven’t selected the domain as one of your two domains, the spells of that domain aren’t considered on your spell list (unless they’re already on your spell list from your class, such as aid, which is on all clerics’ spell lists and not just the spell lists of clerics with the Good or Luck domain).

Wondrous Items

***Boccob’s blessed book* allows a wizard to fill its 1,000 pages with spells without paying the 25 gp per page material cost.**

The *PH* (page 179), however, says materials for writing the spell (special quills, inks, and other supplies) cost 100 gp per page. Which number is correct? Does it cost 25 gp or 100 gp per page to write a spell into a spellbook? Does *Boccob's blessed book* merely subtract 25 gp from the 100 gp per page cost? Also, can a wizard write a spell from any source she could otherwise copy? For example, suppose a wizard finds an arcane scroll with a spell that's on the wizard class list. Can the wizard copy that spell into a *Boccob's blessed book*? Could the wizard do the same thing with a wizard spell from another wizard's spellbook? Or is *Boccob's blessed book* only intended as a cheap way to back up spells from one's own spellbook? How long does it take to copy a spell into the book? Do you have to make any skill checks to copy the spell?

The cost to write a spell into a spellbook is 100 gp per page (for materials) as noted in the *PH*. Note that with the arrival of D&D 3.5, this cost is half what it used to be, because spells now require only one page per spell level (minimum one page), rather than two pages per spell level.

You can put any spell into a *Boccob's blessed book* that you normally could put in your regular spellbook. When you do so, you don't have to pay the 100 gp per page for materials. You still have to pay the cost for acquiring the spell (if any). For example you might buy a scroll to copy into the book, or you might borrow a spellbook from another wizard. When you obtain a scroll for the purposes of expanding your own spellbook, you pay the usual market price for the scroll, as noted in Chapter 7 of the *DMG*. If you borrow someone else's book, the usual price for each spell you copy is 50 gp per spell level. Also, you can research a new spell, see Chapter 2 in the *DMG*. Writing a spell into a *Boccob's blessed book* takes the same amount of time as writing it into a regular spellbook (24 hours), and the task requires the same Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level) you need to copy the spell into a regular spellbook (see page 179 in the *PH*).

If I'm fighting with two weapons, do my bracers of quick strike (MH 42) grant an extra attack with each weapon?

No. The bracers grant you one additional attack with any one weapon held (not with each weapon held). If you're holding two weapons when you activate the bracers, you can take one additional attack with either weapon (but not with both).

The circlet of persuasion (DMG 252) grants a +3 competence bonus on Charisma-based checks. Does this bonus apply on turn/rebuke undead checks?

Yes—anything described as a Charisma check (as well as all Charisma-based skill checks) would gain this bonus.

Can psicrowns or dorjes be recharged?

No. Just like a wand, staff, or any other charged item, once a psicrown or dorje's charges are exhausted, the item loses its special powers and becomes worthless.

The description for the glove of storing in the DMG ends with two sentences that have given me some trouble. The first says spell durations on items stored in the glove "continue to expire." What does that mean? Suppose I'm a 3rd-level wizard and I cast a magic weapon spell on a sword, then store the sword in the glove. Two weeks later, I retrieve the weapon from the glove. Is the weapon still

under the effect of the spell, or has the spell long since expired? The final sentence is even more puzzling. It says that when an effect is suppressed or dispelled, the stored item reappears instantly. What does that mean? The stored item reappears when what effect is suppressed or dispelled? What happens if I've got my hands full when the stored item reappears?

Although an item stored in a *glove of storing* is held in stasis, that stasis does not apply to any spells or other magical effects placed on the stored item. The spell or effect's duration continues to run as normal and it expires at the normal time. The 3rd-level wizard in your example casts a *magic weapon* spell that lasts 3 minutes. This duration is not extended if someone puts the weapon that has received the spell into the glove, even though the weapon is otherwise held in stasis. When you pull the weapon out of the glove after two weeks, the *magic weapon* spell effect is long gone.

The final sentence in the item description refers to the glove itself. If the glove's magic is dispelled or suppressed, any item stored in the glove pops out. In your example, if *dispel magic* is used against the glove, the sword stored in the glove pops out if the spell succeeds. Because the glove is a permanent magic item, the dispel effect is only temporary (see the *dispel magic* spell description), and you can place the item back in the glove when it recovers from the effect. The same effect would occur if you take the glove into an *antimagic field*.

Most magic storage items use extradimensional space (such as a *bag of holding*). When the magic on such an item is dispelled or suppressed, access to the item's interior is closed off, and you cannot deposit or retrieve anything in the magic storage item until the suppression ends. A *glove of storing* works differently. When its magic is dispelled or suppressed, an item stored inside pops out into your hand, just as if you recalled the item yourself. If you're already holding an item in that hand, you must either drop the stored item as it reappears or drop the item you're holding so you can hold the stored item. In some cases, your DM might decide you can hold both items at the same time, in which case you don't have to drop anything.

Do ability enhancing items (such as the headband of intellect, cloak of charisma, and periapt of wisdom) grant bonus spells to the appropriate spellcasters? The spells these items are based on would seem to prohibit it, but the only things specifically addressed in the item descriptions are skill points.

Yes, you can get extra bonus spells if you have an item that increases the ability score that governs your spellcasting. To get the extra bonus spells, you must wear the item while resting to regain spells and all through your initial daily preparations for spellcasting. (Even characters who don't prepare spells need to meditate a little while at the beginning of the day; see Daily Readying of spells under the Sorcerers and bards section of Chapter 10 in the *PH*.)

If you lose the item, you immediately lose the bonus spell slots the item gave you, starting with any uncast spells you have of the appropriate levels.

Does the ivory goat of travail (DMG 256) have all of the special attacks and qualities of the nightmare (including planar travel abilities) in addition to its normal statistics?

No. The reference to game statistics isn't as clear as it could be, but it is intended only as a short-cut (preventing the need to reproduce an entire stat block in the *DMG*). The *ivory*

goat of travail gains only the creature's numerical statistics (including HD, hp, initiative, speed, AC, attacks, damage [but not fire damage], space/reach, abilities, skills, and feats), not any of its special attacks or qualities.

Does a *monk's belt* (DMG 248) grant a non-monk wearer his Wisdom bonus to AC?

Yes. Note, however, that the wearer gains the AC bonus only when unarmored and unencumbered, since the belt clearly states that "this AC bonus functions just like the monk's AC bonus."

The *monk's belt* says it grants the "AC bonus" of a 5th-level monk. What does that mean?

When the *monk's belt* refers to the "AC bonus" of a 5th-level monk, it is referring to the monk ability called AC bonus. It grants +1 bonus to AC and adds your Wisdom modifier to your Armor Class if you are not wearing armor and are not encumbered.

Can a character benefit from multiple *nightsticks* (Libris Mortis 78) or multiple *orange prism ioun stones* (DMG 260)?

Neither of these items provides extra bonuses in multiples. The rules for stacking (*Rules Compendium* 21) do not allow untyped bonuses to stack if they come from the same source. However, this does lead to an interesting question: Could a character use a *nightstick* and then grab a second *nightstick* to use? The Sage recommends Dungeon Masters limit the *nightstick* and similar items to one a day.

Is a *pearl of power* a use activated item (as stated on page 213 of the DMG) or a command word item (as stated in the item's description on page 263)? Does it require a standard action to use and then another action to cast the recalled spell, or is activating the pearl part of casting the recalled spell?

Technically, it is use activated, but still requires a command (a possibility allowed for in the description of use activated items on page 213). Therefore, activating it is a standard action (which is separate from the casting of the recalled spell).

The question boils down to whether the use of the item takes time, or whether its activation is subsumed in its use and takes no extra time. The example for the latter is given as "swinging a magic sword with a built-in enhancement bonus" (DMG 213). This doesn't seem to fit the pearl's description at all, which states clearly that a "command" must be given for its function (recalling a spell) to occur. The pearl's activation isn't subsumed in casting the new spell—it specifically recalls a previously prepared and cast spell.

This means that in most cases you can't activate a *pearl of power* and use the recalled spell in the same round. Obviously, some exceptions exist; any swift-action casting time spell, for example, could be cast in the same round that it was recalled.

Can a *pearl of power* be used to recall a spell of a lower level than it's designed for? After all, I could have prepared a lower-level spell in that spell slot.

No. A 5th-level *pearl of power* can recall only a 5th-level spell, even if all you prepared as 5th-level spells were multiple castings of *stoneskin*.

Any metamagic effects (or other effects that altered the spell's level) apply, so a 5th-level *pearl of power* can recall the

quicken *magic missile* you've already cast, but not the empowered *cone of cold* (since that's a 7th-level spell).

Is there a limit to the number of *pearls of power* that a character can carry or use?

No. Each pearl requires a standard action to activate, but there's no limit to the number of pearls a character can activate per day.

Can you use a *portable hole* (DMG 264) to go through a wall or floor that's less than 10 feet thick?

No. The *portable hole* creates an extradimensional space—it doesn't actually create a hole in an object.

What classes contribute toward a psicrystal's abilities? What about monsters with psi-like abilities—do their racial HD count too?

Any class or prestige class that grants the ability to manifest psionic powers contributes its level for the purpose of determining a psicrystal's abilities, unless the class states otherwise.

Racial Hit Dice don't contribute toward this purpose, even if the creature has a power point reserve or psi-like abilities.

The DMG says that the *quiver of Ehlonna* can produce whatever the possessor wishes. Does this mean that it can create whatever magic item I want?

No. It means that you can draw forth any item the *quiver of Ehlonna* holds just like it was a normal quiver, without any of the fumbling around you'd expect for an item with such great capacity.

The word "produce" in this context doesn't mean "manufacture," it means "give forth," like when the nice highway patrol officer asks you to "produce" some identification.

Not that the Sage has extensive experience with such situations, of course.

Can a *thought bottle* (CAr, 150) be used to restore XP lost from casting a spell or creating a magic item?

No. The item description indicates that its intended function is to restore lost levels. It doesn't erase XP costs from other sources.

Creating Items

I'm unclear about the exact cost of adding enhancements to a cold iron weapon. Page 284 in the DMG says any magical enhancements to a cold iron item cost an additional 2,000 gp. I am unclear as to whether this is a one-time cost or if it applies to each enhancement. For example, would a +1 cold iron frost longsword cost the same as a +2 cold iron longsword (10,330 gp) since both are "+2" weapons, or would it cost 12,330 gp (2,000 extra for the +1 enhancement, and 2,000 extra for the frost enhancement)? Also, is the extra cost (whatever it might be) added to the magic item's base (so that it takes longer to make a cold iron item), or just to the total price?

You pay +2,000 gp each time you enhance the item, not for each magical property. When you first create the item, you add +2,000 gp on top of the cost of all other enhancements you add to the weapon, and that 2,000 gp increases only the item's market price. So your example +1 cold iron frost longsword would have a market price of 10,330 gp (30+300+8,000+2,000). The cost to create the sword would be

6,330 gp (30+300+4,000+2,000) and 320 XP (1/25th of the 8,000 gp cost for the enhancements). The sword would take 8 days to make (the 8,000 gp divided by 1,000).

If you later went back and added another +1 enhancement, you'd have to pay the extra 2,000 gp again.

If I buy a +2 cold iron longsword, it costs 10,330 gp (30 gp + 300 gp + 8,000 gp + 2,000 gp). I also buy a +1 cold iron longsword and it costs 4,330 gp (30 gp + 300 gp + 2,000 gp + 2,000 gp). Now, if I have someone upgrade the second sword to make it match the first, it costs 8,000 gp more (6,000 gp + 2,000 gp), bringing its total value to 12,330 gp (4,330 gp + 8,000 gp). It's the same product, but with two different market values.

When setting the market value for any magic cold iron weapon, use the most efficient creation method. The two example swords have the same market value of 10,330 gp, but the second sword costs an extra 2,000 gp to make and the seller realizes that much less profit. One cannot simply pass along the cost of inefficient manufacturing to customers (even though in the real world it sometimes seems that way).

Can magic items be further enhanced or improved after initial creation? The players in my campaign are wondering if they can take a +1 longsword (whether they made or found it) and make it a +1 flaming longsword. If they can, how would we calculate the costs?

"Adding New Abilities" on page 288 of the *DMG* addresses this issue. Typically, you must pay the difference in gp, XP, and days of time equal to the difference between the two items.

Say a wizard wanted to increase the armor bonus on her robe of the archmagi, or improve her ring of wizardry III to a ring of wizardry IV. How would I figure out the cost for increasing such abilities?

Strictly speaking, neither of these items can be improved in the normal fashion (see previous question), since there aren't any "better" versions of them in the game. Both a +1 longsword and +2 longsword exist in the game and have specific costs, so one can determine the cost difference between them (and thus the cost to improve one to be the other). There's no robe of the archmagi with a +6 armor bonus, however, and a ring of wizardry IV isn't just a ring of wizardry III with more powers (but rather a ring with a different variety of the same kind of power).

That said, a DM willing to allow leeway in item creation could allow a character to upgrade such an item's capabilities, using the same guidelines as for improving any other item (see previous question). Improving a robe of the archmagi's armor bonus from +5 to +6 is a lot like improving bracers of armor +5 to bracers of armor +6 (an 11,000-gp difference).

Changing a ring of wizardry III to a ring of wizardry IV is a slightly different issue (since the abilities aren't cumulative), but a DM willing to allow this should charge the character the difference between the two items (30,000 gp if she pays another character to upgrade the ring, or 15,000 gp and 1,200 XP if she upgrades it herself). Unlike the previous examples, this actually changes the power of the ring rather than simply adding more powers (it now doubles 4th-level spells but no longer doubles 3rd-level spells).

Are there reductions on magic item prices when the item is restricted to certain classes?

The *DMG* suggests that a 30% discount might be appropriate for such a restriction (see the sidebar on page 282). Don't overdo discounts for restricted use—a character making a magic item for herself typically only intends for it to be used by her, and a restriction on use can be a lot like getting something for nothing (since the restriction doesn't really penalize the character in any way).

Can my wizard craft more than one item in a day if the total cost to create the items is no more than 1,000 gp?

No. All items take at least one day to craft, so you can't combine multiple cheap items into a single day's work. A small loophole to this rule is the scroll with multiple spells, which counts as a single item.

According to the rules, creating a magic item takes one day per 1,000 gp in its base cost, with a minimum of one day. The random scroll generation charts in the DMG state that a scroll could have up to six spells on it. Does this mean that when I create a scroll I can place six spells on it? Does it count as one scroll or six for purposes of item creation (in other words, should it take one day or six)?

A scroll with multiple spells counts as a single item for the purpose of determining the time to create it. A divine scroll with six castings of *cure light wounds* (market price 150 gp) would take 1 day to scribe; a divine scroll with six castings of *heal* (market price 9,900 gp) would take 10 days to scribe.

You'd need to expend (and prepare, if that's required by your class) the spell once for each time it appears on the scroll. The act of scribing *cure light wounds* the first time onto a scroll expends *cure light wounds*, which means you'd need to have another one prepared to scribe it again.

Can sudden metamagic feats (CAr) be used to scribe scrolls or craft wands that include the metamagic effect? If so, how would you calculate the cost (since sudden metamagic feats don't alter the level of the spell)?

You can use a sudden metamagic feat in item creation; the cost to create the item would be just as if you were using the regular metamagic feat. For instance, using your Sudden Widen feat to create a scroll of *widened fireball* would cost as much as a scroll of a 6th-level spell (which is what a widened *fireball* is). The act of creating the scroll or wand would expend your daily use of Sudden Widen (since the act of creation triggers the spell, making it unavailable for casting).

The rules for magic item creation permit a character creating an item to use scrolls, wands, or even another caster as the source of the spells to be placed in the item. The rules do not, however, state clearly whether the character crafting the item has to be of a level sufficient to cast a given spell. Is the caster level of the character with the item creation feat being used to create the item (the "creator") a limit on the power of the item? For example, can a 3rd-level wizard with the Craft Wondrous Item feat create items containing any spell (assuming access to the spells by other means), or is he limited to 2nd-level spells?

Unless stated specifically, items never have a minimum caster level as a prerequisite. (The "CL" entry is the default caster level of the item, not a requirement for creation.)

A 3rd-level wizard with Craft Wondrous Item could create a *harp of charming* (even though he's not high-enough level to cast *suggestion*, a prerequisite for creation), as long he had

access to the *suggestion* spell during creation (such as from an item or another character).

Can you enhance a pair of gloves as a weapon (such as +1 frost gloves, for example)? What would they cost?

Objects that aren't weapons can't be enhanced as if they were weapons. You can't create +1 frost gloves any more than you could create a +1 frost corncob pipe or a +5 holy orcbane algebra textbook. You could create a +1 frost gauntlet (since the gauntlet is a weapon described on Table 7–5: Weapons in the PH).

Is it possible to have a weapon or an item enhanced with magic special abilities and imbued with psionic special abilities at the same time? If so, what would the creation process be like and how would you gauge market value?

Nothing in the XPH suggests that such an item couldn't exist. Assuming you were adding both kinds of special abilities at the same time, you'd just need to meet all the prerequisites (although spells or powers required could be contributed from other sources as normal).

For example, a +1 keen psychokinetic longsword would require the creator to have both the Craft Magic Arms and Armor feat and the Craft Psionic Arms and Armor feat, and he would have to supply the *keen edge* spell and the *concussion blast* power. It might well be easier to create one "part" of the item first (for instance, a +1 keen longsword), then bring in a second crafter to add the second "part" (the psychokinetic ability).

Several armor and weapon special abilities have fixed prices instead of a bonus equivalency. Do these abilities count toward the maximum +10 bonus in enhancements?

No.

That said, if you're using the guidelines for epic magic items (page 123 in the EL), any fixed-price abilities should count toward the 200,000-gp market-price "trigger" to determine if an item is considered epic.

Does a weapon property that adds to the price of the weapon, but which does not have an equivalent "plus" value, add to an intelligent weapon's Ego score?

The method of determining an intelligent weapon's Ego score doesn't take such properties into account, but it's reasonable to treat them as worth 1 point of Ego apiece (like a lesser power).

Can you use a metamagic feat when creating items?

Yes; calculate the magic item's price using the new spell level (as adjusted by the metamagic feat).

A wand of maximized cure light wounds, for example, would cost 21,000 gp (spell level 4 times caster level 7 times 750 gp). You couldn't make a wand of maximized cure moderate wounds, because that's a 5th-level spell, which is beyond the spell level limit of a wand.

If you're not using the spell's level to calculate the price, remember to estimate the price using the improved potency of the effect for comparison (rather than using the non-metamagic version of the spell).

Can a magic staff hold only one spell?

Yes. Even though all the staffs presented in the DMG contain multiple spells, the rules don't expressly ban you from

crafting a staff with only one spell (and what's more, it's not significantly unbalancing to do so).

If I make a magic item as a warforged component (ECS 268), can I choose for it not to take up the normal body slot by paying double the normal cost?

The description of warforged components states that "components that do not occupy any space on the body cost twice what they would cost as ordinary magic items."

That doesn't let you get around the normal body slot requirement; it says that items that don't need slots cost twice the normal price.

If you craft a ring of protection +1 as a warforged component, it costs just what a normal item of that type would cost and takes up a ring slot.

If you craft a bag of holding as a warforged component, it costs twice what a normal bag of holding would cost to create (since it doesn't normally take up a body slot).

Theoretically, you could craft a warforged component that didn't take up the normal body slot it requires, but that should cost at least four times normal:

1. Double normal cost as per the guidelines on Table 7–33: Estimating Magic Item Gold Piece Values in the DMG, and
2. Double normal cost for non-slotted items turned into warforged components.

If a character doesn't need to rest or sleep, can he spend 24 hours a day crafting items (including magic items) rather than just 8 hours?

The Craft skill doesn't actually specify exactly how many hours per day are required, just that checks are made per day. It seems reasonable to allow extra progress to a character who doesn't have to rest. If the DM chooses to allow this, the Sage recommends doubling the product of the check result and the DC.

For example, a warforged armorsmith working on a breastplate (DC 15; 2,000 sp price) who rolled a 20 on his Craft check would make 600 sp of progress in a week's work (15 times 20, doubled), instead of the normal 300 sp of progress.

For magic items, you can't work more than 8 hours per day (see DMG 283), even if you are capable of staying awake and alert all night long.

My dwarf fighter wants to craft a dwarven waraxe. Since dwarves treat waraxes as martial weapons, does he use the DC for exotic weapons (18) or the DC for martial weapons (15)?

He can use the martial weapon DC. The dwarf's weapon familiarity racial trait doesn't apply any specific limit to the situations in which dwarves treat waraxes as martial weapons, so it seems perfectly reasonable to allow dwarves to craft such items more easily than other characters. The same would be true for other races with similar traits (such as gnomes and hooked hammers). Note that elves simply receive free proficiency with certain weapons, but don't get to treat them as a different category of weapon.

The Craft skill indicates that you can use the skill in conjunction with the ironwood spell to make wooden items with the strength of steel. Does this override the spell's normal duration?

No. In this case, the skill entry is just pointing out a useful synergy with a particular spell; it's not suggesting that this changes the rules of the game in any way.

Can a character craft a poison with a higher save DC than what's listed in the rules?

There's no simple method that any character can use for this. Certain special exceptions can exist in feats, class features, or other areas of the game, but the Sage isn't aware of any specific examples.

Can a character with spell-like abilities, such as a warlock or factotum, craft alchemical items as if they were a spellcaster?

The rules are a bit vague on this point, but it's easiest to treat a character with spell-like abilities as a spellcaster for this purpose.

Combat

Does a shield bonus granted by a force effect protect against incorporeal touch attacks the way an armor bonus granted by a force effect will?

Yes, a force effect, such as a *shield* spell, that provides a shield bonus is also effective against incorporeal touch attacks.

Armor bonuses and shield bonuses both very specifically say they do not apply against touch attacks, except for force effects, which apply against incorporeal touch attacks. This implies that even force effects that grant an armor or shield bonus do not apply against regular touch attacks. Is that so? If so, why? If a *mage armor* spell can make it harder for a spectre to lay a hand on you, why wouldn't it also make it harder for a hobgoblin to lay a hand on you?

A spectre doesn't "lay a hand on you"—it slams you, and the blow goes right through your armor (and through your shield if you have one). An incorporeal touch attack is so named only to remind you that (most) armor and shields do not apply. A touch attack and an incorporeal touch attack are not the same thing. If they were, they wouldn't have different names.

An armor or shield bonus from a force effect applies against an incorporeal touch attack because the attack can't pass through the force armor or shield as it can through an object. An armor or shield bonus doesn't stop a regular touch effect, because touching it is the same as touching you (just as it is for any other kind of shield or armor you personally use).

Exactly when can a character make a Reflex saving throw? The saving throw section on the *PH* says Reflex saves depend on a character's ability to dodge out of the way. Does that mean you can't make Reflex saves if you can't move?

A character can attempt a Reflex save anytime she is subjected to an effect that allows a Reflex save. A Reflex save usually involves some dodging, but a Reflex save does not depend completely on a character's ability to move around. It also can depend on luck, variations in the effect that makes the save necessary in the first place, and a host of other miraculous factors that keep heroic characters in the D&D game from meeting an untimely fate.

In most cases, you make Reflex saves normally, no matter how bad your circumstances are, but a few conditions interfere with Reflex saves:

- If you've suffered Dexterity damage or Dexterity drain, you must use your current, lower Dexterity modifier for your Reflex saves.
- If you're cowering, you lose your Dexterity bonus (if any). The maximum Dexterity bonus you can have while cowering is +0, and that affects your Reflex saves accordingly.
- If you're dead, you become an object. Unattended objects can't make saving throws.
- If you're entangled, your effective Dexterity score drops by -4, and you must use your lower Dexterity modifier for Reflex saves.
- If you're exhausted, your effective Strength and Dexterity scores drop by -6, and you must use your lower Dexterity modifier for Reflex saves.

- If you're fatigued, your effective Strength and Dexterity scores drop by -2, and you must use your lower Dexterity modifier for Reflex saves.
- If you're frightened or panicked, you have a -2 penalty on all saving throws, including Reflex saving throws.
- If you're helpless, your Dexterity score is effectively 0. You still can make Reflex saves, but your Dexterity modifier is -5. You're helpless whenever you are paralyzed, unconscious, or asleep.

Will a reach weapon (or natural reach) allow you to make an attack of opportunity against a foe using the Spring Attack or Ride-By Attack feats against you? Don't you always get an attack of opportunity against a foe that moves in to make a melee attack against you when you have greater reach than that foe? What about a 5-foot step? If you have greater reach than your foe, won't you get an attack of opportunity against a foe that uses a 5-foot step to get close enough to attack you?

Having superior reach allows a creature to threaten more squares, but it doesn't allow that creature to make attacks of opportunity when it otherwise could not.

When you use either Spring Attack or Ride-By Attack, your movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity from the foe you attack using the feat. (The benefit from Ride-By Attack also extends to the mount.) Indeed, one of the main purposes of both of these feats is to allow you to close with foes that outreach you without getting smacked with an attack of opportunity. Remember, however, that neither feat prevents attacks of opportunity from creatures that you're not attacking.

A 5-foot step provokes no attack of opportunity from anyone if that step is your only movement for the round, no matter how much reach those foes have. Again, one of the reasons the 5-foot step rule exists is to allow a slow, safe approach to foes that outreach you.

If a player who is disabled performs an action that brings him or her above 0 hit points, does he get a move action as part of the same round? Or does the disabled condition apply for 1 round before he's restored to normal actions?

Strictly speaking, going by the language in the *PH* on page 145 ("healing that raises your hit points above 0 makes you fully functional again, just as if you'd never been reduced to 0 or fewer hit points"), you should be quite capable of taking a move action after completing a standard action that brings you above 0 hit points.

If an enemy makes an attack against me that would provoke an attack of opportunity (such as a disarm or grapple attempt), do I get the attack of opportunity if I can't reach him? Would the Close-Quarters Fighting feat help at all?

Strictly speaking, if you don't threaten an enemy, you can't make attacks of opportunity against that enemy. Thus, if an ogre tried to sunder your elf's longsword from 10 feet away, you wouldn't get an attack of opportunity against the ogre (since an elf wielding a longsword doesn't threaten an enemy 10 feet away). This is true even if the ogre is reaching out with his hand, such as when trying to grapple you.

Even the Close-Quarters Fighting feat doesn't help, since that feat applies only when the attack of opportunity against a grappling foe normally would be denied by "a feat or special ability that would normally bypass the attack" and lists Improved Grapple and improved grab as examples.

If, as DM, this bothers your sensibilities and you and your players are willing to bend the letter of the rules a bit, consider the following house rule that the Sage has used in his games in the past: If a foe would provoke an attack of opportunity with any action that brings him (or something he holds) into contact with you or your space, you can make an attack of opportunity against the foe (or the object he holds, if that's what's contacting you). This means that an ogre trying to initiate a grapple would provoke an attack of opportunity that you could make against the ogre (since his hand and arm are clearly coming within your reach to grab you), while the same ogre trying to sunder your weapon with his greatclub would provoke an attack of opportunity that you could make only against the greatclub (that is, with a disarm or sunder attempt).

Just when do so-called full-round actions take place? Does a sorcerer's heightened spell (or any other spell with a metamagic feat applied) go off on the sorcerer's turn, or not until just before the sorcerer's action on the following turn? What about other full-round actions? The coup de grace has generated a lot of problems in our campaign. When is this action finished? If it's not over until just before the attacker's next action, can the target's friends save her, perhaps by getting in the way or dragging her out of reach?

Any full-round action takes place entirely during the acting character's turn. That is, the action begins and ends during the acting character's turn in the initiative order. Though taking a full-round action leaves you no time to move (except, possibly, a 5-foot step) it does not continue into the next round in the same way a spell with a casting time of 1 round does. A full-round action is quicker than a 1-round casting time.

Delivering a coup de grace requires a full-round action, not 1 round. The coup de grace is delivered during the attacker's turn, and the target's allies can do little about it except to drag the target out of reach before the attacker can act (this requires the allies to act before the attacker does during the current round), or fell the attacker with the attacks of opportunity the attacker triggers when delivering the coup de grace (this requires the allies to be in position to threaten the attacker). Since attacks of opportunity are resolved before the action that triggers them, they can prevent a coup de grace if they drop the attacker. Also, a helpless character's allies could ready an action to attack anyone that tries to hurt the helpless ally, but since doing so requires the ready action, they're usually better off dragging their helpless ally to a place of safety.

Is a coup de grace attack an evil act? (i.e., can a paladin make such an attack without falling from grace?)

The coup de grace is simply a kind of attack and is neither inherently good nor inherently evil. In some cases, it's the best option against a foe (such as an unconscious but regenerating troll). If attacking a particular character would be considered an evil act—such as stabbing an innocent merchant in the middle of his shop—delivering a coup de grace on that character would be just as evil.

Of course, if the paladin has already promised to face her foe in nonlethal combat, delivering a coup de grace would almost certainly violate her code of conduct.

If you have more than one attack, can you attack one foe, take a 5-foot step, and make another attack against a different foe (assuming of course, that you didn't otherwise move during your turn)?

Yes, you can take a 5-foot step before, after, or during your full attack action (provided that you don't take any other movement during the round).

When you normally get to make more than one attack a round, and you are wielding two weapons, do you get to add your full base attack bonus on one attack or both? Would a 6th-level fighter count the +6 base attack bonus for the first attack and the +1 for the second? Would you get +6 on both the first two attacks and a +1 on the third and fourth?

Your full base attack bonus applies on the first attack you make with each hand. In the case of a 6th-level fighter wielding two weapons, he uses his full +6 base attack bonus on the first attack with his primary hand and on the first attack with his off hand. His second attack with his primary hand has a base attack bonus of +1, and if he has a second attack with his off hand (for example, if he has Improved Two-Weapon Fighting), it also has a base attack bonus of +1.

I have a 14th-level fighter with a 16 Strength and 19 Dexterity, who fights with two rapiers. He also has Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Greater Weapon Focus (rapier), Greater Weapon Specialization (rapier), Weapon Finesse, and all the necessary prerequisite feats. His base attack bonus is +14/+9/+4, and with Weapon Finesse and Greater Weapon Focus, his attack bonuses jump to +20/+15/+10.

His off hand attacks are made with his best attack bonus (+20). The first off-hand attack is +18 (off-hand weapon is light). His second off-hand attack, from Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, is at a -5 penalty, and his third attack from Greater Two-Weapon Fighting is at -10.

Are those two attacks at a +15 and +10? Are the penalties reduced by 2 because a rapier is a light weapon, making them +17 and +12? I'm not sure if the negatives are final in the feat descriptions or if light weapons still need to be taken into account when calculating these attacks. I suspect that my two remaining primary attacks suffer a -2 penalty, for a total of +13 and +8.

First of all, a rapier is not a light weapon. It is a one-handed weapon, as described on Table 7-5: Weapons, on page 116 of the *PH*. A rapier is treated as a light weapon only to allow you to apply your Dexterity modifier on attack rolls when using the Weapon Finesse feat (*PH* 102). Thus, a character wielding two rapiers is wielding two one-handed weapons, and takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls with both his primary hand and his off hand (see Table 8-10: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties, *PH* 160).

Your character's total attack bonus (not including any enhancement bonuses from the weapons or other effects) is +16 (+14 [base attack bonus] +4 [Dex] +2 [Greater Weapon Focus] -4 [fighting with two weapons]). Both rapiers use this same attack modifier for the first attack made as part of a full attack. The second attack made with each rapier is at 5 less (+11), and the third attack made with each rapier is at 10 less (+6). To put it another way:

Primary hand's rapier: +16/+11/+6.

Off hand's rapier: +16/+11/+6.

Is it possible to eliminate all penalties when fighting with two weapons?

Unfortunately, nothing currently in the rules allows you to eliminate all penalties outside of the Tempest prestige class; this prestige class has class abilities granted that allow it to reduce the penalties for two-weapon fighting. For more information (*CA* 81). And for the complete list of prestige classes, consult the Prestige Class Consolidated Index on the Wizards of the Coast website.

Can you use the two-weapon fighting rules to make an extra unarmed attack if your first attack was also an unarmed attack?

In the Sage's opinion, yes. Unarmed attacks are described as using any part of your body to attack in several places, so using two parts of your body to attack, like both hands, seems permissible.

My character has 18 Strength and wields a two-bladed sword. When I make only a single attack with it, how much of my Strength bonus can I add to the damage? Does it matter which end I swing with?

When you make only a single attack with a double weapon, the weapon is treated as a two-handed weapon. Thus, you'd add 1-1/2 times your Strength bonus (in this case, +6). If you used Power Attack on this attack, you'd add double the value of the penalty you applied to your attack roll (+2 damage per -1 on attack). It doesn't matter which end you swing with.

My DM thinks that if you have four attacks in a round, and you're using the full attack action, you have to designate all your targets at the beginning of the round, and that you can't switch your targets once you start rolling your attacks. I think you choose the target for any attack after you have seen the effect of your last attack. Please help us.

Well, your DM is always right, but the rules are on your side. You pick a target for each of your attacks as you make the attacks, not at the beginning of your turn; see the description of the full attack action in Chapter 8 of the *PH*.

How long does it take to draw a projectile weapon? The *PH* says that drawing a weapon is a move action. Is this limited to weapons that are "drawn" from a sheath or scabbard, or to any weapon on the creature's person that is not in a sealed container?

The game rules do not differentiate between melee, thrown, or projectile weapons as far as defining the action required to draw them. A longsword, dagger, greataxe, or longbow each require a move action to draw, or they can be drawn for free as part of a regular move by a character with a base attack bonus of +1 or greater.

If a weapon is stored in a container (such as a dagger in a backpack, or a short bow in a *bag of holding*), then it is retrieved as if it were a stored item (a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity).

Does drawing a wand from a wand sheath provoke attacks of opportunity or can I draw it as if it were a weapon? If I have Quick Draw, can I draw a wand as a free action?

As described on page 142 of the *PH*, the "draw a weapon" action also applies to weaponlike objects carried in easy reach, such as wands. (The Sage would suggest that magic rods and staves also fall into this category.) Thus, drawing a wand

doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, and a character with Quick Draw could draw one as a free action.

Wands and rods (but not staves) also fall into the category of "light or one-handed weapons" for the purpose of drawing them in conjunction with the Two-Weapon Fighting feat (see page 142 of the *PH*).

In a previous column, the Sage ruled that switching weapons from one hand to the other should take a move action. My group and I thought that seemed pretty long, since it's only a free action to drop something. Why can't you just drop it into your other hand?

It's not really true that switching weapons from one hand to another is just like dropping a weapon. When you drop a weapon, you're releasing it and letting it drop to the ground, with no real guidance (or attention) as to exactly where it lands. Switching a weapon from one hand to another is certainly more complex than simply dropping it. At the very least, switching hands would require you to use one hand to take the weapon from the other and at most it involves using both hands together in a coordinated action. Either way that sounds a lot like drawing a weapon, which is a move action. When you simply drop a weapon, you don't really care where it lands, and it doesn't require you to use the other hand to guide the action.

What kind of action is it to drop gear, such as a backpack or a sack? For instance, I have players that load up their PCs with so much gear that they become encumbered. During battle they argue that it's a free action to drop their gear to lose the encumbrance penalties. I feel that they are trying to get a fast one over me. What do you think?

Generally speaking it is a free action to drop anything that you're holding in your hands. That said, anything that you strap to your person, such as a backpack, should be treated similarly to a shield, which takes a move action.

I was planning on playing a dwarf ranger with a crossbow, but ran into a quandary. The description of a light crossbow says it normally takes a standard action to reload. Does this mean you can fire a light crossbow only once every other round? How does this affect Rapid Shot and multiple attacks earned for higher levels?

It appears that you're misreading the light crossbow description. Loading a light crossbow requires a move action—not a standard action—and provokes attacks of opportunity, as described in the weapon's description on page 115 and in Table 8-2: Actions in Combat in the *PH*. Thus, you can fire a light crossbow once every round as long as you spend your move action to reload it.

You can't fire a light crossbow more than once per round (whether due to a high base attack bonus or the Rapid Shot feat) unless you are capable of reloading the crossbow as a free action (such as with a repeating crossbow or with the Rapid Reload feat). Once this requirement is met, you can fire a light crossbow as many times per round as you could fire a bow (once per attack granted by your base attack bonus, with one additional attack if you have Rapid Shot).

The boomerang in *CW* says that I have to make an attack roll to catch it when it returns to me. Does this require an action? What about when I'm trying to catch other objects, such as a potion thrown to me by my ally? Do

I need to make an attack roll, and if so, what kind of action is required (if any)?

Since the boomerang's description doesn't indicate that an action is required, you can assume that it doesn't require one. In this case—somewhat like the returning weapon property in the *DMG*—the act of catching the boomerang is part and parcel of throwing it in the first place.

The game rules don't really handle the specific issue of catching an object thrown to you by an ally, but we can extrapolate from the information in the *PH* and other sources to propose a simple method of adjudicating this.

Using the boomerang as an example, it would appear that an attack roll is necessary to catch a typical object. This is a melee touch attack, but it should add the catching character's Dexterity modifier rather than Strength modifier.

An object's AC is 10 + Dex mod (typically -5 for 0 Dex) + size modifier (see Table 8-1: Size Modifiers on page 134 the *PH*). A potion (size Fine) would have an AC of 13, while an unconscious halfling rogue lobbed to you would have an AC of 6.

Most importantly, catching an object thrown to you requires a standard action. Since you're likely doing this on another character's turn, you'll probably have to ready an action to do so.

Of course, this only covers catching something thrown to you, not at you. Most characters don't have any ability to catch something thrown at them (such as a dagger or a big rock), although certain feats (such as Snatch Arrow) might allow this.

Are there range modifiers for ranged touch attacks, and if so, what are they? Perhaps the same as the range modifiers for making Spot checks?

There is no category of weapons that is simply labeled "ranged touch weapons." There are spells that allow you a ranged touch attack (e.g., *scorching ray*). There are no range increments for these, and the maximum range is given in the spell description. Outside of this, if you are using a feat or ability that allows you to make an attack with a ranged weapon (such as the bow) as a ranged touch attack, you would use the range increment given for the weapon you're using.

Can you take a free action and a standard action as part of a readied action? For example, suppose I ready an action to attack the first monster to come into melee range. A monster comes into range, and I take an attack—can I also shout, cast a quickened spell, or use some other free action?

Using a strict reading of the ready rules (on page 160 of the *PH*), the answer is no. While the ready action allows you to combine a 5-foot step as part of the readied action, it doesn't say anything about allowing free actions.

Furthermore, the first sentence of the second paragraph under the Ready heading ("You can ready a standard action, a move action, or a free action.") seems to support this, as it clearly sets up a free action as one of the three options, rather than including it as an addition to be included along with either of the other two options.

Since speaking is generally defined as a free action you can perform "even when it isn't your turn" (see the *PH* 144), you don't need to combine a shout with the readied action. You can simply perform it any time you want, including right before or after taking a readied action. The same is true of any spell (or action) that you can cast (or perform) when it isn't your turn, such as *feather fall*, or any spell whose casting time is 1 immediate action. (The immediate action is defined in several

recent rulebooks, including the *XPH* and *CAr*. It is reprinted here for your reference.) You couldn't cast a quickened spell, though, since that can't be done when it isn't your turn.

Immediate Action

Much like a swift action, an immediate action consumes a very small amount of time, but represents a larger expenditure of effort and energy than a free action. However, unlike a swift action, an immediate action can be performed at any time—even if it is not your turn. Using an immediate action on your turn is the same as using a swift action, and counts as your swift action for that turn. You cannot use another immediate action or a swift action until after your next turn if you have used an immediate action when it is not currently your turn (effectively, using an immediate action before your turn is equivalent to using your swift action for the coming turn). You also cannot use an immediate action if you are currently flat-footed.

According to the *EL*, a DC 35 Tumble check allows a character to stand up from prone as a free action (instead of a move action). Does this provoke attacks of opportunity? What happens if the check fails? How does it differ from the thief-acrobat prestige class's "kip up" class feature?

The "free stand" action described in the *EL*, and repeated in *CAr*, still provokes attacks of opportunity as normal. If the check fails, the character still stands up but must spend a move action to do so. (This is similar to the fast mount or dismount action given in the Ride skill description in the *PH*.) If the character does not have a move action remaining, she remains prone.

As originally described in *Song & Silence*, the "kip up" class feature was silent on whether the act provoked attacks of opportunity, and thus it must be assumed that it doesn't change the normal rules for standing up from prone. However, the new thief-acrobat prestige class description in *CAr* stipulates that this action does not provoke attacks of opportunity, and takes precedence over the older version. It also doesn't require any kind of check on the thief-acrobat's part.

Is it possible for an attack of opportunity to provoke an attack of opportunity? For example, a fighter attempts to trip a cleric. The cleric chooses to make a sunder attack against the fighter's weapon as his attack of opportunity. Does the sunder attack then provoke an attack of opportunity from the fighter?

Yes. An attack of opportunity is adjudicated just like any other attack, and it is subject to the same rules (including provoking additional attacks of opportunity). This can lead to odd situations where as the reason for the original action no longer exists. If this starts to confuse you, just remember that D&D combat is an abstract representation of battle, and not necessarily a precise second-by-second representation of every maneuver. Even the "sequential" nature of D&D combat—I make my attacks, then you make your attacks, then I make my attacks, and so forth—is an artificial creation used to keep combat moving quickly.

Using the example you provide, the fighter is indeed allowed to make an attack of opportunity against the cleric. (This attack could, in turn, provoke yet another attack of opportunity from the cleric, but the cleric could make such an attack only if he were allowed more than one attack of opportunity in a single round.)

These attacks are performed in a “Last In, First Out” sequence. The last attack of opportunity declared is the first one resolved, with the remaining attacks resolved in reverse order of their declaration, assuming the character can still make the attack. If the fighter drops the cleric with his attack of opportunity, the rest of the attacks in the sequence—including the cleric’s attack of opportunity and the fighter’s original trip attack—do not occur. The actions are still “spent,” however—the fighter doesn’t get to use that original attack on some other target (although if he has other attacks remaining he can take them as normal).

Can you make a trip attack (or other special attack) as an attack of opportunity?

Yes, as long as you make the trip attack (or other special attack) with a weapon with which you threaten the target. For example, unless you wield a weapon that allows you to make a trip attack, trip attacks are unarmed attacks; a character who doesn’t threaten while unarmed couldn’t make an unarmed trip attack as an attack of opportunity.

If you make a trip attack as an attack of opportunity, does your target get a chance to make a trip attack in return if you fail? What about a disarm attack?

Yes and yes.

Does uncanny dodge make you immune to feinting in combat?

No. If uncanny dodge said “you never lose your Dexterity bonus to AC,” the answer would be yes, but that’s not what it says. Uncanny dodge allows you to retain your Dexterity bonus to AC when flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. Although a feint creates a very similar situation (by disallowing the defender from using his Dexterity bonus to AC), it doesn’t specifically render the character flat-footed. (For example, the target of a successful feint still threatens the feinting character.) Thus, uncanny dodge wouldn’t negate the effect.

Say my character has a 3 in Dexterity, giving him a negative modifier to his AC. Now if he is caught flat-footed, he is denied his Dex modifier to his AC. Does this mean that his AC is actually better if he is caught flat-footed?

Actually, the definition for flat-footed indicates that you lose your Dexterity bonus to AC (if any); it doesn’t remove a penalty that you normally receive from having a low Dexterity score.

How long does it take for an untrained person to apply poison to a blade, while having a 5% chance to poison themselves? Additionally, how long does it take someone trained with poison, like an assassin?

Applying a poison to a weapon is the same kind of action as applying an oil: a standard action. This remains the same whether or not the character can apply poison without risk to himself. The ninja class that appears in *CAD* gains the ability at 9th level to apply poison as a move action.

When in doubt, if a task requires using or activating something, it’s probably at least a standard action (and might be a full-round action). Most move actions either involve actual movement of the character (such as walking, climbing, or standing up) or moving an item (such as drawing a weapon, closing a door, or retrieving a stored item). That isn’t a hard-and-fast rule of the game, but it’s a useful tool to evaluate

corner cases that aren’t handled by Table 8–2: Actions in Combat on page 141 of the *PH*.

Total cover prevents any attack against you. You can use a tower shield to get total cover if you give up all your attacks. What does “give up all your attacks” mean? Can you move while getting total cover from the shield? Can you cast a spell? Also, do you get total cover from all directions or from just one side of your square? Will the total cover from a tower shield negate spell effects? Will it negate attacks of opportunity from movement or from other actions such as spellcasting? Will it prevent charge attacks against you? What about bull rush attacks? Can it prevent grapple attacks or snatch attacks? Will it stop fear effects, gaze attacks, or clouds of poison gas? Will it defeat traps?

To claim total cover from a tower shield, you must use a standard action. The tower shield rules don’t say that, but that’s what they mean. Since you can take only one standard action each round, you cannot also attack, cast a spell, activate a magic item (except for some use-activated items), use a special ability, use total defense, or start or complete a full-round action during the same round you claim total cover from the shield. You can, however, take a move action before or after you claim cover from the shield.

Like other kinds of cover, the shield has to have a location relative to you on the battlefield. When you use the shield for cover, choose one edge of your space (not a corner). You have total cover against any attack’s line of effect that passes through that side of your space. If an attack’s line of effect goes through the corner of the side of your space that the shield blocks, you get cover from the shield (+4 AC, +2 on Reflex saves) instead of total cover. If an attack’s line of effect passes through a side of your space that the shield does not block, you get no cover from the shield at all. To determine where the line of effect enters your space, draw a line from the attacker’s center to your center. Or, in the case of a magical effect, from the effect’s point of origin and your center.

Once you claim cover from the shield, the shield keeps blocking the side of your space that you chose until the beginning of your next turn, when you can again decide whether you’ll use the shield for cover. Once you choose the side of your space that the shield blocks, you cannot change it until your next turn.

You continue to threaten the area around you while you use the shield for cover; however, it provides your opponents with the same benefits you get. You cannot make attacks through the side of your space that the shield blocks, and should you attack through the corners of that space, your foe gets cover against your attack. Since cover of any kind prevents attacks of opportunity (see page 151 in the *PH*), the shield keeps you from making attacks of opportunity in a pretty wide swath.

Total cover or cover from a tower shield has the following effects in different situations:

- **Magical Attacks:** A tower shield’s effects on magical attacks depend on the kind of magical attack. Any attack aimed at your equipment is aimed at you. If a magical attack has you as a specific target (that is it does not merely affect the area that contains you but is aimed right at you), the shield has no effect. All rays fall into this category, as does any spell that has a Target entry in its header and any spell that has an Effect entry and affects creatures (provided, of

course, that the attacker can and does choose the shield user as a target). Magical attacks that fill areas (bursts, cones, cylinders, lines, emanations, and spreads) are subject to all the rules for cover on page 151 of the *PH*. Such attacks are completely blocked if line of effect between you and the attack's point of origin passes through the side of your space the shield blocks. You get cover (+4 AC, +2 on Reflex saves) if the magical attack's line of effect passes through the corner of the blocked side. Spread effects reach around the shield if they normally would extend into your space, but you still get a Reflex save bonus for cover when they do. A gaze attack is blocked if the shield would give you total cover against attacks from the creature with the gaze attack. If the shield gives you cover only, you're still subject to the gaze attack (although you could avert or close your eyes to avoid the attack).

- **Attacks of Opportunity:** As noted earlier, cover or total cover prevents attacks of opportunity. So you could, for example, hunker down behind a tower shield and pick up a weapon or rummage around in a backpack and avoid attacks of opportunity against you. If you're moving while using the shield for cover, things get a little more complicated. You must determine whether the shield gives you cover (or total cover) at the point during your movement when you'd normally provoke an attack of opportunity. Remember that attacks of opportunity are usually resolved before the actions that provoke them. In many cases, the shield won't be positioned correctly to protect you during your whole move.
- **Charging and Bull Rushing:** Opponents can charge you while you claim cover from the shield. An opponent moves as normal when charging you, moving to the closest square from which a melee attack normally would be possible. If the shield gives you total cover from the attack, the attack automatically fails. Foes can bull rush you normally, moving right into your space in spite of the shield. You normally get an attack of opportunity against someone entering your space, but not if the shield gives your foe cover or total cover.
- **Grapple and Snatch Attacks:** Total cover from a tower shield blocks such attacks (the foe just can't get hold of you). The foe could, however, grab the shield. Conduct such attacks just like any other grapple or snatch attack. Your foe can't damage you unless he pins you first. You can escape the foe's hold simply by dropping the shield (a standard action since it's strapped to your arm), so long as the foe has not pinned you.
- **Traps:** Cover or total cover from a tower shield is just as effective against a trap as it is against any other attack.

If I ready a spear for a charge does that mean I have to make an attack against the first enemy to charge me?

That depends on how you word your readied action.

If you say, "I ready my spear against a charge from the next enemy who charges me," then the answer is yes. The triggering condition you stated for your readied action has been met.

If you say, "I ready my spear against a charge from the raging orc barbarian," you don't need to take your readied action against anyone else who charges you (and in fact you can't, since the triggering condition hasn't been met).

You can be as general or specific as you want (within reasonable limits) when stating the conditions under which your readied action triggers.

The PH says that to determine cover I must draw a line between my square and my target's square. What if my target or I take up more than one square?

Whenever a rule requires you to choose "a corner of your square," you can choose any corner of any square you occupy (even one that isn't on the border of your space). The same is true when picking a corner of an opponent's square, although a creature can't provide cover to itself. (That is, just because you can draw a line from a corner of your square to a corner of a target's square that's in the middle of its space doesn't give that creature cover against your ranged attack.)

Given that being prone means you are lying on the ground (PH 311), who can be prone? Can oozes be prone? What about creatures with no limbs like snakes? What about incorporeal creatures?

Anybody can be "prone." Creatures that use limbs for locomotion can use a free action to drop prone and must use a move action to stand up again. Something with no motive limbs, such as a snake, can go prone or "stand up" as a free action. Such creatures might want to become prone to gain an Armor Class bonus against ranged attacks. (Although giving something like a gelatinous cube that option defies common sense and should not be allowed.) Officially, there's an attack of opportunity any time a creature stands up. The Sage, however, heartily recommends no attack of opportunity when a snake or similar creature "stands up."

Being tripped makes you prone. Who can be tripped? Beholders? Gelatinous cubes? What effect does tripping have on these creatures? Can a prone character be tripped again? What about flying and swimming creatures? Many creatures have neither legs nor any relationship to the ground or gravity. How does tripping affect them?

Anything using limbs for locomotion can be tripped. Things that don't need limbs for locomotion can't be tripped. You can't trip a snake, a beholder, or a gelatinous cube. You won't find this in the rules, but then it really doesn't need to be in there—the rules can leave some things to the DM's common sense.

A creature flying with wings can be "tripped," in which case the creature stalls (see Tactical Aerial Movement on page 20 of the *DMG*). You can't make an incorporeal creature fall down. You also can't trip a prone creature.

Creatures can't be tripped when they're swimming (the water holds them up). Likewise, a burrowing creature is driving its body through a fairly solid medium that serves to hold it up.

When a character gets up from prone, when does the attack of opportunity take place? When he is still prone? When he is standing? Can the attacker choose when to attack? In one case, the attacker can get a +4 bonus to hit. In the other, he can make another trip attack. All attacks of opportunity happen before the actions that trigger them (see Chapter 8 in the *PH*). When you make an attack of opportunity against someone who's getting up, your target is effectively

prone, and therefore cannot be tripped. You could ready an action to trip a prone foe after he gets up, however.

Can prone characters move? The rules on crawling would obviously apply here, but this question also includes things like limbless creatures and oozes.

If a creature has no motive limbs, you move at your normal speed when prone, otherwise you must crawl.

Can my character make a jumping charge attack, either with a long jump or a high jump? Do I need the feats Fleet of Foot or Psionic Charge? If I can make a high jump as part of a charge, can I use it in conjunction with Battle Jump?

You can make a long jump as part of a charge. You must still follow all the normal rules for making a charge, such as moving in a straight line on the battle grid. This tactic can let you avoid some of the normal restrictions against charging. If a square of difficult terrain is between you and your charge target, you could possibly jump over it with a long jump. (The fact that your jump means that your movement isn't a perfectly straight line doesn't make the charge illegal—you're still moving in a straight line as far as the battle grid is concerned, and the jump isn't really changing your direction.)

Making a high jump as part of a charge is trickier. It's hard to imagine a significant high jump that doesn't change your direction; after all, you're now moving vertically rather than laterally. Furthermore, if you have to slow your movement at any point of the charge, you can't make the charge. For instance, if you make a high jump toward a ledge as part of a charge, then have to pull yourself up to the ledge before continuing, that's not a charge, it's a move or a double move. It's the same for the "hop up" maneuver described on page 77 in the *PH*: Since it counts as 10 feet of movement, you can't perform such a maneuver as part of a charge.

Fleet of Foot (found in the *PG*) and Psionic Charge (from the *XPH*) might make performing a high jump as part of a charge a little easier. Both feats allow a single change in direction of up to 90 degrees during the charge, which should be sufficient to allow you to make a high jump as part of a charge. Neither feat allows you to ignore the restrictions on slowed movement during a charge.

If you're capable of making a high jump that brings you at least 5 feet above an enemy, you could employ the Battle Jump feat (from *Una*) without having to start at a higher location. Of course, that would require a Jump check result of at least 40 for a Medium opponent, so it's out of reach of most characters. You'd also have to make the Jump check from adjacent to your foe, so it would provoke attacks of opportunity (since you're moving upward out of a threatened square). All in all, it sounds like a pretty tricky maneuver, but cinematically very exciting indeed.

Can I overrun multiple opponents as part of the same action? It seems like a hefty fighter should be able to blast past several opponents if he is willing to take all of the associated attacks of opportunity and other drawbacks.

The overrun rules allow you to overrun only a single opponent as a standard action taken during your move. If the defender chooses to avoid you, the overrun attempt doesn't count against your actions, which means that you could try to overrun another foe during the same move.

What happens if you attempt a coup de grace with a weapon that deals nonlethal damage, such as a sap or a weapon with the merciful property? Is the coup de grace still automatically a critical hit? Is the target required to make a Fortitude save? If so, what's the DC, and what happens if the target fails? What happens if you use a normally lethal weapon to deal nonlethal damage as a coup de grace?

This question takes us beyond the rules. You could rule that you cannot deliver a coup de grace with nonlethal damage, but if you want rules for using nonlethal damage in such an attack, try these:

When you attempt a coup de grace with a weapon that deals nonlethal damage, you automatically hit and inflict a critical hit. Note that you cannot deliver a coup de grace to a creature that is immune to critical hits. Calculate the nonlethal damage from the resulting critical hit just as you would normally. If the nonlethal damage isn't sufficient to render the subject unconscious (see page 153 in the *PH*), the subject should make a Fortitude save (DC of 10 + the nonlethal damage dealt). If the save fails, the subject is rendered unconscious. The subject immediately suffers enough nonlethal damage to make his current nonlethal damage total equal to his current hit points +10. For example, you perform a nonlethal coup de grace on a helpless groll that currently has 12 hit points. You hit the groll and deal 10 points of nonlethal damage, not enough to knock out the groll. The groll, however, must make a DC 20 Fortitude save. If the groll fails the save, its nonlethal damage total immediately rises to 22 (current hit points +10), and it falls unconscious. This is roughly the equivalent of being killed when you fail your saving throw against a lethal coup de grace, since death occurs at -10 hit points.

If a creature has 0 reach, it must enter an enemy's square to attack that enemy, correct? If the creature enters the enemy's square, does it now threaten the enemy? Is it possible for the creature to flank the enemy? If so, where would an ally need to be positioned to flank the enemy?

If you're armed and you're in a position to make a melee attack against a foe, you threaten that foe (see Threatened Squares under the Attacks of Opportunity section in Chapter 8 of the *PH*). To be armed you must wield a weapon or have natural weaponry. If your reach is 0, you can threaten foes in the same square with you only.

A creature with a reach of 0 cannot flank an opponent (see Flanking in Chapter 8 of the *PH*). Such a creature can neither gain a flanking bonus from an ally nor grant a flanking bonus to an ally, not even when two or more of them enter the same foe's square and attack.

Which square is a rider in when on horseback? What if two people are on the horse? What about a larger mount?

A mounted character shares his mount's entire space. Effectively, she is in all squares simultaneously. This is true regardless of how many creatures are riding the mount or the relative difference between the rider's space and the mount's space. Remember that a creature in combat is in continuous motion within its space, shifting back and forth as the battle rages around it. This is just as true for a mount, which means that its rider is also shifting around within the mount's space.

When grappling, the order of events is as follows: starting the grapple (the "grab"), then grappling, then

pinning, right? How many of these can you do in a round? Can you, in one attack, go all the way to pinned or is it based on the number of attacks you have?

It's the latter. You can grab someone and establish a hold with one attack, but pinning an opponent is an option only when you can make an attack and you already have a foe in your grasp (see *If You're Grappling* in Chapter 8 of the *PH*). To grab and pin someone in one turn, you have to have at least two attacks available that turn.

Can you always use Escape Artist instead of a Strength check when you're grappling, or is this only for escaping a grapple?

You don't make a Strength check when grappling; you make a grapple check, which is like a melee attack roll. (See *Grapple Checks* in Chapter 8 of the *PH*).

If a foe has grappled or pinned you, you can make an Escape Artist check to escape the grapple or break the pin. You cannot use an Escape Artist check for anything other than escape. That is, you can't use an Escape Artist check to establish a hold, damage your opponent, draw a light weapon, move, establish a pin, use the opponent's weapon, or even to oppose your foe's grapple check when the foe is trying to do any of those things to you.

If a creature with reach, such as an assassin vine, grapples you, it then pulls you into its space. Does this move happen all at once or is there a limit to how far you are pulled in a round?

When an attacker grapples, the attacker must move into the defender's space, not the other way around. If you can reach a foe and you establish a hold, you move into the foe's space as part of the grapple attack; this movement is free and doesn't count against your movement for the turn (see *Starting a Grapple* in Chapter 8 of the *PH*).

A monster with the Improved Grab special attack, such as an assassin vine, pulls the foe into its own space rather than moving into the foe's space (see the Improved Grab entry in the *MM* glossary). This is also part of the attack and does not count as part of the attacker's or defender's movement.

Can you score a critical hit with a grapple check made to damage your opponent?

No. Despite its similarity, a grapple check is not an attack roll, and thus can't score a critical hit (nor does it automatically succeed on a natural 20 or fail on a natural 1).

My assassin has been grappled by a monster. Can he use his hide in plain sight ability to hide in the shadow of that monster and get away?

The rules for grapple include a specific list of actions that you can take while grappled. Unfortunately, none of those actions allow you to hide.

What are the rules for mounted charges? Do characters on mounts need only a 10-foot straight path when charging? Or do they need more room?

The rules for mounted charges are the same as for other charges. You must move before your attack, not after, and you must move at least 10 feet (2 squares) on your mount and you can move up to double your mount's speed directly toward the designated opponent. This applies no matter how big you or your mount is. A riding dog and an elephant both need 10 feet of movement to perform a charge.

When you make a mounted charge, must you stop once you are in melee range of your target? Or do you continue past the opponent?

If you don't have the Ride-By Attack feat, your movement for the turn you perform a charge ends when you attack. You must make the attack as soon you can.

How many times can a mounted character charge in a combat situation? Can a mounted character charge an opponent that is engaged in melee with another party member?

Generally, a mounted character can charge once a round, just as any other character can. You can indeed charge a foe engaged in melee with an ally, provided you can meet all the requirements for charging (see page 154 of the *PH*).

Any character making a charge must meet all the requirements for making a charge: all movement for the round must be directly toward the designated target, nothing should block or slow that movement. You cannot charge through another creature (except a helpless creature), even though moving through an ally's space doesn't slow you down.

Is sunder a special standard action or is it a melee attack variant? It has its own entry on the actions table, but the text describing it refers to it as a melee attack. Is sunder a melee attack only in the sense of hitting something with a melee weapon, or is sunder a true melee attack?

Sunder is a special kind of melee attack. If it were a special standard action, its description would say so (as the descriptive text for the Manyshot feat says).

If you make a full attack, and you have multiple attacks from a high base attack bonus, you can sunder more than once, or attack and sunder, or some other combination of attacking and sundering.

Sunder does indeed get its own entry in Table 8–2: Actions in Combat in the *PH*. It needs one because unlike a regular melee attack, sunder provokes an attack of opportunity (although not if you have the Improved Sunder feat).

You can also disarm, grapple, or trip as a melee attack (or attack of opportunity).

In a combat, Bob the fighter is unconscious from wounds, and Grog the orc moves into Bob's square. A friendly cleric heals Bob so that Bob regains consciousness. So the orc and prone Bob are now occupying the same square. Now what happens? The rules say that Bob and Grog can't be in the same square, right? So, what happens? Is Grog somehow prevented from entering Bob's square? Does Grog have to leave when Bob wakes up?

You can enter another creature's square and even stop there if the creature is helpless, or if that creature is much bigger or smaller than you are (see *Moving Through a Square* in Chapter 8 of the *PH*).

Assume that Bob is prone (no rule says you're prone when you lose consciousness, but common sense demands that it be so), and that he can remain in Grog's square so long as he remains prone. If he gets up, he must leave Grog's square first, which provokes an attack of opportunity from Grog.

Earlier, you talked about Bob the fighter, who was unconscious and later woke up, prone, to find Grog the orc standing in his space. You said Bob has to stay prone so long as he remained in Grog's space, and that Bob would

provoke an attack of opportunity upon leaving that space. Suppose Bob made a grapple attack on Grog? He can grapple Grog, can't he? Bob would be at a negative for being prone but would not provoke an attack of opportunity, would he? Assuming Bob establishes a hold on Grog, how long does the prone penalty last?

Sure, Bob can grapple Grog. Bob's initial grab attack provokes an attack of opportunity from Grog unless Bob has the Improved Grapple feat or some other circumstance prevents Grog from threatening Bob. (For example, Grog would not threaten Bob if Grog were wielding a reach weapon.) If Grog deals damage to Bob with an attack of opportunity, Bob's grapple attempt is over.

If Grog doesn't damage Bob, Bob's initial touch attack would suffer a -4 penalty for being prone. If the grab succeeds, Bob is still prone and still suffers the -4 penalty for being prone for the ensuing opposed grapple check. (Some DMs I know would give Bob an offsetting bonus wrapping himself around Grog's ankles, but I don't recommend doing so; it's pretty easy to kick loose from somebody lying on the ground when you're standing up).

If Bob gets a hold on Grog, he normally would have to move into Grog's space to maintain the hold. This movement would provoke attacks of opportunity from foes that threaten Bob. However, Bob is in Grog's space already, so he doesn't have to move to maintain the hold, and he is spared attacks of opportunity from Grog's allies.

You can move when grappling (see page 156 in the *PH*). Normally you drag foes along with you when you move during grappling, but there's no reason why Bob can't just use a move action to stand up in Grog's space once he has hold of Grog. Bob has to win an opposed grapple check against Grog (still at -4 for being prone) to stand up. This doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity from Grog (who doesn't threaten Bob or anyone else while grappling), but it does from Grog's allies if they threaten Bob (see page 143 in the *PH*). Once on his feet, Bob can keep grappling without the prone penalty, or just let Grog go. If Bob lets go, he can leave Grog's space with a 5-foot step and not provoke any attacks of opportunity. (Getting up is a move action, but it's not "movement" for purposes of taking a 5-foot step because Bob isn't actually moving any distance, see page 144 in the *PH*).

What type of area does turning or rebuking undead affect? The *PH* says that a character must have line of effect but need not have line of sight to the undead he is trying to affect, but it doesn't specify the shape of the area.

A turn/rebuke attempt is similar to, but not exactly like, a 60-foot-radius spherical burst. Like a burst, the effect expands from the point of origin (which must be a grid intersection of the turning character's space) out to a maximum distance from the point of origin. Like a burst, a turn attempt can't affect creatures with total cover from the point of origin (that is, it can't go around corners).

However, unlike a true burst, a turn/rebuke attempt doesn't automatically affect all creatures within its maximum "area." The "energy" of the turn/rebuke attempt might become exhausted before reaching the extent of the area (because the turning character has run out of Hit Dice that he can affect), or it can skip over creatures (because the creature's HD exceeds the turning character's maximum HD affected). Compare this to a *fireball*, a burst-shaped spell that affects all creatures within its area regardless of their number or HD.

Ultimately, a turn attempt doesn't really have an "area"—it

has a maximum number of targets it can affect (determined by the turning damage roll), each of which cannot exceed a designated HD cap (determined by the cleric's level and his turning check result). While thinking of it as a burst can help somewhat, it can also lead to confusion, so the Sage doesn't advise mixing up the terms in this way.

Suppose a fighter and an archer go at the same initiative. The archer is not in an adjacent square but only one square over. The fighter is not using a reach weapon. Assuming the archer plans to use a full attack action (and doesn't use a 5-foot step), and since they have the same initiative, could the fighter move his 5-foot step (toward the archer) as the archer is firing and get an attack of opportunity?

The question is moot, because two characters never have the same initiative. If two characters tie with their initiative rolls, you must break the tie before starting the combat (see Initiative in Chapter 8 of the *PH*).

The fighter could use the ready or delay special initiative actions to act at about the same time as the archer. In the case of the ready action, the fighter could ready an attack against the archer when the archer shoots. When the archer shoots, the readied action is triggered. The fighter acts before the archer shoots (readied actions are resolved prior to the actions that trigger them, see the ready description in Chapter 8 of the *PH*). Assuming that the fighter has not previously moved this round, he could make a 5-foot step and then attack the archer. Since the fighter now threatens the archer, the fighter can make an attack of opportunity against the archer when the archer fires, provided the archer does not use a 5-foot step to get out of reach first.

If the fighter was delaying, the action would be resolved in the same way, provided the fighter chose to act before the archer. If the delaying fighter acts after the archer, the fighter won't get any attack of opportunity against the archer (this turn, at least).

Maneuvers and Stances

Can I enter a stance or activate a boost in the middle of taking another action? For instance, can I charge up to a foe, enter a stance (*ToB* 43), and then make the attack granted by the charge? Or can I activate a boost such as burning blade (*ToB* 52) after I've made the attack roll?

No. As a general rule, you can't interrupt one of your actions with another action. The *PH* provides various exceptions (drawing a weapon while moving, the Shot on the Run feat, and so on). You could enter the stance before beginning the charge, or after resolving the attack(s) granted by the charge, but not between. Alternatively, you could just move up to the foe, then enter the stance, and then make the attack, but this wouldn't be a charge. You must activate a boost before you begin an attack if you want to apply it to that attack. Once you've rolled, you can't activate the boost.

Can a martial adept (*ToB*) initiate a maneuver or change a stance while grappling? While pinned?

The grapple rules provide a list of actions available to a grappling character, but it's obviously not an exhaustive list. (It doesn't, for example, mention "speaking" as an option.) It's really intended more as a description of how grappling alters many normal actions available to characters (such as attacking and moving). Thus, the DM must apply a bit of his own common sense when adjudicating any grapple situation.

Any maneuver that involves an attack can be used while grappling, as long as it's made with an unarmed strike, natural weapon, or light weapon against another character you are grappling (*PHB* 156).

It's easiest to rule that other maneuvers and stances can be initiated normally while grappling unless something intrinsic to the maneuver indicates otherwise. (For example, a maneuver that requires movement can't normally be initiated while in a grapple because the grappling character can't move freely.) Many maneuvers and stances are designed for use by grappling characters, and it seems counterintuitive to restrict those options. A grappling character is somewhat limited in his physical mobility, but to prevent him from initiating a maneuver or stance seems unreasonably limiting.

The Sage strongly recommends that a pinned character not be allowed to initiate a maneuver or stance. The rules clearly state that "to initiate a maneuver or stance, you must be able to move" (*ToB* 38), which suggests that a pinned character shouldn't be able to accomplish this.

When a multiclassed martial adept chooses to learn a new maneuver in place of one he already knows, can he choose to "lose" a maneuver from one class and "gain" a maneuver from another class?

No. Both maneuvers must be taken from the same class's list of maneuvers.

Many strikes and maneuvers in *ToB* grant a benefit with a successful attack. If a creature's damage reduction completely negates the damage from the attack, does the benefit still accrue?

As it turns out, there are four answers to this question: sort of yes, yes, yes, and no.

If the maneuver or stance simply adds to the damage dealt by the attack, add that damage before applying damage reduction (which might in turn reduce or even negate that extra damage). For example, a character in the Punishing Stance adds +1d6 to damage rolls with melee attacks. If you hit a creature with DR 10/— with attack that deals 8 points of damage and an extra 3 points from Punishing Stance, that creature would take 1 point of damage.

If the maneuver or stance adds energy damage to the attack (such as Lightning Throw), damage reduction doesn't reduce that damage (see Damage Reduction, *DMG* 291-292).

If the maneuver or stance simply requires a hit (or "successful attack") to apply its effect, that effect occurs even if you don't deal damage with the attack that triggers it. Even if your foe's DR completely negates the damage from your Leading the Attack strike, your allies still gain the +4 morale bonus on attack rolls and your Martial Spirit stance still allows you to heal 2 points of damage.

If the maneuver or stance requires you to deal damage to the target, damage reduction that completely negates the damage dealt by the attack prevents the special effect from occurring. This is similar to the Stunning Fist feat (which functions only against a foe "damaged by your unarmed attack") or injury-based disease or poison effects.

If a martial maneuver states that it allows a save but doesn't list the save DC, how do I calculate it?

If a maneuver doesn't list a DC, it is equal to 10 + the maneuver's level + an ability score modifier based on the discipline:

- Desert Wind: Wisdom
- Devoted Spirit: Charisma
- Diamond Mind: Strength
- Iron Heart: Strength
- Setting Sun: Strength
- Shadow Hand: Wisdom
- Stone Dragon: Strength
- Tiger Claw: Strength
- White Raven: Intelligence

If a single opponent is affected by multiple iron guard glare stances (*ToB* 59), what happens?

Play it just like it's written, remembering that the penalties won't stack (since they're all from the same effect). An ogre threatened by two different characters both in the iron guard's glare stance would take a -4 penalty to attack any ally of either character. Assuming the two threatening characters are allies of each other, the ogre can't avoid taking a -4 penalty on his attack roll no matter whom he swings at (unless he moves to a place where one or the other no longer threatens him).

What exactly can or can't iron heart surge (*ToB* 68) remove?

Instantaneous effects can't be removed by iron heart surge. However, any effect with a duration of 1 or more rounds, including permanent-duration spells or effects, can be removed by iron heart surge, nor does iron heart surge restore damage or ability drain.

Iron heart surge doesn't replace lost levels (though it would remove any negative levels resulting from a single spell or effect). It would neutralize a single poison coursing through your system, or a single disease that afflicted you.

Does the use of the shield counter maneuver (*ToB* 60) incur penalties for two-weapon fighting? If so, do these apply to the next round's attacks as well?

No. The shield bash allowed by this maneuver suffers a -2 penalty on the attack roll (as listed in the maneuver description), but no other penalties for two-weapon fighting apply.

Does the Jump check and subsequent jump made as part of the Sudden Leap boost (*ToB* 89) count against the initiator's movement as described in the Jump skill?

No. Sudden Leap is its own swift action, not part of a move action, so the movement is in addition to any you might make using other actions.

Does the wall of blades maneuver (*ToB* 70) work against touch attacks? What about touch attacks from spells?

Yes—this counter works equally well against touch attacks and normal attacks, regardless of their source.

Can you use white raven tactics (*ToB* 94) on yourself to gain another turn right after your current initiative score?

No. White raven tactics doesn't work on the initiator.

If you are in the thicket of blades stance and an opponent tumbles past you, do you get an attack of opportunity?

Yes, you can make an attack of opportunity even if an opponent uses Tumble or other types of movement that would normally not allow you to make them, such as the Spring Attack feat.

Spells

Within the spell section, you can find general spell questions as well as questions alphabetized by a specific spell highlighted by the question and answer.

General Spell Questions

For a good cleric, what kind of action is it to spontaneously convert a prepared spell into a cure spell?

It's not an action at all. It's part of casting the spell (and thus part of the action you use to cast the spell). Evil clerics spontaneously casting *inflict* spells use the same rule.

You can apply a metamagic feat to a spontaneous spell, but when you do so, the spell takes at least a full-round action to cast (or an extra full-round action of the spell normally has a casting time); see Spontaneous Casting and Metamagic Feats in Chapter 5 of the *PH*.

How many times in a day can a priest have his or her spells replenished? I have a player who cites the PH as saying that the priest need meditate for only 1 hour to regain his spells. Please shed some light on this if you can.

A cleric (or other divine spellcaster) regains spells once a day. This requires 1 hour of meditation at the correct time of day (which can vary depending of the character and his deity). See Preparing Divine Spells in Chapter 10 of the *PH*.

How does a favored soul or other spontaneous divine spellcaster ready his spells for the day?

Unless stated otherwise in the class description, favored souls, shugenjas, and other purely spontaneous divine spellcasters ready spells each day just as sorcerers do, and they require 8 hours of rest beforehand and 15 minutes of concentration.

The spirit shaman's spellcasting entry (*CD* 16) states that the character needs only 1 hour of quiet meditation at a particular time each day to regain her spells (much like a cleric).

Many animated objects have hardness scores. What affect, if any, will an animated object's hardness have on spells used against the animated object? For example, an animated wooden table would have hardness 5, right? How would that hardness affect spells such as *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *ray of frost*, and *magic missile*?

If the spell in question has an energy descriptor, hardness affects the attack as noted in the rules for damaging inanimate objects (see page 165 in the *PH*); here's a summary:

- Hardness applies to acid and sonic attacks. These attacks deal normal damage both to creatures and to objects, and thus would deal normal damage to an animated object (less the effect of the hardness). You would subtract 5 points for hardness from whatever damage a *Melf's acid arrow* spell deals to the animated table in your example.
- Hardness applies to electricity and fire attacks. These attacks deal half damage to inanimate objects, but animated objects are creatures and they take full damage (less the effect of the hardness). You would subtract 5 points for hardness from whatever damage a *fireball* or *lightning bolt* spell deals to the animated table in your example. Reduce the damage for a successful saving throw before you apply hardness.

- Hardness also applies to cold damage. Cold attacks deal one-quarter damage to inanimate objects, but again, an animated object takes full damage less the effect of the hardness. You would subtract 5 points of damage for hardness from whatever damage a *ray of frost* spell deals to the animated table in your example. Since *ray of frost* deals only 1d3 points of damage, it will prove ineffective against the animated table unless you somehow increase the damage the spell deals.
- Hardness applies to force attacks. These attacks deal normal damage both to creatures and to objects (when applicable), and thus would deal normal damage to an animated object (less the effect of the hardness). You would subtract 5 points for hardness from whatever damage a *magic missile* spell deals to the animated table in your example. A *magic missile* spell normally cannot be aimed at an object. Because an animated object is a creature, however, it can affect the animated table in the example.

Several spells, such as *scorching ray* and *meteor swarm*, require the user to make multiple ranged touch attacks. Does the caster have to use the full attack action to use all the ranged touch attacks these spells allow? If so, how does this work? Does the caster have to hold the charge (like a touch spell) and then use the full attack action later? Also what attack bonus does the caster use? Can the caster use his full attack bonus for each ranged touch attack, or does the caster's attack bonus decrease by 5 for each attack? What happens if the caster uses the Quicken Spell feat and casts the spell as a free action? What attack bonus does he use then? How many ranged touch attacks can he make? Do the caster's other actions during the rest of the round affect his attack bonus when using the spell?

Both of the example spells have a casting time of 1 standard action and an instantaneous duration. The caster uses the cast a spell action (a standard action), and makes all the ranged touch attacks the spell allows as part of that standard action (not as part of the attack or full attack action); making these attacks is not an action at all.

The caster uses his full attack bonus for all the ranged touch attacks from either example spell. Any other spells that allow multiple ranged touch attacks work the same way unless their descriptions specifically say otherwise.

Casting a quickened version of either example spell works exactly the same way (although you'd have to be an epic-level character to cast a quickened *meteor swarm*); the caster makes all the ranged touch attacks the spell allows as part of the free action he used to cast the spell. The caster generally uses his full attack bonus for each ranged touch attack. Any other attacks the caster might make during the same round as the quickened spell have no effect on the caster's attack bonus for the ranged touch attacks; however, if the caster does something that gives him an attack penalty on all his attack rolls until his next turn, such as fighting defensively, that attack penalty also applies to his ranged touch attacks from the quickened spell.

The rules for targeted spells say you have to be able to see your target. Does this mean that you can use a mirror to look around a corner and fire such a spell at a target you

see in a mirror? For example, can you use a mirror to shoot a magic missile around a corner at your target?

No. First, you must see (or touch) your target to use a targeted spell. Seeing an image of your target doesn't suffice. Second, you must have line of effect to your target (that's true for just about every spell), and you don't have line of effect through (or around) a corner. If you want to aim a targeted spell around a corner, you'll have to peek around the corner at least a little bit. You still can claim cover from the corner, however.

Would a spell used to duplicate a healing spell (such as *limited wish* used to duplicate *cure serious wounds*) function in the Mourmland?

No. Even though the original spell might not be of the healing subschool, it perfectly duplicates the chosen spell in all aspects (except for the save DC). A *limited wish* used to duplicate *cure serious wounds* would be treated as a conjuration (healing) spell and thus would fail to function if cast in the Mourmland.

Can you perform a coup de grace with a ray spell?

No. The coup de grace action specifically allows you to use a bow or crossbow, provided you are adjacent to the target (PH 154).

That said, allowing spells with a ranged touch attack to deliver a coup de grace against an adjacent target wouldn't be an unreasonable house rule.

Necromancy sounds evil. Are all the necromancy spells available to good-aligned spell casters?

First of all, most necromancy spells aren't considered "Evil," at least as far as the game rules are concerned. The game rules only care whether a spell has the Evil descriptor, such as *animate dead*.

That said, most spellcasters aren't prevented from casting spells with the Evil descriptor, nor do they suffer any penalty or ill effect for doing so. Only certain classes have restrictions or ramifications involved with using spells with an alignment descriptor, and those are clearly spelled out in the class descriptions.

For example, clerics and druids can't cast spells of an alignment opposed to his or his deity's (if he has one). A neutral good cleric of Moradin couldn't cast spells with the Evil descriptor (because that's opposed to both his and his deity's alignment). Even though the cleric himself isn't lawful, he also couldn't cast spells with the Chaotic descriptor, because that's opposed to Moradin's alignment of lawful good.

Can a spell cast with a swift action be counterspelled?

Yes, you can counter a spell cast with a swift action. The rules for readying an action (*Rules Compendium* 110) allow you to react to another character casting a spell. There are no restrictions on this based on the type of action used to cast the spell.

Is it possible to counterspell a spell that has no spell component?

For normal counterspelling, the Spellcraft check requires identification of verbal or somatic components. If those are missing, you cannot pass the Spellcraft check, so you cannot counter that spell. However, if you are using *dispel magic* to counter the spell, identifying the spell is not required and the Spellcraft check is skipped, so you can counter spells with no components.

Can you rest for 8 hours more than once a day? For example, could I cast a spell that lasts for the entire day, then rest, and then do it again?

While this is technically within the rules, the Sage nevertheless would support any Dungeon Master that disallowed it. Ultimately, it comes down to the DM's vision of how magic works in her campaign.

Specific Spells

Is the *alarm* spell a trap, and if so can a rogue disable it?

No and no. Unfortunately, the rules don't clearly define a category of spells that qualify as traps, so we must rely on individual spell descriptions to adjudicate this question.

Despite the *alarm* spell's similarity to *glyph of warding*—they're both long-lasting defensive spells used to protect an area—the spell description for *alarm* doesn't contain any details about how to disable it, nor is it listed in the Disable Device skill description as a spell that creates a disarmable trap (PHB 72). Thus, we must conclude that the *alarm* spell should not be treated as a trap and cannot be disarmed with Disable Device.

***Alter self* (PH 197), the base spell in the *polymorph* chain, says that the new form must be within one size category of your normal size. Is the same true of other spells in the chain?**

Not necessarily, although the rules aren't as clear as they could be. *Polymorph*, and any spell that refers back to it (such as *polymorph any object*), allows the new form to be of any size of Fine or greater. *Shapechange* specifically delineates its size limitations (Fine to Colossal), which is a much clearer way of saying the same thing.

The description for the *antimagic field* spell says that it negates supernatural abilities but not extraordinary abilities. The description for the damage reduction special quality in the *MM* glossary says damage reduction can be either supernatural or extraordinary, but it doesn't say which monsters have which kind. Suppose my fighter/wizard casts *antimagic field* on herself and attacks a pit fiend. The pit fiend has damage reduction 15/good and silver. The *antimagic field* would negate the weapon's "good" quality, right? Does the pit fiend lose its damage reduction special quality completely? Or is silver extraordinary and good supernatural? What about the damage reduction of golems, dragons, werewolves, and other creatures?

Damage reduction is extraordinary unless the weapon property that bypasses the damage reduction is "magic" (as in damage reduction #/magic) or one of the four alignment qualities (chaotic, evil, good, or lawful), in which case it is supernatural. Damage reduction that is bypassed by any other weapon quality that a manufactured weapon could not have without being magical also would be a supernatural special quality.

When a creature's damage reduction entry has two or more elements, some extraordinary and some supernatural, only the supernatural elements go away inside an *antimagic field*.

If a creature's damage reduction entry has multiple parts separated by the word "and," a weapon must have all those qualities to bypass the damage reduction. A creature such as a pit fiend, whose damage reduction is 15/good and silver, has damage reduction that's difficult to bypass because the weapon must be both good and silver to overcome its damage

reduction. Attacks from a creature with the good subtype would bypass a pit fiend's damage reduction if the creature wielded a silver weapon. As a natural ability, such a creature's attacks with natural or manufactured weaponry bypass damage reduction as good weapons. Otherwise, a silver weapon must also be magical and have the good quality to bypass the damage reduction. Inside an *antimagic field*, however, only the "silver" portion of the pit fiend damage reduction functions, so the pit fiend effectively has damage reduction 15/silver. Anyone wielding a silver weapon can bypass the pit fiend's damage reduction inside an *antimagic field*.

If the damage reduction entry has two or more elements separated by the word "or," then an attack needs only one of those qualities to bypass the damage reduction. For example, a bearded devil's damage reduction entry reads 5/silver or good, so any silver weapon or any good weapon can bypass the damage reduction. Inside an *antimagic field*, the "good" element in the damage reduction would still be suppressed, and a silver weapon still would bypass the damage reduction.

If a creature with "DR 10/adamantine or good" enters an *antimagic field*, what happens to its damage reduction? Does it become DR 10/adamantine, and if so, doesn't that make the creature more powerful than it was before?

You've correctly determined the effect of the *antimagic field* on the creature's damage reduction. As defined by the official errata for the *MM*, damage reduction can be either extraordinary or supernatural. In the case of creatures with damage reduction formed of multiple components, DR might even be both simultaneously!

In the case of this hypothetical creature, the damage reduction has both extraordinary and supernatural components. DR #/adamantine is an extraordinary special quality, and thus is not negated by an *antimagic field*, while DR #/good (as a supernatural quality) is negated. Thus, a creature with DR 10/adamantine or good within an *antimagic field* effectively has DR 10/adamantine. Of course, for the vast majority of characters the *antimagic field* also negates the "good" component of their weapon's attack, so this affects only such creatures whose attacks are naturally aligned (such as archons).

Note that examples of the odd situation you describe (where a monster's damage reduction becomes more potent within an *antimagic field*) are extremely rare. Such a situation only comes about when

1. a monster's DR combines an extraordinary DR component (such as slashing) with a supernatural DR component whose method of bypass isn't also negated by the *antimagic field* (such as silver), and
2. the two components are linked by "or" rather than "and."

In most cases, DR components noted as supernatural require bypass methods that are also negated within an *antimagic field* (magic weapons, obviously, fall into this category, as do alignment components in the majority of situations). For those creatures whose damage reduction combines extraordinary and supernatural components with "and," dropping the supernatural portion actually makes the creature's DR weaker. A lich in an *antimagic field* has DR 15/bludgeoning rather than DR 15/bludgeoning and magic, which makes it easier to damage, not harder.

Can an *antimagic field* be detected by *detect magic*?

No. By definition, magical effects can't function within an *antimagic field*. Since *detect magic*'s effect would have to

extend into the *antimagic field* to detect it, the *antimagic field* can't be detected by *detect magic*.

In a recent game we began wondering if the *arcane sight* spell lets you see illusions, glyphs of warding, and other kinds of magical traps. We agreed that the spell would reveal the auras from glyphs, symbols, and most other magical traps, but not see an aura around the illusion of a door, floor, or creature.

It's correct that the *arcane sight* spell won't automatically allow you to look right through an otherwise opaque figment, such as an illusory door, floor, or wall. Any active illusion, however, has a magical aura that divination spells such as *detect magic* or *arcane sight* can reveal. In the case of *arcane sight*, you know immediately if anything you can see has a magical aura, and you know what that aura's power is (as explained in the *detect magic* spell description). You also immediately know the aura's location. If what you're looking at happens to be a figment, you do not know it's a figment. You can, however, make a Spellcraft check (making the check doesn't require an action from you) to determine the aura's school. If the check succeeds, you know that the aura is from the illusion school, but you cannot tell its subschool (it could be a figment, glamor, pattern, phantasm, or shadow).

Looking at an illusion with *arcane sight* counts as interacting with it, however, and if the illusion in question allows a saving throw to disbelieve, you can immediately make a saving throw. If you have identified the aura's school as an illusion, you have grounds to find the illusion's reality suspicious, and you get a +4 bonus on the saving throw (since you know it's some kind of illusion). If you make a successful saving throw to disbelieve a figment or phantasm, then you can see through it, although the figment or phantasm remains visible as a faint outline (see the discussion of the illusion school in Chapter 10 of the *PH*).

What are the Challenge Rating adjustment and level adjustment for an awakened animal?

The rules don't state such values, so it's up to the DM to decide. Chapter 4 of the *MM* suggests that an animal should gain +1 to its Challenge Rating per 3 extra HD; since *awaken* adds 2 HD along with an Intelligence and Charisma boost, +1 seems like a reasonable value.

Since most animals don't have a level adjustment listed, calculating the effect of an *awaken* spell on LA is more complicated. Your best bet is to look at the final result and determine a level adjustment for that creature (rather than calculating separate level adjustments for the original animal and the *awaken* effect). Page 25 of *SS* has advice on setting level adjustments.

Does an awakened tree gain skills and feats?

Here we must determine which of two statements takes precedence. The *awaken* spell states that the tree "has characteristics as if it were an animated object" (except for its type and its Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores), while the *MM* indicates that any creature with an Intelligence score has skills and feats.

The Sage believes that the spell's description should take precedence, so the tree wouldn't gain any skills or feats.

When casting the *awaken* spell upon an animal (in this case a wolf with 2 Hit Dice) does the +2 Hit Dice gained by

the spell cause the animal to grow in size (given that the advancement for a wolf is 4 HD for Large size)?

In general, creatures do not grow in size by gaining Hit Dice. The advanced creature entries in the *MM* are there if the Dungeon Master wants to use the same creature but provide an appropriate challenge to a higher level party—but these creatures do not grow if they gain Hit Dice through levels, spells, or other effects. The same would be true if an animal gained Hit Dice due to being an animal companion; the creature would not grow in size, it would simply gain the benefits listed on the animal companion table.

Upon casting *awaken undead* (LM 62), does the undead in question gain skills and feats?

Awaken undead specifically states that the targets “do not regain any skills or feats they had in life,” which strongly suggests that the creatures don’t gain skills or feats of any kind (other than the armor and weapon proficiencies they had in life, as indicated in the next sentence).

When do you make your save against a *blade barrier* spell? Suppose you have already moved in the round and someone casts a *blade barrier* spell on you. You are supposed to move out of the area in the most direct path to avoid damage from the spell. Since you’ve already moved, do you even get a save against the spell? If you make your save and cannot move yet, do you take damage from the spell anyway? Or do you get to move again? Or do you wait until it’s your turn and then make the save?

You make the save when the spell hits you. If you succeed, you take no damage from the spell, and you wind up on one side of the barrier or the other (under the current rules, the barrier must be vertical). Upon making a successful save, you choose which side of the barrier you’ll be on. If movement is necessary to place you on that side, you immediately move to that side along the shortest possible path, even if you’ve already moved that round. For Medium creatures, such movement will be fairly minor (usually 5 feet). In the case of very big creatures, the DM might want to limit the creature to the side that requires the least movement. If you can’t move, or if you can’t move to a safe side, you’re stuck in the barrier and you take damage.

What kind of damage does a slashing wooden weapon (such as a longsword crafted with the *ironwood* spell) deal if I cast *brambles* (CD 156) on it? What about a piercing wooden weapon?

The *brambles* spell description assumes that the spell is being cast on a bludgeoning weapon (all example weapons are bludgeoning), so when it says “the weapon deals both piercing and bludgeoning damage” it means that the weapon’s damage is now treated as piercing damage in addition to its normal type of damage.

However, the spell can be cast on any wooden weapon, not just a bludgeoning weapon. A slashing weapon that gained this effect would deal slashing and piercing damage. A piercing weapon that gained this effect would deal only piercing damage.

Do the bonuses granted by *brambles* and *spikes* (CD 156 and 181) stack?

No and yes. The two spells each grant an enhancement bonus on attack rolls, and thus only the higher enhancement bonus (that granted by *spikes*) would apply. However, the

damage bonus granted by each spell is untyped and would therefore stack with each other.

If a character with *bull’s strength* takes 4 points of Strength damage from a poison, does the damage apply to his actual Strength or does it just negate the bonus?

Both effects (the bonus from *bull’s strength* and the damage from poison) exist separately. Each one adjusts the character’s Strength score accordingly, and if one effect ends the other remains as normal.

Let’s walk through two examples:

A human fighter with Strength 14 drinks a *potion of bull’s strength*, which increases his Strength to 18. A few rounds before it elapses, he takes 4 points of Strength damage, reducing his Strength to 14. This has no impact on the potion’s effect, and the character still technically has a +4 enhancement bonus to his Strength score (so another *bull’s strength* spell would have no effect). When the potion’s duration elapses, the +4 bonus disappears, reducing his Strength to 10.

A halfling wizard with Strength 8 takes 10 points of Strength damage, reducing his Strength to 0. (There are no negative ability scores.) If the party’s paladin casts *bull’s strength* on the halfling, his Strength increases to 4 for the duration of the spell. If, during that spell’s duration, the halfling takes another 5 points of Strength damage, his Strength is once again 0. When the spell wears off, he loses the +4 bonus but is still at Strength 0.

Exactly how many bolts of lightning can you call with a *call lightning* spell? Can you save up the bolts you’re entitled to call every minute, or do you lose them if you don’t call them when they’re due? Or does the spell last until you’ve called all the bolts the spell can produce?

Once you cast the spell, you can call a bolt of lightning every round, not every minute. During the round when you cast the spell, you can call a bolt as part of the spellcasting action. During later rounds, it takes a standard action to call a bolt.

The spell’s duration starts running the moment you finish the spell. You can call a maximum of one bolt each round while the spell lasts. If you let a round go by without calling a bolt, you can’t save that bolt for later, but you can keep calling bolts during later rounds until the spell’s duration runs out.

What exactly is the limit to what you can “persuade” a charmed enemy to do with the *charm person* spell? How trusting of the caster is a charmed individual?

The spell description for *charm person* indicates that the target’s attitude toward you becomes “friendly” as defined by the Diplomacy skill (*PHB* 72).

Thus, a charmed enemy wishes you well, and will chat, advise, offer limited help, or advocate for you.

The spell suggests that you might convince a charmed fighter to hold back an onrushing dragon for a few seconds, but that’s a pretty extreme example and would certainly require the opposed Charisma check described in the spell entry.

A charmed enemy doesn’t automatically trust anything you say, but it “perceives your words and actions in the most favorable way” (*PHB* 209).

When you cast *charm person*, can the verbal component sound like regular conversation and the somatic component look like normal gestures, such as shaking hands?

No. You can’t cast *charm person* by saying hi and shaking someone’s hand.

A spell's verbal components don't sound like normal speech, and a spell's somatic components don't look like normal gestures. When someone's casting a spell, it's pretty obvious that they're casting a spell (though not always obvious what spell they're casting).

There are plenty of feats, class features, and skill tricks that can let you conceal or alter a spell's verbal and somatic components. The right combination might allow you to pull off the trick you're describing.

Does the spell *death ward* protect you from an assassin's death attack?

The assassin's death attack is an extraordinary ability, so *death ward* does not protect you from it. The *death ward* spell only protects you from magical death effects, death spells, energy drain, and negative energy effects.

Is it possible for *detect magic* to locate an invisible creature?

Yes, although not very efficiently. Remember that *detect magic* reveals the location of magical auras over the course of 3 rounds. A creature rendered invisible by a spell or magical effect could be located via *detect magic*, but only after 3 rounds of concentration. Furthermore, the invisible creature must remain within the spell's area for the entire 3 rounds of concentration; if the creature moves out of the area, the process must start again from the beginning. However, even if everything works according to plan, you still don't necessarily know that you've found an invisible creature—at best, the caster of *detect magic* would know that she had located a faint aura of illusion magic in a particular space.

Can you use *detect magic* to detect supernatural effects? For example, can it detect a wildshaped druid?

Supernatural abilities are magical, and thus their effects would produce magical auras. Although the *detect magic* spell doesn't have a line entry for supernatural effect, you can use the same line as "Magic item (caster level)"—a supernatural effect's caster level is equal to the creature's Hit Dice unless noted otherwise (MM 315).

Can *detect magic* be used to identify magical traps? Would *nondetection* block this?

Detect magic locates magical traps, but it can't identify anything more than the location and strength of the aura revealed (and, with a successful Spellcraft check, the school of magic involved). Thus, technically the spell doesn't actually reveal the fact that the magical trap is, in fact, a trap.

Nondetection wards a trapped object from *detect magic* (requiring a caster level check to pierce the *nondetection*). An even better option is *Nystul's magic aura*, which can conceal a magic trap's aura (or change it to appear as that of another spell of your choice).

How does the *disintegrate* spell affect undead?

In the same way that it affects living creatures. Since the *disintegrate* spell also works on objects, it can also affect undead (MM 317).

What happens when multiple creatures dominate the same target?

In most cases, both dominate effects would work normally. Each time one of the controllers gives the target a command, the target follows that command to the exclusion of all other

activities. As long as the commands don't conflict, the target simply follows all commands given.

The only sticky situation comes when the orders conflict, but that's handled on page 172 of the *PH*: "If the controlled creature receives conflicting orders simultaneously, the competing controllers must make opposed Charisma checks to determine which one the creature obeys."

If a spellcaster is subjected to the *enervation* spell and gets two negative levels, does the character also lose the ability to cast his highest level of spells? The descriptive text for negative levels says that a spellcaster loses one spell or spell slot (the highest) for each negative level. This would imply that the spellcaster could still cast his highest level spells so long as he hasn't been enervated for more negative levels than he has spells of his highest level.

You are correct. A spellcaster with a negative level loses one spell of the highest level he currently has available to cast. He does not necessarily lose his whole highest level of spells (although that's a real possibility when a spellcaster picks up several negative levels).

If a creature or player under the effect of *enlarge person* (or similar abilities) is disarmed, what happens to the weapon when it falls to the ground? Does it return to normal size? If so, will it grow again when picked up? If it remains enlarged, will the effect be contingent on the owner's effect (both in duration and if the spell is cancelled or dispelled)?

Actually yes, the weapon (or other item) immediately reverts to its normal size when it leaves the possession of the character/creature affected by *enlarge person*. Unfortunately, the weapon does not become larger again upon being retrieved. If it doesn't ever leave the possession of the affected character/creature, then the weapon (or item) retains its larger size until the duration of the spell runs its course, or the spell is dismissed or dispelled. If the effect is dispelled on the creature, it is likewise dispelled on the items in that creature's possession.

The *entangle* spell allows for DMs to alter the effect of the spell based on the nature of the entangling plants. Exactly what sorts of effects can the DM create? What are the limits of these changes? What sorts of plants or terrains would cause these kinds of effects?

Page 8 of the *DMG* talks about adjudicating situations that aren't explicitly covered by the rules: "When in doubt, remember this handy little rule: Favorable conditions add +2 on any d20 roll, and unfavorable conditions penalize the roll by -2."

The "DM's best friend" can apply to this situation. Are the plants in the area particularly scarce or frail? Grant a +2 bonus on saves to resist the spell and a +2 bonus on checks to escape it. Is the area filled with so many dangling vines and branches that the characters have to hack through it just to move? Apply a -2 penalty on such saves and checks. It's probably not worth the DM's time to worry about more complex alterations—anything much more detailed might well merit an entirely different spell be created to manifest such effects.

Will a *dispel magic* spell dispel an *Evard's black tentacles* spell? The spell description says the tentacles are immune to all types of damage, but is a *dispel magic* spell "damage?" If *dispel magic* works against the tentacles, does

it dispel just one tentacle or all of them? Will a *disintegrate* spell destroy a tentacle the way it can destroy the various Bigby's hand spells?

You can't damage the field of tentacles from an *Evard's black tentacles* spell, not even with a *disintegrate* spell. You can dispel the field, however, in exactly the same way you can dispel other spells that fill an area. If the *dispel magic* is successful, all of the tentacles go away.

Can a character use *dispel magic* against a monster's spell-like or supernatural abilities? For example, a party encounters a basilisk, and the wizard casts *dispel magic* on it to suppress its gaze attack. Does the spell suppress the gaze attack for 1d4 rounds as it would a magic item?

Supernatural abilities aren't subject to dispelling at all.

You can't suppress a spell-like ability with *dispel magic*, but you can dispel an ongoing effect from a spell-like ability provided that the spell duplicated is subject to *dispel magic*. For example, a covey of three green hags can use several different spell-like abilities, including *dancing lights*, *animate dead*, and *forcecage*. You could use *dispel magic* to dispel the hags' *dancing lights* effects, but not *animate dead* or *forcecage*. *Animate dead* has an instantaneous duration, so there's nothing for *dispel magic* to dispel once the effect is in place. *Forcecage* is not subject to dispelling, as noted in the spell description.

Exactly how do the tentacles from an *Evard's black tentacles* spell attack creatures? For example, does a tentacle have a miss chance when attacking an invisible opponent? Also, how do you figure out where the individual tentacles appear? Can more than one tentacle appear in the same 5-foot square?

The *Evard's black tentacles* spell creates a field of numerous tentacles in a 20-foot radius spread. Tentacles sprout from all the surfaces within the spread. The spell actually works something like an *entangle* spell that's capable of dealing bludgeoning damage. The spell uses an opposed grapple check instead of a saving throw to determine if creatures within its spread are affected. Any creature inside the spread might become grappled, as noted in the spell description. The spell does not make an initial touch attack as with normal grappling attempts, so it cannot miss, even if a creature is invisible or otherwise concealed. The spell cannot grapple incorporeal creatures, and a creature using a *blink* spell has a 50% chance to avoid being grappled.

As noted earlier, the spell creates a field of numerous tentacles. These tentacles fill up the spread, and it's not necessary to determine where any particular tentacle is.

Is a character who remains within the area of effect of an *Evard's black tentacles* spell subject to being grappled again after avoiding the tentacles initially, or only upon entering the area?

It appears that *Evard's black tentacles* attack anyone a) in the spell's area when the spell is cast, or b) anyone entering the area, but not c) anyone within the area of the spell on later rounds but free of the tentacles. Thus, if you avoid the initial attack or free yourself from the grapple, the tentacles won't attack you again.

How do spells like *Evard's black tentacles* and *ice storm* affect a creature with damage reduction overcome by magic and bludgeoning? Do the tentacles and hailstones deal magical bludgeoning damage?

Any damage dealt by a spell or other magical effect is unaffected by damage reduction.

How does *Evard's black tentacles* work on the Ethereal Plane? How about the Astral Plane?

Just fine, thanks for asking.

The Sage is guessing, however, that you're more interested in knowing how the spell works with no surface to be cast upon, rather than when cast on another plane. (After all, both the Ethereal and Astral Planes include areas of solid ground.)

Evard's black tentacles functions only if there is a surface from which the tentacles can spring. The spell includes "water" as a surface from which the tentacles can grow, but it's unclear whether this means the surface of a body of water or simply anywhere within a body of water (the Sage leans toward the former option, as it often makes more sense). The spell simply fails to function if cast in open space, whether that's the void of the Astral Plane or the air a hundred feet above the ground.

Can you detect *explosive runes* with *detect magic* before they actually explode?

Assuming you don't cast *detect magic* while actually reading the runes, yes. For example, a character casting *detect magic* from across the room, or on a closed book with *explosive runes* on an interior page, would detect the *explosive runes* but wouldn't set them off.

Does the *feblemind* spell affect only a character's base Intelligence score, or does the spell make the subject's Intelligence score 1 regardless of magical bonuses? If the spell affects only base Intelligence, will any magic that boosts Intelligence (such as a *potion of fox's cunning*) break the spell? Do you have to get your Intelligence to 3 or higher to break the spell?

A *feblemind* spells reduces the subject's Intelligence and Charisma scores to 1 (not just Intelligence). Of course, if the subject already has a score of 0, *feblemind* doesn't increase the score. The subject's Intelligence and Charisma become 1 (or stay at 0) regardless of any enhancements or other increases to those scores.

A *feblemind* effect remains until the subject receives a *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell. The subject cannot benefit from any effect that increases Intelligence or Charisma until the *feblemind* effect is removed.

The *feblemind* spell keeps you from casting spells, presumably because it makes your Intelligence and Charisma scores 1. What if it is your Wisdom score that governs your spells? Can you still cast spells then? Can you use spell-like abilities? Supernatural abilities? Extraordinary abilities?

You can't cast any spells when you're feble-minded, no matter what ability governs your spells. The spell scrambles the higher functions of your brain, rendering you unable to use spells and suppressing your Intelligence and Charisma scores.

Feblemind prevents the use of spell-like abilities, but not supernatural or extraordinary abilities. Also, as noted in the spell description, you cannot use any Intelligence- or Charisma-based skills while feble-minded.

Can a corporeal undead be affected by a *flesh to stone* spell? What about a wizard's homunculus?

Both undead and constructs are immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save *unless the effect also works on objects*

or is harmless (italics added). *Flesh to stone* falls into neither of those categories, as indicated by its Target entry (“One creature”) and its Saving Throw entry (“Fortitude negates”).

Does freedom of movement allow one to use spells such as dimension door and ethereal jaunt despite being under the effect of dimensional anchor?

Freedom of movement does not allow a caster to use spells such as *dimension door* or *ethereal jaunt* while under the effects of *dimensional anchor*. Can you still move or act normally while under the effects of these spells? The answer is yes, though there are spells that will fail if you try to cast them.

Does freedom of movement negate the ranged attack penalty of –2 per 5 feet of water crossed? If not, is there a benefit to the aquatic property for ranged weapons (MIC 28)?

Freedom of movement does specifically state that it allows the subject to move and attack normally while underwater, but then follows up the attacks section with only melee attack entries. It also mentions that hurled weapons do not gain this bonus of *freedom of movement*. Using this information, we can infer that ranged attacks do not gain the benefit of *freedom of movement*, and therefore would suffer all normal penalties while under water.

Does freedom of movement work against mimics and other adhesives?

Yes. *Freedom of movement* will allow a creature to escape from any type of adhesive or creature that uses some type of adhesive attack, such as the mimic. This is of course unless the entry specifically states that *freedom of movement* will not allow the creature to escape.

Swallow whole uses the grapple rules to determine whether you are swallowed. Freedom of movement spell says you win all grapple checks. Does freedom of movement automatically allow a character to succeed against the swallow whole attack?

Freedom of movement's wording is actually a bit more specific on this case, and it reads, “The subject automatically succeeds on any grapple check made to resist a grapple attempt, as well as on grapple checks or Escape Artist checks made to escape a grapple or pin.”

So, by the rules as written, it would not help against the grapple check made to prevent a creature from being swallowed whole. However, a Dungeon Master could definitely rule that the attack is so similar to grappling that the *freedom of movement* effects would still apply.

Also, swallow whole attempts usually happen after the creature has successfully grabbed or grappled a foe, and *freedom of movement* would definitely help against that initial grapple attempt.

Does the freedom of movement spell protect a character from being stunned? The argument is that “stun” is a condition that hinders movement.

Freedom of movement is one of those tricky spells that has a lot of open-ended wording that might lead to confusion. The spell becomes much more manageable if you just look at it as something that ignores any physical impediment to movement or actions. If you assign this restriction, then it makes sense that *freedom of movement* works against *solid fog*, *slow*, and *web*;

each of these spells puts something in the way of the creature that stops them from moving/acting, or specifically targets the creature's physical movement.

With this interpretation, spells and effects such as *hold person* that apply a mental impediment to taking any action would not be bypassed by *freedom of movement*. These are mental effects, and *freedom of movement* only helps you bypass physical effects (such as *solid fog*) or effects that specifically impede just your movement, not spells that stop you from taking any action, as *hold person* does.

In the same vein, *freedom of movement* would not work on someone who had been turned to stone by a medusa's gaze or by a *flesh to stone* spell.

To answer the original question, being stunned is one of those mental effects and would normally deny a creature the ability to act at all. Since it's not specifically focused on just impeding movement, and it is a mental, not physical impediment, *freedom of movement* would not help a stunned creature to act or move normally.

This interpretation of *freedom of movement* can make it easier to adjudicate the effects of the spell, but it is also more restrictive. As always, it will ultimately be up to the Dungeon Master to make the best call as he sees fit for his campaign and play session.

Is a Balance check required to stand up while prone in the area of a grease spell? What about to perform other move actions?

No and no.

If my character moves from a square within the area of a grease spell to an adjacent square outside the spell's area, does he have to make a Balance check?

No. As a general rule, terrain effects apply only to characters entering a square with the terrain effect, not to those leaving such a square. A creature leaving a greased square need not succeed on a Balance check to do so (of course, he must have succeeded on a Reflex save to remain standing).

Is a character in the area of a grease spell considered flat-footed?

Yes. Any character who is attacked while balancing is considered flat-footed unless he has 5 or more ranks of Balance (PH 67).

If a creature standing in the area of a grease spell takes damage, does it have to succeed on a DC 10 Balance check or fall down?

Yes. Any creature who takes damage while balancing must make another Balance check against the same DC (in this case, 10) to remain standing (PH 67).

Could a person use a full-round action to move 5 feet through difficult terrain as a way to get out of the area of a grease spell without making a Balance check?

No. This action (described on page 144 and page 149 of the PH) simply represents the fact that no matter how difficult the terrain is (or how slow your movement has become), you can still move at least 5 feet each round.

When I affix a dispel magic to my hallow spell, what type of dispel effect is it—a targeted dispel, area dispel, or counterspell? Can I choose when I create the hallow?

A *dispel magic* fixed to a *hallow* or *unhallow* spell can be treated only as an area dispel, not as a targeted dispel or a counterspell.

When a spell effect is fixed to a *hallow* spell, how do unusual durations (such as those of *protection from energy*) or instantaneous durations (such as those of *dispel magic*) work?

The spell effect fixed to a *hallow* or *unhallow* spell is treated as being cast on any eligible creature each time it enters. In the case of “ablative” spell effects that are used up gradually (such as *aid* or *protection from energy*), the full effect of the spell is renewed each time the eligible creature re-enters the hallowed/unhallowed area (with the newer version entirely replacing the older version). In the case of instantaneous effects (such as *dispel magic*), the spell affects eligible creatures each time they enter.

Is there any way to get rid of an *unhallow*? It is instantaneous, which implies that it lasts forever and can't be dispelled.

You can't use *dispel magic* to end a *hallow* or *unhallow* effect (although you can use *dispel magic* to end the duration of the spell effect tied to the *hallow* or *unhallow*).

If everlasting *unhallows* bother your sensibility, the Sage recommends the following house rule: Allow *hallow*, if cast anywhere within the area of the *unhallow*, to negate the *unhallow* effect (and vice versa). This prevents PCs from easily overcoming an *unhallow* (thanks to the costly material component and casting time) while simultaneously allowing for such effects to be overcome with the proper effort.

The *harm* spell deals 10 points of damage per caster level (to a maximum of 150 points at 15th level) and cannot take a target's hit points to less than 1. If the target creature makes a successful saving throw, the damage is reduced by half, but the spell still cannot reduce the target's hit points to less than 1. What happens when the spell deals 50 points of damage or more to the target (as it might to any creature that has 51 hit points or more)? Does the death from massive damage rule apply? What if I have 110 hit points and an 11th-level caster casts *harm* on me? I'll take 109 points of damage from the spell if I fail my save, or 55 points if I make my save, right? In either case, I'll have to make a DC 15 Fortitude save to avoid death from massive damage, right? If my hired lackey, who has 49 hit points, receives the same spell, he'll take either 48 points of damage or 24 points. In either case, he's not subject to death from massive damage. Is this correct?

Technically, that's right. If you take 50 points of damage (or more) all at once, you're subject to the death from massive damage rule (see page 145 in the *PH*). It makes no difference what the source of that damage is.

In the case of the *harm* spell, the death from massive damage rule creates a situation that's arguably absurd, because once you have 51 hit points or more, you suddenly become susceptible to instant death from the spell when lesser beings (with fewer hit points) do not. If the situation really bothers you, you might try one of the following house rules:

No Instant Death from Harm Spells: The death from massive damage rule doesn't apply to damage inflicted from a *harm* spell.

Expended Instant Death from Harm Spells: Whenever you fail your save against a *harm* spell, you must make a DC 15

Fortitude save or die, no matter how much damage the spell actually deals to you. If your save against a *harm* spell succeeds, you still have to make a DC 15 Fortitude save or die if the spell deals at least 50 points of damage to you.

The first unofficial rule should prove easier to remember and use, and it matches the intent behind the *harm* spell better than the second rule. The second rule, however, provides a better fit with the death from massive damage rule.

Would casting *detect magic* be considered an attack for the purpose of ending an *invisibility* spell?

The *invisibility* spell states that “for purposes of the spell, an attack includes any spell targeting a foe or whose area or effect includes a foe.” [Emphasis added.] *Detect magic* and similar spells have an area, so if this area included a foe, it would count as an “attack” for this purpose.

Would an invisible character counterspelling an enemy's spell count as making an attack and thus end the *invisibility*? What about a targeted *dispel magic*?

According to page 150 of the *PH*, “to use a counterspell, you must select an opponent as the target of a counterspell.” Thus, by definition, this falls into the category of spells “targeting a foe,” so a counterspell would end the *invisibility*.

Likewise, a *dispel magic* targeted on a foe is a spell “targeting a foe,” so it would end the *invisibility*.

Does casting *flaming sphere* in a non-offensive manner—e.g., to start a campfire—count as an attack for purposes of ending an *invisibility* spell?

No. As stated in the description of the *invisibility* spell, actions directed at unattended objects do not break the spell. You could use *flaming sphere* to burn down a whole village and it wouldn't end an *invisibility* spell, even if the ensuing blaze included foes in its area (since that would fall into the category of causing harm indirectly). (Of course, the Sage does not condone such reckless activity.)

I was wondering if a subject of a successful *flesh to stone* spell (or other petrifying abilities) would then be affected by *soften earth and stone*?

No. *Soften earth and stone* does not affect magical stone, or earth or stone creatures. A creature affected with the *flesh to stone* spell is both of these things.

Does casting *sanctuary* end an *invisibility* spell because it requires a foe to resist its effect with a saving throw? What about *wall of fire*?

No. Any spell that only causes harm indirectly (including causing harm due to another creature's actions, such as *sanctuary*) is not an attack, even if its effects can be resisted with a saving throw.

Other spells that can fall into this category include *fire trap* (since its harmful effect is triggered by a character opening the trapped item), *spike stones* (since its harmful effect is triggered by a character walking over it), and *wall of fire* (since its harmful effect is triggered by a character approaching within 20 feet).

Of course, even some of these spells can be cast in such a way as to end an *invisibility* spell. If *wall of fire* is cast within 20 feet of another creature, it immediately and directly causes harm to that creature, which would end *invisibility*.

A question came up where an invisible sorcerer under *greater invisibility* cast a *cone of cold* on the party. On my turn I tried to cast *hold person* on him, and we were unsure of what would happen—whether or not I could target him because the cone originated from his square, or if just the square he was standing in was too vague for the *hold person* to work?

Actually, if you cannot see your target for a spell such as *hold person*, you cannot target the creature with the spell. Simply knowing the location the creature happened to inhabit upon casting a *cone of cold* wouldn't be good enough for this purpose.

Can the *magic jar* (PHB 250) spell be used to possess a soulless clone (PHB 210)?

No. While you are in a *magic jar*, you can sense and attack life forces. Since a soulless clone has no life force, you can't attack it to possess it.

Let's say you've been fighting a giant created by the *major image* spell for a couple of rounds, and it has gotten a few good hits on you. Finally, you make your will save and you find out that the giant you were battling was an illusion. Do you regain your hit points once you find out it was an illusion or do you still have the damage you took?

Major image is a figment, so it can't damage you at all, even if you don't detect the illusion (see the discussion of the Illusion school in Chapter 10 of the *PH*). If the giant was created with a shadow effect (such as the *greater shadow* conjuration spell), it can damage you. If you take damage from the illusory (shadow) giant and later realize the giant was an illusion, you don't regain any hit points.

Are the multiple figments from a *mirror image* spell legal targets for cleaving? That is, if you have the Cleave feat and you hit an image and destroy it, can you then attack another target within reach (such as another figment from the spell or perhaps the spell user)? What about Whirlwind Attack? Can you use this feat to attack all the images around the spell user? What about spells that allow multiple targets, such as *magic missile*? Can you aim *magic missiles* at different images?

For all intents and purposes, the figments from a foe's *mirror image* spell are your foes. You aim your spells and your attacks at the figments just as though they were real creatures. Any spell you can aim at a creature you can aim at an image. When you use a spell that allows you to select multiple creatures as targets, such as *magic missile*, you can choose multiple images as targets.

If you have the Cleave or Great Cleave feat, destroying an image with a melee attack triggers the feat (and your cleaving attack might well strike the spell user instead of another image). Likewise, you can use Whirlwind Attack to strike at any image you can reach. A Whirlwind Attack almost certainly will allow you to strike once at the spell user.

Is there a way to decide which squares the figments from a *mirror image* spell occupy? Or do the images distribute themselves randomly? If it's the latter, how does the DM decide where they go?

Although the spell description says the images from a *mirror image* spell always stay within 5 feet of either the user or another image, it's easiest to assume that all the images

occupy the same space the spell user occupies. Any attack that can reach the user's space can affect an image.

The *mirror image* spell description says the images have an Armor Class of 10 + size modifier + Dexterity modifier. Can you improve this with spells the spellcaster casts on herself, such as *shield* or *mage armor*? If so, why doesn't the spell description say the images have the caster's Armor Class? What happens if the caster has cover from her surroundings? Will cover improve the images' ACs? What about concealment? Will fog or foliage produce a miss chance for a foe that aims an attack at an image? What about magical concealment, such as a *blur* or *displacement* spell?

The images from a *mirror image* spell don't use the caster's Armor Class. Use the formula in the spell description to calculate each image's Armor Class (10 + caster's size modifier + caster's Dexterity modifier). Use the caster's current Dexterity modifier for each image's Armor Class, no matter how the caster happened to get that modifier. Any Armor Class improvements the caster might have from equipment she carries or wears, or from magic operating on her person, don't apply to the images. For example, a Medium user with a Dexterity score of 16, a *shield* spell, and a suit of +2 *leather armor* has an Armor Class of 21 (10 +4 shield, +4 armor, and +3 Dexterity), but her images have an Armor Class of 13 (10 +3 Dexterity).

It's easiest to assume the images share the user's location on the battlefield, and gain any cover bonuses that might apply to the spell user in that location. If the character in the previous example were behind cover, she would have an Armor Class of 25 and her images would have an Armor Class of 17.

If the user has concealment from her surroundings, the images have the same concealment. The images also look just like the caster, and they share purely visual effects such as the *blur* or *displacement* spell. If the *mirror image* user is also using either of these effects, an attack aimed at an image has the same miss chance an attack aimed at the caster has.

What happens if a *mirror image* user is incorporeal? Are the user's images also incorporeal? Do attacks aimed at the images have the incorporeal miss chance? If the incorporeal user moves through a wall, can the images move through the wall, too? What happens if the user goes to another plane? Do the images go along? What if the *mirror image* user employs a *blink* spell?

Incorporeal spell casters create corporeal effects. So the figments from an incorporeal user's *mirror image* spell are themselves corporeal. Attacks aimed at the images have no incorporeal miss chance.

The images, however, appear like the caster and move as the caster moves. If an incorporeal user moves through a wall, its mirror images also appear to move through the wall.

If a *mirror image* user moves to another plane, the images go along. If the user employs a *blink* spell, the images blink right along with the user, and any attack aimed at an image has the same miss chance (50%) it has if aimed at the caster.

What happens when an attacker accidentally uses a touch spell against a figment from a *mirror image* spell? You can hold the charge with a touch spell, right? So if you touch an image (which really isn't there), is the touch spell discharged? Does the touch spell user get a chance to disbelieve the image and avoid discharging the spell?

As noted in an earlier question, the figments from a *mirror image* spell function just like creatures for the purpose of aiming spells. If a foe using a touch spell touches an image, the spell is harmlessly discharged (though the image is destroyed). There is no chance to disbelieve a *mirror image* spell—if there was, the spell would have a saving throw entry and the entry would read “Will disbelief.”

Am I right in assuming that when the *mislead* spell description refers to *improved invisibility* it really means *greater invisibility*?

Yes, you are.

***Mordenkainen's disjunction* does not say that it actually physically destroys an item. Can a *wish* restore the item's original magic abilities?**

The *wish* spell has a specific list of effects that it can safely produce, but “restore the magic of an inert item” isn't exactly one of them. However, it does allow you to “create a magic item, or add to the powers of an existing magic item,” which seems pretty close. This costs twice the normal XP cost for crafting the item, plus an additional 5,000 XP.

Would *Mordenkainen's disjunction* affect an intelligent magic item?

Mordenkainen's disjunction states that it affects all “magic items” within the radius of the spell. Even though intelligent items are considered to be creatures (specifically constructs, according to page 268 of the *DMG*), they are also still “magic items” and thus can be affected by *Mordenkainen's disjunction*.

The Sage can already hear the next question: What's the difference between a golem (creature; immune to *Mordenkainen's disjunction*) and an intelligent magic item (creature; not immune to *Mordenkainen's disjunction*)?

Unfortunately, this is just one of those places where two completely separate areas of the rules have grown together in an unusual manner. Historically, golems and intelligent magic items haven't shared much (if anything) in common. But as the rules for golems have made them more like magic items (in that they're crafted in a similar manner) and the rules for intelligent magic items have made them more like golems (in that they're considered creatures with the construct type), weird situations like this occur. Two adjacent branches, but growing from slightly different trees, and therefore interacting slightly differently in occasional corner cases of the rules.

Here's the important distinction: Golems are not magic items, and *Mordenkainen's disjunction* affects only “magical effects and magic items.” Intelligent magic items are, as one would expect from their name, magic items (even though they're also creatures), so the spell affects them.

If *Mordenkainen's disjunction* stated that it affected only objects, the answer might be different (since an intelligent magic item is a creature, not an object). But it doesn't, so it's not.

Can a *Mordenkainen's disjunction* destroy magic items stored in a *bag of holding*? What happens to the items within if it destroys the *bag of holding*?

It's not entirely clear where items stored within a *bag of holding* (or similar storage item) actually “are” (whether stored inside a bigger-than-it-looks container or actually floating in some extraplanar void). The bag's entry (*DMG* 248) simply describes it as opening “into a nondimensional space” with an “inside larger than its outside.”

The Sage's suspicion is that most DMs consider items within a *bag of holding* to be “not there”—that is, the items aren't actually bouncing around on the owner's hip but are instead suspended in an extradimensional/extraplanar “somewhere else.” The Sage further suspects that this determination is a combination of a) ease of game play and b) a leftover legacy of previous editions of the game.

The simplest solution, then, is to say the items in a *bag of holding* aren't actually present to be affected by *Mordenkainen's disjunction* (or any other effect that might otherwise damage items stored in a bag or pack).

That doesn't, however, render such items perfectly safe. The rules don't state this clearly, but the entry for the *bag of holding* strongly suggests that if it is destroyed by any means, the contents are “lost forever.” Thus, a *Mordenkainen's disjunction* spell that successfully turns a *bag of holding* into a normal bag also “destroys” anything held within the bag. (A *dispel magic* or similar effect that simply suppressed the bag's magic would strand the items temporarily, but they'd be reachable again as soon as the magic returned.)

Is it possible to cast the *permanency* spell from a scroll? If so, who pays the XP cost for the spell effect made permanent: the scroll creator or the individual who casts the spell from the scroll? Who must meet the minimum level requirement for making a particular spell permanent? For example, see *invisibility* has a minimum level of 10th. Does the scroll creator or the individual who casts the spell from the scroll have to meet this minimum? Does the minimum level refer to arcane spellcaster's caster level or character level?

In general, when you create a scroll with a spell that has an XP cost, you have to pay the XP cost for casting the spell along with the costs for creating the scroll (see *Creating Scrolls* in Chapter 7 of the *DMG*). Since the creator has paid all the costs, the scroll user doesn't have to pay them.

In the case of the *permanency* spell, however, it's best to make the scroll user pay the cost of actually making a particular spell's effect permanent. The scroll creator still pays the XP cost to make the scroll.

You must use the spell's caster level to determine if the spell meets the minimum level to make a spell permanent. In the case of a character casting a spell herself, the spell's caster level is the caster's class level in the class that made the spell available in the first place. For example, when a 12th-level wizard/3rd level fighter casts any wizard spell, the spell's caster level is 12th.

In the case of a spell cast from a scroll, the spell's caster level is the scroll's caster level. The scroll's creator sets the caster level for the scroll when making the scroll, as noted in the *Magic Item Descriptions* section of Chapter 7 of the *DMG*.

Do the cleaning and dirtying effects of *prestidigitation* remain in effect after the spell's duration ends? In other words, if I use *prestidigitation* to clean dirt off my clothes, do my clothes remain clean when the spell ends, or do they magically become dirty again?

As stated in the spell's description, “Any actual change to an object (beyond just moving, cleaning, or soiling it) persists only 1 hour.” Thus, the effects listed within the parentheses remain beyond the spell's normal duration.

Can you use *polymorph* to take the exact physical appearance of a specific person?

Yes. When using *polymorph* (or any other effect based on the *alter self* spell), you can freely designate the form's minor physical qualities, and you can be as precise as you want in doing so. To successfully pass as another person, you must also make a Disguise check (free as part of the effect of the spell). You gain a +10 bonus on this check, as per the spell's description. It's reasonable for the DM to rule that you must be familiar with a person's physical appearance before you can mimic that person precisely.

Baneful polymorph indicates that a target with the shapechanger subtype can revert to its original form as a standard action. Does this end the spell effect, or can the character return to the form designated by baneful polymorph?

This ends the spell effect.

Do the polymorph subschool rules (introduced in PH2) apply to psionic powers as well?

The *polymorph* subschool rules refer only to spells, but it's reasonable to treat psionic powers that mimic spells of that subschool as having the *polymorph* "subdiscipline" for purposes of adjudication. As always, the rules of a particular spell or power take precedence over the subschool—the subschool's really just there to handle new spells created after the fact (and to save a lot of repeated text).

If a character has polymorphed into a hydra and loses a head, what happens when he returns to his normal form?

Upon returning to normal form, a character retains any gross physical changes made during the spell's effect. Getting an arm chopped off while polymorphed into an ogre means you're missing an arm when you return to your normal form. If your normal form doesn't share (or have a reasonably matching equivalent of) the body part that was "changed" during your sojourn in a different shape, congratulations: you're off the hook. For example, a character returning from hydra form after losing a couple of heads still has his one normal head. A character returning from wyvern form after losing a wing would be missing the equivalent arm (since the wyvern's wings are its forelimbs).

Can you become advanced versions of creatures with polymorph* (PH 263), or just the most basic as presented in the MM?

The rules don't explicitly prevent this, but for speed of play (and reasons of sanity) it's entirely reasonable for a DM to disallow any forms other than those detailed in the *MM* (or other allowed volumes of monsters). If the DM chooses to allow advanced creatures, the player must supply full statistics for the advanced version before play begins. Remember that the Hit Die limit for the various *polymorph* spells still applies (a 7th-level wizard can't use *polymorph* to assume the form of a 10-HD advanced sahuagin).

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Can you use polymorph* to turn into a creature with a template?

No. *Polymorph* is based on *alter self*, which clearly states that "[Y]ou cannot take the form of any creature with a template, even if that template doesn't change the creature type or subtype."

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What happens to the equipment worn and carried by a character polymorphed* into another creature capable of wearing and carrying the same gear? What if the new creature's size is different?

Unless stated otherwise, all spells in the *polymorph* chain function as described in the *alter self* spell description, which states that if the new form is capable of wearing or holding the item, it remains worn or held; otherwise it melds into the new form and becomes nonfunctional. A human *polymorphed* into another Medium humanoid-shaped form (such as an elf, grimlock, or bearded devil) can wear or hold all his gear, so it remains in place.

However, this is one of those times when size definitely matters, since your gear doesn't automatically change size as a result of *polymorph*. Assuming the new form has appropriate body locations—for instance, a human *polymorphed* into a troll or a pixie—most of your magic items (rings, cloaks, boots, and other items of magic clothing or jewelry) still fit just fine regardless of your new size (see "Size and Magic Items" on page 213 of the *DMG*).

Nonmagical clothing and accoutrements that don't fit the new size meld into the character's body when he is *polymorphed*. (The Sage recommends that DMs err on the side of leniency when determining what the new form can or can't wear.)

Similarly, armor (even magic armor) doesn't resize to fit wearers of different sizes. The human described above loses the benefit of his +1 *full plate armor* as it melds into his body, even though the new form is capable of wearing armor.

As long as your new form can hold weapons (that is, it has hands or other similarly dexterous extremities), you hold on to whatever weapons you had before the change. However, since the weapons are no longer of a size appropriate to you, you take a penalty on attack rolls with them as described on page 113 of the *PH*. A human *polymorphed* into a troll can still hold his Medium weapons (although they're now one size category too small for optimal use and thus he'll suffer a -2 penalty on attack rolls). On the plus side, he can now wield that Medium greatsword with only one hand, meaning he could pick up a shield or a second weapon to wield simultaneously.

If your barbarian is regularly *polymorphed* into a troll or stone giant, you might want to consider carrying an extra Large weapon for use in those situations.

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If my goliath is transformed into a stone giant by *polymorph, can he wield Huge weapons? What if the wizard just casts *enlarge person* on him instead?**

Alter self, the base spell for the *polymorph* chain, states that you lose any extraordinary special attacks or qualities “from your normal form that are not derived from class levels.” Since powerful build is an extraordinary quality derived from your form (it’s a racial trait), it’s lost when he takes a new form. (The same is true of half-giants, who also have this trait.)

(On the bright side, your now-Large character can still wield the Large weapons he was carrying around before the *polymorph* took effect, which is more than the half-orc barbarian *polymorphed* into a stone giant can say.)

Most simple size-change effects, such as *enlarge person*, allow the character to retain all racial traits. A goliath whose size increased to Large could wield Huge weapons without penalty (and if reduced to Small size, he could wield Medium weapons without penalty). *Enlarge person* and *reduce person* wouldn’t accomplish this (since they work only on humanoids, not on monstrous humanoids like goliaths), but the *expansion* psionic power would.

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When my human uses *polymorph to take the form of another creature, he loses any extraordinary special attacks and qualities. Does this include his bonus feat and bonus skill points? If so, how do I figure out which feat and skill points are derived from his racial traits?**

A human’s bonus feat and bonus skill points—like most other racial traits—are considered extraordinary qualities, and thus are lost when the character would lose such abilities (including when *polymorphed*). This is a good reason to keep track of which feat is your human bonus feat, since it might have wide-reaching effects. (For instance, if Dodge was your bonus feat, you’d lose the benefits of any other feats that have Dodge as a prerequisite, such as Mobility and Spring Attack.)

Keeping track of where your bonus skill points are spent is more onerous, and likely less significant to play. If most of your skills are maxed out (that is, their rank equals your level +3, or half that for a cross-class skill), it’s probably easiest simply to designate one skill as the repository for all your bonus skill points.

For ease of play, some DMs ignore this side effect, but doing so represents a clear benefit granted to humans. Be aware that players of nonhuman characters can resent this “freebie.”

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When you cast *polymorph twice in succession on the same target, does it keep any of the abilities gained from the first spell’s form?**

No. This falls into the category of “one effect makes another irrelevant” (see page 172 in the *PH*). A *polymorphed*

elf wizard who then casts *shapechange* wouldn’t retain any of the abilities gained from *polymorph*—only the wizard’s original form (elf) and new form (from *shapechange*, the last spell cast) matter.

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What kind of spells work on characters transformed into creatures of different types than their own by *polymorph? Can you cast *hold person* on a humanoid who is transformed into a dire bear or would *hold monster* be required?**

If a creature’s type changes (such as from *polymorph**), it is affected by spells according to its new type. An elf *polymorphed* into a dire bear is immune to *hold person* (since she is now an animal), but could be affected by *hold animal* or *hold monster*.

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If, while under the effect of a spell that depends on type (such as *hold person*), my character is transformed into a different creature type by *polymorph, does the spell’s effect remain?**

Yes. A spell only checks to see if you are a legal target when it is cast. If you become an illegal target later (such as via the *polymorph* spell), the spell remains in effect.

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What properties of *polymorph* are inherited for the spell *polymorph any object* (PH 263)? The guidelines suggest that it overrides the normal rules for creature type (an object isn’t any type of creature) and Hit Die limits (turning a pebble into a human or a shrew into a manticores, for example), but the spell doesn’t explicitly describe the changes.

You correctly note that *polymorph any object* isn’t as clear as it could be. The intent of the spell, however, becomes clear by reading the accompanying charts. *Polymorph any object* retains all the limitations of *polymorph* except as follows:

- It can affect an object, and also adds “object” to the list of new forms allowed. It doesn’t add any more eligible creature types for the new form (you can’t use *polymorph any object* to assume the form of a construct, elemental, outsider, or undead).
- The assumed form still can’t have more Hit Dice than your caster level (to a maximum of 15 HD at 15th level), but the secondary limit of the subject’s original HD doesn’t apply. A pebble (with no HD) or a lizard (with 1 HD) can be

transformed into any form whose HD don't exceed 15 or the caster's level, whichever is lower. (Arguably, *polymorph any object* should have a higher HD cap than *polymorph*, but that's not how the spell is written.) The new form can even have no HD at all (as in the case of a creature *polymorphed* into an object).

If I use *polymorph to turn a target into a 1-HD humanoid (such as an elf or an orc), what class (and level) is it and how are its feats and skill points arranged?**

Normally, a target retains its class and levels (i.e., Hit Dice) when transformed by *polymorph**. An ogre transformed into an orc still has 4 HD and doesn't gain any class levels (although he retains any he had). This is true in all cases except when the new form is an object (which obviously can't have HD or class levels).

Now, if the target of the spell has no class levels (or HD), such as an object affected by *polymorph any object*, the Sage recommends that the new form be treated as a 1st-level commoner, with feats and skills chosen by the DM.

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***Polymorph** grants the extraordinary special attacks of the creature that you become. What happens when you swallow whole an opponent who does not then escape your belly before the spell expires?**

Alter self states that "any new items you wore in the assumed form and can't wear in your normal form fall off and land at your feet" which sounds like a pretty close approximation of what's happening with swallow whole. Since your normal form (assumedly) isn't capable of swallowing creatures whole, any swallowed creature would appear adjacent to your space and prone.

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What's the difference between the *polymorph* spell and the polymorph subschool of the transmutation school (appearing in PH2)?

The polymorph subschool was created to provide a central location for rules used by spells that change a character's form. This allows new shape-changing spells to avoid reiterating the same information over and over again.

Existing spells that change a character's form (such as *alter self* and *polymorph*) might vary from the basic rules presented in the subschool. In places where a spell presents different information from the subschool, the spell takes precedence.

Are racial traits considered extraordinary abilities for the purpose of *alter self*, *polymorph*, and similar effects? That is, do I lose my racial traits or keep them when I change my form?

Unless a racial trait is specifically referred to elsewhere as an extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like ability (such as blindsense or damage reduction), it isn't any of those.

Unfortunately, the spells in question are silent in indicating whether racial traits are kept or lost. For *alter self* and the alternate form and change shape special abilities, it's reasonable to conclude that they are retained (and new ones aren't gained), since your type and subtype(s) remain the same regardless of the new form.

However, the *polymorph* spell (and any other spell that specifically refers to it) does change your type and subtype(s) to match the new form. Thus, your existing racial traits should be lost (and new ones gained) when using such an effect. (It's perfectly fine, as a house rule, to have the character retain his own racial traits in place of those of the new form, if the DM and players find that easier to track.)

Other spells of the polymorph subschool replace the character's existing racial traits (as well as virtually all other game statistics) with those of the new form, which makes the switch easier to adjudicate. See the polymorph subschool in PH2 for details.

Any racial trait specifically designated as extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like ability follows the normal rules for the spell used.

What exactly does the second effect of *protection from evil* do, anyway?

The Sage feels your pain. While the first and third effects of *protection from evil* are relatively straightforward, the second is less clear. The key phrase that defines this particular effect of the spell is as follows: "... the barrier blocks any attempt to ... exercise mental control over the creature (including enchantment (charm) effects and enchantment (compulsion) effects that grant the caster ongoing control over the subject . . .)."

(The spell also blocks attempts to possess the creature, but effects that accomplish this are so few as to barely be worth mentioning.)

The first part of this phrase describes the basic criteria by which the DM should judge *protection from evil*'s effect: If the incoming effect attempts to exercise mental control over the creature, *protection from evil* likely suppresses that effect. The parenthetical portion of the phrase provides two specific examples (pointed, obviously, at rules elements of the PH) to help judge what exactly is meant by that:

1. Enchantment (charm) effects. Simple enough—*protection from evil* automatically suppresses any enchantment (charm) effect, such as *charm person* or *enthrall*.
2. Enchantment (compulsion) effects that grant the caster ongoing control over the subject. This is where adjudication gets trickier, because you have to decide what "ongoing control" means. The Sage recommends a broad definition, which includes any non-instantaneous effect that prevents the target from exercising full control over its own actions.

Examples would include the obvious (such as *command* or *dominate person*), but also the less obvious, such as *daze*, *sleep*, and *Tasha's hideous laughter*. Such effects would be suppressed for as long as *protection from evil* lasts on the target.

There are still plenty of enchantment (compulsion) effects that don't grant the caster ongoing control over the subject. *Heroism*, *crushing despair*, *mind fog*, *power word blind*, *rage*,

and *touch of idiocy* are examples. *Protection from evil* has no effect on such spells.

But what about mental control effects that aren't enchantment effects, such as psionics? In such cases, the DM must use the rules and his own best judgment in concert to adjudicate the effect. Psionic powers of the telepathy discipline are the equivalent of enchantment spells, for example, and thus are affected in the same way. Nonspell effects that closely mimic enchantment spells should be treated as if they were spells of the appropriate subschool (charm or compulsion).

Can a summoned evil outsider physically block a path, a door for example, from a character with *protection from evil*? Can the character push him aside without canceling his *protection*?

Well, any creature can physically block the path of a character, if the blocking creature occupies the only spaces of the egress. There are ways to get around this—overrun, bull rush, and tumble are the first nonmagical means that come to mind.

In the case of the former two, while the attempts don't provoke attacks of opportunity from the evil outsider (thanks to the *protection* spell), if they do involve checks to knock the opponent over or push them, that counts as an attack or forcing the barrier against the blocked creature, and thus cancels the *protection*. Tumble, though, is a perfectly fine way to whiz past that pesky evil outsider while keeping the integrity of the barrier.

Does armor with the wild special ability (*DMG* 219) retain its functionality when used with a shapechanging ability other than wild shape (such as *shapechange*, alternate form, druid's a thousand faces class feature, and so on)?

No. The armor specifically states that it allows the wearer to benefit "while in a wild shape." Even other effects functionally identical to wild shape (such as alternate form) don't allow the wearer to gain the wild armor's benefit.

How does *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* work with preparing extra spells? Can I cast *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* in the middle of the day, and then prepare three levels of new spells with 15 minutes of preparation? Or do I have to cast the enhancer in the morning to get the new spells? The spell description says you prepare and cast the extra spells normally, so I assume that you have to take the 15 minutes to prepare the new spells in the middle of the day. Is this correct?

Perhaps a general overview of the *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* spell can help: You can use the spell either to prepare up to three levels of extra spells or to retain a single spell of up to 3rd level that you have already cast.

When you use the enhancer to retain a spell, you simply cast the enhancer within 1 round of casting the spell you want to retain. The spell you choose to retain reappears in your mind, ready to cast, without any further effort on your part.

When using the spell to prepare extra spells, you follow all the rules for preparing spells. You could indeed cast *Rary's mnemonic enhancer* in the middle of the day and then spend 15 minutes preparing up to three levels of additional spells. Or you could cast the spell at the beginning of the day and prepare all your spells, your normal allotment and the extras, as part of your usual preparation time (usually 1 hour; see page 178 in the *PH*).

Are undead and/or deathless considered dead for the purposes of *resurrection* spells? For example, could a 2,600-year-old lich (such as Vol from the *ECS*) be resurrected normally, because she was made into a lich 2,600 years ago, or would a 260th-level cleric be required?

Ah, if only it were that easy to defeat a lich, a creature of such great power! But no—the *PHB* (page 272) description of *resurrection* states: "constructs, elementals, outsiders, and undead creatures can't be resurrected." Still, I would like to meet that 260th-level cleric.

When you grow larger with *righteous might*, do you also get the -2 penalty to Dexterity for growing from Medium to Large? The spell description does not indicate that, but other descriptions for size increase do.

No. The changes to statistics by size indicated in Table 4-2 in the *MM* are primarily a guideline for monster creation, rather than hard-and-fast rules. Although many size-change effects mimic the numbers given on that table, each such effect has its own unique properties that don't necessarily match the table. (The *enlarge* spell, for example, grants only a +2 bonus to Strength, in contrast to the +8 bonus listed on Table 4-2.)

I know the spell description for *scrying* says the spell creates a magical sensor located near the subject. I'm wondering if the spell can scry on locations or items as well as creatures? If it cannot scry on a location or item, can it at least look around the creature's location and see what the location looks like? I mean, to me, it sounds like you cast the spell and all you see is the creature. That's not terribly useful for someone trying to find a kidnapping victim. Is there any way to look at an area remotely?

The subject of the *scrying* spell must be a creature. You can study a location (not a specific creature or object) with the *clairaudience/clairvoyance* spell. In the latter case, you must specify the location. In the case of *scrying*, you need only specify the subject creature.

When the *scrying* spell shows you a creature, however, you also see the area around the creature, to a distance of about 10 feet (see the paragraph immediately after the saving throw table in the spell description). In game terms, you see the creature and everything within 10 feet of the creature (the bigger the creature the more area you see). This might allow you to see other creatures or features near your subject.

When my sorcerer *shapechanges* into the form of a creature with special attacks, what Hit Dice do I use to calculate the DC of those abilities—the creature's normal HD, my caster level, or something else?

When you use *shapechange* (or related magic) to assume another creature's form, your Hit Dice are considered to be the same as your normal Hit Dice.

For example, an 18th-level human sorcerer *shapechanged* into a dire bear would be treated as a 18-HD creature for the purpose of determining what effect an evil cleric's *blasphemy* spell might have upon him. A 17th-level elf wizard *shapechanged* into a horned devil would use his own 17 HD to determine the save DC of his fear aura, stun, and infernal wound supernatural attacks.

This has no effect on your hit points or any other statistics derived from your HD, such as base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and so on.

If you cast *shapechange* (PH 277) to take the form of a choker (MM34), you gain its quickness supernatural quality. Could you cast a swift action spell in a round when you take an extra standard action? If so, wouldn't that allow you to cast three spells in a single round (one with each of your two standard actions, and one swift-action spell)?

Yes and yes. (Theoretically, so could any choker with spellcasting ability.)

When attacking a warforged with *shocking grasp*, do you get the +3 bonus on the attack roll for attacking a creature wearing metal armor?

Yes. The full entry reads “. . . if the opponent is wearing metal armor (or made out of metal, carrying a lot of metal, or the like)” (PH 279). That describes a warforged pretty well.

Even a warforged with the Unarmored Body feat (RE 120) still has some metallic materials within its body.

Can a *spectral hand* spell deliver a touch spell from a staff or wand? What about from a scroll?

No. The spell delivered by *spectral hand* must be one that you cast. Activating a magic item is not the same as casting a spell, even if the effect is virtually identical.

What kind of action is it to attack with a *spectral hand* spell?

Attacking with a *spectral hand* is part of the action of casting the touch spell to be delivered. If the initial touch attack misses, you can make additional attacks with the *spectral hand* in later rounds using the normal rules for holding the charge of a touch spell (PH 176).

Does a *spiritual weapon* get to make attacks of opportunity?

Actually, since the spell indicates specifically that *spiritual weapon* strikes as a spell, and not a weapon, it is not allowed an attack of opportunity when normally provoked. Likewise, the technical definition of an attack of opportunity requires that you threaten the opponent in question (see PHB page 137). While you do direct the spiritual weapon to attack, you are not technically wielding the weapon, and so you do not threaten the square into which it is attacking.

Could you clarify how the *stoneskin* spell works? One of my players is insisting that the damage reduction 10/adamantine from the spell is applied before reducing the damage of 10 hit points per level that the spell will absorb and that the recipient takes no damage until the 10 hit points per level of caster are exhausted. I say the damage reduction is the absorbed damage, with the remainder of the damage applying to the recipient of the spell.

You are right. When the damage reduction from the spell prevents damage to the recipient, deduct that damage from the 10 hit points per level that the spell will absorb. Any damage the spell does not absorb is dealt to the spell recipient. For example, a 7th-level wizard places a *stoneskin* spell on you. A monster hits you and deals 12 points of damage. Assuming the monster doesn't have adamantite weapons (probably a safe assumption) the spell absorbs 10 points of damage (and can absorb 60 points more), and you take 2 points of damage.

Does the *speak with dead* spell work on destroyed undead? For example, can my cleric kill a zombie and then

use *speak with dead* on it to learn who created it? The spell description implies the one-time act of becoming undead ruins any chance the spell will have of working against a creature ever again, even after it is “dead” again.

Speak with dead doesn't work on undead creatures, only on corpses. An undead creature is not alive, but it's also not a corpse—a corpse is an object. (The undead creature might have been made from a corpse, but it has transformed into something else, mainly a creature). If you destroy an undead creature, it ceases being a creature and becomes an object again.

Speak with dead probably won't work on a destroyed undead creature, either, since they're probably too badly damaged to respond to the spellcaster's questions.

What would happen to a warforged who is subject to a *stone to flesh* spell?

Nothing. Since that spell affects a petrified creature or a cylinder of stone, a warforged can't be subject to that spell. This is also covered on page 23 of the ECS.

Can a wizard use a *summon monster* spell to get a familiar from the list of creatures for that spell? Would she need to apply the Persistent Spell feat to the *summon monster* spell, upping the duration to 24 hours and allowing time to bond the potential familiar to her? And does a summoned familiar receive the benefits of the Augment Summoning feat?

There's so much wrong with these questions that the Sage hardly knows where to begin.

1. The fact that a creature appears on a *summon monster* list has no effect on the creature's eligibility to be selected as a familiar. The only creatures legal to select as a familiar are those listed in the PH, with occasional expansions to that list as presented in other sources (such as in *Sto*). Some feats, such as Improved Familiar (DMG 200) further expand the list of eligible creatures.

2. You can't use Persistent Spell on a *summon monster* spell, because the spell doesn't have a “fixed or personal range” as required by the feat (see *CAr*, page 81).

3. Augment Summoning has no effect on a familiar's abilities. Familiars are obtained by completing a 24-hour magical ritual (PH 54), typically with the desired creature present, not by means of a summoning effect.

If a spellcaster dies after summoning a monster, does the monster continue to fight?

A summoned monster continues to carry out your last command as best it can, or it attacks your opponents (whoever they were when you died) failing that.

Does it take an action to give orders (or new orders) to summoned creatures?

No. You can communicate with a summoned creature using normal speech, which doesn't take an action.

Can the caster command a summoned creature to make special attacks, such as bull rushing or grappling? What about commanding it to deal nonlethal damage?

Yes. As long as the caster is capable of communicating to the summoned creature, and as long as the creature is capable of carrying out the commanded action, the caster can give any command he wants and the summoned creature will attempt to carry it out.

Can a summoned creature move beyond the range of the spell that summoned it?

Yes. Once a creature is summoned, it need not respect the original range limit of the spell or effect that brought it.

Do metamagic effects apply to creatures summoned by summoning spell? For example, does a monster summoned by a maximized summon monster spell have maximum hit points?

No. The metamagic effect applies only to the specific rules of the spell itself -- the spell's range, its casting time, the variable number of creatures summoned, and so forth -- not to the monsters it brings.

For example, an *extended summon monster I* would double the duration that the monsters remain, but wouldn't have any effect on the durations of the monsters' special powers.

Does a summoned creature appear with the equipment listed for it in the MM?

Yes.

What happens to a summoned monster's equipment when it dies or the spell ends? What if it's not carrying the equipment any more? What if it's carrying something new?

When a summoned creature goes away, so does everything it came with. If it's holding or wearing something it didn't appear with, that item drops to the ground in the creature's space after it disappears.

Does the Imbued Summoning feat (PH2 42) affect only one summoned creature or all creatures summoned by the spell?

Only one summoned creature (chosen by you) gains the benefit of the spell you choose to cast.

Does Augment Summoning (PH 89) apply to creatures I summon with a magic item, such as a wand?

Yes, as long as the magic item is specifically using a summon spell.

Can a summoned creature (such as a shadow) create spawn? If so, what happens to the spawn when the summoned creature goes away?

Yes, and they continue to exist normally after the spawning creature goes away. Assuming that the summoned creature that spawned them is still alive (remember, when a summoned creature "dies" in combat it isn't actually killed), the spawn remains under the control (if any) of its creator.

The PH indicates that a summoned creature goes away if its hit points drop to 0 or lower. Does a dire boar's ferocity ability mean it stays summoned until it reaches -10?

No. The rule you references states: "A summoned creature also goes away if killed *or* its hit points drop to 0 or below" (emphasis mine). While a dire boar's ferocity ability means that it can fight on when disabled or dying, it does not stop the monster from going back to where it came from when it reaches 0 hit points.

Can you choose not to bring along an item you carry when you cast teleport? If you're manacled, can you teleport out of the manacles?

The *teleport* spell states that you "can" bring along objects, which indicates that it isn't mandatory. Thus, a manacled wizard could cast *teleport* to free herself from captivity.

Does an object with momentum maintain that momentum if teleported?

Nothing in the rules suggests that the rules of physics wouldn't continue to apply, so it appears that momentum is maintained. If you're plummeting toward the ground when you cast *teleport* to reach a safe spot, you'd still be "falling" and would therefore take damage as appropriate to the distance you actually fell before teleporting.

Can I teleport into or out of an extradimensional space, such as that created by Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion or a portable hole?

No. Such spaces are considered to be on another plane, and thus can't be reached by *teleport* since that spell specifically states that interplanar travel isn't possible.

An effect that allowed interplanar travel would allow you to travel from an extradimensional space to another plane (such as from within a magnificent mansion to the Material Plane).

Theoretically, even the reverse might be true (transport from the Material Plane into a *rope trick*, for example), although this is certainly trickier. An extradimensional space isn't actually a "plane," per se, so any spell that takes you to a specific plane wouldn't necessarily succeed. It's probably easiest to say that such effects don't function unless somehow specifically designed to do so—after all, who really wants to open up his *portable hole* to find the angry lich archmage waiting to ambush him?

Can you ride your own Tenser's floating disk?

No. While you could command your *Tenser's floating disk* to move close enough for you to sit upon it, it has no ability to move under its own power. It can follow you only at a maximum rate equal to your normal speed.

If you threaten a critical hit while under the effect of a true strike spell, does the +20 insight bonus also apply to the critical hit confirmation roll?

Yes. The confirmation roll uses exactly the same attack modifier as the original (and can even have additional modifiers, if the character has special abilities that affect the confirmation roll).

If a spell that targets a creature (such as cause fear) is tied to the area of an unhallow spell, does it target creatures inside the area every round, or only when they enter the area?

A spell tied to *unhallow* picks its targets only when they enter the area, not every round they remain within. In the case of *cause fear*, each creature entering the area with fewer than 6 Hit Dice would be required to attempt a will save against the effect, but once within the area would not be required to save against the effect again. If a creature left the area and returned later, the spell would be effectively "cast" again, targeting that creature once again.

Spells that don't have targets (such as *invisibility purge*) simply apply their effects continuously within the area of the *unhallow* spell. A character who turned invisible after entering an unhallowed area with *invisibility purge* tied to the area would be rendered instantly visible by the purging effect.

The *unyielding roots* spell (CD) anchors the recipient, making it impossible for him to move from his space. The flanking rules are based on the lack of facing in the game, but presume that a creature is always turning to deal with adjacent attackers. Should the immobility imbued by this spell also make it easier for a creature to flank the recipient, as the recipient cannot move to face the attacker?

A creature under the effect of *unyielding roots* is just as vulnerable to flanking as any other creature, but no more so. There are a whole category of immobilizing spells and effects, such as hold person, that would appear to create similar situations, but these effects don't alter the fundamentally abstract nature of D&D combat.

On the other hand, if you're using the Combat Facing variant found in *UA*, the *unyielding roots* spell could create some interesting tactical limitations for the recipient.

The *mass lesser vigor* spell has a fixed range (of 20 feet), which makes it eligible for the revised Persistent Spell feat in *PG*. Does that mean a 17th-level druid could use a 9th-level spell slot to give nine creatures fast healing 1 for 24 hours, or does the built-in limit of 25 rounds make that pointless?

Unlike Extend Spell, Persistent Spell replaces a spell's normal duration with a new duration of 24 hours. In this case, the effect overrides the normal maximum duration of the spell, so it would indeed grant nine creatures fast healing 1 for 24 hours (a pretty reasonable effect for a 9th-level spell).

Do you have to pay the 5,000 XP cost for a *wish* spell every time you cast it, or just when you duplicate spells with an XP cost? What about *limited wish*? Suppose you use the "undo misfortune" function of the *wish* spell, or any of the other specific functions listed under the spell. Is there an XP cost then?

Whenever you cast a *wish* spell, you pay at least 5,000 XP for the spell. You could pay more XP for the spell if you use it to duplicate a spell with a higher XP cost, or if you use it to create or improve a magic item, as noted in the spell description.

The long bullet list of effects (which includes the "undo misfortune" function) in the *wish* spell description shows the kinds of result you can get from the spell without any great risks. If you use one of these functions, you still pay the *wish* spell's XP cost, but the wish comes out the way you want. If you try to accomplish something your DM thinks is more powerful or difficult than what appears on the bullet list, you risk unintended consequences from the wish, as noted in the spell description. Since the DM is free to devise such intended consequences, it pays to stick within the limits the spell description sets down.

When you cast a *limited wish* spell, the minimum experience cost is 300 XP, but it could be more, as noted in the spell description.

Powers

Within this section, you can find general powers questions as well as questions alphabetized by a specific power highlighted by the question and answer.

General Power Questions

If you augment a power, is its effective power level increased? Say I manifest *mind thrust* (XPH 120) at an opponent protected by a *globe of invulnerability*. Is it still a 1st-level power no matter how many power points I spend?

An augmented power's level remains the same unless the augmentation listing specifically states otherwise. *Mind thrust* (a 1st-level power) can't ever pierce a *globe of invulnerability* (which protects against spells and powers of 4th level or less), regardless of how many power points you spend to augment *mind thrust*.

Does damage reduction help against powers that deal slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning damage, such as *crystal shard* (XPH 89)?

Spells (and powers), spell-like abilities, and energy attacks ignore damage reduction (DMG 292). Thus, even if a spell or power describes its damage as bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing, it is still a spell (or power) effect, and thus damage reduction does not apply (unless the spell or power's description specifically states otherwise).

I have a question about psionic focuses. Psicrystal containment allows you to use your psicrystal's focus instead of your own, and Epic Psionic Focus allows you to use the same psionic focus to power two psionic feats. What isn't covered is whether you can expend two psionic focuses at the same time. Can you use both your own personal focus and the psicrystal's focus in the same round? For example, could you use your personal focus for Deep Impact and your psicrystal's focus for Psionic Weapon on the same attack?

You can use them simultaneously if you are doing different things with the expended focus, but if you are using two foci simultaneously to amp damage on the same weapon, it probably doesn't work—*unless* the DM feels there is a good reason to allow the combo. I could certainly see this being allowed in some cases.

When attempting to regain your psionic focus, does the check automatically fail if you take damage? Can you make the check “defensively” to avoid attacks of opportunity?

No and no.

Specific Powers

In XPH, nearly every mention of ectoplasm says that it reaches into the Ethereal Plane and affects incorporeal creatures. The *astral construct* power (XPH 77) creates a construct made of ectoplasm. Does that mean that an astral construct doesn't suffer the normal miss chance when attacking an incorporeal creature?

The Sage must take issue with your opening assertion. After checking all references to ectoplasm in XPH, the Sage confirmed that not one of these states anything about the substance affecting incorporeal creatures. The *ectoplasmic cocoon* power states that it extends into the Ethereal Plane, but this is a property of the power, not of ectoplasm in general (and the power says nothing about it affecting incorporeal creatures).

Ectoplasm is not the same thing as force. Neither ectoplasm nor objects or effects created by or from ectoplasm have any particular special properties (other than being affected by the *dismiss ectoplasm* power).

The *control body* power (XPH 86) says that you can control any humanoid, including undead and outsiders with a humanoid physiology. How far does a “humanoid physiology” extend? What about a balor (a humanoid-shaped creature with wings), a glabrezu (which has extra arms), or a salamander (which has a tail instead of legs)? Is there something official about what counts as “humanoid physiology” or is it a DM ruling?

There's no official definition of humanoid physiology. This is one of those places where common sense and DM judgment must rule the day. The Sage advises that “humanoid physiology” should reasonably include any creature whose body is shaped like a humanoid (upright, probably bipedal creature) and includes all the basic parts of a humanoid (legs, arms, a torso, a head). Extra parts—such as wings, a tail, a pair of extra arms, or even an extra head—shouldn't push the creature out of this category. The Sage would even allow some leeway in the area of legs, since both the centaur (with its horselike body and four legs) and the halfblood yuan-ti (which might have a snake's tail instead of legs) are considered “monstrous” humanoids.

When in doubt, look at the creature's descriptive text—if it's described as having a humanoid form, it's probably reasonable to consider it as having humanoid physiology. Ultimately, there's nothing wrong with the DM being overly lenient in his rulings on this topic.

Among the outsiders in the MM, the Sage would consider the following to be of humanoid physiology: angel (astral deva, planetar, solar), most archons (hound archon, trumpet archon), azer, barghest (in goblin form only), most demons (babau, balor, dretch, glabrezu, hezrou, marilith, nalfeshnee, quasit, succubus, vroock), most devils (barbed devil, bearded devil, bone devil, chain devil, erinyes, horned devil, ice devil, imp, pit fiend), eladrins (bralani, ghaele), genies (djinn, efreet, jann), lillend, mephit, night hag, planetouched (aasimar, tiefling), rakshasa, salamander, slaad, titan, triton, and xill.

Virtually all the undead in the MM have “humanoid physiology.” only the nightcrawler, nightwing, and any skeleton or zombie created from a creature without a humanoid physiology would seem to be exceptions.

Does the *damp power* psionic power (Complete Psionic, page 82) trump an effect that empowers or maximizes a spell or power?

Yes and no. An empowered *fireball* affected by *damp power* would deal 1 point of damage per die, plus 50%. A 6th-level sorcerer's empowered *fireball* would thus deal 9 points of damage. A maximized *fireball*, however, no longer has variable, numeric effects (because they've been maximized), so *damp power* would have no effect on its damage.

Can the *psionic identify* power (XPH 112) be used to identify magic items as well as psionic items? Does the *identify* spell identify psionic items?

Assuming you use the psionics-magic transparency rule detailed on page 55 in the XPH, yes and yes.

Could a character use *psychic reformation* (XPH 127) to change a character class he had gained at an earlier level?

No. *Psychic reformation* clearly states which character-building decisions can be changed: skill points, feats, and acquired powers. No other options are available.

What exactly counts as a “purely mental” action, such as those allowed to the second mind created by the *schism* power (XPH 130)? Does a silent, still spell count? What about a spell-like ability or a quickened spell?

The *schism* power specifically includes manifesting a power as an example of a purely mental action. Elsewhere in *XPH*, this is expanded to include “casting spells with no verbal, somatic, or material components.” Thus, a silent, still spell wouldn’t count unless the spell also had no material components (including focuses).

A spell-like ability is essentially a spell without verbal, somatic, or material components (and is described on page 180 of the *PH* as being activated “mentally”) so that qualifies as purely mental. This would also include psi-like abilities.

Although a quickened spell doesn’t provoke attacks of opportunity, it still includes any verbal, somatic, or material components required by the nonquickened version of the spell, and thus doesn’t automatically qualify as a “purely mental” action by virtue of its speed.

The Sage can think of a few other actions that fall into the category of “purely mental” actions:

- Communicating with *telepathy*.
- Concentrating to maintain a spell.
- Dismissing a spell.
- Directing or redirecting an active spell.
- Lowering spell resistance.
- Making a Knowledge check (assuming you aren’t

consulting a text or other resource). Some other skill checks might be allowed at the DM’s option (such as a Spellcraft check made to identify a spell effect), but only if the character makes the check without any movement.

When in doubt, the DM should use common sense and a pretty literal definition of “purely mental” to determine if something fits the bill. If the action requires any physical movement whatsoever (including speech), it shouldn’t qualify.

If a condition (such as being stunned) affects me while *schism* (XPH 130) is manifested, is the second mind also affected by the condition?

Yes. *Schism* allows you to attempt a second save against a charm or compulsion effect, but the benefit doesn’t go any further than that. A stunned character with a second mind is just as stunned as one without a second mind, and the second mind can’t take any actions either.

One notable exception is paralysis, which specifically points out that “purely mental actions” (see previous question) are still allowed, which means that your second mind could act normally (and your primary mind could still use purely mental actions as well, of course).

Can the *timeless body* power be dispelled?

Yes. The *timeless body* power renders you invulnerable to all attacks and powers. However, the power doesn’t protect itself, nor does it protect any other effects currently active on you.

Dispel psionics (or *dispel magic*), even if targeting you specifically, isn’t affecting you—it’s affecting the ongoing powers or spells active on you. Thus, it is unaffected by the protection granted by *timeless body*.

Since *timeless body* doesn’t prevent characters from targeting you with attacks or powers (just from affecting you with them), *dispel psionics* can dispel a *timeless body* effect (or any other effects on a character protected by *timeless body*).

Does *vampiric touch* work when used against undead, specifically mummies?

The *vampiric touch* spell, on page 298 of the *PHB*, has a target entry of “Living creature touched.” A mummy, or any other undead creature, is not living and therefore is not a legal target for the *vampiric touch* spell. It just won’t affect them at all.

Monsters

The entry on flight in the *MM* doesn't elaborate on whether carrying a medium or heavy load actually prevents flight, or it simply slows the flyer down below the indicated speed (and in the latter case, it doesn't explain by how much the creature is slowed down). Some of the monster entries do make mention of medium and heavy loads in terms of carrying capacity (griffins and spider-eaters, for example). Does that mean those creatures can fly with medium or heavy loads? Is it even possible for a flying creature to get airborne at less than its listed fly speed.

You can use a fly speed only when carrying a light load or less. If your load is medium or heavy, you cannot fly; certain kinds of magical flight, such as a *fly* spell, don't have this restriction. Check the description of the flying effect to be sure.

A griffin or a spider-eater can carry a medium or heavy load, but it cannot fly when doing so.

Most flying creatures can get aloft at less than their full fly speeds, provided that they can maintain their minimum forward speeds (see Tactical Aerial Movement in Chapter 2 of the *DMG*). You also can fly when wearing medium or heavy armor if the weight of the armor (plus everything else you carry) doesn't exceed your light load rating. The armor still slows you down (page 20 in the *DMG* has an expanded table of reduced speeds). For example, a balor is a Large creature with a Strength score of 35. A light load for a balor is 2,128 pounds. To calculate that, we must use the tremendous Strength rule on page 163 of the *PH* and find the light load rating for Strength 25 (the number between 20 and 29 that has the same 1's digit as 35). This gives us a value of 266 pounds. Since the balor's Strength is 35, we multiply 266 by 4, which gives us 1,064 pounds. The balor is a Large biped, however, so its carrying capacity doubles ($1,064 \times 2 = 2,128$). A balor can fly so long as it carries less than 2,128 pounds. A breastplate for a Large biped weighs 60 pounds (from Table 7-6 in the *PH*), so its weight won't keep a balor from getting aloft when wearing it. Since a breastplate is medium armor, the balor's base fly speed of 90 feet is slowed to 60 feet (from the table on page 20 of the *DMG*). Since the balor has good maneuverability, it has no minimum forward speed and can easily fly wearing the breastplate. Even if the balor had poor maneuverability, its minimum forward speed would be 45 feet (half its base speed of 90 feet), and it still could fly at a speed of 60 when wearing the breastplate.

If a creature's base flying speed is greater than listed on the chart on page 20 of the *DMG*, just divide the creature's base flying speed into equal parts dividable by 10 and then add up the reduced values for those base speeds off the chart. For example, if a flying creature with a fly speed of 150 feet wears medium armor and can still get aloft, it can fly at a speed of 105 feet. (Its minimum forward speed, if it had one, would be half the base flying speed, or 75 feet.) The reduced speed of 105 feet was calculated by splitting the fly speed into 70 feet and 80 feet ($70 + 80 = 150$). At reduced speed, 70 feet becomes 50 feet and 80 feet becomes 55 feet ($50 + 55 = 105$).

Note that some creatures in the game cannot fly when wearing medium or heavy armor, no matter what their load happens to be (for example, the avariel from *Rac*), so be sure to check the creature's description for any special limits on its flying ability.

Suppose you have a flying mount: a griffon. What do you have to do to use the ride-by tactic in the air or in

swooping down on a target? Do you need to take the Flyby Attack feat? Or does the Ride-By Attack feat cover flying mounts as well? For the mount to make a single attack when riding or flying by, does it also need to somehow gain a feat? If so, which one?

If the example rider wants to make attacks while flying by foes, she needs the Ride-By Attack feat and needs to charge (and fly) in a straight line (see the next question). For the mount to attack in the same situation, it would need the Flyby Attack feat. The rider's Ride-By Attack feat won't help the mount attack, and the mount's Flyby Attack feat does not help the rider attack.

Note that you have to have a fly speed to take the Flyby Attack feat. If you merely ride a flying mount, you don't meet the prerequisite for the feat. If you can meet the prerequisite, your flying mount still doesn't benefit from your Flyby Attack feat (although it's possible that a feat or class feature might allow you to share the feat).

With the rules erratum that prohibits overruns as part of a charge, the Ride-By Attack feat is now nearly useless. You must use the charge action to use the Ride-By Attack feat, and that requires you to travel in a straight line toward your target. Using the example in the *PH*, this would appear to rather specifically mean along a line from your entire square (or squares if riding a horse or other mount with a space of 10 feet or greater), to the target square. Ride-By Attack allows you to continue moving along the straight line of the charge after your attack. This would have to mean that at some point you would enter the square (or squares) of the creature you attacked. (At least I cannot conceive of any other way it could be done). Since you cannot enter your foe's space unless the creature is already dead, Ride-By Attack is now pretty much useless if you can't also overrun the foe. Some have suggested that you could charge in a manner that would not bring you through the target creature's square (or squares). To do so, you would not be charging directly toward the target and likely not moving by the shortest route (also a charge requirement) or attacking it from the first possible square (another charge requirement). In any of these cases, you would be breaking the rules for a charge. Am I wrong about any of this?

No, you've got it about right.

When using the Ride-By attack feat, you must conduct your charge so that you move in a straight line toward the closest square from which it is possible to attack your chosen foe, so long as it is a square that allows you to attack and then continue on in the straight line of the charge. You still must attack your foe the moment you reach that square. (Although the feat description doesn't say so, you and your mount also must move at least 5 feet after you make your attack to get the benefit of the feat.) This is a special rule for charging when using the Ride-By Attack feat. Note that the Flyby Attack feat (discussed in the previous question) does not require you to move in a straight line. You merely make a single move and take another standard action at some point during that move.

How do you use the damage reduction of 3.0 monsters with the new 3.5 rules? Is there a way to convert a damage reduction entry so that it works with the new rules?

First, download a free copy of the *D&D v.3.5 Accessory Update* booklet. This has 3.5 damage reduction values for monsters from *MM2*, *FF*, *DD*, *EL*, and the *MP*. You can find a link to the booklet right on the D&D homepage on the Wizard's of the Coast website: www.wizards.com/dnd.

To convert damage reduction values for other monsters, just look for a similar monster in the 3.5 *MM* and assign your monster a similar damage reduction. Devils, for example, get damage reduction #/good and silver. In most cases, the # would be 15 or less (and usually 10 or less).

Damage Reduction

Unless otherwise stated by the monster's description, use these definitions to determine whether damage reduction components are extraordinary or supernatural.

Extraordinary

- DR #/slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning
- DR #/adamantine
- DR #/—

Supernatural

- DR #/silver or cold iron
- DR #/magic
- DR #/chaotic, evil, good, or lawful

Do creatures with special attacks increase the DC for those attacks when they gain class levels? Are they calculated based on the creature's new ECL or its new CR?

Unless specifically noted in a monster description, the DC of a creature's innate special attacks depends only on its racial HD, and not from HD gained from class levels. A horned devil who gained levels of fighter, for instance, would not use its fighter HD to calculate the DC of its fear aura or stun supernatural special attacks. A creature's ECL or CR has no effect whatsoever on the save DCs for its special attacks or any other ability.

However, if the creature's ability scores change—such as from the increase at every 4-HD interval—that might well affect the DCs of its special attacks. If that horned devil, for instance, improved its Strength from 31 to 32 when it gained its first class level (giving it 16 HD total), its stun save DC would improve by 1. Each special attack lists the ability score upon which it is based (such as Strength for the horned devil's stun).

Why do some creatures have effective character levels higher than their challenge rating? If a hound archon is only CR 4, how can it possibly be as good as an 11th-level character? After all, an 11th-level NPC is CR 11, not CR 4.

Effective character level (ECL) and challenge rating (CR) appear similar—after all, they're both numbers that rate a creature's toughness—but they actually measure two very different things. A monster's CR measures how tough that monster is in a typical combat encounter against player characters, while its ECL measures how powerful a PC it would make.

Take the hound archon as an example of why this is true. In a typical fight, it likely gets a chance to use its *aid* spell-like ability only once. However, in a party of adventurers, it can use this ability on itself and every member of the party an unlimited number of times. This means that a smart group of PCs have *aid* in effect for every battle they fight—even a high-level cleric can't guarantee that. Similarly, while a hound archon can use its *greater teleport* ability only a few times at most in

a fight, a PC with the ability to use *greater teleport* at will has an enormous advantage, both in and out of combat.

The hound archon's damage reduction is also much more useful when used by a PC than by a monster. Most PC groups have the ability to deal with a creature's damage reduction, either overcoming it with the necessary weapons or ignoring it altogether by damaging the monster with spells or other effects. However, most monsters don't have this option. The vast majority of foes faced by a hound archon have no recourse but to use their normal attack forms, meaning the hound archon can ignore the first 10 points of damage from each and every attack made against it.

In the end, a hound archon's special powers don't make it tougher than any other CR 4 monster (such as a gargoyle or vampire spawn), but they make it much more potent than a standard PC of a similar level.

What happens when a monster that carries a disease attacks another monster of the same kind (or somehow bites or scratches itself)? What happens if the monster attacks a monster of a different kind that carries the same disease? For example dire rats and wererats both carry filth fever. What happens when one dire rat bites another or bites a wererat?

Although the rules don't specifically say so, creatures that carry a disease are generally immune to that particular disease. Thus, a dire rat cannot infect itself, another dire rat, a wererat, an otyugh, or any other creature that causes filth fever (or vice versa), since they are both already carriers.

How are save DCs for disease attacks calculated? Judging from the *MM*, disease DCs would seem to be based on Constitution. But that can't be correct, can it? The higher the Constitution score the healthier the monster, right?

When a monster has a disease special attack, the save DC for that disease is 10 plus + 1/2 the creature's Hit Dice plus the creature's Constitution modifier.

As a general rule, any special attack that comes from the attacker's body uses Constitution to determine the save DC. In the case of a mundane disease that functions as a special attack, healthier creatures carry a more virulent strain. For example, Table 8–2 in the *DMG* lists a DC of 12 for filth fever. Nevertheless, it requires only a DC 11 Fortitude save to avoid contracting filth fever from a dire rat's bite, while an otyugh's bite causes the same disease on a failed DC 14 save.

Special attacks that involve supernatural diseases often use Constitution to determine the save DC as well. In some cases the creature or the disease might warrant using a different ability score. A mummy's mummy rot, for example, uses Charisma instead of Constitution because undead creatures lack Constitution scores.

When a character is exposed to a disease in some manner other than a monster's special attack, use the save DC listed on Table 8–2. For example, if a character steps on a rusty nail and is exposed to filth fever, the save DC is 12.

What happens when creatures use their natural weapons as secondary attacks along with a manufactured weapon? For example, lizardfolk have two claws that also serve as hands. What happens when they wield a one-handed weapon in one hand and nothing in the other? Do they lose both claw attacks in exchange for their attacks with the weapon?

Wielding a manufactured weapon doesn't prevent a creature from using all its natural weaponry, provided that the creature is using the full attack action and the additional natural weapons are free.

The example lizardfolk can't make a claw attack with the "hand" that holds its weapon, although it does get to attack with the weapon itself. But, if it's using the full attack action, it can use its other claw as a natural secondary attack (-5 to attack rolls, half Strength bonus), and can also bite as a natural secondary attack. In effect, the lizardfolk is using its normal full attack routine with the manufactured weapon attack substituted for one claw attack.

How many attacks does a creature with multiple natural weapons get while it's grappling? How many grapple checks can it make in a round?

Under normal circumstances, a creature can attack with only one of its natural weapons while grappling (and it takes a -4 penalty on such attacks; *PH* 156). A grappling dire bear can attack with either a claw or its bite.

The rake special attack gives the creature "two additional claw attacks that it can use only against a grappled foe" (and which don't take the normal -4 penalty to such attacks; *MM* 314).

A creature that chooses to make grapple checks in place of attacks—that is, to damage its opponent, escape from the grapple, move, pin its opponent, or use its opponent's weapon—is allowed one grapple check for every attack that its base attack bonus would allow (even if it doesn't normally make multiple attacks in this manner). These attacks deal damage as an unarmed strike made by a creature of that size (1d3 for Medium, 1d4 for Large, 1d6 for Huge, and so forth, plus its Strength modifier).

A creature with BAB +0 to +5 can make one grapple check in place of an attack, BAB +6 to +10 two, BAB +11 to +15 three, and BAB +16 to +20 four. The dire bear, for example, can make two grapple checks in place of attacks, thanks to its base attack bonus of +9: one using its full BAB and the second using its BAB -5.

How do I know whether a monster gets multiple attacks for a high base attack bonus? Some of the monsters in the *MM* have multiple attacks, but others don't, even with the same base attack bonus. Why doesn't a great wyrm red dragon get eight bite attacks per round? After all, its base attack bonus is +40.

The rules for multiple attacks are different for manufactured weapons (such as swords and bows) and for natural weapons (such as claws and bites). A creature wielding a weapon gets multiple attacks based on its base attack bonus, regardless of whether that creature is a goblin, a giant, or a pit fiend. Regardless of its base attack bonus, a creature never gets more than four attacks with any given weapon purely from its base attack bonus (see the sidebar on page 207 of the *DMG*)—thus, if a great wyrm red dragon could wield a manufactured weapon, it still could make only four attacks with it as part of a full attack action (at +40/+35/+30/+25).

Creatures do not receive additional attacks from a high base attack bonus when using natural weapons. A young adult red dragon gets only one bite attack per round, even though a fighter with the same +19 base attack bonus attacks four times per round with a sword or other manufactured weapon.

What happens when a monster has a high base attack bonus, and it uses a manufactured weapon along with a secondary natural weaponry? For instance, suppose a 5th-level lizardfolk fighter wields a battleaxe. What would this creature's attack routine be?

Just add the natural secondary attacks to the manufactured attacks the creature can make. Assuming that the example character has five fighter levels, she has a base attack bonus of +6 (+1 for being a lizard folk, +5 for fighter levels). Assuming the character doesn't use a shield, she has two natural secondary attacks available—her bite and her free claw. She has a -5 penalty when using a natural secondary weapons. So, when the character uses the full attack action, her attack routine is +6/+1 melee (battleaxe)/+1 melee (bite)/+1 melee (claw).

However, if the example character were using the standard attack action instead, she could make only one attack. This single attack could be a +6 if she used the manufactured weapon or a claw (a lizard folk's claws are the primary natural weapon), or +1 if the character chooses to bite. You always take the secondary weapon penalty when you use a secondary natural weapon (see the *MM* glossary).

When a creature has natural weaponry, do all its natural weapons become secondary attacks when it uses a manufactured weapon? If so, what happens to the damage rating for a primary natural weapon that gets demoted to secondary status?

When a creature uses both manufactured and natural weapons together with the full attack action, treat the manufactured weapon as the primary attack (using the creature's full attack bonus) and treat all the natural weapons as secondary natural attacks (-5 attack penalty, or -2 if the creature has the Multiattack feat).

The basic damage rating for a secondary natural weapon doesn't change, but the creature gets only half its Strength bonus to damage for the secondary attack, even if it would otherwise be a primary natural weapon. The troll entry in the *MM* provides a good example of this.

What happens when a creature's secondary natural weapon becomes a primary natural weapon? For example, what is the attack and damage bonus if a lizardfolk uses its bite for an attack action or for an attack of opportunity?

A secondary natural weapon is always a secondary natural weapon, even when a creature attacks only with that weapon. A lizardfolk attacking with only a bite has a -5 attack penalty (-2 with the Multiattack feat) and gains only 1/2 its Strength bonus with the bite attack. Secondary weapons are inherently less effective than a creature's primary natural weaponry, mostly due to limits of the creature's fighting skills or physiology. See page 312 in the *MM* for details.

Can a creature make a slam or claw attack when both his hands are used for something else, such as holding a two-handed weapon?

As long as the creature can easily let go with one hand, yes. A two-handed weapon requires two hands to wield in combat, but not to hold. A frost giant could choose to make a slam attack instead of a greataxe attack without having to drop the greataxe.

On the other hand, a frost giant carrying a heavy weight in both arms doesn't have a free hand to use for a slam attack. He'd have to drop the object (a free action) before making a slam attack.

When a monster uses a special attack option, such as trip or sunder, must it make the attack with its primary natural weapon? Are there any limits on which natural weapons can be used in a trip or sunder attack? When a monster has multiple natural weapons, can it use each of those weapons to make trip or sunder attacks?

A monster with natural weaponry doesn't need to use its primary natural weapon to make sunder or trip attacks. If it uses a secondary weapon, however, the penalty for a secondary weapon applies to the attack (-5 or -2 with the Multiattack feat). In the case of sunder, the secondary weapon penalty applies to the opposed attack roll the creature makes to accomplish the sunder attack. In the case of a trip attack, the secondary weapon penalty applies to the melee touch attack roll the creature makes to start the trip attack.

A creature can make a trip attack with just about any natural weapon, although the DM must exercise some common sense in the matter. Claw and bite attacks are excellent for trip attempts, as are tentacle attacks. Since tripping in the D&D game involves grabbing a foe and pulling him down, stings, gores, hooves, and most slam attacks should not work for tripping (although tail slaps work).

A natural weapon must deal bludgeoning or slashing damage to be useful for a sunder attack. Gore and sting attacks deal only piercing damage and thus aren't useful for such attacks (see page 312 in the *MM* for a list of natural weapons and their damage types), but again, some common sense is in order here. Creatures with pointy fangs, such as monstrous spiders or big snakes, probably deal only piecing damage with their bite attacks and aren't really smart enough to make sunder attacks anyway.

In either case, a monster making a sunder or trip attack follows all the rules a player character uses for the attack in question, including provoking an attack of opportunity.

A monster with several natural weapons can make a sunder or trip attack with each one, provided that it uses the full attack action, and its natural weaponry is useful for the attack in question.

Note that some monsters have special trip or sunder attacks. In such cases, use the rules given in the monster's description, not the general rules discussed here. For example a wolf can make a free trip attempt when it hits with its bite attack and does not provoke an attack of opportunity when doing so. Likewise a bebilith's rend armor attack is similar to a sunder attack, but it works only on a foe's armor, and only when the bebilith hits with both claws. Rend armor doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity.

What happens when a creature with multiple natural weapons gets to make an attack of opportunity? Does it have to use its primary natural weapon? What happens if the creature has a pair of primary weapons, such as a bear's two claws.

An attack of opportunity is a single melee attack; no matter how many weapons or natural weapons the creature making the attack has available.

When a creature with natural weaponry makes an attack of opportunity, it can use any natural weapon it has. If it decides to use a secondary weapon, however, it suffers the usual -5 attack penalty for a secondary attack (or -2 if it has the Multiattack feat), and it applies only half its Strength bonus on damage if the attack hits.

How does poisoning (or any other ability draining effect) work, exactly? Can a character get ability damage through poison several times from one monster in the same encounter? Can there be more than one secondary saving throw for poison?

First, poison causes ability damage, not ability drain. You can heal ability damage on your own (unless you lose the fight and become a monster snack), but you need magical intervention to recover ability score points lost to ability drain.

In either case, there's no limit to the number of times a monster can beat down your ability scores with successful ability damage or ability drain attacks. Resolve each attack and apply their consequences separately. A monster could have an ability drain or ability damage attack that could not affect the same foe multiple times, but that would be a special case noted in the monster's description. None of the creatures in the *MM* have such a limitation.

In the case of poisons that deal ability damage, you must make a saving throw against the poison's initial and secondary effects each time a poisonous attack hits you. For example, if a Huge monstrous scorpion stings you five times, you'll have to make five initial saves and five more secondary saves, each one minute after the initial save for that attack. A character could survive a long fight with a poisonous creature only to succumb to its venom later. Smart players break out the *neutralize poison* spells, healer's kits, antitoxin, or all three after encountering venomous foes.

In the case of poisons that have nondamaging effects, such as paralysis or unconsciousness, the effects don't stack, but each one runs for its full duration.

The description for gaze attacks in the *MM* says any opponents within range of the gaze need to make saving throws. The *DMG* says any characters within range must save. Which is correct? If a creature with a gaze attack has allies, do the allies have to make saves against the gaze attack? Is it possible for a creature to suppress its own gaze attack? If so, how?

The *DMG* is correct. Anyone, ally or enemy, who looks into the eyes of a creature with a gaze attack has to save against the attack. Allies, however, can avert their eyes from the creature with the gaze attack and avoid having to make saving throws 50% of the time; this doesn't provide complete protection, but it helps. The creature with the gaze attack gains concealment relative to its allies that are averting their eyes, but since those allies probably aren't going to attack the creature, that's not a big concern.

Since looking into the eyes triggers a save against a gaze attack, the creature with the attack can stop using its gaze simply by closing its eyes; this is not an action, and the creature can do so anytime, even when flat-footed or during another creature's turn. The creature is blinded so long as it keeps its eyes shut. The creature also can veil its eyes with a translucent cloth. This stops the gaze attack, but all other creatures have partial concealment (20% miss chance) relative to it.

The text on page 289 in the *DMG* says a supernatural ability cannot be dispelled. Table 8-1 on the next page, however, says it can. Which one is right? If supernatural abilities cannot be dispelled, can they be removed or countered in other ways? What would happen, for example, if a medusa turns my character to stone? Can anything restore my character?

The table is wrong. While you cannot dispel a supernatural ability with the *dispel magic* spell, you can remove or reverse its effects on an area, object (but not one in the supernatural ability user's possession), or creature (but not the ability user itself) in other ways. For instance, the petrified victim in your example can be restored through a *break enchantment* spell or a *stone to flesh* spell. Supernatural effects are not subject to counterspelling, but some of them can be countered in other ways if they have the right descriptor (or if they duplicate spells with the right descriptor). For example, the darkmantle's supernatural darkness ability duplicates the 2nd-level *darkness* spell, which has the darkness descriptor. This ability counters and dispels any light effect of its level or lower, and the 3rd-level *daylight* spell (which counters and dispels all darkness effects of its level or lower) negates the darkness created by a darkmantle's darkness ability.

Likewise, spells such as *dispel evil* can remove supernatural enchantment effects if they duplicate spells that can be dispelled otherwise. For example, a *dispel evil* spell removes a vampire's *dominate person* effect from a victim. Similarly spells that block mental control, such as *protection from evil* or *magic circle against evil*, suppress the effects of a vampire's *dominate person* ability, as noted in their spell descriptions.

Are monsters' ability scores adjusted as they age (like PC races)?

The rules include no information on age categories for creatures other than the PC races listed in various books, so the Sage concludes that ability score adjustments by age (such as those described on Table 6-5: Aging Effects, in the *PH*) apply only to those races for which they're listed.

If a DM wanted to create age categories for other creatures, the Sage advises using existing numbers as a guideline.

Does a human who becomes an undead apply the ability score adjustments as he ages?

The Sage recommends that aging effects not be applied to a PC who becomes undead.

It seems unreasonable that an undead's physical ability scores should change based on the original race's lifespan (why should a dwarf vampire stay strong longer than a half-orc vampire?).

Similarly, applying adjustments to mental ability scores seems to create more problems than it's worth. Should a skeleton that's been dead for 200 years be wiser than one that was just created? If a long-dead ghost gets smarter with age, why doesn't a long-dead mummy?

That said, if a DM wanted to apply aging effects to ability scores for undead PCs, it's not terribly unbalancing. He should just be prepared to answer a lot of corner-case questions—and most DMs will find it more hassle than it's worth.

Can a half-dragon elf gain (and use) the Mark of Shadow? What about an elf lich?

Yes and no. Simply changing your type normally doesn't bar you from manifesting a dragonmark associated with your race (or from using a dragonmark you've already manifested).

Undead, however, are incapable of manifesting or activating any of the dragonmarks described in the *ECS*.

Do spell resistance, damage reduction, or caster level for spell-like abilities increase as a monster advances by Hit Dice?

Unless a monster's description states otherwise, most monster special abilities aren't Hit Dice-based, and thus are unaffected by advancement either by HD or by class level. (An exception is the save DC for any monster special ability, which is specifically described as using HD in its calculation).

Again, a DM can create exceptions to this rule; for example, increasing spell resistance by +1 per point of Challenge Rating increase (not per HD) is a good way of keeping a monster's SR relevant.

When I advance a couatl (or other creature with the "spells" special attack quality) by increasing its Hit Dice, what happens to its spellcasting ability?

Gaining a HD or class level generally has no effect on a monster's spellcasting ability. That said, it's reasonable to grant a monster who gains a level in the same class as its existing spellcasting ability another level of spellcasting in that class (as well as the 1st-level class features of the class).

For example, a rakshasa who gained a level of sorcerer should cast spells as an 8th-level sorcerer (7 levels from its race, plus 1 from its class), and should also gain the class features of a 1st-level sorcerer.

Can an animal increase its Intelligence when it gains an ability score increase at every 4 Hit Dice? If its Int increases beyond 2, does it become a magical beast?

The Sage recommends that the DM *not* allow an animal (or any nonintelligent creature) to increase its Intelligence via HD advancement except as a very special case. Even the biggest 18-HD viper in the jungle shouldn't be able to have an Intelligence of 4.

Regardless, an animal's type doesn't change simply due to an Intelligence increase.

The MM says a creature isn't proficient with armor unless it is specifically listed as such (or is wearing armor in its description). What about warhorses and riding dogs, which are often protected by barding?

Technically, such creatures aren't proficient in armor, and thus suffer a penalty on attack rolls equal to the armor check penalty. Many DMs choose to ignore this penalty for animals trained for combat (such as warhorses and riding dogs), which is perfectly reasonable.

The MM lists outsiders as having proficiency with all martial weapons. Does that mean that aasimar, tiefling and genasi PCs are automatically proficient with all martial weapons?

Yes.

In an encounter with creatures of mixed Challenge Ratings (for example, a CR 9 boss with a mix of CR 6 and CR 3 minions) how do you figure Encounter Level and XP?

The Encounter Level of a group of monsters is an estimate of the encounter's relative challenge. Its only value is as a signal to the DM regarding how dangerous the encounter might be to the PCs—it's never used to calculate XP or anything else.

To estimate the EL of a mixed group of monsters, calculate the EL for each group of monsters with the same CR as if each group was a separate encounter. Then, calculate the EL for the two lowest-EL groups of monsters as if each group were a single monster with a CR equal to its EL. Repeat until you have only one number left: that's your EL estimate.

For example, imagine an encounter with a CR 9 boss, two CR 6 lieutenants, and four CR 3 minions. To estimate the EL for this encounter, start by determining the EL of each group of creatures: four CR 3 foes represent an EL 7 encounter, two CR 6 enemies are an EL 8 encounter, and a single CR 9 foe is an EL 9 encounter. A CR 7 plus a CR 8 monster is roughly an EL 9 encounter (it's a lot like the 8 + 6 mixed pair on Table 3-1: Encounter Numbers in the *DMG*), and when you add that to the other CR 9 component, you have an EL 11 encounter.

This isn't a perfect method—it can easily overestimate the value of low-CR minions, particularly in large numbers—but it's good in most cases. If you find that the EL for a mixed group is more than two or three points higher than the CR of the toughest single participant, take your estimate with a grain of salt.

Experience, on the other hand, is always calculated based on each monster's individual Challenge Rating, never by the Encounter Level. Each monster in an encounter is worth a number of XP based on its CR and the PCs' levels, and the total XP reward for the encounter is the sum of these values.

The encounter with a CR 9 creature, two CR 6 creatures, and four CR 3 creatures grants XP equal to the sum of the normal XP rewards for one CR 9 creature, two CR 6 creatures, and four CR 3 creatures. Assuming the party was 8th level, the reward would thus be 7,600 XP (3,600 XP for the CR 9 foe, 1,200 XP for each of the CR 6 enemies, and 400 XP for each of the CR 3 monsters), divided by the number of characters.

I understand that CR, and thus EL, is based on challenging a party of four player characters. How should I adjust the EL of an encounter when the party consists of more or less than four characters?

A good rule of thumb is to increase an encounter's EL by 1 when you add a character to the adventuring party. You can do this either by increasing the number of foes present or by toughening up one or two of the enemies.

Be careful about overloading your encounters for large groups of PCs—even a group of eight PCs can't necessarily deal with an encounter with three or four times the normal number of foes, particularly if those foes can easily gang up on a single PC. One hill giant probably can't take out a 7th-level fighter, but three or four definitely can, even if that fighter has a half-dozen buddies standing behind him waiting to take their turn in initiative.

On the other hand, if there are fewer than four characters in the party, simply reducing the EL might not go far enough. It's possible, even likely, that such a group lacks crucial capabilities expected of a typical adventuring party, such as healing, melee defense, or ranged attacks, and thus might not be able to deal with normal-style encounters even if you significantly reduce the EL.

In such a case, the DM must adjust the encounters on a case-by-case basis so that the party isn't unduly punished for their lack of capabilities, perhaps by using monsters with unusually low attack modifiers and damage values (for groups lacking a fighter or similar character), or by minimizing the use of monsters with long-distance attacks (for groups lacking a wizard, archer, or other ranged-attack character).

Do all creatures with the outsider type gain proficiency with all martial weapons?

Races that start as outsiders should have proficiency with all martial weapons. However, if a creature starts as a non-outsider but later becomes one, it is the Sage's opinion that he

should not gain this benefit.

What happens if you fight a carrion crawler or ghoul and get hit with several different paralyzing attacks at once? Do you have to save against each one? If so, is the duration of the paralysis extended for each failed save or do the effects run concurrently? What happens if you later receive a spell such as *remove paralysis*? Will it take more than one spell to remove all the paralysis effects?

As with poison, you have to make a saving throw for each paralyzing attack that hits you. If you fail your save more than once, the paralysis effects don't stack. The effects overlap and you stay paralyzed until the effect with the longest duration wears off. Likewise, if you become paralyzed and are later affected by another paralysis effect, you remain paralyzed from the time the first effect started until the last effect ends.

Generally, overlapping effects remain in place until all their durations run out or they're all negated somehow. In the case of the various "remove" spells in the *PH* (*remove blindness/deafness*, *remove curse*, *remove disease*, *remove fear*, and *remove paralysis*), one spell removes all the overlapping effects that currently affect you, provided that those effects are subject to the spell. For example, if you have four overlapping paralysis effects, one *remove paralysis* spell deals with them all. When such a spell allows you a new saving throw against an effect rather than simply removing it (as *remove paralysis* does when the caster splits it among several recipients), make one saving throw against the overlapping effect with the highest save DC. If that save is successful, the spell removes all the overlapping effects. If the save fails, the spell has no effect.

Does a celestial or fiendish animal, which has a 3 Intelligence, understand a language?

The celestial and fiendish templates don't indicate that the creature gains the ability to understand any particular language, but it's reasonable for a DM to grant such a creature the rudimentary ability to understand a single spoken language. Celestial (for that template) or Abyssal or Infernal (for the fiendish template) seem like reasonable options, but a DM can alter this as desired.

If a construct has to make a Concentration check, what ability modifier do I apply on the check? Is it -5, just as if the score were 0?

Having no ability score (that is, an entry of "—") is different from having a score of 0. If a creature has no ability score (such as a construct, which has no Constitution score), the ability modifier for that score is +0. (See page 7 in the *MM*.) Thus, a construct has a +0 modifier from its Constitution on Fortitude saves, Concentration checks, and any other Con-based roll.

The same rule applies to undead (which have no Constitution score), vermin (which have no Intelligence score), or any other creature that lacks an ability score. Remember that undead are specially noted on page 317 of the *MM* as using their Charisma modifier for Concentration checks (but not on any other Con-based rolls).

How tall is a Medium creature? How about Large or Huge? I appreciate the example creatures given in the *PH* and *DMG*, but when advancing monsters, or even when trying to give accurate descriptions during a game and answering my players' questions, comparative size doesn't help too much. (For example, if it is as big as a purple

worm, how big is a purple worm?) If an actual listing could be given, such as anything 4 to 7 feet tall is Medium, 7 to 15 feet is Large, 15 to 30 feet is Huge, and so on, it would be of immense use.

You'll find creature size listings in the *MM* glossary; see the Size entry and Table 7–1: Creature Sizes on page 314. Be sure to read the notes accompanying the table.

Can a doppelganger be a mindspy (CW 62)?

The mindspy prestige class requires that you have the *detect thoughts* spell or that you can use it as a spell-like ability. The doppelganger has a supernatural ability that allows him to use *detect thoughts*. So, strictly speaking, the doppelganger's *detect thoughts* ability does not satisfy the mindspy's requirement. In the Sage's opinion, however, DMs should allow doppelgangers to mimic the requirements (no pun intended) for the mindspy prestige class, since their supernatural ability provides the required prerequisites.

Does a dragon's crush attack provoke attacks of opportunity when it enters its targets' squares? What about if its targets have reach weapons? What about when the dragon moves away after the crush attack?

No, maybe, and yes.

The initial crush attack does not provoke attacks of opportunity, even though the dragon is entering enemy spaces.

Assuming the dragon has to move up to its targets to deliver the crush attack, enemies with reach get attacks of opportunity if the dragon leaves threatened squares. It's not the crush attack that provokes, but the dragon's movement.

When the dragon moves away after the crush attack, it provokes attacks of opportunity as normal for movement.

Can a dragon use its breath weapon as an attack of opportunity?

No. Only melee attacks can be used as attacks of opportunity.

Can a dragon's breath weapon harm a golem?

Yes. Although the golem main entry describes "immunity to magic" as granting immunity to "most magical and supernatural effects," individual golem entries clearly state that it applies only to "any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance." Thus, golems are affected normally by a dragon's breath weapon unless the golem's entry states otherwise.

Can or do creatures other than dragons have overland travel speeds?

The overland travel speeds listed for dragons in the *MM* are a special ability of dragons. Other creatures could potentially be created with a similar quality, but it would have to be included in the creature's description.

Dragons are immune to sleep and paralysis effects. Does this include "unconsciousness" effects, such as from drow poison or a color spray spell?

No. Both sleep and paralysis effects create specific conditions defined in the rules (although the "sleeping" condition created by most sleep effects is typically defined in the effect, rather than the glossary). Unconsciousness is an entirely different condition, and dragons are not immune to becoming unconscious.

Can a dragon use wands and scrolls of the cleric spells it's allowed to cast as arcane spells? What about spells from the domains it can cast as arcane spells?

Yes, no, and maybe. Many dragons can cast cleric spells and spells from certain domains as arcane spells. Effectively, these spells are added to the dragon's sorcerer spell list as arcane spells. This means that it can activate spell trigger items (such as wands and staves) containing such spells.

Scrolls, however, always have a type of magic (arcane or divine) inherent to them. A dragon who can learn and cast cleric or domain spells as arcane spells can't use a divine scroll with such a spell on it, any more than a wizard could use a divine scroll of *dispel magic* (even though it's on her spell list).

If a dragon with racial access to domain spells takes a cleric level, can it pick from the domains it has racial access to in addition to those granted by its deity? Does it gain any special benefit if it selects a domain that it already has access to from its dragon kind?

No. Racial access to a domain allows a dragon to learn and cast spells from that domain as if they were sorcerer spells, but doesn't allow any access to that domain for other purposes, nor does it grant any special stacking benefit if the dragon later gains the domain from cleric levels or any other feature.

Does a dragon with Power Attack add twice the number subtracted from attack rolls to damage rolls when making a tail slap?

No. While it shares some mathematical similarity to a two-handed weapon, the tail slap (or any other natural weapon that adds 1–1/2 the creature's Strength bonus on damage rolls) doesn't gain any other benefits applied to the use of a two-handed weapon.

Can a dragon wear magic rings, cloaks, bracers, and so on built by and for humanoids? Can it wield rods, staves, wands, or weapons? If it can, does it have to take off or put away its equipment when it changes forms using alternate form, or do the items it wishes to use in its new form remain intact and useable through its transformation?

As described in an earlier question, most magic items can be worn by any creature that has an appropriate body part upon which to wear it, regardless of the creature's (or the item's) normal size. *Dr* has a sidebar dedicated to precisely this topic (page 24); basically, the answer is that a dragon can wear or use just about any magic item other than armor (unless it's specially made for the dragon, of course).

As indicated in the *MM* errata, any gear worn or carried by a dragon that uses alternate form either stays worn or carried (if the new form can wear or carry it) or falls to the ground in its space.

Does a dragon use its HD or its sorcerer caster level as the caster level for alternate form?

As noted on page 315 in the *MM*, supernatural abilities (such as the dragon's alternate form) have "an effective caster level equal to the creature's Hit Dice" unless otherwise noted. The "Caster Level" column on each dragon's "Abilities By Age" table applies to its sorcerer spellcasting ability and its spell-like abilities (see page 69 of the *MM*).

A very young silver dragon (Constitution 15) uses alternate form to take the form of an average elf (Constitution 8). He takes 4 points of Constitution damage.

When he changes back to his natural form, does the Constitution damage remain? What if he takes elf form again—does his Constitution become normal for an average elf again (8), or does the damage still remain?

Alternate form doesn't eliminate any penalties, damage, or drain currently affecting your ability scores. The dragon with 4 points of Constitution damage would have Constitution 11 in dragon form and Constitution 4 in elf form until the damage was removed.

What are the rules for leaping onto the back of a dragon? What about leaping onto the back of a flying dragon (such as from off a *carpet of flying*)?

Assuming you're not talking about leaping onto the back of your dragon mount (which is covered by the Ride skill), you're in uncharted territory. A Jump check seems like a good start (you must jump high enough or far enough to get into position), and after that it seems like you're doing something much like initiating a grapple (a dragon who doesn't want you on its back should get a chance to resist your attempt).

Whenever you're trying something that doesn't seem covered in the game rules, start by looking for existing rules that mimic what you're attempting, rather than simply creating a new rule from scratch. You might find that existing rules for similar actions get you most of the way there.

Is it possible for two dragons of different colors to breed? If so, which parent does the hatchling take after?

According to a strict reading of the half-dragon template, it can be applied to creatures of the dragon type (including true dragons). Thus, it appears within the framework of the rules to, for instance, create a half-white dragon green dragon. It'd be entirely up to the DM to determine which of the parents is the base creature and which is the half-dragon template.

That said, it doesn't really seem in the spirit of the template—it's designed to make an existing creature more draconic, and the Sage can't see how a creature that's already a dragon can become "more draconic." Thus, such creatures should be extraordinarily rare at most.

Chapter 10 in the *PH* says a spellcaster must have one hand free to cast a spell with a somatic component, and the caster must have any material components in hand already if he doesn't have a free hand. So, how does a creature like a naga cast spells at all? Nagas don't have hands!

Creatures that have hands need at least one free hand to cast spells with somatic or material components (or both).

Creatures that don't have hands don't need hands to cast spells (see page 315 in the *MM*). They use body movements to complete somatic components and use material components either by touching them (but not if they're in another creature's possession) or by having them somewhere on their bodies. A naga might carry material components stuck to its scales or even temporarily swallow them.

I was wondering about ghosts making physical attacks. The text on the incorporeal subtype in *MM* glossary says that these creatures lack a Strength score. The ghost template has the incorporeal subtype and the example ghost has a Strength score. The template makes no exception for ghosts having a Strength score. Do ghosts have this Strength score just when manifesting? Can ghosts use Power Attack if they lack a Strength score? How do ghosts attacking with ghost touch weapons work as far as damage

modifiers from Strength? When using a ghost touch weapon, does a ghost still make an incorporeal touch attack? If a ghost lacks a Strength score, how can they physically move things in the Material Plane or Ethereal Planes? Does a ghost's Dexterity modify only incorporeal touch attacks?

Ghosts have Strength scores in spite of having the incorporeal subtype. A ghost on the Ethereal Plane is not incorporeal.

A manifested ghost functions on the Material Plane exactly like an incorporeal creature does. A manifested ghost can't exert any Strength on the Material Plane and cannot manipulate any objects unless it has the telekinesis power or unless it has the malevolence power and successfully uses it to take over a corporeal body (in which case it has whatever Strength score the body has). A ghost touch weapon also allows a ghost to exert Strength on the Material Plane.

A manifested ghost using a *ghost touch* weapon against a foe on the Material Plane makes a normal attack against the target's normal Armor Class (not an incorporeal touch attack). If the attack is a melee attack, the ghost's Strength modifier (not its Dexterity modifier) applies to the attack. A ghost with the Weapon Finesse feat can use its Dexterity modifier for a melee attack with a ghost touch weapon. If the ghost has the Power Attack feat, it can use that feat with a *ghost touch* weapon.

A ghost on the Ethereal Plane uses its Strength score in the same manner as any other creature on the plane does.

The entries for all the golems in the *MM* say that golems have magic immunity, which is supposed to allow golems to completely resist most magical and supernatural effects except for specific ones listed in each golem's description. (Most of those heal, slow, or damage the golem.) Can you cast beneficial spells on a golem? For example, can you turn a golem invisible? Can you teleport one? Could you cast *darkness* on a golem? How about *fly* or *reverse gravity*? To put it another way, if you are not trying to directly cause damage or drastically alter the golem (such as with *polymorph*), will the spell work? Clearly, if you cast *darkness* on yourself and the golem attacks you, once it moves into the area of darkness, it can no longer see you. But can you cast *darkness* on the golem? Could a golem use a magic item, such as a *ring of invisibility*?

As noted in each golem's entry, a golem resists any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. (In previous versions of the D&D game, golems were impervious to most supernatural effects as well, but that is no longer the case.) In most cases, you can tell if a spell or spell-like ability works on a golem simply by looking up its spell resistance entry. Let's take a quick look at the effects you've listed:

Invisibility: You cannot turn a golem invisible with any version of the *invisibility* spell. (They all have spell resistance entries of "yes.") This immunity to being made invisible doesn't mean the golem has any special ability to see or detect invisible creatures or objects.

Teleport: The spell resistance entry for the various versions of the *teleport* spell is "no," at least for creatures. Note that when you're using the *teleport* spell, you teleport yourself and other willing creatures. Unless you can command the golem (and you probably don't unless you created the golem), it probably isn't willing to accompany you and receives a saving throw to resist.

Darkness: You can't cast a *darkness* spell on yourself, on a golem, or any other creature—only on an object (see the spell description). Golems have no special ability to see through darkness (and the spell resistance entry is “no”). The *silence* spell provides a better example of how a golem's magic immunity (and spell resistance in general) works. You can cast *silence* on a creature, and when you do so, spell resistance applies (see the spell description). A *silence* spell automatically fails if you try to cast it on a golem.

Once a *silence* spell is operating, silence reigns throughout the emanation the spell creates. If a golem moves into the emanation, the golem still cannot hear or make any noise.

Fly: You can't use a *fly* spell to make a golem fly (the spell resistance entry is “yes”).

Reverse Gravity: The spell resistance entry is “no,” so it affects a golem as readily as it affects any other creature or object.

Note that a golem cannot voluntarily lower its magic immunity so that it can receive a harmless spell, but a golem's magic immunity does not extend to magic the golem uses on itself (just as spell resistance doesn't apply to such effects). A golem can make use of any magic item that works continuously or is use activated (provided whoever commands the golem is on hand to put the item on the golem or order the golem to pick it up). Being mindless, a golem cannot use any item activated by command, spell, or spell completion.

One of my players tried to use *Mordenkainen's disjunction* on a golem. The spell failed to get through the antimagic field provided by the golem's creator, so I didn't want to make a ruling this time. My question is, would it have worked? Is a golem more of a creature, having been listed in the *MM*, or a magic item, as it's created just like one? On that subject, a golem is immune to magical effects, would this include *Mordenkainen's disjunction*? That is, is a golem a magical effect for purposes of resolving a *Mordenkainen's disjunction* spell?

You can't disjoin a golem because a golem is a creature, not a magic item or magical effect.

Anything that has both a Charisma score and a Wisdom score is a creature, not an object. *Mordenkainen's disjunction* would destroy any magical effect a golem was using, such as a slow effect from a stone golem.

The golem description in the *MM* says that golems are immune to magic, but the individual golem descriptions say they're only immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. Which one is right?

The “immunity to magic” entry in the opening text of the golem entry (page 134 of the *MM*) is only a general description of that special quality. Each golem's specific immunity to magic entry provides the actual rules mechanics for adjudicating that immunity.

For example, a clay golem is immune to *fireball* (because that spell allows spell resistance), but not to *Melf's acid arrow* (because it doesn't allow spell resistance). It would be immune to *disintegrate*, except for the special note that follows indicating the effect of a *disintegrate* spell on a clay golem.

While stone golems are immune to magic and have DR 10/adamantine, would an alchemical substance such as stonebreaker acid (*AE*) have an effect on it? The acid affects only stone and deals 3d10 points of damage on the first round and 2d10 points of damage on the second round.

A stone golem would suffer the normal damage from stonebreaker acid. Damage reduction doesn't reduce acid damage (the way hardness does). A stone golem is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, but stonebreaker acid is neither.

Can a golem be affected by *dispel magic* as if it were a magic item?

No. A golem is a creature, not an object, so *dispel magic* has the same effect on a golem as it would on any other creature (that is, it might dispel any ongoing magical effects on it, but it doesn't suppress the golem's animating force or anything like that).

Can a character use *stone shape* to turn a stone golem into an inanimate block of stone?

Stone shape doesn't affect creatures, only objects, so it would have no effect on a stone golem.

How does a golem see? Does it have eyes? Can it be blinded (or blindfolded)?

It's best to assume that a golem's visual ability (and other sensory abilities) work just like a normal creature of its general shape (that is, a humanoid creature), even if it doesn't possess any obvious organs dedicated to those senses. Put a blanket around its head and it can't see any better than a normal person; put it next to a really loud noise and it can't hear someone sneaking up on it.

The same applies to skeletons, elementals, animated objects, and other creatures without any apparent sensory apparatus. It's a bit tougher with creatures that don't have a normal shape—the DM just has to wing it as best he can.

When does the effect of a clay golem's cursed wound go away? Can a character use *remove curse* (or a similar spell) to eliminate the effect?

The effect of the cursed wound lasts until all damage dealt to the target by the clay golem has been eliminated. (In general, any healing successfully applied to the character should eliminate the clay golem's damage first.) Even if a cleric succeeds on a caster level check to heal an affected character, if any damage from the clay golem persists after that, he'd have to make another caster level check the next time he wanted to heal that character. If you don't want to track damage from individual foes in this way, assume the effect lasts until all damage on the character has been healed.

The name of the special ability strongly suggests that any effect that affects a curse would also affect this ability. Thus, it's reasonable to conclude that a *remove curse* spell would remove the cursed wound effect.

Can a golem with no ranks in a skill take 10? Do you need at least a basic Intelligence to take 10 on a skill check?

Taking 10 does not require that you have ranks in a skill or an Intelligence score. That said, it is good to remember that a golem can not use a skill that requires Intelligence or Constitution (Knowledge (religion) or Endurance, for example) because it does not have them.

What is the difference between a golem and a construct?

Golems are a specific category of construct that all share a certain set of qualities and abilities. Because of this, they are listed together in the *MM*. However, “golem” is not really a

type or subtype. All golems are constructs and (a) follow all the rules for constructs on page 307 of the *MM*; and (b), also have immunity to magic and some further rules discussed on page 134 of the *MM*.

Are golems immune to psionics like they are to spells?

The rules covered in Psionic and Magic Transparency discussed on page 55 of the *XPH* have you treat psionic powers the same way you would treat a spell, so a golem would be immune to psionic powers because of its magic immunity.

Do conjuration spells such as Evard's black tentacles have an effect on golems?

The easiest way to find out if a golem is affected by a spell is to check the spell to see if it allows spell resistance; if it does, then the golem is immune to the spell. Many conjuration spells—including *Evard's black tentacles*—do not allow for spell resistance, so they would work normally against a golem.

If two half-vampires (from *LM*) mate, will the child be a half-vampire too?

In general, the game rules are silent as to whether templates are passed down from parent to child. Thus, it's entirely up to the DM to rule on the matter, using his best judgment.

The first hurdle is to determine whether the templated creature is even capable of producing offspring. Since half-vampires aren't undead, it seems reasonable to conclude that they are capable of breeding.

Then, you should apply a little game-world logic to it. Does it make sense for the template to "breed true," or is it a one-time-only kind of thing that should disappear in later generations? The text for the half-vampire template describes them as being born that way (rather than changed later), so clearly something vampiric is being passed down from parent to child.

The most important question of all, however, is whether you want it to be true in your game. If it fits the story you're trying to tell, do whatever's necessary and fair to the players. But if it just rubs you the wrong way, there's no reason you have to allow it.

Is there any limit on the number of chains a kyton can control during a single day with its dancing chains ability? The monster description says the kyton can control only four chains at once, but what happens if a controlled chain is destroyed or dragged out of range? Controlling chains is a standard action, but does the number of chains the kyton controls affect that at all? Is controlling four chains still a standard action? Do the chains have face to worry about (by which I mean, do they require a certain amount of space to fight) like a Tiny animated object would? Or could four animated chains all fit in a 5-foot square? How do the chains make saving throws? Are they unattended nonmagical objects (assuming the chains were nonmagical before being animated)? Are they attended nonmagical objects or attended magical objects? Are they creatures? What happens when an energy effect, such as fire, hits the chains? Does their hardness reduce the fire's damage?

Using the dancing chains ability to control chains is always a standard action for a kyton, no matter how many it already controls, what it decides to make them do that round, or how long the kyton has controlled them previously. For example, controlling four chains so that they attack four different foes is a standard action for a kyton. The following round, the kyton

can use another standard action to control those four chains (or any other four chains in range) again. There's no limit to the number of different chains the kyton can control in a day, but it can't control more than four at once.

Treat a kyton's dancing chains like a spell effect. They have a location on the battlefield, but they don't take up any space. Dancing chains can attack anything within 15 feet of their location. They attack only when the kyton uses a standard action to make them attack and do not make attacks of opportunity.

Dancing chains make saving throws as unattended magical objects. Use the kyton's caster level to determine their save bonus; the standard kyton from the *MM* has a caster level of 8 (because it has 8 Hit Dice), so its dancing chains have a saving throw bonus of +6 (2 + 1/2 caster level).

Hardness applies to all types of damage unless specifically stated otherwise by the effect. (Page 165 in the *PH* is sometimes misinterpreted to suggest that hardness doesn't apply to acid and sonic damage; in fact, the phrase "apply [damage] normally after a successful hit" simply means that the damage isn't halved or quartered, as other energy damage is.)

Although they are not creatures, the dancing chains take damage from spells as though they were (in much the same way that *Evard's black tentacles* or the various *Bigby's hands* do). So, the dancing chains take normal damage from cold attacks (not quarter damage as inanimate objects do) and they're subject to damage from *magic missile* spells. Spells that don't deal damage generally won't harm the chains unless they also affect objects.

How big is a lich's phylactery?

The *MM* describes the most common form of a lich's phylactery as a Tiny metal box. *LM* provides some additional examples of lich phylacteries, but establishes that the object is always of Tiny size.

Where exactly, in relationship to its phylactery, does a destroyed lich reappear?

The rules are silent on this issue. The Sage believes it reasonable to assume that the lich reappears in the immediate vicinity of its phylactery, since that is where its lifeforce is stored. (That's how the Sage has interpreted the rule in his past campaigns.) This suggests that any hiding-place for a phylactery must allow enough nearby space for the lich's body to reappear. Ultimately, though, the rules don't indicate a clear answer to this question, leaving it up to DMs to rule as they prefer. Either way, the answer should remain constant within a campaign, and it should be possible for characters to learn how this works (such as via a Knowledge [religion] check).

If a lich is defeated, what happens to its body and equipment? What if it's carrying its phylactery?

A lich reduced to 0 hp is destroyed, just as any undead. The rules are silent on exactly what that means, but regardless this has no effect on its possessions (including its phylactery if the lich is foolish enough to be carrying it at the time).

Can a lich create a backup phylactery in case its primary phylactery is destroyed? What about a new one after its first one is destroyed?

No and no. Each lich can create only one phylactery.

If a lich's phylactery is destroyed, does this destroy the lich as well?

Destroying a lich's phylactery doesn't destroy the lich (or have any effect on an existing lich). However, this act prevents the lich from reappearing after the lich is destroyed, so it's a good first step in any attack plan against a lich. (Alternatively, you can destroy the lich first and then try to track down the phylactery to destroy it next, but then you're racing the clock of 1d10 days until the lich reappears.)

If a lich is destroyed on a different plane of existence from where his phylactery is stored, does it still reappear as normal?

Yes. The rules don't indicate that the lich and phylactery must be on the same plane in order to function.

If a lich and its phylactery are both destroyed, is there any means of bringing the lich back?

A lich without a phylactery is "forever destroyed" (*LM* 151), but forever lasts only as long as the DM says it does. Certainly, it seems reasonable that any method capable of restoring a destroyed undead creature to life or unlife should work even on a lich whose phylactery has been destroyed.

I know you can't resurrect a lich, but after one is destroyed, could you resurrect the base creature from which it was created?

Yes, you could, since you can "resurrect . . . someone who has been turned into an undead creature and then destroyed" (*PHB* 272). The only caveat to that rule would be in order to resurrect the creature who has become the lich, you must also destroy its phylactery. Only then is the lich truly destroyed.

If you deliver the killing blow to a lich using a weapon made of thinaun (which sucks the soul into it), does this keep its soul from going to its phylactery, therefore trapping it until it is released from the weapon?

No. A thinaun weapon sucks a soul into it if the " . . . weapon is touching a creature when it dies" (*CW* 136). Since a lich is already dead and has a life force rather than a soul, thinaun weapons are not sufficient to thwart a lich's return to undeath by way of its phylactery.

How are the hit point totals listed for the lycanthropes in *MM* determined? They seem to use two different Con scores for calculating HD. According to the alternate form errata, shouldn't they use one or the other?

The lycanthropes are exceptions to the normal rule, and they use the humanoid form's Con for the base HD and the animal form's Con for the animal's HD.

Are afflicted lycanthropes supposed to have worse damage reduction than natural lycanthropes, or is the text to that effect in the *MM* an error? Are afflicted lycanthropes really unable to pass on lycanthropy? Is that an error, too?

Afflicted lycanthropes do indeed have lower damage reduction ratings than natural lycanthropes, since they are meant to be less powerful than their natural counterparts.

Afflicted lycanthropes also cannot pass on the curse of lycanthropy, although natural ones can. This was a calculated decision that prevents one afflicted PC from deliberately infecting the rest of the party. It also puts a sanity cap on the campaign-wide implications of a "werewolf plague."

How should a character afflicted with a template (such as a PC who becomes a werewolf) deal with his newly acquired level adjustment? What if he later gets rid of the lycanthropy?

The simplest method to adjudicate this is to use the character's new ECL to determine the point at which he gains his next level. A 4th-level barbarian who contracts lycanthropy from a werewolf (and thus gains 2 Hit Dice and a +2 level adjustment) becomes an ECL 8 character, and thus wouldn't gain another class level until his XP total would advance him to 9th level. In the short term, this means the character has an advantage over his comrades (since he hasn't yet "paid" for his level adjustment), but this is a self-correcting problem.

If the curse of lycanthropy is later lifted, the character loses the level adjustment. Technically speaking, he should then gain any class levels "due" to him according to his XP total. At the DM's option, these levels could be applied gradually rather than all at once. One option might be to give the character one level immediately and then two class levels every time he would gain a single level until his character level is appropriate for his XP total. This makes the change less abrupt, but also represents a significant penalty to the character, so this option should be used only if everyone is comfortable with it.

When a character contracts the curse of lycanthropy from another lycanthrope, do they inherit the same animal form of their attacker?

Yes. Though it does not state it explicitly in the *MM*, it's generally assumed that when you contract the curse of lycanthropy you take the form of the inflicting lycanthrope.

I recently had my group fight five mummies. The argument that came up was that they felt you should roll only one time for the despair effect. I had them roll one time for each creature. They also feel that from then on they were immune to all future effects against other mummy encounters. I did not think so, but could not find a clear answer. Did I make a bad call?

You adjudicated this encounter correctly. The entry for despair states that each creature must make a separate Will save against each mummy that he or she sees. Also, a creature cannot be affected only by the same mummy's despair ability for 24 hours, whether or not the DC 16 Will save is a success or a failure.

I'm confused as to how mummy rot works. I know it isn't cured until a character is magically healed. But how often does a player take damage, and what good does a successful Fortitude save do?

As soon as a character is hit by a mummy's slam attack, he must make a DC 16 Fortitude save. If he makes the save, his immune system fights off the disease and the mummy rot has no effect. If the character fails the save, he has contracted the disease. After the incubation period has passed, in this case 1 minute or 10 combat rounds, the character takes the disease damage: 1d6 points of Constitution and 1d6 points of Charisma damage.

After initial damage, follow the rules for disease (*DMG* 292–293): The character must make a Fortitude save once per day to avoid repeated damage. The first such successful save negates the damage and the second cures the disease.

Mummy rot, however, cannot be cured in this manner alone. First the curse must be broken through *break*

enchantment or *remove curse*, then the disease can be healed or removed as normal.

Can the *resurgence* spell remove mummy rot? If it can, can my character cast it multiple times until the saving throw succeeds?

Yes, as written *resurgence* can be used to let the recipient reroll the original saving throw of an ongoing supernatural effect (as long as it allowed a saving throw in the first place)—even mummy rot and other ongoing supernatural curses and diseases. You can even cast multiple *resurgences* until the recipient finally succeeds at the save. Keep in mind that any hit point or ability damage taken from the effect that is ended will not be restored, as stated in the *resurgence* spell description.

I created a half-ogre mummy. In the MM, under Natural Attacks, it states that Large creatures can have a slam attack for each arm or armlike appendage. Now, my DM read this and said that since the word “can” is underlined, that he can’t actually make a ruling about whether my character would get two slam attacks or not. Can you elaborate on when and why a Large creature receives those additional slam attacks? Is it a racial ability, a feat, or DM discretion?

The rule you are referring to in the glossary entry for Natural Weapons on page 312 of the *MM* states “(. . . Large creatures with arms or armlike limbs can make a slam attack with each arm). Refer to the individual monster descriptions.” This actually means that Large or larger creatures with multiple armlike limbs do have the ability to make slam attacks with each of those limbs unless the monster entry specifically states otherwise. The ogre entry does not have slam attacks in its entry. Because of this, it could make unarmed strikes as a Large creature only if it happened to be unarmed.

An “ogre mummy” is not a creature in the *MM*. If using only that resource, the DM will have to use the monster creation rules using the guidelines provided, and the number of slam attacks would in fact be decided by the DM. However, if a DM wanted to create a new “ogre mummy” creature, it would be her discretion to decide if the creature should have 1 or 2 or no slam attacks.

If you and your DM need inspiration for your specific issue, the *LM* sourcebook has a “Mummified Creature” template on page 110 that can perfectly suit your needs. It even happens to have a mummified ogre as its example, and the beast has only one slam, despite its Large size.

The monster creation rules in the *MM* are not an exact science. Rather, they are a set of general tools for DMs to create or advance monsters for their game. Much of the information in the *MM* assumes that the reader is a DM and has the fiat to modify rules and abilities on the fly for her own sense of game balance and the enjoyment of the group. If the DM allows a player to use those rules to create a PC, the DM should still keep an eye on the process and provide any advice, rules adjudication, or house rules needed to make the character viable and balanced for her particular game.

Are oozes immune to entangle effects such as a net or a tanglefoot bag?

Not as a rule, no.

Does the immunity to psionics special quality of a psion-killer (XPH 208) also render it immune to spells?

Yes. According to the psionics-magic transparency rule (*XPH 55*), spells and psionics are treated as equivalent for adjudicating most effects. This includes both immunity to psionics (which means the psion-killer is immune to spells that allow spell resistance) and immunity to magic (which means that golems are immune to powers that allow power resistance).

Attempting to create a psion-killer (XPH 208) requires the creator to manifest—among other powers—both *fabricate*, a shaper-only power, and *mind seed*, a telepath-only power. Since a psion can focus on only one discipline and cannot use a device with discipline-only powers from other disciplines, how is a psion or any other psionic character supposed to create these creatures? While the Expanded Knowledge feat allows access to these powers, creating a psionic golem already requires at least three other feats (Craft Psionic Arms and Armor, Craft Universal Item, Craft Psionic Construct), and a fourth feat seems a bit much.

As page 282 in the *DMG* points out, while the prerequisites for a magic item must be met for it to be created, “access through another magic item *or spellcaster* is allowed [italics added].” Although it is a creature, a psion-killer is created just like a magic item (or a golem). Thus, multiple characters could work together to create a psion-killer, with one supplying *fabricate* and the other *mind seed*.

What is the hierarchy of metals that a rust monster prefers to eat? More specifically, in what order will a rust monster eat the following metals: silver, gold, copper, iron, platinum, adamantine, mithral?

As mentioned on page 216 of the *MM*, rust monsters prefer ferrous metals (steel and iron) over precious metals (gold or silver), but the exact hierarchy is at the whim of a particular rust monster’s appetites and can be influenced by the frequency of metals in its home environment.

What happens when a rust monster touches an iron golem? What about when an iron golem touches a rust monster?

The touch of a rust monster can destroy “up to a 10-foot cube of metal,” which seems like plenty enough to encompass a Large creature, such as an iron golem. Though the iron golem doesn’t quite fit into the category of objects allowed a saving throw against this attack, the Sage would certainly be on the side of any DM who chose to allow it one. If an iron golem deals damage to a rust monster, it’s reasonable to rule that it loses the use of that slam attack (again, pending a successful save) until it is repaired.

Can the holy touch power of the saint template (BE) deal nonlethal damage? If not, can my saint choose not to deal holy damage, in instances where he would rather subdue a foe rather than kill it?

The saint can’t choose for his holy touch damage to be nonlethal damage, just like a fighter wielding a *+1 flaming sword* can’t choose for the fire damage to be nonlethal (even if the base weapon damage is nonlethal). The saint can’t turn this power off. (In general, special abilities that don’t involve activation can’t be turned off.)

Can an undead shadow pass through walls, floors, and ceilings like a ghost can? Can it walk through shadows as in the *shadow walk* spell?

Shadows are incorporeal, so they can move through walls and other solid objects. See the description of the incorporeal subtype in the *MM*'s glossary.

Shadows do not have a shadow walk ability; if they did it would be mentioned in the shadow's creature description in the *MM*.

Does a lawful good solar gain the lawful subtype as well as the good subtype? What about a chaotic good solar and the chaotic subtype?

No. Simply having a particular alignment doesn't mean a creature also gains an alignment subtype. In the case of angels, their "goodness" is so much more significant to their being than either law or chaos that they gain only the good alignment subtype, even if their alignment includes lawful or chaotic.

If a spectre strikes my 1st-level pixie rogue, does he gain 2 negative levels (because his effective character level is 6) or does he die (because he has only 2 HD)?

Technically, both effects occur, but only the latter really matters to your character. A high level adjustment (such as the pixie's +4 LA) means that the character is particularly vulnerable to effects based on his Hit Dice (including spells such as *sleep* or effects such as *energy drain*). A 2-HD pixie who gains two or more negative levels dies immediately (just as any 2-HD character would).

A succubus with four levels of wizard is an ECL 16 character (6 HD, LA +6, 4 class levels). How many experience points does she have, and how many does she need to become a 5th-level wizard? How much wealth should she have if I'm creating her as a new character to play?

Use your character's Effective Character Level (ECL) to determine XP needed to gain a new level.

If you were creating a 4th-level succubus wizard from scratch, she'd have 120,000 XP (normal for a 16th-level character), and she'd need to earn another 16,000 to reach 17th level and take another level of wizard (or any other class), just like any other 16th-level character.

Assuming your campaign uses the normal wealth guidelines, your 4th-level succubus wizard should have about 260,000 gp worth of gear and treasure, as appropriate for being 16th level. After all, she's likely adventuring with other 16th-level characters, so it's only fair for her to have a similar amount of gear.

Is it possible to poison a troll or does its regeneration power prevent that? What happens if you use a poison that deals damage every round? Will the troll regenerate that damage without neutralizing the poison?

The regeneration special quality doesn't defeat poison. Most poisons in the D&D game deal ability damage and a troll or other regenerating creature remains susceptible to all forms of ability damage. It's even possible to slay a troll or other regenerating creature through Constitution damage. When a poison has a nondamaging effect, such as paralysis, regeneration doesn't defeat that either.

Poisons in the D&D game have an initial effect and a secondary effect; they don't have round-by-round effects. You possibly could have some substance or special attack that deals damage every round, but such a substance is not a poison (at least not in the game sense of the term). A regenerating creature takes nonlethal damage from such an effect, and it

regenerates that damage. Of course, the effect might deal a type of damage the creature can't regenerate (such as acid damage dealt to a troll). In any case, the regeneration quality doesn't neutralize the damaging effect.

How long does a beheaded troll live? The ogre mage's description states that a severed head or other vital organ must be reattached within 10 minutes or it dies.

All creatures with regeneration follow the normal rules for regeneration (presented most recently in *MM4*), with exceptions as noted in the monster's description.

Unlike the ogre mage, a troll regrows any lost body part in 3d6 minutes, even its head (*MM* 248).

Can a troll or other regenerating creature continue to act if it's been beheaded? Can it reattach its own severed head?

A headless regenerating creature (such as a troll) can't take any actions, because its brain can't send any signals to the rest of its body. Thus, it can't reattach its own head.

The Sage supposes that the severed head could still make bite attacks (or use any other special abilities that don't require a body or limbs), but since it can't really move around it's pretty easy for PCs to avoid that danger.

If a beheaded troll's body is destroyed with acid or fire but the detached head remains intact does the head eventually grow a new body? If the troll is simply beheaded and left for dead, does its head or its body regenerate?

A troll reduced to -10 hp is dead and does not regenerate, even if intact body parts remain.

If you chop a troll up into little bits but don't actually reduce its hp to -10, it will eventually regenerate entirely. As a rule, only the largest part of a troll grows into a new troll—you never get more than one troll from a pile of parts from a single troll.

Undead and constructs are immune to critical hits but are they immune to flanking as well?

No. A construct or undead creature can be flanked normally unless its description specifically indicates otherwise.

Undead and constructs are immune to ability damage and ability drain, but are they immune to ability score penalties such as that created by the *ray of enfeeblement* spell?

Undead and constructs aren't innately immune to ability score penalties. Note, however, that *ray of enfeeblement* and many similar spells that apply such penalties are necromantic effects, to which constructs (but not undead) are immune. So that *ray of enfeeblement* will work just fine against a wight, but not against a shield guardian.

Does an undead that takes class levels (i.e., a ghoul with fighter levels) use the class Hit Die for the class levels or a d12?

Vampires, liches, and other undead templates typically state that all HD are replaced with d12s; if the template doesn't say so, assume the HD remains the same. Normally, non-templated undead can't have class levels—any exception is a very special case created for a particular purpose by the DM or adventure author. In such cases, the undead should probably use the normal class Hit Die, since the rules don't say anything about changing it in such cases.

Can an undead creature enter a rage? If so what benefit (if any) does it gain from the Constitution bonus?

An undead creature can indeed enter a rage. Since undead creatures don't have a Con score, the bonus to Constitution provides no benefit (and thus the undead doesn't gain any extra hit points when raging).

You didn't ask about duration, but it's worth noting that since the modifier for a nonability is +0 (*MM* 312), an undead creature's rage would last 3 rounds.

Can an undead character gain levels as a druid? Would an undead druid become an ex-druid?

Nothing in the rules indicates that an undead creature can't be a druid, as long as it has an allowable alignment and reverses nature.

Are thinking undead such as vampires and liches immune to mind-affecting spells? If so, what is it about becoming undead that changes the way the mind reacts to spells such as *charm monster*?

Yes, all undead are immune to mind-affecting spells. As to why that's the cause, many sages have theories but no one knows the real answer. Some suggest it is a boon granted by Vecna or Orcus, while others believe it is a side effect of the creature's defiance of life.

Is there any saving throw to resist the negative level applied by the energy drain attack of a vampire or other undead creature?

Typically no. In most cases where a creature has an energy drain attack, the negative levels are automatically applied. The save occurs 24 hours later, determining whether the negative level results in a permanent level loss.

If a vampire drains an animal's constitution to 0, does it create a vampiric animal?

No. The vampire's create spawn ability clearly indicates that it affects only humanoids or monstrous humanoids (*MM* 252). This applies both to energy drain and Constitution drain.

Under vampire vulnerabilities it states "driving a wooden stake through a vampire's heart instantly slays the monster." How is this done in combat? What roll to hit would be needed to score a hit on a vampire's heart? What about if it's wearing a chain shirt?

This is really not something you can do in the ebb and flow (not to mention abstraction) of combat. In order to slay a vampire in this way, the vampire must be incapacitated (read: helpless). This is a great tactic to use once you've defeated a vampire in combat and forced it back to its coffin.

What kind of action is required for the xeph's burst racial ability? Is it the same as the burst psionic power (a swift action)? And does it provoke attacks of opportunity?

Though the xeph's racial ability shares the same name as the psionic power, it doesn't refer to that power. Thus, the activation time would be 1 standard action, as normal for supernatural abilities. Activating the burst power does not provoke attacks of opportunity (though the xeph's movement would as normal, of course).

In the description for the zombie template, damage reduction is not mentioned as a special quality they get. However, every sample zombie listed has damage reduction 5/slashing. One of them or the other is either incorrect or missing information. My question is this: Do zombies get damage reduction or not?

The published errata for the *MM* lists damage reduction as a special quality gained by all zombies. For current errata for various D&D rulebooks, visit wizards.com/dnd.

Miscellaneous

Can a character choose to delay a choice (such as spending skill points or selecting a feat) until a later level?

No. All choices regarding character advancement must be made as soon as they become available. You can't save skill points from one level to another, nor can you delay selecting a feat from, say, 3rd level to 4th level.

That said, the retraining rules in *PH2* allow you to adjust such decisions later in your career, which accomplishes a similar result.

The DMG says a character has a 5% chance to expose himself to a poison whenever a character applies it to a weapon or otherwise readies it for use. While the first part is pretty clear, I'm a bit undecided what "otherwise readies it for use" refers to. Does the "it" stand for the poison or does it mean the weapon (so whenever the character readies the poisoned weapon for use) itself?

In this case, "it" applies to the poison. You have a chance to poison yourself when you put the poison on a weapon or when you put it on anything else where someone could be affected by said poison. Note that you also have a chance to poison yourself whenever you get a natural 1 on your attack roll when wielding a poisoned weapon.

Let's say a character encounters a trap and sets it off without being aware of the trap ahead of time. Now let's say you are the DM and you roll for the trap to see if it makes the hit but it fails. If a trap is triggered it cannot miss (unless it was broken or didn't work); it has to be dodged. What are you supposed to tell the player if you are the DM? You cannot just say, "You jump out of the way," because you can't control the PCs actions. How would you solve this dilemma? What should you tell the player?

First, some traps certainly can miss; that's why they're assigned attack values. Perhaps the trap's mechanism doesn't work all that consistently, or perhaps the trap actually tracks and attacks its targets the way a creature would. Any trap that can't miss and has to be dodged should use a Reflex save, not an attack roll.

In any case, you, as the DM, have three basic choices:

Tell the player the trap missed the character. It is not necessary to elaborate.

Tell the player the character dodged the trap. It's perfectly okay to assume small, involuntary actions on the part of a character, especially when they work to the character's benefit. You do indeed want to avoid dictating any character action that the player normally would think about before actually deciding to do it. For example, it's bad to inform a player that her character has just opened a door or picked up an object—your job as the DM is to explain that the door or object is there and then get on with the game once the player decides what to do about it. On the other hand, it's just as valid to dictate any purely reflex action that might occur as a result of the player's decision. Let's say a character walks past a door without giving it a second glance. If the door bursts open thereafter, it's fine to tell the player that the sudden event startles the character and sends a shiver through her body. The effect is harmless and is simply added as part of the game's narrative. Likewise, if a character picks up an object that turns out to be searing hot, it's okay to inform the player that the character has dropped the object. In this latter case, the player might legitimately object.

If so, you can allow the character a check or saving throw (perhaps a Concentration check) to hold onto the item.

Finally, you could simply tell the player nothing. Perhaps the character didn't notice the trap at all; however, a Spot or Listen check might be in order just to determine if the character noticed something amiss.

The table of wind effects in the DMG has a column that shows a DC. I don't understand this. What is the DC for?

It's the DC for the Fortitude save a creature makes to resist the wind effect shown on the table. For example, in a strong wind, a Tiny or smaller creature has to make DC 10 Fortitude save or be knocked down.

Does an enhancement bonus to an ability score raise the actual score (for example, a 16 Dexterity raised to a 20 Dexterity in the case of a cat's grace spell) or does it raise that ability's bonus (for example, a +3 modifier [from a 16 Dexterity] +4 cat's grace = +7 Dexterity modifier)?

An enhancement bonus to an ability score raises the score (and therefore the corresponding bonus by the proper amount). If your Dexterity is 16 and you get a +4 enhancement to Dexterity from *cat's grace*, your new score is 20 (+5 bonus).

What's the difference between ethereal and incorporeal? I understand that an ethereal creature is on another plane, but the plane is in the same place as the Material Plane.

Incorporeal has a very specific definition in D&D. An incorporeal creature is a creature present on the Material Plane, but insubstantial and incapable of being touched by nonmagical matter or energy. It is visible to viewers, although it typically appears translucent. Shadows, spectres, and wraiths are incorporeal.

An ethereal creature is a creature that exists on the Ethereal Plane (a transitive plane described in the *DMG* and *MP*). In fact, you could simply replace the term "ethereal creature" with "creature on the Ethereal Plane" and the meaning would remain exactly the same. An ethereal creature can see into the Material Plane (although the Material Plane appears muted and indistinct), but the reverse isn't true—an ethereal creature is totally invisible to creatures on the Material Plane. Ethereal creatures can't affect the Material Plane, and thus they move easily through creatures and objects on the Material Plane.

What's the difference between a manifesting incorporeal ghost and an ethereal ghost that isn't manifesting? Aren't they both incorporeal? You can't see the nonmanifesting ghost, but he's still ethereal and therefore incorporeal, right? If the nonmanifesting ghost is incorporeal, but solid on the Ethereal Plane, can't it still use its incorporeal touch on foes but do so from effective invisibility? What about its other ghost abilities?

While both a manifested and nonmanifested ghost share certain abilities to ignore most effects from the Material Plane, they are not both "incorporeal" in a strict sense. A ghost that is manifesting on the Material Plane is an incorporeal creature, and it enjoys all the benefits and hindrances of that state.

A ghost that isn't manifesting is ethereal, but is not treated as an incorporeal creature. A nonmanifesting ghost can't use its incorporeal touch attack on material or ethereal foes—it can't

interact with material foes due to its ethereal state, and it interacts with ethereal foes just as though it is corporeal. The only power that a ghost can use against material foes while it is ethereal is malevolence.

Can a ghost use its ghost abilities on ethereal targets while not manifesting? What about when it is manifesting? Can a ghost perceive the Ethereal when it is manifesting?

A ghost on the Ethereal Plane can use any of its special attacks that don't rely on incorporeality on other ethereal creatures. This would include corrupting gaze, frightful moan, and telekinesis, but not corrupting touch or draining touch (since both require the ghost to hit a living target with its incorporeal touch attack, which it doesn't possess while ethereal), and not malevolence (since that power requires the ethereal ghost to merge its body with a creature on the Material Plane).

A ghost that has manifested on the Material Plane has the same limitations on seeing and affecting ethereal foes as other material creatures do. Thus, only its corrupting gaze affects an ethereal creature (although targeting a specific foe with corrupting gaze requires the ghost to be able to see the target).

The Ethereal Plane is only coterminous to the Material Plane. So if a ghost encountered a planar curtain on the Ethereal Plane, or if it could cast *planeshift*, could it go to another plane? If so, would it be manifested and incorporeal or solid on any other plane?

A ghost can't become ethereal from any plane but the Material Plane, and it cannot exist ethereally on any plane not coterminous with the Ethereal Plane. Also, a ghost can only manifest (that is, become non-ethereal but incorporeal) by going from the Ethereal Plane to the Material Plane. Thus it can't "manifest by default" when going from the Ethereal Plane to some plane other than the Material Plane, and it therefore can't travel to other planes (besides the Material Plane) from the Ethereal Plane.

The only option a ghost on the Ethereal Plane has is to manifest to the Material Plane, which renders him incorporeal but not ethereal. Once manifested on the Material Plane, the ghost could travel to other planes (just like anyone else), but it couldn't become ethereal while on such a plane.

Assuming I know where it is, can I target an ethereal creature from the Material Plane with spells? My DM says I don't have line of effect for my spell because the creature is on another plane, but the DMG gives *magic missile* as an example of a spell that can affect ethereal targets.

Since force effects from or on the Material Plane are specifically defined as being able to affect ethereal creatures, they are treated as having line of effect to an ethereal foe even though the foe is technically on another plane. The same is true of gaze attacks and abjuration effects. Of course, you still have to be able to see the ethereal foe to specifically target it with *magic missile* or a gaze attack (spells or effects that don't require specific targets function normally even if you can't see the ethereal foe).

If force effects can hurt an ethereal creature from the Material Plane, does the reverse hold true? Can an ethereal creature attack creatures on the Material Plane with force effects? If they can, can they target them through walls and other physical barriers that exist on the Material Plane?

No magical attacks cross from the Ethereal Plane to the Material Plane, including force effects, unless the effect specifically allows such to occur (such as the ghost's malevolence power).

Can ghost touch weapons affect ethereal creatures?

No. An ethereal creature, while insubstantial, is not strictly defined as an "incorporeal" creature and thus it can't be affected by a ghost touch weapon wielded by a material opponent.

What happens when a wall is built on the Ethereal Plane? Can someone using *true seeing* see through it and target ethereal creatures behind it? If you can't see through it, what if there's a hole in the wall? Could you target them then?

Solid objects are very rare on the Ethereal Plane, since no resources are present there to create them. Most objects on the Ethereal Plane were created elsewhere then magically transported to the Ethereal Plane (as described on page 56 of *MP*).

An ethereal wall would be visible to someone using *true seeing* (or a similar effect). The rules don't describe whether such objects block line of sight, but it's reasonable to assume that they do. Thus, an ethereal wall would be visible as a wall to a creature that can see ethereal objects. Even though the creature could distinguish the wall from a material object, it still blocks vision (and thus line of sight) just as a normal wall would. A creature can look through an ethereal wall with a hole in it, and the creature could then target ethereal creatures behind the wall.

Does an ethereal object block force spells cast against targets on the Material Plane? If force spells affect incorporeal creatures, and stuff on the Ethereal Plane is incorporeal on the Material Plane, doesn't an ethereal wall get in the way? If so, does it get in the way of force effects such as *mage armor*, thus stopping a PC protected by such an effect from moving through?

An ethereal wall would block force effects cast on the Material Plane. In essence, a creature affected by *mage armor* is "wearing" a suit of armor made of force—a suit of armor that can't pass through ethereal objects. His weapons, spells, and so on still can't affect ethereal objects any more than they normally could.

Can an ethereal creature or a ghost that isn't manifesting (and thus has a Strength score) grapple someone wearing *bracers of armor* or who has the *mage armor* spell cast on them? What about an incorporeal creature, such as a spectre? What if it's the other way around? Can a person that has a *mage armor* effect on him bull rush an ethereal ghost or an incorporeal spectre?

Mage armor and *bracers of armor* aren't powerful enough to allow a material creature to interact normally with either incorporeal or ethereal opponents (or vice-versa). While the armor bonus from the *mage armor* spell or *bracers of armor* applies against incorporeal touch attacks, it doesn't turn the affected creature into a force effect himself. A monk wearing *bracers of armor* can't affect incorporeal or ethereal creatures with her unarmed strikes any more easily than she normally could, and neither could a fighter "wearing" *mage armor* bull rush an incorporeal or ethereal foe.

How can I keep ethereal characters from wrecking my adventure? They can go anywhere they want in the dungeon and can't be affected by most monsters.

Etherealness is indeed a powerful tool in the hands of crafty adventurers. That said, it doesn't have to ruin a DM's plans. Just as a DM must remember to account for powerful divinations, teleportation, and other potentially plot-derailing effects wielded by high-level characters, the DM must examine the effects of etherealness on an adventure.

Ethereal jaunt is the most common tool used by PCs, which allows a 13th-level cleric or wizard (or a 14th-level sorcerer) to become ethereal for a brief period of time. In this case, two major issues limit the spell's effectiveness. First, the spell affects only a single creature: the spellcaster. This means that the ethereal spellcaster is on his own against any ethereal foes he might encounter (or against material foes who can see and affect ethereal creatures). Don't hesitate to roll on the Ethereal Plane Encounters table in Chapter 5 of the *DMG* from time to time—most of these foes pose a significant challenge to a single character, even one of a level capable of casting *ethereal jaunt*. (Treat a roll of 01–80 as “no encounter” unless you haven't determined what non-ethereal creatures live in the area.) Even a single encounter between the ethereal sorcerer and a pack of phase spiders or a hungry devourer could limit the use of this tactic to crucial situations.

The second limitation is the short duration of the spell—a single round per caster level. The caster likely has little more than a couple of minutes to explore the area and return to safety. The DM should be very strict in timing the ethereal character's activities, and she might even require Intelligence checks to allow the ethereal character to retrace his path correctly (particularly if the ethereal character is winding his way through a complex dungeon, or passing through a lot of walls). Woe to the ethereal character who loses track of time or gets lost while exploring, as he might find himself materializing in hostile territory or, perhaps worse, inside a solid object (at which point he is shunted to the nearest open space, taking 1d6 points of damage per 5 feet shunted).

At higher levels, the *etherealness* spell addresses both of these limitations, but ethereal encounters are still possible. Also, high-level foes (particularly spellcasters) should be equally aware of such options and might well install protections or guardians against such tactics. That doesn't mean that every high-level adventure should include a half-dozen devourers guarding the site from the Ethereal Plane, or that every wizard's tower must be built with *walls of force*, but it does mean that smart opponents should take every reasonable effort they can afford to guard themselves against likely avenues of invasion. Occasionally thwarting the PCs' traditional modes of operation is a good way to keep players on their toes.

Remember that the Ethereal Plane isn't coexistent with any plane other than the Material Plane. Adventures on other planes don't allow ethereal scouting or infiltration, and thus make good changes of pace for high-level characters used to such tactics.

How does the Plane of Shadow mimic the Material Plane without the people on it doing all the things that people on the Material Plane do (like building structures and tearing them down)? Do buildings change themselves? What force decides when things change and what changes?

The Plane of Shadow is a morphic plane, where landmarks are continually in flux. Buildings and other objects often reflect the reality of the Material Plane (or a twisted version thereof),

but this is entirely due to the influence of the Plane of Shadow itself, and not because of any efforts of the native creatures (or shadowy parallels) living on that plane. Neither can efforts on the Material Plane necessarily result in specific results on the Plane of Shadow—while building a new castle on the Material Plane likely results in a shadowy parallel appearing on the Plane of Shadow, the layout, architectural style, or even the precise location itself almost certainly varies from the Material Plane structure. Anyone seeking to “outsmart” the Plane of Shadow in this manner is in for a disappointment.

Can you clarify how Challenge Ratings for traps work? Is the CR of a trap intended to be equivalent to the CR of a monster? If so, does the party (or the party's rogue) gain experience for overcoming a trap of a given CR? Are traps limited to a maximum CR of 10 or is that just the toughest level for which sample traps are listed in the DMG?

A trap's CR means the same thing that a monster's CR does—it rates the relative threat of the trap, and it indicates the XP award granted to the party for overcoming it. A trap is overcome either by disarming it—which gives XP to the whole group, not just the character responsible for disarming it—or simply for setting it off and suffering its effects, for which normal XP is awarded.

Traps above CR 10 aren't included in the rules because the XP award for such traps wouldn't necessarily be appropriate to the trap's challenge. At a certain point, it becomes nearly impossible to adequately rate a trap's challenge for high-level PCs. Not only are Search and Disable Device skill modifiers extremely high, but it's difficult for a trap's effect (typically a one-shot effect) to be balanced to challenge but not wipe out characters. Challenge Rating 10 traps already include instant-death effects, and it's tough to get more dangerous than that.

How much XP is an EL 5 encounter worth? The DMG doesn't have information on giving out XP by Encounter Level.

Encounter Level (EL) is purely a rough measurement of how much challenge a particular encounter presents. It has no mechanical function in the game—it's just a numerical value that lets the DM know whether a particular collection of monsters makes an appropriate encounter for the party. In general, an encounter with an EL that equals the party's average level is expected to use up about 20% of the party's resources. Encounter Level helps the DMs using published adventures—since it lets him evaluate at a glance if a particular room's inhabitants are appropriately tough for his PC group—as well as DMs writing their own adventures, who can build encounters targeting a particular EL by assembling a group of varied monsters.

There's no set XP award for each EL. Rather, XP is awarded based on the CRs of the monsters that make up the encounter. A single monster of CR 5 is an EL 5 encounter, but so is a pair of CR 3 monsters, or a CR 4 monster and two CR 1 monsters, and so forth. Each variation likely awards a different total of XP, though the totals are likely to be in a similar range.

See “Challenge Ratings and Encounter Levels” in Chapter 3 of the *DMG* for more details on how to use these two terms in your game.

If I give a monster a powerful magic item, should I increase its CR?

Yes, but only if the item has a dramatic effect on the monster's statistics. Remember that increasing a monster's CR

by even a single point can increase the XP award by 50%, so it shouldn't happen very often.

There's no hard-and-fast rule for adjudicating this, but a general rule of thumb might be this: To increase a monster's CR by +1, the added equipment should make it function as if it were at least a level or two tougher than normal (including hp, attack modifier, damage, saves, and so on). Changes smaller than that aren't enough to merit a CR change but might still merit an ad hoc XP adjustment (such as +10% or so). In the long run, it's probably not worth the DM's time to adjust XP awards too much, though.

Giving a CR 3 ogre a masterwork greatclub makes it marginally tougher, but certainly not as tough as a CR 4 monster. Giving it full plate armor, an *amulet of health* +2, and a +1 *flaming greatclub* increases its AC by 4 points, its hp by 4, its Fortitude save by +1, its attack by +1, and its damage by 4 or 5 points per swing, which might well merit an increased CR. (Of course, it still has poor Reflex and will saves, making it just as vulnerable to many effects, so it's arguable that this ogre isn't truly a CR 4 monster.) The right two or three extra potions might well change a 1st-level warrior from CR 1/2 to CR 1 if the potions had a great effect on his AC, attack modifier, hp, and damage rolls, but the same potions probably wouldn't alter the CR of a frost giant (since they reflect a smaller change, relative to the giant's original statistics).

Remember also that many monsters, including all NPCs, are assumed to have equipment already. Don't adjust the ogre barbarian's CR for the gear he gets from his class levels, or the dragon's CR for the magic items it's using out of its hoard. A dragon wielding a *staff of the magi* or *sphere of annihilation* might merit a CR adjustment, but one wearing a *ring of protection* and carrying a few potions certainly wouldn't.

How far does a character fall in a single round? If my griffon-riding character falls off his mount 300 feet up, how long do other characters have to catch him?

This ends up being both a rules and a physics question. The short answer is, "In a single round, you fall far enough to hit the ground in the vast majority circumstances that come up in the game."

Here's the long answer: A falling character accelerates at a rate of 32 feet per second per second. What that means is that every second, a character's "falling speed" increases by 32 feet. The distance he falls in that second is equal to the average of his falling speeds at the beginning of that second and at the end of that second. Thus, during the first second he falls 16 feet (the average of 0 feet and 32 feet, which are his speeds at the start and end of that second). During the next second he falls 48 feet (the average of 32 feet and 64 feet). He falls 80 feet during the third second, 112 feet the fourth second, 144 feet the fifth second, and 176 feet the sixth second. That's a grand total of 576 feet fallen in the first round alone, hence the short answer given above—the number of falls occurring in any campaign longer than this is probably pretty small. For ease of play, you could simply use 500 feet as a nice round number—it's easier to remember.

Of course, the character falls even farther the next round, although acceleration soon ends due to the resistance of air on the falling body (this is what's called terminal velocity). If the Sage remembers his high-school physics, terminal velocity for a human body is roughly 120 mph (equivalent to a speed of 1,200 feet per round, or 200 feet per second); thus, the character's falling speed hits its maximum in the first second of the second round. It's safe to say that after 2 rounds the

character will have fallen nearly 2,000 feet, and will fall another 1,200 feet per round thereafter.

In the example you give, other characters would clearly have no more than a round to react, and it's possible they'd have even less time. Remember that despite the sequential nature of D&D combat actions, things are happening very quickly—virtually simultaneously, in many cases. As a DM, I'd probably allow every character a chance to react to a long fall (such as the one you describe), as long as their action occurs before 1 full round has passed from the start of the fall. (As a side note, that's why *feather fall* allows its caster to cast it even when it isn't her turn—otherwise, adjudicating its timing would be a nightmare.) The difference between "you watch the character fall all the way to the ground before you can react" and "the character starts to fall, what do you do?" is really just up to the DM's sense of fun and fair play. Off the top of my head, I'd say that anything up to 50 or 60 feet is clearly too fast to react to (barring a readied action, of course), and anything that approaches 250 feet or more should probably allow characters some chance to react, but that's purely a personal opinion.

Whatever decision you make, try to make the same decision every time, so that players know what to expect. If this situation comes up a lot in your game, it's probably worth creating a house rule so you don't have to try to remember what you did last time. (If your campaign routinely features 300-foot falls, your characters might want to invest in some *rings of feather falling*!)

Now, if you start altering certain assumptions—such as the force of gravity, or the density of air that's resisting the falling character, or even the mass of the falling character—these calculations become less useful. Yet, unless your numbers are much different than the standard values, you can still use these as benchmarks.

If, during my move, my character falls down a shaft (or cliff, or whatever), can he continue to move with the same move action when he hits the bottom (assuming he survives)? What if he uses the *catfall* power (XPH 82)? What about if he has a *feather fall* effect?

The simple answer is no—falling takes at least some time, and in most cases ends up with the character no longer standing up. Together, these issues result in the character's move action "ending" with the fall.

A DM willing to take on some judgment calls, however, can be a little open-minded on the issue. Assuming the character lands on his feet, and the fall was short enough to not take an appreciable amount of time (say, no more than a second or so), it might well seem reasonable to allow him to continue moving as part of the same action. The rest of this answer will tackle these two requirements in reverse order.

As the Sage has pointed out in the past (see *DRAGON* #327), falling happens very quickly. In a single second, the typical character falls 16 feet; after 2 seconds, you've fallen 64 feet. It's probably okay to let a character who falls up to 20 feet or so to continue moving as part of the same action (assuming he remains standing at the end of the drop).

Feather fall says that the character falls 60 feet per round, or 100 feet per second. The Sage suggests that any *feather fall*-aided drop of more than 10 feet is too slow to allow continued movement with the same action. (*Catfall* doesn't reduce falling speed, so it wouldn't have the same restriction.)

Obviously, if the character has to stand up after the fall, his movement has ended and he must take a new move action to

move again. This is true even if he can stand up as a free action (since you can't typically take free actions in the middle of a move). In general, characters don't land on their feet after falling; however, the Sage could see some reasonable exceptions:

- A character who jumps down intentionally and takes no damage because of a successful Jump check (see the Jump skill).
- A character who jumps or falls down and takes no damage because of a successful Tumble check (see the Tumble skill).
- A character with the slow fall ability (such as a monk) who takes no damage from a fall because of this ability.
- A character under the effect of *feather fall* or similar effect that negates falling damage.
- A character who uses the *catfall* power. This one is clear, as the power specifically states that the character lands on his feet no matter how far he falls.

Basically, if the character has an ability that negates the damage from the fall, you could choose to say that she also lands on her feet; assuming the fall was brief enough, she should have the option to keep moving as part of the same action that took her off the edge.

What exactly does “once per day” mean? Does it mean “once per 24-hour period” or is it recharged after the character has rested for 8 hours, like spells?

It means that in any given day, the ability can be used once. So what constitutes a day? That's where things get a little tricky and rely on the DM's common sense.

The Sage advises using daybreak as the start of a “day,” meaning that all daily-use abilities are recharged in full each morning, regardless of exactly when they were used during the previous 24-hour period. For the vast majority of games, that's when most abilities are recharged anyway (spells, for example), which makes it easy to use.

If your players try to abuse this flexibility—such as by adventuring through the night and then suddenly getting all their abilities back when the sun comes up—the DM should feel free to be more restrictive. It's entirely reasonable to require a full 8 hours of rest before allowing daily-use abilities to recharge (even for those characters who don't require sleep).

If a monster has resistance and vulnerability to the same kind of damage (such as fire), which effect is applied first? And when does the saving throw come in?

Always roll a saving throw before applying any effects that would increase or reduce the damage dealt. For example, if a frost giant is struck by a *fireball* that would deal 35 points of damage, it would roll its Reflex save, then apply its vulnerability to fire after determining how much damage the *fireball* would normally deal. If the save failed, the frost giant would take 52 points of damage: 35 + one-half of 35 (17.5, rounded down to 17). A successful save would mean the frost giant suffered only 25 points of damage: one-half of 35 rounded down (17), plus one-half of 17 rounded down (8).

If the creature has both resistance and vulnerability to the same kind of damage, apply the resistance (which reduces the damage dealt by the effect) before applying the vulnerability (which increases the damage taken by the creature). For example, imagine our frost giant wore a *ring of minor fire resistance* (granting resistance to fire 10). If the save failed, the

frost giant would take 37 points of fire damage: 35 (*fireball*) – 10 (resistance to fire 10) = 25, plus one-half of 25 (12.5, rounded down to 12). If the save succeeded, the frost giant would take only 10 points of damage: 17 (half damage from the *fireball*, rounded down) – 10 (resistance to fire 10) = 7, plus one-half of 7 (3.5, rounded down to 3).

As a general guideline, whenever the rules don't stipulate an order of operations for special effects (such as spells or special abilities), you should apply them in the order that's most beneficial to the creature. In the case of damage, this typically means applying any damage-reducing effects first, before applying any effects that would increase damage.

Do temporary hit points from two applications of the same effect stack? What about from different effects? If I have temporary hit points from multiple sources, how should I apply damage?

Temporary hit points from two applications of the same effect don't stack; instead, the highest number of temporary hit points applies in place of all others. Temporary hit points from different sources stack, but you must keep track of them separately.

For example, imagine a character who gained 15 temporary hit points from an *aid* spell. After taking 8 points of damage, she has 7 temporary hit points left from the spell. If another *aid* spell were cast on the same character granting 12 temporary hit points, this total would replace the other spell's total, meaning the character would now have 12 temporary hit points (rather than 19). If the character then cast *false life* on herself, she would add the full benefit of that spell to the temporary hit points from the *aid* spell.

This also applies to temporary hit points gained from *energy drain* and similar special abilities. Each successful attack counts as one application of the effect (meaning that an attack that bestows 2 or more negative levels still counts as only one application of the effect). For example, a wight gains 5 temporary hit points each time it bestows a negative level with its slam attack. If it bestows another negative level while it has 2 temporary hit points remaining from the first attack, the new temporary hit points would replace the old ones.

Temporary hit points are “first-in, first-out.” Damage should be taken off the oldest temporary-hit-point-granting effect first; when that effect is exhausted, apply damage to the next oldest effect. For this reason, you must track each supply of temporary hit points separately.

Healing spells and spell-like effects don't work in the Mournland (ECS 188). What about magic items that create such effects, such as a *potion of cure light wounds*? What about the paladin's lay on hands or the monk's wholeness of body? What about psionic powers that heal damage?

No magic item effect that duplicates a spell from the healing subschool functions within the Mournland. A *wand of cure light wounds*, a scroll of *cure serious wounds*, and a *potion of cure moderate wounds* are all equally useless inside that land's borders.

Extraordinary and supernatural abilities that heal hit point damage function normally, making the paladin an extremely valuable member of a Mournland-bound adventuring party.

Spells that heal damage but which aren't from the healing subschool (such as *goodberry*) work normally. Since psionic powers don't have the healing subschool (and in fact don't have subschools at all), they would also function normally.

Furthermore, while you are within an extradimensional space (such as that created by *rope trick* or *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion*), you can ignore this restriction entirely.

Does fast healing function within the Mournland?

No. The *MM* describes fast healing as “just like natural healing” (page 309), which indicates that it does not function in the Mournland.

Can I heal nonlethal damage while in the Mournland?

Yes, unless the healing results from a spell or spell-like effect from the healing subschool. Healing nonlethal damage isn't considered “natural healing” since it isn't described under the natural healing header in the *PH* (page 146).

Does regeneration function within the Mournland?

Yes, unless it results from a spell or spell-like effect from the healing subschool.

Does darkvision allow a character to read and write in the dark? Can he see his reflection in a mirror?

Darkvision is described as the “ability to see with no light source at all” (*DMG* 292). This suggests that a character with darkvision can read, write, and otherwise perform a normal range of actions despite being in complete darkness.

The simplest answer to the mirror question is yes. To avoid delving too deeply into real-world physics—something it's best to resist, particularly in fantasy gaming—it's easiest to treat darkvision as allowing a character to perceive anything that a normal person could see with light.

If my character permanently changes type, does he change his base attack bonus or saving throws based on the new type?

A PC's base attack bonus and base save bonuses aren't based on his type, they're based on his class. A 10th-level asimar wizard doesn't have the attack and save bonuses of a 10-HD outsider, she has the attack and save bonuses of a 10th-level wizard.

A PC with racial Hit Dice (such as a centaur) gains base attack and save bonuses from his racial HD as well as any class levels he has. If such a character's type changes, his base attack and saves change only if the source of the change indicates that they change. Some templates (such as the vampire template) stipulate that base attack and saves remain the same regardless of the change.

Does a character who has been swallowed whole treat the swallowing monster as flat-footed?

The Sage thinks that's a reasonable interpretation. The “swallow whole” entry on page 315 of the *MM* indicates that the AC of the interior of a swallowing creature has “no modifiers for . . . Dexterity.” While this isn't necessarily quite the same as saying that the monster is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC, it's pretty close.

In addition, it certainly seems true that the swallowed character has total concealment from (i.e., is “invisible to”) the swallowing creature, which would allow the character to treat the creature as flat-footed against his attacks.

Put together, this means that letting the rogue get gulped might make an effective way to defeat a swallowing monster . . . assuming the bite and ongoing damage doesn't kill her.

When a character dies and comes back to life a level lower, are there any guidelines as to which level he must lose? Does it have to be the last level he gained? When he gains a level again later, can he choose a different class than he did originally? What about a 1st-level character (who instead loses a point of Constitution)? Can he begin with a new class completely?

The rules are silent on this issue, but it seems most logical if the character loses the class level he gained most recently. The same is true of any feats, skill ranks, or ability score adjustments gained due to the now-lost level. The character is under no obligation to make the same selection(s) when he next gains a level with XP.

A character who regains a lost level from restoration or a similar effect must regain the same class level (and other abilities) that he lost. In other words, you can't use level drain and restoration to rebuild your character.

A 1st-level character doesn't lose a class level, so he can't change his existing class level.

Do characters receive experience for killing a summoned monster? What about undead created with *animate dead* or an outsider called with *planar ally*?

As a general rule, any creature whose presence on the battlefield is a direct result of another creature using one of its special abilities (such as summoning) during the battle doesn't grant XP to characters defeating it. This is because the monster is counted as part of the challenge provided by the summoning monster. A pit fiend's Challenge Rating (and thus the XP reward granted for defeating him) already takes into account the fact that he can summon allies; without that ability, he'd be worth less XP.

However, there are plenty of situations where a DM should make exceptions to this general rule. Any time that a creature can bring an ally into play without reducing the resources it otherwise brings to the fight (or well outside of combat) you should strongly consider awarding XP for defeating that ally.

Let's look at a few examples to see how this might work in play.

Example 1: Over the course of many days, a powerful necromancer stocks his lair with undead created via spells. When the PCs fight the necromancer and these undead minions, the necromancer has his full array of spells, so the act of creating these undead hasn't reduced the challenge he provides. Thus, the Sage recommends awarding full XP for defeating the undead.

Example 2: The same necromancer is on the run, knowing the PCs aren't far behind. He spends some of his precious daily allotment of spells to animate a few zombies, only minutes before the PCs bust down his door and attack. That's a lot more like summoning, since the creation of the undead represents a direct drain on the necromancer's immediately available resources. Still, he doesn't have to spend any rounds of combat casting the spells, so it's not quite the same. The Sage recommends awarding one-half XP for defeating the undead.

Example 3: An evil cleric uses *lesser planar ally* to call a succubus to serve him as a spy for 7 days, and sends her up against the PCs (without being present himself). The Sage recommends awarding full XP for defeating the succubus. If the PCs then track down and defeat the evil cleric before he's able to prepare spells again, it's tempting to reduce the XP award for the cleric by a little bit (since he's down one 4th-level spell), but it's probably not worth the effort.

When in doubt, err on the side of awarding XP. The DM shouldn't be looking for opportunities to deny the PCs fairly earned XP—if they bested the challenge, they should reap the reward.

With a clear line of sight, how far can an average character see?

Each terrain entry in the *DMG* (pages 87–93) lists a maximum distance at which a character can spot another, assuming nothing on the map specifically blocks line of sight.

Must everyone in a party belong to the same “team” for the purpose of using the teamwork benefits (PH2 157)?

No. As noted on page 158, “A character can join an adventuring party without joining the team that includes the other members of the group.” Of course, a character in the party but not in the “team” doesn't gain the teamwork benefits.

It's even technically possible for an adventuring party to have more than one complete “team” within it—the party's barbarian and rogue might be on a team with the Awareness and Crowded Charge team benefits while the druid and wizard belong to a separate team with the Group Trance and Steadfast Resolve teamwork benefits.

It's fairly common for a team to not include pets (even intelligent pets such as familiars and special mounts), due to the added burden of ensuring the pet meets the team member prerequisites.

Can a character belong to more than one “team” for the purpose of gaining teamwork benefits (PH2 157)?

No, otherwise the limit of one teamwork benefit per 4 HD of the lowest-level member of the team would be meaningless.

When a character takes Constitution damage (such as from a wyvern's poison) and his Con modifier changes, what happens to his hit points? Does it simply lower his maximum hp, or does it reduce his current hit points too?

A character whose Constitution modifier changes adjusts both his current and full normal (maximum) hit point totals accordingly. Remember that your full normal hit point total can't be less than 1 per level (since even a Con penalty can't reduce your Hit Die roll to less than 1).

An injured character who takes Constitution damage can be reduced to 0 or fewer hit points.

If a trap needs an attack roll to hit, is the attack against your normal AC or flat-footed AC?

Technically speaking, any attack made against you before you've taken your first action in combat, or any attack made by an attacker you can't see, uses your flat-footed AC. Most trap attacks fall into one or both of those categories, and thus by a strict reading of the rules should treat their target as flat-footed.

Of course, any trap that doesn't fall into either of those categories would use your normal AC. A wall scythe trap that activates every round of combat wouldn't treat its targets as flat-footed once they'd taken an action.

Can a spellcaster counterspell a magical trap?

Yes, but only if 1) the magical trap duplicates a spell and 2) he has readied the counterspell action to do so.

For example, a mere 1st-level wizard could counterspell one of the *burning hands* traps detailed in the *DMG*, as long as she had readied a counterspell action to do so. However, even a 20th-level wizard couldn't counterspell a trap that simply

created a burst of fire without actually duplicating a specific spell.

If my character casts a silent and stilled spell of any sort that affects the target's behavior (*charm person, suggestion, and so on*) and the target makes the saving throw, would they know they were being cast upon and who cast the spell? What would a typical NPC reaction be to this scenario?

The target of a spell or effect is always aware that he's rolled a saving throw, though the caster of the spell isn't revealed.

There's no guideline for how the average NPC would react to a spell being cast upon him, but the Sage certainly believes that he'd be concerned about it. Being the target of a spell can't be an everyday occurrence for normal folks (even in the world of *D&D*); one imagines that it's a little like seeing the red dot of a laser sight appear on your sleeve before disappearing.

The nature of the effect might influence the target's reaction, but this is firmly in the camp of DM determination. Some DMs inform the target of a spell of its effect as part of asking for the save, while others keep such information secret. (It's almost impossible to keep it entirely secret from a player, since the player has to know what kind of save he's making.)

Personally, the Sage recommends using as much transparency as you feel comfortable, particularly if characters have the ability to adjust their save result on the fly (such as with action points). It hardly seems cricket to drain away a paranoid player's action points with *bane* spells just because he's worried that one of those Will saves might be for *dominate person*.

Can a creature augment its psi-like abilities?

Not exactly. Since a creature doesn't pay power points to manifest a psi-like ability, it can't spend extra power points to augment it (even if the creature has a power point reserve). However, when a creature manifests a psi-like ability, “the power is manifested as if the creature had spent a number of power points equal to its manifester level, which can augment the power (*XPH* 184).

What effect does a negative level have on a psionic character?

The *XPH* is silent on this issue. Luckily, *Complete Psionic* includes a sidebar (page 100) that describes what happens. Basically, it's the same as for any other character, with the added loss of power points equal to your normal manifester level (that is, your manifester level before applying the –1 penalty from that negative level).

How much taint can handling an object or entering a room give you? And how exactly is taint measured by *detect evil*?

The most current guidelines for the effect of taint (the corrupting power of evil) can be found on page 62 of *HH*. As soon as a character is exposed to an area or object suffused with evil, she acquires 1 to 3 points of taint. For each 24 additional hours of exposure to the area or object, the character gains 1 additional point of taint.

Both of these guidelines are entirely subject to more specific descriptions of the situation, as well as to the DM's whim. The corrupting effect of evil should never be fully predictable to the players or their characters, since that diminishes the tension created by such situations.

Characters with at least moderate taint register as evil to a *detect evil* spell. Use the creature's HD to measure the aura of her evil, just as if she were an evil creature (*PH* 219). If the creature would normally have a stronger aura of evil (for example, if it were undead), use the strongest aura of evil.

Would the *strongheart vest* soulmeld (*MoI* 89) protect you from the ability damage of the hellfire warlock's hellfire blast ability (*FCII* 90)?

The *strongheart vest* soulmeld reduces the amount of ability damage you receive from an attack; however, it does not

keep you safe from the costs of hellfire blast because the ability damage you are taking is not from someone attacking you.

Can you use the retraining rules from *PH2* to remake your character in such a way that would not normally be achievable through level-to-level progression?

No. When you are using the retraining rules, your character's end result must be one that you could have created without using the retraining rules.