

The Witch

Handservants of Entropy

*A spellcasting character class with four archetypes
Also includes an alternate witchcraft sorcerous
origin*

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Witch

Witches are spellcasters whose powers don't fall neatly between the extremes of divine and arcane power. Like a cleric or a druid, the power they wield comes from the universe itself — in their case, the Wheel of Life and Death that personifies the entropic cycle of birth, death, and decay. Like a wizard or a sorcerer, they wield this power through force of will and cunning, bending these entropic forces to their will rather than working harmoniously with them.

The energies they wield give witches a number of powers over living things. They can warp perceptions, alter probabilities, and dominate weak minds. Wielded directly, their entropic energies can heal or harm, causing rapid growth or decay. A witch's control over the forces of entropy extends to her own body (and the bodies of her friends and foes), giving her the ability to twist her shape and alter her appearance.

The elemental forces that play such a key role in many spellcaster's repertoires are beyond the reach of a witch's magical machinations. Still, what they lack in raw arcane power they more than make up for in terrifying unpredictability and reality-warping chaos. A witch's foe may not find themselves dodging fireballs and lightning bolts, but there's no dodging the dread that comes with finding yourself unable to trust your senses, your talents, your willpower, or, ultimately, your flesh itself.

Subtle Manipulators

Witches wield subtle magics, often invisible to the naked eye. Theirs is the power to cloud eyes and muddle minds, to bend will and bring ill fortune, to promote health and spread decay. Witches rarely confront their foes head-on in combat, relying instead on the havoc their magic can inflict on their foes' morale and competence to wear them down. However, when cornered, their entropic powers over the energies of life itself can inflict devastating damage.

While some witches delight in the havoc and fear their powers bring — and embrace fearsome and over-the-top appearances and persona accordingly — most witches prefer to keep their powers hidden and their cards close to their chest. For every storybook hag cackling and radiating malign power, there are a dozen unassuming witches whose nondescript mien serves as a perfect complement to their quiet magic — leading many of their foes to underestimate them.

The philosophy of favoring the indirect approach carries over into all that a witch says and does. Even the most benign village healer rules over her flock with cunning and deceit, tricking her wards into doing what she feels is best for them. Less friendly witches are openly manipulative, sly, and treacherous. Witches are rarely direct or truthful, and many verge on being pathological liars; the best one can generally hope for is an inscrutably enigmatic silent treatment.

Agents of Life and Death

A witch's magic comes from the energies of life itself — more specifically, from the swirling, chaotic energies of entropy. Many witches are nearly as connected to the natural world as druids, but their relationship to it is much more dynamic and frequently much darker. While their skills and magics might touch on the living energy of people, plants, and animals, they often warp those energies to their own purposes, rather than seeking harmony or balance in them.

Witches are not, however, inherently servants of chaos, nor are they necessarily evil. The Wheel of Life and Death runs through all living things, and all witches master magics that bend or break the rules by which that Wheel usually turns, but their reasons for doing so are myriad and unique to each witch. For every witch who seeks to spread chaos and death, there is another who would use the same powers to heal, to protect the innocent, or to right wrongs. Most witches, whatever their outlooks, have their own code of justice they seek to impose on the world around them — whether the world wants them to or not.

Creating a Witch

Subtle power may be a witch's most ubiquitous trait, but the ends to which she puts those powers is far more telling of her individual character. To that end, it's best to begin by considering how your witch uses her powers. Does she seek to heal and nurture others, assuming only she knows what's best for them? Is he an enchanter who seeks to bind others to his will and have them do his bidding? Is she a mastermind who works behind the scenes to bring about benevolent or malign changes, hiding behind a mask of glamour?

Witches wield entropic energies, but not all witches seek to bring about chaos. Does your witch seek to master the Wheel of Life and Death to stem the tide of chaos, or does she revel in the havoc?

Quick Build

You can make a witch quickly by following these suggestions. First, make Wisdom your highest ability score, followed by Constitution. Second, choose the Hermit background. Third, choose the *chill touch*, *poison spray*, and *message* cantrips, along with the 1st-level spells *dissonant whispers*, *hex*, and *sleep*.

THE WITCH

— Spell Slots per Spell Level —

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
1st	+2	Spellcasting, Witch's Familiar, Headstrong	3	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+2	Evil Eye	3	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	Witch's Brew, Entropic Spiral	3	5	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	4	6	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5th	+3	—	4	7	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
6th	+3	Spiral Feature	4	8	4	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
7th	+3	Improved Evil Eye	4	9	4	3	3	1	—	—	—	—	—
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	4	10	4	3	3	2	—	—	—	—	—
9th	+4	—	4	11	4	3	3	3	1	—	—	—	—
10th	+4	Witch's Guise	5	12	4	3	3	3	2	—	—	—	—
11th	+4	Superior Evil Eye	5	13	4	3	3	3	2	1	—	—	—
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	5	13	4	3	3	3	2	1	—	—	—
13th	+5	—	5	14	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	—	—
14th	+5	Spiral Feature	5	14	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	—	—
15th	+5	Witch's Curse	5	15	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	—
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	5	15	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	—
17th	+6	Unrepentant Ill Omen	5	16	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	1
18th	+6	—	5	16	4	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	5	17	4	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	1
20th	+6	Dread Curse	5	17	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	1

Class Features

As a witch, you gain the following class features.

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d6 per witch level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 6 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d6 (or 4) + your Constitution modifier per witch level after 1st.

Proficiencies

Armor: None

Weapons: Daggers, Darts, Slings, Quarterstaves, Clubs

Tools: Herbalism Kit, one gaming set (Tarokka cards or another fortune-telling implement, such as dice)

Saving Throws: Wisdom, Charisma

Skills: Choose two from Arcana, Deception, Intimidation, Nature, Medicine, Religion, or Stealth

Equipment

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) a quarterstaff or (b) a club
- (a) a component pouch, (b) an arcane focus, or (c) an athame
- an herbalism kit
- (a) an explorer's pack or (b) a scholar's pack
- (a) ten darts, (b) two daggers, or (c) a sling and 20 bullets

Alternately, you may start with 4d4 x 10 gp and purchase your starting equipment.

Spellcasting

As a manipulator of entropic forces, you can cast witch spells. See chapter 10 of the Player's Handbook for the general rules of spellcasting and below for the witch spell list.

Cantrips

At 1st level, you know three cantrips of your choice from the witch spell list. You learn additional witch cantrips of your choice at higher levels, as shown in the Cantrips Known column of the Witch table.

Spell Slots

The Witch table shows how many spell slots you have to cast your spells of 1st level and higher. To cast one of these witch spells, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.

For example, if you know the 1st-level spell *hex* and have a 1st-level and a 2nd-level spell slot available, you can cast *hex* using either slot.

Spells Known of 1st Level and Higher

You know three 1st-level spells of your choice from the witch spell list.

The Spells Known column of the Witch table shows when you learn more witch spells of your choice. Each of these spells must be of a level for which you have spell slots. For instance, when you reach 3rd level in this class, you can learn one new spell of 1st or 2nd level.

Additionally, when you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the witch spells you know and replace it with another spell from the witch spell list, which must also be of a level for which you have spell slots

Spellcasting Ability

Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for your witch spells, since you must manipulate the natural forces of entropy using your willpower. You use your Wisdom whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Wisdom modifier when setting the saving throw DC for a witch spell you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier

Ritual Casting

You can cast any witch spell you know as a ritual if that spell has the ritual tag

Spellcasting Focus

You can use an arcane focus (found in chapter 5 of the Player's Handbook) as a spellcasting focus for your witch spells. You can also use an athame. An athame is a ritual knife; it is identical to a normal dagger except for the cost (10 gp).

Witch's Familiar

You know the *find familiar* spell and can cast it as a ritual. You do not need material components for this spell. Add your proficiency bonus to your familiar's AC, as well as to all of its saving throws and any skills it is proficient in. Its hit point maximum equals its normal maximum or four times your witch level, whichever is higher.

The bond between a witch and her familiar is abnormally strong. Most witches summon their familiar in the same form every time, and rarely dispel them. When a witch's familiar dies, the witch makes all concentration checks with disadvantage for 1 minute.

Headstrong

Your resolute will allows you to shrug off certain magical effects. When you fail a saving throw against a spell that either causes no damage or that causes only psychic damage, you can reroll it, and you must take the new roll.

Once you have succeeded on a saving throw using this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Evil Eye

A witch's control of entropic forces allows her to inflict misfortune on her enemies. You have a number of Evil Eye dice equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum 1). Your Evil Eye dice are d6s.

As a bonus action, you can assign an Evil Eye die to one creature you can see within 60 feet. Any time that creature succeeds on an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you can invoke the Evil Eye. Roll your Evil Eye die and subtract the result from the target's roll. The target must accept the modified roll. The Evil Eye die is expended when invoked.

Evil Eye dice that are assigned to creatures but are not invoked within one minute are expended.

You regain your expended Evil Eye dice when you finish a short or long rest.

Witch's Brew

At 3rd level, you gain the ability to create temporary concoctions that act as potions. During a short or long rest, you can expend a spell slot to cast any witch spell you know which targets only one creature into a flask of water. That flask becomes enchanted with the spell and acts as a temporary potion. You select any options at the time the brew is created, such as selecting the shape the target assumes when drinking a *brew of polymorph*.

When the brew is consumed, the creature who drinks it is affected as if you had cast the spell on them. You do not need to maintain concentration on brew effects.

You can have only one brew prepared at a time. If you create a second brew, the first brew loses its potency and reverts to a flask of mundane water.

Additionally, if your Dungeon Master uses the optional magic item crafting rules (see p. 128 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), any potions you craft cost 25% less than normal.

Entropic Spiral

At 3rd level, you begin to develop an affinity for a particular manipulation of entropic forces. Witches refer to these different magical styles as "spirals". You may choose from the Spiral of Life, the Spiral of Fate, the Spiral of Bewitching, and the Spiral of Glamour. Your choice grants you features at 3rd level and again at 6th, 14th, and 18th level.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

Improved Evil Eye

At 7th level, your Evil Eye dice improve to d8s and you gain one additional die. Additionally, you can also assign and invoke an Evil Eye die as a reaction when a foe targets you with an attack roll.

Witch's Guise

Starting at 10th level, your affinity for magically altering your appearance becomes so strong that you can do so with barely a thought. You can cast *disguise self* as a bonus action without expending a spell slot. In addition to the normal effects of the spell, you can assume the appearance of any Tiny, Small, or Medium beast. Your statistics and abilities do not change in these shapes, though you do gain the creature's movement modes and speeds, as well as the ability to breathe water if the shape possesses it.

Once you assume a beast shape using this feature, you can't do so again until you complete a short or long rest.

If you already know *disguise self* when you reach 10th level, you may select an additional spell to replace it.

Superior Evil Eye

At 11th level, your Evil Eye dice improve to d10s and you gain an additional die. Additionally, when a creature to whom you have assigned an Evil Eye die is killed, the die is returned to you rather than being expended.

Witch's Curse

Starting at 15th level, when you inflict Necrotic or Poison damage with a witch spell or cantrip to a target to whom you have assigned an Evil Eye die, the damage decreases the target's hit point maximum by the same amount. This effect can be removed with a *remove curse* spell and otherwise lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Unrepentant Ill Omen

Starting at 18th level, whenever you roll initiative and don't have any Evil Eye dice, you regain 1 die.

Dread Curse

At 20th level, you gain the ability to unleash horrific entropic energies on a foe you touch in a single, devastating burst. Make a melee spell attack against a foe. If the attack hits, you can expend as many unassigned Evil Eye dice as you choose, as well as any Evil Eye dice assigned to the target. The target takes 20 Necrotic damage for each expended die, and its hit point maximum is decreased by the same amount. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Once you have successfully used this feature, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest

Entropic Spirals

While all witches wield the powers of entropy over life and death, different witches manifest those powers in slightly different ways, each having a particular affinity for one sort of witch magic or another.

For witches, spirals are an entirely descriptive classification; never prone to formal structure or congregation, the idea of witches flocking together into even informal schools or organizations based on their particular affinity is quite anathematic.

Still, entropic spirals do represent a certain world view, and witches of the same spiral are perhaps slightly more likely to see eye-to-eye with one another than witches of different spirals.

Spiral of Life

Witches who practice the Spiral of Life manipulate entropic energies to heal wounds, cure diseases, and erode harmful magics. Village witches, hedge witches, herbalists, midwives, and healers often follow the Spiral of Life. Unlike clerical healing, the Spiral of Life often demands a price — though who pays that price is often up to the witch herself.

Bonus Proficiency

When you choose this spiral at third level, you gain proficiency in Medicine, if you don't already have it. If you are already proficient in Medicine, you may select a different skill from the witch's list of starting skills.

Spiral Spells

At each indicated level, add the following spells to your spells known. These spells do not count against your total number of spells known listed in the Witch table. If you already know one or more of these spells at 3rd level, you may select a different spell to replace it.

SPIRAL OF LIFE SPELLS

Witch Level	Spells
3rd	<i>cure wounds</i> , <i>lesser restoration</i>
5th	<i>remove curse</i>
7th	<i>death ward</i>
9th	<i>greater restoration</i>

LIFE TRANSFER

At 3rd level, you learn to manipulate the Wheel of Life and Death to heal a creature by taking life from a different one. As an action, you can touch a willing or incapacitated creature. That creature regains hit points equal to your witch level. Optionally, you can touch a second willing or incapacitated creature. The second creature (or you, if you don't touch a second creature) must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, you or the second creature take half of the healed damage (round down) as necrotic damage. On a failed save, you or the second creature take necrotic damage equal to the healed damage.

You may use this feature a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier. You regain expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Boosted Healing

At 6th level, you can accelerate the turning of the Wheel of Life and Death to make your healing effects faster. When you heal yourself or an ally with a spell, you can attempt to increase the rate of healing. Make a Wisdom (Medicine) check with a DC equal to 15+the spell slot level of the healing effect. The spell heals the maximum amount possible. If the check succeeds, you suffer no ill effects. If the check fails, roll the spell's usual healing; you take necrotic damage equal to

the result.

For example, if you attempt to boost a 3rd-level *cure wounds* spell, the target would heal 24+your Wisdom modifier hit points. If you fail a DC 18 medicine check, you would take 3d8+your Wisdom modifier damage.

Cursebreaker

At 14th level, your mastery of the magic of life allows you to help your allies overcome harmful magics. When an ally fails a saving throw against a harmful spell of which you are not also a target, you can use your reaction to attempt the saving throw yourself. If your saving throw succeeds, your ally may reattempt the saving throw immediately with advantage. If your saving throw fails, you take necrotic damage equal to the spell's level (1 point for a cantrip).

Spiral of Fate

Witches who practice the Spiral of Fate are masters of manipulating probability and inflicting ill luck on their enemies. They also learn to read probable futures and to extend their perception beyond their physical limitations.

Bonus Cantrip

When you choose this spiral at third level, you learn the *true strike* cantrip. If you already know *true strike*, you may select a different witch cantrip to replace it.

Spiral Spells

At each indicated level, add the following spells to your spells known. These spells do not count against your total number of spells known listed in the Witch table. If you already know one or more of these spells at 3rd level, you may select a different spell to replace it.

SPIRAL OF FATE SPELLS

Witch Level	Spells
3rd	<i>hex, augury</i>
5th	<i>bestow curse</i>
7th	<i>arcane eye</i>
9th	<i>scrying</i>

Precognition

At 3rd level, you learn to read the subtle weavings of fate a split second before events play out. As a reaction when you are attacked, you can roll an Evil Eye die and add the result to your armor class. You can choose to roll this die after your foe's attack has been rolled but before the result is determined. If the attack fails as a result, the Evil Eye die is not expended; instead, it is assigned to your would-be attacker. If the attack succeeds anyway, the Evil Eye die is expended and you cannot use this feature again until you complete a short or long rest.

Compounded Misfortune

Starting at 6th level, whenever you invoke an Evil Eye die and roll the maximum number, the die is not expended; rather, it remains assigned. Whenever you roll a 1 with an Evil Eye die, the foe that die was assigned to can no longer be targeted by your Evil Eye until you complete a short or long rest.

Untangling the Threads

Starting at 14th level, you can maintain concentration on two spells concurrently, provided at least one of them is a Divination spell. Both spells end if you cast a third spell that requires concentration.

Spiral of Bewitching

Witches who practice the Spiral of Bewitching raise the art of magically clouding other's minds to new heights. Experts at magics which charm, confuse, or dominate others, bewitchers are expert mind controllers who run roughshod over the will of their foes.

Bonus Cantrip

When you choose this spiral at third level, you learn the *friends* cantrip. If you already know *friends*, you may select a different witch cantrip to replace it.

Spiral Spells

At each indicated level, add the following spells to your spells known. These spells do not count against your total number of spells known listed in the Witch table. If you already know one or more of these spells at 3rd level, you may select a different spell to replace it.

SPIRAL OF BEWITCHING SPELLS

Witch Level	Spells
3rd	<i>charm person, suggestion</i>
5th	<i>fear</i>
7th	<i>compulsion</i>
9th	<i>dominate person</i>

Headstrong Personality

Starting at 3rd level, the strength of your will alone radiates powerfully, swaying others to your side or filling them with dread. You can use your Wisdom modifier in place of your Charisma modifier whenever you make a skill check using Deception, Persuasion, or Intimidation.

Enchanting Whispers

At 6th level, your Evil Eye opens a path for you to invade your foes' minds. Enemies to whom you have assigned an Evil Eye die must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw versus your spell save DC if they choose to target you with an attack roll. If they fail, they must select a different target. If they succeed, the Evil Eye die is no longer assigned to them and is returned to you, and they may target you as normal.

Enduring Enchantment

At 14th level, your foes find your bewitchment harder than ever to shake off. When an enchantment spell of yours ends for any reason, you can use your reaction and expend a spell slot of the appropriate level to immediately recast the spell. If you cast the spell successfully, the effect persists without interruption.

Once you have used this feature, you must complete a short or long rest before you can use it again.

Spiral of Glamour

Witches who practice the Spiral of Glamour are experts at weaving illusions and manipulating magic that otherwise convinces their enemies that reality is other than what it appears to be.

Bonus Cantrip

When you choose this spiral at third level, you learn the *minor illusion* cantrip. If you already know *minor illusion*, you may select a different witch cantrip to replace it.

Spiral Spells

At each indicated level, add the following spells to your spells known. These spells do not count against your total number of spells known listed in the Witch table. If you already know one or more of these spells at 3rd level, you may select a different spell to replace it.

SPIRAL OF GLAMOUR SPELLS

Witch Level	Spells
3rd	<i>silent image</i> , <i>mirror image</i>
5th	<i>major image</i>
7th	<i>hallucinatory terrain</i>
9th	<i>seeming</i>

Misleading Curse

At 3rd level, targets afflicted by your Evil Eye have difficulty perceiving your true location. As a reaction when a creature to whom you have assigned an Evil Eye die makes an attack roll against you, you may expend that die. When you do so, you become invisible to that creature, as if under the effects of the *invisibility* spell, until the end of your next turn. You remain visible to all other creatures. The attack suffers disadvantage, and you may also roll the expended Evil Eye die and apply the result as a penalty.

Afflicted Reality

At 6th level, your Evil Eye makes those you target with it particularly susceptible to your illusions. Targets to whom you have assigned an Evil Eye die have disadvantage on any saving throws or ability checks made to disbelieve an illusion you have cast.

Hidden in the Mists

At 14th level, your ability to warp the perceptions of your foes reaches new heights. Whenever you assign an Evil Eye die to a target, you become invisible to that target, as if under the effects of an *invisibility* spell.

Additionally, you can use a bonus action to grant all targets to whom you are invisible via this feature a fleeting glimpse of you — albeit an illusory one. For each target currently assigned an Evil Eye die, you may describe a location visible to them or designate a square. Each target will briefly perceive you in that location, as if you had used the *major image* spell to create the illusory appearance. The images last until the end of your turn.

These targets have disadvantage on any checks made to disbelieve this effect, as per your Afflicted Reality feature.

Multiclass Witch

Should you wish to multiclass into a witch, you must meet the prerequisites, and you gain the proficiencies, listed below.

MULTICLASSING PREREQUISITES

Wisdom 13

MULTICLASSING PROFICIENCIES

Herbalism kit or one gaming set

Spell Slots

When determining your spell slots, add all of your levels in the witch class.

Witch Spells

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

Chill Touch
Friends
Light
Mending
Message
Minor Illusion
Poison Spray
Shillelagh
Thaumaturgy
True Strike
Vicious Mockery

1ST LEVEL

Animal Friendship
Bane
Charm Person
Command
Cure Wounds
Detect Evil and Good
Detect Magic
Detect Poison and Disease
Disguise Self
Dissonant Whispers
Entangle
Find Familiar
Hex
Inflict Wounds
Mage Armor
Ray of Sickness
Shield
Silent Image
Sleep
Tasha's Hideous Laughter

2ND LEVEL

Alter Self
Animal Messenger
Augury
Beast Sense
Blindness/Deafness
Blur
Calm Emotions
Darkness
Detect Thoughts
Enthral
Gust of Wind
Hold Person
Invisibility
Lesser Restoration
Levitate
Mirror Image
Misty Step
Pass Without Trace
Protection from Poison
Ray of Enfeeblement
Silence
Suggestion

3RD LEVEL

Bestow Curse
Blink
Clairvoyance
Conjure Animals
Counterspell
Dispel Magic
Fear
Feign Death
Fly
Gaseous Form
Major Image
Nondetection
Remove Curse
Vampiric Touch

4TH LEVEL

Arcane Eye
Blight
Compulsion
Confusion
Death Ward
Dimension Door
Dominate Beast
Greater Invisibility
Hallucinatory Terrain
Polymorph

5TH LEVEL

Commune with Nature
Contact Other Plane
Contagion
Dominate Person
Dream
Geas
Greater Restoration
Hold Monster
Insect Plague
Mislead
Modify Memory
Planar Binding
Rary's Telepathic Bond
Scrying
Seeming
Tree Stride

6TH LEVEL

Circle of Death
Disintegrate
Eyebite
Flesh to Stone
Harm
Mass Suggestion
Permanent Image
True Seeing

7TH LEVEL

Etherealness
Finger of Death
Mirage Arcane
Plane Shift
Project Image
Sequester
Symbol

8TH LEVEL

Animal Shapes
Antimagic Field
Control Weather
Dominate Monster
Feeblemind
Glibness
Mind Blank
Power Word Stun
Telepathy

9TH LEVEL

Astral Projection
Foresight
Gate
Power Word Kill
Shapechange
Time Stop
True Polymorph
Weird

EXPANDED SPELLS

If you're using *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*, add the following spells from that book to the witch's spell list.

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

Control Flames
Gust

1ST LEVEL

Beast Bond
Cause Fear

2ND LEVEL

Earthbind
Mind Spike

3RD LEVEL

Catnap
Enemies Abound
Life Transference

4TH LEVEL

Charm Monster

5TH LEVEL

Enervation
Negative Energy Flood

6TH LEVEL

Mental Prison
Soul Cage

7TH LEVEL

Power Word Pain

8TH LEVEL

Abi-Dalzim's Horrid Wilting
Maddening Darkness

9TH LEVEL

Mass Polymorph
Psychic Scream

OTHER SPELLS

If you are using spells from another source, consider adding any of the following to the witch spell list:

- Divination, Illusion or Enchantment spells
- Healing spells
- Spells which do psychic or necrotic damage
- Spells which cause a creature to change shape
- Spells which weaken or curse enemies
- Spells which affect beasts or plants
- Subtle natural effects, such as wind

Appendix A: Witchcraft Sorcerous Origin

If you do not wish to implement the witch as a new base class in your campaigns, this appendix provides an alternative: witchcraft as a sorcerous origin available to characters who take the sorcerer class. It's not quite the same, but it will give you many of the same abilities and a very similar-feeling character.

Witchcraft

Witches wield subtle magics. They dabble in all sorts of magic, combining effects that cloud the mind and confuse the eye with control over the plants and animals of the natural world and even the energies of life and death itself. Never flashy, they are nevertheless potent.

Skilled herbalists and folk healers, witches blend their magic with their craft to create magical brews.

Many witches don't know where their magic ultimately springs from. Some have made pacts with malign entities in a fashion similar to warlocks, but most merely learn to tap their inner potential under the tutelage of a senior witch. Some develop abilities with no such mentor. Witchcraft sometimes runs in bloodlines, but it does so haphazardly and unpredictably. Witches come from all walks of life.

Most witches adopt a simple, unassuming appearance that, with their subtle powers, causes many to underestimate them. A few, however, revel in the discomfort that their eerie magics cause and cultivate larger-than-life, practically monstrous appearances.

Witchcraft

You select your spells and cantrips from a unique list of witch spells. Witch's magic is subtle, with a strong affinity for enchantment, illusion, and necromancy, but crosses many of the usual divisions between spellcasters. While their spell list is smaller and less flashy than most sorcerers, they have access to some effects beyond the reach of even the most talented wizard. See "Witch Spells" below.

Additionally, certain powers are so ubiquitous to the witch that they are possessed by all witches. Add the following spells to your list of spells known at each indicated level. These spells do not count against your total number of spells known.

WITCHCRAFT BONUS SPELLS

Sorcerer Level	Spell
1st	<i>hex</i>
3rd	<i>suggestion</i>
5th	<i>fly</i>
7th	<i>polymorph</i>
9th	<i>scrying</i>

Bonus Proficiencies

You are proficient in one skill of your choice from arcana, deception, intimidation, medicine, or nature. You are also proficient with herbalism kits.

Witch's Familiar

You know the *find familiar* spell and can cast it as a ritual. You do not need material components for this spell. Add your proficiency bonus to your familiar's AC, as well as to all of its saving throws and any skills it is proficient in. Its hit point maximum equals its normal maximum or four times your sorcerer level, whichever is higher.

The bond between a witch and her familiar is abnormally strong. Most witches summon their familiar in the same form every time, and rarely dispel them. When a witch's familiar dies, the witch makes all concentration checks with disadvantage for 1 minute.

Witch's Brew

At 6th level, you gain the ability to create temporary concoctions that act as potions. During a short or long rest, you can expend a spell slot to cast any witch spell you know which targets only one creature into a flask of water. That flask becomes enchanted with the spell and acts as a temporary potion. You select any options at the time the brew is created, such as selecting the shape the target assumes when drinking a *brew of polymorph*.

When the brew is consumed, the creature who drinks it is affected as if you had cast the spell on them. You do not need to maintain concentration on brew effects.

You can have only one brew prepared at a time. If you create a second brew, the first brew loses its potency and reverts to a flask of mundane water.

Witch's Guise

Starting at 14th level, your affinity for magically altering your appearance becomes so strong that you can do so with barely a thought. You can cast *disguise self* as a bonus action without expending a spell slot. In addition to the normal effects of the spell, you can assume the appearance of any Tiny, Small, or Medium beast. Your statistics and abilities do not change in these shapes, though you do gain the creature's size, movement modes, and speeds, as well as the ability to breathe water if the shape possesses it.

Once you assume a beast shape using this feature, you can't do so again until you complete a short or long rest.

If you already know *disguise self* when you reach 14th level, you may select an additional spell to replace it.

Witch's Curse

Starting at 18th level, when you inflict Necrotic or Poison damage with a witch spell or cantrip, the damage decreases the target's hit point maximum by the same amount. This effect can be removed with a *remove curse* spell and otherwise lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

So... WHY NOT A WARLOCK?

The decision to build a witch as a sorcerous origin, rather than as a warlock otherworldly patron, really boils down to three things:

First, not all fantasy witches have made nefarious bargains with unnatural powers! Consider the witches of Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* series, for example, who wield magic that's similar to — but subtly different from — that of wizards. I really wanted to be as agnostic as to the origin of the witch's powers as possible, and warlocks are anything but that.

Second, the warlock class, with its d8 hit dice, simple weapon proficiency, and light armor proficiency feels far too martial for most fantasy witches, whose abilities in those regards feel much closer to a sorcerer or wizard.

Third, with their own unique spell list — and a subtle one at that — it felt important to give witches the sort of breadth of spellcasting available to sorcerers. Warlocks hit hard and fast, with a few spells at their highest levels, but then are reliant on their cantrips. Sorcerers bring more slots, of various levels, and the ability to create even more via sorcery points. It's a natural fit.

Appendix B: Design Notes (or, What Is This Nonsense?)

So, honestly, why bother with a witch at all? After all, Dungeons and Dragons includes plenty of spellcasting options already. What possible purpose does another serve?

The answer to that lies in the sources of inspiration for this class, which were basically fourfold: first, and far and away the most important, were the witches of Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* novels. The witches are just plain cool, and they fill a very interesting niche in a fantasy world: tied closely with common people, doing underappreciated gruntwork day-to-day but more than capable of rising to the occasion when the world is in danger. It's from Pratchett's witches that I got my design keywords for this class: *subtle*, *headstrong*, *tricky*. I knew that if I had witches throwing around fireballs, I'd missed the mark. Their affinity for healing and for nature magics, especially plants, animals, and weather, all come from Pratchett, and indeed my first draft of the class made it a subclass of the druid.

The second inspiration was the Verbená tradition in the original *Mage: The Ascension* game (and by extension, the real-world European paganism that inspired them). It's thanks to the Verbená that I began to focus in on exactly what witch magic does: it affects life and living things.

The third inspiration was a surprising one: the character Scylla in Myke Cole's (excellent) military fantasy series *Shadow Ops*. Magic in Myke's world blurs the line between spells and superpowers, and Scylla's "witch" powers all focus on entropy and decay. Combined with the focus on life from the Verbená, the idea of witches as handservants of entropy, directly manipulating the cycle of life and death, was born. It was a bit of an "ah-ha!" moment that brought together everything I wanted to do with the class from a lore perspective. It's also thanks to Scylla that witches have what offensive potential they do, in the way of necrotic damage spells.

The fourth is real-world folklore witches. Folklore on witches is surprisingly varied across the world, and I didn't want to adopt anything too specific to one culture or that steered the class too tightly in one direction (no eating children or making infernal pacts, for example). For the most part, this inspiration meant that witches had to have certain abilities to feel "witchy" enough: they *had* to be able to divine the future, they *had* to be able to brew potions, they *had* to be able to fly, they *had* to be able to curse people, they *had* to be able to change shape, and they *had* to have access to familiars. The bonus spells in the Sorcerer tradition (see Appendix A) are basically this list condensed to a handful of spells.

Looking at all of that, from a mechanical perspective, it was clear that I wanted a full (9th-level spells) caster, with weak hit dice and martial abilities, and a unique spell list. I wanted that spell list to be heavy on enchantment, illusion, healing, and divination (which would each inspire one of the subclasses), and to rely mostly on psychic and necrotic damage for the few damaging spells it had.

It was important that nature played a role, in the way of spells affecting beasts and plants, as well as a few weather-affecting spells that weren't too over the top. The folklore witch checklist got incorporated in to both the class features and the spell list.

Finally, Pratchett's witches showed up in my office and practically *demand*ed that I give them something to represent their resistance to magic through sheer stubbornness, which initially took the form of two strong save proficiencies that covered the sort of effects I had in mind, which was, uh, mildly unpopular with playtesters. Its revised replacement, Headstrong, cuts a lot closer to what I was trying to do and beefs up their otherwise lackluster 1st level features.

At that point, the only thing really missing was a unique core mechanic, and I wanted one that focused on debuffing, both to pump up the witch's cursing ability, which felt thin, and to give it a unique role. I first looked at that other fantasy roleplaying game (you know the one, where people look for trails) and their witch's curse features for inspiration, but they were entirely too showy for what I was trying to do. I then stumbled on the idea of turning the bard's inspiration feature inside-out. It was definitely the missing piece.

In any event, that's what got us where we are. I hope you find this glimpse behind the scenes enlightening, and I hope it makes it easier for you to make whatever modifications you feel are necessary to find a place for witches in your campaign world, because they deserve it, and I'm not just saying that because they have an athame to my throat as I type this (send help).

— Dave Rich



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