

# MARKS OF RENOWN



**O**ften the fame for great deeds and accomplishments can be a reward unto itself. Becoming known as the great dragon slayers or as the dispatchers of kings can fundamentally change how the world at large views an adventuring party. The Marks of Renown system entices PCs to create formal adventuring groups which grant benefits to their members based on their famous (or infamous) deeds!

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GMs can start using the Marks of Renown system by encouraging players to name their group and create an associated symbol and motto. Together the name, symbol, and motto will clearly indicate membership and any deeds done by members will be attributed to the group.

Whenever a member does something particularly noteworthy or impressive while blatantly identified as a group member the GM can choose to award a “Mark of Renown”. These marks are divided into 8 categories each reflecting the key aspect of the act. Multiple marks of the same type can be earned, with up to 3 tiers of cumulative effects for each category.

Belonging to a group with a Mark of Renown changes how people react and treat an adventurer so long as they’ve heard of the group. For example, belonging to a group who’ve earned a “Mark of Magic” gains one some respect amongst wizards and mystics who will be more inclined to grant access to libraries and other magical repositories.

## Reputation

The effects of Marks of Renown all rely on people recognizing the group. Each Mark of Renown adds to a group’s overall “Reputation”. When an NPC first encounters a member of the group, roll a d20. If the total is equal to or less than the group’s total number of Marks of Renown, the NPC knows of the group and their deeds. When the group encounters multiple NPCs at once (such as when they first arrive in a town or meet a new organization) roll only once for reputation.

Only creatures native to the Material Plane with an Intelligence of 6 or higher can recognize the group by reputation, though at the GM’s discretion a group’s reputation may reach across the planes or even to other worlds.

## Mark of Evil

Marks of evil are rewarded for particularly vicious or gratuitously evil acts committed by a group member. Examples include murdering the innocent, cruel and excessive torture of a captive, or the blatant sacrifice of others for personal gain.

**1 Mark of Evil.** Onlookers recognize the group as a dangerous element and they earn a begrudging respect from others on the path of darkness. Members of this group gain a +1 bonus on Charisma (Intimidation) checks made against creatures of a good alignment and a +1 bonus on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made against creatures of an evil alignment. Members of this group also suffer a –2 penalty on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made against creatures of a good alignment.

**2 Marks of Evil.** The group’s symbol sits comfortably amongst those of demons and is seen as a cursed hex by the common folk. Any

## ADVENTURING GROUPS

Giving players a group identity can be a great way to bring a table together and get everyone invested. The GM can gently encourage this within the game world in many ways—adventuring guilds, military platoons, merchant companies, pirate fleets, and street gangs are all group identities that can easily become vehicles for the group’s roleplaying. Give players a wide creative space and allow them to collectively decide their name, symbol, and motto along with any other group monikers (such as gestures or group colors).

non-member who recognizes the group’s symbol must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw to interact with any object it is emblazoned on. On a failed save the creature refuses to grasp or otherwise voluntarily interact with the object for the next minute. If a creature’s saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to this effect for the next 24 hours.

**3 Marks of Evil.** The group’s motto is associated with the foulest of acts and brings fear to anyone who hears it. As a bonus action, any group member may ominously say aloud the group motto. Any non-member within 20 feet that recognizes the group must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is frightened until the start of its next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to this effect for the next 24 hours.

## Mark of Honor

Marks of honor are rewarded when members keep to their bargains, word, or personal codes despite great hardships or loss. Examples include letting a villainous opponent live due to a personal code of honor or keeping a promise to a lord despite getting double crossed.

**1 Mark of Honor.** The group has earned a trustworthy reputation, making even a shady proposal sound clear and forthright. Members of this group gain a +2 bonus to Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to arrange deals, haggle, or otherwise convince others to trust their word for a bargain.

**2 Marks of Honor.** Amongst guards and other law enforcement the group has been identified as a force for law and order. Members of this group gain a +3 bonus to Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to influence law enforcement officers (who are more likely to trust the word of members of this group over the accounts of others).

**3 Marks of Honor.** The group's symbol is respected almost like a badge of office, conferring confidence in the eyes of officials. Members can use this group's symbol like a badge or stately seal of approval. With some convincing, many lawmen will allow the group member access to otherwise restricted areas, permit travel without papers, or other favors granted to the particularly honorable and trustworthy.

## Mark of Ingenuity

Marks of ingenuity are rewarded when members find ingenious solutions to difficult problems or otherwise subvert the GM's expectations in clever ways. Examples include destroying a vampire by shaping a tunnel to daylight or completely working around a clever trap with a cleverer solution.

**1 Mark of Ingenuity.** The group's reputation for quick thinking and ingenious problem-solving has garnered respect among academic circles. Members of this group gain a +2 bonus to Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to influence tinkerers, engineers, alchemists, and any other student of the sciences.

**2 Marks of Ingenuity.** The group's growing respect among the technical- and logically-minded grants members special consideration for their efforts. Most tinkerers, engineers, alchemists, and other scientists are willing to sell their items and services to the group's members at a 25% discount.

**3 Marks of Ingenuity.** The group's clever reputation dissuades most pickpockets and scammers—it is rare for even the smartest man in the room to make the best mark. Most thieves, highwaymen, and con-artists believe this group's members to be too much effort to deal with and do not attempt to steal from them. However, the group's reputation may invite professionals looking for a challenge.

## Mark of Magic

Marks of magic are rewarded when members either use or discover spells and items of great arcane power. Examples include discovering a legendary mystical item, completing a spell once thought impossible, or surviving a dangerous area rife with wild magic.

**1 Mark of Magic.** The group has delved into the arcane and mystical arts, garnering respect among wizarding circles. Members of the group gain a +2 bonus to Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to influence wizards and other practitioners of the arcane arts.

**2 Marks of Magic.** Most arcane researchers and masters now count the group alongside respected magical organizations. Arcane academies and libraries allow members of the group to research their books and knowledge freely.

**3 Marks of Magic.** The group has become a trusted authority on all magical matters, giving their expertise quite a lot of sway. Members of this group may use Intelligence (Arcana) checks instead of Charisma (Persuasion) checks when influencing wizards or discussing primarily magical issues.





## Mark of Nature

Marks of nature are rewarded when members have a major positive effect on the natural world. Examples include protecting a forest from attack, carrying out the will of a god of nature, or saving an ancient nature spirit.

**1 Mark of Nature.** The group has proven themselves as friends of the natural world, earning respect from druidic circles and their kin. Members of this group gain a +2 bonus to Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to influence druids and beasts.

**2 Marks of Nature.** Now honored as protectors of the wild, members of this group are often greeted kindly by scouts and guides. Most guides, rangers, and druids are willing to freely and safely take members of this group through otherwise dangerous wilderness.

**3 Marks of Nature.** The wilderness itself seems thankful for the group's deeds, providing for them whenever possible. Members of this group have advantage on any Wisdom (Survival) check made to locate food, water, or shelter in the wilderness. When a member of the group fails a Wisdom (Survival) check made to follow tracks, they may re-attempt the check once.

## Mark of Power

Marks of power are rewarded when members exhibit raw physical strength or overcome powerful opponents. Examples include defeating enemies with a significantly higher CR or surviving a situation that should surely have killed them.

**1 Mark of Power.** Tales of great feats of strength have given the group an imposing reputation. Members of this group gain a +2 bonus to Charisma (Intimidation) checks made against creatures with a lower CR.

**2 Marks of Power.** The group's motto is synonymous with feats of towering strength and the defeat of titans—uttering it alongside a demonstration of physical prowess is often enough to send men running. Members of this group may use Strength (Athletics) in place of Charisma (Intimidation) checks against creatures that recognize the group if they speak aloud the group motto.



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**3 Marks of Power.** Henchmen and hirelings quake in fear of the group's legendary strength. Creatures with a CR at least 5 lower than a group member's level must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw whenever making a melee attack against a member of this group. On a failed save, the creature must choose a new target or lose the attack.

## Mark of Righteousness

Marks of righteousness are rewarded when PCs exhibit virtues and uphold their morals above adversity. Examples include saving others without expecting reward, most forms of self-sacrifice, or fulfilling the will of a good god.

**1 Mark of Righteousness.** People recognize the good and virtue the group brings to the world. Members of this group gain a +1 bonus on Charisma (Intimidation) checks made against creatures of an evil alignment and a +1 bonus on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made against creatures of a good alignment. Members of this group also suffer a -2 penalty on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made against creatures of an evil alignment.

**2 Marks of Righteousness.** Those bearing the group's symbol are shown favor by most good temples and other holy places. After being shown the group's symbol temples are willing to shelter group members free of charge.

**3 Marks of Righteousness.** The group's litany of greatness allows members to speak with righteous authority. Members may use Intelligence (Religion) checks in place of Charisma (Persuasion) checks when influencing creatures of a good alignment.

## Mark of Skullduggery

Marks of skullduggery are rewarded when members exhibit sneaky or backhanded tactics to successfully deal with a problem. Examples include betraying their word for substantial profit, stealing something of great worth, or pulling off an impressive con.

**1 Mark of Skullduggery.** Word of the group's successes have proliferated down through the criminal underground. Members of this group gain a +2 bonus to Charisma (Persuasion) checks made against criminals.

**2 Marks of Skullduggery.** The group's motto has taken a permanent position in the common Thieves' Cant. Mentioning the group's motto can gain members access to most thieves' guilds, safehouses, or other black market organizations.

**3 Marks of Skullduggery.** The criminal world respects the group and the group's symbol wards off more thieves than the strongest lock. Any creature that recognizes the group's symbol is very likely to be dissuaded from stealing any object that bears it, fearing the repercussions from the group in the criminal underground.