

LANGUAGES REWORK

AN EASIER SYSTEM FOR LANGUAGES IN 5TH EDITION



CREATED BY

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PREFACE

WHY USE THIS REWORK

Players hate missing critical information when their characters can't read something in-game, and you can't always have the comprehend languages spell prepared. On the other hand, ask any DM, and they'll let you know handwritten calligraphy in made-up fonts can be a headache.

The purpose of the rework was two-fold, to make it easier for players and DMs alike.

PLAYER BENIFITS

- The ability to speak/understand additional languages
- Better return from your known languages
- Pre-assembled fonts for easy decoding handouts
- Adds opportunity for more diverse NPC and fun roleplaying

DM BENEFITS

- Easy rules for understanding additional languages
- Free downloadable fonts for all languages with written scripts
- Make handouts in seconds! Type your message, change the font, and print
- Adds opportunity for more diverse NPC and fun roleplaying

PLAYER HANDOUTS INCLUDED

We recommend printing out pages 10 to 17 for your players so they are able to decode any print outs you make in other languages. You can also find the [Full Color Version found here](#).

HOW IT WORKS

This rework puts all languages (spoken and written) into 11 major groups and 1 minor group for special exceptions. Each group is comprised of similar languages based on location, themes, and commonalities between the races that use them.

The reasons for a character to understand similar languages are boundless; backstory, skills, backgrounds, or other plot elements.

If a character tries to read, speak, or understand a conversational language in the same group as one they know, the DM can have a creative story, a character-based reason, or ask for a skill check to understand languages in that grouping.

Some example skill checks are listed below to help get you started.

EXAMPLE SKILL CHECKS

- **Arcana:** During your spell research, you learned additional scripts
- **History:** During your time in the library, you've studied other scripts
- **Insight:** Between the NPC's facial expressions and the broken conversation, you're able to communicate
- **Investigation:** Looking closer, you find similarities in the text
- **Perception:** The context from the few words you understand and the NPC's body language is enough to communicate
- **Performance:** Between a mixture of hand puppets and charades you're able to get your point across
- **Religion:** During readings of divine scripture, you've familiarized yourself with other scripts

TYPICAL DIFFICULTY CLASSES

Task Difficulty	DC	Task Difficulty	DC
Very easy	5	Hard	20
Easy	10	Very hard	25
Medium	15	Nearly impossible	30

LANGUAGE GROUPS

CONVERSATIONAL LANGUAGES

GLYPHS, RUNES, & SIGILS

Name	Spoken	Written	Sample Text	Font Used
Druidic	✓	✓	ᚠᚢᚱᚩᚫᚻ	Ophidian
Dunamis		✓	ᚠᚢᚦ	Hymmnos
Magi	✓	✓	ᚠᚢᚦ	Harpers
Thieves' Cant		✓	ᚠᚢᚦ	Beth Luis Nion + Fearn
Undead	✓	✓	LVMFRL	Sigali

GROUP DETAILS

The 12 different categories are as follows:

Astral	Elvin
Beastial 1	Heavens & Hells
Beastial 2	Mean & Green
Common Speech	Old Ones
Down Under	Smol
Dragon	Glyphs, Runes, & Sigils

ASTRAL

This group contains **Gith and Vedalken** both races trying to achieve a “higher state of being” or both coming from planes beyond the material realm.

BEASTIAL 1

This group contains three “monstrous races,” being **Gnoll, Leonin, and Naga**. These three were grouped since animals of the same species would be considered predators in a feral state.

BEASTIAL 2

This group contains three “monstrous races,” being **Aarakocra, Loxodon, and Minotaur**. These three were grouped since animals of the same species would be considered prey or non-violent in a feral state.

COMMON SPEECH

This group contains **Common, Halfling, and Mimicry**. The languages in this group are all based on English. While Halfling script is in English font, it does use a “shorthand” that not everyone can understand.

DOWN UNDER

This group contains **Undercommon and Krual**, both races that live underground or in caverns concealed by the darkness.

DRAGON

This group contains only one language being **Draconic**. While it may seem strange, dragons being a central theme in many campaigns keeping it secluded will help with balancing.

ELVIN

This group contains **Elvish and Sylvan**, both languages having roots tying to fey ancestry; it was an easy choice to put them together.

HEAVENS & HELL

This group contains **Abyssal, Celestial, and Infernal**. The group has languages of all the holy beings, fiends, and hell dwellers.

MEAN & GREEN

This group contains **Giant, Goblin, and Orcish**. While this group may initially seem like a strange pairing, the three could be green and usually portrayed as mean.

OLD ONES

This group contains **Primordial** and its four dialects **Aquan, Auran, Ignian, and Terran**. While Primordial has a written script, the four dialects do not. Therefore, it is up to DM interpretation if a player who speaks a dialect can understand the Primordial base script.

SMOL

This group contains **Dwarvish and Gnomish** since both races are, in fact, small and focus their time on inventions or innovations through different mediums.

GLYPHS, RUNES, & SIGILS

This group contains multiple scripts, some having a spoken form, while others are written only. The members of this group are **Druidic, Dunamis, Magi, Thieves' Cant, and Undead**.

Unlike the other 11 groups, players won't be able to make any additional checks or understand different languages in this group. Players will only be able to understand the languages of this group if explicitly listed on their character sheet.

HOMEBREW LANGUAGES

The following languages are optional and are not included in the official WoTC Cannon.

DUNAMIS

The ancient and esoteric magic symbols are called dunamis, based on potentiality and probability. Dunamis was discovered independently by several nations and explored to manage and control time, gravity, space, and fate. Based on [Matt Mercer's material from Critical Role](#).

MAGI

Magi is the magic symbols used by arcane scholars in ancient scrolls and scriptures to help document findings. You can't use Magi for spell casting, but many of the arcane sigils originate from Magi characters. This text is universally understood by those with a background, study, or derive their powers from the arcane arts. Such as but not limited to **Artificers, Bards, Sorcerers, and Wizards**.

UNDEAD

The language of those who cross over to the other side. Unknown to many mortals but regularly used among the servants of undeath. Undead text is universally understood by those with a background, study, or derive their powers from the dark arts or influences of necromancy. Such as but not limited to **Clerics, Warlocks, and Wizards**.

CODEX

ABYSSAL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ

CELESTIAL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ	ϙ

COMMON

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

DRACONIC

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ඇ	ආ	ඇ	ඉ	ඇ	උ	ඉ	ඇ	ඉ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඉ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඇ	ඉ

DRUIDIC

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ස	ࡁ	ࡂ	ࡃ	ࡄ	ࡅ	ࡆ	ࡇ	ࡈ	ࡉ	ࡊ	ࡋ	ࡌ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ࡋ	ࡃ	ࡄ	ࡅ	ࡆ	ࡇ	ࡈ	ࡉ	ࡊ	ࡋ	ࡌ	ࡍ	ࡎ

DUNAMIS

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ѡ	Ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ	ѿ

DWARVISH

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
X	ᛒ	ᚼ	ᛘ	ᛖ	ᚻ	ᚹ	ᚷ	ᚴ	ᛏ	ᛗ	ᛊ	ᚵ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ᛗ	ᛟ	ᛞ	ᚮ	ᛠ	ᛈ	ᛎ	ᚢ	ᚩ	ᛖ	ᛟ	ᛁ	ᛇ

ELVISH

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ȝ	ƿ	ƿ	ȝ	ȝ	b	ƿ	h	ȝ	ȝl	ƿ	tau	w
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ƿ	h	ƿ	ƿ	ƿ	ƿ	ȝ	ȝ	h	u	ƿ	ȝ	ȝ

GIANT

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ᚨ	ᛒ	ᚲ	ᛙ	ᛘ	ᛚ	ᛪ	ᛕ	ᚾ	ᛁ	ᛄ	ᚲ	ᛘ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ᛖ	ᛑ	ᛑ	ᛑ	ᚱ	ᛊ	ᛦ	ᚾ	ᚾ	ᛝ	ᛟ	ᛉ	ᛦ

GITH

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
↗	⤒	⤓	⤔	⤕	⤖	⤗	⤘	⤙	⤚	⤛	⤜	⤝
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
⤞	⤠	⤡	⤢	⤣	⤤	⤥	⤦	⤧	⤨	⤩	⤪	⤫

GOBLIN

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ҥ	Ҥ	ڶ	*	Ҥ	ڣ	ڣ	>	ی	ک	Կ	չ	Ճ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Ճ	Վ	Վ	Վ	Կ	Լ	Վ	Ճ	Ճ	Փ	Ւ	Ն	Ճ

GNOMISH

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ջ	Ւ	Ջ	Խ	Խ	Ջ	Ջ	Ջ	Վ	Ա	Ա	Ջ	Ջ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Ջ	Վ	Վ	Վ	Խ	Խ	Վ	Ջ	Վ	Ջ	Վ	Վ	Վ

HALFLING

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ᚨ	ᛒ	ᚚ	ᛞ	ᚚ	ᚚ	᚜	ᚠ	ᛁ	ጀ	ጀ	ጀ	ᛘ
ᚾ	ᛟ	ᛒ	ᚕ	ᚱ	ᛟ	ᛏ	ᚢ	ᚦ	ᚧ	ᛵ	ᛪ	ᛗ

INFERNAL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ᚨ	ᛖ	ᚚ	ᛏ	ᛖ	ᛚ	᚝	ᚔ	ᚚ	ᚚ	ᛖ	ᛖ	ᛘ
ᚾ	ᛟ	ᛖ	ᚕ	ᛖ	ᛖ	ᛏ	ᚢ	ᚦ	ᚦ	ᚦ	ᚦ	ᛗ

KRAUL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
ᚨ	ᛖ	ᚚ	ᛞ	ᛖ	ᛖ	᚜	ᚠ	ᚚ	ᚚ	ᚚ	ᚚ	ᛘ
ᚾ	ᛟ	ᛖ	ᚕ	ᛖ	ᛖ	᚝	ᚢ	ᚦ	ᚦ	ᚦ	ᚦ	ᛗ

MAGI

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ	Ⓖ	Ⓗ	Ⓘ	Ⓘ	Ⓚ	Ⓛ	Ⓜ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Ⓝ	Ⓞ	Ⓟ	Ⓠ	Ⓡ	Ⓢ	Ⓣ	Ⓤ	Ⓢ	Ⓣ	Ⓤ	Ⓥ	Ⓦ

MERFOLK

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ѐ	Ӯ	ӻ	Ӵ	ӵ	ӷ	ӹ	Ӹ	ӹ	ӻ	Ӷ	Ӹ	ӹ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӗ

ORCISH

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ƒ	ڦ	ڶ	ڻ	ڢ	ڦ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
ڙ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ	ڻ

PRIMORDIAL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ѐ	Ӣ	Ӯ	ӟ	Ӗ	Ӗ	Ӯ	Ӆ	Ӯ	Ӯ	Ӯ	Ӯ	Ӯ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Ӯ	Ӫ	ӫ	ӫ	ӝ	ӝ	ӝ	ӝ	ӝ	ӝ	ӝ	ӝ	ӝ

SYLVAN

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ҽ	Բ	Ը	Ժ	Ե	Ւ	Շ	Ջ	Ի	Ջ	Կ	Մ	Շ
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Ճ	Զ	Ծ	Ճ	Ճ	Ծ	Ւ	Ճ	Ճ	Ճ	Ճ	Ճ	Ճ

THIEVES' CANT

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
+	-	≡	⊤	≡	≡	#	+	≡	-	-	⊤	+
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
≡	+	#	≡	≡	#	≡	≡			#	#	#

UNDEAD

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
⊕	†	⊤	⊥	⊖	⊸	⊤	⊥	♀	⊤	⊤	⊸	⊥
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
⊖	○	⊥	✗	†	⊸	†	⊖	⊤	⊸	*	†	⊸

UNDERCOMMON

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
•	ς	▲	⠃	⠇	⠈	⠉	⠄	⠄	⠈	⠄	⠈	⠄
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
⠄	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀	⠀

VEDALKEN

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
-	⠇	⠄	†	'	⠇	⠄		'	⠄	⠄	⠄	⠇
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
⠇	⠄	⠇	⠄	J	⠇	†	'	⠇	⠄		⠄	⠇

CREDITS

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CHANGE LOG

- 7/25/22 Published Language Rework (B&W) [v1]
- 8/3/22 Published Language Rework (B&W) [v2]

SPECIAL THANKS

MIKE

I owe full credit for the original idea of having players be able to understand similar languages to you. Thank you for inspiring me with this fantastic idea. It turned out great and is already a fun addition to my home game with the family.

LACEY

You're simply the best! Thanks for being a great player and always asking questions to get me thinking. I appreciate your help proofreading this and picking out the fonts.

EXPANSIONS FOR EVERY OCCASION

We truly hope you enjoyed this expansion!

Families & Dragons is a collaborative group project to create new modules, expansions, and homebrews for 5th Edition D&D.

You can find more orginal content over at: <https://familiesanddragons.github.io>.