

PLANAR PROFESSIONS

What a body does isn't as important as who he is and what he knows - as long as he's good at his profession. High-up clerics, fighters, magic-users, and thieves (and their attendant subclasses) equally command the respect of those around them, regardless of their differences.

'Course, the trick is surviving long enough - and learning enough - to reach that point.

Prime characters are naturally allowed the full range of class options found on their Prime Material worlds. Planar characters are usually limited to the classes found in the Player's Handbook, unless a player presents a compelling argument to the DM to allow otherwise. The following sets forth a few general planewalker attitudes about the standard AD&D classes, and notes how they're different on the planes.

Clerics, Bards, and Druids

Most priests are treated with as much caution as paladins, since they're so close to their powers. The difference between clerics and druids is irrelevant to most, though druids may be a little more difficult to work into a planar campaign. Sometimes, bards find a warm welcome on the Upper Planes as jacks-of-all-trades or are despised on the Lower as useless fops.

Fighters

Found everywhere throughout the multiverse, fighters are possibly the most common sort of folks around. Though they haven't got the power of magic on their side, the best ones have a knack for surviving the nastiest situations. More important, they know when not to fight, and how to win a confrontation without ever lifting a sword.

Magic-Users and Specialists

The differences between generalist magic-users and specialists are practically nonexistent - it just doesn't matter to nonwizards. Obviously, each school of magic has its advantages and disadvantages over the others, but the real way that wizards can stand out from their peers is by showing they've got what it takes to make their spells useful on the planes. And since the planes themselves are so innately magical, they've really got to shine to prove themselves.

Monks

Monks are viewed as fighters who use their fists and feet as natural weapons. Their discipline and dedication usually earn them some measure of respect on The Planes of Law... and derision (or worse) on The Planes of Chaos.

Paladins

Planewalker paladins are not the headstrong "kill every evil thing they see" type. Berks with that attitude don't last long. Instead, these holy warriors are champions and defenders of their faith, carrying out the duties set before them from their power, its proxy, or some high-up priest. Also, since they're much closer to their deities, they're treated with above-average respect and awe - or extraordinary suspicion and fear.

Psionicists

Psionicists are basically wizards, as far as most planewalkers are concerned - although their highly trained minds are certainly worthy of respect in a place where the power of minds and beliefs can change the multiverse. A warning to over-eager psionicists, though: Plenty of planar creatures have mental powers as well, and are just as willing to brain-blast a sod into oblivion as they are to claw him to shreds.

Rangers

While Sigil ain't got much use for rangers, they're real savvy cutters out on a lot of the planes. Since rangers have to adapt to their environments, most of them find one area to call kip and stick to it. Rangers are usually most at home on the Upper Planes, given their alignment restrictions.

Thieves

On the Upper Planes they're cads and criminals; on the Lower, they're admired for their skills. 'Course, plenty of good-aligned thieves can prove themselves noble and honest - it just takes a bit longer for anyone to believe them.

Variant Classes

As for variants on classes that've developed on Prime Material worlds, they're viewed for the most part as nothing more than different ways of going about the same thing.

For some reason that planars can't fathom, primes have a way of deliberately limiting their full potential with strange restrictions, like the magic-users whose magic obeys the pull of the moons of Krynn or the defilers of Athas who destroy the land when they cast spells. In the planar point of view, the multiverse offers challenges enough; why hinder a body's abilities before he's even begun?



PLANEWALKER ARCHETYPES

Naturally, not every warrior is a simple fighter, and not every cleric is a benevolent healer; every cutter is different, with her own strengths and weaknesses. One way to individualize characters is through the use of character concepts. Characters who come to the PLANESCAPE setting from the Prime Material Plane (and therefore, any of the AD&D worlds) are a diverse lot; hailing from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures, with skills and equipment that reflects these far-flung origins. To account for this, all primes begin play with a background skill (PHB 38) that reflects their pre-adventuring past.

But what about the folks in Sigil? What about those bloods who have traveled some of the Great Ring, jaunted to and from the Inner Planes, and soared through the Ethereal - simply as a matter of course? Well, these characters are called planewalkers, whether they're fighters, magic-users, clerics, or thieves. The planewalker archetypes for each of the four basic character groups (warrior, wizard, priest, and rogue) are detailed below. Planewalkers still choose their class skills but do not choose a background skill for their character. Instead, each archetype grants one or more skills. It's recommended that native planar characters stick to these planewalker archetypes.

Note that these planewalker archetypes are different from factions, and that neither has any bearing on the other.

Planewalker Archetype Descriptions

Each planewalker archetype presented here is described and detailed individually, with an overview presented at the beginning of each section. In addition, each contains the following information:

Role

This section examines the role that characters created with the planewalker archetype play in the total scheme of things. But since the planes are unimaginably big and any class can fill any number of roles, these are generalized and a little vague.

Skills

Bonus proficiencies listed here are granted automatically to the player character, in addition to their class skills.

Special Benefits

Every planewalker archetype has advantages that make it worth dealing with the restrictions associated with the planewalker archetype. These benefits are presented here.

Special Hindrances

Each planewalker archetype has particular drawbacks, which are presented in this section.

Multiclass and Split-Class Characters

The DM may decide to allow multiclassed player characters may select a planewalker archetype for one of their classes, not both.

Example: A fighter/magic-user can either be a planewalker warrior or a planewalker wizard, as suits the character's nature.

Planewalker Priests (Bards, Clerics, and Druids)

Out on the planes, nobody's got to watch their backs more than priests. Sure, they've got a power backing them up, but that means they've got automatic enemies as well. A priest of Lathander is asking for a lot of extra trouble if he makes his way to Gehenna, just as a cleric of Morgion is going to have his hands full on Ysgard. That doesn't mean priests can't travel to realms of gods that oppose their powers - it happens all the time. Sometimes a blood's just got to do what he's got to do.

Depending on what plane they're on, priests are usually either the best or the least prepared of any planewalker. Planewalker priests know that their deities' power diminishes and increases depending on where they stand, and so they're prepared for these contingencies. A priest of St. Cuthbert named Henton was known for saying that while some of his spells worked only some of the time on some of the planes, a cudgel applied forcefully to a berk's skull worked anytime, anywhere.

Like other planewalkers, the real measure of a priest isn't so much what he can do as what (and who) he knows. Contacts are important to a planewalker priest, since he knows it's essential to remain well-lanned. Power keys are immeasurably helpful, but a body can't count on having them. In fact, planewalker priests have to learn not to count on their spells at all - they come and go with alarming regularity. Instead, scrolls and magical items become the priest's best friend, and in a fight, priests need to rely on weapons and normal combat skills.

Role

More so than their prime-material counterparts, planewalking priests are the direct representatives of their chosen deities. As they travel the planes, they act as the eyes, ears, and sometimes the manipulative hands of the powers they serve. As such, they develop relationships with folks throughout the Great Ring (and to some extent, the Inner Planes), making friends and contacts wherever they go.

Skills

Planewalker priests get Planar Survival (one plane) and Persuasion as bonus skills.



Special Benefits

Planewalking priests have two very different benefits. The first is simple and straightforward. Since they cannot rely on having divine spells to cast as they move about the planes, planewalker priests have honed their combat skills. On a plane where his spellcasting powers are diminished, a planewalker priest gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Second, planewalker priests have contacts scattered throughout the planes. The player should pick three planes where his character knows someone. These contacts may be friends, mere acquaintances, or even bashers that the priest knows only through mutual acquaintances. Nevertheless, they can be sources of information and help. The DM should determine the exact location and nature of these contacts, possibly creating them as full-fledged NPCs. These NPCs greet the priest with Goodwill (PHB, 61).

Special Hindrances

Planewalker priests are frequently called upon to serve their powers directly on missions throughout the planes. Planewalker priests must obey any command of the proxies of their deity, who commonly give them tasks.

Priests find themselves saddled with additional responsibilities and errands to run for their high-ups as they travel the planes. They also must keep a constant eye and ear on situations that may affect their power's domain or agenda.

Planewalker Rogues (Assassins and Thieves)

Whether cut-throat thieves, swashbuckling pirates, crafty scouts, or cold-blooded assassins, planewalker rogues are a mainstay of planar society (if such a thing exists). These individuals are found everywhere throughout the planes, the gatetowns of the Outlands, and Sigil.

Being sneaky - knowing how to hide, and how to slip into the shadows - is never a useless skill when a body's stomping grounds include the homes of creatures such as pit fiends, planetars, and slaadi. In fact, rogues are probably the most universally adaptable folk who make their way around the planes.

Role

While Sigil is full of cony-catchers, peel masters, and knights of the post, most planewalker rogues are interested in a little more than bobbing a gully for a handful of jink. They ply their trade in search of the big ride - the one job that will pay off with top-shelf rewards. These spivs live by intuition, instinctively choosing the best course of action.

Rogues have more ways of exercising their trade than the other classes. Certainly, some rogues fit the typical role of burglar-in-the-night or petty thief. Others choose the paths of assassins, bounty hunters, chant brokers, con men, fences, scouts, or spies. Regardless of how they apply their skills, however, rogues develop into masters of the chant. Since their profession naturally leads them to deal with the less savory side of society, they generally know what's really going on before more upright bashers do.

Planewalker rogues know that their Sleight of Hands skill (for example) isn't going to do them much good against tanar'ri that're looking to rip their heads off. But having learned the art of the peel, rogues can sometimes use their knowledge and fast talk to wriggle out of situations. A planewalker rogue dealing with that hypothetical tanar'ri might not be able to fight his way out of his predicament, but he could try to convince the fiend that he was too scrawny a morsel to bother with, or distract it by pointing out a rival tanar'ri, or warn the creature against a (fictitious) horde of oncoming baatezu.

Finally, rogues tend to use the cant more than other classes, since it arose partly from the need to disguise their dealings from the forces of law.

Skills

Planewalker rogues get Planar Survival (one plane) as a bonus skill and get a +2 bonus to all Deception and Persuasion skill checks.

Special Benefits

Planewalker rogues can use the Athletics and Acrobatics skills to move about in nonstandard or non-horizontal environments. The rogue has the same chance to wend his way through the mechanisms of Mechanus, climb along the jagged mountainsides of Gehenna, or navigate plains of broken volcanic glass on Baator and they do to maintain their balance on a narrow ledge or climb a brick wall. Non-rogues increase the DC of such checks by 5.

Special Hindrances

When facing off against the Harmonium, the Mercykillers, the Guvners, and other law enforcement organizations, planewalker rogues lose their bonus to Deception and Persuasion skill checks. Planar law officers are wise to the planewalker rogues' tricks, know their methods, and have heard it all before.

Planewalker Warriors (Fighters, Monks, Paladins, and Rangers)

Although most folks think of warriors as pretty common bashers, there's no denying that being handy with a sword is, well, handy. If a body's not a fighter himself, there's nothing better than having a strong arm he can trust watching his back.



It's also true that handing some berk a blade doesn't make him a true warrior. Fighters with real talent, some style, and a measure of skill are just as rare as any other type of blood.

Role

Planewalker warriors are experienced fighters who know that bashing someone with an axe doesn't solve every problem. They've heard tales and seen firsthand what the multiverse holds, and they know they can't defeat everything that comes along. There's always somebody, or something, tougher out there. Nevertheless, they have the skill and the style - and the knowledge - that enables them to get out of virtually any scrape.

Most planewalker warriors are at least a little interested in acquiring jink - economics of necessity an important concept in any cutter's mind - and often use their skills and strength to earn their keep. Those warriors looking for work can easily find employment guarding a merchant caravan through a portal, escorting wealthy travelers, or watching over someone's tower. Planewalker warriors are also hired to retrieve things - anything stolen, lost, or just something sought. (The "something" can be anything from a rare herb to a gate key to a yugoloth's true name.)

On Prime Material worlds, a typical warrior might be a former blacksmith, butcher, or barkeep. On the planes, most are professional warriors. Oh, they might have had to learn to sail a ship, build a wall, or some other such skill on one of their many adventures, but for the most part, they're not common sods who decided to don some armor and call themselves fighters.

While planewalker warriors can fight with any weapon they wish, most pay particular attention to their weapons. Many fighters feel that the weapon defines the warrior; others think that one sword's as good as another, since they'll all put a body in the dead-book in the hands of a skilled wielder. The former folks use flashier, ornate weapons that make a clear statement of origin or intent - such as a mace covered in horrible, leering faces forged on Pandemonium, or a clockwork crossbow from Automata.

Skills

Planewalker warriors get Planar Survival (one plane) as a bonus skill.

Special Benefits

Because planewalkers know the dark of various planar entities that can be hit only by magical weapons, they reduce the enchantment required by one step.

Therefore, a creature that can be hit only by +3 or better weapons can be harmed by a planewalker warrior with a +2 weapon. This ability does

not reduce the enchantment required below +1, so creatures that can be harmed only by magical weapons still cannot be struck by nonmagical arms.

Planewalker warriors begin the game with a simple portal key that opens a permanent portal connecting two locations of the player's choice.



Special Hindrances

Planewalking warriors can't start out the campaign with skills that don't directly aid them in as planewalker warriors. While Craft skills and most Profession skills are not acceptable, Animal Handling or Arcana might be justified.

Planewalker Wizards (Magic-Users and Specialists)

When wizards from the Prime Material come to Sigil, they're often disappointed to find that out on the planes, a wizard's just another berk. No special treatment, no particular status - just another magic using cutter. On the Great Ring, even a nupperibo has magical powers, and more folk have Magic Resistance than not (or so it seems), so prime wizards can pike their haughty attitudes.

Planewalker wizards, on the other hand, know the chant. They're in on the fact that it's not so much how many Fireballs a body can toss, but knowing when to cast a Fireball and when to use a Rock to Mud instead. More important, they know not to always rely on their spells, because magic is like a tiefling hireling - it won't always work just 'cause you want it to.

Wizards who've seen the different planes and traveled the Great Road know a little of the dark of things. They're privy to a few secrets that the average basher doesn't know. If planewalking wizards have a bit of attitude, it's not because of what they can do; rather, it's because of what they've seen, what they've done, and (most important) what they know.



Role

Planewalker wizards are not the studious book-bound types - they are men and women of action, playing vital roles in all things. Such wizards (whether mages or specialists) are usually catalysts and facilitators. These bloods can cause a fair amount of trouble with those spells of theirs, but it's hard to argue the usefulness of an Airy Water spell when a sod's been thrust into the Elemental Plane of Water.

Powerful wizards who know what they're doing are as dangerous as any fiend, so wizards're important facets of armies, thieving operations, and any other organization that might find itself in a dangerous situation (and that's everyone, friend).

They're also known for their ability to get things done quickly and efficiently. A Dimension Door'll get a basher past a sulfurous chasm right quick, and there's no better way to give a githyanki hunting party the laugh than with a Nondetection spell. Learn the tricks and a body'll soon be a planewalker worthy of respect.

Skills

Planewalker wizards get Planar Survival (one plane) as a bonus skill.

Special Benefits

Having dealt with the races and creatures native to the planes since their first days as apprentices, planewalker wizards had to cope with those creatures' Magic Resistance. These cutters have learned to overcome some of this resistance to their spells and get a +2 bonus to all Concentration Checks made to bypass a foe's Magic Resistance.

Special Hindrances

Although they learn the various magical variations from plane to plane, how to deal with spell keys, and ways to cope with the changing accesses to planar pathways, all planewalker wizards have one failing. There's always a plane that a body can't quite get the hang of - no matter what.

To reflect this, the DM and the player should decide on one plane (not a demiplane) where the planewalker wizard can't make any spell keys work. No matter what, the wizard will never be able to understand how magic on that particular plane works, even with the proper keys.

SPECIAL SKILL NOTES

Disable Device

Locks and mechanical traps found throughout Sigil and other places frequented by planars are well-made and specifically made to foil attempts to disable them. The DC to disable such devices is usually higher than those found on typical, Prime, worlds.

A lock of average quality, for example, would have a Disable Device DC of 10 on a Prime world. In Sigil, however, a lock of average quality, would have a Disable Device DC of 15.

