

MYSTIC

Mystics are a sub-class of cleric who examine and explore religion and philosophy through an unorthodox and even radical approach. Mystics are free-thinking students of the world, learning about their god, their life and their beliefs through independent exploration and self-discovery. Mystics stand athwart the traditional clerical hierarchy, seeking insight and revelation in new and/or unique ways. The goal of most mystics is to develop and establish a legitimate religious tradition based on their understanding of faith and divinity. Accordingly, mystics often work to recruit large followings through charismatic movements. Naturally, such movements are seen as a threat to the mainstream followers of the mystic's faith. Mystics are often disliked and even hunted for their heretical views and ways, although particularly successful and well-established mystics may reshape their faith or even found a new religion.

Mystics are holy men and women who begin study as traditional clerics. At some early point during their training, these clerics receive some insight to turn away from the traditional path of their faith and explore their relationship with their deity and world in some unorthodox manner. The mystic then leaves his or her traditional church to find meaning and faith alone. Although mystics remain devoted to their god, they interpret their relationship and the means of developing it differently than their more-traditional clerical brethren.

Mystics worship the same gods as clerics, but do so in some different way. Perhaps the mystic concentrates on a single aspect of the deity or interprets the commandments of the faith in a new light. Some mystics value non-traditional ethics and alignments than their god. A few mystics even experience their gods in a radically different manner, emphasizing the antithesis of traditional worship or honoring a variety of deities from different pantheons but with a common manifestation or portfolio. Some mystics venerate a concept of divinity, such as healing, rather than a specific, anthropomorphized form, such as Apollo, Diancecht, or St Pelinor. The theme is that mystics do things their own way.

For example, a mystic of Apollo may worship him as only a god of archery and nothing else. Such a mystic would gain special archery-based spells, but would lose many spells dealing with divination, healing, and the sun, Apollo's other traditional portfolios.

As another example, a mystic of Aphrodite may worship her as the goddess of love, but instead of just romantic love, the mystic may see his faith as the love of all creatures. Such a mystic might well be lawful good and interested in helping and healing others. This mystic would avoid killing and would instead preach to others the need to love all beings.

Likewise, a mystic of Thor may venerate him as the embodiment of nature and weather. Such a mystic would be very druidic in her outlook on life, but would focus of the natural phenomena of wind and rain and snow rather than plants and animals. This mystic should be a true neutral hermit, avoiding others to experience the primal power of her deity.

Players are allowed a fair amount of license when creating mystic characters, but in all cases, they should carefully and repeatedly consult with the DM regarding the parameters of the mystic's religious interpretations. Not all interpretations of a god should be allowed; mindless mystics of Athena or cat-hating mystics of Bast are definitely inappropriate. Mystics are usually of chaotic alignment, although mystics of all alignments are possible. In most cases, a mystic's alignment will be the same as his clerical counterparts'. In some cases, one alignment step leeway or an alignment allowed to general worshippers may also be appropriate for a given mystic. In general, mystics may be of any alignment; the majority are chaotic (50%) and few are evil (less than 5%). Evil mystics are rare since such clergy tend to be less philosophical and introspective.

Because the rules and dogma of their faith do not bind mystics, they are much more flexible than traditional clerics. At the same time, since mystics must develop their own understanding of the cosmos with little outside aid, mystics have less access to higher level spells and training than other priests. In many ways, a mystic spends much more of his energies developing his personal faith, pondering questions of philosophy and studying the belief systems of others. Likewise, since mystics do not have a large hierarchy to recruit worshippers nor a large pool of existing believers, mystics must learn to inspire faith and create converts among (sometimes hostile) unbelievers. Mystics are known, in fact, for establishing charismatic movements that may ultimately engulf their parent religion.

The prime requisites for mystics are wisdom and charisma. Mystics must have a wisdom of at least 13 and a charisma of no less than 9. Mystics who possess a 16 in both attributes receive a +10% experience bonus. Unless there is an excellent reason to the contrary, all good mystics can turn undead while all evil mystics can control undead. Neutral mystics should gain an additional religious "liberty" of equal power (see below). Mystics use the same combat and saving throw table as clerics, but roll only a d6 for hit points. Due to their training in the metaphysical, psionically-endowed mystics may also roll a d6 for psionic strength instead of a d4. Mystics are overwhelmingly (over 95%) human, although there have been examples of half-elven mystics. Theoretically, any race capable of producing clerics can also have mystics, although non-human mystics are rare in the extreme and usually limited to racial gods. In general, mystics conform to all the same rules as clerics, except where noted.

A mystic approaches the cosmos with a unique perspective. Accordingly, each mystic is a distinct individual, a mini-cleric class, so to speak. The PC and DM need to work together to create such a mini-class using one of two templates to work from, either that of a cleric of a specific god (Thor, Ra, Zeus, etc) or a generic cleric (à la the PH1). If a mystic is based on a cleric of a specific deity, then the mystic enjoys all the same benefits and restrictions (spheres, weapons, armor, special abilities, etc) as a traditional cleric, except as noted in this article. If a mystic is based on a generic cleric, then the mystic gains four major and four minor spheres, power over undead, use of a limited weapon set (similar in scope and power to "all blunt weapons"), and use of shield as well as any kind of armor. Both mystic

templates, however, also allow up to three "liberties" -- three special dispensations with regard to skills, talents, abilities, and/or spheres that reflect the mystic's unique experience of divinity. Examples of liberties include: use of a forbidden weapon, access to spells of a non-standard sphere, or special abilities not normal for clerics of the god in question. Each liberty that the mystic receives over-and-above those granted to a traditional cleric must be offset with a corresponding "restriction". Some examples of restrictions include: severe weapon restrictions (as a mage), armor restrictions (limited or no armor), and limited access to spells of "standard" spheres.

The fundamental structure of the mystic character class is one of checks and balances. Not all liberties and restrictions are equal; quite clearly being forbidden from wearing any armor is a much more severe limitation than being allowed to use a long bow and arrow. Accordingly, liberties and restrictions have been broken down into three categories: minor, moderate, and major. Two minor liberties/restrictions are equal to one moderate one; two moderate ones are equal to one major one.

LIBERTIES

RESTRICTIONS

MINOR:

Swap one minor sphere for another
Gain minor clerical ability (feather fall or infravision)
May use unusual weapon (if most allowed)
May alter a minor tenant of dogma (with DM's approval)

Must protect and/or obey a specific animal or plant
Must eat a specific plant or animal each day
Must avoid destruction of property
Must wash each day
Must tithe 10% of all treasure
Can't use most weapons (as mage, if most allowed)
Can't kill helpless beings (sleeping, unconscious, etc)
Can't wear a certain color
Can't touch a certain animal (rabbit, horse, dog, etc)
Can't sleep indoors
Can't face a certain direction
Can't look in a mirror
Can't kill anything natural (horse or hamster, but hydra ok)
Can't eat meat (or grains or plants)
Can't drink alcohol
Can't cut hair

MODERATE:

Swap one major sphere for another
Swap one major sphere for two minor spheres
Gain bonus minor sphere (DM's approval)
Gain moderate clerical ability (healing or protect from evil)
May use unusual weapon (if few allowed)
May use a shield
May wear any armor (if limited allowed)
May alter a major tenant of dogma (with DM's approval)

Must make daily offerings/sacrifices
Must wear a certain color
Must avoid killing
Must always grant mercy
Must protect children
Must tithe 30% of all treasure
Must not carry more wealth than can use/carry
Must confront "wrong" religious teachings
Can't have more than 5 magical items
Can't use most weapons (as mage, if any allowed)
Can't have sex
Can't use a shield
Can't wear armor (if limited armor allowed)
Can't fight undead, dragons, human, giants, etc
Can't kill anything sentient
Can't touch gold
Can't use scrolls
Can't lie
Can't strike first blow of violence

MAJOR:

Gain bonus major sphere (DM's approval)
Gain major clerical ability (shape change)
May wear any armor (if none allowed)
May worship an additional deity (each with DM's approval)

Must make daily offerings of valuables/living things
Must heal any sentient being
Must always tell the full and absolute truth (no omissions)
Must tithe 90% of all treasure
Can't use any weapon (if any allowed)
Can't wear armor (if any armor allowed)
Can't use anything made of dead animals or creatures
Can't use magical items
Can't kill anything
Can't touch the dead
Can't use metal

If a mystic violates a restriction, the mystic has sinned and will lose spells and abilities accordingly, just as a cleric who turns against his religious restrictions. In most cases, a simple atonement should restore the mystic's status, although for serious transgressions (against major restrictions), a long and/or arduous quest may be required.

A mystic should **NOT** gain additional powers and abilities above and beyond those of traditional clerics worshipping the same or similar deities. Mystics are not intended to be "power-house" clerics, able to ignore normal divine restrictions or gain extra-special powers. Likewise, mystics are not supposed to be more powerful than traditional priests. The role of the mystic is to experience religion in a new, unique, and different manner. If a player attempts to use the flexibility of the mystic class to circumvent the restrictions of standard clerics or to create a super-priest, the DM should immediately take a very heavy and active hand. In general, a mystic should lose a little something for every liberty he or she gains; the checks and balances of this class should always favor the cleric, not the mystic. Again, not all ideas for mystics are appropriate.

Mystics have the same basic weapon restrictions as their traditional clerical counterparts. Mystics are allowed, however, to begin play proficient in any weapon so long as that weapon is within the scope of the mystic's defined faith. This non-standard weapon should be considered one of the mystic's three religious "liberties". Thus a mystic of Zeus could be proficient with a bow since the arrows it fires represent bolts of lightning. Likewise, a mystic of Thoth might use a crossbow as it is a weapon reflecting learning and technical skills. Additional weapons of proficiency gained due to level may likewise be non-traditional, so long as the same theme is continued (the mystic of Zeus could NOT choose a hand axe, but another slender, lightning-bolt shaped missile weapon would be acceptable). In all cases, the DM is the final arbitrator of whether an unusual weapon is appropriate or not. Mystics begin with one less weapon of proficiency than clerics (thus usually only one weapon) and the same number of non-weapon skills (usually three), gaining additional weapon skills and non-weapon proficiencies just as clerics of the same level.

Mystics, being less involved in martial pursuits, often have stricter armor restrictions than clerics. A mystic's goal is to explore the world, both material and spiritual, not to engage in war. Accordingly, most mystics are more limited in their use of armor and/or shields than a traditional cleric of the same god. This is not a requirement, merely a common restriction taken by mystics. Naturally, those rare mystics devoted to a deity of war or mass destruction should wear any sort of armor, although this would be considered a religious "liberty" if traditional clerics of the same god cannot also wear armor of any sort.

All mystics begin play with the non-weapon skills of meditation and philosophy. At least one hour of meditation is required each day for mystics to regain their spells. Only by meditating upon the ethical questions of life can a mystic perfect his faith and his relationship with his deity. Because of this open-mindedness and willingness to understand the views of others, mystics usually have no religious objections to witches. At the same time, however, unlike traditional clerics, mystics have no special resistance to witchcraft.

With regard to divine phenomena (including divine intervention), mystics should NOT be considered members of the clergy; because of their non-traditional approach, their link to the divine is more tenuous than that of other priests. Mystics are aware of this and accept this as yet another trial to test their faith and devotion.

Since mystics spend so much of their time delving into the mysteries of themselves, their world and their deity, rather than simply accepting the teachings of their faith, mystics advance much more slowly than traditional clerics. At a given level, however, mystics have the same number of spells available to them as traditional clerics. Mystics also use the same spell lists as their traditional counterparts. Because of their broader training and more open-minded approach, however, mystics may also learn prayers that mimic certain spells from other classes. Each time a mystic advances an experience level without gaining a new level of spells (i.e. 2nd, 4th, 6th, etc), through meditation and study, a mystic may add any one non-traditional spell of any level available to the mystic to the mystic's repertoire of prayers. Druid and shaman spells may be taken at the same level. Witch, wizard, and specialist spells may be taken as if they were one spell level higher. In all cases, these duplicated spells must reflect some aspect of the mystic's deity and faith.

For instance, a mystic venerates Loki as a god of fire and chaos. The mystic achieves 6th level and chooses to learn the third level druid spell *protection from fire*. Since this spell is third level for druids, it is also third level for the mystic. Next, the mystic wants to learn the third level mage spell *fireball*. Since this is a wizard spell, for the mystic *fireball* would be a fourth level spell. Thus, the mystic must wait until achieving 8th level to gain this spell. Under no circumstances should this mystic be allowed to learn spells such as *feather fall*, *color spray*, or *charm person or mammal* as none of those spells have anything to do with fire or chaos.

The flexibility of mystics does not come without a price. In exchange for their greater selection of spells, mystics lose access to the highest levels of magic. For purposes of spells granted, the mystic's deity should be considered one category lower. Thus, whereas greater gods can normally grant spells up to 7th level, for mystics the god may only grant spells of levels 1st through 6th. In the case of demigods, the mystic's god could only grant free access to spells from level 1st through 4th. In those rare cases where a mystic gains access to a sphere not in keeping with his specific deity, only 1st and 2nd level spells from this sphere are gained (those powered by faith alone).

Mystics who worship multiple gods have a few additional issues to consider. First, only closely allied gods, whether by portfolio or by pantheon, will allow a mystic to venerate them both. Second, the mystic must live within the restrictions of both faiths, thereby automatically making certain combinations impossible. If cases of two sets of restrictions, the mystic must naturally observe the more limited set. Third, members of both clergies will see the mystic as

a heretic and react accordingly. Because of the diversity of deities, the mystic may enjoy access to additional spells and/or spheres, choosing from any available, but in exchange the mystic's highest level of spells will be 5th from any worshipped deity.

Mystics who worship a customized or non-anthropomorphized deity are likewise limited. Generally, unless there are one or more divine figures with similar abilities willing to sponsor the character, such mystics are limited to 5th level spells. These mystics also are unlikely to receive their spells on other worlds.

Mystics have the same chance to successfully use higher level spells from scrolls as traditional clerics. However, if a mystic unsuccessfully casts a scroll, the chance of a harmful or reversed effect is doubled -- usually manifested directly by the mystic's god or that of an appropriate divine party in order to punish the mystic for "stepping out of line".

As a mystic advances in level, his faith strengthens. The confidence and inner strength this brings further enhances the charisma of the mystic. Beginning at 3rd level, mystics gain a +1 to their charisma score when dealing with members of their own faith whether conventional or not. This bonus increases by another +1 for each additional three levels the mystic gains. Although in general a mystic receives a -10% reaction penalty when dealing with orthodox members of his faith (clerics, paladins, and/or champions), in the case of higher level mystics this is not much of an issue. Likewise, for every three such bonus points to charisma, a mystic gains a general +1 bonus to his charisma when dealing with any being that respects faith or religious conviction (nearly any member of a sentient species in the Dnd universe).

Like clerics, mystics receive experience points for successfully attracting religious followers. Because of the unconventional and charismatic nature of a mystic's religion, attracting converts is especially important in order to establish the mystic's interpretation of faith as religiously legitimate. Therefore mystics earn double the normal amount of experience for successfully recruiting new members to the faith.

An important part of a mystic's personal development and spiritual growth includes exploration and experimentation with the metaphysical. At first this exposure is limited to philosophical and theoretical exploits, but as the mystic advances in level he learns a few practical applications, always in keeping with the tenets of his deity. These "gifts" manifest as divinely powered, spiritual versions of psionic disciplines. The mystic is NOT psionic, but instead has learned a method of achieving the same effect through faith and insight. These gifts are ultimately magical and accordingly can be hampered in the same way as any other divinely-granted, magical blessing (*anti-magic shell*, falling from grace, etc). Beginning at 6th level, once a day a mystic is able to duplicate the effects of a specific minor psionic discipline. Once chosen, this discipline may not be changed and must be in keeping with the mystic's faith. The discipline functions at a level of mastery equal to half the mystic's current level of experience (round up) and is powered by psionic points equal to twice the mystic's level. For every three additional levels the mystic gains, the mystic is able to employ his metaphysical devotion one additional time per day (twice at 9th, thrice at 12th, etc). In addition, upon achieving 12th level, the mystic gains a second minor discipline which likewise operates once per day and advances as above (twice at 15th, thrice at 18th, etc). At 18th level, the mystic gain a major discipline which otherwise conforms as the other two.

Below are some sample mystics which should be used as models for new PCs.

Example #1: Androgoth is a mystic of Zeus. Rather than venerate Zeus as the god of lightning and the heavens, Androgoth worships Zeus as the great Sky-Father -- Androgoth's Zeus is a deity of male parenthood. Accordingly, Androgoth's spheres and abilities are a little different than those of his traditional clerical brethren. Androgoth loses access to lightning spells (major restriction) and weather/air spells (major restriction) as well as the ability to cast lightning bolts (moderate restriction). Androgoth gains, however, creation as a minor sphere (moderate liberty, to reflect fatherhood) as well as death as a minor sphere (moderate liberty, to reflect the creation of life) -- but only spells up to 2nd level in any case. Because of the rules of the Greek pantheon (only Hades normally has access to necromantic spells), Androgoth must be VERY careful when using his necromantic spells and only use them in ways closely in keeping with the creation of life and fatherhood. To do otherwise would be very dangerous; either Zeus or Hades would punish Androgoth directly for a transgression of animating or speaking with the dead. To offset the rest of his restrictions, however, Androgoth is allowed the power to polymorph at 1st level and further it is upgraded to shape change, although the form must always be male and virile.

Example #2: Gabrielle is a mystic of light and healing. Instead of worshipping a single god, she venerates all gods of light and healing, including Apollo, Vishnu, St Pelinor, Amaterasu, and Balder. Rather than follow the tenets of a single faith, Gabrielle may behave as a "generic" cleric with four major spheres and four minor spheres. She chooses healing, death, good, and sun for her major spheres and creation, divination, protection, and time for her minor spheres. Since Gabrielle feels that the taking of life is wrong, she chooses the moderate restriction of "must avoid killing" and the minor restriction of "mage weapons only". In exchange for these restrictions, Gabrielle can lay on hands as a paladin (moderate liberty) and is immune to disease (minor liberty). Naturally, when Gabrielle gains her pseudo-psionic discipline, she will gain either healing (cell adjustment) or luminance (create light).

Example #3: Adama is a mystic of Marduk, but focuses on Marduk's role as the god of magic. Adama loses access to combat (major) and war (moderate) and is limited to mage weapons (moderate). In exchange, Adama gains access to 1st and 2nd level mage spells as cleric spells of two levels higher (major), the ability to read mage scrolls (moderate), and is either no longer restricted in dealing with non-humans which do magic (minor, ignoring dogma) or is not required to treat females poorly (minor, ignoring dogma). Some pseudo-psionic abilities Adama might develop include detecting magic or reading minds (ESP).

Example #4: M'kumba is a mystic of "the Healing Earth-Mother". His beliefs mirror those of many tribal religions as well as certain deities (Gaea, Tiamat, and Ninhursag). M'kumba chooses animal, earth, healing, plant, and weather for his major spheres and good, protection, and travelers for his minor ones (earth is a single elemental sphere and therefore counts as a minor). M'kumba's alignment is good, so he gains the power to turn undead. He also must choose a restricted group of weapons, in this case those made without forged metal. As a moderate restriction, M'kumba limits himself to non-metal armors (as a druid) as well as determines that ferrous metal disrupts his spells and abilities (another moderate restriction). Since the Earth-Mother holds her children with both arms, M'kumba may not use a shield (only a minor restriction, given the already limited armor and use of metal). Finally, as a champion of the living world, M'kumba must protect nature and the environment (much like a druid) and also destroy undead and similar abominations of nature whenever possible (each a minor restriction). This gives a total of three minor restrictions and two moderate ones. The abilities M'kumba chooses are empathic healing (he literally takes on the damage of those he heals, minor), regeneration at one hp per hour when resting "in the embrace" of the earth (limited to double his level per day and precluding activity, moderate), and the benefits of a prayer when in contact with the ground (dungeons and streets would be okay, but taverns and castles would not, major). Pseudo-psionic abilities M'kumba might manifest include empathy or healing (cell adjustment).

MYSTIC (CLERIC) TABLE I

Experience Points	Level	d6 for Hit Points	Disciplines (#/day)			Charisma Bonus	Level Titles
			Minor	Minor	Major		
0 2,250	1	1					Aspirant
2,251 4,500	2	2					Seeker
4,501 9,000	3	3				+1	Initiate
9,001 19,500	4	4				+1	Acolyte
19,501 41,250	5	5				+1	Student
41,251 82,500	6	6	1			+2	Visionary
82,501 165,000	7	7	1			+2	Adept
165,001 337,500	8	8	1			+2	Teacher
337,501 675,000	9	9	2			+3 (+1)	Holy Man (Woman)
675,001 1,012,500	10	9+2	2			+3 (+1)	Guru
1,012,501 1,350,000	11	9+4	2			+3 (+1)	Prophet
1,350,001 1,687,500	12	9+6	3	1		+4 (+1)	Prophet
1,687,501 2,025,000	13	9+8	3	1		+4 (+1)	Prophet
2,025,001 2,362,500	14	9+10	3	1		+4 (+1)	Prophet
2,362,501 2,700,000	15	9+12	4	2		+5 (+1)	Prophet
2,700,001 3,037,500	16	9+14	4	2		+5 (+1)	Enlightened Prophet
3,037,501 3,375,000	17	9+16	4	2		+5 (+1)	Enlightened Prophet
3,375,001 3,712,500	18	9+18	5	3	1	+6 (+2)	Divine Prophet

+337,500 experience points per level of experience beyond 18th.

Mystics gain 2 h.p.s per level after 18th.

Notes on the creation of mystics:

Mystics form the basis of all real-world religions. For the modern gamer, the archetype of the mystic is either a prophet, a heretic/reformer, or a new-age spiritualist. Real-world mystics of widely varying traditions have similar experiences and beliefs, thus supporting the concept of an over-arching unity of religious vision through mystical discovery. It is important for the DM to support this coherent cosmology, however it is constructed in the game universe.

Unlike other character classes, the DM must take a very active role in the creation and development of a mystic. It is deceptively easy for a "rule lawyer" to transform a mystic into an extra-potent priest. The goal of the class, however, is for players to explore role-playing and developing non-traditional but cosmologically-valid clerical characters. Accordingly, this class is not suitable for all campaigns.

Under NO circumstances should a mystic character "invent" a new religion; that would make them religious charlatans. The theme of the true mystic throughout the world seems to involve devout individuals having a personal crisis of faith, the resolution of which forces a re-examination of the mystics perceptions of the cosmos as well as cultural and religious beliefs. The result of this synthesis of ideas is a new faith grounded in personal discovery and spiritual insight. Mysticism by its very nature is a syncretic philosophy.