

# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

## GUIDE TO Hell

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*My Dearest Niko,*  
After several weeks of searching my archives, I found the document that you requested. It proved to be so old and decrepit that I have simply copied over the relevant sections. I believe you'll find it quite interesting, as it confirms several of your suspicions about the archfiend Asmodeus and the obscure figure of Ahriman. Remember, my dear, that dread Asmodeus is the Lord of Lies, so I would not risk my career on the veracity of this document. Should you find corroboration, I hope I shall be the first to know!

*Yours,  
Chrystos*

Sending their coils out into the endless chaos, Jazirian and Ahriman created the first ring, so establishing a fundamental principle of the planes. When Ahriman took Jazirian's tail in his mouth and she did the same with his, they demarcated the plane now known as the Outlands. Since this plane was created by the interaction of Law and Chaos, and was bordered by both Good and Evil, it became the plane of true neutrality. With the Outlands defined, the other planes fell in around it, creating what became known as the Great Ring. This construction—a central plane of neutrality with sixteen other planes of all alignments arrayed around it—is popularly known as the Outer Planes.

Jazirian and Ahriman's ouroboros had instituted the unity of rings already, establishing the importance of rings in planar geography and philosophy. The Twin Serpents then turned their attention to the other laws that would rule the planes. In honor of their triple aspects—Law, Good, and Evil—the serpents established the law of threes, decreeing the importance of the number three in all spheres. After applying this law, they decided they needed another law to complete their triumvirate. Both agreed they should define the center of the universe, about which they

## Serpents of Law

Being a Treatise on the Cosmic Serpents, the Birth of the Outer Planes, and the the Fall of Ahriman.

The universe, at its birth, was little more than swirling chaos. A primordial soup of infinite possibilities, the cosmos was both everything and nothing. Through some unknown process, forms coalesced out of the chaos, including the planes themselves and those beings later known as gods. Some of these newborn powers reveled in the chaos, while others abhorred it. The conflict between these two groups, between Law and Chaos, defined the planes and the laws that they would obey.

The mightiest of Law's champions were the Twin Serpents. These Cosmic Serpents expressed the duality of Law, and were unstoppable when they worked together. Jazirian, winged and feathered, dedicated herself to the cause of good, while Ahriman, scaled and forked of tongue, embraced the darker path of evil. Despite their differences, they were first and foremost agents of Law.





would remain coiled. Despite the clear advantages of choosing the Outlands, a place already given over to neutrality, Jazirian pushed for Mount Celestia, while Ahriman agitated for the inverted mountain of Baator.

For the first time, the Twin Serpents disregarded the importance of law. Ahriman wanted the plane of law and evil to have pride of place, while Jazirian felt the same way about the home of law and good. The two Cosmic Serpents struggled back and forth, neither willing to concede the point in the interest of law. The Great Ring shook as the two serpents rocked the foundation of the Outer Planes. With Jazirian pulling toward Heaven and Ahriman straining toward Hell, the two serpents tore themselves apart.

Jazirian, free at last from her evil consort, flew up to Mount Celestia, also known as the Seven Heavens. Her tail, its tip bitten off by her rival, scattered blood among the Upper Planes. Where each drop landed, a couatl sprang up fully formed.

Meanwhile, Ahriman, lacking the wings of Jazirian, fell into the Pit of Baator. The fall was long and deposited the great serpent on the lowest level of the

Pit. He too bled as he fell, and his tainted vitae gave birth to the devils of Baator. Ahriman, damaged from his fall and embittered from his struggle with Jazirian, embraced these dark offspring as his own.

With the unity of law broken, no center of the universe was chosen, and so it has remained. The planes, envisioned by the forces of law as bordered and finite, now stretched on into infinity. Paradoxically, the lack of a center became the embodiment of the third law the Twin Serpents desired—a nod to chaos in an orderly universe.

Both Jazirian and Ahriman were weakened by their struggle. They had invested a great deal of their power in defining the Outer Planes and were much diminished in the aftermath of their battle. So it was that the other gods usurped them, founding pantheons and spreading their influence throughout the planes. But neither Jazirian nor Ahriman has passed beyond, as much as the multiverse would like to forget them. One day, a force of darkness may erupt from the Pit of Baator, and only Jazirian would stand in the way of the utter annihilation of the cosmos. Pray that day does not come.





## Introduction

The concept of Hell has been around for a long time. Nearly every human culture has a version of it, from Sheol in ancient Judaism to the Yomi of Japanese Shintoism to the more familiar Hades of the ancient Greeks. Views varied on the purpose of Hell. To some cultures, it was simply the place of the dead, while to others it was a place of torment for the damned. The Buddhist Hells were certainly a place of torture, but such abuse was meant to cleanse the soul before its reincarnation. Christian Hell, on the other hand, is the final destination of the damned, where they will spend all of eternity burning in the flames of perdition.

But hey, this is gaming, right? Theology is perhaps best left at the door. The purpose of this book is to explain what Hell means in the AD&D® game multiverse and to provide advice and rules for incorporating the infernal into your campaign. So let's be clear from the outset: What follows is fiction. It is not a guide on how to do anything in the real world concerning devils.

### Hell in the AD&D Game

There is no dominant religion or pantheon in the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, but there is a Hell, originally called the Nine Hells and later known as Baator. What is Hell's place in the cosmology of the planes, and how does it correlate to religion at all? Those answers relate back to the Outer Planes and what they represent.

The Outer Planes are organized into the Great Ring, which wraps around the Outlands. Each of the Outer Planes embodies a particular alignment, with the Outlands representing true neutrality. Powers—deities from assorted pantheons—live on the planes that correspond to their alignments. Their worshipers follow them to these planes when they die, and are known as petitioners.

Hell is the plane of lawful evil and thus the destination of like-aligned petitioners. It is the home of the baatezu race (more commonly known as devils) and powers such as Set and Kurtulmak. Most of the spirits that come to Hell are reborn as larvae and then spend countless centuries as the whipping boys of Baator. These lowly souls, tortured and abused at every turn, lack memories of their mortal lives. Their existence is one of unending pain and suffering. For the lucky few, however, there is a way out.

### The Baatezu

The primary inhabitants of Hell are the baatezu, the so-called devils of folklore and legend. They are a race unto themselves, and the quintessence of law and evil. In the distant past, the baatezu discovered that the wriggling larvae they trampled underfoot were the key to the perpetuation of their race. A process was developed that could transform the wretched larvae into lemures, the lowest members of the baatezu race. This discovery swelled the ranks of the devils, and has enabled them to keep up with their rivals, the tanar'ri of the Abyss.

The baatezu are a very strange race. Although the lowliest members of the hierarchy are horribly mistreated, devils believe in getting ahead (through any means). A lemure can earn promotion to a higher form, and from there conceivably climb up the hierarchy to become a pit fiend or perhaps something even greater. The varied types of devils are really just different forms in the evolution of devilkind. Although baatezu change shapes as they advance through the hierarchy, they always retain their memories. What good would years of carefully collected secrets be if they were lost with the next promotion?

Devils are generally split into three classes: least baatezu, lesser baatezu, and greater baatezu. The least baatezu are lemures, nupperibos, and spinagons. Most devils never evolve out of these forms, but a lucky few rise to the next level. The lesser baatezu include abishai, barbazu, erinyes, hamatula, kocrachons, and osyluths. Each of these types has a job within the hierarchy. The ultimate goal of all lesser baatezu is to achieve the status of greater baatezu. These most powerful devils include annizu, cornugons, gelugons, and pit fiends.

Standing above the whole of the baatezu race are the Lords of the Nine, the legendary rulers of Hell. Each of these lords rules a layer of Hell and controls a court of baatezu nobility. Asmodeus, the Lord of the Ninth, resides in the depths of the Pit, and all the other lords serve him. The lords are only dimly understood, but all fear their power.

### The Name Game

Devils are by nature deceptive. One of the most common ways in which they muddy the waters of scholarship is



by the use of several different names. Because it is a difficult enough job to gather reliable information on devils, many historians of the diabolic mistakenly list each name as a separate devil. Devils compound this confusion by using taking names that sound very similar to those of existing devils. When an obscure name is encountered, it's difficult to tell if it is a misspelled version of an existing name, a new name for an old devil, or an entirely new devil.

Where possible, multiple names have been listed for pertinent personalities. The confusion is worst for players and Dungeon Masters who switched over from the original edition AD&D game to the PLANESCAPE® campaign setting, which tends to use different names for many older devils. DMs are encouraged to use the names they prefer, since one is as good as the next. They are also encouraged to use the Name Game to confuse their players, who don't have a handy resource like this one to tell them who is who.

## The Blood War

The baatezu are perhaps best known for their role in the Blood War. This conflict dominates the politics of the Lower Planes, and pits the devils of Hell versus the demons (also known as tanar'ri) of the Abyss. A battle between law and chaos, the Blood War has been raging for millennia and shows no signs of ceasing. Millions have been slain on both sides for little gain, but still the war goes on.

The cause of the war is unknown. At some point in the distant past, the tanar'ri and the baatezu ran afoul of each other, and this conflict escalated into outright war. The planes of Gehenna, the Gray Waste, and Carceri have been the main battlefields of the war, since they are located between Baator and the Abyss. Armies crisscross these planes regularly, bringing fire and the sword to any that oppose them. The yugoloths, the third race of the so-called fiends, serve as mercenaries in the Blood War, and have betrayed both sides at various times. The yugoloths also claim to be the progenitors of both the baatezu and the tanar'ri, but they are well-known liars, and no one takes their claims seriously.

No one aside from the devils and the demons understands why the Blood War is still going on. Some say it's a war that will determine the face of evil for all time, while others say it is the nature of evil that leads to such internecine strife. The inhabitants of the Upper Planes

are just happy that the devils and demons spend most of their time fighting each other. The few Celestial interventions in the Blood War have all ended badly. "Let the fiends fight" is the order of the day in the Upper Planes.

## What's to Come

Building on this basic information, the rest of this book is a detailed exploration of Hell and its influence in the AD&D game. Every effort has been made to make this work as self-contained as possible. While other books are referenced, *Guide to Hell* should contain everything you need to use devils and Hell in your campaign.

The book is divided into two sections by theme. The first three chapters deal with the influence of Hell on the Prime Material Plane, and provide new rules for players and DMs alike. Nearly all of this information can be shown to players with little fear of repercussions. The rest of the book details Hell proper and should be kept out of players' hands. This second section deals with the geography, politics, and personalities of Hell. It should give an enterprising DM everything he or she needs to run adventures in the Pit.

Chapter 1, "Unwelcome Guests," deals with devils on the Prime Material: what they want, how they get there, and how to stop them. It introduces a Turning Fiends Table and discusses several campaign models.

Chapter 2, "Character Options," provides resources for player characters. Devilkin, a new PC race, is introduced, as is a series of devil-fighter kits. A sample organization for devil-fighters is also presented.

Chapter 3, "Spells and Magic," details the types of magic pertinent to diabolic campaigns, especially those that deal with summoning and control.

Chapter 4, "The Nine Layers," details Hell's physical aspects and locations.

Chapter 5, "Personalities," delves into the most powerful entities in Hell. Here you'll find descriptions of the Lords of the Nine and their statistics, as well as notes on the Dark Eight and the other powers that inhabit Hell.

Chapter 6, "The Diabolic Campaign," provides some guidelines for adventuring in Hell. It includes campaign models, magical conditions, and rules for baatezu spellcasters.

The appendix, "Denizens of Hell," offers a new type of devil, the mezzikim, plus abbreviated statistics for eleven existing types of devils, for those who don't have this information from a MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM®, MONSTROUS MANUAL™, or PLANESCAPE product.



## Chapter 1: Unwelcome Guests

Devils are frequent visitors to the Prime Material Plane. Superstition has it that they can only come to a Prime world if they are summoned, but summoning is merely the most common method. In fact, devils are free to travel the planes, if they have the means and the permission to do so. Since devils live in a lawful society, authorization to travel is not always easy to obtain. Usually, only trusted minions are sent to the Prime, since it offers freedom and opportunity unknowable in Hell itself.

### What Devils Want

Being a devil is all about getting ahead. Devils are schemers and players looking for a way to claw their way up the ladder of the diabolic hierarchy. Thinking of them as the planar version of yuppies is pretty accurate. One of the best places to gain power is the Prime Material Plane, since it is full of mortals who are easy to

manipulate. The Prime gives devils access to mortal minions, potent magical items, and sometimes even souls. All these resources can help a devil advance to a new form or find a new position in the hierarchy. Gaining power is any devil's motivation for dealing with mortals, and that motivation is a big part of what makes devils dangerous. All devils have agendas, and it can be easy to get caught up in their games.

### Dealing with Devils

Mortals have an unhealthy fascination with the denizens of Hell. Despite the obvious perils involved, many mortals continue to study things diabolic. They enact dangerous rituals, compile dubious lists of infernal names, and, in extreme cases, summon up devils from below. Some of these mortals are just youngsters with a taste for danger, while others tread the path of diabolism. All those who try to deal with devils put themselves at terrible risk, but most don't realize it until it's too late.

Diabolism consists of two parts: the connection and the bargain.

#### The Connection

Devils, except for erinyes, usually come to the Prime Material Plane only when summoned. Most of the time, therefore, those on the Prime must first summon a devil before striking a deal. Several infamous tomes detail such spells, and many wizards have copies of those books in their libraries. Since these spells require a fair amount of magical skill, the majority of mortals who deal with devils are mages of some kind, or people with enough money to hire a mage of appropriate level.

Some summoning spells leave devils free to roam the Prime Material Plane for up to two years. Devils at large use their time on the Prime to promote the causes of law and evil, and they frequently strike deals with mortals to boost their own power. The root of many cults and covens is a clever devil who knows how to manipulate mortals. In this case, it is the devil that initiates contact, likely after observing good prospects from the shadows.

#### The Bargain

Once contact with a devil has been established, the bargaining can begin. Popular opinion has it that a devil

