
INFERNAL RUNES
Expanding Chains of Asmodeus
Sample File
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"Runes are knowledge, knowledge is power, and I thirst for this above all." — Asmodeus

Infernal Runes and Script

Infernal script is a rigid, structured and highly efficient language developed for fiends, primarily devils. Unlike Common and other mortal languages, which rely on linear sentence structure and phonetics, Infernal uses a system of runes that encode layered meaning. This makes it inherently difficult for non-fiends to fully comprehend.

Infernal script is a rune-based system used by devils, not a simple alphabet like Common. It relies on **30 base runes**, each representing core concepts like power, hierarchy, or deception. Secondary runes modify or amplify these, adding complexity. Many secondary runes feature a central symbol surrounded by smaller orbiting runes, where placement is just as important as the rune itself.

Runic Encoding of Meaning

- Each Infernal rune is not a letter but an idea, representing emotions, contracts, or authority.
- Combining runes shifts their meaning, functioning like arcane shorthand or layered encryption.
- These runes will often be found on contracts, tattooed on fiends, etched onto war machines and bastions and stitched onto battle standards. The more that are linked together, the more complex the meaning becomes. A single rune tattooed on a lesser devil, for example, may simply mean *"slave"*, whereas the same rune combined with the one for *"important"* could mean *"favored servant."*

Combinations

- Infernal script is closer to a glyph-based shorthand than a phonetic alphabet.
- When runes are combined, their meanings change, forming sigils that encode entire sentences or legal clauses (see page below for examples).
- This makes Infernal an efficient but highly contextual script—without deep knowledge, a non-native reader may misinterpret its meaning.

Deciphering Challenges

- Mortals struggle with Infernal due to its layered meanings and legalistic structure.
- Even those trained in Infernal may only understand its surface meaning.
- Certain runes, particularly in Hellish contracts, may subtly shift based on the observer's intent.

In summary, Infernal is more than mere language; it is a weapon of dominance, a mechanism of control and an unyielding record of fiendish law. To understand it is to glimpse its power—to master it is to wield it.



Sample File

Base Infernal Runes (blank)



Sample File

Infernal Runes (numbered)



Sample File

Basic Runes

The 30 basic runes are described in the following table:

#	Base Rune	Meaning
1	**Asmodex**	Asmodeus, supreme authority, the Lord Below
2	**Dominus**	Power, authority, rule, sovereignty
3	**Syrvach**	Hierarchy, rank, order, obedience, structure
4	**Zarneth**	Deception, lies, illusion, manipulation
5	**Malzeth**	Enemy, opposition, challenger, traitor
6	**Xorath**	War, conquest, battle, subjugation
7	**Karthul**	Death, execution, doom, sacrifice
8	**Tziriak**	Pain, suffering, torture, affliction
9	**Ulzakar**	Contract, oath, pact, binding agreement
10	**Vorzhul**	Slave, subjugation, servant, bound
11	**Threxil**	Corruption, taint, defilement, ruin
12	**Zorveth**	Hunger, consumption, devour, greed
13	**Varnok**	Blood, sacrifice, offering, ritual
14	**Xythir**	Forbidden knowledge, secrets, hidden truth
15	**Gorthul**	Fear, dread, terror, despair
16	**Ulgath**	Fire, destruction, inferno, devastation
17	**Drazeth**	Strength, might, endurance, resilience
18	**Nexar**	Magic, infernal power, invocation, the weave
19	**Karvash**	Chains, imprisonment, restraint, prison
20	**Vorakar**	The Nine Hells, damnation, torment, the Pit
21	**Dravoth**	Betrayal, treachery, backstab, dishonor
22	**Zelgath**	Time, inevitability, destiny, eternity
23	**Xulreth**	Flesh, body, form, mortality
24	**Ilthar**	Mind, thought, will, knowledge
25	**Jhazur**	Influence, persuasion, whispers, temptation
26	**Targoth**	Judgment, punishment, verdict, decree
27	**Ixzith**	Ice, cold, frozen stillness, preservation (Cania)
28	**Zolthar**	Rot, decay, swamp, festering ruin (Minauros)
29	**Zharnix**	Shadow, unseen, cloak, obscurity
30	**Urithar**	Chaos, unmaking, rebellion, defiance

Using These Runes

As your players journey through Hell, introduce these runes gradually. They might find them inscribed on relics, etched into infernal architecture, or carried by fiendish creatures.

- A devil devoted to Asmodeus, for example, may carry the **Asmodex** rune (#1) as a keepsake, set into a ring or tied to a leather cord around its neck.
- A slave could bear the **Vorzhul** rune (#10), branded into their flesh.
- The entrance to a prison complex might be marked with the **Karvash** rune (#19). Let your players piece together the runic script over time, adding depth and mystery to their journey through the Nine Hells.

Combinations

Runes are combined to convery greater meaning. A few examples are provided here:

Rune Combination	Meaning
Xulreth + Vorzhul + Asmodex	*Break their flesh and enslave them to Asmodeus*
Xorath + Karthul + Vorakar	*Wage war until death in the name of the Nine Hells*
Ulzakar + Targoth + Dravoth	*A contract bound in betrayal and judgment*
Threxil + Malzeth + Gorthul	*Corrupt the enemy through terror*
Drazeth + Ilthar + Jhazur	*Strength of will bends the weak*
Ixzith + Zelgath + Karthul	*Frozen in time, awaiting death*
Zolthar + Threxil + Urithar	*Decay spreads, corrupting all to chaos*
Vorzhul + Syrvach + Dominus	*The slave exists to serve their master*
Ulzakar + Vorakar + Asmodex	*A pact sealed by the will of Asmodeus*
Zarneth + Xythir + Nexar	*Hidden magic that deceives all*

Power

Ultimately, whether knowledge of the runes has any mechanical impact in your adventures is up to you to decide. Perhaps they serve only as hidden lore, or maybe collecting them grants tangible power.

In my own game, players who learn 20 or more runes and can speak Infernal gain advantage on Persuasion and Intimidation checks against devils of CR 5 or less—a sign of their growing understanding of fiendish law and hierarchy. I have not yet decided what they will gain when they uncover all 30, but they are obsessed with the search, scrutinizing every wall, tattoo and contract in their quest for the full script.

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