

Tuesday's Two-Pager: Eight Cheiromantic Feats

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Welcome to *Eight Cheiromantic Feats*. There are several kinds of feat in this short collection. One kind (including Impress the Masses and Overwhelming Spell) is most useful against weaker opponents. Other feats, such as Against the Odds and Caution to the Winds, are more suited to those who hunt dragons, or who wish to beard powerful fiends in their lairs. Energetic Spell and Wretched Spell help overcome a foe's defenses, while Ideal Spell capitalizes on an enchanter's strengths. Foil Enemy helps when a character is faced with a kind of opponent who is particularly difficult to deal with. A section with individual commentary on each of these new feats follows the presentation of the feats.

What's Tuesday's Two-Pager?

Tuesday's Two-Pager is a new feature at the Throwing Dice Games website. Every other Tuesday you'll find a new two-pager in the free stuff section of the website. Each two-pager will feature new OGC for your d20 game.

NEW FEATS

AGAINST THE ODDS [METAMAGIC]

Your spells sometimes succeed even when success is unlikely.

Benefit: Against the Odds can be applied multiple times. Each application adds one to the spell level and creates an increasing chance that the saving throw roll will be treated as negative. Double the number of times the feat is applied. That number or lower on the d20 counts as negative; it is subtracted from the saving throw bonuses instead of being added. For example, if the feat is used once, a die roll 1 or 2 becomes a -1 or a -2. If it is used twice, rolls from 1 to 4 become -1 to -4. If used three times then 1 to 6 become -1 to -6, and so on.

Special: By playing the odds you do grant your opponent a small boon: a saving throw roll of 1 is no longer an automatic failure for your opponent.



CAUTION TO THE WINDS [GENERAL]

You may add an element of randomness to your spells to make them more effective against opponents.

Benefit: When you cast a spell you may choose to roll 1d20. The number rolled is used to determine the base save DC of the spell, according to the formula 1d20 + the spell level + ability modifier. The number rolled is also used as the roll made for a caster level check to overcome a target's spell resistance.

Normal: The base save DC of a spell is 10 + the spell level + ability modifier, and has nothing to do with spell resistance.

ENERGETIC SPELL [METAMAGIC]

Your spells affect creatures who normally resist energy attacks

Prerequisites: Spellcaster level 4+, know two Abjuration spells.

Benefit: Your spell bypasses 20 points of one kind of energy resistance (sonic, fire, cold, acid or electricity). This does not overcome immunity to forms of energy, such as granted by *protection from elements*. It has no effect on creatures without energy resistance. An energetic spell uses up a spell slot one level higher.

Special: This feat does not stack, but it may be applied to a spell multiple times. Each time it is applied, choose a different type of resistance to be overcome.



FOIL ENEMY [GENERAL]

You know how to avoid attacks from an unusual type of opponent.

Benefit: You gain a +1 dodge bonus to AC against melee attacks by a certain type of creature (see below), and a +2 bonus to all saving throws versus that creature's spells, spell-like abilities, and extraordinary and supernatural abilities.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Choose a creature type from the following: Aberrations, Constructs, Dragons, Elementals, Fey, Magical Beasts, Oozes, Outsiders (choose subtype: Good or Evil or Chaotic or Lawful), Plants, Shapechangers, Undead and Vermin.

IDEAL SPELL [METAMAGIC]

A spell from another school becomes an Enchantment spell.

Prerequisite: Spellcaster level 7+, Spell Focus (Enchantment) or wizard specialization: Enchantment

Benefit: A spell affected by this feat becomes an Enchantment (mind-affecting) spell and its saving throw (if any) changes to a Will save. It is not treated as belonging to its previous school in any way. This feat cannot be applied to a spell from a prohibited school. An ideal spell uses up a spell slot one level higher.

IMPRESS THE MASSES [METAMAGIC]

Your spells have a greater effect on weaker individuals.

Prerequisite: Cha 13+

Benefit: For each level you raise the spell's level, all targets of that spell are considered to have 1 less hit die, to a minimum of 0, but only for the purpose of determining how they are affected by the spell. Only spells which allow a Will saving throw are affected by this feat; *color spray*, *control undead*, *daze*, etc., are affected, but not *cloud-kill*. A creature whose hit dice are effectively reduced to 0 by this feat receives a -4 to its saving throw.



OVERWHELMING SPELL [METAMAGIC]

Weaker opponents cannot save against your spells.

Prerequisite: Heighten Spell

Benefit: Your spell does not allow a saving throw if your caster level is at least twice the level/hit dice of the subject. For example, if you target an 8th level opponent with an overwhelming *phantasmal killer* no saving throws would be allowed unless your casting level were less than 16. An overwhelming spell uses up a spell slot four levels higher.

WRETCHED SPELL [METAMAGIC]

Your spells ignore magical counter-measures and defenses.

Prerequisite: Spellcaster level 5+, Spell Focus (Abjuration) or wizard specialization: Abjuration

Benefit: A spell modified with the wretched metamagic feat ignores all spells of level 1 or lower. For example a wretched *magic missile* would ignore a *shield* spell. Ignored spells cannot reduce or

prevent damage from, detect or interact in any way with the modified spell. A wretched spell takes up a slot 1 level higher. Wretched spell is stackable; each additional level of wretched causes the modified spell to ignore an additional level of spells. A wretched spell has no special effect on supernatural or extraordinary abilities or defenses. Nor does it ignore mundane materials created by spells such as *wall of stone*. Saving throw bonuses granted by spells are not negated by a wretched spell.

COMMENTARY

Against the Odds: Your opponent needs to have very good saves before this feat is more effective than a simple Heighten Spell. However, at non-epic levels this feat gives the spellcaster a fair chance of success when facing off with very powerful creatures like Dragons. For example, suppose a 20th level wizard with a 26 intelligence prepares a *Tashaa's hideous laughter* against an Ancient Red Dragon. Knowing that Big Red will get a +30 to his Will save, the wizard prepares a 9th level spell slot: *Tashaa's hideous laughter* and 7 applications of Against the Odds. The spell has a base DC of 20, but Against the Odds will affect the dragon's die roll if it is between 1 and 14. Assuming the wizard penetrates the dragon's spell resistance, and the dragon rolls between 11 and 14, it will be affected by the spell. Negative 11 (or worse) plus 30 is only 19 (or less), a little short of the spell's save DC.

Caution to the Winds: Using 1d20 instead of "taking 10" can be useful if your opponent has very good saves: A low roll won't make things much worse but a high roll could help you a lot. If your opponent also has spell resistance, you will find that it is easier to make one high roll than two.

Energetic Spell: Sometimes more subtle methods will not work—you need to blast your enemies. Energetic Spell helps you do this more effectively. Since it suppresses spells like *endure elements* and *resist elements*, the feat demands a certain familiarity with basic Abjuration magic. To make this feat worthwhile it bypasses 20 points of energy resistance, the most common value among energy resistant monsters. With a value less than 20 a caster would be better off learning empower spell.

The value of 20 may be approximated by estimating the ratio between the benefit of a bane enhancement (+1 value) vs. an ordinary +1 enhancement. Instead of +1 to hit and +1 to damage a bane enhancement yields +2 to hit and +2d6 to damage. Against the target creature a bane effect is worth more than twice as much as an ordinary +1: more like 4 times as much. Considering an energetic spell as having a bane-like effect against creatures resistant to a particular form of energy, its +1 to spell level should provide as much benefit as +2 or +4 levels of a more generic form of metamagic. An empowered *fireball* (+2 levels) does an extra 17.5 hp; a doubly empowered (+4 levels) *fireball* does an extra 35 hp damage. If the saving throw is successful the extra damage is halved, but +20 hp is still a fair estimate for the extra damage a bane-like feat should grant to an energy attack. Note that no extra damage is actually passed on to the creature—it only goes towards overcoming energy resistance.

Foil Enemy: Everyone has a nemesis; a kind of opponent that one's usual tactics are ineffective against. Foil enemy gives one a small defensive edge when faced with a difficult class of opponents. The list is similar to the ranger favored enemy list, but with an emphasis on magical creatures with alien mentalities.



Ideal Spell: Note that mindless creatures such as constructs, undead and vermin are immune to an ideal spell, since Enchantments are mind-affecting. However, Ideal Spell negates the evasion special ability, is very useful against creatures with poor Will saves, and enables school based bonuses to apply to spells from another school. Ideal spell flows out of a philosophical stance common among enchanters, namely that the mind is the measure of reality. Meaning, interpretation, decision, action—these are all purely of the mind. Enchantment, the magic of the mind, is thus the most central and basic form of magic, and all other kinds of magic are merely special applications of it. An Ideal Spell is a spell which has been restored to its pristine splendor as an Enchantment.

Impress the Masses: The best application of this feat may be to use *sleep* effectively at higher levels. A 1st level wizard has a good chance of affecting an ogre at first level (she has an 81% chance of rolling a 4 or higher on the 2d4 hit dice affected, and an ogre has less than a 50% chance of resisting the spell.) For every two caster levels beyond first, a wizard with impress the masses can increase the maximum HD affected by 1; thus at 5th level she has a good chance of incapacitating a 6 HD opponent with a third level spell. This is about what could be accomplished with a cleverly worded *suggestion*: hence the high end of this spell is not overpowered. In the low end, that 3rd level *sleep* spell can wipe out any number of 2 HD or lower creatures in a 15 foot burst. So would a *fireball*, except that a successful save won't leave you unaffected by a *fireball*.



Overwhelming Spell: Impress the masses works best on low HD creatures; overwhelming spell has a similar application. Try this feat with spells like *charm person*, *suggestion*, *blindness*, *zone of truth* and *detect thoughts*. It's a great way for high level casters to handle low level characters, but it won't work if the power levels are anywhere close to being equal. An overwhelming spell can be very useful, however, in the right circumstances: No matter how buffed a 5th level character is, short of a *mind blank* there is no way for them to avoid an overwhelming *charm person* cast by a 10th level wizard. But what chance should a 5th level character have against a 10th level character, anyway?

Wretched Spell: A wretched spell can still be countered normally, since the benefits of the feat only apply after it is cast, and it technically hasn't been cast yet. Wretched Spell is conceptually related to the Energetic Spell feat; if +1 to the spell level could allow certain 1st and 2nd level spells to be ignored, how much should it cost to ignore all spells of a given level? Multiple applications of wretched can be quite effective: an *invisibility* with two levels of wretched could not be detected by *detect invisibility*, *darkvision* with three levels of wretched could penetrate a *deeper darkness*, and a wretched (x4) *slay living* would ignore a *death ward*. Still more levels of wretched allow spells to pass through a *wall of force* or even an *anti-magic field*.

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