

NECROMANCER

The halfling widow walked the mossy path to the graveyard. It was late, but she had found some pretty flowers and wanted to place them on her husband's grave. As she got closer, she stopped – for she was not alone. A hooded figure stood above her husband's grave.

Digging. Although her body screamed for her to run away, she crept closer. The hooding figure put the shovel aside, for it was done. With terror she witnessed how a rotted hand reached out of the grave. The hooded figure grabbed it helpfully and said: "Don't you die on me just yet. I need one last favour." The hooded figure and her deceased husband walked off into the night.

The necromancer is an iconic magic wielder who manipulates the forces of life and death around them. Death is a nuisance rather than an eternal judgement, and necromancers are the masters of calling back the departed into their service. Frail on their own, necromancers are a force to fear when given access to a cemetery..

TO KNOW DEATH

Although some necromancy in theory can be taught in study, the true experience is learned by knowing death and suffering on a very deep level. Necromancers innately feel the life inside and around them, and see how it all connects. Death is constant, and by feeding it life a necromancer can gain its favour. Only by completely embracing death can someone learn to overcome it.

JUSTLY FEARED OR MISUNDERSTOOD?

Necromancy is universally considered as evil by its very nature. There is no big secret that many evildoers have delved in the deadly arts, but what path you will take is fundamentally up to you.

To pull a soul back from the heavenly Elysium to do your dirty work is indeed cruel, but to force a departed culprit back to do good, well that's just a different story. The act of returning a slain ally back to the living is fundamentally necromancy, something that clerics tend to forget. They might mock you, but when death comes knocking – they will beg for your aid.

CREATING A NECROMANCER

When creating a necromancer character, think of what led them onto this dark and lonesome path. What goal is so paramount that one must expend one's very life essence in pursuit of it? Perhaps you want to bring back a deceased loved one, or maybe you have a vendetta with a corrupt clergy. Have you turned to adventuring in search of secrets kept by the dead, or have you simply gotten addicted to consuming the lifeforce of others? You should also speak with your DM about the relationship between necromancy and its moral consequences. In their setting, is necromancy shunned, banned or even directly connected to malign forces? Is it a treacherous doing that will twist its practitioners into evil, or is it no different from say healing magic?

QUICK BUILD

You can make a necromancer quickly by following these suggestions. First, Wisdom should be your highest ability score, followed by Constitution. Second, choose the hermit background. Third, choose the *Chill Touch* and *Spare the Dying* cantrips, along with the *Bane* and *Inflict Wounds* 1st level spells.



THE NECROMANCER

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	Spell Level Mastered	Natural Lifeforce	Lifeforce Limit
1st	+2	Death Magic, Lend Me Your Strength	2	2	2nd	1	2
2nd	+2	Circle of Life, Death Sense	2	3	2nd	2	3
3rd	+2	—	2	4	3rd	5	3
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	3	5	3rd	7	4
5th	+3	—	3	6	4th	11	4
6th	+3	Eternal Servants	3	7	4th	14	5
7th	+3	—	3	8	5th	16	5
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	3	9	5th	20	6
9th	+4	—	3	10	6th	26	6
10th	+4	Last Laugh	4	10	6th	31	7
11th	+4	—	4	11	7th	34	7
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	4	11	7th	34	7
13th	+5	—	4	12	7th	38	8
14th	+5	Awesome Creation	4	12	8th	38	8
15th	+5	—	4	13	8th	42	8
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	4	13	8th	42	9
17th	+6	—	4	14	9th	45	9
18th	+6	Pocket Army	4	14	9th	49	9
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	4	15	9th	54	9
20th	+6	Herald	4	15	9th	60	9

CLASS FEATURES

As a necromancer, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d8 per necromancer level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per necromancer level after 1st.

PROFICIENCIES

Armour: None

Weapons: Daggers, darts, sickles, slings, quarterstaves, light crossbows

Saving Throws: Constitution, Wisdom

Skills: Choose two from Arcana, History, Insight, Nature, Medicine and Religion

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) a component pouch or (b) an arcane focus
- (a) a light crossbow with 20 bolts or (b) any simple melee weapon

- (a) a scholar's pack or (b) a dungeoneer's pack
- A dagger and a shovel

DEATH MAGIC

Unlike the wizards that study the necromantic ways you have a very innate knack for the most ambiguous magic of them all. See chapter 10 of the Player's Handbook for the general rules of spellcasting, and the end of this section for the necromancer spell list.

CANTRIPS

At 1st level you know two cantrips of your choice from the necromancer spell list. You learn additional necromancer cantrips of your choice at higher levels, as shown in the Cantrips Known column of the necromancer table.

LIFEFORCE

You draw magic power from the lifeforce of yourself and other creatures. You have a pool of natural lifeforce, seen in the Natural Lifeforce column of the necromancer table. To cast a spell of 1st level or higher, you must expend lifeforce equal to the spells casted level, just as if spending spellslots.

In any one instance you may never spend more lifeforce than your lifeforce limit, as shown in the Lifeforce Limit column of the necromancer table. You may upcast spells if they allow for it. You may not cast spells of level 1 and higher if you have 0 or less lifeforce, but you may have negative lifeforce, and you may cast a spell that would bring you below 0. At the end of a long rest your lifeforce resets to your natural lifeforce.

Since lifeforce represents the strength of your being, draining it will take a toll on you:

- When your total lifeforce is more than your natural lifeforce (see Lend Me Your Strength) you have advantage on Constitution saving throws.
- When you drop below 50% (rounded up) lifeforce you appear sick and frail. This has no effect on you but you appear as if you had Constitution and Strength scores of 6.
- When you drop below 25% (rounded up) lifeforce you have disadvantage on all Strength and Constitution checks and saving throws.
- If you drop below 0 lifeforce you take 1 point of exhaustion for every point below 0.

SPELLS KNOWN OF 1ST LEVEL AND HIGHER

You know two 1st level spells of your choice from the necromancer spell list.

The Spells Known column of the Necromancer table shows when you learn more necromancer spells of your choice. The Spell Level Mastered column in the necromancer table shows what level of spells you can choose from when learning new spells.

Additionally, when you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the necromancer spells you know and replace it with another spell from the necromancer spell list, following the restriction above.

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for your necromancer spells. The power of your spells comes from your understanding of life and death. You use Wisdom whenever a necromancer spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Wisdom modifier when setting the saving throw DC for necromancer spells you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier

RITUAL CASTING

You can cast a necromancer spell you know as a ritual if that spell has the ritual tag.

SPELLCASTING FOCUS

You can use an arcane focus or component pouch (found in chapter 5 PH) as spellcasting focuses for your necromancer spells.

LEND ME YOUR STRENGTH

You may also acquire lifeforce from other sources than yourself. This may bring you above your natural lifeforce, but never above twice your natural lifeforce. You lose all excess lifeforce when you finish a long rest.

From the living – willingly: When standing within 5ft of a willing creature (it could be yourself) you may as a bonus action touch them and take their lifeforce. You may gain lifeforce up to the target's Constitution modifier. The target then takes 1d10 necrotic damage for every lifeforce taken this way. If the target is another necromancer, they may first lose lifeforce from their own lifeforce pool instead of taking damage. You may not take more lifeforce than the target's Constitution modifier until the target has finished a long rest.

From the living – unwillingly: When dealing damage to a living creature of CR ¼ or higher as part of a necromancer spell of 1st level or higher you may recover some lifeforce. Whenever you roll the maximum on one or several damage dies you recover 1 lifeforce.

From the dead – willingly: When a living creature of CR ¼ or higher dies you may harvest lingering energy from its body. By touching a dead creature, you can as an action regain 1 lifeforce. The target must have been dead for no longer than one round.

From the dead – unwillingly: When you bring any number of undead creatures to 0 hit points with a spell of 1st level or higher you gain 1 lifeforce. They must not be under your control.

CIRCLE OF LIFE

Starting at 2nd level you may use lifeforce to restore vigor. As an action you may target yourself or a willing creature within 5ft. Spend any amount of lifeforce. The target regains 1d8 hit points for every lifeforce spent.

DEATH SENSE

Also starting at 2nd level, the presence of death forces a chill down your spine. As an action, you take a moment to scan your surrounding for death. Until the end of your next turn, you know the location of any Undead as well as any preserved corpses and piles of bones within 60ft. You do not learn of its specific identity but can discern whether it is undead or simply dead. This feature can't locate dead/undead if any thickness of lead, even a thin sheet, blocks a direct path between you and the object.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to 1 + your Wisdom modifier (minimum of 1). When you finish a long rest, you regain all expended uses.

ETERNAL SERVANTS

Starting at 6th level the bond between servant and master strengthens. When recasting Animate Dead to reassert control it costs only 2 lifeforce for every four undead. When recasting Create Dead to reassert control it costs only 5 lifeforce for every three undead. This effect is lost when upcasting.

In addition, when you create an undead using a necromancy spell, it springs to unlife with these additional benefits:

- The creature receives temporary hit points equal to your necromancer level.
- The creature adds your proficiency bonus to its weapon damage rolls.

LAST LAUGH

Starting at 10th level you have studied death for long enough to know a few ways around it. Once you are dead you may continue to cast spells targeting yourself for as long as your body is mostly intact (the equivalence of a pile of bones or a corpse, at DM's discretion). You may use whatever lifeforce you had remaining when you died. These spells do not require any components.

AWESOME CREATION

Starting at 14th level you push the limit for what kind of creature you can raise. You can cast Create Undead in a special way, targeting a corpse or a pile of bones from a dead creature of a CR no higher than half your necromancer level (rounded down), alternatively a creature of class level not higher than your necromancer level. It raises and keeps all its features but gain the following ones:

- It is considered Undead
- It may never restore health to itself or any other creature
- It is immune to poison damage and the poisoned condition
- A creation from bones is vulnerable to bludgeoning damage
- A creation from a corpse has Undead Fortitude (see Zombie, Monster Manual)

You could also create a Bone Naga, Crawling Claw, Flameskull, Ghast, Mummy or other original undead if you have proper material, at DM's discretion.

Casting the spell in this way has a casting time of 8 hours instead. You can have only one awesome creation under your control at any one time.

POCKET ARMY

Starting 18th level you have solved the impracticality of having hordes of rotting corpses following you around. By carrying with you small tokens from the undead creatures under your control (such as teeth or bones), you may as an action scatter any number of such tokens at your feet and spend 1 lifeforce for every three tokens. The rest of the undead body that the token belonged to will instantly teleport to anywhere within 15ft of you. You may not command them as a bonus action the same turn they were summoned.

HERALD

Starting at 20th level you are deeply connected to all your undead servants. You may as an action switch from using your own body into using the body of one undead under your control for up to 1 hour, ending the effect as a free action. Similarly to when using Magic Jar, your body falls into a catatonic state. You may act through the undead as if it was your body. It keeps all its features, but gains your Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma, as well as your proficiencies and necromancer features. You may cast spells while in an undead host, but doing so costs double lifeforce, also note that the undead may not have spell components.

If the host moves further than 1 mile from you, dies or you willingly leave it you immediately return to your own body. Once you've returned to your original body you may continue to use this feature and target another controlled undead, if you are doing it within 1 hour of the initial use of this feature. To regain the usage of this feature you must finish a long rest.

NECROMANCER SPELLS

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

Chill Touch
Dancing Lights
Infestation
Mold Earth
Poison Spray
Resistance
Spare the Dying
Thaumaturgy
Toll the Dead

1ST LEVEL

Arms of Hadar
Bane
Cause Fear
Detect Poison and Disease
False Life
Hex
Inflict Wounds
Ray of Sickness

Unseen Servant

2ND LEVEL

Blindness/Deafness
Gentle Repose
Lesser Restoration
Maximillian's Earthen Grasp
Protection from Poison
Ray of Enfeeblement
Warding Bond

3RD LEVEL

Animate Dead
Bestow Curse
Fear
Feign Death
Meld into Stone
Remove Curse
Revivify
Speak with Dead

Spirit Guardians (necrotic)
Vampiric Touch

4TH LEVEL

Aura of Life
Aura of Purity
Blight
Death Ward

5TH LEVEL

Contagion
Dance Macabre
Destructive Wave (necrotic)
Elevation
Greater Restoration
Raise Dead

6TH LEVEL

Bones of the Earth
Circle of Death
Create Homunculus

Create Undead
Eyebite
Harm
Magic Jar
Soul Cage

7TH LEVEL

Finger of Death
Resurrection

8TH LEVEL

Abi-Dalzim's Horrid Wilting
Clone

9TH LEVEL

Astral Projection
Invulnerability
Power Word Kill
True Resurrection

MULTICLASSING

To multiclass into necromancer you must have a minimum Wisdom ability score of 13. You gain no multiclassing proficiencies. Note that Death Magic is different from Spellcasting, and they are tracked individually from another. You can, for example, not use lifeforce to cast non-necromancer spells, or use spellslots to cast necromancer spells.

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Disclaimer: These pictures are meant to be evocative and are not true representations of the class.

