

CATALOGUING THE CRYPTIC: THE ARCHIVIST CLASS

BY LEVI PRESSNELL



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A devout orc opens her prayer book, a poisonous spray of spores erupting on the corrupted wolf. As it howls in pain, the spores grow roots as they hit the ground, winding their way around the creature's paws.

A cowed halfling dives into the demonic warriors, his staff shining with divine light. Their claws slash at his cloak, but they cannot pierce the holy wards that protect him.

A robed tiefling gestures to the arcane portal, filling the gateway with red energy. As the seal strains to keep out invaders, her form begins dissolving into something unnatural.

Archivists are divine casters who delve into a variety of forbidden mysteries, learning how to battle the monsters that threaten their existence. As they search for these secrets, archivists also study how to wield divine magic in defense of their world. The dark knowledge they uncover gives themselves and their allies greater combat knowledge to attack, analyze, and avoid the horrors against whom they struggle.

Archivists rely heavily on their Dark Knowledge feature in combat, inspiring both themselves and nearby allies in a variety of ways. Because of this feature, archivists are especially useful in supportive roles, making everyone around them more powerful. If Dark Knowledge fails, they can fall back on their array of spells for whatever is needed.

“What is hidden must be opened—and wielded as a weapon.” – Magister Leswa Dexard

QUICK BUILD

You can make an archivist quickly by following these suggestions. Intelligence should be your highest score, followed by Wisdom. Second, choose the sage background.

CLASS FEATURES

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d6

Hit Points at 1st Level: 6 + Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d6 (or 4) + your Constitution modifier per archivist level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Armor: Light armor, shields

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

Tools: None

Saving Throws: Intelligence, Wisdom

Skills: Choose two skills from Arcana, Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Investigation, Nature, and Religion

EQUIPMENT

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

- (a) a quarterstaff or (b) a dagger
- (a) a component pouch or (b) a holy symbol
- (a) a scholar's pack or (b) an explorer's pack
- A spellbook

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Class Features	Cantrips Known	Dark Knowledge Die
1 st	+2	Dark Knowledge, Spellcasting	3	1d4
2 nd	+2	Archivist Society	3	1d4
3 rd	+2	Lore Master	3	1d4
4 th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	4	1d4
5 th	+3	Dark Knowledge (Realization)	4	1d4
6 th	+3	Society feature	4	1d6
7 th	+3	Lore Master (improved)	4	1d6
8 th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	4	1d6
9 th	+4	Dark Knowledge (Still Mind)	4	1d6
10 th	+4	Society feature	5	1d6
11 th	+4	Expanded Knowledge	5	1d8
12 th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	5	1d8
13 th	+5	Dark Knowledge (Dread Secret)	5	1d8
14 th	+5	Society feature	5	1d8
15 th	+5	Lore Master (improved)	5	1d8
16 th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	5	1d8
17 th	+6	Dark Knowledge (Foreknowledge)	5	1d10
18 th	+6	Magnified Knowledge	5	1d10
19 th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	5	1d10
20 th	+6	Dark Omniscience	5	1d10

DARK KNOWLEDGE

Beginning at 1st level, you have a trove of lore to combat the monsters of the world. As an action, you select a hostile creature you can see within 60 feet and make an Intelligence-based skill check (Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion) with a DC equal to 10 + the creature's Challenge Rating. On a success, you remember the secrets of engaging this creature in combat. For 1 minute, you can use one of the following options below. Additionally, you can use this feature against any creatures of the same kind as your target. For example, if you were fighting a mixed group of gnolls and hyenas, a successful Dark Knowledge check could let you apply these effects to the gnolls or the hyenas but not both. This feature also requires concentration, as if you were concentrating on a spell. Dice used are based on your Dark Knowledge die as shown on the table above. If you fail the skill check, you cannot attempt to use your Dark Knowledge feature against that creature until after you finish a long rest.

- *Tactics:* As a bonus action on your turn, you or an ally you can see within 30 feet of you can add your Dark Knowledge die to one attack roll you make against the creature within 1 round.
- *Puissance:* As a bonus action on your turn, you can inspire yourself or an ally you can see within 30 feet of you. The affected target can add your Dark Knowledge die to any saving throw they make against that creature's abilities until the beginning of your next turn.
- *Foe:* As a bonus action on your turn, you can add your Dark Knowledge die to the damage of one successful attack you make against that creature within 1 round.

Different creature types generally fall under different types of skill checks as listed here:

- Arcana: aberrations, constructs, dragons, and elementals
- History: fey, giants, and humanoids
- Nature: beasts, monstrosities, oozes, and plants
- Religion: celestials, fiends, and undead

As you gain levels, you gain additional options for this feature.

- *Realization:* Beginning at 5th level, as a bonus action on your turn, you can roll your Dark Knowledge die and gain a number of pieces of the following information equal to the result rolled. If the information does not exist (for example, the target has no damage resistances), that counts as 1 piece of information for this ability. At the DM's discretion, other kinds of information may be available.
 - Your equal, superior, or inferior in a chosen ability score
 - The presence of a special feature or attack
 - Highest level of spellcasting ability
 - Your equal, superior, or inferior in Armor Class
 - A damage resistance or immunity
 - A condition resistance or immunity

- Your equal, superior, or inferior in current hit points
- Current hit points as a total of its maximum (near-death [less than ¼], bloodied [less than ½], healthy [less than full hit points], hale [full hit points])
- *Still Mind*: Beginning at 9th level, as a bonus action on your turn, you or an ally you can see within 30 feet of you that has failed an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma saving throw against an ongoing effect created by the target of your Dark Knowledge feature can make another saving throw, adding your Dark Knowledge die to the roll.
- *Dread Secret*: Beginning at 13th level, as an action, you can force the target of your Dark Knowledge feature to make a Wisdom saving throw against your archivist spell save DC. On a failure, the creature is impaired for 1 round. Its speed is halved, and it can take only a single action or bonus action on its turn.
- *Foreknowledge*: Beginning at 17th level, as a bonus action on your turn, you or an ally you can see within 30 feet of you can add your Dark Knowledge die to your Armor Class against attack rolls made by that creature until the beginning of your next turn.

SPELLCASTING

Beginning at 1st level, you have a prayerbook containing spells and gain divine spellcasting magic much as a cleric does. You gain divine spell slots with the progression of a full caster (such as a cleric or druid). Your spellcasting ability score is Intelligence. At 1st level, your prayerbook contains six 1st-level archivist spells of your choice. You prepare the list of archivist spells that are available for you to cast. To do so, choose a number of spells from your prayerbook equal to your Intelligence modifier + your archivist level (minimum of one spell). The spells must be of a level for which you have spell slots.

You can cast an archivist spell as a ritual if that spell has the ritual tag and you have the spell in your prayerbook. You don't need to have the spell prepared.

You can use a holy symbol as a divine focus (found in chapter 5) as a spellcasting focus for your archivist spells.

Each time you gain an archivist level, you can add two archivist spells of your choice to your prayerbook. These spells must be of a level for which you have spell slots. If you find divine scrolls, you can add those to your prayerbook through the same process as a wizard inscribing scrolls into a spellbook.

ARCHIVIST SOCIETIES

When you reach 2nd level, you delve into a specific type of forbidden lore, making contact with others who also study such secrets. You choose from the Crawling Root, Mysteries of Heaven, or Seals of Corruption societies detailed at the end of the class description. Your choice grants you features at 2nd level and again at 6th, 10th, and 14th level.

LORE MASTER

Beginning at 3rd level, your academic study has paid off in a wealth of extra knowledge. Choose two Intelligence-based skills from Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion. You gain proficiency in those skills or can add double your proficiency bonus if you are already proficient. At 7th level and again at 15th level you can choose one additional skill from this list to gain this benefit.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

Beginning at 4th level and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th levels, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2 or increase two of your ability scores of your choice by 1. You can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

EXPANDED KNOWLEDGE

Beginning at 11th level, when you activate your Dark Knowledge feature you can gain Expanded Knowledge. For the duration of this feature, when you choose a Dark Knowledge option, you can choose additional targets, including yourself or a number of allies you can see within 30 feet of you, up to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of 1). These additional targets gain the benefits of your chosen Dark Knowledge option for 1 round. Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

MAGNIFIED KNOWLEDGE

Beginning at 18th level, when you successfully use your Dark Knowledge feature against a creature, you can use your Dark Knowledge feature against all creatures of that same type (for example, celestial or undead) you can perceive within 120 feet with no additional check required. Creatures with a Challenge Rating greater than your archivist level are immune to this feature.

DARK OMNISCIENCE

Beginning at 20th level, your study has given you supreme knowledge of creatures. When you use your Dark Knowledge feature, you can choose to succeed on the skill check with no roll required. Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

ARCHIVIST SOCIETIES

Though secretive, archivists recognize some value in sharing their work and referencing other scholars in their activities. Like-minded archivists collect in loose fraternities or chapters based on the kinds of knowledge they find most interesting.

THE CRAWLING ROOT

Nature itself can be deadly, and archivists of the Crawling Root have catalogued as many of plants and animals as possible. Their expertise makes them valuable allies for any who would brave the creatures of the wild.

Ensnaring Magic: Beginning at 2nd level when you choose this society, you can imbue your spells with power of the earth, entangling enemies with thorns and vines. When a spell of 1st-level or higher deals damage to an opponent, you can force that opponent to make a Dexterity saving throw against your archivist spell save DC. On a failure, that creature is restrained until the beginning of your next turn. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier but only once per turn. You regain all expended uses after finishing a long rest. Additionally, you learn the *ensnaring strike* spell and add it to your prayer book.

Communion of Worlds: At 6th level, you can channel the power of nature to heal and restore yourself. Once per day after finishing a short rest, you can perform a 10-minute ceremony that involves meditation and prayer. Allies who wish to benefit from this ritual can participate, pulling themselves into the circle and holding hands. You gain a pool of 5 hit points per archivist level that you can restore to yourself or participating creatures. Additionally, you can cure a single one of the following conditions from one of the ritual's participants: blinded, deafened, or poisoned.

Natural Anti-toxins: At 10th level, you gain resistance to acid and poison damage and advantage on saving throws against poisons or the poisoned condition.

Magic Unleashed: At 14th level, you can spend 1 minute inspiring nearby allies and replenishing their abilities with divine power. At the end of this brief performance, you and a number of allies within 30 feet who could see and hear you can choose one of the following benefits:

- You regain a single use of a class feature as if you had finished a short rest.
- You regain a single use of a class feature that has multiple daily uses based on your ability modifier (such as Bardic Inspiration or Warding Flare).
- You regain up to 1d4 levels of spell slots. These can be used for the same spell (such as a single 4th-level spell) or different ones (such as multiple 1st-level spells).

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

THE MYSTERIES OF HEAVEN

Few have traveled to the highest planes, and fewer still have left those blessed realms to bring knowledge to mortals. Archivists of this society collect what little knowledge they can find

about the heavens, enlisting celestials against their enemies through ritual rather than religious reverence. Many find themselves hunted by the servants of heaven for not showing angelic majesties the proper veneration, but these archivists' holy power makes them a formidable tool against all wicked creatures.

Heaven's Ward: Beginning at 2nd level when you choose this society, you can cast *shield of faith* without using a spell slot. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest. Additionally, you learn this spell and add it to your prayer book.

Extra Attack: At 6th level, you have learned martial training similar to that of celestial soldiers. When you take the Attack action you can make one extra attack as part of this action.

Dark Knowledge (Valor): At 10th level while your Dark Knowledge feature is active, you can use a bonus action on your turn to inspire yourself or an ally you can see within 30 feet of you against your Dark Knowledge target. The target of this feature can gain your Dark Knowledge die as temporary hit points when targeted by that creature. These temporary hit points last for 1 round.

Heavens Unleashed: At 14th level, you can add your Intelligence modifier to the damage roll of any archivist spell that deals radiant damage. Additionally, if you cast a spell of 5th level or lower that deals radiant damage you can deal maximum damage instead of rolling. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

THE SEALS OF CORRUPTION

Terrible things claw at the edges of the universe, but those few not driven mad by the knowledge shepherd a small hope of fighting back against these aberrations. Archivists of this society wield magic to obstruct otherworldly entities and protect the world from further destruction...though this sometimes comes at great personal cost.

Horrifying Touch: Beginning at 2nd level when you choose this society, you can touch a foe and strike them with debilitating horror as they understand a measure of what lurks outside the known universe. As an action, choose one creature that you can see within 5 feet of you. If the target can see you, it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw against your archivist spell save DC or become frightened of you until the end of your next turn. The frightened creature's speed drops to 0, and it is incapacitated and visibly dazed. On subsequent turns, you can use your action to maintain this effect, extending its duration until the end of your next turn. However, the effect ends if you move more than 5 feet away from the creature, if the creature gains total cover from you, or if the creature takes damage. Once the effect ends, or if the creature succeeds on its initial saving throw against this effect, you can't use this feature again until you finish a short or long rest. Additionally, you learn *Tasha's hideous laughter* and add it to your prayer book.

Dark Knowledge (Abjure Enemy): At 6th level, while your Dark Knowledge feature is active, you can use a bonus action on your turn to condemn your Dark Knowledge target. The creature must make a Charisma saving throw against your archivist spell save DC or be rebuked, giving yourself the following benefits.

- The creature has disadvantage on attack rolls made against you.
- You can't be charmed, frightened, or possessed by the creature.

Seal Portal: At 10th level, you can use your action to seal a door, gate, window, or other mundane entryway as if using the *arcane lock* spell without requiring material components. This effect lasts for up to 24 hours or until broken. You can also use this feature on an extradimensional portal or teleportation circle no greater than 10 feet in diameter, which suppresses magical transportation up to 1 minute. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Corruption Unleashed: At 14th level, you can use your action to become an aberration of CR 5 or lower for up to 1 minute, until you are reduced to 0 hit points, or until you end this feature as a bonus action. Your statistics are replaced by the statistics of your new form, though you retain your alignment and personality. If you have any abilities that require a saving throw, its DC is equal to that of your archivist spell save DC. You assume the hit points of your new form, and when you revert to your normal form, you return to the number of hit points you had before your transformation. If you revert as a result of dropping to 0 hit points, any excess damage carries over to your normal form. You are limited in the actions you can take by the nature of your new form and your gear melds into the new form. You cannot activate, use, wield, or otherwise benefit from your equipment. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

ARCHIVIST SPELL LIST

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

Chill Touch
Dancing Lights
Light
Mage Hand
Message
Poison Spray
Prestidigitation
Sacred Flame

1ST LEVEL

Alarm
Armor of Agathys
Comprehend Languages
Cure Wounds
Detect Evil and Good
Detect Magic
Expeditious Retreat
False Life
Fog Cloud
Guiding Bolt
Healing Word
Identify
Protection from Evil and Good

Ray of Sickness
Shield
Sleep
Tenser's Floating Disk
Unseen Servant
Witch Bolt

2ND LEVEL

Augury
Calm Emotions
Cloud of Daggers
Continual Flame
Darkness
Detect Thoughts
Flaming Sphere
Gust of Wind
Heat Metal
Magic Mouth
Melf's Acid Arrow
Misty Step
Phantasmal Force
Ray of Enfeeblement
Scorching Ray
Shatter
Silence
Web

3RD LEVEL

Bestow Curse
Fireball
Gaseous Form
Glyph of Warding
Hypnotic Pattern
Lightning Bolt
Magic Circle
Phantom Steed
Protection from Energy
Sending
Sleet Storm
Spirit Guardians

Stinking Cloud
Tongues
Vampiric Touch

4TH LEVEL

Arcane Eye
Banishment
Blight
Confusion
Conjure Minor Elementals
Control Water
Death Ward
Dimension Door
Divination
Evard's Black Tentacles
Fire Shield
Ice Storm
Leomund's Secret Chest
Mordenkainen's Faithful Hound
Mordenkainen's Private Sanctum
Otiluke's Resilient Sphere
Phantasmal Killer
Stoneskin
Wall of Fire

5TH LEVEL

Animate Objects
Bigby's Hand
Cloudkill
Cone of Cold
Conjure Elemental
Contact Other Plane
Dispel Evil and Good
Dream
Hallow
Mislead
Planar Binding
Rary's Telepathic Bond
Scrying
Seeming

Teleportation Circle
Wall of Force
Wall of Stone

6TH LEVEL

Arcane Gate
Blade Barrier
Chain Lightning
Circle of Death
Disintegrate
Drawmij's Instant Summons
Eyebite
Forbiddance
Globe of Invulnerability
Guards and Wards
Harm
Magic Jar
Otiluke's Freezing Sphere
Planar Ally
Sunbeam
Wall of Ice
Word of Recall

7TH LEVEL

Delayed Blast Fireball
Finger of Death
Forcecage
Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion
Mordenkainen's Sword
Plane Shift
Prismatic Spray
Sequester
Symbol
Teleport

8TH LEVEL

Antimagic Field
Control Weather
Demiplane

Feeblemind
Power Word Stun
Sunburst
Telepathy
Trap the Soul

9TH LEVEL

Astral Projection
Gate
Imprisonment
Power Word Kill
Prismatic Wall
Time Stop