

Manual of the Planes

Frequently Asked Questions

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About the FAQ

If you have a question about *Manual of the Planes*, chances are that you'll find them within this FAQ. Any new additions or major corrections in a version are provided in blue text for your convenience. Blue text changes to black text in the next version. If you have a question that isn't answered here, please contact custserv@wizards.com and ask away! You can also contact the Sage, Skip Williams, by writing to him at these handy locations:

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We will be updating this FAQ over time, and each version will have a date stamp on it so that you know which version you have.

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I see in the *Manual of the Planes* that the Great Wheel cosmology has sixteen Outer Planes. Do these in any way mirror the Faerûnian cosmology, other than some obvious parallels such as Baator (The Nine Hells) and the Abyss?

Faerûn has a unique cosmology, although Faerûn's various planes have the traits described in *Manual of the Planes*. For example, Faerûn's Outer Planes are divinely morphic. Furthermore, the cosmology presented in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* assumes that no other cosmologies exist anywhere else. That is, the book assumes that the Great Wheel does not exist at all.

What is the Faerûnian equivalent to the Seven Heavens (Celestia now). Where are the Green Fields and Warriors Rest in relation to Elysium and Ysgard respectively? Are the Barrens of Doom and Despair a pocket of Hades? I thought that Cyric made his home on Pandemonium, but in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*, Cyric's realm is called the Supreme Throne. Is the Supreme Throne a part of Pandemonium?

As noted in the previous answer, the cosmology of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* is completely different from the standard D&D (Great Wheel) cosmology. No part of the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology is part of the Great Wheel.

Is there no connection between the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology and the Great Wheel at all?

You can assume the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology is connected to other cosmologies via the Plane of Shadow (as hinted on page 62 of *Manual of the Planes*). That's strictly optional, however.

How do I use the *Manual of the Planes* with my FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign? What if I decide to link the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology and the Great Wheel? Can you use the Astral Plane to go anywhere in the two cosmologies? What about the Ethereal and Shadow Planes?

In general, you have two options for using the *Manual of the Planes* in a FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign. First, you can assume that the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology is the only cosmology that exists, which is the default assumption for FORGOTTEN REALMS campaigns. Or, you can assume that the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology is part of a larger multiverse that contains two or more cosmologies. If you take this option, you should assume that the Plane of Shadow provides the sole link between the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology and other cosmologies. You can, of course, choose other options, but these two involve the least work on your part and allow you to make the fullest use of future FORGOTTEN REALMS game material.

If you choose the first option, you can make use of all the *Manual of the Planes* rules that deal with planar traits and interplanar travel. The transitive planes in the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology work a little differently than what's described in the *Manual of the Planes*, however:

The Astral Plane: In the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology, the Astral Plane is a transitive plane, but it is finite, not infinite, and its various branches and tendrils give the

cosmology its treelike shape. The diagram on page 157 of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* shows the Astral Plane's branched structure.

The Astral Plane is coterminous (see page 17 in the *Manual of the Planes*) with every other plane in the cosmology, but because the plane is not infinite, interplanar travel in the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology is possible only along an astral branch. The heavy lines on the diagram show these astral branches. Note that it is not possible to travel from one plane to another without passing through Toril (the Prime Material Plane). Some of the FORGOTTEN REALMS deities have forged minor astral links, however, between some Outer Planes and demiplanes; these are shown as light lines on the diagram (for example, between Arvandor and Brightwater).

The Astral Plane of the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology offers no connections with other cosmologies, not even to any Astral Planes that might exist in other cosmologies. In all other respects, the Astral Plane is identical to the Astral Plane described in the *Manual of the Planes*.

The Ethereal Plane: The Ethereal Plane is coexistent with Toril, but it offers no links or access to any other plane. It is otherwise identical to the Ethereal Plane described in the *Manual of the Planes*. It is also a transitive plane, even though it can't take you anywhere.

The Shadow Plane: The Shadow Plane is coexistent with Toril, but it offers no links or access to any other plane. If you decide to run a FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign in which other cosmologies exist, the Shadow Plane is the link between them. Shar and Mask have realms here, and it's a good bet that these areas are at least mildly evil-aligned and otherwise function as divinely morphic locales.

Note that a campaign that includes both the Great Wheel and the Faerûnian Cosmology poses a few problems. For example, there are several deities, such as Bahamut, Corellon Larethian, and Lolth, that are present in both cosmologies. You can assume that such deities have analogs that exist in both cosmologies simultaneously, or you can assume that the deities split their time between the two cosmologies, traveling between them via the Plane of Shadow.

Outer Planes: The FORGOTTEN REALMS Outer Planes are divinely morphic, as are the Outer Planes described in the *Manual of the Planes*. At present, their other planar traits are unrevealed, but one can make some educated guesses about them just based on which deities dwell on each plane.

The Abyss: Mildly chaos and evil aligned. The Abyss of the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology is nearly identical to the Abyss described in the *Manual of the Planes*, except that the only planar link is the astral branch to Toril.

Arvandor: Mildly chaos and good aligned. This plane is similar to the first layer of Arborea.

The Barrens of Doom and Despair: Mildly law and evil aligned. This plane is similar to Gehenna, but without the River Styx.

Brightwater: Mildly good aligned; similar to the first layer of Arborea, but less so than Arvandor.

Cynosure: A demiplane that serves as a meeting place for the deities. As neutral ground, Cynosure has no alignment or energy traits. Although it is a demiplane and of finite size, any deity can travel there. When that deity leaves, however, the deity must return to the plane from whence he or she

came.

Demonweb Pits: Mildly chaos and evil aligned. The Demonweb Pits are similar to the description in the *Manual of the Planes*, except that this is a separate plane, not a location on the Abyss.

Dragon Eyrie: Mixed alignment and elemental traits. The plane's prevailing traits undoubtedly vary depending on which deity's realm you happen to be in.

Dwarfhome: Mildly law and good aligned. The plane is similar to Eracknor, which is part of Celestia, but Dwarfhome is a plane unto itself.

Dweomerheart: No alignment traits, mixed magic traits.

The Fugue Plane: A demiplane that serves as a collection point for the souls of the dead. Like Cynosure, the Fugue Plane is neutral ground and has no alignment or energy traits. (The personal realms of Jergal and Kelemvor probably have alignment traits appropriate for these deities.) Although it is a demiplane and of finite size, the souls of the dead can travel there from anywhere in the cosmology.

Fury's Heart: Mildly chaos and evil aligned. The plane is similar to both Orthrys and Cathrys (both layers of Carceri), but without the River Styx.

Gates of the Moon: Mildly chaos aligned.

The Golden Hills: Mildly good aligned; similar to the Golden Hills region of Dothion (part of Bytopia), but a plane in its own right.

Green Fields: Mildly good aligned; somewhat similar to Venya (a layer of Celestia).

Hammergrim: Mildly law and evil aligned; similar to Dwarfhome, but foul and evil.

Heliopolis: Mixed alignment traits and mixed elemental traits. The plane's prevailing traits undoubtedly vary depending on which deity's realm you happen to be in.

House of Knowledge: Mildly neutral aligned with no energy traits; similar to the Outlands.

House of Nature: Mildly neutral aligned with no energy traits; similar to the Beastlands, but without the River Oceanus.

House of the Triad: Mildly law aligned; similar to the first layer of Ysgard, but a plane in its own right and with a lawful bent.

Nishrek: Mildly chaos and evil aligned. Nishrek is similar to the first layer of Ysgard, but dangerous and evil.

The Nine Hells (Baator): Mildly law and evil aligned. The Hells of the FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology is nearly identical to those described in the *Manual of the Planes*, except that the only planar link is the astral branch to Toril.

The Supreme Throne: Mildly chaos and evil aligned; similar to a closed cavity on Agathon (a layer of Pandemonium), but a plane in its own right.

Warrior's Rest: Mildly chaos aligned; similar to the first layer of Ysgard, but a plane in its own right and with a chaotic bent.

Inner Planes: FORGOTTEN REALMS cosmology's Inner Planes are divinely morphic, just as the Outer Planes are. The only planar links are the astral branches leading to Toril. They are otherwise similar to the Inner Planes described in the *Manual of the Planes*.

I'm unclear about a few things from the *Manual of the Planes*. Assuming I am using the Great Wheel cosmology, exactly where are some spells that access the Ethereal

Plane available or unavailable? Can I cast spells that access the Ethereal Plane in the Outer Planes?

No, you cannot cast ethereal-related spells in the Great Wheel's Outer Planes (see the sidebar on page 55 of the *Manual of the Planes*). You also cannot use those spells in any other locale that doesn't have access to the Ethereal Plane, such as in a cosmology that lacks an Ethereal Plane.

Be aware that the list of ethereal-related spells on page 32 is somewhat misleading. For example: Spells marked with an (F) work anywhere; these are force spells that have some effect on the Ethereal Plane but work fine without Ethereal Plane access. Also, the Divination spells *see invisibility*, *true seeing*, and *zone of revelation* work fine without an ethereal connection; they, too, can affect the Ethereal Plane but don't depend on it.

Finally, the *zone of respite* spell also works without Ethereal Plane access. (It, too, blocks travel to the Ethereal Plane.) Likewise, the *dimensional anchor* spell keeps creatures from leaving whatever plane they're currently on and does not depend on Ethereal Plane access.

Can I use spells that access the Astral Plane on the Ethereal Plane?

Yes, see page 46 in *Manual of the Planes*.

Can I cast spells that access the Astral Plane within the Astral Plane, such as *teleport*?

Yes. If you're on a plane, your spells have access to that plane.