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ATHENAEUM ARCANAE MAGIC ITEMS OF THE SENSES



BY TODD CRAPPER

A+HENAÆUM ARCANÆ: MAGIC I+EMS ⊕F +HE SENSES

IN+R⊕DUCTION

Odds are that your character is a standard humanoid with each of the five basic senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. Should he look out across an open field, he will see the lush greens of the tall grass, hearing the sound of wind hissing over them as they sway back and forth, feel the same cool breeze blowing over his face, catch a breath of pollen in the air, and enjoy a cool drink from the nearby pond. These five senses are so basically intoned to our own way of life that we take them for granted...but why have just those.

For as long as there have been spells woven into physical items, there has been research into enhancing those basic senses into some better; twelve of those items are presented below.

DIVIDED BY SENSES

Each of these twelve magic items are divided into groups of senses, including the “sixth sense” of premonition, for easy convenience in research and presentation. Some of these items are handy add-ons that can be used just as any other magic item at

the whim of its wielder, while some require a long-term, permanent commitment from the character. In these cases, they impart a permanent sensual modification to the character, requiring those wishing to endow themselves with its power to make an irreversible sacrifice or to have suffered from a devastating impairment prior to its discovery.

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About the Author

Todd Crapper is the Head Honcho for Emerald Press (www.emeraldpress.net), another PDF publisher, and author of *Campaign Options: Mazes, Combat Options: Initiative*, and the upcoming *Living Nights Campaign Setting*. He lives in Ottawa, Canada with his dog, Rusty, and invisible cat, Markus

THE I+EMS

VISION ⊕N

Lens of Darkvision

The ability to see in the dark is a powerful one indeed, particularly for those who professional lives are spent within deep dungeons and underground mazes. They appear as leather strapped goggles with lenses as

dark as midnight, almost impossible to see through until they are placed over the user’s eyes. The strap must be tightened firmly at the back and create a strong suction over the user’s skin or else it will completely ineffective and the user will be considered blind until handled properly. Once they have been tightened, the lens convert to a dark rose color and the user is granted darkvision.

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For each hour that the *lens* are worn, the user will require 1 round of concentration after they are removed before he will be able to see normally again, thereby considered stunned for the duration of time. Each positive Constitution modifier of the user can negate this penalty at a rate of 1 round/modifier.

Moderate transmutation; CL 6; Craft Wondrous Item, *darkvision*; Price 2000 gp

Headband of Light Absorption

In many worlds, elves and humans have long stood on similar sides of the same battle, and there have been numerous gifts exchanged in those battles. Among them have been the *headbands of light absorption*, appearing as nothing more than an intricate cloth strap worn across the forehead, adorned with a pair of tiny, shimmering leaves to be placed directly between the eyebrows of the wearer. The elven people, cautious of sharing their innate ability with others – even those who may have made great sacrifices in the continuation of the elven species – and consider these emblems of remarkable ancestry for those that wear them. They ask that those who receive these gifts do not sell them, but pass them down to upcoming generations as a tribute to the event that allow for the passing of such a gift. Anyone found in the possession of one without this reason will suddenly find it missing from their pack the morning after their encounter with a troupe of elves.

When worn, the *headband* grants the wearer low-light vision, as the leaves (which are the part of this item that are truly enhanced) absorb all excess light and pass the information to the wearer's brain – this does not mean that the wearer can see through the leaves, but that they provide a boost to any character with normal vision.

Faint transmutation; CR 3; Craft Wondrous Item, *light*; Price: N/A

Periapt of Auras

While many might not realize this, vision is not just used to witness events: they are an access to an individual's soul or spirit. We are all able to "see" into someone personality by observing body movements; unconscious twitches in behavior, facial expressions, and so forth. The *periapt of auras*, however, takes this process of information a bit further and provides its wearer with a visual presentation of an individual's aura.

The *periapt* appears as an ovular glass shard encased in a silver frame lined with five symbols, one for each of the key alignment phases: good, evil, neutral, lawful, and chaotic. To function, the wearer must firmly hold the periapt in hand and concentrate on the subject of his query until he is able to witness an aura (or "glow") surrounding the individual. The color of this aura dictates their alignment combination as demonstrated below:

Alignment	Aura Colour
Chaotic Good	Sparkling gold
Lawful Good	Silver
Neutral Good	Purple
Lawful Neutral	Blue
Neutral	Grey
Chaotic Neutral	Blue
Neutral Evil	Emerald green
Lawful Evil	Orange
Chaotic Evil	Blood red

Outsiders will always have a stronger aura than those born on the Material Plane, with a radius that is twice as large. In fact, any outsider with 10+ HD that is observed with the periapt will cause a burst of radia-

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tion so strong that the wearer must make a Fortitude save (DC 10) or else become blind for 1d4 rounds.

The *peript* can only reveal the aura of a living creature: undead, constructs, vermin, and plants are immune to the powers of the *peript* as if they were inanimate objects. Its powers do not perform as a detect evil or similar spell in that they do not project a presence in the room – the *peript* cannot reveal a trail from the aura of a creature that was previously in a room at an earlier time. The wearer must have a clear line of sight on the creature in order for its power to work.

Strong divination; CL 10; Craft Wondrous Item, *detect evil*, *detect good*, *detect law*, *detect chaos*; Price 10,000 gp; 1 lb.

Eye Patch of Many

There are dangerous times in which an adventuring party must split up and this is a risky venture: communication within your party is crucial to survival. Years ago, a half-orc rogue named Yarl Slashmouth lost an eye when a silence spell prevented the rest of the party from screaming out the danger coming around the corner towards him. After being forced to wear an eye patch to conceal the gaping hole (that wasn't as appreciated by others as it was by himself, once it had healed over), he decided to put it to good use.

The *eye patch* is actually a set of four black, cloth woven eye patches, each of them identical to the other besides from an invisible arcane mark designating one from the other by a number, symbol, or any other means of separation determined by its creator. When the eye patch is worn, it provides a visual relay from the wearer from any other eye patches that are currently worn. While such a massive relay as four *eye patches* can cause, it is quite simple to adapt to and only requires that the user can-

not take 10 or 20 on a Spot or Search check for as long as the eye patch is in use. If only one of the **eye patches** are in use, it does not provide any visual relay at all and can only be successfully used when placed over the eye of a living creature.

Moderate conjuration; CL 12; Craft Wondrous Item, *scrying*; Price 3500 gp (set of four)

SMELL

Feral Mask

Those creatures and animals that are born with the ability to track another creature by scent can read much more than just body odors and path markings: the inner workings of such creatures have been studied greatly, with numerous specimens dissected and put to rigorous study in order to create this next magic item.

The *feral mask* is commonly made from the skin of any creature or animal with the scent ability, with the fur instead removed and painted over in any numerous depictions that are deemed necessary. For example, a *feral mask* created from a canine might represent such a creature with a pair of ears painted over the side of the mask, while one taken from a minotaur will have long horns painted from the temple towards the back of the head. The *mask* stretches over the head and stops around the nose, where it must fit tightly in order to function. When worn, the *feral mask* grants the user the scent ability.

The risk of wearing such a *mask* comes with offending a similar creature that it depicts. Using the minotaur example above, encountering another minotaur while wearing the *mask* could cause it to become agitated.

Moderate transmutation; CL 10; Craft Wondrous Item, *alter self*; Price 25,000 gp

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THE SCENT SKILL (WIS)

The ability to track down a subject by its odor is something normally relegated to animals and beasts, along with a few monstrous humanoids that are primordial in comparison to the standard races of any world.

The Scent skill represents such a creature's ability to detect odors for the purpose of tracking and locating. By treating it as its own skill, the user will be able to train them self in the art of tracking to a new degree and grant them the possibility of honing this trait at the cost of lowering some others.

This skill is limited only to those creatures that are listed as having the scent ability (including the following creature types: animals, beast, magical beast, and monstrous humanoids).

Check: Any opportunity that a character has to make a Spot check, the character can make a Scent roll as a substitution. Similar rolls that are listed as requiring a Wisdom check can be replaced with this skill so long as they utilize their sense of smell. The creature can detect targets by their scent within an ordinary 30-foot radius.

This increases to 60ft. if the target is upwind and decreases to 15ft. if the target is downwind. Incredible scents, considered those that are detectable to ordinary creatures without this skill, can be found at twice the range. Overpowering scents - including those that may require a Constitution roll to avoid sickness - can be picked up at three time's normal range.

After picking up a creature's scent, the user cannot pinpoint the target's exact location at any distance greater than 5 feet. Anything within this range can be discerned and located by scent alone. A successful check can reveal whether or not the trail is getting stronger or weaker and assist the user

in pinpointing its exact location.

If the user has at least 5 ranks in this skill, it can be used in the same manner as the Track feat, except that the user ignores all penalties for surface conditions and poor visibility. Water and false odors can throw off the scent and increase the base DC for tracking to 20 instead of 10.

Recognizing a target's identity by scent alone is a possibility with this skill as long as the user makes a successful roll by using a partial action.

If the user has at least 10 ranks in this skill, he can do so as a free action.

Armour check penalties can hinder the Scent skill just as it does with others skills such as Balance, Escape Artist, etc.

Retry: Yes. Just as with the Spot, Listen, and other similar skills, a character can make as many attempts as long as he is willing to try.

Special: If you have 5 ranks in Survival, you get a +2 synergy bonus on Scent checks. With 5 ranks in Scent, the same character gains a similar bonus to Survival.

Adapting the Scent Skill

Any creature listed as having the Scent ability can deduct ranks from its Survival skill and transfer them to the new skill. If the creature does not have any ranks in Survival, then it may deduct ranks from either Spot or Search instead.

With the Track feat, it does not change. This feat allows a character (normally intelligent with a score of at least 6 or higher) to visual chase down an opponent.

A synergy bonus may be granted to the Track feat of +2 per 5 ranks of the Scent skill.

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TASTE

Tongue Wrap

It doesn't seem likely that most adventurers have considered using taste as a tool to fight evil and claim treasure, which is probably why it took a gnome with a penchant for too much drink to conceive of this item. The *tongue wrap* is made from a sponge-like fabric that is actually stretched around the neck of its user. A thick liquid is contained between the two bizarre wrappings of the item, creating an unusual "bubbling" effect that can be witnessed upon closer inspection. When worn, the *wrap* allows the user to use his sense of taste as if it were the scent ability (or granting the skill above), replacing all nasal requirements with taste. For example, for a character wearing the *tongue wrap* to track down a target, he must pick up the soil from the ground and taste it – tasting down not require eating the unsavory object completely as the information is processed through the tongue, not the stomach. From there, the user is able to process the same information as if he had been using the scent ability or skill.

Moderate transmutation; CL 8; Craft Wondrous Item, *alter self*; Price 15,000 gp

T⊕OUCH

Rumbling Boots

Despite their appearance as thick boots made of iron, this pair is incredibly light and comfortable (while they do make a terrible sound and inflict a -10 penalty to all Move Silently checks). A series of bolts and straps runs down the side of each boot, requiring them to be suited up as if the character was wearing plate mail armor. When worn properly, however, they grant a powerful ability: tremorsense to a range of 60 feet. If the user wishes to expand their ability, he must blind-

fold himself and increase the range to 90 feet.

Strong evocation; CL 9; Craft Wondrous Item; *sound burst*; Price 45,000 gp; 10 lbs.

Deep Fingers

This unique item is rarely found in pairs, as only one is required to function. **Deep fingers** appear as nothing more than dark, leather gloves, but with thin strips of metal running along the edges of the fingers and thumb (meaning along the top, bottom, and sides of the digits). When pressed against a solid object, they create an enhanced sensation of touch that is so detailed, they allow the user to actually "see" the inner mechanics of a door, locking mechanism, or any other similar device that grants a +10 circumstance bonus to any Open Lock check. The use of the *deep fingers* requires concentration from the wearer, expanding the skill check to a full round, or else they become ineffective.

Moderate divination; CR 6; Craft Wondrous Item, *sound burst*; Price 10,000 gp

S⊕OUND

Sonic Gloves

These leather gloves have a 1" piece of iron embedded to its palms. With a mental command from the wearer, they emit a tiny sonic wave that pulses through any object it touches and allows a blind character to "see" the vibrations of any physical object as if he had the blindsight ability.

The power of the *sonic gloves*, however, varies according to the condition of the user. If the user still has vision – whether it is normal, darkvision, or any other type of visual ability – and uses a blindfold or any other means to impair his eyesight, he will require a Listen check against a varying Difficulty Class. Small-, Medium-, or Large-sized objects have a DC of 10. For every additional size category smaller or larger, the DC

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increases by 2. Diminutive objects are too tiny for the vanguard to detect easily and massive objects are too big for him to detect without extra effort. A character that is permanently blind, however, can use them automatically without any skill checks whatsoever.

Activating these *gloves* can also alert others with tremorsense to its use and activating them against a metal object will make a slight noise that can be heard by those who make a successful Listen check (DC 15).

Strong evocation; CL 5; Craft Wondrous Item, *shatter*; Price 18,500 gp.

Cone of Sound

When the old mage, Devrus Mangetmach, suffered terribly from the cry of a banshee, he created the cone of sound to help him hear again. Unfortunately, his last day was spent on the corner of a dark alleyway after he was mugged by the wicked and greedy Ironclaw thieves, who took the cone for themselves and used it to pick up the juiciest tidbits of gossip within town and bribe their way into power.

The *cone* appears as a tiny, hollow tube as wide as 2" and narrowing down to nothing more than a single human hair at the other. It is made from animal bone and cartilage, with an inner lining of tiny hairs meant to replicate the inside of a human ear. When placed against the user's ear, it can double his normal hearing range and can even be used to make a Listen check around corners, spreading up to 60 feet in length from the base of the *cone*.

Moderate transmutation, CR 5; Craft Wondrous Item, *whispering wind*; Price 2000 gp

PREM⊕NITION⊕

Circlet of Possibilities

As sentient creatures, we all must make choices for every waking moment of our lives, but in the life of an adventurer, the wrong

choice can be fatal. This powerful item grants the user an ability to witness a projection of a possible future, no more than 6 seconds ahead in time, and make a decision based on that possibility.

The *circlet* appears as a thin, golden crown with three strands continuously wrapping over and under each other until it is impossible to discover where one starts and the other ends. When activated, the *circlet* offers a glimpse into the future up to one round in advance, at which point the round is played out as normal – the only condition is that this round is not real, and so any effects or consequences that occur are not yet permanent. After this round is played out, the user may change their course of action based on the events that they have seen (in which case the round is played out again, with only the user able to make a new series of actions instead of the original one, and with all characters re-rolling their results) or can act out in the exact same manner as had been previewed (in which case, all results from the future round occur as had been predicted and dice rolls are kept as they had occurred). Such a brief glance into the future does not offer any possible guarantees for success and can only be used to peer into the same period of time once.

Strong divination; CR 15; Craft Wondrous Item, *moment of prescience, vision*; Price 75,000 gp

Implant of Danger

To wear the implant of danger, this tiny emerald lined with eight small, hooked spikes, must be embedded into the back of the user's neck, causing the permanent loss of 1 hit point for as long as it is worn. Removing the *implant* – at which point it becomes inert and can never be reactivated again – restores the lost hit point after 24 hours. During this time, the user is given an innate danger sense: he is aware when the

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threat of physical harm is within 60 feet of his presence, regardless of whether or not he can see it or recognize it specifically. This grants him an immunity to any surprise and allows him to maintain his

Dexterity bonus to AC at all times in which he is conscious.

Strong divination; CR 7; Craft Wondrous Item, *detect snares and pits*, *detect thoughts*; Price 10,000 gp

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Campaign Options: Mazes; Emerald Press; 2003

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