

OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

RETRO ADVENTURE GAME



The Necromancer

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The Necromancer

v0.2

Play Test Content

This book is presented as in-development content for play testing. The material will be published in its final form in a future *Old-School Essentials* book.

Please email us with play test feedback.

summon@necroticgnome.com

Writing, editing, layout: Gavin Norman. **Cover art:** Chris Malec. **Interior art:** Peter Mullen.

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INTRODUCTION

THE NECROMANCER

Wizards who deal with the macabre mysteries of death and undead are a staple of sword and sorcery fiction and fantasy gaming. While the *Old-School Essentials* magic-user class has access to some spells within the necromantic domain (for example, horrid classics such as *animate dead* and *death spell*), such magic is not the class' primary focus. Enter the necromancer...

Necromantic Magic

Necromancers wield magic in the following main areas:

- ▶ **Undead:** Detecting, commanding, summoning, and creating undead monsters of all kinds.
- ▶ **Offence:** Inflicting pain, disease, and injury, paralysing by touch, cursing, and even killing outright.
- ▶ **Control:** Opening and sealing crypt doors, conjuring necrotic barriers, placing horrid traps, and possessing the bodies of unwitting victims.

Introducing the Necromancer Class

If starting a new campaign, the necromancer may simply be included in the roster of character types players may choose from when creating a character.

Necromancers can easily be introduced into ongoing campaigns as NPCs, making especially compelling villains. A powerful necromancer whose lair is warded with fiendish magic and populated with undead minions makes a formidable enemy.

Alternatively, scrolls of necromancer spells might be placed in treasure hoards, giving PCs a limited access to the field of necromantic magic.

Expanding the Magic-User

Groups that do not wish to add a new class of spell-caster to their games may instead consider adding the new spells in this book to the purview of the magic-user class.

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THE NECROMANCER

Requirements: Minimum WIS 9

Prime requisite: INT

Hit Dice: 1d4

Maximum level: 14

Armour: None

Weapons: Dagger, staff (optional)

Languages: Alignment, Common

Necromancers are adventurers who study the arcane arts of death and the undead. Through this study, they have learned to cast magic spells.

Alignment: Being allied with the macabre forces of death and undeath, necromancers are usually neutral or chaotic. Lawful necromancers may exist at the referee's discretion, possibly as wardens of the dead.

Arcane Magic

See *Magic* in *Old-School Essentials* for full details on arcane magic.

Magical research: A necromancer of any level may spend time and money on magical research. This allows them to add new spells to their spell book and to research other magical effects. When a necromancer reaches 9th level, they are also able to create magic items. Researched spells, effects, and magic items must be within the scope of the necromancer class, as judged by the referee.

Spell casting: Necromancers carry spell books containing the formulae for arcane spells. The level progression table (opposite) shows both the number of spells in the necromancer's spell book and the number they may memorize, determined by the character's experience level. Thus,

a 1st level necromancer has one spell in their spell book, selected by the referee (who may allow the player to choose). The list of spells available to necromancers is found on *p6*.

Using magic items: As spell casters, necromancers are able to use magic scrolls of spells on their spell list. They can also use items that may only be used by arcane spell casters (e.g. magic wands). They are, however, not able to use magic items with effects that charm or control living creatures, including humans (e.g. a ring that controls animals).

Combat

Necromancers can only use daggers and are unable to use shields or wear any kind of armour. This makes them very vulnerable in combat.

Necromancers and Staves (Optional Rule)

Optionally, necromancers may be allowed to wield a staff in combat.

After Reaching 11th Level

A necromancer may build a stronghold, often a great tower or necropolis. 1d6 apprentices of levels 1–3 will then arrive to study under the necromancer.

Necromancer Level Progression

Level	XP	HD	THACO	Saving Throws					Spells						
				D	W	P	B	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	0	1d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2,500	2d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	5,000	3d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
4	10,000	4d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
5	20,000	5d4	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15	2	2	1	-	-	-	-
6	40,000	6d4	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
7	80,000	7d4	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	3	2	2	1	-	-	-
8	150,000	8d4	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	3	3	2	2	-	-	-
9	300,000	9d4	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	3	3	3	2	1	-	-
10	450,000	9d4+1*	17 [+2]	11	12	11	14	12	3	3	3	3	2	-	-
11	600,000	9d4+2*	14 [+5]	8	9	8	11	8	4	3	3	3	2	1	-
12	750,000	9d4+3*	14 [+5]	8	9	8	11	8	4	4	3	3	3	2	-
13	900,000	9d4+4*	14 [+5]	8	9	8	11	8	4	4	4	3	3	3	-
14	1,050,000	9d4+5*	14 [+5]	8	9	8	11	8	4	4	4	4	3	3	-

* Modifiers from CON no longer apply.

D: Death / poison; **W:** Wands;

P: Paralysis / petrify; **B:** Breath attacks;

S: Spells / rods / staves.

Advanced Level Restrictions

If using the optional rules for choosing character race and class separately (see *Old-School Essentials Advanced Fantasy*), the following races may be necromancers:

- ▶ **Drow:** 8th level.
- ▶ **Elf:** 8th level.
- ▶ **Half-elf:** 9th level.
- ▶ **Human:** Unlimited.

NECROMANCER SPELL LIST

1st Level

1. Chill Touch
2. Command Dead
3. Corpse Visage
4. Decay (*Ward Against Decay*)
5. Deathlight
6. Detect Undead
7. Marionette
8. Pass Undead
9. Protection From Evil
10. Read Magic
11. Skull Speech
12. Undead Servitor

2nd Level

1. Bone Armour
2. Choke
3. Death Recall
4. Detect Magic
5. Feign Death
6. Paralysing Touch
7. Seal Tomb (*Open Tomb*)
8. Skeletal Steed
9. Skull Sight
10. Silence 15' Radius
11. Speak With Dead
12. Spectral Hand

3rd Level

1. Animate Dead, Temporary
2. Bone Staff
3. Carrion Stench
4. Crypt Sight
5. Death Ward
6. Drag From Death's Door
7. Fear
8. Grave Breath
9. Hold Person
10. Protection from Evil 10' Radius
11. Skull Trap
12. Vampiric Touch

4th Level

1. Command Undead
2. Corpse Clairvoyance
3. Corpse Mask
4. Curse
5. Dispel Magic
6. Inter (*Exhume*)
7. Reassemble
8. Rotting Touch
9. Skeletal Wings
10. Swarm Transformation
11. Wall of Bones
12. Wound Transference

5th Level

1. Animate Dead
2. Bonewrack
3. Cloudkill
4. Commune With Spirit
5. Gaseous Form
6. Guardian Spirit
7. Hold Undead
8. Magic Jar
9. Spirit Vision
10. Summon Undead
11. Veil of Life
12. Wall of Gloom

6th Level

1. Bonesteel
2. Deathlessness
3. Death Spell
4. Doomveil
5. Energy Drain
6. Eternal Quest (*Remove Eternal Quest*)
7. Necrotic Gaze
8. Protection From Undead
9. Sacrificial Resurrection
10. Skeletal Army
11. Spirit Shield
12. Undead Regeneration

NECROMANCER SPELLS

1ST LEVEL SPELLS

Chill Touch

Duration: 3 rounds +1 per level

Range: Touch

The caster's hands are enveloped with a chilling, blue miasma that disrupts the life energy of any living creature touched.

Attack roll: In combat, a melee attack roll is required.

Effects: The victim suffers 1d4 damage and loses 1 point of STR. If the victim does not have a rated STR score, they instead suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls each time they are touched.

Recovering: Lost points of Strength are recovered at a rate of one per hour.

Command Dead

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: 60'

2d6 humanoid corpses or skeletons within range rise up as undead and obey the caster's commands for a short time.

Combat stats: Each reanimated corpse or skeleton has 1 hit point and attacks using the stats listed below.

Special abilities: They are unable to use any special abilities (including spell casting) that they possessed in life.

Commanded Dead

AC 7 [12], **HD** 1 (1hp), **Att** 1 × weapon (1d6 or by weapon), **THAC0** 19 [0], **MV** 60' (20'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 10

► **Undead:** Make no noise, until they attack. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*).

Corpse Visage

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: The caster

The caster's face and voice replicate those of a corpse touched.

Limitations: The spell only works on the corpse of a humanoid deceased within the last week.

Decay: The caster's face and voice reflect the exact state of the target corpse. If the corpse is decayed, the caster's face will appear rotting and their voice ragged and rasping.

Decay

Duration: 1 turn / instant / permanent
(*ward against decay*)

Range: Corpse touched

This spell has two usages (chosen when cast):

1. **Destroy tissue:** A touched corpse or dead body part (e.g. dismembered limb, extracted organ, etc.) is eaten away to bones in 1 turn, devoured by a gruesomely accelerated mass of maggots and mould. For the purposes of *raise dead*, a decayed corpse is treated as being 6 days old + 1 day per level of the caster.
2. **Harm undead:** *Decay* inflicts 2d6 damage against an undead monster with flesh (e.g. zombie, ghoul). The target must be touched in the round the spell is cast, requiring a successful melee attack.

Reversed: Ward Against Decay

A single corpse or dead body part (e.g. dismembered limb, extracted organ, etc.) is permanently protected from the natural processes of decay and deterioration.

Deathlight

Duration: 6 turns +1 per level

Range: 60'

A single skull, skeleton, corpse, or undead monster is wreathed with flickering light.

Light: 15' radius. May be of any colour the caster chooses.

Saving throw: An intelligent undead monster may **save versus spells** to resist.

Counters invisibility: The flickering light makes it impossible for the target to become fully invisible.

Detect Undead

Duration: 3 turns

Range: 60'

This spell enables the caster to divine the presence of undead creatures within range.

Information: The spell indicates neither the precise location nor the type of any undead detected, only their direction.

Obstruction: The ability to detect undead is blocked by 1' of stone, 3' of earth, or a thin layer of metal.

Marionette

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 round per level

Range: 30'

The caster takes control of a single creature, moving it around as they wish, like a puppet.

Targets: The spell can target either a corporeal undead monster of up to 4 HD or a human, demihuman, or human-like monster (see *Persons* under *Monsters*, in *Old-School Essentials*).

Saving throw: The victim may **save versus paralysis** to resist the spell.

Actions: The caster can make the victim move, attack, freeze, or act in any way desired. Control is imperfect, however: the victim moves jerkily and acts without precision, making attack rolls at a -2 penalty.

Special abilities: The caster cannot command the victim to use any special abilities they possess (e.g. poison, breath weapons, spells, etc.).

Self-destructive acts: Acts that are self-destructive or against the victim's alignment allow another save to break the magical control.

Concentration: Being distracted (e.g. attacked) or performing any other action (except moving) causes the spell to end.

Pass Undead

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: The caster or a creature touched

The subject is rendered completely undetectable to undead.

Detection: Undead with 6 or more HD may **save versus spells** to detect anyone protected by this spell. Undead with 9 or more HD are never deceived by the spell.

Hostile actions: Taking hostile action against undead (e.g. attacking, casting offensive spells) reveals the subject's presence, but only to the individuals which were attacked.

Protection From Evil

Duration: 6 turns

Range: The caster

This spell wards the caster from attacks by creatures of another alignment, as follows:

Bonuses: The caster gains a +1 bonus to saving throws against attacks or special abilities of affected creatures.

Affected creatures' attacks: Against the caster are penalised by -1.

Enchanted, constructed, or summoned creatures: The spell additionally prevents such creatures from attacking the caster in melee, though they may still make ranged attacks. If the caster engages such a creature in melee, this protection is broken (the caster still gains the save and attack bonuses mentioned above).

Read Magic

Duration: 1 turn

Range: The caster

By means of *read magic*, the caster can decipher magical inscriptions or runes, as follows:

Scrolls: The magical script of a scroll of arcane spells can be understood. The caster is then able to activate the scroll at any time in the future.

Spell books: A spell book written by another arcane spell caster can be deciphered.

Inscriptions: Runes or magical words inscribed on an object or surface can be understood.

Reading again: Once the caster has read a magical inscription using *read magic*, they are thereafter able to read that particular writing without recourse to the use of this spell.

Skull Speech

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: 60'

The caster may cause a single skull within range to speak in a rasping whisper.

Words: The caster may cause the skull to utter any words desired. It is not possible to cast spells via the skull.

Undead monsters: An undead monster's skull may be caused to speak. Intelligent undead may **save versus paralysis** to resist.

Undead Servitor

Duration: 6 turns +1 per level

Range: 30'

This spell temporarily reanimates the bones or body of a single dead humanoid into an undead skeleton or zombie.

Obedient: The undead servitor obeys the caster's commands.

Special abilities: The servitor is unable to use any special abilities (including spell casting) that it possessed in life.

Skeleton Servitor

AC 7 [12], **HD** 1 (4hp), **Att** 1 × weapon (1d6 or by weapon), **THAC0** 19 [0], **MV** 60' (20'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 10

► **Undead:** Make no noise, until they attack. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*).

Zombie Servitor

AC 8 [11], **HD** 2 (9hp), **Att** 1 × weapon (1d8 or by weapon), **THAC0** 18 [+1], **MV** 60' (20'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 20

► **Undead:** Make no noise, until they attack. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*).

► **Initiative:** Always lose (no roll).

2ND LEVEL SPELLS

Bone Armour

Duration: Permanent (until destroyed)

Range: The caster

Plates of jagged bone surround the caster, acting as a formidable suit of armour.

Armour Class: The bone armour grants AC 5 [14].

In melee: Any creature that successfully attacks the caster in melee suffers 1d3 damage, due to flying fragments of jagged bone.

Destruction: The armour lasts until the caster suffers 5 points of damage, +1 point per level.

Choke

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: 90'

A pair of spectral hands clasp around the throat of a living creature and begin choking them.

Saving throw: The victim may **save versus spells** to negate the spell.

Damage: The victim automatically suffers 1d4 damage per round.

Attack penalty: The victim suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

Escaping: Due to their ghostly nature, the choking hands cannot be wrenched away from the victim. However, the spell is negated if the caster is killed or knocked unconscious.

Death Recall

Duration: 1 turn

Range: Corpse touched

Upon casting this spell and touching the body of a creature which has died within the last 24 hours, the caster experiences a vision of the last 10 minutes of the creature's life, ending with its demise.

Trance: While witnessing the deceased creature's last moments of life, the caster is in a trance state, unable to move or perceive their surroundings.

Detect Magic

Duration: 2 turns

Range: 60'

Enchanted objects, areas, or creatures are caused to glow. Both permanent and temporary enchantments are revealed.

Feign Death

Duration: 6 turns +1 per level

Range: The caster or a creature touched

A willing subject falls into a cataleptic state, indistinguishable from death.

Hit Dice limit: The subject may not have higher HD than the caster's level.

Senses: The subject retains their senses of hearing and smell, but cannot see or feel.

Damage: Any damage inflicted on the subject is halved.

Immunities: The subject is unaffected by paralysis and energy drain.

Poison: The effects of any poison in the subject's system are suspended while the spell lasts. Once the duration ends, poison has its normal effect once more.

Ending: The caster can end the spell at any time. The subject requires 1 round to awaken.

Paralysing Touch

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: Touch

The caster's touch paralyses living creatures.

Attack roll: In combat, a melee attack roll is required.

Effects: The victim must **save versus paralysis** or be paralysed for 2d4 turns.

Restrictions: Elves and creatures larger than ogres are unaffected.

Seal Tomb

Duration: Permanent / Instant

Range: 60'

A magical seal is placed on a single crypt door or coffer lid, causing it to close and become magically locked.

Bypassing: The magical seal is permanent but may be bypassed as follows:

The caster: Can freely pass their own seal.

A *knock* spell: Allows passage.

Higher level casters: Any magic-using character who is at least 3 levels higher than the caster of *seal tomb* may pass through unimpeded.

Temporary: Bypassing does not end a *seal tomb* spell.

Reversed: Open Tomb

Causes a crypt door or coffer lid to open.

Magical locks: Spells such as *seal tomb* and *wizard lock* are dispelled.

Wards: Warding spells normally triggered by opening the door are temporarily bypassed.

Skeletal Steed

Duration: 3 turns per level

Range: 10'

Conjures a skeletal horse that will carry the caster (or another, designated person) upon its back.

Move silently: The steed moves with a preternatural silence.

Loads: The steed can carry one rider and up to 3,000 coins of weight. Any weight beyond this causes the spell to end.

Expiration: When the duration expires, the skeletal horse crumbles into dust.

Skeletal Horse

AC 7 [12], HD 1 (4hp), Att None, THACO 19 [0], MV 180' (60'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 10

► **Undead:** Makes no noise. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*).

Skull Sight

Duration: 3 turns per level

Range: Skull touched

Binding their eyes with a cloth, the caster gains the ability to see through the empty eye sockets of a humanoid skull, often one worn as a necklace or placed atop a staff.

Dark vision: The skull can see normally, up to 60', in absolute darkness.

Distance: If the caster moves more than 30' away from the skull, the spell ends.

Removing the cloth: If the caster removes the cloth covering their eyes, the spell ends.

Silence 15' Radius

Duration: 12 turns

Range: 180'

A 15' radius area is rendered utterly silent.

Within the area: All sound is stopped. Conversation and spell casting are impossible.

Noise from outside the area: Can be heard by those within it.

Casting upon a creature: *Silence* may be cast upon a creature, which must **save versus spells**. If the save fails, the 15' radius area of silence moves with the creature. If the save succeeds, the spell's effect remains stationary—the targeted creature may move out of it.

Speak With Dead

Duration: 1 turn

Range: 10'

The caster may ask questions of a deceased person, the spirit's voice echoing out from beyond the grave.

Remains: Some remnant of the person's physical body (e.g. bones) must be within range.

Time since death: It is only possible to awaken the spirit of a person who died within a certain time frame, dependent on the caster's level (see table below).

Questions: The number which can be asked depends on the caster's level (see table below). The spirit answers truthfully but briefly, and only possesses knowledge it had during life.

Speech: The spirit speaks with tongues it knew in life.

Speak With Dead Limitations

Level	Time Since Death	Questions
6 or lower	7 days	2
7–8	7 months	3
9–10	7 years	4
11–12	70 years	5
13+	Unlimited	6

Spectral Hand

Duration: 2 rounds per level

Range: 60' + 10' per level

A glowing, ghostly hand formed of the caster's own life force manifests at their side.

Moving the hand: By concentrating, the caster can direct the hand to move, within range. The hand can move up to 60' per round.

Touch attacks: The hand can be used to deliver spells of up to 4th level that take effect via touch. When making a touch attack with the hand, the caster gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls.

Concentration: Moving, attacking, or performing any other action besides casting spells causes the hand to return to hover at the caster's side.

Vulnerability: As the hand is formed of the caster's life force, it is vulnerable to attack. It can only be harmed by magic and has AC -2 [21]. If the hand is damaged, the spell ends and the caster suffers 1d4 damage.

3RD LEVEL SPELLS

Animate Dead, Temporary

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: 60'

This spell turns the bones or bodies of dead creatures into undead skeletons or zombies:

Obedient: They obey the caster's commands.

Special abilities: They are unable to use any special abilities (including spell casting) that they possessed in life.

Expiration: When the duration expires, the animated dead crumble into dust.

Number: The spell animates a number of Hit Dice of zombies or skeletons equal to the caster's level:

- ▶ **Skeletons:** Have AC 7 [12] and HD equal to those the creature had in life.
- ▶ **Zombies:** Have AC 8 [11] and HD one greater than the creature had in life.
- ▶ **Classed characters:** If a PC or NPC with levels in a class is reanimated by this spell, the levels are not counted as HD. For example, the reanimated corpse of a 5th level fighter would have 2 HD (1 HD as a normal human, +1 for being reanimated as a zombie).

Bone Staff

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: Bone touched

A normal bone in the caster's hand is transformed into a magic staff that the caster or another may wield in combat.

Length: Whatever its original size, the enchanted bone grows to 6' in length.

In melee: The staff is treated as a +1 weapon, granting a +1 bonus to attack rolls and inflicting 1d6+1 damage.

Expiration: When the duration ends, the staff shatters into dust.

Carrion Stench

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: The caster or a creature touched

The subject exudes a nauseating carrion stench, detectable up to 60' away.

Close range: All living creatures within 10' of the subject (including allies, but excluding the caster) must **save versus poison** or suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls due to nausea.

Duration: Affected creatures suffer the nausea effect for 1 turn after leaving the subject's presence.

Crypt Sight

Duration: 1 day

Range: The caster or a creature touched

The subject is able to see normally up to 30' in utter blackness.

Acuity: Unlike infravision, the sight granted by this spell allows the subject to perceive fine detail, including script.

Death Ward

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: 60'

A living subject is warded such that they do not die when reduced to 0 hit points, instead being able to survive and continue to act normally until they reach -10 hit points.

Death saves: The subject also gains a +2 bonus to saving throws versus death or poison.

Healing: Healing magic functions normally for a character under this ward. For example, a character could be reduced to -8hp, then receive a healing spell taking them up to -2hp, then drink a potion of healing taking them up to 3hp.

Expiration: Once the spell expires, if the subject has 0 or less hit points, they die immediately.

Drag From Death's Door

Duration: Instant

Range: Creature touched

A subject killed by damage (i.e. not by poison, disintegration, etc.) within the last 3 rounds is dragged back from the brink of death.

Weakness: Returning from death is an ordeal. Until the subject gets two full weeks of bed rest, they have 1 hit point, move at half the normal rate, cannot carry heavy items, and cannot attack, cast spells, or use other class abilities. This period of weakness may not be shortened by any magical healing.

Bargain: In return for cheating death, the necromancer suffers 1d6 damage and the subject suffers a permanent loss of one point from a random ability score.

Fear

Duration: Instant

Range: 60' cone, 30' wide at end

Conjures a cone of magical energy that terrifies those within it.

Effect: Creatures in the cone are struck with terror and will flee from the caster at maximum speed for one round per level of the caster. (A **save versus spells** negates the effect).

Dropping items: Affected creatures have a 60% chance of immediately dropping anything in their hands. The chance is decreased by 5% for each level or Hit Die above 1.

Grave Breath

Duration: 2 turns per level

Range: The caster or a creature touched

The subject can survive without air for the duration. Their natural breathing wheezes and comes to a stop.

Immunities: The subject is immune to drowning and to poison gases.

Choking: Damage from choking (e.g. the choke spell) is reduced by half.

Hold Person

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: 120'

This spell causes one or more humans, demihumans, or human-like monsters (see *Persons* under *Monsters*, in *Old-School Essentials*) to be paralysed if they fail a **saving throw versus spells**. It may be cast in two ways:

1. **Against an individual:** The target's saving throw is penalised by -2.
2. **Against a group:** 1d4 individuals in the group are targeted.

Restrictions: Undead and human-like monsters of greater than 4+1 HD (see *Hit point modifiers* under *Monsters*, in *Old-School Essentials*) are not affected.

Protection from Evil 10' Radius

Duration: 12 turns

Range: 10' around the caster

This spell wards the caster and all allies within 10' from attacks by creatures of another alignment, as follows:

Bonuses: Those warded gain a +1 bonus to saving throws against attacks or special abilities of affected creatures.

Affected creatures' attacks: Against those warded are penalised by -1.

Enchanted, constructed, or summoned

creatures: The spell additionally prevents such creatures from making melee attacks against those warded, though they may still make ranged attacks. If any of the warded party engages such a creature in melee, this protection is broken (those warded still gain the save and attack bonuses mentioned above).

Skull Trap

Duration: Permanent until triggered

Range: Skull touched

A humanoid skull is enchanted to explode on contact.

Contact: The explosion is triggered if the skull is touched by a living creature or is otherwise forcefully contacted. Treat as AC 7 [12] for purposes of firing missiles to hit the skull.

Explosion: A 10' radius blast of violet flame and necrotic energy.

Damage: Creatures caught in the blast suffer 1d4 damage per level of the caster, with a successful **save versus spells** indicating half damage.

Vampiric Touch

Duration: 1 turn or until used

Range: Touch

The caster's touch drains hit points from a living creature, healing the caster by a like amount.

Attack roll: In combat, a melee attack roll is required. If the attack is unsuccessful, the spell is not used up.

Damage: The victim suffers 1d6 damage per 2 levels of the caster, to a maximum of 6d6 damage.

Healing: The caster gains hit points equal to the damage inflicted. Any excess hit points above the caster's maximum are treated as bonus hit points.

Bonus hit points: Damage suffered is subtracted first from any bonus hit points. Bonus hit points disappear after 1 hour.

4TH LEVEL SPELLS

Command Undead

Duration: Permanent / one or more days (see below)

Range: 120'

This spell brings one or more undead monsters under the caster's control. The effects differ depending on the intelligence of the monsters targeted.

Mindless undead:

- ▶ **Targets:** Multiple mindless undead monsters (e.g. skeletons, zombies) totaling up to 1 HD per level of the caster can be affected.
- ▶ **Obedient:** The monsters mindlessly obey the caster's commands.
- ▶ **Duration:** Permanent.

Intelligent undead:

- ▶ **Targets:** A single monster of Hit Dice not exceeding the caster's level can be affected.
- ▶ **Saving throw:** The monster may **save versus spells** to negate the spell.
- ▶ **Mastery:** The monster regards the caster as its master and will come to the caster's defence.
- ▶ **Commands:** If they share a language, the caster may give the monster commands, which it will obey.
- ▶ **Suicidal commands:** The affected monster never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders.
- ▶ **Duration:** The control lasts indefinitely, but the monster may **save versus spells** once per month to break free. Monsters of greater than 3 HD may save once per week, and monsters of greater than 6 HD may save once per day.

Corpse Clairvoyance

Duration: 1 hour per level

Range: Corpse touched

The caster can see and hear through the dead eyes and ears of a corpse.

Range: The caster may move up to a mile away from the corpse and still receive its sensory impressions.

Undead: Animated corpses (e.g. zombies) may be affected, and an affected corpse may subsequently be animated. Intelligent undead may **save versus spells** to resist the communion.

Corpse Mask

Duration: 1 hour per level

Range: Corpse touched

The face of a humanoid corpse twists into a replica of another person's face.

Mental image: The caster must have a clear mental image of the person to be replicated (e.g. a portrait, personal meeting).

Replica: The replicated face is a perfect duplicate. The corpse's body is unchanged by this spell.

Undead: Animated corpses (e.g. zombies) may be affected, and an affected corpse may subsequently be animated.

Curse

Duration: Permanent

Range: 30'

Places a deleterious effect upon a creature, if it fails a **save versus spells**.

Effects: The exact form and effects of the curse are determined by the caster.

Maximum possible effects include: A -2 penalty to saving throws, a -4 penalty to hit, reducing an ability score by 50%.

Multiple curses: May afflict a creature, as long as each has a different effect.

Referee judgement: The referee should judge the effects of this spell and may turn overly powerful curses back onto the caster!

Dispel Magic

Duration: Instant

Range: 120'

Dispel magic ends spell effects within a 20' cube area.

Caster levels: If the level of the caster of the effect to be dispelled is higher than the level of the caster of *dispel magic*, there is a 5% chance per level difference that the attempt to dispel will fail.

Magic items: Are unaffected.

Inter

Duration: 2d4 rounds

Range: 60'

A sinister force drags a single target into the earth over the course of 2d4 rounds.

Hit Dice limit: The target's Hit Dice may not exceed the caster's level.

Saving throw: A **save versus death** is allowed to resist the spell.

Aid: A creature of giant strength or 4 or more creatures of above average strength (combined STR score of 50 or more) can prevent the victim's interment.

Effect: If the victim fails to resist, they are interred 10' beneath the earth. Suffocation usually occurs within 1d4 rounds.

Reversed: Exhume

Causes buried bodies within range to rise to the surface of the earth.

Depth: Corpses buried deeper than 20' cannot be exhumed.

Selecting: The caster may optionally choose which bodies are exhumed (for example, by reading names from gravestones).

Rotting Touch

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: Touch

The caster's touch inflicts a horrible rotting disease on living creatures.

Attack roll: In combat, a melee attack roll is required.

Effects: The victim receives no benefit from magical healing. Natural healing is ten times slower.

Removing: The disease can only be removed by magic (e.g. *cure disease*).

Reassemble

Duration: Instant

Range: 60'

This spell repairs corporeal undead monsters, stitching rended flesh and knitting shattered bone back together. It has two usages (chosen when cast):

1. **Restore hit points:** A total of 1d4 hit points per level of the caster can be repaired, divided between any number of corporeal undead within range.
2. **Reanimate:** Corporeal undead monsters killed within the last turn are restored to 1d4 hit points and reanimated. Up to 1 HD of monsters per level of the caster are affected.

Skeletal Wings

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: 10'

Conjures a skeletal horse with ragged, bat-like wings that will carry the caster (or another, designated person) upon its back.

Move silently: The steed moves with a preternatural silence.

Loads: The steed can carry one rider and up to 3,000 coins of weight. Any weight beyond this causes the spell to end.

Expiration: When the duration expires, the skeletal horse crumbles into dust.

Winged Skeletal Horse

AC 7 [12], **HD** 2 (9hp), **Att** None, **THACO** 18 [+1], **MV** 180' (60') / 360' (120') flying, **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 20

► **Undead:** Makes no noise. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*).

Swarm Transformation

Duration: Permanent until ended

Range: The caster

The caster, their clothing, and all carried items transform into a scurrying swarm of rats, spiders, or insects.

Movement: While in swarm form, the caster can move at 60' (20').

Attacks: The swarm can attack by engulfing victims within a 10' × 10' area. Victims suffer damage (no attack roll): 2hp if wearing armour, 4hp without. Victims who defend themselves by brandishing a weapon (or similar) suffer half damage from the swarm.

Immunity: The swarm is immune to normal damage, but can be harmed by fire, spells, or area attacks (e.g. breath attacks).

Duration: The caster can end the spell's effect at any time, returning to their normal physical form. If the caster is killed, they also return to their normal form.

Wall of Bones

Duration: 12 turns

Range: 120'

An immobile wall of jagged bones springs into existence.

Size: The wall can be any size, and may be shaped in any manner and to any dimensions the caster desires, up to 1,200 sq. ft. For example, it may be a straight wall or curved into a protective circle.

Location: The wall must rest upon a solid surface and may not be evoked so that it appears where objects are.

Cover: Missiles may be fired through gaps in the bone wall, suffering a -3 penalty to attack rolls.

Monsters with fewer than 4 HD: Cannot pass the *wall of bones*.

Monsters with 4 or more HD: Can break through the wall, but suffer 1d8 hit points of damage when doing so.

Wound Transference

Duration: Instant

Range: Creature touched

The subject's wounds are transferred to the caster.

Healing: The subject is healed of up to 2hp per level of the caster (at most as many hit points as the caster currently has). The caster may decide how many hit points to heal.

Wounding: The caster suffers damage equal to the hit points healed.

5TH LEVEL SPELLS

Animate Dead

Duration: Permanent

Range: 60'

This spell turns the bones or bodies of dead creatures into undead skeletons or zombies:

Obedient: They obey the caster's commands.

Special abilities: They are unable to use any special abilities (including spell casting) that they possessed in life.

Duration: They remain animated until they are destroyed or until a dispel magic spell is cast upon them.

Number: The spell animates a number of Hit Dice of zombies or skeletons equal to the caster's level:

- ▶ **Skeletons:** Have AC 7 [12] and HD equal to those the creature had in life.
- ▶ **Zombies:** Have AC 8 [11] and HD one greater than the creature had in life.
- ▶ **Classed characters:** If a PC or NPC with levels in a class is reanimated by this spell, the levels are not counted as HD. For example, the reanimated corpse of a 5th level fighter would have 2 HD (1 HD as a normal human, +1 for being reanimated as a zombie).

Bonewrack

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: 30'

The bones of the targeted living creature agonisingly warp and throb inside its flesh.

Saving throw: The victim may **save versus spells** to negate the spell.

Damage: The victim automatically suffers 1d6 damage per round.

Penalties: The victim suffers a -2 penalty to Armour Class and attack rolls. The victim's movement rate is halved.

Cloudkill

Duration: 6 turns

Range: 30'

A poisonous fog streams from the caster's fingertips, filling a 30' diameter area.

Movement: The fog moves at 60' per turn (20' per round), driven by the wind (or away from the caster, in still conditions).

Sinking: Because the fog is heavier than air, it sinks to the lowest level of the land, even pouring down den or sink-hole openings.

Damage: All creatures in contact with the vapours suffer 1 hit point of damage per round of contact.

Creatures with less than 5 Hit Dice: Must also **save versus death** (once per round of contact) or die.

Commune With Spirit

Duration: One conversation

Range: Spirit manifests in the caster's presence

The caster calls upon the spirit of a deceased person, seeking knowledge they possessed during life.

Chance of success: The chance that the spirit will respond to the spell is mostly dependent on how long it has been deceased (see table below).

Modifiers: The time at which the spell is cast also affects success: daytime -25% , full moon $+10\%$, festival of the dead $+25\%$. Regardless of modifiers, the maximum chance of success is 95% and the minimum 5% .

Failure: On a roll of $96-00$, malicious undead spirits (1d6 spectres) are summoned.

Success: If the spirit is successfully summoned, it rises before the caster as a shade visible to all present.

Questions: The caster may ask up to one question per experience level about 8th.

Reaction: To determine the spirit's attitude, the referee should roll 2d6, applying the caster's NPC reactions modifier due to CHA (see *Ability Scores* in *Old-School Essentials*). If the spirit is a different alignment than the caster, a -2 penalty applies.

Knowledge: The spirit only possesses knowledge it had during life.

Speech: The spirit magically speaks the same language as the caster.

Commune With Spirit Base Chance

Time Since Death	Base Chance
1 week	60% + caster's level
1 month	55% + caster's level
1 year	50% + caster's level
10 years	45% + caster's level
100 years	40% + caster's level
1,000 years	30% + caster's level
Unlimited	10% + caster's level

Commune With Spirit Reaction

2d6	Reaction
2 or less	Resentful. Brief, untruthful answers.
3-5	Reluctant. Brief, cryptic answers.
6-8	Amenable. Brief, truthful answers.
9-11	Eager. Detailed, truthful answers.
12 or more	Passionate. Fully elaborated, truthful answers.

Gaseous Form

Duration: Permanent until ended

Range: The caster

The caster, their clothing, and all carried items transform into a cloud of mist.

Movement: The caster moves at 60' (20') and is able to pass through small holes and cracks.

Actions: The caster cannot attack, speak, or cast spells.

Invulnerability: The caster can only be harmed by magical attacks.

Duration: The caster can end the spell's effect at any time, returning to their normal physical form. If the caster is killed, they also return to their normal form.

Guardian Spirit

Duration: 1 day per level or until manifested

Range: 10'

The caster summons a lost soul from the realms of the dead and tasks it to guard the location where this spell is cast.

Warding: Once summoned, the spirit lies dormant and invisible in the locale to be protected, but will manifest when a trigger condition is satisfied.

The trigger condition: May be as broad or as specific as the caster wishes. It may include conditions on creatures entering the warded area or touching anything within. The trigger condition may only take visual appearances into account (e.g. it cannot discern the alignment, class, level, etc. of creatures who enter).

Once triggered: The guardian spirit manifests in a form selected by the caster when the spell was cast (see possible manifestations, below).

Following manifestation: The spirit is released from its task, ending the spell.

Possible manifestations:

▶ **Wraith:** The spirit manifests as a wraith (see Old-School Essentials) and attempts to fight off intruders for up to 6 turns.

▶ **Warning:** The spirit manifests at the caster's current location, warning of the intrusion in the warded area and providing a broad description of the intruders.

▶ **Chilling fog:** The spirit manifests as a chilling fog, filling a 10' cube area per level of the caster. It blocks normal vision and infravision and inflicts 1hp of cold damage to living creatures. The fog lasts for 1 turn.

Hold Undead

Duration: 6 turns +1 per level

Range: 120'

This spell causes one or more undead monsters to be paralysed if they fail a **saving throw versus spells**. It may be cast in two ways:

1. **Against an individual:** The target's saving throw is penalised by -2.
2. **Against a group:** 1d4 individuals in the group are targeted.

Incorporeal undead: (e.g. spectres, wraiths) can be affected, but gain a +2 bonus to the saving throw.

Magic Jar

Duration: Special

Range: The caster

The caster's body enters a comatose trance as their life-force is transferred into a receptacle (any inanimate object within 30'), known as a magic jar. From there, the caster may attempt to possess the bodies of other creatures.

When the caster's life-force is in the magic jar:

► **Possession:** The caster may attempt to possess the body of another creature within 120'. The victim may **save versus spells** to resist possession. If the save is successful, the caster may not make another attempt to possess that victim for one turn. If the save fails, the caster's life-force leaves the magic jar and enters the victim, possessing it.

► **Returning:** The caster may choose to return to their own body at any time, ending the spell.

► **If the magic jar is destroyed:** The caster dies.

► **If the caster's own body is destroyed:** Their life-force is stranded in the magic jar.

When the caster's life-force is possessing a victim:

► **Control:** The caster gains full control over the victim's body, but is not able to make the victim cast spells.

► **If the magic jar is destroyed:** The spell ends and the caster's life-force is trapped in the possessed body.

► **If the possessed victim is killed:** The caster's life-force returns to the magic jar.

► **Dispelling:** *Dispel evil* forces the caster's life-force back into the magic jar.

► **If the caster's own body is destroyed:** Their life-force is stranded in the body of the creature being possessed.

Spirit Vision

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: The caster

The caster briefly enters a trance, their spirit drifting to observe a distant place or object brought to mind.

The clarity of the vision: Depends on the caster's familiarity with the subject.

Detecting the caster: Any persons present at the site being viewed experience a brief chill as the caster's spirit arrives. Those who can see invisible detect the caster's spirit as a faint shimmering outline.

Attacking the caster: The caster's spirit has AC 5 [14] and can only be harmed by magic. If it is struck, the caster suffers damage and the spell ends.

Turning the caster: The caster's spirit can be turned as a 4 HD undead monster, ending the spell if successful.

Obstructions: A thin layer of lead blocks this spell.

Awakening: If the caster is awoken from the trance, the spell is cut short.

Summon Undead

Duration: Permanent (until dismissed or slain)

Range: 240'

The caster invokes Orcus, lord of the undead, who sends a number of his undead servitors to the caster's aid.

Monsters summoned: Roll 1d6 on the table below to determine which monsters appear. For monster stats see *Old-School Essentials*.

Concentration: Is required to command summoned undead.

Dismissing: While control over the undead is maintained, the caster may dismiss them at any time, sending them back to their master, Orcus.

Disruption: If the caster moves at more than half speed or their concentration is disturbed, the command over the undead ends. The monsters are, henceforth, free-willed entities and will immediately try to kill the caster and any who get in their way.

Dispelling: Summoned undead may be dispelled by *dispel magic* or *dispel evil*.

Restrictions: The caster may cast this spell at most once per day.

Summon Undead Results

1d6	Monsters Summoned
-----	-------------------

1	16 skeletons
2	8 zombies
3	8 ghouls
4	5 wights
5	4 wraiths
6	3 mummies

Veil of Life

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: 30'

This spell cloaks undead monsters with an illusion making them appear alive.

Subjects: 1 undead monster per level of the caster.

Appearance: Each subject appears as it did in life. The illusion veils all the signs of death, including deathly odours.

Behaviour: Subjects' behaviour and intelligence are not altered. For example, while a skeleton can be veiled to appear as a living person, it remains mindless and unable to speak.

Detecting: Only magic (e.g. detect undead, detect illusion) can reveal the veil.

Undead status: In all other respects, the subjects are still treated as undead. For example, they can be turned and are affected by spells such as *command undead*.

Wall of Gloom

Duration: Concentration + 6 turns

Range: 120'

A sinister barrier of pure darkness manifests at a location of the caster's choosing.

Size: 5' thick, 20' high, and up to 20' long per caster level.

Darkness: The wall blocks both normal and infravision.

Touching: Anyone touching the wall must **save versus spells** or flee in terror for 1d6 rounds.

Passing through: Anyone not afflicted by terror upon touching the wall may attempt to pass through, incurring a second **save versus spells**. If this save fails, the creature is paralysed and remains stuck in the darkness of the wall until its duration ends.

Exceptions: The caster, undead creatures, and creatures with an affinity for darkness or shadow are unhindered by the wall.

Concentration: The spell lasts as long as the caster concentrates and performs no other actions. Once concentration ends, the wall persists for 6 turns.

6TH LEVEL SPELLS

Bonesteel

Duration: Permanent

Range: 60'

A single object or creature of normal bone is hardened with the resilience of steel.

Armour Class: The subject's AC improves by 4 points.

Mundane damage resistance: The subject takes half damage from non-magical attacks.

Metal affecting magic: May target the subject.

Deathlessness

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: The caster

The caster is rendered immune to much physical harm, their heart and breathing stopping and their blood ceasing to flow.

Regeneration: The caster regenerates 1 hit point at the start of each round. Even damage that reduces the caster's hit points below 0 can be regenerated while the spell lasts. The caster falls unconscious upon reaching 0hp, but awakens once they regenerate to 1hp.

Attacks: Weapons (including natural weapons such as claws and bites) inflict but a single point of damage. Magic weapons also inflict their magical "plus" bonus (e.g. a sword +2 would inflict a total of 3 damage to the caster).

Energy: Damage from fire, electricity, cold, and acid is halved.

Immunities: The caster is unaffected by gases, paralysis, and energy drain.

Poison: Has no effect on the caster, but lingers in the system and, unless neutralised by other means, takes effect once the spell ends.

Saving throws: The caster gains a +4 bonus to saves versus death and paralysis.

Death Spell

Duration: Instant

Range: 240'

Up to 4d8 Hit Dice of creatures within a 60' cube area must save versus death or die, instantly.

Restrictions: Undead and creatures with greater than 7 Hit Dice are unaffected.

Doomveil

Duration: 1 turn per level

Range: 15'

All living creatures within range (excluding the caster) must **save versus spells** or be surrounded with a shimmering black aura.

Effect: While the spell lasts, affected creatures are unable to gain hit points due to healing of any kind (natural or magical) or regeneration.

Energy Drain

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

The creature touched permanently loses one experience level (or Hit Die).

Attack roll: In combat, a melee attack roll is required. If the attack misses, the spell is wasted.

Effects: The victim loses one Hit Die of hit points, as well as all other benefits due to the drained level (e.g. spells, saving throws, etc.). A character's XP is reduced to halfway between the former and new levels. A person drained of all levels becomes a zombie in 1d4 days, under the control of the caster.

Restrictions: Non-living targets (including undead) are not affected.

Eternal Quest

Duration: Permanent until fulfilled /

Instant (remove eternal quest)

Range: 60'

The caster commands a single subject to perform a specific quest or task.

Examples of quests: Rescuing a prisoner, killing a specific monster, bringing a magic item to the caster, or going on a journey to an oracle.

Suicidal quests: The prescribed quest must not be obviously suicidal.

Saving throw: The subject may **save versus spells** to resist the eternal quest.

Refusal: The subject must undertake the quest or slowly perish. Every day in which the subject does not pursue the quest, their maximum hit points are reduced by 1. If the subject dies, they rise as an undead monster of Hit Dice equal to half their level and continue the quest. The type of undead should be chosen by the referee.

Completion: Once the task is completed, the spell ends. If the subject is undead, they perish, released into death. If they are alive, their maximum hit points are restored to normal.

Reversed: Remove Eternal Quest

Can dispel an active *eternal quest* spell and any incurred penalties. If the caster of the *eternal quest* to be nullified is higher level than the character casting *remove eternal quest*, there is a chance of the spell having no effect. The probability of spell failure is 5% per level the caster is below the caster of *eternal quest*.

Necrotic Gaze

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: 30'

The caster's eyes turn pure black, bringing death to any they gaze upon.

Gaze attack: Once per round, the caster may gaze at a living target within 30'. The gaze may be used in addition to other attacks and actions.

Effects: The target must **save versus death** or suffer 2d6 damage. The body of a target killed by the gaze disintegrates into black sludge.

Expiration: When the spell ends, there is a 1-in-20 chance of the caster being rendered blind for 1d6 hours.

Protection From Undead

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: The caster or a creature touched

The subject is rendered immune to the special attacks of all undead creatures.

Special attacks: The immunity includes paralysis, energy drain, ability score drain, disease, poison, fear effects, etc.

Normal attacks: Undead can still harm the subject with attacks that inflict damage. For example, the claw attacks of a ghoul still inflict 1d3 damage, but have no risk of paralysis.

Spells: The subject does not gain immunity to spells cast by undead creatures, but gains a +2 bonus to saving throws against them.

Sacrificial Resurrection

Duration: Instant

Range: 120'

By making a bargain with the powers of death, the caster can exchange one soul for another, bringing a dead creature back to life in return for a sacrifice of equal magnitude.

Time limit: The caster can raise a person that has been dead for no longer than four days per level of the caster above 10th. For example, a 13th level caster can revive a character that has been dead for twelve days (three levels above 10th \times four days).

Ritual sacrifice: The spell is cast as a ritual lasting 1 turn, during which a number of intelligent beings must be sacrificed, whose total Hit Dice equal that of the creature to be resurrected.

Weakness: Returning from death is an ordeal. Until the subject gets two full weeks of bed rest, they have 1 hit point, move at half the normal rate, cannot carry heavy items, and cannot attack, cast spells, or use other class abilities. This period of weakness may not be shortened by any magical healing.

Skeletal Army

Duration: 1 hour per level

Range: 120'

Cast in a graveyard or at the site of a battle, this spell causes a troop of skeletons to reanimate and rise up from the earth, ready to do the caster's bidding.

Number: Up to 4 skeletons per level of the caster are reanimated.

Weapons: The skeletal legion is equipped with any weapons they were buried with.

Expiration: When the duration ends, the raised skeletons and their weaponry crumble to dust.

Skeleton

AC 7 [12], **HD** 1 (4hp), **Att** 1 × weapon (1d6 or by weapon), **THAC0** 19 [0], **MV** 60' (20'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 10

► **Undead:** Make no noise, until they attack. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*).

Spirit Shield

Duration: 6 turns or until expired

Range: The caster

This spell summons 2d6 guardian spirits from the realm of the dead. The spirits are faintly visible, whirling around the caster, forming a protective shield against magic.

Spell reflection: When the caster is targeted by a spell, one of the guardian spirits reflects it back at the character who cast it. The guardian spirit perishes.

Expiration: Once all guardian spirits have reflected a spell, *spirit shield* ends.

Turning: The guardian spirits can be turned, being treated as 8 HD undead.

Undead Regeneration

Duration: 1 round per level

Range: 60'

One or more undead monsters of the caster's choosing become indestructible for the duration.

Hit Dice limit: Up to 1 HD of undead per level of the caster are affected. Undead monsters of more than 3 HD cannot be affected.

Regeneration: If an affected monster is killed, it rises again the following round, regaining 1d8 hit points.

Destruction: Affected monsters which are utterly destroyed (e.g. disintegrated, destroyed by a D result on a turning attempt) do not regenerate.

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