

THE ASCENDANT Epic Prestige Class

The Ascendant is one who aspires to even greater heights of power than the greatest mortal can achieve. He strives to become, in the end, a God. Seeking powers beyond the ken of mortals, the Ascendant must achieve higher and higher ranks of power as prerequisites for various levels on the path of the Ascendant. The road is difficult- but if any see it through, the rewards are greater than a mere mortal can even imagine.

Hit Die: d8

Prerequisites: To qualify for 1st-level Ascendant, a creature must be Epic level. In addition, it must have encountered a God in person (not a proxy). It must also have the Leadership feat.

Note that an Ascendant may qualify, both for 1st level and for later levels, with the aid of magical devices, but if it loses its qualifications, it loses all benefits (other than skill points, hit points, and Epic attack and save bonuses) of the Ascendant levels it no longer qualifies for.

Class Skills: At first level, all skills are class skills for an Ascendant. This will change over time as it develops its portfolio. The Ascendant receives 8 skill points per level, plus its Intelligence bonus.

Level Special Abilities

- 1 Natural Armor +1, Portfolio (1st element), Transport 1/day
- 2 *Additional Prerequisites*, DR 5/opposition (one alignment), transport 2/day
- 3 Immune to Mind-Affecting Effects, Natural Armor +2, transport 3/day
- 4 *Additional Prerequisites*, Deflection Bonus +1, Domain (First Granted Power), Increased Hit Points
- 5 Acid, Cold and Electricity Resistance 5, Improved Polyglot, Natural Armor +3, transport 4/day
- 6 Deflection Bonus +2, DR 10/opposition (one alignment), improved transport
- 7 *Additional Prerequisites*, Fire Resistance 5, Natural Armor +4, Unfailing Body (Disease, Poison and Stunning)
- 8 Deflection Bonus +3, Domain (Second Granted Power), Increased Hit Points
- 9 Acid, Cold and Electricity Resistance 10, Natural Armor +5, Sacred Animal, transport 5/day
- 10 *Additional Prerequisites*, Deflection Bonus +4, DR 10/(choice of both alignments or one alignment and epic), Outsider Type, improved transport
- 11 Domain (1st level spells), Automatic Actions, Immune to Energy Drain, Natural Armor +6, Unfailing Grace
- 12 *Additional Prerequisites*, Deflection Bonus +5, Domain (2nd level spells), Increased Hit Points, Spontaneous Divine Spells (1st), transport 6/day
- 13 *Additional Prerequisites*, Acid, Cold and Electricity Resistance 20, Deflection Bonus +6, Domain (3rd level spells), DR 15/(choice of both alignments or one alignment and epic), Natural Armor +7, Spontaneous Divine Spells (2nd)
- 14 Deflection Bonus +7, Domain (4th level spells), Fire Resistance 10, Immune to Ability Damage/Drain, Natural Armor +8, Spontaneous Divine Spells (3rd), Transport 4/day
- 15 *Additional Prerequisites*, Deflection Bonus +8, DR 25/epic, Domain (5th level spells), Immortality, Natural Armor +9, SR 21, Spontaneous Divine Spells (4th)

- 16 Deflection Bonus +9, Domain (6th level spells), Increased Hit Points, Natural Armor +10, SR 24, Spontaneous Divine Spells (5th), Unfailing Body (Death, Disintegration and Radiation)
- 17 Acid, Cold and Electricity Immunity, Deflection Bonus +10, DR15/epic and opposition (both), Domain (7th level spells), Natural Armor +11, SR 27, Spontaneous Divine Spells (6th)
- 18 Deflection Bonus +12, Domain (8th level spells), Immune to Transmutation, Natural Armor +12, SR 30, Spontaneous Divine Spells (7th), Transport 5/day
- 19 *Additional Prerequisites*, Divine Rank 0, DR 35/epic, Domain (9th level spells), Fire Resistance 20, Full Deflection Bonus, Maximum Hit Points, Natural Armor +13, Salient Divine Ability, SR 32, Spontaneous Divine Spells (8th)
- 20 *Additional Prerequisites*, Divine Rank 1, DR 20/epic and opposition (both), Fire Resistance 21, Immortality (Not Subject to Death from Massive Damage), Natural Armor +14, Salient Divine Ability, SR 33, Spontaneous Divine Spells (9th), Transport (at will)

Additional Prerequisites: To become a 2nd-level Ascendant, the creature must fulfill the following additional requirements: *must have at least 200 worshipers; must have a Charisma of at least 25 and at least one other score that is 12 points above its racial average; must have at least three Epic feats.*

To become a 4th-level Ascendant, the creature must have the Polyglot Epic feat. In addition, it must fulfill **one** of the following conditions: *must be able to cast 9th level spells; must have +10d6 sneak attack; must have a base attack bonus (including Epic attack bonus) of +20; must have 23 ranks in five skills; or, must have possession of an artifact.* (Note that if the Ascendant loses the artifact and does not fulfill another of these requirements, it loses all abilities gained as an Ascendant of 4th and higher level.)

To become a 7th-level Ascendant, the creature must have at least 500 worshipers. It must have the Epic Leadership feat. It must have an Epic attack bonus of +6 (i.e. it must be at least 31st level). It must have entered and emerged from the realm of the afterlife (either by dying and returning to life, or by traveling to the appropriate Outer Plane according to its alignment). Finally, it must fulfill any **one** of the following requirements: *must have one Epic item creation feat; must have one Epic metamagic feat; must have the Epic Inspiration feat; must have the Epic Weapon Focus feat; must have one Epic wild feat; must have one Epic feat that requires sneak attack as a prerequisite; must have the Planar Turning Epic feat; must have the Shattering Strike feat; must have any one Epic feat with rage as a prerequisite.*

To attain the 10th level of Ascendant, the creature must have a second portfolio element. Acquiring a second portfolio element may be both dangerous and difficult, and to do so the Ascendant must persuade its worshipers that the element is a part of its portfolio. Often, an Ascendant's actions and the tales of its activities determine its portfolio elements, and these are not always what the Ascendant necessarily has desired; it is the belief of hundreds or thousands of mortals that determine its portfolio. The Ascendant must have at least three ability scores that are 12 points higher than the average for its race. The Ascendant must have at least 2000 worshipers, at least one of whom is 10th level (or ECL 10) or higher. (Note that if its sole 10th-level worshiper dies

or loses enough levels to drop below 10th level, the Ascendant loses all abilities of 10th or higher level Ascendant except for hit points, Epic attack and saving throw bonuses, and skill points.) Also, as it gains its second portfolio element, the Ascendant's class skills become limited. The Ascendant may choose six skills that reflect each element of its portfolio, subject to the dm's approval; in the case of skills such as Profession, Craft and Knowledge, it must choose specific versions of the skill (although it can choose more than one version as more than one of its class skills). Each time it gains a new portfolio element, the Ascendant chooses six more class skills that reflect it; some of these may overlap with previous choices, especially if two of the portfolio elements are very closely related.

To become a 12th-level Ascendant, the creature must have at least five worshipers of 10th or higher level. In addition, it must have at least one ability score of 32 or higher. It must have at least two temples or shrines devoted to it that have been built by its worshipers with no direction from the Ascendant, and it must have at least 100 worshipers that have never met it. It must have traveled to the astral, ethereal and shadow planes, at least two inner planes, and at least four outer planes. It must have met with a being of singular power, such as a deity, arch-devil, demon prince, elemental prince, etc, on its own plane. It must have maintained its alignment since taking its first level as an Ascendant. Finally, it must have performed an act relating to its portfolio that affected at least one thousand intelligent beings (even if they were not aware of it).

Before becoming a 13th-level Ascendant, the creature must have had possession of an artifact for at least one year (even if it subsequently lost possession of it). The Ascendant must also have a body of at least 5000 worshipers, including at least one of 15th or higher level. In addition, the Ascendant must meet **one** of the following prerequisites: *must have a 12th-level spell slot; must have the Epic Spellcasting feat; must have an ability score of 40; must have the Death of Enemies Epic feat; must have the Legendary Commander Epic feat; must have the Epic Weapon Specialization feat; must have the Vorpal Strike Epic feat; must have the Swarm of Arrows Epic feat; must have the Terrifying Rage Epic feat; must have the Air Mastery Epic feat; must have the Consume Knowledge Epic feat; must have the Flame Master Epic feat; must have the Water Mastery Epic feat.*

To achieve the 15th level of Ascendant, the creature must have acquired a third portfolio element. It must also have touched godsblood or godsflesh. It must have been involved in the creation of an Epic magic item (either forging the physical vessel or instilling the Epic magic in the item). The Ascendant may not have more than one ability score that falls below its racial average, and the total of its ability scores must exceed 125 points.

To become a 19th level Ascendant, the creature must have at least 40 non-Ascendant levels, must have one ability score that is at least 20 points higher than the average for its race and must have no less than 10,000 worshipers, including at least one who is 20th level or higher and at least ten of 10th level or higher. To achieve 19th level Ascendant the creature must also burn 25,000 xp over the course of the level leading up to 19th level Ascendant, similar to the xp cost for making magic items. The Ascendant must also spend a year and a day in solitary meditation and contemplation.

To become a 20th level Ascendant, the creature must acquire a spark of divinity (from a divine sponsor, a dead god, by stealing it from a deity or similar power, or

through other means). It must have a body of 20,000 worshipers, at least 10,000 of whom have never seen the Ascendant, and at least five of them must be 20th level or higher; at least one must be Epic-level. The Ascendant must have ability scores that total at least 130 points, and at least three of them must exceed the average score for a member of its race by 10 points. One of them must exceed the racial average by 25 points. The Ascendant must burn 50,000 xp over the course of the level leading up to 20th-level Ascendant, similar to the xp cost incurred during item creation.

Natural Armor (Ex): The Ascendant gains the listed natural armor bonus, starting at 1st level. If it already has natural armor, it uses the better value.

Portfolio: An Ascendant's portfolio is its area of divine interest. Ultimately, when it becomes a god, an Ascendant will become god of its portfolio. A 1st-level Ascendant will have one portfolio element, which may be very broad or specific. However, the broader it is, the more likely the Ascendant is treading on the turf of other divine entities- a dangerous proposition, since they are likely far more powerful than the Ascendant (at least at this point). As the Ascendant rises in level, it must acquire more portfolio elements (see *Additional Prerequisites*, above).

Transport (Su): The Ascendant can transport itself, along with 50 lbs of nonliving matter only, as if by a *greater teleport* spell, except that the maximum distance it can travel is 1000 miles per Ascendant level. It can also take any familiars or animal companions it might have (these do not count against its weight limit, but any objects they carry do). The number of times per day an Ascendant can *transport* increases as it becomes more powerful, beginning with 1/day at 1st level.

Beginning at 6th level, the Ascendant can carry one individual and 100 lbs. of nonliving matter with it. Beginning at 10th level, the Ascendant may carry up to three individuals and 150 lbs. of nonliving matter, and may use its transport ability as a *plane shift* spell instead of a *greater teleport* if it wishes. At 20th level, the Ascendant can use this ability at will, and can carry up to ten other creatures and 1000 lbs. of nonliving matter with it.

Damage Reduction (Ex): The Ascendant gains increasingly powerful damage reduction beginning at 2nd level. Initially it can be defeated by weapons of one opposing alignment of the ascendant's choice (a true neutral Ascendant's opposite alignments are 'all'), but this eventually upgrades to require both alignment components and epic weapons to penetrate.

Immune to Mind-Affecting Effects: An Ascendant of 3rd or higher level is immune to mind-affecting effects, except for those utilized by a being of higher divine rank or Ascendant level than itself.

Deflection Bonus (Su): The Ascendant gains the listed deflection bonus to AC, beginning at 4th level. This bonus can never be higher than its Charisma bonus. If it already has a deflection bonus to AC, it keeps the better value. At 19th level, the Ascendant's deflection bonus equals his Charisma bonus.

Domains (Su): As the Ascendant's power grows, it gains two domains. At first it only gets the granted powers of the domains, but it eventually gains the ability to cast the domains' spells as if it had them prepared. The Ascendant gains its first domain's granted power at 4th level, its second domain's granted power at 8th level, and the ability to use its domain spells as spell-like abilities as it increases in level. The Ascendant can use each of its domain spell-like abilities a number of times per day equal to the highest

level domain spell it has the ability to cast (so a 15th level Ascendant, who can cast up to 5th level domain spells, can cast each of them 5/day). Upon attaining 20th level, it can use any of its domain spell-like abilities at will.

An Ascendant's domains are determined by its portfolio. Though the Ascendant can influence them by its actions and the beliefs it instills in its worshipers, ultimately they are not completely in its control.

Acid, Cold and Electricity Resistance (Ex): Beginning at 5th level, the Ascendant becomes more and more resistant to acid, cold and electricity, eventually becoming immune (at 17th level).

Improved Polyglot (Ex): A 5th-level Ascendant gains the ability to speak, read and understand all languages, even nonverbal ones. This includes even such obscure types of languages as scent-based or radio-based ones.

Fire Resistance (Ex): The Ascendant gradually grows more resistant to fire, starting at level 7.

Unfailing Body (Ex): At 7th level, the Ascendant grows immune to disease, poison and stunning, unless inflicted by a being of higher divine rank or Ascendant level than itself. At 16th level, the Ascendant also becomes immune to death effects, disintegration and radiation unless inflicted by a creature of higher divine rank or Ascendant level.

Increased Hit Points: The Ascendant gains hit points equal to ½ its HD. It cannot end up with more hit points than its HD and Constitution bonus would allow; if it has bonus hit points from some other source that would cause it to exceed this limit, it loses them unless this would cause its hit point total to decrease.

Sacred Animal: The Ascendant may use any animal of a specific type sacred to it as a familiar, as long as that animal is within one-half mile of it. At 20th level, this range increases to two miles.

Outsider Type: The Ascendant's type changes to Outsider at 10th level.

Automatic Actions (Ex): An Ascendant of 11th level or higher can take two automatic actions involving its portfolio each round, so long as the skill check DC is 15 or less.

Immune to Energy Drain (Ex): An 11th-level Ascendant is no longer subject to energy drain, except from a creature of higher divine rank or Ascendant level.

Unfailing Grace (Ex): Starting at 11th level, the Ascendant no longer automatically fails a saving throw on a roll of a 1.

Spontaneous Divine Spells: An Ascendant begins to be able to cast its divine spells (if any) spontaneously. This works like a cleric's ability to spontaneously cast *cure* or *inflict* spells, except that it applies to any divine spell the Ascendant can cast. At 12th level, the Ascendant can spontaneously cast 0 and 1st-level divine spells; this increases rapidly. Note that casting a divine spell spontaneously is a full-round action, so most Ascendants still prepare a list of spells for expedient casting.

Immune to Ability Damage/Drain (Ex): A 14th-level Ascendant is no longer subject to ability damage or drain, except from a creature of higher divine rank or Ascendant level.

Immortality (Ex): At 15th level, an Ascendant becomes functionally immortal. It can no longer die of natural causes, does not age, and no longer needs to breathe, eat or sleep. The only way for it to die is through special circumstances, usually by being slain

in combat. At 20th level the Ascendant is no longer subject to death from massive damage.

Spell Resistance (Ex): Beginning at 15th level, the Ascendant gains a measure of Spell Resistance. If it already has SR, it uses the greater value.

Immune to Transmutation (Ex): An 18th-level Ascendant is immune to polymorphing, petrification or any other attack that would alter its form. Any shape-altering abilities it has work on itself normally, and a being of higher divine rank or Ascendant level than itself can affect the Ascendant with such abilities normally.

Maximum Hit Points: The Ascendant has the maximum hit points of a creature of its HD and Constitution score. Any bonus hit points it may have had from other sources are lost unless the Ascendant's hit point total would therefore go down.

Salient Divine Ability: The Ascendant may select a salient divine ability. The Ascendant must meet all prerequisites for the salient divine ability, except that a 19th level Ascendant is considered divine rank 1 for purposes of meeting the prerequisites only.

Divine Rank 1: Upon achieving 20th level as an Ascendant, the creature gains a divine rank of 1. This brings with it many powers and responsibilities. The deity must immediately set out to craft a godly realm either on its home plane or another. It can block the remote sensing abilities of other creatures with equal or lower divine rank. It adds its divine rank to skill, ability, caster level and turning checks, as well as saving throws. It is no longer subject to death from massive damage. Its senses extend to one mile in radius per divine rank, and it can also perceive a like distance around any of its worshipers, holy sites or sacred locales. Furthermore, it can extend its senses for a mile around the location where anyone speaks its name or any of its titles, or anywhere something significant related to its portfolio takes place (dm's discretion, based on portfolio; the event must affect at least 1000 people). The deity can also create magic items with a market value of up to 4500 gp even without the appropriate item creation feats. The deity can communicate remotely with any of its worshipers or anyone within one mile of a site dedicated to it or a statue or likeness of it. Finally, the deity can now grant spells to its followers. (In some cases, followers of the Ascendant may have been able to cast spells powered by their own faith for some time prior to this, but the deity may now deny or change the spells granted to divine casters that worship it.)

Any creature of a given type as familiar within 1 mile/DR