

Steel Dragons' Guide to

Psychics

*Subclasses and additional character options.
"Old School" sensibilities for "New school" systems.*



*A supplement for Players & Dungeon Masters of
the 5th edition of the world's first role-playing game.*

The Psychic

You have an inkling in the back of your head. A thought, an understanding, a piece of personality in your mind that pulses with comprehension and explodes with moments of untapped power and clarity. You may have spent years in meditation and strict training or just “always been this way/able to do this” without knowing why or even how, necessarily, you did it.

An elf crouches among the brush on the outskirts of a large orcish army, blade at the ready. Her eyes are filled with a silvery light as she focuses her mind to “hear” the thoughts of the orcish warlord deep within the camp. Retrieving the information she wanted, she promptly enhances her short sword with a silvery radiance of psychic energy and mentally directs her companions, laying in wait elsewhere, to begin the assault.

A human races to the parapets and dives over the edge, seemingly untouched by any of the guards’ crossbow bolts! Rushing to the wall’s edge, the lieutenant expects to see a seriously injured thief on the ground below, instead the man is floating harmlessly away toward the treeline, with the duke’s jewels!

A halfling clasps her temples and looks shakily at her companions. Her mental defenses are nearly exhausted from the attack bombarding their minds. Mustering her conscious-

ness, with the last of her strength, the halfling encases the tentacled horror in ice before collapsing to the ground.

A half-elf exhales long and slow. His perceptions widen and he begins to sense the presence of the recently dead spirits in the room. The air about him seems to ripple and stretch a bit and when he speaks in response to the party’s questions, it is not his voice that answers them.

The ways of the mind are paths best trodden with care and caution, but may yield incredible feats and terrible power that belies their often meek beginnings.

Unknown Origins: Understanding the ways and origins of the psychic are a mystery to just about all (including, sometimes, the psychic themselves). For some it is a blessing, an awakening of the mind, hand-picked by the gods or an enlightenment of their own making. Others are persecuted as dangerous or “possessed.” How can they effect theses “magic [appearing]” effects without any arcane training or divine knowledge? Power-hungry wizards may insist psychic powers are a type of magic all its own, hunting down psychics for research/enslavement/mastery of this additional type of power for themselves. It could simply be a quirk of genetic mutation. Perhaps a fluke of unusual ancestry? Exposure to powerful mental, magical, otherworldly “radiation”, entities, or forces can also trigger the “awakening” of the psychic mind.

Ultimately the true nature of the powers of psychic individuals, their place in the world, and relation to other various magic-users is a matter for the DM to decide for the setting.

Of Minds & Magic: Are psychic powers “magic”? No. They are the use and manifestation of the psychic’s own mental energies. They produce supernatural effects that normal people can not accomplish. Yes. They appear to and would be mistaken by the layman for “magic/spells.” Yes. Can magic spells create similar, if not duplicate, effects to what a psychic can manifest? Yes. But they are abilities born of the psychic’s own mental [and, perhaps, spiritual or evolutionary] development. They are not “magic” in the specific D&D sense of “[arcane/divine] energies harnessed and directed through the filter of spells.” Where those energies come from or how they are directed (other than intense effort on the psychic’s part) is anyone’s guess.

To further illustrate this difference, the interactions of psychic abilities and magic spells are generally exclusive. With distinct exceptions for magics/powers that specifically deal with mental abilities, magic spells do not detect or dispel psychic effects and psychic powers can not (again, normally) detect or dispel magical energies. Obvious exceptions include *Obscure Mind* or *Nondetection*, that purposely defend a target from mental intrusion or scrying. Conversely, psychic powers can defend the mind against magics that target them, like *Charm Person* or *Phantasmal Killer*.



There are no vocal, somatic or material components necessary to wield Mental Powers. While the psychic uses their powers, there is not, normally, any visual, audial or otherwise sensory effect generated (unless wished by the player and/or DM: the psychic's eyes glow or an ionized corona of energy appears in the air around their head, ripples of barely visible waves in the air emanate from their body, etc...) Obviously, many Kinetic or Metabolic powers: those that would cause objects to move, change shape or create independent [non-mental] energies, like fire or ice, have easily and immediately noticable effects.

Casting & Psychics: It should be explained, to avoid confusion, that the word "casting" is used to discuss the supernatural abilities of psychic. In other words, you are "casting [your powers/energies] out from your mind" the way a fisherman would "cast their line and hook." So, for common understanding, "casting" is used in relation to the use of psychic powers, but *should not* be taken to mean "psychic powers = spells."

[Ok. The parts everyone cares about...]

Class Features

HD: d6 per level.

HP at 1st level: d6. So start with 6 + Con mod.

HP at Higher Levels: d6 + Con. mod. at every level.

Proficiencies

Armor: Light.

Weapons: All simple weapons.

Saving Throws: Intelligence & Constitution.

Skills: Choose any 3.

Equipment

The Psychic begins with the following in addition to the equipment granted by your background.

- a) light crossbow/20 bolts or b) short bow/20 arrows
- a) Explorer's Pack or b) Scholar's Pack
- a set of leather armor and any simple weapon.
- Two daggers.

@1st: Mental Powers

The psychic has a range of abilities that come from their command of their own minds, force of will, and innate mental energies. These are broken down into *Talents*, *Mental Ranks*, and *Discipline* powers

This third set are "bonus" abilities tied to your *Psychic Discipline*, chosen at level 2, and broaden as the psychic increases in levels of experience.

Using Mental Powers: To use a mental power or talent, the psychic need only concentrate. They can not move more than half their normal movement while maintaining concen-



tration on a power and can not keep a power in effect for longer than level + Int. mod. rounds per use.

Talents: Psychic Talents are most easily accessed and are generally used only for mental combat and defense. Choose 3 powers from the Psychic's Talent list. Other than *Mind Blast*, you use these powers at will. You gain more Talents at higher levels as shown on the Psychic Progression chart.

Mental Ranks: The second type of powers are bundled into suites and tiers of the various areas of psychic power in which the character chooses to focus. These powers, generally, follow the effects of known spells. These are acquired and mastered over time by applying and adding the psychic's *Mental Ranks* to them, ranging from the simplest/more common (requiring only 1 rank) to the very powerful (in the top tier needing 5 successive ranks to access).

At 1st, 2nd, 5th, and every odd level thereafter [7th, 9th, etc...] the psychic gains 1 "Mental Rank" to place/spend on a suite of powers from the Psychic Powers' tables. A psychic may not spend ranks on a power suite if they have not already mastered its previous powers. You may use suite powers no more than your psychic level + Int. mod. times per long rest (see *Psychic Overburn*, below).

"Casting" Ability: Intelligence is considered your "casting" ability.

Formidable Psyche: You have advantage on all saves against psychic damage, enchantment or illusion magics, spells and effects.

@2nd: **Psychic Discipline**

Choose your Psychic specialty: *Telepath, Telekinetic, Seer or Metamind.*

@3rd: **Psychic Overburn**

To maintain a Talent or use a Power effect beyond the durations designated (normally 1 round) or after depleting one's uses per day for powers, a psychic can turn inwardly to push their powers beyond their normal limits using their Constitution ability score. For each point of Constitution "burned" in this way, the psychic receives 1 Power use (at normal duration) or 1 round of an existing Talent or Power in effect beyond its normal duration.

For each point of Constitution spent in this fashion, in addition to their diminishing hit points, the psychic takes on 1 level of Exhaustion. Once used, *all levels of exhaustion and Constitution score points must be recovered* before using this ability again.

If a psychic uses all of their Constitution, down to 0, or accumulates 6 levels of Exhaustion, as normal, (whichever comes first) the psychic is irrevocably dead by any means short of a *Wish*, having completely "fried" their minds and bodies, consumed by their powers.

Mental Focus: When the psychic takes damage from an attack while concentrating on mental powers, they can make a successful Int. check to maintain their concentration. As long as the psychic retains consciousness, on a successful roll, their concentration is not broken. The psychic can make this roll for as many attacks per round as half their levels (rounded down). Additional attacks cause the save or loss of concentration as normal.

@4th: **Ability Boost:** as normal. Increases at 8th, 12th, 16th, 19th.

@5th: **Multi-layered Mind:** With a successful Int. check, a psychic may focus and manifest 2 talents or powers at once or initiate a second while maintaining a first. The number of powers able to be simultaneously maintained increases to 3 at 9th level and 4 at 15th.

@13th: **Unassailable Intellect:** You have resistance to psychic damage and can not be charmed or put to sleep by any spell, psychic power or magical effect.

@17th: **Collective Cognition:** At 17th level when the psychic uses an At-Will Talent or 1st or 2nd Rank Power that would normally effect 1 target, they can now extend the power to effect as many minds as they have levels.

Psychic Disciplines

Telekinetic [Kineticist]

2nd: **Mental Muscle:** You move and manipulate objects, as the Mage Hand cantrip, at will without any visual or auditory display or components. The weight of objects, creatures or materials you can move with your mind increases to and can not exceed 10lbs. per level.

Reflexive Defense: On any round you are being directly targeted by an attack you can see, as a reaction, you create a telekinetic forcefield, as the Shield spell, mitigating the incoming damage. You may use this reaction level times per day. You regain uses of this ability after completing a long or short rest.

6th: **Kinetic Force:** When using any power that deals physical damage, the telekinetic adds 2d6 to the damage of the attack. The target must make a Strength check to beat the Psychic's attack DC 8 + Int. mod + Cha. mod. or be pushed back up to 20'. You must complete a short or long rest before using this feature again.

10th: **Kinetic Field:** You always, subconsciously, maintain a low grade telekinetic field around/within your body, like a second skin that aids in your protection. Add 2 to your AC and save rolls dependent on Dex., even when surprised or asleep.

14th: **Psychokinetic Surge:** When you use Constitution to maintain a psychic talent or power, some of your psychokinetic energies are released in an undirected maelstrom of force, to a 50' radius, throwing objects and pummeling creatures. All creatures, Huge or smaller, within the area of effect take 10d6 bludgeoning damage and must make Str. saves to keep from being thrown up to 50' away from the psychic.

The use of this power induces two levels of Exhaustion when it is complete and it can not be used again until a long rest has been completed.

20th: **Kinetic Regeneration:** You have such complete mental control of your telekinesis that your mind keeps your body in a state of nearly endless "recharging/refreshing." You heal, whether conscious or not, at a rate of 3HP per round. You can replenish Constitution points or Exhaustion ranks at a rate of 1 per hour. You no longer age and can not be effected by disease or poison.

Telepath

2nd: **Psychicly Aware:** You can sense any conscious minds with an intelligence above 1 within 50'. Similarly you sense/become aware of any psychic powers or activity being used within 100' range of you.

Mental Call: You may, at will, mentally communicate a message directly into another mind of a person you know within range, as the *Message* cantrip.

6th: **Investigative Probe:** Telepath has advantage on roll to beat target save. You can not use this power again until completing a long or short rest.

10th: **Mind Link:** You can form an interconnected link with others of your choice. The number of minds in the link can not exceed 1/2 (rounded down) the psychic's level. Members of this link can communicate silently as long as they are within 20' per psychic level of each other. All others within the link hear all communications, but are not privy to "private" thoughts, past memories or other information.

Additionally, the link can be used by the psychic to determine raw emotional states (danger, pain, fear, elation, etc...) but not specifics or communication to a distance of 1 mile per psychic level. The psychic can use this connection to "hone in" on the location of mind in the link.

Once initiated, the link remains in effect for half (rounded down) psychic level hours. The telepath need not concentrate to maintain this link and is free to other power as normal. The telepath can remove and add individual minds (up to the maximum possible) or cancel the link entirely at any time they wish. You can not use this ability again until completing a long or short rest.

14th: **Astral Projection:** You are able to move your mind-self into the Astral Plane as the *Astral Travel* spell. You can not use this ability again until completing a long or short rest.

20th: **Indomitable Mind:** You have immunity to psychic damage, enchantment and illusion magic, powers or effects, including compulsions and domination.

Seer [Clairvoyant]

2nd: **Danger Sense:** You have the uncanny sense of when things nearby aren't as they should be, giving you an edge when you dodge away from danger. You have advantage on Dex. saves and Passive Perception checks.

Portent: You gain 2 d20s following each long rest. You can replace any attack, save or ability check roll by you or a creature you can see with one of these foretelling rolls. You must choose to do so before you see the roll and you can replace only one roll per turn. Each die roll can be used only once and are rerolled after a long rest.

6th: **Wandering Eye:** You can use any reflective surface (still pool of water, a mirror, crystal orb, etc...) or stare into a light source (a fire, the night sky, etc...) to enter a trance and remotely view an area, as the *Scrying* spell. The seer



can not move or otherwise act during this trance and it can be maintained for half-psychic level rounds. You can not use this ability again until completing a long or short rest.

10th: **Second Sight:** You can see into the ethereal plane, invisible creatures, and through visual illusions (this sight will not reveal a shapechanged creature). The vision lasts half-psychic level rounds. You can not use this ability again until completing a long or short rest.

14th: **Prescient:** You may roll as many Portent d20s and use them per long rest as half your psychic levels. Any unused rolls are discarded at the end of your long rest and rerolled.

20th: **Remote Viewing:** The seer can enter a trance, as *Wandering Eye*, but does not require any material or meditative focus to do so. You can drop into this scrying trance at will.

Metamind

2nd: **Emotion Alteration:** You may, at will, attempt to influence the mind of a creature with an intelligence of 3 or higher, within range, as the *Friends* cantrip. You also gain advantage on any *Deception*, *Intimidation*, *Insight* or *Persuasion* roll.

Psi-crystal Attunement: You channel your mental ener-

gies through a special crystal to which you have become attuned. The crystal must be a shard or chunk of precious or semi-precious stone of no less than 100gp value or may be a clear quartz crystal, amethyst or emerald of any size. You may only be attuned to 1 psi-crystal at a time (until 10th level, see *Expanded Attunement*).

While in possession of their psi-crystal, the metamind receives +2 to their Int.- or Wis.- based rolls and are considered +2 to their Int. mod. for the purposes of determining DCs.

6th: **Psychic Recovery:** Provided they are in possession of their psi-crystal, the metamind can use a short rest, once per day, to regain half their level uses of Mental Rank powers. These renewed mental energies remain in effect only until used or the psychic takes a long rest (and regains their full number of uses).

10th: **Expanded Attunement:** The metamind can attune to up to half their psychic level number of psi-crystals. Attuning to a new crystal takes 1 round instead of the normal attunement rules.

14th: **Enhanced Psychic Recovery:** Provided they are in possession of a psi-crystal, the metamind can use up to the total number regained from Psychic Recovery in lieu of Constitution points/before acquiring Exhaustion. This ability can not be used again until completing a long rest.

20th: **Psychic Battery:** The metamind suffers no ranks of exhaustion for using Constitution points to maintain powers, as long as they are in possession of a psi-crystal.

TABLE X.X: PSYCHIC POWER PROGRESSION

Psychic lvl.	Talents	Ranks	Features
1	3	1	Mental Powers, Fortified Psyche, Multi-layered Mind
2	3	2	Discipline Power
3	3	2	Exhaustion Overburn
4	4	2	Ability Boost
5	4	3	Mental Focus
6	4	3	Discipline Power
7	5	4	-
8	5	4	Ability Boost
9	5	5	Multi-Layered Mind: 3
10	6	5	Discipline Power
11	6	6	-
12	6	6	Ability Boost
13	7	7	Unassailable Intellect
14	7	7	Discipline Power
15	7	8	Multi-Layered Mind: 4
16	8	8	Ability Boost
17	8	9	Collective Cognition
18	8	9	-
19	9	10	Ability Boost
20	9	10	Discipline Power



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Psychic Talents

All psychic talent attacks are usable against non-psychic individuals. When two psychics are engaged in mental combat, however, the effects are generally not visible except through Aura Sight or other extrasensory perceptions.

Aura Sight: reveals a psychic's existing defenses, alignment and plane of origin. duration: until your next turn.

Helm of Intellect: psychic adds double their Int. mod. to the amount of psychic damage their defenses can withstand. duration: until your next turn.

Idsinuation: target suffers disadvantage to Wis. & Cha. rolls. duration: until the end of your next turn.

Iron Will: target receives advantage on Wis. & Cha. save rolls. duration: until the end of your next turn.

Mental Screen: allies in 20' radius are protected by whatever mental defenses the psychic is using. until the end of your next turn.

Mental Whip: target takes 2d4 psychic damage & make Int. save or be stunned 1 round. duration: instantaneous.

Mind Blast: targets in a cone 20' diameter at the end, take 2d12 psychic damage & make Int. save. or be knocked unconscious for d6 rounds. Using a Mind Blast takes one of the psychic's Power uses for the day. duration: instantaneous.

Mind Shield: protects psychic from psychic damage equal to their level + Int. mod. duration: entire day without needing concentration.

Psi-Armor: withstands psychic damage equal to their Int, Wis, and Cha. mods combined to their physical AC. duration: the end of your next turn.

Psi-blade: a visible blade of crackling psychic energy appears in your hand or can be used to enhance a weapon already in hand. target takes 2d10 psychic damage from melee attack. duration: until your next turn.

Psi-bolt: a visible bolt of energy flies from the psychic (projected from their head, mind or hands) to their target. target takes 2d8 psychic damage from ranged attack, 50'. duration: instantaneous.

Psi-stab: target takes 2d6 psychic damage from melee or ranged [thrown] attack, 20'. duration: until your next turn.

Thought Tower: protects 20' radius from psychic damage equal to psychic level + all mental ability mods. duration: until the end of your next turn.

Additional powers to these tables can be added by the DM. A player may ask for a "Telepathic Invisibility" at 2 ranks, to mask the psychic's presence from being perceived in a particular mind. Or to add Blindness/Deafness by shutting down the specific perception centers of the brain in a target. The DM is free to add or change powers on the rank lists as make sense/can be attributed to that particular type of power.

Ranks Needed	Telepathy Powers
1	Charm Person
	Disguise Self
	Sleep
2	Detect Thoughts
	Hold Person (telepathic paralysis)
	Suggestion
3	Major Image
	Modify Memory
	Telepathic Tongues
4	Dominate Person
	Phantasmal Killer
5	Feeblemind
	Mind Blank

Ranks Needed	Telekinetic Powers
1	Featherfall
	Floating Disc
	Shield
2	Hold Person (telekinetically held in place)
	Levitate
	Telekinetic Knock/Lock
3	Fly
	Slow
	Telekinetic Bolt
4	Telekinetic Resilient Sphere
	Telekinesis
5	Reverse Gravity
	Wall of Force

Ranks Needed	Metabolic Powers
1	Cure Wounds
	Jump
	Resistance
2	Alter Self
	Darkvision
	Enhance Ability
3	Feign Death
	Haste
	Protection from Energy
4	Freedom of Movement
	Polymorph
5	Heal
	Regenerate

Ranks Needed	Empathic Powers
1	Empathy [Detect Emotions]
2	Calm Emotions
3	Hypnotic [Aura] Pattern
4	Confusion
5	Eyebite

Ranks Needed	Medium Powers
1	Detect Good/Evil
2	Detect Thoughts
3	Speak with Dead
4	Banishment
5	Contact Other Plane

Ranks Needed	Teleportation Powers
1	Misty Step
2	Line of Sight Teleport
3	Dimension Door
4	Teleport
5	Teleportational Circle

Ranks Needed	Clairsentience Powers
1	Alarm
	Detect Magic
	Detect Evil/Good
2	Darkvision
	Locate Object
	See Invisible
3	Clairvoyance
	Detect Thoughts
	Nondetection
4	Locate Creature
	Scrying
5	True Seeing

Ranks Needed	Pyro-/Cryo-kinetic Powers (a psychic is one or the other only!)
1	Firebolt/Ray of Frost, respectively
	Produce Flame/Frost
	Heat/Chill Metal
2	Burning/Freezing Hands
	Pyro-/Cryo-shape
	Scorching Ray (pyro) or Hold Person (cryo, encased in ice)
3	Fire/Ice Ball
	Protection from Energy (fire or cold only, respectively)
	Wall of Fire/Ice
4	"Conjure Elemental" [create moving "creatures" of fire or ice, respectively]
	Fire/Ice Storm
5	Cone of Fire/Cold

