

Familiars in OLD.

From the May playtest document:

The Diabolist III gains an IMP familiar and the Mage III gains a tiny sized creature (cat, bat, owl, mouse..etc.) You can speak with it and it can 'report back' {at higher levels the Mage's familiar can deliver touch-based spells.

Not exactly world-shattering capabilities. In the original Elements of Magic: Revised, the familiar granted various abilities and stat boosts as the 3x core rules. Below is a modified listing based on the 3x SRD

Choose the best between the creatures natural abilities/stats and the masters as follows:

- Hit points equal to half their masters total or their own
- Natural attack skill
- Defense
- Mental Defense
- Skills {DM approval on whether the familiar can use that skill}

Note: the creature's natural stats remain the same and checks use the creature's attributes.

The creature gains:

- Bonus to Logic for each rank in any casting class
- Spells cast on the caster may also affect the familiar as long as the creature is in the same square
- Empathetic link to the master while within 1 mile
- 2 points of SOAK per rank of Mage or Diabolist

The mage gains:

- Harder to surprise. Opponents take a -1 die penalty to access the ambush turn
- A boon based on the creature as shown in the below table

Familiar	Special
Bat	Master gains a +1 die bonus on <a href="#">Listen</a> checks
Cat	Master gains a +1 die bonus on <a href="#">Move Silently</a> checks
Hawk	Master gains a +1 die bonus on <a href="#">Spot</a> checks in bright light
Lizard	Master gains a +1 die bonus on <a href="#">Climb</a> checks
Owl	Master gains a +1 die bonus on <a href="#">Spot</a> checks in shadows
Rat	Master gains a +1 die bonus to your End dice pool
Raven <sup>1</sup>	Master gains a +1 die bonus on <a href="#">Appraise</a> checks The Raven can speak one language of its masters choice
Snake <sup>2</sup>	Master gains a +1 die bonus on <a href="#">Bluff</a> checks This is a tiny viper and does have poison
Toad	Master gains +3 hit points
Weasel	Master gains a +2 bonus to Defense

This would be the baseline familiar, but there is no need to stop here. First, expand the options for creatures that could be selected as a familiar.

#### Magical Exploits

- Improved Familiar: (300xp) You may select any Tiny or Small animal, to include Dire versions as your familiar.
- Magical Familiar: (300xp) You may select any Tiny or Small Magical Beast as your familiar.
- Constructed Familiar (300xp) You may select a Tiny or Small Construct {homunculi} as your familiar.
- Necrotic Familiar (300xp) You may select any Tiny or Small undead as your familiar.
- Extra-Planar Familiar (500xp, Requires either Improved Familiar or Magical Familiar.) you may select any Tiny or Small Outsider {Imps, mephitis, etc}
- Draconic Familiar (500xp, Requires either Improved Familiar or Magical Familiar.) you may select a Tiny or Small Dragonette, Drake, or Psuedo-Dragon as your familiar.

Improved Familiars and Magical Familiars grant boons based on their true nature, similar to the boons listed above. These are determined by the GM These boons fall generally into these categories:

- Initiative bonus for creatures with a high Intuition
- Defense bonus for creatures with tough hides or fast reflexes
- Immunity to the special attack of that creature {poison, paralysis, etc.}
- Skill bonus
- Exploit, such as the Toad's granting of 'Hardy'

Second, expand what the familiar can do for the mage.

#### Magical Exploits: Familiar Boons

- Aid Master (300xp) Once per day the mage can gain a bonus of the familiars LOG dice pool to a skill check. The familiar must be within arm's reach. {repeatable}
- Specialization (300xp, extra planar familiar) Gain +1 dice to damage or +1 to casting checks with the element or virtue your familiar is from
- Share Senses (500xp) Once per day you may focus and see and hear through your familiar
- Travelling Familiar (300xp) Your familiar may travel up to 10 miles away from you
- Commune with Master (300xp) You and your familiar can communicate as if they were using a common language
- Commune with others (300xp) Your familiar may communicate with others of its species, based on the intelligence of the species of course
- Extra Language (300xp, Commune with Others or Raven) Your familiar learns to communicate in another language or to another species
- Envoy (500xp) Once per day your familiar can cast 'Comprehend Language' by touch and allow conversation for up to a minute with any intelligent creature
- Lassi (100xp) The familiar knows where its master is and can find him/her as long as they are on the same plane
- Protective Ward (500xp) While within 10 feet, the master may shift half of any damage taken to the familiar.

- Improved Protective Ward (500xp) The familiar heals damage taken through the ward at a rate of 1 point per round.
- Gladiator (500xp) The familiar gains +1 die to a natural attack {repeatable}
- Infiltrator (500xp) The familiar gains +1 die to stealth checks {repeatable}
- Seeker (300xp) The familiar gains +1 die to tracking {repeatable}
- Arcane Seeker (500xp, Seeker) The familiar gains the ability to sense magic within 30'
- Fetcher (300xp) Your familiar can retrieve small items or components based on your mental image of what it is and where it is
- Herbologist (500xp, Fetcher) Your familiar can search for a specific herb or plant to retrieve
- Fingers (300xp) Your familiar can manipulate objects as if it has opposable thumbs and fingers.

All this goodness! But what are the down-sides?

- 1) If your familiar travels more than 1 mile away from you (or 10 with the proper exploit) you lose all benefits derived from having a familiar.
- 2) If your familiar dies or leaves due to abuse, you lose all Familiar Boons that you had purchased
- 3) If your familiar dies, you take 4D6 damage that cannot be soaked. This happens regardless of distance.
- 4) don't forget to feed it!