

ATLAN EXPLORERS CLUB

Binder lore includes stories of the great Atlan Empire, which destroyed itself—or was damned by the gods—because of the misuse of pact magic. In myth and history, the empire is frequently described as corrupt, cruel, and intolerant, savage humanoids against foreign peoples who they subjugated into slavery. However, most atlan explorers view these stories dispassionately and focus on expeditions to locate atlan ruins, find new binder lore, and elucidate a more complete picture of atlan history and culture.

The most interesting Atlan ruins are underwater. The Club maintains a small fleet of ships and one large magical submersible discovered in the atlan ruins. Every three to five years, the Club organizes major expeditions using the submersible, copious potions of *water breathing*, and other magical equipment. To ensure these expeditions go smoothly, the Club goes to great pains to maintain good relations with undersea races such as aquatic elves, triton, and sahuagin. This is challenging since these races dislike intrusion, can be aggressive, and may want to claim Atlan findings for themselves. Rumor suggests that the Club's elite artificers have developed spells to quickly duplicate mundane items, craft simulacra of unusual beasts in a few hours, and create templates of magical items so the items can be crafted later back at the lab.

Among the most prized Atlan artifacts are obsidian stellar monoliths weighing many tons. Monoliths are keyed to particular “constellations” of spirits, and radiate magical energy that enhances the abilities granted by those spirits. Sometimes, a monolith may even move an entire group to a different plane of existence, which may be a bane or boon. The Club has learned the expensive and complex secret of crafting monoliths.

Although expected to be daring and curious, most members are sages, binders, and arcane casters—not the heartiest of folk. To avoid untimely deaths and expensive failures, the club encourages patient study and strategic planning. Why rush today what can be done next year? Mercenaries are only hired as a last resort. If a member is concerned about his safety, he is free to turn down expeditions or he may set aside a retainer of 5,000 gp to finance his return from death. Rumors suggest the Club maintains a magical device that restores the dead to life, although a few priests who are of atlan descent could be capable as well.

Members who travel on Club expeditions can retain a few token items they find; on their own expeditions they are only asked to show-and-tell. It is not unheard of for an unlucky and desperate member to fake his finds, and the guild now prefers to verify items as part of cataloging them. A few rivalries are well-known and the Club encourages a healthy amount of competition. Nor does it wish to stifle ingenuity, which some might call playing unfairly. The Club does not tolerate members, however, who deliberately turn on each other or lack a basic sense of decorum.

A character who joins is expected to showcase his findings, contribute his particular expertise to other club members and club projects, and protect atlan artifacts and ruins from thieves and misguided do-gooders. The best way to join is to visit a Club house and show off one's latest findings. Annual donations are also encouraged.

The most popular spirit among Club binders is the Overmind, a fastidious and thoroughly sane spirit who only grants his abilities to Club members.

Adjudicating Membership in Atlan Explorers Club

Use the first table to determine a character's affiliation score. Then use the second table to determine what benefits and title if any the character enjoys at the resulting membership level.

TABLE 9-2: ATLAN EXPLORERS CLUB SCORECARD

Member Characteristic	Affiliation Modifier
Character level	+1/2 PC's level
5+ ranks in Knowledge (arcana)	+1/5 ranks
5+ ranks in Knowledge (history)	+1/5 ranks
5+ ranks in Swim or Survival	+1
5+ ranks Profession (sailor)	+1
Atlan heritage or aquatic racial stock	+2
Cast <i>legend lore</i> , <i>contact higher plane</i> , <i>vision</i> , or other high-level divination	+4
Cast <i>water breathing</i> or <i>locate object</i>	+2
Criminal record	-10
Fail to show and tell treasure items	(Max -1/year)
Lead successful exploration of ruins	+2
Lent or crafted magic item for Club	+1 (minor item), +3 (major item)
Lied or gave wrong information	-1/incident
Located new ruins or major knowledge	+1
Negligence or malice caused member's death	-2 / member (maximum -10)
Possess artifact of the Atlan Empire	+1 / 5,000 gp value of item
Raised from the dead by Club	-2
Raised or donated 2000 gp for Club	+1 / 2000 gp (maximum +5)
Soured relations with aquatic race, goblinoids, or fiends	-4
Speak aquan, goblinoid, infernal, or abyssal	+1/ language
Unable to use pact magic or cast spells	-5

TABLE 9-3: BENEFITS OF ATLAN EXPLORERS CLUB

Affiliation Score	Rank and Benefits of Membership
3 or less	No Affiliation: No benefits. Members will not sell items, cast spells or use abilities, or offer information.
4 – 10	Student: Attend open-door meetings, ask members to offer their knowledge, assist with expedition preparations, and attend educational lectures. You may bind the Overmind spirit.
11 – 20	Explorer: Participate in expeditions. All expedition expenses are paid except magical equipment. Use a club library, request divinations spells up to 2nd level, and view most club discoveries.
21 – 30	Expert: Call members to make a group Knowledge check. Receive <i>raise dead</i> if killed during an expedition. request use of divination spells up to 4th level. Study discoveries for up to one month. Request 5000 gp worth of magical service to analyze items.
31+	Hierophant: Plan and direct missions using 3d10 explorers and 1d6 experts. Borrow, buy, or sell items on behalf of the club. Know secret of stellar monoliths. Use Community Pact Magic (page 199, thief spirit only).

THE OVERMIND,

SENESCHAL OF FAR TRAVELS

Overmind watches over and aids all mappers, explorers, and scavengers. He grants those who seal pacts with him the ability to detect traps, make quick hops through space and time, resist mental control, and learn the layout of one's surroundings.



Level: 5

Thief Constellation

Legend

The origin of the Overmind is unknown, and the ceremony to summon him was reportedly discovered by accident. Binders agree that he is a tremendously helpful spirit to "explorers," which includes burglars, thieves, and scavengers. He prefers lawful pact magic users and often speaks directly to his binders. All that the Overmind asks is that his binders heed his duty of vigilance, to the point of paranoia many might say. He is otherwise an exceedingly sane spirit.

Summoning Rules

The following rules describe the requirements and rituals for binding the Overmind, Seneschal of Far Travels.

Binding DC: 21.

Requirements: Knowledge (architecture and engineering) 2 ranks, Knowledge (geography) 2 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 2 ranks, Perform (oratory) 2 ranks, Search 3 ranks, Sense Motive 3 ranks. Must be of a lawful alignment.

Special: Must be a member of Atlan Explorer's Club.

Ceremony: Draw a detailed map on the finest lambskin parchment of a place that does not and exist.

Manifestation: The Overmind's fatherly voice clears its throat and recite aphorisms regarding the proper drawing, use, and maintenance of maps. Afterwards, the voice explains how you may reach the impossible place you drew on the map.

Granted Abilities

The Overmind grants the following supernatural abilities.

Bypass Traps: You gain the rogue's trapfinding ability, which allows you to use Search checks to detect traps with a DC above 20, including magical traps. The effect lasts 24 hours.

Dimension Leap: Whenever you move through a physical portal such as a doorway, window, or trapdoor, you can use the *dimension door* spell as a free action, except you can only move yourself a distance of short range. You do not experience disorientation after moving; instead, you gain a move action that must be used immediately or be lost.

Learn Layout: As a move action, you can query the Overmind spirit's extraordinary senses to learn the physical layout of the area around you, to a distance of 30 feet in all directions. This ability works past barriers of all kinds, since the Overmind is viewing the area from its spirit vantage point. Once you use this ability you must wait 5 rounds before using it again.

Protection From Possession: The Overmind is a strong advocate of a clear, independent mind. Similar to the *protection from evil* spell, you are protected against possession and other forms of mental control such as a ghost's possession ability or the *charm person* spell. Also, you gain a +2 bonus to your AC to defend against attacks made by possessed or dominated creatures. The effect lasts 24 hours.

Searching Eye: The Overmind grants you a +8 bonus on

Search checks. This improves to +14 at 14th level and +20 at 20th level. The effect lasts 24 hours.

Time Hop: As an immediate action, you can move yourself into the future up to a number of rounds equal to your binder level. You instantly disappear and effectively cease to exist until you return. Ongoing spells and effects, from *hold person* to poison from a giant spider, are suspended until you return. You return in the same physical location you left. If the space is occupied when you return, then you return to the closest available location. Once you use this ability, you must wait 3 rounds before using it again. Time spent using this ability does not count toward the number of rounds you must wait.

Signs & Influence

This spirit may affect you in the following ways.

Physical Sign: Your voice changes to become more like the Overmind's voice. Your voice conveys a stately and confident manner—perhaps even somewhat fastidious—as if what you are saying is certainly true, if not very important, even when talking about everyday matters such as when ordering an ale.

Alignment Shift: When you fail your binding check by 10 or more, your alignment moves a step closer to Lawful Neutral for 24 hours.

Personality Influence: The Overmind compels you to create detailed maps and stay vigilant for cases of possession. At least once during every 1 minute while exploring an area, or every 10 minutes while engaging in everyday activities, you must draw or add to a map, and also attempt a Sense Motive check unless you are alone and no one is in sight. Ignore this influence during combat or while being chased.

Favored Ally: Humanoid. For some reason, the Overmind is particularly protective of lawfully aligned humanoids. However, he is not friendly toward any humanoid that is possessed, pitiable through the person may be.

Favored Enemy: Any possessed creature and any creature with an innately chaotic alignment.

Capstone Granted Ability

You gain the following ability when you pass your binding check by 10 or more.

Detect Hostile Intent: For as long as you are bound with the Overmind and not using another granted ability, the Overmind alerts you to the presence of any creatures with hostile intent within 30 feet of you, and their direction from you (but not their specific location). The power detects active aggression, as opposed to vigilance. For example, an assassin stalking you would register as hostile but a city guard would not. In addition, you cannot be surprised or caught flat-footed by creatures that are susceptible to mind-affecting spells and abilities, and you can make Sense Motive checks as a free action against anyone within 30 feet of you. This ability can penetrate barriers, but 3 feet of stone, 3 inches of common metal, 1 inch of lead, or 6 feet of wood or dirt blocks it.

Tactical Bonus

While bound to this spirit, apply a +1 bonus to all your d20 rolls for the round you meet any of these criteria:

- » Draw or add to a map.
- » Stand within 30 feet of a possessed creature.
- » Use a measuring device (such as a ruler or hourglass) or cast a divination spell.
- » Use Perform (oratory) for 1 minute or more.