

BETABUNNY'S GUIDE TO FAMILIARS



Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons, Third Edition Core Books, published by
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Betabunny's Guide To Familiars

Contents

Introduction	3
Section I: Acquiring a Familiar	4
Section II: Stats, Abilities, and Powers	9
Section III: Special Abilities	16
Section IV: Losing or Dismissing a Familiar	17
Section V: Adventuring With a Familiar	19
Section VI: New Rules	24
Section VII: Beyond the Core	27
Appendix A: Example Familiar	32
Appendix B: Rules	34

Credits

Design and Layout

Sean Butcher

Editor

Carmen Butcher

Art

Sean Butcher, Dover Publications, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Digital Library System, NOAA Photo Library, U.S. Geological Survey, and a bunch of dead people.

Playtesting

Kate (Diva) Betabunny, John the Meat-Eater, Skinny Head, The Twins, Ælfric of Eynsham, Vladd the Imposter, Elric Burgerbar, Lucky, Sophie, and Eric Blood-Axe.



Open Game Content & Copyright Information

Betabunny's Guide to Familiars is ©2007 Betabunny Publishing. All rights reserved. Reproduction of non-Open Game Content of this work by any means without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden. *Betabunny's Guide to Familiars* is presented under the Open Game and d20 Licenses. See page 65 for the text of the Open Game license. All games mechanics derivative of the Open Game Content and System Reference Document are to be considered Open Gaming Content. All other significant characters, names, statistics, data, places, items, art, and text herein are copyrighted by Betabunny Publishing. All rights reserved. If you have any questions about the Open Games Status of any content herein, please contact Betabunny Publishing. "d20 System" and the "d20 System" logo are Trademark and owned by Wizards of the Coast and are used according to the terms of the d20 System License version 6.0. A copy of this License can be found at www.wizards.com. The mention of or reference to any company or product in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned. Dungeons & Dragons, d20 Modern, Player's Handbook, and Wizards of the Coast are Registered Trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, and are used with permission.

Betabunny Publishing

Visit us on the web at www.betabunny.com

Published in the United States of America

Introduction

A familiar is an integral part of a wizard's or a sorcerer's capabilities. They grant numerous powers and capabilities that afford the arcane spellcaster significant advantages. A familiar can act as a spy, a scout, a servant, or a guardian. It can be a messenger, a thief, or another pair of eyes, ears, and hands. In essence, a familiar is an extension of the arcane spellcaster's own self and is his/her closest friend and companion.

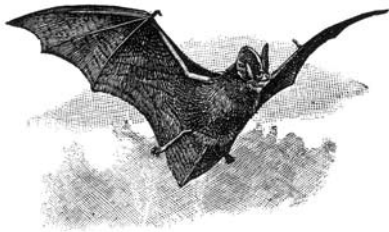
Considering the potential importance familiars can have in a campaign, the rules on familiars in the Player's Handbook and the DMG are surprisingly sparse, fractured, even incomplete. This guide provides thorough coverage of the subject of familiars. The existing rules for familiars have been reorganized, and clarifications are given where necessary. Additionally, a number of variant and supplemental rules are offered to give you a better framework for using familiars in your game. This guide is intended both as a stand-alone product and as a supplement to Betabunny Publishing's range of Bestiaries.

Happy Gaming,

Sean Butcher
January 2007



NORTHERN GOSHAWK



LONG-EARED BAT

Section I: Acquiring a Familiar

A. General Rules

i. A 1st level sorcerer or 1st level wizard gains the special ability to summon a familiar.

Though the Player's Handbook talks of summoning a familiar, this term is somewhat misleading, since it gives the impression that summoning a familiar works in the same way as the *summon monster* spell. This is not the case. The wizard or sorcerer does not in fact summon the creature he wishes to make a familiar, nor is the familiar a conjured creature as is the case with the *summon monster* spell. The sorcerer or wizard must already have the creature that he wishes to make his familiar on hand at the time that he performs the *summon familiar* ritual. It is perhaps more accurate to think in terms of the wizard's or sorcerer's binding the familiar rather than summoning the familiar.

ii. A character may have only one familiar at a time.

Gaining levels in more than one class that grants a familiar does not allow the character to have more than one familiar. They may only have one familiar at a time.

iii. A familiar can only ever have one master.

A creature that already is (or has ever been) another character's familiar cannot become the familiar of a new master. This is the case even if the master dies or dismisses the familiar.

iv. The familiar must be a normal, unmodified animal, unless the character has the Improved Familiar feat.

The familiar must be of an animal type. In general animals are living creatures with no magical ability and an Intelligence score of 1 or 2. Examples include cats, birds, reptiles, etc. Dire animals are not considered to be normal animals. An animal companion cannot also function as a familiar.

The basic list of familiars included in the Player's Handbook includes those animals listed in Table: Basic Familiars (see this page), hereafter referred to as *basic familiars*. This list should not be considered exhaustive. Any normal, unmodified animal of the appropriate size (see

section I.A.vii on page 5) can be used as a familiar.

If the wizard or sorcerer has the Improved Familiar feat, he may have a non-animal familiar (see next section).

v. Characters with the Improved Familiar feat can choose familiars from an extended list of creatures.

If the character has the Improved Familiar feat, he can choose familiars other than normal, unmodified animals. The Improved Familiar feat provides an extended list of creatures that are available for use as familiars, hereafter referred to as *improved familiars*.

The Improved Familiar feat provides one list of improved familiars that are available based on the master's arcane spellcaster level and alignment (see Table: Improved Familiar by Alignment below). The master's arcane spellcaster level is the sum of all levels in any class that can summon a familiar (see Rules Clarification: Arcane Spellcaster Level on page 5). The spellcaster can choose any familiar for which he has the requisite number of arcane spellcaster levels, and which has an alignment up to one step away on each of the alignment axes (lawful through chaotic, good through evil).

The Improved Familiar feat provides a second list of improved familiars that are available based on the master's type/subtype (see Table: Improved Familiar by Master's Type/Subtype below).

Table: Basic Familiars

Bat
Cat
Hawk
Lizard
Owl
Rat
Raven
Snake (Tiny viper)
Toad
Weasel

Table: Improved Familiar by Alignment

Familiar	Alignment	Arcane Spellcaster Level
Shocker lizard	Neutral	5 th
Stirge	Neutral	5 th
Formian worker	Lawful neutral	7 th
Imp	Lawful evil	7 th
Pseudodragon	Neutral good	7 th
Quasit	Chaotic evil	7 th

Table: Improved Familiar by Master's Type/Subtype

Familiar	Master's Type/Subtype	Arcane Spellcaster Level
Celestial hawk ¹	Good	3 rd
Fiendish Tiny viper snake ²	Evil	3 rd
Air elemental, Small	Air	5 th
Earth elemental, Small	Earth	5 th
Fire elemental, Small	Fire	5 th
Shocker lizard	Electricity	5 th
Water elemental, Small	Water	5 th
Homunculus ³	Undead	7 th
Ice mephit	Cold	7 th

¹ Or other celestrial animal from the standard familiar list.

² Or other fiendish animal from the standard familiar list.

³ The master must first create the homunculus, substituting ichor, or another part of the master's body for blood if necessary.

RULES CLARIFICATION: ARCANE SPELLCASTER LEVEL

§§§ The basic rules on familiars refer to the master's class level, which is used to determine the abilities of the familiar. The master's class level is defined as being the sum of all levels in any classes that grant the ability to summon a familiar. The Improved Familiar feat instead refers to the master's arcane spellcaster level. No definition is provided for arcane spellcaster levels, but the term would seem to imply that it would include levels in any class capable of casting arcane spells, not just those classes that are able to summon a familiar. There does not appear to be any reason why the master's level should be calculated in one way for the Improved Familiar feat and in another way for determining the familiar's abilities. It seems unlikely that the rules' authors intended there to be a distinction. We use the term arcane spellcaster level instead of master class level throughout this work. Any reference in this work to arcane spellcaster level or class level refers only to levels in classes that grant the ability to summon a familiar unless otherwise specified. §§§

Type/Subtype on the previous page). To choose one of these creatures as a familiar, the master must have the same type/subtype as the creature, as well as having the requisite number of arcane spellcaster levels.

The list of improved familiars provided should not be regarded as exhaustive. Almost any creature of the same general size and power as those provided in the lists will make a suitable familiar.

Improved familiars otherwise use the same rules as basic familiars, with two exceptions: If the creature's type is something other than animal, its type does not change; and improved familiars do not gain the ability to speak with other creatures of their kind (although many of them already have the ability to communicate in some language).

vi. The familiar's alignment must be compatible with its master.

The familiar's alignment may only be one step away from its master's on each of the alignment axes (lawful through chaotic, good through evil). A creature retains its original alignment when it becomes a familiar. For instance, it is not possible for a chaotic-evil familiar to serve a lawful-good master.

This requirement is not an issue for animal familiars,

Table: Familiar Sizes

Familiar	Familiars List	Size
Bat	Basic	Diminutive
Toad	Basic	Diminutive
Cat	Basic	Tiny
Celestial hawk	Improved	Tiny
Fiendish Tiny viper snake	Improved	Tiny
Hawk	Basic	Tiny
Homunculus	Improved	Tiny
Imp	Improved	Tiny
Lizard	Basic	Tiny
Owl	Basic	Tiny
Pseudodragon	Improved	Tiny
Quasit	Improved	Tiny
Rat	Basic	Tiny
Raven	Basic	Tiny
Snake (Tiny viper)	Basic	Tiny
Stirge	Improved	Tiny
Weasel	Basic	Tiny
Air elemental	Improved	Small
Earth elemental	Improved	Small
Fire elemental, Small	Improved	Small
Formian worker	Improved	Small
Ice mephit	Improved	Small
Shocker lizard	Improved	Small
Water elemental, Small	Improved	Small

since all animals have a neutral alignment. It can, however, be an issue with improved familiars.

vii. To be suitable as a familiar for a Small to Large size character, the creature must be similar in size to those creatures listed in the basic and improved familiar lists.

All creatures are divided into 9 size categories, typically based on their height/length and weight (see Table: Size Categories on the next page). Only creatures of similar size to those creatures listed in the basic and improved familiar lists will be suitable for use as familiars by Small to Large sized characters. The animals listed in the basic familiars list (see Table: Familiar Sizes on this page) are all Tiny and Diminutive. The creatures in the Improved Familiar list (see Table: Familiar Sizes) are all Small or Tiny.

SUPPLEMENTAL RULE: FAMILIAR'S SIZE

The creatures listed in the basic and improved familiar lists range from Diminutive to Small in size. We are told that these creatures are suitable for characters of Small to Large size. However, it is doubtful that it is intended that a Small sized character should be able to have a Small sized familiar. A familiar should always be smaller than its master. Also, the creatures in the basic familiars list are all of Tiny or Diminutive size, while those in the improved familiar lists are Tiny or Small. It hence appears that the Improved Familiar feat allows the master to have a slightly larger familiar. The following supplemental rule provides a clearer guideline on what sized familiars are suitable for a master of a given size.

§§§ Masters with the Improved Familiar feat may have familiars that are 1-3 size categories smaller than they are. Masters without

the Improved Familiar feat may have familiars that are 2-3 size categories smaller than themselves.

Characters that are in the Medium size category may only have familiars that are Diminutive and Tiny, or Small, Diminutive, and Tiny if they have the Improved Familiar feat. Of the basic character races, humans, elves, dwarves, half-orcs, and half-elves are of Medium size. Characters who are in the Small size category may only have Fine and Diminutive familiars, or Fine, Diminutive, and Tiny if they have the Improved Familiar feat. Of the basic character races gnomes and halflings are of Small size. A Large size character may only have familiars that are Small and Tiny, or Small, Tiny, and Medium if they have the Improved Familiar feat. None of the basic character races are of Large size. §§§

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have

written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000-2003, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, Andy Collins, David Noonan, Rich Redman, Bruce R. Cordell, John D. Rateliff, Thomas Reid, James Wyatt, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Modern System Reference Document Copyright 2002, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, Charles Ryan, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, Peter Adkison, Bruce R. Cordell, John Tynes, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

The Bestiary: Predators Copyright 2005, Betabunny Publishing; Author, Sean Butcher.

Apes Of Nature, Myth, & The Imagination, Copyright 2006, Betabunny Publishing; Author, Sean Butcher.

Betabunny's Guide to Familiars, Copyright 2007, Betabunny Publishing; Author, Sean Butcher.

BETABUNNY'S GUIDE TO FAMILIARS



Visit us online at:

www.betabunny.com

**for additional materials including bonus creatures,
supplementary rules, tables, and clarifications.**

**Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons, Third Edition Core Books, published by
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.**