



THE GATES OF HELL

Duke of Hell Template

Creating a Duke of Hell

"Duke of Hell" is a template that can be added to any Pit Fiend Devil, Lawful evil Infernal, or non-Chaotic Outsider with at least 20 HD or 20 ECL. On rare occasions (DM discretion), the Lords of the Nine, Hell's god-like rulers, also grant this boon to very powerful mortals of at least 21st level.

The Dukes of Hell, also known as the Courtiers of Perdition, are the singular nobles that serve under the might of Hell's masters, the Lords of the Nine. Despite their sharing the appellation of Duke of Hell, the various nobles often have different titles and different responsibilities as they pursue the darkest of evils, the blackest of souls, and more power for their masters and themselves (these goals are not, of course, necessarily listed in priority order).

Although they share a common title, the Dukes of Hell are all individuals with different powers and abilities at their command. Each has a singular appearance (which can of course be mimicked with the use of Illusions and similar magicks by rivals), and each deals with allies and adversaries in different ways. Still, considering that they are defenders of Law, one can expect certain similarities from the Dukes of Hell.

The base creature's type changes to that of Outsider. The Duke of Hell uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here:

HD: A Duke of Hell receives the maximum hit points per die.

Speed: The base speed is increased by 10 to all modes of movement. There is a 50% chance that, if the base creature could not fly, the new Duke of Hell will gain that ability at 90 ft (average).

AC: They also gain a profane bonus of +3 to their AC.

Spell-like Abilities or Psionics: Dukes of Hell retain the special attacks of the base creature unless such attacks had the Good and/or Chaotic descriptor. In this case, the special attack with the Good descriptor is replaced with the Evil version while the Chaotic descriptor is replaced by the Lawful version. Thus, if a Solar becomes a Duke of Hell, it loses the spell-like ability *holy smite*, replacing it with *unholy blight*. In the case of Healing spells, such abilities are replaced with Necromantic spells of the appropriate type. If there is no clear opposite, the Duke retains the ability. The caster level for such abilities is always the Duke's HD + 6. All Dukes gain the following spell-like abilities: at will: *blasphemy*, *charm monster*, *deeper darkness*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *flamestrike*, *improved invisibility*, *major image*, *mirage arcana*, *permanent image*, *polymorph self*, *unhallow*, *unholy aura*, *unholy blight*. 6/day: *symbol* (any). 3/day: *destruction*. 1/day: *meteor swarm*. 1/week: *wish*.

Special Qualities: The Duke of Hell retains all of the base creature's special qualities. In the event that the base creature has qualities that are alignment specific, like *protection from evil*, the Duke of Hell will gain the Evil and/or Lawful version. The Duke also gains the following:

- Baatezu qualities: If any of the benefits of these traits overlap with those of the base creature, the Duke retains the better of the two.
- Damage reduction 10/+1 on any existing DR. If the base creature does not possess damage reduction, the Duke gains DR 30/+3.
- Spell resistance equals the Duke's CR+10.
- Regeneration (Ex): Regeneration equal to the Duke's Constitution modifier unless a *blessed* or holy weapon of at least +6 enchantment strikes the Duke. This overrides any existing lower Regeneration.
- As the lesser nobility of Hell, the Dukes of Hell gain a degree of might unknown to mortals and common Devils. The Duke of Hell gains immunity to polymorphing, petrification, or any other attack that alters its form.

Call Baatezu (Sp): As a standard action, all Dukes of Hell, as the vassals of the Lords of the Nine, command the respect of lesser Devils. As such, a Duke of Hell can *call Baatezu* and *summon Baatezu*. Each Duke may *call* up to one time a day 12 Lemures, 6 Barbazu, Erinyes, or Osyluths, 4 Hamatulas, 2 Cornugons or Gelugons, or 1 Pit Fiend. Since these Devils are *called*, they have the ability to *summon* other Devils as their *Monster Manual* descriptions allow. Twice a day, the Duke may *summon* the same spread of fiends listed above.



The Dukes are capable of *calling* and *summoning* Devils not listed above, but in the same limited quantity based upon CR. In other words, a Duke may decide to *call* six Amnizu, detailed in the *Monster Manual II*, rather than six Erinyes. Due to their vaunted status, Dukes of Hell are not beholden to the Devils they *call* or *summon*, so they rarely hesitate to do so if pressed. Some Dukes are more likely to rely on certain kinds of Devils more than others. While Bael, a Duke of Minauraos, is likely to call Barbazu, Martinet, the Voice of Asmodeus, is likely to rely on Pit Fiends.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Con +2, Dex +2, Int +4, Wis +2, Cha +3

Feats: The Duke of Hell typically retains any existing feats of the base creature, although at times the Duke can “swap” a feat for another so long as the Duke meets the prerequisites for the new feat. All Dukes of Hell gain the Corrupt Spell-like Ability feat listed in the *Book of Vile Darkness*; they do not suffer any corruption damage.

Class Levels: The Duke of Hell acquires class levels. All Dukes have at least 10 levels in at least one class suited to their desires and duties. Thus, Titivilus, the Herald of Dispater, is a 15th level Bard, while Bael, a Duke in the service of Mammon, is a 15th level Fighter. This acquisition assumes that the Duke attained powers and experience above and beyond his peers during his time as a common Devil and puts him that much closer to the pinnacle of diabolic power. While level advancement does not provide size increases adjustments, the Duke gains feats, skills, increased attack bonuses, and the like as if he were an epic NPC. See the *Epic Level Handbook*, in addition to the *Dungeons and Dragons Core Rules Books*, for level acquisition guidelines.

Diabolical Adaptation (Su): Dukes of Hell will exhibit special abilities or qualities different from their peers. For example, while most Dukes are completely immune to all kinds of fire, magical or mundane, a Duke of Cania, a layer of malign cold, may be immune to cold. Each Duke gains at least one special ability and one special quality in keeping with his/her duties and areas of interest for every 30 total HD and Levels possessed.

Diabolical Metamorphosis: Almost all Dukes of Hell experience some kind of physical change upon their apotheosis into this new status. This new form always relates to their duties and desires. For example, as Dispater’s word twisting herald, Titivilus is not as huge and physically imposing as a Pit Fiend. This allows a degree of flexibility for the designer. It is typical that a Duke will use elements of animals and beasts as the basis for a metamorphosis. Any adjustments in size and physical make up may affect the Duke’s attack methods or his advancement benefits. The designer should modify attack methods and locomotion accordingly, but keep basic combat statistics the same.

Challenge Rating: +6 + class level

Treasure: double standard base creature

Alignment: Always Lawful evil

Advancement: By class progression
