

Nethergate Playing Guide (with some spoilers)

By Jamie "Skyle" Clark (with material by Stareye and Paul Ellsworth)

Most of the information was derived from the Nethergate Documentation. Nethergate (c) 1999, Spiderweb Software, Inc.

You begin with 4 PCs. A fifth PC - a Celt or Roman - can, and should, be added in Vanarium (you must complete some missions and register the game to cross the bridge). The many side tasks allow the party to gain more than enough experience to complete the major objectives in the main quest. The sixth PC are one of 4 NPCs that briefly join the party during the game (thus playable as a PC).

Party creation suggestions:

1. Be careful about how you change the 4 supplied characters, they have different number of skill points. For the Celts, PC 1 has 54, 2 55, 3 56, and 4 56. On the Roman side, the first 3 PCs have 54 skill points and PC 4 has 57. Thus PCs that need the extra skills points for Druid spells should be created last.
2. Each PC knows all of the spells in the Circles he has the skill levels in during creation. Thus you may want to concentrate on the spell circles so your PC knows those spells and does not have to find an NPC to buy them from or rely on Rune Reading and some writings to impart that knowledge.

From Paul Ellsworth - When creating PCs with Druid skills, try this:

Raise the INT to level 4 so Druidism will be level 2. Raise the other circles to 2 then lower INT. Now you can move your other circle skills up and down, but you don't have to have the Druidism skill up! Using this he got 4 skill levels on Health, Craft, War, Beast, and Spirit... and a Potion Making skill of 5. He also got a Health and Craft skill of 8, and the same with War and Beast.

3. Suggested spell circle levels to have early in the game:

Health Circle	3 - reduce poison, awaken PCs
Craft Circle	3 - (Celts) unlock doors with Pass portal (HC needs to be 3 for CC to be 3)
War Circle	5 - Beast ceremony - saves time casting Quicksilver feets and Battle rages
Beast Circle	3 - (Celts) slow monsters with Coils of the serpent
Spirit Circle	2 - (Celts) Sever seal to pass runes

4. Fully explore for hidden items and get what you can - candles, paper, pants, robes. Redistribute the items - have the future potion maker carry the herbs, the best slinger with the best sling, etc. Note you can equip robes (armor value 2, the green ones look better) and armor (like Celtic robes - 2). Wear pants (armor value of 1) and boots (2).

5. Do the math. If the increased skill won't help (since skills cannot be raised by a fraction of a point - only a full point), either wait and gain more skill points or purchase other skills. For example, to slow 4 monsters with Coils of the serpent, a PC needs the sum of Intelligence and War Circle levels to be 9.

6. Celtic party creation. A Celt is adept at Druidism skills and slings, but can't be encumbered by armor. All of them should have good Slings skills - kill from afar and conserve Spell energy. Fights are faster when, after 2 rounds, all PCs are hasted (Quicksilver feet), and some of the monsters are slowed (Coils of the serpent).

1. Primary fighter with later War Craft skills. A blade will allow a party to survive when spell energy is low (a frequent occurrence). Emphasize Strength, Dexterity, and desired Weaponry skills.

2. Secondary fighter with War Craft skills. Later he develops Herbcraft and First aid to both make potions and use First Aid Kits. Balanced emphasis on the Base skills, some Druidism, then Useful skills.

3. Druid with a strong emphasis on Druidism skills. He is also the slinger that attacks from the rear. He works with the other Druid to better conserve Spell energy.

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5. Your choice of a Celt or Roman in Vanarium. By then you can decide how to strengthen any weak party aspects (spell skills via a Celt or fighter skills via a Roman).

7. Roman party creation. A Roman is a fighter with Javelin skills, Tool Use, and First aid. Javelins break and buying them requires gold, so have slings (and some Slings skill) as a backup. They are excellent fighters, but must be able to reach the dangerous monsters in the rear before they kill the party with spells. Although costly, War Craft skills are a must - fights are faster with hasted PCs.

1. Primary fighter with War Craft skills later developed.

2. Primary fighter with War Craft skills later developed.

3. Secondary fighter with Javelin skills, Tool Use, and First Aid. With Nimble fingers, he needs to use lockpicks effectively to open doors and needs to make potions later.

4. Roman version of a Druid with War Circle and Health Circle skills.

5. Your choice of a Celt or Roman in Vanarium. Most likely you'll want to add a Celt to the party.

8. Additional information about party creation is at Paul Ellsworth's Nethergate page - Party Creation Guide.

Selling items is not a real priority to raise money as your only necessary expenses are identifying items and buying spells. Gather the valuable items and stockpile them in key locations (like at dungeon entrances). Then when your party needs time to restore spell energy or undergo some training, gather the items to be identified (and to sell) and travel to the trainer and merchant. There is a stockpiling limit, exceed like 80 items among all of the towns/dungeons and items will be lost (the engine removes them to make room for the newly dropped items). Consider raising the Barter Skill (via Intelligence or the Barter skill) before selling the items (a total of 10 seems to be an ideal level before it becomes too costly using skill points).

Base cost is for Celts/Romans, a "-" means that skill is usually unavailable (such as Roman training for Celts). As skill points are purchased, they become more expensive. The cost = Base cost + current amount/2. For example, going from 8 STR to 9 STR requires 10 skill points (6 + 8/2).

Base skills		Base Cost	Base =	Description
Strength	STR	6	2	Affects carrying capability, weaponry skills, weapon damage, and ability to bash doors
Dexterity	DEX	6	2	Affects weaponry skills and reduces the chance of being hit in combat
Intelligence	INT	6	1	Affects spell effectiveness and knowledge abilities
Endurance	END	5	3	Affects health points and resistances
Weaponry skills		Base Cost	Base =	Description
Melee	MW	1	(STR+DEX)/4	30 +5% to hit/point with melee weapons
Spears	SP	1	(STR+DEX)/4	30 +5% to hit/point with spears
Javelins	JAV	3/1	DEX/3	40 +5% to hit/point with javelins
Slings	SLI	1/3	DEX/3	30 +5% to hit/point with slings
Armor	ARM	3/1	DEX/4	Reduces armor encumbrance penalty by 5%/point
Berserk	BRZ	3/-	0	+5% to hit/+1 damage and +5% of being hit per point
Hardiness	HRD	2/3	END/3	Chance of reducing damage from blows by 1/point
Defense	DEF	3/2	DEX/3	Parrys blows, thus -3% of being hit in melee/point
Roman training	ROM	-/2	0	+4% to hit with any weapon/point
Druidism skills		Base Cost	Base =	Description
Druid	DRU	1/3	INT/2	Sets the limit for the following Druid spells
Health Circle	HC	1/3	0	HC <= DRU
Craft Circle	CC	2/-	0	CC <= HC, Caster cannot be encumbered by armor
War Circle	WC	1/3	0	WC <= DRU
Beast Circle	BC	2/-	0	BC <= WC, Caster cannot be encumbered by armor
Spirit Circle	SC	4/-	0	SC <= (smaller of BC and CC), Caster cannot be encumbered by armor
Useful skills		Base Cost	Base =	Description
First aid	AID	2/1	INT/4	Need a First Aid Kit, may harm a PC if skill is low
Herbcraft	HCR	1/2	INT/4	Helps find herbs and in potion making
Tool use	TUS	-/1	(INT+DEX)/4	PC, +5% of disarming traps or picking locks/point
Faery lore	FAE	4/-	INT/4	Try to have 3 or 4 levels of this in the party
Woodcraft	WCR	1/2	0	Helps in hunting and avoiding outdoor encounters
Barter	BTR	1	INT/2	Party, more money in selling items
Luck	LCK	4	0	Gives a small bonus in doing just about anything (like surviving death blows)

Secondary skills		Amount =	Description
Health	HP	7+END+Weaponry skills	Maximum health (keep HP > 0)
Spell energy	SE	INT + Druidism skills	Spell points to cast spells
Resist poison	RP	END + HRD + LCK	+5% of resisting poison/point
Resist magic	MR	END + DRU + LCK	+5% of resisting magic/point
Will power	WP	INT + DRU + ROM + LCK	+5% of resisting charming and paralysis/point
Rune reading	RR	INT + DRU + FAE	Party, ability to understand runes and writings
Item lore	IL	INT + DRU + TUS + FAE	Party, to identify found items
Potion making	PM	HCR + FAE + AID/2	Enables the PC to make potions

Character traits	Experience penalty	Advantages
Faerie blood	20%	Magic has less effect and faerie folk may treat you kindly
Toughness	10%	Weapon blows and poison have less affect against the PC
Nimble fingers	8%	PC is better able to deal with locks and disarm traps
Recuperation	12%	PC has an increased healing rate and is more resistant to disease
Beastmaster	10%	PC is able to call animals for aid (via the Actions menu)
Fast on feet	12%	PC occasionally has extra action points (5 vs 4, 10 vs 8)
Faery familiar	8%	PC is able to call a faerie for aid (via the Actions menu)
Nature lore	5%	Party is more likely to find special things outdoors
Highly alert	8%	PC is more likely to resist magical sleep and paralysis
Mighty warrior	20%	PC's chance to hit is much better and attacks do more damage

Checking all advantageous character traits (the left column) gives a 77% experience penalty. Thus there seems to be a discount by having more advantages (77% vice 113%). Only 1 of the following traits is necessary among the party members: Nimble fingers and Nature lore. Also PCs that mainly use Druid spells need not be a Mighty warrior, but should be Highly alert to cast Alertness on the other party members as needed.

Action points - Casting a spell requires 5 AP, melee or missile attack is 4 AP, and getting items is 4 AP. The others, besides looking, require 1 action point.

Potions

Drinking potions can save valuable Spell Energy and minimize deaths. Try to get a PC high in Herbcraft, Faerie Lore, and First Aid to make Healing and Hasting draughts. These alone will save a lot of Spell Energy and frustrations when the First Aid ability cannot be used (not enough time as elapsed from an earlier use on the PC).

	Level	Herbs	Description
Healing draught	5	H	Heals about 20 HP
Curing draught	5	H	Prevents about ? HP of poison damage (may cure the PC)
Hasting draught	8	ES	Doubles the PC's APs for a short time
Energy draught	10	MS	Restores about 20 points of SE
Strength draught	10	EM	
Woad			

There are others, like Beast but I rarely use them as the spells are more effective.

Key: E = Energetic herb, H = Healing herb, M = Mistletoe, S = Spiritual herb

Spells

Each of the 5 circles have 9 spells (Nether Arts being the second level 8 spell), thus the more skill levels a PC has in that circle, the more spells he can cast from it and those spells will be more powerful.

SE is the required Spell energy and Mode is Combat C, Town T, and/or Outdoors O

<u>HC - Health Circle</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Bonus = INT + HC</u>
Mild healing	2	CTO	Heals (2-8 + Bonus/2) HP on a PC
Purge venom	1	TO	Prevents (3-12 + Bonus) HP of poison damage for a PC
Alertness	1	CT	Awakens a PC or protects him from being put to sleep
Healing	4	CTO	Heals (3-18 + Bonus) HP on a PC
Recovery	4	TO	Removes poison and disease from a PC
Unshackle mind	6	CT	Restores a paralyzed or charmed PC
Total healing	7	TO	Restores all HP, cures all poison, and removes all diseases on a PC
Raise dead	20	TO	Raises a dead PC, helps restore a stoned PC, requires Balm of Life

<u>CC - Craft Circle</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Bonus = INT + CC</u>
Create light	1	T	Magical light lasts (50 + 5*Bonus) turns
Piercing sight	4	TO	Gives a magical vision of everything within 5 spaces (lasts 3 rounds)
Pass portal	5	T	Locked doors within 2 spaces have a chance of being unlocked
Remove curse	5	TO	Has a chance of removing the effects of a cursed item (apparent when a PC equips a cursed item)
Word of recall	15	O	Moves the party to just outside they town they started in
Create food	3	TO	Creates (2-8 + Bonus/2) rations of food
Break barrier	8	T	Barriers within 2 spaces have a 10% chance of being dispelled
Stone guardian	12	T	Creates a deadly statue from the ground to fight for the party

<u>WC - War Circle</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Bonus = INT + WC</u>
Battle rage	2	C	Gives a PC (1-3 + Bonus/3) levels of blessing = + 5% to hit and +1 damage/level
Shielding	2	C	Gives a PC (1-3 + Bonus/3) levels of shielding = - 5% being hit and -1 damage/level
Lance of fire	4	C	Inflicts (1 + Bonus/3) * (1-8) fire damage against a monster
Quicksilver feet	3	C	Doubles a PC's actions for (3-5 + Bonus/3) rounds
Beast ceremony	15	T	Each PC is given the effects of Battle rage, Shielding, and Quicksilver feet (can't be cast if hostile monsters are in sight)
Darts of ice	6	C	Inflicts (1 + Bonus/4) separate targets with (1 + Bonus/3) * (1-8) cold damage
Heartshock	8	C	Inflicts (1 + Bonus/2) * (1-12) damage against a living creature
Hero of Old	10	C	Similar to a super Beast ceremony, but affects only a PC

<u>BC - Beast Circle</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Bonus = INT + BC</u>
Call aid	3	C	Summons (1 + Bonus/5) small animals
Bite of the serpent	3	C	Fills (1 + Bonus/3) targets with poison
Coils of the serpent	4	C	Slows (1 + Bonus/3) targets, giving them 1/2 their actions
Charm beast	4	CT	May charm an animal (normal or giant sized)
Beast call	5	C	Summons (1 + Bonus/6) medium sized animals
Capture soul	15	T	May make a copy of a monster in one of four slots
Simulcrum	7	C	Creates a copy of a Capture souled monster you select
Mighty beast	10	C	Summons (1 + Bonus/7) huge beasts

<u>SC - Spirit Circle</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Bonus = INT + SC</u>
Disrupt spirit	3	C	Fires a bolt of happy, positive energy, doing $(3 + \text{Bonus}/5) * (1-12)$ damage against an undead or demonic creature
Sever seal	6	C	Magical seals within 2 spaces have a chance of being broken
Spirit ceremony	6	TO	Heals all party members and removes all negative effects (poison, disease, paralysis, etc.)
Ravage life	5	C	Slows and curses a monster (and damages a living monster)
Control life	7	C	Has a chance of charming a living foe
Soul lance	7	T	Throws $(1 + \text{Bonus}/7)$ powerful bolts of magical energy against separate targets
Call spirit	10	C	Summons several Wights to fight for the party
Doom	14	C	Deals $(10-100 + \text{Bonus})$ unblockable damage to one target (the damage can't be reduced or prevented)

Nether Arts (provided by Stareye with some material from Jeff Lam)

Miraculous Recovery - HC \geq 8, More powerful version of Raise Dead, need Balm of Life (Burial Glenn)
 Create Elixir - CC \geq 8, Creates an elixir but expends 1 skill point (underneath Brigannate Temple)
 Wind Warriors - WC \geq 8, Summons Wind Warriors (underneath Faerie Bazaar)
 Call Hunt - BC \geq 8, Summons Spectral Wolves (Maze of Thorns)
 Clouds of Night - SC \geq 8, More powerful version of Darts of Ice (Vale of the Sould)

6/01/99 - Initial release for posting at the Netherworld
 6/07/99 - Added to party creation, reformatted the HTML page, minor editing
 7/03/99 - Added potion information, minor editing, reformatted to its native Rich Text Format
 5/25/01 - Reformatted to Adobe Acrobat PDF format for online viewing