

Five non-standard doors.



## Five Mysterious Entrances

**Description:** This article contains five magical and strange entrances, all ready to be implemented into your dungeon escapades. **PLEASE NOTE** that this document is designed for system agnostic use, but reference values are given for the Dungeon Crawl Classics system when necessary, in [brackets].

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### To Cross the Pond

*“A still, serene pond fills the space before you. The oily surface refuses to relinquish it’s secrets without investigation.”*

**Description:** The door forward is in the middle of the pond. If a character dives down at the middle of the round puddle, they end up in a hallway to wherever the passage leads (GM’s choice, obviously). The pond is 10 m (30’) in diameter, and the gateway at the middle is roughly 2 m (6’). Passing through tilts gravity so that the diver will find themselves spewed out of a vertical pane of water, framed like a mirror on the wall of the target location.

The pond detects as magical, but obviously this entrance may require giving additional hints to the players: perhaps they've heard tell of a magical entrance beforehand, or there are clear tracks leading into the water, but not out of it.

For additional challenge, GMs can:

- Include a swim roll to enter the gateway [DC 12].
- Slap the divers with a little damage on entry, as they fall on their faces on the dungeon floor [1d3].
- Make the pond frozen, causing whatever challenges you see fit. Recognizing the portal will obviously be more challenging, as well as gaining entry to it (diving into freezing water should require a save [Will DC 6] to work up the nerve to do it, and another save to resist the effects of the cold [Fort DC 10 or 1d3 damage, each round spent in the water]).

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## The Twice-Locked Thrice-Cocked Knock-Shocker<sup>1</sup>

*“You feel like you were lucky to find the first lock. Then you found the second. And the third...*

*After a while of searching the wall for locks, you look at the five keyholes and sigh.*

*This is not going to be nice. Or safe.”*

This is a door for professional thieves. Actually, it is not so much a door as a number of locks set into a wall. Some of the locks are simply traps, while a few of them need to be opened successfully to gain access to the aperture.

The base version described here has five locks, two of which must be undone to open the door; the remaining three are simply traps, which will all actually be worse for the picker if they succeed.

If searched for traps, the “door” marks as trapped, and all of the locks mark as trapped. Very high or critical rolls should reward the players with one of the correct locks. The structure is mechanical, and consists of an intricately-structured wall.

The locks to open the door are visually marked with a simple cue hidden into the locks' decoration, discoverable with a detailed search. This should ideally be done as a verbal (or visual) puzzle, rewarding the players for asking questions and investigation rather than simply rolling dice. GMs are encouraged to come up with their own lock sets, below are a few examples:

1. A humble set, where the material and condition of the lock marks the correct locks to open:

*“Three of the locks on the wall are polished brass, with subtle gold trimmings accentuating the fine filigree decoration. The remaining two are in rough shape, covered in verdigris and wear.”*

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<sup>1</sup> The idea for this entrance is totally borrowed from a Critical Role episode (link [here](#)), so at the very least inspirational credit goes to Matt Mercer.

2. A minimalist design, with an unpleasant twist: the target locks are decorated with skulls, while the trapped locks are simply unadorned:

*“Of the five locks, two are adorned with grimacing skulls, grinning from the rough ironwork. The remaining three lock faces are entirely without decoration.”*

3. A maritime themed lock setup: the nautical beasts mark the correct locks, as they guide the way to open seas:

*“The locks are of masterful quality, with intricate decorations carved into the brasswork. There is a lock decorated with two deer heads, with the horns twisting into strange shapes. Another lock’s face is adorned with a stylized octopus. The third lock features a pair of rampant lions. The fourth lock depicts a couple of snarling boar snouts. The final, fifth lock has a shark’s open mouth framing the keyhole.”*

The lock difficulty should be varied based on the party’s skill level [DC 10 for low levels, DC 15 for higher levels, or GMs discretion]. As the locks are worked on, consult the following table. Correct locks trigger no traps when unlocked, but cause a random minor trap effect if the attempt to unlock them fails. Trapped locks cause a minor effect if the pick attempt fails, but trigger a larger effect if successfully picked - after all, anyone good enough to pick one of the locks but still clueless to the doors true trick must be a dangerous challenger to the thieves beyond!

<b>TABLE A: The Twice-Locked Thrice-Cocked Knock-Shocker</b>		
<b>D4</b>	<b>Pick attempt failed (minor trap)</b>	<b>Pick attempt successful (major trap)</b>
1	<b>Razor Trap:</b> A number of small razor blades click out from the lock’s casing, causing 1d4 points of damage and severing 1d4 fingers clean off unless a save is made [Ref DC 12].	<b>Blade Storm:</b> A plethora of spinning blades is ejected from the door, causing damage [1d8] on everyone within 10 m (30’) of the gateway unless a save is made [Ref DC 16].
2	<b>Noxious Dust:</b> A small puff of fine dust is ejected from the keyhole, causing nausea and sneezing to the character picking the lock [-2 to all rolls for 1d6 turns].	<b>Acid Spray:</b> With a mighty hiss, a spray of acid is released from a hidden nozzle. All creatures within 6 m (15’) of the door suffer damage from the spray [4d4], which is halved on a successful save [DC 14].
3	<b>Alarm:</b> Bells begin clanging on the other side of the door. Roll on the dungeon’s random encounter table or just add a few enemies on the other side [i.e. duplicate a suitable encounter from the adventure]: the party has to face the result once they open the door.	<b>Red Alert!</b> A clamour of klaxons, horns and bells rings on the other side of the door.  Increase the difficulty of all encounters in the dungeon [by adding a few suitable enemies to each encounter].
4	<b>Marked:</b> The trap spews indelible paint on the picker’s hands. The paint marks the character as a thief in the local region, and takes 1d12 months to wear off.	<b>Poison Needles:</b> Hidden holes in the doorway spew out poisoned projectiles. All characters within 8 m (25’) of the entrance are hit [Ref DC 12 to avoid] and poisoned if a save is failed [Black Widow poison, DCC rulebook pg. 446].

Note that characters may have gained keys for one or more locks (this is a good option for parties without thieves). You can vary the difficulty of this door by reducing or increasing the number of locks (I suggest keeping up a rough 1:2 ratio between actual locks and traps).

## The Proverbial Door

*“A massive and polished oaken door stands before you. The hinges and nails are gleaming brass, and there is no handle or keyhole visible. A golden, faun-faced knocker grins sardonically at you.”*

When the knocker is used, roll on the below table. The grinning face will utter one of the options in column A (bonus points for the GM for doing this with a pencil between their jaws).

<b>TABLE B: The Proverbial Proverbs</b>		
<b>D12</b>	<b>First half of proverb</b>	<b>Second half of proverb</b>
1	<i>“Curiosity killed the cat...”</i>	<i>“...but satisfaction brought it back.”</i>
2	<i>“It never rains...”</i>	<i>“...but it pours.”</i>
3	<i>“Doubt your luck and it won’t fail you...”</i>	<i>“...but trust it and it will be gone.”</i>
4	<i>“Pain mars the body...”</i>	<i>“...but clears the mind.”</i>
5	<i>“The map is not the territory...”</i>	<i>“...the menu is not the meal.”</i>
6	<i>“A journey of a thousand miles begins...”</i>	<i>“...with a single step.”</i>
7	<i>“Better the devil you know...”</i>	<i>“...than a demon you don’t.”</i>
8	<i>“Eat, drink, and be merry...”</i>	<i>“...for tomorrow you die!”</i>
9	<i>“He who fights and runs away...”</i>	<i>“...may live to fight another day.”</i>
10	<i>“Jack of all trades, master of none...”</i>	<i>“...always better that than a master of one.”</i>
11	<i>“Live for today...”</i>	<i>“...for tomorrow never comes.”</i>
12	<i>“Nothing is certain...”</i>	<i>“...but death and taxes.”</i>

If the party answers with the matching entry for column B (or an approximation thereof), the door opens. If the party fails to answer correctly (GM’s discretion) roll on the following table, or choose a fitting punishment:

<b>TABLE C: The Proverbial Consequences</b>	
<b>D4 + PER mod</b>	<b>Result</b>
1	<b>Distress:</b> The group’s attempt at insight is so painfully ridiculous that the satyr-visage shrieks in pain. All creatures within 3 m (15’) take sonic damage [1d6] with no save.
2	<b>Confusion:</b> The faunish face holding the knocker starts considering the the party’s suggestion, trying to make their incongruent expressions fit the enchantment controlling it. Party has to suffer the effects of time before trying again (wait the equivalent of a long rest, or roll on the random encounter table for the dungeon, GM’s discretion).

3	<b>ALARM:</b> The suggested solution was obviously wrong, but the knocker just smiles. Roll on the dungeon's random encounter table or just add a few suiting creeps on the other side [i.e. duplicate a suitable encounter from the adventure]: the party has to face the result once they open the door.
4	<b>Derision:</b> The satyrian face loses composure entirely, laughing so harshly at the character's incomprehensible attempt at wisdom that it drops the knocker out of its mouth, and has to be helped to hold it (with possible diplomacy rolls to make it do so) in order to try opening the door again.

The demon bound to the knocker is under a curse to only unlock the door after a proverb is completed successfully, but has some independence: friendly characters may be able to glean tips or other information from the creature. The door itself is well made but not particularly sturdy, and can be taken down with sufficient damage (average AC, roughly as many HP as a couple of orcs), but if attacked the knocker screams in ALARM (see table B above). The door detects as magical, with a focus on the knocker.

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## The Devil's Door

*“Before you stans an infernal aperture made of flesh, bone, and rough black scales. Horns grow from darkened muscles, and an evil face glares at you with cinderous eyes. A baleful voice resonates from a fanged mouth, beckoning you forward.”*

This door is cursed with a powerful devil, and its presence warps the very reality around it. The devil in the door is very ready to bargain with the characters, but will demand ludicrous trades or answers to impossible and inane riddles in order to grant passage.

The devil has been geased to only open the door if a suitable hand sign is presented before it, but part of its task is not to directly reveal this information. Suitable hand signs include the horns (index and pinky up, middle and ring fingers held down with thumb), a ward against evil eye (fist with thumb out between index and middle finger) or even just the bird (middle finger up, but you already know that).

This door is mostly a chance for some fun in-character interaction, and the GM should allow for suitable rolls [skills, INT, PER, spell check, etc.] during the encounter to discern the true purpose of the devil.

If the party attacks the door, treat it as an immobile devil creature [for ease of use, apply and modify stats for a *Barbed Salamander* or a *Minor Toadfiend* from pg. 402 of the DCC rulebook], it will defend itself from assault, but will stop fighting if hostilities are ceased.

## The Twice Shrouded

*“The situation confuses you. The space where the entrance to the deeper reaches of the dungeon should be is just a wall.”*

This door is an illusion within an illusion with a crafty trap at the bottom for added danger.

The first illusion is that of a simple dungeon wall. Characters can see through this with a successful check [INT DC 8]. Anyone may roll if looking at the wall closely, and may roll again if informed about the illusion by those who see through it. If the roll is failed three times, the character just cannot see through the magic.

The second illusion is that of a heavy set metallic door, with a keyhole on the left side and hinges along the right edge. This illusion is of better spellcraft, requiring a harder check to disbelieve [INT DC 16]. Characters may only try the check if they specifically try to disbelieve the door (and have seen through the initial wall illusion, of course). The keyhole is real, and may be picked or opened with a key, but successfully opening the lock triggers the trap (see below)

The door is actually just a large slab of stone, with obvious hinges on the left side, along with a crude keyhole. If the lock is opened, the hinges let loose and the slab falls on the characters in front of the doorway, causing damage [2d6] to everyone within an area of 3x2 m (10'x5') unless a save [Ref DC 14/10/6, depending on what the character sees] is made.

Actually gaining access to the passage beyond only requires pushing the door from the right edge; if this is done, the door simply opens quite easily. It's not even locked!