

## THE GUIDE TO TRAITS' EFFECTS ON ALIGNMENT

### Suggested Alignment Adjustments for NPC (and PC) Traits

by

Matthew "Xeno" Shelton  
<mlsheltn@cc.memphis.edu>

The traits shown in this guide and their suggested alignment adjustments are a way to give a kind of method to deciding a player character's or non-player character's alignment. The idea is to add and balance out all the traits, which will indicate a balance on the two alignments or a tilt towards one extreme or the other.

Given that a character is perfectionist, irritable, vengeful, and covetous, these traits give the following values according to which alignments they affect: 1L (perf), 1C (irri), 1E (veng), and 2E (covt). These numbers aren't treated as positive or negative; though one can consider law/chaos and good/evil to be two positive/negative scales. The numbers would then read +1LC, -2LC, -1GE, -2GE, but you may use whichever notation that is most readable to you

Using the above traits, we find that the balance on the two alignments come out to 1 Chaotic, and 3 Evil. Interpreting this in light of the standard nine alignments, this indicates a chaotic evil character. Looking at it speculatively, the character is slightly chaotic and significantly evil (but not evil incarnate).

Some races are naturally more evil, good, lawful, or chaotic than the rest. Accordingly, one should apply appropriate adjustments to reflect this. A (N)PC Drow might have 5C/5E, while a minotaur would have an adjustment of 3C/5E (they do not respect law or the status quo but are a disciplined). A Gold dragon might have a 5L/5G, or even a 6L/6G. As a general rule, the races having the most extreme alignments should receive the maximum of 7 to tip the character's alignment towards its race's alignment norm. Few if anything should have a 7 for any alignment, unless they are unsurpassed in that particular alignment (a god, for example).

Applying traits to alignments should not be done by considering a character's behavior on the basis of singular instances; rather, the DM needs to chart a general progression of a character's alignment remaining true to form (or shifting towards another one). Only if a character has taken on a certain trait for a good amount of time should that trait then be applied to determining alignment (habits are hard to pick up and hard to break).

It is also recommended that if a character exhibits a trait in an extreme form (such as extreme kind-heartedness) then the adjustment for that trait (2G in this case) should be increased by 1.

A character whose lawful and chaotic traits negate each other and/or whose good and evil traits negate each other, are considered to be Neutral in those areas. The lawful, chaotic, good, and evil alignments can be weighted; this is not true for neutrality, even though one character may emphasize neutrality more than another (the neutrality in law and chaos in regard to a neutral good farmer versus the neutrality of a high-level druid, for instance).

If a certain trait from the DMG isn't listed, it was either because I couldn't see it affecting alignment in any way. The assignments I gave to the traits are my own judgments of what's what; others may feel differently and they are entitled to use whatever alterations they might think will be more accurate. DMs are free to rule on any trait, increasing or decreasing the adjustment or changing that trait's alignment, or excluding it from consideration altogether.

Some traits will have more than one adjustment listed; both adjustments should be applied (it is not an either-or situation).

TRAIT	ADJUST	NOTES
Antagonistic	1C & 1E	promotes chaos and is
selfish		
Argumentative	1C	
Arrogant	1E	
Avaricious (more than selfish)	3C & 2E	
Barbaric (savage)	2C & 2E	
Benevolent (of rulers)	2L & 2G	
Bigoted	2E	
Blustering	1C	
Boorish	1C	
Brave1 (average, steady)	1L	} related to creature's
morale		
Brave2 (elite, champion)	2L	} rating or PC's role-
played		
Brave3 (fanatical, fearless)	3L	} morale rating
Capricious	1C	
Careless	1C	
Cavalier (almost chivalrous)	1C & 1G	"3 Musketeers"
Charitable	2G	
Compassionate	3G	
Covetous	2E	
Cowardly1 (unsteady)	1C	
Cowardly2 (unreliable)	2C	
Cowardly3 (gutless)	3C	
Cruel (more than rude or mean)	2C & 2E	
Deceitful	2E	
Driven	1L	
Easy-Going	1G	
Elitist	1E	
Exacting	2L	
Foolhardy	1C	
Forgiving	2G	
Friendly	1G	
Generous	2G	
Greedy	1E	
Hard-Hearted	2L & 2E	unyielding and
inconsiderate		
Harsh	1L & 1E	sternness with some
cruelty		
Haughty	2E	
Helpful	1G	

Honest	1L & 1G	a little under truthful
Hot-Tempered	1C	
Humble	2L & 3G	
Immature (childish)	1C & 1E	
Immoral1 (rare slip-up)	1C	} Immoral is associated
Immoral2 (dabbler)	1C & 1E	} with sinfulness,
wickedness		
Immoral3 (frequent)	1C & 2E	} evil, or otherwise
corrupt		
Immoral4 (absolute)	2C & 3E	} behavior.
Impulsive	2C	
Insensitive	1E	
Irreverent	2E	
Irritable	1C	
Jealous	1E	
Kind	2G	
Kind-Hearted	2G	
Lazy	2C	
Level-Headed	2L	
Loyal	2L	
Lusty (lecherous)	2E	
Madcap	3C	
Mature (adult)	1L & 1G	similar to sober
Mischievous	1C	
Miserly	1E	less than selfish
Moody	1C	
Obedient (to authority)	3L	
Overbearing (controlling)	2E	
Perfectionist	1L	
Pleasant	1G	
Polite	1L & 1G	
Practical	1L	
Proud	2E	
Punctual	2L	
Reverent	3G	
Rude	1E	
Sadistic (engaging in torture)	3C & 3E	
Scheming	1E	
Selfish (more than miserly)	2E	
Sober (frank, serious)	1L & 2G	not associated with
drunkenness		
Stern (disciplined)	1L	not the same as harsh (not
evil)		
Thoughtless (negligent)	1C	
Thrifty	1L	
Truthful	2L & 2G	
Tyrannical (of rulers)	2L & 2E	
Uncivilized (uncouth)	1C	primitive, uneducated
Vengeful	1E	
Violent1 (occasional scuffle)	1C & 1E	
Violent2 (fights often)	2C & 1E	
Violent3 (menace to society)	3C & 2E	
Warlike (rambunctious)	1C	similar to violent but
less evil		

Many of these traits were gleaned from the Dungeon Master's Guide, pages 114 to 115, the Random NPC Traits Table. I have also added several of my own traits. I encourage everyone to add new traits of their own, and I would appreciate any new traits that can be added to this guide.

When adding new traits, consider the following. (1) Is this trait unique? If there is a trait already listed that is too synonymous with the new trait, then perhaps it should be left alone. English has a lot of words for the same behaviors; one need only think about all the different words for being drunk to realize this. (2) Would this trait really affect alignment (as far as suggesting personal discipline or the lack thereof, morality, concern for others vs. oneself, regard for authority, etc.)? If the new trait meets these criteria, then it is probably a good candidate to be added to the list. Keep in mind that this alignment system does not necessarily regard chaotic behavior as evil or lawful behavior as good; the lawful good mindset that I personally have makes it difficult to put these traits in a neutral perspective (i.e., not everything is in black and white, CE or LG).

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This text written by: Xeno (mlsheltn@cc.memphis.edu)  
Internet Address: <http://www.people.memphis.edu>  
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