



THE ENCHIRIDION OF LICHDOM

A detailed guide on how the mortal spellcaster becomes the undying lich

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Credits

The following sources were researched in the creation of this document.

- AD&D 2nd Edition Monstrous Compendium, TSR 1989
- Van Richten's Guide to the Lich, TSR 1993
- D&D 5th Edition Monster Manual, Wizards of the Coast 2014
- Dragon Magazine #26 "Blueprint for a Lich" June 1979

Interior Illustrations

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On the Cover



This picture is from the "100 Cover Illustrations (Art Pack)" from Arcana Games. Found on www.dmsguild.com

Disclaimer: Use of this material to transform a player character into a lich is not suggested, as phylactery will get you no-where with your dungeon master.

Foreword

Liches have been a part of Dungeons & Dragons since its inception. This work is meant to describe the mechanics of how a spellcaster becomes a lich within the rules of the 5th edition of Dungeons & Dragons.

The mechanics of becoming a lich are a secret that no player or NPC ever learns quickly. There is no library that contains the complete texts and instructions for becoming a lich. No lich would ever instruct another potential rival on the proper path to immortality. Those liches that have completed the transformation themselves most likely destroyed their own notes on the subject lest they fall into the hands of a rival.

The most likely evidence for the mechanics of becoming a lich will be found amongst the writings of those who researched, tried and failed to transition into undeath. These instructions would be dangerous to follow, as they may contain errant steps that caused the last would-be lich to utterly destroy himself rather than become a lich.

The acquisition of a full set of instructions on becoming a lich -for a PC or NPC- should take place of the course of an entire campaign.

This work is not meant for the eyes of anyone other than myself. I have collected the secrets in this tome for a purpose, but I hope that I never bring this knowledge to fruition. Whether I do or not, the contents of this work should be destroyed, be it by my mortal hand or my force from beyond the grave. If you are reading this, turn back. The fact that you are reading this is evidence enough that something has gone horribly wrong, and now your only salvation is to destroy this work, or suffer the same damnation that I suffer.

Over the course of my long years I have come to the conclusion that all of my years of study, reflection, and research will come to mean nothing once the cold hand of death takes my coin and ferries me to the afterlife. All learning is an investment. That investment can only pay dividends over the course of many years. Simply from an economic perspective, it is foolish to continue investing in something that will not be around long enough to pay back that investment. Therefore, the continuing study and research of the elderly mage is not a wise investment.

Yet, the desire for further research is there in the heart of the mage, young and old. And it could be argued that the seasoned hand of the elderly mage is more efficient in the tasks of study and research. Why then must they be robbed of the time required to make good on that research and learning? Why should not the life of the mage be extended to preserve the intellect?

There have been mages who have cheated death. Mages who have continued their research into the arcane mysteries of the multiverse for hundreds or thousands of years. Universally they are seen as tyrannical and corrupt. These undead mages, these unholy monsters, these liches have cheated death and are a blight upon the land. With all the time ever needed to research and study, why would these beings not be doing about greater good? It is through my research in this subject, that I believe the process itself corrupts the soul to such a degree that good is no longer even conceptualized by the lich.

Indefinite Preservation of the Soul

I have found the process for how the scholarly wizard might achieve lichdom! It requires that the intellect and soul be divided and permanently detached from the body.

The soul is something that is quite hardy and robust and also quite essential to sentient life. A soul is very rarely created from scratch or destroyed outright. It enters the body of the sentient creature at birth and departs at death. The natural state of the soul is to be either in the living body of a sentient creature, or in repose in the outer planes, where it might find rest. Of course, this is not always the case. Stories abound of this process gone wrong, of souls trapped between the worlds. While there are many factors that might cause a soul to be in a state of undeath or unrest, I will focus on how the lich holds his soul prisoner, so that he might preserve his own intellect.

-From a loose page found in a wizardly estate

For the wizard, there are two main components of becoming a lich. The first is the phylactery and the second is the transformation potion. Each have a process of how they are created, and then prepared for the transition. Finally, they then facilitate the transition from mortal mage to immortal lich.

The Phylactery

The phylactery is the vessel which holds the soul of the lich. It has unique requirements for its construction, enchantment, and how it must be prepared to hold the soul of all eternity.

Constructing the Phylactery

The phylactery of a potential lich, must be constructed for that purpose. It cannot be an existing item that is re-purposed for use as a phylactery. The phylactery must be highly crafted by a skilled craftsman, be that the potential lich or a commissioned artisan. If the would-be lich has commissioned the creation of the phylactery, the artisan creating it does not need to know its intended purpose, only the specifications to which it needs to be created.

While the phylactery must be created purposefully for use by the lich, it can have existing items incorporated into its construction. For example, a particular gem, such as a family heirloom, which has already been cut and faceted can be incorporated into the phylactery. The construction can also contain dragon bones, manticore spines, or other such body parts from magical creatures. While each phylactery is unique, there are some commonalities.

Shape

The phylactery usually is a small boxlike amulet made of common materials. However, a phylactery can take the form of any item possessing an interior space into which arcane sigils of naming, binding, immortality, and dark magic are scribed in silver. Roll once on the following chart to determine the general shape of the phylactery.

d100	Shape
1-50	Boxlike amulet
51-65	Gem encrusted box
66-75	Jeweled orb
76-85	Crown
86-95	Embellished scepter
96-98	Inlaid apothecary jar
99-00	Exotic (such as the skull of a magical creature)



Materials

Lead or any other black or dark-gray colored material is frequently used. These amulets are never made of wood, and rarely of steel. Brightly colored metals, such as gold, are infrequently used. Roll once on the following chart to determine the most prominent materials used in the crafting of the phylactery.

d100 Materials

1-30	Lead and silver
31-43	Gold and lead
44-53	Gold and silver
54-64	Platinum and lead
65-71	Platinum and silver
72-80	Platinum and gold
81-88	Steel and lead
89-93	Steel and silver
94-97	Steel and gold
98-00	Steel and platinum

Special components

The phylactery is not required to contain any special components, but most likely does. This vessel will house the soul of the would-be lich, and as such should reflect his personality and accomplishments. Family heirlooms, such as gems are not uncommon. It is also likely that trophies from life are incorporated into the design. Roll one or more times on the following chart to determine any special components to include in the design of the phylactery.

d6 Special Components

1	Family heirloom gem (5000 gp+)
2	Bone of a magical creature
3	Vial of quicksilver
4	Tooth of an ancestor or mentor
5	Meteorite fragment
6	Horn of a fiend



Symbols and Sigils

Inspection of the phylactery will reveal various arcane symbols carved into the interior walls. Those grooves are filled with silver as pure as the craftsman can find. Because the mage understandably has no desire for anyone to know what ritual he is undertaking-particularly what the arcane symbols and etchings truly look like-the mage may study and learn how to handle molten metals, and he may well acquire other crafting skills necessary to design and construct the phylactery. Roll on the table below to determine how the symbols are crafted inside of the phylactery.

d4 Symbols and Sigils

1	Carved into the walls and filled with the finest silver
2	Inlaid with fine silver wire
3	The molten silver used to fill the symbols contains crushed diamonds
4	The symbols are painted with a paint made of fine silver and lead

Cost

The vessel that becomes a lich's phylactery must be of excellent craftsmanship, requiring an investment of not less than 1,500 gp per level of the mage. The cost of the phylactery is directly proportional to its ability to successfully accept the soul of the would-be lich.

Consult the table below to determine the percent chance that the completed phylactery will be able to accept the soul of the lich. Once the construction of the phylactery is complete, roll to see if it is suitable. The would-be lich will know if the completed phylactery is suitable or not. If the roll fails, the completed phylactery is no longer of any use to the would-be lich and a new one must be constructed before moving forward. The current -unusable- phylactery is not destroyed, but its value is nowhere as high as the cost of its construction.

Cost	Success Percent
22,500-25,000 gp	75%
25,500-28,000 gp	80%
28,500-32,000 gp	85%
32,500-40,000 gp	95%
40,500+ gp	100%

Enchanting the Phylactery

Once the phylactery is constructed and the designs are set, it must be made into a magical item. During the enchantment, the following spells must be expended each day, although the material components may not need to be consumed each day.

Spell Slot	Spell
6th	<i>Magic jar</i>
8th	<i>Clone</i>
9th	<i>Astral Projection (optional)</i>

Magic jar is cast every day, without the need of the normal material components. For the purpose of this enchantment, the phylactery itself serves as the material component. During this casting the soul and conscience of the would-be lich moves into an out of the phylactery without ever possessing another. This is done, as the phylactery will perform as home for the lich's soul after the transformation.

Clone is cast each day, as the phylactery needs to be able to reconstruct a body for the lich, should his body ever be destroyed. This casting does not require the normal material components, but instead is to prepare the phylactery with the magical ability to re-form the undead body of the lich in the future.

Astral projection is optional, as a lich can be created without this power in the phylactery. A lich created without this enchantment would be truly and permanently bound to the material plane. It is only if the lich wishes to be able to travel to the outer planes after his transformation into lichdom that this spell is required. A lich that does not have astral projection imbued within his phylactery can never become a demi-lich.

Time to Enchant

The enchantment of the phylactery makes progress in 25gp increments. That is, for each 25gp of value of the phylactery, the would-be lich must spend 8 hours each day enchanting the phylactery.

Consult the table below for approximate time required to enchant the phylactery.

Cost	Time to Enchant
22,500-25,000 gp	2.5 years
25,500-28,000 gp	3 years
28,500-32,000 gp	3.5 years
32,500-40,000 gp	4 years
40,500+ gp	4.5+ years

Priming the Phylactery

Once the phylactery has been constructed and properly enchanted, it must be primed to receive and become the new permanent host for the lich's soul.

At least 120 days prior to the ritual, the wizard must follow all of the casting rules of the **clone** spell including the material components. This grows an inert duplicate of the would-be lich inside a sealed vessel. Once the clone has fully matured and the phylactery is within 100 feet of the clone, the phylactery priming ritual can take place.

The wizard casts magic jar on the phylactery one additional time. His body falls into a catatonic state as his soul leaves the body and enters the phylactery container. While in the phylactery, the wizard attempts to possess the body of the clone. Despite being inert, the clone must make a Charisma saving throw. On a failure, the wizard's soul moves into the clone's body. On a success, the clone resists the efforts to possess it, and the would-be lich can't attempt to possess it again for 24 hours.

Once successfully in possession of the clone, the mage must then kill his original body, which should still be in a catatonic state. Once this is done, the soul of the wizard is no longer in his original body, but instead in the body of his clone. Due to the time spent enchanting the phylactery, the soul of the would-be lich has now spent more time in the phylactery than his current cloned body. This has primed the transformation to take place. In fact, the transformation must take place within one week of this ritual, or the transformation will be an utter failure.

The Potion

The potion is the liquid that the would-be lich must drink to permanently snuff out his own life. This must be done so that his soul seeks out the phylactery as its new permeant home, and his body enters a state of undeath.

To initiate the transformation into a lich, to break the link between his body and spirit and forge it anew between his spirit and the phylactery, the mage must drink a special potion that is highly toxic. This potion, if properly made, will cause the mage to immediately transform into a lich. If one small error is made in the formula or the concoction of the potion, irrevocable death results.

Creating the Potion

To create the potion, the mage may blend several forms of natural poisons, including arsenic, belladonna, nightshade, heart's worry, and the blood of any number of poisonous monsters. Also necessary is the venom from a number of rare creatures such as wyverns, giant scorpions, and exotic snakes.



Potion Recipe

Before the potion is created, the wyvern venom bitters must be distilled. This is done by taking one quart of wyvern venom (venom from 2 adult wyverns), combining with an equal part of water, and a pinch of sugar and yeast and cooking for 4 hours. The mash is then left to ferment for 4 days to produce wyvern venom beer. The wyvern venom beer is then distilled so that a single tincture of the wyvern venom bitters - thick and dark orange- is the result.

Amount	Ingredient
2 oz	Ruby of arsenic crystals
4 roots	Belladonna
36 seeds	Nightshade
14 blooms	Heart's worry
1 cup	Aboleth blood
1 pint	Carrion crawler blood
1½ cup	Naga blood
1 tincture	Wyvern venom bitters
9 drops	Giant scorpion venom
4 drams	Black mamba venom

All of the ingredients must be fresh, except the wyvern venom bitters. That does not rule out preserving the ingredients in some magical way.

There are few requirements for the vessel in which the transformation potion must be created. It must be able to hold at least a quart and a half and have a sealable lid. Preferably, it is made of glass, so that the mixing of ingredients can be observed, but this is not required.

The carrion crawler blood is added first. To this is added the naga blood, and then the aboleth blood on top. These three bloods have different densities, and so will form three distinct layers in the mixing jar.

The ruby of arsenic crystals, belladonna roots, nightshade seeds, and heart's worry blooms are all added to a large mortar and then ground to a fine powder with a pestle. This powder is then added to the blood mixture and allowed to settle into the bottom of the mixing jar -through the layers of bloods- over the course of 24 hours.

Once the powder has settled, the wyvern venom bitters, giant scorpion venom and the black mamba venom are added to the top of the mixture, and the entire mixture is thoroughly

mixed until there are no variations in color or consistency in the mixture.

At this point the mixture is a deep ruby red and appears to be slightly viscous and a bit grainy if allowed to drip from a spoon.

Potion Preparation

Once the ingredients are properly mixed, the following spells must be cast upon the potion in order to enchant it for the ritual:

Spell Slot	Spell
3rd	Animate dead
5th	<i>Cone of Cold</i>
5th	<i>Feign death</i>
7th	<i>Etherealness</i>

Feign death is cast so as to totally and completely immobilize the consumer of the potion once it is consumed. Without this enchantment, the would-be lich might flail around wildly as his mortal body dies from drinking the potion.

Etherealness is cast so that the highly toxic potion can permeate through the wizard's body and tissue quickly. The death must be as complete and as quick as possible. If the death is not near instantiations, the transformation into a lich could fail.

Animate dead is cast, so that the body of the would-be lich reaches an undead state as soon and death occurs and the soul can as quickly as possible transfer back into the undead body from the phylactery once the ritual is complete.

Finally, cone of cold is cast on the transformation potion as a way of preserving it. Care should be taken for the vessel holding the potion at this point. If cone of cold is cast on the glass mixing jar, it could cause the jar to shatter, and the potion to be wasted. It is suggested that the potion be poured into a stone or ceramic jar for this step.

At this point the transformation potion is complete, and will be preserved for up to one year. The potion is an incredibly thick and smooth black liquid at this point. If the transformation potion is not used within that year by the mage that prepared it, then it is wasted and a new potion must be created.

Preparing the Potion Vessel

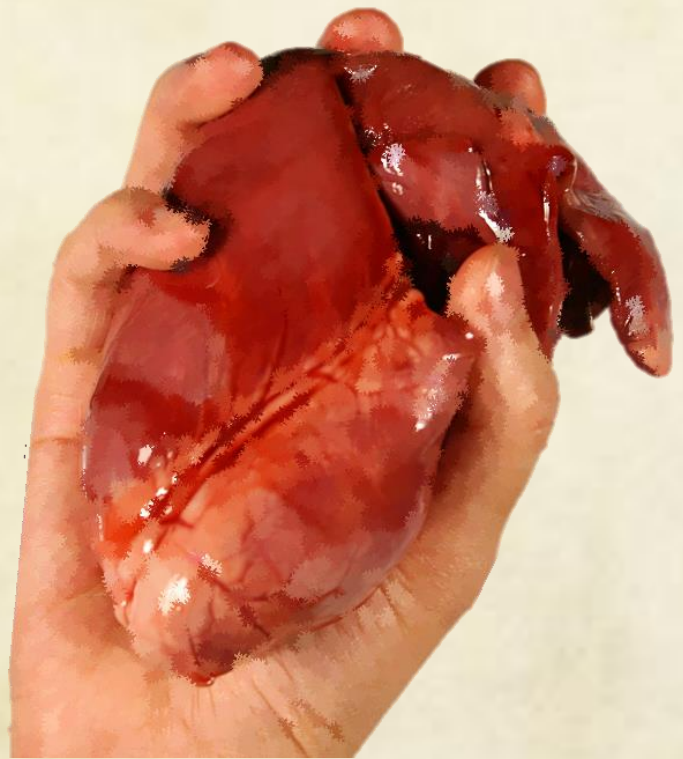
The potion must be consumed from a special vessel to complete the transformation. This special vessel is the newly dead heart of an innocent sentient being.

Innocence is a matter of some subjectivity, but it can be assumed that the owner of this heart must not have ever harmed or wished harm upon the would-be lich. This can quickly become difficult if the would-be lich is well known, or worse yet if he was a tyrant during his life.

For this reason, some would-be liches target children for this step of the transformation, but this is also dangerous, as the heart of the child may not be able to hold enough of the dreadful transformation potion to make the ritual a success.

It is also dangerous to attempt to use a heart which is too big, as it might cause the mage to not be able to drink the potion swiftly enough. Consult the table below for transformation potion success rate based on the size of the creature whose heart was used.

Creature Size	Potion Success
tiny	65%
small	90%
medium	97%
large	85%
huge	40%
gargantuan	5%





Consuming the Potion

The heart must be pulled from the still living body of the innocent sentient being by the would-be lich himself. It is this vile deed that further weakens the body's grasp on the soul. Committing such a heinous crime against nature is something that causes permeant damage to the bond of soul and body.

The heart then has its top bitten off, and is plunged into the vile jar containing the transformation potion. Once the heart is full, and there are no more bubbles, the would-be lich drinks the potion from the heart.

The potion must be drunk during a night with a full moon, and in sight of the full moon. The potion must also be drunk swiftly in one quick motion and within one hour of killing the heart. Upon ingestion, the would-be lich falls dead. There is no going back at this point.

It is now that the transformation potion success is rolled. If the roll is successful, then

the body has died quickly enough, and the soul has successfully and completely pulled itself free from the body. One final roll is made to determine if the soul is successfully captured into the phylactery. Consult the table below.

Phylactery Value	Success
20,000-30,000 gp	86%
30,000-40,000 gp	92%
40,000+ gp	98%

If the mage passes the test, then he has been transformed into a dreaded lich.

If the mage fails either of the rolls, then the mage is dead forever, with no hope of any sort of resurrection. Not even a wish will undo the lethal potion. Either the potion failed to separate the soul and the body correctly, or the phylactery failed to capture the soul. In either case, only the direct intervention of a deity has any hope of resurrecting a mage killed in this manner.

Powers and Limitations of the Lich

We had finally tracked the lich to its lair. There, we prepared our trap. We knew it was only a matter of moments before the lich would arrive to find out why there were mortals within the same room as his phylactery.

We hid in the corner, and Metizan, our mage, covered us in magical darkness so that we might get the drop on the cursed lich. We stood silent, not being able to see a thing in the murky magical blackness as we heard the lich shambling down the hallway. Once he entered the room we knew something was wrong. Despite being cloaked in magical darkness we could still see his glowing red eyes sweep across the room.

The two glowing red orbs fixed on our position, and we could hear the monster shuffling towards us. We still could not see anything but those two glowing orbs when all of a sudden Metizan was grasped by the vile beast and fell cold to the ground, ending our magical darkness. We never had the chance to surprise the damned lich!

-Havanti the ranger, on how he fought and escaped a lich lair.

There are a number of advantages to becoming a lich beyond achieving immortality. There are also certain rituals that must be performed regularly to maintain the lich's body and soul on the material plane.

Powers

While most who seek to transform themselves into a lich do so for the main reason to escape the grave and preserve their intellect indefinitely, there are other boons to the lich's new state.

It should go without saying that the lich no longer ever requires food nor water, air nor warmth. In fact, the lich now radiates the cold of the grave. The lich never requires sleep and therefore never suffers exhaustion.

Undead Restoration

When a lich's body is broken by accident or assault, the will and mind of the lich drains from it and enters the phylactery. Within days, a new undead body reforms next to the lich's

phylactery due to the clone enchantments. The new body coalesces out of glowing smoke that issues from the phylactery.

Lich Sight

The eyes of a lich glow from the depths of the sockets that once held their eyes. This glow and indeed their sight can pierce even magical darkness. A lich can see with normal vision when in total darkness or even magical darkness. The lich's sight also remains unaffected by even the brightest of light.

The Black Aura

When creatures confront a lich, they must make a Wisdom saving throw. This is a DC 15 saving throw. A creature who fails the save becomes frightened for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of his or her turns, ending the effect on the creature on a successful save.

The viewer must see the lich in its true form in order for the aura of fear effect to manifest. A lich disguised with an illusion would not evoke fear unless the disguise was a frightening one.

The cold darkness of the lich's aura is created purely for dramatic effect and has no mechanical function. The lich may freely shift this area of effect to prevent anyone from using the aura as a homing device or other source of information.

Chilling Touch

Should a lich touch a living creature, that creature immediately suffers 1d10 points of cold damage. The victim then must roll a successful Wisdom saving throw against the lich's spell DC or be suddenly and completely unable to move. The victim can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of his or her turns, ending the effect on the creature on a successful save.

Combat Protection

Liches can be hit only by weapons of at least +1 enchantments, by magical spells, or by magical properties.

The magical nature of the lich and its undead state make it utterly immune to charm, sleep, polymorph, cold, electricity, insanity, or death spells.

The lich is not immune to those who can turn undead.

Control over Undead

A lich is automatically able to control any form of undead with a CR of 5 or below. This includes wraiths and lesser undead. For the lich to have control of these undead they must be within the lich's range of influence. This range is equal to the lich's level times 1,000 feet. In other words, even a weak lich will be able to raise and command undead nearly three miles away.

Undead with a CR of 6 or higher than can make a charisma saving throw vs. the lich's spell DC to avoid being controlled. The lich is free to repeatedly impose its will upon undead that have made their saving throws until they succumb to its influence or escape its range of influence. Once the undead fails this saving throw, the only way to break the control is to leave the lich's range of influence.

There is no limit to how many of any particular kind of corpse or undead that the lich can control within his influence. However, only a number of undead equal to the lich's intelligence can be sent out of the lich's influence of control at any one time. The actions assigned to a typical minion must be simple and not contain more than four steps. An example command might be: "Go west until you find a farm; kill the dwarf inside the house; take his gold amulet; return here." Only one adjective may be used with each step in the quest.

Of course, intelligent undead can understand and act upon more complex orders, but will also likely be able to break free of the lich's control. This means that if a lich were to send a vampire outside of his range of influence to do his bidding, the vampire would have to be operating of his own free will.

The minion will not stop in its pursuit of the quest. It will become single-minded in its pursuit and will never stop until its assignment is complete or until willed to do so by the lich.

The lich's controlled undead can still be turned, but turning them only has the effect of making them stand still. When no longer subject to being turned -such as out of the radius of effect of the turning cleric- it will continue on its way. The minion will ignore all distractions during its quest, but will instinctively avoid villages, campsites, fire, and other creatures unless otherwise commanded. The minion will attempt to overcome any obstacle. If it is physically unable to, it will return to the lich.



Once a minion has returned for such a reason, the undead will communicate its difficulties to the lich telepathically. Once a minion leaves the lich's range of control, its senses cannot be used by the lich.

Weakness

The lich must also accept that the boons of escaping the grave come with certain drawbacks which are unavoidable. While the lich never requires food nor drink, he will also never again taste a fresh apple, or know the tingling around the ears after a sip of fine wine. While a lich never needs to sleep, he will also never know again the comfort of letting sleep wash over him in a comfortable bed.

In addition to these drawbacks, there are also certain expectations that must be met if the lich is to preserve his undead body and trapped soul in their current state.

The Ritual of Sustenance

A lich must periodically feed souls to its phylactery to sustain the magic preserving its body and consciousness. There are two methods that a lich might accomplish this feat. A lich must perform one of the two rituals at least once per decade, or risk its physical body falling apart in a way that even the phylactery cannot remedy.

The first is to use the *magic jar* ability of the phylactery itself. With this method, the lich brings a victim within range of his phylactery and possesses his victim body for his phylactery. The soul of the victim will then reside in the phylactery for up to 24 hours.

During this time the undead body of the lich is in a catatonic state. The body of the living victim is possessed by the lich and ages at a greatly accelerated rate. For every hour of possession, the body ages two years.

During the possession, the lich -within the victim's body- only has access to 5th level and lower spell slots. The lich must maintain control over the victim for 24 hours for the soul to be completely consumed and destroyed permanently by the phylactery.

Should the lich leave the victim's body before the 24 hours are complete, the victim's soul will be returned to his now aged body, and the lich will have failed his ritual of sustenance.

The second method involves using the imprisonment spell. Instead of choosing one of the normal options of the spell, the lich uses the spell to magically trap the victim's body and soul inside its phylactery. The phylactery must be on the same plane as the lich for the spell to work. A lich's phylactery can hold only one creature at a time, and a dispel magic cast as a 9th level spell upon the phylactery releases any creature imprisoned within it. A creature imprisoned in the phylactery for 24 hours is consumed and destroyed utterly. whereupon nothing short of divine intervention can restore it to life.

A lich that fails or forgets to maintain its body with sacrificed souls begins to physically fall apart, and might eventually become a demilich if their phylactery is enchanted with astral projection. If the phylactery is not so enchanted, the lich simply begins falling apart.

Protection of the Phylactery

If the lich's phylactery is ever destroyed, then the lich will be destroyed with it. Because the destruction of its phylactery means the possibility of eternal death, a lich usually keeps its phylactery in a hidden, well-guarded location.

Destruction of the phylactery is not a simple matter, either. The amulet itself will be protected with various magics that prevent its destruction by common, physical means. The phylactery naturally resists damage, and upon it are laid enchantments that make it resistant to the ravages of time. One cannot simply smash a phylactery against a rock and be done with it.

Once the lich has been defeated in combat, while his soul is in retreat within the phylactery, dispel magic cast as a 7th level spell or higher upon the phylactery will allow it to be damaged by weapons of +1 enchantment or better. While in this state, if the phylactery takes 25 hp of bludgeoning damage, it is destroyed forever and the lich's soul is released and can never be recovered, revived, resurrected, or reincarnated.

Other Paths to Lichdom

As we ventured deeper into the forgotten temple it became clear that we were not alone. While all traces of this ancient religion had long since vanished from the surface of our world, here there were still candles lit to this ancient and evil goddess.

We had already dispatched more than a score of shambling undead, but now the creature that stood before us was more terrible than any we had anticipated. Its body was dried and rotten to bone, yet its eyes shown with an intense red glow. It still had the rotten priestly garments around its figure as if it was still holding ceremony. It stood before us and simply said "Go." Myself and my companions had no control of our legs as we rose to our feet and made a hasty retreat from the ancient sunken temple.

-Gregrig the explorer's journal

Other Classes

While the most common form of lich to encounter will be the of the scholarly wizard variety, he is not alone in this pursuit. It is possible to find a lich who has gained this status through use of class abilities other than the wizard.

The Bardic Lich

While not nearly as common as the wizard lich, the bard may also seek the path to immortality. The main difference is that bards seem to learn most of their magic haphazardly, and few bards reach the experience necessary to begin the transition with the correct spells available to them. However, if a bard does collect all of the spells required to enchant the phylactery and prepare the transformation potion, there is nothing stopping him from performing the transformation ritual exactly as the wizard would. One notable difference is the shape of the phylactery. While mechanically the same, the bard-lich may choose to fashion his phylactery as some sort of musical instrument. However, the same restrictions apply as to the type of material from which it is made.

The Priestly Lich

Becoming a lich is a truly evil endeavor. It is also a process that fundamentally goes against nature. For this reason, it is extremely rare, if not unique that a clerical follower of a good or neutral deity would ever cross into becoming a lich. For even if this cleric thought that lichdom was the only solution to extend the reach of their god, that same deity would withdraw their favor -and therefore their spells- as soon as steps were taken towards this despicable outcome.

It is for this reason that the cleric that transforms himself into a lich is most likely the servant of a god of evil. The transformation of this cleric will be very different than the transformation of the scholarly wizard. While the transformation itself, and even the spells and components will differ, it will still involve a phylactery and a transformation ritual that may or may not require a potion.

The Unholy Phylactery

Unlike the phylactery that must be created for the scholarly mage, the priestly would-be lich will have his phylactery chosen for him by his deity. This object is most likely a relic of the cleric's religion, or an object brought to the material plane from the deity's palace in the outer planes. The phylactery need not be created for the purpose of being a phylactery, but instead must hold great meaning to followers of the cleric's religion. Consult the table below for possible phylacteries for the priestly lich.

d6	Shape
1	Obelisk
2	Inscribed stone cylinders
3	Jeweled holy symbol
4	Ossuary
5	Codex of religious text
6	Other holy relic

Once the phylactery is chosen for the cleric by his deity, the cleric will need to work together with his deity to enchant the phylactery. This process can take years, or may be sped up considerably with the assistance of the cleric's deity.

The cleric will enchant the phylactery with the following spells.

Spell Slot	Spell
5th	<i>Commune</i>
7th	<i>Resurrection</i>
9th	<i>Astral Projection</i>

Commune is cast each day during the enchantment period, as the phylactery will need to provide a constant line of communication between the cleric-lich and his deity.

Since the cleric cannot prepare the phylactery to hold his soul without divine help, it will be the deity that properly prepares the phylactery to hold the cleric's soul.

Resurrection is cast each day, as the phylactery needs to be able to find a substitute body for the lich, should his own undead body ever be destroyed. The casting of this enchantment does not require the normal material components, but instead is to prepare the phylactery with the magical ability to find a replacement undead body for the lich in the future. Unlike the phylactery of the wizard-lich, the phylactery of the cleric-lich will select a new undead body for the lich from those available within 100 yards. It does not form a new body for the lich to inhabit. It is for this reason, that the cleric-lich will most likely have his phylactery hidden within a sacred burial ground.

Astral projection is not optional for the priestly lich, as he may be required to venture to parlay with his deity within the outer planes. For this reason, a cleric lich must reach at least 17th level before beginning the transformation to lichdom.

The Transformation

The cleric who would become a lich must also find a way to drive his soul wholly and completely from the body so that it can be captured by the phylactery. This does not need to take the form of a transformation potion, but instead may involve some sort of self-sacrifice dictated by the will of their deity.

The transformation of a cleric into a lich could fail, just as a wizard's transformation could also fail. However, due to the active involvement of the cleric's deity in the preparation and the transformation, if anything were to go wrong, the deity could interfere on behalf of the cleric-lich to correct the process. For this reason, the cleric-lich transformation rarely truly fails.

Unlike the arcane -or wizard- lich, the priestly lich does not need to perform a ritual of sustenance, unless required by his deity. It is the deity that can continue to power the phylactery and preserve the lich on the material plane for as long as the deity desires. Due to this, priestly liches never become a demi-lich. They also may remain hidden for centuries as they have no need to "feed".



The Druid Lich

Of all the lichs presented in this work, it is the druid lich which is the most unlikely to come into being. Druids primarily are concerned with the delicate ecological balance that sustains plant and animal life. They seek to live in harmony with nature, not in opposition to it. The pursuit of lichdom is in direct opposition to nature.

However, if the need was great enough then a druid might pursue undeath to ensure the protection of their lands. If this path is chosen, it may very well have been setup as a sort of contingency for the druid if he were to die prior to finding a worthy successor. The fact that the druid attains a timeless body at 18th level makes this need even more unlikely. The sacred grove of the druid would also need to be under direct and imminent threat, as having no druid protector would be preferable to having a protector whose very nature leaches life from the grove.

The Sacred Phylactery

A druid phylactery would need to be something that was once alive and held sacred. Due to this, it is most likely a tree. But there is another requirement. In order to become a druid phylactery, this tree must now be dead and the druid cannot have killed this tree. Instead it must have been killed by those forces that threaten the druid's circle. Even more specifically, the tree must be a yew tree, as the yew is associated with death and rebirth.

These requirements alone make the likelihood of a proper phylactery being available extremely small. However, if a druid -through no fault of their own- finds that they have the right circumstances to create a phylactery, they could choose to enchant the trunk or stump of the dead yew tree with the following spells.

Spell Slot	Spell
5th	<i>Commune with Nature</i>
5th	<i>Reincarnate</i>
8th	<i>Sympathy</i>

Commune with nature must be cast on the husk of the yew every night over the course of a year. This is done as to enforce the bond that

the druid's soul can observe the grove from within this once sacred tree.

Sympathy is cast so as to allow the animals and plants in the area to know that this tree - should it become the home of an undead spirit- is to be tolerated. Without this portion of the enchantment, the natural forces around the phylactery would attempt to remove it as a living body rejects a virus.

Lastly, reincarnate is enchanted into the phylactery so that the druid-lich's soul might take physical form once the spirit has transferred into the phylactery. The casting of this enchantment does not require the normal material components, but instead is to prepare the phylactery with the magical ability to inhabit a replacement body for the lich in the future.

Unlike the phylactery of other lichs, the phylactery of the druid-lich requires that an animal sacrifice is brought to the phylactery to re-form a body. This is also why the sympathy spell is needed in the enchantment. When the druid-lich requires a new body, an animal of the land will come forward and sacrifice themselves for the druid-lich. The druid-lich will then inhabit the body of this animal, and can shift his form between that of the undead animal and his undead humanoid form at will. The *Wild Shape* of the druid-lich is now that of an undead animal.



Unwilling Transformation

Unlike the other lichs described in this book the transformation of the druid to undeath must be an unwilling one. Having prepared the corpse of the sacred tree as a phylactery, the druid does not take his own life. Either through old age, or by dying in the defense of his sacred grove, the druid soul departs his body. It is at this point that the druid's soul may choose to enter the phylactery. There is a flat 50% chance that the sacred grove and the prepared phylactery itself accept the spirit of the druid as its undead tenant. This roll is modified by the table below.

Druid condition	Modification
Dies of old age	-10%
Dies defending the grove	+15%
Per extra year spent preparing the phylactery	+5%
below 18 th level	-10%
Has defeated the person or creature that killed the sacred yew	+20%

For all of these reasons, in the rare case that a druid transforms into a druid-lich, he will most likely have a non-evil alignment.

Defiling Sustenance

Like other forms of lichs, the druid-lich must need to -rarely- perform rituals to sustain his being. These are only required once a century for the druid-lich and are normally as unpleasant to the druid-lich as they are to any outside observer.

When the druid-lich requires sustenance, an animal of the land must again come forward and sacrifice themselves for the druid-lich. Once scarified, the druid-lich will inhabit the body of this animal, and can shift his form between that of the undead animal and his undead humanoid form at will. However, if the druid-lich believes that his grove is no-longer in imminent peril or that a worthy successor has been found, the druid lich will refrain from sustaining himself, and instead let his body disintegrate into dust and his soul will eventually depart the sacred phylactery and travel to the outer planes. There is no path for a druid to become a demi-lich.

The Sorcerous Lich

Sorcerers do not learn their magic from intense study of spell books and from pouring over ancient tomes of magic lore like wizards do. Their magic comes from within their own body. They also do not rely on a deity to grant their spells as clerics do. The powers of a sorcerer do not normally include those magics necessary to transform themselves into a lich. However, with the use of the *wish* spell, some other clever enchantments, and the correct study, the Sorcerer can follow the path to lichdom by mimicking the process of the wizard-lich.

Rarely does a sorcerer actually complete the transformation into a lich. This is not just because of their nature, but also do to the fact that through the use of the *wish* spell, several other options are open to the sorcerer who wishes to prolong his life. The use of the *wish* spell to enchant the phylactery has some dire consequences as described in *The Player's Handbook*. The *wish* spell will need to be used to duplicate the *magic jar* spell, the *clone* spell, and the *astral projection* spell enchantments of the phylactery. This -all or nothing- type of enchantment with a *wish* spell means that there is a 33 percent chance that the sorcerer is unable to cast *wish* ever again after the phylactery is enchanted.

The Immaculate Phylactery

The rules for the construction of the physical phylactery of the sorcerer-lich are the same as those for the wizard-lich. The enchantment however is much different. The same functionality of the enchanted phylactery will need to be created though clever use -and phrasing- of a *wish* spell. This means that the enchantment of the sorcerer's phylactery can be done nearly instantaneously. However, there is no way to know for absolute certain that the phylactery is properly enchanted until the moment when the soul of the sorcerer attempts to enter the phylactery after drinking the potion.

In addition, since the sorcerer cannot cast the *clone* spell himself, he will need to find another way to loosen the ties of his soul to his own body. Killing a blood relative with the *finger of death* spell is one way to weaken the bond of body and spirit. The zombie that results from

this vile act is usually fiercely protected by the sorcerous lich for sentimental reasons.

The Sorcerer's Potion

The sorcerer will also need to brew and enchant the same potion as used by the would-be wizard-lich. The main difference here being that the sorcerer will need to replicate the *animate dead* spell via the use of the *wish* spell. Since this is just replicating a spell of a lower level, there is not as much risk involved as the enchantment of the phylactery. Also, unless the sorcerer can cast *feign death* as a ritual, the potion will be missing this additional enchantment. Without this enchantment, the sorcerer will suffer a -5% penalty on the potion success roll.

Wishful Sustenance

The sorcerer-lich will also need to periodically preform the ritual of sustenance. Again, the sorcerer will need to replicate the spell of the wizard-lich with the *wish* spell. In this case, it will require replicating the *magic jar* spell for a period of 24 hours to consume the soul of an innocent victim. In addition to the sorcerer-lich only having access to 5th level and lower spell slots during the time of consuming the soul, the sorcerer-lich also has a maximum strength of 3.

The Warlock Lich

The nature of a warlock is that he is one who has dedicated himself to seeing through the ambitions of his patron in exchange for great power. The warlock's patron is usually fine with this agreement, especially since the power transfer is inherently temporary based on the mortal warlock. Allowing the warlock to wield this power indefinitely changes the nature of the contract, and as such, any transformation of a warlock into the undying lich requires agreement and participation from the warlock's patron.

The Gifted Phylactery

Warlocks do not possess the ability to cast all of the spells to transform themselves into a lich. While the warlock can commission and even learn the skills to construct a phylactery as a wizard would, he will not have the skills to enchant without outside help.

While the physical phylactery is not given to the would-be warlock-lich, the enchantments

are. The same rules that apply to the creation of the physical phylactery of a wizard apply to the creation of the phylactery of a warlock.

However, the enchantments will need to be performed by the warlock's patron as an upfront gift prior to preparing the soul binding contract.

Soul Binding Contract

Instead of creating and consuming a vile potion to complete the transformation into lichdom and to bind the soul of the warlock to the phylactery, a soul binding contract must be created and executed between the warlock and his patron. Each patron may have different requirements for the signing and execution of this contract, but there are some commonalities. The contract must be written in the poisoned blood of the warlock himself. This means that as the contract is being written the warlock will be in the process of dying from the poison. The contract must also be signed in the presence of the warlock's patron. This may very well mean traveling to the outer planes. Finally, the patron must pierce the heart of the warlock to cause his death once the contract is signed by both parties, and the phylactery must be present. Once all of these conditions are met, a warlock has an set 85% chance of success transforming into a lich

Sustenance of the Pact

The warlock-lich must sustain himself by use of the Soul Cage spell (found in ***Xanathar's Guide to Everything***). The warlock will trap a soul and perform *Steal Life* until the victim is dead. This must be done every year. The warlock also must not break his pact with his patron, lest the magic that maintains his form fail, and the warlock's soul is lost forever.

