

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®



City System

by Jeff Grubb with Ed Greenwood



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Using This Product

CITY SYSTEM is a boxed campaign setting designed for urban adventures in the AD&D® game system. While the mechanics presented within are adaptable for any city in the Realms, or in any other fantasy setting, this boxed set concentrates and expands upon the mightiest city of the Realms: Waterdeep, the City of Splendors.

The true stars of this product are the twelve map-sheets in this boxed set, the largest presentation anywhere of a fantasy city. The city is Waterdeep, but can be used for your own personal campaigns if you desire. The tables, charts, and information which follow are primarily to enhance the use of those maps.

Arranging The Maps

Ten of the twelve maps in this set fit together form an expanded view of

the city of Waterdeep (see p. 3). Map sections overlap to provide a continuous tapestry of urban settings. Regions outside the city proper, such as the farmlands beyond and the sea areas, are used to show typical interior details of many of the buildings. These are arranged according to the typical buildings found within that quarter. Noble houses will be found aligning to the North and Sea Wards, while taverns will be found in the Dock and Trades Wards. These typical buildings may be used by player characters as bases of operations or targets for adventuring.

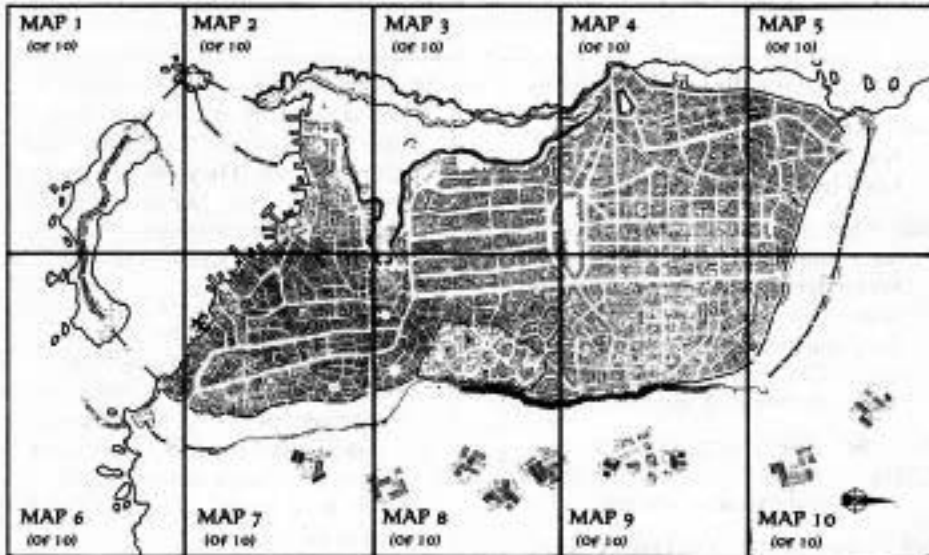
The eleventh map is a detailed interior diagram of Castle Waterdeep, headquarters of the effective civil government of the city. It is here that some of the Watch and Guards are posted, along with the keep, armories and dungeons. It is also here that the Lords of Waterdeep, the secret rulers of the

city, hold their judgments, and receive emissaries and visitors from other lands. Here noted guests of the city stay in safety (where the Lords can keep a discreet eye on them). Castle Waterdeep is one of the oldest structures remaining from the days of the early settlement of the city-state. Its catapults stationed in the towers are still operative, but without magical aid their stones would scarcely clear the outer walls of the new city.

The final map is a picture of the city itself, drawn from the Outer Harbor islands, looking northward over the Dock Ward. The city is built on a sloping plateau that levels out about the same location as Castle Waterdeep, so details beyond that point are lost from this view. The illustration captures the great density and sheer size of the city itself.



WATERDEEP AT A GLANCE



Many of the physical details of the City of Waterdeep can be found in FR1, *Waterdeep and the North*. For a detailed description of the ruling individuals, guilds and their functions, noble families and their heraldry, and the area surrounding Waterdeep, look into that tome. This text contains information about Waterdeep as it applies to cities in the Forgotten Realms—ranging from typical street encounters to a summary of the laws and peacekeeping forces in the city to opportunities for adventurers within the city's walls. Repeated information is intended to be kept to a minimum, and used only where necessary for clarity.

Waterdeep is the largest city of the North. There are metropolises in Calimshan, Amn, and reputedly Thay that exceed Waterdeep in sheer population, but none match the raw power and prestige of the City of Splendors. Waterdeep's population rarely dips beneath 120,000 sentient beings (this in the heart of winter), and during the busiest times of the year (the height of Trading Season), the number reaches upwards of half a million people.

Waterdeep is one of the newer cities as well, having survived and prospered under its current type of secret government for only some 350 years. A long trail of dark times, mysterious fires, and indeterminate spell-casting mark the years before the coming of Ahghairon, Lord of Waterdeep. Both for its growing size and relatively recent arrival, Waterdeep is regarded by larger, older cities to the south as something of an upstart, a home of the new rich and wildly unpredictable adventurers. The fact that Waterdeep recognizes and profits from the actions of adventurers is used as proof to

these old-line nations that Waterdeep is as barbarous as its surroundings. (See Timeline on page 4 for a brief history of the city).

Waterdeep is divided into seven administrative districts, or "wards." The borders between these wards are informal and, with the exception of the City of the Dead, there are no walls dividing them. Each ward has its own personality, and particular groups and individuals tend to collect towards one ward or another. Waterdhavian society has not stratified as much as some other cities: there is no "Noble Quarter" where all the titled heads are crammed within the reaches of a flame strike. Nor is there a "Foreign Quarter", as found in the South and West, where outside nationals and foreign races are confined. Waterdeep takes pride in its lack of such divisions, pointing out that it is an "Open City", while its detractors point out that it is one more example of the chaotic nature of the northerners.

The seven wards of the city are:

- **Castle Ward**—The Political Heart of the City, this ward encompasses both Castle Waterdeep and Piergeiron's Palace, the barracks, and Mount Waterdeep and its defensive system. It is a popular region for those who enjoy the whirl of politics, including adventurers seeking employment by the city.

- **Sea Ward**—North and West of Castle Ward, this region was open fields a hundred years ago, dotted by the villas of the rising noble class of the City. The metropolis has since swallowed the old villas, reducing them to walled islands in the midst of upper-class townhouses. Sea Ward is also center of the Faiths of Waterdeep, relocating with the

rising upper class from Dock and Trades Wards.

- **North Ward**—The other northern ward of Waterdeep, the buildings are slightly older, but still respectable and upper-middle class. Here too the old noble villas have been swallowed by the city. It is in North Ward where successful merchants maintain townhouses for their stays in the city, and where retired adventurers tend to spend their quiet years.

- **City of the Dead**—This is the only walled ward, and with good reason. Disposal of the deceased citizens in a fashion that will not result in their return is a problem for all towns large and small in the Realms. Waterdeep, backed by powerful magic, has chosen to create a series of pocket dimensions, where they may lay the dead to rest in comfort. Some undead, and darker creatures, do slip through in the night, and for this reason, the City is patrolled and night-time activity discouraged. Still, it is the largest park of its type in the North, and a favorite relaxation spot of the people.

- **Trades Ward**—This is the internal merchant and craftsmen's hub of the city, where most of Waterdeep's internal trading and manufacturing take place. Many of the respectable Guilds have their bases there, and it is here that most of the high-level economic dealing takes place.

- **Southern Ward**—If Waterdeep had a "Foreign Quarter", Southern Ward would be it. Nestled firmly against the major gate south, it is here that many caravans stop to break up their cargos for sale and delivery in the city. Many southern merchants have not seen Waterdeep beyond this ward, and many foreign tongues and alien races are found here seeking others of their own breed. Southern ward is dominated by the requirements of the caravan trade: stables, warehouses, and taverns.

- **Dock Ward**—The oldest part of the city, it was in use over 2000 years ago as a trading center with ships from the south. Certain buildings, and most foundations, predate Castle Waterdeep and the founding of the city. It is a rough neighborhood which mixes vital business with shady operations at all hours of the night.



A Timeline of Waterdeep's History

In this brief outline, Waterdeep's system of numbering years is used (known as "Northreckoning," it is used throughout the human Northlands west of Anauroch). The current year is 1332 in Cormyr (whose system is used in Sembia, Westgate, and the western coastlands of The Sea of Fallen Stars) and 1357 in Dalereckoning (the system used in the Dalelands, the Moonsea lands to the north, and over much of Thar and the other Northlands to the east of Anauroch); note that Northreckoning dates from Ahghairon's ascension to the throne, and not the initial founding of the city.

- NR -2120: Annual trade begins at the future site of Waterdeep, between the ships from the South and Northern human tribes.
- NR -980: Permanent farms established in the area by tribes who settle locally.
- NR -560: Tribes conquered by Ulbaereg Bloodhand, and united. Irrigation and extensive building begins.
- NR -160: Nimoar the Reaver conquers the Bloodhand tribe, and seizes the docks and buildings of the harbor. Nimoar's Hold is fortified with a log palisade.
- NR -145: Pirate raids in force from the South.
- NR -143: The Bull Elk tribe of the Dessarin sets Nimoar's Hold afire, but is defeated and driven off. The Hold is rebuilt.
- NR -100: First Trollwar. Forces led by Nimoar clear the Evermoors of trolls, burning miles of land bare

while slaying the everlasting ones.

- NR -96: Heavy orc raids. Death of Nimoar. Gharl chosen as War Lord by the tribe.
- NR -92: Second Trollwar. Continual strife for a decade; the name Waterdeep comes into common usage. Six War Lords of Waterdeep die in battle during this dark time. City population grows as tribes gather in it for safety.
- NR -80: Rise of Ahghairon, mage of the Northern wastes. The trolls are defeated and scattered.
- NR -58: Castle Waterdeep built (single keep on site of Nimoar's Hold). City walls expanded and rebuilt. Lauroun named first female War Lord.
- NR -22: The walls are expanded again, and the harbor fortified. Waterdeep becomes the Free City of Waterdeep, Lauroun its "Warlord" (ruler).
- NR 0: Death of Lauroun in orc raids. Raurlor proclaims himself Warlord of Waterdeep. Black Claw orc horde defeated at Stump Bog.
- NR 0: Raurlor announces Empire of the North. Ahghairon defied Raurlor, The Warlord is killed. Ahghairon, takes the Warlord's seat, and declares himself the first Lord of Waterdeep. The City grows under his just rule, and is prosperous. System of Wards introduced; initially four in number, Castle, Trades, Dock, and Temple (later Southern) Ward.
- NR 216: Waterdeep grows fivefold, and crime becomes a problem. Formation of Guilds. (recognition of merchant gentry; "noble" families developing). Creation of City of the Dead.
- NR 224: Death of Ahghairon. Guildmasters seize power in the City

- NR 230: Guildwars, culminating in the slaying of all but two Guildmasters, Lhorar Gildeggh and Ehlemm Zoar. They declare themselves the Two Lords Magister. "Misrule of the Magisters" begins. Thieves' Guild operates openly.
- NR 241: Baeron and Shilarn, Lords of Waterdeep, slay the Two Lords Magister, and revive Ahghairon's system of rule. Baeron rules openly. Houses of the Lords Magister are declared Outcasts, and exiled. Magisters ("Black Robes") appointed to keep justice. Thieves' Guild outlawed.
- NR 244: Shilarn gives birth to Baeron's daughter, Lhestyn. North and Sea Wards added to city.
- NR 266: Lhestyn, as "The Masked Lady," infiltrates the Thieves' Guild and exposes it. Thieves' Guild is crushed.
- NR 268: Lhestyn weds the mage Zelfphar Arunsun of Neverwinter.
- NR 270: Khelben Arunsun, later to become the Archmage "Blackstaff," born to Lhestyn and Zelfphar.
- NR 276: Baeron dies of fever. Shilarn immolates herself on Baeron's pyre. Lhestyn becomes the "open" Lord of Waterdeep. Lhestyn's (later Piergeiron's) Palace built as home for the "open" Lord of Waterdeep.
- NR 279: Zelfphar slain by fell sorcery. Lhestyn names the paladin Piergeiron her successor- as Open Lord of the City. Durnan founds the Red Sashes.
- NR 282: Death of Lhestyn. Piergeiron takes the throne.
- NR 325: The present year (1332 Cormyr, 1357 Dalereckoning).

RULERSHIP

Who rules a city is often of minor importance in the day-to-day operation of a civilized community. Only in the case of the most brutal, petty tyrants will player characters likely come into direct conflict with the mayors, lord, captain, lesser kings, and self-styled emperors who rule the cities of the Forgotten Realms. One piece of advice, though: should a character anger the rulers of a city, the safest course of action is to leave town quickly and quietly—all but the most despotic rulers enjoy a strong base of support in order to carry out their work.

This strong base of support applies to Waterdeep as well. Wracked by long internal battles in its history, the city has thrived for the first time in the past 300 years, under the ministrations of its hidden “Lords of Waterdeep.” The number and names of these Lords are Waterdeep’s most tightly-held secret, protected both by the magic-resistant masks they wear as well as (it is rumored) divine protection arranged by the various faiths that do good business in Waterdeep and support its rulers. It is commonly thought that there are 16 such rulers, though no more than 7 are seen at any one time.

Among the Lords there is always one “Open Lord,” who wears no mask when conducting daily business for the city, and who is generally recognized as both the spokesman and symbolic head of the city. The current Open Lord is Piergeiron Paladinson, a paladin of 14th+ level, who has ruled the city-state wisely in his past 40 years in the position.

Some of the mysterious Lords of Waterdeep are detailed in FR1, *Waterdeep and The North Sourcebook*, but there are 6 left undescribed for the DM to create his own. The fact that the Lords are undiscovered and undiscoverable makes for an air of security in the city. Those with nothing to hide feel confident that a Lord may be around when needed, while those breaking the law are never sure that the person they are confiding in will not soon be sitting, masked and concealed, on the bench to judge them.

Laws & Peace-Keeping

Player characters in urban environments may not meet the king, but, if they engage in typical adventuring activities in the city, they will definitely encounter the ruler’s minions. In Waterdeep, the prime peace-keeping forces are the Guard and the Watch.

The Guard are Waterdeep’s soldiers, decked in scale mail and carrying short swords and bows; they are the city’s protection. Outposts of the guards can be found throughout the walls ringing the city, as well as at their barracks in Castle Ward, and at all gates into the city. At every gate, there will be a detachment of the Guard in number.

The Watch are Waterdeep’s policemen, and are more commonly seen throughout the city, typically moving in patrols of four men. They are decked in armor of leather strengthened by chain, and carry rods (treat as clubs), daggers, and short swords.

The Watch and Guard are authorized to arrest any individuals breaking the law, and to bring in for questioning any individuals reported to be engaged in illegal activities. They may enter buildings without warning or hindrance, and search any person, place, or container by will.

The Watch will first attempt to have the arrested subject come along peacefully, but if this is not possible, they will fight. The Watch will seek to disarm and grapple opponents, while the Guard tends to kill first, ask questions later. In dangerous situations, the Watch will kill a suspect as well, using *speak with dead* spells to discover the true disposition of matters afterwards. Innocent parties slain by the Guard and/or Watch are provided with *raise dead* spells as is possible.

In dealing with powerful adventurers, who could easily defeat and/or slay large numbers of ordinary guardsmen, the Lords of Waterdeep have three

options, one of which is lesser-known. The first option is to enlist the aid of the local temples and faiths in dealing with the problem. Since this is tied with a large donation from the city to the faith that deals with the problem, most churches are eager to aid in the arrest and/or destruction of the high-powered interloper. Clerical spells are excellent in locating unprotected thieves, and aerial servants and the like can dispose of them on the doorstep of the local Guard (or more likely, within the dungeon directly).

The second option available to the Lords is the unleashing of Force Grey. Force Grey is a group of loyal, powerful Waterdhavians of equal or greater power than the supposed offenders. They can include the following individuals:

Khelben Arunsun – Also called Blackstaff, this 26th level magic-user is reported to be both a Lord of Waterdeep and the leader of Force Grey. He is active only when the city faces its most dire threats, but provides suitable spells and magical items for the rest of the team.

Jardwim – Official leader of the team, a 15th level ranger lord who uses two blink dogs as his aides. Once something is called to his attention, there is little he cannot find. Gruff and stocky, he is a believer that if a problem is sufficient to bring him into the field, the only result is death for the opponents.

Malianzor – A 9th level magic-user and pupil of Khelben, Malianzor usually carries a scroll containing the necessary spells to contain the menace. She is known as “Blackstaff’s eyes,” and though rumors abound of a more intimate relationship between her and Khelben, such tales are never brought up to her face.

Harshnag the Grim – A frost giant in enchanted *plate mail +4*, made for his giantish frame, he is the raw muscle-power with which the team deals with malefactors. Cast out by his people for overly good tendencies, he seeks acceptance in the company of humans.



Hrusse of Assuran – A native of the Inner Sea lands with a thick, stilted accent, Hrusse is a 12th level cleric of Assuran, called Hoar in these parts, the God of Revenge. No slight is forgotten, no task laid aside. He wears enchanted *plate mail +2*, and carries a *mace of disruption*.

Oscos Salibuck – A 9th-level halfling thief, once captured by the Force Grey and supposedly reformed, Oscos would be lost among the greater lights were it not for a *djinn ring* he jealously guards. The djinn, one Amprantines, is very loyal to his halfling master. Oscos is brought in for the quiet touch.

All of Force Grey are at maximum hit points, and should be equipped with further magical gear depending on the situation. Such gear is marked by Khelben so as to magically return (with whoever is carrying it) in a few days time.

In addition to the individuals noted above, Force Grey usually includes 2-8 fighters of 7th or better level.

Not surprisingly, Force Grey is called out rarely, and its approach sends everyday civilians in the opposite direction. An assault by the Force usually results in the destruction of one or more buildings, and widespread slaughter. They are used when no other method is available.

In cases where Force Grey is insufficient (a tarrasque on the horizon), a general call is made to all adventuring citizens to come to the aid of the city. This has not happened in the 40 years of Piergeiron's rule.

Finally, individuals disrupting the peace may earn the wrath of the Red Sashes, a mysterious group that operates within the city as "rivals" to the Lords of Waterdeep. Led by the "The One," this group of neutrally-aligned characters are very effective in removing individuals who are creating problems for the city, not bothering with the niceties of arrest and trial. This Society, while not a thieves' guild, has many characters with thievery abilities in its ranks, and engages in a quiet approach

of theft, threat, blackmail, and kidnapping to bring malefactors to justice. They can be hired for particular actions, though they have never been successful in toppling the Lords of Waterdeep. Their contacts may be found at:

Thentavva's Boots	Bldg 177
Hlakken Stables	Bldg 223
The Purple Palace	Bldg 260
The Sleeping Snake	Bldg 245

The Red Sashes gain their names from the red cloth used to bind up the guilty to be turned over to the local officials.

Justice

Waterdeep has two levels to its legal system: The Magisters and the Lord's Court. There are 20 magisters, or "black-robos", in the city, and they may normally be found (one at the Palace (3 at all times) or the City gates (1 during daylight hours). The Magisters may pass instantaneous judgment on serious or less important crimes. Local citizens may appeal any ruling of the Magisters in the Lord's Court within two days.

The Lord's Court is chaired by Piergeiron and two other masked Lords of Waterdeep, and is held at the Castle Waterdeep each day, beginning at noon. This court hears all appeals, plus all severe crimes. Justice is swift and usually accurate in Waterdeep. A magical society, backed up by *detect lie* spells from the churches, can usually reach at the heart of the matter in a short time. The suggested punishments listed for offenders may be lessened according to situation, but ignorance of the law is no excuse for illegal behavior. There are no bail, no lawyers, and rarely any repeal of crimes. The Lords Court will usually let a Magister's statement stand unless there is information brought to light since then. In game terms, the Court system of Waterdeep is 95% likely to render a correct verdict as to the matters of the situation. The rest of the time there are sufficient unknowns that matters are dropped (unless the case is severe, in which case the least

that will occur will be banishment from the city).

Imprisonment: In addition to finding them guilty, Magisters sometimes order confinement—and to a busy merchant, imprisonment may result in a far greater loss of income than the fine that goes with it. After two days of confinement, prisoners are always brought before the Lords, and examined by a physician before them. Most merchants use this audience to plea for early release in return for the payment of more money. Lords sometimes agree to this, but try to consult with the Black Robe who sentenced the offender first, to determine the reason for imprisonment. The extensive, many-levelled City jail is in (and beneath) Castle Waterdeep, but small holding cells (six cells of up to ten people in each) are contained in the Palace and all major towers (those with names) along the wall. These are used in times of trouble. Waterdeep's prison system (The Dungeons) is on a par with most found in the Realms. The largest complex is located beneath Castle Waterdeep, and protected by magical wards and special cells to keep magical powers at bay. Escape is possible, but rare. For player characters, being sent into prison is virtual retirement for that character until the sentence is up. DM's may seek to have their sentence commuted into some great act for the city, usually involving great personal risk and/or danger. The individual will be questioned and/or geased to perform the action, and if the PC breaks the spell, he or she will be captured and slain upon return to Waterdeep.