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Warlock 5e archfey guide

This guide is meant as a deep dive into the DnD 5e Warlock. For a quick overview of the Warlock class, see our DnD 5e class breakdown. You can see the Warlock class feature here. The color code below has been implemented to help you determine at a glance how good this option will be for your Warlock. This color coding is not a hard and fast rule; There are many sub-optimized options out there that will be viable for your party and will be fun to play. Red will not contribute to the effectiveness of your character build at all Orange is OK option Green is a good choice Blue is a great choice, you should strongly consider this option for your sky blue character is an amazing choice. If you don't take this option your character shouldn't be optimized so if you're ready, put some props on your patron and prepare for a lot of Eldritch Blasting. Before you start racing check out our guide to DnD races for substandard races. Keep in mind that most races and sub-events are limited by the settings and source material selected by the DM. Before choosing any of the races that are not listed below, check with your DM. Dwarf: No CHA is tough and Warlock will not be refueling in any time period, even if they choose to pact blade. Other points of intervention are always useful. Hill: Bonus wis can occasionally help with wisdom saves, but other hitpoints are not helpful. Mountain: STR on Warlock? Not very useful. Dragonborn: +1 CHA bonus is nice, but +2 STR will go to waste. A brass gun can help with limited spells. Elf: Elves get a DEX bonus that can help a little AC warlock. Expertise in perception and with Darkvision is useful. Drow Elf: +1 on CHA is exactly what you are looking for and so is the taste. Just don't go to the sunlight! High Elf: High Elves get INT support and a free guide to cantrip of your choice. Int bonus will be wasted, but extra cantrip is always welcome. If you're playing Hexblade, Grab a Booming Blade or Green Fire Sword. Wood Elf: Nothing here is as beneficial as Warlock. Half-Elf: +2 CHA, ASI, and skill versatility make it one of the better races for the Warlock class. Gnome: You don't need a bonus for INT like Warlock. Forest: Nothing here is as beneficial as Warlock. Rock: Nothing here is as beneficial as Warlock. Half-Orc: STR and CON bonuses, let's move on. Halfling: DEX bonus again marginally helps with AC problems and Lucky feature is always nice to have. Lightfoot: +1 on CHA, in addition to the bonus on DEX and Lucky from Halfling features is quite nice. Stout: Let your muscular party members take care of the CON. People are always decent. Vanilla: In the middle of the road pick up as they increase all your skill score by 1. Variant: Getting a CHA bonus plus expertise and performance at the first level is usually pretty good. Performances are not great for That won't run with Hexblade, which makes this option a little less tempting if you don't plan on going for that option. Tiedling: Tieflings get +2 support cha, free cantrip, and free spells at higher levels, which is the best class choice for Warlock. Ability Scores Ability Score (ASI) at 4th, 8th, 12th, 16th and 16th Warlocks need CHA and nothing else is critically important. Str: Just don't. DEX: Early AC may help for survival, but there are better options. CON: More hitpoints and better CON saves make Warlock less squishy. INT: Extract this statistics for sure. WIS: Can help with WIS saves and perceptions. Cha: This is the most important statistic for Warlock, pump it as high as you can. Background Charlatan: Scam go with a great CHA and sleight hands can always be useful criminal: Fraud and one of the most important skills in 5e, Stealth. Guild Craftsman: Insight is always great even if you have low WIS. Persuasion is a super useful skill here. Sailor: Perception is the most important skill in the game, while this background can help balance out the low WIS urchin modifier: If you don't have a Rogue, grabbing proficiency in Sleight of Hand and Stealth can help your party's chance to stay sneaky. Warlock Class Progression 1st level hit points: Warlocks have decent DB hitdice. Better than a sorcerer and a sorcerer. On the same level as the Druid and the cleric. Saves: Knowledge with WIS and CHA are pretty great, especially at higher levels. Missing out on the expertise DEX saves hurts though. Weapon/Armor Proficiencies: Light armor and simple weapons is probably good enough for your warlock. The blade pact gives you automatic expertise with the weapon you conjure up. Skills: Unfortunately Warlock only gets to pick two skills from their not-so-good Skill Pool: Arcana (INT): You'll probably be leaving it up to other party members. If you don't have any other wheels in your side it might be worth taking, but dumping int will make it hard. Scam (CHA): Probably the best skill in your pool and playing nice with warlock is the inclination to stack cha. History (INT): Same as Arcana. Intimidation (CHA): Frankly, fraud is much better. Investigation (INT): Again, hopefully someone else is stacking INT. Nature (WIS): Clean in a pinch, but low WIS can make it tricky. Religion (INT): As well as history and Arcana. Pact Magic: Covenant Magic is a completely unique mechanic for warlocks. Basically you have very limited pool magic slots and you can only cast spells at their highest level (for example, level 5 Warlock has 2 Spell Slots and always casts them at level 3). The good news is that your very limited magic slots recharge for a short rest, the bad news is that if you don't get a short rest very often you become patched for cantrips. Otherworldly Patron Archfey Archfey Extended 1. Sleep Level: Sleep is a very good 1st level magic slot. It can easily end meetings at lower levels. By the time you get to level 5 it will be pretty useless if you want a semi-consistent way to do no fatal damage. Faerie Fire: Faerie Fire is a better spell overall than sleep because it scales and is a great way to deal with annoying invisibility. 2. Level of Calm Emotions: Not a good spell. If any of the enemy creatures make their CHA saves, you'll still be in at the wrong time. Also only 20 feet radius and it's concentration. Phantasmal Force: There are extreme situations where it might be useful, but it's just not a good spell. 3. Blink level: A 50% chance of completely avoiding damage for a turn is more consistent over a long period of time than mirror image. Plant growth: It can be useful in certain circumstances when you need to control the battlefield. 4. Level dominated by beasts: not many beasts will be worth your 4. If you're fighting cr8 T-Rex you'll want to have this magic. Greater Invisibility: Great charm to avoid damage in combat while gaining an advantage on your attacks. Also, you can give it to a melee teammate for a very strong, hard hit damage dealer. 5. Level dominated by a person: Amazing magic can be useful in combat and RP scenarios. Apparent: Pure from a fighting spell. Fey Presence – Forcing WIS saves on everything in 10ft cubes or being charmed/scared is a pretty solid effect. It can help you get out of a fight or for FP purposes. Misty Escape – Turning invisible and teleporting 60 feet is a great way to avoid damage. Beguiling Defense – This is situational, but it certainly could be a boon. Dark Delirium - Quite a decent way to remove creatures from combat, but it requires concentration. Very Mysterio by Spider-Man: Far From Home. Fiend Fiend Advanced Spells 1. Command: A fixed spell that can be used in combat and beyond. 2. Level of blindness/deafness: Very powerful effect, but is somewhat mitigated by the creature's order to save after each step. Scorching Ray: This spell has upside down and disadvantages. If you come across all 3 spokes, dealing with 6d6 with 2. There is no guaranteed damage, so rolling feels bad. 3rd Level Fireball: It's a fireball. It's great. Stinky cloud: Used under the right circumstances it can be effective, but it's hard to spell on the nail. 4. Level Fire Shield: Probably not a great option if you are caught in combat. Wall of Fire: Amazing battlefield control option. 5. Level Flame Strike: Not particularly exciting when you compare it to Fireball. Hallow: More magic DM than player magic. It has an extremely long casting time and no particularly strong effects. Dark One's – Large and rare custom treatment mechanism. Wall of Fire: Amazing battlefield control option. 5. Level Flame Strike – Better than getting an advantage to roll it in your pocket for important checks or saves. Diabolical resistance - Gaining resistance to a certain type of damage is a huge advantage. Choose the type of damage wisely. Hurl hell - 10d10 is a lot of damage to do without the ability to save (if it's not the devil). The Great Old One The Great Old One Expanded Spells 1st Level Dissonant Whispers: One of the best spells in the game that can provide attacking opportunities for a failed save. If used correctly, it's a heck of a pity seller. Tasha's Hideous Laughter: A poor tribute to a person. Still a great charm, but the fact that they get to make saves after each case, the damage drastically reduces its effectiveness. 2. Level Detect Thoughts: Situational magic that can be used effectively if you are smart. Phantasmal Force: There are extreme situations where it might be useful, but it is straight not a good spell. 3. Level of Clairvoyation: Situational, but good for planning/avoiding forfeiture. Sending: Again situational, but it's a nice utility charm. Hopefully you don't have to waste your precious magic slots on it, but if you need to make a long distance call just before taking a short rest it may prove useful. 4. Level dominated by beasts: not many beasts will be worth your 4. If you're fighting cr8 T-Rex you'll want to have this magic. Evard's Black Tentacles: A very good area of control charm, almost as good as the Wall of Fire. 5. Level dominated by a person: Amazing magic can be useful in combat and RP scenarios. Telekinesis: Great in combat and out of combat utility magic. Woke Mind – Great for RP purposes. Entropic Ward – A consistent way to avoid getting hit. It will be significantly more useful if you have a little decent AC. Thought Shield – Cool idea, but psychological damage is one of the more unusual types. Create Thrall - Create thrall is a great RP opportunity and allows warlock to affect almost any NPC in the game. An incapacitated condition is relatively easy to achieve through other conditions (paralyzed, stunned, unconscious) or using other spells (Sleep, Tasha's hideous laughter, hypnotic pattern, or Hold). Once fixed, it does not allow any type of save and the target can be communicated with as long as you are on the same plane. Hexblade Check out our Hexblade Guide. You get 2 Eldritch invocations. See Eldritch Invocation below. 3. The level of the Boon pact chain - imp is absolutely amazing scout. It gets shapeshifting, flight, invisibility, and poison attack can come in the way. Combine this with the voice string master invocation and annoy your party and DM by destroying all surprises! Covenant Blade - Blade Warlock is fighting a lot with Score and damage per round if you are going to go with hexblade patron. Pact Tome – Really solid to see how you can pick up the lead, Vicious Mocking, and Minor Illusion. Three cantrips that don't do a ton of damage (Eldritch Blast applies to you) but greatly increase your tool. Mystic Arcanum: A nice way to increase the magic slots your warlock has access to. Select a spell that does not have a scale with levels. Check out the spells section to get suggestions for good Mystic Arcanum spells. You get a seventh level spell at 13th Level, an 8th level spell at 15th. Eldritch Master: A minute is 10 rounds of combat, so it's not helpful if you're in combat. If you can find a minute between fights, you can usually find 60 minutes to do a short rest. This is disappointing for Capstone's ability. Eldritch Invoking the Agonizing Explosion – This is one of the best invocations out there. Increasing the damage to warlock favorite cantrip is too good to give up. Armor shadows – There is no huge difference beyond your light armor procreation. Beast Speech – This will not help your Warlock. Be a Druid if you want to chat with your animal friends. Beguiling Impact – You already have the option to choose a scam from your knowledge class. Do not waste the invocation to obtain the persuasion. Devil's Sight - Pairing this invocation with dark magic can give you a huge advantage in combat and stealth. Remember, your party probably can't see it in the magical dark. Book of Ancient Secrets – Ritual casting is a big deal to help with modest warlock magic slots. As has already been said, there are not many rituals for 1. If you're at a Guide party, skip this. Eldritch Sight – To do this, pick up the Book of Ancient Secrets. Get to detect Magic and another ritual when you're at it. Eldritch Spear – This could be fun if you want to be a kitschy, long spectrum spellcaster. Eyes Rune Keeper - To do this, pick up a book of ancient secrets. Get to understand languages and other ritual when you're at it. Diabolical Vigor - This is a help at lower levels, but an average of 6hp doesn't make a huge difference. A look at two minds - Cool taste, very situational. Mask of many faces - A solid ability to help with your expertise in fraud, especially in inconspicuous or political situations. Misty Visions – If you get creative, it could be very useful. Repellent Blast – A great effect that you could use to get out of the melee range and no need to disconnect. No imposition to push effect, so it can be deadly around the cliffs. Thief of five fates - Mine is a solid debuff. Voice Chain Master – This can turn your acquaintance into an amazing option for scouts, especially if you chose imp. 5th Level Mire Mind – Slow's solid debuff, unfortunately it is not scale with magic slots. One with shadows – This can help you avoid damage and gain an advantage on attacks. Sign Ill Omen – Bestow Curse is another solid debuff, but scaling with magic slots isn't exactly worth it. Thirsty Blade – This is a must if you are going to pact blades. If not, don't take this. 7. Level charming whispers – With the urge you can make creatures safely walk in a general direction. I'm not sure it's worth it. Horrible Word – Confusion is not a great debuff and doesn't scale well with levels. Sculptor of meat - Polymorph is a great charm, but there is no scale with levels. If you have someone else at the party who knows, I'll skip it. 9. Level Ascendant Step – Levitate is a fine self fan who can get you out of the melee range. Casting on a eel without using a magic slot is also nice. Minions Chaos - Fixed magic that scales well with magic slots. Great for the action economy. Otherworldly Jump - Jump is a bad self fan. Whispers about the grave - Speak with Dead is a great tool of magic to have on the eotic. 12th Level Lifedrinker – Awesome damage enthusiast for any Blade Warlock pact. 15th Level Chains Carceri - At 15. This is necessary if you are in a campaign that attends those creatures. Master of Myriad Forms - Not necessary with a mask of many faces available from level 2. Visions of a distant empire - Arcane Eye is a great scouting option. If you've taken the pact chain and grabbed the imp, you don't need it as a scouting tool. Witch Sight – Definitely a neat trick that comes in the way of at least a few times in your campaign. Many performances are not suitable for warlock classes, but we will go through those that you may consider. Warning: Being higher in the initiative ranking can be very valuable for Warlock. Elementary Adept: Bonus damage is negligible, but if most of your damage comes from one element then go for it. Great Weapon Master: Just worth the Pact Blade/Hexblades Lucky: Lucky is a performance that is useful for any character. Magic Sniper: The larger range and ignoring the cover of the magic attacks is fantastic. War Caster: The advantage of con saving and casting spells as opportunity attacks are both beneficial components of this exercise. If you're a Pact Blade Warlock it's necessary. Warlocks have access to many spells. Therefore, we think it would be most beneficial to talk only about our favorite spells at each level, and which ones to avoid. Just remember that this does not mean that those that we do not mention are necessarily bad or have no purpose. Cantrips Eldritch Blast: This is your bread and butter like a

warlock. Scales with damage that can compete with any melee fighter. Be sure to pick up the agonizing Explosion Call. Smaller Easily the most versatile spell in the game. Great choice for cantrip. Prestidigitation: A little less useful than minor illusion, but still solid. Mage Hand: Can be a very useful cantrip if used correctly. Chill Touch: With Eldritch Blast available you don't need any other damage solutions for cantrips. Poison Spray: With Eldritch Blast available you don't need any other damage dealing with cantrips. 1. Level Spells Armor Agathys – Great custom enthusiast who can provide some temporary HP and does damage if you get hit. If you're a Pact Blade Warlock you definitely want this. Scales with your level. Weapons Hadar - Decent AoE and allows you to escape on failed to save. Take it only if you are a Pact Blade Warlock. Hellish Rebuke: Awesome use for your reaction. Scales with levels. Hex – This is the Warlock equivalent of Hunters Mark, which is a really, really good spell. It takes your concentration slot. Protection from evil and good: Amazing protective charm against the many types of creatures you face in D&D 5e. It doesn't scale with levels so don't take it if you have other wheels. Witch Bolt: Captivating damage compared to eldritch explosion and agonizing explosion. 2. Level spells cloud dazzles: If you can find a funnel point or you can have your melee warriors push the creature into the cloud it can do mega damage. Scales with levels. Crown Madness: This spell has a lot of crippling limitations because it's a powerful effect on such a small level. Skip until you can dominate the monsters. Darkness: Combos great with a devil's eye. It's not a good spell. Hold Person: This may be a meeting breaking against humanoids. Scales well with the level. Invisibility: Definitely a good spell, but blowing a higher level magic slot in situations where you don't have to do more than one invisible thing is not great. Mirror Image: A good self fan, but there is no scale with levels. Misty Step: A good option to get out of hard situations if you're looking for a late pickup it might be a good choice. It doesn't have a scale with levels. 3. Level of Spells Counterspell: You don't necessarily want your Warlock to be blowing magic slots on Counterspell, but if no one else has it you have to take it. Distract Magic: Just like counterspell. Fear: The amazing magic of crowd control. Especially good because you don't get to repeat the save until you break the line of sight. Fly: A decent custom enthusiast, but not something you want to be wasting magic slots on. Hungry Hadar: A decent option to control the crowd, solid damage if you can have baddies out there or cast at the seduction point. It has been confirmed by Jeremy Crawford that The Devil's View Invoking can't be seen into the spell area. This doesn't stack up with spell levels that makes it less viable for Warlock long term. Hypnotic Pattern: Another great crowd controlling charm, take it or fear based on Taste. Vampiric Touch: Give you a 3d6 melee gun with a life drain as long as you can concentrate, but those concentration controls are going to kill you. Basically, you need a War Caster to make it worth it. 4. Level Spells Banishment: A solid spell to make a creature or two out of a fight. Mold: 4th level single-goal spell that focuses on common save. It barely outdamages a 4th-level fireball and flat-out doesn't work on some common types of creatures. Skip. Dimension Doors: Decent charm, but don't exactly do much for warlocks. 5. Level of spells contact another plane: very niche. Dream: Low key one of the best spells in Warlock's arsenal. This can really mess with BBEG campaigns. Hold The Monster: A spell that can keep creatures from fighting. Allows you to save after every step that makes it worse than banishment for consistently keeping the monster out of the fight, but the monster can be attacked with an advantage that will do a quick job after it fails to save or two. Scrying: Useful but niche. 6. Level spells circle of death: If you can pick up a fireball, you don't need it at all. Necrotic is partly a popular damage resistance as well. Conjure Fey: There are only Feys to CR3 in MM (Green Hag). The only beast you can use is Mammoth. If you are playing with more services, you can make it more worth while. Eyebite: There are much better crowd control options for lower magic slots. Weight Suggestion: This is a ridiculous charm that could easily swing a meeting in your favor. 7. Level Of Finger Death Spells: Very nice damage with the potential to make a little zombie buddy! Plane Shift: A good tool to escape from a fight that has turned south, or force cha to save it to avoid getting banished. Forcecage: No save and no way to get out once you get in. This magic is a great way to contain scary melee creatures. 8. Level of Magic Demiplane: Good utility spells, if you have a strong friend or good persuasion spells you can create your own demi-prison system. Dominate the Monster: A very good choice to help swing the tides battle in your feeblemind favor: The meeting ends with a debuff if you encounter a spellcaster with it. Usually spellcasters at this level will have a very strong INT save or legendary resistance. Glibness: a seemingly small effect for such a high level of charm, although it can be useful in niche circumstances. Power Word Stun: You can car a creature that has less than 150hp, but they'll save you at the end of each of their turns. 9. Level of astral projection spells: Niche and you'll probably have some other reason to get into the astral plane if you need to be there. Foresight: Mad Buff and Debuff and his No Concentration. Incarceration: There are other ways to permanently get rid of these big baddies. Power Word Kill: Very mechanically interesting spell. Basically, a car can kill a creature if less than £100,000. Now, as a player we don't know how much HP monster he has, but an investigation or Insight check could allow some clues as to whether or not they are close. True Polymorph: If you manage to successfully concentrate for an hour, the effect can be permanent. The added flexibility of turning a creature into an object, or vice versa, is really powerful. Strong.

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