

The elan are a race of constructs made to imitate humans but possessing innate psionic powers. Said to have originally been created as covert agents by a group of psionics known as the Order, some elans are now breaking free of their programming and forging new lives for themselves. This blog expands on the elan for AD&D 2e.

The elan race originally appeared in the Revised 3rd edition *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, where they are presented as a race made from volunteers who undergo a strange transformation. When *Dragon* and *Dungeon* magazines tackled *Dark Sun* for the Revised 3rd edition, they added the idea of the elan being created by the Order and that's the interpretation we use in our streamed *To Tame A Land* campaign - along with the idea that not all elan chose to become what they are.

The elan featured heavily as antagonists in the first season of our campaign, but now, in the second season, we have an elan character in the party. This blog presents the core elan race again, along with some additional content for elan, including ways to modify elan using the *Skills & Powers* system from AD&D 2nd edition's *Player's Option* books, and four new kits for use with elan characters.

Elan

Originally created as a secret network of court agents by a powerful group of psionics known as the Order, elan are not born; they are made. It is said that the Order erred when it created the first elan because it gave them too much free will. Some elan enclaves still owe allegiance to the Order, while other elan have turned their backs on the Order and are determined to forge their own destinies in the harsh landscape of Athas.

The average Athasian has never heard of an elan, but most noble families, merchant houses, and high-ranking templars have learned of their existence within the last few years.

Elan all have one thing in common: an origin as a human. Members of the Order and, more recently, a special elan council, would screen living humans from a pool of possible volunteers and targets who were identified for replacement with an elan. Those who are approved for replacement were taken to one of several hidden enclaves, where alchemy and psychometabolism were used to create a duplicate of the chosen human.



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To create an elan, a psionic power known as *transition life* is applied to the human, transferring their awareness, memories, and identity into the duplicate. This kills the human and the newly created elan awakens. Newly created elan retain the basic memories and personalities of their previous lives, but they keep none of their class skills, powers, or spells (if any), or previous class abilities.

Elan are a secretive lot when it comes to their origins, and they do not publicly reveal their enclaves or places of making.

Non-human elan are never created, and it could be that the *transition life* power simply doesn't work for any other creatures but those who were originally human.

Personality: Elan are nearly as adaptable, flexible, and ambitious as the humans from which they are made. Because their state of existence sometimes leads other races to think the worst of them, elan practice a certain restraint, especially in regards to their origin. Otherwise, their personalities vary widely.

Physical: Elan typically stand just under 6 feet tall and weigh about 180 pounds, with men sometimes taller and heavier than women, but not always. Elan vary in looks as widely as the humans they have been chosen to replace. Elan dress in the styles similar to humans, including the adoption of unusual hairstyles, fanciful clothes, tattoos, body piercings, and the like. Elan have unlimited lifespans – as long as they are not destroyed, their mental arts can conceivably continually energize and rebuild their bodies indefinitely.

However, the Order only recently established the first elan enclaves, so no known elan are more than twenty five years old (not counting time they spent as humans before having been transformed into an elan).

Elan do not sleep. Instead, an elan meditates in a deep trance for 4 hours a day, gaining the same benefit a human does from 8 hours of sleep. While in trance, an elan concentrates on suffusing their body with psionic energy, healing the hurts and random lacerations of the day, restoring animation and resiliency to their tissues. Elan, most notably, have white blood, and internal organs that seem grown from plant matter rather than flesh.

Relations: Elan mix well with members of other races, especially humans. It is probable that their relations would undergo a shift should their true nature become widely known, so one of the essential tenets of elan existence is secrecy.

Lands: Wherever humans are found, there, too, are elan.

Language: Elan speak Common. They typically learn other languages, including obscure ones, and they are fond of sprinkling their speech with words borrowed from other tongues: terran curses, elven musical expressions, thri-kreen military phrases, and so on.

Elan Society: Elan society is an artificial thing, growing around elan enclaves that have been created and put in place to further the desires of the Order. Still, elan are lifeforms and cannot help but build culture as they continue to grow. One area that elan take great interest in is that of names.

Elan names vary greatly and often are simply the same as the human name they possessed before crossing into their new existence. This is particularly true when an elan wishes to pick up their old life where they left off. Othertimes, an elan will view their new existence as an opportunity to start fresh and might pick a completely new name.

Titles, however, are important to the elan – though they are used only among themselves. Freshly transitioned elan have the title of Newmade, those who have seen at least a few years of their “new” life have the title of Made, and those over two decades old have the title of Eternal. Those that belong to the group that chooses new elan have the title of Culler (although any elan who knows the power *transition life* might also take this title, whether part of the Culler Council or not).

Role-playing Suggestions: As an elan adventurer, you are akin to humans in their daring and ambition. Because some effects that afflict other races leave elan unscathed, you sometimes seem extraordinarily brave to those who do not know the secret of your existence.

This secrecy is paramount. You were made from a human, either willingly or at the behest of the Order, and they can unmake you as readily as they gave you life. Always remember that the Order is watching. If you are a loyal servant, then act to impress your distant masters. If you seek freedom from their control, focus all your thoughts and deeds on winning a new life for yourself and discovering who you truly are.

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Game Statistics

The following game statistics apply to the elan player character:

Ability Adjustments: +1 Intelligence, +1 Wisdom, -2 Charisma. Elan are mentally powerful, yet their status as artificially constructed beings means that they lack a strong sense of identity.

Movement Rate: 12.

Size: Medium.

Construct: Elan are created beings, and thus are not subject to spells or effects that affect humanoids only, such as *charm person* or *hold person*.

Naturally Psionic: Elan gain 2 bonus Psionic Power Points (PSPs) at 1st level. This benefit does not grant them the ability to manifest powers unless they gain that ability through another source, such as a wild talent or levels in a psionic class.

Resistance: Elan can use psionic energy to increase their resistance to various forms of attack. At any time, an elan can spend 1 PSP to gain a +4 bonus on saving throws until the beginning of their next action.

Resilience: When an elan takes damage, they can spend PSPs to reduce its severity. At any time, they can reduce the damage they are about to take by 2 hit points for every 1 PSP spent.

Repletion: An elan can sustain their body without need of food or water. If they spend 1 PSP, an elan does not need to eat or drink for 24 hours.

Trance: An elan meditates in a deep trance for 4 hours a day. An elan resting in this fashion gains the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

Elan Class and Level Limits

If your DM chooses to use this optional rule, apply the following limits to elan characters:

Bard: 16
Cleric: —
Druid: —
Fighter: 12
Gladiator: —
Psionicist: U
Ranger: —
Templar: 14
Thief: 16
Trader: 16
Wizard: 16

Elan Rogue Skill Adjustments

Bribe: -10%
Climb Walls: —
Detect Magic: +10%
Detect Illusion: —
Detect Noise: —
Escape Bonds: —
Find/Remove Traps: —
Forge Documents: -5%
Hide in Shadows: —
Move Silently: —
Open Locks: —
Pick Pockets: —
Read Languages: +5%
Tunneling: —

Elan Height and Weight

Base Height in Inches: 60/60
Modifier: 2d8
Base Weight in Pounds: 150/150
Modifier: 6d10

Elan Age

Starting Age: varies - the elan is created from an existing human

Variable: 1d4

Base Maximum Age: none - elan are unaffected by age

Variable: N/A

Elan Skills & Powers

Elan start play with 50 character points to assign among their various abilities.

Standard Abilities: Naturally psionic (10-point version), resistance, resilience, repletion, trance.

Body Fuel (10): The elan can take ability damage in return for gaining PSPs. Each point of ability damage taken grants the elan 2 PSPs. The ability damage heals at a rate of one point per day.

Closed Mind (10): The elan's mind is naturally closed, even if they are not a psionist. This power grants no benefit to psionists.

Deep Schooling (10): The elan starts play with two additional non-weapon proficiency slots.

Force of Will (10): The elan can add their Will Bonus to any saving throw rolled, even if the save does not normally allow it.

Hostile Mind (10): Anyone who uses a telepathic power against the elan (even if it is beneficial) must save vs. spells or suffer 2d6 points of damage.

Human Blood (10): The elan's blood is red, not white, allowing them to more easily pass for human.

Naturally Psionic (10/15): For the 10-point version, the elan gains 2 bonus PSPs at 1st level. This benefit does not grant them the ability to manifest powers unless they gain that ability through another source, such as a wild talent or levels in a psionic class. The 15-point version increases this to 4 bonus PSPs.

Resistance (10): Elan can use psionic energy to increase their resistance to various forms of attack. At any time, an elan can spend 1 PSP to gain a +4 bonus on saving throws until the beginning of their next action.

Resilience (10): When an elan takes damage, they can spend PSPs to reduce its severity. At any time, the elan can reduce the damage they are about to take by 2 hit points for every 1 PSP spent.

Repletion (10): An elan can sustain their body without need of food or water. If they spend 1 PSP, an elan does not need to eat or drink for 24 hours.

Superior Talent (15): The elan starts play with two additional wild talents and the PSPs to manifest each twice. No matter what the elan rolls on the wild talent table, they cannot start play with more than two wild talent powers. Psionists may not choose this option.

Trance (10): An elan meditates in a deep trance for 4 hours a day. An elan resting in this fashion gains the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

Elan Kits

Crucible Guardian

The Order created its first elan at a secret location known as the Crucible. Among those early elan were warriors created to defend that location as dedicated guardians. Since then, the secret of creating crucible guardians has been taken up by other elan and used to forge those who defend more than just the Crucible – although the name has remained, as part of the nascent culture of the elan.

Each crucible guardian is dedicated to defending a specific ward. The crucible guardian must declare their ward at the start of each day in a small, personal ceremony. For the remainder of that day, the crucible guardian's powers apply when the elan is defending that ward – they cannot be applied to other targets and the crucible guardian cannot change their ward until they perform their ceremony at the start of the following day.

Crucible guardians may declare individual locations or people to be a ward. The location must be a single, stated, easily defined place. On Athas, this generally means something up to the size of a city. A crucible guardian cannot meaningfully defend something as large as the Forest Ridge or the island of Morgazh, nor readily identify when such a location is truly under threat.

Crucible guardians function well as bodyguards, pledging themselves to the defense of a valued person or organization. Those who defend a location are often loathe to depart from it for any length of time.

Recommended Weapons: None.

Recommended Non-weapon Proficiencies: Armor optimization, craft (armorer and weaponsmithing), information gathering, mental armor.

Bonus Weapon Proficiencies: None.

Bonus Non-weapon Proficiencies: Observation.

Equipment: Crucible guardians start play with one suit of light armor and one medium bone weapon free of charge, granted as part of their training.

Special Benefits

Psychic Riposte: The crucible guardian can spend one PSP to make a free melee or missile attack against anyone who attacks their chosen ward. The elan can do this twice per day, or four times per day if they have the 15-point version of Naturally Psionic.

Psychic Strike: The crucible guardian can spend one PSP to add 1d6 damage to any melee or missile attack made when defending their chosen ward. The elan can do this twice per day, or four times per day if they have the 15-point version of Naturally Psionic.

Special Hindrances

Emotional Response: Whenever their ward is in danger (DM's discretion as to when this applies), the crucible guardian must save vs. spells or be compelled to attack the source of that danger.

Exclusive Focus: The crucible guardian suffers a -1 penalty to hit and a +2 initiative penalty when not engaged in combat directly linked to defending their ward.

Wealth Options: Standard.

Perfected Infiltrator

Elan are most known for their role as spies and infiltrators, being used to replace influential and useful individuals and carry out the designs of the Order under the guise of their new identity. Some elan are designed to fulfill this role flawlessly, chosen when there needs to be minimal or no chance of discovery. These are the perfected infiltrators, elan who are constructed to exacting standards of deceptive ability.

A perfected infiltrator is first and foremost skilled at masquerade, at becoming someone so completely that even those closest to the person being impersonated would struggle to tell that anything is wrong. Elan use this power to pass unnoticed through the halls of the powerful, carrying out the plans of the Order.

Not all perfected infiltrators serve the Order, however. Since that powerful group of mindbenders' recent dissension within its ranks, many perfected infiltrators have gone rogue - or been created independently of the Order - and now pursue their own designs, making use of their skills to further their own goals without discovery.

Perfected infiltrators make excellent spies and their skill in social situations means that they are well-suited to most urban undertakings. They are less comfortable out in the wilderness, understandably, but even there the infiltrator's abilities can come into play with deep desert tribes and merchant caravans. With enough preparation, a perfected infiltrator can make their mark anywhere.

Recommended Weapons: A perfected infiltrator selects weapons most suited to their mission. That aside, they favor size S weapons for their ease of concealment.

Recommended Non-weapon Proficiencies: Forgery, information gathering, intimidation, knowledge (local), language (modern, sign), observation, reading lips.

Bonus Weapon Proficiencies: None.

Bonus Non-weapon Proficiencies: Disguise, etiquette, fast talk.

Equipment: The perfected infiltrator receives equipment that allows them to carry out their mission, usually three outfits and 100 cp in incidental gear.

Special Benefits

Assess Opportunity: When entering into a social situation, a perfected infiltrator can make a Wisdom check to assess that situation and gain insight into how to make the most of the social opportunities offered. They know when it is best to use flattery, intimidation, or bribery, when to rely on etiquette and manners, when to play dumb or seek to impress, and so on. If the perfected infiltrator makes the Wisdom check, they receive a +4 bonus to all related reaction rolls and non-weapon proficiency checks for the remainder of that social encounter.

Unfailing Disguise: A perfected infiltrator attempting to take the place of the original human upon which they were based automatically passes all non-weapon proficiency checks required to convince others of their identity. This includes disguise, etiquette, fast talk, forgery, and the like.

Special Hindrances

Emotional Attachment: A perfected infiltrator can become attached to friends and relatives of the person they are impersonating. The perfected infiltrator must save vs. Spells whenever they wish to take action that might harm one of these people. If they fail, the infiltrator must choose a different course of action.

Mental Stress: The effort of maintaining a flawless cover identity causes the perfected infiltrator considerable mental stress. They never receive a Will Bonus, regardless of their Wisdom score.

Wealth Options: Standard, plus the bonus gear listed under Equipment above.

Psionic Prodigy

With the elan famously created by the Order, it is little surprise that some of them boast impressive psionic abilities. A psionic prodigy is an elan who has been designed to make the most of their psychic potential, resulting in an individual destined to take their place among the great masters of the Way.

A psionic prodigy gains enhanced psionic abilities in addition to those granted by their elan nature, but their true power lies in leaving the bonds of flesh behind and becoming entities of pure mind. As the psionic prodigy grows in power, they become less and less tied to their corporeal form, and are eventually able to shed it entirely for extended periods.

Naturally, a psionic prodigy is best suited to the psionist class, although some have proven to be potent wild talents, never bothering with the strict schooling and methods of Tarandan psionics. If their psionic reserves are sufficient, any elan can explore the realms of pure mind that are home to these elevated beings.

Recommended Weapons: None.

Recommended Non-weapon Proficiencies: Crystal focus, harness subconscious, meditative focus, power manipulation, psionic detection.

Bonus Weapon Proficiencies: None.

Bonus Non-weapon Proficiencies: Knowledge (cosmology, psiology), psicraft.

Equipment: Psionic prodigies are seldom interested in material possessions and generally only carry that which they need to survive.

Special Benefits

Innate Talent: The psionic prodigy starts with an additional 2 PSPs and gains one extra PSP every time they gain a level.

Shed Body: The psionic prodigy can take an action to spend one PSP per level in their highest-level class to become incorporeal for 1 round per level per day. The character gains a fly speed equal to their normal movement rate.

Initially, the character's equipment does not become incorporeal. At 5th level, the character may cause all worn items to become incorporeal and gain any benefits granted by those items. At 10th level, the character may cause an item held in each hand to become incorporeal and use these items normally in their new state.

While in this state, the psionic prodigy gains a +2 bonus to all power checks and to their MAC. Their base Armor Class is 10 plus their Will Bonus (plus any bonuses granted by incorporeal armor or other items from 5th level onwards) and they gain all the benefits of being incorporeal – they can pass through solid objects, are only harmed by magical weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, and psionics, and can only be held at bay by force effects such as wall of force. Attacks with the psionic prodigy's incorporeal weapons ignore physical armor.

While in this incorporeal state, the psionic prodigy is not invisible but appears as a ghostly form. They are silent and weightless, cannot fall, drown, or suffocate, but also cannot interact with physical objects except to make an attack, cast a spell, or manifest a power.

Special Hindrances

Susceptible to Magic: Their focus on the Way makes psionic prodigies especially vulnerable to magic. They suffer a permanent –4 penalty on saving throws against all spells and may never receive the benefit of magic resistance from any source.

Weakened Physique: Psionic prodigies are physically weaker than other elan. When rolling for hit points, the psionic prodigy uses a die one size smaller than is normal for their class (i.e., d10s become d8s, d8s become d6s, d6s become d4s, and d4s become d3s). From name level, the psionic prodigy receives one less hit point per level. This can result in the character receiving no hit points above name level if they would normally receive only one hit point.

Wealth Options: 1d4 x 30 cp.

Renegade Operative

The Order controlled its elan agents with a firm hand, deploying them on missions and using them to stir dissent and spread their influence across the Tablelands. But even the firmest hand must falter and, as time passes, more and more of the Order's elan servants have won their independence.

A renegade operative is an former elan agent of the Order who no longer follows the dictates of that organization. Instead they have struck out on their own and now seek to forge a new existence and identity beyond the control of their creators.

Renegade operatives take the skills they were given and subsequently honed under the tutelage of the Order and put those to personal use, pursuing their own goals. They must always be wary of their former masters, however. The Order – even in its weakened state – does not forget or forgive easily, and renegade operatives live hunted lives.

Recommended Weapons: A renegade operative favors a spread of melee and missile weapons so that they are ready to meet whatever threats arise. Smaller, faster weapons give them a needed edge.

Recommended Non-weapon Proficiencies: Disguise, endurance, heat protection, intimidation, knowledge (any), navigation, riding (land-based), survival.

Bonus Weapon Proficiencies: A renegade operative gains one bonus weapon proficiency.

Bonus Non-weapon Proficiencies: Fast talk, information gathering, observation.

Equipment: A renegade operative starts play with one bone melee weapon and one bone missile weapon.

Special Benefits

Expanded Skill: A renegade operative is treated as having an additional class when it comes to spending non-weapon proficiency slots. In addition to their actual classes, the renegade operative picks another class and purchases non-weapon proficiencies at the cost listed for that class or their own, whichever is lower.

Psychic Inspiration: A renegade operative may spend one PSP to reroll any die once. The elan can do this twice per day, or four times per day if they have the 15-point version of Naturally Psionic.

Special Hindrances

Hidden Enemies: Renegade operatives run the risk of encountering loyal Order agents. Whenever the renegade operative visits a new settlement, there is a chance they will be identified by an agent of the Order, who will take action against them (as decided by the DM). The chance is 1 in 10 for a village, 2 in 10 for a town, and 3 in 10 for a city. Roll once per visit.

Overly Cautious: Renegade operatives struggle to trust others. They may never have followers, hire henchmen, or employ hirelings for a task that lasts for more than a single day.

Wealth Options: Standard.