

8 - Reference and Playtest

Quick-reference tables, design benchmarks, and feedback guidance.

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8.1 - Quick Reference

Character Creation

Step	Choice	Mechanical Result
1	Ancestry	Chassis: size, Speed, senses, inherited traits
2	Lineage	One physical or supernatural sub-race expression
3	Heritage	One regional people; one language or dialect and two Heritage Expressions
4	Native D&D background	Exactly the benefits granted by the campaign's selected background system
5	Ancestral Detail and Trait	One narrow physical ribbon and one ancestry, versatile-lineage, or universal level-1 Trait
6	Flaw	Optional story pressure; no permanent power

Quick and Custom Routes

A lineage's Quick Package recommends its Ancestral Detail and level-1 Trait. Take both for a ready-to-play build or replace either with an eligible option. Quick Packages never grant extra features.

Trait and Talent Advancement

Gain one Ancestral Trait at level 1 and one Ancestral Talent at levels 5, 10, 15, and 20.

Each later Talent is a discovery, awakening, mastery, or revelation. The level-20 option is the apex expression of that ancestry path.

Ability Scores

V4.0 grants no ability-score increases. Use the campaign's normal character-creation and background rules. A 2024-style background may grant ability-score options; a 2014-style background normally does not.

Common Formulas

Ancestry Save DC: $8 + \text{proficiency bonus} + \text{named ability modifier}$

Once per long rest: One use, all uses return after a long rest.

Proficiency-bonus uses per long rest: Uses equal proficiency bonus, all uses return after a long rest.

Versatile Lineage

Aasimar, Tiefling, and Mixed Lineage replace the lineage of a base ancestry. They do not replace or duplicate the ancestry chassis.

8.2 - Playtest Checklist

Record feedback at levels 1, 5, 10, 15, and 20 when possible.

Character Record

- Base ancestry and lineage.
- Ancestral Detail.
- Versatile or Mixed Lineage, if any.
- Heritage and background.
- Ancestral Trait and later talents.
- Class, subclass, and level.
- Expected party role.

During Play

- Which ancestry feature changed an outcome?
- Did the Ancestral Detail supply useful identity without behaving like another skill proficiency?
- Which feature was forgotten or never useful?
- Which choice felt compulsory?
- Which resource required confusing tracking?
- Did an ancestry feature outperform a class feature?
- Did exceptional sight remove the need for ordinary illumination?
- Did a glide, leap, or flight feature make terrain irrelevant more often than intended?
- Did Heritage remain distinct from both inherited Lineage and professional Background?
- Did a Flaw create an interesting decision without removing agency?

Quantitative Checks

- Damage added per round and per long rest.
- Damage prevented or healed per long rest.
- Number of rerolls or automatic successes.
- Flight, teleportation, and special movement uptime.
- Resistance frequency.
- Temporary Hit Point frequency.
- Number of extra skill, tool, and language proficiencies.

Red Flags

- Repeated bonuses to every attack or save for a full combat.
- A short-rest resource usable proficiency-bonus times.
- Sustained flight without an iconic body and a substantial Talent investment.
- A lineage that is strictly better than every alternative.

- A drawback that is actually a reliable benefit.
- A later talent that duplicates a defining class feature.

8.3 - Version Notes and Open Questions

V4.0 Structural Changes

- Replaced open Ancestry Point purchasing with bounded Ancestry, Lineage, Ancestral Detail, and Trait choices.
- Removed ancestry-based ability-score increases.
- Removed the draft v4.0 background catalog; use native D&D 5e and existing Hiraeth backgrounds.
- Renamed the physical sub-race layer **Lineage** and the learned regional-people layer **Heritage**.
- Preserved all sixty base physical Lineages, all five Aasimar and fifteen Tiefling expressions, and the general Mixed Lineage procedure.
- Rebuilt the former knack layer as forty-five inherited **Ancestral Details** rather than learned occupational or cultural habits.
- Added a Quick Package to every base and versatile Lineage expression. Quick Packages use the normal Detail and Trait slots and grant no extra power.
- Renamed level-1 ancestry talents **Ancestral Traits** while retaining later Ancestral Talents at levels 5, 10, 15, and 20.
- Expanded Heritage to sixty-six profiles: thirteen deeply developed Icebeach Heritages and fifty-three profiles spanning the rest of Hiraeth.
- Expanded the learned-expression catalog from sixteen Cultural Practices to thirty-six Heritage Expressions and lets each character choose two.
- Removed companies, religions, and factions as origin choices. They can shape local context but membership belongs to Background or campaign history.
- Kept the campaign's native D&D 5e or Hiraeth Background system instead of recreating it.
- Reframed universal, ancestry-, lineage-, and heritage-associated story pressures as optional Flaws that never purchase power.
- Retained clear Published, Working, Legacy, Thin-Lore, and Restricted status labels so expansion does not silently harden uncertain lore into canon.
- Removed the prior restricted psionic option from the v4.0 Ancestry, Mixed Lineage, Trait, Detail, and Flaw catalogs.
- Restored level 1/5/10/15/20 Talent timing so level 20 carries an apex ancestry revelation.
- Limited short-rest ancestry resources to narrow signature techniques with one tracked use.
- Restricted holistic Low-Light Vision to Felis, replaced Drow Darkvision with Thermal Sight, and gave Dwarves a stone-contact vibration sense.
- Restored Moon Elf physical wings and staged true flight through explicit Talent investment.
- Preserved winged Aasimar and Tiefling concepts through a glide, sustained-flight, and level-20 mastery path rather than free early flight.
- Recast Dragonborn and Aerimpi aerial Talents as leaps and glides rather than generic Fly Speeds.
- Added a complete Dragonborn Breath Weapon rule to accompany its variant matrix.

Deliberate Playtest Questions

1. Should later ancestry talents remain free progression or replace another character resource?

2. Are the glide, level-10 sustained flight, and level-20 mastered-flight gates restrictive enough?
3. Are two Heritage Expressions rich enough without becoming another numerical skill layer?
4. Do Ancestral Details create meaningful physical identity without feeling like another mandatory subsystem?
5. Do Aasimar and Tiefling work better as Versatile Lineages than standalone Ancestries in Hiraeth?
6. Does Mixed Lineage preserve identity without making one secondary Ancestry mechanically compulsory?
7. Do Felis Low-Light Vision, Drow Thermal Sight, and Dwarf Stonepulse create useful distinctions without solving darkness automatically?
8. Which Heritage profiles need a named language before the next setting-wide language pass?
9. Which Legacy Heritages are ready to promote into Published or Campaign-Working profiles?
10. Which physical Lineage Gifts still contain learned skills that should move into Heritage or Background during the balance pass?

Status

This book is a reviewable playtest. No rule in it becomes campaign law merely because it has been published to BookStack.