

# PYRO AND SOULKNIFE

*Psionic prestige class alternatives by Bruce R. Cordell*

Requires the *Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook*, Third Edition, and *Psionics Handbook* published by Wizards of the Coast®

When I was writing *Tome and Blood* (a sourcebook for wizards and sorcerers), I hit on an idea for advancing a character's effective caster level at alternating levels (or in batches), rather than at every level. Of course, I'd already finished designing the *Psionics Handbook* by that time. Ever since then, I've been thinking about that mechanic as it applies to manifester levels.

I've taken that idea and a few others and implemented them in alternate versions of the prestige classes in the *Psionics Handbook*. This document contains a different take on the pyrokineticist and soulknife, which you can use with *If Thoughts Could Kill* as variants of the standard classes. However, to use these versions, you need to refer to the *Psionics Handbook*.

## Pyrokineticist

The pyrokineticist prestige class description appears on page 110 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Hit Die:** d6

## Requirements

To qualify to become a pyrokineticist, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

**Alignment:** Any chaotic

**Manifesting:** Ability to manifest two different powers, one of which must be 2nd level or higher

**Alchemy:** 8 ranks

**Knowledge (psionics):** 4 ranks

**Powers:** Know *control flames*

**Special:** Must have set fire to a structure of any size just to watch it burn

## Class Skills

The pyrokineticist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Knowledge (psionics) (Int), and Psicraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

All the following are pyrokineticist class features.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Pyrokineticists gain no proficiency in any weapon or armor.

**Effective Manifester Level:** At every level indicated on the table for the prestige class, the character gains new power points per day and access to discovered powers as if she had also gained a level in the psionic class she belonged to before adding the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (such as bonus feats, metapsionic or item creation feats, additional psionic combat modes, hit points beyond those she receives from the prestige class, and so on). She does gain the following benefits: an increased effective level of psionic manifestation, additional power points, effective additional levels for psicrystal powers, and additional free manifestations of 0-level powers. If a character had more than one psionic class before becoming a member of this prestige class, she must decide to which class she adds the new level for purposes of determining Effective Manifester Level.

For example, a 7th-level psion/6th-level pyrokineticist has a character level of 13 and a manifester level of 12. So, she manifests powers with level-dependent parameters as if she were 12th level.

**Touch Aflame (Su):** The pyro's mere touch sets objects or foes on fire on the round following the touch, if you desire (you

## THE PYROKINETICIST

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Effective Manifester Level
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Touch aflame, fire lash	—
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Fire adaptation, hand afire	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Bolt of fire	—
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Weapon afire	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Breath of the dragon	—
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Firewalk	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	Nimbus	—
8th	+6	+6	+2	+2	Fear no fire	+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Heat death	—
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	Fire lord	+1 level of existing class

don't have to set things on fire). This ability works just as described on page 111 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Fire Lash (Sp):** The pyrokineticist fashions a 15-foot-long whip of fire from unstable ectoplasm as a standard action. The fire lash persists until she releases it or her reserve falls below 11 power points. She is immune to the fire damage of her own lash. This ability otherwise works as described on page 111 of the *Psionics Handbook*, except that the pyrokineticist can also pay 1 power point per additional 1d4 points of fire damage inflicted on the target (to a maximum of 6d4 points of damage).

**Fire Adaptation (Ex):** At 2nd level, the pyrokineticist becomes resistant to fire. This ability works just as described on page 111 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Hand Afire (Sp):** One of the pyrokineticist's hands is licked by flames that do her no harm, causing her unarmed attacks to be treated as armed. The pyrokineticist may use this ability as a standard action, and attacks using hand afire inflict 3d6 points of fire damage (plus the unarmed attack's other special damage). This ability otherwise works as described on page 111 of the *Psionics Handbook*, except that the pyrokineticist can also pay 1 power point per additional 1d6 points of fire damage inflicted on the target (to a maximum of 10d6 points of damage).

**Bolt of Fire (Sp):** At 3rd level, the pyrokineticist can launch a bolt of psionically manifested fire up to 60 feet at any target in line of sight. This ability otherwise works as described on page 111 of the *Psionics Handbook*, except that the pyrokineticist can also pay 1 power point per additional 1d6 points of fire damage inflicted on the target (to a maximum of 15d6 points of damage) and must maintain a power point reserve of 21 or more.

**Weapon Afire (Sp):** One weapon she holds (including a stone, bullet, arrow, or bolt) is licked by flames that harm neither her nor the weapon. This ability otherwise works as described on page 111 of the *Psionics Handbook*, except that the weapon stops flaming the round after the last activation.

**Breath of the Dragon (Sp):** On reaching 5th level, the pyrokineticist can breathe fire once per day for no cost, per the *breath of the dragon* power described on page 57 of the *Psionics Handbook*, except that the cone of fiery breath extends out in a 60-foot cone that inflicts 10d6 points of fire damage. The pyrokineticist can also pay 1 power point per additional 1d6 points of fire damage inflicted on the target (to a maximum of 20d6 points of damage).

**Firewalk (Su):** Beginning at 6th level, the pyrokineticist can use this ability to literally walk on air. She moves as described in the standard class, except her maximum speed increases; she may move at more than double her speed in a round but cannot run. The footprints of flame she leaves in the air disperse 2 rounds later. In all other ways, firewalk works as described on page 112 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Nimbus (Sp):** Character's entire body is licked by flames that harm neither her nor her equipment. Using this ability is a standard action, and anything she touches or that touches her is treated as if she touched it with her hand afire ability. As long as the pyrokineticist remains afire, her key ability score goes up by +4 (as this is not an enhancement bonus, it stacks with other bonuses). If she has no key ability, she chooses one and, once chosen, she always uses that ability score with this power. She also gains damage reduction 3/—. A character can use this ability at will as long as her power point reserve is 17 or more.

**Fear No Fire (Su):** At 8th level, the pyrokineticist becomes even more resistant to fire. This ability works just as described on page 112 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Heat Death (Sp):** A pyrokineticist who reaches 9th level can use this ability to raise the internal temperature of one living creature within 100 feet to lethal levels. To avoid death as described for this ability on page 112 of the *Psionics Handbook*, the target must make a successful Fortitude save with a DC of 1d20 +8 +pyro's key ability modifier. If he does succeed at the save, he still suffers 3d8 points of fire damage. Creatures of the Fire subtype and other creatures immune to fire damage are immune to this effect. The pyrokineticist must pay 15 power points each time she uses this ability.

A pyrokineticist can also direct this power against objects. Attended objects save as their owner; constructs make a Fortitude saving throw as described above and also take 3d8 points of fire damage even on a successful save. Unattended objects so targeted implode, leaving only a fine rain of fiery hot fragments. The pyro can affect up to a 10-foot cube of nonliving matter, so if she targets a very large object or structure, only part of it explodes.

**Fire Lord:** At 10th level, the pyrokineticist gains the supernatural ability to become a greater fire elemental once per day for up to 1 hour. She gains the elemental's type, extraordinary abilities, and statistics (including hit points) when she does so, save that she retains her key ability score (if a psion). She also retains all of her own feats, skills, and abilities to manifest psionic powers, though her skills and certain other of her abilities may be affected by her new ability score modifiers. She retains her equipment, and it is unharmed by her new fiery body for the duration (and immune to all damage from fire from other sources). A character must retain a power point reserve of at least 21 to use this ability.

## Soulknife

The soulknife prestige class description appears on page 113 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Hit Die:** d6

### THE SOULKNIFE

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Effective Manifestor Level
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Mind-blade, sneak attack +1d6	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Imbed power, throw mind-blade	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Sneak attack +2d6	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Imbed psionic attack	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +3d6	—
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Sever life, free draw	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Sneak attack +4d6	—
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	Upgrade	+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Sneak attack +5d6	—
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Knife to the soul	+1 level of existing class

## Requirements

To qualify to become a soulknife, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +3

**Move Silently:** 3 ranks

**Base Power Points/Day:** 9+

**Knowledge (psionics):** 3 ranks

## Class Skills

The soulknife's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Autohypnosis (Wis), Concentration (Con), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (psionics) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Psicraft (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Stabilize Self (Con), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

All the following are features of the soulknife prestige class.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Soulknives are proficient with light armor but not with shields. They are proficient with short swords and with their mind-blades (see below).

**Effective Manifester Level:** At every level indicated on the table for the prestige class, the character gains new power points per day and access to discovered powers as if he had also gained a level in the psionic class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (such as bonus feats, metapsionic or item creation feats, additional psionic combat modes, hit points beyond those he receives from the prestige class, and so on). He does gain the following benefits: an increased effective level of psionic manifestation, additional power points, effective additional levels for psycrystal powers (if he has a psycrystal), and additional free manifestations of 0-level powers. If a character had more than one psionic class before becoming a member of this prestige class, he must decide to which class he adds the new level for purposes of determining Effective Manifester Level.

For example, a 7th-level psychic warrior/6th-level soulknife has a character level of 13, and a manifest level of 10. So, she manifests powers with level-dependent parameters as if he were 10th level.

**Mind-Blade (Sp):** As a move-equivalent action, the soulknife creates a semisolid blade 1 foot in length composed of psychic energy (distilled from his own mind). When the soulknife reaches 2nd level, his mind-blade gains a +1 enhancement bonus; at 4th level, +2; at 6th level, +3; at 8th level, +4; and at 10th level, +5. The enhancement bonus applies to each mind-blade created, including those that are thrown, upgraded, and imbedded (see below).

Even where psionics does not normally function (such as within a null psionics field), the soulknife can try to sustain the mind-blade by making a Fortitude save against the DC set by the creator of the effect. Even on a successful save, the

soulknife must roll again next round to keep the mind-blade in existence.

This ability works just as described on page 114 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** A soulknife can make sneak attacks exactly like a rogue, but only with his mind-blade. Any time the soulknife's target would be denied a Dexterity bonus to AC, the mind-blade attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases by +1d6 every other level (+2d6 at 3rd level, +3d6 at 5th level, and so on). See the rogue description in Chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook* for more information on sneak attacks. The soulknife benefits from this extraordinary ability as long as his power point reserve is 1 or more.

**Imbed Power (Sp):** At 2nd level, the soulknife can imbed any one psionic power (but no psionic attack modes) of 3rd level or lower that he knows in his mind-blade. This ability works exactly as described on page 114 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Throw Mind-Blade (Su):** At 2nd level, the soulknife can throw his mind-blade as a ranged weapon with a range increment of 30 feet. This ability works just as described on page 114 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Imbed Psionic Attack (Sp):** At 4th level, the soulknife can imbed any one psionic attack mode that he knows in his mind-blade. This ability works just as described on page 114 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Sever Life (Su):** When a soulknife reaches 6th level, he can use imbedded psionic attacks to strike at the target's life force. This ability works just as described on page 114 of the *Psionics Handbook*. Constitution damage in the same amount is dealt to non-psionic targets and psionic targets alike.

**Free Draw (Su):** At 6th level, a soulknife can materialize his mind-blade as a free action instead of a move-equivalent action. This ability works just as described on page 114 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

**Upgrade (Su):** On reaching 8th level, the soulknife achieves greater control over his mind's power. His mind-blade's base characteristics are now those of a longsword, so that it deals 1d8 points of slashing damage. This ability works just as described on page 114 of the *Psionics Handbook*. All the feats previously used for the standard mind-blade also apply to the upgraded version.

**Knife to the Soul (Su):** At 10th level, the soulknife becomes expert at attacking an opponent's life energy. This ability works just as described on pages 114–115 of the *Psionics Handbook*.

## Additional Credits

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The psionics accessory/adventure *If Thoughts Could Kill* is now available for purchase at Monte Cook's Website:

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