

Familiar

Familiars are typically obtained via the *find familiar* spell.


Stats

Stats listed in the *find familiar* spell description are used. Stats not provided are taken from a monster book.

Often, stats for a familiar are found in the MM2, rather than the MM. Rules listed under *find familiar* always trump the monster books.

Abilities

Abilities listed in the books which are conferred to the character are vague, and are expanded on as

follows.^{Ex}  *This section is a draft and partially unplaytested. The rules need to be tweaked so the familiars are not so imbalanced, I think.*

- **Cat, black**

- **Surprise 1-in-6:** Party only surprised on a 1-in-6 (does not stack with ranger or monk ability).
- **Regular encounter distance in the dark:** Spot enemies at the normal encounter distance, even in the dark, as long as there is a little light (even as dark as a new moon).
- **Low-light spotting:** Negate effects that hamper vision due to low light. DM will also increase chance to notice things in a dungeon if the chance of noticing them would be aided by low-light vision.

- **Crow**

- **Fly to increase encounter distance 3x:** Outdoors, fly to multiply encounter distance by 3x. Doesn't work (1) in medium woods or thicker, (2) if there is heavy precipitation, or (3) if the crow is surprised. (The crow provides a special surprise check which happens before the party's check.)
- **Daytime vision 3x:** 3x vision distance outdoors during daytime. (Does not affect encounter distance, just lets character see farther.)
- **Small movement spotting:** DM provides better chance to notice things that involve small movements (e.g. may provide bonus to notice a trap)

- **Hawk**

- **Never surprised if vision matters:** Party is never surprised unless vision is irrelevant to the scenario (e.g. opening a door).¹⁾
- **Fly to increase encounter distance 10x:** Outdoors, can fly to multiply encounter distance by 10x. Doesn't work (1) in medium woods or thicker, (2) if there is heavy precipitation, or (3) if the hawk is somehow surprised.
- **Daytime vision 10x:** 10x vision distance outdoors during daytime. (Does not affect encounter distance, just lets character see farther.)

- **Owl, screech**

- **Never surprised dusk or dark:** Party is never surprised during dusk or darkness.²⁾
- **Double ultravision:** Double standard [ultravision](#).³⁾
- **Toad**
 - **-20% to thief MS/HIS:** Applies a -20% penalty to enemy [move silently and hide in shadows](#) checks when used for backstabbing or pickpocketing within 9".
- **Weasel**
 - **Surprise 1-in-6 if sound or smell matters:** Party only surprised on a 1-in-6 when sound or strong smell is a factor (does not stack with ranger or monk ability).
 - **Scent:** Character is able to pick up on smells that would be undetectable by normal creatures, possibly providing valuable information.

Remember that these sensory abilities are **imparted** to their master. The master does not need to ask the familiar what they see/hear. The master sees/hears themselves.

The player should endeavor to remind the DM of their special abilities when they believe the abilities might be relevant, as the DM can easily forget about a familiar.

Scouting with a flying familiar

Scouting with a flying familiar such as a hawk grants the familiar a special surprise check with an encounter distance greater than normal. [Hawks](#) multiply the encounter distance by 10; the DM will adjust this multiplier upward or downward for scouts of different perceptive abilities.^{Ex4)}

¹⁾

MM2 64.

²⁾ ³⁾

MM2 98.

⁴⁾

The DMG's section on adventures in the air (DMG 49-50) does not mention changes to encounter distance for aerial circumstances.

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