

THE
GRIFTER

Card sharks certainly have their reputations and this one is one of the worst kinds.

THE GRIFTER

There are those who would seek to deceive and trick whenever they sit down to play a friendly game. Running a racket and chasing their marks for every last dollar comes naturally to those without the morale compass of other more upstanding members of society. It is those card sharks and dice slingers that give these types of games a bad reputation and make the people that study and perfect them feel like second class citizens. Most players want to sit down and play a friendly game, but these traveling tricksters only want to win whatever the cost. In the end, the cost may end up being your entire savings. When things turn south and the wrong person gets on the end of a losing streak with a Grifter, they have to know how to defend themselves or who knows what trouble they may face.

Grifters are especially gifted in deception and will always

seek to gain the upper hand regardless of how fair the game might seem. They know the odds and will work tirelessly to tip them in their favor whether that's through slight of hand or real magic. They're the perfect mixture of trickster and real magicians that will cover their tracks to make their games seem fair, though they never are.

You can often find grifters like these in the seedier corners of taverns or sometimes set up as roadside entertainment in more populous cities. You can find them running cup games, dice games, card games, and all other manner of simple to learn but impossible to master games. They tend to avoid law enforcement and will do whatever they can to make themselves seem legitimate. Oftentimes victims won't even know they've been swindled. Grifters love nothing more than to make it seem like you simply got caught with a stroke of bad luck when the reality is that they simply

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CREATURE 7

CN MEDIUM HUMANOID

Perception +18; (21 to Sense Motive)

Languages common, three additional languages

Skills Deception +20, Diplomacy +17, Performance +20, Society +17, Stealth +17, Thievery +17, Underworld Lore +17

Str +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +6, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +5

Eye for Deception The Grifter has a knack for spotting deception and gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Perception checks when attempting to notice trickery in a game.

Two Steps Ahead For social encounters involving deception or a rigged game, The Grifter is a 10th-level challenge.

Items +1 Rapier of Striking, leather armor

AC 25; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +17, **Will** +16

HP 111

Distracting Flourish ⤵ (manipulate, mental); **Frequency** Once per minute; **Trigger** A creature targets The Grifter with a Strike; **Effect** The Grifter creates a dazzling display of card, sword, and movement. The creature that triggered this reaction must first succeed on a DC 14 flat check or pick a new target for the Strike.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✦ rapier +16 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d8+8 piercing

Melee ✦ fist +13 (agile, finesse, non-lethal, unarmed), **Damage** 2d6+6 bludgeoning

Occult Spontaneous Spells DC 22, attack +14 ; **2nd** blur, charm, invisibility, paranoia (3 slots); **1st** charm, illusory disguise, illusory object (3 slots); **cantrips** (4th) daze, detect magic, message, prestidigitation, sigil

Pick a Card ✦ (manipulate); **Frequency** Once per round; **Effect** The Grifter draws a card from their belt pouch granting them a bonus based on the suit. Roll a d4 to determine the suit and bonus.

1. **Hearts.** The Grifter regains 4d6+4 hit points.

2. **Diamonds.** The Grifter gains a +1 circumstance bonus to their AC until the start of their next turn.

3. **Clubs.** The Grifter gains a +1 circumstance bonus to attack and damage rolls until the start of their next turn.

4. **Spades.** The Grifter can instantly move up to their movement speed without triggering attacks of opportunity.

engineered the game to never let you win.

They often work in teams to run their scams making it seem like someone can actually win at their games. They will also often work with pickpockets in the crowd to loot even just a bit more from the citizenry. They know that if they get on the wrong side of too many people, they may be looking at a fight. Even in combat, they look to gain the advantage as suddenly you're facing multiple foes instead of just them. It's fair to say that grifters come in many shapes and sizes, but one thing they will never give you is a fair fight.

Think twice before dropping your hard earned coins at a gambler's table. There's no telling how much of a game they're actually running. Keep your purse strings tight around these traveling troublemakers and know that if the game seems too easy to win, there's definitely something you're missing.

TACTICS

Grifters hate to see things come to blows as it's terrible for their business and usually means they have to upend things and move to another town. That said, if a moment calls for combat, they will dive in to defend themselves until they can secure a getaway.

- Pick A Card is their signature play and should be used as often as possible to gain the grifter the upper hand when a fight breaks out.
- Distracting Flourish is the perfect way to shut down a powerful attack coming towards a grifter. Save it for something deadly.
- They have a series of spells that can help them get out of bad situations. They also might be used as a last minute attempt to swing the truth in their favor and stop a fight from ever happening.

SUGGESTED PAIRINGS

Grifters never work alone and almost always travel with a band of various ne'er do wells. The type and makeup is only limited by your imagination.

- Consider some thieves and other quick NPCs that can deal heavier damage than the grifter. They are ultimately not that strong in combat alone.
- They would likely have some muscle with them knowing that things could get messy. Consider giving them some bruiser or warrior style companions.



SWINDLER'S SHOE

ITEM 7

INVESTED MAGICAL

Price 345 gp

Usage worn on belt; Bulk L

The gold lining of this dealer's card shoe is inlaid with ornate pattern work that is meticulously well polished to a bright shine. A small and clever device on the side of the shoe functions to push a card up quickly when the top of the shoe is opened allowing for an easy draw at a moment's notice. The back of this shoe is equipped with a sturdy leather belt loop that can be fastened on your waist for convenient access whenever a card needs to be drawn. Inside the shoe is what looks to be a deck of playing cards.

This shoe contains a standard deck of playing cards that can be used for any card game. It is magically enchanted to shuffle the deck inside each time a card is drawn.

Activate ♦ manipulate; **Frequency** Three times per day; **Effect** You draw a card from this deck and gain a bonus based on the suit of the card drawn. Roll a d4 to determine the suit and effect listed below.

- **Hearts.** You restore 3d8+10 Hit Points.
- **Diamonds.** You gain a +1 bonus to your AC until the end of your next turn.
- **Clubs.** You gain a +1 item bonus to attack and damage rolls until the end of your next turn.
- **Spades.** Your movement speed is increased by 10 feet until the end of your next turn.

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