

Playing a Necromancer

This supplement provides three synergistic assets designed for a specific playstyle: a necromancer commanding a clutch of undead minions.

The core of this build is the foundational Necromancer Path, which grants access to the new Raise Undead move. This move is the engine of the playstyle, allowing the character to convert fresh corpses into a pool of zombies that serve as a primary resource.

The gameplay loop is centered on the acquisition and expenditure of this resource. The necromancer must first secure a source of fresh corpses, then use the Raise Undead move to start or grow their zombie horde. This horde can then be spent in three primary ways:

- **Defense:** Zombies can be sacrificed directly using the Necromancer Path's abilities to survive combat exchanges.
- **Offense:** Zombies can be permanently converted into Skeleton Warriors, which function as the primary offensive units.
- **Magic:** Zombies can be consumed to fuel the powerful utility and combat spells of the Bone Shaper Path.

The primary strategic challenge is balancing these expenditures. The constant need to acquire fresh corpses to replenish the horde is a core narrative driver, pushing the character to engage in grim deeds to maintain and grow their power.

PATH NECROMANCER

You may Raise Undead zombies to follow you.

- Your Zombies keep the enemy at bay. When you Clash you may sacrifice a number of Zombies to add +1 for each. **Max Zombies: 4**
- When you React Under Fire by directing your zombies to swarm an enemy you may sacrifice a number of Zombies to add +1 for each. **Upgrade: +2 Max Zombies.**
- When you perform the Raise Undead move, add +1. On a match, your insight into necromancy deepens, mark one tick on your discoveries legacy track. **Upgrade: +2 Max Zombies.**

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COMPANION SKELETON WARRIORS

When in a safe place with time to focus, you may convert your zombies into skeletons.

- Your Skeletons engage your foes. When you Strike you may add +1 for every two skeletons you control. **Max Skeletons: 3**
- When you Gain Ground by directing your skeletons to overwhelm an enemy you may roll +Skeletons. **Upgrade: +1 Max Skeletons.**
- When you Enter the Fray by sending your Skeletons in as a vanguard, you roll +Skeletons. On a strong hit, your foe is overwhelmed by the skeletal tide; mark progress. **Upgrade: +1 Max Skeletons.**

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PATH BONE SHAPER

You freely rip the bones from your zombies and shape them as weapons and tools.

- **Bone Crafter:** If you can envision how bones may be used instead of supply, you may use zombies when you Sacrifice Resources or Check Your Gear. You must always sacrifice at least one zombie.
- **Bone Spear:** When you Strike by propelling the bones from a zombie as a projectile; you roll +Wits or +Heart and mark progress on a strong hit.
- **Bone Armor:** When you must Endure Harm, you may use the bones from one zombie to add +2 by forming a protective barrier that dampens the blow.

Necromancer:

The Necromancer Path is the foundational asset for this playstyle. Its primary function is to create and manage the zombie horde, which serves as a defensive screen and an expendable resource pool for other necromancy assets. This asset establishes the core gameplay loop of raising and sacrificing the undead.

Clash Ability: The first ability is a reactive defensive tool for close-quarters combat. When you are in a bad spot and must fight back directly, this allows you to sacrifice zombies to increase your chance of success on the Clash move. This converts your expendable minions into a direct bonus to survive a dangerous exchange.

React Under Fire Ability: The second ability is a versatile defensive and utility tool. It allows you to sacrifice zombies for a bonus on the React Under Fire move, using them to absorb damage, create diversions, or overcome hazardous obstacles while under pressure. The upgrade increases your maximum zombie count, directly expanding the resource pool for all your necromancy assets.

Raise Undead Ability: The third ability provides a +1 bonus to the Raise Undead move, improving the reliability and output of zombie creation. The legacy track reward provides a narrative and mechanical incentive for repeatedly engaging with this core gameplay loop, while the upgrade further increases your resource cap.

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Skeleton Warriors:

Skeleton Warriors are offensive companion units created by converting zombies. They function as a permanent, investment-based combat force, contrasting with the expendable nature of the zombie horde.

Conversion: Creating skeletons requires the permanent conversion of zombies outside of combat. This action represents a key strategic choice, trading the versatile 'fuel' of the zombie horde for a dedicated offensive unit. This resource trade-off must be balanced against the needs of other necromancy assets.

Strike Ability: The first ability provides a passive bonus to your Strike move that scales with the number of active skeletons. Because the bonus is dependent on the quantity of skeletons, this mechanic incentivizes protecting these units to maintain maximum combat effectiveness.

Gain Ground Ability: The second ability allows you to roll +Skeletons when you Gain Ground. This leverages the size of your undead squad to tactically overwhelm foes during an ongoing fight, creating advantages or reinforcing your control of the battlefield.

Enter the Fray Ability: The third ability lets you initiate combat by rolling +Skeletons on the Enter the Fray move. This is used to start a conflict on favorable terms, with a strong hit allowing you to mark progress immediately, representing a successful opening assault by your vanguard.

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Bone Shaper:

The Bone Shaper Path provides the necromancer with direct magical abilities by consuming zombies from the horde as a resource. This asset offers a toolkit for personal utility, ranged offense, and emergency defense, allowing the necromancer to act directly without entering melee.

Bone Crafter: This ability is a resource-substitution and utility tool. It allows you to use zombies in place of supply when making Sacrifice Resources or Check Your Gear moves. This provides a solution for survival and equipment-related challenges, making you highly resourceful as long as your horde is maintained. Because you are always converting bone to the required item, tool or structure; you must always sacrifice one zombie before rolling.

Bone Spear: This is your primary ranged offense ability. It converts a zombie from your horde into a direct magical attack, allowing you to personally engage key targets from a safe distance. Using +Wits or +Heart for the Strike roll defines this as a magical attack, independent of your character's physical prowess.

Bone Armor: This ability functions as an emergency defensive tool. It provides a substantial +2 bonus to an Endure Harm roll at the cost of one zombie. Its high bonus makes it a powerful last-resort option for personal survival against significant, focused damage when other defenses have failed.

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Move: Raise Undead

When you perform a dark ritual over a source of fresh corpses... Roll +heart or +wits. You may Sacrifice Resources (-1 supply) before you roll to represent the use of rare ritual components and add +1.

- On a **strong hit**, the ritual is a resounding success. Your will overwhelms the lingering spirits, binding them to your service. Add up to 5 zombies to your Horde tracker.
- On a **weak hit**, you manage to animate the dead, but the process is draining and imperfect. Add up to 3 zombies to your Horde tracker, but the spiritual strain is significant; you must Endure Stress (-2).
- On a **miss**, the ritual fails catastrophically. You raise no zombies, and the angered spirits or uncontrolled necrotic energies lash out. You must Pay the Price.

A Note on "Fresh" Corpses: This move requires corpses that are relatively intact and no more than a few days old. The ideal sources are recent battlefields, fresh graves, plague pits, or the victims of an attack or raid, one probably initiated by the necromancer himself. An ancient crypt filled with dusty skeletons would not be a viable source for raising these fleshy zombies.

Potential Assets for a Necromancer

While the custom assets form the core of the necromancer playstyle, several official assets from Starforged and Sundered Isles can be used to add further depth, utility, and thematic flavor. The following assets are particularly well-suited to a commander of the undead.

SCHOLAR: This Path from Sundered Isles reinforces the necromancer's role as a keeper of forbidden knowledge. And allows you to frame your character in the context of research and study of esoteric knowledge. Of special note is the ability to mark progress on the discovery legacy track, which complements the similar ability on the Necromancer asset.

LORE HUNTER: This Starforged asset is perfect for a necromancer driven by a singular, knowledge-based quest, such as the search for a legendary grimoire or the tomb of an ancient lich. This asset frames your necromancy not just as a power, but as a driving ambition to uncover the ultimate secrets of death.

OUTCAST: A necromancer is rarely welcome. This Starforged asset mechanizes this social isolation.

HAUNTED: A character who commands the spirits of the dead is a natural target for a spirit that refuses to be commanded. This Starforged asset adds a deep narrative layer to your character, tying you to a specific ghost. This spirit could be the source of your necromantic knowledge, a past ritual gone wrong, or even a former bond that perished and you raised as an undead companion, providing a rich source of story hooks and guidance from beyond the grave.

SORCERER: Your core necromancy assets are powerful but costly, requiring the sacrifice of your zombie minions. This Path from Sundered Isles complements your build by providing access to minor, at-will magic that doesn't deplete your horde. In many settings, necromancers are also powerful wizards and sorcerers.

UNDEAD: For the necromancer who delves too deep, this Deed from Sundered Isles represents the ultimate thematic evolution. Gained after dying or suffering a terrible curse, this asset transforms you into an undead creature. You could even go on an epic quest to turn yourself into a lich and gain this asset willingly.

DAMNED: Similar to UNDEAD, this Sundered Isles Deed represents a fundamental transformation. It is gained when you mark tormented or doomed and allows you to discard old assets to take new, "damned" ones that better reflect your cursed existence. For a necromancer, this could represent a pact with a death entity or the consequence of a ritual gone wrong, allowing you to mechanically evolve your character by swapping out more mundane skills for supernaturally themed assets.

When your necromantic magic results in a miss or you must Pay the Price for a ritual gone wrong, you may roll on this table for inspiration.

Necromantic Backlash Oracle (d10)

- Unruly Minions:** The ritual fails, and the uncontrolled energy causes
- 1 one of your active undead minions (if any) to turn momentarily hostile or crumble into dust. Envision which and how.
- Spiritual Parasite:** A malevolent or desperate spirit latches onto you.
- 2 You are haunted until you perform a cleansing rite or appease the spirit. This may count as an impact or lead to a new vow.
- Necrotic Corruption:** The dark energy sears your own flesh. You
- 3 undergo a physical torment which leaves a grim, unnatural mark upon you; Endure Harm (-2).
- Unwanted Attention:** Your magic acts as a beacon in the darkness. You
- 4 attract the attention of a hostile, supernatural entity that preys on the dead or their masters (such as a ghoul, a devourer of spirits, or even a rival necromancer).
- Blighted Ground:** The land in the immediate area is tainted by your
- 5 ritual. For a time, it becomes supernaturally unnerving. Plants wither, animals avoid it, and locals will likely become suspicious.
- Gruesome Failure:** The corpses animate incorrectly, becoming a
- 6 writhing, screaming amalgam of flesh and bone before gruesomely collapsing. The source of corpses is ruined and cannot be used again.
- Wild Energy:** The necrotic power misses its intended target. The nearest
- 7 living being (a friend, ally, or companion) is struck by the errant magic and must Endure Harm or Endure Stress (-2).
- Death's Echo:** You are flooded with the painful or terrifying final
- 8 memories of the dead you were attempting to control. The psychic trauma is overwhelming; you must Endure Stress (-2).
- Overwhelming Will:** The spirits briefly overwhelm your own. For a
- 9 moment, you are not yourself and act against your own interests or those of an ally, driven by a spirit's lingering rage, fear, or sorrow.
- Catastrophic Failure:** The ritual fails in every conceivable way. Roll
- 10 twice on this table and apply both results. If you roll the same result twice, make the outcome significantly worse.

When you uncover a dark secret or have a grim revelation, you may roll on this table for inspiration.

Forbidden Lore Oracle (d10)

- 1 **The Echo of Skill:** The bones of skilled warriors retain a memory of their training. Skeletons converted from the corpses of soldiers or guards are more disciplined and formidable than those raised from common folk.
- 2 **The Price of Will:** The zombies in your horde are not truly mindless. Each is a soul trapped in a loop, reliving the terror of their final moments. This psychic anguish is what you harness, and it yearns for release.
- 3 **Unhallowed Ground:** Necromantic energy pools in places of great tragedy or betrayal. Performing your rituals in such a location is perilous, but promises far greater results, potentially doubling the number of undead you can raise at once.
- 4 **A Rival's Method:** You learn of another who practices your art, but their method is different. They do not raise the dead whole; they stitch them together from many mismatched parts, creating grotesque and unpredictable abominations.
- 5 **The Spiritual Tether:** The spirits of all your creations are faintly linked through you. A sudden, catastrophic blow that destroys one of your Skeleton Warriors can send a psychic shockwave through the rest of your horde, causing them to falter.
- 6 **The Spirit's Anchor:** You discover that a spirit can be more strongly bound if an item of great personal significance from its life is used as a ritual focus. Undead raised this way are more potent, retaining a dim echo of their former selves, but may act on old habits or instincts.
- 7 **A Hidden History:** You find proof that a respected local bloodline or faction owes its current status to a dark pact made with a necromancer generations ago. They publicly condemn your art, but secretly possess forbidden knowledge of their own.
- 8 **The Bone's Thirst:** Bone is a porous conduit for magic. You learn that a Bone Shaper's creations can be made vastly more powerful if the bones are first steeped in specific alchemical reagents or fresh blood.
- 9 **The Soul's Remnant:** Every spirit you bind leaves an imprint on your own soul. Over time, your memories may begin to blur with those of the countless dead you command, leading to strange dreams or moments of confusion.
- 10 **The Path to Mastery:** You uncover a fragment of a ritual that details how to condense the spiritual energy of an entire horde into a single, undying, and intelligent champion, a true immortal servant, at the cost of sacrificing your entire legion.

When you find a source of corpses to fuel your Raise Undead move, you may roll on this table to determine their condition and circumstances.

State of the Dead Oracle (d10)

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| 1 | Recent Casualties: The bodies are fresh, dead no more than a day from battle or misadventure. They are ideal for your ritual, but their freshness means that friends, foes, or authorities may be nearby. |
| 2 | Plague-Ridden: The corpses are victims of a virulent disease, still contagious. While fresh, performing your ritual is hazardous. You or anyone assisting you may need to Face Danger to resist suffering. |
| 3 | Mangled Remains: The bodies have been savaged by beasts or a brutal conflict and are barely intact. You can attempt the ritual, but the results will be diminished; you cannot achieve a strong hit on your Raise Undead roll. |
| 4 | The Unjustly Slain: These individuals were betrayed, and their spirits are enraged. They actively resist your control. When you attempt to Raise Undead, you must first overcome their will (suffer -2 on your roll). |
| 5 | Unnaturally Preserved: The bodies are ancient, yet show no signs of decay due to a strange magic or environmental effect. They are not technically "fresh," and raising them may lead to a strange side effect or a chaotic result, as determined by the oracle. |
| 6 | A Secret Grave: You find a single, unmarked but recent grave. The body is an ideal specimen, but who was this person and why were they hidden? Raising them will likely entangle you in a local mystery or conspiracy. |
| 7 | A Deliberate Trap: The corpses are fresh and conspicuously arranged. You have a moment to realize this is bait for a trap before the hidden hunters, beast or person, spring their ambush. You must Face Danger to proceed. |
| 8 | The Dying and the Dead: You arrive at the scene of a disaster as it concludes. Some are dead, others are dying. The bodies are perfectly fresh, but you must act immediately in the presence of witnesses, or choose between saving the living and harvesting the dead. |
| 9 | The Drowned Dead: A group of bodies washed ashore or pulled from a bog. The water has preserved them, but they are bloated and waterlogged. Zombies raised from these corpses may be unnaturally slow or have other strange properties. |
| 10 | Hollow Husks: The corpses are physically pristine, but you sense their spirits are already gone, consumed, stolen, or departed. You cannot raise them as they are. You must first investigate what malevolent force has been here to harvest the souls. |