

5E

AB
ABYSSAL BREWS

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

THE GRIFTER

Medium Humanoid (any race), Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 16 (Studded Leather)

Hit Points 130 (20d8+40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +9, Insight +4, Stealth +6, Sleight of Hand +9

Senses Passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Thieves' Cant

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Eye for Deception. If The Grifter spends one minute watching any type of game be played, they gain a +2 bonus to their perception check to see if there is any deception or trickery taking place in the game.

Pick a Card. At the start of their turn, The Grifter draws a random card that grants them bonuses based on the suit. Roll a d4 to determine the suit and bonus.

1. Hearts. The Grifter regains 3d6+3 hit points.
2. Diamonds. The Grifter gains a +1 bonus to their AC until the start of their next turn.
3. Clubs. The Grifter gains a +1 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.

Actions

Multiattack. The Grifter makes three Rapier attacks.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d8+3) slashing damage.

Spellcasting. The Grifter's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At Will: *Disguise Self*, *Mage Hand*, *Minor Illusion*

1/Day Each: *Hold Person* (4th level version), *Mage Armor*, *Major Image*

Reactions

Distracting Flourish (3/Day). When a creature attempts a weapon attack against The Grifter, The Grifter puts on a dizzying display of hand, card, and weapon movement. The triggering creature must first succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom save or pick a new target for the attack.

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

Wondrous Item, Rare (requires attunement)

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. The shoe itself is magically enchanted to reshuffle the deck within it each time a card is drawn. Three times per day, as a bonus action, you can speak the command word and draw a card from the shoe giving you additional effects depending on the suit of the card drawn. Roll a d4 to determine the suit and effects.

- **Hearts.** You heal 8d4+8 hit points.
- **Diamonds.** You gain a +1 bonus to your AC until the end of your next turn.
- **Clubs.** You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls until the end of your next turn.
- **Spades.** You can immediately move up to your movement speed without triggering attacks of opportunity.

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