

Blades of Cursed Midnight: A Hexblade's Guide



Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed in one self-place; for where we are is hell, and where hell is, there must we ever be. - Mephistopheles, The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus

Greetings. We all know why you're here, so let's not pretend that any of you here are ignorant about what you're about to get into. The path of the Hexblade may seem easy to tread at first, and we are derided for it by others who believe we sell our souls for fleeting power. But it is this power that can one day change the world for the better. Of course, you'll have to survive that long first, but then again, that's why you're here, I suppose.

Selling Points: Why play a Hexblade?

You're Flexible: You can manifest a weapon of pure arcane magic to fight foes up close, and you can strike down foes far away with ranged implement attacks. You also possess great basic attacks out of the gate, in case you have leaders who can capitalize on that. Basically, if you want to attack a foe, you shouldn't have a problem hurting them.

You have Minions: You have the ability to summon entities related to your pact, from tiny imps to do your errands for you, to Treants which will pulverize your foes into nothingness.

You're Tougher than you appear: Although Hexblades seem as fragile as any striker as first, they have a lot of tricks to boost their longevity, including summons which can soak damage, temporary hit points, status effects, and mobility, among other things. If you play things right, you should be staying upright for a while.

How to Look at Options

The following rating system will be used for this handbook:

Red - Bad. Really Bad. So bad, not even Asmodeus would approach it with a 10-foot pole.

Purple - Limited. Shines in very limited circumstances. Worthless most of the time.

Black - Acceptable. Choosing this won't actively harm your Hexblade.

Blue - Good. These picks are a good idea in general. Not the best, but still solid.

Sky Blue - Optimal. You don't need these, but you'd better have a good reason for passing one up.

Gold - Mandatory. It would be difficult to play even a minimally optimized Hexblade without this.

Source Material Covered and its Abbreviations

AP - Arcane Power

AV - Adventurer's Vault

AV 2 - Adventurer's Vault 2

D### - Dragon Magazine, issue ###

DP - Divine Power

DSCS - Dark Sun Campaign Setting

FRPG - Forgotten Realms Player's Guide

HoS - Heroes of Shadow

HotEC - Heroes of the Elemental Chaos

HotF - Heroes of the Feywild

HotFK - Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms

HotFL - Heroes of the Fallen Lands

MME - Mordenkainen's Magnificent Emporium

MotP - Manual of the Planes

MP - Martial Power

MP 2 - Martial Power 2

PHB - Player's Handbook

PHB 2 - Player's Handbook 2

PHB 3 - Player's Handbook 3

PHR:D - Player's Handbook Races: Dragonborn

PHR:T - Player's Handbook Races: Tieflings

PHH 1 - Player's Handbook Heroes: Series 1

PHH 2 - Player's Handbook Heroes: Series 2

Ten Minutes to Midnight: Power Source and Role

Hexblades are a variation on the Warlock class found in the *Player's Handbook*, and like the traditional Warlock, they're **Arcane Strikers**. Like most other Arcane classes, your powers tend to have some kind of control element attached them, whether it is debilitating effects or hitting multiple foes at once. There are quite a few things that being a striker entails, though...

Nova/Spike Damage - This is not your forte. You don't possess multi-attack powers like the Ranger does, nor do you have the Barbarian's crit synergy, and your daily powers tend more towards large control effects than large damage spikes. Infernal Hexblades tend to be a little better at this than the other Pacts.

Damage Per Round (DPR) - This part of being a striker you can do fairly well. Every build of the Hexblade has at least 1 weapon vs. NAD attack, which tend to be very accurate, and Fey Hexblades can take advantage of many light blade accuracy-enhancing abilities.

Debilitating Effects - You're also pretty good at making sure foes are less effective. Your powers can teleport foes out of position, induce vulnerabilities, or even make you invisible. And that's not even getting to the dailies.

Survivability - Like I mentioned before, you're tougher than you appear, but you aren't as tough as a defender. Infernal Hexblades with their Constitution and Temporary HP focus as are the toughest of you all, but even if you drop to low HP, you still have solid ranged capabilities to fall back on. You'll also have a guaranteed retributive attack too at the end of heroic tier, so there's that.

Targeting Capacity - Unlike traditional Warlocks, your striker bonus damage isn't limited to foes who you curse. Since your bonus damage is applied to all of your powers, you can hit anyone on the field, and still have access to your striker goodies. All pacts have decent mobility as well, but Fey Hexblades take it up to a new level, with a bunch of defensive and teleportation abilities that should let them reach their target with impunity.

Secondary Role Effectiveness

Controller - As I mentioned before, most of your powers are going to have some decent control effects. You can't really sub in for a full time controller like certain traditional warlock builds can, but you can still play your part.

Defender - Infernal Warlocks can be an off-tank with their extra toughness. No other pact should really try it, though.

Leader - You can't heal or buff allies, but several of your daily and utility powers can help move allies around the battlefield quite well.

The Unsheathed Blade: Baseline Mechanics

As a Hexblade, you belong to one of the Essentials subclasses. As such, many of your abilities are related to class features, rather than powers. In fact, your At-Will and Encounter attacks are all determined by which pact you decide to go with. So choose your pact wisely; it will literally control your destiny.

Note that I will only be discussing Pact-neutral features here. Everything related to a specific pact will get its own discussion in a later post.

Game Mechanics

Hit Points - You get 12 + your Constitution score initially, and 5 every time you level up. This is standard for most strikers, although obviously **Infernal Hexblades** will have it a little easier than everyone else.

Healing Surges - 6 + Con modifier surges. It's not that many, so try keep your defenses up as much as possible. Again, **Infernal Hexblades** have an easier time here than anybody else.

Defense Bonus - You get a +1 bonus to your Fortitude and Will defenses. These are the strong defenses for Infernal Hexblade, while the Fortitude bonus shores up the Fey and Star Hexblade's weak defense. It's certainly not bad, at any rate.

Armor Proficiencies - You get all the way up to chain to start. Infernal Hexblades will do okay in Chain at level 1 (although they'll likely want to upgrade at some point), which Fey and Star Hexblades probably won't want anything higher than Hide Armor.

Weapon Proficiencies - You can't complain about this. All simple and military melee weapons, and ranged weapons. Of course, you're never going to use any of them (unless you're into Pact Blades, or something similar)

Implement Proficiencies - You start with the ability to use Rods and Wands. Both of them are good and have excellent Expertise Feats backing them, although there are ways of getting other implements if you're not satisfied.

Class Features

Eldritch Bolt (Lv. 1) - One of your At-Will powers, which all Hexblades possess. Fortunately, it's not too bad, being a ranged option that should deal solid force damage, which generally isn't resisted. Unfortunately, it's not Eldritch Blast, so it doesn't possess any of the feat synergy that goes along with Eldritch Blast.

Pact Reward (Lv. 1) - Good news: this damage bonus applies to all of your Warlock attacks. Bad news: it only applies to Warlock attacks. So no multiclassing for other classes' dailies, okay? Your patrons tend to be snippy about that kind of thing.

Pact Boon (Lv. 1) - If you kill a foe or a foe dies next to you, you get a neat little utility effect that should help you along. Unfortunately, this isn't as reliable as the traditional Warlock's boon, which goes off when a cursed enemy dies. Still, you work with what you got.

Pact Weapon (Lv. 1) - This is your reason for being. The Pact Weapon is an amazing feature: it allows you to fight at melee while retaining your ranged option, and it gets more powerful as your implement does, so you never need to worry about finding more power magic weapons and implements at the same time. All pact weapons have the stats of superior weapons too - it is literally the best weapon you start out with.

Your pact weapon also comes with a preselected At-Will attack that you can use as a melee basic attack, and a pre-selected encounter power.

Improved Pact Weapon (Lv. 3) - You get another use of your Pact Weapon's encounter attack. Not much else to say.

Lesser Planar Ally (Lv. 4) - Joy of joys! You get your own minion! Although he's useless in battle, he can perform tasks like locating people or spotting difficult terrain ahead of you, so he has his uses.

Pact Weapon Retribution (Lv. 7) - Instead of another use of your Pact Weapon Encounter, you get an immediate reaction attack against a foe that attacks you. They tend to vary in usefulness, but most of them tend to be pretty good pickups.

Summon Warlock's Ally (Lv. 9) - Instead of choosing your 9th level daily, you get this. It's pretty awesome, since this makes you the only striker with a naturally-occurring summon. The summons themselves are also pretty nice, and they can have some nasty attacks. Best of all, they still get your Striker Bonus Damage when they make an attack.

Superior Warlock's Ally (Lv. 17) - Your minion summoned with Summon Warlock's Ally gets a +3 damage bonus. That's... okay, I guess.

Master of Magic (Lv. 22) - This is a preselected utility level for you. This power is... okay, but a little underwhelming for an epic-level power.

Greater Summon Warlock's Ally (Lv. 25) - A bigger, badder minion you can summon with Summon Warlock's ally. They tend to have abilities like immobilization and dazing up their sleeve, so calling them is a good idea.

The Uncalled Sword: Skills

You're middle-of-the-road as far as skills are concerned. You have a decent list, and can choose any 4 you want. You don't have the breadth of a Rogue or Bard, but you don't have the shallowness of a Fighter or Barbarian either.

Class Skills

Arcana (Int) - Star Hexblades have the Intelligence to get mileage out of this skill. Everyone else can take it or leave it, especially if there's a Wizard or Swordmage in the party whose already decent with this skill.

Bluff (Cha) - A good skill for a high Charisma character, such as yourself, to have. You never know when you'll have to lie your way out of a situation.

History (Int) - Like Arcana, only Star Pact Hexblades can really get good use out of this skill in the long run. It might not even come up, depending on what kind of campaign you're in.

Insight (Wis) - A good skill, but you probably don't have the Wisdom to really use it. Still, it has some pretty awesome skill powers, which just might make it worth training in for you.

Intimidate (Cha) - Another good skill for a high-Charisma character. In addition to social situations, you can also use this to get foes to surrender in battle. It also has some interesting skill powers to boot.

Religion (Int) - Much like the other Intelligence skills, this can be good in the hands of a Star Hexblade.

Stealth (Dex) - This skill is pretty thematic for a Fey Hexblade, who gets a lot of invisibility powers anyway. And I mean, why not scout ahead of the party anyway? You have the teleportation to get back, after all.

Streetwise (Cha) - The use of this skill outside a city is iffy, at best. Still, if you adventure a lot in urban locales, you could do worse than pick this up.

Thievery (Dex) - If no one else in the party is trained in this, take it; disabling traps and picking locks is an important duty. Fey Hexblades can especially use this skill well.

Recommended Non-Class Skills

Acrobatics (Dex) - The only Dexterity Skill Hexblades lack. Fey Hexblades should be able to pull this off well, so getting it might be a good idea.

Diplomacy (Cha) - A Charisma Skill Hexblades normally don't get. Since sometime sweet-talking is useful, getting this is a good idea.

Endurance (Con): The only Constitution-based skill. Doesn't tend to come up too often, but when it does, it's often because you've been poisoned, sickened, or some other horrible, gruesome fate has befallen you. When that happens, you'll be happy to have this.

Perception (Wis): Yeah, it's wisdom-based, but getting caught by surprise, whether by an enemy ambush or a deadly trap, really sucks. Hopefully, though, someone else has this one picked up.

The Hour Draws Near: Ability Scores

While all Hexblades have to keep a good Charisma, their other scores really depend on the pact they choose. Note that I'm not including racial adjustments in the scores.

Strength - Not that important for you. The only use it really has is for Infernal Hexblades who want to get Scale Armor. Both Fey

and Star Hexblades can safely dump it, relying on Constitution to bolster their Fortitude defense.

Recommended Starting Score: 10-12 for Infernal Hexblades, 8-10 for Fey and Star Hexblades.

Constitution - The secondary score for Infernal and Elemental Hexblades, and Tertiary score for Fey, Gloom, and Star Hexblades. You're going to spend some time in Melee, so you want to be sure that you can take a hit.

Recommended Starting Score: 14-16 for Infernal Hexblades, 10-12 for Fey and Star Hexblades.

Dexterity - The secondary score for Fey and Gloom Hexblades, and a good tertiary stat for Infernal, Elemental, and Star Hexblades, since Dexterity's addition to Initiative can only be a good thing.

Recommended Starting Score: 14-16 for Fey Hexblades, 10-12 for Infernal and Star Hexblades.

Intelligence - The secondary score for Star Hexblades. Infernal, Elemental, Gloom and Fey Hexblades don't really have to invest that much in this, unless they'd prefer not to completely suck at Intelligence skills.

Recommended Starting Score: 14-16 for Star Hexblades, 10-12 for Infernal and Fey Hexblades.

Wisdom - One of the dump stats for a Hexblade. Only reason not to dump it is if you don't want to fail at any Wisdom skills you may have, in which case, dump Strength instead.

Recommended Starting Score: 8-10 for all pacts.

Charisma - This is your main ability, no questions asked. You need Charisma to make your attacks actually hit, and several nice skills are also based off of it.

Recommended Starting Score: 16-18 for all Pacts

Souls of the Lost: Races

Because of the flexibility of the Hexblade's secondary score, most any race with a boost to Charisma will find they can make a good Hexblade of some sort. That said, there are some front runners for each pact:

Infernal/Elemental - Dragonborn, Half-Elves, Tieflings, Satyrs

Fey/Gloom - Drow, Halflings, Changelings, Revenants, Vryloka, Pixies, Satyrs

Star - Eladrin, Tieflings, Changelings, Shardminds, Gnomes, Pixies

PHB

Dragonborn - Although Dragonborn can excel using the Infernal Pact, what they truly shine at is the Elemental Pact. Their toughness makes two already hard-to-kill pacts even harder to kill, and their Dragon Breath can be customized some to help create an adequate nova round. Dragonfear is an acceptable Racial Power too if Dragon Breath isn't your thing.

Dwarf - Dwarves can make acceptable Infernal Hexblades with their Strength and Constitution boosts, affinity for heavy armor, and minor action second wind. Unfortunately, Dwarven Hexblades can't use any of the Axe and Hammer support they could normally have.

Eladrin - Their Charisma and Intelligence boosts make them excellent Star Hexblades, plus their scholastic flavor matches pretty well with the pact. Fey Step is a pretty awesome power here, and has a bunch of feats that make it even more awesome.

Unfortunately, Eladrin aren't quite as awesome Fey Hexblades, but you can't have everything.

Elf - Boosts to Dex and Int means Elves can make acceptable Fey or Star Pact Hexblades. Elven Accuracy is a pretty awesome power to boot, and their extra mobility can be helpful.

Half-Elf - Another excellent choice for an Infernal or Elemental Hexblade, Half-elves have a choice between the Knack for Success racial power and the Dilettante racial feature. Unfortunately, Dilettante isn't that nice for Hexblades, since their extra damage doesn't apply to non-Warlock powers.

Halfling - Perfect stats for a Fey Hexblade, and the mobility to really pull it off. Halflings are also hard to hit with their second chance racial power, which should keep you alive a while longer.

Human - While they lack a secondary ability boost, Humans have a bunch of great racial features, including the ability to have a classic Warlock power at their beck and call. Do note that only Infernal or Elemental Hexblades will have the Constitution necessary to choose some of them, so pick wisely.

Tiefling - As should be expected on the creators of the Infernal Pact, Tieflings make great Infernal Hexblades. They also have a bunch of striker support, which makes them arguably the best Infernal Hexblades. Tieflings can also make great Star or Elemental Hexblades, if the Infernal Pact doesn't appeal to you.

PHB2

Deva - With the ability to gain a Charisma boost now, Deva can make decent Hexblades. The boost to Wisdom is disappointing, but you can have okay Insight, and the other racial goodies are enough to make this a pretty strong choice.

Gnome - Excellent Star Pact Hexblade candidates. The lower speed kind of sucks, but the stealth boosts and ability to get out of trouble in a pinch makes gnomes a good pick.

Goliath - Boosts to Constitution and Strength aligns Goliaths to be Infernal Hexblades. Their racial power will certainly help their toughness, but there isn't really enough here to make a goliath excellent.

Half-Orc - Boosts to Constitution and Dexterity makes Half-Orcs good potential Infernal, Elemental, Gloom, or Fey Hexblades, and the charging goodies can be actually useful with the Hexblade. Furious assault is also a solid pickup for Hexblades, whose weapons tend to be d10s or d12s, and automatic temporary HP when bloodied makes you good at this, even without the Charisma boost.

Longtooth Shifter - A boost to both dump scores. Ouch! Only a fantastic racial power saves you from being totally bad at this.

Razorclaw Shifter - You get bumps to the Fey secondary ability, and a dump stat. The racial power is nice, but it doesn't really save you.

PHB3

Githzerai - You get a boost to a dump stat, and your choice of either Intelligence or Dexterity, which makes you okay Star, Gloom, or Fey Hexblades. Your defensive racial features are kind of helpful here, but this probably isn't your line of work.

Minotaur - Boosts to Strength and Constitution make you can okay Infernal or Elemental Hexblade, and the charging bonus and free swing when you're downed are nice bonuses for you.

Shardmind - Perfect bumps for a Star Hexblade, and some nice racial features to go with it, including a nice teleportation racial power. Yeah, you'll do fine here.

Wilden - Boosts to a dump stat, and either Constitution or Dexterity. You also have an adaptable racial power; Wrath of the Destroyer is probably what you'll be going with most of the time. Acceptable overall.

Campaign Settings

Drow - Perfect ability boosts for a Fey or Gloom Hexblade, and a solid racial power no matter what you choose.

Genasi - You have the secondary score for either a Star Hexblade or an Infernal Hexblade (skip the Strength boost). Adaptable manifestations are okay, with your best bets probably being Watersoul, Windsoul, Cindersoul, or Voidsoul.

Changeling - Perfect ability bumps for a Fey or Star Hexblade, and some solid racial features and powers to go with them. Unfortunately, racial feat support is kind of skimpy, so you'll mostly be looking at race-neutral feats to get by.

Kalashtar - Boosts to Charisma and Intelligence make Kalashtar pretty good Star Pact Hexblades, although their racial features and lack of feats keeps them from being top picks.

Warforged - Another Strength and Constitution race, which makes the Infernal Pact the best fit.. In the case of the Warforged, the extra toughness is not a bad thing at all.

Mul - Similar to the Dwarf, but without the minor-action second wind and more straight-up toughness.

Thri-kreen - You get a boost to Dexterity, and your choice of dump stat. You Thri-Kreen arms trait isn't that useful here, since you

probably won't swap weapons/implements that often, and there's not much feat support.

Bladeling - Wisdom and Dexterity means you should go for a Fey Hexblade. You have but one racial feat though, so... tough luck.

Heroes of Shadow / Feywild + Dragon

Gnoll - You have boosts to Constitution and Dexterity, so both Infernal and Fey Pacts are on the table for you. You also have a bunch of striker racial features, and you can take advantage of the charging racial power you have. A solid pick in the end.

Hamadryad - You get a boost to Charisma and Wisdom, which is kind of eh. The racial features are pretty nice, and Hamadryad aspects is offensive when you need offense and defensive when you need defense. The feat support is pretty skimpy though, to say the least.

Pixie - Fortunately, the pixie's size limitation means nothing to you, and it comes with great mobility and the perfect stat boots for Feyblades, Gloomblades, and Starblades. It doesn't have many feats, but they all work well for Hexblades, which is nice.

Hengeyokai - Charisma and Dexterity are good boosts for Fey or Gloom Hexblades, but you lack any racial feats and your racial power isn't exactly what one would use in combat often. Still, you don't have the Shade's healing surge penalty, which is something I guess.

Revenant - With the ability to boost Dexterity and Charisma, Revenants can make excellent Hexblades now, their ability to stay standing after dropping to 0 HP helping them make the frailer Hexblade pacts at which they excel more survivable. Their ability to partake in the racial support of other races is also excellent as well.

Satyr - Perfect stats for Hellblades, Feyblades, and Gloomblades, paired with some decent racial features that include extra saves against fear effects and extra healing during a short rest. Tack on a power that gives you some slides (especially helpful for pacts that don't have a lot of forced movement), and you have a solid pick.

Shadar-Kai - You can opt to be either a Fey or Star Hexblade, although you won't be the best at either. Of the two, I'd recommend Star: there are some Shadar-Kai feats that function off of Intelligence.

Shade - This race has the perfect ability boosts for Fey and Star Hexblades, but its racial features are so underpowered that it's hard to recommend this race at all.

Vryloka - You have the perfect ability scores to make a Fey or Gloom Hexblade, you've got some awesome racial features (Blood Dependency aside), and your racial power is top-class. A pretty good choice, overall.

Dancing with the Devil (in the Pale Moonlight): The Pacts

We come now to the most important choice you will make as a Hexblade: what pact you will enter. Your pact determines everything about your character: your secondary ability, your pact weapon, what At-will and encounter powers you get to use, and other things too. There are currently four pacts that Hexblades can enter, although certainly more will appear as time goes on.

The Infernal Pact

Introduced in Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms, aka Hellblades.

When most people think of Warlocks, they think of fell pacts with Devils. This is the pact created by Tieflings in old Bael Turath, although these days this power can also be stolen without the need for a devilish pact granter. Taking that route will make devils awfully angry though.

At any rate, Infernal Hexblades tend to be brutes. They wear heavy armor, and depend on that and their temporary hit points to allow them to outlast their enemies.

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Infernal Pact Class Features

Pact Reward: Having Constitution as a secondary ability is a pretty awesome deal when you're a melee striker. Your extra HP and surges should prove instrumental in keeping you in the fight.

Pact Boon (Soul Feast): Getting temporary HP every time you kill an enemy or an enemy next to you dies is a pretty sweet deal.

Pact Weapon: The Blade of Annihilation is a heavy blade, which is inaccurate but powerful. You certainly can't complain about receiving a superior weapon proficiency for free.

Soul Eater: This power gets a bad rap, but it's not as dire as one would think. Every time you strike a foe, you get a +2 bonus to attack rolls against the guy you hit, which means your next attack against that enemy is just that more likely to hit (striking with Soul Eater before following up with an encounter or daily attack might not be a bad thing). It's only real weakness is that it deals necrotic damage, which tends to be resisted by many foes, most notably undead. This can be worked around though, with any number of items or feats. It certainly isn't a deal breaker.

Blazing Doom of the Void: The Infernal Pact encounter spell. You deal extra [W] damage, and you get a hefty bonus to damage rolls against the enemy you attacked for your next attack, even if you missed. It also deals fire and necrotic damage together, which means its not likely that a foe will resist this.

Reflexive Hellstrike: If an enemy attacks you, you damage them and push them very far away from you. This is especially helpful if you want to get out of melee.

Spined Devil Lackey: The lesser of two devils you can summon. The Lackey's not bad by any means, able to inflict ongoing damage when you ask it to and damaging enemies who end their turns next to you as an opportunity action. Maybe not the best, but not a waste of space either.

Pit Fiend Servitor: You know you're in epic tier when you can boss around a pit fiend. It's standard action attack deals a lot of damage, and it inflicts enemies who end their turns next to you with ongoing damage. It also has a minor action debuff technique too. Overall, not a bad use of a daily.

The Fey Pact of the Winter Court

Introduced in Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms, aka Feyblades.

The capricious lords of the Feywild grant their magic secrets on a whim, and if you impress them, you too can receive the boon of their magic.

Fey Hexblades tend to be skirmishers. The flit about the battlefield, their teleportation and invisibility spells allowing them to attack any enemy they believe is the biggest threat.

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Fey Pact Class Features

Pact Reward: Dexterity is one of the best secondary ability scores you could ask for as a striker. The ability to go first is a huge advantage, especially since most of your spells debuff your foes in some way; making a foe start off at a disadvantage is a good thing.

Pact Boon (Soul Step): Much like the traditional Fey Warlock, you can teleport when an enemy dies. This teleportation scales up as you get more powerful, and you can use it to teleport into a flanking position when the enemy you've been attacking goes down, or you could teleport behind a defender if your HP is running low. It's pretty versatile that way.

Pact Weapon: The Blade of Winter's Mourning is the strongest light blade there is at the moment, and no one else but you gets it.

Powerful, accurate, and with a whole slew of feats to make it better, this is currently regarded as the best pact weapon.

Icy Skewer: A neat melee basic attack that deals cold damage and boosts your defenses against one enemy's attacks. Not a bad pickup at all.

Piercing Shard: The first thing to note is that this power targets the Will defense, which is usually the weakest defense on a monster. It deals cold and psychic damage, both which are well-supported, and makes you invisible to an enemy you attack with it, whether you hit or not. All-in-all, a solid encounter attack.

Pact Retribution: A foe attacks you, they take damage and you teleport away. Not a bad escape button if you need one.

Wood Woad Guardian: An ally that you can summon with Summon Warlock's Ally, the Wood Woad is a loyal friend to you. His standard action attacks knock enemies prone, and if a foe hits you, he'll teleport by your side and take the attack instead of you (just remember that this takes up both your opportunity action for the turn and your immediate action for the round). Just be sure to give him some candy when the battle's over; guy deserves it!

Frostblight Treant Protector: This large wooden buddy is your epic tier summoned ally. His standard action attacks are a little weaker than your MBA, but he immobilizes foes his hits. He has a minor action slowing technique if foes stay near him, and as an opportunity action, he'll slow (save ends) an enemy who moves near him. Unlike the Wood Woad, he doesn't take attacks for you, which is kind of sad.

The Fey Pact of the White Well

Introduced in Dragon 393, aka Wellblades.

Unlike the Fey Pact offered by the Winter Court, the Fey Pact offered by the Lady of the White Well is focused more around radiant moonlight rather than freezing winds. This means you're extra-equipped to handle undead. Unfortunately, in the long run, Winter Court Fey Hexblades will likely be more powerful, but White Well Hexblades can still do their job well.

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Fey Pact Class Features

Pact Reward: Like a Fey Hexblade of Winter, you have Dexterity as a secondary ability, which is a very good thing for a striker.

Pact Boon (Soul Step): Also the same boon as the Winter Court Fey Pact. Which again is a very nice thing.

Pact Weapon: This is where the Fey Pact of the White Well differs. White Well Hexblades receive the Sword of the White Well, which is essentially the Infernal Hexblade's Blade of Annihilation by a different name. Which still isn't a bad thing; not every class receives a d12 one-handed weapon for free.

Moonfire Blade: One of the best At-Will attacks there is. It targets reflex, is a Melee Basic Attack, deals radiant damage, and deals extra damage to enemies who don't try to run away from you. You'll be calling on this a lot.

Well of Light: Unfortunately, this power isn't quite as nice. It deals extra [W] damage, and as a result activates a limited aura around your body that gives enemies near you slight radiant vulnerability. While this sounds nice, the vulnerability never scales, and it doesn't interact with enemies already vulnerable to radiant damage. Still, it's not horrible, and it is a nice perk if you have a leader who can grant you some extra attacks to take advantage of the aura while you have it.

Moonlit Escape: This retributive power damages a foe that attacks you, makes you insubstantial, and gives you a shift. Certainly not bad at all, although the insubstantiality doesn't last long.

Mourning Handmaiden: Like the Wood Woad, a summon that cares about you. It's standard action attack immobilizes enemies, and as an opportunity action, it teleports to your side when you get attacked, taking half the damage of an enemy's attack. While

it doesn't take all the damage, it also doesn't need to eat up an immediate action to take the damage either, so there's that.

Spectral Protector: Who says chivalry is dead? This epic tier summoned ally has a close blast standard action attack that pushes, a minor action attack debuff for enemies that get too close to it, and he'll swap positions with you when you get attacked as an opportunity action, becoming the target of the attack himself. He'll also attack the enemy who hurts him like this, sliding that foe as well. A worthy companion indeed!

The Star Pact

Introduced in Dragon 393, aka Starblades.

Unlike most pacts, Star Hexblades don't really know who they're bargaining with for their fell powers. Doesn't stop them from doing it all the same, but still one wonders.

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Star Pact Class Features

Pact Reward: Star Hexblades have Intelligence as their secondary ability. It can give them good AC, but doesn't control initiative like Dexterity or HP and Surges like Constitution. It's not bad, but not the best either.

Pact Boon (Dire Fate): If an enemy dies next to you, you get a +1 untyped bonus to attack rolls. Unfortunately, like a traditional Star Warlock, you don't get a stacking attack bonus since this boon only activates once per round, but it's still not bad.

Pact Weapon: The Starshadow Blade used by Star Hexblades is essentially a Bastard Sword. So you get a Bastard Sword as a free proficiency. Which is awesome.

Resplendent Blade: A pretty good melee basic attack that deals radiant damage and damages an enemy other than the foe you targeted, which makes Star Hexblades the current best pact to handle multiple enemies at once.

Wield the Warp: You hit a foe, and teleport them to some other square adjacent to you. Obviously, this power is kind of situational, but if you have a knight buddy nearby or some hindering terrain you're next to, this power could prove quite useful. Unlike other Hexblade power, it doesn't have an effect if you miss, so tough.

Gaze into Nothing: If an enemy attacks you, you blind them. Unfortunately, the blinding only happens after the enemy's attack is finished, which means this power should only really be used on enemies who can attack multiple times in a round, like elites or solos. This makes it a weak point on the Star Hexblade.

Thought Phantom: An interesting summon. It's invisible automatically, and has combat advantage against foes who can't see invisible things, which is nice. Its standard action attack inflicts ongoing damage, and it can make you invisible if you get hit, which means you likely won't get hit again in that round. Overall, decent.

Way Walker: The Star Hexblade's epic summon. Its standard action attack dazes enemies, which is a very nice condition for you, it can push enemies who end their turn in its aura, and it can make you or your allies phasing, which is excellent in those battles with a lot of hindering terrain. Not bad to summon now and then.

The Gloom Pact

Introduced in Heroes of Shadow, aka Gloomblades.

Arcane power can be found in all areas of the planes, even in the Shadowfell. The tainted magic that these Hexblades wield rend both the enemies mind and soul, making it difficult for them to make a counterattack against you.

Gloom Pact Hexblades wield arcane powers that are also shadow powers. Of all Hexblades, they most emphasize the controller secondary role that the Hexblade has, their every power (with the exception of Eldritch Bolt) imposing some kind of debuff on an enemy. Because of the nature of their Pact Weapon, Gloom Pact Hexblades should try multiclassing into a Martial Class of some sort; it gets the best Flail support.

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Gloom Pact Class Features

Pact Reward: Like both varieties of Fey Pact Warlock, you have Dexterity as your secondary stat, with all of the benefits this entails, including high initiative and AC.

Pact Boon (Convocation of Shadows): Dropping a foe nets you a round of being insubstantial and phasing. This means that attacks against you deal less damage, and you can walk through walls and foes alike to get to where you need to be. A pretty good boon, all-in-all.

Pact Weapon: Your Scourge of Exquisite Agony, unlike most other Pact Weapons, is a flail and not a blade. It's got +2 proficiency, and reach along with it. This makes optimizing it much different than any other Hexblade Pact, but it can be well worth it in the end.

Flesh Rend: The Gloom Pact Melee Basic Attack, this power is a pretty sweet catch, allowing you both to slide an opponent and to debuff its attack. Like the Infernal Pact attack, its default Necrotic damage is a bit of a downside, but there are enough ways to circumvent it that this power ends up coming out on top overall.

Spirit Flay: This power has less single-target damage when compared to other Pact Encounter attacks, but makes up for it by targeting two foes and dazing foes it hits, really emphasizing your controller sub-role. Your reach weapon is a real boon with this power, allowing you more space in which to get two foes to hit to make the most of this power. And finally, as an effect, you get partial concealment for a round, which is pretty sweet. An overall good addition to your repertoire.

Shadow Scourge: If an enemy attacks you, you hurt them and force them to give up combat advantage. A nice power that your allies can benefit from.

Dark Creeper: Your initial summon doesn't deal good damage (although its output becomes okay if it gets combat advantage, so you'll likely use it more for its utility. It can flank with you, give you concealment via its aura, and upon dying, it makes all foes around it blind. An interesting companion.

Sorrowsworn: Only the most powerful adventurers could boss around the Raven Queen's top minions, and summoning a Sorrowsworn can be a good idea. Its powers include a (save ends) weaken effect with every standard action attack it makes, an opportunity attack that (save ends) dazes, an aura that gives you partial concealment, and the ability to phase through walls whenever it wants. A good summon when you get it.

The Elemental Pact

Introduced in Heroes of the Elemental Chaos, aka Eleblades.

Elemental Hexblades make their pacts with the forces of the elemental chaos, beings like primordials, archons, and genies. This makes them extra suspect among the gods, of course.

The Elemental Hexblade thrives off of damage type abuse, particularly of hitting vulnerabilities of enemies. They can create these vulnerabilities from level 1, making them about the only class that can make use of feats like Wintertouched during the heroic tier.

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Pact Reward: Constitution serves to make you stronger, and on top of that you gain free proficiency with Scale Armor. It's not dexterity, but it's plenty awesome.

Pact Boon (Warding Chaos): You gain a shift based off of your Constitution modifier along with some temporary resistance against elemental damage types when you drop a foe. The resist doesn't scale, which is disappointing, and the shift isn't as good as Soul Step's teleport. It's not a bad boon, but it's not really as good as the others are either.

Pact Weapon: The Blade of Chaos is an Eleblade's weapon of choice, and it's pretty good, essentially a one-handed Falchion.

Unraveling Strike: I have one thing to say about this power: Vulnerability on Demand. The vulnerability never scales, but there are enough feats that depend on striking a foe vulnerable to certain damage types that this is a pretty good grab anyway. The power itself doesn't deal any typed damage though, so you'll need something like Arcane Admixture or a Frost Dagger to actually take advantage of the vulnerability with this power.

Elemental Wrath: This encounter power is pretty awesome. You get to choose its damage type, you negate a foe's resistance to said damage type, and you create a temporary aura around yourself that damages enemies around you. This aura's damage type naturally is the same type that you chose when you attacked with the power, making it combo pretty well with Unraveling Strike on an Action Point.

Elemental Roar: When an enemy attacks you, you cause them a little bit of damage and you cause the enemy to grant combat advantage. It's essentially the Gloomblade's Shadow Scourge by a different name, but that's not necessarily a bad thing.

(Element) Archon Grunt: When you use Summon Warlock's ally, what kind of Archon Grunt you summon (Air, Earth, Fire, or Water) is randomly determined. The archons themselves are fairly solid as far as summons go, but not being able to actually choose what you summon is definitely a pain. After all, you might find yourself in skirmisher-heavy encounter where the Air Archon's immobilizing attack might be helpful, but you end up summoning the fire archon instead.

(Element) Titan Warrior: At epic tier, you make titans (of the Earth, Fire, Frost, or Storm variety) fight for you. Like the Archons, you don't actually choose the kind of Titan you're getting. Naturally, they all have better attacks and such than the Archons, but it still sucks that they're randomly determined for you.

What Came Before: Themes

A Hexblade doesn't arise in a vacuum. What did you do before you swore your fell pact? Were you a swordsman dedicated to a knightly order? A cutpurse ready to swear to anything to improve her lot in life? Maybe a noble who delved too deeply into his studies. Whatever the case, this story element of your character, or theme, can help to distinguish your character and make him or her more deadly than before.

Themes

Devil's Pawn (NWCS): Certainly thematically appropriate, this theme helps to bolster your Controller sub-role with its granted power, a close burst that deals minor damage and debuffs the accuracy and defenses foes who stay near you. You also get a substantial boost when diplomizing with devils and anyone connected to devils, so that's neat. Fire resistance is also handy. The extra powers aren't all that hot, but you have enough good class utility powers anyway.

Elemental Initiate (HotEC): You get an immediate reaction attack when a foe in melee missed you, and extra trained knowledge skill, and a boost to will, all of which are okay. The real reason to take this theme, though, is to get proficiency with Ki Focuses from level 1 without any multiclassing needed. The boosted unarmed attack won't be used by you, naturally.

Fey Beast Tamer (HotF): You want an animal buddy? Have one! Thematically appropriate for Fey Hexblades, but any Hexblade appreciates having an extra body to take hits. Of special note is that your animal buddy forces your foes to grant combat advantage at level 5, which you can appreciate, especially with all the ranged daily powers you get.

Guardian (D399): I know what you're thinking. A Hexblade, caring about someone? But the attack power that this theme grants is a seriously good way to get some extra damage on an enemy's turn, even if you have to take it on the chin to make the strike. Especially nice for Infernal Hexblades, since they can use their Temporary HP to soak the hit.

Infernal Prince (D406): Appropriate thematically, this theme is also a pretty good pick in and of itself if you like dealing fire damage; you gain an accuracy boost with fire attacks, in addition to a power that deals extra damage after you hit with your attacks and debuffs a foe's attacks against you. Higher levels gets you a bonus to bluff and diplomacy, skills you can use well, and the ability to reuse your granted power after you're bloodied. The utility powers aren't that great, but you can ignore those anyway. Overall, pretty strong.

Iron Wolf Warrior (D400): The main reason to take this theme is its granted power, which makes a charge attack you make once per encounter more damaging and a little more controllable. A bonus to nature and perception is negligible (although having good perception never hurts), and the level 10 feature gives you an extra attack if you drop to 0 HP. You don't want that to trigger too often, but an extra attack in a bad situation may just turn things around.

Ironwrought (HotEC): This theme is pretty awesome. Your granted power makes your melee attacks much more accurate, you gain resist all when you're bloodied, and at level 10, using said granted power makes the rest of your attacks accurate for a round. Its level 10 power also gives you a 19-20 crit range for one encounter, which is pretty sweet. If you want an elemental character, consider this.

Knight Hospitalier (D399): Another off-flavor theme, but adding some extra healing to your party isn't a bad idea. The accuracy bonus you get from healing your ally also helps you make your attack, so it's a little strikery anyway.

Pack Outcast (NWCS): A Werewolf Hexblade is pretty interesting thematically, although you'll never use Body of the Wolf in combat. Your main reason for taking this is its level 5 feature, which allows you to gain combat advantage more easily against enemies that you and your allies gang up on, even if you're not flanking.

Purple Dragon (D407): For those Hexblades who swear loyalty to Cormyr, the Focused Discipline stance can help their Melee Basic Attacks be that much more versatile when they need it. Need to make a hit now? You got it. Your ally's in trouble? Give'em a hand. Need a little more mobility? No problem! It certainly helps that Hexblades have no real options as far as stances go. You also can use aid another better (although that's fairly situational), and at level 10, you get 2 benefits from your Focused Discipline stance at once (I predict that offense and mobility will be used together in most cases).

Samurai (D402): Whose to say that the Noble Lord you serve isn't also your Pact giver? The Samurai initial feature makes you close quickly with enemies, and if you get higher initiative than any other enemy, makes your first attack much more likely to crit. This makes this best for high Dexterity Pact like the Fey or Gloom pact, or with races that can boost initiative like the Tiefling. The other features are likely to be a little helpful too.

Sohei (D402): This theme offers you a minor action attack, although it doesn't benefit from your striker bonus damage. There are certainly better ways to get extra attacks.

Tuathan (HotF): For Humans or Half-Elves only. There's a bunch of nice bonuses that this path grants, and the animal shape you can assume is pretty flavorful too.

The Stilled Heart: Daily Powers

Unlike your encounter attacks, most, if not all, of your daily powers are going to be used through your implement. I'm going to be separating each level of daily spells into categories: Charisma and Constitution (and Intelligence, for the few Warlock dailies based off of that stat). Charisma powers can be used by any Hexblade, but generally only Infernal Hexblades will have the Constitution to use powers fueled by that ability (the few Intelligence powers there are can only really be used by Star Hexblades).

Note that at levels 9 and 25, you get either a summoned minion or a better summoned minion, so those levels of dailies aren't really relevant to Hexblades.

Charisma

Armor of Winter's Grasp (HotFK): You use a close burst attack that slows enemies (save ends), and gain a bonus to AC and Fortitude for the rest of the encounter. Solid enough.

Ashen Scourge (DSCG): You damage a foe, force them to grant combat advantage, inflict ongoing damage on them, and pull them if you use this as a ranged power (this can be used either in melee or at a range). It's okay, but it deals fire and necrotic damage, so be sure your foes don't resist either damage type.

Contagion (FRPG): Hitting with it deals ongoing damage to foes which will spread with failed saves. Seeing as this power does nothing but ongoing damage, it's a little finicky for me to recommend very highly.

Crown of Stars (D366): You damage a foe, blind them for a turn if they're bloodied, and can use minor actions for the rest of combat against any enemy to damage them for Charisma modifier damage after an attack vs. Will. Kind of odd, but can work for you.

Curse of the Dark Dream (PHB): Deals solid damage, and allows you to slide that enemy around too. Allows you to slide the enemy too as a minor action sustain, but has a confusing (save ends) clause along with it.

Decree of Khirad (AP): A close blast pseudo-dominate that makes foes attack each other, with some consolation damage against that enemy if they miss or if you miss.

Dread Star (PHB): Damages a foe, immobilizes them, and makes them take a (save ends) penalty to will. Best for Fey Hexblades, since their encounter attack targets will.

Fortune's Reversal (AP): This power is an immediate action that triggers off of a foe getting a critical hit or making a saving throw. The initial damage kind of sucks, but it causes ongoing damage that a foe will take at least once. [A little better](#) for Fey Hexblades, since they also inflict an attack penalty with this power.

Hellfire Blast (HotFK): Deals damage and nothing else. But it's in a close blast, so you can rack up some impressive hits on multiple foes if you play your cards right. Not a waste of space.

Mists of Madness (HotFK): A close burst attack that deals light damage and makes foes hurt each other. It's also reliable too, although it lacks that keyword. Okay, but not amazing.

Prophecy of Zhudun (D366): You damage a foe, and daze them (save ends). Dazing is a pretty powerful condition right at level 1, so this is alright. Note that while the foe is dazed, you and your allies have concealment from it, making it extra helpful.

Star Shackles (D374): Now this one's interesting. The initial damage is weak, but you grab foes and if they want to escape, they'll be targeting your stronger defense no matter what. This power is also sustain standard, and sustaining it deals damage as if you hit, and allows you to target enemies who haven't been grabbed yet. Good control and repeating damage sounds good to me.

Yan-C-Bin's Breath (HotEC): A close blast attack that causes ongoing damage and that leaves a zone of difficult terrain that hurts creatures that end their turns in it. The zone is sustained by a minor action, but there's also a chance of the zone growing bigger or shrinking (50/50 either way). As such, it can disappear in a few turns, so I'm a little leery about it.

Your Glorious Sacrifice (FRPG): This Dark Pact power gets more accurate and can inflict ongoing damage if you deal minor damage to an ally. The initial damage is alright, and even without the Dark Pact rider, this still is a good pickup if you want it.

Constitution

Armor of Agathys (PHB): How useful this power is really depends on your level. At level 1, it's [pretty awesome](#), adding another damage roll to each of your turns. The power lacks the implement keyword though, so that damage doesn't really scale well.

Flames of Phlegethos (PHB): Classic "big damage" power that hammers an enemy with fire damage and inflicts ongoing damage on them. Not bad.

The Lash's Bite (D382): Solid damage for a first-level daily, and it strips a foe of resistances, which can be trouble for Infernal Hexblades. Missing with the power sucks, but you can take damage to get the power back, with an added attack bonus against the foe you missed with this power. Not a bad pick overall.

Tyranny of Flame (AP): You damage a foe, knock them down, and force them to stay down until they save, which they'll find harder to do because of the Infernal Pact rider on this. This is a pretty good pick for Infernal Hexblades at first level.

Vestige of Khaeleth (AP): This power just does not work for you. Skip it.

Vestige of Mount Vaelis (AP): Encounter-power type damage and pseudo-immobilization. Yeah, you don't want this either.

Vestige of Thaxter (D383): Just damage with this attack, and not as much as some other powers that deal damage and have an effect. There's also a shift based on your Intelligence, but how high will an Infernal Hexblade have that?

Vile Brand (D382): Solid level 1 daily damage, and an attack debuff against a lot of foes. The debuff doesn't last too long, though. You can also take damage to not expend the power if you miss with it, like Lash's Bite.

Level 5

Charisma

Crackling Fire (AP): How useful this power is depends on how much you rely on lightning and fire attacks. Hexblades who do (like Infernal pact users) will find this an [acceptable](#) choice, while others may want to [skip this over](#).

Crown of Madness (PHB): The initial damage is low, but as long as an opponent fails its saves, you can use your minor actions to force that foe to hit its allies. Worth a look.

Curse of the Bloody Fangs (PHB): You damage an enemy, and as long as it keeps failing its saves, both it and allies next to it take damage if you spend a minor action. Not bad.

Emerald Shield (HotFK): A decent encounter-long defense buff, although the actual attack part of the power is a little uninspiring. [Worse](#) for hexblades who employ rods, since the shield bonus from this power doesn't stack with their expertise feat.

Flames of the Smoking Crown (DSCG): An interesting power. It deals its damage as an effect; the real meat of the power is in the (save ends) ongoing damage it deals, which you can spread around to other enemies. Since spreading the fire to other foes can depend on your Intelligence modifier, Star Hexblades have the most to gain from this power.

Forceful Assault (FRPG): Damage + (save ends) dazing. It'll work just fine if that's what you want.

Lure of Gibbeth (AP): Low damage, but you can basically pull one enemy you hit with this near you all encounter long. Could be helpful.

Nightshade Dreams (HotFK): Low initial damage, but dazing + ongoing damage. Solid enough.

Roaring Storm of Cania (HotFK): A close blast with cold damage, prone, and sliding. It doesn't have any encounter-long effects though, so it's got that against it.

Tentacles of Cryonax (HotEC): This power is pretty awesome: You create giant, icy tentacles that grab foes and damage those same foes just by being near the tentacles. Like Yan-C-Bin's breath, it takes minor actions to sustain the tentacles, and there's a chance to either add a tentacle or remove a tentacle, but there's a lesser chance of the removal happening.

Twilight of the Soul (FRPG): The initial damage is a little higher, but this power is basically outclassed by Nightshade Dreams.

Venomous Webs (AP): Decent damage, and a (save ends) combat advantage starts this power, and if the enemy moves, it also takes ongoing damage equal to your Intelligence modifier, even if the initial attack missed. Worth a look by Star Hexblades, who actually have an Intelligence modifier worth talking about. This power is basically tailor-made to strike at powerful skirmishers; don't use it on enemies who you think will sit still.

Well of Death (D372): A high damage daily, but only if your ally sacrifices a healing surge. Only really good to use if you have a high-Con defender on your side.

Constitution

Avernian Eruption (PHB): An area burst that inflicts ongoing damage no matter what. Decent enough.

Blistering Torrent (D382): Close blast damage, which deafens foes without a save (kind of meh). Save ends slowing also ensues for Infernal-types who use this power, which makes it a little better.

Hunger of Hadar (PHB): Quite simply, one of the best powers this level. The zone it creates automatically damages foes, and sustaining the zone with a minor action gives you an additional attack against all enemies in the zone. A prime pick for Infernal Hexblades.

Tyrannical Threat (AP): This power is based around the Warlock's Curse, which you don't have. So for you, it's basically a weak close burst attack. You have better options.

Vestige of Baatar (D383): Basically a worse Smoking Crown at first. If you can find a way to penalize an enemy's saving throws, though, you can knock them unconscious. And Coup de Graces are always excellent when you're delivering them.

Vestige of Ugar (AP): Without all the Vestige Pact goodies, this power is all about the zone it creates. Having an autodamage zone isn't a bad thing at all, although Hunger of Hadar does most of it better. What this power does have going for it is that the zone denies concealment; if you encounter a lot of lurkers, this might get a nod over Hunger of Hadar.

Vestige of Xandor (AP): An interesting pickup. It'll do damage no matter if you hit or miss, and also dazes on a miss. Being influenced by Xandor is an interesting condition; it's enough that this might be worth a look, even without the Vestige Pact goodies.

Intelligence

Fury of Gibbeth (D366): An excellent pickup for Star Hexblades. This power has some inherent accuracy built into it, decent damage, and continually forces a foe to make an acrobatics check or fall prone. Used on enemies with bad acrobatics scores (it should be easily to tell which aren't very acrobatic), you can lock down their movement for a while.

No Ability

Hellsworn Blessing (D382): Although flavored for Infernal Hexblades, this power requires no ability score to work. You essentially up an ally's striking potential, which is useful if you're the second striker in a party. It doesn't work on you, though, so tough. Infernal Hexblades, in addition to the bonus to attack and damage rolls, confer fire resistance too.

Level 15

Charisma

Armor of Summer's Glory (HotFK): You get a decent bonus to all defenses (only against melee and ranged attacks though - it doesn't work against bursts or blasts), you become a giant lightbulb, and your secondary attack is... okay. Fixed damage means you can't really improve it a whole lot, but it's a minor action, which is okay.

Curse of the Golden Mist (PHB): This power denies a foe its standard action, but it deals no damage. And however much of a

secondary controller you are, you are a striker primarily. Dealing damage is what you're supposed to DO.

Dark Lady's Gift (FRPG): Weak initial damage, with ongoing (5) psychic damage that damages enemies around the victim when the victim fails to save against it. A little gimmicky, compared to some of the more reliable options this level.

Dark Rain of Mutuz-Vot (AP): Area burst damage, and it creates a zone that automatically (save ends) blinds enemies who enter it or start their turn in it. A fantastic way to keep yourself and your allies safe for a battle; if the enemy saves against the zone, just have you or an ally push, pull, slide, or teleport them back in there.

Dream of Mual-Tar (HotEC): A huge close blast that induces ongoing damage, and as long as the ongoing damage persists, creates near the target take damage as well (this includes your allies; be careful about that). The blast also creates a zone that induces vulnerability to Thunder and Lightning, which suits Eleblades just fine. Sustaining the zone takes a minor action, and has a small chance to either give creatures in the zone shifts or slow creatures in the zone. There's a lot going for this power, but it can also be used against allies as well.

Far Realm Glimpse (D366): Targets fortitude, but has some accuracy built in. Single target damage is okay, and dazes the enemy. If that enemy doesn't spend its one action running away from you, it takes even more damage and gets dazed again... somehow.

Kimmerial's Smile (FRPG): Damage a foe, and daze them. The daze doesn't end until the victim hits with an attack. So be sure to have you and your allies debuff that one foe's attack as much as possible, to enjoy the sweet daze effect even longer.

Plague of Frogs (AP): Another area burst attack that creates a damaging zone. And like the others, not a bad pickup.

Touch of the Two Moons (DSCG): Good single target damage, and you can push enemies near that foe quite a long distance away. A good way to isolate an enemy, or disrupt a troublesome formation. Worth a look.

Visage of Zhudun (D366): No initial attack here: just creates an autodamage zone that, when you sustain it with a minor action, gives you an extra attack against all enemies within the zone. Overall, an excellent pick this level.

Vortex of Fire (HotFK): Okay initial damage in an area burst, and create a damaging zone. Sustaining the zone doesn't give you extra attacks like some other attacks here, but you can move it around with move actions, so it has its points.

Whispers of the Void (HotFK): Decent initial damage, and (save ends) dazing. But while the foe is dazed, you can also mess with their one action, causing them to spend their turn doing nothing, lash out at a random creature, and force them to attack an ally. Definitely worth a look.

Constitution

Blasphemous Utterance (D382):

Caution of Dispater (AP): Not a bad pickup at all. Initial Damage is okay, but the real good part is the autodamage the foe takes as long as only you are attacking him (I am correct in that only Infernal Hexblades are looking here, right?).

Evil Expulsion (D382): Deals the same damage as Two Moons does, but lacks its extreme pushing power.

Fireswarm (PHB): Deals decent damage on the first hit, but sustaining it with a standard action makes it lose some of its punch. Probably not what you're looking for here, since there are other powers that deal damage on its level AND have other effects.

Hellfire Soul (D372): Single-target damage on this power is okay, but what you really want is for this spell to be the finishing blow; if you do, you have a dominated minion for the rest of the encounter. So be sure to reserve it for bloodied enemies on their last legs.

Tendrils of Thuban (PHB): An area burst with excellent damage, which immobilizes foes. On top of that, it creates a zone that grants you an extra attack against foes in the zone when you sustain it. And the immobilization means its likely that you'll get those extra attacks. At top pick for Infernal Hexblades this level.

Thirsting Maw (PHB): Deals solid single target damage, and gives you free healing. Sustaining the power with a minor action gives you automatic damage until the foe makes a saving throw. And each of those minor actions you used to damage the foe? More free healing for you. This can be a lifesaver.

Vestige of Leraje (AP): Weaksauce single target damage + ongoing 5. Come on, this isn't Heroic Tier anymore. Step it up!

Vestige of Solis (AP): You strike a single enemy with meh damage and ongoing 10, and then you unleash a secondary attack that dazes and defeats (save ends) that foe and a bunch of enemies around it. Okay, but not great.

Vestige of the Unknown Arcanist (D383): Weak damage, but allows you to disappear a foe for a few rounds. If you want one foe gone so that your party can all focus on another, this is something to check out.

Level 19

Charisma

Baleful Eye of Imix (HotEC): This power conjures an eye that inflicts ongoing damage on creatures who start their turns next to it, which makes this a pretty sweet power for parties that have a lot of forced movement effects. It also has a secondary attack attached to it that deals good damage and pulls enemies near the eye next to it, so that the ongoing damage is inflicted when their turn starts. Sustaining the eye requires a minor action, and while it is possible that you might not be able to use the secondary power for one turn, there is also the chance for some autodamage as well. Overall, quite solid.

Delusions of Loyalty (PHB): Hitting the foe with this attack causes that enemy to attack whoever attacked you last. You keep the enemy hitting those who hurt you with minor actions. An overall nice power this level.

Dread Briars (D375): Weak initial damage, with ongoing 10 necrotic damage and immobilization (save ends). Fey Hexblades get to ignore necrotic resistance with this attack, but honestly? You've got much better choices this level.

Force of Nature (AP): This power deals big damage, knocks a foe prone, and pushes it away. Star Hexblades can push farther than anyone, but it's nice for any Hexblade who wants a massive one-off attack.

Maelstrom of Despair (AP): The initial attack is decent, but the effect, which punishes foes for rolling saving throws, is what this power is about. Since it scales with the Intelligence modifier, Star Hexblades like this a lot, but Fey Hexblades get a boost to their saving throws when sustaining the effect.

Memory of Blades (HotFK): The big brother of Emerald Shield, in that it provides a shield bonus to AC and Reflex and punishes foes for attacking you. Its punishment attack includes multiple foes though, so that's new.

Nightshade Cloud (HotFK): Decent initial damage, and you make it so that foes can't shift and can't be near your allies or else their dazed. You also create a zone that you can slide enemies in. Not too bad, overall.

Passionate Betrayal (FRPG): A (save ends) dominate, that is penalized for every unbloodied non-minion enemy in the battle. Throw this out at the beginning of the fight, and you should have the victim dominated for a while. Just be sure not to attack the target while it's dominated: it gets an extra saving throw against the effect if you do that. The power also (save ends) dazes if you miss with it, although I hope it doesn't come to that too often.

Rain of Lead (HotFK): Decent initial damage in a close blast, and you restrain the foes (save ends). Unfortunately, if those foes take 20 or more damage, they get extra saving throws against the technique. There's also the difficult terrain created by the power, but you inadvertently end your own effect by hitting the enemy? Not cool.

Voice of the Dictator (DSCG): A (save ends) domination power that damages the dominated foe when it fails a saving throw, and gives temporary HP to your allies. Good, if you can manage to scrounge up so saving throw penalties against the enemy who is dominated.

Wrath of Acamar (PHB): You damage a foe and disappear them to a starry realm, where they can't effect the battle and take damage. A saving throw brings the enemy back, but by then hopefully you've taken care of the enemies you needed to.

Constitution

Vestige of Amaan (AP): Damage a foe, immobilize him, and give him vulnerable 10 all (save ends). Not a bad daily, even without the Vestige pact riders.

Vestige of Kronata (D383): Weak initial damage with ongoing damage in an area burst. This just doesn't cut it now.

Vestige of the Burned Emperors (AP): Deals nothing but damage, and the modifier to damage for this power is Intelligence, which isn't a priority for Infernal Hexblades. If you want a big damage power, may I recommend Force of Nature?

Void Star (AP): An interesting power. Inflicts ongoing damage, and allows you to steal any HP that enemy would gain. Save this for regenerating foes.

No Ability

Minions of Malbolge (PHB): A successor of sorts to Armor of Agathys. You get 25 temporary hit points, and you automatically damage foes who come near you, along with pushing them. The autodamage and pushing end with the temporary hit points, but its still not a bad spell to have in your repertoire.

Level 29

Charisma

Armor of the Void (HotFK): You get a pretty impressive bonus to AC, and damage foes who still manage to hurt you while teleporting them away. You can end the ongoing bonus for a one-off attack that teleports foes around, but I don't like that you have to lose the AC bonus to get it. Still not a bad pick, though.

Arrangement of Disorder (AP): You teleport foes and allies alike with this power. Interesting for rearranging the battlefield as you need it.

Caiphon's Abominable Melody (D366): An absolutely brutal daily attack. It has accuracy built into it, forces 3 conditions on an enemy (that they have to make separate saving throws against). As long as at least one condition persists, the foe takes more damage on its turn. And finally, you get to reduce damage made against you to 0 half the time you're hit. Sure, you or your ally takes a little damage while the enemy is still suffering an effect, but this is still a great capstone to have on your side.

Curse of the Dark Delirium (PHB): Like domination, but better. You don't deal damage directly with this power, but if you can control an elite monster that can attack with a minor action, you might be able to do good with this.

Dregoth's Ashen Curse (DSCG): Mediocre initial damage, but you get ongoing damage and slowing (save ends). And when the foe save against that, they get the same conditions + (save ends) weakening as an aftereffect. Not too bad.

Eyes of the Victim (AP): The damage on this power isn't impressive for an epic power, but its effect is. You inflict the foe with blindness, which can spread to other enemies who start their turns next to the victim. Said foes also gain the blindness contagion, so they in turn can spread it to other enemies. For parties that can force foes to move a lot, this is an interesting pick.

Fury of Ogremoch (HotEC): This power causes immobilization as an effect, which can then progress to restraining and finally petrification. Enemies making a save against the effects cause damage to themselves and enemies around them. Definitely a control-type power.

One Final Sacrifice (FRCG): A pure damage power. Damage is kind of eh at first, but gets better if you cause allies pain. The damage you cause to allies will always be worse than the extra damage you cause with the power, making this an iffy choice at best.

Soul Cutter (HotFK): Yet another pure power option for you, but this is worth a look. First off, as a Weapon vs. NAD attack (yes, you actually use your Pact Weapon for this daily power), it's pretty accurate. It also allows you to reroll any damage dice you don't like, so you'll probably end up causing some good damage with it.

Spread the Corrosion (FRPG): Another power that causes nothing but damage. It's kind of meh, but its to three enemies. Still not that good for you, though.

Constitution

Doom of Delban (PHB): You summon a giant laser from the heavens, to smite all foes against you. This is one of the big hitters of this level, since you can sustain it with standard actions (and increase its damage with each sustain). Sustaining it hurts you though, so be careful. Still an excellent pick this level.

Forbiddance of the Ninth (AP): You create a wall of flames, which damages friend and foe alike. You also gain a pretty awesome minor action attack for the duration of the power. Finally, you can move it next to you with a move action, which can be helpful. A good pick for Infernal Hexblades.

Hurl Through Hell (PHB): This power has an awesome name, and is just awesome in general. Heavy damage, and you remove the foe from play for a few rounds (if you pay the minor actions to do so). The enemy returns stunned and prone. Definitely a strong option for an Infernal Hexblade.

Vestige of the Earthen Maker (D383): Weak initial damage and ongoing 10, which is weak for epic. Sure it ignores resistances, but this just isn't a good pick for you.

Vestige of the Master of the Hidden Flame (AP): Without the Vestige Pact riders, this is just a pure damage power. And you have better choices for a power like that at this level. Skip it.

Vestige of Zuriel (AP): Basically the same as the Hidden Flame power for you. Which makes it worthless.

Walking Through Shadow: Utility Powers

Warlock utility powers tend to be rather versatile. They can teleport you, create zones that deter enemy movement, reduce damage you take, and allow you to take flight, among other things. Since your utility power at level 22 is fixed, we won't be looking at utilities of that level.

Level 2

Assassin's Bane (DSCG): You create a fairly big zone that makes it so opponents can't hide or teleport. Definitely useful if you're the sort that hates it when the big bad of a dungeon teleports away at the last minute.

Beguiling Tongue (PHB): This power will likely see more use in skill challenges than in battle. Still, Bluff and Intimidate have combat applications, and getting a boost to those or Diplomacy could be helpful for you.

Caiphon's Leap (AP): This power is triggered by a class feature that you don't have. Pass.

Charm of Hearts (D382): You don't provoke opportunity attacks at all, and you have a defense bonus to boot. Not bad for a daily power, but the fact that you have to keep paying minor actions to keep it going is kind of a bummer.

Devil's Trade (AP): You give yourself temporary vulnerability to all damage to autosucceed on a save you make at the end of the turn. The vulnerability might come back to bite you in the rear, but reliably saving at the right moment could be decisive.

Ethereal Stride (PHB): A short-range teleport coupled with a defense boost. This is a great power to use if you need to get the hell out of dodge, and should be considered.

Eyes of the Spider Queen (AP): Getting darkvision for an encounter is nice, and penetrating invisibility is cool. Only, you can only see invisible things right next to you, and the darkvision isn't permanent. You can probably pick something better.

Fevered Certainty of Caiphon (D366): Skip it. A boost of skill checks is good, but you lose out on will defense when you use it, and it's a daily power. That kind of tradeoff would work if this was an encounter power, but a daily?

Fey Bargain (AP): This one should be avoided. A bonus to attacks is nice, but it's not worth failing a save automatically. Especially in the higher tiers, where the effects levied against you get more and more intense.

Fiendish Resilience (PHB): You get temporary HP with this. It's primarily aimed at Infernal Hexblades, although they really don't need it, seeing as Soul Feast is perfectly good at handing THP to them.

Ruinous Phrase (D382): This power has the niche of destroying inanimate objects, like crates and bottles. It scales up with level, and could certainly be useful... maybe. Works a little better for Infernal Hexblades.

Shadow Veil (PHB): A big bonus to stealth checks. Fey Hexblades can get mileage out of this, and Infernal and Star Hexblades can use this to totally not fail at Stealth checks.

Spectral Fade (HotFK): Invisibility for a turn. There are worse powers.

Spider Scuttle (HotFK): You get a get a climb speed for 2 turns, and also can crawl fast too. Interesting, and could be handy if you find yourself in need of climbing.

Stony Roots (HotEC): For one encounter, you ignore forced movement and can make saving throws to avoid falling prone. Definitely situational, but handy when foes that try to push you around come up.

Wrathful Aspect (HotFK): This one's good on and off of the battlefield. In social skill challenges, a big bonus to intimidate is a good thing, and in battle, opponents get hurt when they hurt you.

Level 6

Astral Eyes (HotFK): Brief darkvision, and a small boost to perception and insight. Interesting, but if you're the party's main perception user, there's a problem.

Chaos Armor (HotEC): You gain resist 10 to an element of your choosing for one encounter a day, and enemies who hit you take damage equal to your Constitution modifier of that same element. Obviously, only Hellblades and Eleblades will like this, but it's good for them.

Dark One's Own Luck (PHB): A once per day reroll of an attack roll, skill check, ability check, or saving throw. And when you need a reroll, you really need it. Even if it's daily, this is still a strong choice.

Fate's Frayed Thread (D382): The Warlock's Curse section of the power is useless to you, and the attack penalty comes too late to really help, but combat advantage is nice. Still kind of not that good, though.

Fey Switch (HotFK): You and an ally swap places. This could really be useful when used at the right moment.

Iron Aspect of Dispatier (HotFK): Resist 5 all + ignoring forced movement is definitely a handy benefit.

Life Siphon (AP): Face it. At some point, your pals are gonna get hurt. Might as well make the best of the bad situation, turning an allies' pain into an attack bonus (and temporary HP, for Infernal Hexblades).

Mercurial Form (AP): This is an odd one. You can't be marked, you count as tiny for squeezing purposes (and how often does squeezing happen?), and you can escape grabs easily. Even with all the benefits, it's still really situational, and probably not worth a slot.

Racing Fire of Ulban (AP): You move twice your speed. Sometimes, you just gotta be somewhere right now. This helps.

Red Leeches of Nihal (D366): When a creature near you spends a healing surge or action point, you get a load of temporary HP

(equal to your second wind value). An interesting power, and potential helpful, if you like being bloodied, or something like that.

Rending Fear of Khirad (D366): This is a pure roleplaying power, seeing as it's only useable on helpless enemies and forces them to answer questions. Not sure why an intimidate check wouldn't work as well, but whatever.

Sand Shape (DSCG): This power is purely used for exploration and/or sneaking, since the sandy form you take on can't be attacked. Still, it's good at what it does.

Shadowslip (FRPG): If an opponent misses you, you get a teleport that scales with your Charisma. A good pick.

Shroud of Black Steel (PHB): You gain a bonus to AC and Fortitude in return for a penalty to speed. You have some ranged options, which makes the speed penalty at least bearable.

Spider Climb (PHB): Completely obsoleted by the Level 2 utility spell Spider Scuttle.

Spider Queen's Caress (AP): An encounter-long bonus to saves and stealth checks isn't a bad thing at all.

Unspeakable Bond (D382): If you're hit by an attack, you can pawn the damage off onto one of your allies. The ally then gets a big bonus to attack and damage rolls (and defenses, if you're an Infernal Hexblade). If you have an ally whose okay soaking damage for you, this is a strong pick, especially if you're running low on healing surges.

Level 10

Accursed Souls (D372): Requires Warlock's Curse, which you don't have. Next!

Ambassador Imp (PHB): A very long-range messenger for you. It's mostly useful if you're the kind who likes making allies and keeping them in the loop about your adventures. Otherwise, there's other choices.

Bond of Brotherhood (AP): When an ally spends a surge, you get free healing. Nice!

Brimstone Caress (D382): You can teleport an ally with one of your minor actions, and even give him concealment if you're an Infernal Hexblade. Unfortunately, you cause the ally some minor fire damage; this means that if your allies have fire resistance, this might be [one to consider](#).

Curse of Nessus (AP): Turn a miss into a bad situation, since this power significantly debuffs the saving throws of an enemy you miss. Something to consider.

Darkest Mirror (FRPG): You see invisible enemies as if they were visible, but normally visible creatures (including your allies) are invisible to you. Honestly, I don't think the tradeoff is worth it, especially if some leader or defender allies have goodies for you that depend on line of sight.

Destiny Inversion (AP): Turns an attack against you into ongoing damage equal to half the damage dealt. So you're basically gambling to get lower damage against you. A bit much of a risk, in my opinion, seeing how out of hand it could get with a few bad rolls.

Duelist's Dance (HotFK): You enter a stance that lets you teleport if a foe misses you. Okay.

Ethereal Sidestep (PHH1): This power basically gives you teleportation as a move action. It's just one now, but there are ways of tricking out your teleport speed, and when it's modified, this power will show its worth.

King's Step (DSCG): The flying and being insubstantial during that flight is nice for you. The warlock's curse part, not so much.

Murky Deep (HotEC): Basically, you create a swamp in a close burst 3 once per day. Said swamp lets you shift pretty quickly in it, and it slows enemies. Enemies that have a swim speed ignore the swamp, though. It also takes minor actions to sustain it. Overall, I wouldn't bother; there are plenty of good picks this level.

Shadow Form (PHB): You can fly, are insubstantial, and can't take standard actions. It's likely this power will be used more for exploration than for combat, although it is a good "get outta here quick" power.

Shielding Shades (PHB): One attack against you per day deals no damage whatsoever. Still one of my favorite warlock powers.

Smothering Darkness (HotFK): Like the Drow's Cloud of Darkness, but longer. This power is very ally unfriendly, so it's probably better to avoid it.

Spined Devils' Boon (HotFK): Encounter-long flight and disincentive for enemies to hit me? I'll take it.

Transcendent Dance (AP): Close to an **autopick** for Star Hexblades. **Not so hot** for everyone else.

Troublesome Aid of Caiphon (D366): Troublesome indeed! Doubling your healing surge value once an encounter is definitely great, but be sure not to head into death save territory! This might be better saved for after combat, when the death save thing isn't likely to come into play before you have a short or extended rest.

Warlock's Leap (PHB): Mid-range teleport that you don't need line of sight to use. Useful in infiltration missions and such.

Level 16

Amaan's Continuance (AP): Although you certainly hope that you'll never hit 0 hit points, it's bound to happen sooner or later. This power lets you fought on a round after you should collapse from hitting 0, which means you have a round to use your second wind or have an ally heal you.

Caiphon's Disquieting Liberty (D366): If you're slowed, immobilized, or restrained, you can take 5 damage to end it. That's more than a fair price, I say.

Cloak of Shadow (PHB): Another "insubstantial flight" power. This one is per-encounter though, although the part about not attacking in shadow form still applies, sadly enough.

Death Shroud Aspect (HotFK): Completely outclassed by Hero's Defense, which does what this power does and more.

Diabolic Escape (HotFK): Teleport 10 is something awesome. Attaching it to a close burst beforehand that makes enemies vulnerable to fire? Even better!

Eye of the Warlock (PHB): This is a fun one. Basically, you can see through an enemy's eyes, and can attack as if you were in the enemy's space. This has some interesting applications, such as a Star Hexblade using Wield the Warp to teleport an enemy across the battlefield to their side. Long story short, an interesting pick.

Fail Me Not (DSCG): This power looks like it would be more at home on a leader. Still, it's an okay choice for Star Hexblades, although it does eat minor actions to keep it going.

Guise of the Laughing Fool (HotFK): You get a small bonus to speed and you can't be targeted by melee or ranged attacks, as long as you don't attack anyone. Useful, if you need a turn to spend your second wind or something.

Heart of the Storm (HotEC): You push foes around you as a move action, and then you fly 8 squares. Not too bad, overall.

Hero's Defense (AP): You buff your strongest defense, and then the enemy's attack targets that defense. And even if the attack still hits, it deals half damage. This is definitely something to look at.

Infuriating Elusiveness (PHB): A short-range teleport followed up by a round of invisibility. A good pick.

Painful Transference (AP): This power ends one (save ends) effect on you, at the expense of damaging some of your allies. But honestly, if the effect was something like stunning or domination, I'm sure they won't complain that much. And since this power takes no actions to use, you actually can use it to end stunning and domination.

Ruinous Resistance (FRPG): You give an ally vulnerable 5 to a damage type so that you can get resist 15 to it. Seriously? Don't be a jerk.

Vile Resonance (D382): You gain vulnerable 5 all for what? To slide one square with your attacks for Infernal Hexblades, and nada

for everyone else, since you lack Warlock's curse. Skip this.

Warp Space (AP): You and a couple allies teleport to different spaces on the battlefield, ready to kick butt. And this is an encounter power. Glorious.

Hour Before Daylight: Other Powers

What is this section here for? To denote powers you'll get from other sources. Some of you will be humans, and want a Warlock At-Will. Others will be Half-Elves, wondering if there's any dilettante powers that Hexblades can make use of. Still others will have a paragon path that allows you to take a Level 7 Warlock power, or will take the Reserve Maneuver feat to get one anyway. And there are also skill powers.

Basically, this is all the other powers a Hexblade may use.

Human Extra At Will Charisma

Chromatic Bolt (HotEC): A psychic attack against reflex that deals a little damage against another enemy based on your Constitution modifier, which means it would work best for Infernal and Elemental Hexblades. However, if you want to damage multiple foes, Echoing Dirge is a much better choice than this.

Echoing Dirge (Hos): This power is a pretty potent choice for Hexblades. In fact, I'd say that outside of Hellish Rebuke, it's their strongest choice. Why? In short, it allows Hexblades to deal with multiple foes, something they really can't do unless they're a Gloomblade or they use a Daily. Additionally, the ability to deal with swarms is helpful.

Eldritch Blast (PHB): It's Eldritch Bolt, sans force damage. It has some feat support, but not enough to warrant choosing it over something else.

Eldritch Strike (PHH1): An interesting choice. While Hexblades already possess an excellent Melee basic attack, having 2 of them, each for a different situation could be handy, especially since most pacts don't have an at-will that slides a foe. There's one problem, though; since this power lacks the Implement Keyword, you'll have to take 2 expertise feats to keep it up to date. Not a problem for Fey Hexblades, who may take their expertise feat for the extra damage it provides anyway, and even Heavy Blade Expertise's bonus against OA's isn't entirely worthless. It's just something to keep in mind if you want to make use of this. Naturally, this power is outclassed by Flesh Rend in just about every way, making it **worthless** for Gloomblades.

Eyebite (PHB): Low damage, but provides you with invisibility, which can definitely be handy. Targeting will defense and dealing psychic damage are also good points as well.

Fascinating Shadows (D406): Like Echoing Dirge, this is a Close Blast attack that deals psychic damage, only this pulls instead of pushes. It also deals Intelligence Modifier damage to enemies that try to hurt you, which makes this a pretty good choice for Star Pact Hexblades. As for other pacts, whether you choose this over Echoing Dirge depends on whether you prefer pulling to pushing.

Gift to Avernus (D386): Normally the alternate power a Infernal Warlock could have, any Hexblade can use it. Not sure why you'd want to though; sure, you can damage yourself to reroll the attack. Beyond that, it's not really much different from Eldritch Bolt.

Hand of Blight (DSCG): A decent power. It works in melee or at a range, targets Fortitude (some foes do actually have a weak Fortitude defense) and gives you combat advantage. You can't augment it like a Sorcerer King Warlock can, but you can make use of it.

Mind Shadows (HoS): Same damage as Eldritch Bolt, with the added effect that causes an enemy to not be able to see nearby foes. The Psychic Damage is nice, but overall, it's not really the best you can do.

Shadow Claws (HoS): This attack deals about as much damage as Eldritch Bolt, and adds an extra effect that causes a foe that moves to take extra damage. It deals cold damage to boot, and targeting Fortitude makes this a pretty good power to use on

Skirmishers. A lost cause for Infernal Hexblades, but Fey, Star, or Gloom Hexblades might want to look at it.

Spiteful Glamor (FRPG): A psychic attack vs. will that deals more damage to a foe at full HP. The fact that it does nothing but damage is really a strike against it though; if you want a power that deals psychic damage, look at Mind Shadows or Eyebite. At least they let you screw with an opponents ability to target you.

Constitution

Dire Radiance (PHB): Targets fortitude, and punishes an enemy that moves closer to you. Interesting, but there's really only one choice for human Infernal Hexblades anyway.

Eyes of the Vestige (AP): This is one of the best At-Will powers a traditional Warlock could ask for. But without the Warlock's Curse feature, this power is outclassed by Spiteful Glamor in every way. Avoid it.

Hellish Rebuke (PHB): A strong power, through and through. Although the initial damage is low, doubling it is a powerful benefit. The Infernal Hexblades who use this will also have the toughness to actually take the damage needed to set off the double hit too. The strongest choice for humans who deal with the devil.

Half-Elf Dilettante

Burning Spray (PHB2): While this Close Blast attack won't gain your Pact Reward Damage bonus, it can still be useful for hitting multiple foes or taking out swarms whenever you need to.

Song of Serendipity (HotF): This power won't work for you unless you also take the Master of Stories Feat, but if you do, this will allow you to hand out attack buffs to your allies every time you hit with your At-Will attacks. Buffing your leader tends to make the leader buff you more, so it's a win-win! Half-Elves that opt to go this route should ignore Versatile Master, since they won't need to use this power more than once an encounter.

Twin Strike (PHB): The definitive Ranger power, you can use this if you use a Weapliment in your off-hand, like a Dagger or a Short Sword. You'll likely want to take a feat to make this power use Charisma, and it doesn't gain your Pact Reward bonus. Still, it's not a terrible choice.

Racial Utility Powers

Dwarf Utility Powers

Avalanche Rush, Lv. 2 (D402): You should never bull rush anyone. Ever.

Dwarven Pride, LV 6 (D402): You get a damage buff when you are forced to move. Kind of situational, really, although a better pick if you have Bard that can slide you around as a friend.

Stone Stubborn, Lv. 10 (D402): Would you rather be stunned or dominated, or would you rather be dazed?

Mountainborn Tenacity, Lv. 16 (D402): If you drop, you can spend a surge and get temporary damage resistance that only Hellblades will care about.

Half-Elf Utility Powers

Help is Here, Lv. 2 (D402): As a minor action, you use aid another on an adjacent ally. It's a versatile action type, so if you feel like giving a buddy a hand, it can be kinda useful.

Sudden Switch, Lv. 6 (D402): A pretty situational power, to be honest. Its use depends on how often you and an ally clump together.

Lockstep, Lv. 10 (D402): Actually, this is pretty nice. You get a big shift, and an ally gets a big shift. Only reason I hesitate to

recommend it is the plethora of teleport options that you get at this level.

Persuasive Words, Lv. 16 (D402): You get a big bonus to all your social skills, and not much else. Unless you do a lot of talking, skip this.

Halfling Utility Powers

Happy Feet, Lv. 2 (D402): If a foe's move, you can shift as an immediate reaction. Honestly, it's not a good way to spend your immediate action, in my opinion.

Minor Threat, Lv. 6 (D402): An encounter stance power that gives you a bonus to defenses and stealth when you're bloodied. The defense bonus comes when you most need it, which makes this fairly solid.

Pay Your Debts, Lv. 10 (D402): An at-will power used as an immediate action that gives an ally combat advantage against a foe no longer flanked. Not a trap, but you have better options.

Underfoot Hustle, Lv. 16 (D402): This is a pretty good pick. You get a huge shift that can go through enemy spaces, that nets you combat advantage. If you don't get this at level 16, get it at level 22; it's probably a better pick for you than Master of Magic.

Hamadryad Utility Powers

Body of Solid Oak, Lv. 2 (HotF): You get temporary HP, a bonus to defenses, and a weakness to fire. Overall, I'd avoid it.

Wooden Sanctuary, Lv. 6 (HotF): While I can get behind spending healing surge and removing yourself from harm's way for a turn, the fact is that you won't always be near a tree. That situationality kills this power.

Spirit Form, Lv. 10 (HotF): You get phasing and insubstantial for 2 turns, on top of a 2 square shift. Solid enough.

Feyborn Majesty, Lv. 16 (HotF): An emergency button to hit when you get bloodied, and it does its job okay.

Fey Mind Mirror, Lv. 22 (HotF): Take this power and love it. Reflecting a foe's daze, domination, or stun right back at them is pure win, and a lot better than Master of Magic.

Human Utility Powers

Extra Effort, Lv. 2 (D402): Rerolling a save, even with a save penalty later, can be pretty game changing. Consider this.

Rapid Move, Lv. 6 (D402): Once per day, you can take a move action as a minor action. Okay, but you have enough ranged attacks as to where the extra move shouldn't be that vital.

Flush with Success, Lv. 10 (D402): After hitting a foe, you get a free shift and some temporary hit points which scale up with levels. This power's pretty awesome that way.

Courageous Determination, Lv. 16 (D402): If you get bloodied and a foe hits you, you can shift, spend a healing surge, and get a bonus to defenses for a round. Okay, but even with all that, it seems a little weak for a daily power.

Pixie Utility Powers

Ventriloquist Prank, Lv. 2 (HotF): You either slide a foe, or make it grant combat advantage. You can't control which you get to do, which makes it not very reliable overall.

Pixie Invisibility, Lv. 6 (HotF): On-demand invisibility. Handy if you're stuck near foes and want to make an escape.

Gift of Flight, Lv. 10 (HotF): This allows your allies to fly for a few turns. A neat trick if you want to help them out, but it doesn't do anything for your own mobility.

Fairy Dance, Lv. 16 (HotF): Once per day, you can activate an Aura that lets allies shift and slows enemies. You should have no trouble targeting your foes, and you can already aid ally movement with your racial power, making this kind of a dud for you.

Pixie Teleport Trick, Lv. 22 (HotF): Throughout one encounter, you can teleport after a foe attacks you every time. Better than Master of Magic because it lasts the entire encounter.

Satyr Utility Powers

Satyr's Leap, Lv. 2 (HotF): This power gives you big bonuses to jump, which helps make up for a Hexblades sucky jumping abilities. Not bad.

Bending the Balance, Lv. 6 (HotF): Once per day, you increase a foe's damage a little or increase an ally's healing a little. It's a small effect for a daily power, so skip this.

Tune of Enchantment, Lv. 10 (HotF): You can't use this, because it requires you to play an instrument to use it. Seeing as your hands will be occupied by your implement and your pact weapon, you won't fulfill the power's requirement.

Foes into Friends, Lv. 16 (HotF): This power's actually pretty sweet. After you or any one of your team drops a foe, you get to dominate it with no strings attached (other than the foe dying, of course). You get an extra body to harm foes and absorb another attack, making this pretty solid.

Channel the Unseelie, Lv. 22 (HotF): This power is better than Master of Magic by a mile. You get constant concealment no matter what, dim light makes you invisible, and you take half damage from necrotic attacks. A solid power to pop during an undead encounter, or in a dark cave even. Basically, take it.

Shade Utility Powers

Fleeting Shade, Lv. 2 (HoS): Invisibility + a bonus to Stealth checks is a decent pickup for a utility power.

Twilight Torch, Lv. 6 (HoS): A zone of dim light is useful for making some situational feats much less situational, but for the most part, you already have darkvision, making this pretty pointless.

Shadow Monsters, Lv. 10 (HoS): You conjure 4 mobile enemy debuffing creatures. Not too bad overall.

Shadow Jump Lv. 16, (HoS): Hey, teleportation! Too bad Diabolic Escape totally outclasses it!

Five Darknesses, Lv. 22 (HoS): If you've made it this far as a Shade Hexblade, then you'll want this. Five Darknesses is one of the few powers that can overwrite your auto-picked Master of Magic, and it's actually pretty good, granting temporary hit points and a substantial mobility boost every encounter.

Vryloka Utility Powers

Unnatural Vitality, Lv. 2 (HoS): Although listed as a daily power, this is basically a permanent bonus to death saving throws and saving throws against ongoing damage. How much you need this power is determined by what foes are thrown against you, and how often you drop.

Bloodwolf Form, Lv. 6 (HoS): A minor action polymorph effect. Not attacking in the transformed state sucks, but getting darkvision, ignoring difficult terrain, and getting substantial bonuses to skills that Hexblades don't normally use could be worth it. The fact that you can switch forms while the power lasts makes it not a complete trap.

Crimson Wings, Lv. 10 (HoS): This power is all about upward mobility. You can't attack, but you can fly, which makes this more useful for exploring than for actually fighting.

Vryloka Bloodbond, Lv. 16 (HoS): Picking this up allows you to resurrect the dead. Certainly an odd pickup for a striker, but you'll save the party money that might have gone towards a resurrection ritual. Still, deliberately weakening yourself, even for an ally's sake, seems a little counterintuitive for a striker.

Crimson Death, Lv. 22 (HoS): Yes. Yes, you want this very bad. It's a daily like Master of Magic, but its effects last an entire encounter, and they definitely add to your striking potential. Inflicting ongoing damage with your At-Will attacks is definitely something strikers would like.

Warlock Encounter Powers

Level 7 Warlock Powers

Charisma

All the Sand, All the Stars (AP): A Close Blast attack with fair damage that dazes enemies. It also has a Star Pact Rider that makes it deal extra damage equal to the Intelligence modifier. A great pick for [Star Hexblades](#), and decent for everyone else.

Confounding Laughter (D390): Poor damage, but getting your enemies to smack each other is always fun, and if your enemy misses, it takes more damage. An okay pick.

Cyst of Darkness (HoS): Only deals damage, and not very much of it. Don't take this.

Deathboon (FRPG): Decent initial damage, and if you kill an enemy with this, you get bonus damage on your next attack. If you have a good sense of when an enemy is about to die, this can be an interesting power to use.

Death's Commands (FRPG): Damage is on the weaker side, although dazing is always a nice condition. The necrotic damage this deals is kinda iffy, although it has an additional effect against undead. Overall, probably not worth it.

Far Realm Phantasm (D366): Weak damage, but you make the enemy you hit waste their next standard action, which could be lifesaving in a solo fight. [Star Hexblades](#) also debuff the enemies will, although only their daily attacks will target that defense, which means its mostly for the benefit of your allies.

Influence of Acamar (D366): Pretty good damage, and a long pulling distance. [Star Hexblades](#) can double the range of this power, although range 10 is usually enough in most battles, making this a good pick for everyone.

Lash of the Long Night (D374): The damage is alright, but getting a save-ends slow on an encounter power is pretty nice, and [Fey Hexblades](#) even get a push along with it.

Mire the Mind (PHB): Poor damage, but you make all of your allies along with yourself invisible. Could be handy, I suppose.

Nypacian Serpents (AP): Okay damage, although this power is really only a good pick for [Star Hexblades](#), since its kicker is based off of Intelligence.

Pain to Pleasure (D386): This power has poor damage for an encounter attack, but regain HP equal to your Intelligence mod could be interesting to [Star Hexblades](#), and [Infernal Hexblades](#) also get HP back equal to their Charisma mod. You can also damage yourself if the attack misses to try hitting with it again. Overall, okay.

Pall of Darkness (HoS): A low-damage attack that blinds. Not a complete trap, but there are better options.

Shadow Strangler (AP): Okay damage, and an attack debuff. Could be worse.

Sign of Ill Omen (PHB): Okay damage, but the rider makes it likely that the opponent will miss. Even more so for [Star Hexblades](#) with this power.

Sorcerer-King's Decree (DSCG): Okay damage, and a push effect based off of your Intelligence modifier. Once again, pretty good for [Star Hexblades](#), decent for everyone else.

Constitution

Acrid Decay (AP): A ranged attack vs. 2 different foes for okay damage. Probably not your best pick.

Hero's Arrow (AP): Single attack that allows allies to regain HP based off of a stat that [Infernal Hexblades](#) don't use. Next.

Howl of Doom (PHB): A close blast that pushes enemies. Make sure your Intelligence modifier is positive so that you can actually use the push.

Infernal Moon Curse (PHB): Immobilizing a foe 5 feet off the ground is an interesting effect, but there are probably better powers for you to choose.

Mordant Rain of Dis (AP): Poor damage for an Encounter power, and while Blinding is nice, this isn't really a good pick for you.

Level 13 Warlock Powers

Charisma

All Must Sacrifice (FRPG): The damage on this power starts out kind of low, but by damaging allies, you can make this power hurt more when it hits. Just make sure your allies are cool with that, though.

Bewitching Whispers (PHB): This power deals no initial damage, but instead forces one enemy to make Opportunity Attacks against all that enemy's allies if it can. This power is kind of niche, but there are situations in which it can shine.

Blaze of Ulban (D366): Mediocre damage and a slide effect. Only really worth it for Star Hexblades, who can inflict a saving throw penalty with this power.

Break the Will (DSCG): The damage on this isn't great, but it does daze, which could count for something.

Cursegrind (FRPG): Worthless to you, since you lack Warlock's Curse.

Dark Reach of Xevut (AP): An immediate action attack targets an enemy who makes a saving throw, and afflicts a different enemy with the effect that the triggering enemy just saved against. On top of that, Star Hexblades get a bonus to saving throws too. Even without the Star Pact rider, this is a strong choice.

Devouring Dark (HoS): Pretty strong area burst damage, which creates a zone that forces creatures in it to grant combat advantage. This one's actually pretty good.

Haunting Shadow (Hos): Decent single-target damage, sliding, and an effect that damages other enemies if they get close to the target. An acceptable choice.

Ice Blades of Levistus (D386): You hit a foe with meh damage, and immobilize and mark it. Better on [Infernal Hexblades](#), since enemies who can't hit you while marked take extra damage.

Korred's Tune (AP): Pretty good damage, and an effect that damages a foe if it doesn't move. Fey Hexblades make the effect stricter, so that the enemy must move farther to avoid damage. Not too bad.

Wraith's Shadow (AP): The damage is kind of meh, but weakening is pretty nice debuff to throw out.

Constitution

Coldfire Vortex (PHB): A burst-ish attack that deals okay damage. Not much else to say about it.

Harrowstorm (PHB): Meh damage, but a huge slide. Useful if you have a controller that can make damaging zones (or if you can create damaging zones yourself).

Killing Flames (AP): An immediate reaction against an enemy who becomes bloodied, this deals solid damage, and also ignores fire resistance. A pretty good pick.

Skirmisher's Volley (AP): A multi-attack that targets 3 foes, although the damage is pretty weak for a Paragon-tier encounter

attack. Skip this.

Soul Flaying (PHB): Pretty much the same as Wraith's Shadow, except it targets Will, which makes it slightly better.

Unclouded Evening: Feats

There are a lot of feats in the game. A LOT. So I'm just going to be rating the feats most relevant to Hexblades. If you feel that there's an important one missing, then naturally post it in the thread.

Hexblade / Warlock / Arcana Feats

Heroic

Arcane Familiar (AP): All builds may not be able to fit it in, but having a little buddy could pay off in the long run.

Arcane Implement Proficiency (AP): While Rods and Wands will do it for most Hexblades, there are some who may want a more unconventional implement, like a dagger or a staff. For those of you who play with DMs that allow dual implement spellcaster to work with your Hexblade, having this feat is pretty much **mandatory**.

Dual Implement Spellcaster (AP): Right now, this feat is rather controversial, since there's no official answer as to how this interacts with the Hexblade's Pact Weapon. To be on the safe side, ask your DM about it. If you get the go-ahead, this is a **no brainer**. If the DM says no, well... **nothing more need be said**.

Starfire Womb (D366): This feat gives you extra saves when you deal radiant damage with your powers. Since radiant is basically all that White Well and Star Hexblades do, this is something to look at for them.

White Lotus Defense (D374): You smack an enemy with one of your At-Wills, you get a defense bonus. Solid enough.

White Lotus Enervation (D374): Hitting a foe with an At-Will spell debuffs that enemy's defense slightly. Good if you want to hit with an attack that hits a similar defense, and also allows you to act somewhat like a leader. A little.

White Lotus Evasion (D374): Hitting with an At-Will allows you to shift as a minor action. Now that's mobility I can get behind!

White Lotus Hindrance (D374): Hitting with an At-Will makes all squares near you difficult terrain. Interesting.

White Lotus Riposte (D374): Hitting with an At-Will makes attacking you a bad idea. Good on it's own, but this opens up something really nice later on.

Paragon

Arcane Admixture (AP): Not a bad feat for Infernal Hexblades to consider, if they want Soul Eater to be resisted by fewer enemies. Fey Hexblades may also want to make Eldritch Bolt deal cold damage. At any rate, this can solve problems if you have them.

Prisoner's Resolve (D381): Infernal Hexblades only. If you fail a saving throw, you can take 10 damage to reroll it. This is a very good feat to have on your side; 10 damage is a small price to pay to remove a blinding or dazing effect that might have neutered you for another round.

White Lotus Master Evasion (D374): Hitting a foe with an At-Will power gives you a shift as a free action and a speed bonus. If you liked White Lotus Evasion, you're gonna love this one.

White Lotus Master Hindrance (D374): Takes White Lotus Hindrance, and applies it to your allies. A good pick if you want to up your Controller sub-role.

White Lotus Master Riposte (D374): Wow. Basically, you get an out of turn smack every time an enemy gets uppity and you hit them with an At-Will attack. Take it an love it.

Epic

Quickened Spellcasting (AP): An At-Will attack as a minor action once per encounter? Sign me up!

Student of the Athanaeum (D366): Once per day, you can reuse a daily power you used in a battle in another battle. This is an excellent pickup for Star Hexblades, and Fey or Infernal Hexblades might consider starting with 13 Intelligence in order to get this feat at Epic Tier.

Trusted Spellcasing (AP): If you're going to take this feat, apply it to your Hexblade fixed encounter power. Since you can use that power twice be encounter, you'll be getting more bang for your buck that way.

Warlock Implement Expertise (AP): An increased crit range is very good to have as a striker. This feat is pitifully easy for an Infernal Hexblade to get, and while a Fey or Star Hexblade might have to sacrifice a little damage to get it, it still could be worth it.

General Offensive Feats

Heroic

Flail Expertise (MME): This feat gives Gloomblades a great control option. You can knock foes prone when you feel like it, and even do it from reach too! Well worth a feat.

Headsmans Chop (PHB3): This feat has to potential to make you Heavy Blade-wielding Hexblades deal quite a lot more damage over your career. Problem is, you can't knock many enemies prone regularly. If you have an ally that does so, though, then take this. Teamwork is the spice of life, or something like that.

Implement Focus (HotFL): This is a damage focused feat, and you're a damage focused character.

Improved Initiative (PHB): This helps you go first. Everyone likes going before Team Monster, so pick it up if you can.

Light Blade Expertise (HotFL): For Fey Hexblades who want some extra damage after taking Implement focus, piling on the pain for attacking with combat advantage is nice. Note that you're not taking this for the Attack Bonus; one of your Implement Expertise feats is already handling that.

Nimble Blade (PHB): Another Fey Hexblade feat that rewards getting combat advantage. Flank the s**t out of every enemy you see.

Rod Expertise (HotFK): Of the two default Hexblade Implements, this is the more defensive feat. +1 AC and Reflex is pretty snazzy, and while most Rods don't work with Hexblades, there are a few winners out there.

Silvery Glow (D386): If you worship Sehanine, this allows your Radiant and Cold powers to deal more damage than Implement Focus could. Which for Star Hexblades, Fey Hexblades of both varieties, and some Dragonborn, matches their attacks. Sehanine also makes sense as a God to worship from a fluff perspective, what with the trickery and darkness being something Hexblades can appreciate.

Wand Expertise (HotFL): A more offensive-inclined expertise feat. Ignoring cover and superior cover can certainly be handy, and you can use wands to get uses out of Warlock at-will and encounter powers, which should help out.

Wintertouched (PHB): By itself, this feat isn't so useful, since so few enemies are vulnerable to cold. Where it really shines is paragon tier.

Paragon

Lasting Frost (PHB): Combining this with Wintertouched activates a combo known as "Frostcheese," which should make your attacks really painful. Fey Hexblades and Dragonborn with the Rod of the Dragonborn definitely like this.

Light Blade Precision (PHB1): A damage bonus against large enemies for Fey Hexblades. Solid enough, considering the plethora of large baddies this tier.

Epic

Superior Initiative (PHB3): This doubles the bonus to initiative that Improved Initiative gives you. It doesn't stack with that feat, so if you have it, retrain it when you get this (or retrain it to this).

General Defensive Feats

Heroic

Armor Proficiency (Plate) (PHB): The extra AC Plate offers is undeniable, but this requires a heavy investment to get in heroic tier, one that most Infernal Hexblades generally don't want to make. Picking it up in Paragon or Epic Tiers might be a plan, though.

Armor Proficiency (Scale) (PHB): A pretty good upgrade over chain, and easily affordable by Infernal Hexblades with just a minor investment in strength.

Durable (PHB): Adds 2 surges to your pool. Infernal Hexblades can go without it, but any other Hexblade with a feat to spare might want to pick it up.

Improved Defenses (HotFL): It's not a matter of if you'll take this feat, it's when. The extra survivability is just too important to pass up.

Superior Fortitude (HotFL): Generally only Infernal Hexblades will have the ability to take this feat. Resisting ongoing damage will certainly improve your lifespan.

Superior Reflexes (HotFL): This feat will likely only be taken by Fey or Star Hexblades. Combat Advantage for going first is something that Fey Hexblades, with their high Dexterity, may find useful. Not so much for most Star Hexblades, though.

Superior Will (HotFL): The boost to Will is only 1 over Improved Defenses, but the ability to save against a dazing or stunning effect you have is useful. Every Hexblade has the Charisma to take the feat, so consider it.

Swift Recovery (HotFL): Allows you to make the most of your healing surges.

Toughness (PHB): No one has ever complained about having too many hit points.

Paragon

Armor Specialization (Chain): Dexterity 15 can be tough for Infernal Hexblades, but can be done. Certainly, +1 AC is nothing to

complain about.

Armor Specialization (Hide): Getting Constitution 15 can be a stretch for the Fey and Star Hexblades that want this feat, but it can be done by epic if you invest 3 points in Constitution at character creation. Extra AC and no check penalties are certainly nice.

Armor Specialization (Plate): Although getting plate armor initially is tough for Infernal Hexblades, specializing in it is trivial, and should be done ASAP.

Armor Specialization (Scale): Unfortunately, this feat is hard to get for Infernal Hexblades without sacrificing stats somewhere, since getting scale armor requires investing in Strength and this feat requires investing in Dexterity. Still, if you can get it, go for it.

Epic

Epic Fortitude (PHB 3): Useful for Fey Hexblades and Star Hexblades to patch up their weak defense, although more Fortitude for Infernal Hexblades isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Epic Reflexes (PHB 3): Infernal Hexblades can appreciate the boost to their weakest defense.

Epic Will (PHB3): Although your Will is likely plenty high already, making it nigh-unhittable is not a bad choice.

Racial Feats

Dragonborn

Draconic Spellcaster (AP): Unlike most Spellcasters, you actually have a legitimate reason to grab this feat! If you have a Rod of the Dragonborn, taking this feat saves you on taking Implement Expertise, Weapon Focus, and Implement Focus. Sure, you're locked into a single damage type, but you were planning on Frostcheese anyway, weren't you? Additionally, this opens up Ninefold Master, which I recommend for Dragonborn Hexblades anyway.

Tiefling

Imperious Majesty (D381): Tieflings tend to favor pacts that don't boost Dexterity, making this feat a very good pick for them. Obviously if you use a Dexterity-based pact, it *won't be as useful*.

Secrets of Belial (PHRT): This power is a Utility Power Swap with no multiclassing prerequisites. That makes this an excellent pick. Here are a few to pick from:

Utility Powers

Eagle's Splendor (Druid 6): It's an all-day boost to your Charisma attacks, checks, and will defense. Definitely something to consider.

Shield (Wizard 2): Effectively nullify one attack made against you per encounter. It's hands down the best Wizard utility of its level, and it's solid for you too.

Destined for Darkness: Paragon Paths and Epic Destinies

Because many class features between the Hexblade and the traditional Warlock differ, they have different criteria when evaluating Paragon Paths and Epic Destinies. Many Warlock Paragon Paths make use of the Warlock's Curse feature, which Hexblades lack. I won't be evaluating Paths that do that unless they have something else that makes up for it, so if a Warlock Path is not there, assume it's not for your Hexblade. You may also notice that I'm rating Legendary Hexblade several times; its features vary wildly depending on the pact, so it's kind of necessary.

Warlock / Hexblade Paragon Paths

Disciple of Razaundra (HoS): The path that most Gloomblades should default too, and it's not that bad. Some of the features and powers encourage you to be bloodied, but you won't suck at them if you aren't bloody. The level 16 feature allows you a minor action attack on the turn after you drop a foe, which helps cleanup considerably. It's daily is (save ends) stunning, which is always awesome. Sure, it dazes you, but even with a save, the foe still remains dazed, and you get a considerable power boost against that foe. Overall, take this.

Evermeet Warlock (FRPG): An odd path, and one that doesn't really add to your striker potential. Instead, it gives you some controller abilities, leader abilities, and survivability. It concentrates a lot on teleportation, which makes it fit Fey Hexblades really well, although only Star Hexblades can really use the level 20 daily power to really help allies. The biggest part of this path is that with Ethereal Sidestep, you can effectively become permanently invisible to enemies you fight in melee, which is obviously pretty awesome and should mean you won't be hit all that often.

Hellbringer (AP): One of the rare Warlock Paths that doesn't require a curse, and fortunately, it's pretty good for Infernal Hexblades. Extra damage on an Action Point, causing fire weakness on criticals, and ignoring fire resistance is pretty awesome, and the powers aren't anything to sneeze at either. It's level 20 daily is ironically better used by you than by a traditional Warlock, because your bonus damage is applied to all opponents you hit.

Herald of Vezzuvu (HotEC): I'll be frank - don't take this path. It's only good feature is its action point feature; everything else about it is either situational or highly inaccurate. I mean, your attack powers don't benefit from any of your class goodies like the pact reward or implement enhancements.

Legendary Hexblade (Elemental) (HotEC): This is probably the best variation of the Legendary Hexblade. Temporary hit points on an action point and resistance that you can change at the end of an extended rest are helpful, its encounter attack makes one enemy dangerous to other enemies around it for a little bit, it makes your Pact Boon much better by making it boost your damage, and it's Transformation ability is decent as well. I can definitely recommend this as a solid pick for Eleblades.

Legendary Hexblade (Fey) (HotFK): The standard Hexblade Paragon Path. Fey Hexblades have a decent path here, which buffs their teleporting powers and gives them some extra speed. You also become invisible a lot with the Path too. It's not the best path ever, but it's servicable.

Legendary Hexblade (Gloom) (HoS): The Gloom version of the Legendary Hexblade is about necrotic damage; you resist it and you deal it. There's some insubstantial and weakening stuff here too, but honestly, it's not that good overall.

Legendary Hexblade (Infernal) (HotFK): The Infernal Variation of the Legendary Hexblade focuses on damage and forced movement. You also get some fire resistance too. Overall, it's one of the better Legendary Hexblade variants, which isn't really saying much.

Legendary Hexblade (Star) (D393): The Star Hexblade's version of the Legendary Hexblade boosts their secondary controller role, although it has a really nice encounter attack that makes one enemy a danger zone for other enemies for a turn. Not too bad, but it's not Student of Caiphon, which takes it out of the running.

Student of Caiphon (D366): Widely considered one of the best Striker Paths at the moment. There really are no compelling reasons for a Star Hexblade not to take this path. It's level 11 features are amazing (ongoing damage and expanded crits are very awesome), It's encounter attack allows you to smack invisible and concealed enemies, it has encounter flight, and its daily utility can help you can your allies recover vital powers in the middle of a tough fight. Only its level 16 feature is a dud, due to you lacking the Warlock's Curse feature, but everything else this path offers you more than makes up for it.

Valiant Hexblade (D393): A paragon path for Fey Hexblades themed around the White Well. It's okay, although overall not really any better than the Fey variation of the Legendary Hexblade.

Racial Paragon Paths

Adroit Explorer (PHB2): A human path that is great used with any class, and the Hexblade is no exception. Picking up a classic Warlock power can be pretty handy, especially if you can nab a blast or burst that can help you damage multiple foes at the start

of a battle.

Mithral Arm (D385): A Dragonborn Path that is great with any class, and Hexblades can use it to good effect. Grabbing Arcana or Religion can help you get plot hooks from your DM too, if that interests you. Even without those skills, traditional Warlock powers, at-will teleportation, and a downright impressive defensive utility make this a strong choice.

Ninefold Master (PHR:D): Taking this path requires you to take Draconic Spellcaster, but it's worth it. The main benefit you get from this path is making your Dragon Breath an arcane Warlock power. That means that it benefits from Draconic Spellcaster, which patches its accuracy problem, and boosts its damage with your Striker Bonus damage. You now have a powerful minor action attack that can be recharged in battle several times through various feats.

Turathi Highborn (PHB2): A good choice for Tiefling Hexblades that gives them some nifty domination options, pushing with Infernal Wrath, and perhaps most awesomely of all, a hefty damage boost against bloodied enemies.

Other Paragon Paths

Academy Master (D374): A Path that rather than expands your capabilities, makes your already existing attacks more potent. And believe me, the boosts this path provides are good. Features include an accuracy boost when you hit with an At-Will Attack, an attack reroll on Action Points, and a fairly sizable boost to your At-Will Attacks. The powers are good too, with the encounter boosting the damage of one of your At-Will Attacks, the utility allowing you to recharge encounter attacks you miss with, and a daily that makes encounter attacks you hit a foe with have their extra effects become (save ends). This path is a little better for Hellblades, Feyblades, and Gloomblades because of the daily, but all Hexblades can take this path and use it pretty well.

Lyrandar Wind-Rider (EPG): This path is really only viable for Hellblades or Eleblades, but boy is it good. It's all about lightning and thunder damage, and attacks that deal such get a +1 bonus to accuracy and a +Constitution mod bonus to damage at level 11. Its other features aren't as awesome, but aren't terrible either. Its powers are decent, although they lack your Pact Reward damage, so you might want reserve maneuver in case you miss that overmuch.

Traveler's Harlequin (D382): The prerequisites for this path include having a multiclass feat, being trained in Bluff, and worshiping the Traveler, all which Hexblades can do pretty easily (well, that last one might be tough to justify outside of an Eberron Campaign). Taking the path allows you to grab multiclass feats from multiple classes, something only Bards can normally do. Its other features and powers are also great (well, you might want to end up using reserve maneuver to swap out the 11th level attack power). Overall, definitely something worthy of consideration if you worship the enigmatic god of change.

Epic Destinies

Chosen (FRPG/DP): If you associate your Hexblade closely with a God, well, they might just grant you their ultimate favor. Ability score boosts, returning an encounter power, and a power that changes depending on which God you favor.

Demigod (PHB): Ascending to godhood; what could be more epic than that? This boosts your ability scores, allows you to reuse an encounter power, and grants regeneration; overall, it's excellent.

Destined Scion (HotFK): An excellent ED to fall back on if nothing captures your imagination. Ability score boosts, attack bonuses, and returning from death; nothing here is wasted on you.

Shades of Grey: Multiclassing

As an essentials-style class, the Hexblade finds its multiclassing priorities a little different than its parent class. Hexblades never multiclass to grab the powers of other classes, since it cannot trade out encounter powers and its bonus damage is tied to Warlock powers. Instead, getting class-exclusive feats that help the Hexblade are the main reason for nabbing a multiclass feat. Sometimes, the multiclass feat itself is enough, since they usually have some pretty sweet benefits.

Any Martial Class

Since quite a few martial feats are all about improving weapon skills, getting them can be helpful. These feats can be nabbed by multiclassing into any martial class.

Martial Feats

Deft Blade (MP2): This Paragon Tier feat is a great pick for any Winter Fey Hexblades who can grab it. Having Icy Skewer hit Reflex is great for your overall DPR.

Epic Recovery (MP): This epic tier feat can really only be obtained by Infernal Hexblades. Having 2 second winds per encounter might just save your life.

Lashing Flail (MP2): Gloom Hexblades can get this paragon tier feat to, in effect, get a slide 2 with Flesh Rend. That could be useful.

Assassin

Assassins possess some nice entry feats, but one feat in particular, Cursed Shadow, is what you're here for. Hexblades that do a lot of bouncing around the battlefield can find constant partial concealment to be a nice benefit. I'll also be listing feats that interact with Shadow Walk here, since this is the only way that you can get it.

Entry Feats

Acolyte of the Veil (D382): You get training in either stealth or acrobatics, a once per encounter use of Shadow Step, and Ki Focuses. This feat is easily obtainable for any Hexblade with 13 Dex as a prerequisite, so the only question is whether you value a short-range teleport or a damage spike more.

Practiced Killer (D402): If you're going to grab any Assassin Multiclass feat, get this one. Why, you may ask? Because it's the Executioner Assassin's multiclass feat, which means you get martial goodies in addition to the Shadow Walk stuff you crave. There's also the small damage spike too, which is kind of nice as well, as well as choosing whatever skill you like.

Shadow Initiate (D382): You get stealth training, a small damage spike with Assassin's Shroud, and the ability to use Ki Focuses. With only 13 Dex as a prerequisite, any Hexblade can easily get this.

Assassin Feats

Assassin's Cloak (D379): You become invisible, and you can hide as a free action. Hexblades have enough invisibility powers (especially Fey Hexblades) that this becomes an interesting choice.

Cursed Shadow (D382): You get Shadow Walk. This feat is basically why you multiclassed into Assassin.

Killer's Insight (D379): A niche feat at best, but those who took Shadow Initiate can now use it to immediately spike their damage and not wait a turn.

Venom Hand Assassin (D379): This feat adds some damage to your first attack of each encounter. It's something to consider.

Shadow Walk Feats

Ephemeral Stride (AP): This epic tier feat makes Shadow Walk a very big mobility booster for you. Passing right through enemy spaces can be a good thing.

Avenger

There's only one Avenger feat that you'll want to grab, and it will require investing in what is normally something of a dump stat for Hexblades. Still, getting Oath of Enmity rerolls can be pretty awesome for action point rounds and for when you want an attack to really connect.

Entry Feats

Disciple of Divine Wrath (PHB2): The feat you want. Wis 13 is a little steep, but 2 rounds of Oath of Enmity can be very useful. The free religion training is just a bonus.

Hero of the Faith (DP): Avoid this like the plague. The freed up skill training sounds nice, but the Oath of Enmity lasts half as long as what Disciple offers you, and 15 Wisdom is a heavy price.

Bard

Why would a Hexblade want to multiclass Bard, you ask? Because sometimes, one extra heal in combat can mean all the difference (that's not even counting the way Half-Elves can exploit the Aura). Plus, because Skalds are part martial, you can still grab martial goodies anyway. A good investment, says I.

[Entry](#) Feats

Bardic Ritualist (AP): If you like Rituals, I guess you could take this. Not really optimal though.

Master of Stories (HotF): This feat grants you the ability to create a Skald's Aura every encounter, although the healing aspect of the aura can only be used once per day. Even though you technically need two minor actions to use the heal, this still works out better in my opinion, since an ally of yours can activate the heal instead, you gain access to Martial feats, and Half-Elf Skalds can use their own Dilettante racial feature to hand out attack buffs with At-Will Attack they perform.

Bardic Dilettante (PHB2): Similar to Master of Stories; the main differences is that Majestic Word needs only one minor action to use (technically) and it slides the creature you use it on. However, since you don't gain access to Martial feats with this particular multiclass, I can't rate it as high as Master of Stories.

Fighter

Hexblades use weapons, and who knows weapons better than a fighter? Nobody, that's who. Fortunately, there are enough fighter feats that you don't have to sacrifice too many stat points to get a multiclass feat you want.

[Entry](#) Feats

Battle Awareness (MP): This is widely regarded as the best Fighter Multiclass feat. Unfortunately, it requires that you invest in both of the Hexblade's dump stats, which makes it hard to get. If you qualify for it though, grab it.

Brawling Warrior (MP2): You'll never have a free hand, making this worthless for you.

Cyclone Warrior (MP2): Getting a weapliment for your off-hand via a Pact Blade or Arcane Implement Proficiency is easy enough, and if you do that, you get a nice damage boost for a turn, in addition to an extra skill. The fact that you only need 13 Dex to qualify makes it a winner for Feyblades and Gloomblades.

Student of the Sword (PHB): The original fighter multiclass feat. A +1 to attack at a critical moment isn't worthless, but there are better picks.

Wrathful Warrior (MP2): The Hellblade's Fighter multiclass of choice, a trivial 13 Con nets you an extra skill and temporary hit points after getting hit equal to your Con modifier once per encounter.

[Class](#) Feats

Advantageous Perspective (D378): This feat is not a bad pickup for Halfling and Gnome Hexblades. All you need is combat advantage against a large foe, and your melee attacks will be critting on 19s and 20s. Especially helpful because the pacts they favor often can't qualify for Warlock Implement Expertise. This doesn't work RAW for Pixies, but some lenient DMs may allow it.

Dragging Flail (MP): Gloomblades who take this after taking Flail Expertise don't have to choose whether to knock a foe prone or slide it; they can do both!

Mobile Warrior (MP): The 17 Dex requirement for the Epic tier feat is easy for Feyblades, Wellblades, and Gloomblades, and the extra shift after every attack can allow you to basically disengage from a foe at-will if you need to.

Surprising Charge (MP): Charging with Icy Skewer and combat advantage means an additional 1d10 damage. Pretty sweet.

Rogue

Generally, only Winter Fey Hexblades will multiclass into Rogue, but it's a pretty good choice for them. Sneak Attack is pretty nice damage booster for a round, and there are several feats that will make your Blade of Winter's Mourning deadlier than before.

Entry Feats

Sneak of Shadows (PHB): Thievery training and a once per encounter Sneak Attack are a pretty sweet package.

Twilight Adept (MP2): The other good Rogue multiclass feat. Getting the Cunning Sneak benefit makes easier to hide once an encounter.

Rogue Feats

Surprising Charge (MP): Charging with Icy Skewer and combat advantage means an additional 1d10 damage. I can dig it.

Swordmage

Hexblades who multiclass into Swordmage usually do so to nab implement proficiency with blades. Essentially, it's Arcane Implement Proficiency +, which is pretty neat.

Entry Feats

Blade Initiate (FRPG): So, you get proficiency with blades of all kinds as implements, you get an encounter-long AC boost as a daily power, and you get training in Arcana (retrain out of Arcana and into something else if you had that skill already). Definitely a nice package.

Heart of the Blade (AP): Well, Blade Proficiency and training in either Athletics or Endurance is good, but Swordbond is basically fluff and not that useful.

Wizard

It seems odd that a Hexblade would want to multiclass into a Wizard, considering that Warlocks sell their soul to bypass the magic-learning part in the first place. Still, there are some elemental-based feats that Wizards possess that Hexblades can make use of (especially if they're Tieflings).

Entry Feats

Arcane Initiate (PHB): The original Wizard multiclassing feat gives you training in Arcana, access to Wizard Implements, and the ability to use a Wizard At-Will attack as an Encounter Power. Decent enough, but you need 13 intelligence to make it work (not impossible).

Learned Spellcaster (AP): This feat requires Wisdom 13 in addition to Intelligence 13, but you're a little freer with which skill you gain, plus you get access to the Wizard's Ritual Spellcaster feature, which is definitely the best way to get Ritual Caster if that's your thing.

Witchcraft Initiate (HotF): This feat is essentially the same as Arcane Initiate right down to its prerequisites, but instead of a Wizard At-Will, you gain access to Augury, which allows you to determine the future. The usefulness of Augury depends on your DM, though.

Wizard Feats

Consuming the Weak (D388): If you hit a foe vulnerable to fire with a fire attack, you cause ongoing damage to that enemy. Since causing vulnerabilities is a specialty of the Elemental Hexblade, this is definitely worth a look from them (especially Tieflings).

Hellfire Master (D381): Tiedling Elemental Hexblades can combine this feat with Consuming the Weak to increase their damage output. It gets even better when you add the Tiedling feat Icy Clutch of Stygia into the mix.

Artifacts of a Lost Era: Items

Hexblades are inextricably tied to magical items: they create their weapons out of thin air, after all. You definitely want a nice implement, some sturdy armor, and a shiney amulet to start. But what else is there? Read on to find out...

A quick note: I'm listing items according to their lowest possible enhancement bonus. So if you see something listed as 1+ for example, assume that I'm also including the Level 6, 11, 16, 21, and 26 versions of the item in my rating.

The Rod is the default implement of most Hexblades, owing to its solid expertise feat. While most rods are tied to the Warlock's Curse mechanic of the Cursing Warlock, there are still some nice enchantments for the discerning Hexblade.

Rods

Magic Rod (1+, Common): It's cheap and otherwise unremarkable, but sometimes you need that extra enhancement bonus right now.

Rod of Smiting (2+, Common): It's a weapliment and a rod, so if that is what you need, that's what this is.

Ironscar Rod (3+, Uncommon): Similar to the Rod of Smiting, but with a daily power added on top that deals extra damage and debuffs a foe's attack. Might be worth a little extra gold.

Rod of Absorption (4+, Rare): It's main feature is that it deactivates enemy auras. Some of those can be quite nasty, making this a solid pick.

Rod of the Dragonborn (4+, Uncommon): This Rod transforms a Dragonborn Hexblade's spell damage into their Dragon Breath's damage type. This makes it an excellent way for a Dragonborn Hexblade to take advantage of Frostcheese, even with the Infernal Pact. Obviously, **non-Dragonborn should stay away.**

Rod of Resurgent Valor (8+, Uncommon): Since you'll be in melee quite a lot, expect to be targeted. This rod will help you hit back against foes that attack you.

Rod of the Feywild (8+, Uncommon): For Feyblades only. Your pact boon teleports you farther, and you can also teleport as an encounter power. If you think you need the mobility, this helps you get it.

Rod of the Infernal (8+, Uncommon): For Hellblades. Get more Temporary HP from your Pact Boon, and get Temporary HP as a daily power.

Rod of the Bloodthorn (17+, Uncommon): You gain an attack bonus if you're bloodied or the targets bloodied, and if both conditions are true, you're even more accurate. Also, you can suck out a healing surge from a foe, which is helpful to the Warlock pacts that don't have Constitution as a secondary.

Rod of the Star Spawn (22+, Uncommon): This Rod allows you to score critical hits on a 19 or 20, and spend a healing surge when you make a critical hit. Obviously, this is a pretty sweet pickup for the pacts that can't get Warlock Implement Expertise.

Wands are perceived as a somewhat weaker implement, due to their enchantments. Still, if you've got your heart set on wands, you can make it work.

Wands

Magic Wand (1+, Common): It's cheap and otherwise unremarkable, but sometimes you need that extra enhancement bonus right now.

Some Hexblades favor using Daggers in their off-hands. Here are some reasons why.

Daggers

Magic Dagger (1+, Common): It's cheap and otherwise unremarkable, but sometimes you need that extra enhancement bonus right now.

Goblin Totem (2+, Uncommon): This weapon provides an item bonus to damage against foes larger than you. Of course, that means that [Halflings](#), [Gnomes](#), and especially [Pixies](#) will love this dagger forever.

Frost Dagger (3+, Uncommon): Only Elemental Hexblades, whose melee basic power lacks a damage type, can really use this dagger to its fullest effect. Of course, they're the only ones who really want to use it anyway.

Pact Blade (3+, Uncommon): Kind of an unremarkable enchantment compared to other magic daggers, but you don't need a feat to use this as an implement. So basically, if you're feat-strapped, use this. Still, hopefully you should be able to get Arcane Implement Proficiency soon...

Incisive Dagger (9+, Uncommon): This dagger makes all of your teleports (including At-Will Ethereal Sidestep) bigger. The distance it adds scales up with its enhancement bonus, making it a pretty sweet weapon to have on hand when you need to get behind enemy lines.

While the Ki Focus is usually the realm of the Assassin, some Hexblades can use them quite well...

Ki Focus

Magic Ki Focus (1+, Common): It's cheap and otherwise unremarkable, but sometimes you need that extra enhancement bonus right now.

Blazing Arc Ki Focus (3+, Uncommon): This Ki Focus allows you to make your melee attacks deal Fire Damage on demand, something that's hard to do any other way in the Heroic Tier.

Iron Body Ki Focus (5+, Uncommon): The attacks of the enemy you hit with this Ki Focus hurt less. Definitely handy.

Steadfast Stone Ki Focus (9+, Common): Some Hexblades have powers that deal damage that's easily resisted (Necrotic, mainly). This Ki Focus helps punch through resistances with every attack, making it easier to use those powers.

There are several different kinds of bracers, but when talking optimization, there's one that really rules them all.

Bracers

Iron Armbands of Power (6/16/26, Uncommon): A plain, simple boost to damage. Yeah, it only works on your melee attacks, but those tend to be your most potent attacks anyway. Obviously, if you have another way to get an item bonus to damage, **these become worthless.**