

Languages

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Languages Overview

<u>Language</u>	<u>Type / Rarity</u>	<u>Who Knows</u>	<u>Player Learns</u>	<u>Written</u>	<u>Spoken</u>	<u>Mastery Range</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
Common	Common	Everyone	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Trade language.	
Dwarven	Common	Dwarf ancestry, scholars	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Standard PF2e	
Elven	Common	Elf ancestry, scholars	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Standard PF2e	
Gnomish	Common	Gnome ancestry	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Standard PF2e	
Halfling	Common	Halfling ancestry	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Standard PF2e	
Orcish	Common	Orc ancestry	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Standard PF2e	
Goblin	Common	Goblin ancestry	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Standard PF2e	
Sylvan	Common	Druids, Fey researchers	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Fairly common around older forests	

Moonrest Tongue	Regional / Common	Moonrest locals	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Born in Moonrest Fishermen Coastal traders Refugees who have lived there several years It is essentially Common with enough unique words that outsiders immediately sound foreign.	
High Imperial	Regional / Common	Old Language - Fallen Kingdoms	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	Used in: Government records Noble houses Historical texts Old military writings A noble from elsewhere would almost certainly know this.	
Northern Speech	Regional / Common	Spoken throughout the northern settlements.	Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-2	A traveller arriving from the mainland north would likely know it.	
Giant	Uncommon		Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-3		

Draconic	Uncommon		Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-3		
Priomordial	Uncommon / Very Rare		Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-6		
Celestial	Uncommon		Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-3		
Infernal	Uncommon		Character or NPC that speaks	Yes	Yes	1-3		
Tide Cant	Uncommon	A sailor's shorthand. Part spoken language. Part coded phrases. Part hand signs.	Tidewardenn Maera	Partial	Yes	1-3	Known by: Sailors Smugglers Pirates Harbourmasters Useful for: Secret messages Ship logs Hidden caches	
Verdant Speech	Uncommon	The language of the oldest druids.	Shrinekeeper Torv	Rarley	Yes	1-3	Known by: Circle Druids Ancient Wardens Certain Leshies Not commonly written. Many rituals are oral only.	

Stone Cant	Uncommon	An old mining language.	Blacsmith NPC doesn't exist yet	Yes	Yes	1-3	Known by: Master miners Ancient dwarven clans Tunnel explorers Very useful underground.	
Hearth Sign	Uncommon	A silent sign language developed by isolated settlements during harsh winters and hunting expeditions.	Garric Fen ?? Poss someone else	No	Yes	1-3	Known by: Moonrest hunters Rangers Scouts Allows communication without speaking.	
Scholar's Script	Uncommon	Less a spoken language than a standard written system.	Will Tosskobbl e - also possibly Herbalist Yselle Marr	Yes	Rarley	1-3	Likely Inscription specialisation player will want to know Used in: Libraries Universities Arcane colleges A wizard might know it despite never having visited Moonrest.	
REDACTED	LANGUAGE	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	

Warden Signs	Uncommon	Trail markers, warnings and silent communication	TBC - When they start to encounter elements / symbols of the language	Yes	No	1-3		Yes
Circle Glyphs	Uncommon	Ritual markings and sacred sites	TBC - When they start to encounter elements / symbols of the language	Yes	No	1-3	Likely Druid will want to learn	Yes
Ash Cant	Uncommon	Funeral symbols and tomb markings	Gravekeeper per Lysa Venn	Yes	Yes	1-3	Likely Death Cleric will want to learn	Yes

Heartwood	Rare	The "language" of the forest.	Learnt - Players possibly may start learning level 1	No	Yes	1-5	Not truly spoken. Instead it consists of: pulses vibrations rhythms root patterns harmonic tones Creatures touched by the Heartwood gradually begin to understand fragments . No player can normally start with this. It is earned.	Yes
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First Speech	Rare	The language spoken before civilisation .	TBC - When they start to encounter elements / symbols of the language	Yes	Yes	1-6	Legends say: Animals Spirits Mountains Storms Trees all understood it. Very little survives. Mostly inscriptions.	
Further	Entries	Remain	Unknown.. ..					

Language Categories

Languages are intended to be an exploration mechanic within Ashes of the Shrouding. While many are available during character creation, others can only be discovered through adventure, research and interaction with the world.

Tier 1 - Everyday Languages

These languages function exactly as standard Pathfinder 2e languages and may be selected during character creation through ancestry, background or Intelligence.

- Common
- Dwarven
- Elven
- Goblin
- Orcish
- Halfling
- Gnomish
- Sylvan
- Moonrest Tongue
- Northern Speech
- High Imperial

Tier 2 - Specialist Languages

These require an appropriate background, mentor, organisation, specialised training, or significant in-game justification.

These **cannot** simply be chosen because you have high Intelligence. Instead you must justify them.

For example:

- *"I grew up on merchant ships."*
 - → Tide Cant.
- *"My mentor was one of the last Wardens."*
 - → Warden Signs.
- *"I'm a druid of the Emerald Circle."*
 - → Verdant Speech.

Professional and Specialist

- Tide Cant
- Verdant Speech
- Stone Cant
- Scholar's Script
- Ash Cant
- Hearth Sign

Organisational

- Warden Signs
- Circle Glyphs
- REDACTED

Ancient Languages

- Giant
- Draconic
- Celestial (Empyrean)
- Infernal
- Primordial

Ancient languages are seldom encountered in the modern world. While some are still spoken by their original peoples, most survive only through specialist scholars, ancient orders, or the few creatures that continue to preserve them.

Tier 3 - Lost Languages

These languages lie beyond the knowledge of almost all modern societies. They cannot be selected during character creation and cannot normally be taught by conventional means. Characters may only begin to understand them through exploration, research and major campaign discoveries.

- Heartwood
- First Speech
- Whisper Speech
- *Further entries remain unknown*

Learning New Languages

Unlike standard Pathfinder 2e, languages are not limited to those chosen during character creation. Characters can discover, study and learn additional languages throughout the campaign through downtime, exploration, roleplay and research.

For more information, see *Learning Languages*.

Learning Languages

Unlike standard Pathfinder 2e, languages in Ashes of the Shrouding form part of the campaign's exploration and discovery systems. Characters are expected to encounter, study and gradually master new languages throughout their adventures.

Learn Language (Downtime Activity)

(This covers Tier 1 and Tier 2 languages.)

Requirements

To learn a new language you must have access to one or more of the following:

- A fluent teacher
- Suitable books or reference material
- Ancient inscriptions or written texts
- Prolonged exposure to speakers of the language

Learning a language normally takes **4 weeks of Downtime**, modified by your Intelligence modifier.

Intelligence Modifier	Time
+0	4 weeks
+1	3½ weeks
+2	3 weeks
+3	2½ weeks
+4	2 weeks
+5	10 days

Example

- Study a Draconic grimoire → +1 progress.
- Spend two weeks researching in a library → +1 progress.
- Speak to an ancient dragon → +2 progress.
- Recover a lost lexicon → Automatically unlock the next Mastery Stage.
- Cast *Comprehend Languages* on a forgotten inscription → Grants insight but **not** permanent mastery.

Researching Ancient Languages

Whenever you successfully Decipher Writing, Recall Knowledge or perform Research involving a language you are currently learning, the GM may award additional progress towards its next Mastery Stage.

Specialist and Lost Languages

Specialist and Lost Languages are not learnt normally. Instead they are progressed. Different specialist and lost languages have different numbers of Mastery Stages depending on how complex or mysterious they are.

For Example **Primordial**:

Mastery Stage	Knowledge Gained
I	Recognise the script.
II	Identify repeated words.
III	Read simple phrases
IV	Translate historical texts.
V	Speak the language
VI	Understand idioms and hidden meanings.

Other Ancient and Lost languages follow similar progressions, although the number of stages and the knowledge gained may differ.

Some languages, such as **Heartwood**, do not have written or spoken forms. Their progression represents increasing understanding rather than linguistic fluency.

Gifted Linguist (New Skill Feat)

This feat reduces the time required to learn Tier 1 and Tier 2 languages. It does not affect Ancient or Lost language progression unless specifically stated by the GM.

Available at Level 2.

Benefits:

- Learn new languages in half the normal time.
- Can hold simple conversations after only one week of exposure.
- Gain a +1 circumstance bonus when Deciphering Writing in an unfamiliar language.

