

# Alignments: An Alternative

## Overview

This is actually a modification and expansion on some rules that crossed one of the mailing lists I'm on some time ago. The original rules were constructed by Midnight, so some credit needs to go to him. This is simply a different way to look at alignments that gives players and GMs much more flexibility when creating villains and/or characters/NPCs. By answering the following questions, it will allow you to create a character who has some good traits and some bad traits, but will allow the character's actions to define the alignment, as opposed to the other way around.

To "make your own alignment", answer the questions below relating to a character's morals and general attitudes. This will not only define the character's general alignment, but also help in developing the personality of the character.

## Questions

1. Do you:
  - (A) Always keep your word of honor?
  - (B) Keep your word of honor to other good people, but not necessarily bad people?
  - (C) Keep your word of honor and have a high regard for life and freedom?
  - (D) May or may not keep your word of honor?
  - (E) Not necessarily keep your word of honor to anyone?
  - (F) Rarely keep your word of honor (or you have no honor at all)?
  
2. Do you:
  - (A) Avoid lying?
  - (B) Lie only to selfish or evil people?
  - (C) Lie and cheat if necessary (especially to evil people)?
  - (D) Lie and cheat if you feel it's necessary?
  - (E) Lie and cheat to anyone, good or evil?
  - (F) Lie to and cheat those not worthy of your respect?
  - (G) Lie and cheat to anyone?
  
3. Will you:
  - (A) Never kill or attack unarmed foes?
  - (B) Not kill unarmed foes (but you will take advantage of one)?
  - (C) Not likely kill an unarmed foe, but certainly knockout, attack or beat one?
  - (D) Most definitely attack and unarmed foe (those are the best kind)?
  - (E) May or may not kill an unarmed foe?
  - (F) Most certainly attack and kill an unarmed foe?
  
4. Do you:
  - (A) Never harm innocents?
  - (B) Never kill innocents (but may harm or kidnap)?
  - (C) Use or harm innocents?
  - (D) Not kill innocents, particularly children (but may harm, kidnap others)?
  - (E) Use, hurt, and kill an innocent without a second thought?
  - (F) Kill for pleasure?
  
5. Do you:
  - (A) Never torture for any reason?
  - (B) Never torture for pleasure, but will extract information forcefully if the situation requires?
  - (C) Not use torture unless absolutely necessary?
  - (D) Use torture to extract information (but not for pleasure)?
  - (E) Use torture to extract information and also for pleasure?

- (F) Never torture for pleasure, nor resort to inhumane treatment of prisoners, but as a necessary means of extracting information?
6. Will you:
- (A) Never kill for pleasure?
  - (B) Never kill for pleasure (but always attempt to bring the villain to justice)?
  - (C) Seldom kill for pleasure, but in revenge is ok?
  - (D) Possibly kill just for the hell of it?
  - (E) Kill for sheer pleasure?
7. Will you:
- (A) Always help others?
  - (B) Help those in need most of the time?
  - (C) Help those in need as, but only with some ulterior motive (even it's only showing off)?
  - (D) Help those in need only if there is some kind of material reward?
  - (E) May or may not help those in need?
  - (F) Most likely help someone only to kill or rob them yourself?
8. Do you:
- (A) Work well in a group?
  - (B) Work with groups, but dislike bureaucratic red tape and confining laws?
  - (C) Work with groups, especially if it's profitable?
  - (D) Not work well in groups (you're a bit loud-mouthed and do as you please)?
  - (E) Work with others if it will help you obtain personal goals, otherwise screw it?
  - (F) Not work well in groups because you always ignore orders?
9. Do you:
- (A) Never break the law unless you are desperate?
  - (B) Attempt to work within the law if possible, but you are willing to bend the rules and manipulate the law to work for you?
  - (C) Dislike authority?
  - (D) Have little respect for self-discipline or authority?
  - (E) Have no deference to laws or authority, but will work within the law if it serves your purpose?
  - (F) Respect and honor self-discipline?
  - (G) Despise honor, authority, and self-discipline?
10. Will you:
- (A) Never betray a friend?
  - (B) Possibly betray a friend?
  - (C) Betray a friend if it serves your needs or keeps you alive?
  - (D) Betray a friend at the drop of a hat?

---

By answering these questions in a sentence or two, you have not only defined your character's morals, but also his/her personality, in part. Keep to these rules and your character's behavior is much more flexible (and you get more in depth).

Article Written by: Thoth  
thoth@interkan.net  
Based on an article written by Midnight  
2 April 2000