

# The Genius Guide to: LOOT 4 LESS



## BELL, BOOK & CANDLE

**PATHFINDER**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Welcome to the ninth book in the *Loot 4 Less* line, in which we deal exclusively with items that have a cost to consumer of 2,500 gp or less. And to increase the level of difficulty in terms of providing you with low-cost items, we also don't deal in one-shot (or even two- or three-shot) magic items. Here in *Volume IX: Bell, Book, & Candle*, we're looking at a narrow range of wondrous items that you ring, read, or light up. Many of these items are useful for spellcasters (in keeping with the origin of such items in myth and legend), but at least a few in each group can be useful to any character. Everything in these pages has no charges and can be used in adventure after adventure.

Additionally, these items are all of real use. No spot-on-the-wall spells stored in a wand with a switch. We deal only in things that are of at least some practical use. No one is going to kill a teammate to take an *everburning candle*, but is that such a bad thing? These items can flesh out the equipment lists of low-level characters, can be found in treasure troves of mid-range monsters, or can be passed out as party favors at the celebrations of 30th-level wizards.

As an added bonus, to help make the vast category of "wondrous items" more diversified, some optional rules in this volume give various spellcasters advantages when making magic bells, books, or candles (as opposed to less interesting items that take the form of apparel or jewelry). These rules are not major power boosts or likely to come into play often, but they help make these classic icons of mystic power a little different from other wondrous items.

# INVESTMENT ITEMS

If you've read this section in another *Loot 4 Less* volume, you can skip this. It's all the same arguments, repeated just in case this is the first *Loot 4 Less* book you've picked up. Feel free to go on and look at the magic knick-knacks listed further on in the book, and don't worry about missing anything important here. If this is your first *Loot 4 Less* book, and you're wondering why the whole book is filled with only the most inexpensive of magic items, read on.

So, do campaigns really need a few dozen more magic item options? Why would anyone care about more cheap magic items that aren't one-shots? Aren't there enough options such as masterwork and mithral that provide enough items of use at lower costs to take care of inexpensive treasure needs? Aren't potions and scrolls magic enough for low-level characters?

Not really, no.

The problem with using one-shot items to flesh out the treasure piles of lower-level characters is that once used, they're gone. This makes it difficult for low-level characters to accumulate wealth. Since the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* assumes characters build to specific amounts of wealth as they gain class levels, a GM is forced to either boost treasure given at lower levels, or have a group of PCs who are slightly underpowered. By giving PCs minor but permanent magic items, a GM gives them the ability to save some wealth value. Since these items can be resold for half their full value, a low-level character can take a few minor items early on in his career and sell them to pay for (or at least offset the full cost of) a more major item at higher levels.

Another benefit of cheap, re-useable magic items is that they tempt low-level spellcasters to craft items. The investment in gp and time to make even a +2 sword is more than most 6th-level casters want to attempt, and a party needs only so many +1 weapons. By expanding the number of cheap options lower-level casters have, a GM gives them more opportunities to be useful to their party and explore the rules regarding item creation.

Finally, having more low-cost items allows both players and GMs to customize characters more. With only a few items in their price range, the treasures of low CR NPCs often look very similar. By the same token, when all anyone can afford is a +1 weapon and +1 armor, characters don't seem that different. Compare that to a cleric with a temple bell and a *sumaturge's thesaurus*. He might not have as high an AC or hit as often, but since he'll work with what he has, he's more likely to look for situations where the items he does have can stun foes, or he can use his increased flexibility preparing spells in innovative ways. That leads to more interesting games, and more memorable moments for everyone.

## BELLS

Bells are wondrous items, normally made of metal or more rarely crystal or earthenware, that makes a single tonal noise when struck. This includes hand-held bells with moveable clappers, larger bells designed to be struck by mallets, gongs and similar hammer-struck flat bells, small round bells with balls trapped within to ring, and most any similar musical device.

**Optional Item Creation Rule:** A bard (or any class with a class ability with "performance" in the title, such as "bardic performance") can create wondrous items that are musical instruments (including bells) without having the Craft Wondrous Item feat. The DC for a bard to create a wondrous item musical instrument increases by 5 when the bard does not have the Craft Wondrous Item feat (using the normal rules for increasing the DC by 5 for every prerequisite the creator does not have).

**Optional Item Creation Rule:** A character that meets all the prerequisites for creating a wondrous magic item that is also a musical instrument can use the Perform skill used to play the instrument, rather than Spellcraft, as the skill check to determine success.

### ALARM BELL

**Aura:** minor divination; **CL:** 5th

**Slot:** —; **Price:** 2,000 gp; **Weight:** 0.5 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

An *alarm bell* is a roughly spherical brass or copper bell, with a metal ball within to serve as the clapper. Most *alarm bells* have the features of a canine or porcine beast with an open mouth, from which most of the bell's sound issues forth.

Once per day, an *alarm bell* can be set to ward an area as large as a 20-foot-radius. If the bell is tied to a string, cord, or similar item that forms a perimeter smaller than a 20-foot-radius, it wards only the area within the perimeter. When set, the *alarm bell* rings loudly enough for anyone within 200 feet of

it to hear it if it notices a creature of Tiny size or larger enters its warded area. When set, the *alarm bell* can have a password assigned to it, allowing any creature speaking the password to enter the warded area without setting off the alarm. An *alarm bell* has a Perception bonus of 10 + the HD of the creature that set it. An *alarm bell*'s warding lasts for 10 hours or until it is removed from the area warded.

An *alarm bell* can be set to not ring for creatures of a particular type, or for creatures of a particular size, or for a combination of such features. For example, it would be possible to set an alarm bell so it would not be activated by Small or smaller animals, or not by humanoids, or not by colossal dragons, or any similar combinations.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements:** Craft Wondrous Items, *alarm*; **Cost:** 1,000 gp.

### DISTANT CHIME

**Aura:** minor conjuration; **CL:** 1st  
**Slot:** —; **Price:** 1,000 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

#### DESCRIPTION

A *distant chime* is an unremarkable brass or bronze bell with a metal clapper on a string hanging within it, and a wooden bar set horizontally across the top (which can be used as a handle, or as a hanging post). Most of these items are tarnished and show signs of extensive wear.

A *distant chime* can be played as a normal bell, creating a noise approximately as loud as a human shouting. As a standard action, the wielder of the chime can move the point of origin of the noise made by the

bell, placing it any place within 30 feet of the bell to which he has line of sight. The sound originates from the selected point until the chime is moved out of range, at which point the chime's audible emissions once again emanate from its physical location.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Items, *ghost sound*, *summon monster I*; **Cost:** 500 gp.

### GONG OF VEXING RINGING

**Aura:** minor illusion; **CL:** 3rd  
**Slot:** —; **Price:** 1,200 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

#### DESCRIPTION

A *gong of vexing ringing* is a flat disk of iron (or less often steel or tin) etched with images of mystic creatures with powers tied to sound or voice (transhees, sirens, satyrs) dancing around the center of the gong.

Once per day, the gong can be thrown at a target. This is a ranged touch attack, with a range increment of 10 feet. If the gong hits a target, it sticks to the target and begins to vibrate. Though it makes no noise that can be heard by anyone else, the target hears the gong constantly making loud and distracting booms and clashes. The target is deafened by noise only it can hear as long as the gong is attached to it. The gong can be removed as a standard action with a DC 25 Strength check, and it falls off of its own accord after 3 minutes.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements:** Craft Wondrous Items, *sound burst*; **Cost:** 600 gp.

