Mystara Character Alignment
by Charles Rose

This alignment system is inspired by Charles Taylor's *Sphere Alignment System*:
http://pandius.com/isphalgn.html

In Mystara, there are four competing schools of thought about alignment. One belief, which is promoted by some rulers and clerics, is that there are only three alignments: Law, Chaos, and Neutrality. However, many reject this, and argue that the truth is more complex.

Some argue that there is a second alignment axis of Good, Neutrality, and Evil. The interaction of these two axes produce 9 alignments. This belief is popular in the Savage Coast area, but is otherwise not widely accepted.

Many clerics teach that there are five Spheres of Power, each represented by various Immortals. Four of them, Matter, Energy, Time, and Thought, are united against the fifth, Entropy. But Entropy is as powerful as the other four combined. The only immortal beings that are neutral in this conflict are the Fair Folk. However, the relationships between these Spheres suggest that there should be more alignments than Spheres. So it seems that spheres and alignments are not the same thing.

Finally, some sages prefer to conceptualize alignment as the interaction of seven elements, five of which are connected to the five Immortal Spheres. That is the model that will be used here.

The Seven Basic Alignments

Alignment represents the cosmic forces that a character is, well, aligned with. It should be reflected in that character's personality, and it will also influence how some supernatural beings and powerful magic items react to the character. Choose an element (alignment) from this list that you would like to roleplay. Note that if you play the character in a manner contrary to the chosen alignment over a period of time, the DM may declare that the alignment has changed.

Earth: You believe in order, tradition, and conformity. You are likely to be stable, resilient, consistent, and resistant to change. This is a common alignment for warriors and clerics of Immortals of the Sphere of Matter.

Fire: You believe in freedom, self-determination, and individualism. You are likely to be dynamic, active, temperamental, and innovative. This is a common alignment for thieves and clerics of Immortals of the Sphere of Energy.

Water: You value art, embrace change, and believe in experiencing all that life has to offer. You are likely to be hedonistic, relaxed, open-minded, and creative. This is a common alignment for bards and clerics of Immortals of the Sphere of Time.

Air: You believe in seeking knowledge and understanding, and applying them to achieve your goals. You are likely to be curious, focused, analytical, and obsessive. This is a common alignment for wizards and clerics of Immortals of the Sphere of Thought.

Void: You value power, embrace conflict, and place self-interest above everything else. You are likely to be power-hungry, self-serving, manipulative, and willing to use any means to achieve your ends. This alignment is not recommended for player characters.

Wood: You believe in living peacefully, preserving life of all kinds (though not necessarily the lives of all individuals), and accepting the natural world's cycles of life and death. You are likely to be selfless, detached, and lacking in ego, with a balance of traits from the elements of Earth, Fire, Water, and Air. This is a common alignment for guardians, aka druids. (D&D druids don't have much to do with their historical namesakes, so I prefer to use a different name.)

Aether: Either you have no strong ideals, or you believe in living a balanced, harmonious life and developing every aspect of yourself to the fullest. You exhibit a balance of traits from the elements of Earth, Fire, Water, Air, and Void. This is a common alignment for mystics.

Dual Alignments

You may have a dual alignment if desired. In this case, pick two elements which both strongly influence the character. Neither of these elements can be Aether. Aether is the element of balance, so it is not valid in a dual alignment.

Also note that, while it is possible to combine Void and Wood, this always results in a deeply conflicted character. If they make peace with these two sides of themselves, their alignment changes to Aether.

Although it is not required, you may want to write a brief explanation of how the elements interact to influence the character. This is a particularly good idea with the Void/Wood, Earth/Fire, and Water/Air alignments.

Equivalents in the 3-Alignment Model

Here are the closest equivalents between the Classic three alignments and the seven elements, in case you want to convert between them.

Classic Editions Alignment	Mystara Alignment

Lawful	Earth, Air, or Wood
Neutral	Water, Air, Wood, or Aether
Chaotic	Fire, Air, or Void

Equivalents in the 9-Alignment Model

You are likely familiar with the alignment system used in the numbered editions of D&D, which has both a Law/Chaos axis and a Good/Evil axis. Here are the closest equivalents in this system, in case you want to convert between them.

"Numbered" Editions Alignment	Mystara Alignment
Lawful Good	Earth/Wood
Neutral Good	Wood, Air/Wood, or Water/Wood
Chaotic Good	Fire/Wood
Lawful Neutral	Earth, Earth/Water, Earth/Air, or Earth/Wood
True Neutral	Water, Air, Water/Air, Earth/Fire, Wood, Air/Wood, Water/Wood, or Aether
Chaotic Neutral	Fire, Fire/Water, Fire/Air, Fire/Wood, or Void/Wood
Lawful Evil	Earth/Void
Neutral Evil	Void, Water/Void, or Air/Void
Chaotic Evil	Fire/Void

Typical Alignments of Different Races

Here are my best guesses about which elements should be most common among various humanoid races. Since Kobolds are Air/Void aligned, this suggests they should tend to be cunning, using traps and clever ploys to compensate for their lack of physical strength. On the other hand, goblins are Water/Void aligned, which suggests to me that they should be creatively vicious, but not truly cunning. I think of them as more intelligent, better organized versions of the monsters in the movie Gremlins.

To account for their canonical behavior, I made the Djinni Fire/Wood aligned. But this seems odd considering that they come from the plane of Air. It may be the case that some races from the elemental planes could use a bit of tweaking to better fit this alignment scheme.

Humanoids:
Bugbear – Void

Gnoll – Earth/Void
Goblin – Water/Void
Hobgoblin – Earth/Void
Kobold – Air/Void
Ogre – Fire/Void
Orc – Fire/Void
Troll – Void

Humans, Demi-Humans, and Misc:
Djinni – Fire/Wood
Dwarf – Earth
Elf – Water or Water/Wood
Gnome – Earth/Air or Air/Wood
Halfling – Earth/Water or Water/Wood
Hsiao – Wood
Human – Earth, Aether, or Void
Sidhe – Water/Wood or Water/Void
Wooddrake – Fire or Fire/Wood