

Alchemical Items Guide

v1.1

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1 introduction

I'll be using the standard coloring scheme:

- almost always bad
- circumstantially useful
- usually good
- always very good
- absolute must-have

Now many of these items aren't all that expensive so you could carry even the poor options. However, while encumbrance often isn't tracked all that rigorously, if you try to carry even the poor options, you'll probably be burdened. Also, not every item can be easily accessible at the same time; bandoliers have limited slots and all. So prioritizing is necessary.

I abbreviate often-used books as follows:

CRB = Core Rulebook, APG = Advanced Player's Guide, ACG = Advanced Class Guide, UE = Ultimate Equipment, AM = Alchemy Manual, AA = Adventurer's Armory, GMG = Gamemastery Guide, FG = Pathfinder Society Field Guide

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2 Alchemical Weapons

alchemists and alchemical weapons

Alchemists get a lot of mileage out of alchemical weapons. Their **Throw Anything** special ability lets them add their Intelligence modifier to the damage and to the splash damage. It seems like you would also add Point-Blank Shot damage and bonus damage from for example Inspire Courage. So there's the potential for a lot of damage here.

A powerful trick (that some GMs may balk at) is to aim these weapons not at the monster you want to target, but at an intersection on the edge of its square. Thus you avoid the Shooting Into Melee penalty, since the ground isn't fighting anyone. It's a AC 5 touch attack to hit an intersection, though there may be a +4 Cover bonus to AC depending on your line of fire. All in all, it's fairly easy to hit.

The kicker is this: *there's no save to halve the splash damage*. The save only applies to bombs, not to mundane alchemical weapons. So if you land a vial of *acid* next to a goblin with high Touch AC, you'll probably kill it. (At level 1 my alchemist did 6 splash damage with acid.) Against agile enemies, this tactic may be much more reliable than bombs, especially at low level.

A second, less controversial benefit is that most of these weapons are cheap and a good way to ensure you don't run out of fire/acid/cold-power during an adventure. In PFS alchemists can craft their own items, so a vial of acid costs you only 3.33 gold; that's affordable even in session 1.

Some weapons look amazing for alchemists, but probably aren't. Ultimate Equipment has a table of alchemical weapons, and in the "Special" column some are given the "splash" property. I'm confident that the grenade weapons that lack that property don't get Throw Anything damage. In addition, some splash weapons do more damage the next turn after being thrown; I don't think Throw Anything applies to that delayed damage, but a GM might rule otherwise.

marker dye^{AA,UE} – besides the psychological stuff involved in painting a black dragon pink, this can also be combined with *glowing ink* to make enemies visible in the dark; it seems like even enemies that didn't suffer a direct hit would be somewhat painted, and you might be able to fully reveal enemies on a direct hit. If you paint an invisible creature with the glowing ink/marker dye combo, it will emit light. It doesn't become visible, but it should help to pinpoint it's square.

tangleburn bag^{UE} – a pretty nasty weapon, but also quite an expensive one to spam.

tanglefoot bag^{CRB} – this is a spectacular debuff that almost anyone can use. Entangle a caster and suddenly he has to make concentration checks for everything. If you manage to glue him to the floor, he can't do the 5ft shuffle anymore. But it's also good to debuff almost anyone else.

alchemist's fire^{CRB,UE} (alchemist) – a cheap anti-swarm weapon, and also useful if you want to commit arson. For alchemists it's unimpressive compared to bombs.

artokus's fire^{AM} (alchemist) – it's pretty expensive but it's a fast way to attack swarms if you lack better abilities. Alchemists have better abilities and should use more cost-effective ammo.

desiccating lubricant^{AM} (alchemist) – some decent debuffs that may come in handy against big (low Touch AC) creatures with Grab, or oozes of course. For alchemists this is spectacular because it lets you splash people for significant amounts of nonlethal damage (using Throw Anything), a rare and valuable option. The combination of doing nonlethal damage and reducing someone's CMD against grapple and disarm is also good synergy. Also, for the look on people's faces when you announce that you're going to use Desiccating Lubricant on the BBEG.

fuse grenade^{AA,UE} (alchemist) – it's not much use against intelligent enemies that have the option of just moving away. But mindless swarms or zombie hordes don't know that, and it's respectable damage. Sadly for alchemists, Throw Anything doesn't apply because this is not actually a splash weapon (just thrown like one).

ghast retch flask^{UE} – the chance of nauseating isn't very high, but the sickened effect happens without a save, in the entire splash area. You should consider throwing this weapon at grid intersections rather than at creatures directly (easier AC). That reduces the duration though. When is it good? When you need to debuff enemy saves with Sickened so that another party member can do some horrible SoS/SoD.

holy water^{CRB,UE} (alchemist) – at low level this is a decent weapon against incorporeal undead like Shadows. If the whole party pulls out holy water at once you might be able to kill the monster in a single round. For alchemists, the other target group is more important: evil outsiders. Those tend to be fairly resistant or immune to elemental damage, especially fire. Holy water combined with *Throw Anything* does stupendous damage however, and there's no risk of causing collateral damage to your party. It's moderately expensive to spam as an alchemist because you can't make it at discount, but having a means of attack is so very worth it. Finally, holy water is also supposed to work against Haunts, but I have no personal experience with how well that works.

pellet grenade^{UE} (alchemist) – roughly the same as a *fuse grenade*, with a bit more damage type flexibility.

shard gel^{UE} (alchemist) – the annoying thing about caltrops is that you need to spread them square by square, making them mediocre for unprepared getaways. This weapon covers a 3x3 square area in caltrops; now we're talking. Also neat is that you can seed an area with caltrops at a distance, which creates all kinds of tactical possibilities. For alchemists, this also does Throw Anything damage in a novel damage type (piercing), which might come in handy.

shriek bomb^{AM} – like other bombs, they're a bit unreliable. However, doing sonic damage is nothing to sneeze at; there are very few creatures resistant to that. Best used against creatures too slow, stupid or preoccupied to get away. Like swarms.

acid^{CRB,UE} (alchemist) – a cheap weapon against swarms, though not doing a lot of damage. For non-alchemists, *alchemist's fire* is a better anti-swarm weapon. For alchemists, acid is great. It's cheap, Throw Anything helps you do a lot of damage with it and it's an additional energy type.

alkali^{APG,UE} (alchemist) – a decent weapon against oozes. Because oozes tend to have really low touch AC, even without Precise Shot you can plausibly throw this into melee, and it doesn't do a lot of collateral damage. There's an odd wrinkle in the rules here; alkali does additional damage against oozes because it's chemically base and so reacts nastily with the acid most oozes are made of. However, oozes that deal acid damage are themselves often acid-immune, and game-mechanically alkali does acid damage. I think in this case RAI is that oozes' acid immunities don't work against alkali flasks.

banshee ballerina fireworks^{UE} – this weapon will deafen four squares for a few rounds, meaning 20% verbal spell failure chance. Spending an action on that when a caster can just walk away is kinda lame though. If you're looking for a noisy distraction however...

bloating solution^{AM} – it's a bit circumstantial, but there are some situations when this is excellent. Quite a few encounters feature oozes actually using their compression ability to fit into narrow hallways. Suppressing that ability forces the ooze to Squeeze, meaning -4 AC, -4 to hit, and difficult movement, so it can't charge anymore.

burst jar^{UE} – the delayed splash damage probably doesn't qualify for Throw Anything. Otherwise this is blue for alchemists because it's sonic damage. As is, the no-save deafened condition is nice but not that nice.

congealer spray^{AM} – it's only really good for the Split-stopping effect, but when you need that, you'll really appreciate this. However, chances are the ooze has already split once, so make sure to carry multiple doses.

defoliant^{UE} (alchemist) – it's not something you're likely to need often, although it's useful if you want to piss off druids. It's quite lightweight for the amount of area it affects so that's something. For alchemists this is nifty stuff; it can be made cheap through crafting, doesn't do collateral damage to the party, and it doesn't really matter what immunities or resistances the plant monster has. Throw Anything will boost your damage to acceptable levels.

dust knuckles^{ACG} – I'm not sure how this item is supposed to function. Either "punching someone in the face" is its own special action that only delivers the payload, or it's a side effect of making an Unarmed Strike. In the latter case this is a nice rider effect for *monks*, *brawlers*, *sacred fists*. I think this item needs more attention from a Paizo editor, because there's no rules for specifically punching someone in the face (except for the optional Called Shots in Ultimate Combat).

firecracker, spirit^{AM} – not the most brutal attack against incorporeal creatures, but there's no user skill required so you could use them to boost NPC morale or gainfully employ henchmen. The difficulty however is getting the thing in the same square as the incorporeal enemy.

flash powder^{AA,APG,UE} – blinding people is fun, but it's unclear whether you can throw this at a distance. The save DC isn't super-impressive, though it might give some casters a bit of trouble. If you can throw this at a distance, or if you're a Grenadier using the Alchemical Weapon ability on ranged weapons, this is green.

flame fountain fireworks^{UE} – if you're desperate for a melee touch weapon with mediocre fire damage, there's this.

itching powder^{AA,UE} – the DC is very low, but anyone that fails will be affected until the end of the combat. The debuff stacks with just about everything else since it's a unique condition. Using it to inflict a penalty on saving throws has some sinister implications in interrogation scenarios; victims won't be able to wash it off and end the effect.

kaava musk^{AA} – it has a few uses, although they won't come up all that often. You might be able to divert a *summon swarm* with this if you splash it on an enemy. It's also useful if you want to track someone, or allow Scent-using creatures to pinpoint an invisible enemy at longer ranges.

liquid blade^{UE} – it's a cool idea for an assassination where you can't bring weapons, but it's kinda weak.

liquid ice^{AA,APG,UE} (alchemist) – as an anti-swarm weapon, *alchemist's fire* is better. As backup ammo for alchemists, *acid* is better. But it provides another element of damage to alchemists and that's worth having.

skydragon fireworks^{AM} – if you just want to create chaos, this has its uses.

skyrocket fireworks^{AA,UE} – let's be clear: this is way too unpredictable to used as a weapon, it's just a cautionary tale about fireworks safety. But as a way of signalling over large distances, it's adequate.

slime grenade^{AM} (alchemist) – 3d6 damage ignoring hardness against gear, has a decent chance of Breaking it. With alchemist's Throw Anything, those odds rise further. In addition, it also does damage to the creature

itself, so you don't have to choose between attacking the enemy or his gear. The downsides are that this is an expensive weapon, and that you're ruining your loot. For PFS, two considerations: items you encounter but destroy still count towards loot and access via chronicle sheets (GtOP p. 21–22), and season 6 has robots. Robots are constructs with the robot subtype, and they tend to have hardness. Now, the slime grenade ignores hardness on objects, but it's unclear whether it does so on creatures. Expect table variation.

starfountain fireworks^{AA,UE} – again, useful for signaling or entertainment. Indoors, fun if you want to just screw everyone or have supreme confidence in your relative reflex saves. Probably more fun as a GM with goblins...

suffocating powder^{AM} – against a spellcaster, you're basically trading one action of yours for hopefully one of theirs, and that's not great. But the DC is high enough that it might give an arcane caster pause.

thunderstone^{CRB,UE} – the chance of success is just too low. First the target get a save (that is tough for wizards, true), then it's only a 20% chance of spell failure. There are better ways to hinder casters.

blanch bomb^{AM} – duration is uncertain, effect is small, enemies can evade it. Never mind.

bottled lighting^{UE} – sadly this is neither an area attack (for use against swarms) nor a splash weapon (for use with Throw Anything as an alchemist).

firecracker^{AM} – a 10gp item that has a small chance of scaring away animals. Also decent as a signal I suppose.

firework, desnan candle^{AA} – As entertainment, it might be worth it. But as a weapon it's trash.

keros oil^{AA,UE} – this is not a weapon.

lyddric essence^{AM} (alchemist) – we're firmly in the realm of special-purpose weapons here, and plant enemies aren't the most common. But if you're an alchemist, you're probably already investing in a handy haversack anyway, and it can't hurt to have a few bottles of this on hand just in case.

paper candle fireworks^{AA,UE} – Oh noes! Save or be dazzled!

sneezing powder^{AA,APG,UE} – it doesn't even hinder spellcasters. The people you would really want to stagger will easily make the fortitude save.

star candle fireworks^{UE} – why are all these fireworks classified as weapons? This one is absolutely worthless as a weapon.

stormstone^{AM} – Expensive, not a lot of damage, and doesn't seem to count as a splash weapon so uninteresting to alchemists.

3 Alchemical Arrows

durable arrows^{AM} – if you have a bow, get these. Then get durable arrows made from adamantine and other exotic materials.

pheromone arrow^{AM} – it's mostly a curiosity, unless you have an animal companion with Scent, in which case it's a serious buff.

tangleshot arrow^{AM} (alchemist) – Now we're talking. Attacking Touch AC and threatening weak entanglement doesn't sound spectacular, but it's annoying for castings. For alchemists it's a good reason to take Explosive Missile, for a massive range extension on bombs. For Grenadier alchemists, this is purple because it's the perfect way to use Alchemical Weapon; you'll still do Throw Anything damage if you hit the primary target, but no risk of hitting adjacent allies. You've probably taken the longbow as your free martial weapon proficiency. Your range increment with alchemical weapons just went from 10 feet to 110 feet!

bleeding arrow^{AM} – it's unclear whether the effects stack, and they're pretty expensive. But many creatures are stupid and will have a hard time stopping bleed effects. If the GM rules that these arrows stack, they become green.

dye arrow^{AM} – although it's not called out, perhaps you can combine these with *glowing ink* to tag invisible foes. (alchemist) – Grenadier alchemists and alchemists with the Explosive Missile discovery can use these to deliver attacks against Touch AC at much longer range. However, *tangleshot arrows* are even better for that.

raining arrow^{AM} – Against corporeal undead, the -2 to hit will probably be a dealbreaker. Against incorporeal undead, I'm guessing you first need to make sure your bow or arrows are magical so that they actually hit the critter, but then this becomes fairly good; incorporeal undead have relatively poor AC due to not wearing armor. Specifically, their touch and normal AC are pretty much the same.

lodestone arrow^{AM} – the increased to-hit bonus is mostly made irrelevant by halving the damage.

slow arrow^{AM} – It's extra damage with no loss of action economy or to-hit, but at 100gp, it's rather expensive damage.

splintercloud arrow^{AM} – 25gp for a possible 1d3 extra damage, but you don't want to use it if your party is also in that melee. No thanks.

trip arrow^{AM} – as I read it, first you have to hit, then attempt another to-hit to trip. I don't like those odds.

4 Alchemical Remedies

alchemist's kindness^{APG,UE} – mainly an RP item, but anyone who's had a hangover IRL will agree that this item is too good to believe for its 1GP cost. It doesn't weigh anything so make sure you pack some.

antiplague^{AA,APG,UE} – a big bonus that will often turn the save into a Sure Thing. But better even, it immediately gives you additional saves to quickly shake off the disease. This can be a cheaper alternative to *remove disease* in PFS, where you have to get rid of disease conditions before the end of the session.

bladeguard^{AA,APG,UE} – 40gp to protect your fancy magic sword from being damaged by acidic oozes or rust monsters. Every melee warrior should carry this.

soul stimulant^{UE} – *restoration* can only remove one permanent negative level per week. And you'll just see that you happen to have two of them due to a *raise dead* spell. And of course there's time pressure because the world is about to end. You shouldn't need this often but when you do it's really really nice.

vapours of easy breath^{AM} – an excellent answer to *stinking cloud*. Just grab the bottle as a Move action and let it fall to the floor and break as a Free action.

vermin repellent^{AA,UE} – it's cheap, doesn't weigh anything and it lasts long enough for a typical dungeon crawl. In addition, swarms of vermin tend to be annoyingly diminutive and troublesome to many PCs.

allnight^{AA} – it's unclear to me if this also prevents you from becoming fatigued, or if it only eliminates already-existing fatigue. If it prevents fatigue, then it's **blue** (and for barbarians, **purple**). Note that extreme environmental conditions like climbing high mountains can cause fatigue.

antiemetic snuff^{ACG} – nauseated is a brutal condition, and can be inflicted by Stinking Cloud, which can be cast by Dretches, which are a common Summon Monster in scenarios. That said, there are also other remedies that help against it, and this one only works if you took the snuff before the save. TODO: choose the best remedies.

antitoxin^{CRB,UE} – It's a substantial bonus to saves against poison, but it doesn't give you any bonus saves (unlike *antiplague*. At lower levels it might just be too expensive to drink before *every* fight.

bloodblock^{AA,APG,UE} – simply stops bleed effects (and also provides some bonuses to Heal checks that you don't often make).

bodybalm^{AA} – a +5 bonus to heal checks is pretty decent. Note that this can still be combined with things like *Antiplague*; the victim of the disease gets a bonus from *Antiplague*, but not from *Bodybalm*. The healer meanwhile gets a bonus from *Bodybalm* but not *Antiplague*. In my experience though, 95% of all Heal checks are made to determine the cause of death, because magical healing is faster. But this is versatile stuff and for a low-level party without access to *remove disease* or *neutralize poison* it can be useful to have a few vials stashed away.

essence of independence^{AM} – a solid chance to break a mind-affecting effect is very nice, but consider the difficulty of getting someone to drink it in the first place. Since it doesn't weigh anything, consider carrying a bottle anyway; you never know when you might get a chance to turn the BBEG's familiar against him and milk it for information.

mimic fibers^{AM} – cheap and doesn't weigh anything, so why not bring a few, because you never know when they might come in handy.

smelling salts^{APG,UE} – this can wake someone up from a *color spray*. More importantly, it can wake up the only party member capable of using a healing item or spell – on himself!

soothe syrup^{APG,UE} – nauseated is a nasty condition. This remedy combines nicely with *antiemetic snuff*, but you do need ample warning or gratuitous time for just-in-case buffing.

troll oil^{UE} – automatic stabilization can be a lifesaver, but acid and fire damage aren't exactly uncommon. It's a good consumable for nervous frontliners.

twitch tonic^{UE} – paralysis mid-combat is scary, but it can be logistically tricky for an ally to feed this tonic to you when you really need it. If you know you're about to fight ghouls or witches you should definitely have a GT though.

vivifying moxybustion needles^{AM} – a not exactly cheap or fast but long-duration buff, as well as a broad solution to various ongoing ailments. It looks like you can even use this to get rid of ongoing effects that normally take more than one successful save to shake off.

distilled terrap sap^{UE} – similar to *vapors of easy breath*, but not quite as good because it doesn't allow a new saving throw, and because the duration is too short and uncertain. It does have a nice big AoE though.

flayleaf^{AA,GMG} – This isn't red because I don't know any other mundane item that makes you immune to pain. But a -5 to saves on mind-affecting abilities is generally unacceptable. Note that this is a drug and you should familiarize yourself with the addiction rules in the GMG before using it.

fortifying brew^{ACG} – there are many things that give you morale bonuses against fear. This one can be used only once per day, and you have to guess in advance when you'll need it.

padzahr^{UE} – it's a way to save on *lesser restoration* casting when resting in camp, but not very practical during a dungeon crawl.

poison ward salve^{ACG} – the way I read it, the idea is that if you apply the salve fast enough you get another chance at the first save. It might stop the initial effect if that's not instantaneous (sleep perhaps, but not ability damage), and it will prevent any secondary effects, which is nice if the poison normally requires multiple saves to end if you failed the initial save. That said, contact poisons are uncommon and a lot of things have to go right before this item is useful.

troll styptic^{Seekers of Secrets} – the way it reads, you need to be wounded before you can be dosed with this, which is a bit inflexible. It's major virtues are that it involves no magic whatsoever (so any idiot can use it), and that it circumvents weird powers that prevent magical healing. A bit niche if you ask me, but it doesn't weigh anything, so you could carry a packet if you want to be Crazy Prepared.

wismuth salix^{UE} – similar to *soothe syrup* and many other remedies against the nauseated condition. The bonus is unimpressive in comparison, although this remedy can also handle the sickened condition, which is rare. The reroll on the save is nice in theory, but drinking it is a Standard action which you can't perform while nauseated.

acid neutralizer^{AM} – just not as good as *bladeguard*. And you don't really want to stand next to an ooze to dose it with this, because then the next thing it'll do is engulf you.

bloodclotter salve^{ACG} – there are far better ways to stop bleed effects. Like a single tap from a wand of *cure light wounds*, or *bloodblock*.

bloodgorge^{AM} – just assuming you're under a bleed effect, nearby enemies need to make an easy save to not be grossed out for a moment.

chill cream^{UE} – hopelessly circumstantial and with fussy mechanics to boot.

fire ward gel^{UE} – fire resistance is nice of course, but this item is expensive, takes a minute to apply, and doesn't give all that much fire resistance.

frost ward gel^{UE} – cold resistance is nice of course, but this item is expensive, takes a minute to apply, and doesn't give all that much cold resistance.

meditation tea^{UE} – at first glance it sounds good, but the duration is a bit short. One problem is that you actually need to brew tea in the middle of the dungeon, and then maybe force it down the throat of a resisting PC.

rager's aid^{ACG} – so this is basically for barbarians who need to rage again in a short time. So then they have to spend a round drawing the leaves and putting them in their mouth, and then afterwards you're exhausted. Presumably exhausted for the same duration that the fatigue would last, although the rules are vague. No thanks, I'll spend the extra money for a potion of *lesser restoration*.

5 Buffs

blood-boiling pill^{AM} – it's a nice bonus to initiative that lasts quite a while, and initiative checks are vastly more common than bleed effects. Most bleed effects are easily fixed by a dash of magical healing anyway. If you're still worried, use *troll oil*. Having *infernal healing* active will also protect you against bleed effects.

clear ear^{AA} – a +2 bonus to knowledges and perception at the cost of a -2 on Charisma-based checks. There's quite a few characters out there that would benefit from this.

reagent paper^{ACG} – a +2 bonus to identify potions for only 1 GP is a bargain.

tracking powder^{ACG} – a huge bonus on tracking checks for a very small investment.

weapon blanch, ghost salt^{FG} – coat some arrows in this, just in case you run into incorporeal enemies. The arrows will stay salted until used; make sure to get a note from the GM on your chronicle sheet.

alchemical grease^{AA,APG,UE} – It's a substantial bonus to avoid being grappled that lasts for four whole hours, and it's cheap. It stacks with *grease*. And you can also do other creative stuff with it.

armor ointment^{UE} – it can't reduce your armor check penalty to 0 so you can't cheat your way around armor proficiency with this. But it's 30gp for an effective +1 to all Strength and Dexterity-related checks for 8 hours, so that's pretty good.

gravelly tonic^{ACG} – a big bonus to intimidate that stacks with just about everything, for an hour. Did you know that *blistering invective* is on the alchemist extract list? With *alchemical allocation* you can stack it with an Elixir of the Thundering Voice for a +15 bonus to intimidate. You don't even need class skills anymore with those kinds of bonuses.

holy weapon balm^{ACG} – oil of *bless weapon* or *magic weapon* will cover more ammunition, but this does more damage. Those also work well on melee weapons; this one doesn't. On ammunition it's equal to the oils but worse than blanches (due to duration). On the plus side, it's way cheaper than *ghost salt*.

lozenge of the songbird^{ACG} – mainly of interest to bard I'd say. It does stack with most other bonuses you might have. Could be interesting with Versatile Performance, or if you know in advance that you're gonna do a high-stakes performance.

rusting powder^{UE} *disable device* – a substantial buff to Disable Device checks, but with some risks if you still fail the check. Could also be used in other creative ways.

shaman's war paint^{AM} – the buff the caster level is actually pretty good. Remember you're also your own ally. But the real beauty of this item is in the downside: automatic wisdom damage. If you need to soften up a prisoner for interrogation (or possession...), just cover them in paint for ten minutes or so.

silence dust^{AM} – if you need to take out some guards without setting the entire dungeon on high alert, this has its uses. For personal stealth I think the duration is on the short side, but the bonus is significant.

tracker's snuff^{ACG} *buffs!Scent!tracker's snuff* – forget about tracking. You get Scent for an hour, and Scent lets you detect invisible enemies, and pinpoint them automatically when they become adjacent. This is a non-caster's way of hunting invisible enemies.

weapon blanch, silver^{APG,UE} – bludgeoning silver weapons are decent enough. On arrows this blanch can be worth it because it doesn't cause the -1 to damage that actual silvertipped arrows incur, and because the blanch remains on the arrow until it's used, so you can prep it in advance.

angel's trumpet^{AM} – this is a big package of buffs and downsides. It's a drug, which means risk of addiction as described in GMG. Note that addiction is a disease and Antiplague and *remove disease* can help you with that. I think angel's trumpet offers very substantial benefits, and under rare circumstances is worth using. For example, it will prevent *dominate person* or *confusion* from working on you. However, the side effects are pretty brutal; light blindness is no joke. Because it causes fatigue it doesn't help barbarians all that much either.

beast scent^{Seekers of Secrets} – for low-level druids who dump Charisma, a bonus on handle animal might be nice. But at those levels using this every combat might just be a little bit too expensive, and it takes a bit too long to apply in combat.

blood-chilling pill^{AM} – I might take this if I was going into a very fire-themed dungeon, but in general I'm less worried about bleed than I am about initiative.

boulderhead bock^{AM} – These effects aren't terribly common, and the duration isn't long enough to drink up for every dungeon. That said, if you know you're fighting a certain kind of wizard, these buffs are pretty welcome because you don't want to fail those saves. I'm not sure if they'd apply to things like Dazing Fireball; getting dazed is a rider effect on a save for half damage, and it'd be a bit odd to avoid the damage because you're good at saving against the rider effect. Expect table variation.

icecap ale^{AM} – the bonuses don't last long enough in my opinion. However, the memory loss could be used on other people intentionally, as the save DC is pretty high.

insight leaves^{AM} – circumstantial but pleasant. I'm mainly worried about knowledge checks that I technically succeeded at, but didn't roll high enough for the really good stuff.

liquid traction^{ACG} – I'm rarely worried about bullrushing, and I can't remember the last time I made checks to maintain balance. This not working on *grease* immediately nullifies the one thing it might be really good for.

It takes a long time to apply, but doesn't say how long it lasts. I think it's fair to assume that it'll last for an entire PFS scenario.

oil of the masters^{ACG} – doesn't list an activation (unlike *lozenge of the songbird*), but essentially the same effect. I don't think you can use it on Versatile Performance however, making it much more circumstantial.

pesh^{AA,GMG} – the effect of AA-pesh and GMG-pesh is not the same. Both give a buff and stiff penalties.

shoanti barbarian chew^{AA} – I think this is a relic of 3.5 days.

weapon blanch, adamantine^{APG,UE} – on a melee weapon it's fairly pointless. On ammunition it's a poor choice, because it only penetrates DR, not hardness. *durable arrows* made from adamantine are more expensive but also much better.

chameleon ointment^{AM} – if you're a homonculous it's perfectly fine, but anyone else has to walk around naked for a measly +2 circumstance bonus.

eye drops of the unseen master^{AM} – if you have a homonculous, this is **purple**, otherwise it does absolutely nothing.

frightful war paint^{AM} – a lot of work to make people momentarily shaken. And it has significant downsides. If you want to abuse those downsides, use the cheaper *shaman's war paint*.

imposing war paint^{AM} – the bonus is nice, but the downsides are just too severe to use this.

longbeard lambic^{AM} – the buffs don't last nearly long enough to be useful.

pesh, black^{AM} – the addiction save is hard, and getting a Strength bonus at the price of Constitution damage is unattractive. Penalties against mind-affecting effects are also nasty.

pesh, golden^{AM} – the major addiction makes this unattractive. The effects are also unimpressive.

weapon blanch, cold iron^{APG,UE} – actual cold iron weapons are cheap.

woundweal^{AA} – I'm not a big fan of poison. At first glance this seems like it could be useful, but then consider: an enemy needs to fail his save, and then receive magical healing in combat which might just fail because of it. For 100gp, I want more certain results. I think the only people against which this has a good chance of working, are weak enough that it's not worth the money. It's bloody annoying when used on PCs though.

6 miscellaneous alchemical items

glowing ink^{AA,UE} – cute, and maybe you can talk the GM into letting you use this on scrolls, so you can read them in the dark without darkvision. It could perhaps also be used in combination with *dye arrows*, if you want to make enemies visible to other PCs without darkvision.

tindertwig^{CRB,UE} – make fire fast. Cheap, doesn't weigh anything. What's not to like?

alchemical glue^{UE} – lightweight and once it dries, quite strong. Make sure to also bring *alchemical glue accelerant*.

alchemical glue accelerant^{UE} – weightless and makes *alchemical glue* dry faster.

bachelor snuff^{AA} – It's cheap and reliable.

bloodvine rope^{ACG} (alchemist) – it's a bit expensive, but it's just as lightweight as silk rope but stronger. Alchemists can offset the costs by crafting it themselves.

foaming powder^{UE} – if you can cast *create water*, you now have a way to make difficult terrain wherever you like. You could probably also use this to build a raft. It might also be funny to use this to hide bear traps under the foam.

ghost ink^{Seekers of Secrets} – rather like *invisible ink*; it can be useful if you're engaging in intrigue.

invisible ink^{AA,UE} – you can hide a secret message in a regular letter, and because it's not magical, chances are fairly small anyone will notice. The DC to "crack" the message is pretty high.

light detector^{APG,UE} – Versatile, cheap and doesn't weigh anything. Useful for creative solutions.

light fire ink^{ACG} – Burn After Reading. Can be useful if you're involved in intrigue. Sadly not useful for arson without any further chicanery, although maybe you could use it to light a fuse at sunrise.

masking scent^{ACG} – Doesn't weigh anything, no check listed to realize the deception, long duration; this can be quite useful. I think it might just be the best way to circumvent enemy Scent during infiltrations.

night tea^{AA} – the text suggests that you'd need to drink it for several days before intercourse to be assured it works, but for a woman it's good to have options.

scent cloak^{AA,UE} – decent duration and DC hike to avoid being tracked, which can be useful when trying to exfiltrate. It's of little help for the invisible PC that's afraid of being pinpointed by Scent though.

sunrod^{CRB,UE} – They don't require air to work, so they work underwater. Although there's nothing bad about sunrods, you'll often adventure with people with *light* spells, wayfinders, ioun torches or whatnot, so in practice you don't use these often.

tea of transference^{AM} – If you're multiclassed then you might as well have some of this with you. Particularly the option of regaining Smite Evil uses sounds good to me.

tunnel creeper^{AM} – sometimes you want to make a quiet entry or exit, and beating down the walls with your adamantite rapier isn't the best way of doing that. This little buddy doesn't weigh a lot. The only worry is that sometimes 10ft isn't far enough, so make sure you know where you're going.

vomit capsule^{ACG} – good enough for some chicanery, and you might even talk the GM into getting a bonus against things you swallowed or that crawl down your throat. Also fun to Sleight of Hand into someone's drink.

woad painting kit^{ACG} – Still Spell isn't a terribly impressive feat, but doing it for free has to be useful for something. Ignoring material components could also be useful. I feel that there's some awesome use of this item that I just haven't thought of yet.

air crystals^{FG} – in theory they sound nice, but a potion of *air bubble* lasts just as long and doesn't prevent you from speaking.

alchemical cement^{UE} – like *casting plaster*, but stronger and lighter, though probably also slower and less area.

beast lure^{AA} – it sounds rather circumstantial, but when it's applicable it's quite potent. Some uses: select the right flavor so that your animal companion can track it with Scent (or you, if you have it). Use it to keep track of an invisible enemy. Splash it on an item you want the bad guys to steal so you can track whoever steals it; it only smells special to one species, so your ruse might go undetected. And of course if you have forewarning that your enemy uses poorly-controlled swarms, this can be hilarious.

blackfire clay^{UE} – it's ridiculously heavy, but a campfire that doesn't emit light or smoke could be useful someday. It could also be useful for cold climate travel, but really, pay the 5gp extra and have someone use a *endure elements* scroll on you.

buoyant balloon^{UE} – there are some possible creative uses, but those should be weighed against *mage hand* and *levitate* spells.

candlerod^{UE} – rather circumstantial, and easily duplicated with *prestidigitation*, which any self-respecting arcane caster will have.

casting plaster^{APG} – Versatile, but really heavy. If encumbrance is not a problem for you, it could be handy to carry a few packs.

embalming fluid^{UE} – the skill DC is on the high side. It's easier to use *restore corpse* to fix any decay.

homonculous clay^{AM} – it does something pretty unusual, but at this price we're far beyond the cost-efficient consumables this guide is all about.

impact foam^{UE} – you can soften your fall, but that seems rather circumstantial.

instant fertilizer^{AM} – nice if you want to prepare a battlefield by placing some strategic bits of difficult terrain, but it's rather heavy given the quantities you're likely to need. Cute item though. If you're not worried about the AoO, it's a mundane way to entangle enemies with a decent save DC.

loyalty transfusion^{AM} – looks pretty circumstantial. However, it suggests that the new master doesn't necessarily need any feats. So suppose you can obtain a sample of a recurring villain's blood, it could be fun.

mending paste^{UE} – rather circumstantial, but it'll patch up a fighter's broken sword until you have time to do a proper job.

nushadir^{APG,UE} – I don't really know when I'd ever need this.

pathstones^{ACG} – I suppose they're versatile, but they're a bit expensive. A sunrod wrapped in thin cloth might do the same thing.

smokestick^{CRB,UE} – Creating a 10ft cube of smoke has its uses; used indoors you can stop line of sight in corridors, which will stop some spellcasting, nerf archery and even reach attacks. It's worth remembering that you can't make Attacks of Opportunity against something that has total concealment, so smokesticks can be used to get close to or away from reach monsters. You probably won't use these often but when you do they're quite nice. However, the radius is quite small and fog spells tend to be better.

water purification sponge^{AA,UE} – *purify food and drink* is just easier. Also, *create water* is one of the most popular orisons.

alchemical solvent^{AA,APG} – it can dissolve most monster glue abilities since those tend to be Exceptional, but they'll probably also count as being strong adhesive, and 1d4+1 rounds stuck to a mimic is just too long. Universal Solvent costs only 30gp more and is far better.

semblance transfusion^{AM} – if you don't have a humonculous, this doesn't do anything for you. But if you do then this is blue.

smoke pellet^{AA,APG,UE} – Short duration and tiny area; just not enough.

wyrm's breath bitter^{AM} – good only for pranking; the benefits are too small to use it offensively yourself, the downsides too small to trick enemies into using it.

7 various odds and ends

hybridization funnel^{LE} – it's a significant DC to use, but an alchemist can do it. You also have to know that you'll be using your hybrid weapons that day, so it's basically good when you know in advance you're going into a dungeon. That's not always the case in PFS, but sometimes it is.

vial of efficacious medicine^{AM} – pumping bonuses from +5 to +7 is nice, and getting some free extra healing is also nice. It's not a very expensive item, might be a good investment for an alchemist that uses a lot of remedies. Basically it turns any alchemical remedy into a CL 5 potion of *cure light wounds*, and that's nice. Make sure that the item you're improving is classified as a Remedy though.

pain wheel^{AM} – complete waste of time.

focusing flask^{AM} – creates unclear rules issues with regards to Throw Anything, and in general looks like it's too expensive to use.

winged bottle^{AM} – I don't think you get Throw Anything damage with this, and that renders it horribly overpriced.

fungal grafts – TODO. Not PFS-legal anyway.

8 relevant traits & feats

potion glutton (feat, Urgathoa) *Inner Sea Gods* – drinking just about anything as a swift action is nice.

carpenden lobster (trait, regional) *Andoran, Spirit of Liberty* – a +2 to hit with the trusty *tanglefoot bag* and *desiccating lubricant*. That's pretty impressive.

accelerated drinker (combat trait) *Cheliox, Empire of Devils* – not as good as it sounds at first. It only works on potions, not extracts, mutagens or alchemical gunk. And you have to start with the potion in your hand. One way to make it work is to always carry a potion in your hand, which you drink at the start of combat.

firebug (combat trait) *Quests and Campaigns* (alchemist) – a +1 bonus to hit with all splash weapons and alchemist bombs? Sign me up.

9 spontaneous alchemy

TODO

retort of control^{AM} – it's quite expensive, but the ability to make sure your weapons don't affect PCs or animal companions is worth something. Likewise, if you're going to poison a banquet, excluding one subspecies might be politically useful. The main use however would be speeding up spontaneous alchemical creation, if you use the normal slow crafting rules.

10 poison-related

I'm not really interested in poison. The problems I see with poison are these: it's very expensive, and they're generally about attrition. Getting poisoned will penalize you the whole day, but as a PC you don't care about the rest of the monster's day (if any). You only care about how well it's doing in this fight right now. And the penalties aren't usually enough to swing a fight, not fast enough at any rate. Also, save DCs tend to be low, compared to monster Fortitude saves.

poison belcher^{AM} – Turning an ingested poison into a ranged touch attack is interesting.

poison diffuser^{AM} – alternate vectors are nice.

spirit of glass^{AM} – allowing you to deliver poison without having an encounter; nice.

vector ink^{AM} – leave a note.

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