

NetHack Wishing Spoiler

March 3, 2004

Original 3.3 Wishing Spoiler by Peter Snelling (snellingATnortelnetworks.com)

Extensions & changes for 3.4 by Stanislav Traykov (stanislavATtortoises.org)

With contributions from Philipp Lucas, S., David Corbett, Seraphim, Rast, tomandcatherine, Big Al, Erik Hesselink,
and many other people in rec.games.roguelike.nethack

Contents

1	General Wishing Guidelines	1
2	How many, what enchantment, blessed?	2
3	What to Wish For?	3
3.1	High Priority	4
3.2	Medium Priority	4
3.3	Low Priority	4
3.4	Specific Needs & Remedies	5
3.5	Without Wishing	5
4	Quest Artifacts	5

1 General Wishing Guidelines

There are 5 ways to get a wish:

1. Wands of wishing: generated with up to 3 charges. Empty (0:0) ones can be recharged only once with a scroll of charging (or equivalent). This will bring the number of charges to d3 with normal or 3 with blessed charging. Also, you have a 1/121 chance of getting a final zap from an empty wand, after which it will turn to dust. So once you've recharged it and used up all wishes, you can get one final wish by zapping it repeatedly.

Tip #1: If you don't have the means to recharge it, make sure you use your first wish on something to do this with. Blessed scrolls of charging are the most obvious way, but if you've already seen one of those, wish for a magic marker instead.

Tip #2: If your luck is d5 or more below zero, you will not get a wish ("Unfortunately, nothing happens").

2. A magic lamp: #rubbing it repeatedly will eventually release a djinni. If the lamp is blessed, there is a 4/5 chance of getting a wish (1/5 if uncursed, 1/20 if cursed). Once you get the djinni from a magic lamp, it becomes a normal lamp, and can't be recharged to give you another wish. Some players save magic lamps if they don't desperately need a wish, since they are permanent light sources.
3. A fountain: Quaffing or dipping at a fountain has a 1/30 chance of releasing a water demon who has a (20 - dungeon level)/100 chance of giving you a wish.
4. Quaffing a smoky potion: There is a $1/(13 + 2 * \text{djinnis created in the game})$ chance of it containing a djinni. If the potion was blessed, it will grant you a wish 4/5 of the time (1/5 if uncursed, 1/20 if cursed).
5. Sitting on a throne: If your luck is not d5 or more below zero, you have a 1/39 chance of getting a wish. After you sit on a throne, it can vanish in a puff of logic. Considering all factors, the overall chance for getting at least one wish from a throne, if your luck is at least zero and you don't kick it, is very close to 3/40. (Or exactly that if you have teleport control and make sure you teleport away from the throne, if it makes you teleport.)

Other than the wand, these methods have a possibility of a hazardous outcome.

If you do get a wish, remember that you are not always given an artifact when you wish for it ("For a moment, you feel something in your *body part*, but it disappears!") and that only your god can unrestricted weapon skills (by crowning or when granting you a weapon).

The odds for getting an artifact are inversely proportional to the number of artifacts already created in the game. The following table is from the artifacts spoiler by Kevin Hugo and Dylan O'Donnell:

Number of artifacts	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	n
Chance	1	1	2/3	2/4	2/5	2/6	2/7	2/n+1

There is no reliable way to wish for another wish. Don't waste a wish on another wand of wishing or a magic lamp. The only possible way is to wish for blessed smoky potions, which have a possibility of giving you a wish.

Note that NetHack accepts both British and American English, so you can wish for "a blessed can of grey dragon meat". Samurai can also use the English names, and other classes may use the Japanese ones.

2 How many, what enchantment, blessed?

When wishing for a "stackable" item, you should always ask for more than one. The random number generator may only give you one, but it doesn't hurt to ask. Similarly, you should specify an enchantment, since you'll get +0 if it fails. Asking for it to be blessed (or cursed) and/or fooproof doesn't hurt and is guaranteed to work if your luck is non-negative.

Asking for a specific number of charges using "(x:y)" or "+x" is possible, but for anything except rings, the lower of a random value and your number is chosen. Ring charges are treated as enchantments below.

Opinions differ on whether it is better to wish for quantities of 2 or 3 and enchantments of +2 or +3. A summary of the odds (thanks to Dylan O'Donnell) follows:

Quantity	Chance	Average	Enchantment	Chance	Average
1	1	1	+1	1	+1
2	2/3	1.66	+2	4/5	+1.6
3	1/2	2	+3	3/5	+1.8
4	1/3	2	+4	2/5	+1.6
5	1/6	1.66	+5	1/5	+1
6	0	1	+6	0	+0

The exceptions to the above table are candles (up to 7 are guaranteed), missile weapons (up to 20), and gold pieces (up to 5000).

As with everything else, this is situation dependent. For example, if you really need two charging scrolls, play it safe and only ask for two.

3 What to Wish For?

Answer: It depends. It depends on your character class, on your playing style, on your game situation, on your NetHack ethics (eg. polypiling, wishing for artifacts), the number of wishes, and your current inventory.

The general consensus for an early wish is gray or silver dragon scale mail, since they provide important intrinsics you can't easily get elsewhere—you eventually want both magic resistance and reflection, and these are good ways to get them. Gray dragon scale mail is considered better for most classes as magic resistance protects from some potentially nasty traps. Also, an amulet of reflection could be waiting in Sokoban.

One of the most powerful tools you can wish for is a magic marker. It can be used to write scrolls or spellbooks. This is reliable only if the resulting object is already known. The base chance of writing an unknown scroll or spellbook is 1/15 (1/3 for wizards). This will improve with higher luck and reach about 32% (98% for wizards) at maxed-out luck.

Many useful spellbooks are low-level, and that means cheap. A spellbook of magic missile, for example, costs maximum 19 charges and is thus not worth wishing for, if you are a wizard.

Speed boots are also a popular choice, especially for characters without intrinsic speed. But even these are situation dependent:

- If you haven't found a bag after the Mines and Sokoban, a bag of holding might make sense.
- If you're burdened and wimpy, perhaps gauntlets of power
- If you're a poor typist, perhaps an amulet of life saving
- If it's a wand, wish for scrolls of charging.
- etc.

Take a look at the Specific Needs section if your condition needs some help right now.

Remember that you need to consider your situation before you can pick the best item.

3.1 High Priority

2 blessed scrolls of charging
blessed +2 gray dragon scale mail
blessed +2 silver dragon scale mail
blessed greased fireproof +2 cloak of magic resistance
blessed fireproof +2 pair of speed boots
blessed rustproof +2 gauntlets of power
uncursed magic marker
blessed amulet of life saving
blessed wand of polymorph
blessed spellbook of polymorph

if it's from a wand
magic resistance
if magic-protected
if you have SDSM
makes you very fast
esp. for a Valkyrie
for b/u/c scrolls
there's one at Vlad's
zap at a pile of junk
high-level wizards

3.2 Medium Priority

blessed tinning kit
blessed greased rustproof +2 helm of brilliance
blessed +2 Grayswandir
blessed rustproof +2 Frost Brand
blessed rustproof +2 Mjollnir
blessed rustproof +2 Magicbane
blessed rustproof +2 Stormbringer
blessed ring of levitation
blessed ring of polymorph control
2 blessed scrolls of genocide

for getting resistances, Str
for spellcasters
sears demons & undead. Law
Few monsters resist cold
Few monsters resist shock. Neu
absorbs curses, Neu
tough to control, Cha
usually found before endgame
Poly into a Xorn or Vamp Lord
genocide races

3.3 Low Priority

blessed ring of free action
blessed ring of conflict
blessed greased rustproof +2 helm of telepathy
rustproof +2 helm of opposite alignment
blessed fireproof +2 gauntlets of dexterity
blessed greased fireproof +2 robe
blessed greased fireproof +2 oilskin cloak
blessed greased fireproof +2 cloak of displacement
blessed fireproof +2 T-shirt
blessed amulet of magical breathing
2 cursed scrolls of genocide
blessed spellbook of identify

prevents paralysis
extrinsic telepathy
protection loss!
won't hinder spell-casting
for challenged spellcasters
prevents grabbing, drowning
cancellation of 2
enchant & wear for extra AC
no choking, allows swimming
Caution is advised
wizards should write one

3.4 Specific Needs & Remedies

2 blessed potions of gain ability
blessed ring of slow digestion
blessed cockatrice corpse
blessed ring of teleport control
blessed magic marker
blessed greased bag of holding
blessed figurine of an Archon

increases all stats
hungry situations
Gloves and lots of caution are advised
if you got teleport without control
if holy water is very scarce
usually found in Soko or the Mines
still the best pet

3.5 Without Wishing

The following are useful items, but usually there are ways to get them—or the advantages they provide—without wishing (or by wishing for something else).

blessed luckstone
7 blessed wax candles
blessed fireproof +2 levitation boots
blessed +2 shield of reflection
blessed amulet of reflection
blessed fireproof +2 water walking boots
blessed rustproof +2 Excalibur
blessed spellbook of magic missile

One is at mine bottom
Mine town usually has enough
in 1/4 of Perseus statues
in 3/4 of Perseus statues
could be at last Sokoban level
in Vlad's Tower
for lawful characters
wizards can write one

Note that Valkyries and wizards have guaranteed first sacrifice gifts—Mjollnir and Magicbane. Additionally, praying can result in being crowned, which can give you Excalibur (Law), Vorpall Blade (Neu), or Stormbringer (Cha). Be sure to wield a long sword while praying to get Excalibur. Creating it by dipping a long sword into a fountain is easier still.

Also, obtaining a dragon scale mail is sometimes possible before getting the first wish opportunity. If you find dragon scales, you can create your own mail by wearing the scales as your only armor and reading a noncursed scroll of enchant armor. Blessed scrolls will additionally bless the new armor and increase its enchantment by one (scales enchantment is preserved otherwise).

4 Quest Artifacts

You cannot wish for your own quest artifact. However, it is possible to wish for the quest artifacts of other classes. As with any artifacts, your odds are inversely proportional to the number of artifacts already created.

Quest artifacts may not be as powerful for other classes and will blast you with their power when picked up, worn, or wielded. If you are not of their alignment, they will evade your grasp and you will not be able to use them at all (your own quest artifact's alignment will be adjusted to yours).

Wish for	Align	Cl	Only for intended class
blessed Orb of Detection	Law	A	
blessed rustproof +2 Sceptre of Might	Law	C	
blessed Magic Mirror of Merlin	Law	K	2x damage with some spells
blessed rustproof +2 Mitre of Holiness	Law	P	1/2 dmg from undead&demons
blessed +2 Tsurugi of Muramasa	Law	S	
blessed Platinum Yendorian Express Card	Neu	T	blessed charging
blessed Orb of Fate	Neu	V	
blessed Eye of the Aethiopica	Neu	W	
blessed Heart of Ahriman	Neu	B	
blessed fireproof +2 Staff of Aesculapius	Neu	H	
blessed Eyes of the Overworld	Neu	M	
blessed fireproof +2 Longbow of Diana	Cha	Ra	
blessed Master Key of Thievery	Cha	Ro	

Quest artifact weapons are usually a poor choice, though the Staff or the Sceptre might be practical with some roles, especially in situations where you cannot unrestrict skills.

There are few cases where lawful or chaotic characters will wish for others' quest artifacts at all (unless they intend to change alignment). The Tsurugi loses much of its appeal, because it needs both hands. The others in the lawful section just lack power compared to other wishes. The Key is sometimes chosen when you need teleport control and warning.

Neutral quest artifacts are much more powerful. Depending on role, you may wish for any one of them, except the pretty useless Heart. Consult an artifacts spoiler for their effects.

Distribution of modified versions of this document is permitted only if all contributors and changes are credited. This version may be freely used/copied.