

The Field Guide To Summoned Monsters

Do you like the idea of playing a summoner in D&D 3.5, but get sick of summoning celestial or fiendish farm animals? Do you crave something more interesting and exotic? There's good news for you; besides the list of legal summons in spell descriptions in the Player's Handbook, there are a variety of other monsters that can be summoned by the various Summon Monster spells. This guide covers the additions specifically noted as legal in WotC published books, not including Dragon Magazine, third party products, or arbitrary substitution schemes.

In the Monster Manual I and Monster Manual II there are no additional creatures listed as being summonable using *summon monster*. However, in Monster Manual III-V, Fiend Folio, the Fiendish Codexes, and some other scattered sources there are a number of monsters noted specifically as being summonable with Summon Monster spells.

This guide starts talks in depth about notable aspects of all these additional summonable monsters and recommends the best summons for each level. Where you have to make a choice, I make sure to point out which you should probably take. This guide is informed by my playing a malconvoker up to level 14 and exercising the heck out of all these summons.

Options in **blue** are the best all-around options for a given level of summoning spell. Options that are ~~struck through~~ are the ones you don't want when you have to choose between two monsters to have on your summoning list.

Special Notes

Many characters have their summoning choices constrained by their alignment since summon spells count as being aligned spells according to their target. You'll need to weigh my advice versus your DM's view on this restriction, especially for clerical summoners. Being a malconvoker (a prestige class from Complete Scoundrel) gets around that restriction and allows a good character to summon evil creatures, and is recommended if you really want to go full bore as a summoner.

Many summonable creatures on this list specify that "an evil spellcaster" must summon them. A logical rule interpretation is that a malconvoker would count for that restriction as well, as their Deceptive Summons ability's point is to emulate being evil for summoning purposes.

Some of these new summons specify that they replace an existing choice on the summon lists, requiring you to remove one monster to get the new one as a potential summon, but many just note "you can summon them" and do not require replacing one. You should be able to just add these to your list, resulting in a gratifyingly long list of options for your summoning.

Make sure you understand exactly how the fine details of the summon monster spell and especially the fiendish and celestial templates work. They mess with the creature types, for example - vermin and animals become "magical beast (extraplanar)" - which means vermin lose their mindlessness trait and many animal buff spells won't work on the animals.

Meet the Monsters

Summon Monster I

At SMI a lot of the critters are weak combat-wise. Nowadays most starting adventures (Paizo's Adventure Paths, for example) have opponents for even first level characters where the attack bonus and damage lots of these summons do is not a credible threat, especially since they're only going to be around a couple rounds. And the celestial/fiendish templates don't confer much benefit to the creatures they enhance yet. Note that many of these summons have Weapon Finesse, which means the to-hit bonus from the STR boost you'd otherwise get from the Augment Summoning feat isn't there.

Celestial dog (LG) - Decent combatant, and if you can't summon evil creatures it'll be your go-to for melee situations.

Celestial owl (LG) or ~~**Elysian Thrush**~~ (NG, Planar Handbook) - These have zero combat potential. The owl is way better as a flying scout with its huge move silently. But the elysian thrush is a total chick magnet. So it's a hard choice.

Celestial giant fire beetle (NG) - One hair worse than the celestial dog.

Celestial porpoise (NG) - If you're in the water, it's your best bet. It has good attacks for this level.

Celestial badger (CG) - Gets three attacks - three sucky attacks. It gets OK when raging but it'd have to survive a shot first and that's unlikely.

Celestial monkey (CG) or **Elysian Thrush** (NG, Planar Handbook) - Again, zero combat potential from both. I guess the monkey could apply if you need a nimble scout. But what's more nimble than flying? (Aside: They have a -12 grapple check? Those monkeys in Costa Rica that kept stealing my food had a hell of a grapple!) Is "neither" a valid choice?

Fiendish dire rat (LE) - Boo. Worse than the dog.

Fiendish raven (LE) - Not as good as the owl or hawk.

Fiendish monstrous centipede, Medium (NE) - It has poison! Not so good poison though, DC 10 (12 with Augment Summoning) for 1d3 Dex. There's better options.

~~**Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Small**~~ (CE) or **Fiendish monstrous crab, Small** (NE, Stormwrack) - The scorpion gets sucky attacks and DC 12 1d2 Con poison, and its improved grab is backed up by poor grapple check and damage. The monstrous crab gets two attacks, improved grab and 2d4 constrict. If you want to grapple, use the crab.

Fiendish hawk (CE) - Comparable to the owl, and can arguably fight a little if you've got Augment Summoning. Use if you're desperate for something flying.

Fiendish monstrous spider, Small, web spinner (CE) or ~~**Fiendish monstrous diving-spider, Small**~~ (CE, Stormwrack) - Yay, poison and webs! (Always use the web-spinner not the hunting spider.) They shoot a pretty effective mini *web* spell! They have Weapon Finesse and so your Augment Summoning won't boost their to-hit, but it does up their poison DC to 12 for 1d3 Str damage. And it has tremorsense, which means it can detect invisible creatures and operate in fogs without problem (as a conjurer type, you're likely to be using fogs a lot). I used this at first level to spot and pin down a troublesome quasit.

You don't want the diving spider unless you're a merfolk or something froofy like that because the diving spiders can't *web*.

Fiendish octopus (CE) - A decent grappler for... aquatic rogues who want to get in more backstabs? Go with the crab.

~~**Fiendish snake, Small viper**~~ (CE) or **Fiendish sea snake, Small** (CE, Stormwrack) - Go for the sea snake; it can be summoned on land - it's slower on land than the viper but the viper isn't gonna win any races either, and you can summon it adjacent to your target anyway. Their venom is Fort DC 12 (14 if you have Augment Summoning) and does 1d6 Con damage! It's way the best poison choice, that's poison that might actually kill somebody. Another Weapon Finesse victim, so it's to-hit isn't as high as you might hope.

Summon Monster I Summary

The **fiendish sea snake** is probably your best killer, with its Con poison. Use the **celestial dog** if you don't want to rely on poison or you can't summon the more effective evil critters. The **crab** is a good fighter and grappler and the **spider** is also a good grappler with a side of poison. If you just need a flying scout, use a **fiendish hawk**. In aquatic situations, the **celestial dolphin** is the best option. The rest are useful only in fringe cases.

Summon Monster II

Similar to the SMIs, you want to choose the **crab** over the **scorpion**, **spider** (web spinner) over **diving spider**, and **sea snake** over **viper**, unless you have special needs. (Short bus style special needs!) This will apply to every level where the same choice appears (and that's a lot of them).

Note that the alternate summon options that aren't Fiendish/Celestial don't get the energy resistance 5 or SR that those templates grant, but in many cases at these levels you won't need that.

Celestial giant bee (LG) - Never summon the bee, it dies after one sting.

Celestial giant bombardier beetle (NG) - The beetle just isn't up to snuff either.

Celestial riding dog (NG) or **Ur'Epona** (N, Planar Handbook) - This choice bears some thought. Well, if you're Medium and plan to use this as a steed, you might pick the Ur'Epona - but that's what Phantom Steed is for, and the riding dog is one of the better melee combatants in SM II. So you probably want to go riding dog. (For some bizarre reason the Ur'Epona has the best grapple at this level and the most hp. It hurts my brain's cheese gland to think about summoning a horse to grapple someone though. YMMV.) Related question - is the riding dog you summon "trained for war?" If it is, it's better in all respects than the fiendish wolf. If not, it's got better stats but no trip, which is a bummer.

Celestial eagle (CG) - You could use it to scout, but it's not meaningfully better than the SMI flying scouts, so use those instead.

Clockwork Mender (LN, MMIV) - Generally sucks, but it has construct immunities; if you need a Tiny flying scout to go somewhere that would normally kill the living (like through a cloud of poison gas), that's its niche.

Fetid Fungus (N, clerics of Zuggtmoy only, MMV) - For all you clerics of Zuggtmoy out there, you should take this as it's kinda signature. Not, you know, *good*, but signature. It sickens and envelops, but only has 12 hit points.

Nerra, Varoot (N, Fiend Folio) - This guy has spiffy spell-likes and you'll get lots of use out of him. Use the varoot because with reflective SR and a CL 12 *mirror image*, many opponent configurations won't be able to hurt it for the duration of the spell, and it has a +2 wounding weapon (and doesn't use Weapon Finesse so your Augment helps its to-hit). I ended up using the varoot a lot, to the point where my party carried silver mirrors on their belt so it could teleport from or to any one of them.

Devil, Lemure (LE) - Though not a great combatant, this is the only creature at this level with DR. If combined with fast healing from paragnostic apostle or more hit points from master specialist it can probably "go the distance" as a tank more than many of the others. Now, technically it's mindless, so a wiseacre DM may say you can't control it. In my opinion that's a bit against the intent of having it as a SMII option, but they're your DM.

Fiendish squid (LE) - Not very useful, unless you want some brimstone scented calamari.

Fiendish wolf (LE) - Not as good as the celestial riding dog.

Fiendish monstrous centipede, Large (NE) - The centipede has a much improved at this level grapple (+7) and poison combo. If you're looking to incapacitate an opponent it might be an alternate option to the spider, depending on whether you think your opponent has a weak grapple check or a weak escape artist/strength check.

~~**Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Medium**~~ (NE) or **Fiendish monstrous crab, Medium** (NE, Stormwrack) - For raw damage dealing, the crab is a great choice - also a very good grappler (right behind the Ur'Epona in grapple and hp).

Fiendish shark, Medium (NE) - decent aquatic meleer.

Kaorti (NE, Fiend Folio) - Use the kaorti if you want to debuff opponents with *ray of enfeeblement*, *reduce*, and *color spray*. If you would be casting those anyway, this is quite an augmentation to your daily casting abilities.

~~**Fiendish monstrous spider, Medium**~~ (CE) or ~~**Fiendish monstrous diving spider, Medium**~~ (CE, Stormwrack) - go with the normal web-spinner again. As at SMI it's a solid option for webbing up opponents.

~~**Fiendish snake, Medium viper**~~ (CE) or **Fiendish sea snake, Medium** (CE, Stormwrack) - The sea snake is better for the same reasons it was for SMI. It is your best kill-by-poison option at this level - DC 15/1d6 Dex with Augment Summoning.

Howler Wasp (CE, MMIV) Howler Wasps are kinda like a Celestial Bee, but they get 3 attacks or two plus poison, and don't frickin' die if they sting someone. And nothing else is evil and flies for SMII. Their poison is better (1d6 DEX) and to hit is better than the fiendish scorpions. If you summon multiple wasps, then it's nice that when they die they spray their killer with wasp-buffing goo. And sometimes, only a flying critter will do.

Summon Monster II Summary

The **crab**, **sea snake**, and **spider** are even better at this level for fighting, poisoning, and grappling in various combinations. And also just as with SMI, the **dog** is a good alternate. The **varoot nerra** should be coming out a lot, and the **howler wasp** is the best flyer.

Summon Monster III

OK, your casting-time choices begin to ramp up here - there's 27 summonables in total and only two of them are a choice you have to make. The good (?) news is you won't be summoning most of them - there's a real split between the better and the worse summons emerging at this level, especially because 3 of them (the **bison**, **centipede**, and **ape**) cross the magical 4 HD line to get DR from their template.

Celestial black bear (LG) – Trash compared to the celestial bison.

Celestial bison (NG) – The first of your two real workhorses at this level, the bison gets DR 5/magic, good attacks, and loads of hp. Since they have high HD their SR and smites don't totally suck at this level.

Guardinal, Musteval (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) – Mainly a small meat-sack for containing the spells *see invisible* and *magic missile*.

Bauriaur (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds) – Bah.

Celestial dire badger (CG) – Trash compared to the bison.

Celestial hippogriff (CG) - For flyers, you can use the hippogriff as an emergency mount – assuming it counts as “trained” so you can ride it. It is super fast, great for getaways and maximal party-ferrying on a short timeframe.

Eladrin, Coure (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - As a scout the Coure Eladrin is without peer. +24 Hide and +16 Move Silently, with *tongues*, *flying* and an incorporeal form. You may need some of her spell-likes at times too. And AC 23!

Elemental, Small (N) - You might summon an earth elemental to pass through stone to scout, but there's no real reason to get any of the elementals otherwise.

Bacchae (CN, Fiend Folio) - You could summon the bacchae for kinky sex but that's about it. Possibly the worst summon at this level.

Fiendish ape (LE) or ~~Kalabon~~ (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) - if you are (or can fake being) a LE caster, you might go with the kalabon because it can sicken opponents, but the ape is the best Medium combatant (3 attacks, DR), so if you think you'll be in places you can't plop down the Large/Huge options with impunity (constrained dungeons, for example) you might want it. This comes up more than you'd think.

Fiendish dire weasel (LE) – Has some CON drain going for it but it's unlikely to hit anything at this level.

Hell Hound (LE) – Just not competitive with the other SMIII summons.

Fiendish snake, constrictor (LE) – Just not competitive with the other SMIII summons.

Fiendish boar (NE) - Warning - the Sage has ruled that the fiendish boar's ferocity doesn't keep it around as a summon when it goes below 0 hp! Meaning it sucks even worse than it otherwise would. Check with your DM, though, many DMs recognize the Sage's rulings as

being generally retarded.

Fiendish dire bat (NE) – Another good escape-assisting flying mount, and is much better than the hippogriff, but is much slower also – and if you're summoning an emergency escape flyer you probably want speed over stamina.

Fiendish monstrous centipede, Huge (NE) - Your second real workhorse at this level. DR 5/magic, good attacks, and loads of hp. Since it has high HD its SR and smites don't totally suck at this level. And the centipede's grapple is the best of the SM III's.

Demon, Dretch (CE) – Not really good, but if you are desperate for it spell-like (*scare*, *stinking cloud*) you might whip it out.

Demon, Nashrou (CE, MMIV) - The nashrou demon is awesome. It gets 4 attacks, has DR and the most hp. It's vulnerable to crits, but so what? Of more concern is its lack of SR, so use this for melee-fests.

Fiendish crocodile (CE) – Not good. The fiendish giant croc at SMV is a different story, but you don't want this one.

~~**Fiendish snake, Large viper**~~ (CE) or **Fiendish sea snake, Large** (CE, Stormwrack) – Sadly, the snakes' poison DCs are no longer competitive at this level.

Fiendish wolverine (CE) – Sucks compared to the ape.

Windrazor (CE, MMIV) – Sucks compared to anything. Intelligent, but you don't usually summon creatures for the conversation.

Summon Monster III Summary

You'll be using the **celestial bison**, **fiendish ape**, and **fiendish centipede** a lot. Heck, even as a Malconvoker I regularly stepped over to the "good side" and summoned the bison – I got cornered by a whole herd of serial killer cultists, alone, and *glitterdust* plus a celestial bison did them all in. The **nashrou demon** will also be in the rotation; it's a great killer with two Achilles heels (no SR and crit vulnerability).

You won't be using any of the other celestial/fiendish animals because they are all just so much worse than those (except the **hippogriff** for emergency escapes).

Some of the others have some nice spell-like but nothing worth a third level spell unless you're desperate. However, this is where being a summoner is great – sometimes you *are* desperate, and you can essentially turn your summoning spell into any spell any of your summons can cast. I was desperate once like that; our party was facing a lich that was invisible and flying inside a wall of force... I summoned a lowly **musteval guardinal** which burrowed under the wall of force, could see invisible so it knew where the lich was, and magic missile the lich to designate him as a target for the party's fireballs as soon as the wall dropped... Sometimes, the dumbest creature is the right tool for the job at hand. Know all of your summons inside and out, whether it's one of the generally better choices or not.

Summon Monster IV

OK, so this level is why y'all should be giving me money via PayPal or something. Lordy. There's 49 (yes, 49) summonable creatures at this level. So strap in.

Arcadian Avenger (LG, MMV, LG/LN casters only) - A CR 6 for a SM IV. It flies and kicks butt with its dual swords (which are a buffing opportunity for you). You have to be lawful and non-evil to summon one but damn boy! They don't have DR or SR but they have double the hp of the other choices. It's the best flying combatant.

Archon, Lantern (LG) - 4 hit points? Are you kidding me? Sure, it does a 2d6 touch attack that bypasses DR, but it wouldn't last past doing one of those...

Celestial giant owl (LG) - I don't really need to know how many licks it takes to get to the center of a Tootsie Pop, so I'll pass.

Guardinal, Cervidal (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - A real beauty. Can heal poison, disease, dismiss stuff, and dispel illusions as a 20th level caster (requires touch, though)! Plus 1/day *hold person* and *suggestion*; it's your own summonable cleric.

Rhek (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - You never want this.

Celestial giant eagle (CG) - slightly better than the owl, not that that's anything to write home about.

Celestial lion (CG) - A good example of how "a celestial animal, slightly better than the previous level's" has become obsolete. Sure, it has a batch of big cat style attacks, but read the stats and then think about the things you fight at level 7+. Would it be more than a speed bump to them? No, sadly.

Aoa Droplet (N, Fiend Folio) - For antimagic action, the Aoa droplet has reflective SR 22 and a CL 15 dispelling touch, making it nice to have around when fighting mages. More useful than an antimagic field in many ways, and available at much lower level.

Storm elemental, Small (N, MMIII) - The storm elemental is worthless, it's basically one 3d6 blast and then that's it. It has 11 hit points - even a land-bound opponent can sneeze and kill it at this level.

Mephit (N)

Mephit, glass (N, Sandstorm)

Mephit, sulfur (N, Sandstorm)

The **mephits** (there's 12 of them) generally suck, but they each have 1-2 spell-likes. They're generally low level spell-likes, though, around second level, so it's a bit of a stretch to swap a fourth level spell for them - however, it does provide for huge flexibility. Keep the list handy, and when a *glitterdust* or *heat metal* is the difference between victory and a TPK, pull out the right one. (You want to have summoned a glass or sulphur mephit at least once, so that later on when you *planar bind* a marruspawn abomination and your DM objects you can say "Hey, I already summoned creatures from Sandstorm and you didn't mind then..." Heh, heh.)

Nerra, Kalareem (N, Fiend Folio) - The kalareem nerra has reflective SR 15 and is otherwise like the SM II varoot with a couple more HD - I'd be hard pressed not to just summon a wad of varoots though. Really they're just useful for the mirror image + reflective SR as screeners anyway.

~~**Fiendish dire wolf**~~ (LE) or ~~**Fiendish dire eel**~~ (CE, Stormwrack) or **Nightmare, lesser** (NE, Planar Handbook) - The eel is the best aquatic combatant, better than the shark. The wolf is one of the best land combatants and has one great attack plus SR/DR, and the nightmare is also one of the best land combatants with three great attacks and

choking/concealing smoke (but no SR/DR). This is a really hard choice. However, another choice is the nightmare vs. the howler, but the howler's good too. I think I'd go nightmare, but if you do a lot of aquatic work you'll want the eel.

Fiendish giant wasp (LE) or **Spined devil** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE casters only) or **Abishai, White** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE casters only) - The spined devil is a good scout/ranged combatant and is super fast (120'!). The wasp has pretty decent poison. The abishai gets 4 attacks and has some spell-likes (*command*, *charm person*, *scare*), although it doesn't get the Wrack ability tougher abishai do. I'd probably pick the abishai, but I think it's a wash.

Imp, Bloodbag (LE, Fiend Folio)

Imp, Euphoric (LE, Fiend Folio)

Imp, Filth (LE, Fiend Folio)

The imps are cute but the DCs on their specials are low - though the wounding curse of the bloodbag and the *major image* of the euphoric are good. All my attempts to get my party to suck blood out of the bloodbag imp for healing purposes have been unsuccessful for some reason, however.

Elemental Grue (NE, Complete Arcane) - The elemental grues' main virtue is jacking spellcasting related to their element. So when Tim the Fire Mage attacks you, whip out a fire grue and take him down.

Fiendish giant praying mantis (NE) - The fiendish giant praying mantis isn't competitive. It would be one of the only good flyers if you were going off the stock list, but all these other expansion critters outshine it.

Fiendish shark, Large (NE) - It bites. If and only if you are stuck underwater, you want it.

Yeth hound (NE) - The yeth hound flies and has DR 10. It can't hurt much, but its bay panics opponents - only a Will DC 11 though so don't use it on clerics or anything.

Yugoloth, Skeroloth (NE, Fiend Folio) - You don't want the skeroloth; its main ability is to cringe and say "not in the face!" No, really, look it up.

Yugoloth, Voor (NE, MMIV) - You totally want the voor. It is a heck of a combatant with 6 heavy attacks, rend, blindsense, great resistances/immunities, and SR 15! I think it's the best damage-dealing summon at this level. With Augment, Fury, and Legion on the Voor I would regularly generate round 1 damage more than rivaling any direct damage spell.

Demon, Carnage (CE, MMV, evil casters only) - A sexy name of course, but they're CR 4 SM IVs. They also have a chance to rampage and just kill things (it's unclear whether the control that Summon Monster provides supersedes this). At SM IV a fiendish dire wolf would eat one. But it can bypass "metal" DR (cold iron, adamantine, etc) and they get bonuses the more of them there are, so maybe a crowd of them to crunch up a construct would work, though it sucks so bad I'm not sure even that's worthwhile.

Demon, Gadacro (CE, MMV, evil caster) - The cool if complex eyeball-stealing gadacro is hard to hurt but doesn't do much damage, mainly relying on its high crit chance or sneak attack to activate its blinding ability. As you can engineer a sneak attack pretty easily, it will reliably blind opponents. And has specials - they can earthbind a flying creature and poof away after getting hit (so practically immune to full attacks). Very good for specific combats.

Demon, Skulvyn (CE, Fiend Folio) – The skulvyn has DR 10, a mess of attacks, and a slow aura, making it a solid choice.

~~**Fiendish snake, Huge viper**~~ (CE) or **Fiendish sea snake, Huge** (CE, Stormwrack) - As usual you should pick the sea snake over the viper.

Fiendish monstrous spider, Large (CE) or ~~**Fiendish monstrous diving spider, Large**~~ (CE, Stormwrack) - As usual you should pick the web-spinning spider over the diving spider.

Howler (CE) or ~~**Nightmare, lesser**~~ (NE, Planar Handbook) – I'd go with the howler, mainly because I chose the nightmare in its three-way decision above. It's a good fighter, and it's core, which will give your DM a chance to calm down after all the pain you are wreaking upon his precious NPCs and monsters with your weirdo summons.

Wrackspawn (CE, MMIV) - The wrackspawn has a very good chance (Fort DC 18) to sicken and do lots of damage to living opponents with its bone spear (2d6 plus sickens living creatures). It has no SR, though, so its most opportune victims with low-ish AC and low Fort saves (wizards) tend to be dangerous for it.

Summon Monster IV Summary

For me, it usually boiled down to the great **voor yugoloth** as my go-to in most melee cases, with the **gadacro demon** if I wanted to blind caster types. Goody-goodies will like the **arcadian avenger** and **cervidal guardinal**. It's becoming a lot more about the specials and less about the "Hi I'm a celestial or fiendish animal that can perform largely ineffective attacks" at this level. So you'll also pull out a **mephit** or **imp** from time to time based on specific needs.

Summon Monster V

You have 32 options at this level, which sounds good but the **energon** variants account for 7 of them and only 5 of the remainder aren't from the Monster Manual. Unfortunately, most of them kinda suck - by this level they don't really match up as pure combat opponents with the kinds of critters you'll be fighting - you have to be a ninth level spellcaster to cast SMV and you get something CR 5-ey. CR1 at level 1 isn't so bad, but this begins to stretch it. You really need some spell-likes to be worthwhile and this level's short on them for some reason. In many cases you may consider multiple IVs instead of the Vs; I often would just go for multiple **voors** when casting *summon monster V*.

Archon, Hound (LG) - Has DR 10 and good SR, and good attacks - with a sword you can buff, and some minorly helpful spell-likes (*circle vs evil*, *aid*).

Celestial brown bear (LG) – Junk.

Dwarf Ancestor (LG, MMIV, clerics of Moradin only) - If you happen to be a cleric of Moradin, the Dwarf Ancestor has AC 26, DR 10/adamantine and more hit points than any other SMV, but no SR. Great tank if you meet the requirement. They won't do as much damage as some of the standard options.

Celestial giant stag beetle (NG) – Junk.

Celestial sea cat (NG) – Junk.

Leskylor (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - The leskylor has a load of spell-likes, mostly not

too helpful. A breath weapon and OK attacks, but no SR or DR. It does have the "touch of golden ice" feat, which is a Book of Exalted Deeds special that makes its natural attacks do 1d6 Dex damage to evil folks. The hitch is that it's a mighty low DC 14 Fort save to resist. But, it does get a lot of attacks (plus improved grab/rake) so if you send it after a foe that's not maxed with AC and Fort save you may get good results.

Celestial griffon (CG) – Junk; if you want a flying mount drop down to the hippogriff and save a couple spell levels.

~~**Elemental, Medium**~~ (N) or **Energion** (any) (N, Planar Handbook/Manual of the Planes) - You totally want the energions over the elementals. The elementals really blow, way underpowered at this level. All seven of the energions are really nice because they are incorporeal and have 4 incorporeal touch attacks that do hellacious damage - 1d6 + 2d6 energy. There's all different sorts so you can pick sonic, fire, positive, negative, etc. for the event. No SR but they can dish out the hurt with unprecedented speed. The xag-ya/xeg-yi are a little differently written up; instead of the +2d6 on every attack they do 2d8+5 damage only 5 times a day (or healing for the xag-ya, so if you need a quick 10d8+25 healing it can do it).

Achaierai (LE) - The achaierai can spew a cloud of insanity mist, Fort DC 15. It's got no DR but very good SR. Got a hell of a bite too, does 4d6+2.

~~**Devil, Bearded**~~ (LE) or **Abishai, black** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) - The bearded devil vs. the black abishai somewhat depends on whether you're picking abishais at SMIV and/or VI. You probably want some abishais in there somewhere and this is a good one. Assuming you can be a LE caster. The bearded devil's still good though; it wounds with its attacks and has good SR and decent DR. The black abishai can Wrack an opponent - DC 16 Fort save or be totally helpless. Just one wrack a day. You have to be LE or fake it to conjure them though. Good SR and DR both and their attacks are OK after their one shot of Wrack (4 attacks, too, good for Mirror Images). The DC is Cha-based (I believe, it's not explicit so that's an assumption on my part) so boost it before it Wracks for best effect.

Fiendish deionychus (LE) – Junk.

Fiendish dire ape (LE) – Junk.

Fiendish dire boar (NE) or ~~**Fiendish dire barracuda**~~ (NE, Stormwrack) - Well, it doesn't really matter. The croc's better than the barracuda so you don't need that. Warning – as with the normal fiendish boar, the Sage has ruled that the fiendish dire boar's ferocity doesn't keep it around when it goes below 0 hp! Check with your DM.

Fiendish shark, Huge (NE) – Not as good as the giant croc.

~~**Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Large**~~ (NE) or **Fiendish monstrous crab, Large** (NE, Stormwrack) - Always choose the crab.

Shadow mastiff (NE) - The shadow mastiff has a bay attack to panic opponent but it's only Will save DC 13. No DR or SR. If you need to take out a big crowd of orcs, there's other ways to do it with a fifth level spell.

Fiendish dire wolverine (CE) – Junk.

Fiendish giant crocodile (CE) - Of the celestial/fiendish guys, the fiendish giant croc's very good - a good attack, improved grab, and high grapple. Good on land and in water.

Fiendish tiger (CE) – A fiendish normal tiger? Junk.

Summon Monster V Summary

The **energons** are great; whenever you come up against something that has an energy vulnerability or is immune to normal attacks they are just the ticket. I used the sonic ones against golems all the time. The only one of the celestial/fiendish guys you want is the **giant croc**, which is very handy for a meat-lump. I used them to good effect against normal melee-type opponents. The **leskylor** and **abishai** and maybe the **achaierai** have their place too. That's about it, but remember, know even the "weak" choices because there'll be that one time they're the perfect fit.

Summon Monster VI

This is a good level for summoning. There's 35 different critters here, though many are replacement choices. Also, you're going to need to keep an eye on all the resistances and SR here. At these levels (11+), most opponents will have a variety of specials and spell-likes and/or be hell on wheels in combat. The cloud giant (AC 25, +22/+17/+12/4d6+18), stone golem (AC 26, +18/+18/2d10+9), and hezrou (SR 21, *chaos hammer* and *confusion* DC 19, *reverse gravity* DC 22) are common CR 11 combatants. So don't match melee against melee or magic against magic. Any of those three opponents will chop any SMVI up in one round. Bad guys' SRs and saves are also high. But you're a mage, and whatever type of mage you are you live (or die) by your smarts. Summon the right guy whose strength is effective against the weakness of your opponent.

Celestial polar bear (LG) – An improved grab option. Grappling is good at these levels because it can really neutralize a single pesky opponent.

Celestial orca whale (NG) – Not as good as the elasmosaurus.

Guardinal, Equinal (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - The equinal guardinal has some nice spell-likes. *Slow*, *wall of stone*, *dispel magic*. Its whinny can deafen folks but the save DC is low (16, but 18 if Augmented). Backed up by 10 DR and 18 SR, it's a solid choice.

Eladrin, Bralani (CG) - The bralani eladrin has its uses - it flies, has good arrow attacks, and can *blur*, *mirror image*, and *wind wall*. It's an especially nice option when you can pin down non-flying opponents and shoot damage into them - it's hard to hurt.

Celestial dire lion (CG) – An improved grab option and sports one of the better attack bonuses at this level.

Formian, Winged Warrior (LN, Fiend Folio) - The winged warrior has some OK ranged attacks with Str damage, but nothing to write home about.

Elemental, Large (N) or **Elementite Swarm** (N, Planar Handbook) - The elementite swarms are nice - 2d6 points of damage a round plus nauseate saves - and the water swarm has a killer trick of "drown". Anyone in the swarm can't hold their breath and must immediately start to make drowning Con checks - so DC 10 + 1/round and if they fail they die. And the nauseate save DCs are Con-based so Augment gets them up to 15-17. Choose these and leave the normal elementals behind.

Genie, Janni (N) - The Janni gets the award for the biggest wuss of the lot. Summon it for easy combat practice.

Inferno Spider (N, MMIV, ritual required) - The inferno spider is really good. Now, it requires a ritual - 2 days research, 100 gp in opal dust - to learn to summon it. But it looks from the writeup like this is a one time requirement. It's got the most hit points of any SM VI (119) and a +14 to hit with poison that's DC 21. And fire shield, and a ranged touch web that entangles and flames. Of course if the opponent has fire resistance it's worthless, but if they don't it's hell on wheels.

Nerra, Sillit (N, Fiend Folio) - The sillit nerra has the big advantage of the earlier nerras - reflective SR 18. Pop it into the midst of the party and reflect all those fireballs, lightning bolts, etc. at the caster. It can mislead and change self to help with that. And *mirror image*, mirror jump, and shard spray for 5d6 are nice. (My adventuring party each carries a silver mirror on their belt for this reason. Nerra nerra who's got the nerra?)

Storm elemental, Medium (N, MMIII) - The storm elemental still blows (no pun intended) for the same reason its lower CR cousins do.

Chaos beast (CN) - The chaos beast is a one trick pony but it's a nice trick. Its attack requires a DC 15 Fort save (DC 17 if Augmented) or else you melt into goo - you're confused, can't use equipment, and lose 1 Wis/rnd till you become a chaos beast. A DC 15 Cha check lets you retain your shape for a minute, so many opponents may not succumb to it in the short term - but if you can afflict one or two baddies and extract, it'll keep the bad guys unhappy for a while. Although you may end up having to fight a bunch of chaos beasts, so make sure you're using it on something tougher than that.

Slaad, Mud (CN, Fiend Folio) - The only reason to summon the mud slaad is to nibble on a prisoner to give them turn-into-a-mud-slaad disease. It might help your Intimidate checks. Or at least be entertaining.

Devil, Chain (LE) or **Abishai, green** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) or **Devil, pain** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) - You have a hard choice. The abishai has its one save-or-lose Wrack at DC 17 (more if you can buff its Cha), and lots of attacks and other spell-likes. The pain devil is better on pretty much all counts (hp, to hit, damage, DR, spell-likes) than the chain devil *unless* you're able to cart around and distribute 4 chains for the chain devil to animate, in which case it gets like 8 attacks by my reading.

Devil, Gultbir (LE, MMV, evil caster) - It eats evil outsiders and gets stronger! And eats Medium or smaller creatures and pukes them out Dominated (no save!). Use against small-ish things with low grapple checks, especially evil outsiders! It has 5 *rays of enfeeblement* to use to soften up potential chimichangas of Satan.

XIII (LE) or **Amnizu** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) - The amnizu is a great alternate pick. Though the xill has the highest SR in the field, 21, it can't do much. The amnizu has 3 quickened *fireballs*, is immune to fire, has DR 10/SR 18, and has a stupefying touch that is a Will DC 19 for 2d4 Int damage. That's instant death for most dumb critters and a problem for spellcasters. Summon one "behind the lines" and let it touch enemy casters while dropping a fireball per round at ground zero. Truly, as a summoner you want to be LE or Lawful and take Malconvoker to fake the Evil part. The various FIENDISH CODEX II options are just too nice to pass up.

Fiendish monstrous centipede, Gargantuan (NE) - Need a blocker? The Gargantuan fiendish monstrous centipede is the only celestial/fiendish critter at this level with DR 10,

and it has a +27 grapple and poison that's DC 17 for 1d8 Dex, DC 19 if Augmented. And it's a 20' square with 15' reach! I call it "Wall of Chitin."

Fiendish rhinoceros (NE) or ~~**Fiendish ichthyosaur**~~ (NE, Stormwrack) – The rhino is good for one big charge/smite combo, not all that great but it's something.

Yugoloth, Corruptor of Fate (NE, MMIV) - The Corruptor of Fate has a unique trick - attackers have to roll twice for attacks and damage and take the worst result. It also has a curse on touch and a corrupting gaze attack. It's perfect to lay about with the debuffs during a boss fight.

Demon, Artaaglith (CE, Ghostwalk) - The artaaglith can desecrate, animate dead, and also casts as a full L5 cleric with the evil and undeath domains. So that's 20 HD of zombies, and as much pre-thought as you can put into the spell selection will pay off.

Fiendish elasmosaurus (CE) – Best aquatic option at this level.

Fiendish monstrous spider, Huge (CE) or **Fiendish monstrous diving spider, Huge** (CE, Stormwrack) – Choose the webspinner, never summon it.

Fiendish snake, giant constrictor (CE) – An improved grab option.

Windscythe (CE, MMIV) - Windscythes - boy I'm confused. They're CR4 and in the same SM VI band as the chain devil (CR 9). I give them a big "bah".

Summon Monster VI Summary

It's all about the **amnizus** – those guys are incredible. The quickened fireballs are nice for burning soft targets like mages to death, but when I was fighting giants the stupefying touches just made them keel over, so they're great against beefcakes too. **Elementite swarms** and **inferno spiders** have their niches. Get the **artaaglith** when you have a couple spare rounds and there's a lot of corpses around and it's zombie army time. And if you just want to bring the noise, it's the **gargantuan centipede**.

Summon Monster VII

This is an interesting level. There appears to be some quality overlap with *summon monster VI*, so if you don't need the absolute highest attack bonuses etc. you may want to go with multiple VI's in some cases. Anyway, there's 32 total summons here (you can only get 26 max since some are choices).

DR makes a lot of difference in combat - your summoned monsters' DR ranges from 0 to 10 - and you need to watch out for opponents with the means to bypass it, in which case you'd be better served by summoning something with loads of hit points. But remember, in 3.5 creatures do NOT get special attack properties to bypass opponents' DR just because they have DR themselves as they did in 3.0.

SR is probably the other area where the summons actually surpass your fellow party members in something. They're not going to have as high to hit, do as much damage, or have as many spells, but they are spell-resistant. Find ways to leverage that - illusions and whatnot can draw bad magic to something with a high SR that you don't care if it dies anyway.

Deva, Movanic (G, Fiend Folio) The movanic deva deserves a huge mention because it can *raise dead*! As well as remove poison, curses, disease, etc. Finally, an on-call cleric. Remember that all SLAs don't have their long casting times or costs that they do as spells, so its *atonement*, *commune*, and divination spells are available for you.

Archon, Justice (LG, MMIV) - Justice Archons suck compared to avorals from what I can tell. There's almost no reason to ever use the **justice archon** instead except when its "justice strike" would be perfect. This ability means that when the archon hits it does damage like the opponent's, including specials like level drain or whatnot. That's a real special case though, otherwise they're like hound archons (SM V) with 2 more HD as a SM VII.

Celestial elephant (LG) - There are many better options.

Guardinal, Avoral (NG) - This guy has at-will empowered magic missiles - 4 missiles, (d4+1)*1.5 damage apiece. That's an average of 21 points with very few ways of avoiding it. And it's got some lightning bolts and hold persons to toss in too. It has 10/evil or silver DR and 25 SR.

Celestial baleen whale (NG) - Unless you need to sucker in some Japanese whalers, you won't get a lot of use out of this.

Leskylor, three-headed (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - A pretty good melee because it has five attacks, more if it pounces and rakes. Essentially you have it go jump on somebody and hope the touch of golden ice poison kicks in. But the pisoloth is better at that schtick.

Asura (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - There's no reason to use the **asura**; one holy smite doesn't merit a whole summon.

Genie, Djinni (CG) - Don't bother, unless you need a permanent 20 cubic feet of vegetable matter and the powers of a 13th level fucking wizard can't get it for you some other way.

Formian, Armadon (LN, Fiend Folio) - it's OK but just not competitive.

Elemental, Huge (N) - The elementals are finally good for something. They have the highest to-hit bonus at this level. In fact, the Huge earth elemental, when Augmented, has two slams at +21 to hit for 2d10+11 each! (Careful, air and fire use weapon finesse so don't benefit from Augmentation on the to-hit.) If you just need something to go toe to toe it's a good summon; even an adult dragon isn't gonna just ignore one. 5/- DR and hit points in the 170s Augmented. They have no SR, however, so may go 'poof' when confronted by casters.

Invisible stalker (N) - Summon something non-sucky instead and just put invisibility on it.

Rilmani, Ferumach (N, Fiend Folio) - An interesting melee combatant. It's like a normal fighter (medium, uses gear), which means you have a lot of buffing options. It can come in, cast phantom steed, and then use its powerful charge and ride-by attack. And it has a fear aura and a 30 AC/20 SR.

Storm Elemental, Large (N, MMIII) - Still not competitive.

Slaad, red (CN) - Don't bother, it's indifferent melee plus one weak stunning croak special.

Devil, Bone (LE) or **Abishai, blue** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) - The bone devil is also a good one. It's good in combat, sure, with a fear aura and high DC poison, but it can do dimensional anchor (very helpful at these levels - I hate it when the bad guy teleports away), major image, and wall of ice as well. Very solid DR and SR as well. It's better than

the blue abishai, even though the abishai gets 3 Wracks at this level.

~~Fiendish megaraptor~~ (LE) or **Steel devil** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) - Though you want to choose the steel devil over the fiendish megaraptor for your list, as that sucks even worse, this is basically a middling combatant that can *haste*. Meh. Summon something better and *haste* it yourself. Although this is the only summon whose attack counts as cold iron; that may be worth something.

~~Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Huge~~ (NE) or ~~Souleater~~ (NE, Magic of Incarnum, evil caster) or ~~Pack fiend~~ (NE, Planar Handbook) or **Fiendish monstrous crab, Huge** (NE, Stormwrack) - Now you have one big four-way choice among a bunch of complicated monsters. Go with the crab. No, seriously. The souleater, besides a negative level aura that's likely to get your allies, is poor. The pack fiend is a decent melee with poison, but the crab has improved grab with a huge grapple check. Grappling is as useful at high levels as it is at low levels (heck, maybe more).

Yugoloth, Piscoloth (NE, Fiend Folio) - The piscoloth yugoloth has some carrion crawler action going on - 8 paralyzing tentacle attacks. Each is only Fort DC 16 and, sloppily, they didn't mention what the DC is based on - it's logically Con and so Augmentation could get it to 18 but RAW you're stuck at 16. But just like with the crawler, if you have to make enough saves eventually you fail.

~~Demon, Babau~~ (CE) or **Demon, arrow** (CE, MMIII, evil caster) - The arrow demon for the babau is an interesting swap. With the straightforward arrow demon, you have a good option for mass distance damage; if it uses rapid shot and its symmetric archery tricks at the same time gets 6 arrow attacks (+12/+12/+12/+12/+7/+7) for 2d6+6 each - that's quite some hurt on non-super ACs. They're not slouches in melee either, 4 claws at +15. It's got double the hit points and is a great choice to pour on the arrow damage. You have to choose between it and the babau demon, which is an unremarkable combatant but has dispel magic at will, which is useful, along with some smaller spell-likes. The avoral does too though, so you don't lose that by ditching the babau.

Fiendish giant octopus (CE) - Not very good.

Fiendish girallon (CE) - Also not very good.

Summon Monster VII Summary

If you want to deal damage, the **arrow demon** is a great bet. Use the **crab** for grappling, the **deva** for clerical casting, and the **piscoloth** to try to paralyze someone. Then use the **elementals** for tanking and the **bone devil** for spell-likes and poison. I'll be honest though, mostly I used this spell to get 1d3 **amnizus** or **gargantuan centipedes**.

Summon Monster VIII

There are a lot fewer options at this level. Only 19, once you've made all your choices. And there's a lot of choices you have to make. This is a weird level, the Hit Dice of the summons range from 6 to 24!

Celestial dire bear (LG) - A decent combatant and grappler.

Hammer archon (LG, Races of Stone, dwarf, gnome, or goliath caster only) - The hammer

archon is OK, but generally you'd go with the earth elemental instead for combat – it can get you three *walls of stone*, though, if you need them.

Celestial ~~cachalot whale~~ (NG) or **Elsewhale** (NG, Planar Handbook) - The elsewhale is a better cachalot whale in all respects except for lacking the celestial template's DR/SR. I'd go with the elsewhale because it can carry your entire party underwater; there's many other choices if you need a celestial/fiendish whatnot just to fight.

Celestial triceratops (NG) or **Celestial ~~archelon~~** (NG, Stormwrack) or **Gaspar** (N, Planar Handbook) - OK, the archelon sucks so you can pull that from the decision tree unless you're Aquaman. Next you need to ask your DM about the gaspar. It's just a big deer, except it has an ability to plane shift enemies to the great beyond. But summoned creatures don't have their planar travel or teleport abilities. Does this count under that restriction? If it can plane shift enemies, it's good, although the resist is only DC 16 Will, and the foe's gear goes with them (your party might lynch you for this). Even without that it gets seven attacks, though most at low attack bonuses. It packs more punch than the triceratops but much worse defenses (no SR, DR). Make your choice there after your DM rules.

Hollyphant (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - The hollyphant is weak; you'd only use it for its couple good spell-likes – *raise dead*, *heal*, *banishment*, *flame strike*. Though the movanic deva a level down can *raise dead* too, so really this is for if you need a 30 HD, DC 19 Banishment. And if you're a summoner of this level you probably have one of those memorized. It has some psionics, which always annoys me, and a host of other specials that you probably wouldn't want to waste a round on. In the end, it's a cute little flying elephant that poos glitter. The mind boggles. If you match up the malelephant with the hollyphant, both level VII summons, you get a hollyphant squealing in horrible, horrible violation every time.

Guardinal, Lupinal (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - It's actually in Monster Manual II but it's the Book of Exalted Deeds that says it's summonable – and it has the distinction of being the only Medium melee summon at this level. I've certainly run into a situation in confined spaces where I can't summon Large creatures, let alone Huge/Gargantuan/Colossal ones. It's not all that good but does have both grab and trip. And with its change self, is your best summon to pass as a human/demihuman if you need to be discreet.

Lillend (CG) - Have you ever said to yourself, "Boy, I wish we had a 6th level bard along!?" No, neither have I. So don't summon the lillend. Ever. You're level 15+ at this point; to you a 6th level bard is a barely passable 1 gp hooker.

Archon, Warden (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds) - The warden archon is OK, and it's certainly hard to hurt – AC 30, DR 10, SR 25 and its "shield of the archons" spell will block spells too. So if a true tank will help you, it's good, though it doesn't do much damage.

Elemental, greater (N) or **~~Caller from the deeps~~** (NE, Stormwrack) - Now, the elemental is really four creatures in one, and they are very good meat-lumps at this level. They have loads of hit points, great to-hit, and DR 10/-, and your choice of movement specials. And they're big enough now that their vortex/whirlwind powers aren't just a joke. The caller from the deeps has a great CON drain when it's grappling, but it's aquatic only and has a pretty low to-hit, so really you'd go with the elementals unless you're in an aquatic campaign.

Storm Elemental, Huge (N, MMIII) - The storm elemental finally comes into its own at this level. Its specials weren't enough to justify it before, but now its free action shock does 8d4 electricity and its one shot thunder/lightning attack is for a total of 24d6 damage! The

Large one, one level down at SM VII, does only half of this. I'd go with this over the air elemental most of the time, and especially in boss fights where you need to put maximum damage on target in round 1. BAM!

Slaad, blue (CN) or ~~Limbo Stalker~~ (CN, Planar Handbook) or ~~Yugoloth, Echinoloth~~ (NE, Stormwrack) - Uh, none of the above? I guess keep the blue slaad for unlimited *passwalls*, to annoy your DM in a dungeon environment. The echinoloth has tremorsense but so does the spider, and it has a nauseating aura but with too low of a save DC. As combatants they are all way sub par. Although as a malconvoker, I might go with the echinoloth over the blue slaad just because I get 2 for 1 with Fiendish Legion. Well, on second thought, I can get two better meleers (vrock, fiendish dire tiger) too, so it's really about the spell-like, which the slaad has but the others don't.

Fiendish giant squid (LE) - Aquatically, choosing between the squid or the eldsewhale is a tradeoff of alignment and number of attacks vs to hit/damage of one attack.

Hellcat (LE) or **Orthon** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) - Interesting. Neither is going to kill anything at this level, but the hellcat is naturally invisible and the orthon disrupts dimensional movement. Both have their uses; the hellcat is tactically interesting because it's invisible even as it's summoned. The orthon is great as a dimensional anchor substitute - no save! There's many a time you don't want that bad guy to teleport/plane shift away. I'd go orthon.

Malelephant (LE, Fiend Folio) - The malelephant has great DR, a forget-cloud breath weapon that neutralizes casters, and can do 3 *baneful polymorphs* and *blade barriers* per day. I like it! Summon, defensive stance, blade barrier, polymorph, polymorph, polymorph, breathe as necessary.

Fiendish monstrous centipede, Colossal (NE) or **Gaspar** (N, Planar Handbook) - You're keeping the centipede. Its Colossal size and 24 HD means that it's one bad ass brick, 29 SR, DC 23 on the poison. And a +42 grapple check if you can sneak it in past the attack of opportunity. With Augment Summoning and the malconvoker Fury ability and a ring of mighty summons and a Varisian idol, that means... 360 hit points. Who's your daddy!?!

Demon, Solamith (CE, MMV, evil caster) - For ranged attacks versus high ACs, the solamith demon is interesting. It tears off 5-hp chunks of itself and tosses them creating basically 4d6 20' fireballs (half of the damage is untyped, however). It has fast healing 5 so that's sustainable; it can tear off more hp at a time for larger bursts or max damage. If it's in a protected position it can dole out 24 points a shot in 20' bursts up to 100' away for a good while. And there's a save but it's Ref DC 23. Don't use on anything resistant to fire.

Demon, Vrock (CE) - The vlocks are a little complicated with all their specials. They're the only evil flier though. The elemental's got more raw melee power but the vlocks have abilities, and if you're a malconvoker the "2 for the price of 1" factor makes them a must have.

Fiendish dire tiger (CE) - The tiger is always attractive with its grabs/rakes. All the cats are good to try to grapple an enemy spellcaster early in a combat; its multiple attacks on a pounce degrade mirror images and stoneskins and such.

Fiendish monstrous spider, Gargantuan (CE) - The Gargantuan spider is solid as usual, as tremorsense + web never go out of style against the ubiquitous invisible flying enemies.

Fiendish tyrannosaurus (CE) - Pretty decent combatant especially against Medium or smaller opponents.

Summon Monster VIII Summary

As a malconvoker, I really needed a great reason (specific needed ability) to summon one of the non-evils because Fiendish Legion gives me 2 creatures for 1 summon, so I used the **malelephant** and **Colossal centipede** (when I had room for it!) most of the time. But sometimes the **tiger** if I needed maxed to-hit and the **vrock** if I needed flying. I was tempted to specific non-evil creatures a lot more than in most levels – the **storm elementals** and **greater elementals** specifically are very good, depending whether you need single punch or staying power. And even if you stick to Good creatures there's some decent picks here – but nothing with a lot of fight in it.

Summon Monster IX

Ah, the pinnacle of monster summoning. There are 30 total options at this level (choices pare it down to a list of 25) – and six of them are from the Book of Exalted Deeds, so if you haven't invested in that, it's time. (You bought Fiendish Codex II many levels ago, if you're a malconvoker.)

Deva, Monadic (G, Fiend Folio) – Very nice long list of spell-likes including *holy aura*, *raise dead*, *dispel evil*, and is immune to about anything (and its protective aura and holy aura do the same to you). And has a mace of smiting, so you might pull it out when golems threaten.

Archon, Owl (LG, Book of Exalted Deeds) – Some spell-likes but all of them questionably worth a ninth level spell.

Archon, Sword (LG, Book of Exalted Deeds) – Pretty good flying butt-kicker along the lines of the arcadian avenger.

Couatl (LG) – Casts spells as a ninth level sorcerer in addition to some spells and psi. That's a lot of flexibility right there. Pretty low on the hit points.

Guardinal, Leonal (NG) – Good option; has some effective spell-likes (*heal*, *wall of force*) and can melee.

Guardinal, Ursinal (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) – Casts spells as a 12th-level wizard plus spell-likes!

Moon Dog (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) – This sucks, why is it CR12? Has various effects that have very low save DCs. Does have effectively unlimited dispel evils, but otherwise bah.

Quesar (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds) – DEATH BLOSSOM! This has one use, which is that it can generate a 22d6 damage disintegrate effect in a 15' radius three times a day, obviously the three rounds right after you summon it. Pop it far away from your guys in the enemy's ranks and nova away.

Celestial roc (CG) or ~~**Celestial plesiosaur**~~ (NG, Stormwrack) - an easy decision based on whether you do lots of underwater adventuring or not. You probably won't use either.

Eladrin, Firre (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds) – One prismatic spray and then casting as a

12th level cleric is nice; its 44 hit points make it fragile to collateral damage at this level of play.

Formian, Observer (LN, Fiend Folio) – Ha ha ha ha no.

Elemental, elder (N) - Has +27 to hit and 228 hit points (before Augment or anything). Not the best for general fighting but if something's vulnerable to a given alignment this'll work well.

Rilmani, Cuprilach (N, Fiend Folio) – Like a rogue that can hide in plain sight and has some spell-likes, but with startlingly low sneak attack dice.

Storm Elemental, Greater (N, MMIII) – Can bust out 10d4 per round electric as a free action plus one 12d6 sonic + 21d6 electricity zap. Possibly your best round 1 damage delivery mechanism (to something without electricity resistance).

Slaad, green (CN) or **Unraveler** (LN, Planar Handbook) - Green slaad. The unraveller works very much like a chaos beast, which is unexceptional at SM VI. However, the slaad only has a fistful of fairly low DC spell-likes going for it.

Devil, Barbed (LE) – Not up to snuff with the other damage dealers on the list.

Demodand, Farastu (NE, Fiend Folio) – Not competitive at this level.

~~**Fiendish dire shark**~~ (NE) or **Brachina** (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) – Mmm, the pleasure devil. (Ignore the shark.) Unlimited DC 23 *charm monsters*, and a DC 25 1-round *dominate* usable three times a day, and one *trap the soul*, plus other stuff. And great for the end of the day, when you figure you might as well free up that spell slot and need to unwind for bedtime...

~~**Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Gargantuan**~~ (NE) or **Fiendish monstrous crab, Gargantuan** (NE, Stormwrack) - Nothing changes at this level to make the crab not always the better choice. Did I mention its attack bonus is +41!?! And improved grab with a +65 grapple check. If it can be grappled and squeezed to death, this guy will do it reliably.

Night hag (NE) – Many of its abilities aren't really good in a summoning situation.

Demon, Bebilith (CE) or ~~**Fiendish mosasaur**~~ (CE, Stormwrack) - Demon with spell-likes vs more aquatic melee trash. Bebilith, though it's a bit of a one-trick (web then poison) pony – and arguably the colossal spider is even better at that schtick!

Fiendish monstrous spider, Colossal (CE) – Its poison is DC 28 (more augmented) for 2d8 Str damage and its web is a 32 break DC. Very solid.

Demon, Adaru (CE, MMV, evil caster) – Good at charming other demons and that's about it.

Demon, Hezrou (CE) – Good for spamming blasphemies but it's only CL 13 so it's mainly a way to weed out mooks, but the Fort save DC for its stench is really good (24) and will nauseate opponents (keep your allies away!).

Demon, Wastrilith (CE, Fiend Folio) – Good swimmer, good melee, and good spell-likes, including three symbols at CL 15. In fact, it's really good – which is why it has one drawback; it can break free of the summon monster spell with an opposed Wisdom check and attack you! Luckily it only has a 12 Wis but still. If you're in the water, wise, and

feeling lucky it's too good to pass up.

Summon Monster IX Summary

There are a lot of good summons at this level depending on what you need. A lot of the good-aligned summons have good spellcasting power – the previous level was lacking in compelling Good summons but there are a bunch here. Many of the others are effectively “smart bombs” of one sort or another – the **hezrou** is a stink bomb, the **quesar** is a three-bang bomb, and the **storm elemental** is a one-big-bang bomb. The **brachina** has her, um, uses. And even at this high of a level you really can't overlook the **crab** – with those stats, it really can rend most targets limb from limb quickly without all that saving throw nonsense. For an evil caster, there's some decent options, and remember you can always summon down. 1d4+1 malelephants (+1 if you have fiendish legion) means you can spam that many baleful polymorphs per round! They'll fail one of those saves...

Conclusion

Summoning has always been one of those wizard schticks that seemed iconic but usually was unsatisfactory in practice. Too often you'd have to summon some celestial or fiendish trash that your opponents just ignored and got in the way of the party meleers. Summons were primarily useful to surround yourself with as blockers to protect you while you cast “real spells.” But if you have access to this larger list of monsters, then you can deal as much damage with a summon spell of a given level as with a damage spell of the same level, as well as have battlefield control over positioning and flanking and blocking, as well as being able to turn a spell into a number of lower level spells at will. And it also lets you be a better wizard the more you're using your brain, which is a pleasing experience; summoning is the epitome of the “life as a chess game” philosophy.

All Summonable Monsters By Spell Level

Summon Monster I

Celestial dog (LG)
Celestial owl (LG) or Elysian Thrush (NG, Planar Handbook)
Celestial giant fire beetle (NG)
Celestial porpoise (NG)
Celestial badger (CG)
Celestial monkey (CG) or Elysian Thrush (NG, Planar Handbook)
Fiendish dire rat (LE)
Fiendish raven (LE)
Fiendish monstrous centipede, Medium (NE)
Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Small (CE) or Fiendish monstrous crab, Small (NE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish hawk (CE)
Fiendish monstrous spider, Small (CE) or Fiendish monstrous diving spider, Small (CE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish octopus (CE)
Fiendish snake, Small viper (CE) or Fiendish sea snake, Small (CE, Stormwrack)

Summon Monster II

Celestial giant bee (LG)
Celestial giant bombardier beetle (NG)
Celestial riding dog (NG) or Ur'Epona (N, Planar Handbook)
Celestial eagle (CG)
Clockwork Mender (LN, MMIV)
Fetid Fungus (N, cleric of Zuggtmoy only, MMV)
Nerra, Varoot (N, Fiend Folio)
Devil, Lemure (LE)
Fiendish squid (LE)
Fiendish wolf (LE)
Fiendish monstrous centipede, Large (NE)
Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Medium (NE) or Fiendish monstrous crab, Medium (NE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish shark, Medium (NE)
Kaorti (NE, Fiend Folio)
Fiendish monstrous spider, Medium (CE) or Fiendish monstrous diving spider, Medium (CE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish snake, Medium viper (CE) or Fiendish sea snake, Medium (CE, Stormwrack)
Howler Wasp (CE, MMIV)

Summon Monster III

Celestial black bear (LG)
Celestial bison (NG)
Guardinal, Musteval (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Bauriaur (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Celestial dire badger (CG)
Celestial hippogriff (CG)
Eladrin, Coure (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Elemental, Small (N)
Bacchae (CN, Fiend Folio)
Fiendish ape (LE) or Kalabon (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)

Fiendish dire weasel (LE)
Hell Hound (LE)
Fiendish snake, constrictor (LE)
Fiendish boar (NE)
Fiendish dire bat (NE)
Fiendish monstrous centipede, Huge (NE)
Demon, Dretch (CE)
Demon, Nashrou (CE, MMIV)
Fiendish crocodile (CE)
Fiendish snake, Large viper (CE) or Fiendish sea snake, Large (CE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish wolverine (CE)
Windrazor (CE, MMIV)

Summon Monster IV

Arcadian Avenger (LG, MMV, LG/LN caster)
Archon, Lantern (LG)
Celestial giant owl (LG)
Guardinal, Cervidal (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Rhek (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Celestial giant eagle (CG)
Celestial lion (CG)
Aoa Droplet (N, Fiend Folio)
Storm elemental, Small (N, MMIII)
Mephit (N)
Mephit, glass (N, Sandstorm)
Mephit, sulfur (N, Sandstorm)
Nerra, Kalareem (N, Fiend Folio)
Fiendish dire wolf (LE) or Fiendish dire eel (CE, Stormwrack) or Nightmare, lesser (NE, Planar Handbook)
Fiendish giant wasp (LE) or Spined devil (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) or Abishai, White (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)
Imp, Bloodbag (LE, Fiend Folio)
Imp, Euphoric (LE, Fiend Folio)
Imp, Filth (LE, Fiend Folio)
Elemental Grue (NE, Complete Arcane)
Fiendish giant praying mantis (NE)
Fiendish shark, Large (NE)
Yeth hound (NE)
Yugoloth, Skeroloth (NE, Fiend Folio)
Yugoloth, Voor (NE, MMIV)
Demon, Carnage (CE, MMV, evil caster)
Demon, Gadacro (CE, MMV, evil caster)
Demon, Skulvyn (CE, Fiend Folio)
Fiendish monstrous spider, Large (CE) or Fiendish monstrous diving spider, Large (CE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish snake, Huge viper (CE) or Fiendish sea snake, Huge (CE, Stormwrack)
Howler (CE) or Nightmare, lesser (NE, Planar Handbook)
Wrackspawn (CE, MMIV)

Summon Monster V

Archon, Hound (LG)
Celestial brown bear (LG)
Dwarf Ancestor (LG, MMIV, cleric of Moradin)
Celestial giant stag beetle (NG)
Celestial sea cat (NG)

Leskylor (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Celestial griffon (CG)
Elemental, Medium (N) or Energion (any) (N, Planar Handbook/Manual of the Planes)
Achaierai (LE)
Devil, Bearded (LE) or Abishai, black (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)
Fiendish deionychus (LE)
Fiendish dire ape (LE)
Fiendish dire boar (NE) or Fiendish dire barracuda (NE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish shark, Huge (NE)
Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Large (NE) or Fiendish monstrous crab, Large (NE, Stormwrack)
Shadow mastiff (NE)
Fiendish dire wolverine (CE)
Fiendish giant crocodile (CE)
Fiendish tiger (CE)

Summon Monster VI

Celestial polar bear (LG)
Celestial orca whale (NG)
Equinal (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Eladrin, Bralani (CG)
Celestial dire lion (CG)
Formian, Winged Warrior (LN, Fiend Folio)
Elemental, Large (N) or Elementite Swarm (N, Planar Handbook)
Genie, Janni (N)
Inferno Spider (N, MMIV, ritual required)
Nerra, Sillit (N, Fiend Folio)
Storm elemental, Medium (N, MMIII)
Chaos beast (CN)
Slaad, Mud (CN, Fiend Folio)
Devil, Chain (LE) or Abishai, green (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster) or Devil, pain (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)
Devil, Gulthir (LE, MMV, evil caster)
Xill (LE) or Amnizu (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)
Fiendish monstrous centipede, Gargantuan (NE)
Fiendish rhinoceros (NE) or Fiendish ichthyosaur (NE, Stormwrack)
Yugoloth, Corruptor of Fate (NE, MMIV)
Demon, Artaaglith (CE, Ghostwalk)
Fiendish elasmosaurus (CE)
Fiendish monstrous spider, Huge (CE) or Fiendish monstrous diving spider, Huge (CE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish snake, giant constrictor (CE)
Windscythe (CE, MMIV)

Summon Monster VII

Deva, Movanic (G, Fiend Folio)
Archon, Justice (LG, MMIV)
Celestial elephant (LG)
Guardinal, Avoral (NG)
Celestial baleen whale (NG)
Leskylor, three-headed (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Asura (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Genie, Djinni (CG)
Formian, Armadon (LN, Fiend Folio)
Elemental, Huge (N)

Invisible stalker (N)
Rilmani, Ferumach (N, Fiend Folio)
Storm Elemental, Large (N, MMIII)
Slaad, red (CN)
Devil, Bone (LE) or Abishai, blue (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)
Fiendish megaraptor (LE) or Steel devil (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)
Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Huge (NE) or Souleater (NE, Magic of Incarnum, evil caster)
or Pack fiend (NE, Planar Handbook) or Fiendish monstrous crab, Huge (NE, Stormwrack)
Yugoloth, Piscoloth (NE, Fiend Folio)
Demon, Babau (CE) or Demon, arrow (CE, MMIII, evil caster)
Fiendish giant octopus (CE)
Fiendish girallon (CE)

Summon Monster VIII

Celestial dire bear (LG)
Hammer archon (LG, Races of Stone, dwarf, gnome, or goliath caster)
Celestial cachalot whale (NG) or Elsewhale (NG, Planar Handbook)
Celestial triceratops (NG) or Celestial archelon (NG, Stormwrack) or Gaspar (N, Planar Handbook)
Hollyphant (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Guardinal, Lupinal (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Lillend (CG)
Archon, Warden (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Elemental, greater (N) or Caller from the deeps (NE, Stormwrack)
Storm Elemental, Huge (N, MMIII)
Slaad, blue (CN) or Limbo Stalker (CN, Planar Handbook) or Yugoloth, Echinoloth (NE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish giant squid (LE)
Hellcat (LE) or Orthon (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)
Malelephant (LE, Fiend Folio)
Fiendish monstrous centipede, Colossal (NE) or Gaspar (N, Planar Handbook)
Demon, Solamith (CE, MMV, evil caster)
Demon, Vrock (CE)
Fiendish dire tiger (CE)
Fiendish monstrous spider, Gargantuan (CE)
Fiendish tyrannosaurus (CE)

Summon Monster IX

Deva, Monadic (G, Fiend Folio)
Archon, Owl (LG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Archon, Sword (LG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Couatl (LG)
Guardinal, Leonal (NG)
Guardinal, Ursinal (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Moon Dog (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Quesar (NG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Celestial roc (CG) or Celestial plesiosaur (NG, Stormwrack)
Eladrin, Firre (CG, Book of Exalted Deeds)
Formian, Observer (LN, Fiend Folio)
Elemental, elder (N)
Rilmani, Cuprilach (N, Fiend Folio)
Storm Elemental, Greater (N, MMIII)
Slaad, green (CN) or Unraveler (LN, Planar Handbook)
Devil, Barbed (LE)
Demodand, Farastu (NE, Fiend Folio)

Fiendish dire shark (NE) or Brachina (LE, FIENDISH CODEX II, LE caster)
Fiendish monstrous scorpion, Gargantuan (NE) or Fiendish monstrous crab, Gargantuan (NE, Stormwrack)
Night hag (NE)
Demon, Bebilith (CE) or Fiendish mosasaur (CE, Stormwrack)
Fiendish monstrous spider, Colossal (CE)
Demon, Adaru (CE, MMV, evil caster)
Demon, Hezrou (CE)
Demon, Wastrilith (CE, Fiend Folio)

New templates to replace Celestial or Fiendish at any level - anarchic, axiomatic, entropic (+1 to spell level), vivacious (+1 to spell level). (Planar Handbook)

All Summonable Monsters By Source

Monster Manual

See the Summon Monster spell lists; there's no need to reproduce all that here.

Monster Manual III

Arrow demon (VII, CE, evil caster only, replaces the babau)

Storm elementals - Small (IV, N), Med (VI, N), Large (VII, N), Huge (VIII, N), Greater (IX, N)

Monster Manual IV

Clockwork mender (II, LN)

Demon, Nashrou (III, CE) – It's not listed in the table of contents as a summonable creature, but it is designated so in its text!

Dwarf Ancestor (V, LG, clerics of Moradin only)

Howler Wasp (II, CE)

Inferno Spider (VI, N)

Justice Archon (VII, LG)

Windrazor (III, CE)

Windscythe (VI, CE)

Wrackspawn (IV, CE)

Yugoloth, Corruptor of Fate (VI, NE)

Yugoloth, Voor (IV, NE)

Monster Manual V

Arcadian Avenger (IV, LG, LG/LN casters only)

Demon, Adaru (IX, CE, evil casters only)

Demon, Carnage (IV, CE, evil casters only)

Demon, Gadacro (IV, CE, evil casters only)

Demon, Solamith (VII, CE, evil casters only)

Devil, Gulthir (VI, LE, evil casters only)

Fetid Fungus (II, clerics of Zugtmoy only)

Fiend Folio (Published for 3.0 but many groups use it as legal for 3.5)

Aoa Droplet (N, IV)

Bacchae (CN, III)

Demodand, Farastu (NE, IX)

Demon, Skulvyn (CE, IV)

Demon, Wastrilith (CE, IX)

Deva, Monadic (G, IX)

Deva, Movanic (G, VII)

Formian, Armadon (LN, VII)

Formian, Observer (LN, IX)

Formian, Winged Warrior (LN, VI)

Imp, Bloodbag (LE, IV)

Imp, Euphoric (LE, IV)

Imp, Filth (LE, IV)

Kaorti (NE, II)

Malelephant (LE, VIII)

Nerra, Kalareem (N, IV)

Nerra, Sillit (N, VI)

Nerra, Varoot (N, II)

Rilmani, Cuprilach (N, IX)

Rilmani, Ferumach (N, VII)
Slaad, Mud (CN, VI)
Yugoloth, Piscoloth (NE, VII)
Yugoloth, Skeroloth (NE, IV)

Fiendish Codex II

Abishai, White (IV, LE, LE caster, replace fiendish giant wasp)
Abishai, black (V, LE, LE caster, replace bearded devil)
Abishai, green (VI, LE, LE caster, replace chain devil)
Abishai, blue (VII, LE, LE caster, replace bone devil)
Amnizu (VI, LE, LE caster, replace xill)
Kalabon (III, LE, LE caster, replace fiendish ape)
Orthon (VIII, LE, LE caster, replace hellcat)
Pain devil (VI, LE, LE caster, replace chain devil)
Brachina (IX, LE, LE caster, replace fiendish dire shark)
Spined devil (IV, LE, LE caster, replace fiendish giant wasp)
Steel devil (VII, LE, LE caster, replace fiendish megaraptor)

Book of Exalted Deeds - thanks to BenSan

Bauriaur (III, CG)
Coure Eladrin (III, CG)
Musteval Guardinal (III, NG)
Cervidal Guardinal (IV, NG)
Rhek (IV, NG)
Leskylor (V, NG)
Equinal (VI, NG)
Asura (VII, CG)
Leskylor, three-headed (VII, NG)
Hollyphant (VIII, NG)
Lupinal Guardinal (VIII, NG) - actually from MMII
Warden Archon (VIII, CG)
Firre Eladrin (IX, CG)
Moon Dog (IX, NG)
Owl Archon (IX, LG)
Quesar (IX, N)
Sword Archon (IX, LG)
Ursinal Guardinal (IX, NG)

Complete Arcane - thanks to BenSan

Elemental Grue (IV, NE) - Air, Fire, Earth, or Water.

Ghostwalk - thanks to BenSan

Demon, Artaaglith (VI, CE)

Magic of Incarnum - thanks to BenSan

Souleater (VII, NE, evil caster, replaces Huge fiendish monstrous scorpion)

Planar Handbook - thanks to BenSan

Elementite Swarm (any) (VI, N, replaces Elemental, Large) - 4 kinds.
Elsewhale (VIII, NG, replaces celestial cachalot whale)
Elysian Thrush (I, NG, replaces celestial owl or celestial monkey)
Energon (any) (V, N, replaces Elemental, Medium) - and technically this allows the xeg-ya and xeg-yi from Manual of the Planes as well for a total of 7.
Gaspar (VIII, N, replaces celestial triceratops or Colossal fiendish monstrous centipede)
Limbo Stalker (VIII, CN, replaces blue slaad)

Nightmare, lesser (IV, NE, replaces fiendish dire wolf or howler)
Pack fiend (VII, NE, replaces Huge fiendish monstrous scorpion)
Unraveler (IX, LN, replaces green slaad)
Ur' Epona (II, N, replaces celestial riding dog)
New templates - anarchic, axiomatic, entropic (+1 to spell level), vivacious (+1 to spell level).

Races of Stone

Hammer archon (VIII, LG, dwarf, gnome, or goliath caster)

Sandstorm - thanks to BenSan

Glass mephitis (IV, N)

Sulfur mephitis (IV, N)

Stormwrack - thanks to Nanshork

Fiendish dire barracuda (V, NE, replaces fiendish dire boar)

Fiendish dire eel (IV, CE, replaces fiendish dire wolf)

Fiendish monstrous diving spider (various, CE, replace other fiendish monstrous spiders)

Fiendish sea snake (various, CE, replace other fiendish vipers)

Caller from the deeps (VIII, NE, replace Elemental, greater)

Yugoloth, Echinoloth (VIII, NE, replace blue slaad)

Fiendish monstrous crab, small (I, NE, replace fiendish monstrous scorpion, small)

Fiendish monstrous crab, medium (II, NE, replace fiendish monstrous scorpion, medium)

Fiendish monstrous crab, large (V, NE, replace fiendish monstrous scorpion, large)

Fiendish monstrous crab, huge (VII, NE, replace fiendish monstrous scorpion, huge)

Fiendish monstrous crab, gargantuan (IX, NE, replace fiendish monstrous scorpion, gargantuan)

Celestial archelon (VIII, NG, replaces celestial triceratops)

Fiendish ichthyosaur (VI, NE, replaces fiendish rhinoceros)

Fiendish mosasaur (IX, CE, replaces behemoth)

Celestial plesiosaur (IX, NG, replaces celestial roc)

There are no additional summonable creatures in Monster Manual II, Fiendish Codex I, the Book of Vile Darkness, Draconomicon, the Complete series up through Scoundrel/Mage/Champion, the Races series, the DMG II, Exp. Psionic Handbook, Heroes of Battle/Horror, Libris Mortis, Lords of Madness, Manual of the Planes, or Unearthed Arcana.

Appendix

Useful Links

The Tales of Valgrim the Summoner – my original malconvoker character. Home of this guide, other summoner aids, and even full character sheets at every level and lengthy summaries of every session of our campaign (Rise of the Runelords) to show a real summoner in action!

d20SRD.org - aka "The Rules Legally Online for Free": <http://www.d20srd.org/>

Wizards of the Coast's Character Optimization Board – the original CharOp board where most of this was initially worked out. Wizards of the Coast jacked up their forum (and D&D, really) pretty bad and now not many people post there; the CharOp crowd is mostly found at Brilliant Gameologists nowadays:
http://community.wizards.com/go/forum/view/75882/136042/d20_Character_Optimization

Brilliant Gameologists Min/Max Board – the new home of hardcore rules wonks:
<http://brilliantgameologists.com/boards/index.php?board=9.0>

Brilliant Gameologists Handbooks Board – a min/max sub-board containing only thoroughly researched handbooks:
<http://brilliantgameologists.com/boards/index.php?board=22.0>

Legal 3.5 Summonable Monster List– the original thread where this guide got its start:
http://community.wizards.com/go/thread/view/75882/19872206/Legal_35_Summonable_Monster_List?num=10&pg=1

Mastering the Malconvoker - TreantMonk20's original thread on the Wizards CharOp forum. Be all that you can be; be a Malconvoker:
http://community.wizards.com/go/thread/view/75882/19872758/Mastering_the_Malconvoker

Mastering the Malconvoker - the thread's new home on Brilliant Gameologists:
<http://brilliantgameologists.com/boards/index.php?topic=289.0>

A Guide to Wizards: Playing a GOD - the definitive wizard guide by TreantMonk20:
<http://brilliantgameologists.com/boards/index.php?topic=394.0>

The Conjuror's Handbook – all about conjuration:
http://community.wizards.com/go/thread/view/75882/19863086/The_Conjurors_Handbook

The Summoner's Guide – all about summoning – wizard, cleric, and druid. Their trick of Wizard/Master Conjuror/Thaumaturgist is no longer legal because of errata:
http://community.wizards.com/go/thread/view/75882/19864066/Summoning_Handbook

Practical Demonkeeping (A Summoner's Guide to the Lower Planes) – a guide to fiend summoning by Gnorman:
<http://brilliantgameologists.com/boards/index.php?topic=5573.0>

Rising Above (A Summoner's Guide to the Upper Planes) – a guide to nice thing summoning by Gnorman:
<http://brilliantgameologists.com/boards/index.php?topic=5812.0>

IMarvinTPA's Dungeons and Dragons Database - Find obscure spells, feats, and items. Need a level 3 or higher Cleric spell with the [Electricity] descriptor? Now you can find it: <http://imarvintpa.com/dndlive/>

RealmsHelper - Has full descriptions of most feats. Other sections of the site include spells, skills, and psionic powers: <http://realmshelps.dandello.net/datafind/feats.shtml>

Credits

Ernest Mueller, aka **mxyzplk**, who originally authored the Field Guide. Contact him at geek.related@gmail.com, or check out his blog at <http://mxyzplk.wordpress.com>.

TreantMonk20 for the Mastering the Malconvoker guide, inspiring my guides, and general input and support.

BenSan and **Nanshork** contributed a number of monsters from various books.

Endarire did an update and proofreading of the Guide. Contact him at theelward@yahoo.com, or check out his blog at <http://CampbellGregE.wordpress.com>.

Gnorman for adding on to my work with his Brilliant Gameologists guides.