**100 nearly useless non-fiction books**

The books in this list all describe non-fiction books that might be found by a group of adventures on their travels. Very few of these books serve any practical use, and most of them have almost no sell value other than to a collector or a character particularly interested in the topics related to that book. Each entry begins with the title of the book (if there is one) and a brief description – most would then take some study to determine the rest of the information provided.

Some entries refer to historical events, people or places in the Forgotten Realms Setting, and typically assume your party is in the Sword Coast area. You may wish to adapt these entries for your setting, and they are marked with an (F)

1. **Taptoo’s Journal: A Guide to Monsters and How to Cook Them**

*This thick leather journal appears to be a diary detailing the adventures of a halfling ranger known as Taptoo Wedge. Taptoo’s adventures seem to consist almost entirely of a quest to hunt down and eat as many different kinds of monster as possible, often in a highly experimental fashion – and a surprising number of the entries detail poisonous or other harmful entities. Taptoo’s adventures seem to have been published posthumously by his companions after his fortieth death chasing his dreams. It’s not made clear why his long-suffering cleric elected not to raise him from the dead a fortieth time.*

1. **(F) Hillsfar in Chaos: How a Week Changed a City**

*A small paper-bound volume describing a curious sequence of events that befell the city of Hillsfar on the Western edge of the Moonsea – perhaps a couple of hundred years old. During this time, four unrelated adventurers all rose to become the new heads of their respective guilds in the same week through a sequence of increasingly lubricous and far-fetched events. The book makes repeated references to an incompetent half-orc pit-fighter called “Lefty” and contains a surprising number of non-fatal riding accidents.*

1. **(F) Halls to Hellgate**

*A remarkably detailed book of maps, detailing the geography of the High Forest to an excruciating level of exacting detail – all the notes are in elven, which is unsurprising as it seems almost nobody else could possibly be this interested in trees. Given the level of detail involved and the sheer size of the High Forest, this piece of cartography must have taken hundreds of years to complete, and thus it is almost completely impossible to imagine the earliest areas mapped were remotely accurate by the time the last areas were finished.*

1. **Blank Snakeskin Journal**

*This brown snake leather journal has gold leaf inlays, thick forest green endpapers and a deep bottle green ribbon bookmark. It also smells like it has been smoked through with incense or perfume of some kind. The volume is of an exceptionally high quality – the kind that seems too nice to use for random note-taking or scribbles. It’s the kind of tome one would own, but never use due to lack of a suitable project to “do it justice”, and never sell because nobody would be willing to pay its value for a journal they would never use.*

1. **Evard’s guide to knot tying**

*A pocket-sized simple paper book with a plain paper cover – this illustrated book has seen heavy use and is dogeared and tattered. The illustrations provide detailed guides to tying over one-hundred different styles of increasingly adventurous knot. A little under halfway through the book, the knot tying methods start to implement dimensional travel, extraplanar pocket spaces and the ethereal plane, and the last few seem to require manipulating fate or time travel to complete. There are no instructions for dimensional travel, planar travel, manipulating fate or time travel.*

1. **(F) Vote Gruuk, Vote Battle!**

*A simple eight page pamphlet that appears to be a political manifesto for an orc called Gruuk, campaigning to replace Porphyrys Cadorna on the Council of the city of New Philan in the year 1208DR. Gruuk’s campaign strategy seems simple enough, that he promises to personally kill every monster in a part of the city known as Podol Plaza, which has apparently been infested and dedicated to the dark god Bane. A pencilled note inside the back cover states “It is unknown if Gruuk ever succeeded in his campaign as New Philan was destroyed a few years later in a large magical calamity believed to be direct intervention from Bane himself”*

1. **(F) The Long Road to Construction: The Long Road**

*A slim fifty page long history book, several of the pages are slightly stuck together by the binding glue used to make this volume, suggesting that nobody has ever bothered to read it. The book details the political deals and history surrounding the conception and construction of the Long Road, a well-travelled trading route that follows most of the Sword Coast. Apparently most of the workers involved in the project were never paid.*

1. **Mukdan’s Almanac of Stone**

*A surprisingly weighty tome for its size (250 large pages) – this is an illustrated Dwarvish guide to different types of stone, detailing how to recognize them in different lighting conditions, their structural properties, where in the world to find them, what minerals or ores are more likely to be found associated with each, and which tools and methods are most efficient for excavating them. The book is widely circulated in Dwarven Mining circles, and as a third edition, this copy is unlikely to be of any value to a collector. Would make an excellent doorstop.*

1. **(The title of this volume is embossed on the cover in the form of some musical notation)**

*This seems to be a two-way translation dictionary in a language that is presented in written form purely as musical notation and vowel sounds, it is remarkably difficult to navigate. Using the book to translate the marks on the cover, it appears to be titled “Dictionary of Overcommon” – a language that does not seem to exist or be spoken by any known entities. It is unclear whether or not the language is purely fictional, but it* ***can*** *be translated with a comprehend languages spell.*

1. **(F) Waterdeep Public Library Lost Books Catalogue**

*A simple loosely bound tome covered with red leather, this hand-written catalogue provides a list of books missing from the Waterdeep Library, along with the names of those responsible for taking them out. While the date inside the cover is seventy years old, it is highly likely that most of the books listed are still missing. The catalogue does reference itself, approximately two-thirds of the way through, which is extremely concerning.*

1. **Snaffi’s Research Journal**

*A dogeared and foul-smelling tattered collection of papers bound with string, this is, at first glance to the untrained eye, a wizard’s spellbook written in Goblintongue. To a trained eye (i.e. any wizard) this is a spellbook of half-completed spells based in arcane theory so fundamentally flawed that incorporating* ***any*** *elements of them to real arcane theory would be hazardous at best, and most likely suicidal. It’s genuinely impressive that anyone would be able to create magical theory this wrong. The back third of the spellbook is charred beyond recognition.*

1. **Tormand’s Dictionary: First Edition**

*A neat three-hundred page book with a wooden cover, this appears to be an early attempt at creating the first dictionary. The few hundred most common words are all included, but after that, there’s only about an 80% chance that another word is included. Spelling is very non-standard. The entries from the middle of ‘v’ to the end of ‘x’ are also missing, although the binding is undamaged and the pages fill the width of the spine. Curious.*

1. **If You’re Determined Enough, You Don’t Need a Ladder**

*Apparently some kind of lifestyle guide or self-help manual written by a halfling bard using the moniker “Tipple Rhyme” – this paperback volume is neatly printed and has a woodcut image of a handsome male halfling giving a large thumbs-up expression on the cover, alongside the bold claim “Tipple works every time!” and then in very small writing underneath (30% of halflings agree). The back cover is plastered with endorsements from notable halfling and gnomish celebrities. The contents of the book appear to consist of detailed advice and suggestions for attracting romantic attention, dating, and what Tipple enthusiastically refers to as “boudoir aerobics”. All of the advice is bad.*

1. **Bathroom Etiquette**

*Blah blah blah*

1. **Lockpicking**

*Blah blah blah*

1. **Dodgy Financial Record ledger for a spice merchant, dated in the future**

*Blah blah blah*

1. **Map of caves and dungeons produced by divination magic, but they’re all wrong**

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1. **Rulebook for a complicated storytelling game**

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1. **Litany of complaints about Elminster**

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