

# Monstrous Races

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*Character Options for Playing  
Every Monster in the Monster Manual*



# Monstrous Races

## *Character Options for Playing Monsters*

**Introduction:** Whether you're playing an all-monster party or just want to play a monstrous race in an otherwise normal party, this document presents rules for playing every creature in the *Monster Manual*, new feats and backgrounds for monstrous characters, analysis of officially published races, highly detailed rules for building your own races, new rules for tiny races, and rules for templates for player characters.

by Tyler Kamstra



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# Contents

## Contents ..... 3

## Introduction ..... 6

How to Use This Document .....	6
Design Notes .....	6
Included Art .....	6

## New Rules & Rules

## Clarifications ..... 7

Healing Constructs and Undead .....	7
Monks and Natural Weapons .....	7
Templates .....	7
Tiny Creatures .....	8
Unconsciousness and Immunity .....	8

## Monstrous Races ..... 9

Aarakocra .....	9
Aboleths .....	9
Angels .....	10
Animated Objects .....	11
Ankheg.....	14
Azer .....	15
Banshee .....	17
Basilisks .....	18
Behirs.....	20
Beholders .....	21
Blights.....	23
Bugbears.....	25
Bulettes .....	26
Bullywug.....	27
Cambion .....	28
Carrion Crawler .....	29
Centaur .....	30
Chimera .....	31
Chuul .....	32
Cloaker.....	33

Cockatrice .....	34
Couatl.....	35
Crawling Claw .....	36
Cyclops.....	37
Darkmantle .....	38
Death Knight [Template: Acquired] .....	39
Demilich .....	41
Demons.....	42
Devils .....	53
Dinosaurs .....	61
Displacer Beast .....	64
Doppelganger .....	65
Dracolich [Template: Acquired] .....	66
Dragon, Shadow [Template: Natural or Acquired] .....	67
Dragon .....	68
Dragon Turtle.....	71
Drider .....	72
Dryad .....	72
Elementals .....	74
Empyrean.....	76
Ettercap .....	77
Ettin .....	78
Faerie Dragon .....	79
Flameskull .....	80
Flumph.....	81
Fomorian.....	83
Fungi .....	84
Galeb Duhr.....	86
Gargoyle.....	88
Genies.....	88
Ghouls.....	91
Giants.....	92
Gibbering Moulder .....	96

Gith.....	97
Gnolls .....	99
Goblins .....	100
Golems .....	101
Gorgon .....	104
Grell.....	105
Grick .....	106
Griffon .....	107
Grimlock.....	107
Hags.....	108
Half-Dragon [Template: Natural] .....	110
Harpy.....	112
Hell Hound .....	113
Helmed Horror .....	114
Hippogriff .....	114
Hobgoblins .....	116
Homunculus .....	116
Hook Horror .....	117
Hydra.....	118
Intellect Devourer .....	119
Invisible Stalker .....	121
Jackalwere.....	122
Kenku .....	124
Kobolds.....	124
Kraken .....	125
Kuo-Toa .....	127
Lamia.....	127
Lich [Template: Acquired] .....	128
Lizardfolk.....	131
Lycanthropes [Template: Acquired or Natural].....	132
Magmin .....	135
Manticore.....	136
Medusa .....	137
Mephits.....	138

Merfolk.....	140	Shield Guardian.....	180	Blink Dog.....	217	
Merrow.....	141	Skeleton [Template: Natural] .....	181	Blood Hawk.....	217	
Mimic.....	141	Slaadi.....	182	Boar.....	218	
Mind Flayer.....	142	Specter.....	185	Brown Bear.....	219	
Minotaur.....	144	Sphinxes.....	186	Camel.....	219	
Modrons.....	145	Sprite.....	187	Cat.....	219	
Mummies.....	147	Stirge.....	188	Constrictor Snake.....	220	
Myconid.....	148	Succubus/Incubus.....	189	Crab.....	221	
Myconid Spore Servant [Template: Natural] .....	150	Tarrasque.....	190	Crocodile.....	221	
Naga.....	151	Thri-Kreen.....	191	Death Dog.....	222	
Nightmare.....	153	Treant.....	192	Deer.....	222	
Nothic.....	154	Troglodyte.....	193	Dire Wolf.....	223	
Ogre.....	155	Troll.....	193	Draft Horse.....	223	
Oni.....	156	Umber Hulk.....	195	Eagle.....	223	
Oozes.....	157	Unicorn.....	196	Elephant.....	223	
Orcs.....	161	Vampire [Template: Acquired] ....	196	Elk.....	224	
Otyugh.....	162	Water Weird.....	200	Flying Snake.....	225	
Owlbear.....	163	Wight.....	201	Frog.....	225	
Pegasus.....	164	Will-o'-Wisp.....	202	Giant Ape.....	226	
Peryton.....	165	Wraith.....	203	Giant Badger.....	226	
Piercer.....	165	Wyvern.....	204	Giant Bat.....	226	
Pixie.....	166	Xorn.....	205	Giant Boar.....	227	
Pseudodragon.....	167	Yeti.....	206	Giant Centipede.....	227	
Purple Worm.....	168	Yuan-ti.....	206	Giant Constrictor Snake.....	228	
Quaggoth.....	168	Yugoloth.....	209	Giant Crab.....	228	
Rakshasa.....	170	Zombie [Template: Natural] .....	211	Giant Crocodile.....	229	
Remorhaze.....	170	<b><u>Miscellaneous Creatures</u></b>			Giant Eagle.....	229
Roc.....	171	<b><u>..... 213</u></b>			Giant Elk.....	229
Roper.....	172	Ape.....	213	Giant Fire Beetle.....	230	
Rust Monster.....	173	Awakened Shrub.....	213	Giant Frog.....	230	
Sahuagin.....	174	Awakened Tree.....	214	Giant Goat.....	231	
Salamanders.....	175	Axe Beak.....	214	Giant Hyena.....	231	
Satyr.....	176	Baboon.....	215	Giant Lizard.....	232	
Scarecrow.....	177	Badger.....	215	Giant Octopus.....	233	
Shadow.....	178	Bat.....	216	Giant Owl.....	234	
Shambling Mound.....	179	Black bear.....	216	Giant Poisonous Snake.....	235	

Giant Rat.....	235	Mastiff.....	246	Tiger .....	257
Giant Scorpion .....	236	Mule.....	246	Vulture .....	258
Giant Sea Horse .....	237	Octopus.....	247	Warhorse .....	258
Giant Shark .....	237	Owl.....	248	Weasel.....	258
Giant Spider .....	237	Panther .....	249	Winter Wolf.....	259
Giant Toad .....	238	Phase Spider .....	249	Wolf.....	260
Giant Vulture .....	238	Poisonous Snake .....	250	Worg.....	260
Giant Wasp .....	239	Polar Bear .....	251		
Giant Weasel .....	240	Pony .....	251	<b><u>Monstrous Character</u></b>	
Giant Wolf Spider .....	240	Quipper .....	252	<b><u>Options..... 262</u></b>	
Goat.....	241	Rat.....	253	Class Options.....	262
Hawk.....	241	Raven .....	253	Feats.....	262
Hunter Shark .....	242	Reef Shark.....	254	Backgrounds.....	263
Hyena .....	243	Rhinoceros .....	254	<b><u>Published Races..... 266</u></b>	
Jackal .....	243	Riding Horse.....	255	<b><u>Appendix: Race Builder. 275</u></b>	
Killer Whale .....	244	Saber-Toothed Tiger .....	255	<b><u>Appendix: Template Builder</u></b>	
Lion.....	244	Scorpion .....	255	<b><u>..... 282</u></b>	
Lizard .....	245	Sea Horse .....	256		
Mammoth.....	246	Spider.....	256		

# Introduction

This document is a supplemental text seeking to expand upon the character options available to players. Each race presented in this document attempts to stay roughly balanced with the races included in the Player's Handbook.

This document makes no assumptions of setting, purpose, or usage. It is merely an attempt to open new and interesting options, and to allow you to do with them whatever you like.

## How to Use This Document

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Allowing "monstrous" or otherwise abnormal races in your game is a decision which the DM should make, likely after discussing the subject with other members of the group. Some groups prefer to stick to classic "heroic" races like Humans, Elves, and Dwarves. Other groups allow "uncommon" races like those presented in the Player's Handbook, including Dragonborn, Half-Elves, and others.

More adventurous groups might also welcome races which are even less common, like Goblins and Orcs. For those groups, this document seeks to provide an easily-accessible source of new options.

Many of the "races" (the term is used very loosely here) in this document are clearly absurd. In many campaigns, the idea of an animated object as a character make no sense, but I've seen enough people wanting to play sentient items or animated objects that I've given up all hope of logic, internal consistency, or sanity. Instead, I've opted to present every possible option in hopes that someone somewhere will enjoy them, if only for the time it takes to read the racial traits for a rug of smothering.

If you choose to allow content from this document, you don't necessarily need to allow everything contained herein. If your group wishes to allow a set of the contained races, but disallow others, that's fine too. For example: your group might allow a handful of specifically chosen races that fit a theme, or you might consider allowing all humanoid races.

Once you have selected what content your group will allow, treat those races just like you would any race in the Player's Handbook while creating new characters. The races in this document work just like existing playable races, and use all the same rules.

Each race includes sections on the race's flavor and concept, the race's traits, suggestions for playing that race, and design notes about the creation of the race

which are presented to help you adjust races if you decide to do so.

The Race Builder appendix provides detailed rules for how the races in this document were created, and rules for creating or customizing your own races.

## Design Notes

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It should be noted that 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Dungeons and Dragons does not abide by any strict balance standards. Some options are outright better than others. Some are better some of the time, but worse in others. Races are a great example of this: some of the races in the Player's Handbook are good at a wide variety of classes and character concepts, while others are useful only for a few.

In an attempt to make every option in this document appealing, the races presented attempt to fall into an acceptable range of power (8-10 "Build Points": see the Race Builder appendix). No race should present a balance issue in your game, and every race should be both fun and functional. Some races will still be stronger or weaker than average, and a handful of races will be extremely weak when the base creature was extremely weak.

The NPC Features table, presented on page 282 of the Dungeon Master's Guide, is used as inspiration for many of the humanoid races included in this document, but the stats presented there are typically overridden or outright ignored in this document.

To keep monstrous races in line with official published races, many monsters' abilities have been replaced, reworded, or otherwise altered to make them fair for use by players.

All races are also assumed to be "intelligent", and are assumed to be in the normal range of Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores normally afforded to Player Characters. Any in-game reasons behind this sudden leap in mental capacity are left entirely to you to determine, and options like the *awaken* spell make a fine explanation.

## Included Art

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The art included in this document is all free art taken from the creator resources provided by Wizards of the Coast on DM's Guild. If you wish to reuse these images, I encourage you to download the official creator resources for the original images.

# New Rules & Rules Clarifications

While this document attempts to live within the confines of existing rules, adapting some parts of the monster manual requires some new concepts and mechanics.

## Healing Constructs and Undead

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The most common magical healing options (*cure wounds*, *healing word*, and *heal*) do not affect constructs or undead. This creates a unique challenge for players hoping to play those creature types.

Jeremy Crawford suggested [on twitter](#) that constructs and undead could heal themselves by resting, just as living creatures can, and also noted that the Regenerate spell still applies to constructs and undead.

In addition to these options, I recommend introducing matching spells which only affect constructs and undead. *Repair damage* matches *cure wounds*, *word of repair* matches *healing word*, and *repair* matches *heal*. You might also introduce more spells for newer options like *healing spirit*, published in Xanathar's Guide to Everything. Any class which has the normal version of the spell on their spell list should have the "repair" version on their spell list.

Alternatively, you could allow undead to be healed by necrotic damage. However, since necrotic damage is available as a cantrip, I don't advise this.

## Monks and Natural Weapons

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Monks gain a superhuman ability to deal damage with their unarmed strikes. While this causes no issues for humans and similar races, creatures which have powerful natural weapons already deal more unarmed strike damage than 1<sup>st</sup>-level monks.

For the purposes of Martial Arts and Flurry of Blows, the bonus unarmed strikes made as a Bonus Action must be conventional unarmed strikes: punches, kicks, etc. instead of relying upon claws, teeth, etc. These attacks deal bludgeoning damage, and follow the standard Monk Unarmed Strike damage progression.

## Templates

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The Monster Manual introduces the concept of Templates, which can be applied to existing creatures

to customize them. These templates include iconic creatures like liches, lycantropes, and skeletons. While the existing rules work well for monsters, they don't function well for player characters, and granting players a template like lycanthropy presents a huge power increase, often at little cost.

The alternate rules presented here are intended as a replacement for the existing rules, allowing players to use templates without gaining an unfair benefit over other player characters, and presenting easily used means to play iconic creatures like vampires and werewolves while still fitting into the normal bounds of the game.

## Natural vs. Acquired templates

Natural templates are templates which must be applied to a creature at creation. These templates are specific to some circumstance of the creature's birth or creation, such as the half-dragon template or the skeleton template.

Acquired templates can be applied to a creature at any point as specified by the specific template, and represent a dramatic change to the creature at some point in their existence, such as a creature and returning as a ghost, or a creature being afflicted with lycanthropy.

Some templates can be either natural or acquired, such as the lycanthrope template. In these cases, the template's description elaborates on the mechanics of acquiring the template.

## Acquiring Templates

Natural templates can be applied to valid creatures when the creature is created, and acquired templates can be applied to valid creatures at any time, as specified by the template's description. All templates apply a set of traits immediately upon gaining the template.

## Template Levels

In addition to the traits applied when a template is initially applied, some templates also have "template levels." These levels function similarly to gaining levels in a class, but when you can or must take them is dictated by the template itself. More powerful templates will require more levels.

Template levels grant hit dice, as specified in the template's description. Template levels may only be taken by characters with at least one class level. A character's proficiency bonus advances with their total

level, including any template levels, just as if they had taken levels in a class.

## Removing Templates

If a character ever loses a template, such as by being cured of a curse, they immediately lose any traits gained from the template. If they have levels in the template, they lose those levels and may replace them with the same number of levels in a class upon completing a long rest.

## Tiny Creatures

Due to their small stature, tiny creatures require additional mechanics not covered in the core rules. Being the size of a house cat carries certain complications not faced by common humanoid races like halflings and elves.

Tiny creatures have difficulty using weapons which small and medium creatures can wield comfortably. Tiny creatures may not use weapons made for larger creatures unless they have the Light property. Using those weapons requires two hands and negates the Finesse property, and tiny creatures suffer disadvantage on attack rolls with those weapons. Tiny creatures may not use weapons for larger creatures to engage in two-weapon fighting, even though they have the Light property, just as a medium creature cannot use two two-handed weapons for two-weapon fighting.

Due to their inability to use weapons made for larger creatures, tiny creatures usually wield weapons better suited to their size. Such weapons add the Tiny weapon property, in addition to any other properties, and remove the Reach property if the weapon possesses it normally.

Weapons with the tiny property deal reduced damage, as per the table below, and weigh one quarter the normal weight for that type of weapon, and have half the range of the normal weapon (if any). Ranged weapons, thrown weapons, and thrown improvised weapons with the tiny property have ranges equal to half of their normal range, rounded down to the nearest 5 feet and to a minimum range of 5 feet. In addition, weapons with the Tiny property ignore the restrictions described in the preceding paragraph since they are size appropriately for tiny creatures.

Original Damage	Tiny Damage
1d4	1
1d6	1
1d8	1d2
1d10	1d3

1d12/2d6

1d4

Tiny creatures use armor which weighs less than armor for small or medium creatures. Armor made for tiny creatures weighs one quarter of the armor's listed weight.

Finally, tiny creatures can lift and carry one quarter the amount which a medium or small creature would be able to carry with the same Strength score.

## Unconsciousness and Immunity

The Monster Manual presents a long list of creatures with immunity to the Unconscious condition. However, it's never explicitly explained what happens to these creatures when they drop to 0 hit points. The text in question, taken from the "Dropping to 0 Hit Points" section, is as follows:

"When you drop to 0 hit points, you either die outright or fall unconscious"

While this isn't explicitly stated anywhere, it seems reasonable that if you're presented with two options and one option is disallowed, you must take the other option. Therefore, creatures that are immune to unconsciousness are outright slain when they fall to 0 hit points.

Several of the races presented in this document are immune to the Unconscious condition. This presents a tradeoff for those races. They are immune to effects which would render them prematurely unconscious, such as the *sleep* spell. However, they also lose the relative safety of falling unconscious during a difficult fight. Expect these players to play more defensively than usual, and possibly to flee when the possibility of 0 hit points seems likely.



# Monstrous Races

## Aarakocra

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Aarakocra are presented in the Elemental Evil Player's Companion, available as a free PDF from the Wizards of the Coast website.

[http://dnd.wizards.com/articles/features/elemental\\_evil\\_playerscompanion](http://dnd.wizards.com/articles/features/elemental_evil_playerscompanion)

Unlike other monster races which Wizards of The Coast has published thus far (bugbears, goblins, etc.), the Aarakocra stays true to the monster described in the Monster Manual. For further discussion and suggestions on design alterations to the published Aarakocra race, see the "Published Races" appendix.

## Aboleths

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Aboleth are super-intelligent, otherworldly, fish-like creatures who pre-date the gods. They have potent psychic powers, and seek to mentally enslave other creatures.

### Aboleth Traits

Aboleths share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence, +1 Charisma

**Alignment.** Horrifying creatures known to mentally enslave other creatures, most aboleths are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft., and you have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *charm person* spell once per day. Your spellcasting ability for this spell is Intelligence.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Superior Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Tentacle.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Deep Speech.

## Playing an Aboleth

Aboleths make excellent Sorcerers, Warlocks, and Wizards. They work thematically with an emphasis on enchanting spells, and their telepathy trait allows them to communicate easily with charmed creatures without others knowing.

Aboleths make good party leaders due to their tendency to build followings out of mentally subjugated creatures. Other party members might be mentally enslaved by the aboleth (purely for plot purposes; don't apply a mechanical effect unless your party is completely comfortable with the idea), or they might share the aboleth's nefarious goals.

## Design Notes

The Aboleth is a very complex creature. Its Mucous Cloud ability and its tentacle's disease effect both provide dangerous long-term conditions which make the aboleth dangerous long after the encounter ends. Coupled with its immense strength, the aboleth is a serious threat in melee combat. Beyond that, its ability to mentally enslave creatures allows it to build groups of wholly subservient followers who it can then psychically drain to heal itself. All of these abilities will need to be vastly altered to make them usable for players. We'll completely ignore the legendary actions; those are intended for use in "boss fights".

Aboleths are the aberration creature type, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Before we assess the Aboleth's capabilities, we need to reduce it to medium size. This will entail some reduction in Strength, Constitution, and natural armor, but the precise values aren't important yet.

Aboleth are extremely intelligent, and extremely persuasive. We'll give them +1 to Intelligence and +1 to Charisma for 2 BP to emphasize their magical, telepathic, and mind-control abilities rather than focusing on the fact that they are giant scary tentacle fish.

From the Aboleth's stat block, we get a walking speed of 10 ft. for -2 BP, a swim speed of 40 ft. for 1.5 BP, Superior Darkvision for 3 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP.

The base aboleth's natural armor is fantastic, but we'll need to conserve BP to leave room for more interesting abilities. +2 natural armor for 1 BP will grant aboleth spellcasters a decent AC boost without exceeding the benefits of light armor.

From the aboleth's special abilities, we get Amphibious for 0.5 BP.

At 5.5 BP, we still need to tackle the aboleth's natural weapons (possibly including the tentacle disease effect), mucous cloud, telepathy, probing telepathy, and enslave.

The aboleth's two natural weapons deal 2d6 damage for the tentacles and 3d6 damage for the tail. Reduced to medium size, we can reasonably say that tentacles should deal 1d8 damage. However, since we're trying to conserve BP and emphasize the aboleth's role as a mind control monster, 1d6 damage for 1.5 BP seems more reasonable.

The on-hit disease effect for the aboleth's tentacles is difficult to approximate for players. Since players generally don't follow enemies around for hours, the effects all take place "off screen", which makes them hard to evaluate. Mucous cloud faces the same issue. I think that for simplicity, our best option is to wave both of those abilities.

Telepathy is difficult to approximate. Telepathy allows the user to communicate with any creature that speaks a language, largely eliminating the need to know languages, so it should have an appropriately high BP cost. If we cut the range to 30 ft., I think that we can get away with 2 BP. We'll omit Probing Telepathy.

That leaves Enslave. The effects of Enslave are a massive improvement over spells like Dominate Person, so clearly Enslave is too powerful for use by players. Enchantment spells are an obvious solution, but it's hard to say which to use. Friends would be good because the player can use it repeatedly, but a more potent low-level spell would be closer to the actual effect of Enslave. I think Charm Person is probably the closest we can get, so we'll allow aboleths to cast Charm Person once per day for 1 BP.

At 10 BP, aboleths are at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. They have some fun thematic abilities, and they're set up to make excellent enchantment-focused spellcasters. If you need to weaken aboleths, reduce *charm person* to *friends*, reduce their natural armor, or reduce their tentacle damage. If you need to strengthen aboleths, add *friends* to their innate spellcasting.

## Angels

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Angels are celestial beings created by good-aligned deities to do their bidding.

### Angel Traits

Angels share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Celestial

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Divine servants of good-aligned deities, most angels are lawful good.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Divine Resistance.** You have resistance to radiant damage.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Immortal Nature.** You don't require food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you meditate deeply, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. (The Common word for such meditation is "trance.") While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Celestial.

### Deva

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Divine Messenger.** You know the *message* cantrip. Upon reaching 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *disguise self* spell once per day. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

### Planetary

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Angelic Weapons.** Starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, as a bonus action, you may focus your angelic power behind your attacks. For one minute, your melee weapon attacks deal an additional 1d6 radiant damage. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

### Solar

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Healing Touch.** Upon reaching 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *cure wounds* spell once per day. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Poison Resilience.** You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.

## Playing an Angel

Angels are powerful flying characters. Depending on your choice of subrace, you may excel in different roles. Devas make great Bards and Sorcerers, and work well for any character seeking to emphasize social skills. Planetars make good Barbarians, Fighters, and Rangers. Solars are extremely durable, and work well in any class on the front lines of combat.

Angels are good-aligned outsiders, and as such flock to good causes like peace and justice. That makes them excellent adventurers, and easy to fit into typical parties.

## Design Notes

The Monster Manual includes what are perhaps the three most iconic angels. Each of three has a somewhat unique flavor: Devas are messengers, often disguising their true form to guide mortals for some higher purpose; Planetars are soldiers, enacting their deity's will through magical might; Solars are extremely powerful creatures which intervene to derail the plots of exceptionally evil creatures. Because all three are extremely powerful creatures, we'll need to make some serious adjustments to fit them into playable races. The Aasimar presented in the Dungeon Master's Guide is a great example of what we're shooting for.

Angels are of the celestial creature type, costing 0.5 BP.

All angels have 20+ wisdom, so we'll grant a +1 Wisdom increase. We'll also give each subrace a second +1 increase to help distinguish them, but that's all that we can afford since angels have so many other abilities. Devas are messengers, so they'll get +1 Charisma. Planetars are greatsword-wielding soldiers, so a +1 Strength increase fits well. Solars are harder to define since their highest ability score is Strength, but they wield flying swords and spend most of their time using a longbow. I think I'll give them a +1 to Constitution since they seem to have the most resistances of the three. That totals 2 BP for each subrace.

The stat blocks are appropriately insane for the CRs of all three angels. Condition immunities, damage resistances, truesight, telepathy, magic resistance, flight, they've got it all. On top of that, they can cast numerous high-level spells, deal radiant damage with their weapons, and their Healing Touch trait replicates many of the effects of the *heal* spell. That's great for monsters and super-powerful NPCs, but totally unfair for players.

Adapted to work as player races, we can give angels medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, racial languages plus Common, Darkvision for 2 BP, 30 ft. flying speed for 4 BP, resistance to Radiant damage for 2 BP, and Immortal Nature for 1 BP.

And just like that, we're at 9 BP already. Each subrace has a unique ability score increase, but that's a pretty boring distinction, so I want to give them each some additional abilities.

Deva are messengers and can disguise their appearance, so I want to emphasize these aspects. *Message* for 0.5 BP and *disguise self* for 1 BP address this nicely.

Solars are soldiers, so I'll drop their spellcasting to emphasize their combat abilities. We can replicate the Azer's Heated Weapons trait and reskin it to deal radiant damage for 2 BP.

Planetars have more resistances than other angels, so I want to emphasize their defenses. I'll give them Poison Resilience for 1 BP, and allow them to cast *Cure Wounds* once per day for another 1 BP.

If you need to weaken angels, remove their Charisma bonus or their Radiant damage resistance. If you need to strengthen angels, give them Brave (0.5 BP), or the *spare the dying* cantrip.

## Animated Objects

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Animated by magic for a variety of purposes, animated objects are common objects given a crude intelligence to serve their master's needs.

### Animated Object Traits

Animated Objects share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Construct. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** Created for a variety of purposes by a variety of masters, animated objects can be of any alignment but are usually neutral.

**Antimagic Susceptibility.** You are incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 60 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Construct Nature.** You are immune to the deafened, exhaustion, paralyzed, and petrified conditions.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a mundane object which your race resembles. You must spend one minute motionless before this trait takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Languages.** You can read and understand Common.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Animated Armor

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 18. You are unable to wear armor, but may still use shields.

#### Flying Sword

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Blade.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 50 feet.

**Living Sword.** You are unable to wear armor or use shields.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 17 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

#### Rug of Smothering

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Damage Transfer.** While you are grappling a creature, you take only half the damage dealt to you, and the creature which you are grappling takes the other half.

**Living Carpet.** You are unable to wear armor or use shields.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Smother.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

### Playing an Animated Object

Animated objects are peculiar options for player characters. Lacking the ability to speak, they have issues communicating with party members. Flying swords and rugs of smother both lack limbs and hands, so they have issues tackling simple obstacles like doors. As such, these characters must rely heavily on their allies for many things.

All animated objects share an inability to speak, which carries complications beyond conversation. Speechless characters can't perform verbal spell components, which severely limits your options as a spellcaster.

Living armor is the most straightforward of the animated objects. It's basically a suit of full plate armor, which means that it has human-like anatomy and can do many of the things that a human can do. Because they're a walking suit of armor, living armor makes an excellent fighter.

Flying swords are conceptually simple, but a bit more complicated to play. They have no walking speed, and are entirely dependent on flight to move. Since they lack the ability to hover, they will frequently need to fly in circles or land to remain in roughly the same place. Beyond that they are much like a flying fighter with a longsword.

Rugs of smothering are excellent grapplers, but don't excel at much else.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Animated Objects are a really fun concept as a race. Much like animals, they're unintelligent and normally

incapable of human-like mental function. This document assumes that everything has at least human-like intelligence, so suddenly animated objects are intelligent creatures with thoughts, feelings, and free will! The three objects presented in the monster manual are unique, and have more differences than similarities. As such, I'll address each object type individually for the most part.

Animated Objects are constructs, which costs 1 BP.

From the three stat blocks, we can draw some shared traits which are necessary for animated objects to survive in the world. All three have natural armor of different values since they can't wear armor. They have blindsight out to 60 ft. for 9 BP (partially offset by being blind for -4 BP), Poison Immunity for 2 BP, and no ability to speak for -1 BP. I'll grant animated objects the ability to read and understand Common for 0 BP so that they can function in a party of creatures who speak.

Animated Objects have a long list of immunities beyond their poison immunity. Since they're no longer nearly-mindless under the rules presented in this document, we can do away with the immunity to charmed and frightened. We'll keep the immunities to deafened, exhaustion, paralyzed, and petrified for 2 BP.

Antimagic Susceptibility is a fun weakness. Dispel Magic generally isn't used to target players, but when used on animated objects it's a potent effect. Falling unconscious for a minute is about as powerful as the Sleep spell. Since most NPCs and Monsters don't have access to *dispel magic* or an antimagic field, we'll call this -0.5 BP.

False Appearance costs 0.5 BP.

That brings us to a total of 9 BP before we break off to examine individual object types.

### Animated Armor

Animated Armor is shaped much like a humanoid. It has prehensile hands and human-like anatomy. This makes it the simplest to design of the animated objects presented in the monster manual. The monster stat block seems to assume that the armor is a suit of full plate, so we'll make the same assumption.

Animated armor gets +8 natural armor for 4 BP, mostly offset by their inability to wear armor for -3 BP. We'll also disallow adding their Dexterity modifying for another -1 BP. They can still use shields, and I suspect that encounters with animated armor wielding swords and shields are very common. This is quite a bit of armor at first level, but remember that animated armor characters won't benefit from magic armor since

they can't wear separate armor. In games with magic items that's a serious handicap.

Animated armor has a walking speed of 25 ft. for -0.5 BP, and a slam which deals 1d6 damage for 1.5 BP.

At 9.75 BP, animated armor is within our target BP range of 8-10. While it has fantastic built-in defenses, it lacks an ability score increase which is an important part of building a character.

### Flying Sword

The flying sword presents some interesting challenges both to design and to play. It has no walking speed and must rely entirely on its flying speed, but without the ability to hover the flying sword will frequently need to land or fly around in circles. I find that extremely amusing, so I might just leave that in if we're short on BP.

The flying sword has a walking speed of 0 ft. for -3 BP, no hands for -2 BP, no arms for -2 BP, and can't wear armor or use shields for -4 BP. And just like that we've gone from a problematic 8.25 BP to an equally problematic -0.75 BP.

To match the monster entry for flying swords, we'll give the flying sword small size for -1 BP, a natural weapon dealing 1d8 damage for 2 BP, +7 natural armor for 3.5 BP, and a fly speed of 50 ft. for 6 BP. Unfortunately, that leaves us without room for an ability score increase.

At 10.5 BP, the flying sword slightly exceeds our target BP range of 8-10, but comes with a large set of complications. Lacking limbs, hands, and normal means of locomotion are a massive handicap in a world where opposable digits are the norm. Simple tasks like opening doors suddenly become massive challenges for creatures like this.

If you need to strengthen the flying sword, give it a +1 Dexterity increase, grant it the ability to hover, or allow it to use Dexterity for attacks (flying rapier?). If you need to weaken the flying sword, reduce its flying speed or reduce its natural armor.

### Rug of Smothering

The Rug of Smothering is an interesting creature. It's only offensive option is Smother, which is a fairly unique grapple mechanic when combined with Damage Transfer.

From the monster stat block, we get 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, no hands for -2 BP, no arms for -2 BP, unable to use armor or shields for -4 BP, and +2 natural armor for 1 BP. We'll drop the rug's size to medium to keep in line with other adapted races. That brings our total to -0.75 BP, presenting us with the same issue as

the flying sword, but with no easy pre-defined abilities to lean on.

Since the rug of smothering is dependent on grappling, we'll give the rug a +1 Strength increase for 1 BP and proficiency in Athletics for 0.5 BP. We'll scale smother's damage down to 1d8 (appropriate for the size change), and call it a natural weapon for 2 BP. That brings our total to 2.75 BP, leaving lots of room to handle Smother's grapple effect and Damage Transfer.

Allowing a player to automatically grapple on a hit is a bit unfair, so we'll take Tavern Brawler's grapple mechanic, and allow the rug to attempt a grapple as bonus action after hitting with an unarmed strike. We'll abandon the part of the ability which deals damage at the beginning of the target's turn. Instead, we'll just expect that the player will continue making unarmed strikes against the target. Since this duplicates a major part of a feat, we'll call it 2 BP.

Damage Transfer is bit harder to approximate. It's potentially a very powerful trait with a lot of abuse cases. The rug's allies could target the rug and take advantage of its low AC to get easy damage on the rug's grappled foes. Granted, that's a costly tactic since the rug still takes half of the damage. We can reasonably call this as much as 5 BP and still be within our target range, but I'll call it 4 BP and I think that will be sufficient.

With the remaining BP, I'll bump the rug's speed up to 20 ft. 10 ft. is fine for an ambush monster that sits around for years at a time waiting for foes, but for a player that's a death sentence. 20 is a bit more manageable, though it's still going to be a problem.

At 10.5 BP the rug of smothering slightly exceeds our target BP range of 8-10. The rug is a potent grappler, but can't accomplish much else effectively, including simple tasks like opening doors or having a conversation. If you need to strengthen the rug of smothering, improve its speed or natural armor. If you need to weaken the rug of smothering, reduce its unarmed strike damage, reduce its natural armor, or remove its Strength increase.

## Ankheg

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Ankhegs are giant, predatory, insect-like monstrosities with potent acidic saliva.

### Ankheg Traits

Ankhegs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity.

**Alignment.** Simple creatures with no specific motives, Ankhegs can be of any alignment but are frequently neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a burrow speed of 10 ft.

**Acid Spray.** As an action, you can spit acid in a line that is 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 acid damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Tremorsense.** You can detect and pinpoint the origin of vibrations within 30 ft., provided that you and the source of the vibrations are in contact with the same ground or substance. Tremorsense can't be used to detect flying or incorporeal creatures.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing an Ankheg

Ankhegs have a burrow speed and tremorsense which makes them uniquely skilled as infiltrators and scouts. As such, they make excellent rogues. However, the ability to move into close quarters unnoticed can also make them potent in any melee-based build.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Ankhegs are simple creatures with easily adapted abilities. Since they're large we'll adapt them to medium size and scale down some of their numbers where appropriate.

Ankhegs are Monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.



Ankhogs are physically strong, so a strength increase makes sense, but because the Ankhog has several expensive abilities we don't have room for an ability increase.

From the monster manual entry, we get Darkvision for 2 BP and a 10 ft. burrow speed for 2 BP. Because we're scaling the Ankhog down to medium size, we'll drop the 14 natural armor to 12 for 1 BP. We'll ignore the reduced armor while prone because it's annoying to track for a player and it matters so infrequently that it will likely be forgotten. We'll give the ankhog the ability to speak and understand Common for 0 BP.

We're at 5.5 BP and we need to tackle the ankhog's natural weapons, acid spray, and tremorsense.

We can approximate acid spray as a re-skinned breath weapon for 1 BP. If we drop the bite damage to 1d4 slashing and 1d4 acid damage, we can call that 2 BP (roughly equivalent to 1d8 damage). We'll drop Grab because we just don't have the BP to handle it. We can drop the ankhog's tremorsense to 30 ft. for 2 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the ankhog is slightly over the target BP range. However, its natural armor is poor, and its Darkvision will frequently be redundant with

tremorsense, so I think it's still reasonably playable without being overpowered. The lack of an ability score increase is a significant drawback for players since they depend on high ability scores to fuel their offensive options.

If you need to strengthen the Ankhog, give it a +1 Strength increase or increase its natural armor. If you need to weaken the Ankhog, change its bite damage to 1d6 slashing and remove the acid damage or reduce its natural armor.

## Azer

Natives of the Elemental Plane of Fire, Azers are humanoid-like elementals crafted from brass and imbued with living flame.

### Azer Traits

Azers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your

consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Masters of labor and industry, most Azers are lawful neutral.

**Born of Flame.** You have resistance against fire damage.

**Body of Brass.** You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage (explained in chapter 9 of the Player's Handbook).

**Heated Body.** When a creature makes a successful melee attack against you, you may retaliate with a burst of flame as a reaction. The creature must make a Dexterity saving throw. It takes 2d10 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.

**Heated Weapon.** Starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, as a bonus action, you may heat one metal melee weapon which you are currently holding. For one minute, melee weapon attacks with the weapon deal an additional 1d6 fire damage. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration or lose your grip on the weapon, it cools quickly, returning to a normal temperature.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Illumination.** You shed bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Ignan.

## Playing an Azer

Azer are great melee characters, excelling as Barbarians and Fighters. Their flame-themed abilities give them the ability to resist and deal fire damage.

Azers are native to the elemental planes, so it would be strange to find them on the material plane. If your Azer character has fallen in with more conventional races, consider reasons why your Azer may have been drawn away from the planar home of your people.

## Design Notes

Azers are an excellent example of converting a monster race into a playable race. They're nearly-humanoid in shape and behavior, but still have some crazy abilities

above and beyond what an elf or a human might have. Since Azers look and act similarly to Dwarves, they're a great comparison.

Azers are of the elemental creature type, costing 1 BP.

Based on the Azer's stat block, +2 Strength and +1 Constitution make sense for a totally of 3 BP. In terms of senses and speed, the Azer matches a normal medium humanoid. We'll grant them the ability to speak Common for ease of play.

The complexity comes from the Azer's special abilities, of which is has several. Azers have immunity to fire. I'm extremely hesitant to grant immunity to the most common energy type, so let's drop that to resistance for 2 BP. Azers also have immunity to poison and the poisoned condition, so we can drop that to resistance by giving the Poison Resilience (similar to a Dwarf) for another 1 BP.

We're already at 7 BP so we don't have a ton of wiggle room left, and we need to figure out what to do with Heated Body and Heated Weapons. They're both considerably too good for a player race, but they're important to the feel of the race, so we'll need to weaken them a bit.

Heated Body is a similar effect to the *hellish rebuke* spell, so let's just use that. We'll reskin it so that it's not an actual spell so that enemies can't counterspell your flaming hair, and we'll limit it to melee attacks, but otherwise we'll duplicate the original spell. On casting per long rest costs another 1 BP.

Heated Weapons has a similar effect to Elemental Weapon. As a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell, that's a very expensive BP cost, and delaying such an iconic part of the race to 7<sup>th</sup>-level isn't very fun. Instead, we can take some ideas from Hunter's Mark and Magic Weapon to come up with something unique to approximate Heated Weapons. We should require Concentration to maintain the ability, and it definitely needs to be limited use. We can go for a 1 hour duration and one use per long rest, but I think a 1 minute duration and once per short rest is comparable in utility but more fun to use. Let's call it 2 BP, since this will (hopefully) be roughly as effective as Magic Weapon. We should delay this trait to 3<sup>rd</sup> level since it's similar to a spell, and considerably too good to be fair at 1<sup>st</sup> level. Remember that this effect doesn't make the weapon magical, so it doesn't bypass damage resistance normally bypassed by magic weapons.

We'll grant Illumination for 0.25 BP. Light of this scale is easy to produce, and can be turned off. In some cases, Illumination is actually a handicap.



That leaves us at 10.25 BP, maxing out our target range. The Azer has some really cool abilities, but since its abilities only work in melee the Azer is also completely shoehorned into a handful of classes. Of course, classes like Barbarian and Fighter make a lot of sense for an Azer, so I think I'm okay with that.

If you need to weaken the Azer a bit, remove the +1 to Constitution. You might also consider flipping Heated Weapon's duration between the two options I discussed in the paragraph above. They should be roughly equivalent in power, but the extra utility of being able to activate the trait 3 times per day instead of once might be a significant advantage. You might also consider dropping Heated Weapon's damage from 1d6 to 1d4.

## Banshee

The undead spirits of female elves who used their beauty to manipulate others, banshees are famous for their horrifying appearance and their terrifying wail.

### Banshee Traits

Banshees share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Undead creatures cursed for their sins but still plagued by vanity and greed, most banshees are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Corrupting Touch.** As an action you may make a melee spell attack. This attack deals 1d8 necrotic damage. This damage increases to 2d8 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d8 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d8 at 17<sup>th</sup> level. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Deathly Resistance.** You have resistance to necrotic damage.

**Detect Life.** You can magically sense the presence of living creatures up to 5 miles away. You know the general direction they're in but not their exact locations.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet, and can hover. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Sorrow Bound.** You are forever bound to the place of your demise, and are unable to venture more than five miles from that location.

**Wail.** You can cast the *Dissonant Whispers* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Elvish.

### Variant Banshee Traits

Banshees are potent flying creatures, but their traits are tied to one specific interpretation of banshees. For a slightly different take, consider these variant traits. These traits replace the banshee's speed, deathly resistance, flight, and languages.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Corpse Body.** You have resistance to cold, necrotic, and poison damage, and you have advantage on saving throws against poison.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and the racial language of the race you were as a mortal (if different than Common).

### Playing a Banshee

Banshee are angry, evil, undead spirits. They covet beautiful objects commonly found while adventuring, which may be motivation enough to join a party of like-minded characters.

When creating your character, consider what they did in their lifetime to inflict them with the banshee's curse. A few details from the character's life can go a long way.

Sorrow Bound presents a particularly unique challenge for players. Discuss its effects with your DM before deciding to play a banshee. You might consider allowing the banshee to remain within 5 miles of any place where the banshee went in life. Leaving the character's life vaguely defined opens up some interesting story-telling opportunities. Instead, you might completely negate the effects to ease play.

### Design Notes

Banshees are a classic undead creature. It's a bit odd that banshees can only come from female elves, but that's something that you can change in your games if you don't like it. The banshee has several interesting abilities, some of which are shared by other incorporeal undead, but many of which are unique to the banshee. Like any flying, incorporeal creature they

present significant design challenges to balance them for player use. Their mountain of resistances and immunities indicate that they are clearly meant to be a stand-alone boss monster, so we will need to make major cuts to make them playable.

Banshees are undead, which costs 1 BP.

The Banshee's highest ability score is Charisma, and it sets the DC for Wail, so we'll give the Banshee a +1 to Charisma for 1 BP.

We'll need to re-examine most of the banshee stat block, but we can keep 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP (reduced from 40 ft. to save BP) with hover for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP.

At a total of 7 BP already, we have very little room to tackle the banshee's remaining resistances, traits, and abilities. We'll tackle the banshee's other traits first, then return to resistances.

Sorrow Bound presents a particularly unique challenge. How do we approximate the value of such an ability with no knowledge of the campaign? In a campaign centered on one city, a 5-mile radius is fine. In a campaign featuring any sort of travel, that invalidates the character. I'll include it as part of the banshee traits, but we'll call it 0 BP and expect that it will probably be ignored, house-ruled, or irrelevant in most campaigns.

Detect Life is powerful, but also very imprecise. It's great for undead trying to murder every living thing in range, but beyond that it's mostly useless. We might be able to approximate it by looking at some spells, but it's like a bad Detect X effect with the scale of *Commune with Nature*. This isn't something that you can use to determine information which wouldn't be easily achievable by other means, so we'll call it 0.5 BP.

Incorporeal Movement is out. Etherealness is the closest player option, and it's an extremely high-level spell for a very good reason. The ability to pass through barriers is simply too good to leave to players without extremely powerful magic.

Corrupting Touch is very similar to the *chill touch* cantrip, but works in melee. We'll modify *chill touch* and call it 0.25 BP.

Horrifying Visage can best be compared to the *fear* spell. Already a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell, horrifying visage is constant and omnidirectional, making it far outside the reach of a playable race. Our best bet is to look at low-level enchantment/illusion spells that might have a similar effect. The *dissonant whispers* spell immediately drew my attention, especially since its

damage matches the damage dealt when creatures succeed on their saving throw against Wail.

Wail is an AOE death effect. Spells with similar effects are extremely high level, so it's clearly too good for a player race. We can use the *dissonant whispers* spell to combine the effects of Horrifying Visage and Wail. A 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell once per day for 1 BP is fine, but we lose the ability to affect multiple targets. We'll allow the Banshee to cast this at 1<sup>st</sup> level (two levels earlier than normal) for 0.25 BP.

At 8 BP, we still need to tackle the banshee's other resistances and immunities. The Monster Manual banshee is resistant to three major energy types and nonmagical weapon damage. That's too good, so we'll dump it all. They're also immune to cold and necrotic damage, to poison, and to a handful of conditions, some of which come from being incorporeal. Since we dropped incorporeal form, many of those immunities go away. We don't have much BP left, so we'll take resistance to necrotic damage for 2 BP.

At 10 BP, the banshee tops out our target BP range of 8-10 BP. With a charisma bonus, flight, and some innate spellcasting the banshee will make a fantastic sorcerer or warlock but not much else. If you need to strengthen the banshee, give it poison resilience. If you need to weaken the banshee, remove Corrupting Touch.

If you want to significantly alter the banshee, remove the association with female elves, and replace elven with one other language spoken by a player race. You can also replace flight with a 30 ft. walking speed, opening up 3 BP which you can spend on resistance to cold damage and poison resilience, making the banshee more durable but less mobile. In fact, I like that suggestion so much that I'll present it as a variant!

## Basilisks

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Multi-legged reptilian creatures with a paralyzing gaze.

### Basilisk Traits

Basilisks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Simple beasts, basilisks can be of any alignment but are typically neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it

were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 15 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Petrifying Gaze.** As an action, you can attempt to petrify a creature with your gaze. The target must be within 30 ft. and you must be able to see each other. Creatures whose bodies are not made of flesh, such as constructs, are immune to this effect, as are creatures immune to paralysis. The target creature must make a Constitution saving throw. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus.

On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone. They are treated as having 1 level of fatigue. The creature must repeat this saving throw at the end of each of its turns. On a failed saving throw, the creature is treated as gaining an additional level of fatigue. If the creature fails 6 saving throws, it is petrified until freed by *greater restoration* or similar magic. On a successful saving throw, the creature resists the effect, and is treated as having one less level of fatigue. The creature is treated as having one less level of fatigue each round until they are treated as having 0 levels of fatigue. Creatures immune to fatigue are not immune to this effect, and any actual levels of fatigue do not stack with this effect.

This effect lasts up to one minute. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, the creature is treated as having no levels of fatigue from this effect and immediately returns to normal. If the creature becomes petrified by this effect, the effects are permanent and you no longer need to concentrate.

A creature may avert its eyes from you, which makes it immune to this ability. If it does so, it cannot see you until the beginning of its next turn, at which point it may choose to avert its eyes again.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

## Playing a Basilisk

Basilisks are durable, and have great built-in armor. They can still wear armor, so consider buying some if your AC is poor. You can't use shields or weapons, but

your bite is as strong as a longsword. The basilisk's biggest draw is its petrifying gaze. While extremely potent, it can also be troublesome to track. Be sure to help your DM keep track of the effects.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Basilisks' biggest ability is their petrifying gaze. When players face a basilisk, this is an amusing mechanic which the party must adequately prepare themselves to counter or risk petrification. Bringing this into a party is massively unfair, so we'll need to adjust the basilisk to fit into a party of players.

Basilisks are Monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The Monster Manual entry lists high Strength and Constitution, so we'll give the basilisk +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the basilisk's stat block, we get 25 ft. walking speed for -0.5 BP (increased from 20 ft.) and Darkvision for 2 BP. Basilisks have no hands for -2 BP. +5 natural armor is a lot, but since they can't use shields or weapons it's essentially light armor, so we'll grant it for 2.5 BP. We'll grant the basilisk the ability to speak Common for 0 BP so that they can easily fit into a party.

The basilisk's bite deals an absurd amount of damage, especially for a small creature, so we'll change it to deal 1d8 damage for 2 BP.

Petrifying Gaze requires a delicate touch. Since the basilisk doesn't have a ton of exciting abilities yet, I want this to be an ability that they can use frequently without breaking the game. The spell equivalent is the *flesh to stone* spell, but as a 6<sup>th</sup>-level spell it's far too powerful without some considerably modifications. I also don't want to grant an effect at 1<sup>st</sup> level which can end a fight in a single roll.

A sort of "death spiral" effect seems appropriate. The original ability and the *flesh to stone* spell both start the target at restrained, then move to petrified after a few bad saves. This is fine for a high-level spell or for an ability used by a slow-moving melee monster, but in a party which might have one or more ranged attackers the ability to restrain foes can instantly win a fight. We'll need a similar, but less powerful effect.

While paging around and examining conditions and spell effects, I stumbled past the Exhaustion sidebar.

Exhaustion represents the creature becoming gradually more exhausted, and their movements slowing and eventually stopping. This is exactly the sort of effect I'm looking for, so I'll outright steal most of it. Walking out of range doesn't seem to affect the ongoing effects of the original ability, so we don't have to change anything to maintain the effect on enemies attempting to flee. Death at stage 6 will be replaced with petrification.

I'll allow petrifying gaze to recharge on a short rest, and move the target along the fatigue track one step per failed save. To balance the usage frequency, I'll make it a single-target effect with a 30 ft. range and it will require Concentration. We'll call this 4 BP.

I realize that this effect is very complicated. Hopefully it's not too much of a nightmare at the table, but I can think of plenty of spells which are just as problematic.

At 10.5 BP, the Basilisk tops out our target BP range of 8-10. With built-in armor and a good natural weapon, the basilisk resembles a fighter wielding a longsword and a shield, and wearing light armor. To strengthen the basilisk, increase its natural armor. To weaken the basilisk, reduce its natural armor, reduce its bite damage, or limit paralyzing gaze to once per day.

## Behirs

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Behirs are serpentine creatures originally created by giants to battle dragons.

### Behir Traits

Behirs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Alignment.** Descended from the creations of evil giants, most Behirs are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Constrict.** When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**Lightning Breath.** As an action, you can breathe lightning in a line that is 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 lightning damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Draconic.

### Playing a Behir

Behirs are grapple monsters with a climb speed, which allows them to easily get into melee range in many environments, including caves and dungeons. They lack an ability score increase, which can make them difficult to play.

### Design Notes

Behirs are high-CR monsters with several very potent abilities. Their traits will need to be scaled down to account for dropping their huge size to medium. We'll keep the big pieces, but the numbers will be mostly inspiration.

Behirs are Monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Behirs are snake-like in shape and immensely strong, but much of that strength comes from their immense size. A Strength increase would still make sense, but with all of the behir's other abilities we don't have room for one.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from huge), 30 ft. speed (down from 50 ft.), a climb speed of 30 ft. for 2 BP (down from 40 ft.), Darkvision for 2 BP, +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP (down from +7), and only racial languages for -1 BP. Behirs have limbs, but have no hands for -2 BP.

We can give the behir a breath weapon for 1 BP, Grab for 2 BP, and a 1d8 bite for 2 BP. That leaves us just enough room for lightning resistance.

At 10 BP, the behir tops out our target BP range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the behir, grant it a +1

Strength increase. If you want to weaken the behir, reduce its climb speed or natural armor.

## Beholders

Floating balls of magical eyeball terror, beholders are among the most iconic monsters in Dungeons and Dragons.

### Beholder Traits

Beholders share the following racial traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Deep Speech and Undercommon

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Eye Tyrant

**Creature Type.** Aberration.

**Alignment.** Tyrannical, insane, and absolutely evil, most eye tyrants are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Antimagic Cone.** Once per day when a creature that you can see within 60 ft. attempts to cast a spell, you may use your reaction to attempt to negate the spell. Make an Intelligence check. The DC equals 10 + the spell's level. On a success, the creature's spell fails and has no effect.

**Eye Rays.** You know the *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*, *friends*, and *mage hand* cantrips. You may cast spells as though you were using a magic focus, even if you are not doing so.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 20 feet, and can hover. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor. You are immune to the prone condition.

### Death Tyrant

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** No better in death than they were in life, most death tyrants are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Eye Rays.** You know the *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*, *friends*, and *mage hand* cantrips. You may cast spells as though you were using a magic focus, even if you are not doing so.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 20 feet, and can hover. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor. You are immune to the prone condition.

**Negative Energy Cone.** Your central eye emits an invisible, magic 60-foot cone of negative energy. At the start of each of your turns, you decide which way the cone faces and whether the cone is active.

Any creature in that area can't regain hit points without first passing a Constitution saving throw. The DC equals 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

### Spectator

**Creature Type.** Aberration.

**Alignment.** Not as evil as their larger cousins, and more prone to obedience to their summoner, most observers are lawful neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Eye Rays.** You know the *chill touch* and *mage hand* cantrips. You may cast spells as though you were using a magic focus, even if you are not doing so.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet, and can hover. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor. You are immune to the prone condition.

**Spell Reflection.** If you have advantage on a saving throw against a spell, or if the spellcaster has disadvantage on a spell attack roll to hit you with the spell, you may disregard that effect to attempt to reflect the spell. If you succeed on the saving throw to resist the spell, or if the spell attack roll misses you, you can choose another creature (including the spellcaster) which you can see within 30 feet of you. The spell targets the chosen creature instead of you. If

the spell forced a saving throw, the chosen creature makes its own save. If the spell was an attack, the attack roll is rerolled against the chosen creature.

### Playing a Beholder

All three beholders make fantastic wizards. Their Intelligence increases and flight are ideal, and their bonus cantrips open up other options for you to choose from.

All three beholders are slightly different. Eye tyrants are good all-around option. They're not very fast, but they have a good range of innate spells, and Antimagic Cone is a great utility option. Death tyrants are more durable than eye tyrants, but their negative energy cone is less impactful than Antimagic Cone. The Observer is faster than both, and has fewer eye ray cantrips, but Spell Reflection is a powerful (if risky) option when facing enemy spellcasters.

### Design Notes

Beholders are of my favorite monsters, and I'm very excited to tackle designing them as a playable race. They have a mountain of abilities, most of which we will need to weaken or ignore. The three different types of beholders also present some interesting variations which I really want to emphasize.

The three types of beholders share some common traits that we can retain. We'll weaken several of them to conserve BP.

Beholders are extremely intelligent and devious, so we'll give them all a +1 Intelligence increase for 1 BP.

We'll give all three medium size, Darkvision for 2 BP, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, racial languages plus Common (Undercommon in this case) for 0 BP, no hands for -2 BP, and a 1d6 bite for 1.5 BP. None of them have a walking speed (-3 BP), but they can all fly (at varying speeds), and can hover for 2 BP. They are all immune to the prone condition for 0.5 BP.

Since beholders don't have hands but are basically tailor-made to be wizards, we'll allow them to cast spells as though they were using a focus for 0.25 BP.

That starts each subrace at 3.25 BP before we break off to examine each of them individually.

### Eye Tyrant

The most iconic and well-known type of beholder, the eye tyrant is famous for its ant-magic central eye and its array of magical eye rays.

Eye tyrants are Aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The eye tyrant is slow for a flyer, with a flight speed of just 20 ft. for 3 BP, bringing our running total to 6.5 BP.

The eye tyrant's eye ray is obviously too good to grant unmodified, but the theme is too important to ignore. It should do something to hamper spellcasting in a cone in front of the eye tyrant, but it shouldn't outright negate it. We could do something similar to Magic Resistance and provide advantage to resist spells, but I don't think that's quite what we want. Counterspell is closer, but it's a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell, so we'll need to weaken it.

If we drop the auto-success against 1<sup>st</sup>-level through 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spells, I think that makes it reasonable to call 2 BP if we allow it once per day.

With the central eye tackled, we need to do something about the eye tyrant's eye stalks. We're already at 8.75 BP, so cantrips are really the only things that we can still afford. Eye tyrants get 10 rays, but we can't come close to approximating all of them, so we'll just pick 4 cantrips to cover the major use cases.

*Friends* will approximate the charm ray. *Mage hand* will approximate the telekinetic ray. *Chill touch* will approximate the enervation ray and the death ray. *Eldritch Blast* will approximate the disintegration ray. At 1 BP, that's a pile of great options that any spellcaster can enjoy.

At 9.75 BP, the eye tyrant is within our target BP range of 8-10. If you want to strengthen the beholder, add additional cantrips, or proficiency in Perception. If you want to weaken the eye tyrant, remove its natural armor.

### Death Tyrant

Death tyrants are undead eye tyrants, and are similar in many ways. The biggest changes are their undead traits and the change to the effect of their central eye.

Death tyrants are Undead, costing 1 BP.

The eye tyrant is slow for a flyer, with a flight speed of just 20 ft. for 3 BP. We'll add poison immunity for 2 BP, but we'll drop the death tyrant's other immunities to conserve BP.

That brings us up to 9.25 BP, and we haven't tackled the negative energy cone of the death tyrant's eye rays.

With so little BP left to spend, negative energy cone needs to be a really weak effect. Automatically raising zombies is a nightmare for a DM, so we'll drop that. The healing prevention is pointless almost everything in the monster manual, so we'll keep that bit. *Chill touch* applies a similar effect anyway, and if a cantrip can do it than it's clearly not a huge problem. Granted,

*chill touch* allows a saving throw, so we'll allow creatures to make a saving throw each time they attempt to heal. We'll call that 0.5 BP, but honestly that might be too high for such a situational ability.

We'll duplicate the eye tyrant's cantrips to keep the theming consistent.

At 10.75 BP, the death tyrant is just over our target BP range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the death tyrant, add additional cantrips, or proficiency in Perception. If you want to weaken the death tyrant, remove its natural armor, reduce its poison immunity to poison resilience, or remove the negative energy cone ability.

### Observer

A weird miniature version of eye tyrants, observers are marginally less evil and crazy, and have weaker magic, but are faster and more self-sufficient.

Observers are Aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The observer is the fastest of the beholders, with a fly speed of 30 ft. for 4 BP. That leaves us at 7.5 BP before we tackle the observer's eye rays and Spell Reflection.

Spell Reflection is extremely powerful. The ability to redirect spells is something that looks good on a solo monster, but on a player is a huge problem. In 3.5 the *spell turning* spell was very high level for exactly this reason. We'll need to do something clever.

I want spell reflection to be a big deal when it comes into play, but I also want to cost something. So I'll allow the observer to sacrifice advantage on a saving throw vs. a spell to trigger it. Then, if they succeed, they can redirect the spell as described in the ability's original description. We'll call that 2 BP, but it's hard to evaluate something so unique.

Observers have fewer eye stalks (and fewer rays) than true beholders. It's hard to approximate anything but the wounding ray as a cantrip, so we'll grant *chill touch* and *mage hand* to give the observer an offensive option and a utility option for 0.5 BP.

At 10.25 BP, the observer has less magical options than the eye tyrant, but it's faster and has a potent (if risky) ability in Spell Reflection. If you want to strengthen the observer, add additional cantrips or proficiency in Perception. If you want to weaken the observer, remove its natural armor.

## Blight

Blight are sentient, bloodthirsty plants, spawned from evil trees carrying the curse of an ancient vampire.

## Blight Traits

Blights share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Plant.

**Alignment.** Evil plants with a taste for blood, most blights are neutral evil.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 60 ft.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Needle Blight

**Ability Score Increase.** One ability score of your choice increases by 1.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Needles.** You may fire stiff, coniferous needles from your body as a ranged weapon attack. This attack has 30/60 range, and deals 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.

### Twig Blight

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Dry Body.** You are vulnerable to fire damage.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a dead shrub. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Stealthy.** You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.

## Vine Blight

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Constrict.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 bludgeoning damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike.

**Entangling Plants.** As an action, you can cause grasping roots and vines to sprout in a 15-foot radius center on you. For the duration, that area is difficult terrain for non-plant creatures. In addition, each creature in that area when the plants appear must succeed on a Strength saving throw or become restrained. A creature can use its action to make a Strength check, freeing itself or another entangled creature within reach on a success. The DC for the save and for the check is 8 + your Constitution bonus + your proficiency bonus.

This effect lasts up to one minute. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, the effect ends immediately, and the plants wither away to nothing.

After you use entangling plants, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a cluster of vines. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

## Playing a Blight

Blight is a diverse bunch of plant creatures, each with unique abilities.

Needle blights is a great all-around character with a flexible ability increase, great natural weapons that work in melee and at range. They work well for many classes.

Twig blights are sneaky and have good natural armor, and their blindsight makes them very effective in darkness or in other vision-obscuring conditions. They make especially good rogues.

Vine blights are melee monsters with two effects which make it difficult for enemies to escape. As such,

they do well as any class which fights in melee. They are also the only blight capable of speech.

## Design Notes

Blight is a trio of interest, unique plant creatures. They resemble humanoids in shape, and are similar enough that they can be easily interpreted as a playable race.

Blight is plants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The three subraces of blights have only a few specific abilities in common, but what they do share is important. All three are blind for -4 BP, but have 60 ft. blindsight for 9 BP. They are also immune to deafened for 0.5 BP. That places our total BP at 6 before we examine individual subraces.

The rest of each blight subrace's traits are unique enough that we will need to consider each subrace individually.

### Needle Blight

Needle blights are the humans of blights. They have no especially good abilities. They're just sort of... generic.

With no particularly high abilities, it's hard to say what to give the needle blight for an ability increase, so I'll give them a flexible +1 for 1.5 BP.

From their stat block, we get +2 natural armor for 1 BP and a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP, and no ability to speak for -1 BP.

The needle blight's Needles ability does more damage than its claws, and can be used at range. I'm extremely hesitant to provide a 1d10 ranged weapon with no draw backs, so we'll drop it to 1d8 damage. We're already paying 2 BP for a 1d8 natural weapon, so I'll allow Needles to be used at range for an additional 0.5 BP.

At exactly 10 BP, the Needle Blight tops out our target BP range of 8-10. Even then, it's not as powerful as other races with 10 BP. Its natural armor is poor, and will likely be overridden by actual armor. Its natural weapons are on par with a longsword, which is nice but not particularly important since blights can use weapons. The needle blight's biggest draw is its Needles ability and its flexible ability increase.

If you want to strengthen the needle blight, improve its natural armor. If you want to weaken the needle blight, reduce its Claws and/or Needles damage.

### Twig Blight

Twig blights are the halflings of blights. They are small, and they are more nimble and stealthy than other



blights. They have better natural armor, but they're also vulnerable to fire.

Twig Blight's only passable ability scores are Dexterity and Constitution, so we'll give them a +1 to each for 2 BP.

From their stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (increased from 20), fire vulnerability for -1 BP, inability to speak for -1 BP, claws that deal 1d4 damage for 1 BP, and false appearance for 0.5 BP.

Since it doesn't have much going for it, we'll throw in Stealth proficiency for 0.5 BP.

At 7.5 BP, the twig blight is slightly below our target BP range of 8-10. However, blindsight offers an especially potent option for stealthy characters, and coupled with its ability increases I think that the twig blight is plenty playable. If you want to strengthen the twig blight, increase its Dexterity increase to +2. If you want to weaken the twig blight, reduce its natural armor.

### Vine Blight

Vine blights are the most challenging blights to design. The monster entry makes them slow-moving ambush predators, which really doesn't work for a player race. We'll need to make some adjustments.

Vine Blights are slow-moving brutes, so we'll give them a +1 to Strength for 1 BP. A Constitution increase would also make sense too, but we need to conserve BP for other traits.

From their stat block, we get +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP (increased from 10 ft.), the ability to speak Common for 0 BP, and false appearance for 0.5 BP.

We're at 7.5 BP and still need to tackle Constrict and Entangling Plants. A 1d8 natural weapon with Grab would work for Constrict, but would also consume a lot of our remaining BP, and I really want to do something cool with Entangling Plants because it's such a fun ability. We'll drop Constrict to 1d6 damage for 1.5 BP, and add Grab for an extra 0.5 BP. This will mean that many players will rely primarily on a weapon, but might keep an open hand for when they want to grapple.

Entangling plants should be a major part of the Vine Blight's tactics, so I want it to be a short rest recharge. The spell *entangle* is the closest spell effect, and a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell is only 1 BP. A short rest recharge for a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell is 2.5 BP total, but *entangle* has some advantages over Entangling Plants. *Entangle* has better range and a bigger AOE, both of which are considerable improvements.

I think that sticking to Entangling Plant's 15-foot radius, and centering it on the user is enough to drop the BP cost a bit. If we add a Concentration requirement, I think it's even fair to allow plant creatures to ignore the effect. We'll drop the ability to select creatures to omit from the effect, as that would make it too easy for players to abuse. We'll call this 2 BP, but 1.5 BP might be more accurate.

At 11.5 BP, the vine blight exceeds our target BP range. Their abilities are a bit crazy, but they're great at holding foes in place. If you want to strengthen the vine blight, add a +1 Constitution, increase the constrict damage to 1d8, or improve the vine blight's natural armor. If you want to weaken the vine blight, remove the natural armor, or reduce the constrict damage.

## Bugbears

A race of violent, uncivilized humanoids, Bugbears are the largest of the goblinoid races. Even more than their cousins, Bugbears crave violence and mayhem.



### Bugbear Traits

Bugbears share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (goblinoid)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Drawn to violence and reluctant to follow orders, Bugbears are nearly always Chaotic Evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it

were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Stealthy.** You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

**Savage Attacks.** When you score a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, you can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

**Surprise Attack.** If you surprise a creature and hit it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. You can use this trait only once per combat.

This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Goblin.

### Playing a Bugbear

Bugbears are mechanically very similar to Half-orcs: they have the same ability score increases, both have Darkvision, and both have Savage Attacks. However, the two race's racial skills and the difference between Surprise Attack and Relentless Endurance set the two apart. Where the Half-Orc is an intimidating brute, the Bugbear is a muscular ambush predator.

Like many uncivilized humanoid races, Bugbears are chaotic and violent, rarely submitting to authority unless doing so allows them greater opportunity for violence. As such, you may have trouble fitting into non-evil parties.

### Design Notes

Bugbears are the big brutes of the goblinoid races. Their monster stat blocks emphasize their physical ability scores almost exclusively. A +2 bonus to Strength is a given, and a +1 to Constitution seems likely too. That costs 3 BP total.

Comparing the three types of Goblinoids, we can see that they all have proficiency in Stealth, which seems like a nice component to share between the three races' traits. 0.5 BP for a fixed skill proficiency.

Bugbears have two iconic abilities: Brute, and Surprise Attack. Both are considerably too powerful for player characters, especially at low levels, so we'll need to adjust them a bit.

Brute is the reason that the beginner box uses a Bugbear as a low-level boss. It's too powerful for a player at any level (imagine a high-level fighter with a greataxe), so we need something less insane. The theme of adding additional weapon damage dice is cool, and fortunately Half-Orcs introduce the Savage Attacks ability, which has a similar feel but only applies

to critical hits. That costs 0.5 BP, leaving us plenty to play with.

Surprise Attack presents a similar problem to the goblin's Nimble Escape ability, in that it steals part of a Rogue's ability set. Even if it only applies during the first round of combat, Surprise Attack is simply too powerful to grant to a low-level character. Imagine a bugbear rogue (or any bugbear with a greatsword) dealing 4d6 damage in the first round of every combat!

If we drop the damage to 1d6, and scale it by +1d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 17<sup>th</sup> level (the same level that cantrips scale) it will continue to be a useful tactical option without being terribly overpowered. We'll also limit the usage to once per combat to prevent things like Extra Attack from making it too powerful. Let's call it 1 BP. The total damage output may be similar to the Dragonborn's breath weapon, which also costs 1 BP.

Looking at the Bugbear stat block we have standard 30 foot speed, medium size, Darkvision for another 2 BP, and standard racial language plus Common. That leaves us at 8 BP; slightly lower than our target range, but still reasonably playable.

### Bulettes

Vicious predators often called "land sharks", bulettes are ambush predators capable of burrowing at incredible speed and leaping incredible distances.

### Bulette Traits

Bulettes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity.

**Alignment.** Motivated by little more than hunger, bulettes are usually neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft., and you have a burrow speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Deadly Leap.** If you jump at least 15 feet as part of your movement, as an action you can then choose to land on your feet in a space that contains another creature of your size or smaller. As part of this action, make a single unarmed strike against that target. If you miss, you end your movement in an unoccupied space of your choice adjacent to the target creature. If your attack hits, the creature must make a Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice) or take damage

equal to your unarmed strike damage and be knocked prone. On a successful save, the creature takes only half damage, isn't knocked prone, and is pushed 5 feet out of your space into an unoccupied space of the creature's choice. If no unoccupied space is within range, the creature instead falls prone in your space. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength modifier.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Tremorsense.** You can detect and pinpoint the origin of vibrations within 30 ft., provided that you and the source of the vibrations are in contact with the same ground or substance. Tremorsense can't be used to detect flying or incorporeal creatures.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Bulette

Bulettes are chargers. Their Deadly Leap ability coupled with Standing Leap allows them to quickly move into melee range, even if the target is behind obstacles. Use deadly leap to knock foes prone before tearing into them with your bite attack. Your burrow speed and tremorsense allow you to scout many places unseen, and make you adept at surprising foes. Bulettes don't have hands so they have trouble playing spellcasters, but they work great as Barbarians, Fighters, and Monks.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Bulettes are fun creatures. Their Deadly Leap ability is a great way for bulettes to jump into the middle of a party and mix things up. In previous editions the bulette was famous for disrupting parties which were normally accustomed to fighting in strict formation. Mechanically, the bulette is mostly straightforward. We'll need to adjust its size down to medium, and Deadly Leap is an interesting challenge.

Bulettes are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

After adjusting their abilities to account for size, Strength and Constitution are still the bulette's highest ability scores. Increases to both would make sense, but the bulette has too many abilities to spend BP on ability score increases.

From the monster entry, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +7) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40), 20 ft. burrow speed (down from 40) for 3 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and tremorsense 30 ft. (down from 60 ft.) for 2 BP. Bulettes have no hands for -2 BP, and Standing Leap for 0.5 BP. We'll grant bulettes the ability to speak Common for 0 BP.

Adjusting their bite down to a fair range, a 1d8 natural weapon costs 2 BP.

That brings us to 9.5 BP. I've already made major cuts to the Bulette. Their natural armor is very thin, their burrow speed is slow, and their tremorsense range is small. We still need to tackle Deadly Leap and we're already very short on BP. We'll need to make the ability really weak to justify adding anything else.

To limit the effects of Deadly Leap, we'll make some adjustments to the ability as written. It will only affect creatures on the bulette's size or smaller. We'll keep it as an action, and allow the bulette to make a single unarmed strike as part of the action. On a hit, we'll then allow the target to make a saving throw to resist being knocked prone. This is still potentially a very strong ability, but since it requires movement which might not always be a safe option, it's not much better than using Shove to knock a creature prone. I would call it somewhere in the range of 1 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the bulette slightly exceeds our target BP range of 8-10 BP. Its natural armor and bite place it on par with a character in light armor with a longsword, so I don't anticipate any significant balance issues. If you want to strengthen the bulette, increase its speed or grant it a +1 ability increase to Strength or Constitution. If you want to weaken the bulette, reduce its natural armor, bite damage, or tremorsense range, or remove its ability to speak.

## Bullywug

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Bullywugs are evil swamp-dwelling frog people who attack travelers seeking treasures to improve their social standing among other Bullywugs. Burdened with a racial inferiority complex, Bullywugs are desperate for the acknowledgement and respect of others.

### Bullywug Traits

Bullywugs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (bullywug)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution, +1 Strength or Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Bullywugs have a moderately civilized aristocratic society with some social strictures, but still tend toward lawlessness, murder, and preying upon the weak and unfortunate. Bullywugs tend to be Neutral Evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Speak with Frogs and Toads.** You can communicate simple concepts to frogs and toads when you speak in Bullywug.

**Standing Leap.** Your long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

**Swamp Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity checks to hide in swampy terrain.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Bullywug.

### Playing a Bullywug

Bullywugs are durable ambush predators. They have good Constitution like a Dwarf, and their semi-flexible ability score increase allows them to use a variety of weapons. Bullywugs are at home in and around water, but their slow walking speed can be a big problem in most games.

Bullywugs have a weird social culture, which can be interesting to bring into a party of other races. Consider how and why your Bullywug might have attached himself to the party.

### Design Notes

Bullywugs are frog people who live in swamps, and that informs many of their stats. Their stat block includes a lot of abilities present in other creatures, too, which makes them very easy to define.

The Bullywug's ability score increase is actually difficult to decide, primarily because their monster stat block has such terribly abilities. Their physical abilities are roughly even, but their mental abilities are outright terrible. Even the DMG's NPC Features table presents them only with ability score penalties. +2 Constitution seems like a decent choice since that's their highest ability score, and they live in a hostile environment. A semi-flexible +1 to Strength or Dexterity will open up some build options. Let's call that 3.25 BP.

Humanoid creature type is a given, and Bullywugs have no special senses. Their walking speed is only 20 feet (10 below standard for a medium creature), which gives us 1 extra BP. Their 40 ft. swim speed costs 2. They have a listed Stealth bonus and Camouflage, so Stealth proficiency for 0.5 BP seems reasonable.

Amphibious costs 0.5 BP, and Camouflage costs another 0.5. Speak with Toads is similar to the Forest Gnome's Speak With Small Beasts, so we'll call that another 0.5 BP. Standing leap is cool but will rarely matter, so we'll call that 0.5 BP too. Bullywugs have a dangerous bite, so we'll give them Natural Weapons for 1 BP.

With all of that, we're still only looking at 7.75 BP. Bullywugs have a bunch of options, but none of them are especially powerful. 7.75 is below our target range, but that's really all that we can draw from the race's stat block.

If you want to give Bullywugs a boost, consider letting them use their bite attack as a Bonus Action after they make an Attack action. Much like two-weapon fighting, don't apply their ability score bonus to this damage. I considered adding this ability for 2 BP, but I'm concerned that it would be too powerful at low levels when a character could wield a big two-handed weapon and have the same action economy as a two-weapon fighting build with better damage output of a two-handed weapon build.

## Cambion

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The offspring of fiends and mortal humanoids, cambions are evil by nature.

### Cambion Traits

Cambions share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fiend.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Children of a variety of fiends, Cambions are typically evil and often match the alignment of their fiendish parent.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Fiend Magic.** You know the *fire bolt* cantrip. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *charm person* spell

once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common, Abyssal, and Infernal.



### Playing a Cambion

Cambions make excellent fighters, paladins, and sorcerers due to their ability scores. Their ability to fly makes them very mobile, and very good at moving toward or away from enemies as needed. Their innate spellcasting gives the cambion some limited magical options.

Because cambions are charismatic, they can make a great party leader, especially in an evil party.

### Design Notes

Cambions are a bit problematic to design because of Tieflings. The two fill essentially the same design concept, but we need to differentiate the two. The *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide* presents tiefling variants which further compound this issue by adding the possibility of wings.

Cambions are fiends, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

All of the Cambions ability scores are at least above average, making it difficult to decide on an ability increase. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma, so we'll start with a +1 to Charisma. A +1 to Strength will make the race equally viable as a martial character and as a sorcerer or warlock. Both increases total 2 BP.

From their stat block, we get 30 ft. fly speed (reduced from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, racial languages plus Common and an additional fixed for 0.25 BP. Cambions have too many resistances to account for them, so we'll just dump them all. Despite the expensive fly speed, that leaves us some room for the Cambion's remaining abilities.

We're going to dump *Fiendish Blessing*. It's just too good and too abusable to allow players to use it. The Cambion's innate spellcasting is too broad to decide which spells to focus on. Instead, we'll just expect that if players want to pursue that focus they'll take an appropriate class.

*Fire Ray* can be easily replaced with the *fire bolt* cantrip for 0.5 BP. *Fiendish Charm* can be replaced with the *charm person* spell for 1 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the Cambion is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It has quite a bit in common with the Tiefling, but enough of a difference that I think I'm happy. If you want to strengthen the Cambion, increase the Strength increase to 2. If you want to weaken the Cambion, remove the Charisma bonus or *fire bolt*.

### Carrion Crawler

Disgusting insectoid creatures, carrion crawler creep across walls and ceilings to avoid competitors and predators, and feed on dead bodies or anything weak enough that the carrion crawler can easily subdue it.

#### Carrion Crawler Traits

Carrion crawlers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity.

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent scavengers, most carrion crawlers are neutral, but may be of any alignment.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Tentacles.** As an action, make a single unarmed strike against an adjacent creature. On a hit, you deal poison damage equal to your unarmed strike damage. In addition, the creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned this way, the target is restrained. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poison on itself on a success. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

## Playing a Carrion Crawler

Carrion crawlers are excellent climbers, and can move along walls and ceilings with ease to reach otherwise difficult locations. Combined with their excellent Constitution, they make good martial characters or rogues.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Carrion Crawlers are giant bugs which survive primarily by eating dead bodies. For reasons I could never determine, they have the ability to paralyze foes with their tentacles.

Carrion crawlers are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Carrion crawlers have excellent constitution, and since their diet consists primarily of rotting bodies, it makes sense. Adjusting for size, their other abilities are unremarkable. We'll give them a +2 increase to constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP (down from +3), 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, Spider Climb for 1 BP, and no hands for -2 BP. We'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP.

We're at 6 BP, leaving lots of room to tackle the carrion crawler's tentacles and their paralysis effect or on the carrion crawler's bite. Paralysis is extremely potent, so we'll need to weaken the crawler's tentacles considerably. We also need to account for the possibility of multiple attacks. If a player could apply paralysis (or our substitute) on every attack as a fighter with 4 attacks, that would be crazy.

I think the closest fair approximation of paralysis that we can get is restrained. I don't want to make the carrion crawler a grappler, so this will be a bit of a weird ability. The poison mechanic is important, if only because some creatures can be resistant/immune to poison. We'll allow a constitution save to resist the effect, and we'll allow creatures to repeat the save at the end of each turn. To prevent the extra attacks problem, we'll make using this ability an action. I'll also limit this to once per short rest so that we can safely call it 1 BP.

Since players don't differentiate between types of unarmed strikes, we can roll bite and tentacles into one attack. We'll go with 1d8 damage for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 9 BP, the carrion crawler is within our target range of 8-10 BP. To strengthen the carrion crawler, increase its natural armor. To weaken the carrion crawler, reduce its unarmed strike damage.

## Centaur

An iconic mythological creature appearing in numerous works of fiction, Centaurs are horse people, resembling

a horse from the neck down attached to a human body at the waist.

## Centaur Traits

Centaur's share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Well-intentioned creatures, most centaur's are neutral good.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 15 feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Powerful Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Elven and Sylvan.

## Playing a Centaur

Centaur's ability scores are fantastic for many martial builds, and their Charge ability is fantastic for hit-and-run tactics. Consider the Mobile feat to allow you to easily take advantage of your natural mobility. Your excellent speed allows you to easily outrun many foes, so don't feel like you need to stand still in melee and absorb hits like many martial characters.

Centaur's are natural adventurers. Their societies are nomadic, so travel is common. Centaur's who become detached from their herds often take up residence among other races, which is a perfect way to fall in with a group of adventurers.

## Design Notes

Centaur's are an iconic race which appears in a lot of very good fiction. Reducing them to medium size is necessary for playability, but it's a bit of a shame because the most iconic horse-person race in history becomes smaller than a person on a horse. We'll just say that playable centaur's are pony people instead of horse people.

Centaur's are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Centaur's best ability score is Strength, so we'll give them +2 to Strength for 2 BP. Adjusting for size, their other abilities aren't particularly good, but we'll give them a +1 to Dexterity too since centaur's are often skilled archers, and they're quick to react to danger.

From the monster entry, we get 40 ft. move speed (down from 50) for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, plus an extra fixed language for 0.25 BP.

We'll scale the centaur's hoof damage down to 1d6 for 1.5 BP. I want centaur's to use weapons like humanoid's, but a hoof is great backup weapon.

We'll update charge to require less movement (15 feet is much more reasonable), and add 1d6 damage on the attack, scaling at the same rate as cantrips. We'll also limit it to once per round so high-level fighters aren't dealing 16d6 bonus damage per turn. We'll call this 2 BP. The damage is the same abilities like surprise attack, but it's much easier to apply and can be used every round if the character can move around enough.

I'm also going to give centaur's Powerful Build for 0.25 BP. It doesn't matter in most games, but it makes sense that a muscular quadruped should be able to carry more stuff than an equivalent biped.

At just 7 BP, centaur's are below our target range of 8-10 BP, but they're plenty playable. If you want to strengthen centaur's, give them proficiency in Common or one of the skills listed in the Monster Manual entry. If you want to weak centaur's, remove their Dexterity increase.

Players will likely ask why centaur's can't use lances one-handed. This might seem like a reasonable question when you think of the centaur as a person with a built-in horse, but that's not what a centaur is. A centaur is a person with weird legs. A guy on a horse can let his horse worry about moving around while juggling a lance, and riding allows the rider to "couch" the lance for a charge, making it usable one-handed. As a centaur, you've got to worry about running around and using a weapon at the same time, and you don't have a saddle or a horse on which to couch your lance.

## Chimera

Chimeras appear in various forms and interpretations in many pieces of fiction and in many historical myths. However, they share the common trait of being an evil, multi-headed creature sharing the most despicable traits of each of its component parts.

## Chimera Traits

Chimeras share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures created by a demon prince, most chimeras are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Claws, Horns, and Teeth.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Fire Breath.** As an action, you can breathe fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that cone must make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 fire damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 14 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Draconic.

## Variant Chimera Traits

The chimera presented in the monster manual has a red dragon head, giving it a fire breath weapon. While this is the most iconic form of chimera, there is no reason why a chimera couldn't have the head of another form of dragon. If you want a chimera with a different dragon head and breath weapon, replace the chimera's fire breath with any breath weapon listed for Dragonborn on page 34 of the Player's Handbook under "Draconic Ancestry".

## Playing a Chimera

Chimeras are strong flying creatures with a breath weapon and good natural weapons. Their ability to deal all three types of physical damage makes them able to overcome the damage resistances of many creatures. Unfortunately, they can't use weapons or shields, and since they can't hold foci or use verbal components they have trouble becoming spellcasters. Remember that since you can't fly in medium or heavy

armor, you'll need to rely on the chimera's natural armor.

Chimeras are normally territorial creatures who prefer to sit and defend an area. Consider why your chimera might be disobeying its territorial instincts to pursue a life of adventure.

## Design Notes

Chimeras are a really fun creature. They have a great flavor and an excellent personality for a monster. Despite their three heads, chimeras are surprisingly easy to design for a player race because all of their abilities can be easily quantified.

Centaurus are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Chimeras are strong and hardy, so we'll give them a +1 to Strength and a +1 to Constitution for 2 BP.

From their stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +4 natural armor for 2 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, and no ability to speak for another -1 BP, no hands for -2 BP, and a breath weapon costs 1 BP.

Player rules don't differentiate between different natural weapons, so we'll adjust all of the chimera's natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. Between the three types, the chimera can deal every type of weapon damage, so we'll allow that for another 0.5 BP.

At 9.5 BP, chimeras are within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the Chimera, increase its natural armor or increase its Strength increase. If you want to weaken the chimera, reduce its natural armor or natural weapon damage.

## Chuul

Chuul are minimally-intelligent crustaceans created to serve as soldier-slaves to their aboleth masters.

## Chuul Traits

Chuul share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Created to serve evil masters, most chuul are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages



which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 14 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pincer.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Deep Speech.

## Playing a Chuul

Chuul are durable grapplers who excel in melee combat and little else. Their lack of hands makes them unable to real weapons or magic foci, and their inability to speak makes them unable perform verbal components or communicate with their allies easily.

Chuul normally spend eternity fulfilling the last order they received, often leading them to stand and guard a location for eons before being disturbed. Consider why such a creature might potentially deviate from their orders to go adventuring.

## Design Notes

Chuul are strong and durable, and they're excellent grapplers due to the combination of Grab and their tentacle's poison/paralysis effect.

Chuul are the aberration creature type, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Adjusting for size, Strength and Constitution are still the chuul's best abilities. To keep this focus, we'll give them a +1 to both for 2 BP.

From their stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +6) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. swim speed for 1 BP, poison immunity for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, no ability to speak for -1 BP, Amphibious for 0.5 BP, no hands for -2 BP, a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP, and Grab for 2 BP.

That doesn't leave room to do anything with tentacles, so we'll need to leave them out. Paralysis is an extremely potent effect, and Grab will already allow the chuul to drag enemies around.

At 9.5 BP, the chuul is within our target range of 8-10 BP. The natural armor and ability increases are decent, and a swim speed provides some mobility, but with no ability to speak and no ability to fill roles outside of melee combat the chuul's capacity to contribute to a party is extremely limited. If you want to strengthen the chuul, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the chuul, reduce its natural armor or reduce poison immunity to poison resilience.

## Cloaker

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Horrifying ambush predators native to the underdark, cloakers are famous for resembling leather cloaks while they lay motionless.

### Cloaker Traits

Cloakers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Sentient creatures who hunt other sentient creatures for food, most cloakers are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**Cloak Body.** You are unable to wear armor or use shields. You have no arms or hands, and are unable to use items or perform other tasks requiring hands.

**Damage Transfer.** While you are grappling a creature, you take only half the damage dealt to you, and the creature which you are grappling takes the other half.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a dark leather cloak. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Deep Speech and Undercommon.

### Playing a Cloaker

Cloakers are stealthy grapplers. Move into combat carefully, and choose your target wisely. To improve your grappling abilities, consider classes like Barbarian, Fighter, and Monk.

### Design Notes

Cloakers are difficult to design because they have a lot of abilities. Their primary abilities are similar to those of the rug of smothering, but other abilities like Moan present additional BP costs. Fortunately, the cloaker faces many of the same issues as the rug of smothering, and gets corresponding additional BP.

Cloakers are the aberration creature type, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Adjusting for size, the cloaker's abilities are unremarkable. Their best ability is Dexterity, so despite being primarily a grapple monster we'll give the cloaker a +1 increase to Dexterity for 1 BP to emphasize their stealthiness.

From their stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor (down from +4) for 1 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 40 ft.) for 4 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, racial languages plus Common (Undercommon in this case), Damage Transfer (see rug of smothering design notes) for 4 BP, False Appearance for 0.5 BP, and Sunlight Sensitivity for -2 BP. Because they're giant flaps of flying skin they have no hands for -2 BP and can't wear armor for -3 BP.

After all that craziness, we're at 3.5 BP. We'll add a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP and Grab for another 2 BP, bringing us up to 7.5 BP. We still need to tackle Moan and Phantasms.

Moan is surprisingly difficult to pin down. The *fear* spell is the closest magical approximation, but there are significant differences. Moan has a one-round duration, a circular range instead of a cone, and doesn't force foes to flee. To keep things simple, we'll limit the ability to once per short rest and call it 1 BP.

Phantasms is clearly a clone of the *mirror image* spell, so we'll just grant cloakers the ability to cast *mirror image* once per day for 2 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the cloaker exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. It has some playability issues, but it's a great ambush predator, and in a game that involves a lot of killing things, that's a huge asset. If you want to strengthen the cloaker, increase its natural armor or grant it a +1 Strength increase. If you want to weaken the cloaker, remove Phantasms.

## Cockatrice

A hideous bird resembling a giant, rotting chicken, the cockatrice is known for its ability to petrify creatures with its bite.

### Cockatrice Traits

Cockatrices share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity.

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent animals, most cockatrices are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Petrifying Bite.** After striking a foe with your unarmed strike, you may spend a bonus action to attempt to paralyze the target creature. Creatures whose bodies are not made of flesh, such as constructs, are immune to this effect, as are creatures immune to paralysis. The target creature must make a Constitution saving throw. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus.

On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone. They are treated as having 1 level of fatigue. The creature must repeat this saving throw at the end of each of its turns. On a failed saving throw, the creature

is treated as gaining an additional level of fatigue. If the creature fails 6 saving throws, it is petrified until freed by *greater restoration* or similar magic. On a successful saving throw, the creature resists the effect, and is treated as having one less level of fatigue. The creature is treated as having one less level of fatigue each round until they are treated as having 0 levels of fatigue. Creatures immune to fatigue are not immune to this effect, and any actual levels of fatigue do not stack with this effect.

This effect lasts up to one minute. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, the creature is treated as having no levels of fatigue from this effect and immediately returns to normal. If the creature becomes petrified by this effect, the effects are permanent and you no longer need to concentrate.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Cockatrice

The cockatrice is a nimble flyer, but its options in combat are limited. The cockatrice's bite damage is small, and it can't use weapons, so you need to look for other sources of damage like Sneak Attack. Cockatrices also can't use foci, which can make it difficult for them to play spellcasters.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

The cockatrice is mostly simple, but its petrifying bite presents some complications.

Cockatrices are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Cockatrice's ability scores are unremarkable. They're physically frail, so a Dexterity increase makes the most sense. We'll say +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From their stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 20 ft. move speed for -1 BP (remember that 25 is normal for small creatures), 40 ft. fly speed for 5 BP, and Darkvision for 2 BP, no hands for -2 BP, and a bite dealing 1d4 damage for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP. We'll grant the cockatrice the ability to speak common for 0 BP to make them more easily playable.

Petrification presents a lot of problems, so we'll follow the same design decisions I made in the Basilisk entry. Since the basilisk's petrification ability works at range, we can call the cockatrice's melee-only petrification effect 3 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the cockatrice is inside our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the cockatrice, increase its bite damage or grant it a +1 Constitution increase. If you want to weaken the cockatrice, limit Petrifying Bite to once per day.

## Couatl

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Beautiful serpentine celestials who live to serve a divine purpose.

### Couatl Traits

Couatls share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Celestial.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Servants of a long-forgotten benevolent deity, most couatls are lawful good.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Divine Mandate.** You are always treated as holding a spellcasting focus for the purposes of casting Cleric and Paladin spells, and for using Cleric and Paladin abilities. You must select a Cleric Domain at 1<sup>st</sup> level which relates to your divine mandate. If you take levels in Cleric, you must select this domain as your Cleric Domain. You do not need to worship a deity to gain Cleric abilities, and may instead draw divine power from the ancient divine being which created the couatls.

**Divine Resistance.** You have resistance to radiant damage.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Serpentine Body.** You have no arms or hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor.

**Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Celestial.

### Playing a Couatl

Couatls make excellent Clerics. The ability to fly and cast spells without a spellcasting focus allow them to remain out of harm's way while safely supporting allies. Their lack of armor can make them vulnerable in melee, but a sufficiently strong couatl can make an excellent grappler.

Couatls make great adventurers due to their divine mandate. Couatls are bound to their mandate until it is completed, offering an excellent means for the DM to motivate your character.

### Design Notes

The couatl's design is complicated by how absurdly high their numbers are, and how many abilities they have. All of the couatl's ability scores are good. Their flight speed is an astounding 90 feet. They have innate spellcasting, damage resistances, poison, and Grab. We'll start with the absolute basics, then see how much BP we have left to play with.

Couatls are of the celestial creature type, costing 0.5 BP.

Based on their innate spellcasting and their ability scores, couatls should make good clerics. As such, we'll give them +1 Wisdom for 1 BP.

From their stat block, we get medium size, +3 natural armor (down from +4) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 90) for 4 BP, resistance to radiant damage for 2 BP, telepathy for 2 BP, and a 1d6 bite for 1.5 BP and Grab for 2 BP. We can't grant all languages, so we'll say racial language plus Common for 0 BP. Couatls have no hands for -2 BP. We'll also disallow armor for -3 BP because I have no idea how you would armor a snake.

And with all of that we're at 9.5 BP. I still want couatls to be able to play Clerics despite their lack of hands, so we'll grant them a unique ability which fits

their flavor. I want them to always have the effect of a spellcasting focus, and they can choose a domain which suits their divine purpose without committing to a known deity. This will have no mechanical effect if the couatl isn't a Cleric, but could provide some cool flavor.

At 9.5 BP, the couatl is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen couatls, allow them to cast Cure Wounds once per day starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level. If you want to weaken couatls, remove Grab.

## Crawling Claw

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The severed hand of a murderer animated by vile necromantic magic.

### Crawling Claw Traits

Crawling claws share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** The undead hands of murderers, most crawling claws are evil.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft. You have a climb speed of 20 ft.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 bludgeoning or slashing damage on a hit.

**No Spare Hands.** Because your only hand is your entire body, you are unable to use hands and move at the same time, and you lack the capability to wield a weapon like a creature with an arm to swing. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. In any turn in which you walk, climb, or swim, you cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.



### Playing a Crawling Claw

Crawling claws are small and nimble, making them excellent rogues.

Since crawling claws can be created from the severed hands of living murderers, decide if the rest of your body is still alive or not, and who the person was from whom you were created.

### Design Notes

Crawling claws are the first creature in the monster manual of tiny size. Beyond that, the crawling claw is a very simple creature.

Crawling claws are undead, which costs 1 BP.

Crawling claw's ability scores aren't great, but their best ability is Dexterity so we'll grant a +2 Dexterity increase for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.), 20 ft. climb speed for 1.5 BP, poison immunity for 2 BP, blindsight 30 ft. for 6 BP, and a 1d6 claw attack for 1.5 BP. Crawling claws

can't speak for -1 BP, but can still understand Common for 0 BP. Crawling claws are blind for -4 BP.

Despite being a hand, crawling claws have no hands. When your means of locomotion is wriggling fingers, it's difficult to hold a weapon. No Hands is normally -2 BP, but I'll present an altered version which allows crawling claws to use items while immobile, and we'll call it -1.5 BP.

At 5 BP, the crawling claw is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the crawling claw, increase its claw damage or walking speed. If you want to weaken the crawling claw, reduce its claw damage or walking speed.

### Cyclops

Enormous one-eyed giants with simple minds and little knowledge of the world.

### Cyclops Traits

Cyclops share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Barbaric, uncivilized creatures, most cyclopes are chaotic neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Poor Depth Perception.** You have disadvantage on any attack roll against a target more than 30 feet away.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 14 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Powerful Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Giant.

### Playing a Cyclops

Cyclopes are big, dumb brutes. Their ability increases and natural armor make them fantastic barbarians and fighters, but their poor depth perception makes them very bad at ranged combat. If you plan to play a spellcaster, avoid spells with long-range attack rolls at ranges greater than 30 ft.

Cyclopes are generally unsophisticated, simplistic, and easily fooled by even simple magic. This may make them a liability to the party, or it might provide an excellent source of comic relief. If you plan to play to this trait, be sure not to overplay it and annoy your party members. Remember: Dungeons and Dragons is a shared story, not a one-man show.

### Design Notes

Cyclopes (plural of the singular cyclops) are very similar to many other giants: big, brutish, and not very smart. They're also plagued by a lack of depth perception, which is a fun limitation to add to a playable race.

Cyclopes are Giants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Since they have no special abilities, we have room for lots of ability increases. We'll give the cyclops +2 Strength and +2 Constitution for 4 BP.

From their stat block, we get medium size (down from huge), +4 natural armor for 2 BP, and 30 ft. walking speed. Since the cyclops is already a very featureless race, we'll allow them to speak racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We're reducing the cyclops's size but I still want them to feel really big, so we'll give it Powerful Build for 0.25 BP.

Poor Depth Perception makes spellcasting and using ranged weapons very difficult, but since most cyclopes

players will want to play a melee monster, we'll call it just -0.5 BP.

At just 5.75 BP, the cyclops is well below our target range of 0 BP. It works very well for simple melee builds, but is barely functional for other builds, and it definitely isn't very interesting. If you want to strengthen the cyclops, add some additional special abilities. If you want to weaken the cyclops, reduce its ability score increases.

## Darkmantle

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Disgusting creatures resembling flying octopi, darkmantles cling to cavern ceilings and ambush passing prey.

### Darkmantle Traits

Darkmantles share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent creature, most darkmantles are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Echolocation.** You can't use your blindsight while deafened.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a stalactite or stalagmite. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Darkmantle

Darkmantles are flying grapplers, and typically attack by ambushing their prey. Waiting in a cave for long periods of time doesn't really work for adventurers, but don't let that discourage you. Despite their small size, darkmantles are still good in grapples. Consider classes like Monk and Fighter to improve your grappling capabilities.

## Design Notes

Darkmantles are mechanically simple, but have a couple of expensive abilities.

Darkmantles are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Despite their small size, darkmantles are incredibly strong. We'll give them a +1 Strength increase for 1 BP to keep our BP cost low.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, blindsight 30 ft. (down from 60 ft.) for 6 BP, Echolocation for -1.5 BP, and False Appearance for 0.5 BP. Darkmantles have no hands for -2 BP. We'll give darkmantles the ability to speak Common for 0 BP.

The darkmantle's natural weapon deals 1d6 damage for 1.5 BP, and we'll approximate the rest of Crush with Grab for 2 BP.

That brings our total to 9.5 BP, which doesn't leave us enough room for Darkness Aura, so we'll skip it.

At 9 BP, the darkmantle is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the Darkmantle, improve its Strength increase. If you want to weaken the Darkmantle, reduce its natural weapon damage.

## Death Knight [Template: Acquired]

Paladins who fall from grace and die without atoning, they are resurrected as a Death Knight, trapped in an undead purgatory until they atone for their sins.

### Becoming a Death Knight

Any living, humanoid Oathbreaker Paladin of evil alignment and of at least 5<sup>th</sup> level can become a death knight. When the character dies, it rises from the dead at midnight as a death knight.

Upon gaining the Death Knight template, the character immediately gains the traits listed under Death Knight Traits, below. In addition, the character's growth and training are affected. The next time the character gains enough experience to gain a level, instead of selecting a class in which to take a new level the character immediately gains a level of the Death Knight template. All levels of the template must be taken before the character can resume taking levels in a class.

Once a creature becomes a Death Knight, it cannot be raised from the dead until it finds atonement (see below). However, if it is killed it returns to undeath 24 hours later (see Immortal Until Redeemed, below).

## Atonement

If the Death Knight ever atones and finds redemption for its sins, both those committed before and after its death, the Death Knight is instantly destroyed.

After this, the creature's spirit is released to whatever afterlife awaits it. In addition, it can be raised from the dead as normal, though it is treated as having died at the time of the creature's original death, often putting the creature out of reach of all but the most powerful magic.

## Death Knight Traits

All death knights have the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits upon gaining the Death Knight template.

### Hit Points

**Hit Dice.** 1d10 per death knight level

**Hit Points at Higher Levels.** 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per death knight level

### Traits

Death knights gain the following traits at each level, as indicated on the table below.

Level	Features
0	Ability Adjustment, Creature Type, Alignment, Undead Nature, Spellcasting
1	Darkvision, Immortal Until Redeemed, Poison Immunity
2	Hellfire Orb

**Ability Adjustment.** The weight of your sins and the crushing weight of your undeath is psychologically draining. Your Wisdom is permanently reduced by 2. This reduction may not be removed by any means, but is removed automatically if the Death Knight achieves atonement.

**Creature Type.** You replace your current creature type with Undead, but retain any subtypes.

You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you meditate deeply, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. (The Common word for such meditation is "trance.") While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** Trapped in undead purgatory by their evil deeds in life, all death knights are evil.

**Undead Nature.** You have immunity to the exhausted condition.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it

were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Immortal Until Redeemed.** A death knight can arise anew even after it has been destroyed. If the death knight dies, it returns to life at midnight, no less than 24 hours after its destruction at the place where it originally rose as a death knight.

Any items which the death knight carried remain where they were when the death knight was destroyed, but may be retrieved normally.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Spellcasting.** Upon gaining each level in the Death Knight template, you are treated as one Paladin level higher for the purposes of Spellcasting, including spell slots and the level of spells which you can prepare with that class.

**Hellfire Orb.** As an action, you may hurl a magical ball of hellfire, which explodes on impact at a point you can see within 120 feet. Each creature within a 20-foot radius centered on that point must make a reflex saving throw. The sphere spreads around corners. A creature takes 1d6 damage per each of your total levels on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. Half of which is fire damage (rounded up) and half of which is necrotic damage (rounded down).

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.

## Design Notes

The Death Knight is a powerful template, adding several useful abilities to the base creature. In fact, it grants so many new traits that we'll need to make it a leveled template. We can't guarantee that the character taking the template will happen to die when they have enough experience to gain a level, so we'll also need a level 0 for the template that creatures can use until they gain a level.

Part of designing the Death Knight will require use to break out the Paladin class features from the Death Knight template features. The published Death Knight is a CR 17 creature, and based on its spells it's based on a Paladin of at least 19<sup>th</sup> level. Notably, published creature also omits all of the Paladin's other class features like Divine Smite and Aura of Protection. I imagine that this is done to simplify the creature since monsters tend to be dramatically simpler than player characters.

Death Knights will use d10 hit dice, keeping them on pace with Fighters and Paladins, for 1 BP per level.

Death Knights switch to the undead creature type for 1 BP. They don't need to eat, drink, or sleep (included in the creature type BP), they are immune to the exhausted condition for 0.5 BP, and they get Poison Immunity for 2 BP. That brings our total to 4.5 BP. I want the Death Knight to progress neatly from Paladin, so we'll add Spellcasting for 3 BP at each level.

The death knight's immortality is as difficult as similar mechanics on other creatures like demiliches. Instead of assessing a BP cost, which is largely impossible, we'll leave it up to the player and their DM to handle. Keep in mind that the death knight's belongings are all lost, potentially leaving the character unarmed and unarmored after rising again.

Finally, we need to include the Death Knight's Hellfire Orb. It's an iconic ability which has remained in place since Death Knights first appeared in Dungeons and Dragons, and removing it would take a lot away from the feel of the creature. The listed damage totals a stunning 20d6, almost as much damage as a fully charged *delayed blast fireball*, which is a 7<sup>th</sup>-level spell. We can't grant that to players without placing an extremely high-level requirement on the template, so we'll need to scale Hellfire Orb's damage.

If we set it to 1d4 per level, divided evenly between fire and necrotic damage, that should be fine to allow once per day. That's roughly equivalent to a fireball which gradually increases its spell level. It's hard to assess a BP cost, but 3 seems reasonable (3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell once per day for 3 BP to match fireball, plus some extra for the scaling damage and extra damage type, minus a bit to account for the reduced damage die). We'll add a level requirement to the template to keep players from getting a fireball-equivalent before 5<sup>th</sup> level just to be safe.

Now that we have an idea of the BP costs, we'll need to break things up between the template's 0-level and the template levels.

The creature type change and Undead Nature should apply immediately. That's a BP cost of 1, which doesn't seem like a lot, but changing creature types is a big deal. To balance it, we'll add a -2 Wisdom penalty for -1 BP, bringing the BP cost total to 0 for the 0-level portion of the template.

At 1<sup>st</sup> level we'll grant Darkvision for 2 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, immunity to exhausted for 0.5 BP, and Spellcasting for 3 BP at the template's first level for a total of 8.5 BP including 1 BP for hit dice, which is within our target range of 8-10 BP.



At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, we'll grant Hellfire Orb for 4 BP, and another level of Spellcasting for 3 BP. That brings the total to 7 BP once we include the 1 BP for hit dice, which exceeds our target range of 4-5 BP. That's a bit of a problem, but I don't see a good way around it.

If you want to strengthen the Death Knight, increase the hit die size to d12. If you want to weaken the Death Knight, reduce the damage of Hellfire Orb to 1d4 per level.

## Demilich

The disembodied head of a lich whose mind was drifted into near non-existence.

### Demilich Traits

Demiliches share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

**Alignment.** The remains of the most evil spellcasters in the multiverse, most demiliches are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet, and can hover.

**Howl.** Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you can cast the *fear* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Lich's Resistance.** You are resistant to necrotic and psychic damage.

**Magic Skull.** You are immune to the paralyzed, petrified, and prone conditions. You are always treated as holding a spellcasting focus. You are unable to wear armor. You have no hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You may cast spells as though you were using a spellcasting foci.

**Enduring Existence.** Your spirit is bound to a phylactery. If the phylactery is destroyed, you are also destroyed. If your body is destroyed, your body reforms adjacent to your phylactery 1d10 days later.

Upon reforming, you lack the presence of mind to remain near your phylactery or to recall your own actions. You wander aimlessly, including across planes

of existence, until you arrive near where you were destroyed. You have no knowledge of your wanderings, or of the location of your phylactery.

If you locate your phylactery and feed at least one soul into it, you cease to be a demilich and become a lich instead.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Demilich

Flight with hover and a flexible ability increase make the demilich an extremely powerful spellcaster of any kind. The demiliches resistances and immunities make it able to withstand several troublesome effects. However, your lack of hands or limbs makes it difficult to carry equipment or use magic items.

Demiliches normally don't depart the place where they first fell. Consider what suddenly motivated your character stir from near-endless peace to a life of adventure. Also consider who your character was as a lich, and who they were before becoming a lich.

Also consider the existence of your character's phylactery. The ability to reform after 1d10 days is exceptionally powerful, so be sure to discuss the issue of the phylactery with your DM before deciding to play a demilich. If you feed a soul into your phylactery, you become a full lich. Replace your demilich race with stats for your original race, and apply the lich template.

### Design Notes

The demilich is a challenging creature. At such a high CR, it has a pile of resistances and abilities which we will need to strip away to turn it into something fair to play. It also faces certain design complications because it's a floating head. On top of the creature's abilities, we also need to consider the demilich's phylactery.

Demiliches are undead, which costs 1 BP.

Liches are spellcasters, but any sufficiently evil and powerful spellcaster can become a lich. As such, it's difficult to decide which of the demilich's ability scores to increase. Increasing all three would cost too much BP, so we'll give a flexible +1 increase to any mental stat for 1.5 BP.

From their stat block, we get tiny for -1.5 BP, +2 natural armor (down from +5) for 1 BP, 0 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, hover for 2 BP, poison immunity for 2 BP, and necrotic and psychic damage resistance (down from immunity) for 4 BP.

We'll drop some of the demiliches condition immunities, but we'll keep paralyzed, petrified, and prone for a total of 1.5 BP since a floating skull has no ears, doesn't move much, and doesn't really care if it's on its side. Demiliches normally don't speak, but we'll let them speak Common for 0 BP.

Demiliches have no limbs for -2 BP, no hands for -2 BP, and can't wear armor or shields for -4 BP.

We're at just 5.5 BP, despite the demilich having several excellent traits. The only salvageable ability remaining is Howl. It's a death effect, so we'll drop the death part and focus on the fear aspect. Fear is a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell, so it should eat our remaining BP nicely. We'll allow it to be cast two levels early, totaling 3.25 BP.

Unfortunately, the rest of the demiliches stat block needs to be completely abandoned. The abilities are designed for a massively powerful solo monster, so they can't really be adapted to a player race.

Since demiliches should really be spellcasters, I'll allow them to ignore spellcasting foci for 0.5 BP.

The last piece to discuss is the phylactery. The ability to reform after 1d10 days means that death is essentially meaningless, and the player is functionally invincible. I can't really fix this without massively changing what a demilich is, so I'll leave it up the players to discuss with their DM. However, I also don't want it to be an easy "I want to be a regular lich now" mechanic, so I'll add a mechanic which forces the demilich to lose its phylactery again after reforming.

At 9.25 BP, the demilich is at within our target range of 8-10 BP, but I think that it's more powerful than its BP indicates. If you want to strengthen the demilich, give it a second flexible ability increase. If you want to weaken the demilich, remove its natural armor or delay *fear* to 7<sup>th</sup> level.

## Demons

The vile denizens of the Abyss.

### Demon Traits

Demons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fiend (demon)

**Alignment.** Embodiments of chaos and evil, most demons are chaotic evil.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Balor

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Charisma.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Flaming Aura.** As an action, you create an aura of abyssal flames. Each creature within 5 ft. of you must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 1d6 fire damage. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. The damage increases by 1d6 when you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d6), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d6), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d6).

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Infernal Resistance.** You have resistance to fire damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

### Barlgura

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite and Fists.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing or bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

### Chasme

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Drone.** Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *sleep* spell once per day. Every 4 levels, you may cast *sleep* as a spell slot 1 level higher (2<sup>nd</sup>-level at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3<sup>rd</sup> level at 9<sup>th</sup> level, 4<sup>th</sup> level at 13<sup>th</sup> level, and 5<sup>th</sup> level at 17<sup>th</sup> level). Constitution is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Proboscis.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing and 1d4 necrotic damage on a hit.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

#### Dretch

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution, +1 any other.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Fetid Cloud.** Once per day, as an action you can create a 10-foot radius of disgusting green gas extending out from you. The gas spreads around corners, and its area is lightly obscured. It lasts for 1 minute or until a strong wind disperses it. You must maintain concentration during this time, as if you were casting a spell.

Any creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. While poisoned in this way, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both, and can't take reactions.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11+ your Dexterity modifier.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

#### Glabrezu

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Intelligence.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13+ your Dexterity modifier.

**Pincer.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike.

**Sense Magic.** Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *detect magic* as a ritual.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

#### Goristro

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 15 feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Horns.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit, or 1d10 damage on a hit when you use your Charge ability.

**Labyrinthine Recall.** You can perfectly recall any path you have traveled.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Siege Monster.** You deal double damage to objects and structures.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

#### Hezrou

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Stench.** As a bonus action you can exude a horrifying stench for up to one minute. Any creature which starts its turn within 5 ft. of you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, affected creatures are no longer poisoned by this ability.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

#### Manes

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Demonic Resistance.** You have resistance to cold, electric, and fire damage.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Abyssal.

### Marilith

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 to any two.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Inhuman Reflexes.** Your AC increases by +1.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Six Arms.** You have six arms, and may hold and use items in each of your hands.

If you have Extra Attacks, when you take the Attack action you may make each of your attacks using any weapon you are holding.

When you take the Attack action and attack with a weapon which qualifies for use with two-weapon fighting, you can use a bonus action to attack with a different qualifying weapon. You don't add your ability modifier to the damage of the bonus attack unless the modifier is negative or you have an ability which allows you to add your ability modifier to the bonus attack granted by two-weapon fighting. If you choose to make this additional attack, you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn.

If you use a weapon with the Heavy property or use a Versatile weapon two-handed you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn, but you may switch between multiple Heavy or Versatile weapons with each attack.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

### Nalfeshnee

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Horror Nimbus.** As an action, you can emit a scintillating, multicolored light that instill fear in nearby creatures. Each creature within 10 feet of you that can see the light must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma bonus. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a

success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to your Horror Nimbus for the next 24 hours.

You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, affected creatures are no longer frightened by this ability.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13+ your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

### Quasit

**Creature Type.** Fiend (demon, shapechanger)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Scare.** As an action, you can instill fear in a creature. One creature of your choice within 20 feet must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.

**Shapechanger.** As an action, you can magically take the form of a small creature. You may take the form of a bat, a centipede, or a toad. Any equipment you are holding or wearing is not transformed. You retain all of your own statistics, and the effect ends if you take damage.

To discern that you are disguised, a creature can use its action to inspect your appearance and must succeed on an Intelligence (Investigation) check. The DC of this check is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.

**Hidden Step.** As a bonus action, you can magically turn invisible until the start of your next turn or until you attack, make a damage roll, or force someone to make a saving throw.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

### Shadow Demon

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 psychic damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Shadow Stealth.** While in dim light or darkness, you can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

**Stealthy.** You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, at whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

### Vrock

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Beak and Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Spores.** As an action, you can shake poisonous spores from your wings to infect creatures within 15 feet. The spores spread around corners. Each creature in that area must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. Emptying a vial of holy water on the target also ends the effect on it.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

### Yochlol

**Creature Type.** Fiend (demon, shapechanger)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Shapechanger.** As an action, you can magically take the form of a servant of Lolth. You may take your normal ooze form, the form of a female drow, or the form of a spider. Any equipment you are holding or wearing is not transformed. You retain all of your own statistics, except as noted below.

To discern that you are disguised, a creature can use its action to inspect your appearance and must succeed on an Intelligence (Investigation) check. The DC of this check is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier.

When in your normal form, you are a yellow ooze. You have a 30 ft. climb speed. You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing. You are unable to wear armor or use shields, and you have no hands and are unable to wield weapons or use some items. Your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier. You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

When in the form a female drow, you are able to wear armor and use shields and items just as if you were a normal drow.

When in the form of spider, you have a 30 ft. climb speed, but may only climb while wearing light armor or while unarmored. You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing. You have no hands and are unable to wield weapons or use some items. Your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier. You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Abyssal, Elven, and Undercommon.

### Playing a Demon

Demons are all unique, and each demon excels in a variety of roles. Despite these differences, demons are all inherently evil, and as such are well suited to evil campaigns.

#### Balor

Balors make good fighters, paladins, and sorcerers due to their ability increases. Their ability to fly grants balors excellent mobility, and allows spellcasters to remain out of harm's way without needing Concentrate on spells like *fly*.

Balors' ability scores make them excellent front-line leaders, and their role in the abyss makes them a good focal-point around which to build an evil party.

#### Barlgura

Barlgura are strong and brutish, so they make excellent Barbarians, Fighters, and Monks. Because of their

natural weapons and natural armor, they are able to fight effectively without relying on weapons or armor. Their climb speed allows them to traverse many obstacles easily, granting them mobility not available to many races.

Bargura are pack predators, so forming a party of like-minded creatures is a natural instinct.

### Chasme

Chasme's dexterity and mobility make them excellent Monks, Rangers, and Rogues, but their lack of hands makes them unable to utilize ranged weapons. Consider feats like mobile to take advantage of your natural mobility while quickly moving in and out of reach.

Chasme function similarly to bounty hunters in the abyss. While this likely makes them naturally solitary, it shouldn't preclude them from being an asset to an evil party.

### Dretch

Among the weakest of demons, dretches aren't really built for one specific set of tasks. Ironically, being terrible at everything means that they're equally good at almost anything. Their flexible ability increase makes the dretch adaptable to nearly any class, and their other traits offer options welcome on any character.

Dretches are self-loathing creatures who spend most of their time roaming the abyss and complaining about how terrible they are. This might make for an amusing personality, but be sure not to frustrate your fellow players by constantly complaining. This sense of self-deprecation also makes dretches great followers in a party with a strong, central personality like a balor or cambion.

### Glabrezu

Glabrezu are intelligent and strong, which makes them an ideal choice for an eldritch knight or a wizard pursuing the bladesinging tradition. The glabrezu's natural armor works fine in place of real armor, and its pincer attack makes the glabrezu fearsome in melee combat without a weapon.

Glabrezu are prone to evil plots and deceit, but aren't terribly charismatic. This makes them a great brain-trust for the party's more charismatic characters.

### Goristro

Goristro are strong, but that's about it. They make excellent barbarians and fighters, and excel at charging into combat to quickly kill foes.

Goristro are beasts of little intellect, but make excellent warriors. As such, they make a great addition

to an evil party with leaders who are smart enough to make use of the goristro's strengths.

### Hezrou

Hezrou are foot soldiers: strong, and durable. As such, they make good barbarians and fighters. Their Stench ability provides a useful advantage in melee combat, but be careful not to poison your allies.

### Manes

Manes are durable, but that's about it. Their good Constitution and their resistances and immunities allow them to shrug off many types of damage and a couple of problematic conditions. This makes them ideal for springing traps, drawing fire, and otherwise drawing unwanted attention away from the rest of the party.

The manes lacks the ability to speak, which can make it troublesome to include in a party. You will be almost completely unable to use social skills like Persuasion, so you will need to find ways to depend on others for those capabilities.

### Marilith

The marilith is flexible and versatile. With flexible ability increases it can fill numerous roles, and its ability to hold and wield multiple items allows it to easily adapt to numerous situations. While the marilith does fine as a spellcaster, its AC bonus and additional hands allow it to shine in melee combat.

### Nalfeshnee

Nalfeshnee are strong brutes with a powerful crowd control ability. Horror Nimbus allows you to frighten foes, imposing disadvantage on their attacks. This makes it easy for the nalfeshnee to excel in melee combat even if its AC is low. The nalfeshnee's strength makes it a good Barbarian, Cleric, or Fighter.

### Quasit

Quasits are small and stealthy, making them excellent rangers and rogues. The quasits magical abilities grant it some unique options which most characters can't achieve without magic.

Quasits frequently serve spellcasters as familiars and greater demons as messengers, so they have good reason to be among mortal adventurers. Your character might be bound to another character in some fashion, or they might have some great demonic purpose which motivates their adventures.

### Shadow Demon

The shadow demon is a natural rogue. They excel in darkness, and their ability to deal psychic damage with

their claws allows them to easily damage creatures which are resistant to normal weapon damage types.

Shadow demons are the essence of demons which died and were unable to return to the abyss. Consider what sort of demon your character was before their destruction. Use this decision to shape your characters personality.

### Vrock

The Vrock is a durable flyer, allowing it to get into melee combat and survive well. However, it lacks natural armor and its unarmed strikes are weak, so be sure to pick up armor and weapons. The vrock's Spores ability allows you to hinder nearby foes, granting you a significant advantage in melee combat.

Vrocks are petty, greedy creatures attracted to shiny baubles like cheap jewelry. While one might think that this makes them easy to motivate, the vrock is more likely to kill anyone with the capacity to give the vrock something that it wants. Any party including a vrock should consider some means of keeping the vrock in line so it doesn't murder the rest of the party to take their belongings.

### Yochlol

The yochlol is a complex race with the ability to change forms. As an ooze, it can fit into small spaces and move around easily, but can't use weapons, wear armor, or use many items which you typically wear or hold. As a spider, you can wear light armor and some items without losing your climb speed, but lose the ability to speak. As a drow, you behave more like a normal humanoid, but lose your climb speed and your unarmed strike damage.

The yochlol exists to serve Lolth. As such, it fits well into a party of drow or some other Underdark creatures.

### Design Notes

Demons are numerous and diverse. Very little is shared between demon varieties beyond their creature type, but there are a handful of similar abilities which will have the same design issues. Like other fiends, I want to make a specific point to differentiate demons from similar creatures including tieflings (and their variants) and cambions.

Demons are fiends, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Specialized vision is a common ability between demons. All demons have either Darkvision or Truesight (they don't need both because Truesight eclipses the effect of Darkvision). I can't grant Truesight

to a player race: it's simply too powerful. I approximated a perpetual see invisibility to 2.5 BP (see the Kuo-Toa design notes), which is the most that I would ever allow. However, to truly approximate Truesight, I would need to add Darkvision for another 2 BP. 4.5 BP really doesn't leave a lot of room for anything else, and demons with wings will shoot straight to 8.5 BP before they get anything remotely interesting. Instead, I'll grant all demons Darkvision for 2 BP and call it good. Some might get superior Darkvision, but I'll probably avoid it to save BP.

All demons have some set of resistances. Resistance to cold, fire, and lightning damage are all common, and all demons have immunity to poison. Unfortunately, I'll need to abandon all of these to save BP, but I may re-introduce them on a case-by-case basis for individual demons.

Most demons also have telepathy. I've adjust the range down to 30 ft. for 2 BP for other creatures, so some demons may retain that ability. Demons with telepathy typically only speak Abyssal, but even that isn't consistent across all demons.

With Darkvision and the creature type cost, all demons start at 2.5 BP before we discuss individual design.

### Balor

Balors are the most powerful demons short of demon princes. They have all of the best features of demons: horns, wings, and fire-related abilities. If you recall the balrog from Lord of the Rings, you can see the similarities pretty clearly.

Because they're CR 19 monsters clearly intended to work as solo monsters, we need to strip away huge amounts of the balor to make them a playable race.

Balors have fantastic ability scores, but I think Strength and Charisma are really their two biggest. They're big strong melee combatants, but also leaders of lesser demons. We'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From their stat block, we can take medium size (down from huge), 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40), and 30 ft. flying speed (down from 80 ft.) for 4 BP. Balors normally have telepathy, but we just don't have enough room for it. Instead, we'll grant racial languages plus Common for 0 BP.

We're already at 8.5 BP and we haven't even considered to the balor's resistances or their fun abilities. With so little BP, we need to dump almost all of it.

I'll grant the balor fire resistance for 2 BP. Even though we're already above our BP range, I want to retain Flame Aura somehow, so I'll reskin the

*swordburst* cantrip out of the Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide to deal fire damage for 0.25 BP.

At 10.75 BP, the balor exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. However, they have only one active ability, so despite their high BP value they're not particularly exciting. If you want to strengthen the balor, grant it natural armor. If you want to weak the balor, remove its Charisma increase.

### Barlgura

Barlgura are big, dumb brutes. They have a tiny bit of innate spellcasting, including some illusion effects which I really can't explain. Their Reckless ability duplicates the effect of the Barbarian's Reckless Attack ability, which makes it clear that barlguras are intended to be melee monsters. Barlguras also have blindsight, but much like their weird illusion abilities I don't really see anything in their flavor to justify it.

The barlgura's physical ability scores are fantastic, as one might expect from a creature like this. Adjusting for their size, I think we can still justify +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From their stat block, we'll take medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor (down from +5) for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, and 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP. Barlgura normally have telepathy, but we just don't have enough room for it. Instead, we'll grant racial languages plus Common for 0 BP.

We're at 8.5 BP already, but I still want the barlgura to be work without weapons, so I'll give it a 1d6 natural weapon for 1.5 BP.

At 10 BP, the barlgura is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. Despite its high BP cost, it's still not a great race. Comparing the barlgura to the half-orc, the two seem roughly equivalent.

If you want to strengthen the barlgura, give it more natural armor or increase its Darkvision to Superior Darkvision. If you want to weaken the barlgura, reduce its natural armor or natural weapon damage.

### Chasme

Chasmes are giant demonic mosquito. Their iconic ability is Drone, which puts creatures to sleep. Their proboscis is a potent natural weapon which deals necrotic damage and lowers the targets hit point maximum. Chasmes also have spider climb, which allows them to easily traverse walls and ceilings, much like a real mosquito.

Adjusted for size, the chasme's ability scores aren't great. Dexterity and Wisdom are the chasme's two best abilities, but Wisdom doesn't really do anything for it as a race, so we'll focus on Dexterity. A +1

Dexterity increase for 1 BP leaves us lots of room for other traits.

From the monster entry, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor (down from +5) for 1 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20) for -0.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 60) for 4 BP. We'll drop telepathy in favor of racial languages plus Common for 0 BP, and we'll keep Spider Climb for 1 BP. Based on their picture in the monster manual, chasmes have no hands for -2 BP.

At 7 BP, we don't have a lot of room left to tackle the Chasme's natural weapon and Drone ability. With no hands, the Chasme needs a passable natural weapon to make it playable, so we'll spend 2 BP to give it proboscis and deal 1d4 piercing and 1d4 necrotic damage.

Drone presents a design problem going beyond BP. The closest ability we can use to approximate it is the *sleep* spell, which drops in effectiveness very quickly as players gain levels. We could allow Drone to cast *sleep* with a gradually improving spelt slot level, but the BP cost will be high and it's still not guaranteed to remain useful. We could call casting *sleep* as a 9<sup>th</sup>-level spell 5 BP (1 for the spell level, plus 0.5x4 for increasing the spell slot level), but that's more BP than we can justify.

I think our best bet is to have Sleep grow at pace with half-casters like the Paladin or Ranger, which caps its spell level at 5<sup>th</sup>-level for a total of 3 BP. We're not getting a lot for that 3 BP, so I think we'll be okay exceeding our target BP range.

At 12 BP, the chasme exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. Despite the high BP, the chasme is frail, doesn't have great abilities, and Drone will only rarely be able to affect enemies in any significant capacity. If you want to strengthen the chasme, increase its Dexterity increase to +2. If you want to weaken the Chasme, reduce its walking speed or remove its natural armor.

### Dretch

Dretch are small, frail, and not very threatening. Fortunately, that makes them very easy to design.

Dretch's ability scores terrible, but that also gives us a lot of flexibility. The dretch's best ability is Constitution, so we'll give the dretch +1 Constitution and a +1 flexible increase for 2.5 BP.

From their stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.), and we'll grant dretches racial languages plus common for 0 BP. We'll give the Dretch a 1d6 natural weapon for 1.5 BP.

At just 5 BP, we have lots of room for other abilities. The dretch's only active ability is Fetid Cloud, which has



a similar effect to the *stinking cloud* spell, but with half the radius and no range. We'll call that essentially a 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell (*stinking cloud* is a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell), and allow it to be cast two levels early for 2.25 BP. That leaves us enough room to give the dretch Poison Immunity for 2 BP.

At 9.25 BP, the dretch is within our target range of 8-10 BP. The dretch has good ability increases and some other racial traits that place it roughly on par with halflings. Because of their flexible ability increases, I can see dretches succeeding in a variety of classes.

### Glabezu

The glabezu is an interesting demon. They're built like your typical melee monster, but instead of being a simple murder machine like many demons, they use their high intelligence to deceive and mislead mortals.

Because of their personality, it's hard to pin down the glabezu's abilities. Accounting for size, its Constitution and Intelligence seem like two great options, but its personality seems to indicate Strength and Charisma. I think Strength and Intelligence will make the most sense for building a character. That will make the glabezu a natural choice for an eldritch knight, but that will also help justify abandoning most of the glabezu's innate spellcasting. We'll grant +1 Strength and +1 Intelligence for 2 BP.

From their stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +7) for 1.5 BP, and racial languages plus common for 0 BP.

At 6 BP, we've got a bit of room to tackle the glabezu's remaining traits. Glabezu have four arms, but since they only have two hands we'll just ignore them. A 1d8 natural weapon makes sense for the pincers for 2 BP, and we can add Grab for another 2 BP.

We're going to need to drop essentially all of the glabezu's innate spellcasting, but we can keep *detect magic* as ritual only for 0.5 BP without really breaking anything.

At 10.5 BP, the glabezu slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP, but it's locked into a small handful of viable builds, and many of those will quickly supersede the glabezu's racial traits with class features (weapons, armor, spellcasting, etc.). If you want to strengthen the glabezu, grant it a +1 constitution increase. If you want to weaken the glabezu, reduce its natural weapon damage or remove grab.

### Goristro

The goristro is described as a giant, demonic minotaur. Based on their abilities, the similarities are extremely

apparent. So much so that I went and designed the minotaur before designing the goristro.

The first big difference between the two is their creature type. It doesn't come with a BP change, but it's important. Goristro also aren't as clever as minotaurs, so we'll change the flexible ability increase to a fixed Strength increase, reducing the BP cost by 0.5, and we'll add Siege Monster for 0.5 BP to offset the cost. It's not terribly exciting, but that's probably enough to distinguish the two without breaking anything.

To make adjustments to the goristro, see the minotaur design notes.

### Hezrou

Hezrou are surprisingly boring in 5<sup>th</sup> edition. In 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, the Hezrou had a list of spell-like abilities which made them dangerous well beyond their physical bulk. In 5<sup>th</sup> edition, they're essentially just oversized demonic troglodytes.

Adjusting for size, all of the Hezrou's physical ability scores are good. They serve as front-line soldiers in demonic armies, so that makes a lot of sense. They should make good barbarians and fighters, so +1 increases to Strength and Constitution for 2 BP make sense.

From their stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor (down from +6) for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, racial languages plus Common for 0 BP, and a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP.

At 8 BP, we don't have much room left, and we still need to tackle Stench. For a normal Hezrou it's an always-active ability, but that's probably too strong for a player ability. The Dretch's Fetid Cloud ability is a good basis, but the Fetid Cloud has a more potent effect and is only usable once per day. If we weaken the effect, I think we can get away with once per encounter.

We'll make Stench cause creatures within 10 ft. to be poisoned, but we'll require that the hezrou maintain Concentration to maintain the effect for us to a minute. We'll allow it to be used once per short rest as a bonus action and call it 2 BP. We'll also add Poison Immunity even though it will exceed our target BP range.

At 11.5 BP, the hezrou exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. The race has very limited utility, and most hezrous will likely be barbarians or fighters, which will make their natural armor and natural weapon abilities largely inconsequential. If you want to strengthen the hezrou, increase its natural armor. If you want to

weaken the hezrou, reduce its natural armor or natural weapon damage, or reduce Stench to once per day.

### Manes

Manes are pitiful little demons. Their ability scores are terrible and they have essentially no special abilities or traits. They're like an ugly dretch that smells better. Manes can't even talk. Because they have so little going for them, it's very difficult to design the Manes.

Like the dretch, the Manes doesn't have any particularly good abilities, but they have decent Constitution, so we'll give them +2 Constitution for 2 BP.

From their stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.), no ability to speak for -2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, and we'll let the Manes have a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP because I have very few ideas what else to give them.

At just 3 BP we have lots of room, so we'll look at their demonic resistances. For 6 BP, we can grant resistance to cold, fire, and lightning. For another 1 BP, we can grant immunity to the charmed and frightened conditions.

At 9.5 BP, the manes is within our target range of 8-10 BP, but still pretty terrible. They're hard to kill, but that's really all that they have going for them. If you want to strengthen the manes, give it poison immunity. If you want to weaken the manes, make the player choose two of its three damage resistances.

### Marilith

The Marilith is the first creature in the monster manual with multiple arms, all of which have a human-like hand. Beyond the normal design issues implicit in adapting a high-CR creature, multiple arms a huge design problem on their own. The mere ability to hold things in six hands means that players can do crazy things like use two greatswords, hold a shield, and throw a spear at the same time. We'll tackle the easy stuff first, then discuss the 6-arms thing.

The Marilith's abilities are stellar. Even adjusting for size, it's basically impossible to determine which abilities to emphasize. We can go the vanilla human route and dump 6 a ton of BP into a +1 to every ability, but that's really unhelpful in practice. Instead, we'll give them two flexible +1 increases.

From their stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor (down from +3) for 1 BP, 30 ft. speed (down from 40 ft.), and racial languages plus Common.

At 6.5 BP, we've got a bit of room to tackle the marilith's Reactive and Parry abilities, and the six arms issue.

Reactive is too good for a player. Adding even one extra reaction per round would be massively disruptive to the game's mechanics. Imagine a character with the Sentinel feat getting to stop two or more foes in a given round. Imagine a rogue sneak attacking twice or more on other creature's turns. It's not a pretty picture.

Parry is also too good. It's essentially a better version of the Defensive Duelist feat, making it something like 3 or 4 BP.

We need something to address the Marilith's crazy reflexes without breaking anything. Advantage on opportunity attacks seems to work well for Reactive, but I'm really worried about combining it with Sentinel, War Caster, or any number of abilities which combine with opportunity attacks. Parry should just be an AC boost, but I really don't want it to constantly consume the marilith's reactions.

It's not particularly fun, but a flat +1 bonus to AC for 2 BP is probably the best we can do. AC doesn't scale much, so a fixed +1 to AC is a potent ability even if it isn't terribly exciting.

Six arms is a lot of arms. This isn't 3.5, so we're not going to let players get extra attacks for each arm or allow them to use two-weapon fighting rules with greatswords. To keep things relatively balanced, all that multiple arms will really do is allow the marilith to hold a bunch of stuff and attack with different weapons without needing to switch between them. This isn't a huge benefit, but it needs to be *very* explicitly defined to prevent abuse. Several creatures have multiple arms, so the design used here will be used repeatedly throughout this document. We'll call the "extra arms" ability 0.5 BP + 0.25 BP for each extra arm, totaling 1.5 BP for the marilith.

Marilith also have the ability to grapple foes with their tails, but we'll need to abandon that ability to remain within BP constraints. If players ask about it, tell them that a medium marilith's tail isn't strong enough to grapple creatures effectively.

At 10 BP, the marilith tops out our target range of 8-10 BP. The marilith's flexible ability scores and excellent armor make it an interesting option if players find a way to take advantage of them. If you want to strengthen the marilith, grant it a 1d4 damage natural weapon. If you want to weaken the marilith, remove its natural armor.

## Nalfeshnee

The nalfeshnee is fairly straightforward. Most of their abilities are easily defined, and their only unique ability is Horror Nimbus.

We need a lot of BP to pay for flight, so we don't have a lot of room for ability increases. We'll settle for +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +8) for 1.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 30 ft. flying speed for 4 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. The Nalfeshnee's natural weapons do a ton of damage, so we'll drop them down to 1d8 damage for 2 BP.

At 8 BP, we don't have much room for Horror Nimbus. The *dissonant whispers* spell is close, but I don't want the damage. Fear is an obvious comparison, but it's too high level and adds some additional effects which we don't want. If we stick to the basic Frightened condition, reduce the radius to 10 ft., and add a Concentration requirement, I think that we can make Horror Nimbus usable once per short rest at 1 BP.

At 9 BP, the nalfeshnee is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the nalfeshnee, increase its walking speed or grant it another +1 ability increase. If you want to weaken the nalfeshnee, reduce Horror Nimbus to once per long rest.

## Quasit

Quasits are tiny, but certainly not weak. Their ability to change shapes makes them extremely mobile, and their abilities to become invisible, frighten foes, and deal poison damage all make them very dangerous. Despite their low CR, we'll need to make significant cuts to the quasit to make it playable.

The quasit's only good ability score is Dexterity, so we'll grant the quasit a +2 to Dexterity for 2 BP.

From their stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP and 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40) for 1 BP. We'll grant the quasit a 1d6 claw for 1.5 BP but drop the poison component.

At 5.5 BP, we've got a bit of room to tackle Shapechanger, Scare, and Invisibility.

Shapechanger steals some of the most useful parts of wild shape. I don't want to trample on a class like that, and access to all of those movement types would be more BP than I could possibly allocate to a single race. If we make this a purely cosmetic effect, I think we can keep it for 0.5 BP. We'll add the Shapechanger creature subtype for another 0.25 BP.

Scare is easy. It doesn't deal damage and isn't as effective as the *dissonant whispers* spell, so we'll grant it once per day for 0.5 BP.

Invisibility is a problem. Granting the spell once per day is 2 BP, which is possible, but doesn't really offer a significant enough option to replicate an ability which is usable at will like this. Instead, we'll borrow from the recently published *Volo's Guide to Monsters*. The firbolg race includes the Hidden Step ability, which I think perfectly meets my goals for the quasit's invisibility. We'll call it 2 BP.

At 8.75 BP, the quasit is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the quasit, change its claws damage to 1d4 slashing and 1d4 poison damage. If you want to weaken the quasit, reduce Vanish to once per long rest.

## Shadow Demon

Shadow demons are incorporeal, which is very odd for a fiend. Their incorporeal nature presents a lot of problems similar to those discussed in the Banshee design notes, so we'll take some of the same steps to address the shadow demon. Unfortunately, where the banshee is just a screaming undead which happens to be able to move through walls, Incorporeal Movement is one of the shadow demon's defining features. It's going to be difficult to maintain the shadow demon's flavor while still making it mechanically viable.

The shadow demon's best ability score is Dexterity, so we'll grant it +1 to Dexterity for 1 BP. The shadow demon's mental abilities are decent, too, but not enough to justify an ability increase.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. flying speed for 4 BP, and Sunlight Sensitivity for -2 BP (converted from Light Sensitivity). Everything else will require additional discussion.

Incorporeal Movement is out. Etherealness is the closest player option, and it's an extremely high-level spell for a very good reason. The ability to pass through barriers is simply too good to leave to players without extremely powerful magic.

Shadow Stealth is similar to Cunning Action's hide option, but with the limitation that it only applies in dim light or darkness. We'll keep it and call it 1 BP.

The shadow demon's claws are really unique because they deal psychic damage instead of a more conventional damage type like slashing. We'll give the shadow demon 1d6 psychic damage and call it 2 BP. Psychic damage is difficult to resist, so it should certainly cost a bit more to resist than normal weapon damage types which are frequently resisted by many creatures.

The shadow demon should be naturally stealthy, so we'll grant it Stealth proficiency for 0.5 BP.

At 9 BP, the shadow demon is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the shadow demon, improve its Dexterity increase to +2. If you want to weaken the shadow demon, change its claws to slashing damage.

### Vrock

Vrocks are flying bird demons with the ability to shake poisonous spores from their wings and to stun foes with a shriek. Most of their abilities are easy to quantify, but Spores and Shriek will need some focus.

The vrock's physical abilities are great, but their mental abilities are poor. Adjusting for size it's difficult to decide which abilities should receive an increase. We'll give it a +1 Constitution increase since we'll use Constitution for the DC of Spores.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), 30 ft. fly speed (down from 50) for 4 BP. We'll drop the vrock's natural armor to conserve BP. A normal vrock relies on natural weapons, but I think they'll be fine to use a real weapon so we'll give the vrock a 1d4 natural weapon for 1 BP.

At 8.5 BP, we have very little room for Shriek Spores. Shriek might be too powerful to keep. The *command* spell's "Halt" option is passable approximation, but for 1 BP we can only allow it to affect one creature once per day. Instead, we'll focus on Spores, which I think will be much more fun.

Since Spores recharges for a normal vrock, I want it to be rechargeable on a short rest. I also want it to remain viable as the vrock levels. With so little BP to work with, I think it makes sense to abandon the damage component of spores. The Poisoned status effect imposes disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks, which is already a significant tactical advantage. We'll keep the 15-foot radius, and keep the holy water mechanic for flavor. We'll call it 2 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the vrock is slightly above our target range of 8-10 BP. Because most of its BP is tied up in flight, the vrock doesn't have a lot of cool abilities, but Spores is a fantastic option in a crowded fight. If you want to strengthen the vrock, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the vrock, reduce Spores to once per long rest.

### Yochlol

Yochlols are among the most complex demons. Where other demons are creatures designed for a singular purpose, the Yochlol does a bunch of stuff which isn't

tied together except by the "I work for Lolth" flavor. Many of its abilities are extremely problematic, so designing the yochlol to be playable will take some effort.

The yochlol's ability scores are all good, so it's difficult to decide what deserves an increase. Constitution seems like a likely choice since it's the yochlol's highest ability, so we'll grant a +2 Constitution increase for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, racial languages plus Common (Undercommon in this case) and 1 additional fixed language for 0.25 BP. Because the Yochlol's default form is an ooze, they have no hands for -2 BP, and can't wear armor or use shields for -4 BP. We can add a natural weapon for 2 BP which deals 1d4 weapon damage plus 1d4 poison damage, and poison immunity for 2 BP.

At 6.25 BP, we have room for the yochlol's remaining abilities. Spider Climb costs 1 BP and Web Walker costs another 0.5 BP, bringing us to 7.75 BP.

We can use the Quasit's Shapechanger mechanic as a basis and expand it to support a drow form and a spider form.

A drow form allows the Yochlol to use weapons and armor, which represents a 6 BP change, so the drow form will need to have some adjustments. If we remove the natural armor and natural weapon, that's 3.5 BP. If we remove the climb speed, Spider Climb and Web Walker, that's 7 BP total. That's a little bit more than I wanted, but the ability to become a humanoid is pretty fantastic when you're a weird yellow blob.

The spider form should still be able to climb and move through webs. Since the drow form is so mechanically different from the ooze form, I want the spider form to be different too. Spiders can probably wear armor, which represents a 4 BP change, so we'll need to make cuts. Spiders can't talk for -1 BP, but that's about it. If we add a light armor only restriction to the spider form's climb, which removes most of the utility of armor since the yochlol already gets natural armor as good as light armor.

We'll call the yochlol's shape changing ability 2 BP since it's versatile, powerful, and offers major stat changes. We'll also add the Shapechanger subtype for 0.25.

At 10 BP, the yochlol is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a complex creature with some interesting abilities. The ability to change shape functionally allows the yochlol to change races and



capabilities quickly. However, players may have trouble bringing those abilities into play without losing or destroying their gear. If you want to strengthen the yochlol, increase the yochlol's natural armor in ooze form and spider form. If you want to weaken the yochlol, reduce its constitution increase.

## Devils

Evil creatures native to the nine hells, devils seek to entrap the souls of wayward mortals.

### Devil Traits

Devils share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fiend

**Alignment.** Embodiments of chaos and evil, most demons are chaotic evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Devil's Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't impede your Darkvision.

**Devil's Soul.** If you are killed outside of Hell, you are instead returned to hell. If you are killed in Hell, your spirit is permanently destroyed. You cannot be raised from dead, except by very powerful effects like a *wish* spell or divine intervention.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Barbed Devil (Hamatula)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 any.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Barbed Hide.** As a bonus action you may deal 1d6 piercing damage to any creature grappling you.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit.

**Hurl Flame.** You know the *fire bold* cantrip. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Keen Senses.** You have proficiency in the Perception skill.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

### Bearded Devil (Barbazul)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Beard.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Poison Resilience.** You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Steadfast.** You can't be frightened while you can see an allied creature within 30 feet of you.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

### Bone Devil (Osyluth)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Sting.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

### Chain Devil (Kyton)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Devil's Chains.** When you hold a normal chain, it sprouts spikes and hooks along its length. Upon losing your grip on the chain, these growths immediately vanish. You can use chains as a weapon, and are always proficient with them.

While using a chain one-handed, the chain deals 1d8 slashing damage. While using a chain two-handed, the chain deals 1d10 damage and has the Reach property.

When you take the Attack action and make an attack with a chain, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful attack.

**Animate Chains.** Upon reaching 5<sup>th</sup> level, as an action you can animate a chain to fight for you. One mundane chain within 60 feet sprouts hooks and barbs, and animate under your control for 1 minute, provided that the chain is not being worn or carried.

When you use this ability, you can make a melee weapon attack against a creature within 5 feet of the chain. On a hit, the target takes slashing damage equal to 1d8 + your Strength modifier.

The animated chain is an object with AC 20, 20 hit points, resistance to piercing damage, and immunity to psychic and thunder damage. As a bonus action on your turn, you can move the chain up to 20 feet and repeat the attack against a creature within 5 feet of it.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

### Erinyes

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 any.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Hellish Weapon.** Starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, as a bonus action, you may imbue a weapon which you are currently holding with fiendish poison. For one minute, melee weapon attacks with the weapon deal an additional 1d6 poison damage. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration or lose your grip on the weapon, the poison effect ends.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

### Horned Devil (Malebranch)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Tail.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

### Ice Devil (Gelugon)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 any.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite and Tail.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning or piercing damage on a hit.

**Ice Wall.** Once per turn as an action, you can create a frozen barrier. You create a wall of ice up to 5 feet wide, up to 5 feet high, and 6 inches thick in an unoccupied space which you can see within 30 ft.

The wall lasts for 1 minute or until you are incapacitated or die. The wall can be damaged and breached; it has AC 5, 10 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to acid, cold, necrotic, poison, and psychic damage. If the wall is breached, the effect ends. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Icy Weapon.** Starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, as a bonus action, you may freeze one melee weapon which you are currently holding. For one minute, melee weapon attacks with the weapon deal an additional 1d6 cold damage. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose

concentration or lose your grip on the weapon, it cools quickly, returning to a normal temperature.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

#### Imp

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Stinger.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Hidden Step.** As a bonus action, you can magically turn invisible until the start of your next turn or until you attack, make a damage roll, or force someone to make a saving throw.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

#### Lemure

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Hellish Resistances.** You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage, cold damage, and fire resistance.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Infernal.

#### Pit Fiend

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Charisma.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Horror Nimbus.** As an action, you can emit a scintillating, multicolored light that instill fear in nearby creatures. Each creature within 10 feet of you that can see the light must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma bonus. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the

effect ends for it, the creature is immune to your Horror Nimbus for the next 24 hours.

You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, affected creatures are no longer frightened by this ability.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

#### Spined Devil (Spinagon)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Tail Spine.** You may fire bony, flaming spines from your body as a ranged weapon attack. This attack has 30/60 range, and deals 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 fire on a hit.

You have a number of spines equal to 2 + half your level. Used spines regrow by the time you finish a long rest.



**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

### Playing a Devil

Devils are diverse with a wide range of abilities and personalities, but they are all absolutely evil, and make great characters in an evil campaign.

#### Barbed Devil (Hamatula)

Barbed devil's traits are diverse, allowing it to function in a wide variety of classes. Their barbed hide makes them excellent grapplers, but Hurl Flame also allows them to fight at range.

Barbed devils are typically guards and sentinels for more powerful demons, and are motivated by the desire to accumulate material wealth. This makes them easy to include in an evil party as a guard or a hired mercenary.

#### Bearded Devil (Barbazu)

The numberless foot soldiers of Hell, bearded devils make excellent barbarians and fighters. Natural armor, poison resistance, and Steadfast provide several useful defensive options, and your beard provides a helpful offensive option if you're unarmed.

Bearded devils are greedy, so money is an excellent motivator for them. Promises of looted treasure, payment for their services, or other material rewards will easily compel a bearded devil to adventure.

#### Bone Devil (Osyluth)

The bone devil is a durable flyer. Take advantage of your flight and Darkvision to confound foes in dark areas.

Bone devils are taskmasters, making them a good option for a party leader in an evil party, especially one composed of lower-ranking devils.

#### Chain Devil (Kyton)

Chain devils are excellent melee fighters, and their chains allow them to grapple foes at a short distance, allowing you to hold foes in place and attack them safely. Animate Chains provides a helpful source of additional damage in combat.

Chain devils torture the souls of evil mortals. If there are lemures in the party, they may be fearful of the chain devil.

#### Erinyes

Erinyes are versatile flyers, and can play a variety of classes well. Hellish Weapons provides a potent damage boost to melee weapons, allow the Erinyes to be extremely effective in melee combat.

Erinyes don't have a specific role among devils, but they work well in a variety of evil-themed parties. The monster manual mentions that the first Erinyes were fallen angels, which can provide inspiration for your character's personality.

#### Horned Devil (Malebranch)

Simple, but extremely capable, Horned Devils make excellent barbarians, fighters, and paladins. The combination of flight and natural armor makes them easy to play and very effective, but without heavy armor you'll need to invest in Dexterity to boost your AC.



Horned Devils are lazy. They can be compelled to action by stronger creatures, so they can fit very well into a party with another powerful demon.

### Ice Devil (Gelugon)

Ice Devils are versatile devils which can excel in many roles. Their Frozen Weapon ability provides a potent damage boost in melee combat, and their Ice Wall ability provides a useful way to manipulate terrain.

Ice devils are commanders of hell's armies, making them an obvious choice for a party leader in a party composed of devils and other evil creatures. They are ambitious and resentful of their superiors, which provides some excellent ways to motivate your character.

### Imp

The imp's abilities make it great at stealth. Flight, invisibility, and a dexterity increase all work very well together for rangers and rogues.

Imps are created to serve evil masters of all kinds, so they make a great addition to any evil party. If the party includes a strong evil personality like another devil or a warlock, an imp is an excellent addition to the party.

### Lemure

The lemure is a punching bag. With several resistances and excellent Constitution, it can withstand a startling quantity of damage. However, it lacks active abilities so you'll need to look to your class for offensive options.

Lemures are the lowest of devils, so they naturally fall into place as servants, cannon fodder, or convenient punching bags. Parties including other devils will have a clear pecking order, but any evil party will likely still treat the lemure with some degree of active disdain.

### Pit Fiend

Pit fiends are the highest form of generic devil, subservient only to archfiends. Their strength makes them powerful in melee combat, but their charisma also makes them excellent negotiators.

As befits the pit fiend's status, the pit fiend is a natural choice for a party leader, especially in a party including other devils. Pit fiends are narcissistic, domineering, and manipulative. Resist the urge to solve every problem through force of arms, but if violence is required be confident in your abilities.

### Spined Devil (Spinagon)

Spined devils are dexterous flyers. Their bite is powerful for a creature their size, making them dangerous in melee combat. Their ability to fire spines from their tails gives them a potent ranged option that

deals as much damage as a longbow, but can only be used a few times per day.

Spined devils have a similar purpose to imps, but where imps will serve anyone sufficiently evil, spined devils generally only serve other devils. Spined devils are cowardly pack creatures, so they fit well into a party, especially if that party have bigger creatures to hide behind.

### Design Notes

Devils, while very different in flavor, share a lot with demons. They have similar abilities and resistances, similar motivations, and handfuls of devils can be compared directly to demon equivalents (imps and quasits, for example). As such, we can borrow a lot of design work from the work I've already done for demons.

Devils are fiends, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Like demons, devils all have either Darkvision or Truesight. I'll elect to drop all devils down to Darkvision like I did with demons, and I'll add Devil's Sight for an additional 1 BP. It's tempting to make Devil's Sight less costly since it's such a situational ability, but a smart player will abuse it as often as possible by bringing magical darkness into every fight. At that point, it becomes a massive tactical advantage which 0.5 just doesn't cover.

As with demons, we'll need to drop all of the devils' resistances and immunities, including Magic Resistance.

Devil's notably can't be killed anywhere except Hell. While this is nice for a creature that lives forever, it presents practical issues for players. If you're doing all of your adventuring on the material plane, being banished to hell means that you're functionally dead unless you can cast *plane shift*. Since devils can't be raised, a devil who dies may very well be out of reach of the rest of the party, effectively removing them from the campaign. We'll retain this mechanic, but we won't assign it a BP value since it's not clearly a benefit or a drawback.

That brings our base BP cost for devils to 3.5 BP. That's a really big base cost, but it will have to do.

### Barbed Devil (Hamatula)

Barbed devils are very simple. Their only ability which we haven't handled before is Barbed Hide, and it's not complicated.

The barbed devil's abilities are all fairly good, so it's hard to decide which ability to increase. The race's function says something physical, but their emphasis

on being constantly alert says Wisdom. I don't want to shoehorn the barbed devil into being a Cleric, so we'll go for a single flexible increase for 1.5 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We'll keep the 1d6 claw damage for 1.5 BP.

Hurl Flame looks startlingly similar to the *fire bolt* cantrip, so we'll give the barbed devil *fire bolt* for 0.5 BP.

At 8 BP, we don't have a ton of room left, but we don't have much left to tackle. I want to emphasize the barbed devil's role as a guard, so we'll add proficiency in Perception for 0.5 BP.

Barbed hide can be very abusable for a character looking to emphasize grappling unless we design it very carefully. I think we'll stick very close to the ability as written, but I'll add a bonus action use cost, and reduce it to 1d6 damage to match the barbed devil's unarmed strikes. That makes it a nice, reliable damage boost in a grapple without being insanely powerful at low levels. We'll call that 0.5 BP.

At 9 BP, the barbed devil is within our target range of 8-10 BP. The barbed devil has some cool abilities which allow it to be used in a variety of builds, but it doesn't excel at any one set of roles. To strengthen the barbed devil, increase its claw and barbed hide damage to 1d8. To weaken the barbed devil, remove its natural armor or remove barbed hide.

### Bearded Devil (Barbazu)

Bearded devils are very nearly humanoid. Their most unique traits are their attacks. The bearded devil's signature beard allows them to poison foes, and the bearded devil's glaive inflicts a brutal bleed effect. They serve primarily as foot soldiers, so players will likely use them to build fighters or similar characters.

The bearded devil's physical abilities are all good, and its mental abilities are all bad. I think it makes more sense to emphasize Strength and Constitution over Dexterity, so we'll give the bearded devil +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We can replace Steadfast with Brace for 0.5 BP.

We can't allow the bearded devil's beard to poison targets like the monster does; it's just too powerful. Instead, we'll allow the bearded devil's beard to deal 1d4 piercing damage for 1 BP and drop the poison component.

We don't really have anything exciting or unique in the race yet, so we'll add Poison Resilience for 1 BP. We'll also add Steadfast for 1 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the bearded devil is slightly above our target range of 8-10 BP. It has solid abilities for a melee build, but lacks interesting active abilities. If you want to strengthen the bearded devil, change its bear to deal poison damage and possibly increase the damage to 1d6. If you want to weaken the bearded devil, remove its natural armor or its beard.

### Bone Devil (Osyluth)

Bone devils have great numerical stats, but no interesting special abilities. This makes them easy to design by shaving down their numbers.

All of the bone devil's ability scores are good, making it difficult to device what to increase. We're going to need to be careful with our BP, so we'll give the bone devil +1 Constitution for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +7) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), 30 ft. fly speed (down from 40 ft.) for 4 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP.

We're already at 10 BP, so we can't add much more. Hooked devils are known to use weapons, so we don't need to invest heavily in the bone devil's natural weapons. We'll give it 1d4 natural weapon damage for 1 BP, and drop the poison component from its sting.

At 11 BP, the bone devil exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP, but it's also a really boring race. Its stats are fine, but it doesn't really do anything interesting. If you want to strengthen the bone devil, grant it a +1 Strength increase or add 10 ft. reach to its unarmed strikes. If you want to weaken the bone devil, reduce its natural armor.

### Chain Devil (Kyton)

The chain devil is named for its vicious chains, which run the border between natural and material weapon. Beyond that complication, the chain devil is fairly simple.

The chain devil's physical ability scores are excellent. It's Strength and Constitution are its highest abilities, so we'll give the chain devil a +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We'll drop the chain devil's natural armor so save BP. They're basically humanoid, so most players will likely elect to wear armor anyway.

The bulk of the chain devil's abilities relate to turning normal chains into weapons. While that's a neat trick,

it's not much better than a regular weapon. The chain devil monster deals 2d6 damage (matching a greatsword) and has reach. That's better than any weapon a player can normally access, so we'll drop that a bit. I want to retain reach, so we'll make the chains deal 1d10 damage with reach, but add the Heavy property. Functionally, it's a glaive. I'll also allow the chain devil to use a chain one-handed and deal 1d8 damage, matching a flail. We'll also add Grab, and call this 2.5 BP total.

Animate Chains is very similar to Spiritual Weapon, so we'll reskin that for 2 BP. We'll change the force damage to slashing damage, too.

At 10.5 BP, the chain devil slightly above our target range of 8-10 BP. Its abilities aren't particularly interesting, but the ability to grapple with reach is interesting, and Animate Chains is a great option for any melee character.

### Erinyes

The Erinyes is extremely simple; it's little more than a flying humanoid. As such, it's extremely simple to design.

All of the erinyes' ability scores are good, which makes it difficult to pick something to increase. Instead, we'll give the Erinyes a single flexible increase for 1.5 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP.

Hellish Weapons can be replicated by reskinning the azer's Heated Weapon to deal poison damage for 2 BP.

At 11 BP, the Erinyes exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. The flexible increase and flight allow it to explore a variety of classes, but Hellish Weapon really forces it into melee. If you want to strengthen the erinyes, increase its flight speed. If you want to weaken the Erinyes, reduce Hellish Weapons to once per day.

### Horned Devil (Malebranch)

By devil standards, the horned evil is extremely boring. Essentially all it does is damage. Even their personality is boring: they're lazy and scared of things that are bigger than they are, but follow orders to the letter.

The horned devil's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll give them a +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +5) for 1.5 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20) for -0.5 BP, a 30 ft. flying speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We'll drop the horned devil's

tail down to 1d4 damage for 1 BP, and abandon the bleed effect.

At 11.5 BP, the horned devil exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP, but it's very dull. It's a flying stat block. I really wish we had some more inspiration, but there isn't anything to go on. If you want to strengthen the horned devil, increase one of its ability increases. If you want to weaken the horned devil, remove its tail damage.

### Ice Devil (Gelugon)

The ice devil has excellent stats, but it's not very interesting. Its only special abilities are cold damage on its attacks and Wall of Ice.

Since all of the ice devil's abilities are good, it's hard to know what to emphasize. Adjusting for size, Intelligence and Charisma could be the ice devil's best abilities, but since it's primarily a melee monster it's hard to justify increasing either. We'll give the ice devil a flexible +1 increase for 1.5 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +6) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We'll keep cold resistance for 2 BP because it would be silly not to.

At 7 BP, we don't have much room left. We still need to do something about Wall of Ice, and I want to keep the ice devil's cold damage mechanic. The ice devil also has natural weapons which we should consider.

The cold damage on attacks seems like a big draw. We'll re-skin the azer's Heated Weapon ability to deal cold damage for 2 BP.

Based on the ice devil's stat block it makes sense to give the ice devil a 1d8 natural weapon, but I don't want to spend that much BP at this point. We'll give the ice devil 1d4 damage with bite and tail for 1 BP, but we'll drop the claws since they're the lowest damage and adding a third weapon damage type costs extra BP.

Wall of Ice is right out. The *wall of ice* spell is a 6<sup>th</sup>-level spell, and there's no way I'm granting it as a racial ability. We'll give the ice devil a considerably weakened version which will allow the ice devil to create a small barrier, but we'll totally remove the damage mechanic. We'll allow it to be used at will like a cantrip, but require Concentration, last up to a minute, and limit it to one 5-foot by 5-foot section 6 inches thick. The *shape water* cantrip can freeze a cube of up to 5 feet of water, so we're trading volume for the ability to create ice with abundance of water. We'll call this 0.5 BP since it's functionally similar to a cantrip.

At 10.5 BP, the ice devil is slightly above our target range of 8-10 BP. The ice devil has some great

signature abilities, and some decent stats that should make it fun to play. If you want to strengthen the ice devil, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the ice devil, reduce Ice Wall to once per short rest.

### Imp

Imps are the smallest devils, and they serve primarily as messengers and spies. Their ability to fly and turn invisible makes them excellent at their duties. The imp has some similarities to the quasit, so we'll draw on the quasit for a few ideas.

The imp's best ability by far is Dexterity, so we'll give the imp +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 2 ft. walking speed for 0 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 40 ft.) for 4 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP.

We're already at 7 BP, so we don't have a ton of room left. We need to tackle the imp's natural weapons and its invisibility and shapechanger abilities.

Like the quasit, we'll replace Invisibility with Hidden Step for 2 BP. Unfortunately, that leaves us very little room for anything else. We'll drop shapechanger entirely, and grant the imp a 1d4 natural weapon for 1 BP.

At 10 BP, the imp is slightly above our target range of 8-10 BP. Comparisons to the quasit are obvious: the imp trades the quasit's offensive capacity and Shapechanger for the ability to fly. If you want to strengthen the imp, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the imp, reduce Vanish to once per long rest.

### Lemure

Lemures are the weakest of demons. Their only remarkable ability is Hellish Rejuvenation, and most of their stat block is penalties. The primary function of lemures is to be tortured for their sins as mortals, or to be turned into more useful devils. Since they lack any other clear direction and the only decent part of their stat block is their hit points, we'll emphasize their ability to absorb punishment.

The lemure's best abilities are constitution and wisdom, but I don't want this to look like a creature known for its mental capacity, so we'll give the lemure +2 Constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block we get medium size, 25 ft. speed (up from 15 ft.) for -1 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, and no ability to speak for -1 BP.

At 2.5 BP, we have lots of room for resistances. We'll add poison immunity for 2 BP, cold resistance for 2 BP,

and fire resistance for 2 BP. I'm tempted to add immunity to the charmed and frightened conditions, but player characters will have enough intelligence that they should be able to be charmed or frightened.

For lack of other options, we'll add a 1d4 natural weapon for 1 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the lemure is within our target range of 8-10 BP. The lemure is extremely durable, but that's about it. If you want to strengthen the lemure, give it the ability to understand Common and/or the ability to speak. If you want to weaken the lemure, drop poison immunity to poison resilience.

### Pit Fiend

Pit fiends have a lot in common with balors, so it's natural to make some comparisons. The two creatures' numbers are similar, but their special abilities and attacks are very different.

The pit fiend's abilities are all fantastic, but Strength and Charisma are the best, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. flying speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, and racial languages plus common. We'll drop the pit fiend's natural armor to conserve BP.

We're already at 9.5 BP so we don't have room for much else. I'm fine leaving the pit fiend without natural armor or natural weapons since the original monster seems to do just fine using a mace. That leaves Fear Aura and the pit fiend's innate spellcasting.

We can replace Fear Aura with the Nalfeshnee's Horror Nimbus for 1 BP. The effect is functionally the same, and it doesn't require re-inventing the wheel. We'll need to abandon the pit fiend's innate spellcasting.

At 10.5 BP, the pit fiend slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the pit fiend, give it the Produce Flame cantrip with Charisma as the pit fiend's spellcasting ability. If you want to weaken the pit fiend, reduce its walking speed or reduce Horror Nimbus to once per day.

### Spined Devil (Spinagon)

Spined devils are similar toimps in their position as spies and messengers, but have few other similarities beyond their duties. Spined devils are better known for their capacity to launch flaming spines from their bodies.

The spined devil's best ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant a +1 to Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.), 30 ft. fly speed (down from 40 ft.) for 4 BP, and racial languages plus Common. We'll drop the spined devil's natural armor to conserve BP.

The spine devil has excellent natural weapons, including both its bite and its spines which deal roughly 1d8 weapon damage. The spine devil's spines also deal fire damage, but have limited usage. We'll keep the spine devil's bite at 1d8 for 2 BP.

We'll allow the spine devil's spines to deal 1d4 piercing and 1d4 fire at range for 0.5 BP. We'll retain the limited spines ability for flavor, but 12 spines won't become a limiting factor until high level when most characters are making multiple attacks and enemies have big piles of hit points. Instead, we'll give the player 2 spines plus half their level. That will still max out at 12, and it will keep the limit low enough at low levels that players will still need to be picky about when to use their limited spines.

We'll need to drop the flyby ability, unfortunately. Players who really want it can pick up the Mobile feat to get a similar effect.

At 10 BP, the spine devil is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the spine devil, allow its spines to regrow after a short rest. If you want to weaken the spine devil, reduce its bite damage to 1d6 and reduce its spine damage to 1d6 fire.

## Dinosaurs

Dinosaurs vary wildly in size and appearance, but the most iconic dinosaurs are typically giant reptilian creatures. In many Dungeons and Dragons settings, dinosaurs still exist in a handful of locations throughout the world.

The dinosaurs presented here are examples of a handful of iconic dinosaurs. If you want to play a different but similar dinosaur, you can use the stats below with little or no modification. For example, if you wanted to play a stegosaurus, you could change the ankylosaurus' tail to deal piercing damage.



### Dinosaur Traits

Dinosaurs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Alignment.** Simple animals motivated by little beyond basic survival instincts, most dinosaurs are neutral.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Allosaurus

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Pounce.** If you move at least 15 feet straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

#### Ankylosaurus

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 15 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Tail.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d10 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Trip.** If you hit a creature with an unarmed strike, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see “Shoving a Creature”, page 195 of the Player’s Handbook).

#### Plesiosaurus

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d10 bludgeoning damage on a hit. You may make unarmed strikes as though you had reach.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

#### Pteranodon

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can’t be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Flyby.** You may perform the Disengage action as a bonus action.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

#### Triceratops

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Gore and Stomp.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Trampling Charge.** If you move at least 15 feet straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see “Shoving a Creature”, page 195 of the Player’s Handbook).

#### Tyrannosaurus Rex

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

#### Playing a Dinosaur

Dinosaurs are simple creatures with few special abilities, but they’re also built to survive on their own without the aid equipment of magic.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character’s personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character’s personality.

#### Allosaurus

The allosaurus is a powerful charger. Pounce allows you to knock foes prone, making it difficult for foes to escape and granting you Advantage on any successive attacks.

Unlike most dinosaurs, the allosaurus has hands which it can use to hold and use items, allowing it to easily solve problems which most beasts find insurmountable.

#### Ankylosaurus

The ankylosaurus is well defended, even without armor. Its tail does incredible damage with its tail, and has the ability to knock foes prone. However, it has trouble dealing with challenges which can’t be solved by knocking them down.

#### Plesiosaurus

The plesiosaurus is a strong swimmer with a fantastic bite attack which can be made at reach. Its aquatic mobility and ability increases make it an excellent fighter or barbarian. However, since it lacks hands it has trouble casting spells or using tools.

### Pteranodon

Pteranodons are fast, nimble flyers. Take advantage of Flyby to remain out of range of melee attacks. Your mobility works great for a variety of classes, but remember that when you are out of melee reach you may be leaving your allies vulnerable.

### Triceratops

The triceratops is a strong charger, capable of doing huge amounts of damage in melee. However, it lacks hands and will have trouble solving problems which humanoids can handle without issue.

### Tyrannosaurus Rex

The tyrannosaurus rex is a grappler with the ability to grab foes after biting them. Use this to hold troublesome enemies in place while you wear them down.

## Design Notes

Mechanically, dinosaurs are little different from other beasts. Lots of natural armor and natural weapons, but generally dinosaurs can't do things like breath fire. As such, they're fairly simple to design.

Since dinosaurs are the firsts beasts approached in this document, now is a good time to discuss the issue of speech. The *awaken* spell seems like a likely source of intelligence beast heroes, and since it grants the subject the ability to speak a language, I think it's reasonable to grant all beasts the ability to speak at least one language.

Dinosaurs are beasts, costing -0.5 BP due to the increased vulnerability to numerous magical effects.

### Allosaurus

The allosaurus is built to charge things and knock them prone, making pounce their central ability.

Adjusting for size, Strength and Constitution are the allosaurus' best abilities, so we'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor for 1 BP, and 35 ft. walking speed (down from 60 ft.) for 1 BP. We'll retain the allosaurus' natural weapons at 1d8 damage for 2 BP.

Pounce works similarly to the Charge ability, so we'll impose the same movement limitation. The Monster Manual version allows the knockdown without costing an action, then allows an extra attack as a bonus action. I don't want to make knocking a target prone free, so we'll make it a bonus action instead. If the player wants to bite after charging, they can use Extra Attack. This replicates part of the Tavern Brawler feat,

so I want to call this 2 BP, but we'll drop it to 1.5 BP since it has a limitation.

At 8.5 BP, the allosaurus is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the allosaurus, increase its Constitution increase. If you want to weaken the allosaurus, reduce its Strength increase.

### Ankylosaurus

The ankylosaurus is a heavily armored herbivore.

Adjusting for size, Strength and Constitution are the allosaurus' best abilities, so we'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from huge), +5 natural armor for 2.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, and no hands for -2 BP. We'll drop the ankylosaurus' tail damage to 1d10 damage for 3 BP. That's a ton of damage for a natural weapon, but with no hands the ankylosaurus is very limited in its options.

We'll add Trip for another 2 BP.

At 8 BP, the ankylosaurus is at the bottom of our target range of 8-10 BP. It has excellent natural armor and extremely potent natural weapon, but has serious problems overcoming problems which can't be solved by knocking them over. If you want to strengthen the ankylosaurus, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the ankylosaurus, reduce its natural armor or tail damage.

### Plesiosaurus

The plesiosaurus is an aquatic predator. For some reason, it has the ability to flop around on land, but mostly it goes around biting stuff underwater.

The plesiosaurus' physical abilities are all good, but its Strength and Constitution are its best abilities, so we'll give it +2 to each for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 40 ft. swim speed for 3 BP, hold breath for 1 hour for 1 BP, and no hands for -2 BP.

At just 5 BP we really need to give the plesiosaurus something cool. We'll grant their bite at 1d10 damage for 3 BP and add reach for another 1 BP. That essentially gives the plesiosaurus a built-in glaive.

At 9 BP, the plesiosaurus is at the bottom of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the plesiosaurus, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the plesiosaurus, weaken its bite.

### Pteranodon

The pteranodon is a fast flying, but it's not terribly strong. The flyby attack is a potent option for many builds, especially Rogues.

The pteranodon's best ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant a +2 Dexterity increase for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 50 ft. fly speed (down from 60) for 6 BP. We'll set the pteranodon's bite at 1d8 for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

The pteranodon is the first creature we're designing to include the Flyby ability. It's similar to the effect of the Mobility feat or the Withdraw action, but doesn't require the use of an action. I don't want this to be too easy for players to abuse, so we'll alter Flyby to allow players to use Disengage as a bonus action for 2 BP.

At 11 BP, the pteranodon exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the pteranodon, allow them to use their feet like prehensile hands. If you want to weaken the pteranodon, remove flyby.

### Triceratops

The triceratops is mechanically very similar to the Allosaurus, so much of the design will be the same.

The triceratops' two best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +4) for 1.5 BP, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 50) for 1 BP, and we'll grant the triceratops a 1d10 natural weapon for 3 BP. The triceratops has no hands for -2 BP.

Trampling Charge has the same effect and faces the exact same problems as Pounce, so we'll just reskin Pounce for 2 BP.

At 6 BP, the triceratops is below our target range of 8-10 BP. Comparisons to the allosaurus are obvious: the triceratops has better natural weapon damage and natural armor, but lacks hands. If you want to strengthen the triceratops, improve its natural armor. If you want to weaken the triceratops, reduce its natural weapon damage.

### Tyrannosaurus Rex

The t-rex is cosmetically similar to the allosaurus, but where the allosaurus knocks its foes down to kill them, the t-rex grapples them. That's a pretty tiny difference, so essentially we can just trade the allosaurus's Pounce for Grab.

## Displacer Beast

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Otherworldly feline predators with the ability to displace light and mask their location.

## Displacer Beast Traits

Displacer beasts share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Cruel, predatory pack creatures, displacer beasts are usually lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Displacement.** Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, as an action you can project an illusion that makes you appear to be standing near your actual location. For 1 minute, any creature has disadvantage on attack rolls against you. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. An attacker is immune to this effect if it doesn't rely on sight, as with blindsight, or can see through illusions, as with truesight.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Tentacles.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage and 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.

## Playing a Displacer Beast

Displacer beasts are powerful in melee combat where their tentacles do considerable damage, and their Displacement ability provides them a potent defensive option which allows them to survive situations which would otherwise be overwhelming.

Displacer beasts are pack predators, but typically only associate with their own kind unless they form some sort of beneficial arrangement. This is difficult to do without the ability to speak, but not impossible.

## Design Notes

Displacer beasts are mostly simple, but their Displacement ability will take a bit of work.

Displacer beasts are Monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.



The displacer beast's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, which makes sense for a predator like this. We'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40) for 1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP. Displacer beasts have no hands for -2 BP, and can't speak for -1 BP but we'll allow them to understand Common for 0 BP. We'll drop the displacer beast's tentacle attacks to 1d4+1d4 damage for 2 BP.

At 5 BP, we've got a little bit of room Avoidance is extremely potent for a player, so we'll dump it. Similar abilities exist, but they're typically high-level class abilities.

Displacement is the displacer beast's most iconic ability, so I want it to be a prominent part of the race. It's functionally similar to the *blur* spell, so we'll reskin *blur*. I also want it to be usable frequently, so we'll allow it to recharge on a short rest for a total of 5 BP.

## Doppelganger

Doppelgangers are legendary creatures which disguise themselves as people, often living their victim's lives temporarily to fulfill the Doppelgangers goals, whatever those might be.

### Doppelganger Traits

Doppelgangers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity (shapechanger)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Doppelgangers tend to be shifty, self-centered, and devious, but aren't outright evil. They can be of any alignment, but are usually neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Devious.** You are proficient in Deception.

**Keen Insight.** You are proficient in Insight, and may add double your proficiency bonus to Insight checks.

**Shapechanger.** You can cast Disguise Self once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Surprise Attack.** If you surprise a creature and hit it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. You can use this trait only once per combat.

This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Doppelganger

Doppelgangers are deceptive, tricky, and hedonistic, though not necessarily evil. They seek to impersonate others for personal gain, and often cooperate with allies in order to do so.

In a party, Doppelgangers make excellent Rogues, with a natural talent for deception and subtlety.

### Design Notes

Doppelgangers present significant design problems as a playable race. Despite a reasonably low CR, Doppelgangers have a slew of abilities which are considerably too powerful to provide to player characters. Previous editions of the game have left Doppelgangers as a monster, but introduced Changelings as a playable race with a similar feel. However, the goal of this guide is to present a playable version of every monster in the Monster Manual within the confines of existing published rules, so I'm going to do my best to approximate the Doppelganger.

Doppelgangers are Monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits. Their shapechanger subtype has some implications for polymorph effects.

The doppelganger's monster stat block gives them impressive ability scores. A +1 to Dexterity is a great start. The stat block gives them equal Constitution and Charisma, but I think that Charisma plays to the Doppelganger's theme much better, so I'll give them +1 to Charisma. Total, that's 2 BP. I normally give a race a +2 to their primary ability score, but Doppelgangers have too much going on to spend all of their BP early in the design process.

The basic numbers give us 30 foot walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common for languages.

Doppelgangers need Deception to function, and Insight provides a nice way for players to "read" other creatures without giving them the ability to constantly read the thoughts of other creatures. That's another 1 BP for two fixed skills.

We're already at 5.5 BP and we still need to design the most difficult portions of the race. Doppelgangers have a slam attack which deals 1d8 damage, Shapechanger, Ambusher, Surprise Attack, and Read Thoughts. The Slam attack can be a natural weapon for 1 BP (we won't attempt the 1d8 damage, which would

cost another 1 BP), and our updated version of Surprise Attack costs another 1 BP, bringing us to 8.

With just 2.5 BP left, we don't have much room to design Shapechanger, Ambusher, and Read Thoughts. Looking at what we have already, I think it makes sense to drop Ambusher. Getting Advantage against a creature which you have surprised is pretty easy, so it's not great loss.

Shapechanger and Read Thoughts can both be replicated with spells, but Polymorph is too strong for a racial spell, and at 2 BP Detect Thoughts will eat most of our remaining BP.

Shapechanger leaves the Doppelgangers stats unchanged in any form, which means it's essentially just an illusion. We can approximate that with Disguise Self for 1 BP. The once per day limitation might be disappointing for players looking to play a Doppelganger, but it's a good limitation for a player character to have. I'll also allow the Doppelganger to cast this spell 2 levels early (at 1<sup>st</sup> level instead of 3<sup>rd</sup>) for an additional 0.25 BP.

With only 1.5 BP remaining, we don't have enough room for a magical solution. Instead, I'll give the Doppelganger Expertise in Insight for 1 BP. That gives them a constant ability to easily "read" other creatures without needing to exceed our target BP cap. We'll call it "Keen Insight".

At 9.75 BP, the Doppelganger is within our target BP range of 8-10. If you really want your Doppelganger to have Detect Thoughts, consider dropping the skill proficiencies and expertise, and allow them to cast Detect Thoughts once per day starting at level 5. If you need to weaken the Doppelganger, remove Surprise Attack and/or Keen Insight.

## Dracolich [Template: Acquired]

The most villainous of evil dragons sometimes seek to extend their already long lives, performing an unholy ritual to make them undead.

### Becoming a Dracolich

Any living, evil dragon of 10<sup>th</sup> level or higher can become a dracolich. When the dragon attains enough experience to gain a level, they may choose to undergo the dracolich creation ritual instead of gaining a level in class.

To perform the ritual, you must acquire a gem worth no less than 5,000 gp to serve as your phylactery. The ritual is then performed by three or more creatures capable of casting ritual spells, typically wizards or cultists devoted to your service. Performing the ritual

takes one hour. Half-way into the ritual, you must willingly consume a poisonous drought which slays you instantly. If the ritual is interrupted after this point, your soul is released to the afterlife.

Upon completing the ritual, the character immediately gains the single level of the Dracolich template and all of the traits detailed below, and reanimates as a dracolich.

### Dracolich Traits

All dracoliches have the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits upon gaining the template.

#### Hit Points

**Hit Dice.** 1d10 per dracolich level

**Hit Points at Higher Levels.** 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per dracolich level

#### Traits

Dracoliches gain the following traits at each level, as indicated on the table below.

Level	Features
1	Creature Type, Condition Immunities, Damage Resistance, Phylactery, Poison Immunity

**Creature Type.** You replace your current creature type with Undead, but retain any subtypes.

You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you meditate deeply, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. (The Common word for such meditation is "trance.") While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Condition Immunities.** You are immune to the charmed, exhaustion, frightened, and paralyzed.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to necrotic damage.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and to the poisoned condition.

**Phylactery.** If your physical form is destroyed, your soul instantly returns to your phylactery so long as it is on the same plane. If your physical form is destroyed while your phylactery is on another plane, your spirit is released to the afterlife.

While trapped in your phylactery, your senses behave normal. You may see, hear, etc. in the area around your phylactery. However, you can take no actions, and have no way to communicate.

If your phylactery then touches the corpse of another dragon, you can take possession of that

dragon's body. If that dragon was a different variety of dragon, your original racial traits are replaced by those of the dragon whose body you possess.

### Design Notes

Dracolich is one of the simpler templates in the game. There is no progression, there are no unique mechanics, and the template is acquired without a troublesome starting point like the creature's death or being attacked by a monster. It also has fairly few abilities, so we can squeeze it into a single template level.

Dracoliches will use d10 hit points for 1 BP.

Dracoliches can only be dragons, so changing the creature type costs 0.5 BP.

The dracoliches damage resistances and immunities are split into several separate entries in the monster manual entry. We'll retain resistance to necrotic damage for 2 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, and condition immunities to charmed, exhaustion, frightened, and paralyzed for 2 BP total.

Despite the long list of traits, that's only 6.5 BP. That leaves plenty of room for the dracolich's phylactery, but even that is fairly weak compared to other resurrection mechanics. The written description of the phylactery locks the dracolich's soul to the gem, but doesn't allow it to regenerate its own body. For a player, this means either keeping dragon corpses laying around or asking your allies to hunt dragons when your body is destroyed. We'll add a 5,000 gp cost for the phylactery gem since the gem should be special and valuable on its own, and we'll call the whole ability 2 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the dracolich's single level is within our target range of 8-10 BP for the first level of leveled templates. If you want to strengthen the dracolich, increase the hit die size to d12. If you want to weaken the dracolich, remove some condition immunities or replace them with Advantage on saves against affects which would impose those conditions.

### Dragon, Shadow [Template: Natural or Acquired]

True dragons that are born on the Shadowfell or that spend many years there are infused with the plane's dark energies, losing much of their original self and becoming a shadow dragon.

### Becoming a Shadow Dragon

A true dragon born on the Shadowfell or a true dragon that lives there for several years can be corrupted by the dark energies of that plane, changing them into a shadow dragon.

### Shadow Dragon Traits

All shadow dragons have the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits upon gaining the shadow dragon template.

**Bite.** If you deal acid, cold, fire, lightning, or poison damage with your bite as part of your racial traits, change that damage type to necrotic. Additional damage from other effects such as spells or class features is not affected.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to necrotic damage.

**Damage Vulnerability.** You have weakness to radiant damage.

**Shadow Breath.** Any damage-dealing breath weapon possessed by the dragon deals necrotic damage instead of its original damage type.

**Shadow Stealth.** While in dim light or darkness, you can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

**Skill Proficiency: Stealth.** You gain proficiency in Stealth.

**Sunlight Weakness.** While in sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

### Design Notes

The shadow dragon monster template does quite a bit to alter the original dragon, adding several new traits and switching the original dragon's offensive abilities to deal necrotic damage. While in many cases damage types are largely interchangeable, resistance to necrotic damage is considerably less common than resistance to basic energy damage types like acid and fire. The shadow dragon monster template comes with only one weakness, and it's a fairly minor one, so we'll need to find a way to balance that.

It's difficult to decide if this template will be a leveled template or not. Leveled would be easier since we won't need to trim so much from the template, but natural leveled templates are complicated because a character can't take their first level in a template. We'll keep this as a non-leveled template, but we'll need to make some cuts to the traits granted by the original template.

The original monster template grants resistance to necrotic damage for 2 BP. We'll adjust Living Shadow to

only grant proficiency in Stealth for 0.5 BP instead of expertise. We'll drop living shadow because it's considerably too powerful for a player. Shadow Stealth is basically the same as Cunning Action's option to hide as a bonus action with a limitation on when you can use it, so we'll call it 1.5 BP, though it's difficult to assess how effective this will be in the larger context of the template. Switching the dragon's energy damage to necrotic can occasionally be a big advantage since dragons are so dependent on energy damage. We'll call it 0.5 BP. Finally, we'll drop the additional effect on the dragon's breath weapon which creates shadows. That brings our total to 4.5 BP.

Sunlight Sensitivity is the only drawback in the original monster template. That's not nearly enough to offset the benefits of the template, so we'll change that to Sunlight Weakness for -3 BP. Finally, we'll add vulnerability to radiant damage for -1 BP.

That brings our total to 0.5 BP, meaning that the Shadow Dragon template will very slightly strengthen the character. The benefits of the template are clearly excellent, but Sunlight Weakness is a huge limitation, and vulnerability to radiant damage is a serious weakness considering how difficult it is to find resistance to radiant damage. DMs allowing players to take this template should be sure to bring the template's drawbacks into play to prevent the template from becoming an unfair advantage.

## Dragon

Symbols of strength and pride, dragons are among the most legendary creatures in existence. The ten "true" dragon species are each as different from each other as humanoid races, occupying different environments, eating different food, and displaying widely varying personalities.



### Dragon Traits

Dragons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Dragon

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Breath Weapon.** You can use your action to exhale destructive energy. Your species determines the size, shape, and damage type of the exhalation.

When you use your breath weapon, each creature in the area of the exhalation must make a saving throw, the type of which is determined by your species. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Draconic.

**Subrace.** Dragons are numerous and varied. Choose one of these subraces.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Black Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** +1 Dexterity, -2 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** The most vile and ill-tempered of chromatic dragons, most black dragons are chaotic evil.

**Speed.** You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of acid, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to acid damage.

#### Blue Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** +1 Constitution, -2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Vain and territorial, most blue dragons are lawful evil.

**Speed.** You have a burrow speed of 5 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 lightning damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of lightning, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to lightning damage.

#### Green Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** +1 Intelligence, -2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Tricky and manipulative, most green dragons are chaotic evil.

**Speed.** You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of poison, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

#### Red Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** +1 Strength, -2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Exceedingly vain and covetous, even for a dragon, most red dragons are chaotic evil.

**Speed.** You have a climb speed of 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of fire, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to fire damage.

#### White Dragon

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution, -2 Intelligence.

**Alignment.** Evil, bestial hunters, most white dragons are chaotic evil.

**Speed.** You have a climb speed of 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 cold damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of cold, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Brass Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** +1 Constitution, -2 Wisdom.

**Speed.** You have a burrow speed of 5 ft.

**Alignment.** Gregarious and friendly, most brass dragons are chaotic good.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of fire, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to fire damage.

#### Bronze Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** +1 Strength, -2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Honorable creatures who gladly fight for good causes, most bronze dragons are lawful good.

**Speed.** You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of lightning, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to lightning damage.

#### Copper Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** +1 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Jovial but even-tempered pranksters, most copper dragons are chaotic good.

**Speed.** You have a climb speed of 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of acid, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to acid damage.

### Gold Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** None.

**Alignment.** Dedicated foes of evil, most gold dragons are lawful good.

**Speed.** You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of fire, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to fire damage.

### Silver Dragon

**Ability Score Adjustment.** +1 Charisma, -2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Cheerful, social, and happy assist good creatures, most silver dragons are lawful good.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing and 1d4 cold damage on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of cold, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to cold damage.

**Keen Senses.** You have proficiency in the Perception skill.

### Playing a Dragon

Dragons have unique personalities, but mechanically are very similar. Study the Monster manual entries for your chosen dragon species for ideas on personality and motivation.

### Design Notes

Dragons share a lot. They all have roughly similar anatomy and abilities: wings, claws, scales, breath weapons, etc. This saves us a ton of design work. We'll look at the wyrmling version of each dragon to keep things simple.

Dragons are dragons (obviously), costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Ability score adjustments are difficult. We know that dragons have a ton of abilities which will cost a lot of BP, but I feel like we need to grant something to further reflect the immense power of true dragons, we'll grant every dragon +1 Strength for 1 BP, and we'll make further adjustments by subrace (addressed below). Each subrace will get another +1 to something (or the Strength bonus will increase to +2) and -2 to something else to negate the BP cost.

After a quick glance through the stat blocks, every wyrmling has a few things in common. We'll retain medium size and the 30 ft. walking speed, but we'll drop the dragons' fly speed to 30 ft. for 4 BP to leave room for other stuff. We'll also keep Darkvision for 2 BP. Dragons speak only racial languages for -1 BP, and don't have hands for -2 BP, but we'll give them a 1d4 slashing + 1d4 energy bite attack for 2 BP.

Each dragon also has a breath weapon (we'll drop the secondary breath weapons from metallic dragons) and immunity to the damage type of their breath weapon. We'll retain the breath weapon for 2 BP and drop immunity down to resistance for 2 BP (except for Green Dragons since Poison Immunity is only 2 BP). For breath weapons, we'll duplicate the table from the dragonborn race.

We're already at 10.5 BP, unfortunately, so we have very little room to differentiate each species beyond their breath weapons. The only thing we can afford without going wildly outside of normal BP range is additional movement types, but even that is a bit more BP than I want to add. Still, it's a crucial part of the creatures, so we'll add 1 BP worth of special movement type to each type of dragon. Unfortunately, that means that we're leaving out things like amphibious and ice walk.

The silver dragon is the only dragon type without a third movement mode, so we'll grant them Perception proficiency for 0.5 BP. They'll be 0.5 BP behind other dragons, but that's not enough of a difference to worry about.

That brings our total to 11.5 BP (11 for silver dragons), slightly above our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen dragons, increase their species-specific movement speed or raise their resistance to immunity. If you want to weaken dragons, reduce or remove their species-specific movement speed.

### Black Dragon

Black dragons are stealthy and have unusually high Dexterity for a dragon, so we'll grant +1 Dexterity. However, they're quick to anger, so we'll add -2 Wisdom.

### Blue Dragon

Blue dragons have unusually high Constitution, but poor Dexterity, so we'll grant +1 Constitution and -2 Dexterity.

### Green Dragon

Green dragons have high Intelligence, even by dragon standards, so we'll grant +1 Intelligence. Their other ability scores are all average by draconic standards, so it's hard to know what to reduce. For lack of a better idea, we'll apply -2 Dexterity.

### Red Dragon

Red dragons are the stronger species of true dragon, so we'll grant them an additional +1 Strength. Their Dexterity is as poor as that of blue dragons, so we'll apply -2 Dexterity.

### White Dragon

White dragons have good Constitution, but they're dumb as rocks. An ancient white dragon is only as intelligent as an average human. We'll grant +1 Constitution and -2 Intelligence.

### Brass Dragon

Brass dragons have good Constitution, but the lowest Wisdom of the metallic dragons. We'll grant +1 Constitution and -2 Wisdom.

### Bronze Dragon

Bronze dragons have similar abilities to red dragons, so we'll match their +1 Strength and -2 Dexterity.

### Copper Dragon

Copper dragons have mostly average ability scores by dragon standards. Their Intelligence is unusually high, so we'll grant +1 Intelligence, but it's hard to decide what to reduce. The Monster Manual describes them as pranksters, so we'll apply -2 Wisdom to reflect their goofy nature.

### Gold Dragon

Gold dragons are difficult because they have the best ability scores of any dragon, exceeded only by copper dragons in Intelligence. When you're good at everything, what are you best at? We can't afford the BP for +1 to everything, so we'll just skip additional ability increases for gold dragons.

### Silver Dragon

Silver dragons have among the highest Charisma, so we'll grant +1 Charisma. Their Dexterity never exceeds 10, so we'll apply -2 Dexterity.

## Dragon Turtle

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Dragon turtles are enough aquatic creatures related to true dragons.

## Dragon Turtle Traits

Dragon turtles share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Dragon

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Having no strong moral leanings, dragon turtles are usually neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing on a hit.

**Breath Weapon.** You can use your action to exhale scalding steam in 15 ft. cone.

When you use your breath weapon, each creature in the area of the exhalation must make a saving throw, the type of which is determined by your species. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 fire damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 14 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Aquan and Draconic.

## Playing a Dragon Turtle

Dragon turtles are slow-moving on land, but very quick in the water. They also have excellent natural armor, allowing many dragon turtles to survive unarmored. Dragon turtles make excellent Barbarians and Fighters thanks to their good Strength and Constitution.

Dragon turtles seem content to work for whoever will provide them with treasure, making little distinction between good and evil. This allows them to fit easily into a party which does mercenary work.

## Design Notes

Dragon turtles are interesting creatures. They look like giant turtles, and they breathe deadly steam. What's not to like? They're also mechanically simple, which makes it easy to adapt their stats.

Dragon turtles are dragons, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Strength and Constitution are the dragon turtle's only good abilities, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from gargantuan), +4 natural armor for 2 BP (down from +10), 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 40 ft. swim speed for 1.5 BP, fire resistance for 2 BP, and Darkvision for 2 BP. Dragon turtles speak only racial languages for -1 BP, plus an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP. Dragon turtles have no hands for -2 BP.

At 6.25 BP, all we have left to tackle is the dragon turtle's natural weapons and breath weapon. We can add a breath weapon for 2 BP and a 1d8 natural weapon for another 2 BP.

At 10.25 BP, the dragon turtle is very slightly above our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the dragon turtle, increase its walking speed or its natural armor. If you want to weaken the dragon turtle, reduce its natural armor.

## Drider

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Driders are abominations cursed by Lolth after failing a test of faith and strength. They resemble drow from the waist up and spiders from the waist down.

### Drider Traits

Driders share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Insane, reclusive, and evil, most driders are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Diminished Drow Magic.** You know the *dancing lights* cantrip. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell

**Fey Ancestry.** You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put you to sleep.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Walker.** You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Undercommon and Elven.

### Playing a Drider

Driders aren't as nimble as normal drow, but they're more durable and more mobile. Take advantage of

your ability to climb walls and ceilings in order to overcome your enemies.

Despite being cursed by their goddess, driders still revere Lolth and often still have motives which bring them close to drow society. Consider what may have happened to turn your character into a drider, and how they feel about it.

### Design Notes

Driders are very close to drow in terms of design, so we'll start with drow as a base and move toward the drider stat block. This is a bit problematic because drow are 11.5 BP, but we'll do what we can.

Driders are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Driders have good abilities across the board. Drow get bonuses to Dexterity and Charisma, but since driders are spidery abominations, I don't think a Charisma bonus makes sense. We'll grant +1 Dexterity and +1 Constitution for 2 BP.

Driders retain several drow abilities: Fey Ancestry for 0.5 BP, the drow's innate spellcasting for 4.5 BP total, Superior Darkvision for 3 BP, and Sunlight Sensitivity for -2 BP. That brings our running total to 9.5 BP.

We'll add a 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, Spider Climb for 2 BP, and Web Walker for 0.5 BP.

That brings our total to 14 BP, which is just too much. We'll need to make cuts. If we remove the ability to cast both *faerie fire* and *darkness*, that drops our BP cost to 10. Driders are cursed drow, so I think it makes sense that they would lose some iconic drow abilities.

At 10 BP, the drider tops out our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the drider, allow it to cast *faerie fire* once per day. If you want to weaken the drider, remove its Constitution increase.

## Dryad

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Dryads are fey creatures resembling humanoid women sculpted from bits of trees. In some settings, they closely resemble beautiful humans or elves, while in others their bodies appear composed entirely of wood.

### Dryad Traits

Dryads share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fey

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Wisdom, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Dryads are wild spirits of the forest, can often care little for the world's morals. They care for their forests, and concern themselves with little else. Most Dryads are neutral, though Dryads whose forests



are frequently assaulted by other creatures (especially humans) may be driven to acts of evil to protect their homes.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Bound to the Forest.** Your spirit is bound to a single tree. Your appearance resembles that of your tree, changing with the seasons as your tree does. If the tree takes damage, you take an equal quantity of damage. If the tree becomes sick, you suffer effects similar to the tree. If your tree dies or is uprooted you die instantly. If you die your tree dies instantly.

**Dryad Magic.** You know the *druidism* Cantrip, and may cast the *shillelagh* cantrip once per day. At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you may cast *entangle* and *goodberry* each once per day. Your spellcasting ability for these spells is Charisma.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Speak with Trees.** You may speak with trees as if you shared a language.

**Tree Stride.** As a bonus action, you may spend 10 feet or more of your movement in 5 foot increments. Once per turn, you may then enter a tree at least one size bigger than you and emerge from another tree within a distance equal to twice the movement you spent to activate this ability. You emerge 5 feet from the tree in an unoccupied space of your choice.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Sylvan.

## Playing a Dryad

Dryads are wild spirits of the forest. They have natural abilities similar to a Druid, and make excellent Druids and Rangers. Their natural Charisma also makes them good Sorcerers and Warlocks.

Many dryads are emotionally detached from the affairs of mortal beings so long as those events do not threaten the dryad's home. As such, it may be difficult to find a place for them in an adventuring party. Still, you may be at home in a party with a Druid, a Ranger, or a Paladin with the Oath of Ancients.

## Design Notes

Dryads have simple stat blocks, but a pile of innate spellcasting and a few unique abilities.

Dryads are Fey, starting them at a cost of 1 BP.

Medium size, 30 foot walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common will cover all of the basics. Dryads also have 1 point of natural armor and proficiency in Perception and Stealth, but we'll need to ignore those. We'll also consider the Dryad's spellcasting last because they have so many innate spells, and we don't want to eat up all of our BP before touching on other abilities.

Dryads are Fey creatures with magical abilities similar to a Druid, and the natural ability to charm humanoids and animals. +1 to Wisdom and +1 to Charisma will work great for 2 BP. Charisma makes more sense based on the Dryad's stat block, but the theme of the character really speaks to Druids and Rangers, so Wisdom is likely to play more of a role in player character's builds.

Magic Resistance is obviously a problem. It's a great ability for a monster which needs to survive an entire party of players, but it's just too good for a PC. We could drop it to Cunning for 2 BP, but it really doesn't matter to the theme of the Dryad so we'll drop it entirely.

Speak with Beasts and Plants is also a problem. Speak with Animals is only as 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell, but Speak with Plants is a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell. We'll roll that into our discussion of the Dryad's innate spellcasting and tackle it later.

Tree Stride is, as you might expect by now, another problem. The spell Tree Stride is a 5<sup>th</sup>-level spell, but has considerably longer range. 5 BP is obviously more than we want to spend on one ability, so we need a lower cost version with a similar feel. The Dryad's version is actually a reasonable basis: it costs 10 feet of movement to use, limits the usage to Large or bigger trees. The 60 foot range is a bit unfair, so we'll tweak that a bit. Costing movement to get more movement is also a really good trade for players, so there needs to be a bigger cost.

For a bonus action, we'll allow players to move from one tree to another at double speed, but they need to spend at least 10 feet of movement to do so, and they must end their turn outside of the tree. That still fits the look and feel, but won't allow Dryads to totally outmaneuver foes in a forest without a little bit of effort. We'll call that 1 BP.

With 4 BP remaining we have very little room to work with considering how much we have left to tackle, so let's tap into mythology (and ideas from previous editions) to bring in some flavor in exchange for some free BP. Dryads are spirits bound to trees, and in mythology (and in previous editions) if the Dryad's

tree were destroyed the Dryad would die too. An immobile, large, defenseless, and extremely flammable hit point link is a significant risk for an adventurer. A free 1 BP for being life-linked to a tree seems like a fair trade, and fits the theme of a reclusive, cautious, forest-dwelling Fey. Dryad players will need to check on their tree periodically to ensure that it is in good health or they may begin to suffer.

Now with 5 BP, we have a little more wiggle room to tackle the Dryad's remaining abilities. We need to tackle natural armor (if we want to keep it), Speak with Beasts and Plants, the Dryad's innate spellcasting, and Fey Charm.

Fey Charm is essentially Charm Person, but also allows the Dryad to target up to three beasts instead of a humanoid. We can allow players to do that for 1.25 BP (a little more than the 1 BP for normal Charm Person).

Speak with Beasts and Plants is harder. It's a constant effect which replicates a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell *and* a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell simultaneously, which is worth at least 4 BP. If we limit the ability similarly to the Forest Gnome's Speak with Small Beasts ability, we can limit it to trees for 0.5 BP. If the Dryad wants to speak to animals or other plants, they should consider being a Druid.

The Dryad has a small pile of spells, but we'll need to drop most of them. We can grant *druidcraft* for 0.5 BP and *shillelagh* once per day for another 0.25. *Entangle* and *goodberry* once per day each for another 2 BP add some great thematic options. The spellcasting ability will need to be Charisma to stick to the monster stats, but that's probably fine.

With just 0.5 BP remaining, we'll give the Dryad 1 point natural armor. It's not much, so Dryad players will probably wear real armor.

At 10 BP, the Dryad maxes out the target BP range. It has some really cool abilities that should make it fun to play, but it definitely has some room for adjustment. If you want to make the Dryad more suitable as a Druid/Ranger, switch the spellcasting ability to Wisdom. If you want to make the Dryad stronger, allow it to cast *Shillelagh* at will like a normal Cantrip instead of once per day, or improve the natural armor. If you want to weaken the Dryad, Remove the ability to cast *Entangle* and/or *Goodberry*.

## Elementals

Elementals are beings composed of raw elemental energy. At home in their home planes, they have no

physical form, but when summoned to other planes they take shape and enact their summoner's will.

### Elemental Traits

Elementals share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** Having no culture, society, or solid form on their home planes, most elementals are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Unstable Form.** Your body is not completely rigid, and your limbs often fluctuate in size and shape as you move. You are unable to wear armor, but may still use shields.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Air

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet, and can hover.

**Gust.** You know the *gust* cantrip. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Air Form.** You can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. You are immune to the exhaustion, grappled, petrified, prone, restrained, and unconscious conditions.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Auran.

#### Earth

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a burrow speed of 20 ft.

**Earth Glide.** You can burrow through non-magical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, you don't disturb the material you move through.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Siege Monster.** You deal double damage to objects and structures.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Terran.

#### Fire

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Illumination.** You shed bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

**Born of Flame.** You have resistance against fire damage.

**Fire Form.** You can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. You are immune to the exhaustion, grappled, petrified, prone, restrained, and unconscious conditions.

When you enter another creature's space for the first time that round, you may make an unarmed strike as a bonus action.

**Touch.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 fire damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Ignan.

#### Water

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Freeze.** If you take cold damage, you partially freeze; your speed is reduced by half until the end of your next turn.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Aquan.

### Playing an Elemental

Elementals all act and play differently. Their personalities might reflect their native element in some fashion, but since elementals are a simple, vaguely-defined intelligence in their native form it's difficult to make any assumptions about an elementals personality.

Because elementals only solidify when summoned magically, consider what summoned your character. A spellcaster who summoned you might have a dramatic effect on your character's behavior and motivations.

#### Air

Air elementals are nimble flyers. Use your mobility to get into difficult areas and to ambush your foes. With excellent Dexterity and mobility, consider classes like Rogue.

#### Earth

Earth elementals are durable and strong with good natural armor. Consider classes like barbarian, fighter, or monk.

#### Fire

Fire elementals are quick and agile. Their natural Dexterity makes them excellent fighters, rangers, and rogues, and Fire Form allows them to easily move past and through enemies in the thick of a fight.

#### Water

Water elementals are strong grapplers. Consider classes like barbarian and fighter to capitalize on your melee combat abilities.

### Design Notes

The four basic elementals share some common parts, but beyond those core traits each elemental is very different from the rest.

Elementals are elementals (obviously), costing 1 BP.

Based on their stat blocks, we'll drop all of the elementals to medium size and grant them Darkvision for 2 BP and Poison Immunity for 2 BP. Elementals speak only racial languages for -1 BP.

Earth elementals put this in question a bit, but I'm going to rule that elementals can't wear armor for -3 BP. Being able to fit into 1-inch spaces and meld with stone makes armor a non-option.

That puts us at 1 BP before we design the individual elementals. Not bad consider what they get, but most elementals will have some issues with AC.

#### Air

Air elementals are fast flyers with a unique Whirlwind ability. Whirlwind will take some effort since it doesn't match any published spells, but the air elementals other abilities are easily converted.

Dexterity is clearly the air elemental's best ability, so we'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, and 30 ft. fly speed (down from 90 ft.) for 4 BP. We'll add Hover for 2 BP, a 1d8 slam for 2 BP, and flexible

form for 0.5 BP. We'll also pick up immunity to the exhaustion, grappled, petrified, prone, restrained, and unconscious conditions for 3 BP. That's a lot of immunities, but it's hard to apply any of those to a cloud. We'll need to drop the elementals damage resistances.

We're already at 10.5 BP, so we really don't have room for anything cool for Whirlwind. We'll grant air elementals the *gust* cantrip for 0.5 BP and call it a day.

At 11 BP, the air elemental exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. With the ability to pass through tiny spaces and ignore a lot of conditions which typically pin creatures in place it can present serious problems for DMs. If you want to strengthen the air elemental, grant it resistance to electricity or thunder damage. If you want to weaken the air elemental, remove its immunities to the exhaustion, paralyzed, and unconscious conditions.

### Earth

Perhaps the simplest of elementals since it has a mostly solid form, the earth elemental is a big durable rock with the ability to glide through earth.

The earth elemental has excellent Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get +3 natural armor (down from +7) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 20 ft. burrow speed (down from 30 ft.) for 3 BP, Earth Glide for 1 BP, Siege Monster for 0.5 BP, and a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP. We'll also retain vulnerability to thunder damage for -1 BP.

At 10 BP, the earth elemental is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the earth elemental, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the earth elemental, reduce its burrow speed or natural weapon damage.

### Fire

Fire elementals are all about setting stuff on fire. Fire elementals make potent summons because they can burn foes simply by moving through their spaces, but we can't offer that option to players as a race because it's considerably too powerful at low level. We'll need to weaken the fire elemental considerably to make it safe for use as a player race.

The fire elemental's best ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant the fire elemental +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get 35 ft. walking speed (down from 50 ft.) for 1 BP, fire resistance for 2 BP (down from immunity), a 1d6 fire damage natural weapon for 1.5 BP, and Illumination for 0.25 BP. We'll retain Water Susceptibility for -1 BP, and we'll pick up

immunity to the exhaustion, grappled, petrified, prone, restrained, and unconscious conditions for 3 BP.

I want to retain the fire elemental's ability to move through foes and damage them, but we need to limit it to keep it balanced while still keeping it relevant at high levels. I think it's reasonable to allow it to work once per round as a bonus action similar to two-weapon fighting. If we allow it to deal full unarmed strike damage, that will put it roughly on par with two-weapon fighting. This is very potent, so we'll call it 3 BP.

At 11.75 BP, the fire elemental exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the fire elemental, give it natural armor. If you want to weaken the fire elemental, remove its constitution increase.

### Water

Water elementals are grapplers. Whelm is functionally similar to many other creature's Constrict abilities, so we can make similar design adjustments.

Strength and Constitution are the water elemental's best abilities, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. swim speed (down from 90 ft.) for 1 BP, a 1d8 slam for 2 BP, Grab for 2 BP, and flexible form for 0.5 BP. We'll also pick up immunity to the exhaustion, grappled, petrified, prone, restrained, and unconscious conditions for 3 BP. We'll drop acid resistance since it's costly and not crucial to the theme of the race.

Freeze is a fun thematic handicap. We'll change the effect to half of the character's speed rather than a fixed 20 ft., but other than that it's fine. We'll call this -0.5 BP.

At 11 BP, the water elemental exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the water elemental, increase its natural armor or swim speed. If you want to weaken the water elemental, remove its natural armor.

## Empyrean

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Empyreans are the immortal children of the gods of the upper planes. Though not quite gods themselves, they are more powerful than most mortals could possibly imagine.

### Empyrean Traits

Empyreans share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Celestial

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma, +1 any other.

**Alignment.** Divine children of the most righteous of gods, most empyreans are chaotic good. However, some empyreans are corrupted or cursed by evil deities or the forces of the lower planes; these empyreans are usually neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Bolster.** Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *bless* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Manifest Emotions.** You can experience deity-like fits of emotion which affect the world around you in small ways. When you are sad, the sky might turn gray or rain. When you are happy, birds might chirp, or small animals might parade behind you. When you are angry, fires might burn abnormally high or thunder might crack in the distance. The exact effects of this trait are up to the Dungeon Master.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Celestial.

## Playing an Empyrean

Empyreans are great at almost everything. Their flexible ability increase allows them to fill a variety of classes, and their ability to fly and swim easily makes them exceptionally mobile in a variety of situations. Bolster provides a potent way to strengthen your allies when things are going badly.

Empyreans are extremely self-assured, as befits their parentage. Your character should be confident, possibly to the point of recklessness. Try to use manifest Emotion for dramatic effect, but be sure not to let your character's personality overshadow your fellow players.

## Design Notes

Empyreans, like many creatures with such a high CR, are absurdly powerful. We'll need to shave a lot off of their numbers before we can really see the design patterns emerge. While designing the Empyrean, we also need to be very careful not to duplicate the design of similar creatures like aasimar.

Empyreans are celestials, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The Empyrean's ability scores are all amazing. Its worst abilities are above the player ability cap. The best approximation might be to grant a +1 to all abilities, but we need a lot of BP to cover the rest of

the empyrean's abilities, so we'll give them a +1 flexible increase and a +1 to Charisma for 2.5 BP.

From the stat block, we get almost nothing useful. Most of it needs to be ignored. We'll give empyreans medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, 30 ft. swim speed for 1 BP, and racial languages (Celestial) plus Common for 0 BP.

At 8 BP, we've already got a fairly powerful race. The ability to both fly and swim easily makes them exceptionally mobile. We'll use our remaining BP for a bit of innate spellcasting.

I'm worried that with the Charisma increase Bolt will just make the empyrean a ready-made sorcerer, so I'm going to dump it. It's not particularly important to the creature, and if players want to shoot lasers they can play a spellcaster.

Bolster looks very similar to Bless and it's a cool thematic ability, so we'll grant Bless once per day for 1 BP.

At 9 BP, the empyrean is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the Empyrean, change its ability increase to two flexible increases or grant it a free cantrip. If you want to weaken the Empyrean, remove its Charisma increase.

## Ettercap

Hideous spider-like creatures that hunt humanoids and fey for food.

### Ettercap Traits

Ettercaps share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Hunters of intelligent creatures, most ettercaps are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Web.** You may shoot sticky webs from your body as a ranged weapon attack. This attack has 30/60 range.

On a hit, the creature is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can make a Strength check against a DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution bonus, escaping from the webbing on a success. The effect ends if the webbing is destroyed. The webbing has AC 10, 5 hit points, resistance to bludgeoning damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

**Web Walker.** You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.

### Playing an Ettercap

Nimble creatures with strong natural weapons, ettercaps make excellent fighters, rangers, and rogues. Their Web ability allows them to gain a tactical advantage over their foes, allowing the ettercap to close the distance to their victim.

Ettercaps tend and care for giant spiders in much the same way that humans care for cattle. An ettercap might find a home in a party containing giant spiders or other similar predators.

### Design Notes

Ettercaps are spider-like in function, but humanoid in shape. Having already designed creatures like the Drider, ettercaps aren't particularly difficult to design.

Ettercaps are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The ettercap's best ability is Dexterity, which makes sense considering their stealthy nature. We'll grant a +1 to Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, Spider Climb for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Web Walker for 0.5 BP, and a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP. We'll allow the Ettercap to understand Common for 0 BP, but ettercaps can't speak for -1 BP.

At 9 BP, we don't have much room for Web Sense or Web. I think we'll just drop Web Sense to save BP.

Web is like a much weaker version of the *web* spell. I would call it somewhere between a cantrip and a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell. I think we can grant the ability as-written once per short rest and call it 1 BP.

At 10 BP, the Ettercap is at the top of our target BP range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the Ettercap, increase its Dexterity increase. If you want to weaken the Ettercap, reduce Web to once per long rest.

## Ettin

Two-headed giants known for the constant bickering of their two unique personalities.

### Ettin Traits

Ettins share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Foul, angry, solitary, and quarrelsome, most ettins are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Powerful Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Two Heads.** While both of your heads are awake, you have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

**Wakeful.** When one of your heads is asleep, your other head is awake.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Giant and Orc.

### Playing an Ettin

Ettins are strong brutes, so they make excellent Barbarians and Fighters. Their resistances allow them to resist many conditions which spellcasters frequently use to incapacitate martial characters, so ettins make excellent mage hunters. Two-weapon fighting builds are a great theme for ettins, but don't feel like you absolutely need to go that route.

Having two personalities can be fun to roleplay, but remember that your character is defined by a constant shared experience. Your personalities feud constantly, but likely have similar opinions and outlooks on most subjects. Overfamiliarity often breeds resentment, but remember that each of your personalities is completely dependent on the other to survive.

Bickering with yourself can be amusing occasionally, but be careful not to force other players at the table to sit around while you have lengthy conversations with yourself. How your personalities act while the other sleeps can also be a major part of your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Ettins are big dumb brutes that are resistant to certain effects because they have two brains to affect. They

tend toward two-weapon fighting, but there isn't anything specific in their stats which is easy to translate to a player ability.

Ettins are giants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The ettin's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +2 to Strength and +1 to Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), Darkvision for 2 BP, racial languages only for -1 NP, and an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP. We'll drop the ettin's natural armor and expect that players will likely wear armor. We'll also add Powerful Build for 0.25 BP to get the feel of being a giant without actually being large.

At 5.75 we've got plenty of room to handle Two Heads and Wakeful.

Immunities to the six conditions listed under two heads would cost 3 BP, so we'll call that 1.5 BP. Guaranteed advantage on a skill is very powerful, especially one as important as Perception. We'll call that 2 BP, but that might be a bit low. This is a powerful set of abilities, so I'll limit it to only apply while both heads are conscious.

Wakeful is immunity to a condition, so we'll grant it for 0.5 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the Ettin is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the Ettin, allow it to apply its ability score bonus to damage rolls with weapon attacks made with off-hand weapons when two-weapon fighting. If you want to weaken the Ettin, reduce its strength bonus, or remove the Perception portion of Two Heads.

## Faerie Dragon

Cheerful draconic pranksters, faerie dragons take delight playing harmless pranks on passers-by.

### Faerie Dragon Traits

Faerie dragons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Dragon

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Puckish tricksters with no real ill-will, most faerie dragons are chaotic good.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 15 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your

unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Euphoria Breath.** You can use your action to exhale a puff of euphoria gas at one creature within 5 feet. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw, or for 1 minute, the target is overcome by feelings of Euphoria. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution bonus. On a failed save, the affected creature can't move or take actions, including reactions. The creature may attempt a new saving throw at the end of each of its turns.

Mindless creatures and creatures with no emotions are immune to this ability.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet, and can hover. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Trickster Magic.** You may cast the *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, and *minor illusion* cantrips each once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells. You may cast spells as though you were using a magic focus, even if you are not doing so.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Draconic and Sylvan.

### Playing a Faerie Dragon

Faerie dragons are extremely nimble, and are charismatic, making them excellent Rogues and Sorcerers.

Players who like to rely on trickery, illusions, and surprise will likely enjoy playing a Faerie Dragon. If you choose to perform pranks, be sure that your recipients will find them as good-natured as you do, and be sure not to interfere with another players' fun.

### Design Notes

Faerie dragons have a lot of easily interpreted abilities, but their Innate Spellcasting and their Euphoria Breath both present interesting design challenges.

Faerie dragons are dragons, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The faerie dragon's best ability is Dexterity, and Charisma is its second highest ability and its spellcasting ability. We'll grant +2 Dexterity and +1 Charisma for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 15 ft. walking speed (up from 10 ft.) for -1.5 BP, 40 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP plus an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP. We'll give the faerie dragon a 1d4 bit for 2 BP, but no hands for -2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 7.25 BP, we've got a bit of room left for the faerie dragon's remaining abilities.

The faerie dragon's innate spellcasting needs to be approached very carefully. The monster entry allows the faerie dragon to cast all of the spells which it is old enough to cast, and the spells gradually grow in level over time. This is fine for a monster (although Polymorph on a CR 1 creature seems dangerous), but obviously too abusable for players.

Instead of making a complicated attempt to adjust the faerie dragon's spellcasting, we'll embrace the "Red" level, and allow the faerie dragon to cast the *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, and *minor illusion* cantrips each once per day each for a total of 0.75 BP. We'll also allow them to cast spells without a spellcasting focus for 0.25 BP.

Euphoria breath is difficult to conceptualize. The monster entry's version is extremely powerful. Affected creatures have a 2 in 3 chance to waste their turn running around, and only a 1 in 3 chance to even attempt to shake off the effect. The closest approximation I can find is the *confusion* spell, which is 4<sup>th</sup>-level and clearly too powerful to put on a race. We'll need to completely abandon the original effect and find something conceptually similar.

The root concept is that the creature becomes "euphoric". My dictionary defines Euphoria as feelings of intense happiness. That immediately reminds me of the *tasha's hideous laughter* spell. Since it's a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell we can use it, but I want to make the effect more unique and usable on a short rest recharge. I'll remove the portions of the effect which make creatures prone and incapacitated, but we'll still prevent the creature from taking reactions. We'll also drop the range to 5 ft. to mirror the original ability. We'll call this 1 BP.

At 8.5 BP, the faerie dragon is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to weaken the faerie dragon, reduce its flight speed or only allow Euphoria Breath to recharge on a long rest. If you want to

strengthen the faerie dragon, allow it to use its cantrips at will.

## Flameskull

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The animated remains of a dead spellcaster, flameskulls are evil, insane facsimiles of their former selves.

### Flameskull Traits

Flameskulls share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Intelligence.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures created using dark magic to serve nefarious purposes, most flameskulls are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Flaming Body.** You are resistant to cold and fire damage.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet, and can hover.

**Illumination.** You shed bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

**Magic Skull.** You are immune to the paralyzed, petrified, and prone conditions. You are always treated as holding a spellcasting focus. You are unable to wear armor. You have no hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You may cast spells as though you were using a spellcasting foci.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Recalled Magic.** You know the *fire bolt* and *mage hand* cantrips. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Rejuvenation.** Upon falling to 0 hit points, you immediately stabilize. While unconscious, if you take damage which is insufficient to kill you, you suffer a death saving throw failure as normal, but you remain stabilized. After 1 hour of being unconscious and stabilized you regain 1 hit point.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.



## Playing a Flameskull

Flameskulls are natural wizards. Their ability to fly and their resistances help them to remain out of harm's way, but they lack natural armor and without the ability to wear armor their AC can be problematic.

Flameskulls are often bound to obey evil masters, which provides an easy way to work them into a party. Alternatively, flameskulls which are no longer able to fulfill their given orders become independent, and are free to pursue whatever goals they choose. Since flameskulls have vague recollections of their previous life, consider who your character was before their death and use it to inform your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Similar in many ways to demiliches, flameskulls are much simpler to design because they have considerably fewer abilities.

Demiliches are undead, which costs 1 BP.

Unlike demiliches, flameskulls are very clearly more skewed toward wizardry. As such, a +2 to Intelligence makes sense. However, I don't want the flameskull to be a strictly better wizard than the demilich. The two should be different, but a demilich wizard shouldn't be a strictly worse choice than a flameskull wizard.

Flameskulls are also extremely dexterous, so we'll give them +1 Dexterity and +1 Intelligence for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 0 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 40 ft. fly speed for 5 BP, hover for 2 BP, poison immunity for 2 BP, cold and fire damage resistance (down from immunity) for 4 BP, and the ability to speak Common for 0 BP.

Flameskulls have no limbs for -2 BP, no hands for -2 BP, and can't wear armor or shields for -4 BP. We'll duplicate the demilich condition immunities which we kept for a total of 1.5 BP. Demiliches normally don't speak.

At 6 BP, we've got some room for the flameskull's remaining abilities. We'll match the Azer's illumination ability for 0.25 BP. We'll dump Magic Resistance because it's too powerful for a player, but we can at least adapt everything else.

The flameskull's innate spellcasting is its primary function. We can replace the Fire Ray ability with the *fire bolt* cantrip for 0.5 BP. We'll retain *mage hand* for another 0.5 BP. Like the demilich, we'll allow them to ignore spellcasting foci for 0.5 BP.

Rejuvenation is a serious problem. Much like the lich's phylactery, it makes the creature functionally immortal. Since most enemies don't carry around holy water, it's essentially guaranteed that the player will

rejuvenate normally. Instead of allowing players to return to full health for free, we'll just make rejuvenation a slightly gentler death mechanic. We'll call this 1 BP.

At 8.75 BP, the flameskull is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It is comparable to the demilich in many ways, and presents a loss of versatility in favor of some potent pre-determined options. The flameskull's resistances are more useful, and it will be more effective at low levels thanks to its free cantrips, but at mid and high levels the demilich's Howl ability will likely eclipse the cantrips.

If you want to strengthen the flame skull, allow it to cast the *shield* spell once per day starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level. If you want to weaken the flame skull, remove its ability to cast the *magic missile* spell, or remove its cold resistance.

## Flumph

Good-natured telepathic creatures similar to jellyfish which float about in the underdark, where they feed harmlessly on the psychic energy of other creatures.

### Flumph Traits

Flumphs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Flumphs are good-natured creatures who live in complex, structured societies. Most flumphs are lawful good.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 5 ft.

**Advanced Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft. You can perceive the content of any telepathic communication used within 30 feet of you, and you can't be surprised by creatures with any form of telepathy.

**Exposed Mind.** You are vulnerable to psychic damage.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet, and can hover. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Prone Deficiency.** If you are knocked prone, roll a die. On an odd result, you land upside-down and are incapacitated. At the end of each of your turns, you can make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, righting yourself and ending the incapacitated condition if it succeeds.

**Stench Spray.** You can use your action to spray a foul-smelling liquid. Each creature in a 15-foot cone must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw, or be poisoned for 1d4 rounds. Creatures are poisoned while within 5 feet of the coated creature. The coated creature may make a new saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.

**Telepathic Shroud.** You are immune to any effect that would sense your emotions or read your thoughts, as well as all divination spells.

**Tendrils.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Flumph

Flumphs are flying telepaths, allowing them to move about safely, often avoiding notice of other creatures. Their ability scores make for excellent clerics and wizards, but rogues might also benefit from the flumph's traits.

Flumphs are good-natured, and like to be around good people with good thoughts for them to feed upon. They generally avoid creatures with disturbing thoughts, and they actively seek the downfall of those creatures. These motivations make them a good member of a good-aligned party, but parties with evil characters or anti-heroes might be a problem for a flumph.

### Design Notes

Flumphs are among the weirder creatures in the game. Most of their abilities are tied up in telepathy, which makes them a bit complex to design.

Flumphs are aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.



The description of flumphs emphasizes their intelligence and wisdom, so we'll grant them a +1 to Intelligence and a +1 to Wisdom for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 5 ft. walking speed for -2.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, vulnerability to psychic damage for -1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, no ability to speak for -1 BP, but flumphs can still understand Common for 0 BP. We'll keep the flumph's tendrils at 1d4 piercing and 1d4 acid damage for 2 BP, but we'll remove the ongoing damage component. We'll grant 30 ft. telepathy for 2 BP. Flumphs have no hands for -2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 5 BP, it's time to tackle the flumph's other abilities. Advanced Telepathy is extremely situational, so we'll call it 0.5 BP. Prone Deficiency can be an absolutely lethal handicap, but since the DC to avoid it is so low we'll call it -1 BP.

Telepathic Shroud is strong, but technically situational. Still, immunity to an entire school of magic is extremely potent. We'll keep the ability as written for 3 BP.

Finally, we need to do something with Stench Spray. I have to assume that the DC is tied to the flumph's Constitution modifier, and players will see that this is an extremely effect crowd-control effect. The Poisoned condition applies Disadvantage on attacks and ability checks, severely hindering those affected. Even at one use per day, this is still very powerful. If we allow a free saving throw every round and grant advantage for washing with water or something, I think we can bring this down to 2 BP.

At 9 BP, the flumph is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the flumph, allow it to use Stench Spray after a short rest or allow it to be used as a bonus action. If you want to weaken the flumph, remove Stench Spray.

## Fomorian

Evil, twisted descendants of a cursed race of giants, fomorians live a life of cruelty and depravity deep in the underdark.

### Fomorian Traits

Fomorians share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Evil, depraved creatures who bow only to superior strength, most fomorians are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Curse of the Evil Eye.** As an action, you may use your Evil Eye ability, but on a failed save the creature is also afflicted with a magical deformity. The creature may attempt a new saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

When you use this ability, choose one deformity from the list below.

- *Twisted Legs:* Reduce the creature's movement speed for 10 ft.
- *Warped Joints:* The creature has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws and ability checks, and on attacks based on Dexterity.
- *Withered Limbs:* The creature has disadvantage on Strength saving throws ability checks, and on attacks based on Strength.

**Evil Eye.** As an action, you may target one creature you can see within 30 ft. of you. The target must succeed on Charisma saving throw or take 1d8 psychic damage. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier. The

damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d8), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d8), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d8).

**Powerful Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Twisted Form.** Due to your deformed body, you are unable to wear armor. You may still use shields normally.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Giant.

### Playing a Fomorian

Fomorians are as strong as any giant, and as such make excellent barbarians and fighters. However, since they are unable to wear armor fomorian fighters may have problems with their armor class. Curse of the Evil Eye provides a potent tactical option which you can use to gain a temporary advantage over your foes.

Fomorians are evil creatures which prey on the weak, using slavery to feed themselves and eating slaves who are unable to serve them. They bow only to greater strength, so fomorians fit best into a party with an evil character sufficiently strong to bend the fomorian to some degree of respect and subservience.

### Design Notes

Fomorians are giants, and as such we can borrow a lot from the design work we already did on the cyclops. The fomorian's only unique abilities are Evil Eye and Curse of the Evil Eye, and they'll need some adjustment.

Cyclopes are Giants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Like many giants, fomorians are big, dumb brutes. We'll give them +2 Strength and +2 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from huge), +4 natural armor for 2 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common (Undercommon in this case) for 0 BP. We'll also add Powerful Build for 0.25 BP to make the fomorian feel like a giant despite its medium size. Based on their description and their twisted forms, we'll also disallow armor for -3 BP.

That brings our total to 7.75 BP before we tackle Evil Eye and its curse. Curse of the Evil Eye is a massively powerful debuff, and it will take quite a bit of adjustment to make it reasonable for a player. To replicate the damage effect, we can make a fake cantrip which deals psychic damage, and call it 0.5 BP. The difficult part is the debuffs.

I want Curse of the Evil Eye to be usable on a short rest, but to make that possible it needs to be fairly weak. A 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell usable on a short rest is 2.5 BP, which puts us over our target range. Some cantrips, like *ray of frost*, apply similar debuffs. If we allow the fomorian to apply the player's choice of one or a few minor debuffs, I think we can fit it into 1 BP.

At 6.25 BP, the fomorian is below our target range of 8-10 BP. It has a workable stat block and a really unique active ability that should make it fun to play. The fomorian's biggest limitation is its inability to wear armor, which is easily overcome by the Barbarian's Unarmored Defense thanks to the Fomorian's ability increases. If you want to strengthen the fomorian, allow it to wear armor. If you want to weaken the fomorian, reduce its ability score increases.

## Fungi

Fungi are oversized plant creatures native to the underdark, where the dark and damp provide excellent environs for these creatures to thrive.

### Fungi Traits

Fungi share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Plant

**Alignment.** Typically unthinking plants, most fungi are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Gas Spore

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Death Burst.** When you drop to 0 hit points, you explode in a cloud of spores and immediately die. Each creature within 20 feet of you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 poison damage and become infected with a disease on a failed save. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. The damage

increases by 1d6 when you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d6), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d6), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d6). Creatures immune to the poisoned condition are immune to this disease, and this ability has no effect on creatures which are already dead.

Spores invade an infected creature's system, killing the creature in a number of hours equal to 1d12 + the creature's Constitution score, unless the disease is removed. The disease can be removed magically, or with a successful Wisdom (Medicine) check against the original DC.

After the creature dies, you regrow from the creature's body with 1 hit point. If multiple infected creatures die after being infected, you respawn from the first creature's body. Each remaining effected body spawns 2d4 tiny gas spores that grow to full size in 7 days, and use the normal statistics for gas spores.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet, and can hover. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor. You are immune to the prone condition.

**Touch.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 poison damage on a hit.

#### Shrieker

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a normal fungus. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Keen Senses.** You have proficiency in the Perception skill.

**Shriek.** When a bright light or a hostile creature come within 30 ft. of you, you emit a shriek audible within 300 feet of you. You continue to shriek until the disturbance moves out of range and for 1d4 rounds after. You may force yourself to stop shrieking as a bonus action on your turn.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

#### Violet Fungus

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity, +1 Constitution.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a normal fungus. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Rotting Touch.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 necrotic damage on a hit.

Upon killing a creature with your rotting touch, the creature's body begins to decompose rapidly. If you die within 1 day, you regrow from the oldest body which you killed after 1 day. You are restored to life at 1 hit point. If you do not regrow from an affected body, a normal violet fungus grows from the body and reaches full size after 2d6 days.

### Playing a Fungi

Fungi are awakened plant creatures. Being magically awakened has some effect on the creature depending on who or what awakened them. Consider who or what awakened you, and your awakener's effect on your character's personality.

### Gas Spore

With no ability increases, it's hard to pick a class for the gas spore. You'll need to rely on the gas spore's Touch to fight, so consider classes which work well in melee like barbarian or monk. Death Burst can provide a timely burst of area damage, but when your hit points get low be sure that you have a living enemy nearby to infect.

Gas spores are borderline suicidal. They reproduce by spawning from the dead bodies of other creatures. This requires that you occasionally die and infect nearby creatures. Since the effects of your spores can kill your allies, be careful about where you are when your Death Burst goes into effect, and make sure that someone in your party is proficient in Medicine.

### Shrieker

Shriekers are simple creatures that defend themselves by bludgeoning foes with their bodies. Their excellent Strength and Constitution makes them excellent barbarians and fighters, but their Shriek ability makes it difficult for them to be subtle or stealthy.

### Violet Fungus

The violet fungus is physically capable, and has a potent natural weapon which deals necrotic damage. Due to its reliance on natural weapons, classes like barbarian and monk are good choices, but fighter may also be an option.

The violet fungus has the ability to regrow from corpses of creatures killed by the fungus's rotting touch. This ability is potent, but you may need to keep track of bodies in order to know where you will regrow. As bodies decompose, they will spawn normal violet fungi. These fungi are completely normal, and may be

hostile to you're and your allies, so be sure not to let them become problems for your party.

### Design Notes

Fungi are one of most difficult creatures in the Monster Manual to design as playable races. They are essentially mindless, 2 of the three don't move, and the third self-destructs when it takes damage. I'm going to have to take some artistic liberties to make these viable options. We'll make the base assumption that the plants have been affected by the *awaken* spell, which makes it much easier to turn fungi into a player race.

Fungi are plants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

All fungi have blindsight 30 ft. Since we're assuming that fungi are "awakened", we'll dump blindsight in favor of human-like senses. We'll add Darkvision for 2 BP since fungi are from the Underdark. They also have no hands for -2 BP. We'll allow fungi to speak Undercommon for 0 BP.

That leaves us at 0.5 BP before we design individual fungi.

### Gas Spore

The gas spore is essentially a bomb. It's designed to take damage then immediately explode and infect nearby creatures. The fact that these creatures survive to reproduce can be attributed almost entirely to the fact that they look like beholders. If they didn't, throwing rocks to destroy gas spores would quickly make them extinct. Since it's so central to the creature, I want to find a way to make Death Burst work for players.

The gas spore's ability scores are pitiful. They're literally designed for the gas spore to die immediately. I have no idea what to do with them.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (up from 10 ft.) for 4 BP and the ability to hover for 2 BP, and immunity to poison for 2 BP. We'll retain immunity to the prone condition for 0.5 BP. Gas spores have no hands for -2 BP and no arms for -2 BP.

That mess brings us to 2 BP, leaving us plenty of room for other abilities. With no hands, the gas spore really need a solid natural weapon. We'll grant a 1d8 poison damage natural weapon for 2 BP.

We'll leave Eerie Resemblance unmodified for 0.5 BP.

Death Burst is the gas spore's biggest draw. I want it to be really cool to compensate for the race's lack of ability score increases or other interesting abilities. To

keep it balanced, we'll match the damage to a cantrip. The range is fine, so we'll keep it at 20 ft.

The disease mechanic of Death Burst is still a problem. Creatures don't get any saves after the initial effect, so without access to magical disease removal, death is guaranteed. That's a bit much for a player ability. Instead, we'll allow the gas spore to grow if the creature dies after being diseased, and we'll allow a Wisdom (Medicine) check against the original DC so that creatures can attempt to remove the effect without magic. This places some responsibility on the gas spore's party members, since it's not guaranteed that an enemy will be killed by the gas spore's death burst.

The 7-day regrowth time may also be frustratingly long for players who are excited to jump back into adventuring after their party member regrows. Instead, we'll allow the gas spore to regrow at 1 hit point, then leave them to deal with healing on their own. This may encourage investment in Constitution and feats like Durable in order to boost their healing rate. We'll call all this 3 BP, but it's really hard to approximate effects which can make creatures nearly immortal.

At something like 7.25 BP, the gas is below our target range of 8-10 BP. However, Death Burst is unpredictable and potentially more powerful than the BP indicates. If you want to strengthen the gas spore, increase its natural weapon damage or grant it a +1 ability score increase. If you want to weaken the gas spore, reduce its flying speed or natural weapon damage.

### Shrieker

Where the gas spore is hard to design because it's weird, the shrieker is weird because it's boring. All it does is shriek. It doesn't move, it doesn't fight, and it doesn't release harmful spores. I really don't know what to do with it. I think our best bet is to make it a walking club made of fungus. I'm sure someone somewhere will at least get a laugh out of that.

The shrieker's ability scores are awful, but in keeping with our "fungus club" theme, we'll give it +2 to Strength and +2 to Constitution for 4 BP.

Amazingly, we get almost nothing from the stat block. We can keep False Appearance for 0.5 BP. Since Shriekers are all about screaming when they see stuff, I'll grant proficiency in Perception for 0.5 BP. We'll keep Shriek for free, but we'll modify it a bit so that shriekers aren't constantly screaming when a party member is nearby. Shriekers have no arms for -2 BP.

We'll grant the shrieker a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP so that shriekers can club people with their bodies.

At 5.5 BP, the shrieker is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's barely playable, but with so little source material there's not much that we can do. If you want to strengthen the shrieker, give it natural armor. As much as +4 for 2 BP would be reasonable. If you want to weaken the shrieker, reduce its natural weapon damage.

### Violet Fungus

The violet fungus is the easiest fungus to design. It already moves and has an attack, so we don't need to do a lot of crazy design to make them work.

The violet fungus's abilities are terrible. I want it to be less of a blunt instrument than the Shrieker, so I'll give it +1 to all three physical ability scores for 3 BP.

We don't get much from the violet fungus' stat block. We can keep false appearance for 0.5 BP, and we'll drop its natural weapon to 1d6 necrotic damage for 2 BP.

It's not listed in the stat block, but the violet fungus reproduces by killing other creatures, which then produce a new fungus after 2d6 days. Like the Gas Spore, we can adapt this to allow the fungus to regrow itself. The 2d6 days is the amount of time before the fungus fully regrows, so we'll tweak things to restore the fungus to 1 hp and allow natural healing to bring the fungus back up to full health. We'll also limit the effect to bodies killed in the past 24 hours; others will grow a normal violet fungus. This is a very potent ability, so we'll call it 4 BP.

At 10 BP, the violet fungus is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the violet fungus, extend the window it has to respawn from a corpse from 1 day to 2 days. If you want to weaken the violet fungus, remove one of its ability score increases.

## Galeb Duhr

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Galeb Duhr are earth spirits bound into a vaguely humanoid form made of stone, frequently created to guard specific locations. They are renowned for their ability to remain motionless.

### Galeb Duhr Traits

Galeb Duhr share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Though intelligent, Galeb Duhr's perception of the world is simple, and they are not prone to great philosophical thought. Most Galeb Duhr are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 15 ft.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a boulder. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 14 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Rolling Stone.** As a bonus action you may begin rolling. While rolling, your base speed is doubled (quadruple while rolling downhill). As a bonus action, you may stop rolling.

When you use your action to Dash while rolling, you can use a bonus action to make one unarmed strike or to shove a creature. This causes you to stop rolling.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Stone Body.** You are immune to the exhaustion, paralyzed, poisoned, and petrified conditions. In addition, you are immune to poison damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Terran.

## Playing a Galeb Duhr

Galeb Duhr are rocks. They're big, durable brutes. They make excellent Barbarians and Fighters, but don't do well at range. Their walking speed is a problem, so be sure to use Rolling Stone tactically to get into melee range.

Because Galeb Duhr are typically summoned to defend a location, they generally don't have a reason to go adventuring. Be sure to come up with a suitable explanation for how your Galeb Duhr came into existence, and why it is off adventuring instead of guarding something.

## Design Notes

Galeb Duhr are very similar to Earth Elementals, so they're going to have some stuff in common. Since they're large creatures, we'll drop their size to medium to fit in line with normal player race rules.

Galeb Duhr are of the elemental creature type, costing 1 BP.

Galeb Duhr have matching Strength and Constitution, so if they're going to get bonuses they should match. +2 to both would be appropriate, but

we're going to need a ton of BP to cover the Galeb Duhr's other abilities, so we'll go for +1 to each for 2 BP. We can use the reduced size as an explanation for being relatively frail compared to a normal Galeb Duhr.

From their stat block, we get +4 natural armor (down from +6) for 2 BP, 15 ft. walking speed for -1.5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP and only racial languages for -1 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, plus immunity to the exhausted, paralyzed, and petrified conditions for 1.5 BP. We'll need to discuss other basic parts of the stat block because the Galeb Duhr's abilities make them a bit complicated.

We're at 8 BP and we still need to tackle natural weapons, tremorsense, False Appearance, Rolling Charge, and Animate Boulders. Tremorsense isn't really important to making the Galeb Duhr a playable race and it's extremely powerful (and therefore expensive), so we'll just drop it.

The Galeb Duhr's slam deals 2d6 damage, which we can drop to 1d8 due to the size decrease. 2 BP is hard at this stage, but the Galeb Duhr's slam should be good enough to be its go-to weapon.

False Appearance is potentially very powerful, so we need to impose limitations to make it fit within our BP range. Spending one minute to get comfortable and enable the ability seems reasonable, and requiring Concentration means that the Galeb Duhr can't sit around and maintain spells while waiting to ambush enemies. We'll call that 0.5 BP.

There's nothing in the Monster Manual which indicates how the Galeb Duhr starts or ends rolling. As far as I can tell, you just declare it. If that's the case, there's functionally no penalty for the Galeb Duhr's terrible speed. I want rolling to be a fun tactical option rather than a way to bypass the Galeb Duhr's terrible speed.

I'll let the Galeb Duhr stop or start rolling as a bonus action. While this is a fairly minor cost, the limits of the action economy mean that Galeb Duhr will need to make a tactical decision about whether it's better to spend the bonus action and move quickly, or to trudge around on their feet.

We can also roll Rolling Charge into this mechanic by duplicating part of the Charger feat. If the character takes the Dash action, they can spend a bonus action to stop rolling and make an unarmed strike. The Galeb Duhr's monster entry allows them to deal an extra 2d6 damage *and* require a Strength save to resist being knocked prone. That's far too strong for a player ability, so we'll need to ignore that part. Players can already use the Shove action in place of an attack, so

we'll allow players to make an unarmed strike or a shove. I'm going to call this 2 BP total, but that might be a bit low. It's hard to say without extensive playtesting.

Animate Boulders is clearly too powerful for a player, so we'll need something similar. The Mold Earth cantrip is a good thematic fit for 0.5 BP, and since it's rarely useful in combat I think that it's fine to add despite exceeding our BP range.

At 13 BP, the Galeb Duhr exceeds our target BP range of 8-10, but I don't think that it's so powerful that it will cause notable problems. If you need to weaken the Galeb Duhr, drop its natural armor by a point or two, or drop its unarmed strike damage to 1d6.

## Gargoyle

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A source of constant paranoia for adventurers, gargoyles are evil creatures which disguise themselves as ordinary statues in order to ambush their prey.

### Gargoyle Traits

Gargoyles share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength or +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Gargoyles take great joy in harming other creatures, especially sentient creatures. Most Gargoyles are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a statue. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Stone Body.** You are immune to the poisoned and petrified conditions. In addition, you are immune to poison damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Terran.

### Playing a Gargoyle

Gargoyles are tough, flying creatures. Their natural armor allows them to survive without armor, and they work well at range or in melee. However, their slow walking speed means that they have trouble getting around in places where they can't fly.

Gargoyles are patient ambush predators, and typically disguise themselves as statues for centuries while waiting for a mortal to wander by. With such a sedentary personality, you'll need to consider a good reason why a gargoyle would go off adventuring.

### Design Notes

Gargoyles are very simple compared to other Elemental creatures, which simplifies their design considerably. However, their impressive flight speed adds a considerable BP cost which we need to anticipate from the beginning of the design process.

Gargoyles are of the elemental creature type, costing 1 BP.

Since they're made of rock, bonuses to Strength and Constitution make sense. Based on their monster stat block, +1 Strength and +1 Constitution for 2 BP does the job without costing too much BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +2 natural armor (down from +5) for 1 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (down from 30 ft.) for -0.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and only racial languages for -1 BP. We'll drop the gargoyle's resistances, but we'll keep Poison Resilience (down from immunity) for 1 BP, and condition immunity to Petrification for 0.5 BP. We'll set the gargoyle's natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP, but won't go any further so we can conserve BP.

False appearance costs another 0.5 BP, and we'll keep the limitations discussed in the Galeb Duhr design notes.

At 11.5 BP gargoyles exceed our target BP range of 8-10. If you need to weaken gargoyles reduce their natural armor or further reduce their walking speed. If you need to strengthen gargoyles increase their natural armor by 1 or increase their natural weapon damage.

## Genies

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Potent denizens of the elemental planes, genies are famed for their wealth and stature, and for their ability to grant wishes.

### Genie Traits

Genies share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Elemental Demise.** If you die, your body disintegrates, leaving behind only equipment you were wearing and a trace of your native elemental energy.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Dao

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Greedy, malicious, and vain, most dao are neutral evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a burrow speed of 10 ft.

**Earth Glide.** You can burrow through non-magical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, you don't disturb the material you move through.

**Earth Magic.** You know the *mold earth* cantrip. Charisma if your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Terran.

#### Djinni

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Jovial and mischievous, but not so prone to the cruel tendencies of other genies, most djinni are chaotic good.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Air Magic.** You know the *gust* cantrip. Charisma if your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Lightning Resistance.** You have resistance against fire damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Auran.

#### Efreeti

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Cruel, spiteful tyrants, most efreeti are lawful evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Fire Resistance.** You have resistance against fire damage.

**Hurl Flame.** You know the *fire bolt* cantrip. Charisma if your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Ignan.

## Marid

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Self-centered and egotistical, but not outright malicious, most marid are chaotic neutral.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Water Magic.** You know the *shape water* cantrip. Charisma if your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Aquan.

## Playing a Genie

Genies are haughty and self-assured, and believe themselves second only to deities. They take pride in material wealth, in keeping slaves, and in their impressive homes. The desire for prestige, material wealth, or political gain might motivate a genie to pursue a life of adventure outside of the genie's native plane.

## Dao

Dao are strong and durable. Their ability to glide through earth allows them to be extremely mobile. To capitalize on these abilities, consider classes like barbarian and fighter.

Dao are greedy, egotistical creatures. They can be a strong presence in an evil party, and despite their lack of charisma might serve as a suitable party leader through force. Other party members might be grudging equals, willing subordinates, or possibly slaves.

## Djinni

The djinni's strength and charisma makes them excellent paladins, sorcerers, and warlocks. They can also serve as purple dragon knight fighters.

Djinni are the friendliest of genies. They treat their slaves like favored servants, deserving both of respect and protection. They can also be bent to service or cooperation with flattery and bribes. A djinni in a party might have been convinced by one of the party members, or it might view the rest of the party as its slaves. Regardless, djinni react harshly to betrayal by those whom it trusts.

## Efreeti

Efreeti are fast and durable, but lack the strength or charisma of other genies. They work well in any class, though they lack an aptitude for any specific task. Their Constitution increase may be helpful for classes like barbarian, fighter, and monk, but their increased speed can be helpful for rangers, rogues, and spellcasters.

Efreeti don't play well with others. They're cruel masters, so making the party slaves can be problematic for a group of players. Efreeti also don't particularly

like being bound to service, but this may be preferable to letting the efreeti take command. Consider your character's place in the party carefully before considering the efreeti.

## Marid

The marid's abilities make it an excellent spellcaster. Cleric, druid, and wizard are all obvious choices but don't overlook eldritch knight fighter or arcane trickster rogue.

Marid are egomaniacs, so their retelling of events may often overshadow the presence of other party members. If the rest of the party can endure this, marids fit easily into many parties.

## Design Notes

Genies share a lot in common with genasi and elementals, so we can borrow design ideas from both, but we must also be careful to distinguish genies from genasi and elementals. Genasi are humanoids with some elemental traits, but lack the magical potency of a genie. Elementals are raw elemental energy given form, but lack the finesse and refinement of a genie.

Genies are elementals, costing 0.5 BP but offering none of the specific traits which most other elementals receive (not needing to eat and sleep, etc.).

From the stat blocks, we can draw some common traits. They all have natural armor, but we'll abandon it to save BP since genies can easily wear armor. They can all fly, though at different speeds. They all have Darkvision for 2 BP, and only speak their racial languages for -1 BP.

We'll keep Elemental Demise for -0.25 BP. A body is required for many spells which raise the dead, but it doesn't come up frequently, so this usually isn't important.

That brings us to 1.25 BP before we approach individual genies. We'll need to make massive cuts to make genies playable, but not outright better than other race options. I'm not too worried about outdoing genasi since the air and earth genasi are both terrible. The fire and water genasi are actually playable, so I'll try not to step on their toes too much.

## Dao

Dao are much like other earth-related elementals: strong, durable, and little else.

Their best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll give dao +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 25 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for -0.5 BP, 10 ft. burrow speed (down from 30 ft.) for 2 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP,

and condition immunity to Petrified for 0.5 BP. We'll retain Sure-Footed, but its BP cost is somewhere between 0.25 and 0, so we'll just ignore it.

That brings our total to 9.25. We can't come anywhere close to the dao's innate spellcasting, so we'll add the *mold earth* cantrip for 0.5 BP and call it good.

At 9.75 BP, the dao is within our target range of 8-10 BP. Dao have a good flavor, but since so much of their BP is tied up in movement modes, they don't have anything particularly flashy. Still, having both a burrow speed and a flight speed is a rare combination. If you want to weaken the Dao, reduce its burrow and its fly speed. If you want to strengthen the dao, grant it natural armor.

### Djinni

Djinni are air genies, and are notably the only good-aligned genie. Their abilities are primarily air-themed, and they have access to several air-related abilities and spells.

Adjusting for size, Charisma is the djinni's highest ability. Strength is still a good ability for the djinni, so we'll grant +1 Strength and +1 Charisma for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 90 ft.) for 4 BP, and damage resistance to lightning damage for 2 BP (down from immunity). We'll drop thunder immunity to save BP.

Like the dao, we can't replicate the djinni's innate spellcasting so we'll grant it the *gust* cantrip for 0.5 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the djinni is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It trades the Dao's additional movement mode for resistance to lightning damage, and the djinni's abilities make it viable for several interesting builds. If you want to weaken the djinni, remove its lightning damage resistance. If you want to strengthen the djinni, increase its fly speed or add thunder damage resistance.

### Efreeti

Efreeti are perhaps the most evil of genies. As fire elementals, they are resistant to fire damage, and like many fire elemental creatures they are strong and highly mobile.

The efreeti's highest ability is Constitution, so we'll grant +1 for 1 BP to conserve BP.

From the stat block, we get 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 1 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, and resistance to fire damage (down from immunity) for 2 BP.

We can't match the efreeti's innate spellcasting, so we'll grant it the *fire bolt* cantrip to replicate Hurl Flame for 0.5 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the efreeti is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to weaken the efreeti, reduce its walking speed. If you want to strengthen the efreeti, grant it a +1 Strength increase.

### Marid

Marid are weird fishy genies. They like to tell tall tales, and are exceptionally egotistical, even by genie standards.

The marid's abilities are almost all good. Adjusting for size its Strength and Constitution are the best, but that's not particularly interesting. Marids are notable both the most intelligent and wisest genies, so we'll grant the marid +1 to Intelligence and Wisdom for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. swim speed (down from 30 ft.) for 2 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 90 ft.) for 4 BP. They have resistance to an impressive three energy types, but we'll need to drop all three to save BP.

We can't match the marid's innate spellcasting, so we'll grant it the *shape water* cantrip for 0.5 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the marid is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to weaken the marid, make players select between one of the two ability increases. If you want to strengthen the marid, allow players to choose two ability increases from any of the three mental abilities.

## Ghouls

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Ghouls are cannibalistic undead that hunt in packs, seeking humanoid flesh.

### Ghoul Traits

Ghouls share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Ghouls are undead cannibals. Ghouls are nearly always Chaotic Evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Ghoulish Resistance.** You are immune to the Charmed, Exhausted, and Poisoned conditions, and you are immune to Poison damage.

**Paralyzing Claws.** On a successful melee attack with your claws, you may attempt to paralyze the target. The target must make a Constitution save against a DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. On a failure, the target is paralyzed for 1 minute. Elves and undead are immune to this effect. At the end of the creature's turn, they may attempt this save again, ending the effect on a successful saving throw.

You may not use this ability again until you have completed a long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

## Playing a Ghoul

Ghouls work well in the dark. Their Darkvision and Paralyzing Claws make them excellent assassins, so they excel as Rogues. Their Dexterity also helps them as Monks, Rangers, and sometimes as Fighters.

Because Ghouls are evil, flesh-eating undead, they often have issues traveling among civilized people. Be sure to find ways to disguise your true nature in places where it might be a liability, and seek out allies who are willing to tolerate your cannibalistic nature.

## Design Notes

Ghouls are very straightforward by undead standards. Their only complex mechanic is the paralyzing effect on their claws.

Ghouls are undead, which costs 1 BP.

The ghoul's only notably good ability score is Dexterity, so we'll go for +1 to Dexterity for 1 BP. That's lower than most races get to their primary ability score, but the Ghoul's appeal isn't in its ability scores.

From the Ghoul stat block, we can take medium size, 30 ft. walk speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common. We'll pick up the common undead immunities to Charmed, Exhaustion, and Poison for 3 BP total.

Ghouls deal 2d6 damage with their bite or 2d4 with their claws. Players use natural weapons as unarmed

strikes, and generally don't distinguish between the body part used to make the attack. Since I want to emphasize the claws, we'll focus on the claw damage. Since no weapons deal 2d4 damage in 5e, we'll shoot for 1d8 for a total of 2 BP.

We've spent 9 BP so far and covered everything but the paralysis effect on the claws. Based on the monster stat block, the Ghoul's save DC is 8 + proficiency + Constitution (10 for both the Ghast and the Ghoul presented in the Monster Manual). While this DC is fine on a monster which might appear in one or two encounters, a player is going to be using this ability 1 or more times almost every round for the life of the character. With even a modest investment in Constitution that becomes a game-breaking ability immediately.

Instead of applying to every attack, we could make the paralysis apply only on critical hits. That would make it a cool ability which the player can count on for an infrequent but potent advantage. However, it also means that 5% of the time the player can paralyze any foe not immune to the effect. That's a bit problematic, especially when you consider the likelihood of Ghoul Monks and Fighters making 4 attacks a turn.

We could apply the effect on critical hits *and* require a save. That makes the ability reasonably easy to avoid, but also makes the ability difficult to rely upon for classes which don't get more than one or two attacks.

I think our best bet is to make the ability an on-hit effect with limited uses. Once per long rest seems reasonable with a repeating Constitution save by the target for 1 BP. Making the ability usable more often would be great, but considering that this replicates the effect of a 5<sup>th</sup>-level spell without Concentration it's already very powerful.

At 10 BP, the ghoul is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. The Ghoul's abilities are mostly passive, but its claws and paralysis ability give it some unique active options. If you want to strengthen the ghoul, increase its Dexterity increase to +2. If you want to weaken the ghoul, reduce its natural weapon damage.

## Giants

Ancient creatures resembling gigantic humanoids. Giants live within a rigid social structure called the ordning, and serve ancient giant deities over the deities revered by other races.

### Giant Traits

Giants share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Giant



**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Powerful Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Rock.** As a ranged weapon attack you can conjure and throw a large rock with a free hand. This attack has a range of 20/60 ft., and deals 1d6 + your Strength modifier bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Giant.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Cloud Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Wisdom, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Cloud giants primarily worship Memnor, the giant trickster deity. Depending on the giant's favorite aspects of Memnor, a cloud giant is usually either neutral good or neutral evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Cloud Magic.** You know the *light* cantrip. Upon reaching third level, you can cast the *fog cloud* spell each once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

#### Fire Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Brutal tyrants who work their slaves to death in fields and in mines, most fire giants are lawful evil.

**Armor Training.** You have proficiency with light and medium armor.

**Born of Flame.** You have resistance against fire damage.

**Master Craftsmen.** You are proficient with one set of artisan's tools of your choice.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

#### Frost Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Violent raiders who respect nothing but the ordning and physical might, most frost giants are neutral evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Born of Winter.** You have resistance against cold damage.

#### Hill Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Motivated by little more than hunger and prone to fits of rage, most hill giants are chaotic evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

#### Stone Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Reclusive and caring little for the outside world, most stone giants are neutral.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Rock Catching.** If a rock or similar object is hurled at you, as a Reaction you can, with a successful Dexterity saving throw, catch the missile and take no bludgeoning damage from it. This DC is 10, + 5 for each size category by which the attacker is larger than you.

#### Storm Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Benevolent, but bound only by their own moral compass, most storm giants are chaotic good.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Born of the Storm.** You have resistance to thunder damage.

**Storm Magic.** You know the *shocking grasp* cantrip. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

#### Playing a Giant

Giants are widely varied in personality, but all live within the Ordning. Ordning politics might provide numerous motivations for giants who are commanded by higher-ranking giants, or they might choose to adventure in order to advance their own status.

Remember that all giants have the ability to throw stones, so they are never without a weapon.

#### Cloud Giant

Cloud giants are potent spellcasters among giant kind, and their abilities make them excellent clerics, druids, sorcerers, and warlocks.

Cloud giants are second only to the storm giants in the ordning, and as such rely on lower giants to do much of their dirty work, especially when violence is required. Cloud giants are motivated by status and displays of wealth, and often gamble on events in mortal lands to gain both. A clever giant might move to influence such events directly, perhaps even walking among mortals to cheat other gamblers. So long as they don't get caught, even other cloud giants consider this a clever decision.

#### Fire Giant

Fire giants are strong and tough like most giants. Their resistance to fire and easy access to armor allows them to succeed in classes which would normally require high dexterity to survive frequent combat in light armor. Consider classes like barbarian, fighter, and ranger.

Fire giants are fiercely militaristic, seeking to conquer and enslave lands near their homes in order to feed their communities of smiths, artisans, and soldiers. A fire giant might take to life of adventure to acquire resources for their forge, or they might be commanded to do so by a giant higher in the Ordning.

#### Frost Giant

Frost giants are strong and remarkably quick for such a bulky creature. Use your improved speed to your advantage in melee combat. Consider classes like Barbarian and Fighter which excel in combat.

Falling on the lower half of the Ordning, frost giants have little political influence among giants. They are motivated mostly by the need to gather food and weaponry to survive their homelands. Still, since they are so low-ranking, many giants could compel a frost giant to a life of adventure for those giants' own purposes.

### Hill Giant

Hill giants are big dumb slabs of meat. They make fine Barbarians and Fighters, but have little utility beyond smashing things.

Hill giants have simple personalities and emotions, and are prone to fits of rage. Party members need to be cautious not to offend the hill giant or make the giant feel inadequate in any way lest they enrage the hill giant. Hill giants lack any real culture, instead adopting whatever cultures they have been able to observe recently. This mimicry might lead a hill giant to adopt a life of adventure after briefly seeing a group of adventurers (likely before killing and eating them).

### Stone Giant

Stone giants are the nimblest of giants. Despite their strength, they also make excellent rangers and rogues, though their abilities work just as well for fighters.

Stone giants are typically reclusive, and view the surface world as a surreal dream-world where nothing is real. As such, their behavior might be erratic while they are above ground, making them a potential liability to surface-dwelling allies.

### Storm Giant

Storm giants are strong and wise, making them excellent clerics and druids. Their ability to throw stones and cast *shocking grasp* give them reliable combat options even without a weapon at hand.

Storm giants are wise, patient seers. When they venture from their secluded homes, they do so with great purpose toward a long-term vision which might reach well beyond the lifespans of shorter-lived races like humans or elves.

### Design Notes

Giants have a lot in common. Like subraces of a normal humanoid race, giants are primarily distinguished by abilities which distinguish their theme and flavor.

Giants are giants (obviously), costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

We'll drop all giants to medium size. To make them feel big, we'll grant Powerful Build for 0.25 BP, and we'll allow all giants to speak racial languages and common for 0 BP.

All true giants also share the ability to throw boulders. This is a really fun, flavorful ability that I want to retain in some form. However, I don't want it to completely replace actual ranged weapons. I'll allow giants to throw stones as a ranged weapon attack, dealing 1d6 damage. We'll call this 2 BP.

That brings us to 2.75 BP before we examine individual races.

### Cloud Giant

Cloud giants are haughty, reclusive giants who dwell high above the world, gathering wealth and prestige to raise their status in the Ordning. They are among the best giant spellcasters, second only to storm giants.

Based on their hands-off role in giant conflicts, and the note about them being notable spellcasters among giants, I want to avoid making cloud giants another Strength/Constitution race. Cloud giants have the best Wisdom and Charisma among true giants (excluding Storm Giants), so we'll grant a +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get +2 natural armor (down from +4) for 1 BP, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP, racial languages plus Common for 0 BP, and Keen Smell for 0.5 BP.

At 6.25 BP, we've got some more room to explore the cloud giant's innate spellcasting. Looking at the lower-level options in the stat block, we can pick up the *light* cantrip for 0.5 BP, the *fog cloud* spell for 1 BP.

At 8.25 BP, the cloud giant is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the cloud giant, add the ability to cast the *feather fall* spell. If you want to weaken the cloud giant, remove the ability to cast *fog cloud*.

### Fire Giant

Fire giants' stats hardly reflect their flavor. Fire giants are the great crafter among giants, claiming slave kingdoms to feed their enormous forges.

Like many giants, the fire giant's best abilities are Strength and Constitution. We'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 25 ft. walking speed (down from 30 ft.) for -0.5 BP, resistance to fire damage (down from immunity) for 2 BP.

To keep with their theme as skilled crafters, we'll also grant the fire giant proficiency in one type of artisan's tools of the player's choice for 0.75 BP.

That doesn't leave the fire giant with much, so we'll add proficiency in light and medium armor for 2 BP.

At just 9 BP the fire giant is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the fire giant, increase one of its ability score increases. If you want to weaken the fire giant, remove its Strength increase.

### Frost Giant

Frost giants are simple creatures. They don't have any especially interesting abilities, and they win fights by being big and muscly and hitting stuff.

The frost giant's best abilities are Strength and Constitution. We'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get 35 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP and cold resistance for 2 BP. Unfortunately, that's all that we have to go on.

At 8.25 BP, the frost giant is a bit boring, but plenty functional. If you want to strengthen the frost giant, increase its Constitution increase. If you want to weaken the frost giant, reduce its Strength increase.

### Hill Giant

Huge and barely intelligent, hill giants are incredibly plain. They're going to be a stat block with big plusses and little else.

We're going to give the hill giant +2 Strength and +2 Constitution for 4 BP. There's little else we could do here.

From the stat block, we get +3 natural armor (down from +5) for 1.5 BP and 30 ft. walking speed.

At 8.25 BP, the hill giant is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the hill giant, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the hill giant, reduce its Constitution increase.

### Stone Giant

Stone giants are bizarre by giant standards. They have more special abilities than most giants, and have the notable ability to catch rocks.

Stone giants are strong and tough like other giants, but accounting for size their Dexterity is nearly as good as their other physical abilities. I want to emphasize this unique trait, so we'll give the stone giant +1 Strength and +1 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, and Camouflage for 0.5 BP. We'll retain Rock Catching for 0.5 BP since it won't come up often, but we'll adjust it to make it harder to catch rocks thrown by larger creatures.

At 8.75 BP stone giants are within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen stone giants, grant them a constitution increase. If you want to weaken stone giants, remove Rock Catching.

### Storm Giant

Storm giants are the most powerful of giant, and their stats reflect that superiority. They function as well on land as they do underwater.

Storm giants are as strong as any other giant, but they're also the wise leaders and seers of giant-kind. To emphasize this, we'll grant the storm giant +1 Strength and +1 Wisdom for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed (down from 50 ft.), and 30 ft. swim speed (down from 50 ft.) for 2 BP. We'll drop cold resistance and lightning immunity, but we'll keep thunder resistance for 2 BP. We'll retain Amphibious for 0.5 BP.

That brings us to 9.25 BP, leaving us little room for the storm giants remaining abilities. I really like Lightning Strike, but there isn't an equivalent spell effect so we'll grant storm giants the *shocking grasp* cantrip for 0.5 BP to keep the thematic effect.

At 9.75 BP, the storm giant is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the storm giant, grant it resistance to lightning damage. If you want to weaken the storm giant, remove the ability to cast *shocking grasp*.

## Gibbering Moulder

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Horrifying creatures resembling amoeba made of eyes and toothy maws, known for their ability to drive prey to madness with their insane gibbering.

### Gibbering Moulder Traits

Gibbering moulers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Despite being a horrifying abomination, gibbering moulers are motivated by little more than simple instinct, so most gibbering moulers are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**Amoeboid.** Your body is a gelatinous, amoeboid form. You are unable to wear armor. You have no arms or hands, and are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Bites.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Blinding Spittle.** As an action, you can spit a chemical glob at a creature which you can see within 15 feet of you. The glob explodes in a blinding flash of blinding light. The creature must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of your next turn. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Gibber.** As an action, you can babble incoherently.



Each creature that is within 20 feet of you and can hear you must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. On a failure, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during its turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action or bonus action and uses all its movement to move in a randomly determined direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Trip.** If you hit a creature with an unarmed strike, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Gibbering Moulder

The gibbering moulder is a strange creature. Without the ability to use spellcasting foci or perform somatic components. Instead, look for classes that work well in melee. Without the ability to wear armor, barbarian is an obvious choice to capitalize on the gibbering moulder's strong Constitution, but fighter and monk can also be options.

As a horrifying monster with vaguely-defined origins, gibbering moulthers are a strange addition to any party. An evil (or at least sufficiently permissive) party might welcome such a hideous creature, but expect them to treat you like the monstrosity that you are.

### Design Notes

Gibbering moulthers are a bit of a mess. Their abilities are weird and alien, they don't have normal humanoid anatomy, and they have several completely unique abilities. We'll need to strength some things to make the moulder playable and weaken others to make it fair.

Gibbering moulthers are aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Amazingly, the gibbering moulder's only good ability is Constitution. We'll give the moulder +2 Constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 20 ft. walking speed (up from 10 ft.) for -1 BP, 20 ft. swim speed (up from 10 ft.) for 1 BP, immunity to the Prone condition for 0.5 BP and Darkvision for 2 BP. Gibbering moulthers have no

hands or arms for a total of -4 BP, and can't wear armor for another -3 BP. Gibbering moulthers normally don't speak a language, but we'll grant them the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. They certainly have enough mouths.

At -2 BP, we have a ton of room. We'll grant the moulder a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP and add Trip for another 2 BP. That still leaves us quite a bit of room Aberrant Ground, Gibbering, and Blinding Spittle.

Aberrant Ground could be very powerful. It makes the gibbering moulder difficult to move past, which makes it a powerful front-line character without relying on class abilities or the Sentinel feat to prevent enemies from moving past it. I think we'll drop the range to 5 ft. and call it 2 BP, but it's hard to approximate how strong such a unique effect will be.

Gibbering is obviously too powerful to be a passive for a player. Even allowing it to be used at will is too good, so we'll update it to be usable once per short rest as an action. Beyond that I think we can leave the ability unchanged. It's unclear what ability informs the DC, but based on the gibbering moulder stat block it looks like Wisdom is the key ability. That really doesn't make much sense (except that Wisdom is the gibbering moulder's only passable mental ability), so we'll make it Charisma instead. There are 1<sup>st</sup>-level spells which are arguably more powerful, but we'll call this 3 BP to be safe.

Blinding spittle is another weird ability. It has a recharge roll, so we'll drop it to once per encounter like we've done previously with other recharge abilities. I'm hesitant to grant an AOE blind effect like this. Blindness/Deafness is the closest magical approximation, and it's a 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell which affects only one target. Of course, it also has a 1-minute duration. If we drop the duration to 1 round, I think we can equate it to a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell, and allow it on a short rest for 3 BP.

At 10 BP, the gibbering moulder is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the gibbering moulder, grant it natural armor. If you want to weaken the gibbering moulder, reduce its natural weapon damage to 1d6.

### Gith

Githyanki and Githzerai were once on race enslaved by Illithids. A great leader named Gith led them to freedom, but their race divided between the leadership of Gith and that of Zerthimon. Since then, the two races have remained completely separate, and hate each other bitterly.

## Gith Traits

Gith share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (gith)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Psychic Strikes.** Starting at third level, as a bonus action, you may focus your psionic energies behind your attacks. For one minute, your melee weapon attacks deal an additional 1d6 psychic damage, and are treated as attacks from a magic weapon. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Gith.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Githyanki

Githyanki share the following racial traits in addition to the racial traits shared by all Gith.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Githyanki are a heavily war-like race, devoting their entire existence to hunting their former masters. Most Githyanki are Lawful Evil.

**Psionics.** You know the *mage hand* Cantrip, and when you cast it the hand is invisible. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast *jump* once per day. Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you can cast *misty step* once per day. Once you reach 7<sup>th</sup> level, you can cast *nondetection* (self only) once per day. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

### Githzerai

Githzerai share the following racial traits in addition to the racial traits shared by all Gith.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Githzerai are contemplative and philosophical, devoting their efforts and abilities to defending themselves and their monasteries against the predations of the Illithids and the hostility of the Githyanki. Most Githzerai are Lawful Neutral.

**Psionics.** You know the *mage hand* Cantrip, and when you cast it the hand is invisible. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast *feather fall*, *jump*, and *shield* spells each once per day. Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you can cast *see invisibility* once per day. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

## Playing a Gith

Gith are skilled warriors with potent psionic abilities. Githyanki make excellent Barbarians, Fighters, Rangers, and occasionally Rogues. Githzerai make excellent Druids, Monks, and Rangers.

Both Gith subraces share a mutual hatred of Mind Flayers, and hunting and killing them is an important part of both Gith cultures. Because this task is so central to the cultures of the two subraces, it makes an excellent justification for adventuring.

## Design Notes

Gith are difficult to convert to a playable race. Their stat blocks include abnormally high ability scores and a lot of innate spellcasting. They also deal bonus psychic damage on all of their attacks.

I think it makes sense to assume that the stat blocks presented in the *Monster Manual* include something along the lines of class levels. Githzerai are clearly Monks, while Githyanki are almost certainly Fighters. This emphasis helps us to parse out what is central to the race absent any specific training or experience, and also helps guide us toward where the race's abilities should excel.

Gith are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

Both subraces have high Dexterity, so they'll each get a +1 to Dexterity. Githyanki have high Strength, so we'll give them a +1 to Strength as well. Githzerai have high Wisdom and are frequently Monks, so we'll give them +1 Wisdom. That's 2 BP for either subrace.

The Gith stat blocks give us 30 ft. walk speed, no special senses, and only racial languages for -1 BP.

The innate spellcasting for both subraces is easy to implement so long as we drop the 3/day uses. Both subraces get *Mage Hand* for .5 BP. Githyanki get *jump* (1 BP), *misty step* (2 BP), and *nondetection* (3 BP) for a total of 6 BP. Githzerai get *feather fall* (1 BP), *jump* (1 BP), *see invisibility* (2 BP), and *shield* (1 BP) for a total of 5 BP.

That brings us to 7 BP for Githzerai and 6 BP for Githyanki. I think that the "self only" limitation on the Githzerai's *Nondetection* balances things out.

The last piece to consider is the Gith ability to add psychic damage to attacks. Githzerai do d8's of damage, which Githyanki only deal d6's. I think that d6's make more sense for bonus damage on attack, so we'll stick to those. We need to limit this ability considerably to keep it from becoming a problem at low levels where even 1d6 bonus damage can easily win a fight.



In this case I think it makes sense to steal another ability and reskin it. The Azer's Heated Weapon ability (see the Azer entry in this document) can cover this ability perfectly. We can tweak it a bit to work with any melee weapon attack, and to be a magical weapon attack to mimic the Gith monster stat blocks, and call it 3 BP.

That brings the Githyanki up to 10 BP (less if we consider the "self only" limitation on Nondetection worth BP) and the Githzerai up to 9 BP, both of which fit into our target range of 8-10 BP. Both Gith have lots of cool active abilities which give them fun tactical options. However, they lack passive abilities common to other races, so players may find them "bursty", in that they may spend their racial abilities quickly and run out of usable options early in the day.

## Gnolls

The vial spawn of the demon lord Yeenoghu, Gnolls are a savage race of hyena-like humanoids with a wild penchant for violence and destruction. They are formidable warriors, forming tribes dominated by a single alpha who rose to power through strength, violence, and cunning.

### Gnoll Traits

Gnolls share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (Gnoll)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength.

**Alignment.** Gnolls are descendants of the demon lord Yeenoghu. They are bereft of anything resembling a conscience, motivated only by the need to kill and destroy. Gnolls are nearly always chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Rampage.** When you reduce a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on your turn, you can take a bonus action to move up to half your speed and make a bite attack.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Gnoll.

### Playing a Gnoll

Gnolls are normally murderous, rampaging maniacs. While this is fine for something that the party needs to defeat in battle, it's a bit of a problem for a player character. Unless your party is a group of similarly-motivated psychopaths, you may want to grant your Gnoll a higher purpose than simple violence.

While it's not emphasized in the Gnoll's abilities (either here or in the monster stat block), remember that Gnolls formed from hyenas, and that is a great

insight into their personalities and behavior. Hyenas are opportunistic pack hunters, and will attack ruthlessly when they have an overwhelming chance of victory, but are smart enough to retreat when they are outmatched or when things are going poorly.

Consider also why your character departed his tribe. Was he or she driven out for some transgression? Are they fleeing a power struggle? Was their tribe destroyed or scattered by adventurers or a rival group?

## Design Notes

Gnolls are brutes in a similar vein to Orcs and many other similarly barbaric humanoid.

Gnolls are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities. Based on their monster stat block, Strength appears to be their best ability score, so we'll give them a +2 to Strength for 2 BP.

Rampage is the Gnoll's signature ability, and I want to leave it in place unchanged if possible. We can either make it limitless, once per short rest, or once per long rest. Long rest is obviously silly, but I'm not sure if I want to go for short rest either. The ability might trigger once or twice in an entire encounter, and a single attack for 1d4+ damage as a bonus action isn't going to break anything. Still, let's call that 2 BP. Maybe 3, but 1 point won't make or break the race.

The rest of the Gnoll's traits can be copied straight from the monster stat block. Their bite is a natural weapon for 1 BP. 30 ft. walking speed is standard. +2 BP for Darkvision. Gnolls normally only speak Gnoll, but we'll give them standard racial language plus Common so that they work in a party of non-Gnolls without spending additional character resources to learn Common.

That leaves our total BP at 7 or 8, depending on how we weight Rampage. A little lower than our target of 8-10, but still fantastic as a Barbarian, Fighter, or Paladin. If you want to buff Gnolls a bit more, I recommend a +1 to Dexterity or Constitution.

## Goblins

A staple of fantasy settings, goblins are small, evil humanoids who live in the wild places of the world, occasionally ranging into civilized lands to kill, loot, and pillages.

Goblins are the smaller of goblinoid kind, but frequently ally with Bugbears and Hobgoblins for mutual strength when they attack civilized races.

## Goblin Traits

Goblins share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (Goblinoid)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Goblins revel in theft, murder, and inflicting pain on other creatures. Goblins are almost always Chaotic Evil.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Stealthy.** You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

**Nimble Escape.** You can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Goblin.

## Playing a Goblin

Goblins are cowardly and weak on their own, but work well in groups, especially when there are larger members to draw attention away from the goblin. As such, Goblins often make excellent Rangers and Rogues, allowing them to capitalize on their natural Dexterity while other allies draw the ire of the party's foes.

Goblins rarely depart from their home, as they are safest among the multitudes of their own kind. If you plan to play a goblin among other races, be sure to find a suitable reason why your character left their home and fell in with the party.

## Design Notes

Goblins are small creatures, roughly on par with Halflings, and they should fill a similar niche. Goblins are presented with high Dexterity, which makes their ability increase obvious. +2 Dexterity for 2 BP is fine, but I don't see a need for any other ability score increases.

Goblins are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

Comparing the three types of Goblinoids, we can see that they all have proficiency in Stealth, which seems like a nice component to share between the three races' traits. 0.5 BP for a fixed skill proficiency.

Nimble Escape actually presents a significant design problem. It covers 2/3 of the function of Cunning Action, which is wasteful because Goblin Rogues are a common choice for players hoping to play a monstrous race. Adding it unmodified doesn't present any balance issues, but it's likely going to be wasted on many

characters. It's a pretty great ability, so let's call that 2 BP.

The rest of the Goblin's traits can be copied straight from the monster stat block. 30 ft. walking speed for +0.5 BP (remember that 25 ft. is the default for small creatures), +2 BP for Darkvision, and normal racial languages plus Common.

That leaves our total BP at 7. A little lower than our target of 8-10, but plenty playable for Rangers, Rogues, or Fighters. If you want to buff Goblins a bit more, I recommend a +1 to Intelligence or Wisdom.

## Golems

Enduring creatures built to serve their master's commands, golems are magical juggernauts wrought from humble materials.

### Golem Traits

Golems share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Construct. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution

**Alignment.** Constructs built to serve their master's will without complaint, most golems are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Immutable Form.** Your body is composed of inanimate materials, compelled to move by magic. You are immune to the Exhaustion, Paralyzed, Petrified, and Poisoned conditions, and to poison damage. You are immune to any spell or effect which would alter your form.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Clay Golem

**Acid Resistance.** You have resistance to acid damage.

**Berserk.** Whenever you start your turn with half of your maximum hit points or fewer and are not incapacitated, roll a d6. On a 6, you go berserk. On each of your turns while berserk, you attack the nearest creature you can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack you attack an object, with preference for an object smaller than yourself. Once you go berserk, you continue to do so you are destroyed or regain all of your hit points.

After one minute, you may attempt to calm yourself by making a Wisdom save against a DC of 15. On a success, you regain control of your actions. On a failure, you continue to go berserk. You do not need to roll a d6 at the beginning of your turns unless you take additional damage which leaves you below half of your maximum hit points.

While you are going berserk a trusted ally may attempt to calm you by speaking in in a calm, firm voice as an action. You must be able to hear the ally, who makes a Persuasion check against a DC of 15. On a success, you are calmed just as if you passed the Wisdom save to calm yourself.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Haste.** You can momentarily increase your speed, striking swiftly and evading blows with ease. Until the end of your next turn, you magically gain a +2 bonus to AC, have advantage on Dexterity saving throws, and can make a melee weapon attack as a bonus action.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Unstable Form.** Your body is not completely rigid, and your limbs often fluctuate in size and shape as you move. You are unable to wear armor, but may still use shields.

### Flesh Golem

**Aversion to Fire.** If you take fire damage, you suffer disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of your next turn.

**Berserk.** Whenever you start your turn with half of your maximum hit points or fewer and are not incapacitated, roll a d6. On a 6, you go berserk. On each of your turns while berserk, you attack the nearest creature you can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack you attack an object, with preference for an object smaller than yourself. Once you go berserk, you continue to do so you are destroyed or regain all of your hit points.

After one minute, you may attempt to calm yourself by making a Wisdom save against a DC of 15. On a success, you regain control of your actions. On a failure, you continue to go berserk. You do not need to roll a d6 at the beginning of your turns unless you take additional damage which leaves you below half of your maximum hit points.

While you are going berserk a trusted ally may attempt to calm you by speaking in a calm, firm voice as an action. You must be able to hear the ally, who makes a Persuasion check against a DC of 15. On a success, you are calmed just as if you passed the Wisdom save to calm yourself.

**Lightning Immunity.** You are immune to lightning damage.

#### Iron Golem

**Body of Iron.** Your AC is equal to 18. You gain no benefit from wearing armor, but may still wear shields normally.

**Poison Breath.** As an action, you can breathe poison in a 15 foot cone. Each creature in that cone must make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 poison damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

#### Stone Golem

**Body of Stone.** Your AC is equal to 18. You gain no benefit from wearing armor, but may still wear shields normally.

**Slow.** You can target one or more creatures within 10 feet of you and magically slow their movements. Each target must make a Wisdom saving throw against this magic. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency modifier + your Constitution bonus. On a failed save, a target can't use reactions, its speed is halved, and it can't make more than one attack on its turn. In addition, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both.

These effects last for 1 minute. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.

## Playing a Golem

Golems share a lot. Their personalities are essentially identical, and they share a lot of traits. Golems are typically unthinking servitors, so consider what might have caused your character to gain greater intelligence, and consider what they have chosen to do with that intelligence. Perhaps their last received instruction led them to a life of adventure, or perhaps they are seeking a higher purpose for themselves.

Because golems are strong and durable and have resistances to damage types and special effects, they do well as front-line classes like fighter.

#### Clay Golem

Clay golems have enough natural armor to match light armor, but lack the ability to wear real armor. As such, you'll need to find other ways to boost your AC, like a high Dexterity score. Be sure to use your Haste ability to the best possible effect, like when you have Advantage on your attacks for a round, or when you're expecting to suffer multiple attacks before your next turn.

Clay golems are the easiest golems to construct, if only because their materials can be easily gathered. However, their relatively soft forms are less able to contain the earth elemental which gives them movement, so they're prone to fits of rage when they become damaged. Be very careful to avoid triggering Berserk as much as possible, or at least to let it run its course away from your friends and allies.

#### Flesh Golem

Flesh golems suffer the same Berserk tendencies as clay golems, so take the same precautions. They are also immune to lightning damage, but suffer penalties when they suffer fire damage. Fire is a common threat to any adventurer, so do whatever you can to avoid it.

Unlike other golems, flesh golems can wear armor like a humanoid would.

#### Iron Golem

Iron golems are extremely durable. Their heavy iron skin is as good as plate armor. The iron golem's breath weapon provides a useful way to handle groups of nearby foes which often present problems for characters using weapons over spells.

#### Stone Golem

Stone golems are just as durable as iron golems, but trade the iron golem's poison breath for the ability to magically slow nearby foes. Slow provides a great way to prevent foes from running away quickly or from

easily reaching your allies, but since you can only use it once per day be sure to use it to great effect.

## Design Notes

Golems are magical robots. They're really cool monsters to face, but they present some problems when designing them to be a player race. Fortunately, many of these problematics are duplicated between other golems, so we can share the results of our design efforts between individual golem types. Golems generally aren't intelligent, but we'll treat them as though they were affected by something similar to the *awaken* spell to give them human-like intelligence.

Golems are constructs, which costs 1 BP.

All golems have very similar abilities. Strength and Constitution are the best across the board by a wide margin, so we'll grant golems +1 Strength and +1 Constitution for 2 BP.

All golems share some traits in common. All golems are immune to poison and psychic damage (plus at least one other damage type) and non-magical, non-adamantine weapons. We'll dump the psychic damage immunity since we're making golems intelligent, and we'll dump the weapon damage immunity because it's unfair for a player to have, but we'll keep Poison Immunity for 2 BP.

Golems are also immune to several conditions. We'll keep Exhaustion, Paralyzed, and Petrified for 1.5 BP, but remove the mental condition immunities because we're making golems intelligent. Golems are also immune to effects which change their shape (polymorph effects generally), so we'll call that another 0.25 BP.

All golems have Darkvision for 2 BP. Iron and Stone golems have Superior Darkvision, but we'll stick to regular Darkvision to conserve BP.

All golems have a slam attack which we'll keep at 1d4 for 1 BP. They can use weapons, so they don't need to rely on natural weapons.

Golems all have Magic Resistance. Magic Resistance is a massively powerful ability on a player, and the 5 BP cost reflects this. At this point that's far too much to add, so we'll abandon Magic Resistance entirely.

With the bulk of golems' shared traits handled, I want to consider speech. I've left other constructs like animated objects without the ability to speak, and I think I want to maintain that trend for golems. We'll allow them to understand common, but disallow speech for -1 BP.

That brings our BP total to 8.75. That's a bit of a problem since individual golems have several unique abilities to consider.

## Clay Golem

The clay golem is the simplest golem, but it still has a handful of unique traits which we haven't addressed which we'll need to rework to make the race playable.

I don't think I want the clay golem to wear armor. Clay is a soft, malleable substance so strapping rigid armor over it wouldn't be particularly effective. We'll drop the clay golem's natural armor to +3 (down from +5) for 1.5 BP and disallow armor for -3 BP.

Acid Absorption is a problem. Turning a type of energy damage into free healing is a fun mechanic on a monster, but when you've got a wizard in the party who can deal acid damage as a cantrip it quickly becomes an infinite source of easy healing. We'll replace it with resistance to acid for 2 BP.

Berserk is an interesting trait. It's clearly a massive drawback: dropping below half hit points is a common occurrence for player characters, and going into an unstoppable rage when you're an immortal construct is a serious problem. We need to implement a time-limit and a mechanism by which allies can calm the golem. We also need to update the hit point threshold (40 is a bit high for low-level characters). 50% should be fine.

A one-minute tantrum seems like a reasonable amount of time. We'll allow a Wisdom saving throw after one minute. Borrowing from the flesh golem, we'll also allow the golem to be calmed by talking to it. We can't assume that the golem's creator will be in the party, so we'll allow certain characters to calm the golem as an action. Using a phrase like "a trusted ally" leaves enough wiggle room for the DM to decide who can and can't calm the golem. We'll keep the flesh golem's DC of 15 for both the Wisdom saving throw and the Persuasion check. We'll call this -3 BP since it's a fairly large handicap that will occur frequently.

Haste is one of my favorite golem abilities. A sudden boost of speed every once in a while offers the golem an opportunity for a jump in effectiveness without significantly changing the golem's other traits. I want to retain the ability in-tact as much as possible. The extra attack as a bonus action can be easily compared to two-weapon fighting, but haste should probably apply an ability modifier to damage. The defensive bonuses are also fairly strong, even if they're short-lived. We'll allow Haste to grant one additional weapon attack (which will include Slam, of course) as a bonus action, and we'll allow the ability to be used once per short rest for 4 BP.

The rider effect on the clay golem's slam attack is obviously too good (and too annoying to track) to give to a player race, so we'll drop it.

At 10.25 BP, the clay golem slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the clay golem, increase its slam damage. If you want to weaken the clay golem, reduce its natural armor or reduce Haste to once per day.

### Flesh Golem

The most humanoid-like golem, flesh golems are the closest thing you get to Frankenstein's monster. Notable among golems, they lack natural armor or weaponry. They're basically just a human with the shared golem traits and lightning absorption. They share a lot in common with clay golems, so we'll borrow the design work we've already done.

We'll keep Berserk for -3 BP. Aversion to Fire is close enough to weakness to fire that we can call it -1 BP.

That brings the flesh golem's BP total down to just 4, which obviously isn't okay since the clay golem is strictly better. I dumped Acid Absorption on the clay golem, so I should do the same for the flesh golem. However, with this much BP I think we can grant the flesh golem full immunity to lightning damage for 5 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the flesh golem is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the flesh golem, give it temporary hit points equal to any lightning damage it resists. If you want to weaken the flesh golem, reduce its lightning damage immunity to resistance.

### Iron Golem

Iron golems are fairly simple. We'll give them +8 natural armor (down from +11) for 4 BP, disallow armor for -3 BP, add fire resistance for 2 BP, and add a breath weapon for 2 BP.

Unfortunately, that's 13 BP so we're going to have to make some cuts. I think we'll drop fire resistance. It hurts making any cuts at this point, but between fire resistance and Poison Breath, I think Poison Breath is more fun.

At 11.75 BP, the iron golem exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. While this is admittedly strong, much of the golem's BP is locked up in its natural weapons and natural armor, both of which may lose significance after low levels. If you want to strengthen the iron golem, give it fire resistance. If you want to weaken the iron golem, remove its poison breath.

### Stone Golem

Stone golems are very similar to iron golems. We'll give them the same +8 natural armor for 4 BP, and disallow

armor for -3 BP. The stone golems only remaining special ability is Slow, and with 1 BP to spend it's going to take some work.

It's going to be hard to fit Slow into 1 BP. The *slow* spell is a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell with nearly identical effects. Reducing the range helps a bit, as does dropping the AC penalty inflicted by the *slow* spell, but I would still consider that on par with a 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell. We'll call it 2 BP and allow Slow to be used once per day.

At 11.75 BP, the stone golem exceeds our target BP range of 8-10. Like the iron golem, much of the stone golem's BP is tied up in its slam attack and natural armor, both of which may lose relevance beyond low levels. If you want to strengthen the stone golem, allow it to use Slow after a short rest. If you want to weaken the stone golem, reduce its natural armor.

## Gorgon

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Horrible predators resembling bulls made of metal, gorgons are famous for petrifying their pray before devouring them.

### Gorgon Traits

Gorgons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Despite their horrifying nature, gorgons are intellectually simple beasts motivated by animal instinct, so most gorgons are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Hoof.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Metal Skin.** Your AC is equal to 18. You gain no benefit from wearing armor.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Petrifying Breath.** As an action, you can breathy petrifying gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a Constitution saving throw. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

On a failed save, a target begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained target must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success,



the effect ends on the target. Creatures that are immune to petrification are immune to this effect.

This effect lasts up to one minute. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can read and understand Common.

### Playing a Gorgon

The gorgon is a strong, durable beast with a potent breath effect. Because the range of petrifying breath is short, choose a class which works well in melee combat. Barbarian, fighter, and paladin are obvious choices, but ranger and rogue may also work.

### Design Notes

Gorgons are an interesting creature. They're essentially a magical bull with a ton of natural armor and a strong breath weapon.

Gorgons are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The gorgon's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, as you might expect from a creature which is functionally a metal bovine. We'll give the gorgon +1 Strength for 1 BP, but drop the Constitution increase to save BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +8 natural armor (down from +9) for 4 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) immunity to the Petrified condition for 0.5 BP, and Darkvision for 2 BP. We'll drop the gorgon's hoof attack to 1d8 damage for 2 BP. Gorgons can't speak for -1 BP, and have no hands for -2 BP.

That brings us to 6.75 BP before we tackle Trampling Charge and Petrifying Breath. We'll go ahead and drop Trampling Charge to save BP for Petrifying Breath.

Petrifying Breath should borrow a lot from the design work we did for the Basilisk. However, that leaves two major problems: I valued the basilisk's petrifying gaze at 4 BP, and a gaze attack only affects one creature. Adding an area of effect should absolutely increase that BP value, possibly by 1 but more likely by 2. We simply can't do that.

I'm going to do something crazy. I'm going to make petrifying breath not actually petrify foes. Instead, it will restrain them. Restrained is still a really powerful condition. If we reduce the breath cone to 15 feet, set a 1-minute duration with saves every round, require concentration, and make this usable on a short rest I think we can call this around 4 BP.

At 10.75 BP, the gorgon exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the gorgon, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the gorgon, reduce its natural armor or only allow petrifying breath to be used once per day.

## Grell

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Grell are vicious ambush predators resembling a floating brain with a beak. They prey on nearly anything that is edible and small enough for them to kill and carry off.

### Grell Traits

Grell share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Vicious creatures with no quandaries about eating sentient creatures, most grell are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Beak.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet and can hover. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor. You are immune to the Prone condition.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak in Grell.

### Playing a Grell

Grell are vicious flying predators. Their mobility and blindsight allow them to ambush foes who might be impeded by darkness. However, the limited range of blindsight makes them vulnerable in large, open areas. Consider classes which fare well in melee combat like barbarian, fighter, and monk. Also consider classes which benefits from the grell's mobility like rogue.

Grell are typically solitary creatures, which makes them an odd party member. They don't have any real ambition for treasure, fame, or power, but they really enjoy eating sentient creatures, which may be enough to motivate them to join an evil party.

## Design Notes

Grell are weird creatures. They have the difficulties presented by both blindsight and flight, which presents a considerably BP cost before we get into any active abilities. Fortunately, the grell doesn't have any.

Grell are aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The grell's ability scores are interesting. The highest is Strength, and they descend perfectly in order. We'll give them +1 Strength and +1 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP with the ability to hover for 2 BP. We'll drop lightning immunity to lightning resistance for 2 BP. We'll retain immunity to the Prone condition for 0.5 BP, and we get immunity to the Blinded condition because grell are blind for -4 BP. Grell have blindsight 30 ft. (down from 60 ft.) for 6 BP, and they can only speak racial languages for -1 BP. Grell have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll give them a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP.

I'm a little uncertain about whether or not grell can wear armor. They're strangely shaped, but if you could strap a few bits of leather and steel to its brain-shaped body, I suppose that would technically qualify as armor.

At 10 BP, the grell is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. The grell's blindsight and its ability to fly make it a fearsome foe, but its extremely limited sensory range is a huge handicap. If you want to strengthen the grell, increase its blindsight range. If you want to weaken the grell, remove one of its ability increases.

## Grick

Gricks are snake-like ambush predators which primarily dwell underground. They live in packs around an alpha, typically the largest and best-fed of the group.

### Grick Traits

Gricks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Typically unintelligent predators, most gricks are neutral.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Beak and Tentacles.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning or slashing damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Stone Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

**Languages.** You can speak and read in Common.

### Playing a Grick

Gricks are strong and agile, making them a great candidate for classes like monk and rogue. Their wisdom is helpful for classes like cleric and druid, but be remember that the grick's lack of hands make it hard for them to use material components for many spells.

Gricks have a pack structure, so following a strong "alpha" may be a natural behavior. A grick might join a party for mutual protection, or simply to get food more easily. An awakened grick might also develop a higher sense of purpose than its base animal instincts might impart.

### Design Notes

Gricks are simple creatures. They don't have any unique abilities, and they can be easily adapted. They're unintelligent creatures, so we'll treat them like they've been awakened.

Gricks are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The grick's Strength, Dexterity, and Wisdom are all equally good. They're dumb animals, so Wisdom seems like a weird option, but they seem to be at least clever enough to be ambush predators. The race doesn't have anything in the way of active abilities, so we'll give it +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity, and +1 Wisdom for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and Camouflage for 0.5 BP. We're treating the grick as though it was awakened, so we'll allow it to speak Common for 0 BP. Gricks have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll give them a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP.

At 9 BP, the grick is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the grick, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the grick, remove of its ability score increases.

## Griffon

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Griffons are a popular mythological beast, appearing in numerous works of fiction. They often serve as flying mounts, combining the utility of a Pegasus with the aggression of an apex predator.

### Griffon Traits

Griffons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Typically unintelligent beasts, most griffons are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Beak and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read in Common.

### Playing a Griffon

Griffons are great flying melee combatants. Their strong natural weapons and excellent flight speed allow them to get around in combat quickly, and their keen sight allows them to easily notice foes. Consider classes like barbarian and fighter to take advantage of your prowess in melee, but be careful of medium and heavy armor as it prevents you from flying.

It's natural to want to allow allies to ride you into combat. This is a fun mechanic, but can be somewhat complicated. Be sure to consult the rules on independent mounts, explained in the third paragraph under "Controlling a Mount" on page 198 of the Player's Handbook.

Griffons are proud, noble creatures. Griffon heroes will likely lean more toward lawful than chaotic, but may be fine in an evil party which treats them sufficiently well. Since griffons greatly enjoy horse

meat, they may present a constant threat to other party member's mounts.

### Design Notes

Griffons are functionally flying lions. This is awesome, but it's also not terribly interesting to design. Like many other monstrosities, we'll treat them as though they have been awakened to make them easier to fit into a party.

Griffons are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Griffon's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant the griffon +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 30 ft. walking speed, 40 ft. fly speed (down from 80 ft.) for 5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and Keen Sight for 0.5 BP. Griffons have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll give them a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP. Since we're treating griffons as though they were awakened, we'll allow them to speak Common for 0 BP.

At 10 BP, the griffon is within our target range of 8-10 BP. They're a fairly boring race, to be honest, but they fit the monster and they have decent stats. If you want to strengthen the griffon, increase its fly speed. If you want to weaken the griffon, reduce its walking speed.

## Grimlock

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Grimlocks are the twisted descendants of humans who once worshipped Illithids, their bodies now adapted to their lives in the underdark.

### Grimlock Traits

Grimlocks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (grimlock)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength.

**Alignment.** Grimlocks are wicked hunters who still seek to serve their former masters. Most Grimlocks are Neutral Evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 30 ft., or 10 ft. when you are deafened and/or unable to smell.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have proficiency in the Perception skill. You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Stealthy.** You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

**Stone Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Undercommon.

### Playing a Grimlock

Strong and blind, Grimlocks thrive in close-quarters melee combat. Consider classes like Barbarian and Fighter which can take advantage of your capabilities.

Still devoted to their former masters, grimlocks fit well into parties containing a mind flayer.

### Design Notes

Grimlocks are fairly normal humanoids, excepting their Blindsight, and even that is easy to quantify.

Grimlocks are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities. From their stat block, we get 30 ft. walk speed, medium size, and only racial languages (Undercommon) for -1 BP.

Grimlocks, lacking the perception range to be ranged combatants, are melee brutes. However, they're not particularly durable. I'll give them a +2 to Strength for 2 BP.

Grimlocks' biggest complication comes from being blind. Blindness makes them automatically immune to the Blinded condition, and offsets most of the BP cost of Blindsight 30 ft., netting 2 BP. While this isn't difficult to implement, it certainly presents challenges for including Grimlocks in a party.

The rest of the Grimlocks abilities are simple. Blind Senses is -1 BP, Keen Hearing and Smell is 1 BP (see Keen Sense in the Race Builder rules), and Camouflage is 0.5 BP.

That touches all of the important points from the Grimlock's monster stat block, but we're only at 3.5 BP. Since Grimlocks survive by sneaking around in the dark and ambushing people, it make sense to give them Stealth proficiency. Their reliance on their keen senses is also a good basis for giving them Perception proficiency. That's another 1 BP total, bringing us up to 4.5.

4.5 is really low, but that's really all that we can get from the Grimlock's stat block.

## Hags

Hags are evil creatures with magical powers. They also famously form covens, typically consisting of three witches joining together for greater power.

### Hag Traits

Hags share the following racial traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Green Hag

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Spiteful, manipulative creatures, most green hags are neutral evil.

**Creature Type.** Fey

**Hag Magic.** You know the *minor illusion* cantrip. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *disguise self* spell once per day. Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you also cast the *invisibility* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Mimicry.** You can mimic any sounds you have heard, including voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful Insight check against a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma (Deception) bonus.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common, Draconic, and Sylvan.

#### Night Hag

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Banished from the Feywild, then tainted by the lower planes, most night hags are neutral evil.

**Creature Type.** Fiend

**Hag Magic.** Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *disguise self* and *sleep* spells once per day, each. Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you also cast the *ray of enfeeblement* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Abyssal, Common, Infernal, and Primordial.

#### Sea Hag

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Ugly inside and out, most sea hags are chaotic evil.

**Creature Type.** Fey

**Illusory Appearance.** You cover yourself and anything you are wearing or carrying with a magical illusion that makes you look like an ugly creature of your general size and humanoid shape. The effect ends if you take a bonus action to end it or if you die.

The changes wrought by this effect fail to hold up to physical inspection. For example, you could appear to have no claws, but someone touching your hand might feel the claws. Otherwise, a creature must take an action to visually inspect the illusion and succeed on an Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern that the hag is disguised. The DC of this check is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Aquan, Common and Giant.

### Playing a Hag

Hags are intelligent, cunning creatures. As such, they make excellent wizards. Green hags and night hags also have increase charisma, making them excellent warlocks and sorcerers.

Notoriously vain, hags view nearly all other creatures as inferior, often including other hags. However, hags are quick to make bargains which benefit the hag, possibly including joining a party of adventurers with similar goals.

#### Green Hag

Green hags are deceitful and manipulative. Their powers center on illusions, allowing them to disguise their appearance and to become invisible. Use these abilities to deceive, confuse, and manipulate your foes.

#### Night Hag

Night hags are as deceitful and manipulative as the green hag, but their abilities are less illusory and more substantive. Night hags can cast some potent spells to incapacitate and weaken their foes, and their change shape allows them to assume the form of a humanoid in a way which will pass close inspection.

#### Sea Hag

Sea hags are bestial and uncouth by hag standards. Where other hags are deceitful and tricky, sea hags are more direct and violent. Sea hags are also the most durable of hags. While they lack the charisma to serve as sorcerers or warlocks, their improved constitution allows them to survive a life as a wizard or as an eldritch knight.

### Design Notes

Hags are somewhat confusing. Their flavor is all about being evil spellcasters, doing rituals, and stealing souls but their ability scores look like your normal vanilla

Strength and Constitution meat-slab. I think I'm going to embrace the hag's flavor over their stats in the interest of supporting player characters that capitalize on the hags' flavor.

Hags have only a few things in common mechanically. They're all medium, have 30 ft. walking speed, and have Darkvision for 2 BP (we'll drop the night hag to normal Darkvision). We'll drop their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP.

Hag covens use Intelligence as their spellcasting ability. Since I want to emphasize their capacity as spellcasters, we'll grant all hags +1 Intelligence for 1 BP. Strangely, hags use Charisma for their individual innate spellcasting, but we'll address that later.

That brings us to 4 BP before we consider individual types of hags.

#### Green Hag

The most generic hag, the green hag does all of the things which you would expect of a hag. It eats babies (I'm not joking), it casts some spells, and it's generally unpleasant. It has a handful of special abilities, but most of them can be match by reworking spells.

Green hags are fey, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Green hags use Charisma for their innate spellcasting, so we'll grant them +1 Charisma for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get racial languages plus Common for 0 BP, an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP, Amphibious for 0.5 BP, and Mimicry for 1 BP. We'll drop the green hag's natural armor to save BP.

At 6.25 BP, we've still got some room to tackle the green hag's innate spellcasting, Illusory Appearance, and Invisible Passage.

Illusory Appearance is essentially identical to the *disguise self* spell, and Invisible Passage is essentially the *invisibility* spell. We can grant both for a total of 3 BP. I really like emphasizing the illusion magic, so we'll grant the *minor illusion* cantrip for 0.5 BP and drop the other cantrips.

At 9.75 BP, the green hag is within our target range of 8-10 BP. Its abilities aren't directly offensive, but they combine to make the green hag tricky and deceitful. If you want to strengthen the green hag, grant it the *vicious mockery* cantrip. If you want to weaken the green hag, remove its natural armor.

#### Night Hag

The night hag is fairly similar to the green hag, but has a different set of special abilities. The night hag's abilities center more around sleep, and the hag's ability to travel to the ethereal plane and steal souls. We'll

need to dump the whole soul stealing thing since we won't want players using that to solve all of their problems.

Night hags are fiends, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Like green hags, night hags use Charisma for their innate spellcasting, so we'll grant them +1 Charisma for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get very little. We'll need to dump all of the night hag's resistances, as well as immunity to the Charmed condition. Night hags speak racial languages plus Common for 0 BP, plus 2 fixed languages for 0.5 BP.

At just 6 BP we have plenty of room to tackle the night hag's remaining abilities.

Change Shape is a bit like the "Change Appearance" portion of the *alter self* spell. I don't think holding up to physical inspection is especially important to the flavor of the race, so we'll replace it with *disguise self* for 1 BP.

Etherealness is too good to grant to a player, so we'll drop it. Nightmare Haunting really doesn't make sense as a player ability, so we'll drop that, too.

That leaves the night hag's innate spellcasting. We don't have a ton of room left, so we'll drop most of the spells. We'll retain *sleep* and *ray of enfeeblement* for 3 BP.

At 10 BP, the night hag is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. Despite its high BP cost, the night hag isn't significantly more powerful than the green hag, and is likely much less powerful than the tiefling. If you want to strengthen the sea hag, allow it to cast magic missile once per day. If you want to weaken the sea hag, remove the ability to cast ray of enfeeblement.

### Sea Hag

Sea hags are unique among hags in their lack of innate spellcasting. They're still hags, but instead of casting spells they have a couple of offensive special abilities.

Sea hags are fey, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Unlike other hags, sea hags' abilities resemble your typical Strength and Constitution monster. To reflect this, we'll grant the sea hag a +1 to Constitution for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. swim speed (down from 40 ft.) for 1 BP, racial languages plus Common for 0 BP and an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP.

That brings us to 8 BP before we look at the sea hag's special abilities. Death Glare is obviously too good for a player ability, so we'll drop it.

Horrid Appearance is central to the sea hag, but it's also too good to be usable constantly. We can rework it a bit to be a fun surprise effect. If we drop the fear duration to 1 round and only allow it to affect surprised creatures, I think we can allow it once per day for 1 BP.

Illusory Appearance is functionally similar to the *disguise self* spell, but not quite as powerful. If we allow it to be used once per day, I think we can call it 0.75 BP.

At the 10 BP, the sea hag is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. The sea hag lacks the magical options of other hags, but is considerably more durable. If you want to strengthen the sea hag, allow it to use Illusory Appearance after a short rest. If you want to weaken the sea hag, reduce its natural armor.

## Half-Dragon [Template: Natural]

The offspring of a polymorphed dragon and another creature, half-dragons carry many of the traits of their draconic parentage.

### Becoming a Half-Dragon

Half-dragons are born half dragon. They have one parent that is a true dragon, and one that is a beast, humanoid, giant, or monstrosity. When creating a character with the half-dragon template, select a base race to serve as the non-dragon parent. The non-dragon parent's race is the race for the character. In addition, select a variety of true dragon (blue, gold, red, etc.) to serve as the dragon parent. This decision affects the traits gained from the template.

For example: A half-dragon human with a red dragon parent and a human parent would use human as the character's race, and would apply the half-dragon template to the character.

### Half-Dragon Traits

All half-dragons have the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits upon gaining the half-dragon template.

**Breath Weapon.** You can use your action to exhale destructive energy. Your species determines the size, shape, and damage type of the exhalation.

When you use your breath weapon, each creature in the area of the exhalation must make a saving throw, the type of which is determined by your species. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Draconic Nature.** You are incapable of bearing natural children. You live twice as long as a member of your race.

**Draconic Parentage.** Select one type of true dragon as your parent. Your chosen parent provides additional traits.

#### Black Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Wisdom.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of acid, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Blue Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Dexterity.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of lightning, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Green Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Dexterity.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of poison, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Red Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Dexterity.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of fire, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### White Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Intelligence.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of cold, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Brass Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Wisdom.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of fire, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Bronze Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Dexterity.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of acid, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Copper Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Wisdom.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 5 ft. by 30 ft. line of acid, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Gold Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Strength.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of fire, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

#### Silver Dragon

**Ability Adjustment.** -2 Dexterity.

**Breath Weapon.** Your breath weapon is a 15 ft. cone of cold, and allows a Dexterity save for half damage.

### Design Notes

Half-dragons are somewhat difficult to design. They're a natural template with no ability progression, so they need to be a non-leveled template. However, the template doesn't include any built-in drawbacks, which makes balancing the template difficult. We'll need to apply some artistic license to keep the template fair, and we also need to make the template meaningful without making the dragonborn race pointless.

The template's Monster Manual entry lists the traits granted by the template. We can adapt them without too much difficulty.

We'll abandon Blindsight. Even at 10 ft. range, it's still 4 BP. We'll also abandon Darkvision. We'll replace the listed breath weapons mechanics with a breath weapon matching the dragonborn's for 2 BP and we'll let half-dragons learn Draconic for 0.25 BP. We'll abandon any hope of damage resistance. That brings us to 2.25 BP before we consider drawbacks.

Adding penalties is difficult. We could apply -2 to several ability scores, but that wouldn't be any fun. I'm also hesitant to apply universal penalties to specific ability scores because that will create practical limits on the races and classes that will be able to use the template effectively. We could add things like damage vulnerabilities, but those don't make sense on every type of dragon.

I think our best bet is to assess each type of dragon individually. Each type has different shortcomings, so addressing them separately will allow us more flexibility in design and will offer interesting character options. The Monster Manual entry also lists some personality traits which can provide some ideas.

To tie the half-dragon closely to its draconic parentage, we'll copy the dragon parent's -2 ability score adjustment for -1 BP. Gold dragons don't have an ability score reduction, so we'll apply -2 Strength since no other half-dragon has it.

That brings our total to 1.5 BP. That's much higher than our target BP of 0 for non-leveled templates, but I think that the effects of the template are balanced well

enough that players will only bother with it if they're really excited about the idea of being a half-dragon.

## Harpy

Harpies are winged, humanoid-like monstrosities famous for using their luring song to attract and enchant their victims.

### Harpy Traits

Harpies share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Harpies are vicious predators, using their beguiling music to entrap and feed upon sentient creatures. Most Harpies are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Luring Song.** As an action, you sing a magical melody.

Every humanoid and giant within 100 feet of you that can hear the song must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the song ends. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. You must take a bonus action on subsequent turns to continue singing, and you must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

While charmed by you, the target is incapacitated and ignores the songs of other harpies. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from the harpy, the target can take the Dash action on its turn to move toward you by the most direct route. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but before moving into damaging terrain, such as lava or a pit, and whenever it takes damage from a source other than the harpy, a target can repeat the saving throw. A creature can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the effect ends on it.

A target that successfully saves is immune to your song for the next 24 hours. You may not use this ability again until you have completed long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Harpy

Harpy's bonus to Charisma makes them good Sorcerers, but they can also work as charismatic Rogues. Luring Song is a powerful effect, allowing you to charm large groups of creatures and force them into

dangerous positions or harmful effects. Because Luring Song affects humanoids, be careful not to harm your allies.

Harpies typically see humanoids as prey rather than allies, so if your party includes humanoids be sure to work that aspect into your character's behavior.

### Design Notes

Harpies are mechanically simple; their only complex ability is their Luring Song.

Harpies are monstrosities, which costs 0.5 BP but doesn't provide any specific abilities.

The Harpy's abilities scores are very low, with an emphasis on physical ability scores and Charisma. It seems likely that the Harpy's Luring Song's DC is Charisma-based, so we should keep an emphasis on that. A +1 to Charisma for 1 BP does the job.

From their stat block, we get medium size, 20 ft. walk speed for -1 BP, and standard racial languages plus Common. The Harpy's fly speed is 40 ft. for 5 BP, leaving us at 5.5 BP.

Harpies have claws which deal an impressive 2d4 damage, but we'll convert that to 1d8 to keep it consistent with normal weapons for 2 BP.

At 7.5 BP, we have some wiggle room for Luring Song. The original ability is extremely potent, but has some built-in limitations. It only affects humanoids and giants (giants are likely included for historical reasons), it allows a Wisdom save against a DC which is very low due to the Harpy's poor ability scores, and allows a new save each round. Once the target saves successfully, they're immune for 24 hours. This is crucial when players face a Harpy, but giving a player this ability unchanged essentially guarantees that every fight will be dominated by Luring Song. With a rising proficiency bonus and almost certainly high Charisma, the DC will be considerably higher, making the ability even more threatening than it already is.

The DC calculation for ability like Luring Song works just like everything else: 8 + proficiency bonus + ability modifier. Tying Luring Song to Charisma makes the most sense. However, the save DC isn't enough to keep this fair for players to use, especially without a limitation on uses per day. The limitation of only affecting humanoids and giants is significant: depending on your campaign your enemies may be almost exclusively humanoids, or you might not encounter humanoids past very low levels. There's also the issue of other characters in the party, many of whom are likely to be humanoids.



To approximate similar effects, spells are our best bet. The Command spell's "Approach" option covers most of the effect. If we assume that encounters have an average of 5 creatures, we can examine casting Command with a 5<sup>th</sup>-level spell slot for 3 BP. Command has a shorter range and only lasts for one round, but it also affects all creature types.

I think that our best option is to limit Luring Song's usage to once per long rest, to limit the range, and to require Concentration. 300 foot range is insane, and intended for monsters to draw players into an encounter against their will. 100 feet is much more manageable for players, but still makes Luring Song a massive crowd control effect. With the DC we discussed earlier, I think that we can call this somewhere in the range of 2 to 3 BP.

Somewhere between 9.5 and 10.5 BP puts the Harpy right at the upper edge of your BP range. If you need to strengthen the Harpy, allow Luring Song to be used once per short rest instead of once per long rest, or grant a +1 to Dexterity. If you need to weaken the Harpy, reduce the Harpy's Claw damage or fly speed.

## Hell Hound

Hell hounds are vicious canines from hell, famed for their ability to breathe fire and their vicious hunger for mortal flesh.

### Hell Hound Traits

Hell hounds share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fiend

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Trainable and obedient so long as it is allowed to feed its evil appetite, most hell hounds are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage and 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Fire Breath.** As an action, you can breathe fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that cone must make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 fire damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can read and understand in Infernal.

### Playing a Hell Hound

Hell hounds are a wonderful addition to any evil party. Their Darkvision and Keen Hearing and Smell make them excellent sentries and scouts, and their excellent speed allows them to move about quickly in melee. Consider classes like Barbarian and Fighter which excel in melee combat, but classes like Monk, Ranger, and Rogue may also be good options.

Hell hounds are obedient, trainable creatures. Serving an evil master is natural, and any party with a suitably evil leader is a welcome home for a hell hound character.

### Design Notes

Hell hounds are flaming dogs. Their abilities are pretty similar to many beasts, but they're more notably on fire than, say, a wolf.

Hell hounds are fiends, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Hell hounds' best abilities are Strength and Constitution, but they have a bunch of special abilities to eat into our BP budget so we'll only grant a +1 to Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +3 natural armor (down from +4) for 1.5 BP, 40 ft. movement speed (down from 50 ft.) for 1 BP, fire damage resistance (down from immunity) for 2 BP, and Darkvision for 2 BP. Hell hounds can't speak for -1 BP and have no hands for -2 BP. We'll set their bite attack to 1d4 slashing and 1d4 fire for 2.5 BP.

At 7 BP, we don't have a ton of room left for the hell hound's special abilities. Two Keen Senses costs another 1 BP, and a breath weapon costs 2 more. I'm not sure what to do with Pack Tactics, but we're also at 10 BP already so we can safely drop it.

At 10 BP, the hell hound is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. They're fast and have a good mix of offensive, defensive, and utility traits, and I think that

they'll be an excellent addition to many parties. If you want to strengthen the hell hound, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the hell hound, reduce its natural armor or speed.

## Helmed Horror

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Intelligent, animated suits of armor, the helmed horror is an improvement on simple animated armor. Imbued with human-like intelligence and flight, the helmed horror is a truly formidable foe.

### Helmed Horror Traits

Helmed horrors share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Construct. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** Intelligent servants with little ambition beyond their given orders, helmed horrors can be of any alignment but are usually neutral.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 60 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Construct Nature.** You are immune to deafened, paralyzed, and petrified conditions.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet.

**Living Armor.** You are unable to wear armor, but may still use shields.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 18.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Languages.** You can read and understand Common.

### Playing a Helmed Horror

With built-in full plate and the ability to fly, helmed horrors are powerful warriors. However, they lack ability increases, so they may not keep pace with other races offensively. Without the ability to speak, most spellcasting is out of the helmed horror's reach. Consider classes which work for the helmed horror like fighter.

Helmed horrors don't speak, which makes them a troublesome member of a party. They are intelligent

and understand speech, but may need to resort to pantomiming or other forms of communication to converse with party members.

### Design Notes

Helmed horrors are essentially a flying suit of animated armor. Since we've already designed a suit of animated armor, we can go steal a bunch of stuff from it. We'll keep most of the animated armor's traits, but I'll address specific differences. We'll start from the animated armor's 9.75 BP.

Helmed Horrors lose the Antimagic Susceptibility trait for 0.5 BP, but they also give up immunity to the Exhaustion condition for -0.5 BP, they give up the animated armor's natural weapon for -1.5 BP, and they give up False Appearance for -0.5 BP. That brings us to 7.25 BP. We'll then add the helmed horror's 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP.

At 11.25 BP, the helmed horror exceeds our target BP range of 8-10 BP. Flight is a huge advantage over animated armor. If you want to strengthen the helmed horror, grant it a 1d4 natural weapon. If you want to weaken the helmed horror, reduce its walking and fly speeds to 25 ft.

## Hippogriff

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Similar in many ways to griffons, hippogriffs are easier to tame and train, and as omnivores are less likely to hunt local herds. Like griffons, they're popular mounts and companions.

### Hippogriff Traits

Hippogriffs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Typically unintelligent beasts, most griffons are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Beak and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read in Common.

### Playing a Hippogriff

Hippogriffs play much like a griffon; excellent mobility and good melee options. However, they trade the griffon's Constitution increase for improved walking speed. While this isn't always helpful for a flying creature, it allows the hippogriff to maintain its speed advantage in close quarters like building interiors and cramped dungeon corridors.

Hippogriffs are omnivores, which makes them much less of a liability than griffons in parties who must frequently travel in lands where horses are common.

They are easily trained and loyal, making them a devoted party member so long as their allies live.

### Design Notes

Hippogriffs are frustratingly similar to griffons. Their stat blocks are almost identical, differentiated only enough to have different CR's. The best we can hope to do is make the hippogriff essentially a variant of the griffon.

Hippogriffs have much lower Constitution than griffons, so we'll drop the griffon's Constitution increase to free up a little bit of BP. We'll then use that BP to increase the hippogriff's walking speed to 40 ft. This isn't a huge change, but it's enough to make the two mechanically different.

If you want to adjust the hippogriff, follow the guidance in the griffon design notes.



## Hobgoblins

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Hobgoblins are the most organized of the goblinoids, more tactical than Bugbears and less crazed and unpredictable than Goblins. They are strategic thinkers, and their society is highly militarized.

### Hobgoblin Traits

Hobgoblins share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (goblinoid)

**Ability Score Increase.** Two different ability scores of your choice increase by 1.

**Alignment.** Hobgoblin society is highly regimented, but dictated by martial might and tyranny. Most Hobgoblins are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Martial Advantage.** Once per turn, you can deal an extra 1d6 damage to a creature which you hit with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of one of your allies that isn't incapacitated. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Stealthy.** You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Goblin.

### Playing a Hobgoblin

Hobgoblins are versatile, and do well in a variety of roles. Martial Advantage is an extremely potent ability which allows them to excel with weapons, but requires that they work tactically with their allies to ensure that they can deal extra damage.

Hobgoblins are organized and tactical, and make an excellent focal point around which to construct a party of monstrous races which only submit to authority through force. Their society is very organized compared to most monstrous humanoids, so many different class and build options work with the theme of the race.

### Design Notes

Hobgoblins are skill warriors, tending toward rigorous training more than the raw strength on which bugbears rely. Their abilities are mostly simple, complicated only by martial Advantage.

Hobgoblins are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

From their stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed, medium size, and Darkvision for 2 BP. It's hard to pin down an ability score bonus since all of their physical abilities are roughly the same (though not particularly good), and none of their mental ability scores are any good. So instead, let's do something crazy and give them two flexible +1 ability score increases, similar to the variant humans presented in the Player's Handbook. That runs 3 BP, and make Hobgoblins a nice parallel to humans.

Comparing the three types of Goblinoids, we can see that they all have proficiency in Stealth, which seems like a nice component to share between the three races' traits. 0.5 BP for a fixed skill proficiency.

We're at 5.5 BP and we've covered everything but Martial Advantage. The standard Hobgoblin deals 2d6 bonus damage, which is terrifying on a CR ½ creature. A single successful usage with the standard Hobgoblin's longsword can do as much as 1d8+2d6+1 damage, averaging 12.5 damage; enough to drop almost any 1<sup>st</sup> level characters. Similarly, giving that much damage to a player is considerably too powerful at low levels to be usable.

Instead, let's use the same damage scaling as Surprise Attack (see the Bugbear Design Notes presented earlier in this document). Martial Advantage's usage condition is considerably easier to achieve, so it needs a correspondingly high BP cost. I would call this as much as 4 BP, but since we have so much wiggle room it doesn't matter all that much. I'm still worried about how much bonus damage this deals, especially since it's so reliable, but for 4 BP it needs to be on par with a feat, and there are several feats which I would consider better than this.

At something like 9.5 BP, Hobgoblins are a very solid race. While they don't have a lot of abilities, Martial Advantage is a very strong option, providing a reliable source of damage so long as the player's allies cooperate. This makes them the best of the goblinoid races by 2 BP.

If you need to weaken Hobgoblins, drop the damage bonus from Martial Advantage to d4's instead of d6's, or adjust the damage scaling to 1d6 at 1<sup>st</sup> level and 2d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level.

## Homunculus

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Small creatures created by spellcasters to serve as spies, messengers, and companions.

## Homunculus Traits

Homunculi share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Construct. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** As extensions of their creators, most homunculi share their creator's alignment.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Magical Servant.** You were created to serve your master, a spellcaster of one kind or another. You can share thoughts, senses, and languages through a mystical bond. So long as you are on the same plane of existence as your master, you can communicate telepathically. You are immune to the charmed condition.

So long as you live, your master cannot create another homunculus. If your master dies, you die too.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common and any one language spoken by your creator.

## Playing a Homunculus

The homunculus is a small, nimble flyer. As such, it does well fighting and range and performing as a scout. Consider classes like ranger and rogue to take advantage of your mobility.

The homunculus is a creature made to serve its master. Consider who made your character: Who are they? What do they want? What do they do? Why are you off adventuring without them?

## Design Notes

The homunculus requires some adjustment. At its core, it's a tiny flying humanoid with a function similar to a familiar. I'm hesitant to leave the homunculus tied to a

master, especially since the two share knowledge, potentially granting the homunculus access to a huge amount of knowledge not normally available to players.

We also need to consider the homunculus's master. The telepathic bonding presents a considerable advantage for the homunculus which we can't fairly grant to a player, but it's also important to the flavor of the creature. I think the best we can do is a vaguely-described trait with no specific implications, and leave it up to the DM to implement.

Homunculi are constructs, costing 1 BP.

Homunculi have poor ability scores. Their only good score is Dexterity, so we'll grant the homunculus +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for 0 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, poison immunity for 2 BP, and Darkvision for 2 BP, and immunity to the Charmed condition for 0.5 BP. Homunculi can't speak for -1 BP, but we'll allow them to understand Common for 0 BP. We'll also add one flexible language for 0.5 BP to reflect their master's spoken language.

At 9.5 BP, the homunculus is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a well-rounded flying creature, but doesn't have any really unique traits. If you want to strengthen the homunculus, add a 1d4 damage natural weapon. If you want to weaken the homunculus, reduce its flying speed.

## Hook Horror

Predators native to the Underdark, hook horrors are named for their viciously hooked appendages. They hunt in packs, and live in extended packs or "clans".

## Hook Horror Traits

Hook horrors share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Simple creatures of little intellect, most hook horrors are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. and you have a 30 ft. climb speed.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Echolocation.** You can't use your blindsight while deafened.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 10 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Hook.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Keen Hearing.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read in Hook Horror.

### Playing a Hook Horror

Big, durable, and deadly, hook horrors are terrifying melee threats. Their climb speed and blindsight can make them dangerous in many situations, including magical darkness. Consider classes which do well in melee like barbarian, monk, and fighter.

### Design Notes

Hook horrors are fairly simple creatures. They're mostly your standard beast, but with some interesting stuff around their senses.

Hook horrors are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Like most beast-like creatures, Strength and Constitution are the hook horror's highest abilities, so we'll give it +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +5) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, blindsight 30 ft. (down from 60 ft.) for 6 BP, echolocation for -1.5 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, and keen hearing for 0.5 BP.

The hook horror's Darkvision is a bit odd. I don't know of another creature with so little Darkvision. Let's call it 0.5 BP.

Hook horrors have no hands for -2 BP, but we'll set their claw to a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the hook horror exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. It's most notable issue is that it has blindsight while not also being blind, making it a fearsome threat when darkness or other sight-blocking effects are a tactical option for a party of players. If you want to strengthen the hook horror, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the hook horror, remove its Darkvision, reduce its blindsight range, or remove one of its ability score increases.

## Hydra

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Legendary reptilian creatures famed for their ability to regrow their multiple heads, hydras are driven by insatiable hunger.

### Hydra Traits

Hydras share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts driven only by hunger, most hydras are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. and a 30 ft. swim speed.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 10 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Hold Breath.** You can hold your breath for 1 hour.

**Multiple Heads.** You have a number of heads equal to your proficiency bonus. If you suffer damage from a single source equal to or greater than your Constitution score, one of your heads dies and falls off of your body. On your next turn you may spend one hit die as a bonus action to grow two additional heads. Roll the hit die spent as though you were resting; you gain a number of temporary hit points equal to your roll. When these temporary hit points expire or are depleted, the second head dies and falls off of your body.

If you ever have 0 heads, you become incapacitated. You may take no actions except to spend a bonus action on your turn to grow two heads, at which point you are no longer incapacitated and may act normally for the remainder of your turn. If you have no more hit dice you spend, you fall to 0 hit points and begin dying. While you are in this state any healing allows you to grow one head.

Whenever you spend a hit die to restore hit points while resting, you may grow one head, up to your normal number of heads.

While you have two or more heads which are awake, you have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Wakeful.** When you sleep, one of your heads is awake.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Hydra

The hydra is a very complex race. The ability to lose and regrow heads is a complicated mechanic, but it can also be very powerful. However, regrowing heads cuts into your pool of hit dice, so be careful not to burn through them more quickly than you need to or you will quickly find yourself headless and unable to heal. Hydras thrive in close combat, so consider classes like barbarian and fighter.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Hydras are among my favorite monsters to use as a boss fight. Their variable number of heads and their ability to rapidly increase and decrease in effectiveness makes fights against them really chaotic and exciting. Of course, a creature's stats changing during a fight is a really complicated issue for players. I want to preserve the fun bits of the hydra without making it excessively complicated.

Hydras are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Like most beasts and monstrosities, Strength and Constitution are the hydra's best abilities. We'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from huge), 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. swim speed for 1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and Hold Breath for 1 hour for 1 BP. We'll treat the hydra as though it was awakened, and allow it to speak Common for 0 BP. Hydras have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their bite to 1d8 damage for 2 BP.

That brings our total 6.5 BP before we address the issue of multiple heads. Fortunately, we've already design the Ettin so we can draw on those ideas. The hydra gets all of the same advantages for having multiple heads, so we'll duplicate the abilities from the Ettin for the same total of 3.25 BP.

I want to expand on the multiple heads mechanic a bit beyond the Ettin. I want the hydra's number of heads to be variable like the original monster, but we can't rely on the 25 damage mechanic since a fixed number doesn't work well at every level. I still want a

mechanic for losing heads, and there's a few ways we could go. Each have pros and cons:

- **Critical Hits:** Lose a head when player receives a critical hit. Dramatic and often unpredictable. May be problematic in encounters with numerous enemies. Doesn't lose heads when they're hit with something that requires a saving throw but doesn't make an attack.
- **Constitution Score:** Lose a head when player takes damage exceeding their Constitution score. Could be a good way to tie to a scaling number. At low levels, losing heads will be rare. At high levels, it will be very common. Might place too much emphasis on increasing the character's Constitution score.
- **Fraction of Hit Points:** Lose a head when the player takes damage exceeding a portion of their hit points, like 1/4<sup>th</sup>. Scales well at every level, but won't work well with a fast regrowth mechanic.

I think that the Constitution Score option might be the best. At low levels, losing a head will be rare because enemies don't do a lot of damage. That's fine with me. At high levels losing a head will become more common, but the hydra will also be better prepared to handle losing heads. This also allows the mechanic to slowly work its way into the game, allowing the table to grow accustomed to it over time instead of expecting the group to adapt to it instantly.

Now that we've discussed losing heads, we need to discuss regrowing them. For the monster, regrowing a head grows two heads and restores 10 hit points. That's too good to grant to players as a racial ability. Plus, I want regrowing a head to come with a cost of some sort.

I think using hit dice might be an interesting solution. They provide a growing pool for the hydra to draw on, and using the natural healing mechanic to restore a part of the character's body seems reasonable. I don't want to cut into the character's daily healing too badly, so we'll also let the hydra gain temporary hit points from their hit die.

Unfortunately, I can't begin to guess at a fair BP assessment for the hydra. The multiple heads mechanic is highly complex, so be very cautious about including hydra characters in your game. If you want to strengthen the hydra, increase its Strength increase. If you want to weaken the hydra, remove or reduce the temporary hit points granted by regrowing a head.

### Intellect Devourer

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A horrifying creature created the brain of a mind flayer victim, the intellect devourer consumes the minds of its victims and seize control of their bodies.

### Intellect Devourer Traits

Intellect Devourer share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Pets created by mind flayers to serve their tyrannical masters, most intellect devourers are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Body Thief.** If you would reduce a humanoid creature to 0 hit points with Devour Intellect you may attempt to seize control of the creature's body as a bonus action. Initiate an Intelligence contest with the target. If you win the contest, instead of dealing the psychic damage normally dealt by Devour Intellect you magically consume the target's brain, teleport into the target's skull, and take control of the target's body.

While inside the creature, you have total cover against attacks and other effects originating outside of the host. You retain your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, as well as your understanding of Deep Speech, your telepathy, and your traits. You otherwise adopt the target's statistics.

You may remain inside the host for a number of rounds equal to the creature's Intelligence score. During this time, you may access the creature's mind and memories. Each round, you may do one of the following:

- Cast one of the creature's spells using the appropriate casting time for that spell
- Speak in a language the creature speaks as a free action
- Recall one specific memory or piece of information which the creature knows as a bonus action

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Devour Intellect.** As an action, you can target one creature that you can see within 10 feet of you and which has a brain. The target must succeed on an Intelligence saving throw or take 1d6 psychic damage. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier. The damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d6), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d6), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d6).

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Undercommon.

### Playing an Intellect Devourer

The intellect devourer is a complicated creature. It's nimble and fast, which makes it a good Monk or Rogue. It's blindsight allows it easily located hidden and invisible enemies, but the short range means that the intellect devourer is often blind to nearby foes.

Devour Intellect and Body Thief allow the intellect devourer to subdue foes with psychic damage, then seize control the target's body if it's a humanoid. While controlling a humanoid in this way, the intellect devourer can use many of the creature's abilities, including its ability to cast spells, and can access a few of the creature's memories. However, Devour Intellect has a very short range and needs to be timed carefully to ensure a chance of success.

### Design Notes

The intellect devourer is a super weird creature. It's the size of a house cat, but between its claws and its special abilities it's as lethal as many predatory animals. Detect Sentience, Devour Intellect, and Body Thief all require considerable design consideration, and before we consider those abilities the intellect devourer already has blindsight and telepathy.

Intellect devourers are aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The intellect devourer's ability scores aren't great. Its Dexterity, Constitution, and Intelligence are all above 10, but hardly enough to justify ability score increases. We'll grant the intellect devourer +1 Dexterity for 1 BP, and save the rest of our BP for other abilities.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40) for 1.5 BP (remember that 20 is standard for tiny creatures). Intellect



devourers are blind for -4 BP, but have blindsight 30 ft. (down from 60 ft.) for 6 BP. They can't speak for -1 BP, but we'll let them understand Undercommon for 0 BP, and they have 30 ft. telepathy (down from 60 ft.) for 2 BP. Intellect devourers have no hands for -2 BP, but we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

That brings our total to 4.5 BP before we tackle the intellect devourers other abilities. Detect sentience is insanely powerful for a player, so we'll just dump it.

Devour Intellect is obviously too powerful for a player. In a game where so many enemies have 3 Intelligence, the ability to one-shot them based on their Intelligence is totally unfair. However, I think we can retain the psychic damage component. If we reskin a cantrip to deal psychic damage with an Intelligence save and dump the stun effect, I think we can call this 0.5 BP.

Body Thief is really difficult. It's very powerful and fairly complicated, so I'm very hesitant to allow players to use it. However, it's also the intellect devourer's signature ability and removing it would essentially invalidate the race's design. We need to make it work, but we also need to limit it very strictly. It has some built-in limitations: a save, followed by an Intelligence contest, and the target must be a humanoid.

If we allow Body Thief to be used at will, players will spend all of their time using it. If we limit it to a certain number of uses. On top of that, we're potentially handing players control of a powerful humanoid with no duration limits. I want Body Thief to have a very short time limit.

I think it makes sense to make Body Thief a rider effect on devour intellect. Once the intellect devourer is done devouring the target's intellect, they should get a chance to jump into the body briefly. We'll allow the intellect devourer to activate Body Thief as a bonus action after dealing enough damage to drop a humanoid to 0 hit points with Devour Intellect.

That still leaves the issue of essentially permanent control of the victim. If we limit the duration of control to 1 round per point of the creature's Intelligence, we solve two problems: the duration, and the fact that low-intelligence creatures are extremely vulnerable to Devour Intellect. This means that players can choose an easy target and control it very briefly, or they can choose an intelligent target and control it for a longer period.

We also need to limit how much access the player gets to the creature's mind. Knowing everything that

the creature know means that the intellect devourer could potentially learn every secret in an adventure in a single turn with very little effort on the player's part. We'll limit access to the creature's abilities so that the intellect devourer can only use or recall fragments of the creature's memories.

Even with these adjustments, Body Thief is potentially a very powerful ability. We'll allow it to recharge on a short rest, and call this 4 BP.

At 9 BP, the intellect devourer is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the intellect devourer, increase the range of Devour Intellect. If you want to weaken the Intellect Devourer, reduce the damage die size of Devour Intellect.

## Invisible Stalker

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Invisible stalkers are air elementals magically bound to retrieve objects and hunt creatures for its master.

### Invisible Stalker Traits

Invisible stalkers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Having no culture, society, or solid form on their home planes, most elementals are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Air Body.** You are immune to the exhaustion, grappled, petrified, prone, restrained, and unconscious conditions.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Faultless Tracker.** You may add double your proficiency bonus to Wisdom (Survival) checks to track a creature or locate an object so long as your quarry is on the same plane of existence.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet, and can hover.

**Hidden Step.** As a bonus action, you can magically turn invisible until the start of your next turn or until you attack, make a damage roll, or force someone to make a saving throw.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Poison Resilience.** You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Unstable Form.** Your body is not completely rigid, and your limbs often fluctuate in size and shape as you move. You are unable to wear armor. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Auran and understand Common.

### Playing an Invisible Stalker

The invisible stalker is similar in many ways to the air elemental, but gives up the air elementals ability to cast the *gust* cantrip for the ability to vanish, and expertise in tracking creatures. Consider classes like monk, ranger, and rogue which can take advantage of these abilities easily. Since invisible stalkers can't hold or use objects, they can't use weapons or spell foci, making it difficult for them to function as spellcasters.

Invisible stalkers are created to serve the commands of their masters until the magic binding them expires. Their task might compel them to cooperate with other adventurers, but their career might suddenly come to an end when their task is complete if their master dies. Invisible stalkers are unwilling servants, so they might welcome this release.

### Design Notes

The invisible stalker is similar in many ways to the air elemental. However, while air elementals fly about and blow stuff around the air stalker flies around being sneaky and murdering people. Still, we can borrow a lot of design work from the air elemental.

Invisible Stalkers are elementals, costing 1 BP.

Invisible stalkers have several good ability scores. Dexterity is the best by far, followed by Strength, Wisdom, and Constitution. We'll grant the invisible stalker +1 Dexterity for 1 BP and save our remaining BP for other traits.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 50 ft.), 30 ft. fly speed

(down from 50 ft.) for 4 BP with the ability to hover for 2 BP, Poison Resilience for 1 BP (down from immunity), Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP.

We'll duplicate the air elemental's condition immunities for 3 BP, but we'll drop the invisible stalker's damage resistances. Since invisible stalkers are made of air, we'll disallow armor for -3 BP. They also have no hands for -2 BP. We'll give them a 1d8 slam attack for 2 BP.

This brings us to 10 BP, which is problem since we haven't tackled the invisible stalker's Invisibility or Faultless Tracker abilities.

We'll add Hidden Step for 2 BP. It's not nearly as good as it really should be to adapt the invisible stalker, but perpetual invisibility obviously isn't viable on a player race.

Faultless Tracker is too good for a variety of reasons. It's infallible as long as you're on the right plane, making it more powerful in some ways than many high-level divination spells. The core of the ability is tracking, so we'll grant Expertise in Survival for the purposes of tracking for 1 BP.

At 13 BP, the invisible stalker exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. It's frustrating close to the air elemental, and the air elemental is a bit better balanced. If you want to strengthen the invisible stalker, allow it to function as though it had hands. If you want to weaken the invisible stalker, reduce its slam damage.

## Jackalwere

Jackalweres are shapechangers which function similarly to lycanthropes, but get their abilities from a very different source. Imbued with demonic power, they exist to serve their lamia masters.

### Jackalwere Traits

Jackalweres share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (shapechanger)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures made to lie and deceive, most jackalweres are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn

against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Shapechanger.** As an action, you can polymorph into a specific Medium human or a jackal-humanoid hybrid, or back into your true form (that of a Small jackal). Other than your size, your statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment you are holding or wearing is not transformed. You retain all of your own statistics, except as noted below. You revert to your true form if you die.

While in your true form (that of a Small jackal), you cannot speak, and you are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit. You have no hands, and as such you are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

While in your hybrid form you are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Jackalwere

If you want to play a lycanthrope but don't want to deal with complicated templates, the jackalwere is a good option. While technically not lycanthrope, the jackalwere functions very similarly and avoids problems incurred by natural cycles of the moon.

With a small Dexterity increase and two keen senses, the jackalwere makes a great ranger or rogue, allowing it to move about cautiously and locate threats while also avoiding detection.

Jackalweres were created to serve lamias, which are powerful evil creatures. As such, jackalweres typically have evil, destructive personalities. Consider if your character serves a lamia or some other similar entity, and consider how that fits you into your party.

### Design Notes

Jackalweres are similar in some ways to lycanthropes, so when we get to designing lycanthropes I hope to borrow some of the design work we'll do here. The most difficult mechanic of the jackalwere is its Shapechanger ability, but we can borrow work done for the Quasit and the Yochlol, so even that shouldn't be too difficult. Pack tactics also presents a challenge, but it's one that we'll need to tackle to handle a lot of other creatures.

Jackalweres are humanoids with the shapechanger subtype, costing 0.25 BP.

The jackalwere's best ability is Dexterity and its Intelligence are above average, but the rest of its abilities hang around 10. We'll grant the Jackalwere +1 Dexterity for 1 BP, and save the rest of our BP for other things.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 35 ft. speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP, Common for 0 BP, and two keen senses for a total of 1 BP.

Pack Tactics presents a serious problem. Advantage on attacks should never be this easy to get. With the availability of familiars, animal companions, or even expendable NPCs Pack Tactics essentially guarantees advantage on all melee attacks. No amount of BP can make this fair, so we need to reduce the effects.

After a lot of investigation, I've noticed that creatures in the Monster Manual with pack tactics never have multiattack (with the exception of giant vultures) and almost never have abilities which use a bonus action. This have me a clever idea: to limit Pack Tactics, we'll require it to be activated as a bonus action and to only apply on the user's next attack that round. Using a bonus action to activate this makes it reasonably accessible, but cuts into the character's action economy, especially at higher levels where bonus action abilities become common. This is still very good, so we'll call it 5 BP.

At 7.75 BP, we've got very little room to tackle the jackalwere's Shapechanger and Sleep Gaze abilities.

Sleep Gaze is a really powerful ability. It doesn't have a hit point cap like the *sleep* spell, so it's always useful. It also doesn't allow repeated saves, arguably making it better than powerful spells like *hold monster*. After considering a slew of ways to limit the ability, I can't find anything better than the *sleep* spell, which becomes largely useless beyond low levels. Instead of burning BP on a throw-away ability, we'll abandon Sleep Gaze.

The Jackalwere's hybrid form essentially dominates the function of its Shapechanger ability. Jackal form and humanoid form are fine for sneaking around or avoiding notice, but hybrid form combines the best aspects of the two with no drawback. The jackal and hybrid forms both add a 1d4 natural weapon (worth 1 BP), but the different forms don't grant wildly different utility like those of the Yochlol. Since we assessed the yochlol's Shapechanger ability at 2 BP, we'll call the jackalwere's 1.5 BP.

At 9.25 BP, the jackalwere is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a reasonably effective race which introduces a lycanthropy-style mechanic without complicated templates. If you want to strengthen the

jackalwere, allow it to cast Sleep once per day starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level. If you want to weaken the jackalwere, only allow it to use Keen Hearing and Smell while in jackal or hybrid form.

## Kenku

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Kenku are raven-like humanoids, cursed by an ancient master for their greed and duplicity. Now, Kenku wander the earth as vagabonds, begging or stealing whatever baubles they can find.

The official traits for Kenku are presented in Volo's Guide to Monsters. The traits presented here are developed to reflect the monster stats presented in the Monster Manual.

### Kenku Traits

Kenku share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (Kenku)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Kenku prize beautiful baubles, and often seek to acquire them through deception, trickery, and crime. Most Kenku are chaotic neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Ambusher.** You have advantage on attack rolls against any creature you have surprised.

**Deceptive.** You are proficient in Deception.

**Mimicry.** You can mimic any sounds you have heard, including voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful Insight check against a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma (Deception) bonus.

**Stealthy.** You are proficient in Stealth.

**Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common and Auran, but are unable to speak except through your Mimicry ability.

### Playing a Kenku

Kenku excel as Rogues. Their natural Dexterity, coupled with Ambusher and Mimicry, allow them to accomplish all sorts of clever tactics.

Because Kenku rely on mimicry for speech, you may have trouble speaking with your party. Establish clear forms of communication (specific signals, secretive messages, etc.) to convey crucial information with trusted allies.

## Design Notes

Kenku are a very simple humanoid race. Their only unique ability is their speech, which is easy to quantify and has few strict mechanical implications.

Kenku are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

Kenku's only high ability score is Dexterity, so a +2 to Dexterity for 2 BP is an obvious decision. The NPC Traits table in the Dungeon Master's Guide agrees.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walk speed, and racial languages plus common. Kenku can't speak (-1 BP), but that's offset by the Kenku's mimicry ability for 1 BP.

Ambusher costs another 1 BP, bringing us to 3 BP. That's extremely low, so we'll grant Deception proficiency and Stealth proficiency for another 1 BP.

We're still at really low BP, so I'll dip back into 3.5 for some ideas. Kenku in 3.5 had usable talons, so for 1 BP we'll give the Kenku talons that deal 1d4 damage.

At just 5 BP, Kenku are far below our target BP range. I recommend using the official version of the Kenku, though you may consider the adjustments I suggest in the "Published Races" section presented later in this document.

## Kobolds

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Kobolds are small, reptilian humanoids who worship and revere dragons. They frequently occupy dungeons, where they accumulate tiny hordes and seek to emulate the grandiosity of true dragons.

### Kobold Traits

Kobolds share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (kobold)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Kobolds obey the orders of their leader, typically either a Kobold elder or a real dragon. Most Kobolds are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that

rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, at whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Draconic.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Kobold

**Pack Tactics.** You have advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### Winged Kobold

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

### Playing a Kobold

Kobolds are small, nimble humanoids. Normal Kobolds make excellent Fighters, Rangers, and Rogues, especially in parties where they can count on their allies for Pack Tactics. Winged Kobolds make good Fighters and Rangers, but also make good Sorcerers and Warlocks.

Kobolds tend to be followers more often than leaders, but a charismatic Kobold, especially one with wings, can be an effective leader in a monstrous party.



### Design Notes

Kobolds are an icon of Dungeons and Dragons, and have been around in various incarnations for a long time. They've seen all manner of interpretations, but are generally famous for being the frail, disposable canon-fodder of dragons looking to build a quick

following. They are very mechanically simple, complicated only by Pack Tactics and the possibility of wings.

Kobolds are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

Kobolds' only high ability score is Dexterity, so a +2 to Dexterity for 2 BP is an obvious decision. The NPC Traits table in the Dungeon Master's Guide agrees, but also specifies a -4 to Strength. I've chosen to do away with racial ability score penalties, so we'll ignore the suggested Strength penalty.

From the Kobold's stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, small size for -1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common.

Sunlight sensitivity is -2 BP, and a huge hindrance for most adventurers. That brings us to just 1.5 BP.

The only things remaining are Pack Tactics, and flight for winged kobolds. Flight at a 30 ft. speed is 4 BP, bringing Winged Kobolds up to 5.5 BP.

Pack tactics is a major design consideration. Totally fine on weak creatures like hyenas and Kobolds, it's a huge tactical option for player characters. A Rogue can already Sneak Attack any foe with an adjacent ally, but Advantage dramatically improves the reliability of the Rogue's attacks. Adding the possibilities of things like summoned creatures and familiars means that any player putting in a tiny bit of effort is guaranteed perpetual Advantage on their attacks. We'll call this 5 BP.

I think that it makes sense to reserve Pack Tactics for non-winged Kobolds. It's a tactical advantage similar to the ability to fly, and I think it makes sense that Kobolds stuck on the ground would benefit more from the assistance of allies than Kobolds who could solve problems by flying.

Pack Tactics costs 5 BP, so I'll also grant Winged Kobolds a +1 to Charisma to represent their stronger Draconic heritage, and their tendency to become leaders among their people.

At 6.5 BP, kobolds are below our target range of 8-10 BP. They present some interesting options, but have few racial traits compared to published races. If you want to strengthen kobolds, grant proficiency in Stealth or add the Grovel, Cower, and Beg ability from the official version of the race.

### Kraken

Created to serve as soldiers in ancient war waged by the gods, kraken now lurk the depths of the oceans, driven by the violent urge to destroy the gods who created them.

## Kraken Traits

Krakens share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures bent on destroying the gods which created them, most krakens are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 15 ft. You have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Bite and Tentacles.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning or piercing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Lightning Resistance.** You have resistance to lightning damage.

**Lightning Storm.** As an action, you may target one creature you can see within 30 ft. of you. The target must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 1d8 lightning damage. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. The damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d8), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d8), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d8).

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, and Primordial.

## Playing a Kraken

Krakens are strong and durable, making them excellent barbarians and fighters. However, lacking hands they are unable to easily rely on weapons, shields, or other tools. Lightning Storm offers a useful ranged option, but most of the kraken's fighting will be done with its bite and tentacles.

Krakens are evil creatures who hate the gods, so they won't fit well into a party with religious characters like clerics or paladins, even if those characters worship evil deities.

## Design Notes

Like any legendary creature with a high CR, the kraken requires a lot of trimming. In a lot of ways the kraken is basically an octopus, but it has some additional magical

abilities related to storms. I don't want this to be octopus with additional stuff, so the kraken will need to give up some of the octopus's traits in exchange for some magical options. In fact, it may be best to start from the giant octopus and adjust it to better fit the flavor of the kraken.

Krakens are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

With the exception of Dexterity, all of the kraken's abilities scores are good. Unfortunately, that doesn't make selecting ability score increases easy. Krakens are extremely intelligent, but they're primarily known for being big and smashing stuff. As such, we'll grant the Kraken +1 Strength and +1 Constitution for 2 BP.

From comparing the kraken and giant octopus stat blocks, we can take a few common elements. We'll reduce the kraken's size to medium, drop natural armor to +2 for 1 BP, adjust the krakens walking speed to 15 ft. for -1.5 BP, adjust swimming speed to 40 ft. for 1.5 BP, reduce lightning immunity to lightning resistance for 2 BP, drop immunity to non-magic weapon damage, and drop the condition immunities. Truesight is way too powerful for a player race, but we can drop it to Darkvision for 2 BP.

Krakens speak only racial languages for -1 BP, plus 3 fixed languages for a total of 0.75 BP. Real krakens don't speak and have telepathy, but we'll let krakens speak normally to keep things simple and to save BP. We'll keep Amphibious for 1 BP, but we'll dump Siege Monster. Krakens have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons at 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 8.25 we've got a little bit of room for the kraken's remaining abilities. We'll drop the kraken's grapple ability to save BP and we'll drop Fling ability because it's too hard to adapt to something as small as medium. That just leaves Lightning Storm and Ink Cloud.

The kraken's version of ink cloud adds a poison damage effect, but I think we'll drop that to keep the ability from becoming problematic. Instead, we'll largely duplicate the giant octopus's version. The giant octopus's ink cloud is very similar to the *fog cloud* spell. Ink Cloud's duration is much shorter and only works in water, so we'll allow it to be used once per short rest and call it 1 BP.

Lightning Storm is a really cool ability, but it's also way too powerful to add to a race. Instead, we'll reskin a cantrip to deal lightning damage. I think it makes sense for Lightning Storm to require a save instead of the kraken making a spell attack, so we'll duplicate the

*sacred flame* cantrip and alter it to deal lightning damage for 0.5 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the kraken is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a quick swimmer with decent traits, and a fun ranged magical option. If you want to strengthen the kraken, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the kraken, reduce the damage dealt by Lightning Storm from d8's to d6's.

## Kuo-Toa

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Kuo-Toa are subterranean fish people that worship gods which they invent on their own, then bring into existence through the force of their faith.

### Kuo-Toa Traits

Kuo-Toa share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (kuo-toa)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, -2 Charisma, +1 any other.

**Alignment.** Kuo-Toa are insane creatures prone to creating their own gods, and are led by brutal archpriests. Most Kuo-Toa are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Otherworldly Perception.** You can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of you that is invisible or on the Ethereal Plane. You can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

**Slippery.** You have advantage on ability checks and saving throws made to escape a grapple.

**Superior Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Undercommon.

### Playing a Kuo-Toa

Kuo-Toa's ability increases makes them versatile, and their other abilities allow them to function in a variety of environments. However, Sunlight Sensitivity means that most of your outdoor/above ground adventuring will need to be done at night.

### Design Notes

Kuo-Toa's racial traits are fairly straightforward. Their most notable ability is Otherworldly Perception, which isn't difficult to quantify.

Kuo-Toa are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

The monster manual presents Kuo-Toa with no especially high ability scores, and the Dungeon Master's Guide's NPC Traits table suggests no ability score increases. While that's fine for a monster which players will slay en masse, it's not viable for a playable race. The monster stat block has above average Strength and below average Charisma, so we'll grant +1 Strength for 1 BP and -2 Charisma for -1 BP. That's not very exciting, so we'll add a flexible +1 which can be applied to any of the four other ability scores.

From the Kuo-Toa's stat block, we get medium size, a 30 foot walking speed, a 30 foot swim speed for 1 BP, superior Darkvision for 3 BP, and 1 point of natural armor for 0.5 BP.

From the Kuo-Toa's special abilities, we get Amphibious for 1 BP, Slipper for 0.5 BP, and Sunlight Sensitivity for -2 BP, bringing us to 5.5 BP.

Otherworldly Perception exactly replicates the effects of the See Invisibility spell with a permanent duration. See Invisibility's duration is already 1 hour long, which is long enough that we can comfortably call Otherworldly Perception somewhere slightly above 2 BP. We'll call it 2.5 BP.

At a total of 8 BP, the Kuo-Toa is at the bottom of our target BP range of 8-10. They're a nice, versatile race with a few cool abilities. If you need to strengthen Kuo-Toa, grant them additional natural armor. If you need to weaken Kuo-Toa, remove the flexible ability increase.

I haven't touched on the Kuo-Toa's unique equipment. Including those items is up to you. I'm hesitant to allow the sticky shield to players, but it's a fun tactical option which your players might enjoy.

## Lamia

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Evil, hedonistic creatures that resemble lions with humanoid upper bodies in place of a lion's head.

### Lamia Traits

share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity.

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Selfish hedonists, most lamia are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *minor illusion* cantrip. Starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *disguise self* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Intoxicating Touch.** As an action, you can attempt to touch a target and inflict them with a curse. Make a melee spell attack against a creature within reach. On a hit, the target is magically cursed for 1 hour. The target has Disadvantage on the next Wisdom saving throw made during this hour, at which point this effect ends immediately. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this attack.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

## Playing a Lamia

Charismatic and possessing the ability to cast illusions innately, Lamia are natural Sorcerers and Warlocks. However, their ability to magically disguise themselves and their natural charisma can also make them tricky rogues.

Lamia are selfish, and hedonistic, and tend to surround themselves with sycophants and toadies. This makes them natural party leaders, but they may have personality conflicts with characters who don't take orders and won't defer to the Lamia's clear superiority.

## Design Notes

The lamia is a good mix of magical and melee abilities. I want to emphasize its magical abilities primarily since the lamia is by design a "lead from the rear" sort of creature, but I'll include the melee capabilities as a backup.

Lamias are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The lamia's ability scores are all good, which makes it difficult to select ability increases. Charisma is the lamia's spellcasting ability, so that's a good choice. It's tempting to also grant a Strength increase, but if we adjust for size the Lamia's Strength is about the same as its other abilities. We'll grant +2 Charisma for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), we'll drop the natural armor, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus

Common. We'll drop the lamia's natural weapons down to 1d4 for 1 BP.

At just 5 BP, we have lots of room for the lamia's remaining abilities. Innate spellcasting won't be difficult, but Intoxicating Touch requires some thought.

As written, Intoxicating Touch is too good. It's easy to optimize a single attack, and thereafter the target of Intoxicating Touch becomes a laughably easy target for spells with Wisdom saving throws like Dominate Monster, making even the most powerful monster a negligible threat for the Lamia. To limit the ability, we'll only allow it to apply Disadvantage once, and we'll limit it to once per short rest. We'll call that 2 BP.

That brings us to 7 BP before we tackle the Lamia's innate spellcasting. I'm expecting a lot of lamia sorcerers and warlocks, so I don't think we need to keep everything, but we should touch the highlights. Lamia get enchantment and illusion spells across several spell levels, and they can cast Disguise Self and Major Image at will. We'll drop all of the spells above first level outright. If we keep Disguise Self but drop it once per short rest, that will cost 2.5 BP. Replacing Major Illusion with Minor Illusion costs 0.5 BP, and still gets at the same feeling without giving a first-level player anything crazy. And just like that, we're at 10 BP.

At 10 BP, the lamia is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the Lamia, allow it to cast *disguise self* at 1<sup>st</sup> level, or allow it to be cast will. If you want to weaken the lamia, reduce *disguise self* to once per long rest.

## Lich [Template: Acquired]

The undead remains of evil wizards, liches are among the most powerful magic users in the multiverse.

## Becoming a Lich

The process of becoming a lich is a closely guarded secret, known only to some of the most vile and powerful creatures in the multiverse. To become a lich, a wizard must bargain with a fiend, evil deity, or similarly powerful evil entity which possesses the knowledge required to become a lich. These creatures often demand fealty or some significant service in exchange for this precious knowledge.

Once they gain the knowledge to do so, the prospective lich must create their phylactery. A phylactery must take the form of an object with an interior space no smaller than three cubic inches, and contains magic symbols magically inscribed in silver. The most common form of phylactery is an amulet in



the shape of a small box, but it may take the form of any qualifying object with your Dungeon Master's permission. The components to create the phylactery cost 1000gp, plus the cost of any special materials specific to the prospective lich's phylactery design.

Once the phylactery is created and the prospective lich is ready to take their first level in the lich template, the prospective lich must perform a ritual to complete the process. This ritual requires the sacrifice of a living, sentient creature with a soul such as a human. The victim's blood is used to craft a poison potion, and the victim's soul is fed to the phylactery. Upon drinking the potion, the prospective lich immediately dies. After 24 hours, if the victim's soul has not been freed (by casting *dispel magic* on the phylactery as a 9th-level spell) from the phylactery, the victim's soul is utterly destroyed and cannot be restored except by divine intervention. The lich's soul is then bound to the phylactery, and the lich's body reanimates as a lich.

After reanimating, the character immediately gains their first level in the lich template. They must take all three levels of the template before they can take levels in another class or template.

### Lich Traits

All liches have the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits upon gaining the template.

#### Hit Points

- **Hit Dice.** 1d6 per lich level
- **Hit Points at Higher Levels.** 1d6 (or 4) + your Constitution modifier per lich level

#### Traits

Liches gain the following traits at each level, as indicated on the table below.

Level	Features
0	Transformation, Phylactery, Spellcasting
1	Cold Resistance, Lightning Resistance, Turn Resistance
2	Frightening Gaze, Paralyzing Touch

**Creature Type.** You replace your current creature type with Undead, but retain any subtypes.

You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you meditate deeply, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. (The Common word for such meditation is "trance.") While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Undead Nature.** You have resistance to necrotic damage. You have immunity to the poisoned condition, and to poison damage.

**Transformation.** Upon taking your first level in the lich template, you die and are reanimated. You immediately gain all of the traits listed under Lich Traits, above.

**Phylactery.** Your soul is bound to your phylactery. If your body is ever destroyed, the phylactery begins to emit magical smoke. After 1d10 days, your body reforms in an empty space adjacent to your phylactery. If your phylactery is destroyed, you die immediately and your soul is destroyed. Nothing short of divine intervention can restore you.

In order to continue functioning, you must occasionally feed souls to the phylactery. To do so, a special version of the *imprisonment* spell must be cast on a living, sentient creature with a soul within 5 feet of the phylactery. While the lich typically casts this spell, any spellcaster capable of casting the *imprisonment* spell may perform the sacrifice.

Upon doing so, the creature's body falls into a death-like stasis and its soul is imprisoned within the phylactery. A soul can be released from the phylactery by casting *\*dispel magic\** upon it as a 9th-level spell. If the soul is not freed with 24 hours, the creature's body dies and the phylactery consumes the creature's soul in order to sustain you, destroying it utterly. Nothing short of divine intervention can restore the creature.

You are sustained for one year per hit die of the sacrificed creature. If another creature is sacrificed before this time expires, the old spirit's sustenance is lost and replaced by the new spirit, provided that the new spirit's sustenance would end upon a later date than that of the original spirit.

At the end of this period, your body and mind begin to rapidly decay. You suffer a -1 penalty to each of your ability scores, starting at midnight the day after the imprisoned soul has been fully consumed. Every 24 hours, this penalty increases by 1. When your Strength or Dexterity score falls to 0, your body falls immobile. You are mentally aware, but can take no actions. When your Wisdom or Charisma score falls to 0, your mind goes into a vegetative state, and you are thoughtless, helpless, and can take no actions. When your Constitution or Intelligence score falls to 0, your body decays into ash, your mind slips into a vegetative state, and you become a Demilich. If a soul is ever sacrificed to your phylactery, you reform instantly, returning to full lich-dom.

**Spellcasting.** Upon gaining each level in the Lich template, you are treated as one Wizard level higher for the purposes of Spellcasting, including spell slots and the level of spells which you can prepare with that class.

**Cold Resistance.** You have resistance to cold damage.

**Lightning Resistance.** You have resistance to lightning damage.

**Turn Resistance.** You have advantage on saving throws against any effect which turns undead/

**Frightening Gaze.** As an action, you can magically terrify a creature with your gaze. Target one creature within 60 feet of you that you can see. If the target can see you, it must make a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of your next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Paralyzing Touch.** As an action, you may touch a creature and magically paralyze them. Make a spell attack. On a hit, the target takes 3d6 cold damage and must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

## Design Notes

The lich is one of my favorite creatures in Dungeons and Dragons. Their immortality allows them to take a very long view of the world, plotting evil schemes which might take centuries to come to fruition. They have a pile of resistances which make them difficult to defeat, plus several excellent plot ideas built right into their mechanics. I want to be very careful to do the lich justice.

Balancing the lich will be difficult. The lich gets too much to fit into a single level, so we'll need to make the template take 2-3 levels. That will mean wizards give up Spell Mastery, their final Ability Score Improvement, and Signature Spells. I want the lich to be roughly equivalent to the power granted by those features so that neither choice is universally better.

Liches are intended to be high-CR creatures. The process to become one requires casting a 9th-level

spell, which is an impressive achievement on its own. We'll require the ability to cast the \*imprisonment\* spell as a wizard spell, and we'll require evil alignment since being insanely evil is a big part of being a lich. We could consider other requirements, but being a wizard of at least 17th level seems like a sufficiently high bar.

Picking hit dice for the lich is easy. Wizards use 1d6, so we'll stick with that for 0 BP.

Because we want the lich to continue being a powerful spellcaster, we'll grant Spellcasting for 3 BP per level.

The lich's first level is the most important, and comes with a lot of important distinguishing qualities of the lich. Equivalent wizards pick up Spell Mastery, which is one of the wizard's most powerful class features, so we want the benefits to roughly match that level of power. The undead creature type costs 0.5 BP. Like many other undead, we'll grant Poison Immunity for 2 BP and resistance to necrotic damage for 2 BP.

Finally, we'll add the lich's Phylactery. The phylactery is a massively powerful survival tool, and it's nearly impossible to assess a BP cost for it. A sufficiently clever lich can make finding phylactery so difficult that entire adventuring campaigns could be written to search for and destroy it. However, it also presents a permanent threat to the lich, and an ongoing tax to keep the lich from deteriorating into a demilich.

Including spellcasting, that brings our total to 7.5 BP, ignoring a possible BP value for the lich's phylactery. That's just slightly below our target range of 8-10 BP for the first level of levelled templates. Compared to Spell Mastery, I think this is a viable option. Spell Mastery is extremely useful, but the comfort of immortality seems like a fair trade considering how many spell slots a wizard of this level has to spend on their 1st- and 2nd-level spells.

Our second level is somewhat harder. An ability score increase is a huge benefit, but by now nearly all wizards will have 20 intelligence. We can grant an Ability Score Increase, but that's boring. We can grant a bonus to Intelligence which allows the lich to exceed 20, but +1 would be useless and +2 would be so tempting that I think it would make levels 19 and 20 of the wizard class unappealing. I think it makes the most sense to dump the ability score increase, and go back to our template prerequisites and add 20 Intelligence as a prerequisite.

By now the wizard has received four ability score increases (not counting the one at 19th level) so they likely have 20 intelligence and have had the opportunity to pick two feats previously, so there may

not be many appealing feats for them at this level. I suspect that most wizards will either pick up a feat that makes them more durable or an increase to Constitution with their 19th-level ability score increase. Following that logic, I think we can focus on the lich's remaining defenses. We'll add resistance to cold and lightning and turn resistance.

We still haven't covered everything that the lich gets, so we'll add a third and final level to the template which adds the Paralyzing Touch and Frightening Glare. We're matching the effectiveness of Signature Spells, which is two free 3rd-level spells every short rest, so we've got some room to work. Paralyzing Touch is essentially the \*hold monster\* spell with a little bit of damage, so we can make some adjustments to make it work. Dropping \*hold monster\*'s range to touch goes a long way, but it's not enough for the difference between a 3rd-level spell from Signature Spells and a 5th-level spell.

Frightening Glare is essentially the same as the mummy's Dreadful Glare, so we'll copy it.

Looking at the DC's in the monster stat block, they're not tied to Intelligence. The math works out to 8 + proficiency bonus (7) + 3, but the lich has three abilities with +3 modifiers, I think Constitution makes sense for Paralyzing Touch, and Charisma makes sense for Frightening Glare. The frustrating ability dependencies will help bring the power level down to match Signature Spells. We'll also limit the usage of both abilities to once per short rest to prevent players from using them every round.

## Lizardfolk

Lizardfolk are a reptilian race of swamp-dwelling humanoids. They are fiercely territorial, and are adept survivors.

### Lizardfolk Traits

Lizardfolk share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (lizardfolk)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Lizardfolk have no notion of traditional morality, and they find the concepts of good and evil utterly alien. Truly neutral creatures, they kill when it is expedient and do whatever it takes to survive. Most Lizardfolk are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft., and you have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Hold Breath.** You can hold your breath for 1 hour.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Survivalist.** You have proficiency in the Perception, Stealth, and Survival skills.

**Teeth and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Draconic.

### Playing a Lizardfolk

Lizardfolk are natural survivalists: strong, durable, and skilled. Their ability scores make them good Barbarians and Fighters. Their racial skills make them excellent Rangers and Rogues. Their excellent natural armor allows them to survive unarmored, and their natural weapons allow them to fight unarmed.

Lizardfolk have no concept of good and evil as other races do, which might make

### Design Notes

Lizardfolk are very basic humanoids, and possess no abilities unique to the race. This makes them very easy to quantify, but not terribly interesting to design.

Lizardfolk are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

The basic Lizardfolk and Lizardfolk Shaman monster stat blocks both have 15 Strength and 13 Constitution. The Dungeon Master's Guide's NPC Traits table presents Lizardfolk with +2 Strength and a -2 Intelligence penalty. I've chosen to do away with racial ability penalties, but we'll keep the +2 Strength for 2 BP, and add a +1 to Constitution for another 1 BP.

From their stat block, we get medium size, 30 foot walking speed, 30 foot swim speed for 1 BP, and only racial languages for -1 BP. Their only special ability is Hold Breath for 0.25 BP.

Lizardfolk also have an impressive +3 natural armor, which we'll keep for 1.5 BP. +3 natural armor is on par with studded leather, so Lizardfolk players who normally opt for light armor will be able to completely forego armor.

The basic Lizardfolk is presented with a bite attack which deals 1d6 damage, and the Lizardfolk Shaman and Lizardfolk King/Queen both have claw attacks for 1d4. Since players don't distinguish between natural weapons, we'll keep the 1d6 natural weapon for 1.5 BP.

At just 6.25 BP, Lizardfolk are seriously lacking. Characters opting for armor above light armor won't benefit from the Lizardfolk's natural armor. Lizardfolk Barbarians are an obvious choice, so with Unarmored

Defense they will also lose the benefits of natural armor. 1d6 is good for unarmed strikes, but nearly every player will opt for a weapon dealing 1d8 damage, so they will lose that bonus too. At that point, Lizardfolk have 3 BP worth of abilities that are outright ignored. We need to give them some other options to work with.

The only thing left to draw from is the skills presented in the Lizardfolk stat blocks. Fortunately, we are presented with three very different Lizardfolk, all of which have the same three skills. Granting each of these skills is just 1.5 BP. I'm a little bit hesitant to grant 3 skills on a race, but considering a variant Human could take the Skilled feat, and Half-Elves get 2 flexible skills, I don't see any issues. Plus, these skills play well to Lizardfolk society's strict emphasis on survival.

3<sup>rd</sup> edition lizardfolk had the ability to hold their breath for an hour at a time. This makes sense considering their habitat, so we'll grant lizardfolk the same ability for 1 BP.

At a total of 8.75 BP, lizardfolk within our target range of 8-10. They have some good things going for them which definitely make them playable. They don't have any big flashy abilities, but they have a ton of skills and they can do everything which they need to survive, which really seems to fit the race's personality.

## Lycanthropes [Template: Acquired or Natural]

Lycanthropy is a curse tied to the cycles of the moon. When the moon is full, lycanthropes are transformed into an animal hybrid form and lose control of their actions, often for days at a time. While some lycanthropes are good-natured, most lycanthropes are violent predators that go on murderous hunting sprees when transformed.

### Becoming a Lycanthrope

A humanoid creature with one or more parents who are lycanthropes is born with the same lycanthropy as their cursed parent. If both parents are infected with different versions of lycanthropy, choose randomly which will be inherited.

Creatures not already cursed with lycanthropy may be cursed when attacked by a lycanthrope's attacks, usually by a bite. A humanoid hit by an attack that carries the curse of lycanthropy must succeed on a Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + the lycanthrope's

proficiency bonus + the lycanthrope's Constitution modifier) or be cursed.

After being cursed with lycanthropy, the effects take some time to become noticeable. The character's demeanor might shift subtly, their features might change slightly to resemble the animal tied to their curse, and their hair might change color or become abnormally thick.

Upon gaining the Lycanthropy template, the character immediately gains the traits listed under Lycanthrope Traits, below. In addition, the character's growth and training are affected. The next time the character gains enough experience to gain a level, instead of selecting a class in which to take a new level the character immediately gains a level of the Lycanthropy template. Characters born with lycanthropy take their first level in a class, as normal, and apply the traits listed under Lycanthrope Traits, below. Upon reaching second level, they must gain a level in the Lycanthropy template.

After gaining this level, the curse of lycanthropy continues to affect the character. Every time the character gains enough experience to gain a level, they must make a Constitution saving throw against the original DC to resist becoming cursed. On a failed saving throw, the character must take a second level of the Lycanthropy template. On a successful saving throw, the character may gain a level normally, but may not choose to take a second level of the lycanthropy template. At any point after becoming cursed, the character may choose to embrace their curse. If they do so, they automatically fail this saving throw the next time they would gain a level.

After gaining the final level of the Lycanthropy template, characters may resume gaining levels normally.

### Removing Lycanthropy

A remove curse spell can rid an afflicted lycanthrope of the curse, but a natural born lycanthrope can be freed of the curse only with a wish. Upon removing the curse, the character loses any traits gained from the lycanthropy template, as normal.

After recovering from lycanthropy, the character becomes resistant to the curse, and makes all future saving throws to resist lycanthropy with Advantage.

For further information on removing templates, see the Templates rules presented earlier in this document.

## Lycanthrope Traits

All lycanthropes share the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits.

### Hit Points

**Hit Dice.** See Lycanthropy Form, below.

**Hit Points at Higher Levels.** 1d12 (or 7) + your Constitution modifier per lycanthrope level

### Traits

Lycanthropes gain the following traits at each level, as indicated on the table below.

Level	Features
0	Creature Type, Cursed by the Moon, Lycanthropy Form
1	Controlled Shapechanger, Bestial Might
2	Alignment Change, Master Shapechanger, Improved Bestial Might

**Creature Type.** The affected creature adds the shapechanger subtype to their existing subtypes.

**Cursed by the Moon.** When the full moon rises, you are forced to assume the shape of your hybrid form. Your character's actions for the following 24 hours are determined entirely by the alignment specific to their version of lycanthropy, and your specific actions are decided by the Dungeon Master. After this period, your character returns to humanoid form. You remember these events as if they were a nightmare, and might have trouble recalling your actions in their entirety.

In addition, you have vulnerability to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage dealt by silver weapons.

**Shapechange.** You can transform into an animal-human hybrid, an animal, or into your true form, which is your original humanoid form. Your statistics, except as noted under your Lycanthropy Form, are the same in each form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. Clothes or armor you are wearing are shed or destroyed if your new form does not fit into them. While in beast form, you are unable to speak. You revert to your true form if you die.

You are unable to control this transformation when initially afflicted with lycanthropy, but gradually gain more control as you gain levels in the Lycanthropy template.

**Controlled Shapechange.** As an action, you may attempt to activate your Shapechanger trait to change forms. To do so, make a Constitution saving throw against. The DC of this saving throw depends on your current form and your desired form, as described in the table below. On a successful saving throw, you may use Shapechanger to change into your desired form. On a failed saving throw, you suffer one level of fatigue.

Current Form	Desired Form	DC
True Form	Hybrid Form	13
True Form	Animal Form	15
Hybrid Form	True Form	10
Hybrid Form	Animal Form	13
Animal Form	True Form	13
Animal Form	Hybrid Form	10

**Bestial Might.** You gain additional traits, as specified by your Lycanthropy Form.

**Alignment Change.** You adopt the alignment specified by your Lycanthropy Form.

**Master Shapechanger.** When making a Constitution saving throw to activate your Shapechanger trait, you make the saving throw with Advantage. In addition, you no longer lose control of your character when the full moon rises, though you are still forced to assume your hybrid form for 24 hours.

**Improved Bestial Might.** You gain additional traits, as specified by your Lycanthropy Form.

## Lycanthropy Form

Your lycanthropy form is determined by the lycanthrope that afflicted you with the curse of lycanthropy. The traits listed below are acquired

### Werebear

**Hit Dice.** 1d12 per level

**Alignment.** lawful good

**Bestial Strength.** Your Strength increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity bonus. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which 1d8 slashing damage or piercing damage on a hit.

**Improved Bestial Strength.** Your Strength increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity bonus. You gain Keen Smell in all forms. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you gain a climb speed of 30 feet.

### Wereboar

**Hit Dice.** 1d10 per level

**Alignment.** neutral evil

**Bestial Strength.** Your Strength increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity bonus. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which 1d6 piercing damage on a hit. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you gain the Charge trait.

**Improved Bestial Strength.** Your Strength increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your

hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity bonus. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you gain the Relentless trait.

#### Wererat

**Hit Dice.** 1d8 per level

**Alignment.** lawful evil

**Bestial Strength.** Your Dexterity increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity bonus. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which 1d4 piercing damage on a hit. These unarmed strikes use the higher of your Strength or Dexterity for attack and damage. While in your beast form, you gain Darkvision.

**Improved Bestial Strength.** Your Dexterity increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity bonus. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you gain the Keen Smell trait.

#### Weretiger

**Hit Dice.** 1d10 per level

**Alignment.** neutral

**Bestial Strength.** Your increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity bonus. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which 1d8 piercing damage or slashing damage on a hit. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you gain the Pounce trait.

**Improved Bestial Strength.** Your increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity bonus. You gain Darkvision.

#### Werewolf

**Hit Dice.** 1d10 per level

**Alignment.** chaotic evil

**Bestial Strength.** Your increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity bonus. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Improved Bestial Strength.** Your Strength increases by +1, to a maximum of 20. While unarmored in your hybrid or animal forms, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity bonus. While in your hybrid or animal forms, you gain the Keen Hearing and Smell trait.

## Design Notes

Lycanthropy was first template I wrote for this document. I selected it because the multiple types of lycanthropy presented design challenges which would help me balance the different versions of the template against each other. Though the different types of lycanthropes presented in the Monster Manual range in power, I wanted the templates to be roughly equivalent.

The "level 0" portion of the template gives characters the Shapechanger subtype (0.25 BP), which makes them immune to polymorph effects. It's offset by vulnerability to silver weapons (-0.5 BP), which don't come up much in a normal campaign, but if the players start stomping around as werewolf the DM is likely to start producing enemies with silvered weapons. It's technically a net negative, but those are story points which I think will make it more interesting to play a lycanthrope.

The first level of the lycanthropy template causes the character's alignment to shift. While this doesn't have a BP value it can be an important deterrent if a player is cursed by a lycanthrope with an alignment opposed to that of his party. It also grants Controlled Shapechanger, granting willing access to the lycanthrope's different forms. Changing shapes itself isn't particularly exciting, but the ability to switch between a combat form and a socially-acceptable humanoid form is probably worth 1 BP.

Individual lycanthrope types grant additional traits, which we'll examine individually.

#### Werebear

Werebears are big and strong, and notably have a climb speed. The published rules grant them the largest Strength increase, but I'm hesitant to grant more than +1 on a single-level template because it's so appealing.

The werebear will use d12 hit dice for 2 BP.

We'll limit their size to medium, grant +1 Strength for 2 BP, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 1d8 natural weapons for 2 BP, and Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, and a climb speed of 30 ft. for 2 BP. With the exception of Keen Smell those will only apply in hybrid or animal form, but since I expect lycanthropes to spend much of their time in hybrid form I won't adjust the BP cost to compensate for the restriction.

At 9.5 BP, the werebear is within our target range of 8-10 BP. d12 hit dice are great for the sorts of characters who are likely to seek out becoming a

werebear, and the werebear's traits provide a nice mix of new options.

### Wereboar

Wereboars are strong and all about charging. That's really appealing for melee characters like barbarians and fighters, and Relentless provides a fantastic defensive option for characters who tend to draw a lot of attacks.

The wereboar will use d10 hit dice for 1 BP.

We'll grant +1 Strength for 2 BP, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 1d6 natural weapons for 2 BP, Charge for 2 BP and Relentless for 0.5 BP.

At 8.5 BP, the wereboar falls within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's less versatile than the werebear, but its emphasis on melee combat still makes it very appealing for a certain set of character types.

### Wererat

Wererats are the weakest of lycanthropes, and gain the least from lycanthropy. That's fine for monsters, but not much fun for player characters. We'll need to find some extra stuff to add to beef up the wererat.

The wererat will use d8 hit dice for 0.5 BP.

We'll grant +1 Dexterity for 2 BP, 1d4 natural weapons for 1 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, and proficiency in Stealth for 1 BP. Normal wererats only get Darkvision in rat form, but I can't think of any reason why that would be the case so we'll grant Darkvision for 2 BP.

At 7 BP, the wererat falls below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's absolutely a niche option, but it can be very useful for rangers, rogues, and other stealthy characters who lack access to Darkvision, not to mention the utility of turning into a rat to get into small spaces unnoticed.

### Weretiger

Weretigers have more special abilities than other lycanthropes, which makes designing them easy without depending on a big ability score increase to eat up their BP budget.

The weretiger will use d10 hit dice for 1 BP.

We'll grant +1 Strength for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Keen Hearing and Smell for 1 BP, Pounce for 1.5 BP, and 1d8 natural weapons for 2 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the weretiger falls within our target range of 8-10 BP. It provides useful senses, a fun active ability, and an ability increase, making it an interesting and appealing character option.

### Werewolf

The werewolf is very similar to the weretiger, making it difficult to design in a way that keeps it unique. Even more frustrating, it loses both Darkvision and Pounce without adding anything except natural armor.

The werewolf will use d10 hit dice for 1 BP.

We'll grant +1 Strength for 2 BP, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, Keen Hearing and Smell for 1 BP, and 1d8 natural weapons for 2 BP.

That only brings our total to 6.5 BP, which isn't nearly enough. The weretiger is nearly identical but strictly better, so we need some way to distinguish the werewolf. The werewolf stat block doesn't provide any other options, so we'll look at the wolf for ideas. Both the werewolf and the wolf have listed bonuses to Perception and Stealth, so we'll grant proficiency in Stealth for 0.5 BP. The wolf also gets Pack Tactics, but that's more BP than I want to spend and werewolves aren't presented as pack animals. For lack of a better option, we'll grant the werewolf a 5 foot increase in walking speed for 0.5 BP.

At 7.5 BP, the werewolf falls slightly below our target range of 8-10 BP. It combines several options from other forms of lycanthropy, making it a nice mix of abilities.

## Magmin

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Small fire elementals bound into a form of hardened magma.

### Magmin Traits

Magmins share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Though not actively evil or intentionally destructive, magmins are driven by an innate desire to set fire to everything around them. Most magmins are chaotic neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Death Burst.** When you fall to 0 hit points, you explode in a burst of fire and magma. Each creature within 10 feet of you must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 1d8 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The DC of this

check is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. Flammable objects that aren't being worn or carried in the area are ignited. The damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d8), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d8), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d8).

**Ignited Illumination.** As a bonus action, you can set yourself ablaze or extinguish your flames. While ablaze, you shed bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Touch.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 fire damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Ignan.

### Playing a Magmin

Magmin are quick and have good Dexterity, making them excellent rangers and rogues. Their Touch ability allows them to deal fire damage with a touch, allowing them to easily circumvent resistances to normal weapon damage. Death burst provides a great last resort option, but be careful not to rely on it or you may find your character unconscious through long portions of an encounter.

Like other elementals, magmin only exist when magically summoned. Consider what magic brought your character into existence, and who may have performed that magic. You might be bound to that spellcaster in some fashion, which may be a good reason to remain in an adventuring party.

### Design Notes

Magmins' stats are very similar to fire elementals, so we need to be careful not to make magmins a small version of the fire elemental.

Magmins are elementals, costing 1 BP.

The magmin's only notably good ability is Dexterity, so we'll give them a +2 to Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP (remember that 25 ft. is standard for small races), resistance to fire damage (down from immunity) for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and only racial languages for -1 BP.

Illumination normally costs 0.25 BP, but we'll allow the magmin to toggle it for an additional 0.25 BP.

We'll drop the magmin's natural weapon to 1d8 fire damage for 2 BP.

That brings us to 9 BP, and all that we have left to consider is Death Burst. Death burst is a great mechanic on monsters because it makes them

dangerous to slay en masse, but it's difficult to apply to players. For monsters, they generally "die" when they hit 0 hit points, but players generally use the death saving throws mechanics, which mean that whatever incapacitated them has often moved away long before the player dies.

In order to make death burst interesting, I think that it make sense to adjust it to take effect when the player falls to 0 hit points. I don't want the damage to be so powerful that players spend a ton of time trying to get knocked out, but I also want it to be enough that it matters. I think if we tie it to cantrip damage progression we'll hit a nice middle-ground. We'll use d8's for the damage dice to keep the damage reasonably effective, and allow a Dexterity save for half damage. We'll call this 1 BP.

At 10 BP, the magmin is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. The magmin is quick and works reasonably well with no equipment, and its death burst is a good fallback mechanic. If you want to strengthen the magmin, increase the damage die of Death burst to d10's or increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the magmin, disallow armor or reduce the damage die of Death burst to d6's.

## Manticore

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Evil predators resembling a lion with bat wings and a humanoid face. Manticores are known for their ability to fire bony spikes from their tails.

### Manticore Traits

Manticores share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Evil, intelligent predators, most manticores are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.



**Tail Spikes.** You may fire stiff, bony spikes from your tail as a ranged weapon attack. This attack has 30/60 range, and deals 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Manticore

Strong and durable like many beasts and beast-like creatures, manticores make excellent barbarians and fighters. Lacking hands limits the manticore's ability to use spellcasting foci, but the manticore's tail spikes offer a potent ranged option.

Manticores hunt in packs, and willingly join forces with other evil creatures provided that they are treated well and given regular prey. An evil party might recruit a manticore character by promising it the right to eat the party's foes.

### Design Notes

The manticore is mostly a beast with a few extra traits. Its tail spikes are the manticore's most notable ability, but we can easily replicate it by borrowing from the needle blight.

Manticores are monstrosities, costing 0.5 but offering no specific traits.

Like most beasts and beast-like monsters, the manticore's best abilities are Strength and Constitution. We'll give the manticore +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 40 ft. fly speed (down from 50 ft.) for 8 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Manticores have no hands for -2 BP, but we'll give them 1d8 natural weapons for 2 BP. Like the needle blight, we'll allow the manticore to fire spikes at range for 0.5 BP.

At 8.5 BP, the manticore falls within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the manticore, increase its fly speed. If you want to weaken the manticore, remove its natural armor or reduce its fly speed.

## Medusa

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Mythical beasts with snakes for hair and the ability to petrify creatures with their gaze.

### Medusa Traits

Medusas share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures cursed as a result of their desire for eternal life and beauty, most medusas are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 15 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Petrifying Gaze.** As an action, you can attempt to petrify a creature with your gaze. You and the creature must be within 30 ft. and must be able to see each other. Creatures whose bodies are not made of flesh, such as constructs, are immune to this effect, as are creatures immune to paralysis. The target creature must make a Constitution saving throw. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus.

On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone. They are treated as having 1 level of fatigue. The creature must repeat this saving throw at the end of each of its turns. On a failed saving throw, the creature is treated as gaining an additional level of fatigue. If the creature fails 6 saving throws, it is petrified until freed by *greater restoration* or similar magic. On a successful saving throw, the creature resists the effect, and is treated as having one less level of fatigue. The creature is treated as having one less level of fatigue each round until they are treated as having 0 levels of fatigue. Creatures immune to fatigue are not immune to this effect, and any actual levels of fatigue do not stack with this effect.

This effect lasts up to one minute. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, the creature is treated as having no levels of fatigue from this effect and immediately returns to normal. If the creature becomes petrified by this effect, the effects are permanent and you no longer need to concentrate.

A creature may avert its eyes from you, which makes it immune to this ability. If it does so, it cannot see you until the beginning of its next turn, at which point it may choose to avert its eyes again.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Snake Hair.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

## Playing a Medusa

Medusas are nimble, crafty, and have a deadly petrifying gaze. Their abilities make them excellent rogues and warlocks, and either class fits the origin of the monster well.

Cursed by their own vanity, medusas may have varying opinions about revealing themselves to other. A medusa traveling with others might choose to cover themselves, possibly wearing a veil to obscure their petrifying gaze.

## Design Notes

Medusas are a fantastic classical monster. While they're primarily known for their petrifying gaze, they also have snakes for hair for some reason. Designing them is fairly straightforward since we've already designed petrifying gaze for other creatures, and the medusas other traits are easily replicated.

Medusas are monstrosities, costing 0.5 but offering no specific traits.

The medusa's best ability scores are Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma. Though Constitution is the Medusa's highest, I think we're going to ignore it. According the monster manual, medusas are created as the price of ancient magic which grants the subject eternal beauty. I think Dexterity and Charisma better represent that ideal, so we'll grant the medusa +1 Dexterity and +1 Charisma for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +1 natural armor (down from +3) for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, and Common. We'll drop snake hair to 1d4 poison damage for 1 BP, and we'll duplicate the basilisk's petrifying gaze for 4 BP.

At 10 BP, the medusa is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the medusa, increase the damage dealt by poison hair from 1d4 poison to 1d4 poison and 1d4 piercing. If you want to weaken the medusa, remove its natural armor.

## Mephits

Mephits are imp-like elemental creatures composed of two of the four elements.

### Mephit Traits

Mephits share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your

consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** Cruel tricksters, most Mephits are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Dust Mephit

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Death Burst.** When you fall, you explode in a burst of dust. Each creature within 5 feet of you must then succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be blinded for 1 minute. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution bonus. A blinded creature can repeat the saving throw on each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Auran and Terran.

### Ice Mephit

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from an ordinary shard of ice. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Ice Body.** You have weakness to bludgeoning damage and fire damage, and you have resistance to cold damage.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You can cast the *fog cloud* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Aquan and Auran.

### Magma Mephit

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from an ordinary mound of magma.

You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Magma Body.** You have weakness to cold damage, and you have resistance to fire damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Ignan and Terran.

#### Mud Mephit

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. and you have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from an ordinary mound of mud. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 20 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Mud Breath.** As an action, you can breathe viscous mud onto a creature within 5 feet. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or be restrained for 1 minute. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Aquan and Terran.

#### Smoke Mephit

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Fire Resistance.** You have resistance to fire damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Aquan and Ignan.

#### Steam Mephit

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Death Burst.** When you fall to 0 hit points, you explode in a burst of fire and magma. Each creature within 10 feet of you must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 1d8 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The DC of this check is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. Flammable objects that aren't being worn or carried in the area are ignited. The damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d8), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d8), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d8).

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Fire Resistance.** You have resistance to fire damage.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *dancing lights* cantrip. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Auran and Ignan.

#### Playing a Mephit

Mephits all work in roughly the same way. They lack ability increases, but their mobility and special abilities offer interesting options which can work for a variety of classes.

The Monster Manual provides little information on mephits' personalities, but it describes them as cruel tricksters. If your party includes characters who worship a deity who enjoys trickery, or if your party gets by on deception, a mephit might be a good fit.

#### Design Notes

Mephits are a collection of very similar elementals. In video game terms, they're a pallet swap. They're largely identical, but they're a different color and deal different types of damage.

Mephits are elementals, which costs 1 BP.

Each mephit's ability scores are different, which makes their ability score increases difficult to pin down. We'll consider them individually when we get to the subrace specifics.

From the stat blocks, we can see that mephits share small size for -1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and poison immunity for 2 BP, and speaks two languages. We'll call the languages racial plus one fixed, for a net of -0.75 BP. We'll give all mephitis 1d4 natural weapons for 1 BP, though several of them deal additional damage. Because mephits have so many abilities, we need to conserve BP.

Each mephit also has a Death Burst and a breath weapon. Several also have damage immunities or vulnerabilities and innate spellcasting (usually one 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell). We'll need handle each ability separately for each mephit, and we'll likely need to drop one or more depending on the specific mephit's other abilities.

Counting all of the traits which apply to all mephitis, we're starting from 4.25 BP before we examine individual subraces.

#### Dust Mephit

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, and vulnerability to fire for

-1 BP. We'll drop the innate spellcasting since it doesn't scale. Between the death burst and the breath weapon, I think I like the death burst better because it'll be really hard to balance a blinding effect on a breath weapon. We'll call it 2 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the dust mephit falls within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the dust mephit, grant it a breath weapon that applies the same blinding effect as Death Burst in a 15-foot cone. If you want to weaken the dust mephit, reduce its walking speed.

#### Ice Mephit

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, vulnerability to bludgeoning damage for -1 BP, vulnerability to fire for -1 BP, and resistance to cold (down from immunity) for 2 BP. Ice mephitis can cast the *fog cloud* spell once per day for 1 BP, and we'll allow it to be cast 2 levels early for an additional 0.25 BP. We'll also retain False Appearance for 0.5 BP. We'll drop death burst and the ice mephit's breath weapon.

At 9.5 BP, the ice mephit is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the ice mephit, give it a breath weapon which deals cold damage in a 15-foot cone or upgrade its cold resistance to cold immunity. If you want to weaken the ice mephit, reduce its speed.

#### Magma Mephit

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, vulnerability to cold for -1 BP, and resistance to fire (down from immunity) for 2 BP. That's already 9.75 BP, but we'll retain False Appearance because the magma mephit won't get anything else fun without it.

At 10.25 BP, the magma mephit slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the magma mephit, increase its fire resistance to fire immunity or grant it a breath weapon which deals fire damage in a 15-foot cone. If you want to weaken the magma mephit, reduce its speed or remove False Appearance.

#### Mud Mephit

From the stat block, we get 20 ft. walking speed for -0.5 BP, 20 ft. fly speed for 3 BP, and 20 ft. swim speed for 0.5 BP. Because its speed is abnormally slow for a mephit, we are left with more BP to work with than other mephits get.

I really like the mud mephit's breath weapon, so we'll retain the breath weapon unchanged and False Appearance for 0.5 BP. I think we can call the breath

weapon 2 BP, but I'm not sure how effective the effect will prove to be.

At 9.75 BP, the mud mephit falls within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the mud mephit, grant it a Death Burst effect which applies the same effect as the mud mephit's breath weapon. If you want to weaken the mud mephit, reduce the duration of its breath weapon's effect.

#### Smoke Mephit

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, and resistance to fire (down from immunity) for 2 BP. That doesn't leave much room, but we'll add the *dancing lights* cantrip for 0.5 BP.

At 10.25 BP, the smoke mephit slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the smoke mephit, upgrade its fire resistance to fire immunity. If you want to weaken the smoke mephit, remove its ability to cast *dancing lights*.

#### Steam Mephit

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, and resistance to fire (down from immunity) for 2 BP. That makes the steam mephit essentially identical to the smoke mephit, but without a fun cantrip. We can't do that, and we don't have enough BP for a breath weapon, so we'll give the steam mephit Death Burst.

At 10.75 BP, the steam mephit exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the steam mephit, grant it a breath weapon which deals fire damage in a 15-foot cone. If you want to weaken the steam mephit, remove its Death Burst.

## Merfolk

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Merfolk are an iconic race of aquatic humanoids, famous for their fish-like lower bodies.

### Merfolk Traits

Merfolk share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (merfolk)

**Ability Score Increase.** Your ability scores each increase by 1.

**Alignment.** Merfolk are diverse creatures, and have no predisposition to any one alignment.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft., and you have a swim speed of 40 feet.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Aquan.

### Variant Merfolk Traits

If your campaign uses the optional feat rules from chapter 5 of the Player's Handbook, your Dungeon Master might allow these variant traits, all of which replace the Merfolk's Ability Score Increase trait.

**Ability Score Increase.** Two different ability scores of your choice increase by 1.

**Skill.** You gain proficiency in one skill of your choice.

**Feat.** You gain one feat of your choice.

## Playing a Merfolk

Merfolk are the humans of the sea; they are a flexible, diverse, and far-ranging race which can fit into any story. Their ability scores allow them to thrive as any class.

## Design Notes

Merfolk are among the simplest of humanoids. They have no unique abilities. The only thing which truly complicates their design is how incredibly bland their monster stat block is.

Merfolk are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

From the merfolk's stat block, we get medium size, 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 40 ft. swim speed for 2 BP, and racial languages plus common. The Merfolk's only special ability is Amphibious for 1 BP, bringing the total to 4 BP.

Merfolk are the closest thing you'll get to aquatic humans, so it makes sense that their abilities would be similar. Since the merfolk's monster stat block lacks any particularly good ability scores, we'll give them the option of +1 to all ability scores for 6 BP or two flexible +1 ability score increases for 3 BP, and one feat for 4 BP as a "variant".

At 10 or 11 BP, we have two perfectly fine human substitutes for aquatic campaigns. If you want to strengthen merfolk, grant them a flexible skill proficiency. If you want to weaken merfolk, reduce their swim speed

## Merrow

Monstrosities descended from merfolk ensnared by the demon lord Demogorgon, merrow are hulking aquatic monstrosities set loose on the material plane to cause havoc.

## Merrow Traits

Merrow share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Twisted by eons on the abyss, most merrow are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft. and you have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Abyssal and Aquan.

## Playing a Merrow

Merrow are strong and durable, making them excellent barbarians and fighters. They lack any active special abilities, but that doesn't make them any less effective.

Since merrow originate from the abyss, they fit well into any party with demon worshippers or other similarly evil characters.

## Design Notes

Where merfolk are aquatic humans, merrow are aquatic half-orcs. They lack the variety and versatility of merfolk, but make up for it with emphasis on brute strength.

Merrow are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The merrow's best ability scores are Strength and Constitution, so we'll give them +2 Strength and +2 Constitution for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 40 ft. swim speed for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, racial languages plus one fixed language for -0.75 BP, and Amphibious for 0.5 BP. We'll drop the merrow's natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP since they can use weapons.

At 8.25 BP, the merrow is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the merrow, grant it Aggressive. If you want to weaken the merrow, reduce its ability increases.

## Mimic

Mimics are iconic ambush predators, known for disguising themselves as mundane objects like chests to attract and prey upon unsuspecting prey.

## Mimic Traits

Mimics share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Motivated by little more than hunger, most mimics are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 15 ft.

**Adhesive.** While in object form, you can adhere to huge or smaller object or creature that touches you as a reaction. Ability checks to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

**Amorphous Form.** You have no hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor or use shields.

**Bite and Pseudopod.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, and may attack with a bite or with a pseudopod.

When you attack with a bite, your unarmed strikes deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

When you attack with a pseudopod, your unarmed strikes deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike with a pseudopod, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**False Appearance.** While motionless in object form, you appear indistinguishable from an ordinary object. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Grappler.** You have advantage on attack rolls against a creature you are grappling.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Shapechanger.** You can use an action to polymorph into an object or back into your true, amorphous form. Your statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. You revert to your true form if you die.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Mimic

Mimics are fantastic grapplers, but are seriously hampered by their limited mobility. Learn to rely on guile, ambushes, or assistance to quickly get yourself into melee range. Consider classes like barbarian to

improve your AC, but fighter, monk, and ranger can both capitalize on your capabilities in melee combat.

## Design Notes

Mimics are a fantastic and iconic monster, but like any ambush predator it's difficult to turn them into a player race because waiting for pretty to stumble into your mouth isn't generally how players do things.

Mimics are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The mimic's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll give them +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 15 ft. walking speed for -1.5 BP, acid resistance (down from immunity) for 2 BP, immunity to the Prone condition for 0.25 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and False Appearance for 0.5 BP. Mimics have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. We'll allow it to bite for 1d4 slashing and 1d4 acid, but won't allow the mimic to apply Grab (see below) unless it uses a pseudo pod. Since oozes can't wear armor and the mimic's true form is an "amorphous form", we'll disallow armor for -3 BP.

That brings us to 3.25 BP, and we need to consider Shapechanger, Adhesive, Grappler, and the grab effect on the mimic's pseudopod attacks.

Shapechanger doesn't actually offer the mimic any useful options. In fact, reverting to its natural shape only removes abilities. Since that's the case, we'll call Shapechanger 0 BP and largely ignore it.

The mimic's remaining abilities need to be handled very cautiously. While they're fine on a monster, giving them to a player can very quickly create a problem character. Adding Grab to the mimic's natural weapons costs 2 BP. Grappler adds the most important part of the Grappler feat, so 2 BP seems like a reasonable estimate. We'll make Adhesive trigger on the mimic's reaction to keep it from being abused, and we can call it 2 more BP.

At 9.75 BP, the mimic is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a fantastic grappler, but it's limited by its poor AC and limited mobility. If you want to strengthen the mimic, raise its walking speed. If you want to weaken the mimic, remove its natural armor.

## Mind Flayer

Horrifying creatures known for eating the brains of sentient creatures.

## Mind Flayer Traits

Mind flayers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Intelligence.

**Alignment.** Horrible brain-eating tyrants, most mind flayers are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Extract Brain.** On a successful hit with your tentacles, if the damage would reduce the creature to 0 hit points, you may choose to kill the target by extracting and devouring its brain.

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *levitate* spell once per day. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Mind Blast.** As an action, you can magically emit psychic energy in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that line must make an Intelligence saving throw. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 psychic damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Tentacles.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 psychic damage on a hit.

**Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Deep Speech and Undercommon.

### Playing a Mind Flayer

Mind flayers are intelligent and have some useful abilities which supplement the abilities of classes like wizard. When official psionics rules are eventually published, mind flayers should make natural psionics.

Arcane spellcasters are hugely rare among mind flayers, who eschew arcane magic in favor of psionics. If you choose to play a mind flayer wizard, being an outcast among your own kind is wonderful motivation to take up a life of adventure.

### Design Notes

One of the most popular monsters in the game, mind flayers are really interesting. They have a good mix of abilities, they have great flavor, and they make great villains. I really want to do them justice.

Mind flayers are aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

All of the mind flayer's mental ability scores are fantastic, but Intelligence is clearly the best. We'll give mind flayers +1 Intelligence for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision (down from Superior Darkvision) for 2 BP, racial languages plus Undercommon, and Telepathy for 2 BP.

That already brings us to 5.5 BP, so we need to be very careful with the rest of our BP. The rest of the mind flayer's stat block includes Magic Resistance,



Innate Spellcasting, Tentacles, Extract Brain, and Mind Blast.

We'll drop Magic Resistance. We could use Cunning instead, but generally when I see Magic Resistance it's on creatures that need to work as stand-alone boss monsters. Players don't need to do that.

The mind flayer's innate spellcasting takes a sharp jump in power level. We'll keep levitate for 1 BP, but drop the rest to conserve BP

We can examine Tentacles and Extract Brain together. We definitely don't have room to add grappling abilities to the mind flayer, so we'll drop the grapple mechanics add Extract Brain as a fun rider effect of some kind. We'll drop the tentacle damage to 1d4 for 1 BP, and we'll allow Extract Brain to work like a coup de grace, installing killing anything dropped to 0 hit points after being hit with the mind flayer's tentacles. We'll call Extract Brain 0.5 BP since nearly every time a player drops a foe to 0 hit points it's considered dead.

We're already at 8 BP, and Mind Blast is too good to add without significant adjustment. If we reskin a breath weapon to deal psychic damage in a cone, we can get away with 2 BP for Mind Blast.

At 10 BP, the mind flayer is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. The race has some very potent abilities, but really only works for a tiny number of character concepts. If you want to strengthen the mind flayer, increase its Intelligence increase. If you want to weaken the mind flayer, reduce Mind Blast to once per day.

## Minotaur

Minotaurs are great horned monstrosities resembling a humanoid bull. They are famous for their horns, and for their ability to perfectly navigate labyrinths.

### Minotaur Traits

Minotaurs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Monster of the Labyrinth.** +1 Strength, Constitution, or Wisdom

**Alignment.** Descended from cursed demon-worshippers and outcasts, most minotaurs are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 15 feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6

damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Horns.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit, or 1d10 damage on a hit when you use your Charge ability.

**Labyrinthine Recall.** You can perfectly recall any path you have traveled.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

### Playing a Minotaur

Minotaurs are strong brutes, and make excellent Barbarians, Clerics, Fighters, and Rangers. Be sure to use your Charge ability when moving around in combat.

Minotaurs are evil monsters in most fantasy settings, but not in all of them. Depending on your setting, your character might be from any number of backgrounds and have any kind of personality.

### Design Notes

Wizards took a swing at Minotaurs as a player race in their article "[Unearthed Arcana: Waterborne Adventures](#)". I'll use that article as an additional source of inspiration, but I'll attempt primarily to the Minotaur presented in the Monster Manual because the Waterborne Adventures version is intended to cater primarily to Dragonlance, while the Monster Manual version is more generic.

Minotaurs are Monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Minotaurs are strong and durable, but they're also clever. Accounting for size, their best abilities are Strength and Wisdom. I really want Minotaurs to be clever combatants rather than just dumb brutes, so we'll steal some inspiration from the Conqueror's Virtue ability on Wizards of the Coast's Dragonlance minotaurs. We'll grant a fixed +1 Strength, and the choice of another +1 to either Strength, Constitution, or Wisdom. We'll call this 2.25 BP.

From their stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +4) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), Darkvision for 2 BP, and we'll give them racial languages plus



Common for 0 BP since they're a near-humanoid race and should fit into a party easily.

We'll add Charge for another 2 BP, and Labyrinth Recall for 0.5 BP, but we'll drop Reckless since it should remain a feature exclusive to Barbarians and many Minotaurs will choose to go that route anyway.

The minotaurs horns are where I take issue with Wizards of the Coast's design. 1d10 damage is too good for an attack which doesn't use two hands. At that point, why would anyone ever use a weapon? On top of that, Wizards of the Coast grants minotaurs advantaged on checks made to shove a creature, making them unparalleled at an extremely popular fighter tactic. Hammering Horns further compounds this issue by removing the need for the Shield Master feat.

We're already at 8.75 BP, so we don't have much room left. I'll grant the minotaur 1d6 damage with its horns, and I'll allow it to deal 1d10 when using their horns with Charge. This motivates the minotaur to use its horns when charging, but still encourages it to use a weapon most of the time. I'll call that 1.25 BP.

At 10 BP, the minotaur is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. Their abilities shoehorn them into a small set of builds, but that makes sense based on the monster. If you want to strengthen the minotaur, allow them to pick two of their three flexible ability increases. If you want to weaken the minotaur, replace its flexible ability increase with a fixed +1 Constitution increase, or reduce the damage their horns deal on a charge from 1d10 to 1d8.

## Modrons

Modrons are constructs from the plan of Mechanus who serve Primus. A normal Modron's mind is linked into the Modron hierarchy, and they are utterly incapable of disobedience. However, sometimes Modrons become defective, and break from the dictates of Primus.

The traits presented here work for all modrons, but players will generally play rogue modrons.

### Modrons Traits

Modrons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Construct. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** Modrons are typically lawful neutral, but a rogue Modron may be of any alignment.

**Disintegration.** If you die, your body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind any items you were wearing or carrying.

**Otherworldly Perception.** You can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of you that is invisible or on the Ethereal Plane. You can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Modron.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Monodrone and Quadrone

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

#### Duodrone

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

#### Tridrone

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Three Arms.** You have three arms, and may hold and use items in each of your hands.

If you have Extra Attacks, when you take the Attack action you may make each of your attacks using any weapon you are holding.

When you take the Attack action and attack with a weapon which qualifies for use with two-weapon fighting, you can use a bonus action to attack with a different qualifying weapon. You don't add your ability modifier to the damage of the bonus attack unless the

modifier is negative or you have an ability which allows you to add your ability modifier to the bonus attack granted by two-weapon fighting. If you choose to make this additional attack, you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn.

If you use a weapon with the Heavy property or use a Versatile weapon two-handed you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn, but you may switch between multiple Heavy or Versatile weapons with each attack.

### Pentadrone

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Arms.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 14 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Paralyzing Gas.** As an action, you can exhale a mildly paralytic gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that line must make a Constitution saving throw. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature is restrained for one minute on a failed. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.

### Playing a Modron

Monodrones and quadrones make excellent rangers and rogues due to their increased Dexterity and their ability to fly. Duodrones and quadrons make excellent barbarians, fighters due to their strength, durability, and natural armor. Pentadrones also make excellent barbarians and fighters, but trade their hands for a potent breath weapon.

Since modrons don't act outside of their given instructions, it's generally best to assume that modron player characters are "rogue" modrons (not to be confused with modron rogues). Rogue modrons are only vaguely detailed, so a rogue modron might do any number of strange things, including joining a party of adventurers.

### Design Notes

Modrons are bizarre constructs. They have five variations, which are essentially subraces for our purposes. They share some core traits, but have several differences.

Modrons are constructs, which costs 1 BP.

From the various Modron stat blocks we can draw some shared traits. All Modrons have truesight, Disintegration, and only racial languages for -1 BP. We'll add Disintegration for 0 BP, and we'll downgrade modrons to Otherworldly Sight ability for 2.5 BP as we've done for other creatures with truesight.

Other traits of individual Modron types need to be considered individually. It's important to note that some of the drones are functionally identical, essentially representing higher-level version of the same creature. Due to these redundancies, we'll combine the monodrone and quadrone.

### Monodrone and Quadron

Monodrones and quadrones are flyers. For normal modrons monodrones are flying cannon fodder, while quadrones are flying archers. Beyond numerical differences and their default gear, they're essentially identical.

Dexterity is both the monodrone's and the quadrone's highest ability, so we'll grant a +1 to Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat blocks for monodrones and quadrone, we get medium size, +3 natural armor (down from +4) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, and a 1d4 natural weapon for 1 BP.

At 10 BP, the monodrone and quadrone are at the top of our target BP range of 8-10 BP. The quadrone doesn't have any active abilities, but its traits combine to make it a potent threat in the air. If you want to strengthen the monodrone and quadrone, increase their natural armor. If you want to weaken the monodrone and quadrone, reduce their natural armor or remove their natural weapon.

### Duodrone

Duodrones the weakest of the non-flying modrons. Their traits are extremely bland, so we'll need to give them decent numbers to make them competitive with monodrones and quadrones.

Like monodrones and quadrones, duodrones' best ability is Dexterity, followed closely by constitution. Their abilities aren't great, but they also don't have much else to look at so it's hard to find ways to spend BP. We'll give the duodrone +2 Dexterity and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +4 natural armor for 2 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, and a 1d4 natural weapon for 1 BP.

At 8.5 BP, the duodrone falls within our target range of 8-10 BP. It lacks the mobility of the monodrone and quadrone, but has better natural armor and ability scores. If you want to strengthen the duodrone, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the duodrone, reduce its natural armor or removes its natural weapon.

### Tridrone

The tridrone is very similar to a duodrone, but has an extra arm. That's enough difference to separate the two, but most of the design is identical. We'll drop the tridrone's natural armor to +3, and add Extra Arms with one arm for 0.75 BP.

At 8.75 BP, the tridrone falls within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's very similar to the duodrone, but trades the protection of extra natural armor for the versatility of a third hand. If you want to strengthen the tridrone, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the tridrone, reduce its natural armor.

### Pentadrone

The pentadrone is where things get a bit silly. When most modrons are relatively similar to humanoids in terms of anatomy, the pentadrone is like a weird robot flower with legs. It has no hands and has a relatively weak natural weapon which is normally acceptable since it makes 5 attacks with it, and its Paralyzing Gas ability is startlingly powerful.

Unlike other modrons, the pentadrone's best ability is Strength. It's reasonable to assume that it's partially because the pentadrone is large, but since we can't make a creature with no hands rely on finesse weapons or ranged weapons, giving it a Dexterity increase isn't terribly helpful. We'll give the pentadrone +2 Strength for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +4 natural armor for 2 BP, and 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP. Pentadrones have no hands for -2 BP. Normally pentadrones only deal 1d6 damage with their natural weapons, but we'll upgrade it to 1d8 for 2 BP to compensate for losing the ability to make 5 attacks.

That brings us to 7 BP before we consider the pentadrone's Paralyzing Gas. As it stands it's far too powerful. Paralysis is an extremely potent effect, so Paralyzing Gas is at least as powerful as the *hold monster* spell, which is a 5<sup>th</sup>-level spell. If we reduce the effect to Restrained, and reduce the range to that

of other breath weapons, and limit usage to once per day, I think we can call it 3 BP.

At 10 BP, the pentadrone is at the top of our target BP range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the pentadrone increase its natural weapon damage or allow it to use Paralyzing Gas once per short rest. If you want to weaken the pentadrone reduce its natural armor or reduce its Strength increase.

## Mummies

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Undead raised by terrible rituals, mummies are animated bodies wrapped in bandages which frequently occupy ancient crypts and tombs.

### Mummy Traits

Mummies share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Animated by an evil necromantic ritual, most mummies are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Dreadful Glare.** As an action, you can magically terrify a creature with your gaze. Target one creature within 60 feet of you that you can see. If the target can see you, it must make a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of your next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and one other language that the mummy knew in life.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

## Mummy

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

## Mummy Lord

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Wisdom.

## Playing a Mummy

Mummies are intelligent undead. Normal mummies are raised from servants to serve and protect the tombs of the mummy lord who they served in life. Both types of mummy are strong, but their abilities differ. Common mummies are durable, making them excellent barbarian fighters, while mummy lords are wise, making them excellent clerics and druids.

Mummies are inherently evil, and are animated into undeath when a condition specified by their creator is met. This condition typically involves the desecration of some item or location important to the mummy's creator. Consider what animated your mummy character, who created them, and what would allow your character to return to a peaceful rest.

## Design Notes

Mummies are fairly basic undead for the most part. The basic mummy has some rider effects on its Rotting Fist natural weapon and Dreadful Glare, and the mummy lord adds some innate spellcasting and Rejuvenation. We'll need to give the basic mummy some stuff to differentiate it, but first we'll look at what the two have in common.

Mummies are undead, costing 1 BP.

Both mummies have excellent Strength, so we'll give them both +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat blocks, we get medium size, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.) for -0.5 BP, vulnerability to fire for -1 BP, resistance to necrotic damage (down from immunity) for 2 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, and Darkvision for 2 BP. We'll drop all of the mummy's natural armor and condition immunities to save BP.

That brings us to 6.5 BP. We haven't tackled the mummy's natural weapons, Dreadful Glare, or the differences between the two types of mummy. We can add a 1d4 natural weapon for 1 BP, and expect most mummies to use weapons.

Dreadful Glare is primarily a single-target fear effect. If we drop the paralysis component, it's both easier to bring into the game and easier to assess. We'll also need to reduce Dreadful Glare from at-will usage to prevent abuse.

The closest spell I can find to a single-target fear effect is the *command* spell's "Flee" option. *Command* once per day would be 1 BP, but it's also considerably

more versatile than Dreadful Glare. Since we only have one of the *command* spell's five options, I think we can allow Dreadful Glare once per short rest for 1 BP.

Unfortunately, that brings us to 8.5 BP, and we still haven't done anything to differentiate the two types of mummy. It's not much, but a second ability increase will give a little differentiation and encourage different roles without costing a ton of BP. We'll give standard mummies +1 Constitution and mummy lords +1 Wisdom.

At 9.5 BP mummies are within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen mummies, increase their natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken mummies, remove one of their ability score increases.

## Myconid

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Myconids are peaceful, sentient fungoid creatures native to the underdark.

## Myconid Traits

Myconids share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Plant.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Simple, peaceful creatures with a simple bug regimented society, most myconids are lawful neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Pacification Spores.** You eject spores at one creature you can see within 5 feet of you. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be incapacitated for 1 minute. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Report Spores.** As an action, you can spread spores which allow affected creatures to communicate telepathically. A 20-foot radius of spores extends from you. These spores can go around corners and affect only creatures with an Intelligence of 2 or higher that aren't undead, constructs, or elementals. Affected creatures can communicate telepathically with one



another while they are within 30 feet of each other. The effect lasts for 1 hour.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Superior Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Sun Sickness.** While in sunlight, you have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. You die if you spend more than 1 hour in direct sunlight.

**Languages.** You know no languages.

### Playing a Myconid

Myconids are durable and wise, but their racial traits don't lend themselves well to violence. Consider classes like cleric, druid, and monk which can take advantage of the myconid's ability score increases, and

which spend enough time in melee to use Pacifying Spores.

Because myconids lack the ability to speak, they rely almost entirely on Rapport Spores to communicate. This bizarre form of telepathy allows a small group of creatures to communicate with each other, offering a potent silent communication mechanism for groups of adventurers who often must rely on stealth to survive. Myconids abhor violence, so consider how your character might reconcile their innate pacifism with the violent lifestyle of adventurers.

### Design Notes

Myconids are mushroom people. Their culture is actually pretty interesting, though certainly not complex. Their spores may present some interesting design challenges, but since the race abhors violence they're not particularly deadly. The monster manual presents a stat block for the myconid sprout and the

myconid sovereign. Since these are functionally child/elder versions of one race and not unique subraces or something we'll consider myconids to be one race and design them as such.

Myconids are plants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The myconid's three variations have fairly similar abilities, and Constitution and Wisdom are clearly the myconid's best, so we'll give them +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.) for -0.5 BP, and 120 ft. Darkvision for 3 BP. Myconids don't have any languages for -2 BP and can't speak (no BP adjustment since they have no languages). We'll drop the myconid's natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP since they appear to have something resembling hands with which to use weapons.

That brings us to 5 BP before considering the myconid's remaining abilities, most of which relate to spores. Distress Spores seems like an occasionally interesting plot device for players, so we'll call it 0 BP. Sun Sickness is essentially the same as Sunlight Sensitivity, so we'll call it -2 BP.

That drops our total to 3 BP before we consider other types of spores. The three different myconids show different kinds of spores. All three get Rapport Spores. Adults add Pacifying Spores, and sovereigns add Animating Spores and Hallucination Spores. The sovereign's new spore abilities are really powerful, so we'll work from the myconid adult.

Pacifying Spores is very potent. Stunned is very nearly as powerful as Paralyzed, so it's easy to compare this spell to the *hold monster* and *power word stun* spells, both of which are very high level spells. We'll need to find a weaker approximation. The *tasha's hideous laughter* spell is a nice low-level option. We'll drop the prone component of the spell and the intelligence requirement, then reduce the range to 5 feet to match the original ability. We'll allow myconids to use it once per short rest, and call it 3 BP.

Rapport Spores is harmless, but it's deceptively powerful. The closest approximation is the *rary's telepathic bond* spell, which is a 5<sup>th</sup>-level spell. We'll need to make some cuts to keep the ability fair. Rapport Spores' range is 20 ft. (slightly smaller than *rary's telepathic bond*), and the telepathy only works if the communicating creatures are within 30 feet of each other. That means that they're basically in speaking range, so I think that's probably enough of a cut. We'll call this 3 BP, and allow it to be used once per short rest.

At 9 BP, the myconid is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the myconid, grant it some natural armor. If you want to weaken the myconid, remove its natural weapon.

## Myconid Spore Servant [Template: Natural]

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Zombie-like creatures reanimated by the spores of a myconid sovereign, myconid spore servants exist to serve and protect their peaceful masters.

### Becoming a Myconid Spore Servant

Any large or smaller flesh and blood creature can become a spore servant by being brought back to life by the animating spores of a myconid sovereign. Constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, or undead can't be turned into spore servants.

### Myconid Spore Servant Traits

All myconid spore servants have the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits upon gaining the template.

**Creature Type.** You replace your current creature type with Plant, and remove any subtypes or tags.

**Retained Racial Traits.** You retain racial ability adjustments to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution, any resistances, vulnerabilities, immunities, natural armor, and natural weapons (claws, etc.).

**Lost Racial Traits.** If your racial traits include natural weapons that deal damage types other than bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage (poison, fire, etc.), your natural weapons no longer deal that damage. You lose any racial ability adjustments to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. You lose any special senses such as Darkvision, Blindsight, or Tremorsense. You lose any other special racial traits and abilities not specified under Retained Racial Traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** -2 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Robbed of their former personality, most myconid servants are neutral.

**Speed.** Reduce each of your racial speeds by 10 feet, to a minimum of 5 feet.

**Senses.** You have blindsight with a radius of 30 feet, but you are blind beyond this radius.

**Condition Immunities.** You are immune to the blinded, charmed, frightened, and paralyzed conditions.

**Attacks.** If your race does not already have natural weapons, you develop the ability to fight with your fists

or limbs better than a living member of your race. You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You lose all known languages, but can respond to orders given to you by myconids using rapport spores. You must give highest priority to orders received from the most powerful myconid.

### Design Notes

Myconid Spore Servants are a strange template, even by monster template standards. Unlike most templates, the template removes a significant amount of the original creature's traits. Because we can't make any assumptions regarding the original creature's traits, that makes it exceptionally difficult to assess the template's BP cost.

Still, we'll do the best we can. We'll assess most of the abilities as though they were applied to a featureless humanoid.

The template changes the creature's type to Plant, which costs 0.5 BP.

Spore servants are blind for -4 BP, and gain 30 ft. blindsight for 6 BP. They gain immunity to the charmed, frightened, and paralyzed conditions for a total of 1.5 BP. Finally, spore servants get 1d4 natural weapons for 1 BP.

We should also discuss the servant's ability scores. The original template sets the creature's mental abilities to fixed values, presenting mechanical problems for character creation, not to mention the massive weakness of having such massive ability score penalties. Instead, we'll remove racial ability adjustments to mental ability scores and impose -2 penalties to each of them for a total of -3 BP.

That brings our total to 2 BP. That's more than we want for a non-leveled template, but it's hardly the template's biggest problem. Removing all of the race's special traits is worth an unpredictable amount of BP. Without designing a different template for each race, it's basically impossible to balance.

If you plan to include this template as a player option in your games, be very cautious about how it affects the balance of your game. Use the race building rules at the end of this document to get an idea of how fair this template is for the race in question. If you need additional penalties, consider reductions to Intelligence or Wisdom.

## Naga

Eternal, undying spirit creatures resembling snakes, nagas dwell among ruins of long-dead civilizations.

## Naga Traits

Nagas share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Immortal Nature.** You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. If your body is destroyed, your body reforms adjacent to your phylactery 1d10 days later.

Upon reforming, you lack the presence of mind to remain near your phylactery or to recall your own actions. You wander aimlessly, including across planes of existence, until you arrive near where you were destroyed. You have no knowledge of your wanderings, or of the location of your phylactery.

If you locate your phylactery and feed at least one soul into it, you cease to be a demilich and become a lich instead.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Rejuvenation.** If you die, you return to life in a secluded area near where you died 1d6 days later. Only a *wish* spell can prevent this trait from functioning.

**Serpentine Body.** You have no arms or hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Guardian Naga

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Wise, noble spirits dedicated to guarding ancient sites and artifacts, most guardian nagas are lawful evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *thaumaturgy* cantrip. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *shield of faith* spell once per day. Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you can also cast the *calm emotions* spell. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Celestial and Common.

### Spirit Naga

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence.

**Alignment.** Devious, spiteful, and obsessed with revenge, most spirit nagas are chaotic evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *minor illusion* cantrip. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *charm person* spell once per day. Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you can also cast the *detect thoughts* spell. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Abyssal and Common.

### Bone Naga Traits

A naga's rejuvenation can be prevented by a ritual known to the Yuan-Ti which changes the naga into a bone naga, an undead servitor with abilities resembling those it bore in life. A bone naga uses the same traits as a living naga, except as noted below.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** Undead servants stripped of their former personalities, most bone nagas are lawful evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Immortal Nature.** Bone nagas lose the Immortal Nature trait.

**Rejuvenation.** Bone nagas lose the Rejuvenation trait.

**Undead Nature.** You are immune to the charmed, exhaustion, and paralyzed conditions.

### Playing a Naga

Nagas are potent spellcasting snakes. Their Rejuvenation ability allows them to face danger fearlessly, and their spells and natural weapons provide reliable options in a variety of situations.

### Bone Naga

Bone nagas give up the naga's Rejuvenation ability, but picks up some useful condition immunities.

Since bone naga are evil undead servitors created by yuan-ti rituals, they are a good fit in a party including yuan-ti. However, they might also work alongside other evil characters like necromancers who might have access to the magic to create a bone naga.

### Guardian Naga

Guardian nagas wise and make excellent clerics, druids, and monks. Their innate spells complement those of the cleric, providing some utility and defensive options.

Guardian nagas work to keep evil artifacts and locations out of the hands of those who would abuse them. They fit well into any party seeking to remove evil forces from sites of power or seeking to recover/destroy artifacts which could be used for nefarious purposes.

### Spirit Naga

Spirit nagas are intelligent and conniving, making them excellent arcane tricksters and wizards. Their innate spells lend themselves to trickery and manipulation.

Spirit nagas are evil and vengeful, but have few motivations beyond revenge. Fortunately, it's easy to turn revenge into motivation to do a variety of things, so they can fit easily into a variety of parties.

### Design Notes

Nagas are interesting creatures. They're giant snakes, which makes them plenty threatening already, but their biggest ability is their innate spellcasting.

All three types of naga have excellent Dexterity, which is unsurprising for a snake. We'll give each naga +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat blocks, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +4 for the guardian naga, up from +2 for the bone and spirit naga) for 1.5 BP, poison immunity for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. Nagas have no hands for -2 BP and no arms for another -2 BP. We'll also disallow armor for -3 BP because I have no idea how you would armor a snake.

All three nagas deal poison damage on their bite attacks. Spirit and Guardian nagas require a save, but requiring a save every time a player attacks is a horrible idea, so we'll stick to guaranteed damage. For 2 BP, we'll allow nagas to deal 1d4 piercing and 1d4 poison damage with their natural weapons.

Nagas all have innate spellcasting, and their stat blocks state that they can cast their innate spells with only verbal components so I'll allow them to ignore spellcasting foci for 0.5 BP. All three get several spells running up to 6<sup>th</sup>-level spells on the guardian naga, but I think we'll limit all three variety's spells to 3<sup>rd</sup>-level at most.

That brings our total to just 2 BP before we examine individual naga varieties.



### Bone Naga

The bone naga is the weakest naga, representing a diminished version of what was once a powerful immortal guardian. It's interesting to note that the bone naga's spellcasting derives from the original, and beyond that and the creature type the monsters differ very little. In fact, it's difficult to find any meaningful variations between a bone naga race and the two other naga races. Instead of trying to scrape together some meaningful differences, we'll present the bone naga as a variant which can apply to either of the other two naga variations.

Bone nagas are undead, costing 1 BP. They give up the monstrosity creature type for -0.5 BP.

Bone nagas are slower than other nagas, dropping their speed to 30 ft. for -0.5 BP. They also lose Immortal Nature or -1 BP, and they lose Rejuvenation. Bone nagas gain condition immunities to charmed, exhaustion, and paralyzed for a total of 1.5 BP.

In total, the bone naga is 0.5 BP (minus whatever Rejuvenation is worth) stronger than a living naga. That's not a big difference, so we don't make any other adjustments.

### Guardian Naga

The most powerful naga, guardian nagas are what you want from a noble defender. They plan ahead, they attempt diplomacy first, and when they're pushed they're strong enough to push back.

Guardian nagas are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Guardian nagas are wiser than other nagas, which fits their flavor, and Wisdom is their spellcasting ability. We'll give guardian nagas +1 Wisdom for 1 BP.

From the guardian naga's stat block, we get 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP, bringing us to 4 BP before we look at innate spellcasting.

I want the guardian naga's innate spells to emphasize defense and mysticism over blasting things, and I want to grant a cantrip and one spell of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> level. Since we're trying to create a weakened version of the guardian naga's spellcasting, we'll select spells from the bone naga's innate spellcasting list, which is a middle point between the original monster and where we can't be. We'll take *thaumaturgy*, *shield of faith*, and *calm emotions*. That costs a total of 3.5 BP.

Rejuvenation is difficult to tackle. Our best bet is to draw on the design work we've done previously for the demilich. We'll obviously remove the phylactery component, but otherwise the ability will work in

largely the same way. Unfortunately, it's basically impossible to assess a BP cost for this ability.

At a 7.5 BP, the guardian naga is below our target range of 8-10 BP, but it's impossible to estimate the value of Rejuvenation. If you want to strengthen the bone naga, allow it to cast the *bestow curse* spell once per day starting at 7<sup>th</sup> level. If you want to weaken the guardian naga, remove Rejuvenation.

### Spirit Naga

I'm not really sure why spirit nagas exist. They're evil and vengeful, which seems to draw them away from the "immortal guardian" aspect of nagas.

Spirit nagas are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The spirit naga's Intelligence isn't much better than its other abilities, but since it's the spirit naga's spellcasting ability we'll give it +1 Intelligence for 1 BP.

From the spirit naga's stat block, we get 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP, bringing us to 4 BP before we look at innate spellcasting.

The spirit naga's spells emphasize enchantment and illusion, so we'll focus on those options over direct damage options. We'll borrow from the bone naga the same way we did for the guardian naga. We'll take *minor illusion*, *charm person*, and *detect thoughts*. That costs a total of 3.5 BP.

## Nightmare

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Nightmares are black, fiendish horses famed for their incredible speed and their flaming manes and tails.

### Nightmare Traits

Nightmares share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fiend

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Evil, predatory fiends created from tortured pegasi, most nightmares are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Hooves.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage and 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can read understand Abyssal, Common, and Infernal.

### Playing a Nightmare

Nightmares are strong and have a commanding presence. Their natural charisma makes them excellent paladins, sorcerers, and warlocks, but their lack of hands makes it difficult for them to cast many spells.

The nightmare's personality isn't explored in the Monster Manual, so it's unclear what motivates them. Since they're created from mutilated pegasi, it's possible that the creature serves whoever created it originally, which may be a way to justify including a nightmare in an evil party.

### Design Notes

Nightmares are a great creature. They look great, they make a great mount for a villain, and they have some cool abilities. All around, they're just a fantastic creature. Since they're flying quadrupeds, we can borrow design elements from other creatures which we've already designed like griffons and hippogriffs.

Nightmares are fiends, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Nightmares resemble beasts in many ways. Strength and Constitution are their best abilities, but adjusting for size Dexterity and Charisma aren't much lower. To make things interesting, we'll give the nightmare +1 Strength and +1 Charisma for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 40 ft. walking speed (down from 60 ft.) for 1 BP, 40 ft. fly speed for 5 BP, fire resistance (down from immunity) for 2 BP, racial languages plus Common and one additional fixed language for 0.25 BP, and illumination for 0.25 BP.

Nightmares have no hands for -2 BP, and can't speak for -2 BP. We'll let their natural weapons deal 1d4 bludgeoning and 1d4 fire damage for 2 BP.

That brings our total to 9.5 BP. Unfortunately, that means that we'll need to cut the nightmare's remaining abilities. Confer Fire Resistance should cost something like 3 BP, and Ethereal Stride would need to be massively weakened to be viable.

At 9.5 BP, the nightmare is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the nightmare, increase its fire resistance to fire immunity or increase

its fly speed. If you want to weaken the nightmare, reduce its walking speed.

## Nothic

Nothics are one-eyed aberrations, the twisted remains of scholars and spellcasters afflicted with a vile curse left by Vecna.

### Nothic Traits

Nothics share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures born of a dark curse, most Nothics are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Arcane Mysteries.** You gain proficiency in the Arcana skill.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Otherworldly Perception.** You can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of you that is invisible or on the Ethereal Plane. You can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

**Rotting Gaze.** As an action, you may target one creature you can see within 30 ft. of you. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 1d8 necrotic damage. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier. The damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d8), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d8), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d8).

**Stealthy.** You gain proficiency in the Stealth skill.

**Weird Insight.** As an action, you may target one creature you can see within 30 ft. of you. The target must contest its Charisma (Deception) check against your Wisdom (Insight) check. If you win, you magically learn one fact or secret about the target. The target automatically wins if it is immune to being charmed.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Undercommon.

### Playing a Nothic

Sneaky, nimble, and with excellent senses, Nothics make excellent Monks and Rogues. Their Weird Insight allows them to glean secrets from enemies at a distance, and their Rotting Gaze provides a lethal attack option, even while unarmed.

Despite their affliction, Nothics are still inclined to hoard magical knowledge. They are at home in a party with multiple spellcasters, especially wizards.

## Design Notes

Nothics are an interesting creature. They have a really interesting origin, and a couple of unique abilities which I think will have some interesting applications at the table. We'll need to adapt truesight like we have with other monsters, and we'll need to adapt Rotting Gaze and Weird Insight.

Nothics are aberrations, which costs 0.5 BP but grants no special traits.

Nothics have good physical ability scores and decent intelligence, but it's difficult to tell what to emphasize. There appear to be some mathematical errors in the Nothic's stat block which make things especially complicated. The Nothic's primary offensive ability, Rotting Gaze, doesn't follow normal DC calculation rules (8 + proficiency bonus + ability modifier), and even the Nothic's claws appear to use different abilities for determining their attack bonus and damage bonus. We'll leave the ability increases for now and look at them again after we're done with everything else.

From the stat block we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, Keen Sight for 0.25 BP, and a 1d6 natural weapon for 1.5 BP.

Truesight is still too powerful to give to players, so we'll drop it to Otherworldly Gaze (see the Kuo-Toa design notes earlier in this document) for 2.5 B.

Rotting Gaze does 3d6 damage and has no usage limitation. It's the Nothic's signature offensive ability, so I really want to keep the feel intact as much as possible. The closest approximation we can get is a cantrip, and there are several which deal similar damage at will with a saving throw to negate the damage. 3d6 damage is obviously too much damage for a low-level character, so we'll need to stick to cantrip damage scaling. Reskinning Sacred Flame to deal Necrotic damage is probably our best bet. We'll drop the range to 30 feet to keep it in line with a normal Nothic. A cantrip costs 0.5 BP, so we'll call our version of Rotting Gaze 0.5 BP and try to ignore the range reduction. I'm really not sure which ability should determine the DC. Intelligence seems logical since Nothics are cursed wizards.

Weird Insight is the hardest part of the Nothic to quantify. The closest comparison is the Detect Thoughts spell. Weird Insight is usable at will, so it's probably more powerful than just a 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell, but

it's also extremely imprecise and leaves the DM a lot of room to give the player useless facts. We'll call it 2.5 BP.

The Nothics skills are really central to its function. Arcana is a defining part of the creature's backstory, and without Insight proficiency Weird Insight is basically useless. We'll grant the Nothic both for 1 BP.

With all of that settled, we're at 8.75 BP and still need an ability score increase. We only have room for a +1 to something, and it's really hard to decide what it should be. +1 Intelligence fits the theme, but a Nothic wizard seems to fly in the face of the monster's origins. A bonus to Dexterity fits the sneaky, infiltrator style of the monster, so I think that's probably our best bet. +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the Nothic is nearly at the top of our target BP range of 8-10 BP. It has some very unique abilities, and it should be really fun to play. If you need to strengthen the Nothic, give it a +1 to Constitution. If you need to weaken it, either take away the +1 to Dexterity, remove one of the skill proficiencies, or reduce Rotting Gaze's damage to d6's instead of d8's.

## Ogre

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Among the smallest of giants, ogres are famous for being violent, brutish, cruel, and incredibly stupid.

### Ogre Traits

Ogres share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Vicious, greedy, and easily angered, most ogres are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Furious Temper.** If you are insulted, confused, mocked, robbed, inconvenienced, or otherwise bothered by a creature or object, you can fly into a violent tantrum. As a bonus action, choose a creature or object that you can see within 90 feet to be the subject of your tantrum. Until your tantrum ends, you deal an extra 1d6 damage to the target whenever you hit it with a weapon attack. If the target drops to 0 hit points before this effects end, you can use a bonus action on a subsequent turn of yours to turn your tantrum on a new creature or object.

Your tantrum lasts for 1 hour. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Powerful Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Siege Monster.** You deal double damage to objects and structures.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Giant.

#### Half-Ogre Traits

Ogres occasionally mate with humans, hobgoblins, bugbears, or orcs to produce half-ogre children. Half-ogres have the same traits as ogres, except as noted below.

**Bugbear.** Half-ogres with bugbear parents lose the Siege Monster trait, and gain the Savage Attacks trait.

**Hobgoblin.** Half-ogres with hobgoblin parents lose the Siege Monster trait, and gain the Stealthy trait.

**Human.** Half-ogres with human parents lose the ogre's +2 to Constitution, and gain +1 to any ability score except Strength.

**Orc.** Half-ogres with orc parents lose the Furious Temper trait and gain the Aggressive trait.

### Playing an Ogre

Ogres are fantastic barbarians. Their natural strength and durability play perfectly to the barbarian's most important abilities, and Furious Temper offers a potent damage boost.

Ogres aren't smart, but they're greedy and like to kill things. As such, they make fantastic mercenaries, providing an easy way to bring them into a party of evil characters.

### Design Notes

Ogres are a very simple creatures. They're almost identical to hill giants, but lack the ability to throw boulders.

Ogres are giants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The ogre's only good abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +2 to each for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common. We'll add Powerful Build for 0.25 BP as we have for other giants.

That brings us to 6.75 BP, and leaves us with a strictly worse version of the hill giant. We need to find something else to add to the ogre to distinguish them. There isn't anything else in their stat block to draw on,

but if we look at their flavor we can come up with some ideas.

Ogres get angry, and they're good at smashing things. Siege Monster is a good start, but at only 0.5 BP it's not enough. I want to emphasize their tantrums, but I also don't want to steal from the barbarian. Some bonus damage or something would be a great option, and I want to motivate the ogre to continue attacking the target of their anger.

Bonus damage against a previously specified target is done very well by the *hunter's mark*, so we can steal from the spell's effect. We'll drop the Perception and Survival components of the spell and allow it to target objects, but otherwise leave it unchanged. If we allow the ogre to use this effect once per short rest, we can call it 2.5 BP.

#### Half-Ogres

Ogrillons are frustratingly similar to ogres. Really the only difference is that their stats are slightly weaker. That's totally unhelpful for designing a new race.

Instead, we'll present half-ogres as a variant on the ogre. We'll wrap Furious Temper for one or more of the racial traits of the second parent.

### Oni

Fearsome magical bogeymen resembling ogres with blue skin and magical powers.

#### Oni Traits

Oni share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Conniving and opportunistic, but willing to serve a master that rewards the oni, most oni are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Powerful Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Giant.

## Playing an Oni

Oni's abilities make it a fantastic paladin, sorcerer, or warlock. Natural flight provides fantastic mobility which usually requires powerful magic, so take advantage of your flight to out-maneuver your foes in combat.

Oni are perfectly happy to cooperate with other creatures so long as the creatures provide the oni with payment, typically in the form of magic items.

## Design Notes

Oni resemble ogres, but trade their brute strength for magical abilities. None of the oni's abilities are new, so designing it is straightforward.

Oni are giants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Oni are strong like any giant and cast spells using Charisma, so we'll grant them +1 to Strength and +1 to Charisma for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common. We'll drop the oni's natural weapons to 1d4 damage for 1 BP. We'll add Powerful Build for 0.5 BP as we've done with other giants.

Unfortunately, that brings us to 10 before we get to anything interesting. As much as I want to add some innate spellcasting, we'll need to leave that to the player.

At 10 BP, the oni is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the oni, allow it to cast the *charm person* spell once per day starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level. If you want to weaken the oni, remove its claws.

## Oozes

Oozes are horrifying creatures which dissolve their prey, and can often rapidly destroy metal, wood, and stone.

### Ooze Traits

Oozes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Ooze

**Alignment.** Usually unintelligent predators, most oozes are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Amoeboid.** Your body is a gelatinous, amoeboid form. You are unable to wear armor. You have no arms or hands, and are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools,

etc. You are immune to the deafened, exhaustion, and prone conditions.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can read and speak in Common.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Black Pudding

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Amorphous.** You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Corrosive Form.** Contact with your body corrodes and destroys mundane armor and weaponry. When you make an unarmed strike and roll a natural 20 you may destroy any non-magical shield made of metal or wood which the creature is currently wielding. If the creature is not wielding a shield, you may destroy any non-magical armor made of metal or wood that the creature is wearing. Alternatively, if a creature attacks you with a non-magical weapon made of metal or wood and rolls a natural 1 you may destroy the weapon used in the attack.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to acid and electricity.

**Pseudopod.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a climb speed of 20 ft.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Split.** When you are subjected to lightning or slashing damage, you split into two new oozes if you have a number of hit points greater than your level after applying the damage. Each new ooze has current and maximum hit points equal to half of your original total, rounded down. The two new oozes are one size smaller than your previous size. Any ongoing effects continue to affect both oozes. You may not split into more than two oozes at one time.

While split this way, you control both oozes. If both oozes are effected by a source of damage, such as a breath weapon or a *fireball* spell, both oozes make saving throws and suffer damage independently. Both oozes move independently, and can move your full speed. However, both oozes must share your actions, bonus actions, and reactions. If you make the Attack

action and may make multiple attacks, you can make each attack from either pudding.

You may rejoin the two oozes as an action, combining the current and maximum hit points and returning to your normal size. Any ongoing effects affecting either pudding continues to affect the rejoined ooze. Duplicate effects only affect the ooze once, as though the effect had been applied to the same creature multiple times.

Once split, your body begins to decompose. After a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score, the ooze with fewer hit points dies. If both oozes have the same number of current hit points, select one randomly to die.

If either ooze dies, your hit point maximum is reduced to that of the surviving ooze and you remain in your reduced size until you complete a long rest or are effected by a *greater restoration* spell.

#### Gelatinous Cube

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Engulf.** As an action you can move up to your speed and attempt to engulf a creature in your body. While doing so, you can enter spaces of a creature up to your size. Whenever you enter a creature's space, you must attempt to grapple the creature.

If you fail to grapple the creature, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of the cube. A creature that chooses not to be pushed suffers the consequences of losing the grapple.

If you succeed the grapple, you enter the creature's space, and damage equal to your pseudopod damage. The engulfed creature can't breathe and is restrained. As a bonus action at the beginning of your turn you may automatically deal damage equal to your pseudopod damage to all creatures which you have currently engulfed.

When you move, the engulfed creature moves with you. An engulfed creature can try to escape by defeating you in a grapple. On a success, the creature escapes and enters a space of its choice within 5 feet of you.

**Ooze Cube.** You take up your entire space. Other creatures can enter your space, but when a creature that does so you may subject the creature to your Engulf as a reaction and has disadvantage on opposed grapple check.

Creatures which you have engulfed can be seen but have total cover.

A creature within 5 feet of you can take an action to pull a creature or object out of your body. Doing so requires defeating you at an opposed grapple, and the

creature making the attempt takes damage equal to your Pseudopod damage.

You can hold only one creature of your size or up to four creatures one or more sizes smaller than you inside your body at a time.

**Pseudopod.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 acid damage on a hit.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Transparent.** While motionless, you are able to hide in plain sight. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. After you become transparent, it takes a Wisdom (Perception) check to notice you until you move or take an action. The DC of this check is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

#### Gray Ooze

**Amorphous.** You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Corrode Metal.** Contact with your body corrodes and destroys metal. When you make an unarmed strike and roll a natural 20 you may destroy any non-magical shield made of metal which the creature is currently wielding. If the creature is not wielding a shield, you may destroy any non-magical armor made of metal that the creature is wearing. Alternatively, if a creature attacks you with a non-magical weapon made of metal and rolls a natural 1 you may destroy the weapon used in the attack.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to acid, cold and fire.

**Pseudopod.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a climb speed of 20 ft.

#### Oche Jelly

**Amorphous.** You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to acid and electricity.

**Pseudopod.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning and 1d4 acid damage on a hit.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a climb speed of 20 ft.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Split.** When you are subjected to lightning or slashing damage, you split into two new oozes if you have a number of hit points greater than your level after applying the damage. Each new ooze has current and maximum hit points equal to half of your original total, rounded down. The two new oozes are one size smaller than your previous size. Any ongoing effects continue to affect both oozes. You may not split into more than two oozes at one time.

While split this way, you control both oozes. If both oozes are effected by a source of damage, such as a breath weapon or a *fireball* spell, both oozes make saving throws and suffer damage independently. Both oozes move independently, and can move your full speed. However, both oozes must share your actions, bonus actions, and reactions. If you make the Attack action and may make multiple attacks, you can make each attack from either pudding.

You may rejoin the two oozes as an action, combining the current and maximum hit points and returning to your normal size. Any ongoing effects affecting either pudding continues to affect the rejoined ooze. Duplicate effects only affect the ooze once, as though the effect had been applied to the same creature multiple times.

Once split, your body begins to decompose. After a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score, the ooze with fewer hit points dies. If both oozes have the same number of current hit points, select one randomly to die.

If either ooze dies, your hit point maximum is reduced to that of the surviving ooze and you remain in your reduced size until you complete a long rest or are effected by a *greater restoration* spell.

### Playing an Ooze

Oozes are extremely dangerous, but face severe defensive limitations because they can't wear armor and have no natural armor. They also have poor speed, so they often have trouble getting within reach of their foes. Oozes don't have hands to perform somatic components, so they generally work best in classes like Barbarian, Fighter, and Monk.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Black Pudding

Black puddings include the most interesting ooze abilities. They have the ability to destroy weapons and

armor and the ability to split in half. Split offers a potent tactical option, but also exposes the character to twice as much possible damage from area effects.

### Gelatinous Cube

The gelatinous cube is a potent grappler. Engulf allows the ooze to quickly capture foes and damage them very easily while making it difficult for them to escape. Hide in Plain sight also allows the gelatinous cube to set dangerous ambushes for unwary foes.

### Gray Ooze

The gray ooze trades the black pudding's Split ability for additional durability.

### Ochre Jelly

The ochre jelly trades the black pudding's Corrosive Form ability for additional durability.

## Design Notes

Oozes are frustrating. They have several totally unique abilities which make them very hard to design and balance. On top of that, all four types of ooze are different enough that they have very little common to all four despite frequent overlap. Since oozes are unintelligent, we'll assume that they've been affected by an effect similar to the *awaken* spell.

Oozes are oozes (obviously), costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

From the stat blocks, we get medium size (down from large for several types), immunity to the deafened, exhaustion, and prone conditions for a total of 1.5 BP, blindness for -4 BP, and blindsight 30 ft. for 6 BP. Since we're treating oozes as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Oozes have no arms for -2 BP, they have no hands for -2 BP, and they can't wear armor for -3 BP.

That brings our total to -4.5 BP before examining individual oozes, leaving us a huge amount of room to design.

### Black Pudding

The black pudding is indicative of the difficulties in designing oozes as a playable race. Its ability to damage and destroy weapons and armor is fine for an occasional monster, but adding it to a player means bringing that frustrating book-keeping into every encounter for the duration of the character's career. Black puddings also introduce the ability to split in half, presenting further design problems.

Black oozes' only good abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 20 ft. climb speed for 1.5 BP, resistance to acid and lightning (down from immunity, and we'll drop cold and slashing) for 4 BP, Amorphous for 0.5 BP, and Spider Climb for 1 BP. We'll add a 1d4+1d4 natural weapon for another 2 BP.

That brings our total to 6.25 BP before we tackle Corrosive Form and Split.

Corrosive Form as written is an unmanageable mess, so we need to make it easier to track, and we need to be extremely careful to balance it. Destroying your enemy's weapon or armor isn't universally useful: it's either a fight-ending advantage or a totally worthless ability depending on the type of enemy. We need the ability to be reasonably possible to trigger, but also not so easy to trigger that it can win every fight in which the enemies use weapons and armor.

Corrosive Form needs to trigger both offensively and defensively, and I want there to be an incentive for the ooze to draw attacks and make attacks repeatedly until the effect triggers. As such, I think we'll tie the ability to natural 20's and natural 1's. It makes the ability unreliable but very exciting, and forces the ooze to play how I hope they will. It also means that stronger enemies which require more attacks to kill are more likely to suffer the effects, while easily dispatched enemies frequently won't bring the effect into play.

Since we don't want the effects to require tracking tiny reductions in damage or AC, we'll just outright destroy the affected object. It's definitely going to be a problem for foes in heavy armor, but I think that's exactly what we want from the ability. It's hard to assess the value of this ability, but I think it falls somewhere around 3 BP.

Split also presents some problems. When the original monster splits it becomes twice as lethal but also becomes vulnerable to area of effect damage. We can't allow a player to essentially double their number of turns, so we'll need to adjust the ability. If we force the player to share their actions and bonus action between each split but grant each split the ability to move independently it gives the ooze an interesting tactical option without significantly improving its ability to deal damage.

We'll also split the character's hit points between the two oozes. This keeps the vulnerability to area damage, adding a tactical drawback to what would otherwise be a massive tactical option.

The monster conspicuously omits a mechanism for the oozes to re-join. I assume that the monster just stays perpetually split and the oozes eventually regrow

to full size. We can't leave any of these issues in place or players will do things like split in half, then send one of the splits off adventuring while the other stays safely at home to make the character functionally immortal. Instead, we'll add a death timer to the split. After a number of rounds equal to the ooze's constitution modifier, one of the oozes will die and reduce the character's maximum hit points until they take a long rest.

We'll allow the two oozes to merge as an action, rejoining the character's hit point pools. I think we can call this 2 BP, but it's hard to estimate without extensive playtesting.

At 11 BP, the black pudding exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. The black pudding has some unpredictable mechanics, so be cautious when considering whether to include it in your game. If you want to strengthen the black pudding, give it natural armor. If you want to weaken the black pudding, only allow it to split once per short rest.

### Gelatinous Cube

The gelatinous cube's big ability is Engulf. It's more complex than conventional grappling, so we'll need to take some artistic liberties to make it playable. Beyond that, the gelatinous cube is easily approximated.

The gelatinous cube's best ability by far is Constitution, so we'll grant it +2 Constitution for 2 BP. We'll also grant +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get 20 ft. walking speed (up from 15 ft.) for -1 BP. We'll add a 1d8 natural weapon for another 2 BP.

At 0.25 BP, we've got a ton of room to work. The gelatinous cube's remaining abilities are Ooze Cube, Transparent, and Engulf. Removing any of them would be a huge disservice to the original monster, and the three depend on each other to function.

Transparent is the easiest to handle, so we'll do that first. It works a lot like False Appearance, so we'll use False Appearance as a base. The ability to hide in plain sight is still better than looking like a mundane object since a mundane object like a boulder or pile of magma can be clearly out of place. We'll retain the one-minute timer from False Appearance, but we'll essentially allow the ooze to hide in plain sight. We'll set a Constitution-based DC to spot the character instead of using Stealth since the ooze isn't so much hiding as it is attempting to suppress its constant jiggling. False appearance is 0.5 BP, but this is a bit better so we'll call it 1 BP.



Ooze Cube and Engulf are very tightly connected. The biggest function of Ooze Cube is applying Engulf, so we can't design Ooze Cube until we design Engulf.

Engulf is very similar to grappling in many ways, but it has some important differences.

- The gelatinous cube doesn't need to roll anything to apply the effect.
- The gelatinous cube gets to damage affected creatures for free every turn.
- The gelatinous cube moves into the targets space, pushing it away if it isn't engulfed
- Engulfed creatures are restrained, not grappled.
- Engulfed creatures move with the cube automatically without requiring a grapple check
- Engulfed creatures have full cover
- Other creatures can attempt to remove affected creatures from the cube

We'll need to change several of those points to make the ability both usable and fun for players. I think we'll trade the saving throw mechanic in favor of the normal grapple mechanics because they're more "normal" for players to use. We can then allow other creatures to remove engulfed creatures by grappling them and forcibly moving them out of the gelatinous cube's space.

Granting a creature full cover while engulfed might not be as useful as one might think. In a game where enemies are frequently outnumbered by players this means that a creature is protected against attacks and spells from other party members. Still, it's an exciting combat option that's central to the race, so we'll leave it in place.

We'll allow the gelatinous cube to make a free attack against each engulfed creature as a bonus action, which covers the last important point of the Engulf ability. It's extremely difficult to assess the power of an ability this complex, but I'll estimate something like 6 BP.

Finally, we'll take a look at Ooze Cube. The important part of the ability grants a free chance to engulf a creature. If we require the player to use their Reaction to make the attempt, I think we can call it 2 BP.

At 9 BP, the gelatinous cube is within our target range of 8-10 BP, but includes several completely unique abilities which make balancing the race difficult. If you want to weaken the gelatinous cube, only allow the cube to engulf one creature at a time. If you want to strengthen the gelatinous cube, allow it to engulf creatures which enter its space without expending a reaction.

### Gray Ooze

The gray ooze is relatively simple after designing the black pudding. It trades the black pudding's Split and Spider Climb abilities for increase durability.

The gray ooze's best ability by far is Constitution, so we'll grant it +2 Constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 20 ft. walking speed (up from 10 ft.) for -1 BP, 20 ft. climb speed (up from 10 ft.) for 1.5 BP, resistance to acid, cold, and fire for 6 BP (down from immunity), Amorphous for 0.5 BP, and False Appearance for 0.5 BP. We'll add a 1d4+1d4 natural weapon for another 2 BP.

Finally, we'll duplicate the black puddings Corrosive Form ability, but since the gray ooze can only dissolve metal we'll drop the cost to 2.5 BP.

At 11 BP, the gray ooze exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the gray ooze, increase its speed. If you want to weaken the gray ooze, decrease its speed.

### Ochre Jelly

The ochre jelly is the gray ooze's opposite in a sense, trading the black puddings Corrosive Form for extra resistances.

Black oozes' only good abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 20 ft. walking speed (up from 10 ft.) for -1 BP, 20 ft. climb speed (up from 10 ft.) for 1.5 BP, resistance to acid and lightning (we'll drop slashing) for 4 BP, Amorphous for 0.5 BP, and Spider Climb for 1 BP. We'll add a 1d4+1d4 natural weapon for another 2 BP. Finally, we'll duplicate the black pudding's Split for 2 BP.

At 8.25 BP, the ochre jelly is within our target BP range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the ochre jelly, increase its lightning resistance to lightning immunity. If you want to weaken the ochre jelly, reduce its speed.

## Orcs

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Orcs are an iconic race featured in numerous works of fantasy dating all the way back to Lord of the Rings. Though their presence and personality varies between settings, Orcs are universally muscular brutes prone to violence and destruction.

### Orc Traits

Orcs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (orc)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength.

**Alignment.** Prone to violence and destruction, most Orcs are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, you can move up to your speed toward a hostile creature that you can see.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Menacing.** You gain proficiency in the Intimidation skill.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Orc.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

**Orc**

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Orog**

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence.



## Playing an Orc

Orcs are strong, aggressive brutes. They excel in melee combat, so take advantage of Aggressive to quickly move to melee range and bring your immense Strength into play. Orog are more intelligent than typical Orcs,

so their play style should be less reckless, but equally aggressive.

Orcs, especially Orog, make great mercenaries, which offers them plenty of opportunity to work alongside civilized races and travel in civilized lands. However, in many settings Orcs are widely hated so you may have trouble interacting with civilized peoples.

## Design Notes

Orcs are simple humanoids, and the multiple stat blocks presented in the monster manual present several sources to compare in order to determine the core components of the race. Half-Orcs also provide an excellent basis, provided we can strip out what should come from their human heritage and what should remain solely unique to Half-Orcs.

Orcs are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

Orcs are famously strong, so a +2 to Strength is an obvious starting point. The Dungeon Master's Guide's NPC traits table suggests +2 Strength and -2 to Intelligence for Orcs, but I've chosen to do away with racial ability score penalties. I want to differentiate between normal Orcs and Orog, so we'll give Orcs a +1 to Constitution and Orog a +1 to Intelligence to reflect their superior intellect, which costs 3 BP for either subrace.

From the multiple Orc stat blocks we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, racial languages plus Common, and proficiency in Intimidation for 0.5 BP.

Aggressive is a great ability for a melee brute seeking to close to melee range quickly. It replicates the Dash option of Cunning Action, so we'll call this 1 BP. Goblin's Nimble Escape is 2 BP for the other 2/3 of Cunning Action, so half the BP for half the effect seems fair.

At a total of just 6.5 BP Orcs are a bit below our target BP range of 8-10 BP. Coincidentally, that puts the Orc at the same BP cost as the Half-Orc. 6.5 is a bit low, but the Orc's abilities make it an excellent Barbarian, Fighter, or Paladin. The Orog makes a good Eldritch knight thanks to its Intelligence boost. Aggressive offers a fantastic option for the Orc to quickly close to melee distance where it functions best.

If you want to strengthen Orcs, give them Savage Attacks.

## Otyugh

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Disgusting creatures which dwell in mounds of rotting garbage, otyughs are motivated by nothing except the need to eat.

## Otyugh Traits

Otyughs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Motivated by nothing but hunger, most otyughs are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite and Tentacles.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or bludgeoning damage on a hit.

When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Limited Telepathy.** You can magically communicate simple ideas, emotions, and images telepathically with any creature within 100 feet of it that can understand a language.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Otyugh.

## Playing an Otyugh

Otyughs are simple beasts. Their natural armor and excellent constitution make them extremely durable, so they make good Barbarians, Fighters, and Monks.

Otyughs are motivated by nothing but the need to eat, but they're intelligent enough to speak and can be trained by masters which can feed them enough to keep them happy. Promises of suitable food may be enough to motivate an otyugh into nearly any party.

## Design Notes

Otyughs are simple creatures. Tentacle Slam is their only unique ability, and it's not important enough to the creature that I would feel bad abandoning it.

Otyughs are aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The otyugh's two best abilities are Strength and Constitution, with Constitution being higher by a fair margin. We'll grant the otyugh +1 Strength and +2 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision (down from 120 ft.) for 2 BP, and only racial languages for -1 BP. Otyughs have no hands for -2 BP, but we'll give them a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP and add Grab for another 2 BP.

That brings us to 8 BP before we tackled Limited Telepathy and Tentacle Slam. We'll grant Limited Telepathy for 1 BP.

Tentacle slam is a powerful offensive option. A repeatable way to stun a creature is dangerous in a game where players frequently outnumber monsters. Stunned is a very powerful condition not typically available from spells until at least 6<sup>th</sup>-level spells, so it's very difficult to assess a BP cost and still make the ability accessible. Instead, I think we'll just drop tentacle slam and upgrade the otyugh's Darkvision to 120 ft. for another 1 BP.

At 10 BP, the otyugh is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the otyugh, improve its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the otyugh, reduce its Constitution increase.

## Owlbear

An iconic monstrosity resembling a bear with an owl's head, owlbeats are fierce and hardy predators.

## Owlbear Traits

Owlbeats share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Usually simple beasts, most owlbeats are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Keen Sight and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Owlbear

Owlbears are dumb brutes. Their excellent ability increases make them great barbarians and fighters, and their keen senses and Darkvision make them excellent at Perception checks.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Mechanically, owlbears aren't much different from normal beasts. Their abilities are extremely basic, so they're easy to adapt. We'll treat the owlbear as though it was awakened.

Owlbears are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The owlbear's best ability is Strength, followed by Constitution. Since the owlbear doesn't have any interesting abilities, we'll give it +2 to each for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Common for 0 BP (we're treating the owlbear as awakened), two keen senses for 1 BP. Owlbears have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll give them a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP.

At 8.5 BP, the owlbear is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not a particularly interesting race, but mechanically the owlbear is a very boring creature. If you want to strengthen the owlbear, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the owlbear, reduce its ability score increases.

## Pegasus

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Beautiful, winged horses native to the celestial planes.

### Pegasus Traits

Pegasi share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Celestial

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Wild, free, and noble, most pegasi are chaotic good.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 50 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Hooves.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Common, Elvish, and Sylvan.

### Playing a Pegasus

The pegasus's greatest strength is its excellent flight speed. Use your speed to stay out of enemy's reach whenever possible. However, since pegasi lack hands to use ranged weapons you will need to move into melee or find a way to cast spells without the ability to speak or hold spell foci.

Pegasi are celestial creatures who are often sent to aid those in need. They form life-long bonds, often working alongside those pursuing noble goals. They fight well into parties which include paladins or good-aligned clerics.

### Design Notes

Pegasi are among the most iconic flying mounts in the game. We've already designed Nightmares, which are essentially altered pegasi, so we can borrow large elements of the nightmare's design. However, the has considerably more abilities, so to make up the BP gap we'll improve the pegasus in other areas.

Pegasi are celestials, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits. Pegasi seem like a race that should make good clerics and druids, so we'll give them +2 Strength and +1 Wisdom for 3 BP.

Adjusting for size, the pegasus has numerous excellent abilities all within a point or two of each other, which makes it hard to choose which to emphasize.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 40 ft. walking speed (down from 60 ft.) for 1 BP, 50 ft. fly speed (down from 90 ft.) for 6 BP, racial languages plus Common and one additional fixed language for 0.25 BP, and inability to speak for -1 BP.

Pegasi have no hands for -2 BP, but we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 9.75 the pegasus is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's unusually fast, but it's difficult to play since its abilities cater to classes which are difficult to play without hands. If you want to strengthen the pegasus, grant it natural armor. If you want to weaken the pegasus, reduce its speed.

## Peryton

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Intelligent, flying bird-like monstrosities that feed on the hearts of humanoids

### Peryton Traits

Perytons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Intelligent creatures that feed almost exclusively on humanoids, most perytons are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Dive Attack.** Once per turn, if you dive at least 30 feet toward a creature and hit it with a melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Gore and Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Flyby.** You may perform the Disengage action as a bonus action.

**Keen Sight and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Common and Elven.

### Playing a Peryton

The peryton is a powerful flying combatant. It has good fly speed, and with the combination of Dive Attack and Flyby it can make devastating hit-and-run attacks. Consider classes like barbarian and fighter to take advantage of the peryton's natural weapons, but also consider rogue to combine Dive Attack with the damage boost from Sneak Attack.

Perytons are evil, intelligent predators which feed primarily on humanoids. While they have little more ambition than unintelligent beasts, they might be drawn into a party of evil characters if the party's

efforts offer the peryton frequent access to their primary food source.

### Design Notes

Perytons are simple creatures thanks to design work we've already done for other creatures.

Perytons are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The peryton's best ability is Strength, and its other abilities aren't good enough to merit mention. We'll give the peryton +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +1 natural armor (down from +2) for 0.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 40 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 5 BP, racial languages plus Common for 0 BP, the inability to speak for -1 BP. Perytons have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

That brings us to 5 BP before tackling the peryton's special abilities. Dive Attack costs 2 BP, Flyby costs another 2 BP, and two keen senses cost 1 BP.

At 10 BP, the peryton is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the peryton, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the peryton, remove its natural armor.

## Piercer

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The larval stage of roppers, piercers disguise themselves as stalactites in order to fall and impale unsuspecting foes that pass below them.

### Piercer Traits

Piercer share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent creatures, most piercers are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 5 ft. You have a climb speed of 5 ft.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Drop.** As an action you can attempt to fall on a creature directly below you. Make a melee weapon attack. On a hit, you deal 1d6 piercing damage per 10 feet fallen, up to 6d6. On a miss you take half the normal falling damage for the distance fallen.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a stalactite. You must spend one

minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Limbless.** You have no arms or hands, and are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 15 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Common.

### Playing a Piercer

Playing a piercer is an exercise in self-harm. Its pitifully low speed and near total lack of combat options makes surviving combat nearly impossible. Capitalize on the race's ability to surprise foes and consider classes like rogue which can deal huge amounts of damage in a single attack.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Piercers are a difficult monster to design because they are not built for the traveling inherent in a life of adventure. They're one-shot ambush predators. Their natural attacks only work once, then require a long and painfully slow climb. I have no idea why or how someone would play a piercer. But, in the spirit of this document, I'm going to adapt it anyway. We'll treat the piercer as awakened so that we can allow it to speak.

Piercers are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The piercer's only decent ability is Constitution, so we'll grant it +2 Constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +5 natural armor for 2.5 BP, 5 ft. walking speed for -2.5 BP, 5 ft. climb speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. blindsense for 6 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Common for 0 BP, no hands for -2 BP and no arms for -2 BP, False Appearance for 0.5 BP, and Spider Climb for 1 BP.

That brings our total to 8.5 BP. I'll just grant Drop as-written and call it 2 BP since it's functionally very similar to Charge or Dive Attack, and has the added drawback that it can easily kill the user.

At 10.5 BP, the piercer exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP but it's still absolutely unplayable, and there's really nothing that you can do to fix it without turning it into a totally different creature. If you want to

strengthen the piercer, increase its speeds dramatically. If you want to weaken the piercer you're a cruel, cruel person.

## Pixie

Tiny, charming fey, pixies are friendly to good-natured creatures but use their magical prowess to lead dangerous creatures astray.

### Pixie Traits

Pixies share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fey

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Overwhelmingly friendly and mostly nonviolent, most pixies are neutral good.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Cunning.** You have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Hidden Step.** As a bonus action, you can magically turn invisible until the start of your next turn or until you attack, make a damage roll, or force someone to make a saving throw.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *druidcraft* cantrip. Once per day, you may cast the *dancing lights* cantrip. Once you reach third level, you can cast the *entangle* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Sylvan.

### Playing a Pixie

With good Dexterity and the ability to fly, pixies make excellent monks, rangers, and rogues. However, their natural aversion to weapons can make them somewhat reluctant in combat. Instead, pixies often rely on trickery to deter foes.

Pixies are friendly and welcoming to good-natured creatures, but their natural opposition to violence makes it difficult for them to become adventurers. Consider what may have motivated your character to take up a life of excitement and danger.

### Design Notes

The pixie is a near-humanoid fey with some fun abilities. Its traits are easily adapted based on previous work.

Pixies are fey, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Pixies have a few decent abilities, but Dexterity is the best by far, even accounting for size. They also have good Wisdom. We'll grant pixies +2 Dexterity and +1 Wisdom for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, and only racial languages for -1 BP.

That brings us to 3.5 BP before we consider the pixie's remaining abilities. Magic Resistance is too powerful alongside the traits we have left to cover, but we can add Cunning for 2 BP. Superior Invisibility is just too powerful to a player, but we can add Hidden Step for another 2 BP.

For a CR ¼ creature, the pixie's spellcasting is terrifyingly powerful. Fly, phantasmal force, and polymorph are all effects far out of range for players which might realistically encounter a pixie in combat. Obviously, these options are far too powerful for a playable race, so we'll make some significant cuts. We'll retain the *druidcraft* cantrip for 0.5 BP, the *dancing lights* cantrip once per day for 0.25 BP, and the *entangle* spell for 1 BP.

At 9.25 BP, the pixie is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the pixie, allow it to cast dancing lights at will or grant it a +1 Charisma increase. If you want to weaken the pixie, remove the Pixie's Wisdom increase.

## Pseudodragon

Pseudodragons are small creatures resembling a red dragon, but they lack many of the iconic traits of a true dragon.

### Pseudodragon Traits

Pseudodragons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Dragon

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Cheerful and rarely hostile, most pseudodragons are neutral good.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 15 ft.

**Bite and Sting.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 10 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Limited Telepathy.** You can magically communicate simple ideas, emotions, and images telepathically with any creature within 100 feet of it that can understand a language.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Common and Draconic.

### Playing a Pseudodragon

Pseudodragons are fast, nimble, and have excellent senses, making them excellent rangers and rogues. They lack the raw combative power of true dragons, but make up for it with other traits.

Pseudodragons are generally reclusive, but their loyalty can be earned with good food or treasure from an agreeable companion. Pseudodragons lack the ability to speak, so they rely on their limited telepathy as their primary means of communication.

### Design Notes

Pseudodragons are very similar to dragons, but their lack of breath weapon and energy resistance opens up some BP space for other traits.

Pseudodragons are dragons, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The pseudodragon's best ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, we'll abandon natural armor, 15 ft. walking speed for -0.5 BP, 40 ft. fly speed for 5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and 10 ft. blindsight for 4 BP. Pseudodragons can't speak for -1 BP, but still understand racial language plus Common for 0 BP. We'll retain Keen Senses as written for 1.25 BP. Pseudodragons have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll give them a 1d4 natural weapon for 1 BP.

That brings us to 9.75 BP. We'll drop the pseudodragon's poison since any reasonable adaptation of the ability would need to cost too much BP.

At 9.75 BP, the pseudodragon is within our target BP range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the pseudodragon, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the pseudodragon, reduce its flight speed.

## Purple Worm

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Huge subterranean predators, purple worms are known for the massive tunnels they leave as they burrow through solid stone.

### Purple Worm Traits

Purple worms share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Usually unintelligent creatures, most purple worms are unintelligent.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft. You have a burrow speed of 20 ft.

**Bite and Stinger.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage or 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 15 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Serpentine Body.** You have no arms or hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor.

**Tunneler.** You can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 16-inch-diameter tunnel in your wake.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Purple Worm

Purple worms make excellent fighters and barbarians. Their natural strength and constitution, coupled with their excellent natural armor, make them deadly in combat. However, the worm's limited blindsight can make it difficult to reach your foes.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Purple worms are essentially a force of nature in the Underdark. One of the most powerful creatures in the monster manual, their stats are extremely high.

However, since the creature's design is so simple we can approximate a purple worm race very easily. Since purple worms aren't intelligent, we'll treat them as though they have been affected by an Awaken effect. We'll also borrow some design elements from other snake-like creatures like the naga.

Purple worms are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The purple worm's best abilities by a huge margin are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +2 to each for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we met medium size (down from Gargantuan), +5 natural armor (down from +10) for 2.5 BP, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 50 ft.) for 0.5 BP, 20 ft. burrow speed (down from 30 ft.) for 3 BP, and 30 ft. blindsight for 6 BP. We'll allow the worm to speak Common since we're treating it as awakened. Purple worms have no hands for -2 BP, can't wear armor (how would they tunnel in full plate?) for -3 BP, and are blind for -4 BP. We'll also add a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP, but we'll drop the swallow mechanic.

That brings our total to 9.5 BP before we look at Tunneler, the purple worm's only remaining ability. It allows the worm to create a tunnel through which allies could pass, giving it much of the function of useful spells like *passwall*. However, it also makes the purple worm very easy to track, largely removing any hope of stealthy tunneling. I don't think the ability is powerful enough that it should cost a ton of BP, but we need to decide how wide the tunnel should be.

One size category in Dungeons and Dragons represents a creature roughly doubling in size. If we trace that backwards from Gargantuan to Medium, we halve the original worm's size 3 times, effectively dividing it by 8. That's 1.25 feet, or 16 inches across. That's enough for small creatures to crawl through and for tiny creatures to walk through, but most medium creatures generally won't be able to fit at all. We'll call Tunneler 0.5 BP.

At 10 BP, the purple worm is at the top our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not terribly interesting, but Tunneler presents a unique opportunity for the worm's party. If you want to strengthen the purple worm, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the purple worm, remove Tunneler.

## Quaggoth

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Quaggoth are barbaric, cannibalistic humanoids which dwell in the Underdark. They are famous for becoming more vicious in the face of their own deaths.

## Quaggoth Traits

Quaggoths share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (quaggoth)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Vicious and cannibalistic, but not outright malicious, most Quaggoths are chaotic neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft., and you have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Poison Resilience.** You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.

**Wounded Fury.** The first time you fall below one fifth of your maximum hit points (rounded up), you may fly into a fury. While in this fury, once per turn when you may deal 1d6 damage to any target that you hit with a melee attack. The fury ends if you become incapacitated or regain hit points which are enough to bring you above 1/5<sup>th</sup> of your maximum hit points. This damage increases by 1d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level (2d6), 11<sup>th</sup> level (3d6), and 17<sup>th</sup> level (4d6).

You may not use this ability again until you have completed a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Undercommon.

## Playing a Quaggoth

Quaggoth are strong and durable, so they make excellent barbarians and fighters. Quaggoth are most dangerous when they're badly injured, so discourage your allies from healing you when you so that you can bring Wounded Fury into play.

## Design Notes

Quaggoths are fairly basic humanoids with several easily quantifiable qualities, but they have several expensive abilities and their Wounded Fury ability presents an interesting design challenge.

Quaggoths are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

Based on their monster stat block, Quaggoths are strong durable. We'll give them a +1 to Strength and a +1 to Constitution for 2 BP. We could go higher, but we need to save BP for

From their stat block we get medium size, a 30 ft. walking speed, a 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, superior Darkvision for 3 BP, racial languages for -1 BP, +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, and immunity to poison for 2 BP.

Matching the Quaggoth's claw damage costs another 1.5 BP.

At a total of 11 BP, we've exceeded the BP limits and we haven't even looked at Wounded Fury. We can drop the Superior Darkvision to regular Darkvision to save 1 BP. Dropping the 30 ft. Climb speed to 20 ft. saves another 0.5 BP. Reducing Poison Immunity to Poison Resilience saves another 1 BP, bringing us back down to 8.5 BP, enough to do something with Wounded Fury.

Wounded Fury won't work without some adaptation. At low levels 10 hp may be more than the character's maximum hit points, and at high levels hitting that tiny range can be extremely difficult. The 2d6 damage may also present a problem.

We need to tie the hit point cap to something that will scale with level. 10 is a bit more than one fifth of the Quaggoth's hit points, so one fifth seems like a good ballpark.

The damage also needs to be adjusted. Character with numerous attacks (monks, TWF builds, Fighters) would get far too much damage from 2d6 per attack. Instead, I think it makes sense to make it a once-per-turn boost, and scale the damage like a cantrip.

Finally, we need to consider abuse cases. With such a tantalizing ability, there's a good chance that players may spend all of their time below the hit point cap for Wounded Fury. I think we'll need to limit the usage to once per short rest. The ability can trigger the first time the character falls below 1/5<sup>th</sup> of their maximum hit points, and last until the end of the encounter. That will make the ability usable and exciting, but players won't be able to use it constantly.

Now how do assess the BP cost for this? Hunter's Mark should have roughly similar damage, and will be usable around the same number of times per day, so I think it's fair to call Wounded Fury somewhere around 1 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the Quaggoth is inside our target BP range. Quaggoths are a durable, vicious melee monster with

some cool abilities. If you need to strengthen the Quaggoth, undo one or more of the BP-saving cuts discussed earlier in this section. If you need to weaken the Quaggoth. Drop the Wounded Fury damage scaling to 1d6 at 1<sup>st</sup> level and 2d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level.

## Rakshasa

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Fiends resembling a humanoid tiger, rakshasa are rarely seen in true form, preferring instead to disguise themselves as nobles and other important figures.

### Rakshasa Traits

Rakshasa share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fiend

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Evil spirits in mortal flesh, most rakshasas are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Devil's Soul.** If you are killed outside of Hell, you are instead returned to hell. If you are killed in Hell, your spirit is permanently destroyed. You cannot be raised from dead, except by very powerful effects like a *wish* spell or divine intervention.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *minor illusion* cantrip. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *disguise self* spell once per day. Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you can cast the *invisibility* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Infernal.

### Playing a Rakshasa

The rakshasa's natural charisma and innate spellcasting make it an excellent sorcerer and warlock, but it can also make a potent rogue.

Rakshasa are adept at impersonating important figures. They make an excellent leader for an evil party.

### Design Notes

Rakshasa are essentially humanoid, but have a few fun magical abilities. We'll need to drop a lot of the

rakshasa's defenses to make the race playable, but we'll do our best to retain the creature's flavor.

Rakshasas are fiends, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The rakshasa's spellcasting is Charisma-based, so we'll grant +1 Charisma for 1 BP. The rakshasa's other abilities are all above average, but we'll ignore them.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We'll drop the rakshasa's claw to 1d4 for 1 BP.

That brings our total to 7 BP before we consider the rakshasa's innate spellcasting. The rakshasa is a trickster at heart, so we'll emphasize trickery with their spells. We'll keep the *minor illusion* cantrip, *disguise self*, and *invisibility* for a total of 2.5 BP.

Finally, we'll copy the death mechanic from devils since rakshasas follow the same rules.

At 9.5 BP, the rakshasa is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the rakshasa, increase its Charisma increase. If you want to weaken the rakshasa, remove its natural armor.

## Remorhaze

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Large insects with a powerful internal flame.

### Remorhaze Traits

Remorhazes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent predators, most remorhazes are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a burrow speed of 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to cold damage and fire damage.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Heated Body.** When a creature makes a successful melee attack against you, you may retaliate with a burst of flame as a reaction. The creature must make a Dexterity saving throw. It takes 2d10 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Remorhaze

Remorhazes lack ability increases, but their other traits make them excellent in a variety of classes. Their lack of hands may make it difficult to cast spells, but any class which thrives in combat can benefit from the remorhaze's natural weapons and resistance to both cold and fire damage.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Remorhazes are powerful creatures, but their abilities aren't particularly unique so reworking them into a playable race isn't hard. The monster manual also provides two age blocks for the remorhazes, which gives us a helpful way to identify which traits are truly central to the creature. We'll work primarily from the young version. Remorhazes also aren't playably intelligent, so we'll treat them as awakened.

Remorhazes are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Strength and Constitution are the remorhaze's best ability scores by a wide margin, but since they have so many special abilities we'll need to forgo an ability increase to save BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 10 ft. burrowing speed (down from 20 ft.) for 2 BP, resistance to cold and fire (down from immunity) for 4 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and the ability to speak Common since we're treating them as awakened. We'll need to drop tremorsense to save BP. Remorhazes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll give them a 1d4+1d4 natural weapon for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

That brings our total to 10 BP before we look at Heated Body. We'll copy the design from the Azer for 1 BP.

At 11 BP, the remorhaze exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. It's got a good set of abilities, and without an

ability increase it shouldn't cause any balance issues. If you want to strengthen the remorhaze, grant it a +1 Strength increase. If you want to weaken the remorhaze, remove Heated Body or the remorhaze's natural armor.

## Roc

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Rocs are massive birds of prey, faster than nearly any other flying creature and strong enough to carry off full-grown horses.

### Roc Traits

Rocs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent predators, most rocs are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 50 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Powerful Build.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Roc

Rocs are fantastic flyers. Their ability increases and speed make them excellent at getting into melee combat where they're most effective. Consider classes like Barbarian and Fighter which can easily capitalize on the roc's strengths. Keen Sight also provides a useful boost to Perception, making the roc an effective flying scout.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Rocs are extremely mundane. Really their only remarkable traits are their immense size and absurd speed. When we reduce those to fit a playable race, they're just like many other flying beast-like creatures. Since they're not intelligent, we'll treat the roc as awakened.

Rocs are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The roc's best ability scores are Strength and Constitution by wide margins, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from gargantuan), +3 natural armor (down from +5) for 1.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 50 ft. flying speed for 6 BP, and the ability to speak common since we're treating the roc as awakened. Rocs have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. We'll keep Keen Sight for 0.25 BP, and we'll drop the grab mechanic.

To emphasize that rocs are massive birds, we'll add Powerful Build for 0.25 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the roc is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the roc, grant it the Grab ability. If you want to weaken the roc, reduce its natural armor or flight speed.

## Roper

Ropers are ambush predators native to the Underdark that use their long, grasping tendrils to pull prey into their toothy mouths.

### Roper Traits

Ropers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Intelligent creatures perfectly happy to feed on other intelligent creatures, most ropers are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a normal cave formation, such as a stalagmite. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must

maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Grasping Tendrils.** When you make the Attack action, you may make a special melee attack to grasp a creature up to 50 ft. away with your tendrils. To do this, grapple the creature as though it were within your reach. If you succeed, you subject the creature to the grappled condition. If you move more than 50 feet away from the creature, this grapple ends.

You can have up to six tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 20; 10 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage). Destroying a tendril deals no damage to you. As a bonus action, you can extrude a replacement. A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a Strength check against it. The DC of this check is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 15 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Reel.** When you make the Attack action, in place of one of your attacks you may attempt to pull any creatures grappled by your tendrils closer to you. Make a Strength (Athletics) check contested by each target's Strength (Athletics). If you succeed against any creature, you pull the target up to 25 feet straight toward you. After doing so, you may make an unarmed strike as a bonus action against any creature which you successfully pulled toward you.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Common.

### Playing a Roper

Ropers are slow-moving grapplers. Use your grasping tendrils to drag foes into range of your unarmed strikes. Because you need multiple attacks to make efficient use of your tendrils, consider classes which offer Extra Attack, especially Fighter.

Ropers don't have particularly interesting personalities, and they're motivated mostly by the need to eat. While this doesn't give much basis for a personality, it also makes them a blank slate for a character.

### Design Notes

Ropers are a really weird creature. They're frustratingly slow, so they compensate by using their tentacles to drag prey closer to them. That's a really unique

mechanic so we'll need to take some time considering how it will work for players.

Ropers are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Strength is the roper's best ability, and since grappling is such an important mechanic we'll grant +1 for 1 BP and ignore other abilities to conserve BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +5 natural armor (down from +11) for 2.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed (up from 10 ft.) for -1 BP, 10 ft. climb speed for 1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, False appearance for 0.5 BP, and Spider Climb for 1 BP. Ropers can't speak for -1 BP, but we'll allow them to understand Common. Ropers have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their bite to 1d8 for 2 BP.

That brings our total to 7.5 BP before considering the roper's other abilities. Tendril, Grasping Tendrils, and Reel are all tightly tied together. We don't have a lot of room left, and I don't want the roper's grapple abilities to be so powerful that they easily win every fight.

The monster version of Tendril allows the roper to apply the Restrained condition. While this makes the monster terrifying, it would make a player too powerful. We'll drop Restrained in favor of Grappled. We'll also drop the disadvantage component because it would make it too easy for a roper player to win every grapple. From there, we can add Grab for 2 BP and allow it to be used at range for 0.5 BP like we've done with other natural weapons. We'll keep Grasping Tendrils unmodified as a balancing factor.

Reel is a totally unique ability. It allows the monster to move restrained creatures without a check, save, or contest of any kind. That's very powerful, so I think we'll require a grapple check when the roper uses the ability.

The roper's multiattack ability allows it to tendrils, reel, and finally make a bite attack all as one action. This is very powerful, and players typically need to use a bonus action to do this. To match this behavior, we'll allow the roper to make a bite attack as a bonus action when they use reel to pull a creature within 5 ft. Altogether this ability is likely somewhere in the range of 2 BP.

At 12 BP, the roper exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. Ropers are complicated creatures with unpredictable effects on combat, so be very cautious about including them in your games. If you want to strengthen the roper, don't require a grapple check when it uses Reel. If you want to weaken the roper, remove its strength increase.

## Rust Monster

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Rust monsters are gigantic insectoid creature with the ability to dissolve and consume ferrous metals.

### Rust Monster Traits

Rust monsters share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally motivated by little except hunger, most rust monsters are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Iron Scent.** You can pinpoint, by scent, the location of ferrous metal within 30 feet of it.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Rust Metal.** Contact with your body corrodes and destroys mundane armor and weaponry. When you make an unarmed strike and roll a natural 20 you may destroy any non-magical shield made of metal which the creature is currently wielding. If the creature is not wielding a shield, you may destroy any non-magical armor made of metal that the creature is wearing. Alternatively, if a creature attacks you with a non-magical weapon made of metal and rolls a natural 1 you may destroy the weapon used in the attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Rust Monster

Rust monsters are quick and tough, but aren't particularly dangerous. They present a serious problem for enemies with metal equipment, but other creatures likely won't find them particularly threatening. Consider classes like fighter which thrive in melee and offer you extra attacks so that you are more likely to apply Rust Metal.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Among the most feared of monsters despite its relative weakness, the rust monster is known for its ability to destroy metal. We've already dealt with a similar mechanic for oozes, so we'll borrow that work. Beyond that, the rust monster is fairly simple. Since rust monsters are normally unintelligent, we'll treat them as awakened.

Rust monsters are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

None of the rust monster's abilities are especially good, I think we'll emphasize Constitution to make them nice and hardy. We'll grant +1 Constitution for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and the ability to speak Common since we're treating the rust monster as awakened. Rust monsters have no hands for -2 BP, but we'll set their bite to 1d8 for 2 BP.

That brings us to 4 BP before we tackle Iron Scent, Rust Metal, and Antennae. Iron Scent is a very limited version of Blindsight. 30 ft. blindsense is 3 BP, so I think 1 BP is fair for Iron Scent. It will be very effective against humanoids and constructs, but the rest of the world's creatures likely won't be affected.

Antennae and Rust Metal works very similarly to the gray ooze's Corrode Metal ability. We would need to make all of the same adjustments that we did for the gray ooze, so we'll just copy Corrode Metal for 2.5 BP.

At 9 BP, the rust monster is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the rust monster,

increase its Constitution increase. If you want to weaken the rust monster, reduce its natural armor.

## Sahuagin

Sahuagin are a predatory race of fish-like humanoids who dwell in the deepest trenches of the seas, emerging only to pillage and wage war.

### Sahuagin Traits

Sahuagin share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (sahuagin)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Brutal conquerors who believe the whole of the sea to be their domain, most Sahuagin are lawful evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft., and you have a 40 ft. swim speed.

**Limited Amphibiousness.** You can breathe air and water, but you need to be submerged at least once every 4 hours to avoid suffocating.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Shark Telepathy.** You can magically communicate any shark within 120 feet, using a limited telepathy.

**Superior Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Sahuagin.



## Playing a Sahuagin

Sahuagin are fierce warriors with a strong religious streak. They make good Clerics, Druids, Fighter, and Rangers. Their ability to communicate with sharks telepathically makes sharks good choices for pets, summons, or animal companions.

Sahuagin believe that they rightfully reign over the whole of the sea, so your character may have a superiority complex regarding other aquatic races.

In non-aquatic campaigns, breathing is a serious problem for a Sahuagin character. You may need to keep a large source of water handy (such as a large barrel) in which to submerge yourself every few hours in order to avoid suffocation.

## Design Notes

I'll just come right out and say that I'm not going to specify a mechanical difference between genders, and I'm not going touch on the four-armed Sahuagin.

Sahuagin are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

Sahuagin's ability scores aren't spectacular, but if we take the top two we can justify a +1 to Strength and a +1 to Wisdom for 2 BP.

From the basic Sahuagin's stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, 40 ft. swim speed for 1.5 BP, Superior Darkvision for 3 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, +2 natural armor for 1 BP, and 1d4 natural weapons for 1 BP.

We're already at 7.5 BP, which doesn't leave us with much room, but is enough to tackle the remaining pieces of the Sahuagin.

Limited Amphibiousness is great for quick forays onto land, but the four hour limitation means that Sahuagin likely won't survive a campaign on land. We'll call it 0.5 BP since Amphibious is 1 BP.

Shark Telepathy allows Sahuaging to *command* sharks, not just communicate with them. That's clearly too powerful for players since they'll do silly things like gather packs (Schools? Shoals?) of sharks and throw them at problems. Instead, we'll weaken it to allow the Sahuaging to communicate with sharks, but the player would still need to make an Animal Handling check to make them do stuff. We'll call that 0.5 BP, but in an underwater campaign it could definitely be worth more.

At this point we have a perfectly functional race, which is great because there is no way in any of the nine hells that I'm giving Blood Frenzy to a player. In a game which involves so much combat, players will spend the vast majority of their time attacking things

which don't have all of their hit points, so Blood Frenzy is simply too powerful to allow to a player.

8.5 BP puts the Sahuagin inside our target BP range. Sahuagin get several cool abilities, and their good swim speed and Superior Darkvision make them an excellent option for a deep-sea campaign. If you need to strengthen Sahuagin, give them Advantage on Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks with sharks or improve their natural armor. If you need to weaken Sahuagin, reduce their Superior Darkvision to regular Darkvision.

## Salamanders

Salamanders are elemental creatures from the plane of fire resembling a gigantic snake with a humanoid upper body.

Salamanders have two stages of life: The "Fire Snake" stage encompasses a Salamanders first year, during which they grow into a full Salamander.

## Salamander Traits

Salamanders share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental

**Alignment.** Deeply influenced by the tyranny of efreeti, and by their chaotic elemental natures, most salamanders are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Heated Body.** When a creature makes a successful melee attack against you, you may retaliate with a burst of flame as a reaction. The creature must make a Dexterity saving throw. It takes 2d10 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

### Fire Snake

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Tail.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage and 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Ignan.

### Salamander

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Heated Weapon.** Starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, as a bonus action, you may heat one metal melee weapon which you are currently holding. For one minute, melee weapon attacks with the weapon deal an additional 1d6 fire damage. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration or lose your grip on the weapon, it cools quickly, returning to a normal temperature.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Tail.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Ignan.

### Playing a Salamander

Salamanders are capable warriors and share many of the most important traits of humanoids. If you plan to play a campaign which covers a long period of in-game time, you might choose to start as a fire snake and age into an adult salamander. Otherwise, the adult salamander is likely a more effective choice. Adult salamanders gain increases to both Strength and Dexterity, allowing them to succeed in a wide variety of classes and roles.

Salamanders are nomadic creatures native to the plane of fire. They might find their way into the material plane where they enjoy setting fire to everything that possible can. As such, they may fit well into an evil party with a penchant for destruction.

### Design Notes

Salamanders are mostly straightforward, but present an interesting design question due to their age categories and sizing. Fire snakes are medium, while adults are large. Normally we drop large creatures to medium, but what do that imply for fire snakes? There's also the issue of age. What happens in campaigns in which a lot of in-world time passes? I think our best bet is to keep both version of the salamander at medium size, and include language for the fire snake to age into a full salamander.

Salamanders are elementals, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +2 natural armor (down from +3 for the adult) for 1 BP, 30 ft.

walking speed, vulnerability to cold for -1 BP, resistance to fire (down from immunity) for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and only racial languages for -1 BP.

That brings our total to 3.5 BP before we consider special abilities. Both versions have Heated Body, so we'll retain that for 1 BP using the same design we've used for other races.

That brings our total to 4.5 BP before we examine individual versions of the salamander.

### Fire Snake

We don't want the fire snake to just be a weaker version of the adult salamander, so we'll need to take some artistic liberties. It's important that whatever we add transitions neatly into the adult salamander.

The fire snake's best ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP. We're a bit starved for traits, so we'll also grant +1 Constitution for 1 BP.

Fire snakes can't speak for -1 BP, have no hands for -2 BP. We'll set their natural weapons to 1d4+1d4 fire for 2 BP.

I'm not sure what else to give the fire snake, unfortunately.

At 6.5 BP, the fire snake is below our target BP range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the fire snake, consider

### Salamander

Adult salamanders grow arms and the ability to speak, making them a much more useful race for a playable character.

Adjusting for size, all of the salamander's physical ability scores are good. We'll grant +1 to Strength and +1 to Constitution for 2 BP.

Adult salamanders gain the Heated Weapons ability. We'll copy the work we've done for other races like the Azer, and add Heated Weapon for 2 BP. We're already at 8.5 BP, and salamanders typically rely on material weapons, so we'll drop the salamander's natural weapons to 1d4 fire for 1 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the salamander is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the salamander, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the salamander, remove its natural armor.

### Satyr

Satyrs are mythical creatures resembling a cross between a goat and a human. They are famous for their hedonistic tendencies and their magical pan pipes.



## Satyr Traits

Satyrs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fey

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Wild, hedonistic creatures drawn to revelry and celebration, most Satyrs are chaotic neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Magic Resistance.** You have advantage on all saving throws against magic.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common, Elvish, and Sylvan.

## Playing a Satyr

Satyrs don't have any exciting active abilities, but they have good ability scores for a variety of classes and Magic Resistance makes them extremely resilient against spellcasters.

## Design Notes

Satyr are very simple for a fey. Without their pipes, they don't have any especially troublesome abilities. For simplicity (and because an item shouldn't be part of a race's features), we'll ignore the satyr pipes. If a DM decided to introduce satyr pipes as a magic item it would be in line with many other magic items.

Satyr are fey, which costs 0.5 BP but doesn't grant any specific abilities.

From their ability scores we see that Satyrs are nimble and charismatic, so we'll give them a +2 to Dexterity and +1 to Charisma for 3 BP total.

From the Satyr stat block, we get medium size, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, and racial languages plus Common and an extra fixed language for 0.25 BP.

The Satyr's only special ability is Magic Resistance. That's more powerful than I'm usually comfortable granting to any player, but we're only at 4.25 BP so there really isn't much else to use. I'll grant Magic Resistance for 5 BP.

At 9.25 BP, the Satyr is within our target BP range. Their ability scores give them several class options, but I suspect that people will generally chose to play a Satyr primarily for Magic Resistance.

If you need to strengthen the Satyr, grant them proficiency in Performance. If you need to weaken them, replace Magic Resistance with Cunning.

## Scarecrow

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Scarecrows are crude humanoid constructs made of sack cloth and straw animated by binding an evil spirit into a constructed body.

## Scarecrow Traits

Scarecrows share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Construct. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Evil spirits bound into a physical body, most scarecrows are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Construct Nature.** Your body is composed of inanimate materials, compelled to move by magic. You are immune to the Exhaustion, Paralyzed, Poisoned, and Unconscious conditions, and to poison damage.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flammable.** Your body is made of dry straw, wood, and sack cloth. You are vulnerable to fire damage.

**Terrifying Gaze.** As an action, you can magically terrify a creature with your gaze. Target one creature within 60 feet of you that you can see. If the target can see you, it must make a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of your next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common and one other language of your choice.

## Playing a Scarecrow

Scarecrows are a common sight in agricultural communities since they're used to deter common pests like birds. Couple with their increased Dexterity, they make excellent stealthy characters like rangers and rogues. Their increased Charisma can make them terrifying creatures, but their inability to speak limits their ability to cast spells so classes like sorcerer and warlock may be difficult choices.

Scarecrows are animated by evil spirits, making them innately evil. They obey the orders of their creator, but a scarecrow which doesn't destroy itself upon its creator's death may be motivated by revenge, by the last orders of its creator, or by generally destructive tendencies. When creating a scarecrow character, consider your creator's personality as much as your own, and consider how your character's creator influences your character's actions and motivations.

## Design Notes

Scarecrows are an excellent low-CR construct, so for players hoping to play a construct character they can be a good option. Their abilities are straightforward and their stats are easily adapted.

Scarecrows are constructs, costing 1 BP.

The scarecrows abilities aren't great, but their best are Dexterity and Charisma so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get 30 ft. walking speed, vulnerability to fire for -1 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, immunity to the exhaustion, paralyzed, and unconscious conditions (we'll drop charmed and frightened) for 1.5 BP, and Darkvision for 2 BP. We'll give scarecrows Common plus one flexible language for 0.5 BP, but they can't speak for -1 BP.

We'll add False Appearance for 0.5 BP, we'll drop the scarecrows natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP since they can use weapons, and we'll steal Dreadful Glare from the mummy for 1 BP to approximate the scarecrow's Terrifying Gaze since the abilities are very similar and would need to make the same adjustments to fit Terrifying Gaze onto a playable race.

At 9.5 BP, the scarecrow is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a versatile race with some fun abilities that should make it easily playable alongside published humanoid races. If you want to strengthen the scarecrow, add natural armor or increase its claw damage. If you want to weaken the scarecrow, remove its condition immunities to frightened and paralyzed.

## Shadow

Undead shadows hunt living creatures, killing them by sapping their strength and converting them into new shadows.

### Shadow Traits

Shadows share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While

resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Undead creatures that prey on the good and the kind-hearted, most shadows are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Amorphous.** You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Shadow Stealth.** While in dim light or darkness, you can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

**Shadowy Nature.** Your body is composed of barely solid shadow. You are immune to the Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, and Restrained conditions, and to poison damage.

**Strength Drain.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 necrotic damage on a hit.

You have the ability to drain the strength of living creatures. When you make an unarmed strike against a living creature and roll a natural 20 the target must make a Strength saving throw. On a success, the creature is unaffected. On a failure, the target's strength is drained, and the creature suffers disadvantage on Strength-based attack rolls, Strength ability checks, and Strength saving throws until it completes a short or long rest, or is affected by *lesser restoration* or similar magic. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution bonus.

If you score a natural 20 again against a creature which is currently under the effects of Strength Drain, they must make a second Strength saving throw. On a success, the creature remains drained. On a failure, the creature falls to 0 hit points and begins dying.

**Sunlight Weakness.** While in sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common.

## Playing a Shadow

Shadows are nimble and sneaky, make a great ambush predator. Consider classes like monk, ranger, and rogue which cater well to stealth.

Shadows can't speak. Their motivations are only vaguely defined, so it's unclear what might motivate a shadow to join a party of adventurers. A cleric of an evil deity might control the shadow by divine means, or the shadow might work alongside servants of an evil deity.

## Design Notes

Shadows are immensely frustrating. They have immunity or resistance to every damage type except radiant, a pile of condition immunities, a unique and extremely deadly rider effect on their attacks, and somehow they're only CR ½. On top of that, the shadow has some immunities (grappled, prone, restrained) which imply that the creature isn't corporeal, but otherwise follows the normal rules for corporeal creatures. We'll need to make a lot of cuts, and strength drain will require some serious adjustment.

Shadows are undead, costing 1 BP.

The shadow's best abilities are Dexterity and Constitution, but we'll ignore Constitution and grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP, damage vulnerability to radiant for -1 BP, resistance to necrotic for 2 BP (down from immunity; we'll drop the other resistances), Poison Immunity for 2 BP, immunity to the exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, and restrained conditions (we'll drop frightened and prone) for 2.5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and Amorphous for 0.5 BP. Shadows can't speak for -1 BP, but we'll allow them to understand Common for 0 BP.

That brings us to 7.5 BP before we consider the shadow's remaining abilities. Sunlight Weakness is a considerable weakness. It's similar to Sunlight Sensitivity but with worse consequences, so we'll call it -3 BP.

Shadow Stealth is similar to the rogue's Cunning Action ability, but has only one of the three functions and only works in shadows. This will be very easy to use in parties where everyone has Darkvision, but will become very difficult the moment a light source appears. We'll call this 1 BP.

Strength Drain is the final piece of the shadow. It should be the shadow's primary offensive option, so we'll set the damage to 1d8 for 2 BP. The actual

Strength effect is the real problem. Asking a table to track Strength penalties on every creature which the shadow fights would be foolish, so we'll need to rewrite the mechanic. The effect needs to require less tracking, so we'll make the effect trigger less frequently and make the effect stronger.

Triggering on a natural 20 will make the effect occur infrequently, but make it an occasional moment of excitement. Creatures with more Strength should be more resistant to the effect, so we'll allow a Strength saving throw to resist the effect. We'll make it work in two stages: the first stage will imply disadvantage to Strength ability checks and saving throws, and the second will drop the creature to 0 hit points. This requires two natural 20s and two failed saves, so it won't be an easy win condition, but even applying the effect successfully once could be the defining moment of a fight. We'll drop the ability to create additional shadows. It's hard to estimate a BP cost for this, but we'll call it 2 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the shadow is within our target range of 8-10 BP. The shadow's Strength Drain is unpredictable, so be cautious about including shadow characters in your game. If you want to strengthen the shadow, add natural armor. If you want to weaken the shadow, limit how often it can apply Strength Drain's strength reduction effect.

## Shambling Mound

Shambling mounds are patient predators, lying in wait in swamps and forest for days at a time while they wait for prey to stumble upon them.

### Shambling Mound Traits

Shambling mounds share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Plant

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Usually unintelligent predators, most shambling mounds are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**Blind Senses.** You have no eyes, and are blind (and therefore immune to the Blinded condition). You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance to lightning damage.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require

manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Plant Nature.** You are immune to the Deafened and Exhaustion conditions.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Shambling Mound

Shambling mounds are slow, but they're strong and durable. Without hands, they have trouble using items like weapons or spellcasting foci, so consider classes which do well in melee combat like barbarian, fighter, and monk. However, keep in mind that your lack of hands will prevent you from using ranged weapons, and your poor speed will make it easy for enemies to escape you. Expect to spend a lot of time taking the Dash action unless you can find ways to improve your speed.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

The shambling mound is a weird creature. It has a dangerous mix of abilities, but fortunately we can steal similar abilities from other creatures which we've already designed. Because shambling mounds are only as intelligent as animals, we'll treat them as awakened.

Shambling mounds are plants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The shambling mound's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, but we'll only grant +1 Strength for 1 BP and save BP for the shambling mound's other traits.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor (down from +6) for 1.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 20 ft. swimming speed for 0.5 BP, and immunity to the deafened and exhaustion conditions for 1 BP. Shambling mounds are blind for -4 BP, but have blindsight 30 ft. (down from 60 ft.) for 6 BP. We'll drop resistance to cold and fire to save BP, and allow them to speak Common for 0 BP.

That brings our total to 5.5 BP before we tackle the shambling mounds natural weapons and remaining abilities. We don't have anywhere near enough range to keep lightning absorption, so we'll drop it to resistance for 2 BP. We'll say that the shambling mound has no hands for -2 BP, and set its natural weapons to 1d8 damage. We'll approximate Engulf with Grab for 2 BP.

At 19.5 BP, the shambling mound is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the shambling mound, increase its lightning resistance to lightning immunity. If you want to weaken the shambling mound, reduce its natural armor.

### Shield Guardian

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Shield guardians are constructs built to defend their master from harm.

The traits presented here represent a shield guardian that has been separated from its bound amulet, setting it adrift in the world with free will but still motivated by its need to protect creatures of great importance to the shield guardian.

### Shield Guardian Traits

Shield guardians share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Construct. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Intelligent but wholly subservient to their master, most shield guardians are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Construct Nature.** You are immune to the charmed, exhaustion, frightened, and paralyzed conditions.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** Your AC is equal to 18. You are unable to wear armor, but may still use shields.

**Shield.** When a creature makes an attack against an ally other than you within 5 feet of you, you may grant a +2 bonus to the ally's AC as a reaction.

**Languages.** You understand spoken commands in any language. You can read and write in Common.

### Playing a Shield Guardian

Shield guardians are built to defend other creatures. Consider classes like Fighter and Paladin which also cater to this focus.

Most shield guardians are bound to an amulet. While you are free of this bond, you still feel the urge to protect a creature that you perceive as your master or keeper. Consider who this creature might be, and how that shapes your character's actions.

### Design Notes

The shield guardian is a fairly simple construct with a small handful of specific abilities tailored to protecting another creature. We can borrow a lot of our design choices from similar creatures like animated armor and iron golems.

Shield guardians are constructs, costing 1 BP.

The shield guardian's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), Poison Immunity for 2 BP, and condition immunities to charmed, exhaustion, frightened, and paralyzed for 2 BP. We'll give them +8 natural armor (down from +11) for 4 BP but disallow armor for -3 BP. Shield guardians can't speak for -1 BP, but can understand commands in any language which we'll call 1 BP. We'll set the shield guardian's natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

That brings us to 10 BP before considering the shield guardian's remaining abilities. We'll drop Regeneration since it will cost far too much BP. We'll also drop Spell Storing; if a shield guardian player wants spells, they can learn to cast them.

Shield is like a weaker version of the Protection fighting style. It's hard to estimate an exact BP cost, but I think it's somewhere in the range of 1 BP since the bonus is only +2 instead of Disadvantage, and the two effects are mutually exclusive because they both consume your reaction.

The shield guardian's bonded amulet is a liability, but it also includes the ability to absorb damage dealt to the wearer, which is a powerful effect in a party of player characters. It's difficult to balance this and we're already over our target BP range, so I think we'll abandon the amulet entirely. We'll introduce a fluff reason why this is the case.

At 11 BP, the shield guardian exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the shield

guardian, update Shield to provide a bonus equal to half of the character's proficiency bonus. If you want to weaken the shield guardian, remove its Constitution increase.

## Skeleton [Template: Natural]

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Bones bound together and animated by necrotic energy. The evil that animates them compels them to kill mortals on sight.

### Becoming a Skeleton

Any formerly living organic creature which leaves behind a skeleton when it dies can become a skeleton. Cartilaginous creatures, such as sharks, cannot become skeletons. The body is animated by means of *animate dead* or a similar spell or magical effect.

The skeleton template must be applied to a character during character creation. Skeletons retain essentially nothing of their former mind, so a skeleton created from the body an experienced character loses any class levels, proficiencies, or other acquired capabilities that it may have had while it was alive. The skeleton is functionally a new character, sharing only the body of the formerly living character.

### Skeleton Traits

All skeletons have the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits upon gaining the skeleton template.

**Creature Type.** You replace your current creature type with Undead, but retain any subtypes.

You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Adjustments.** +1 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Animated by evil magics, all skeletons are evil.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Undead Nature.** You have immunity to the exhausted and poisoned conditions, and to poison damage.

### Design Notes

The Skeleton is a fairly simple template. It trades the flexibility of life for some of the biggest advantages of undeath. It's easy to compare skeletons to zombies: zombies are slower and more durable, but skeletons are more agile and more vulnerable. Since skeleton is a natural template, we'll make it a non-leveled template, so the BP cost needs to be close to zero. That means we'll need to find penalties to offset the benefits of the template.

Skeletons switch to the undead creature type for 1 BP.

Unlike many undead, skeletons aren't resistant to necrotic damage. However, they still don't need to eat, drink, or sleep (included in the creature type BP), they still get immunity to the exhausted condition for 0.5 BP, they still get Poison Immunity for 2 BP, and they have 60 ft. Darkvision for 2 BP. That brings our total to 5.75 BP before we consider drawbacks.

Skeletons can't speak for -1 BP. They're vulnerable to bludgeoning damage, which we'll call -2 BP since most of the monster manual prefers piercing or slashing damage for physical damage. Skeletons are described as very simple-minded, and their stat blocks have horrible mental ability scores, so we'll add -2 to each mental ability score for -3 BP.

That brings our total to -0.5 BP. That means that the skeleton template likely makes the character very slightly weaker than normal, but I think that's fine.

## Slaadi

Slaadi are creatures resembling giant frog-like humanoids which originate from the chaotic plane of Limbo.

### Slaadi Traits

Slaadi share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Aberration

**Alignment.** Evil beings from the chaotic plane of limbo, most slaadi are chaotic evil.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Blue Slaad

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Chaos Phage.** One per day, upon hitting a humanoid creature with an unarmed strike, you may choose to infect the creature with a transformative disease. The target must succeed on a Constitution save, or be infected. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

While infected, the target can't regain hit points, and its hit point maximum is reduced by 10 (3d6) every 24 hours. If the disease reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target instantly transforms into a red slaad or, if it has the ability to cast spells of 3<sup>rd</sup> level or higher, a green slaad. Only a wish spell can reverse the transformation.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Slaad.

#### Green, Gray, or Death Slaad

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *fire bolt* cantrip and the *mage hand* cantrip. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *detect magic* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Metamorphosis.** At some unpredictable point in your existence, you may discover the magic to permanently transform yourself into a gray slaad.

Once you become a gray slaad, you may become a death slaad by eating the entire corpse of a death slaad.

The changes do not alter your stats, but do alter your character's appearance to reflect their new status.

**Shapechanger.** As an action, you can polymorph into a specific small or medium humanoid (typically the one you emerged from as a tadpole), or back into your true form. Other than your size, your statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment you are holding or wearing is not transformed. You retain all of your own statistics, except as noted below. You revert to your true form if you die.

While in your true form you are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Slaad.

#### Red Slaad

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Implant Egg.** One per day, upon hitting a humanoid creature with an unarmed strike, you may choose to implant a slaad egg. The target must succeed on a Constitution save, or be infected. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

A humanoid host can carry only one slaad egg to term at a time. Over three months, the egg moves to the chest cavity, gestates, and forms a slaad tadpole. In the 24-hour period before giving birth, the host starts to feel unwell, its speed is halved, and it has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws. At birth, the tadpole chews its way through vital organs and out of the host's chest in 1 round, killing the host in the process.

If the disease is cured before the tadpole's emergence, the unborn slaad is disintegrated.

**Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Slaad.



#### Slaad Tadpole

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Metamorphosis.** Upon emerging from your host, you begin to grow into a fully-formed slaad over 2d12 hours. You grow into a fully grown blue slaad normally, or into a green slaad if the host had the ability to cast 3rd level spells or higher.

**Serpentine Body.** You have no arms or hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Slaad.

#### Playing a Slaad

Slaad have two functional groups. Red and blue slaadi are brutish warriors, primarily responsible for fighting and reproduction. Green, gray, and death slaadi are the leaders among their kind, and operate in a rough hierarchy enforced mostly by force.

### Blue Slaad

The blue slaad makes a perfect fighter or barbarian. Chaos Phage allows you to prevent foes from healing, which can be a powerful advantage over enemies with the ability to do so. Converting foes into new slaad may not matter frequently, but creating new slaad can be a powerful way to gain allies.

### Red Slaad

Much like the blue slaad, the red slaad is a simple brute, the red slaad makes a perfect barbarian or fighter. Their ability to inject eggs into foes may not matter frequently for most adventurers, but don't underestimate the value of growing a few slaad allies.

### Green, Gray, or Death Slaad

Green, gray, and death slaad are functionally identical, but represent a gradual increase in social status among slaadi. These cosmetic changes and social status improvements are independent of your character's game statistics, but can represent exciting new opportunities for your character.

These slaadi are the leaders among their kind, and as such they make an excellent party leader in a chaotic party.

### Slaad Tadpole

Slaad tadpoles only exist for up to 24 hours. Your DM might choose to have you live out this brief period prior to metamorphosing into an adult slaad.

## Design Notes

Slaadi are difficult to design. There are six forms of slaad, all with fairly different abilities. There are some similarities, but many of them are small.

Slaadi are aberrations, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

From the stat blocks, we get 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP and only racial languages for -1 BP. We'll drop all of the slaadi's resistances, Magic Resistance, and Regeneration from every slaadi but the tadpole.

That brings our BP total to 1.5 BP before we examine individual slaadi varieties.

### Blue Slaad

The blue slaad is the second weakest variety of slaadi. They're basically clawed humanoids, but have the important function of producing more slaadi.

The red slaad's best abilities are Strength and Constitution. We'll grant +1 Strength and +1 Constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, Telepathy for 2 BP, and a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP.

That brings our total to 8.5 BP before we examine the red slaad's ability to infect humanoids with chaos phage. The most dangerous part of the ability is preventing the target from regaining hit points. We'll limit use to once per short rest and call it 1 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the blue slaad is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not a particularly interesting race, but the ability to create more slaadi may be fun. If you want to strengthen the blue slaad, increase its Constitution increase. If you want to weaken the blue slaad, remove its Constitution increase.

### Green, Gray, and Death Slaadi

While blue slaadi and red slaadi are weak and serve little purpose except to kill things and make more slaadi, green slaadi have the capacity to ascend through the ranks of green, gray, and death slaadi.

Though green slaadi are as big and strong as blue slaadi, they also have some magical abilities which we'll emphasize over raw bulk. I also want to provide a vaguely-defined mechanism for the green slaad to become a gray slaad, and eventually a death slaad, so the abilities should transition cleanly from one subrace into another without a ton of disruption.

The green slaad's best ability is Strength, so we'll grant +1 Strength and save the rest of our BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +2 natural armor (down from +4) for 1 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, and Telepathy for 2 BP. We'll set the green slaad's natural weapons to 1d6 for 1.5 BP.

That brings our BP total to 6 BP before we consider the green slaad's remaining abilities. Shapechanger and Hurl Flame will be easy to duplicate from previously designed races, but we'll need to largely gut the slaad's innate spellcasting.

The slaad's version of Shapechanger is the simplest version we've created up to this point. I don't want the slaad to have a super-powered version of Disguise self at all times, so we'll limit Shapechanger to a one specific humanoid. That's roughly equivalent to the jackalwere's version, so we'll keep the 1.5 BP cost.

As we've done with several demons and devils, we'll replicate Hurl Flame with the *fire bolt* cantrip for 0.5 BP.

That just leaves the green slaad's innate spellcasting. Green, gray, and death slaadi all share roughly the same spells with a few additions and improvements at each stage. To try and keep a logical progression we'll



try to do something similar. We'll retain *mage hand* and *detect magic* for 1.5 BP.

At 10 BP, the green slaad is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the green slaad, grant it a +1 Constitution increase. If you want to weaken the green slaad, remove its ability to cast *make hand*.

### Red Slaad

The red slaad is the weakest form of slaadi, and is basically a weaker version of the blue slaad, which is fine for a monster but terrible for a playable race. The only meaningful distinction is that the red slaad applies a different effect with its claw attacks, so we'll make some adjustments to reflect this but otherwise we'll copy the blue slaad.

Because the blue slaad's claw effect is better than the red slaad's, we'll increase the red slaad's Strength increase to +2.

### Slaad Tadpole

Slaad tadpoles are the weakest of slaadi, but they also only exist for 24 hours before they turn into a real slaad. I don't anticipate anyone playing a tadpole for any significant duration, so I won't worry too much about making them reasonably playable. Their stats are awful, so doing so would be difficult.

The slaad tadpole's only good ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, and a 1d4 natural weapon for 1 BP. Tadpoles can't speak for -1 BP, have no hands for -2 BP, and no arms for -2 BP. I can't imagine that a tadpole could wear armor, but if a player wants to buy a suit of armor for their tadpole then we may as well let them.

At -2 BP, the slaad tadpole is well below our target BP range. It's clearly not a long-term playable race, but fortunately it's not intended to be.

## Specter

Spirits of mortals denied the release of the afterlife, specters are trapped in the material plane where their rage and sorrow drive them to murder the living.

### Specter Traits

Specters share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your

consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Evil, murderous spirits, most specters are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Deathly Resistance.** You have resistance to necrotic damage. You are immune to the poisoned condition, and to poison damage.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Life Drain.** As an action you may make a melee spell attack. This attack deals 1d8 necrotic damage. This damage increases to 2d8 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d8 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d8 at 17<sup>th</sup> level. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this attack.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, at whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Common and one other language of your choice.

### Playing a Specter

Specters are murderous, evil creatures that only go out at night. Their ability to fly and their increased Dexterity make them excellent rogues, allowing them to surprise and kill unwary victims.

Specters have no ties to their former life except their known languages. Their motivations are almost exclusively violent, so it's difficult to compel them to join an adventuring party. Still, they might elect to join a party with a spellcaster or wraith which originally created the specter, or with some other Creature who has the ability to control the undead.

### Design Notes

Specters are similar to banshees in many ways. They fly, they have Incorporeal Movement, and they've got too many resistances for us to replicate. We'll borrow as much design as we can from the banshee.

Specters are undead, costing 1 BP.

The specter's only good ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 50 ft.) for 4 BP, hover for 2 BP, resistance to necrotic damage (down from immunity) for 2 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, and Darkvision for 2 BP. Specters can't speak for -1 BP, but they know Common for 0 BP and one flexible language for an additional 0.5 BP. We'll also keep Sunlight Sensitivity for -2 BP.

That brings us to 9.5 BP. Like the banshee, we'll abandon incorporeal movement and the specter's condition immunities. We'll duplicate the banshee's Corrupting Touch for 0.5 BP and rename it Life Drain.

At 9 BP, the specter is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the specter, change Life Drain to be an unarmed strike which deals 1d8 damage. If you want to weaken the specter, reduce poison immunity to poison resistance.

## Sphinxes

Sphinxes are creatures created by the gods to protect things of great importance.

### Sphinx Traits

Sphinxes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Alignment.** Serving their chosen task without failure and without tiring, most sphinxes are lawful neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You may cast spells as though you were using a magic focus, even if you are not doing so.

**Inscrutable.** You are immune to any effect that would sense your emotions or read your thoughts, as well as any divination spell that you refuse. Wisdom (Insight) checks made to ascertain your intentions or sincerity have disadvantage.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Unassailable Mind.** You have resistance to psychic damage, and are immune to the Charmed and Frightened conditions.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Sphinx.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Androsphinx

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Wisdom.

#### Gynosphinx

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence.

### Playing a Sphinx

Sphinxes are flying creatures built primarily for spellcasting. They have the ability to cast spells without a focus, allowing them to cast spells more easily than most creatures without hands. Their natural weapons also offer a useful fallback option when their spells fall short. Androsphinxes should consider classes like cleric and druid, while gynosphinxes should consider wizard.

Sphinxes are created to guard something: an artifact, a place, or a piece of information. The Monster Manual states that sphinxes never leave the place they are created to guard, even if they stray from their original purpose, but for the purposes of adventuring you may need to break that rule.

### Design Notes

Sphinxes are a classic creature featured in fiction from several cultures. Generally they're known for asking riddles, but in Dungeons and Dragons they're characterized as guardians set in the place by deities. Mechanically, they're similar to griffons with some innate spellcasting, so we'll borrow a lot of design work from the griffon. We'll examine the similarities between the two varieties before we examine individual traits.

Sphinxes are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), 30 ft. fly speed (down from 50 ft.) for 4 BP, resistance to psychic damage (down from immunity) for 2 BP, conditions immunities to Charmed and Frightened for 1 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We'll drop natural armor and Truesight to save BP. Sphinxes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

Inscrutable is the only special ability that identical between the two varieties. It's an extremely situational ability, so we'll leave it unchanged for 0.5 BP.

Both types of sphinx have a lot of innate spellcasting, and they make sense as options for spellcaster player characters. Since they have no hands, we'll allow both types of sphinx to cast spells as though they were holding a focus for 0.5 BP.

That brings our BP total to 8.5 before we examine individual subraces. That's not much room to work with, unfortunately.

Going into ability score increases and innate spellcasting to differentiate the varieties of sphinxes makes sense thematically, but we're short on BP and need to face practical realities of how the races are likely to be used.

If we grant the Androsphinx a +1 Wisdom increase, it's most likely to be used for clerics and druids, which would make cleric-like innate spellcasting redundant. If we grant the gynosphinx a +1 Intelligence increase, it's most likely to be used for wizards, which would make wizard-like innate spellcasting redundant. So, we'll just stick to the two ability score increases. And abandon innate spellcasting.

At 10 BP, the both varieties of sphinx are at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen either variety of sphinx, grant it a cantrip from the monster stat block for that variety of sphinx, such as *prestidigitation* or *theurgy*. If you want to weaken sphinxes, reduce their natural weapon damage or walking speed.

## Sprite

Tiny fey warriors, sprites resemble humanoids with gossamer wings like those a dragonfly.

### Sprite Traits

Sprites share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fey

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Staunch warriors who oppose evil fey and goblinoids at every turn, most sprites are neutral good.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Heart Sight.** The sprite touches a creature and magically knows the creature's current emotional state. If the target fails a Charisma saving throw, the sprite also knows the creature's alignment. The DC of

this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma bonus. Celestials, fiends, and undead automatically fail the saving throw.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Hidden Step.** As a bonus action, you can magically turn invisible until the start of your next turn or until you attack, make a damage roll, or force someone to make a saving throw.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Poison Brewers.** In their forest domains, sprites brew toxins, unguents, antidotes, and poisons, including the sleep poison with which they coat their arrows. You are proficient with the Poisoner's Toolkit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common, Elvish, and Sylvan.

### Playing a Sprite

Sprite are nimble flying characters. As such, they make excellent rangers and rogues, but can also make excellent fighters and paladins if you emphasize finesse weapons or ranged weapons.

Sprites are militant and good-natured, which makes them welcome in a party of heroic adventurers. Druids, Paladins, and Rangers all make great companions, though any good-aligned character might find themselves fighting alongside a sprite.

### Design Notes

Sprites are fey similar to pixies, but where pixies are peaceful and rely on trickery and deception, sprites are fierce warriors not afraid to fight to defend their homes. We can borrow from the pixie's design and make adjustments to fit the sprite's flavor.

Sprites are fey, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Sprites have a few decent abilities, but Dexterity is the best by far, even if we reduce it a bit to adjust for size. We'll grant pixies +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, and racial languages plus Common and one additional fixed language for 0.25 BP.

That brings us to 4.25 BP before we consider the sprite's remaining abilities. Like the pixie, we'll replace Invisibility with Hidden Step for 2 BP.

Heart sight is unique ability. It's a bit similar to the Paladin's Divine Sense ability and to the *detect good and evil* spell. I also don't want players to go around using this all the time on every person they meet, so

we'll limit it to once per encounter. Otherwise, we'll leave it unchanged. The single-target nature and touch range both seem like sufficient limitations compared to *detect good and evil*, so we'll call this 2 BP.

Pixies are known to use a sleep poison, and use of this poison is important enough to get a full paragraph of text in the monster's description. I feel like abandoning that would be a bad design decision, so we'll grant sprites proficiency with the Poisoner's Kit for 0.5 BP.

At 8.75 BP, the sprite is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the pixie, grant it a +1 increase to Intelligence or Wisdom. If you want to weaken the sprite, reduce its Dexterity increase.

## Stirge

Stirges are blood-sucking creatures resembling the foul hybrid of a bat and a mosquito.

### Stirge Traits

Stirges share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most stirges are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Blood Drain.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

On a successful attack, you may choose to attach to the target. While attached, you may not attack using Blood Drain. If the target moves, you may choose to move with it. You may remove yourself as an action or by spending half of your movement. The creature may remove you as an action.

At the beginning of your turn, you may drain the creature's blood, dealing damage equal to your unarmed strike damage to the target as a bonus action. Once you drain hit points of blood equal to your Constitution score you detach automatically.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Stirge

Stirges are quick flying creatures with good dexterity. Their lack of hands means that they must rely on their Blood Drain attack, but to boost their damage consider stealthy classes like ranger and rogue.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Stirges are straightforward creature except for their blood drain ability. Since they're normally unintelligent, we'll treat the stirge as though it has been awakened.

Stirges are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The stirge's ability are all terrible except Dexterity, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 40 ft. fly speed for 5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP. Since we're treating the stirge as awakened, we'll allow it to speak Common for 0 BP. Stirges have no hands for -2 BP. Because they qualify (once we add Blood Drain), we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

That brings us to 4.5 BP before we consider the stirge's Blood Drain. The natural weapon part is easy, so we'll set it to 1d6 piercing damage for 1.5 BP. The difficult part is the blood drain and the attachment/detachment stuff. The monster entry assumes that the stirge is attacking because it's hungry, and the 10 hit point cap represents the stirge's stomach. A playable character needs to be able to keep fighting much longer than that. The attachment/detachment component is similar to grapple, but it doesn't apply the grappled condition to either creature. I'm also hesitant to allow the stirge to deal damage for free, even if it's only once per turn.

I don't expect stirges to be good grapplers because of their size and poor Strength, so Grab isn't a good option. Instead, we'll copy the attach mechanic largely unchanged. We'll increase the "stomach" value to the

stirge's Constitution score, and we'll allow the stirge to deal unarmed strike damage for free as a bonus action without making an attack. Making an attack may seem like a limiting factor, but if we go that route it's difficult to make attaching tactically useful without then adding another benefit like Advantage, which then opens up all kinds of combinations like Sneak Attack which could be really problematic. I'm not sure how to assess this, but 3 BP seems reasonable.

At 9 BP, the stirge is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a good flyer with a unique attack ability, but it's not very interesting otherwise. If you want to strengthen the stirge, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the stirge, lower its fly speed

## Succubus/Incubus

Fiends which inhabit all of the lower planes, succubi and incubi are known for their ability to lead mortals to pursue dark desires.

### Succubus/Incubus Traits

Succubi and Incubi share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fiend

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures bent on corrupting virtuous mortals, most succubi and incubi are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Charm.** As an action, you may attempt to magically charm one humanoid within 30 feet. The target must succeed on a will saving throw or be magically charmed for one hour. It must make a Wisdom saving throw, and does so with Advantage if you or your companions are fighting it. If it fails the saving throw, it is charmed by you until the effect ends or until you or your companions do anything harmful to it. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. The charmed creature regards you as a friendly acquaintance. When the effect ends, the creature knows it was charmed by you.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Draining Kiss.** As an action, you may kiss a creature under the effects of your Charm ability or a willing creature. The target takes 1d10 psychic damage. This damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5th level (2d10), 11th level (3d10), and 17th level (4d10).

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Shapechanger.** As an action, you can polymorph into a specific small or medium humanoid (typically the one you emerged from as a tadpole), or back into your true form. Other than your size, your statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment you are holding or wearing is not transformed. You retain all of your own statistics, except as noted below. You revert to your true form if you die.

While in your humanoid form you lose the use of your Claws and Flight traits.

**Telepathy.** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common, Abyssal, and Infernal.

### Playing a Succubus/Incubus

With increased Charisma and their magical ability to charm creatures, succubi and incubi make excellent bards, sorcerers, and warlocks. However, they can also make for excellent charming rogues.

Succubi and incubi work willingly with fiends of all kinds, but might also join a party of mortals. In a good-aligned party they might seek to lead the party's virtuous characters astray, or in an evil party they might look elsewhere for prey.

### Design Notes

Succubi and incubi are mostly straightforward creatures with a handful of unique abilities.

Succubi and incubi are fiends, costing 0.5 BP.

The succubi's and incubi's best abilities are Dexterity and Charisma, but with so many special abilities to handle we don't have room for both. We'll grant +1 Charisma for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, racial languages plus Common and an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP, telepathy for 2 BP, and a 1d4 natural weapon (down from 1d6) for 1 BP. We'll drop the succubi's and incubi's natural armor and damage resistances to conserve BP.

That brings our BP total to 8.25, which doesn't leave us much room to address the succubi's and incubi's

remaining abilities. We'll dump Etherealness because any reasonable approximation would be too powerful for a playable race.

Charm is perhaps the race's most important ability. It has roughly the same effect as the *dominate person* spell, but where the spell has a 1-minute duration the succubi/incubi version lasts a full day and doesn't require concentration. The monster's "fluff" is the only thing keeping it from using this ability repeatedly to dominate everyone it meets. That obviously won't work for a player, so we'll need to make significant cuts.

We'll drop the spell's effect to match Charm Person, and allow it to be cast just once per day for 1 BP. We'll also allow it to be cast 2 levels early for another 0.25 BP.

With Charm considerably weakened, Telepathic Bond becomes much less powerful. We'll limit the effect to only work on creatures charmed with the Charm ability to prevent it from being used with normal spells. We'll call this 0.5 BP.

Draining Kiss is a weird one. It only works on charmed/willing creatures, so it's not much of a combat option. We should make it powerful enough that it's meaningfully useful to execute charmed or willing creatures. Since it's effectively touch range, we'll reskin the *shocking grasp* cantrip. Since we're losing advantage against metal armor and the ability to use it in combat, we'll bump the damage from 1d8 to 1d10. We'll call this 0.5 BP.

Finally, we'll consider Shapechanger. It's identical to the green/grey/death slaad's version, so we'll duplicate the design changes and keep the 1.5 BP cost.

At 11 BP, the succubus and incubus exceed our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the succubus and incubus, add a +1 Dexterity increase. If you want to weaken the succubus and incubus, reduce their walking speed.

## Tarrasque

A legendary creature more powerful than even the oldest dragons.

### Tarrasque Traits

Tarrasques share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity (titan)

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally a destructive, unintelligent beast, most tarrasques are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Damage Resistance.** You have resistance against fire damage and poison damage, and you have advantage on saving throws against poison.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Reflective Carapace.** Any time that you are targeted by a magic missile spell, a line spell, or a spell that requires a ranged attack roll, you have a chance to reflect the spell back at its caster. If the spell requires a saving throw, you may do so by rolling a natural 20 on the saving throw. If the spell requires a ranged attack roll, you may do so why the caster rolls a natural 1 on the attack roll. If the spell is a magic missile spell, roll a d20 and on a natural 20 you may reflect the spell. If you successfully reflect the spell, you are unaffected, and the effect is reflected back at the caster as though it originated from you, turning the caster into the target.

**Siege Monster.** You deal double damage to objects and structures.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Tarrasque

The tarrasque is a simple beast with some excellent defensive abilities. Consider classes like barbarian and fighter which can take advantage of these strengths.

The tarrasque is typically a unique creature, and typically isn't very intelligent. Consider how your character came to exist, and how it gained its abnormal intelligence.

### Design Notes

Designing the tarrasque as a playable race seems absurd because it's intended to be a singular, unique creature. It's the highest CR creature in the Monster Manual by 6. The monster is a frightening beast both offensively and defensively. Its defenses make it resilient to traditional methods of effect, but also largely immune to indirect attacks which players might

attempt with the aid of NPCs. No armies of 1<sup>st</sup>-level wizards killing it with magic missile, or making it stand in a giant bonfire until it falls over. We'll need to make drastic cuts to make the creature a playable race. We'll treat the tarrasque as though it was awakened.

Tarrasques are monstrosities with the titan subtype, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Like other beasts and beast-like creatures, the tarrasque's best abilities are Strength and Constitution. We'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from gargantuan), +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), resistance to fire (down from immunity) for 2 BP, and Poison Resilience (down from immunity) for 1 BP, and Siege Monster for 0.5 BP. Since we're treating the tarrasque as awakened we'll allow it to speak Common for 0 BP. We'll drop the tarrasque's condition immunities. Tarrasques have no hands for -2 BP, but we'll grant 1d8 natural weapons for 2 BP.

At 7 BP we've got a little bit of room to consider the tarrasque's remaining abilities. Most will need to be dumped, unfortunately. We'll add Grab for 2 BP, but I don't want the tarrasque to be just another grapple monster.

Reflective Carapace is my favorite of the Tarrasque's abilities, and I think it's the most iconic. I don't want to make the tarrasque immune to these spells one sixth of the time, so we'll create a new mechanic for triggering the effect. I think it makes sense to trigger on a natural 20, which is rare enough that I think we can call this 1 BP.

At 10 BP, the tarrasque is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a cool creature with some interesting defenses, but offensively it's lackluster. If you want to strengthen the tarrasque, increase its ability increases or its natural armor. If you want to weaken the tarrasque, remove Siege Monster.

## Thri-Kreen

A desert-dwelling race of insect-like humanoids.

### Thri-Kreen Traits

Thri-kreen share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (thri-kreen)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Reclusive and nomadic, most thri-kreen are chaotic neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Chameleon Carapace.** You can change the color of your carapace to match the color and texture of your surroundings. As a result, you have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Standing Leap.** Your long jump is up to 30 feet and your high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Thri-kreen.

### Playing a Thri-Kreen

With increased Dexterity and Wisdom, thri-kreen thrive in a variety of classes. Four arms make them excellent with weapons, but also allow them to easily switch between using weapons and using spellcasting foci, or between using two-handed weapons and shields.

Thri-kreen are normally reclusive and avoid other races. Consider what may have compelled your character to join up with a group of adventurers who are likely members of other races.

### Design Notes

Thri-kreen are a fun race for bug-lovers, for people who want to play a humanoid with multiple arms, and especially for fans of psionics and the Dark Sun setting.

Thri-kreen are humanoids, costing 0 BP.

The thri-kreen's best abilities are Dexterity and Wisdom. We'll grant +1 Dexterity and +1 Wisdom for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +2 natural armor (down from +3) for 1 BP, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, and Chameleon Skin (renamed to Chameleon Carapace since they're bugs) for 2 BP. We'll drop the thri-kreen's natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP, and drop the poison effect from the bite. Thri-kreen have four arms for 1 BP.

The thri-kreen's version of Standing Leap is the thri-kreen's only truly unique ability. It's neat, but not much more useful than something like the *levitate* spell, and since the range is strictly limited to 30 feet it can often

be replicated by using rope. As such, we'll call it 0.5 BP and leave it unmodified.

At 9 the thri-kreen is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the thri-kreen increase its natural armor or natural weapon damage, or allow it to speak Common. If you want to weaken the thri-kreen, reduce its Dexterity increase.

## Treant

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Mighty trees awakened into magical life.

### Treant Traits

Treants share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Plant

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Free, good-natured creatures with no formal society, most treants are chaotic-good.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Animate Plants.** You may cast the *entangle* spell once per day. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a mundane. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Siege Monster.** You deal double damage to objects and structures.

**Tree Body.** Your body is an animated tree, and it grows and moves in inconsistent and often unpredictable ways. You are unable to wear armor, but may still use shields. Also, you are vulnerable to fire damage.

**Natural Armor.** Your AC is equal to 17.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Sylvan.

### Playing a Treant

Treants are strong, wise, and very durable. Their exceptional natural armor allows them to survive melee combat easily. Their increased Strength makes them excellent fighters and rangers, while their increased wisdom makes them powerful clerics, druids, and monks.

Treants are long-lived, and born from trees. Consider what caused your treant to become a treant. What sort of tree were you? Did a druid care for you while you were a tree?

## Design Notes

Treants are fairly simple compared to other plant creatures.

Treants are plants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The treant's best ability scores are Strength and Constitution, with Wisdom not far behind. Which abilities we decide to emphasize will determine how people play the race. Strength and Constitution will make the treant yet another barbarian/fighter. Strength and Wisdom will make the treant a good cleric, ranger, and druid. Constitution and Wisdom will make the treant a good cleric and druid. Bonuses in all three will likely result in a lot of treant clerics and almost nothing else. I think Strength and Wisdom offer the most interesting options, so we'll grant +1 Strength and +1 Wisdom for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from huge, 30 ft. walking speed, vulnerability fire for -1 BP, False Appearance for 0.5 BP, and Siege Monster for 0.5 BP. Treants speak Common plus racial languages, plus two fixed languages for 0.5 BP. We'll drop resistance to piercing and bludgeoning weapons, and we'll need to examine natural armor a bit more closely than normal.

Treant anatomy is a bit strange, which raises some questions about their capabilities. Can they wear armor? Can they use weapons? How many arms do they have? The art in the monster manual pictures a treant with four limbs ending in what appear to be hands (one is on the right side behind the back, and you can see the hand hanging down between the legs), which is neat but not especially helpful. We'll need to take some liberties.

Since we're going for a medium treant, I think we can safely stick to two arms. Removing the damage multiplier for size sets a medium treant's natural weapons to 1d6 damage, but I don't know that I want the treant to be reliant on weapons. Using weapons and armor tends to make False Appearance difficult to use, plus a tree carrying around a sword might look kind of silly. Still, this is a silly document full of strange things like sentient carpets, and tarrasques as a playable race, so we can live with a bit more silliness.

We'll set the treant's natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. We'll disallow armor for -3 BP and set the treant's natural armor to +7 for 3.5 BP, disallowing Dexterity bonus to AC for another -1 BP. 17 AC is lower than full plate, but it's the best you can get from light or medium armor without a shield or other AC boost.

That brings us to 7.5 BP before we examine Animate Trees. We can't have players cloning themselves like



this, so we'll need to find something with a similar flavor but different effects. With so little BP to work with we don't have many options. I think our best bet is Entangle for 1 BP, and we'll allow it 2 levels early for another 0.25 BP.

At 8.75 BP the treant is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's extremely durable and has some minor but fun abilities to play with and works for a decent range of classes. If you want to strengthen the treant, grant it a +1 constitution increase. If you want to weaken the treant, reduce its natural weapon damage to 1d6.

## Troglodyte

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Troglodytes are foul smelling, tribal reptilian humanoids who dwell in the underdark.

### Troglodyte Traits

Troglodytes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (troglodyte)

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Vicious predators that leave their victim's bodies lying about to rot, most troglodytes are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Stench.** As a bonus action you can exude a horrifying stench for up to one minute. Any creature which starts its turn within 5 ft. of you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, affected creatures are no longer poisoned by this ability.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on

Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, at whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Troglodyte.

### Playing a Troglodyte

Troglodytes are strong and durable, and their Stench ability makes them potent barbarians and fighters. Chameleon Skin allows them to make excellent ambushes, so they can also work well as Rangers.

Be careful with your Stench ability. It doesn't distinguish between friends or foes, so you may occasionally find yourself poisoning your allies if you're not careful to remain at a polite distance.

### Design Notes

Troglodytes are mostly a simple humanoid, but their Chameleon Skin and Stench abilities provide some design challenges which aren't apparent when considering the monster stat block.

Troglodytes are humanoid, which costs 0 BP and includes no special abilities.

From their stat blocks we can see that Troglodytes have good Strength and Constitution. The Dungeon Master's Guide's NPC Traits table suggests +2 to both, plus -4 penalties to Intelligence and Charisma. I've chosen to do away with racial ability score penalties, so we'll ignore them. +2 to Strength and Constitution seems like a bit much, but mountain dwarves get the same bonus and they're certainly not overpowered. Both bonuses total 4 BP.

From their stat block we get medium size, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, Sunlight Sensitivity for -2 BP, a 1d4 damage natural weapon for 1 BP, and only racial languages for -1 BP.

At 5.5 BP we still need to tackle Chameleon Skin and Stench. Chameleon Skin is similar to Camouflage, but considerably more versatile since you can use it anywhere. I'll call it 2 BP.

We can copy Stench from the Hezrou Demon for 2 BP.

At 8.5 BP the troglodyte is within our target BP range of 8-10. If you want to strengthen the troglodyte, increase its natural armor or natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the troglodyte, replace Chameleon Skin with Camouflage.

## Troll

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Trolls are giants with the ability to regenerate quickly, even regrowing their own severed heads.

## Troll Traits

Trolls share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Giant

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Lacking any societal structure or respect for authority and happy to eat anything that they can catch, including intelligence creatures, most trolls are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Regeneration.** You are able to recover from wounds with horrifying speed, and can even regrow severed body parts. As a bonus action, you may spend a Hit Die to recover hit points.

If a part of your body is removed or destroyed (including your head) but you are not killed, you may re-attach the body part as an action.

You are vulnerable to acid and fire. If you take acid or fire damage, you may not use your regeneration trait to recover hit points or re-attach limbs until the end of your next turn.

When you take a short or long rest, you regain spent Hit Dice, up to a number of dice equal to half of your total number of them, rounded up. If you have lost any body parts, the missing body parts regrow and the original body parts wither and die.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Giant.

## Playing a Troll

Trolls are hard to kill, and that is their single most defining characteristic. Classes which spend a lot of time being attacked suit trolls well. Consider barbarian, fighter, monk, and paladin. Be sure to increase your Constitution to improve the effectiveness of your Regeneration.

## Design Notes

Trolls are mostly simple, but are differentiated by their regeneration. Up to this point we've abandoned Regeneration every time it has come up because perpetual healing is too powerful to grant to a player.

Doing that for the troll would totally invalidate the race, so we'll need to get more creative.

Trolls are giants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The troll is famously difficult to kill, and its Constitution reflects that. We'll grant +2 Constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor (down from +4) for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, Darkvision for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, and 1d6 natural weapons for 1.5 BP. Like other giants, we'll add Powerbuild Build for 0.5 BP.

That brings us to 7 BP before we look at Regeneration. Natural healing is typically handled using hit dice. Normally this healing is only accessible during a short or long rest, but I think bringing them into play any time might be what we need. Allowing hit dice to be used as a bonus action gives us an easily accessible healing mechanic, it has a built-in usage limitation, its usefulness scales with level, and it doesn't cut into the character's actions too much. Players who use feats will find the Durable option especially useful.

We also need to bring acid and fire damage into the design. Disallowing regeneration for one round isn't impactful to force a player to avoid those damage types, so we'll add weakness to acid and fire damage for -2 BP total, and when the troll takes one of those damage types we will block regeneration for one round. That will make players cautious about those damage types.

At this point we've made the troll able to easily access the healing options already available. That's neat, but doesn't actually provide more healing than an equivalent human. Since we've decided to tie Regeneration to the Hit Dice mechanics, we should stick to that idea. Granting additional hit dice will allow regeneration to remain useful and impactful beyond the pool of hit dice normally available to a character. Characters normally regain half of their hit dice in a day, which simply isn't enough for a busy troll. If we move that recovery rate up to every short or long rest, we're tripling the troll's total available hit dice in a day. I briefly considered setting the recovery to match the troll's Constitution modifier, but Constitution will already be over-emphasized for trolls, and it won't scale with level as well as I want it to.

It's difficult to assess a value for this ability since there really isn't anything to compare it to. We could compare it to several castings of the *cure wounds* spell, but that doesn't accurately reflect Regeneration's

scaling. The ability is fantastic because it allows the troll to heal itself so much in a day, but compared to a spellcaster with access to spells like *word of healing* and *heal* the ability to recover large amounts of hit points certainly isn't unique. Still, we'll call this 5 BP.

At 10 BP, the troll is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a fairly generic creature, but regeneration provides an exciting and powerful tactical option which may be powerful enough to cause issues in your game. If you want to strengthen the troll, allow it to regain all of its hit dice when it takes a short rest. If you want to weaken the troll, reduce the rate at which it regains hit dice.

## Umber Hulk

Enormous insect-like monsters that hunt pretty by bursting through solid stone walls.

### Umber Hulk Traits

Umber hulks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Vicious predators with no societal structure, most umber hulks are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a burrow speed of 10 ft.

**Claws and Mandibles.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Confusing Gaze.** As an action you can gaze at another creature that can see and that can see you within 30 feet and attempt to magically confuse it. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the. If the creature does so, it can't see the umber hulk until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the umber hulk in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

On a failed saving throw, the creature can't take reactions until the end of its next turn and rolls a d6 to determine what it does during that turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action but uses all its movement to move in a random direction.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 17. You gain no benefit from wearing armor, though you may still use shields normally. While wearing armor or clothes which cover a significant portion of your body, you lose the effects of your Tremorsense trait and may not use your burrow speed or your Tunneler trait.

**Tremorsense.** You can detect and pinpoint the origin of vibrations within 30 feet, provided that you and the source of the vibrations are in contact with the same ground or substance. Tremorsense can't be used to detect flying or incorporeal creatures.

**Tunneler.** You can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 3-foot wide and 4-foot high tunnel in your wake.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Umber Hulk.

### Playing a Umber Hulk

Umber hulks are strong ambush predators. Their natural armor makes them durable without relying on armor, but won't make a suit of full plate. Use your ability to burrow through stone and your tremorsense to surprise foes. Consider classes like Barbarian which can deal large amounts of damage using your increased Strength.

Very little information is given about umber hulks and their societies or personalities. You may need to explore sourcebooks from previous editions or improvise your character's motivations and history.

### Design Notes

With the exception of Confusing Gaze, the umber hulk is a very simple creature.

Umber hulks are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The umber hulk's best ability score by far is Strength, so we'll grant +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +7 natural armor for 3.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 10 ft. burrow speed (down from 20 ft.) for 2 BP, Darkvision 60 ft. (down from 120 ft.) for 2 BP, 30 ft. Tremorsense for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, and 1d8 natural weapons for 2 BP. We'll disallow armor for -3 BP because it would interfere with the Umber Hulk's carapace and tremorsense, and we'll disallow adding Dexterity to AC for another -1 BP. We'll

copy Tunneler from the purple wyrm for another 0.5 BP.

That brings us to 8.5 BP before we consider Confusing Gaze. We'll need to adjust it like we did with the basilisk's petrifying gaze so that it's not passive and can't doesn't outright win every fight. We can adjust it to an action to use the gaze, reduce it to a single target, and only allow it to be used once per short or long rest, but we also need to change the specific effect. Currently it's a one-round effect similar to the *confusion* spell. We can't duplicate a 4<sup>th</sup>-level spell, so we'll need to weaken the effect. Dropping the area of effect is a big step. If we drop the "attack an adjacent creature" I think we can call this 2 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the umber hulk exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the umber hulk, use the original confusion effects (only the effects) of the umber hulk's Confusing Gaze. If you want to weaken the umber hulk, reduce its strength increase.

## Unicorn

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Noble celestial creatures resembling white horses with an ivory horn.

### Unicorn Traits

Unicorns share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Celestial

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, and either +1 Wisdom or +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Noble protectors sent by good deities, most unicorns are lawful good.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 15 feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Hooves and Horn.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning or piercing damage on a hit.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *druidcraft* cantrip. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast *cure wounds* and *detect good and evil* once per day each. Your spellcasting ability for these spells is either Wisdom or Charisma, depending on which ability you chose to increase.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Untamed.** You are immune to the charmed and paralyzed conditions.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common, Elven, and Sylvan.

### Playing a Unicorn

Unicorns are fast and versatile. They excel in divine and nature-based classes like cleric, druid, and paladin. Their innate spellcasting provides helpful utility options, and healing touch provides a useful source of healing that works even when spells won't.

Unicorns are sent by deities to protect forests, sacred sites and items, and occasionally important creatures. Consider what your divine purpose is, and how that brought your character into a party of adventurers.

### Design Notes

Unicorns are fancy horses with some special abilities.

Unicorns are celestials, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The unicorn has several good abilities, so it's a bit difficult to decide what to increase. Strength is obvious, but it's hard to device between Wisdom and Charisma. Unicorns are placed by good-aligned deities (often nature deities), so classes like cleric, druid, paladin, and ranger all make sense. We'll grant +1 Strength and the choice of +1 Wisdom or +1 Charisma for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 40 ft. walking speed (down from 50 ft.) for 1 BP, condition immunities to charmed and paralyzed for 1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, racial languages plus Common and one additional fixed language for 0.25 BP, and Charge for 2 BP. Unicorns have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set the unicorn's natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. We'll drop poison immunity, telepathy, magic resistance, and teleport.

That brings out total to 8.75 BP before we examine the unicorn's remaining abilities. Healing Touch is essentially Cure Wounds without spell components, so we'll grant it once per day for 1 BP. We'll drop most of the unicorn's innate spellcasting, but we'll keep *druidcraft* and *detect good and evil* for 1.5 BP.

At 11.25 BP, the unicorn slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the unicorn, allow it to cast *cure wounds* after a short rest, or allow it to use its own horn as a spell focus. If you want to weaken the unicorn, remove one of its leveled innate spells.

### Vampire [Template: Acquired]

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Evil undead humanoids that feed on the blood of the living. Vampires' powers are numerous, and include the ability to assume the form of a bat, to mentally dominate the living, and the ability to heal from mortal wounds almost instantly.

## Becoming a Vampire

If a living humanoid creature slain by a vampire's bite is then buried in the ground, it rises the following night as a vampire spawn.

Upon gaining the Vampire template, the character becomes a Vampire Spawn and immediately gains the traits listed under Vampire Traits, below. In addition, the character's growth and training are affected. The next time the character gains enough experience to gain a level, instead of selecting a class in which to take a new level the character immediately gains a level of the Vampire template.

After gaining the first level of the Vampire template, characters may resume gaining levels normally if they choose to do so.

In order to gain the second level of the Vampire Template, the vampire which created the Vampire Spawn must knowingly and willingly allow the Vampire Spawn to drink the vampire's blood. Upon doing so, the Vampire Spawn may continue taking levels of the Vampire template the next time they gain enough experience to gain a level.

Unfortunately, most vampires are reluctant to promote their spawn, as doing so means that their former spawn is no longer destroyed upon the master vampire's death, thereby removing the need to protect their master in order to survive.

## Removing Vampirism

A creature that becomes a vampire or vampire spawn cannot be returned to normal life except by a Wish spell or similarly powerful magic, or by destroying the vampire or vampire spawn and raising the creature from the dead with *raise dead* or a similar spell.

## Vampire Traits

All vampires share the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits.

### Hit Points

**Hit Dice.** 1d8 per vampire level

**Hit Points at Higher Levels.** 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per vampire level

## Traits

Vampires gain the following traits at each level, as indicated on the table below.

Level	Features
0	Alignment, Creature Type, Chained to the Grave, Vampire Weaknesses, Bite and Claws, Darkvision
1	Regeneration, Spider Climb
2	Charm, Children of the Night
3	Shapechanger
4	Ability Score Increase
5	Misty Escape

**Alignment.** Your alignment changes to lawful evil.

**Creature Type.** Your creature type changes to Undead, and adds the Shapechanger subtype to their existing subtypes.

**Chained to the Grave.** The coffin, crypt, or grave site in which you were buried becomes your resting place, and you must rest there by day. If you did not receive a formal burial, you must rest beneath at least one foot of earth at the place that you rose from the dead. You may move your resting place by transporting your coffin or a significant amount of grave dirt to another location.

**Vampire Weaknesses.** You gain the following flaws:

- **Forbiddance.** You can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.
- **Harmed by Running Water.** You take 20 acid damage when you start your turn in running water.
- **Stake to the Heart.** You are destroyed if a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into your heart while you are incapacitated in your resting place.
- **Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** You take 20 radiant damage when you start your turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing and 1d4 necrotic damage or 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Regeneration.** You are able to recover from wounds with horrifying speed, and can even regrow severed body parts. As a bonus action, you may spend a Hit Die to recover hit points.

If a part of your body is removed or destroyed (including your head) but you are not killed, you may re-attach the body part as an action.

You are vulnerable to acid and fire. If you take acid or fire damage, you may not use your regeneration

trait to recover hit points or re-attach limbs until the end of your next turn.

When you take a short or long rest, you regain spent Hit Dice, up to a number of dice equal to half of your total number of them, rounded up. If you have lost any body parts, the missing body parts regrow and the original body parts wither and die.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Shapechanger.** If you aren't in sunlight or running water, as an action you can polymorph into a Tiny bat or a Medium cloud of mist, or back into your true form.

While in bat form, you can't speak, your walking speed is 5 feet, and you have a flying speed of 30 feet. Your statistics, other than your size and speed, are unchanged. Anything you are wearing transforms with you, but nothing you are carrying does. You revert to your true form if you.

While in mist form, you vampire can't take any actions, speak, or manipulate objects. You are weightless, have a flying speed of 10 feet, can hover, and can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. In addition, if air can pass through a space, the mist can do so without squeezing, and you can't pass through liquids. You have advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws and resistance to all nonmagical damage, except the damage you take from sunlight. You can't fall and remain hovering in the air even when stunned or otherwise incapacitated.

You may remain in mist form for up to one hour, at which point you return to your true form. If you are forced to revert to your true form while in a space that cannot contain you, you are shunted into the nearest safe space, following a path which mist could follow, and take 1d6 damage per 5 feet traveled this way. The resistance from mist form does not apply to this damage.

Once you adopt mist form, you cannot do so again until you have completed a long rest. You may adopt bat form at will.

**Misty Escape.** When you drop to 0 hit points outside your resting place, you transform into a cloud of mist (as in the Shapechanger trait) instead of falling unconscious, provided that you aren't in sunlight or running water.

If you can't transform (either due to sunlight, running water, because you have used Misty Escape already since your last long rest, or due to another effect which prevents you from changing forms), you are destroyed.

While you have 0 hit points in mist form, you can't willingly to your vampire form, and you must reach your resting place within 1 hour or be destroyed. While at 0 hit points, you automatically succeed on death saving throws (you may not roll these saves, so you cannot roll a natural 20 to regain one hit point). However, if you take radiant damage (such as the damage you take from sun light), you are treated as though you had failed a death saving throw. If you fail three death saving throws, you are destroyed.

Once in your resting place, you revert to your vampire form. You are then paralyzed until you regain at least 1 hit point. You may take short and long rests while in this state, spending hit dice to heal yourself as normal.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Charm.** You may cast the *charm person* spell once per short rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

**Children of the Night.** You magically call 3d4 swarms of bats or rats, provided that the sun isn't up. While outdoors, you can call 3d4 wolves instead. The called creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as your allies and obeying your spoken commands (no action required by you). The beasts remain for 1 hour, until you die, or until you dismiss them as a bonus action.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

## Design Notes

Vampires have too many abilities to make them a non-leveled template. Fortunately, the fifth edition version of vampires presents a clear progression from living creature to vampire spawn, then later to full-fledged vampire. We'll consider the vampire spawn the first level of the template, and we'll use the second level to add the abilities which vampires get that vampire spawn don't, like Charm. Before we distribute abilities over levels, we'll need to assess their BP cost.

The "Players Characters as Vampires" sidebar is important to note. It provides very little information, unfortunately, but it explicitly sets the DC formula for Charm, and it explains that ability score adjustments aren't applied until the character becomes a full vampire.

Creatures that become vampires become Undead, costing 1 BP.

Chained to the Grave is a tiny handicap for adventurers. While it's a crucial vulnerability for enemies in a typical campaign, for most players it will

only matter behind the scenes. As such, we won't assess a BP cost.

Vampire Weaknesses comes with several handicaps. Forbiddance is difficult to assess, and depending on the campaign it might either be a major problem or it might literally never matter. We won't assess a BP cost. Harmed by Running Water is similarly difficult to assess, but we'll call it a damage vulnerability for -1 BP. Stake to The Heart is basically an extension of Chained to the Grave, and honestly vampires are no more vulnerable to being executed than a normal humanoid, so we won't assess a BP cost. Sunlight Hypersensitivity is Sunlight Weakness with an added damage component, so we'll call it -4 BP. In total, Vampire Weaknesses comes to -5 BP.

The vampire's bite and claws are simple, adding a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP. Darkvision adds another 2 BP.

The Vampire's regeneration is very similar to the Troll's. Vampires regenerate twice as fast and their regeneration is halted by different things, but the heart of the ability is the same and it faces all of the same design issues for a playable character. However, vampires don't have the ability to regenerate limbs. While that doesn't usually matter, it's occasionally an important distinction. That might be enough of a difference to adjust the BP cost, but the damage types which halt the Vampire's regeneration are also less common so we'll call it a wash. We'll duplicate the design we did for the Troll, adjust the effects which block it, and keep the 5 BP cost.

Spider Climb is 1 BP.

Shapechanger is difficult. We can draw on previously design creatures like the Yochlol, but even that isn't a perfect approximation. The bat form is reasonably simple, but the mist form is a more powerful version of the *gaseous form* spell, which is a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell, and vampires can shapechange at will.

The bat form is surprisingly useful. Not only does it grant the vampire the ability to fly, but it also allows the vampire to continue to use its bite attack, thereby allowing it to fight effectively while flying. The vampire doesn't lose any notable capabilities except hands and the ability to speak. Since the bat grants 30 ft. fly speed, we'll call it 3 BP (4 BP for speed, -1 BP for the hassle of transforming and for losing your hands and speech while transformed).

Mist form is similarly frustrating. Combined with Misty Escape, it's intended to keep your big bad evil guy alive even if the players manage to kill them in combat. We need to keep the ability mostly intact to

stay true to the monster, but the current version is too powerful. If we weaken the mist form to match Gaseous Form, that helps a bit because the player isn't quite as invulnerable and they're much slower. Even with that change, it's still a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell. We'll allow it to be used once per day for 3 BP, and we'll set an explicit 1-hour duration cap on its usage so players don't spend all of their time floating around as mist until they need to fight things.

Like any revival mechanic, Misty Escape is difficult to grant to a player. Adventurers have a high mortality rate, so abilities which allow them to survive death at no cost except time are very powerful. Previously I've avoided adding BP costs for mechanics like this on creatures like the demilich, but this is the only instance of a revival mechanic on a template. It's also the fastest revival mechanic, allowing the character to return to full capacity in a matter of hours thanks to 5<sup>th</sup> edition's generous healing rules.

To limit the ability, we'll limit the duration to one hour just as we did with mist form on Shapechange, and we'll only allow it to be used once per long rest so players aren't hopping out of their coffin and throwing themselves on sharp spikes in a loop, as amusing as that might be. The vampire monster entry doesn't mention how or if the vampire makes death saves while in this form, but I think the intent is that misty escape prevents the vampire from making death saving throws. It's also totally unclear what happens if the vampire takes damage while at 0 hit points and already in mist form. It would be really disappointing for a vampire to die as a cloud of fleeing mist, only for its body to reform and drop out of the air, but I think we need to allow that possibility.

This is a build of a wild guess, but we'll call this 5 BP. It's an entire template level worth of class features, but as a player I would probably consider that a good level.

Charm is like a very slightly improved version of Charm Person, but it's not quite dominate person. Rather than expend a bunch of time and effort writing and balancing a new ability, we'll just allow the vampire to cast Charm Person once per short rest for 2.5 BP.

Children of the Night looks like it should be a design problem, but after a little of research it proves to be very similar to a limited version of the *conjure beast* spell. Children of the Night will give you more wolves on average than you can get from *conjure beast*, but I don't think the number of animals is really central to the ability. Even the one hour duration and the mechanism for issuing commands is the same. *Conjure*

*beast* is a level 3 spell, which would normally cost 3 BP. We'll keep all of the limits on children of the night (only works at night, wolves only available outside) and set the number summoned to 3d4 (which averages to 7.5, just short of *conjure beast's* 8 creatures), and we'll call it 2 BP.

With the vampire's laundry list of abilities assessed, we must now decide how to distribute them across template levels. The vampire's abilities total 21.5 BP, including the -5 BP for Vampire Weaknesses.

Since players won't always become vampires when they're ready to level, we need a 0 level. Granting the creature type, Chained to the Grave, and Vampire Weaknesses gives us the absolute basics of being a vampire, but it's also -4 BP, and the penalties are big enough that without some benefits it's possible that players might not make it to their next level. To balance the drawbacks, we'll grant Darkvision and the Vampire's natural weapons. That brings the total to 0 BP, which is exactly what we want for a template's 0-level.

The template's first level should be for Vampire Spawn, which get considerably fewer abilities than a full Vampire. Accounting for the decisions above, Regeneration and Spider Climb are the Vampire Spawn's only remaining abilities. That totals to just 6 BP, which is a bit low for our target of 8-10 BP for the first level of leveled templates, but we don't have much room to make adjustments without changing the flavor of the creature.

That leaves us with 15.5 BP worth of remaining abilities. At 4-5 BP per level, that's about 3 levels. That would bring our template to 4 levels, so we'll add an ability increase at level 4 and stretch the template to 5 levels.

Where we allocate the vampire's abilities is totally flexible. Misty Escape should require that the vampire already has Shapechange, but that's the only notable restriction.

For the template's second level, we'll grant Charm and Children of the Night for 4.5 BP, placing us right in the middle of our target range of 4-5 BP.

For the template's third level, we'll grant Shapechange. Between both forms, that's 6 BP. It's a little bit above our target of 4-5 BP, but we'll need to accept it in order to keep Shapechange a singular ability and to avoid adding another template level.

For the template's fourth level, we'll grant an Ability Score Increase so that players taking the template don't miss out on the normal progression of Ability

Score Increases they would normally get from their class.

For the template's fifth and final level, we'll grant Misty Escape. At 5 BP, it's enough to fill the level on its own.

## Water Weird

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Elemental guardians bound to a watery location.

### Water Weird Traits

Water weirds share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental. You do not require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Alignment.** Lacking a concept of good or evil, most water weirds are neutral, though their personalities might be warped by the water they occupy.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Constrict.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Unstable Form.** Your body is not completely rigid, and your limbs often fluctuate in size and shape as you move. You are unable to wear armor.

**Water Bound.** The water weird dies if it leaves the water to which it is bound or if that water is destroyed.

**Water Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in water.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Languages.** You can understand, read, and write in Aquan.



## Water Weird

Water weirds are sneaky ambush attackers, but they're severely limited by their inability to wear armor or move on land. Consider classes like barbarian or monk which will offer you alternate sources of AC, and do your best to mitigate your inability to walk. Also consider classes like rogue which can take advantage of your Water Camouflage.

Water weirds are bound to specific bodies of water. Discuss how this would work with your DM. In an aquatic campaign this will rarely be an issue, but in a land-based campaign you might need to do something strange like roll around in a barrel.

## Design Notes

Water weirds are very similar to water elementals with a few minor differences. They're also bound to the body of water which they guard, which presents some problems at the table.

Water weirds are elementals, costing 1 BP.

The water weird's two best abilities are Strength and Dexterity, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 50 ft. swim speed (down from 60 ft.) for 2 BP, resistance to fire for 2 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, immunity to the exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, restrained, prone, and unconscious conditions for 3 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP and no ability to speak for -1 BP. We'll drop blindsight to conserve BP. Water weirds have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 damage for 2 BP. Water weirds can't wear armor for -3 BP.

That brings our total to 4 BP before we consider the water weirds remaining abilities. We'll add Grab for 2 BP to replace the remaining effects of Constrict. Granting players perpetual invisibility in water will make the water weird too good in water-heavy campaigns, so we'll replace it with Chameleon Skin for 2 BP.

Water Bound presents a serious limitation and several questions. How do we define "destroyed" for these purposes? Can you evaporate a water weird's pool? What happens when you dump it into a larger source of water? Can the water weird live in a barrel? We'll leave the ability unchanged and not assess a BP value.

At 8 BP, the water weird is below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a problematic option since it's bound to a body of water, so be cautious about including one in your games. If you want to strengthen the water weird,

increase one of its ability increases. If you want to weaken the water weird, remove one of the ability increases.

## Wight

The undead bodies of mortals who cried out to evil forces to escape the moment of their death.

### Wight Traits

Wights share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 to any two of Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution.

**Alignment.** Vile creatures who feed on the life force of other living mortals, most wights are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Life Drain.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 necrotic damage on a hit.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, at whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Undead Resilience.** You have resistance to necrotic damage. You are immune to the exhaustion and poisoned conditions, and to poison damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and one other language of your choice which you spoke in life.

### Playing a Wight

Wights excel in melee combat. They can increase any two of their physical ability scores, and Undead Resilience provides several useful defenses. Between Darkvision and Sunlight Sensitivity you will function

better at night or underground, so avoid fighting in sunlight.

Wights remember their previous lives. Consider who your character was in life, and what compelled them to call out to dark powers and become a wight instead of facing death. Wights hate the living, seeking to snuff out the spark of life in other creatures. You will fit well into any evil party that spends a lot of time killing things.

### Design Notes

Wights are an excellent undead to convert into a playable race. They're mechanically simple with a cool flavor, and they use items like a normal humanoid.

Wights are undead, costing 1 BP.

With the exception of Intelligence and Wisdom, all of the wight's abilities are excellent, making it difficult to decide which abilities to increase. Wights seem more like martial creatures than spellcasters, so we'll grant them the option of +1 to any two physical ability scores. +1 to any two is normally 3 BP, but we'll call it 2.75 BP since we're limiting them to physical abilities.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, resistance to necrotic damage for 2 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, condition immunity to exhaustion for 0.5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Common for 0 BP plus another flexible language for 0.5 BP, and sunlight sensitivity for -2 BP.

That brings us to 8.75 BP before we consider the wight's Life Drain. We'll need to drop the zombie mechanic, but we can grant a 1d4 necrotic damage natural weapon for 1 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the wight is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a simple option for people hoping to play undead without any abilities that could unbalance the game despite several excellent traits. If you want to strengthen the wight, add Charisma to the three existing options for ability score increases. If you want to weaken the wight, remove one of its two +1 ability increases or remove its natural weapons.

### Will-o'-Wisp

Evil spirits that lead mortals to their doom and feed on their dying souls.

#### Will-o'-Wisp Traits

Will-o'-wisps share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive

mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures that prey on the suffering of others, most will-o'-wisps are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Consume Life.** As a bonus action, you can target one creature it can see within 5 feet of it that has 0 hit points and is still alive. The target must succeed on a DC Constitution saving throw against this magic or die. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution bonus. If the target dies you may spend a hit die to heal yourself, and you are nourished as though had eaten enough food for a week. If the creature fails the save and rolls a natural 1, a new will-o'-wisp forms in the space initially indifferent to the creature's body. This will-o'-wisp is neutral to the player and their allies, and doesn't need to eat for a week after its creation.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Ephemeral.** You can't wear or carry anything, including weapons, armor, shields, etc. In addition, your Strength score may not exceed 1.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet.

**Hidden Step.** As a bonus action, you can magically turn invisible until the start of your next turn or until you attack, make a damage roll, or force someone to make a saving throw.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Ignited Illumination.** As a bonus action, you can cause yourself to glow or extinguish your light. While glowing, you shed bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. While extinguished, you cast light less than that of a candle.

**Shock.** As an action, you may shock a creature within reach. Make a melee spell attack against the target. On a hit, the target takes 1d8 lightning damage. The damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5th level (2d8), 11th level (3d8), and 17th level (4d8). Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this attack.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and one other language of your choice which you spoke in life.

## Playing a Will-o'-Wisp

Will-o'-wisps are complicated creatures. They are unable to use weapons or armor, and with no natural armor they are very frail. Their only means to attack is their Shock ability, which requires them to be in melee reach. Because Shock is a spell attack, you won't be able to take advantage of abilities like Sneak Attack, and without the ability to hold a spellcasting foci you may have trouble playing a spellcaster.

Will-o'-wisps are one of the few types of undead that need to eat. Consume Life will sustain you for a week, so be sure that you never wander too far away from something that you can feed upon when the need arises. Joining a party of adventurers, especially an evil one which doesn't hesitate to kill, is a good way to gain a reliable source of sustenance.

## Design Notes

Will-o'-wisps are tiny evil death balls. They have a ton of resistances, several condition immunities, and Incorporeal Movement. We'll need to make serious cuts to make them playable, but fortunately they only have a few unique abilities.

Will-o'-wisps are undead, costing 1 BP.

Will-o'-wisps have the highest Dexterity score in the monster manual, so we'll grant them +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 0 ft. fly speed for -3 BP, 40 ft. fly speed (down from 50 ft.) for 5 BP, damage resistance to lightning (down from immunity) and necrotic damage for 4 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, condition immunities to exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, prone, restrained, and unconscious for 3 BP, and Darkvision 60 ft. (down from 120 ft.) for 2 BP. We'll drop the remainder of the wisp's resistances to save BP. We'll allow wisps to speak Common plus one flexible language for 0.5 BP.

That brings us to 14 BP before we consider the wisp's remaining abilities. We'll replace Invisibility with Hidden Step for 2 BP, and we'll grant Illumination with the ability to toggle it for 0.5 BP.

Ephemeral is really interesting. We've tackled races with no hands and no ability to wear armor, but an absolutely inability to carry things. That's a pretty serious handicap for an adventurer who needs to do things like open doors and carry McGuffins. We'll cap the Will-o'-wisp's Strength at 1 and call the Ephemeral a total of -7 BP (two worse than no hands and no armor).

Consume Life combines several important aspects of the will-o'-wisp. Wisps are among the notable few

undead which actually need to eat, and Consume Life allows them to do so while also providing a healing ability. While the stat block doesn't explain it, this is also how will-o'-wisps reproduce. Unfortunately, granting this ability without a cap on usage will open up potential abuse cases. If we require the wisp to use a hit die for the healing, I think we can call this ability 1 BP. We'll allow this to feed the wisp for a week so that they don't need to kill daily to survive, and we'll allow the wisp to create additional wisps if the victim rolls a natural 1 to resist.

With no ability to use weapons, the will-o'-wisp is dependent on Shock to attack. It's a spell attack that deals lightning damage, so we'll re-skin the *shocking grasp* cantrip (dropping the Advantage mechanic) for 0.5 BP. It's not clear which ability backs the wisp's attack bonus, but it appears to be Wisdom.

At 10 BP, the will-o'-wisp is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. The race has several complicated mechanics, and may presents difficulties in your game. If you want to strengthen the will-o'-wisp, allow it to cast spells as though it were holding a spellcasting focus. If you want to weaken the will-o'-wisp, limit Consume Life to once per short rest or reduce its Dexterity increase.

## Wraith

Malice incarnate, wraiths are undead creatures bent on the end of all life.

### Wraith Traits

Wraiths share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Undead. You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you enter a restful state, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. While resting, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are reflexive mental exercises inherent to your consciousness. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Existing solely to extinguish all life, most wraiths are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft.

**Bereft of Body.** You are unable to wear armor, but may still use shields.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet, and can hover.. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Life Drain.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 necrotic damage on a hit.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, at whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Undead Resilience.** You have resistance to necrotic damage. You are immune to the exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, and restrained conditions, and to poison damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and one other language of your choice which you spoke in life.

### Playing a Wraith

Wraiths are nimble and durable. They make excellent fighters, rangers, and rogues. Take advantage of your flight to out-manuever your foes.

Wraiths seek the end of all life, so it makes the most sense to include them in a party of undead, or at least in a party of characters with deeply evil goals.

### Design Notes

Wraiths face similar challenges to other incorporeal creatures like the banshee, but their special abilities aren't particularly difficult to handle.

Wraiths are undead, costing 1 BP.

The wraith's abilities are almost all good, so it's hard to decide which to increase. Dexterity and Constitution are the wraith's best, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we medium size, 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, Hover for 2 BP, resistance to necrotic damage (down from immunity) for 2 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, condition immunities to exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, and restrained for 3 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Common plus one flexible language for 0.5 BP, and Sunlight Sensitivity for -2 BP. We'll drop the wraith's other resistances and condition immunity to charmed to save BP. We'll disallow armor for -3 BP.

That brings us to 10.5 BP. The only remaining ability is Life Drain. Most creatures with similar abilities make them as spell attacks, so it's unusual that this is a

weapon attack. We'll treat it as a natural weapon dealing 1d6 necrotic damage for 1.5 BP.

At 12 BP, the wraith is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. It's very durable, not particularly exciting. If you want to strengthen the wraith, allow it to choose between a Constitution increase or a Charisma increase. If you want to weaken the wraith, reduce its natural weapon damage.

## Wyvern

Beastly creatures related to true dragons, wyverns are powerful hunters with a deadly poison sting.

### Wyvern Traits

Wyverns share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Dragon

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Usually unintelligent creatures, most wyverns are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Stinger.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak and read in Common.

### Playing a Wyvern

Wyverns are strong and durable, but lack special abilities. Consider classes which can capitalize on the wyvern's traits like barbarian and fighter.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Wyverns are a poor-man's dragon, bigger than a pseudodragon but far less magical. It has no unique

abilities, which makes it very easy to design. Wyverns are unusually intelligent for beasts, but they're still subject to being awakened so we'll treat them as such.

Wyverns are dragons, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Like many beasts and similar creatures, the wyvern's best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.) for -1 BP, 40 ft. fly speed (down from 80 ft.) for 5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP. Since we're treating the wyvern as awakened, we'll allow it to speak Common for 0 BP. Wyverns have no hands for 0.2 BP, and we'll set the wyvern's natural weapons to 1d4 piercing and 1d4 poison for 2 BP.

At 10 BP, the wyvern is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. It's simple with no special abilities, but it works. If you want to strengthen the wyvern, increase its constitution increase. If you want to weaken the wyvern, reduce its natural armor.

## Xorn

Three-armed, three-legged, three-eyed stony orange metal-eaters.

### Xorn Traits

Xorn share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Elemental

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Generally peaceful and motivated mostly by hunger and curiosity, most xorns are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a burrow speed of 20 ft.

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Earth Glide.** You can burrow through non-magical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, you don't disturb the material you move through.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 17. You gain no benefit from wearing armor, though you may still use shields normally.

**Three Arms.** You have 3 arms, and may hold and use items in each of your hands.

If you have Extra Attacks, when you take the Attack action you may make each of your attacks using any weapon you are holding.

When you take the Attack action and attack with a weapon which qualifies for use with two-weapon fighting, you can use a bonus action to attack with a different qualifying weapon. You don't add your ability modifier to the damage of the bonus attack unless the modifier is negative or you have an ability which allows you to add your ability modifier to the bonus attack granted by two-weapon fighting. If you choose to make this additional attack, you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn.

If you use a weapon with the Heavy property or use a Versatile weapon two-handed you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn, but you may switch between multiple Heavy or Versatile weapons with each attack.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Terran.

### Playing a Xorn

Xorns are slow moving, but difficult to kill. With natural armor and increase constitution they're extremely durable. Their ability to move through stone without leaving a trace makes it easy for them to ambush or bypass foes. Xorns work as a wide variety of classes, but don't excel in any one area.

Xorns are usually not violent, but they're curious and have difficult dietary needs. They might join a group of adventurers in hopes of a steady supply of gems and metal to eat, or in hopes of finding a way back to the plane of earth.

### Design Notes

Xorn are very similar to earth elementals, which makes sense considering their origins.

Xorn are elementals, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Xorns have extremely high Constitution, so we'll grant +1 Constitution for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +7 natural armor (down from +9) for 3.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 20 ft. burrow speed for 3 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, 30 ft. tremorsense (down from 60 ft.) for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, Earth Glide for 1 BP, and camouflage for 0.5 BP. We'll disallow armor for -3 BP, and prevent the xorn from adding Dexterity to AC for -1 BP. We'll set the xorn's natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. Xorns have three arms for 0.5 BP.

That brings our total to 9.5 BP before we consider Treasure Sense. Treasure Sense is hard to assess

because it's situational, but potentially very powerful. It invalidates many hidden doors, instantly locates anyone carrying money or wearing jewelry. We'll call it 2 BP, but it's difficult to assess.

At 11.5 BP, the xorn exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a problematic race and it's difficult to know where to make further cuts to reduce BP costs. If you want to strengthen the xorn, increase its natural armor to +8. If you want to weaken the xorn, reduce its natural weapon damage.

## Yeti

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Furry white monstrosities that stalk frozen mountaintops in search of food.

### Yeti Traits

Yetis share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Intelligent creatures that happily commit cannibalism, most yetis are chaotic evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Chilling Gaze.** As an action, you can target one creature that you can see within 30 ft. If the target can see you, it must make a Constitution saving throw against this magic or take 1d8 cold damage have its speed reduced by 10 feet until the start of your next turn. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus +

**Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Cold Resistance.** You have resistance to cold damage.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Fear of Fire.** If you take fire damage, you have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of your next turn.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Snow Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Yeti.

## Playing a Yeti

Yetis' increased Strength and Constitution makes them excellent barbarians and fighters, but their Snow Camouflage can make them stealthy enough to make excellent rangers.

Yetis are vicious, carnivorous, and not particularly intelligent, but that makes them excellent muscle in a party of evil characters. With no qualms about eating humanoids, access to easy food may be enough to persuade a yeti to go adventuring.

## Design Notes

Yetis are simple creatures. Chilling Gaze is their only totally unique ability, so designing the yeti as a race isn't difficult.

Yetis are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The Yeti's best abilities by a wide margin are Strength and Constitution, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.), 30 ft. climb speed (down from 40 ft.) for 2 BP, damage resistance to cold (down from immunity) for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, only racial languages for -1 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, and Camouflage for 0.5 BP.

That brings our total to 9 BP. Fear of Fire is essentially vulnerability, so we'll call it -1 BP. We'll drop the yeti's natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP.

Chilling Gaze is obviously too powerful for a racial ability. Paralysis of any duration is too powerful to be usable at will. The cantrip *ray of frost* has a similar effect (cold damage and movement reduction) so we'll tweak it to replace Chilling Gaze. Instead of an attack we'll allow a saving throw, and to match the flavor of the ability we'll allow the target to ignore the speed reduction if they're immune to cold damage. We'll call it 0.5 BP since it's essentially still a cantrip.

At 9.5 BP, the yeti is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It has some fun abilities and should work very well alongside published humanoid races. If you want to strengthen the yeti, increase its natural weapon damage to 1d4 slashing and 1d4 cold, or grant it a breath weapon dealing cold damage in a cone. If you want to weaken the yeti, remove its natural armor.

## Yuan-ti

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Yuan-ti are foul, snake-worshipping creatures who seek to attain divine ascension through world conquest,

manipulation, and eventually by devouring and supplanting their own gods.

### Yuan-ti Traits

Yuan-ti share the following racial traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Evil, power-hungry creatures who seek power by any means, most yuan-ti are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Cunning.** You have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Abyssal, Common, and Draconic.

**Poison Immunity.** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Yuan-ti Abomination

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Bite and Constrict.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage or 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

#### Yuan-ti Malison

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Malison Type.** Select one of the three types of Malisons.

- Type 1: Human body with snake head. You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.
- Type 2: Human head and body with snakes for arms. You have no hands. You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make a melee attack with your unarmed strikes, as bonus action you may make one additional unarmed strike.
- Type 3: Human head and upper body with a serpentine body instead of legs. You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit. When you hit a creature with an unarmed strike or an improvised

weapon on your turn, you can use a bonus action to attempt to grapple the target.

#### Yuan-ti Pureblood

**Creature Type.** Humanoid (yuani-ti)

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *poison spray* cantrip. Once you reach 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you can cast the *find familiar* (poison snake only) spell once per day. Once you reach 5<sup>th</sup> level, you can cast the *suggestion* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Stealthy.** You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

#### Playing a Yuan-ti

Yuan-ti are all charismatic, evil creatures, but their specific abilities make them differ greatly. The malison and the abomination are powerful melee fighters with enhanced strength and natural weapons, so consider classes like barbarian, fighter, and paladin. Purebloods have innate spellcasting, which will provide helpful additional options for sorcerers and warlocks.

Evil and ambitious, yuan-ti make a great choice for a party of evil characters. The race's overall goal is to dominate the world and ascend to god-hood, so an individual yuan-ti might go to great lengths to further that goal.

#### Design Notes

Yuan-ti are one of my favorite creatures. Their society is interesting, and unlike many of the villainous humanoid races, they aren't just insane cannibalistic murderers and barbarians. Their culture clearly justifies the existence of the three different types of Yuan-ti, and gives each a specific role and function in society.

That said, the mechanical differences in the three types of Yuan-ti also present considerable mechanical challenges. The power scale between the three is sufficiently different that we'll need to do a lot to differentiate the three. The pureblood will be fairly straightforward, but the malison and abomination are hugely different.

Yuan-ti purebloods are humanoids (0 BP), but the malison and abomination are both monstrosities (0.5 BP). Neither creature type offers specific abilities.

All three types of yuan-ti list Charisma as their highest ability score, so we'll grant each a +1 to Charisma for 1 BP.

From the monster stat blocks we can draw a few similarities. All three types of yuan-ti get Poison Immunity for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, speak racial languages plus Common and an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP, Magic Resistance for 5 BP, and

proficiency in Stealth for 0.5 BP, but we'll only apply that to the pureblood to balance out the BP differences. That puts us at 9.75 BP, so we'll need to make some serious cuts to their remaining shared traits to make room for the stuff which set Yuan-ti subraces apart.

If we drop Magic Resistance to Cunning, we recover 3 BP, leaving us some room for other abilities.

All yuan-ti get some innate spellcasting. We'll keep it Charisma-based to keep in line with the monster stat block and the Charisma increase which we decided upon earlier. All yuan-ti can cast *animal friendship* and *suggestion*, but to differentiate between the subraces (and to save on BP) we'll leave all of the innate spellcasting to the purebloods. The innate spellcasting is kind of an after-thought for malisons and abominations anyway, so I don't think it's a big loss.

That leaves us at 6.75 BP for each subrace, giving us room to tackle the specific abilities of the subraces. I'm going to discuss the remaining design of each subrace individually because they're so different.

#### Pureblood

Purebloods are the simplest of the Yuan-ti. They're humanoid, and their most notable ability is their innate spellcasting. As discussed previously, I'll also grant purebloods proficiency in Stealth to balance out the creature type BP cost difference. The rest of the pureblood's remaining BP will go into innate spellcasting.

*Animal friendship* is a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell. Yuan-ti cast it at will, but it can only target snakes. That's pretty similar to a cantrip in some ways, but with a 24-hour duration players will almost certainly abuse it to charm a small army of snakes and drown their enemies in snakes. A more reasonable effect would be to allow the character to have a single pet snake. That's pretty similar to Find Familiar, so we'll just give the pureblood Find Familiar (snake only) for 0.5 BP (down from 1 since it's a reduced effect, and since you generally don't need a new familiar every day). As per the normal innate spellcasting rules, the pureblood won't be able to use this ability until 3<sup>rd</sup> level.

All yuan-ti are able to cast *suggestion* three times per day. *Suggestion* is a 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell, so we definitely don't want to allow that. Instead, we'll allow it to be cast once per day for 2 BP.

The pureblood monster stat block allows the pureblood to cast poison spray three times per day as part of their innate spellcasting, but for a player that's not particularly useful. Instead, we'll just give purebloods *poison spray* as a cantrip for 0.5 BP.

At 9.75 BP, the yuan-ti pureblood is a fun race with some cool thematic abilities. If you need to strengthen the pureblood, grant them a +1 to intelligence. If you need to weaken the pureblood, remove the ability to cast *find familiar*.

#### Malison

Malisons are the middle tier of yuan-ti. They have one snake body part (we'll count "arms" as one body part), which distinguishes them from purebloods.

Their ability scores are considerably better than those of a pureblood, too. Their Strength matches their Charisma, so a +1 Strength increase for 1 BP is a good fit. It will also help differentiate between the pureblood's emphasis on stealth and cunning and the malison's emphasis on being a snake thug.

All that's left if the Malison's natural weapons. Each type is a little bit different. The first two types deal additional poison damage with their bites. Yuan-ti poison typically deals 2d6 damage, but that's far too much for a player, so we'll need to lower it.

Type 1 is easy. A natural weapon that deals 1d4 damage is normally 1 BP. If we add 1d4 of poison damage it's roughly as effective as 1d8 damage, so we'll call that another 1 BP for the poison damage.

Type 2 is a bit more complicated. The damage should be the same as type 1, so 2 BP is fine, but having snakes for hands presents some serious problems. The ability to open and close what is functionally a claw can't match the dexterity of a real hand, so type 2 has the "no hands" trait for -2 BP. We should spend that BP to keep type 2 viable, so for 2 BP we'll give type 2 the ability to make an extra unarmed attack as a bonus action. This will allow them to keep pace with more conventional melee characters who can perform two-weapon fighting.

Type 3 is the most complex. The Constrict attack presented in the monster manual is too good for a player due to the restrain mechanic. We'll make the constrict attack a natural weapon dealing 1d4 damage for 1 BP and add Grab for 2 BP. Type 3 Yuan-ti will still need to use weapons for most of their damage, but can use their tail to grapple a bit better than a human.

At 9.75 BP, the malison is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the malison, increase its Strength increase. If you want to weaken the malison, remove the Strength increase.

#### Abomination

The pinnacle of Yuan-ti, abominations are as much a snake as a yuan-ti can be. Of course, being the best subrace makes it difficult to design the abomination



without actually making it better than other yuan-ti. The abomination combines the strengths of Types 1 and 3 malisons, plus the innate spellcasting of purebloods. We'll need to take a little from each without making the abomination too powerful.

The abomination's best ability is Strength, so we'll grant a +1 Strength increase for 1 BP.

Already at 7.75 BP it's hard to know what parts of the abomination to keep. We'll add a 1d8 natural weapon for 2 BP, and allow it to be used either as a poison bite or as a tail attack but we'll abandon Grab.

At 9.75 BP, the abomination is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's functionally identical to the snake head malison, but without the luxury of CR gaps we don't have any room to provide meaningful mechanical differences. If you want to strengthen the abomination, grant it some natural armor. If you want to weaken the abomination, reduce its natural weapon damage.

## Yugoloth

Fiendish mercenaries who will work for anyone who can pay, yugoloths are a varied collection of closely-related fiends.

### Yugoloth Traits

Yugoloths share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fiend (Yugoloth)

**Alignment.** Evil, fiendish mercenaries motivated by little more than material reward, most yugoloths are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Fiendish Resilience.** You are resistance to acid damage and to poison damage. In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against poison.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common and Abyssal.

**Subrace.** Choose one of these subraces. You gain the traits listed under your chosen subrace in addition to those listed above.

#### Arcanoloath

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Intelligence, +1 Charisma.

**Innate Spellcasting.** You know the *prestidigitation* cantrip. Once you reach third level, you can cast the

*detect magic* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

#### Mezzoloth

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Four Arms.** You have four arms, and may hold and use items in each of your hands.

If you have Extra Attacks, when you take the Attack action you may make each of your attacks using any weapon you are holding.

When you take the Attack action and attack with a weapon which qualifies for use with two-weapon fighting, you can use a bonus action to attack with a different qualifying weapon. You don't add your ability modifier to the damage of the bonus attack unless the modifier is negative or you have an ability which allows you to add your ability modifier to the bonus attack granted by two-weapon fighting. If you choose to make this additional attack, you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn.

If you use a weapon with the Heavy property or use a Versatile weapon two-handed you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn, but you may switch between multiple Heavy or Versatile weapons with each attack.

#### Nycaloth

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

#### Ultraloth

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution, +1 Charisma.

**Hypnotic Gaze.** As an action, you may target one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see you, the target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw against this magic or be charmed until the end of the ultraloth's next turn. The charmed target is stunned. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. If the target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the your gaze for the next 24 hours.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

### Playing a Yugoloth

Yugoloths are very different creatures, each of which can thrive in different ways.

### Arcanoloth

With increases to both intelligence and charisma, arcanoloths make excellent eldritch knights, sorcerers, warlocks, and wizards.

Arcanoloths deal primarily in information, but also collect valuable magic items. This is easily enough to motivate an enterprising arcanoloth to set out on a life of adventure in search of buried information or valuable trinkets, especially if someone else in the party is paying the arcanoloth to be there.

### Mezzoloth

Mezzoloths serve as foot soldiers in yugoloth armies. Their strength and durability makes them excellent barbarians and fighters, and their additional arms and claws allow them to easily switch between weapons and equipment to suit their needs in combat.

Mezzoloths enjoy violence and being rewarded. Those are abundant in a life of adventuring, so convincing a mezzoloth to join an adventuring party should be simple.

### Nycaloth

Strong, flying combatants, nycaloths make good fighters and barbarians. With increased strength, nycaloths will do well either in melee combat or using thrown weapons while flying out of enemy reach.

Nycaloths like to stick to one master who treats them well. If an adventuring party includes someone who might serve as this master, the nycaloth may be a life-long ally to the party.

### Ultroroth

## Design Notes

A group of closely-related fiends, Yugoloths are a diverse set of fiends created to function independent of the lower planes. This allows them to serve as mercenaries, making them fantastic adventurers. Beyond flavor there's very little in common between types of yugoloth. Yugoloths are powerful creatures, so we'll need to make significant cuts to convert them into a playable race.

Yugoloths are fiends, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

From the stat blocks, we get medium size (down from large for the nycaloth, acid resistance (down from immunity) for 2 BP, Poison Immunity for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and racial languages plus Common for 0 BP. We'll drop all of the yugoloths' damage resistances, telepathy, blindsight, truesight, magic

resistance, magic weapons, and Teleport. We'll also drop the Arcanoloth's ability to speak all languages.

Despite massive cuts, that brings our total to 6.5 BP before we consider individual varieties of yugoloth.

### Arcanoloth

The spellcasters of yugoloth society, arcanoloth's remaining abilities are dominated almost entirely by innate spellcasting.

Arcanoloth's abilities are almost all excellent, but Intelligence is their best and Charisma is their spellcasting ability, so it's a bit difficult to decide which ability to increase. Yugoloths serve as negotiators which suggests Charisma, but they also collect knowledge and information which suggests Intelligent. We'll grant +1 Intelligence and +1 Charisma for 2 BP even though most characters may have trouble using both.

We'll drop the arcanoloth's claws to save BP so that we can focus on innate spellcasting. We don't have a lot of room left, so we'll add the *prestidigitation* cantrip and the *detect magic* spell for 1.5 BP.

At 10 BP, the arcanoloth tops out our target range of 8-10 BP. It's an excellent base for many arcane spellcasters. If you want to strengthen the arcanoloth, allow it to cast *detect thoughts* or grant it claws dealing 1d4 damage. If you want to weaken the arcanoloth, remove the ability to cast *detect magic*.

### Mezzoloth

Mezzoloths are four-armed insectoids that serve as foot soldiers in yugoloth armies. They have a little bit of innate spellcasting, but the spells are too high level for us to keep so we'll need to focus on the mezzoloth's melee capabilities.

Strength and constitution are the mezzoloth's best abilities, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

We'll grant the mezzoloth 4 arms for 1 BP and we'll set the mezzoloth's natural weapons to 1d4 damage for 1 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the mezzoloth exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a fairly standard strength-constitution race with a couple of neat abilities, so it should fit well into a party of published races despite the high BP cost. If you want to strengthen the mezzoloth, increase its Strength increase to +2. If you want to weaken the mezzoloth, remove its claws.

### Nycaloth

Nycaloths are flying shock troopers with some innate spellcasting. The nycaloth has lots of other traits to cover we'll need to be careful without BP.

The nycaloth's strength and constitution are its best abilities, but we'll only grant +1 Strength for 1 BP so that we can reserve BP for other things.

30 ft. flight costs the nycaloth 4 BP, already bringing us to 11.5 BP. We'll set the nycaloth's natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP.

At 12.5 BP, the nycaloth exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. It's likely too powerful to include in a party without some cuts. If you want to weaken the nycaloth, remove its ability increase, remove its claws, or reduce its walking speed.

### Ultrloth

Ultrloths are the leaders of yugoloth armies. They have innate spellcasting similar to the arcanoloth, though less powerful, and have a potent hypnotic gaze attack. To differentiate the ultrloth from the arcanoloth, we'll drop the innate spellcasting in favor of hypnotic gaze.

The ultrloth's best ability is Charisma, and Constitution is a close second, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

Hypnotic gaze is a single-target effect which charms stuns the target for one round. That already includes a lot of limitations, but the ability to use it at will still presents a problem. We'll limit use to once per short rest and call it 2 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the ultrloth slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. It works for some builds and should work fine alongside published races. If you want to strengthen the ultrloth, allow it to cast *detect magic* once per day. If you want to weaken the ultrloth, remove the Constitution increase.

## Zombie [Template: Natural]

A classic fictional monster, zombies are the bodies of dead creatures animated by evil magic.

### Becoming a Zombie

Any formerly living organic creature with a corporeal body can become zombie. The body is animated by means of *animate dead* or a similar spell or magical effect.

The zombie template must be applied to a character during character creation. Zombies retain essentially nothing of their former mind, so a zombie created from the body of an experienced character loses any class levels, proficiencies, or other acquired capabilities that it may have had while it was alive. The zombie is functionally a new character, sharing only the body of the formerly living character.

## Zombie Traits

All zombies have the following traits, adding these traits to their existing racial traits upon gaining the zombie template.

**Creature Type.** You replace your current creature type with Undead, but retain any subtypes.

You don't require air, food, drink, or sleep. Instead, you meditate deeply, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. (The Common word for such meditation is "trance.") While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Ability Adjustments.** -2 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma.

**Alignment.** Animated by evil magics, all zombies are evil.

**Speed.** Any natural movement speeds you possess (walking speed, climbing speed, flight, etc.) are reduced by 10 ft., to a minimum of 5 ft.

**Can't Speak.** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Relentless.** When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest. If you have the Relentless trait from another source, such as your race, you may use it an additional time before you finish a long rest.

**Undead Nature.** You have resistance to necrotic damage. You have immunity to the exhausted and poisoned conditions, and to poison damage.

## Design Notes

The Zombie is a simple template. Mostly it trades the advantages of life for the durability of undeath. Being undead comes with a few useful benefits, so we need to find some penalties to sufficiently offset those benefits.

Zombies switch to the undead creature type for 0.5 BP.

Unlike many undead, zombies aren't resistant to necrotic damage. However, they still don't need to eat, drink, or sleep for 0.5 BP, they still get immunity to the exhausted condition for 0.5 BP, and they still get

Poison Immunity for 2 BP. Undead Fortitude is far too powerful to grant to a player, so we'll replace it with Relentless for 0.5 BP. We'll also add a special note specifying that if the player has relentless from two sources (such as the half-orc race), they can use the ability an additional time before resting. All zombies also have 60 ft. Darkvision for 2 BP. That brings our total to 6.25 BP before we consider penalties.

Zombies normally lose 10 ft. of walking speed for -1 BP because losing 10 ft. would make melee combat so difficult. Zombies can't speak for -1 BP. Zombies have bad Dexterity, and all of their mental ability scores are poor. I'm hesitant to apply 4 ability score penalties because it's super boring, but it also fits the monster really well so we'll apply -2 to Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma for a total of -4 BP.

That brings our total to 0.5 BP, which is just slightly above our target of 0 BP for non-leveled templates. While that technically means that it makes the player slightly stronger according to the BP, I think the significant penalties for being a zombie are still enough to prevent players from seeing this as an easy path to power.

## Miscellaneous Creatures

This section contains animals, vermin, and some other creatures that don't quite qualify as monsters for reasons beyond knowing.

### Ape

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Apes are large primates resembling hairy, disproportionate humans.

#### Ape Traits

Apes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most apes are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Fist.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Rock.** You may throw a rock or similar object as a ranged weapon attack. This attack has 30/60 range, and deals 1d6 bludgeoning damage on a hit. This is made as though the object had the Thrown weapon property.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

#### Playing an Ape

For someone looking to play a beast without sacrificing the versatility of a humanoid, the ape is a great option.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

#### Design Notes

The ape is, in many ways, essentially humanoid, which makes it easy to design. It's also notably the first creature with a "giant" version, so the decisions we make here will inform many of the decisions we make for other creatures with a giant version. This will be discussed further under the Giant Ape. Like other beasts, we'll treat the ape as awakened.

Apes are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The ape's physical ability scores are all good, so it's hard to know what to increase. Apes tend to be the big strong primates, so I think increasing Strength and

Constitution makes the most sense. We'll grant +2 to each for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, a 1d6 natural weapon for 1.5 BP, and we'll add Rock by allowing the natural weapon to be used at range for 0.5 BP.

That brings our total BP to 7.5 BP. The ape doesn't have any other distinguishing traits to work from, so we'll leave it there.

At 7.5 BP, the ape falls just below our target range of 8-10 BP.

### Awakened Shrub

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A small shrub magically granted intelligence and mobility.

#### Awakened Shrub Traits

Awakened shrubs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Plant

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent plants, most awakened shrubs are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a mundane shrub. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Flammable.** You have vulnerability to fire damage.

**Rake.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

#### Playing an Awakened Shrub

Awakened shrubs are terrible. Only play them if survival and success are unimportant.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

#### Design Notes

Awakened shrubs are terrible. At CR 0 everything about them is pitiful. We'll need to add quite a bit to make this anywhere near playable.

Awakened shrubs are plants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

None of the awakened shrub's ability scores are good, so we won't grant an ability increase.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.), vulnerability to fire for -1 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP, and False Appearance for 0.5 BP. We'll set the shrub's natural weapons to 1d6 damage for 1.5 BP.

That brings our BP total to 0.5 BP. There's no recovering from this much of a deficit.

At 0.5 BP, the awakened shrub is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's totally unplayable, so I don't encourage using it in your games except as a joke.

## Awakened Tree

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A sturdy tree magically granted intelligence and mobility.

### Traits

Awakened trees share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Plant

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent plants, most awakened trees are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**False Appearance.** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a mundane tree. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Flammable.** You have vulnerability to fire damage.

**Slam.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing an Awakened Tree

Awakened trees are sturdy and strong, but not terribly interesting. Consider classes like barbarian, fighter, and monk, and be sure to avoid fire.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Essentially a much bigger version of the awakened shrub, we'll mostly copy the shrub. Since their

concepts are similar, the awakened tree will end up looking a lot like a boring version of the treant.

Awakened trees are plants, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Awakened trees have considerably better ability scores than awakened shrubs. We'll grant +2 Strength and +2 Constitution for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +3 natural armor (down from +7) for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, vulnerability to fire for -1 BP, the ability to speak Common, False Appearance for 0.5 BP, and 1d8 natural weapons for 2 BP.

At 7.5 BP, the awakened tree is below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's really boring, but perfectly functional. If you want to strengthen the awakened tree, increase its natural armor to +7 but disallow adding Dexterity to the tree's AC. If you want to weaken the awakened tree, reduce its natural armor to +2.

## Axe Beak

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Tall, flightless birds with a powerful beak.

### Axe Beak Traits

Axe beaks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most axe beaks are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 50 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing an Axe Beak

Axe beaks are strong and fast, so consider classes which can take advantage of your increased mobility to get into melee and deal a lot of damage quickly.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the axe beak as awakened.

Axe beaks are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The axe beak's abilities aren't great, but Strength is its best so we'll grant +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 50 ft. walking speed for 2 BP, the ability to speak Common, and 1d8 natural weapons for 2 BP. Axe beaks have no hands for -2 BP.

At 2.5 BP, the axe beak is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's mostly unplayable.

## Baboon

---

Predatory primates native to jungles.

### Baboon Traits

Baboons share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most baboons are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Baboon

The combination of increased Dexterity and Pack Tactics is an extremely potent option for rogues and for dexterity-based fighters and rangers.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the axe beak as awakened.

Baboons are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The baboon's best ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP, Pack Tactics for 5 BP, and 1d4 natural weapons for 1 BP.

At 8 BP, the baboon is at the bottom of our target range of 8-10 BP. It's perfectly viable for a handful of characters concepts. If you want to strengthen the baboon, increase its Dexterity increase. If you want to weaken the baboon, reduce its walking speed.

## Badger

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Omnivorous burrowing mammals.

### Badger Traits

Badgers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most badgers are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft. You have a burrow speed of 5 ft.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Badger

Wise and tough, badgers make good druids and rangers. Despite its slow speed, don't underestimate the effectiveness of the badger's ability to burrow.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the badger as awakened.

Badgers are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The badger's two best abilities are Constitution and Wisdom, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from 20 ft.), 5 ft. burrow speed for 1.5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and Keen Smell for 0.5 BP. Badgers have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set the badger's natural weapons to 1d6 for 1.5 BP.

At 3.5 BP, the badger is well below our target range of 8-10 BP.

## Bat

---

Flying nocturnal mammals known for their echolocation.

### Bats Traits

Bats share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most bats are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 60 ft.

**Echolocation.** You can't use your blindsight while deafened.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Hearing.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Bat

Bats are nimble, they can fly, and their blindsight allows them to function well in perfect darkness.

Consider classes which can capitalize on these strengths like ranger and rogue.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the bat as awakened.

Bats are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The bat's only notable good ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1 BP, 5 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 30 ft. fly speed for 4 BP, blindsight 60 ft. for 6 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the bat as awakened, echolocation for -1.5 BP, and Keen Hearing for 0.5 BP. Bats have no hands for -2 BP., and we'll set the bat's natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 4.5 BP, the bat is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. Blindsight is great, but likely not enough to make the bat playable.

## Black bear

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Relatively small bears, black bears are still dangerous.

### Black Bear Traits

Black bears share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most black bears are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.



## Playing a Black Bear

Black bears make excellent barbarians and fighters due to their excellent ability score increases, but will have trouble playing other classes.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beasts, black bears have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the black bear as awakened.

Black bears are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The black Bear's strength and constitution are both good, so we'll grant +2 to each for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +2 natural armor (up from +1) for 1 BP, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the black bear as awakened, and Keen Smell for 0.5 BP. Black bears have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 8 BP, the Black Bear is at the bottom of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the black bear, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the black bear, reduce its natural armor or walking speed.

## Blink Dog

Canine creatures native to the feywild famous for their ability to blink out of existence to attack foes and avoid injury.

### Blink Dog Traits

Blind dogs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Fey

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Noble and just, most blink dogs are lawful good.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require

manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Teleport.** As a bonus action, you may teleport yourself and any equipment you are carrying or wearing to an unoccupied space within 40 ft. that you can see.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can understand and read Sylvan. You can speak and read Blink Dog, but may not speak any other languages.

## Playing a Blink Dog

Blink dogs are nimble and have the ability to teleport, allowing them to quickly move into melee combat. Consider classes like fighter, ranger, and rogue which can take advantage of these capabilities.

Blink dogs receive little detail in the monster manual, so their personality is poorly defined and it is difficult to suggest what might motivate a blink dog to take up a life of adventure.

## Design Notes

Blink dogs are basically dogs with the ability to teleport short distances.

Blink dogs are fey, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The blink dog's best ability by far is Dexterity, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, and Keen Hearing and Smell for 1 BP. Blink dogs understand only racial languages plus an additional fixed language for -0.75 BP. They can only speak Blink Dog, which we'll call -0.75 BP. Blink dogs have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d6 for 1.5 BP.

The blink dog's Teleport ability is essentially the same as Misty Step so we'll re-skin the spell, and allow it to be used once per short rest for a total of 6 BP.

At 8.5 BP, the blink dog is within our target range of 8-10 BP.

## Blood Hawk

Small raptors with blood-red feathers which hunt in flocks.

### Blood Hawk Traits

Blood hawks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most blood hawks are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 50 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Blood Hawk

Blood hawks are nimble and wise, making them excellent rangers. Pack Tactics is extremely useful for rogues, especially when combined with flight.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the blood hawk as awakened.

Blood hawks are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The blood hawk's Dexterity and Wisdom are both good, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size, 10 ft. walking speed for -1.5 BP, 50 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 6 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the blood hawk as awakened, Keen Sight for 0.5 BP, and Pack Tactics for 5 BP. Blood hawks have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the blood hawk slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. Despite its BP cost, it's still not a great race.

## Boar

Omnivores resembling large hairy pigs with sharp tusks.

### Boar Traits

Boars share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most boars are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 15 feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Relentless.** When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

**Tusk.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Boar

Boars are strong, fast, and good at charging. Pick classes which support hit-and-run tactics to capitalize on the bonus damage from Charge.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the boar as awakened.

Boars are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The boar's ability scores are all fairly poor, but Strength is their best so we'll grant +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, charge for 2 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the boar as awakened, and Relentless for 0.5 BP. Boars have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d6 for 1.5 BP.

At 3 BP, the boar is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's largely unplayable.



## Brown Bear

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Larger and more aggressive than the black bear.

See the traits listed under "Black Bear", earlier in this section.

### Design Notes

The brown bear is essentially identical to the black bear with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the black bear stats.

## Camel

---

Quadrupedal herd animals famous for the large humps on their backs and for their ability to survive extended periods without water.

### Camel Traits

Camel share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most camels are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 50 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Camel

With the camel's impressive speed, consider serving as a willing mount for your party members. With no hands and weak natural weapons, consider classes which will compensate for your lack of offensive options like Monk.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the camel as awakened.

Camels are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The camel's ability scores are all fairly poor, but Strength and Constitution are their best so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 50 ft. walking speed for 2 BP, and the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the camel as awakened. Camels have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP.

At 2.5 BP, the camel is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's largely unplayable.

## Cat

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Small, quadrupedal predators frequently domesticated for their ability to hunt pests.

### Cat Traits

Cat share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most cats are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Cat

With good movement speed and high dexterity, cats make natural rogues. However, their poor natural weapons and lack of hands make them fairly weak without a damage boost like Sneak Attack.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the cat as awakened.

Cats are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The cat's ability scores are mostly terrible, but their Dexterity is good so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1 BP, 40 ft. walking speed for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the cat as awakened, and Keen Smell for 0.5 BP. Cats have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 3 BP, the cat is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's largely unplayable.

### Constrictor Snake

Large snakes that kill prey by crushing and strangling them in the snake's heavy coils.

### Constrictor Snake Traits

Constrictor snakes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most constrictor snakes are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite and Constrict.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, and may attack with a bite or with a constrict attack.

When you attack with a bite, your unarmed strikes deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

When you constrict, your unarmed strikes deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit. When you take the Attack action and make a constrict attack, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 10 ft.

**Serpentine Body.** You have no arms or hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Constrictor Snake

Constrictor snakes have good physical ability scores, decent movement options, and a powerful grapple ability on their natural weapons. Consider classes which work well in melee like barbarian, fighter, and monk. Use your blindsight to ambush hidden or invisible foes and grapple them to keep them from fleeing.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

More complex than many beasts, the constrictor snake has a couple of interesting abilities like blindsight and Grab. Like other beasts, we'll treat the constrictor as awakened.

Constrictor snakes are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The constrictor snake's best ability scores are Strength and Dexterity, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, blindsight 10 ft. for 4 BP, and Grab for 2 BP. Constrictor snakes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 2 BP. Due to the nature of the snake's movement, we'll disallow armor for -3 BP.

At 6.5 BP, the constrictor snake is below our target range of 8-10 BP.

## Crab

---

Clawed crustaceans valued for their succulent meat.

### Crab Traits

Crab share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** None.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most crabs are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 ft. You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 60 ft.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Crab

The crab is only useful for its blindsight. Its poor armor, weak natural weapons, and lack of ability increases make it wholly unthreatening.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

A fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the crab as awakened.

Crabs are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The crab's ability scores are all awful, so we'll omit an ability increase.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1 BP, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 25 ft. walking speed (up from

20 ft.) for 0 BP, 20 ft. swim speed for 0.5 BP, blindsight 30 ft. for 6 BP, and amphibious for 0.5 BP. Crabs have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP.

At 4.5 BP, the crab is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. Blindsight is its only redeeming quality.

## Crocodile

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Aquatic predators that emerge from murky pools to ambush their prey.

### Crocodile Traits

Crocodiles share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most crocodiles are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Crocodile

Strong ambush grapplers, unfortunately the crocodile's natural hunting methods don't cater well to a life of adventuring. You will need to adapt to hunting prey outside of the crocodile's natural habitat.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

A fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the crocodile as awakened.

Crocodiles are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The crocodile's ability scores aren't great, but their Strength is good so we'll grant +2 Strength for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 20 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 30 ft. swim speed for 2 BP, and 15 minutes of

Hold Breath for 0.25 BP, and Grab for 2 BP. Crocodiles have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll drop their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 5.75 BP, the crocodile is well below our target range of 8-10 BP.

## Death Dog

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Evil, two-headed canine monstrosities with a taste for humanoid flesh.

### Death Dog Traits

Death Dogs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Evil creatures with a taste for human flesh, most death dogs are neutral evil

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Superior Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Two Heads.** While both of your heads are awake, you have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Death Dog

Death dogs are similar to many beasts, but notable have two heads. This provides several defensive benefits, making the death dog resistant to many debilitating conditions and difficult to survive.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Little more than a beast, the death dog is easy to design. We'll treat the death dog as awakened.

Death dogs are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The death dog's physical ability scores are all good, making it difficult to decide what to increase. Since the death dog is mostly a basic beast, we'll grant +1 Strength and +1 Constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, 120 ft. Darkvision for 3 BP, and two heads for 3.5 BP, and the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the death dog as awakened. Death dogs have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d6 for 1.5 BP.

At 9 BP, the death dog falls within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the death dog, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the death dog, remove the Perception benefit of Two Heads.

## Deer

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Quadrupedal herbivores native to several continents.

### Deer Traits

Deer share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most deer are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 50 ft.

**Gore.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Deer

The deer's ability scores make it an excellent Druid, Monk, or Ranger. However, its weak weapons and lack of special traits make it extremely weak compared to other races.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the deer as awakened.

Deer are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The deer's best ability scores are Dexterity and Wisdom, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity and +1 Wisdom for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 50 ft. walking speed for 2 BP, and the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the deer as awakened. Deer have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP.

At 3.5 BP, the deer is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. Despite fantastic ability scores it's not really a playable option. If you want to strengthen the deer, increase its natural weapon damage.

## Dire Wolf

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Larger and more primitive looking than the common wolf.

See the traits listed under "Wolf", later in this section.

### Design Notes

The dire wolf is essentially identical to the wolf with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the wolf stats.

## Draft Horse

---

Larger and stronger than ponies, draft horses are bred for pulling large objects and other forms of labor.

See the traits listed under "Pony", later in this section.

### Design Notes

The draft horse is essentially identical to the pony with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the pony stats.

## Eagle

---

Large raptors, eagles are native to many continents.

### Eagle Traits

Eagles share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most eagles are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 60 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing an Eagle

The eagle is fast and nimble, but otherwise weak. Consider classes like druid and ranger which take advantage of the eagle's ability increases and mobility.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the eagle as awakened.

Eagles are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The eagle's best ability scores are Dexterity and Wisdom, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -1.5 BP, 60 ft. fly speed for 7 BP, Keen Sight for 0.5 BP, and the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the eagle as awakened. Eagles have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 5.5 BP, the eagle is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. Despite excellent speed, the eagle is simply too weak to serve as a playable race.

## Elephant

---

Enormous land-dwelling herbivores with huge tusks, and long prehensile trunks.

### Elephant Traits

Elephants share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most elephants are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Gore and Stomp.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage or bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Trampling Charge.** If you move at least 15 feet straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see “Shoving a Creature”, page 195 of the Player’s Handbook).

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing an Elephant

Strong, durable, and fast, elephants are powerful chargers. Consider classes like barbarian and fighter which can survive running into and out of melee to take advantage of Trampling Charge.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character’s personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character’s personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we’ll treat the elephant as awakened.

Elephants are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The elephant’s best abilities are Strength and Constitution, so we’ll grant +2 to each for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from huge), +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 35 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0.5 BP, and the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we’re treating the elephant as awakened. Elephants have no hands for -2 BP, and we’ll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

Like the triceratops, we’ll reskin Pounce for 2 BP to approximate Trampling Charge.

At 8 BP, the elephant bottoms out our target range of 8-10 BP. It’s a fairly boring race, but it’s reasonably playable. If you want to strengthen the elephant, increase its speed.

## Elk

Large, horned quadrupeds resembling enormous deer.

### Elk Traits

Elks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most elk are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 50 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 15 feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Hooves and Ram.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Knockdown.** If you move at least 15 feet straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see “Shoving a Creature”, page 195 of the Player’s Handbook).

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing an Elk

Strong and fast, elk excel at charging. Use hit-and-run tactics to capitalize on your Charge and Knockdown traits.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character’s personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character’s personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we’ll treat the elk as awakened.

Elk are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The elk’s only good ability is Strength, so we’ll grant +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 50 ft. walking speed for 2 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we’re treating the elk as



awakened, and we'll combine Charge for 2 BP and Pounce for 1.5 BP to approximate the secondary effects on the elk's Charge. Elk have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 6 BP, the elk is below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not particularly interesting, but having two charging abilities could make it fun to play.

## Flying Snake

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Brightly colored, winged serpents.

### Flying Snake Traits

Flying snakes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most flying snakes are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 10 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Serpentine Body.** You have no arms or hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Flying Snake

Flying snakes are mobile, dexterous, and have blindsight. As such, they do well in any class that emphasizes stealth, including monk, ranger, and rogue. However, with no ability to wear armor or use shields and with no natural armor they have problems raising their armor class.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the flying snake as awakened.

Flying snakes are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The flying snake's Dexterity is excellent, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size (up from tiny) for -1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 4 BP, 30 ft. swim speed for 2 BP, blindsight 10 ft. for 4 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the elk as awakened, and flyby for 2 BP. Flying snakes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 piercing + 1d4 poison for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

Like other snakes, we'll also disallow armor for -3 BP.

At 10 BP, the flying snake tops out our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not especially exciting but it's very mobile and has excellent stats. If you want to strengthen the flying snake, increase its fly speed. If you want to weaken the flying snake, reduce its natural weapon damage or reduce its walking speed.

## Frog

---

Amphibious creatures native to a wide variety of climates.

### Frog Traits

Frogs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most frogs are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Limited Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 30 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Standing Leap.** Your long jump is up to 30 feet and your high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Frog

Frogs are too weak to be reasonably played as a player character. They lack any form of attack, and with no ability to hold spellcasting foci or use somatic components they are unable to cast most spells.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the flying snake as awakened.

Frogs are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The frog's abilities are atrocious. Dexterity is the only ability score above 10, so we'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed, 20 ft. swim speed for 0.5 BP, Darkvision 30 ft. for 1.5 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the frog as awakened, Amphibious for 0.5 BP and Standing Leap for 0.5 BP. The frog has no hands for -2 BP, but does not have any natural weapons to compensate.

At 0 BP, the frog is functionally unplayable.

## Giant Ape

Larger and stronger than normal apes.

See the traits listed under "Ape", earlier in this section.

## Design Notes

The giant ape is essentially identical to the ape with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the ape stats.

## Giant Badger

Enormous omnivorous mammals that live in burrows.

### Giant Badger Traits

Giant badgers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant badgers are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a burrow speed of 10 ft.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage or 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Limited Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 30 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Giant Badger

Giant badgers tough, and have a burrow speed. However, they're not very strong and lack natural armor. Consider classes which will keep you alive like barbarian or fighter.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

The giant badger's stats aren't much different from those of the standard badger, but they're different enough to highlight some differences in the stat blocks. As usual, we'll treat the giant badger as awakened.

Giant badgers are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant badger's abilities aren't great, but their constitution is good so we'll grant +2 Constitution for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, 10 ft. burrow speed for 2 BP, 30 ft. Darkvision for 1.5 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, and the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the giant badger as awakened. Giant badgers have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 5.5 BP, the giant badger is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the giant badger, consider adding a Strength increase.

## Giant Bat

Enormous cave-dwelling creatures with leathery wings.

### Giant Bat Traits

Giant bats share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant bats are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 60 ft.

**Echolocation.** You can't use your blindsight while deafened.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Hearing.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.



### Playing a Giant Bat

Giant bats have good physical ability scores, and with blindsight and flight are able to move around quickly in the dark. Consider classes which perform well in darkness like rogue.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant bat as awakened.

Giant bats are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Giant bats have good Strength and Dexterity, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 40 ft. fly speed (down from 60 ft.) for 5 BP, blindsight 60 ft. for 6 BP, the ability to speak Common for 0 BP since we're treating the bat as awakened, echolocation for -1.5 BP, and Keen Hearing for 0.5 BP. Giant bats have no hands for -2 BP., and we'll set the giant bat's natural weapons to 1d6 for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the giant bat is within our target range of 8-10 BP. Flight and blindsight are a potent combination that could make the giant bat fun to play. If you want to strengthen the giant bat, increase its fly speed. If you want to weaken the giant bat, reduce its fly speed.

### Giant Boar

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A larger version of the common boar.

See the traits listed under "Boar", earlier in this section.

### Design Notes

The giant boar is essentially identical to the boar with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the boar stats.

### Giant Centipede

---

Enormous bugs with numerous legs.

#### Giant Centipede Traits

Giant centipedes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant centipedes are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your

unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 60 ft.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Centipede

Giant centipedes are nimble and quick, and have excellent blindsight, allowing them to thrive in darkness. Consider classes like monk, ranger, and rogue which perform well while being stealthy.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant centipede as awakened.

Giant centipedes are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Giant centipedes have poor stats, but their Dexterity is decent so we'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, blindsight 30 ft. for 6 BP, and the ability to speak Common since we're treating the giant centipede as awakened. Giant centipedes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 piercing and 1d4 poison for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

We'll abandon the paralysis mechanic of the giant centipede's bite to save BP.

At 9.5 BP, the giant centipede is within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's playable, but not very exciting.

### Giant Constrictor Snake

Larger still than the already immense constrictor snake.

See the traits listed under "Constrictor Snake", earlier in this section.

### Design Notes

The giant constrictor snake is essentially identical to the constrictor snake with slightly better ability scores

and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the constrictor snake stats.

### Giant Crab

Enormous crustaceans capable of grasping a full-grown human in their claws.

### Giant Crab Traits

Giant crabs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant crabs are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 piercing damage a on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Crab

Giant crabs are quick and have natural armor and blind sight. This combination of mobility, durability, and senses makes them excellent stealth characters, either as a monk, a ranger, or a rogue.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant crab as awakened.

Giant crabs are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Giant crabs have poor stats, but their Dexterity is decent so we'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +2 natural armor (down from +3) for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. swim speed for 2 BP, 30 ft. blindsight for 6 BP, the ability to speak Common since we're treating the giant crab as awakened, Amphibious for 0.5 BP, and Grab for 2 BP. Giant crabs have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d6 for 1.5 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 11.5 BP, the giant crab exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. However, I don't think it's much more appealing than any published race. If you want to strengthen the giant crab, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the giant crab, reduce its blindsight range or remove its natural armor.

## Giant Crocodile

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Truly massive lizards that dwell in warm, murky waters.

See the traits listed under "Crocodile", earlier in this section.

### Design Notes

The giant crocodile is essentially identical to the crocodile with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the crocodile stats.

## Giant Eagle

---

Enormous raptors strong enough to carry off full grown humans. Unlike most beasts, giants are intelligent.

### Giant Eagle Traits

Giant eagles share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** One of few naturally intelligent beasts, most giant eagles are neutral good.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 60 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Giant Eagle. You can understand Common and Auran, but can't speak any language except Giant Eagle.

### Playing a Giant Eagle

Giant eagles are both strong and nimble, giving them numerous class options. Consider classes which do well in melee like barbarian and fighter, but don't ignore classes like ranger or rogue just because they lack the sheer martial might of other classes.

Giant eagles are described as noble, and are among few naturally intelligent beasts. With little information provided on giant eagle culture and personality, you'll need to fill in the gaps.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Notably, giant eagles are already intelligent.

Giant eagles are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Giant eagles have excellent physical ability scores. Strength and Dexterity are the best, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 80 ft. fly speed for 9 BP, and Keen Sight for 0.5 BP. Giant Eagles can speak only their own language, but can understand Common and Auran. We'll call that Common plus a racial language and an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP, and we'll apply half of the Can't Speak penalty for -0.5 BP. Giant eagles have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 8.75 BP, the giant eagle is within our target range of 8-10 BP. However, most of this BP comes from the giant eagle's fly speed, so the race isn't especially interesting.

## Giant Elk

---

Horned herd animals the size of elephants.

See the traits listed under "Elk", earlier in this section.

## Design Notes

The giant elk is essentially identical to the elk with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the elk stats.

## Giant Fire Beetle

---

Nocturnal insects the size of dogs known for their glowing glands.

### Giant Fire Beetle Traits

Giant fire beetles share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant fire beetles are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Illumination.** You shed bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Fire Beetle

Giant fire beetles are durable, but their illumination makes them an easy target. Blindsight allows them to operate in darkness, but since they glow they're unable to use mundane darkness to their advantage. Consider classes like barbarian or fighter which are capable of surviving drawing a lot of attacks.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant fire beetle as awakened.

Giant fire beetles are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Giant fire beetles have terrible ability scores. Constitution is the only one above 10 (barely), so we'll grant +1 Constitution for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, +3 natural armor for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. blindsight for 6 BP, Illumination for 0.25 BP. Giant fire beetles have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d6 for 1.5 BP.

At 7.25 BP, the giant fire beetle is below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's close to a reasonable BP value, but it's barely playable. If you want to strengthen the giant fire beetle, grant it some natural armor, increase its natural weapon damage, or increase its Constitution modifier.

## Giant Frog

---

Enormous amphibians that prey on nearly anything they can swallow.

### Giant Frog Traits

Giant frogs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant frogs are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. and you have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Amphibious.** You can breathe air and water.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Frog

Giant frogs are strong and nimble, but lack natural armor. Either wear manufactured armor, or consider classes like barbarian and monk with offer other options to raise your armor class.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant frog as awakened.

Giant frogs are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant frog's abilities aren't great, but we'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Dexterity for 3 BP since those are their best ability scores.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. swim speed for 1 BP, 30 ft. Darkvision for 1.5 BP, the ability to speak Common since we're treating the giant frog as awakened, Amphibious for 0.5 BP, and Standing Leap for 0.5 BP. Giant frogs have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll raise the giant frog's natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP and add Grab for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

We really can't grant Swallow to players. It's too easy to abuse, and it would win most fights against medium or smaller creatures with little effort on the player's part.

At 8 BP, the giant frog is at the bottom of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the giant frog, grant it natural armor. If you want to weaken the giant frog, reduce its Strength increase.

## Giant Goat

---

Enormous quadrupeds native to mountainous environments, and are known for their grand, curved horns.

### Giant Goat Traits

Giant goats share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant goats are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 15 feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Ram.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Sure-Footed.** You have advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock you prone.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Goat

Giant goats are strong and wise, making them excellent druids, fighters, monks, and rangers. Their natural armor is poor, so consider wearing manufactured armor.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant goat as awakened.

Giant goats are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant goat's ability scores are pretty typical for a large animal, but they've got abnormally high Wisdom. We'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Wisdom for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, the ability to speak Common since we're treating the giant goat as awakened, and Charge for 2 BP. Giant goats have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

Surefooted is new, but it's also really situational. We'll call it 0.5 BP.

At 6.5 BP, the giant goat is below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not a terrible race, but it's not especially interesting. If you want to strengthen the giant goat, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the giant goat, reduce its natural weapon damage.

## Giant Hyena

---

Larger and even more vicious than their smaller cousins.

## Giant Hyena Traits

Giant hyenas share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant hyenas are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Rampage.** When you reduce a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on your turn, you can take a bonus action to move up to half your speed and make a bite attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Giant Hyena

Strong and tough, hyenas make excellent barbarians and fighters. Rampage provides an easy way to get an extra attack, so try to focus on eliminating weak but numerous foes to thin their numbers quickly.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant hyena as awakened.

Giant hyenas are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant hyena's ability scores are surprisingly good for a mundane beast. Unfortunately, that makes it hard to decide what to improve. We'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP since those will dominate the abilities that giant hyena characters use.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 40 ft. walking speed (down from 50 ft.) for 1 BP, and the ability to speak Common since we're treating the giant hyena as awakened. Giant hyenas have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

We'll copy Rampage from the gnoll for 2 BP.

At 5.5 BP, the giant hyena is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. Improving it numerically won't make it much better, and there isn't much inspiration to add

additional features. If you want to strengthen giant hyena, increase its Constitution increase or increase its speed.

## Giant Lizard

Enormous reptiles as large as horses, they dwell in a variety of warm climates.

### Giant Lizard Traits

Giant lizards share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant lizards are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Gecko

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

### Iguana

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

### Salamander

**Hold Breath.** You can hold your breath for 15 minutes.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft. and a swim speed of 30 ft.

## Playing a Giant Lizard

Strong and quick, giant lizard make excellent barbarians and fighters. The three versions of the giant lizard offer you options to suit the environment in which your campaign will primarily take place.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.



## Design Notes

Fairly straightforward beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant lizard as awakened.

Giant lizards are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant lizard's ability scores are fairly typical for a mundane beast. We'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, 30 ft. Darkvision for 1.5 BP, and the ability to speak Common since we're treating the giant lizard as awakened. Giant lizards have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

With the basic lizard covered, I want to address the optional variant lizards presented in the monster manual. I love diversity in races, so covering different varieties of lizards seems like a fun idea.

Hold breath is 0.25 BP, and a swim speed is another 1 BP. Spider climb is 1 BP, but I don't think we need to worry about a 0.25 BP difference. I also don't want the generic lizard to be totally worthless, so we'll grant +10 walking speed for 1 BP.

At 7.5 or 7.75 BP, the giant lizard is just below our target range of 8-10 BP. With three subraces to choose from, players have some fun options. If you want to strengthen the giant lizard, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the giant lizard, reduce its Strength increase.

## Giant Octopus

Enormous aquatic creatures with soft bodies and incredibly powerful tentacles.

### Giant Octopus Traits

Giant octopi share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant octopi are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft. You have a swim speed of 60 ft.

**Amorphous.** Your body is not completely rigid, and your limbs often fluctuate in size and shape as you move. You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. You are unable to wear armor.

**Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while underwater.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Hold Breath.** You can hold your breath for 1 hour.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. However, your tentacles are nimble enough to manipulate and use most other objects.

**Tentacles.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**Water Breathing.** You can breathe only underwater.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Giant Octopus

Octopi are interesting beasts. Clever, inventive, and intelligent enough to use simple tools. They can squeeze through small spaces, and are dangerous grapplers. However, their inability to wear armor makes them vulnerable in extended combat. Consider classes which provide alternatives to manufactured armor like barbarian and monk.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Despite how complex and interesting octopi are in real life their stat block is fairly simple. Since players will spend so much more time playing an octopus than a dungeon master would spend running a monster, we'll need to make some additions to match the exceptional capabilities of real-world octopi.

Giant octopi are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant octopus's strength is fantastic, but its other ability scores aren't great. We'll grant +2 Strength for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 60 ft. swim speed for 2.5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and the ability to speak Common since we're treating the giant octopus as awakened.

Octopi are aquatic, and can't breathe air. Hold Breath works fine with this change, so we'll grant 1 hour of Hold Breath for 1 BP, and Water Breathing for 0 BP.

Camouflage is a bit of a problem. Normally it's specific to a particular terrain like forests or rocky terrain, but "underwater" is really broad for an aquatic

creature. We'll call it 1 BP, but that might be too low if the campaign spends a lot of time underwater.

Octopi don't have hands, but they have prehensile tentacles which are nimble enough to use simple tools. I don't think they could reasonably swing a weapon or hold a shield, but they've been recorder opening door knobs and other such tasks. So we'll grant No Hands for -1.5 BP and expand the description to mention the octopus's awesome tentacles.

We'll set the giant octopus's natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP and add Grab for another 2 BP.

Ink Cloud is pretty similar to fog cloud, though it only works underwater and also allows the octopus to Dash as a bonus action. A 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell allowed two levels early, and usable once per short rest is 2.75 BP. The water limitation is significant, but I expect octopi will primarily be used in underwater campaigns. Dashing in combination with fog cloud is great, but it only occurs once per short rest. We'll call the whole thing 3 BP.

Though the stat block doesn't mention it, one of the many wonderful capabilities of octopi is that they can squeeze through any space small enough to fit their beak. We'll add Amorphous for 0.5 BP. Of course, their movement relies heavily on the fact their bodies are soft and malleable. We'll disallow armor for -3 BP.

At 9 BP, the octopus is well within our target range of 8-10 BP. It's an interesting race, but as you might expect it will have a lot of issues in land-based campaigns. If you want to strengthen the giant octopus, grant it natural armor. If you want to weaken the giant octopus, reduce its Strength increase.

## Giant Owl

Enormous, nocturnal birds of prey known for their near-silent flight despite their immense size.

### Giant Owl Traits

Giant owls share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Though they often befriend creatures like fey or other chaotic-aligned forest creatures, most owls are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 5 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 60 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Flyby.** You may perform the Disengage action as a bonus action.

**Keen Hearing and Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. However, your tentacles are nimble enough to manipulate and use most other objects.

**Superior Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Giant Owl, but cannot speak other languages. You can read and understand common, elvish, and sylvan.

### Playing a Giant Owl

Fast and nimble with excellent Darkvision, giant owls are excellent scouts, especially at night. Consider classes which can take advantage of your mobility like fighter or rogue.

Giant owls are one of very few naturally intelligent beasts. The Monster Manual doesn't explore their personality or society, so you'll need to create those on your own.

### Design Notes

Giant owls are mostly simple beasts, but notably they're one of very few beasts which are intelligent without being awakened. Beyond that distinction, they're very simple.

Giant owls are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant Dexterity is the giant owl's only particularly good ability score, and it's still not great. We'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 5 ft. walking speed for -2.5 BP, 60 ft. flying speed for 7 BP, 120 ft. Darkvision for 3 BP, flyby for 2 BP, and keen hearing and sight for 0.5 BP. Giant owls have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

Giant owls speak their own language, but can only understand other languages. We'll call the limited ability to speak -0.75 BP like we did with the blink dog.

Giant owls get their own language plus two fixed languages for a total of -0.5 BP.

At 9.25 BP, the giant owl is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the giant owl, grant it a +1 Wisdom increase. If you want to weaken the giant owl, reduce its flight speed.

## Giant Poisonous Snake

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Enormous predators which hunt by biting and poisoning their prey.

### Giant Poisonous Snake Traits

Giant poisonous snakes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant poisonous snakes are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 10 ft.

**Serpentine Body.** You have no arms or hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Poisonous Snake

With high Dexterity and blindsight, giant poisonous snakes are natural rogues. However, with no ability to wear armor and no natural armor you will need to be very cautious about protecting yourself in combat. Consider classes like barbarian and monk which provide alternatives to manufactured armor.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Giant poisonous snakes are simple beasts, possessing no unique or difficult traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant poisonous snake as awakened.

Giant poisonous snakes are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Dexterity is the giant poisonous snake's only particularly good ability score, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 30 ft. walking speed for 0 BP, 30 ft. swim speed for 1 BP, and 10 ft. Blindsight for 4 BP. Since we're treating the giant poisonous snake as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Giant poisonous snakes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 and 1d4 poison for 2 BP. We'll also disallow armor for -3 BP because I have no idea how you would armor a snake.

At 3.5 BP, the giant poisonous snake is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not very interesting, but the stats work well for a rogue. If you want to strengthen the giant poisonous snake, grant it a constitution increase and natural armor.

## Giant Rat

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Oversized cousin of the omnipresent vermin, giant rats are more dangerous than their smaller relatives and are just likely to carry contagious diseases.

### Giant Rat Traits

Giant rats share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant rats are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. However, your tentacles are nimble enough to manipulate and use most other objects.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Giant Rat

High Dexterity and Pack Tactics can make the giant rat a potent melee threat. However, with a weak natural weapon you'll need to look for ways to boost your damage output. Consider classes like Monk and Rogue which offer damage boosts which can easily capitalize on Pack Tactics.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Giant rats are simple beasts, possessing no unique or difficult traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant rat as awakened.

Giant rats are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Dexterity is the giant rat's only particularly good ability score, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 0.5 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, Pack Tactics for 5 BP. Since we're treating the giant poisonous snake as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Giant poisonous snakes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 7.5 BP, the giant rat is just below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not very interesting, but a race with good Dexterity and Pack Tactics can be very effective. If you want to strengthen the giant rat, grant it a swim speed or proficiency in Stealth. If you want to weaken the giant rat, reduce its Dexterity increase.

## Giant Scorpion

Enormous arachnids with crushing claws and a poisonous sting.

### Giant Scorpion Traits

Giant scorpions share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant scorpions are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Claws and Sting.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and

1d4 poison damage on a hit with your sting, or 1d8 damage with your claws.

When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike, provided that you made the attack with your claws.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. However, your tentacles are nimble enough to manipulate and use most other objects.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Giant Scorpion

A terrifying physical threat, the giant scorpion makes an excellent barbarian or fighter. The scorpion's claws provide an easy way to grapple foes, keeping them in place while you overpower them.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

The giant scorpion is horrifying. It's fast, it has blindsight, it has Grab, and it does a pile of poison damage. It's strange for a beast, but we'll need to make some cuts to make it playable. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant scorpion as awakened.

Giant scorpions are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant scorpion's Strength and Constitution are both decent, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor (down from +4) for 1 BP, 30 ft. walking speed (down from 40 ft.) for 0 BP, and 30 ft. Blindsight (down from 60 ft.) for 6 BP. Since we're treating the giant scorpion as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Giant snakes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP, we'll add Grab for 2 BP, and we'll allow the scorpion to deal 1d4 piercing and 1d4 poison damage if it forgoes Grab.

At 10.5 BP, the giant scorpion exceeds our target BP range of 8-10 BP. It's powerful, but lacks versatility and adaptability. If you want to strengthen the giant scorpion, increase its natural armor by 1 or 2. If you want to weaken the giant scorpion, remove blindsight.

## Giant Sea Horse

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Enormous fish with heads that resemble land-born horses, giant sea horses occasionally serve as mounts for aquatic humanoid.

### Giant Sea Horse Traits

Giant sea horses share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant sea horses are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft. You have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 15 feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. However, your tentacles are nimble enough to manipulate and use most other objects.

**Ram.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Water Breathing.** You can breathe only underwater.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Sea Horse

With increased Strength and Dexterity but no hands, the giant seahorse is a potent physical threat. Choose a class which can easily capitalize on the damage boost from Charge, like barbarian or fighter.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

The giant sea horse is an aquatic charger similar to the giant elk. However, unlike other chargers, it's more Dexterity-based, which makes it difficult to make into a logical and playable race. The beast isn't particularly

strong, so we'll need to make some enhancements to make it playable. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant scorpion as awakened.

Giant sea horses are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant sea horse's Dexterity is decent, but that's not enough. The sea horse has Charge, which requires Strength, so we'll grant +1 Strength and +1 Dexterity for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor (up from +1) for 1 BP, 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 40 ft. swim speed for 1.5 BP, Charge for 2 BP, and Water Breathing for 0 BP. Since we're treating the giant scorpion as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Giant sea horses have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP (up from 1d6). Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At just 3 BP the giant sea horse is far below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's hard to see a way to make it playable, though in a purely underwater campaign it might be passable since lacking a land speed isn't a handicap. If you want to strengthen the sea horse, increase its ability increases or natural armor.

## Giant Shark

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Even larger than hunter sharks, giant sharks prey on nearly anything that moves, including passing ships.

See the traits listed under "Hunter Shark", later in this section.

### Design Notes

There are three varieties of shark presented in the monster manual. While the reef shark is a better representation of sharks which hunt in schools, the giant shark and the hunter shark are differentiated only by their numeric stats and their size. Since we need to reduce both of their sizes to medium, they're functionally identical, so we'll just refer players to the hunter shark.

## Giant Spider

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Arachnids as big as a full-grown human, giant spiders catch prey in elaborate sticky webs.

### Giant Spider Traits

Giant spiders share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant spiders are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. and you have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web.** You may shoot sticky webs from your body as a ranged weapon attack. This attack has 30/60 range. On a hit, the creature is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can make a Strength check against a DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution bonus, escaping from the webbing on a success. The effect ends if the webbing is destroyed. The webbing has AC 10, 5 hit points, resistance to bludgeoning damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

**Web Walker.** You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Giant Spider

Giant spiders are mobile and deadly. Spider Climb allows you to easily traverse walls and ceilings, allowing you to easily reach places normally inaccessible to most creatures. Web provides a powerful means of immobilizing your foes while you move in to attack them. Consider classes like barbarian, fighter, and rogue which fare well in melee combat and which can take advantage of your ability to immobilize foes.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Gross. Giant spiders have a whole mess of useful traits which make them surprisingly interesting as a race option. We can borrow some design elements from the Ettercap, too. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant spider as awakened.

Giant spiders are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant spider's Dexterity is its best ability, but its Strength isn't bad either. We'll grant +2 Dexterity and +1 Strength for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Spider Climb for 1 BP, and Web Walker for 0.5 BP. We'll drop blindsight to conserve BP. Since we're treating the giant spider as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Giant spiders have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 and 1d4 poison for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

The giant spider's version of Web differs very slightly from the Ettin's. The spider's web is weak to fire, but totally immune to bludgeoning damage instead of merely resistant. I don't think this is enough to justify a BP change, so we'll keep Web for 1 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the giant spider is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the giant spider, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the giant spider, remove its Strength increase.

## Giant Toad

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Amphibious predators the size of a horse.

See the traits listed under "Giant Frog", earlier in this section.

## Design Notes

While the difference between frogs and toads matters in the real world, the mechanical difference between the giant frog and the giant toad boils down to size and slightly bigger numbers. We'll just refer players to the giant frog.

## Giant Vulture

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Possessing greater intellect than many beasts, giant vultures are evil scavengers. While they feed mostly on the bodies of the already dead, a hungry flock of vultures will not hesitate to speed the process along.

### Giant Vulture Traits

Giant vultures share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Giant vultures have no qualms about killing and eating intelligent creatures, and will pursue them for days to slowly watch them die. Most giant vultures are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Languages.** You can read and understand Common, but can't speak.

### Playing a Giant Vulture

Strong flyers with the advantage of Pack Tactics, giant vultures are a potent physical threat if they have nearby allies. With Keen Sight and Smell, the ability to fly makes you an excellent scout. With no ability to use weapons, consider classes which excel in melee combat like barbarian, monk, and ranger.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

One of very few intelligent beasts, the giant vulture has elements in common with giant eagles and giant owls. However, unlike other giant birds, the giant vulture can't speak.

Giant vultures are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant vulture's Strength and Constitution are its only good ability scores, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 40 ft. flying speed (down from 60 ft.) for 5 BP, Keen Sight and Keen Smell for 1 BP total, and Pack Tactics for 5 BP. Giant vultures can't speak for -1 BP, but still understand Common for 0 BP. Giant vultures have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 8.5 BP, the giant vulture is within our target range 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the giant vulture, increase its speed. If you want to weaken the giant vulture, reduce its ability increases or its speed.

### Giant Wasp

Carnivorous insects as big as a full-grown human, giant wasps share their smaller cousins' aggression and poisonous sting.

### Giant Wasp Traits

Giant wasps share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant wasps are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 50 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Sting.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Wasp

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior

intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Giant wasps are fairly simple since their only interesting ability is their poison sting. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant wasp as awakened.

Giant wasps are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant wasp's only good ability is Dexterity, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, and 50 ft. fly speed for 6 BP. Since we're treating the giant wasp as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Giant wasps have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 and 1d4 poison for 2 BP. We'll drop the stabilizing/paralysis effect since players can choose to knock a creature unconscious when dropping them to 0 hit points with a melee attack.

Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 5.5 BP, the giant wasp is well below our target range of 8-10 BP.

## Giant Weasel

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Enormous mammalian predators that feed on smaller animals, especially rodents.

### Giant weasel Traits

Giant weasels share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant weasels are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Weasel

Giant weasels are fast, nimble, and observant. They make excellent monks, rangers, and rogues, but lack options to succeed in most other classes.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Giant weasels are extremely simple. Like other beasts, we'll treat the giant wasp as awakened.

Giant weasels are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The giant weasel's best ability is Dexterity. Wisdom is slightly than the weasel's other abilities, but not enough to justify an increase. We'll grant the giant weasel +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, and Keen Hearing and Keen Smell for 1 BP. Since we're treating the giant weasel as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Giant weasels have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d6 (up from 1d4) for 1.5 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 5.5 BP, the giant weasel is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's extremely boring, but from a walking bite attack monster there's not much inspiration to be drawn.

## Giant Wolf Spider

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Enormous arachnids that eat by hunting prey instead of luring them into a web.

### Giant Wolf Spider Traits

Giant wolf spiders share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.



**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant wolf spiders are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft. and you have a climb speed of 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Walker.** You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Giant Wolf Spider

Giant wolf spiders are faster than normal giant spiders, but lack their potent Web ability. Consider classes which can capitalize on your ability to get into combat quickly like Barbarian and Rogue.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

It's difficult to distinguish the giant wolf spider from the giant spider since the two are so mechanically similar. Instead of repeating the same work, we'll start from the giant spider and tweak it to fit the giant wolf spider.

The wolf spider loses Web, but it also has much better ability scores than the giant spider. We'll drop Web and replace its BP cost with a 10 ft. increase to the giant spider's walking and climb speeds.

## Goat

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Smaller than their giant cousins, goats live in the same climates. Goats, due to their smaller size, are frequently domesticated for meat and milk.

See the traits listed under "Giant Goat", later in this section.

### Design Notes

Goats are a CR 0 creature, making them difficult to design as a playable race. What few traits are usable are duplicated on the giant goat, so we'll just refer players to the giant goat instead.

## Hawk

---

Small raptors that prey primarily on fish and small mammals.

### Hawk Traits

Hawks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most hawks are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 60 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Hawk

Hawks are fast, nimble, and observant. They make excellent rangers, though without hands they may have trouble casting some spells due to their inability to use spellcasting foci.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior

intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Hawks are largely identical to blood hawks, but are smaller, have worse ability scores, and don't get Pack Tactics. That makes it difficult to meaningfully distinguish the hawk without just making it a weaker blood hawk.

Hawks are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Dexterity is the hawk's best ability by a wide margin, and its Wisdom is also good, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity and +1 Wisdom for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 50 ft. fly speed for 6 BP, and Keen Sight for 0.5 BP. Since we're treating the hawk as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Hawks have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 (up from 1) for 1 BP.

At 5.5 BP, the hawk is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It has some minor advantages over the blood hawk, but compared to Pack Tactics those advantages don't help much. If you want to strengthen the hawk, increase its speed or ability increases.

## Hunter Shark

Vicious aquatic predators drawn to the smell of blood.

### Hunter Shark Traits

Hunter sharks share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most hunting sharks are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft. You have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Blood Frenzy.** The smell of fresh blood drives you into a vicious frenzy. When you make an Attack action and make a successful unarmed strike attack, you may make another unarmed strike against the same target as a bonus action.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require

manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Water Breathing.** You can breathe only underwater.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Hunter Shark

Hunter sharks thrive in melee combat. Barbarian, Fighter, and Ranger are all natural choices for a hunter shark. Focus on larger targets to get as much damage as possible out of Blood Frenzy.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

The hunter shark is mostly a simple beast, except for Blood Frenzy which will require a lot of consideration. Like other beasts, we'll treat the hunter shark as awakened.

Hunter sharks are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Hunter sharks are very strong, and their Constitution is good. We'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 40 ft. swim speed for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. blindsight for 6 BP, and Water Breathing for 0 BP. Since we're treating the hunter shark as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Hunter sharks have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 (down from 2d8) for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

That brings our total to 7.5 BP before we consider Blood Frenzy. Blood Frenzy is difficult because most enemies spend most of the encounter below their maximum hit points. Generally, that's what players want to happen. Since that's the case, it would mean near-perpetual Advantage. We could add a bonus action activation, but that's even more permissive than Pack Tactics, which already carries a hefty BP cost.

Instead, we'll design something mostly new. I want the ability to encourage the shark to focus on attacking foes which it has already damaged. We'll allow the hunter shark to make an extra unarmed strike as a bonus action against a target they hit with an Attack action. That's powerful, but there are several feat and class abilities that provide similarly effective options. We'll call it 3 BP to be safe.

At 10.5 BP, the hunter shark slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the hunter shark, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the hunter shark, reduce its Strength increase.

## Hyena

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Vicious pack predators with a distinctive call that sounds like maniacal cackling.

### Hyena Traits

Hyenas share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most hyenas are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 50 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Hyena

Hyenas are very fast, and Pack Tactics provides an excellent offensive option. However, their bite doesn't do a lot of damage and they're not especially durable. Be sure to consider armor or a class that provides other AC sources like barbarian or monk.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

I'm a bit surprised by the hyena's stat block. Real-world hyenas are *very* strong. Even by themselves, they're extremely dangerous animals. Most real-world animals

are low CR, but CR 0 is still surprising. Regardless, the hyena is a simple beast to design. Like other beasts, we'll treat the hyena as awakened.

Hyenas are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Hyenas have really poor ability scores, so we'll largely ignore them. We'll grant +1 Strength and +1 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 50 ft. walking speed for 2 BP, and Pack Tactics for 5 BP. Since we're treating the hyena as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Hyenas have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d6 for 1.5 BP.

At 8 BP, the hyena is at the bottom of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the hyena, add a Constitution increase. If you want to weaken the hyena, reduce its speed.

## Jackal

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Small canines which hunt in packs.

### Jackal Traits

Jackals share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most jackals are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Jackal

Small and agile, jackals make excellent rangers and rogues. Look for other sources of damage to

supplement your weak natural weapons, such as Sneak Attack or Hunter's mark.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Jackals are almost identical to hyenas, though they're smaller, have better dexterity, and do less damage. We'll follow some of the same design choices. Like other beasts, we'll treat the hyena as awakened.

Jackals are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The jackal's Dexterity is its best ability, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP. Since their Wisdom is decent, we'll also grant +1 Wisdom for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 40 ft. walking speed for 1.5 BP, Keen Hearing and Keen Smell for 1 BP, and Pack Tactics for 5 BP. Since we're treating the jackal as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Jackals have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 8 BP, the jackal is at the bottom of our target range of 8-10 BP. They'll fit into a small niche of build concepts, but aren't versatile enough to work for a lot of characters. If you want to strengthen the jackal, increase its natural weapon damage. If you want to weaken the jackal, reduce its speed or remove its Wisdom increase.

## Killer Whale

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Enormous, aquatic mammals, they are highly intelligent, and extremely capable hunters.

### Killer Whale Traits

Killer whales share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most killer whales are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 60 ft.

**Echolocation.** You can't use your blindsight while deafened.

**Hold Breath.** You can hold your breath for 30 minutes.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Killer Whale

Killer whales are strong, fast swimmers. Blindsight allows them to fight effectively in deep water, but also allows them to face invisible foes effectively. Consider classes which can capitalize on your strength and your strong bite attack.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

I'm sure science enthusiasts have spent plenty of time decrying the "killer whale" misnomer for orcas, so I'll gloss over it in favor of remaining consistent with the Monster Manual. Beyond that, the killer whale is mostly a simple beast. Like other beasts, we'll treat the hyena as awakened.

Killer whales are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The killer whale's Strength is its best ability by far, so we'll grant +2 Strength for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from huge), +1 natural armor (down from +2) for 0.5 BP, 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 50 ft. swim speed (down from 60 ft.) for 2 BP, 60 ft. blindsight (down from 120 ft.) for 9 BP, Echolocation for -1.5 BP, 30-minute Hold Breath for 0.5 BP, and Keen Hearing for 0.5 BP. Since we're treating the killer whale as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Killer whales have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 9.5 BP, the killer whale is within our target range of 8-10 BP. Most of its BP is eaten by blindsight, but it's a very capable aquatic racial option. If you want to strengthen the killer whale, increase its natural armor. If you want to weaken the killer whale, reduce its blindsight range.

## Lion

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Fierce pack predators that dwell in temperate grasslands. Known for their noble stature and the iconic manes of their males.

### Lion Traits

Lions share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most lions are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 50 ft.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage or slashing damage on a hit.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Pounce.** If you move at least 15 feet straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Running Leap.** With a 10-foot running start, you can long jump up to 25 feet.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Lion

Lions are powerful charges, combining the mobility of Running Leap and the power of Pounce to overcome their foes. They hunt best in packs where they can take advantage of Pack Tactics. Other classes like Barbarian, Monk, and Fighter which excel in melee combat.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Mostly simply beasts, but lions have several potent special abilities.

Lions are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Lions have excellent physical ability scores, but we need to be careful to save BP for their other abilities. We'll grant +1 Strength for 1 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 50 ft. walking speed for 2 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, Pack Tactics for 5 BP, and Pounce for 1.5 BP. Lions have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

Running Leap is the lion's only unique ability. It's not quite as good as Standing Leap, so we'll call it 0.5 BP.

At 10 BP, the lion is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. It's a great charger, but won't be effective at much else. If you want to strengthen the lion, grant it a +1 to Dexterity. If you want to weaken the lion, remove Pack Tactics and replace it with additional ability score increases.

### Lizard

Small reptiles that dwell in a wide variety of warm climates.

### Lizard Traits

Lizards share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most lizards are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a climb speed of 20 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Lizard

Tiny and nimble, lizards make excellent rogues. However, they're slow and not very durable, so be cautious to avoid drawing attention to yourself.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality.

Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Lizards are extremely weak, so we'll need to give them a lot to make them anything resembling playable. Like other beasts, we'll treat the mastiff as awakened.

Lizards are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The lizard's best ability score is Dexterity, though at just 11 it's not very impressive. Lacking better options, we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed, 20 ft. climb speed for 1.5 BP, and 20 ft. Darkvision for 1.5 BP. Lizards have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 (up from 1) for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At just 2.5 BP, the lizard is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's nowhere near viable as playable race. If you want to strengthen the lizard, borrow ideas from the giant lizard.

## Mammoth

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Ancestors of modern elephants, mammoths are huge tusked quadrupeds covered in thick fur.

See the traits listed under "Elephant", earlier in this section.

### Design Notes

Mammoths are essentially just bigger, scarier elephants. Scaling them down to a playable race makes them indistinguishable from elephants, so we'll point players to the elephant stats that we've already designed.

## Mastiff

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Enormous dogs domesticated for hunting and for riding by small humanoids, Mastiffs are easy to train and fiercely loyal companions.

### Mastiff Traits

Mastiffs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most mastiffs are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Mastiff

With excellent physical ability scores and good speed, mastiffs thrive in melee combat. Consider classes which can capitalize on these advantages like barbarian, monk, fighter, and rogue.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts with few special traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the mastiff as awakened.

Mastiffs are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The mastiff's physical abilities are all decent, so it's hard to know what to increase. Large dogs are generally known for being strong, but their Dexterity is slightly higher for some reason. This may be a bit crazy, but we'll grant +1 to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution for a total of 3 BP. That's a bit of a risky design choice, but mastiffs get almost nothing else so I think we have some room for risky choices.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, and Keen Hearing and Keen Smell for 1 BP. Mastiffs have no hands for -2, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 (up from 1d6) for 2 BP.

At just 4.5 BP, the mastiff is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. They're fast and have good ability scores, but with almost no special abilities they're fairly bland.

## Mule

---

Infertile quadrupeds bred from a horse and donkey, mules are renowned for their usefulness as pack animals.

## Mule Traits

Mules share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most mules are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Beast of Burden.** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Hooves.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Sure-footed.** You have advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws and ability checks made against effects that would knock it prone.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Mule

With excellent Strength and Constitution, mules excel in melee combat. Consider classes like Barbarian and Monk.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Simple beasts with few special traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the mule as awakened.

Mules are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The mule's best ability scores are Strength and Constitution. Lacking notable special abilities to consume BP, we'll grant +2 to each for 4 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, and sure-footed for 0.25 BP. Mules have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 (up from 1d4) for 2 BP.

The mule's only unique ability is Beast of Burden. It's essentially the same as Powerful Build, so we'll reskin Powerful Build for 0.25 BP.

At 5 BP, the mule is below our target range of 8-10 BP. It has no notable traits, but its ability score increases are nice. If you want to strengthen the mule,

## Octopus

Clever, 8-tentacle aquatic predators with soft bodies and sharp-beaked mouths.

## Octopus Traits

Octopi share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most octopi are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 5 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Amorphous.** Your body is not completely rigid, and your limbs often fluctuate in size and shape as you move. You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. You are unable to wear armor.

**Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while underwater.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 30 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Hold Breath.** You can hold your breath for 1 hour.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. However, your tentacles are nimble enough to manipulate and use most other objects.

**Tentacles.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Water Breathing.** You can breathe only underwater.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing an Octopus

Smaller and weaker than the giant octopus, you will do better to focus on stealth and surprise than charging directly into combat. Consider classes like monk and ranger than cater well to a stealthy playstyle.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Largely the same as the giant octopus, the octopus is basically a smaller, weaker, slower version of the same creature. Like other beasts, we'll treat the octopus as awakened.

Octopi are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The octopus's Dexterity is its only good ability score. We'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get small size for -1 BP, 5 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 30 ft. swim speed for 1 BP, 30 ft. Darkvision for 1.5 BP, and the ability to speak Common since we're treating the octopus as awakened.

Octopi are aquatic, and can't breathe air. Hold Breath works fine with this change, so we'll grant 1 hour of Hold Breath for 1 BP, and Water Breathing for 0 BP.

Camouflage is a bit of a problem. Normally it's specific to a particular terrain like forests or rocky terrain, but "underwater" is really broad for an aquatic creature. We'll call it 1 BP, but that might be too low if the campaign spends a lot of time underwater.

Octopi don't have hands, but they have prehensile tentacles which are nimble enough to use simple tools. I don't think they could reasonably swing a weapon or hold a shield, but they've been recorder opening door knobs and other such tasks. So we'll grant No Hands for -1.5 BP and expand the description to mention the octopus's awesome tentacles.

We'll set the octopus's natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP and add Grab for another 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

Ink Cloud is similar to the *fog cloud* spell, though it only works underwater and also allows the octopus to Dash as a bonus action. A 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell allowed two levels early, and usable once per short rest is 2.75 BP. The water limitation is significant, but I expect octopi will primarily be used in underwater campaigns. Dashing in combination with fog cloud is great, but it only occurs once per short rest. We'll call the whole thing 3 BP.

Though the stat block doesn't mention it, one of the many wonderful capabilities of octopi is that they can squeeze through any space small enough to fit their beak. We'll add Amorphous for 0.5 BP. Of course, their movement relies heavily on the fact their bodies are soft and malleable. We'll disallow armor for -3 BP.

At just 4 BP the octopus is far below our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the octopus,

grant it proficiency in Stealth, and possibly natural armor.

## Owl

Nocturnal raptors that fly almost silently and can see great distances in the dark of night.

### Owl Traits

Owls share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity, Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most owls are neutral

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 5 ft.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 60 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Flyby.** You may perform the Disengage action as a bonus action.

**Keen Hearing and Sight.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. However, your tentacles are nimble enough to manipulate and use most other objects.

**Superior Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 120 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Talons.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing an Owl

Tiny, nimble, and observant, owls make excellent rangers and rogues. Their natural weapons are weak, so look for other sources of damage like Sneak Attack.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Owls are almost identical to giant owls. Regular owls are smaller and lose the Giant Owl's languages since



normal owls aren't naturally intelligent. We'll start from the giant owl, and adjust the BP to fit the standard owl.

Dropping size from medium to tiny costs -1.5 BP. Since we're treating the owl as awakened it can speak common, costing 0.5 BP compared to the Giant Owl's speech capabilities. We'll set the Owl's natural weapons to 1d4 (up from 1), costing -1 BP compared to the Giant Owl. That brings us to 1 BP less than the giant owl. We'll grant the owl +1 Wisdom increase to make it worthy of consideration next to the giant owl. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 9.25 BP, the owl is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the giant owl, increase its Dexterity increase to +2. If you want to weaken the giant owl, reduce its flight speed.

## Panther

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Black-furred feline predators.

### Panther Traits

Panthers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most panthers are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 50 ft. You have a climb speed of 40 ft.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage or slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pounce.** If you move at least 15 feet straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Panther

Strong and nimble with an excellent climb speed, predators are a great ambush predator. Consider classes like barbarian or fighter which thrive in melee, but don't overlook stealthy classes like monk, ranger, and rogue.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Panthers are similar to lions in a lot of ways, which makes sense when comparing feline predators. However, their stats reflect difference between the real-world animals. Lions are larger pack hunters, while panthers are solitary hunters and skilled climbers. The end result will be two similar races with differences reflecting the differences between the two animals. Like other beasts, we'll treat the panther as awakened.

Panthers are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Panthers have less costly special abilities than lions, leaving us more room for ability increases. The Panther's best abilities are Strength and Dexterity. We'll grant +2 Dexterity and +1 Strength for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 50 ft. speed for 2 BP, 40 ft. climb speed for 3 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, and Pounce for 1.5 BP. Panthers have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 10 BP, the Panther is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to Strengthen the Panther, increase its Strength increase. If you want to weaken the panther, reduce its Dexterity increase or its walking speed.

## Phase Spider

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Horrifying arachnids capable of entering the ethereal plane to ambush their prey.

### Phase Spider Traits

Phase spiders share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most giant spiders are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. and you have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Ethereal Jaunt.** As a bonus action, you can magically shift to the ethereal plane or the material plane. At the start of your next turn, your return to the plane on which you activated this ability.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Web Walker.** You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Phase Spider

Dangerous ambush predators, phase spiders are capable of briefly stepping into the ethereal plane to ambush their prey. While this is a powerful ability, it can only be used briefly. Consider classes which can take advantage of surprising your enemies like monk, ranger, and rogue.

Unlike other giant spiders, phase spiders are intelligent. However, they lack the capacity to speak or understand languages. Consider how and why you might communicate with other party members who would likely be considered food in normal circumstances.

## Design Notes

The Phase Spider is largely identical to the giant spider, separated by little beyond Web and Ethereal Jaunt. Notably, phase spiders are Intelligent enough that they

don't qualify for awakening, but they can't speak or understand languages. They're also unaligned, which is generally reserved for creatures without sufficient Intelligence to have an alignment.

Phase spiders are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The phase spider's Strength and Dexterity are even, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, Darkvision for 2 BP, Spider Climb for 1 BP, and Web Walker for 0.5 BP. Phase spiders have no language capacity for -2 BP. Phase spiders have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 and 1d4 poison for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

That brings us to 6.5 BP before we tackle Ethereal Jaunt. We obviously can't allow it in its current form. Access to the ethereal plane is immensely useful, and allowing it to be used at will is something that many high-level wizards can't do. Instead, we'll start with Hidden Step (which we've used to replace Invisibility) and make some adjustments.

Retaining the 1-round duration, bonus action activation, and short rest recharge mechanics are great ways to limit the ability. 1 round of etherealness till allows the Phase Spider to do a lot of interesting things like evading enemies, walking through barriers, etc. Hidden Step is 2 BP, but Etherealness is much more powerful than invisibility, so we'll call Ethereal Jaunt 4 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the Phase Spider slightly exceeds our target BP range of 8-10 BP. If you want to weaken the phase spider, add a -2 Intelligence penalty. If you want to strengthen the phase spider, allow it to use Ethereal Jaunt more frequently. Once every time it rolls initiative could work, but presents possible abuse. Consider twice or three times per short rest.

## Poisonous Snake

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### Poisonous Snake Traits

Poisonous snakes share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most poisonous snakes are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft. You have a climb speed of 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 poison damage on a hit.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 10 ft.

**Serpentine Body.** You have no arms or hands. You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. You are unable to wear armor.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Poisonous Snake

With high Dexterity and blindsight, poisonous snakes are natural rogues. However, with no ability to wear armor and no natural armor you will need to be very cautious about protecting yourself in combat. Consider classes like barbarian and monk which provide alternatives to manufactured armor.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts, poisonous snakes have no unique traits. Like other failures in nomenclature found throughout the monster manual, we'll ignore the fact that snakes are venomous, not poisonous. Like other beasts, we'll treat the poisonous snake as awakened. We'll also borrow heavily from design choices made for the giant poisonous snake.

Poisonous snakes are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The Poisonous Snake's only good ability score is Dexterity, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, 30 ft. climb speed for 2 BP, and 10 ft. blindsight for 4 BP. Since we're treating the poisonous snake as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Poisonous snakes have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 poison damage for 2 BP. We'll also disallow armor for -3 BP because I have no idea how you would armor a snake.

At just 2 BP the poisonous snake is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. It's not very interesting, but the stats work well for a rogue. If you want to strengthen the poisonous snake, grant it a constitution increase and natural armor.

## Polar Bear

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Enormous arctic predators with stark white fur.

### Polar Bear Traits

Polar bears share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most polar bears are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft. You have a swim speed of 30 ft.

**Bite and Claws.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Polar Bear

Polar bears make excellent barbarians and fighters due to their excellent ability score increases, but will have trouble playing other classes.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

After adjusting their size, polar bears are identical to black bears in almost every aspect. We can trade the black bear's climb speed for a swim speed, and suddenly we have a new bear. That does drop the Polar Bear's BP by 1, so check the Black Bear's design notes for guidance on adjusting either bear.

## Pony

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Smaller than horses, ponies make excellent mounts for small riders like halflings and human children.

### Pony Traits

Ponies share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most ponies are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Hooves.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Pony

Fast and strong, ponies fare well in melee and make excellent barbarians and fighters. If you have small characters in your party, consider letting them ride you to take advantage of your speed.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts, ponies have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the pony as awakened.

Ponies are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The Pony's Strength and Constitution are good, so we'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size and 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP. Since we're treating the pony as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Ponies have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 damage for 2 BP.

At just 3.5 BP, the pony is well below our target range of 8-10 BP.

## Quipper

Tiny predatory fish, quippers often live in schools which quickly devour anything they find.

### Quipper Traits

Quippers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most quippers are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft. You have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Blood Frenzy.** The smell of fresh blood drives you into a vicious frenzy. When you make an Attack action and make a successful unarmed strike attack, you may make another unarmed strike against the same target as a bonus action.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Water Breathing.** You can breathe only underwater.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Quipper

Tiny creatures with few notable traits, quippers can still make effective fighters and rogues. Blood Frenzy can provide a powerful boost to your damage output, despite the quipper's small bite attack.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Essentially a tiny shark, the quipper is a simple creature. We'll borrow design elements from the hunger shark, especially Blood Frenzy. Like other beasts, we'll treat the quipper as awakened.

Quippers are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The Quipper's only good ability score is Dexterity, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 0 ft. walking speed for -3 BP, 40 ft. swim speed for 1.5 BP, Blood Frenzy for 3 BP, and Water Breathing for 0 BP. Since we're treating the Quipper as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Quippers have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 (up from 1) for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At just 3.5 BP, the quipper is well below our target range of 8-10 BP.



## Rat

Rodents common to nearly every locale occupied by humans, rats are often considered signs of filth and disease.

### Rats Traits

Rats share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most rats are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 30 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it

were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields. However, your tentacles are nimble enough to manipulate and use most other objects.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Rat

Among the weakest of creatures, rats have trouble succeeding in nearly any role. However, their prevalence can make them an effective rogue if you capitalize on the fact that rats are commonly ignored in many locales.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Normal rats are, unsurprisingly, very similar to giant rats. However, they're considerably worse. We'll start from the giant rat stats and work backward.

Rats are tiny, costing -0.5 BP. Their Darkvision range is reduced to 30 ft., costing -0.5 BP. Their bite damage goes from 1d4 to 1, costing -1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP. Finally, they lose Pack Tactics, costing -5 BP.

At just 0.5 BP, rats are truly pitiful.

## Raven

Black birds known for their intelligence and their ability to mimic sounds.

### Raven Traits

Ravens share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most ravens are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 50 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Mimicry.** You can mimic any sounds you have heard, including voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful Insight check against a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma (Deception) bonus.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Raven

Fast and nimble, but physically weak, ravens don't do well in combat. However, with good Dexterity and excellent flight they can make decent rogues.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Fairly simple beasts, ravens have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the raven as awakened.

Ravens are beasts, costing -0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The Raven's only good ability score is Dexterity, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, 50 ft. flight speed for 6 BP, Mimicry for 1 BP. Since we're treating the Raven as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Ravens have no hands for -2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At just 4 BP, the raven is well below our target range of 8-10 BP.

### Reef Shark

Smaller than hunter sharks or giant sharks, reef sharks inhabit shallow waters and hunt in packs.

#### Reef Shark Traits

Reef shark share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most hunting sharks are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft. You have a swim speed of 40 ft.

**Blindsight.** You have blindsight 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Water Breathing.** You can breathe only underwater.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Reef Shark

Strong fast, and deadly in the water, reef sharks function best when they have allies to support them in melee combat. Consider classes like barbarian, fighter, and monk which excel in melee.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Reef sharks are extremely similar to hunter sharks once we adjust for size, so we'll start from the hunter shark and make adjustments.

The biggest difference between the two sharks is trading Blood Frenzy for Pack Tactics. It's a 2 BP difference, and since the Hunter Shark is already at 10.5 BP we need to make some cuts from the reef shark. We'll drop the reef shark's ability increases to just +1 Strength and we'll drop natural armor altogether, bringing the reef shark's BP to 10.

If you want to adjust the Reef Shark, check the Hunter Shark's design notes for suggestions.

### Rhinoceros

Sturdy pachyderms with ivory horns on their noses.

#### Rhinoceros Traits

Rhinoceri share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Charge.** Once per turn, if you move at least 20 feet straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

In addition, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see “Shoving a Creature”, page 195 of the Player’s Handbook).

**Gore.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Rhinoceros

Powerful and durable, rhinoceroses make excellent chargers. Consider classes which do well in melee combat like barbarian or fighter.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character’s personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character’s personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts, rhinoceroses have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we’ll treat the Rhinoceros as awakened.

Rhinoceroses are beasts, costing -0.5 BP.

The Rhinoceros’ Strength is fantastic, and its Constitution is also good. We’ll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor for 1 BP, and 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP. Since we’re treating the Rhinoceros as awakened, we’ll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Rhinoceroses have no hands for -2 BP, and we’ll set their natural weapons to 1d8 (down from 2d8) for 2 BP.

The Rhinoceros’s Charge combines Charge (the bonus damage) and Pounce (the knockdown). We’ll add both traits for a total of 3.5 BP.

At 8 BP, the Rhinoceros is at the bottom of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the Rhinoceros, increase its natural armor or Constitution increase. If you want to weaken the Rhinoceros, remove its Constitution increase.

## Riding Horse

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Larger and stronger than ponies, but faster and less sturdy than draft horses, riding are bread travel and frequently used as mounts in combat.

See the traits listed under “Pony”, earlier in this section.

### Design Notes

The riding horse is essentially identical to the pony with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That’s not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we’ll just refer players to the pony stats.

## Saber-Toothed Tiger

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Feline predators distinguished by their jutting canine teeth.

See the traits listed under “Tiger”, later in this section.

### Design Notes

Saber-toothed tigers are largely identical to tigers, differentiated only by slighter better numbers. That’s not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we’ll just refer players to the tiger stats.

## Scorpion

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Arachnids with a deadly poisonous sting and grasping claws.

### Scorpion Traits

Scorpions share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most scorpions are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Sting.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 poison damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

## Playing a Scorpion

Nimble and tiny, scorpions make natural rogues. However, limited by their poor speed and locked into poison damage, you may have trouble defeating foes who can escape your reach or resist your damage.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Simple beasts, scorpions have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the Scorpion as awakened.

Scorpions are beasts, costing -0.5 BP.

The Scorpion's Dexterity is its only ability score above 10, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 10 ft. walking speed for -1 BP, and 10 ft. blindsight for 4 BP. Since we're treating the Scorpion as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Scorpions have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 poison for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At just 3.5 BP, the scorpion is well below our target range of 8-10 BP.

## Sea Horse

Small fish with heads resembling a horse's.

### Sea Horse Traits

Sea horses share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most sea horses are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 0 ft. You have a swim speed of 20 ft.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Sea Horse

Slow and lacking meaningful traits of any kind, sea horses are essentially unplayable.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality.

Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

## Design Notes

Simple beasts, sea horses have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the sea horse as awakened.

Sea horses are beasts, costing -0.5 BP.

The Sea Horse's Dexterity is its only ability score above 10, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 0 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 20 ft. swim speed for 0.5 BP, and Water Breathing for 0 BP. Since we're treating the Sea Horse as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Sea horses have no hands for -2 BP.

At -3.5 BP, the sea horse is unsalvageable. It's essentially unplayable.

## Spider

Larger than common household spiders, but not so immense as true giant spiders, spiders the size of housecats are dangerous predators.

### Spider Traits

Spiders share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most spiders are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 20 ft. You have a climb speed of 20 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 poison damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 30 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Spider Climb.** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.



**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, you know the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Spider

Nimble and capable of walking on walls and ceilings, spiders make excellent rogues. Since your attacks are weak, consider classes like monk or rogue which add to your damage output.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts, spiders have no unique traits except Web Sense. Like other beasts, we'll treat the Spider as awakened.

Spiders are beasts, costing -0.5 BP.

The Spider's Dexterity is its only ability score above 10, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 20 ft. walking speed, 20 ft. climb speed for 1.5 BP, 30 ft. Darkvision for 1.5 BP, Spider Climb 1 BP, Web Walker for 0.5 BP. Since we're treating the Spider as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Spiders have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 poison for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

Web sense is simple and extremely situational. We'll call it 0.5 BP.

At 4 BP, the spider is well below our target range of 8-10 BP.

## Tiger

Immense felines famous for their orange and black striped coats.

### Tiger Traits

Tigers share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most tigers are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Bite and Claw.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing or slashing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Keen Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pounce.** If you move at least 20 feet straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Tiger

Strong and nimble, tigers thrive in melee combat. Consider classes like barbarian and fighter which can capitalize on the tiger's natural capabilities.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts, tigers have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the Tiger as awakened.

Tigers are beasts, costing -0.5 BP.

The Tiger's physical ability scores are excellent, but it's hard to know what to emphasize. I like the idea of focusing on the tiger as a strong, agile predator, so we'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Dexterity for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, 60 ft. Darkvision for 2 BP, Keen Smell for 0.5 BP, and Pounce for 1.5 BP. Since we're treating the Tiger as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Tigers have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At 7.5 BP, the tiger is just below our target BP range of 8-10 BP. It's a fine charger, but not so interesting as similar beasts like the Lion.

## Vulture

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Enormous birds that feed almost exclusively on carrion.

### Vulture Traits

Vultures share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Constitution, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most vulture are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 10 ft.

**Beak.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 40 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor.

**Keen Sight and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Vulture

With fast flight and Pack Tactics, vultures are an excellent flying ambusher, but they rely heavily on allies. Since the vulture's unarmed strike damage is relatively weak, look for other ways to increase your damage. Consider classes like monk, ranger, and rogue.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts, vultures have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the Vulture as awakened.

Vultures are beasts, costing -0.5 BP.

The ability scores are poor, but it has above-average Constitution and Wisdom, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size, 10 ft. walking speed for -2 BP, 40 ft. flying speed (down from 50 ft.) for 5 BP, Keen Sight and Keen Smell for 1 BP, and Pack Tactics for 5 BP. Since we're treating the Vulture as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Vultures have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 for 1 BP.

At 10.5 BP, the vulture is slightly above our target range of 8-10 BP. The combination of fast flight and pack tactic make it a potent threat, but it has poor offensive options and will likely be heavily dependent on allies to succeed in combat. If you want to strengthen the vulture, increase its flight speed to 50 ft. If you want to weaken the vulture, reduce its flight speed to 30 ft.

## Warhorse

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A riding horse trained to kick and bite when threatened, warhorses are an excellent steed for anyone seeking to ride into battle.

See the traits listed under "Pony", earlier in this section.

### Design Notes

The warhorse is essentially identical to the pony with slightly better ability scores and a few more hit dice. That's not enough to distinguish the two as playable races, so we'll just refer players to the pony stats.

## Weasel

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Burrowing marsupials valued for their fluffy white winter coats.

### Weasel Traits

Weasels share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Dexterity, +1 Wisdom.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most weasels are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is tiny.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common.

### Playing a Weasel

Nimble and observant, weasels make excellent rangers and rogues. Be sure to look for ways to boost your damage output like Hunter's Mark and Sneak Attack.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts, weasels have no unique traits. Like other beasts, we'll treat the Weasel as awakened.

Weasels are beasts, costing -0.5 BP.

The weasel's Dexterity is excellent, and its Wisdom is above average, so we'll grant +2 Dexterity and +1 Wisdom for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get tiny size for -1.5 BP, 30 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, and Keen Hearing and Keen Smell for 1 BP. Since we're treating the Weasel as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Weasels have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d4 (up from 1) for 1 BP. Because they qualify, we'll add natural weapon finesse for 0 BP.

At just 2 BP, the weasel is well below our target range of 8-10 BP. With no hands and terrible natural weapons, it's basically unplayable.

### Winter Wolf

Considerably larger than a normal wolf, and coated in thick white fur. Winter wolves have pale blue eyes, and deadly frozen breath.

### Winter Wolf Traits

Winter wolves share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Intelligent predators that ally themselves with evil giants, most winter wolves are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Bite.** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

**Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

**Cold Breath.** As an action, you can breathe a blast of freezing wind in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that cone must make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 cold damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level. 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Snow Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

**Trip.** If you hit a creature with an unarmed strike, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Languages.** You can speak and read Common, Giant, and Winter Wolf.

### Playing a Winter Wolf

Equipped with a long list of useful racial traits, the Winter Wolf is a formidable creature. Use your speed to move into melee quickly. Impede single foes with Trip, and attack groups of enemies with your cold breath. Your natural armor reduces the need for manufactured armor, but don't forget to invest in your Dexterity if you plan to go unarmored.

Winter wolves commonly ally themselves with evil ice giants, so they're a natural addition to a party with an ice giant character.

### Design Notes

While they're mechanically simple, winter wolves have a long list of traits to be considered.

Winter wolves are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

Winter wolves have good physical ability scores, especially Strength and Constitution. We need to conserve BP, so we'll grant +1 to each for 2 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 40 ft. walking speed (down from 50) for 1 BP, racial languages plus Common and an additional fixed language for 0.25 BP, Keen Hearing and Keen Smell for 1 BP, Camouflage for 0.5 BP, a breath weapon for 2 BP, and Trip for 2 BP. We'll drop Pack Tactics to conserve BP. Winter wolves have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 10.25 BP, the Winter Wolf slightly exceeds our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the Winter Wolf, increase its Strength increase. If you want to weaken the Winter Wolf, remove its Constitution increase.

## Wolf

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Canine pack hunters native to a variety of climates, wolves have long symbolized the danger of the untamed wilds.

### Wolf Traits

Wolves share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Beast

**Ability Score Increase.** +1 Dexterity.

**Alignment.** Normally unintelligent beasts, most wolves are neutral.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 11 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Pack Tactics.** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Trip.** If you hit a creature with an unarmed strike, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write in Common.

### Playing a Wolf

Wolves are capable attackers, but lack defensive options. Be sure to pick up armor, or consider classes

like barbarian and monk which offer alternate means of boosting your AC. Cooperate with allies in combat; use Pack Tactics to gain Advantage on your attacks, then use Trip so that allies will gain Advantage on their own attacks.

Like many other creatures, being awakened has a great deal of influence of your character's personality. Consider what effect granted your character superior intelligence, and how that effect shaped your character's personality.

### Design Notes

Simple beasts, wolves have no unique traits. However, they have several special abilities which will eat BP quickly. Like other beasts, we'll treat the Wolf as awakened.

Wolves are beasts, costing -0.5 BP.

Wolves have good physical ability scores, but aside from Dexterity it's hard to know what to emphasize since four of the ability scores are 12. We'll grant +1 Dexterity for 1 BP, and spend the rest of the BP elsewhere.

From the stat block, we get medium size, +1 natural armor for 0.5 BP, 40 ft. walking speed for 1 BP, Keen Hearing and Keen Smell for 1 BP, Pack Tactics for 5 BP, and Trip for 2 BP. Since we're treating the Wolf as awakened, we'll grant the ability to speak Common for 0 BP. Wolves have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 10 BP, the wolf is at the top of our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to strengthen the wolf, add a +1 Strength increase. If you want to weaken the wolf, reduce its speed.

## Worg

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Bigger than a wolf and nearly as intelligent as a human, worgs are cunning, malevolent predators. They frequently serve goblins and hobgoblins as mounts, and accompany them in battle.

### Worg Traits

Worgs share the following racial traits.

**Creature Type.** Monstrosity

**Ability Score Increase.** +2 Strength, +1 Constitution.

**Alignment.** Cunning beasts that ally themselves with goblinoids and willingly hunt humans, most worgs are neutral evil.

**Size.** Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 40 ft.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it

were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Natural Armor.** While unarmored, your AC is equal to 12 + your Dexterity modifier.

**No Hands.** You are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc.

**Trip.** If you hit a creature with an unarmed strike, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Languages.** You can speak and read Goblin and Worg.

### Playing a Worg

Strong and fast, worgs are aggressive melee combatants. Their Trip ability provides allies an easy way to gain Advantage against their foes. Consider classes like barbarian and fighter which can capitalize on the worg's traits.

Worgs are frequently raised by goblinoids for use as mounts or hunting companions. This makes the Worg an excellent addition to many parties featuring goblin character.

### Design Notes

Worgs are extremely similar to wolves, but give up Pack Tactics for better numbers. They're already intelligent and capable of speech, so we don't need to treat them as awakened.

Worgs are monstrosities, costing 0.5 BP but offering no specific traits.

The Worg's best ability score is Strength. Its Dexterity and Constitution are equal, but I think it makes more sense to emphasize Strength. We'll grant +2 Strength and +1 Constitution for 3 BP.

From the stat block, we get medium size (down from large), +2 natural armor for 1 BP, 40 ft. walking speed (down from 50 ft.) for 1 BP, 60 ft. Darkvision for 2 BP, only racial languages plus on fixed language for -0.75 BP, Keen Hearing and Keen Smell for 1 BP, and Trip for 2 BP. Worgs have no hands for -2 BP, and we'll set their natural weapons to 1d8 for 2 BP.

At 9.75, the Worg is within our target range of 8-10 BP. If you want to weaken the Worg, reduce its Strength increases. If you want to strengthen the Worg, increase its speed.

# Monstrous

## Character Options

This section presents several new character options. While these feats are intended for use by the races presented in this document, some of them may be useful for races presented in other publications.

### Class Options

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#### Combat Style

The Combat Style class feature exists across several classes. The following Combat Style options are available to fighters, paladins, and rangers.

#### Natural Weapon

The damage dealt by your unarmed strikes increase by one die size (1 > 1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12, up to 1d12). If your unarmed strike damage includes multiple dice, only one of the dice changes in size. You may choose which die to improve, but this decision is permanent.

### Feats

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#### Bestial Spellcaster

A wave of the claw, a series of canine yips, or even grinding chitinous plates together can serve just as well as wagging fingers and magic words.

- If you lack human-like hands, you may cast spells as though you were wielding a spellcasting focus.
- You may perform somatic components as though you had human-like hands.
- If you can create vocalizations or sounds of some sort which your species uses to communicate (barking, trumpeting, whale song, etc.) you may perform verbal components even if you are physically incapable of speaking a language.

#### Mighty Breath

Your breath weapon is exceptionally fearsome.

*Prerequisite: Breath weapon racial trait.*

- Increase the die size of the damage dealt by your breath weapon by one size (1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12, up to 1d12). If your breath weapon deals multiple damage dice (2d6, 3d8, etc.), they all increase in size.
- You may use your breath weapon twice before requiring a short or long rest.

#### Natural Weapon Master

Your body is as deadly as any blade.

*Prerequisite: Racial natural weapons such as claws, a bite, or tentacles.*

- The damage dealt by your unarmed strikes increase by one die size (1 > 1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12, up to 1d12). If your unarmed strike damage includes multiple dice, only one of the dice changes in size. You may choose which die to improve, but this decision is permanent.
- After taking the Attack action, you may use a bonus action to make an unarmed strike using your natural weapons. You don't add your ability modifier to the damage of the bonus attack, unless that modifier is negative.
- You may use the higher of your Strength or your Dexterity modifier for attack and damage rolls with unarmed strikes when using your natural weapons.

#### Powerful Flyer

You are able to fly while weighed down, and can fly unusually fast while unencumbered.

*Prerequisite: Flight racial trait.*

- While wearing light armor or no armor, your flight speed increases by 10 feet.
- You can fly while wearing medium armor or carrying a medium load.

#### Thick Hide

Your unladen body as impenetrable as the sturdiest armor.

*Prerequisite: Natural Armor racial trait.*

- Increase your Constitution score by +1, to a maximum of 20.
- While unarmored, your AC increases by +1.

## Backgrounds

The following backgrounds are designed for use primarily by monstrous characters, but frequently work just as well for more conventional characters.

### Exile

No longer welcome among your own kind, you have abandoned your home to try to survive the world on your own. Perhaps you will return home again someday, but for now you must live among people whose ways are foreign to you.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Persuasion, Survival

**Tool Proficiencies:** Herbalism kit

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Equipment:** A club, quarterstaff, or spear, a set of traveler's clothes, a pouch containing 5 gp.

### Cast Out

What was the reason you were driven from your home? You can work with your DM to determine the exact nature of your seclusion, or you can choose or roll on the table below to determine the reason behind your seclusion.

d8 Cast Out

- 1 I committed an unforgivable crime
- 2 I was falsely accused
- 3 I angered an influential figure
- 4 I failed an important task
- 5 I stole an object of great value
- 6 I faked my own death
- 7 I was an outsider among my people
- 8 I left of my own free will

### Feature: Stranger in a Strange Land

Accustomed to being among people who do not share your ideals or culture, you have learned to quickly adopt the mannerisms of the local peoples wherever you go. Even if your people are not normally encountered wherever you are, most people treat you like a local unless they have a specific reason not to do so, and your race does not draw unwanted attention from people with no strong feelings toward your race.

### Suggested Characteristics

Some exiles are well suited to a life away from their own kind, while others long to return home. Whether they seek to return home or not, the solitary nature of their life shapes their behavior. Many are driven to depression, anger, or insanity by their circumstances.

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I've been away from my people so long that I barely speak my native tongue.
- 2 I have come to accept my situation.
- 3 I love my people, and extol their virtues to anyone who will listen.
- 4 I take pity on those in similar situations, and aid them when I can.
- 5 I have trouble conforming to etiquette and manners in my new homeland.
- 6 I believe that I was exiled for some higher purpose.
- 7 I am often distracted by thoughts and reminders of home.
- 8 I seek to make myself an example to my people.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Independence.** I must prove that I can survive alone. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Revenge.** I want revenge for how I was treated. (Evil)
- 3 **Penance.** I need to endure the punishment for my mistakes. (Lawful)
- 4 **Forgiveness.** Everyone falls short, and deserves forgiveness. (Good)
- 5 **Diversity.** Every culture has merit, and I can't expect others to conform to my ideals. (Neutral)
- 6 **Discovery.** I can learn a lot from the world outside my former home. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 I still want the best for my people.
- 2 I hope to return to my home one day.
- 3 I keep a prized memento to remind me of my former home.
- 4 I have contacts among my people with whom I keep in touch.
- 5 I went into exile to escape the full consequences of my actions, but I still fear the punishment I am due.
- 6 I am loyal to those who took me in.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I am easily enticed by the pleasures of my new homeland.
- 2 I refuse to abandon or deviate from the customs of my people.
- 3 I continue act in ways which would disappoint my people.
- 4 I am overcome by shame for even minor transgressions.
- 5 I often forget the laws of my new homeland.
- 6 I find the culture of my new homeland strange and disturbing.

## Orphan

Orphaned at a young age, someone took you in and taught you everything that you know. Regardless of your surrogate parent and your origins, this experience defined your life.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Your choice of two from among Animal Handling, Deception, Religion, Sleight of Hand, and Survival

**Tool Proficiencies:** One type of Artisan's tools or one vehicle

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Equipment:** A dagger, a hand-drawn map of the city you grew up in, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 10 gp

### Adopted

You were taken in by a person or an organization which raised you to adulthood. You can decide who or what raised you, or you can roll on the table below.

d8 Adopted

- 1 A church or religious group
- 2 A family with no children of their own
- 3 An orphanage
- 4 A local artisan or craftsman
- 5 A group of elderly spinsters
- 6 A criminal organization
- 7 A traveler or adventurer
- 8 A local educator or sage

### Feature: Charitable Spirit

Wherever you go you can find others willing to shelter and provide for you, least temporarily. This might be as simple as sharing a tent and a heel of bread, or as lavish as a stay in a well-appointed castle with a grand feast. In any case, you can find a place to sleep and a meal from a willing host. Though the host won't ask you for payment in coin, they may expect you to repay their kindness in other ways.

### Suggested Characteristics

An orphan often feels lost in the world, and seeks out purpose and a sense of belonging. Whatever the circumstances of their parentage and adoption, being raised by an adoptive family has a great effect on the orphan's view of the world.

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I don't remember my original family, but I don't miss them.
- 2 Someday I want to build a family of my own.
- 3 I will go to great lengths to care for my friends and family.

- 4 I'm accustomed to doing things alone, so I forget to ask for help even if I know it's available.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Rebellion.** My adopted parent's culture is anathema to me, and I rail against it at every opportunity. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Stricture.** My adopted parent taught me the value of discipline and order. (Lawful)
- 3 **Charity.** The charity of others saved me from a life of despair, and I must pass that gift on to others. (Good)
- 4 **Jealousy.** When I have little to call my own, so I can't let anyone threaten what little I have. (Evil)
- 5 **Self-sufficiency.** I need to be able to stand on my own without depending on others. (Neutral)
- 6 **Family.** Family is what I choose to make it. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 I carry a token of my original family, and prize it above all.
- 2 I carry a gift from my adoptive parent which was of little value to them, but which carries great significance for me.
- 3 I return to my adopted home as often as I can manage.
- 4 I owe my adoptive parent a great debt which I may spend my whole life attempting to repay.
- 5 I care deeply for the safety and wellbeing of children.
- 6 I hold onto hope that one day I will be reunited with my birth family.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I resent whoever is responsible for making me an orphan.
- 2 I fear abandonment by those I consider friends or family.
- 3 I resent the pity that others feel for me.
- 4 I have trouble accepting gifts or assistance for fear of indebting myself to others.
- 5 I fear scarcity, and hoard mundane objects like food.
- 6 I am slow to accept new family and friends



## Emissary

Tasked with a duty of great importance, you were sent away from your own lands to serve your people from afar as a representative.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Any two from among Deception, Insight, Intimidation, and Persuasion.

**Tool Proficiencies:** One type of gaming set

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Equipment:** A set of fine clothes, a badge of office or an official letter, and a purse containing 5 gp

## Mission

You were tasked with an important mission which you must complete before returning home. You can decide what your mission is, or you can roll on the table below.

d8	Mission
1	Negotiate Peace
2	Declare War
3	Permanent Ambassador
4	Espionage
5	Exploration
6	Establish Trade Relations
7	Cultural Exchange
8	Academic Exchange

## Feature: Demand Audience

Your status as an emissary allows you to gain an audience with suitable authorities, dignitaries, or major figures, so long as the subject is not personally hostile toward you. While the subject is not forced to acquiesce to any requests or demands you might make, they will meet with you at the very least.

## Suggested Characteristics

Emissaries are as diverse as the people they represent. Some are sent to negotiate peace or trade, while others are sent to deliver declarations of war. An emissary's methods, motives, and behavior greatly influence how they interpret their mission.

D6	Personality Trait
1	I am very important and everyone should treat me well.
2	My people's culture is clearly superior to others.
3	I can learn many things from other cultures which will help my people.
4	I collect mundane customs of foreign lands like trophies.
5	I share the customs of my people with others every chance I get.
6	I love to share stories of my friends and family back home.

d6	Ideal
1	<b>Peace.</b> I seek permanent peace for my people. (Good)
2	<b>Conflict.</b> I seek to bring my people to the glory of war. (Evil)
3	<b>Order.</b> I seek to ensure that my people are treated fairly in foreign lands. (Lawful)
4	<b>Freedom.</b> I seek to ensure that my people are free to do as they please in foreign lands. (Chaotic)
5	<b>Isolationism.</b> I seek to isolate my people from the outside world. (Neutral)
6	<b>Trade.</b> I seek to open trade with other peoples. (Any)

d6	Bond
1	I must complete my mission at any cost.
2	I wear a badge of office with great pride.
3	My good reputation among foreign peoples is crucial to my duties.
4	I have someone at home who I can't see until I complete my mission, but I miss them dearly.
5	I am emotionally close to the person to whom I was sent as an emissary.
6	I am enamored with a culture foreign to my own, and after completing my mission I hope to remain among them.

d6	Flaw
1	The wellbeing of my own people is my sole concern.
2	I take great offense to even the most innocent faux pas.
3	I openly mock the social customs of other cultures.
4	I flaunt activities which are acceptable in my own culture, but taboo in others.
5	I am utterly incapable of understanding foreign cultures.
6	I assume that others adhere to my people's culture without any evidence that will do so.

# Published Races

The following section assesses races currently published in the official rules, assigns a BP cost to each race, and attempts to offer design suggestions for altering races which might benefit from such adjustments.

It's interesting to note that the races drawn from *Volo's Guide to Monsters* were published after I had completed the designs presented earlier in this document. In many cases my own designs came amusingly close to the official versions.

## Aarakocra (9 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 Fixed, +1 Fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (5 BP).** 25 ft. walking, 50 ft. flying
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Special Abilities (1 BP).** Natural Weapons.

The aarakocra is a fine race with a couple of minor issues. Its flying speed eats over half of its BP, so it hasn't got much else going on. Its fly speed is amazing, so even without other abilities, it can be problematic in your games.

If you want to weaken the aarakocra, reduce its flying speed to 30 ft. If you want to strengthen the aarakocra, grant it proficiency in a skill like perception or survival, or give it the "Dive Attack" ability (see above under "Race Builder: Special Abilities").

## Aasimar (DMG Version) (15 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 Fixed, +1 Fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Special Abilities (4 BP).** Damage Resistance x2
- **Innate Spellcasting (6 BP).** 1 fixed cantrip, 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell two levels early, 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell two levels early
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

Aasimar are frustrating. Their BP cost is clearly not acceptable, but it's hard to remove much without deviating from the historical incarnations of the race. The race just has too much going for it. I think the issue here is that the race attempted to stay true to the mechanics of Aasimar in previous editions instead of emphasizing the theme of the race with a new mechanical spin in the same way that the core races were designed.

If you want to weaken the aasimar, delay its access to both of its two innate level spells by 2 levels and remove Darkvision. If you want to strengthen the Aasimar, grant it proficiency in Religion.

## Aasimar (VGTM Version)

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- **Ability Score Increase (2 BP).** +2 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Innate Spellcasting (0.5).** 1 fixed cantrip
- **Special Abilities (2.5 BP).** Damage Resistance, and enough healing to match Toughness.

A dramatic improvement over the DMG version, the VGTM version of the Aasimar is more balanced, and expands upon the flavor of the race by presenting three subraces. The subraces are very similar and fairly well balanced against each other, though not perfectly. However, the race still gets a lot of stuff, so its BP cost is a little bit high.

If you want to weaken the Aasimar, reduce the Charisma increase or remove Healing Hands.

## Fallen (11 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Special Abilities (3 BP).** Necrotic Shroud.

The weakest of the Aasimar subraces, the Fallen's special ability's non-damage effect only applies once when the ability is triggered and has a disappointing duration.

If you want to strengthen the Fallen, allow it to apply the fear effect from Necrotic Shroud each time the bonus necrotic damage is dealt. You may also grant Advantage on the saving throw if the creature has previously succeeded on a save against the ability during that activation of Necrotic Shroud.

## Protector (12 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Special Abilities (4 BP).** Radiant Soul.

Access to flight is fantastic, but it only lasts for one minute per day, so it's not as good as real flight and not worth as much BP.

## Scourge (12 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Special Abilities (4 BP).** Radiant Consumption.

Despite the self-damaging effect, the AOE damage from Radiant Consumption is a fantastic option in a game where heroes are often outnumbered by groups of foes with small numbers of hit points.

## Bugbear (7.5 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).**
- **Proficiencies (0.5 BP).** 1 Fixed skill.
- **Special Abilities (2 BP).** Long-Limbed, Powerful Build, Surprise Attack.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

Bugbears introduce two new racial traits on published races: Long-limbed and Surprise Attack. Long-limbed is really interesting, but it's hard to assess since reach works so strangely in 5<sup>th</sup> edition. If you have the Polearm Master feat, reach is always excellent because it widens the area which you can discourage foes from entering. If you don't, reach can actually be a handicap because it allows foes to move around safely within a wider area without exiting your reach. We'll call it 0.5 BP.

I should note that I wrote the version of Surprise Attack several months before Volo's Guide to Monsters was published. The design which Wizards decided to publish is specifically what I was trying to avoid: 2d6 bonus damage for a 1<sup>st</sup>-level character. With that bonus, it's easy for a bugbear to deal 4d6 damage plus an ability modifier at 1<sup>st</sup>-level, which is enough damage to kill a CR ½ creature in one attack and to cut down about half of a CR 1 creature's hit points. At that point, low-level encounters become pointless. It also faces the issue that the damage becomes irrelevant at higher levels since it doesn't scale.

Limiting Surprise Attack to once per combat was a smart limitation that I decided to retain. While surprising foes more than once is exceptionally rare, the text prevents a potential abuse case. We'll still call Surprise Attack 1 BP despite the difference between the official version and my own version.

If you want to strengthen the bugbear, add Savage Attacks. If you want to weaken the bugbear, reduce its Strength bonus. If you want to rebalance the bugbear, trade the official version of Surprise Attack for the one presented in this document.

## Dragonborn (6 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed (2 BP), +1 fixed (1 BP).
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Special Abilities (3 BP).** Breath Weapon, Damage Resistance
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

Dragonborn are a really popular race. Their abilities are solid for a paladin and passable for a sorcerer or warlock, and everyone wants to be a dragon. The dragonborn's signature abilities are its breath weapon and damage resistance. Energy resistance is fantastic, but the breath weapon has mediocre range, and doesn't do a ton of damage past first level. Even with the damage scaling, it's frequently more effective to swing a weapon than to use an action on your breath weapon. Plus, once you've used your breath weapon the dragonborn reverts to a fixed stat block with no active abilities.

If you want to strengthen the dragonborn, grant it a skill proficiency appropriate for its dragon ancestor and/or make their breath weapon a swift action. If you want to weaken the dragonborn, reduce its Strength increase.

## Dwarf

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- **Ability Score Increase (2 BP).** +2 Fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (-1 BP).** 25 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Proficiencies (2.5 BP).** 3 Martial Weapons, 1 Simple Weapon, 1 Semi-flexible Tool.
- **Special Abilities (1.5 BP).** Poison Resilience, Stonecunning.

Dwarfs are one of my favorite races in 5e. All three subraces are playable, none of them feel unfair, and they work for a large enough subset of characters that they don't feel shoehorned.

I don't advise altering dwarfs in any way.

## Duergar (9.75 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 Fixed
- **Languages (+0.25).** +1 fixed language.
- **Vision (-1 BP).** Superior Darkvision (improved from Darkvision), Sunlight Sensitivity.
- **Innate Spellcasting (3 BP).** 1 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell, 1 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell.
- **Special Abilities (0.5 BP).** Duergar Resilience.

### Hill Dwarf (9.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 Fixed.
- **Special Abilities (.5 BP).** Toughness.

### Mountain Dwarf (10 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (2 BP).** +2 Fixed.
- **Proficiencies (2 BP).** Light and Medium Armor.

## Elf

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- **Ability Score Increase (2 BP).** +2 Fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Proficiencies (0.5 BP).** 1 Fixed skill.
- **Special Abilities (1 BP).** Fey Ancestry, Trance.

Elves are another great race. They have diverse subraces which open up good builds for nearly every class in the game. The drow are a bit more powerful than I like, but their spells are gentle enough that they're not a huge problem.

I don't advise changing elves in any way, with the possible exception of Drow as explained below. For other subraces I've provided suggestions for tweaks if you want a different "feel" for the subrace.

### Drow (11.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** 1 Fixed.
- **Vision (-1 BP).** Superior Darkvision (improved from Darkvision), Sunlight Sensitivity.
- **Proficiencies (1.5 BP).** 3 Martial Weapons.
- **Innate Spellcasting (4.5).** 1 Fixed Cantrip, 1 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell, 1 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell.

The drow's innate spellcasting makes it mathematically the most powerful elf subrace. However, its spells are non-lethal and situational, and Sunlight Sensitivity presents a significant handicap, so I don't think that the drow's high BP score indicate that it's overpowered.

If you want to weaken the Drow, delay its access to both of its two innate level spells by 2 levels.

### Eladrin (13.75 BP?)

Source: Dungeon Master's Guide

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** 1 Fixed.
- **Proficiencies (2 BP).** 4 Martial Weapons.
- **Innate Spellcasting (5.25+ BP).** 1 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell usable once per short rest, and it's available from first level.

The Eladrin is far too powerful almost entirely due to Fey Step. Fey Step is a fantastic ability for a small set of builds, but granting it at 1<sup>st</sup> level and allowing it on a short rest makes the Eladrin extremely powerful, especially at low levels before *misty step* is available to other races.

If you want to weaken the Eladrin, reduce its proficiencies to longsword and longbow, and delay Misty Step to 5<sup>th</sup> level.

### High Elf (9 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** 1 Fixed.
- **Proficiencies (2 BP).** 4 Martial Weapons.
- **Innate Spellcasting (1 BP).** 1 Flexible Cantrip.

High Elf is a great option for Eldritch Knight and Arcane Tricksters because it gets you access to magic earlier than normal. With the addition of cantrips like Green-flame Blade, it also presents a powerful and potentially problematic damage boost, especially at low levels.

Overall, I think the High Elf is fine aside from problem cases like combining Green-flame Blade with Sneak Attack. If you want to tweak the High Elf, consider replacing the free cantrip with three cantrips each usable once per day. That will make the cantrips more of a flavorful utility option, and less of an exploitable way to get free damage without a feat or multi-classing.

### Wood Elf (10 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** 1 Fixed.
- **Proficiencies (2 BP).** 4 Martial Weapons.
- **Speed (+1 BP).** Increase to 35 ft. walking speed.
- **Special Abilities (0.5 BP).** Mask of the Wild.

### Firbolg (9 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Languages (0.25 BP).** Racial Language and Common, plus one additional fixed language.
- **Innate Spellcasting (2.5 BP).** 2 1<sup>st</sup>-level spells available 2 levels early.
- **Special Abilities (3.25 BP).** Hidden Step, Powerful Build, and an ability which is essentially a weak at-will version of speak with animals.

Firbolgs are a fun race that works in a lot of builds due to its excellent ability increases and its eclectic mix

of special abilities. It's very well balanced, and it's a great example of a well-designed race.

If you want to strengthen the firbolg, grant it the *druidcraft* cantrip. If you want to weaken the firbolg, delay access to its innate spellcasting for 2 levels.

## Genasi

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- **Ability Score Increase (2 BP).** +2 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

Genasi have a lot of problems. The fire and water genasi subraces are strictly better than the air and earth elementals, which is especially apparent since they're presented immediately adjacent. The base race is fine, but fixing the subraces requires tweaks to the subraces.

If you want to weaken genasi, reduce their constitution bonus. If you want to strengthen genasi, improve the individual subraces.

### Air (4.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Innate Spellcasting (1 BP).** 1 level 1 spell.
- **Special Abilities (0.5 BP).** Unending breath.

The air genasi is probably my least favorite of the genasi. *Levitate* is a really situational spell that melee characters essentially can't use it. *Unending Breath* is neat, but extremely situational. And that's it. That's all that they get. An ability increase and two options which most characters will never use.

If you want to strengthen the air genasi, grant it the ability to cast the *gust of wind* cantrip, increase its dexterity increase, and increase its walking speed to 35 feet.

### Earth (4.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Innate Spellcasting (1 BP).** 1 level 1 spell.
- **Special Abilities (0.5 BP).** Earth Walk.

The earth genasi is very close to functional despite a low BP cost. The abilities are great, and *Earth Walk* solves a very common problem for melee characters at low levels before flight becomes a widely accessible option. The earth genasi just needs a bit of flair.

If you want to strengthen the earth genasi, grant it 11+dex natural armor and *Sure-Footed* (see Race Builder: Special Abilities, above).

### Fire (8.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Innate Spellcasting (1.5 BP).** 1 fixed cantrip, 1 level 1 spell.
- **Special Abilities (2 BP).** Damage Resistance (Fire).

The fire genasi is my favorite genasi. It has clear build options, a couple good passive abilities, and a couple good active abilities that fit the theme.

If you want to strengthen the fire genasi, allow the fire genasi to cast *burning hands* starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

### Water (8.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Speed (1 BP).** 30 ft. swim
- **Innate Spellcasting (2 BP).** 1 fixed cantrip, 1 level 1 spell, +1 spell level to a leveled spell.
- **Special Abilities (2.5 BP).** Amphibious, Damage Resistance (Acid).

The water genasi is another good example of what the genasi should be: a couple good passive abilities and couple good active abilities, all of which fit the theme of the race.

If you want to strengthen the water genasi, change its damage resistance from acid to cold.

## Gnome

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- **Ability Score Increase (2 BP).** +2 fixed.
- **Size (-1 BP).** Small.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft. (base; actual speed is 25 ft.).
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Special Abilities (2 BP).** Cunning.

Gnomes are an oft-overlooked race. They don't have many interesting abilities which are actively useful. *Cunning* is a great defense, but doesn't come up often. The subraces have great flavor, but offer very little mechanically. The base race's Intelligence increase also tends to shoehorn norms into a small set of builds, but there are other races which are strictly better in those builds, so the gnome is generally more of a novelty than an actual option.

If you want to Strengthen the gnome, see the advice below for individual subraces. If you want to weaken the gnome, reduce its Intelligence increase or its walking speed.

### Forest (7 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** 1 Fixed.

- **Innate Spellcasting (0.5 BP).** 1 fixed Cantrip.
- **Special Abilities (0.5 BP).** Speak With Small Beasts is functionally *Speak with Animals* weakened and converted to work a bit like a Cantrip.

If you want to strengthen the forest gnome, emphasize its illusion mastery by allowing it to cast the *silent image* once per day starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level.

### Rock (7.5 BP).

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** 1 Fixed.
- **Proficiencies (0.5).** 1 Fixed (see Tinker).
- **Special Abilities (1 BP).** Artificer's Lore, Tinker (1 BP).

If you want to strengthen the rock gnome, grant it proficiency in one tool, or weapon proficiency in spears, light crossbows, and shields.

### Svirfneblin (7.75 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** 1 Fixed.
- **Vision (+1 BP).** Superior Darkvision (improved from Darkvision).
- **Languages (0.5 BP).** +1 Fixed.
- **Special Abilities (0.25 BP).** Camouflage.

If you want to strengthen the svirfneblin, grant it Stonecunning (See Race Builder: Special Abilities, above).

### Goblin (7.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (-1 BP).** Small.
- **Speed (0.5 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Special Abilities (3 BP).** Fury of the Small, Nimble Escape
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

Like many of the other races in Volo's Guide to Monsters, I wrote the version in this document several months before the official version was published. In this case, I'm surprised by how close the two designs are. The official version adds a Constitution bonus, which is a great addition to the race though it doesn't really align with the nature of the race. The official version also drops Stealthy, which is surprising.

The official goblin also adds Fury of the Small, which is a fun ability that should see a lot of use. The damage scaling is easy to track, and keeps the ability relevant at every level. We'll call it 1 BP.

If you want to strengthen the goblin, grant Stealth proficiency. If you want to weaken the goblin, remove the Constitution increase.

### Goliath (6 BP).

- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Proficiencies (0.5 BP).** 1 fixed skill.
- **Special Abilities (2.5 BP).** Stone's Endurance, Powerful Build, Mountain Born.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

Despite its low BP score, I think that the goliath race works very well. Its traits mostly limit goliaths to strength-based melee builds, but that suits the flavor of the race very well.

If you want to strengthen the goliath, add a +1 Wisdom increase. If you want to weaken the goliath, reduce its Strength increase.

### Halfling

- **Ability Score Increase (2 BP).** +2 fixed.
- **Size (-1 BP).** Small.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft. (base; actual speed is 25 ft.).
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Special Abilities (3.5 BP).** Lucky, Brave, Nimbleness.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

Halflings are an iconic race with a lot going for them. Despite their low BP score, many of the halflings abilities are fantastic. The two subraces open up enough builds to make the race interesting, and the halfling's unique abilities differentiate it enough that other races with similar traits aren't strictly better.

If you want to weaken the Halfling, reduce its Dexterity increase. If you want to strengthen the Halfling, give it proficiency with daggers and slings.

### Ghostwise (7.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Special Abilities (2 BP).** Silent Speech.

### Lightfoot (6.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Special Abilities (1 BP).** Naturally Stealthy.

### Stout (6 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +1 fixed.
- **Special Abilities (0.5 BP).** Poison resilience.

### Half-Elf

- **Ability Score Increase (5 BP).** +2 fixed, 2x +1 flexible.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.

- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Special Abilities (.5 BP).** Fey Ancestry.
- **Languages (0.5 BP).** Racial Language and Common, plus one flexible language.

Half-elves are among the best of the races included in the player's handbook. They get increases to more abilities than anyone, and they have the flexibility of the variant human while still having a +2 to an ability. They get so many options that they can play nearly any build, and their abilities make them an obvious go-to option for a huge variety of builds. The variants presented in the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide* present variants which range widely in strength, and offer half-elves even more options, allowing them to outdo other races in a huge number of builds.

If you want to weaken half-elves, remove one of their flexible ability increases, and consider adjusting the races other abilities depending on the chosen variant. If you want to strengthen half-elves, see the advice for each variant below.

### Aquatic (10 BP)

- **Speed (+2 BP).** 30 ft. swim speed.

A swim speed is a fair trade for two skills. In an aquatic campaign, characters live and die by their ability to swim.

If you want to weaken the aquatic half-elf, reduce its walking speed. If you want to strengthen the aquatic half-elf, grant it Amphibious or Hold Breath (see *Race Builder: Special Abilities*, above).

### Drow (12.5)

- **Innate Spellcasting (4.5).** 1 Fixed Cantrip, 1 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell, 1 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell.

The half-drow variant gives up two skills for access to the drow's potent innate spellcasting. These spells are potent, though somewhat situational, and access to the drow's magic without the drow's handicaps can be a potent combination.

If you want to weaken the half-drow variant, delay its access to both of its two innate level spells by 2 levels

### High/Moon/Sun (9 BP)

- **Innate Spellcasting (1 BP).** 1 Flexible Cantrip.

An extra cantrip can be a potent tool, especially for a half-elf spellcaster. With the half-elf's existing traits, I don't think the High/Moon/Sun elf variant needs any adjustment.

### Keen Senses (8.5 BP)

- **Proficiencies (0.5 BP).** 1 fixed skill.

The "Keen Senses" variant is a joke. Hopefully no player would be foolish enough to actually pick this.

If you want to strengthen the Keen Senses variant, add Fey Ancestry and Trance to bring the half-elf a little closer to its elven heritage and a little further away from its human heritage.

### Standard (10 BP)

- **Proficiencies (2 BP).** 2 flexible skills.

With the possible exception of the half-drow, I think that the vanilla half-elf is still the best version of the half-elf. Two skills of the player's choice means that the player starts the game with a minimum of 6 skills. On top of the half-elf's other fantastic traits, it poises the half-elf to dominate the majority of the game which doesn't involve combat without cutting into the half-elf's ability to succeed in combat.

If you want to weaken the vanilla half-elf, reduce its skill proficiencies to any one instead of any two.

### Wood (10, 9, or 8.5 BP)

One of the following:

- **Proficiencies (2 BP).** 4 Martial Weapons.
- **Speed (+1 BP).** Increase to 35 ft. walking speed.
- **Special Abilities (0.5 BP).** Mask of the Wild.

Proficiencies in weapons really aren't that important. Most characters who want to use them will already have proficiency, and characters without good weapon proficiencies have other options. Having options is nice, but limiting the player to one of the three is silly.

If you want to strengthen the wood elf variant, allow players to select any two of the three options. If you want to weaken the variant, reduce the weapon proficiency option to any two of the four listed weapons.

### Half-Orc (6.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed (2 BP), +1 fixed (1 BP).
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Proficiencies (0.5 BP).** 1 fixed skill.
- **Special Abilities (1 BP).** Relentless Endurance and Savage Attacks.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

The half-orc is among the worst playable races in the game. Their abilities allow them to excel in a tiny

variety of builds, so nearly every half-orc is either a barbarian or a fighter. Its fine for a race to have a definitive niche, but where the half-orc should excel it's easily outdone by other playable races like the dwarf and the goliath.

If you want to weaken the half-orc, reduces its Strength increase. If you want to strengthen the half-orc, grant it Aggressive or Charge (see Race Builder: Special Abilities, above).

## Hobgoblin (9 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Proficiencies (2 BP).** 2 martial weapons, light armor.
- **Special Abilities (2 BP).** Saving face.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

This is absolutely not what I expected from the official version of hobgoblins. Aside from the name and Darkvision, I don't see how the hobgoblin lines up with the original monster. The ability increases are going to produce a lot of eldritch knights and wizards.

Saving Face is a neat ability, but there's not a lot to compare it to, so it's hard to rate. It only works once per short rest and it provides a bonus slightly better than something like guidance. Still, the ability to trigger it on a miss is excellent. We'll call it 2 BP.

If you want to strengthen the hobgoblin,

## Human

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- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

The human comes in two flavors. For advice on altering humans, see the two variants below.

### Standard Human (6 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (6 BP).** 6x +1 Fixed

I've never seen anyone play the standard human unless they were using pre-generated characters. While it's easy to take this as an indication of how much fun feats are, it's also an indication that the standard human is not a fun option. It's nearly impossible to make active use of all 6 ability scores, and beyond numerical increases the human has nothing to offer.

If you want to strengthen the standard human, grant it proficiency in two skills of the player's choice. This will allow players to get some more use out of their universally strong ability scores.

### Variant Human (8 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** 2x +1 Flexible
- **Skills (1 BP).** +1 Flexible
- **Feat (4 BP).**

The variant human is clearly the better of the two. Feats are extremely potent, and access to one at 1<sup>st</sup> level is extremely tempting for any player with feats in mind. On top of that, two flexible ability increases means that the variant human is one of the best options for nearly every build concept in the game. The bonus skill proficiency is a neat extra, and even without it I would consider the variant human one of the better races in the game.

If you want to weaken the variant human, remove the flexible ability increase. If you want to strengthen the variant human, grant a free proficiency in a tool or vehicle.

## Kenku (6 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Languages (-1 BP).** Racial Language and Common, but with a limitation.
- **Proficiencies (1.5 BP).** Two options from a fixed list.
- **Special Abilities (1.5 BP).** Expert Forgery, Mimicry

Considering the issues which I faced while designing the version of kenku presented earlier in this document, I'm not surprised that the official version of Kenku is so lackluster. The race's abilities mostly create roleplaying complications, and the kenku gets little in the way of actual usable abilities.

If you want to strengthen the kenku, grant them the Ambusher special ability (see "Special Abilities", above), natural weapons dealing 1d4 damage, or both.

## Kobold (7.5 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (1 BP).** +2 fixed, -2 fixed.
- **Size (-1 BP).** Small.
- **Speed (0.5 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Special Abilities (5 BP).** Grovel, Cower, and Beg, Pack Tactics, Sunlight Sensitivity.



- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

Perhaps the most problematic entry in Volo's Guide, Kobolds introduce two new abilities: Grovel, Cower, and Beg and Pack Tactics. It also introduces the option of ability score penalties, a relic of bygone editions which I had sincerely hoped would never resurface.

The kobold is a perfect example of why ability score penalties don't work. In 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, that penalty would cause reduced damage for a character using a bow or a finesse weapon, so characters would either need to suffer the reduced damage or find a way to solve it through feats. In 5<sup>th</sup> edition, ranged and finesse weapons no longer face that issue. A kobold of nearly any class could go their whole career without using Strength for anything except an occasional ability check.

I strongly disagree with the way Pack Tactics was handled. Copying the monster ability verbatim is far too powerful. Imagine a rogue making two attacks on their turn, both with Advantage, essentially guaranteeing that they hit and deal Sneak Attack damage. Imagine a kobold fighter using two weapons and fishing for criticals every round.

In my own version of Pack Tactics, I made the ability require the use of a bonus action. While this is typically a small cost for many characters since not everyone has a use for bonus actions, it's a meaningful handicap because it forces kobolds to choose between pressing their advantage and using another option like a second weapon or Cunning Action.

Grovel, Cower, and Beg is really amusing, and I think it's one of the few redeeming qualities of the official kobold. It's usable on a short rest, so we'll call it 2 BP.

I think my own version of the kobold is better balanced and more in line with the design philosophy of 5<sup>th</sup> edition. I suggest using the version of Kobolds presented earlier in this document, possibly with the addition of Grovel, Cower, and Beg.

## Lizardfolk (9 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Proficiencies (1.5 BP).** Two options from a fixed list.
- **Special Abilities (4.5 BP).** Natural Weapon, Cunning Artisan, Hold Breath, Natural Armor, Hungry Jaws

Another fantastic entry from Volo's Guide, the lizardfolk is really fun. The natural weapons and armor

can be replaced with material weapons and armor, but the specific values of both are still useful, and Hungry Jaws helps to keep the bite in play even if the character prefers material weapons.

If you want to strengthen the lizardfolk, adjust Hungry Jaws to grant temporary hit points equal to the damage dealt. If you want to weaken the lizardfolk, reduce their natural armor by 1.

## Orc (6 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (2 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed, -2 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Proficiencies (0.5 BP).** One fixed skill.
- **Special Abilities (1.5 BP).** Aggressive, Powerful Build
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

I'm glad that orcs kept Aggressive, but otherwise they're disappointing. The intelligence penalty is totally unnecessary, and Aggressive is the only ability they have which is likely to see a lot of use. Half-orcs are objectively better, which is sad since half-orcs aren't an especially powerful race.

My own version of orcs isn't significantly different, dropping the Intelligence reduction and Powerful Build. You could use either version and likely won't notice much of a difference unless you use my Orc subrace.

## Tabaxi (10.5 BP)

- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (1.5 BP).** 30 ft. walking, 20 ft. climb
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Proficiencies (1 BP).** Two fixed skills.
- **Special Abilities (3 BP).** Feline Agility, Natural Weapon.

Tabaxi are fine, and they work pretty well, but they're not very exciting. I predict a lot of tabaxi rogues, so Cunning Action will make Feline Agility rarely important but occasionally crazy. Considering that's the tabaxi's only active ability, that's disappointing.

If you want to strengthen the Tabaxi, allow it to select two skills from a list including the two it already gets and new options like Survival. If you want to weaken the tabaxi, reduce its Dexterity bonus.

## Tiefling

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 Fixed, +1 Fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Innate Spellcasting (5 BP).** 1 fixed cantrip, 1 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell with +1 spell level, 1 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell.
- **Special Abilities (2 BP).** Damage Resistance.

The tiefling is one of the best races in the game. It has excellent ability increases for several builds, and its other traits are useful for a wide variety of builds. The variant tieflings offer some excellent trades to cater to a variety of tastes and character concepts, but do little to balance the tiefling.

If you want to weaken the tiefling, reduces its +2 ability increase to +1, or remove its free cantrip.

### Standard (12 BP)

No BP Change.

### Feral (12 BP)

No BP Change.

### Devil's Tongue (12 BP)

No BP Change.

### Hellfire (12 BP)

No BP Change.

### Winged (11 BP)

- **Speed (+4 BP).** 30 ft. flying
- **Innate Spellcasting (-5 BP).** No spells.

## Triton (11.75 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** 3x +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (0 BP).** Normal.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.
- **Innate Spellcasting (5.25 BP).** One 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell, one 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell, and one 3<sup>rd</sup>-level spell, all available 2 levels early, but with the single innate spell slot limitation.
- **Special Abilities (3.5 BP).** Amphibious, damage resistance, and an ability which is essentially a weak at-will version of speak with animals.

The triton is exciting not because it's a powerful race, but because it introduces new design options.

Granting three static ability increases is unprecedented, and the Triton is the first race with innate spellcasting that can only cast one of its spells per rest. Adding both of those as options for designing other races gives us useful new options for designing other races.

The triton is a little bit stronger than our target BP range of 8-10, but some small tweaks can bring it down without significantly changing the race. If you want to weaken the triton, delay each of its innate spells by 2 levels, remove Emissary of the Sea, or do both.

## Yuan-Ti Pureblood (15.75 BP)

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- **Ability Score Increase (3 BP).** +2 fixed, +1 fixed.
- **Size (0 BP).** Medium.
- **Speed (0 BP).** 30 ft.
- **Vision (2 BP).** Darkvision.
- **Innate Spellcasting (3.75+ BP).** 1 fixed cantrip, one modified 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell, one 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell available 2 levels early.
- **Special Abilities (7 BP).** Magic Resistance, Poison Immunity.
- **Languages (0 BP).** Racial Language and Common.

While it doesn't present as many design problems as the kobold, the yuan-ti pureblood is well outside of normal BP ranges. Immunity to poison and resistance to all magic makes the pureblood extremely difficult to kill. Its ability increases are really useful, and its innate spellcasting is really good.

The version of yuan-ti purebloods presented earlier in this document is considerably less powerful, opting for playability and balance without sacrificing the flavor of the race. If you want to use the official version, I suggest dropping Magic Resistance entirely, and delaying Suggestion until 5<sup>th</sup> level.

# Appendix: Race Builder

The following rules are an expansion to the rules presented in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## Build Points

Each race should be worth roughly 8-10 build points (BP). Races worth more tend to be stronger, while races worth less tend to be weaker. Keep in mind that this number is an approximation, not a precise measure. Some combinations of traits may be more or less potent than their point value might indicate.

## Creature Type

Each creature must have a creature type. This determines the starting point of your new race, and often includes several basic traits common to all creatures of that type.

Keep in mind that not being a humanoid means that the race is affected differently by many spells like *Dominate Beast*, *Dominate Person*, and *Dominate Monster*. Beasts are affected by the lowest level versions, while humanoids ("Person") are affected by the mid-level version, and everything else is only affected by the high-level version.

For more information on creature types, see page 6 of the *Monster Manual*.

**Humanoid (0 BP).** Most player races are humanoids. Humanoids have no special traits.

**Aberration (0.5 BP).** No special traits.

**Beast (-0.5 BP).** Beasts are affected by several spells which don't have equivalents for most other creature types. They are also affected by the lowest-level version of *Dominate*. Beasts generally don't have opposable digits (-2 BP), so they must rely on their natural weapons for attacks. Beasts usually can't speak (-1 BP).

**Celestial (0.5 BP).** No special traits.

**Construct (1 BP).** Constructs do not require food, drink, or sleep (see the "trance" special ability).

**Dragon (0.5 BP).** No special traits. Dragons typically have *Darkvision* (2 BP).

**Elemental (1 BP).** Elementals do not require food, drink, or sleep (see the "trance" special ability).

**Fey (0.5 BP).** No special traits.

**Fiend (0.5 BP).** No special traits.

**Giant (0.5 BP).** No special traits. Giants typically have *Darkvision* (2 BP) and *Powerful Build* (0.25 BP).

**Monstrosity (0.5 BP).** No special traits.

**Ooze (0.5 BP).** No special traits.

**Plant (0.5 BP).** No special traits.

**Undead (1 BP).** Undead do not require air, food, drink, or sleep (see the "trance" special ability). Undead typically have *Darkvision* (2 BP), and are typically immune to the *Exhausted* and *Poisoned* conditions, and to poison damage (2.5 BP total).

## Subtype

Subtype rarely matters, but a handful have some important mechanical effects.

**Shapechanger (0.25).** Shapechangers ignore polymorph effects.

## Size

Adventurers come in all shapes and sizes. This document presents new rules for tiny characters (see below), but does not include rules for players larger than medium.

Size	BP Cost	Notes
Tiny	-1.5	20 ft. Walking Speed, half normal carry weight, weapon limitations (see below)
Small	-1	25 ft. Walking Speed
Medium	0	30 ft. Walking Speed

## Limbs

Most creatures have movable extremities which allow them to manipulate items. A typical playable race has two legs and two arms. The assumption is that the creature has hands which allow them to finely manipulate objects, but that might mean hands, claws, tentacles, or some other appendage.

## Arms

Arms	BP Cost
2 Arms	0
No Arms	-2
No hands	-2

**Extra Arms (0.5 + 0.25 per arm beyond the second BP).** You have more than two arms, and may hold and use items in each of your hands.

If you have *Extra Attacks*, when you take the *Attack* action you may make each of your attacks using any weapon you are holding.

When you take the *Attack* action and attack with a weapon which qualifies for use with two-weapon fighting, you can use a bonus action to attack with a different qualifying weapon. You don't add your ability

modifier to the damage of the bonus attack unless the modifier is negative or you have an ability which allows you to add your ability modifier to the bonus attack granted by two-weapon fighting. If you choose to make this additional attack, you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn.

If you use a weapon with the Heavy property or use a Versatile weapon two-handed you may not benefit from using a shield until the beginning of your next turn, but you may switch between multiple Heavy or Versatile weapons with each attack.

**No Arms.** Creatures with no hands automatically also have “No hands” (see below).

**No hands.** Creatures without hands are unable to wield weapons or wear shields, and cannot use items which require manipulation, including spellcasting foci, wands, tools, etc. unless they have some other means by which to do so. Creatures which still have arms may push and pull items, and may be able to lift them with their limbs, but generally can’t manipulate items finely enough to use them.

For these purposes “hands” refers to any suitable grasping appendage, including prehensile tentacles or some kinds of claws. If the appendage could easily lift and pour out the contents of a glass, open a door knob, and wield a sword, it counts as a hand. As such, claws might qualify, but tentacles and tails typically do not.

For creatures with racial Dexterity increases and no hands, strongly consider adding the Natural Weapon Finesse special ability. These creatures often see the Rogue class as an appealing option, and the inability to wield a weapon should not prevent them from doing so.

## Age

Each race should have an entry describing their general age range. This has little mechanical effect on the race, but is important for defining the race.

## Alignment

Each race should have an entry describing the general alignments of members of that race. This has little mechanical effect on the race, but is important for defining the race.

## Ability Score Increases

Every race should have one or more ability increases; this indicates where that race excels.

“Fixed” ability increases apply to a single ability score determined when the race is designed, while “Flexible”

ability bonuses can be applied to any ability score (except one which also received a Fixed increase), as chosen by the player during Character Creation. Multiple Flexible ability increases may not be applied to the same ability score.

Increase	BP Cost
-2 Fixed	-1
+1 Fixed	1
+2 Fixed	2
+1 Flexible	1.5

## Vision and Senses

Vision	BP Cost
Blind	-4
Normal	0
Darkvision (10 ft.)	1
Darkvision (30 ft.)	1.5
Darkvision (60 ft.)	2
Darkvision (120 ft.)	3

**Blind (-4 BP).** You have no eyes. You are immune to the Blinded condition.

**Devil’s Sight (1 BP).** Magical darkness doesn’t impede your Darkvision.

**Otherworldly Perception (2.5 BP).** You can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of you that is invisible or on the Ethereal Plane. You can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

## Additional Senses

Sense	BP Cost
Blindsight 30 ft.	6
Blindsight -10 ft.	-1
Blindsight +10 ft.	+1
Blindsight +10 ft.	+1
Blindsense 30 ft.	3
Blindsense +10 ft.	+1
Tremorsense 30 ft.	2
Tremorsense +10 ft.	+1

**Blind Senses (-1 BP).** Your blindsight or blindsense distance is reduced to 10 ft. while you are deafened and/or unable to smell.

**Echolocation (-1.5 BP).** You can’t use your blindsight while deafened.

**Tremorsense (2+ BP).** You can detect and pinpoint the origin of vibrations within a specific radius, provided that you and the source of the vibrations are in contact with the same ground or substance. Tremorsense can’t be used to detect flying or incorporeal creatures.

## Movement

Every race should generally have a base land speed. 30 feet is standard walking speed.

## Walking Speed

Remember that small races reduce their walking speed by 5 feet. This cost is included in the -1 RP for being small, and is applied after defining the races base walking speed. A small race which selected 25 ft. speed would have a final speed of 20 feet.

Speed	BP Cost
30/25 ft.	0
-5 ft.	-0.5
+5 ft.	+0.5

## Burrowing Speed

Very few creatures have burrow speeds, and those which do typically have a much higher walking speed. Burrow speeds present considerable problems because they allow players to easily circumvent a variety of problems without exposing themselves as much as they might while flying.

Speed	BP Cost
10 ft.	2
-5 ft.	-0.5
+10 ft.	+1

**Earth Glide (1 BP).** You can burrow through non-magical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, you don't disturb the material you move through.

## Climb Speed

Climb speeds allow creatures to easily circumvent obstacles like walls and pits, but aren't as problematic as burrow speeds or flying speeds.

Speed	BP Cost
30 ft.	2
-10 ft.	0.5
+10 ft.	+1

**Spider Climb (1 BP).** You can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

## Flying Speed

Flight is a potent tool, accessible to most races only with powerful magic like the spell Fly. Flight allows creatures to stay safely out of reach of potential threats, and allow them to easily bypass many obstacles.

Creatures with a natural flying speed cannot fly while wearing medium or heavy armor.

Speed	BP Cost
30 ft.	4
-10 ft.	-1
+10 ft.	+1

**Hover (2 BP).** You can remain in place while flying.

## Swimming Speed

Creatures with swimming speeds often have poor (or no) walking speeds. These creatures can be extremely problematic as player races.

Speed	BP Cost
30 ft.	1
-10 ft.	-.5
+10 ft.	+.5

## Languages

Nearly all races speak at least one language. A typical race can speak its own language plus Common, and most races in this document have been granted the ability to speak Common even if they could normally only speak their racial language. The ability to speak Common makes a race viable in a party without the need to spend additional resources learning Common, which makes it easier to integrate monstrous characters into a party.

Note that "Racial Language and Common" also covers races which only speak Common, including Humans and many other races.

Language	BP Cost
None	-2
Racial Language	-1
Racial Language and Common	0
1 Additional Fixed Language	.25
1 Flexible Language	.5

**Can't Speak (-1 BP).** You are unable to speak, but are still able to read, write, and understand any languages which you know. You are unable to perform verbal spell components.

If your race provides no languages, you do not gain the -1 BP for can't speak.

## Proficiencies

Many races provide bonus proficiencies of various sorts. These proficiencies often pertain to a racial aptitude for something which is not explained by the race's ability increases.

## Skills / Tools

Proficiency	BP Cost
1 Flexible Skill or Tool Proficiency	1
1 Semi-flexible Skill or Tool from a fixed list Proficiency	.75
1 Fixed Skill or Tool Proficiency	.5

**Expertise (1 BP).** You may add double your proficiency bonus to skill checks with the selected skill. If the race does not provide proficiency in the skill, this

bonus applies only to a single specific usage of the skill, like using Athletics to climb.

## Armor

Proficiency	BP Cost
Light Armor	1
Light and Medium Armor	2
Light, Medium and Heavy Armor	4
Shields	2

## Weapons

Proficiency	BP Cost
1 Simple Weapon	.25
All Simple Weapons	1
1 Martial Weapon	.5
All Simple and Martial Weapons	2

## Innate Spellcasting

Some races have the innate ability to cast spells. If your race can cast spells this way, select an ability score to use for all of the race's spells.

Note that racial spells beyond Cantrips normally can't be cast until the character reaches a caster level sufficient to cast spells of those level (use the table on page 165 of the Player's Handbook) +2. For example: An Air Genasi can cast Levitate (a 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell) at 3<sup>rd</sup> level.

Leveled spells (not Cantrips) gained this way can be cast once per day, recharging after a long rest. Spells cast this way require no material components.

Spell	BP Cost
1 Fixed Cantrip usable once per day	.25
1 Fixed Cantrip	.5
1 Cantrip from a fixed class's spell list	1
1 Spell	Spell's level
1 Spell (Ritual Only)	Spell's level /2
Increase spells spell slot level by 1	+0.5
Cast spell 2 levels early	+0.25
Cast spell 2 levels earlier than a primary spellcaster of the appropriate level (cleric, wizard, etc.)	Not allowed
Recharge on short rest	x2.5

**Single Innate Spell Slot (Varies).** The race may only cast one of its leveled innate spells per rest. Divide the BP cost of every spell except the highest-level spell by 2. For example: if a race can cast one 1<sup>st</sup>-level spell and

one 2<sup>nd</sup>-level spell, but can only cast one of the two per rest, the BP cost is 2.5 BP instead of 3 BP.

## Special Abilities

Other special abilities are often unique to the race, but here is a collection of pre-existing abilities to use for your own races. Many of these abilities are copied or adapted from officially presented races, but several have been created for use in races presented in this document.

**Aggressive (1 BP).** As a bonus action, you can move up to your speed toward a hostile creature that you can see.

**Ambusher (1 BP).** You have advantage on attack rolls against any creature you have surprised.

**Amorphous (0.5 BP).** You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

With some rare exceptions, most creatures with Amorphous should also have Unable to Wear Armor, but may still be able to use shields if they have appropriate limbs.

**Amphibious (0.5 BP).** You can breathe air and water.

**Artificer's Lore (0.5 BP).** Whenever you make an Intelligence (History) check related to magic items, alchemical objects, or technological devices, you can add twice your proficiency bonus, instead of any proficiency bonus you normally apply.

**Brave (0.5 BP).** You have advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

**Breath Weapon (1 BP).** You gain a breath weapon, as described on page 34 of the Player's Handbook.

**Camouflage (0.5 BP).** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in the terrain to which the species is native.

**Chameleon Skin (2 BP).** You have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide.

**Charge (2 BP).** Once per turn, if you move at least half of your race's base speed feet toward a creature and hit it with a Strength-based melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Condition Immunity (0.5 each).** Select from the following conditions:

- Blinded
- Charmed
- Deafened
- Exhaustion
- Grappled
- Paralyzed

- Petrified
- Prone
- Stunned
- Unconscious (Note that immunity to unconsciousness means that you die outright when you reach 0 hit points)

**Cunning (2 BP).** You have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

**Damage Immunity (5 BP).** You are immune to Acid, Cold, Electricity, Fire, Necrotic, Radiant, or Thunder Damage.

**Damage Resistance (2 BP).** You have resistance to Acid, Cold, Electricity, Fire, Necrotic, Radiant, or Thunder Damage.

**Dive Attack (2 BP; requires Flight).** Once per turn, if you dive at least half your race's flight speed toward a creature and hit it with a melee weapon attack, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Duergar Resilience (0.5 BP).** You have advantage on saving throws against illusions and against being charmed or paralyzed.

**Damage Vulnerability (-1 BP).** You have vulnerability to one type of damage.

**Earth Walk (0.5 BP).** You can move across difficult terrain made of earth or stone without expending extra movement.

**False Appearance (0.5 BP).** While motionless, you appear indistinguishable from a mundane object which your race resembles. You must spend one minute motionless before this ability takes effect. You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell.

**Feat (4 BP).** You gain one feat of your choice for which you qualify.

**Fey Ancestry (0.5 BP).** You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put you to sleep.

**Flexible Form (0.5 BP).** You can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. You can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Flyby (2 BP; requires Flight).** You may perform the Disengage action as a bonus action.

**Grab (2 BP; requires Natural Weapon).** When you take the Attack action and make an unarmed strike, you can use a bonus action to initiate a grapple with the target of your successful unarmed strike. You may grapple even though you have no hands if your form

supports doing so (rugs of smothering, slimes, and snakes are all good examples).

**Hidden Step (2 BP).** As a bonus action, you can magically turn invisible until the start of your next turn or until you attack, make a damage roll, or force someone to make a saving throw.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Hold Breath (0.25+ BP).** You can hold your breath for 15 minutes per 0.25 BP.

**Illumination (0.25).** You shed bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. For an additional 0.25 BP the race may suppress or re-activate this ability as a bonus action.

**Immortal Nature (1 BP).** You don't require food, drink, or sleep (see the "trance" special ability).

**Keen Sense (0.5 BP each).** Select one or more senses from hearing, sight, or smell. You gain advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on those senses.

**Limited Telepathy (1 BP).** You can magically communicate simple ideas, emotions, and images telepathically with any creature within 100 feet of it that can understand a language.

**Lucky (2 BP).** When you roll a 1 on an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you can re-roll the die and must use the new roll.

**Magic Resistance (5 BP).** You have advantage on all saving throws against magic.

**Mask of the Wild (0.5 BP).** You can attempt to hide even when you are only lightly obscured by foliage, heavy rain, falling snow, mist, and other natural phenomena.

**Mimicry (1 BP).** You can mimic any sounds you have heard, including voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful Insight check against a DC equal to 8 + your Charisma (Deception) bonus.

**Mountain Born (0.25 BP).** You're acclimated to high altitude, including elevations above 20,000 feet. You're also naturally adapted to cold climates, as described in chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

**Natural Armor (0.5+ BP).** You have a natural armor bonus of +X. When unarmored, your AC is equal to 10 + your natural armor bonus + your dexterity modifier. The BP cost of this ability is the natural armor bonus (X) divided by 2 (do not round the final value). If the bonus is +3 or greater, you may disallow adding Dexterity (as though the character were wearing heavy armor) to the character's AC for -1 BP.

Be very cautious about granting more than +3 natural armor. +2 is the highest bonus provided by light

armor, so +3 natural armor means that the character can have higher AC than a character in light or medium armor can achieve. Consider disallowing armor (see Unable to Wear Armor, below) for races with exceptionally high natural armor.

**Natural Weapon (1 BP).** You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 damage on a hit (1d3 for small races). This die size can be increased for an additional .5 BP per step up to 1d8 (1.5 total BP for 1d6, 2 BP for 1d8). Creatures with no hands may deal 1d10 damage for 3 BP.

Note that many monster's natural weapons behave like a Finesse property in their monster stat block, but there is no general rule allowing player characters to do this.

Natural weapons may deal one or two types of damage between bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing, or may deal any of the three for an additional .5 BP.

**Natural Weapon Finesse (0 BP; requires No Hands and Dexterity increase).** You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as a weapon with the Finesse property for all effects which require it, such as Sneak Attack.

**Naturally Stealthy (1 BP).** You can attempt to hide even when you are obscured only by a creature that is at least one size larger than you.

**Nimbleness (1 BP).** You can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than yours.

**Otherworldly Perception (2.5).** You can sense the presence of any creature within 30 feet of you that is invisible or on the Ethereal Plane. You can pinpoint such a creature that is moving.

**Pack Tactics (5 BP).** As a bonus action you may take advantage of the presence of your allies. You gain Advantage on the next attack roll you make this turn against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Poison Immunity (2 BP).** You are immune to poison damage, and immune to the poisoned condition.

**Poison Resilience (1 BP).** You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.

**Pounce (1.5 BP).** If you move at least half of your race's base speed straight toward a creature then hit it with an unarmed strike on the same turn, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Powerful Build (0.25 BP).** You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

**Relentless/Relentless Endurance (0.5 BP).** When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

**Running Leap (0.25 BP).** With a 10-foot running start, you can long jump up to 25 feet.

**Savage Attacks (0.5 BP).** When you score a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, you can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

**Siege Monster (0.5 BP).** You deal double damage to objects and structures.

**Slippery (0.5 BP).** You have advantage on ability checks and saving throws made to escape a grapple.

**Standing Leap (0.5 BP).** Your long jump is up to 30 feet and your high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start.

**Stench (2 BP).** As a bonus action you can exude a horrifying stench for up to one minute. Any creature which starts its turn within 5 ft. of you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. The DC for this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier.

You must maintain concentration during that time, as if you were casting a spell. If you lose concentration, affected creatures are no longer poisoned by this ability.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Stonecunning (0.5 BP).** Whenever you make an Intelligence (History) check related to the origin of stonework, you are considered proficient in the History skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

**Stone's Endurance (2 BP).** You can focus yourself to occasionally shrug off injury. When you take damage, you can use your reaction to roll a d12. Add your Constitution modifier to the number rolled, and reduce the damage by that total.

After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Sunlight Sensitivity (-2 BP).** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when



you, the target of your attack, at whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Sunlight Weakness (-3 BP).** While in sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

**Sure-footed (0.25 BP).** You have advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws and ability checks made against effects that would knock it prone.

**Surprise Attack (1 BP).** If you surprise a creature and hit it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from the attack. You can use this trait only once per combat.

This damage increases to 2d6 at 5<sup>th</sup> level, 3d6 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, and 4d6 at 17<sup>th</sup> level.

**Telepathy (2 BP).** You can communicate telepathically with any creature that knows a language within 30 ft.

**Toughness (0.5 BP).** Your hit point maximum increases by 1, and it increases by 1 every time you gain a level.

**Trance (0.5 BP).** You don't need to sleep. Instead, you meditate deeply, remaining semiconscious, for 4 hours a day. (The Common word for such meditation is "trance.") While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

**Trip (2 BP).** If you hit a creature with an unarmed strike, you may attempt to shove the target prone as a bonus action (see "Shoving a Creature", page 195 of the Player's Handbook).

**Two Heads (3.5 BP).** While both of your heads are awake, you have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

**Unable to Wear Armor (3-4 BP).** For whatever reason, you are unable to wear armor (possibly because your body is shapeless or has built-in armor). If you are also unable to use a shield, the BP cost is 4.

**Unending Breath (0.5 BP).** You can hold your breath indefinitely while you're not incapacitated.

**Water Breathing (0 BP).** You can breathe only underwater.

**Web Walker (0.5 BP).** You ignore movement restrictions caused by webbing.

# Appendix:

## Template Builder

Creating a template using the rules presented in this document is similar in many ways to creating a new race. Templates provide traits in much the same way that a race does, and can follow many of the same rules.

The sections below go into detail on designing new templates. The Design Notes section, below, addresses the process I followed for creating these rules.

### Build Points

Like races, templates use a system of build points (BP) to assess the strength of individual options and the template as a whole.

Non-leveled templates should have a BP value of roughly 0; they should provide options to customize a creature, but shouldn't make that creature weaker or stronger since they're applied mostly for free.

Leveled templates should have a BP values of roughly 8-10 for the first level of a template, and roughly 4-5 BP for additional levels beyond the first. This should keep them roughly equivalent to class levels, as explained in the design notes section, below. However, keep in mind that front-loading rewards may encourage players to take a single level in a template before looking elsewhere. While the BP value of additional template levels should be lower, the traits offered by those levels should be tantalizing enough that players who start a template want to finish it.

Breaking up template levels and assigning abilities to those levels is as much an art as it is a science. Distribute abilities so that there is always something exciting one or two levels away. If the template includes abilities which are less exciting (passive abilities, damage resistances, etc.), use those abilities to space out the more exciting abilities.

Deciding how many template levels to use is also a crucial part of designing your template. There is no strict cap on how many template levels a template should have, but I recommend 10 at the absolute most.

### Ability Score Adjustments

Be cautious about applying ability score adjustments on a template, as they could provide characters with an easy way to maximize their key ability scores faster than they would be able to do so normally.

Increase	BP Cost
-2 Fixed	-2
+1 Fixed	2
+2 Fixed	4
+1 Flexible	3

### Hit Dice

Leveled templates, like class levels, offer hit dice. These hit dice behave just like hit dice gained from class levels.

Hit Die	BP Cost
D6	0
D8	0.5
D10	1
D12	2

### Special Abilities

Most special abilities from the Race Builder appendix can be applied to templates without issue. The following special abilities include traits available to templates, but not available to races.

**Ability Score Increase (5 BP).** Leveled templates only. Leveled templates with 4 or more levels may provide ability score increases. Generally, these should not occur earlier than the 4<sup>th</sup> template level, and should almost never appear less than 4 levels apart (one at 4<sup>th</sup> level, one at 8<sup>th</sup> level, etc.). Fighters and Rogues notably receive ability score increases closer together than other characters, but those traits are part of the things which set those classes apart from other options.

**Spellcasting (3 BP per level).** Leveled templates only. Template must require the Spellcasting or Pact Magic class features. Upon gaining a level in the template, select one of your classes with the Spellcasting or Pact Magic class feature. You are treated as one level higher for the purposes of Spellcasting or Pact Magic in that class, including spells known, spell slots, and the level of spells which you can prepare with that class.

### Design Notes

Creating character templates and template levels is a leap of faith in some ways. It's a totally new concept which tries to drag the "Effective Character Level" concept kicking and screaming out of 3rd edition and into 5th edition. This was a complex mechanic in 3rd edition because the idea of having non-levels that counted as levels was difficult for many players to grasp. By making "template levels" work just like normal class levels we can treat templates more like multiclassing than like a totally new concept.

Since we're basing template levels on the existing multiclassing rules, it makes sense to balance template levels against what characters gain from multiclassing. We can use the BP system to roughly approximate the value of multiclass options, though this more art than science because the value of multiclassing varies so much depending on your character and level. We'll examine the cleric, fighter, rogue, and wizard classes since they're presented in the basic rules with simple options to balance against.

Clerics use d8 hit dice for 0.5 BP per level.

Multiclassing into cleric grants proficiency in light armor and medium armor (2 BP), and shields (2 BP). One level of a full spellcasting class grants 2 1st-level spells per day (2 BP at least) and 3 cantrips from a fixed class's spell list (3 BP). The Life domain included in the basic rules adds heavy armor proficiency (2 BP on top of the existing armor proficiency) and Disciple of Life, which we'll call 1 BP. That's a total of 12 BP. A second level grants an additional 1st-level spell per day (1 BP at least) and Channel Divinity, including the Turn Undead option and the Preserve Life option granted by the Life domain. We'll call that 3 BP. That's a total of 12.5 for a single level, and 4.5 more for a second.

Fighters use d10 hit dice for 1 BP per level.

Multiclassing into fighter grants proficiency in light armor and medium armor (2 BP), shields (2 BP), simple weapons and martial weapons (2 BP), a fighting style which we'll call 2 BP, and second wind which we'll call 2.5 BP since it's roughly equivalent to healing word on a short rest (1st-level spell \* 2.5). A second level grant a single use of Action Surge, usable once per short rest, which we'll call 2.5 BP. That's a total of 11.5 BP for a single level and 3.5 more for a second.

Rogues use d8 hit dice for 0.5 BP per level.

Multiclassing into rogue grants proficient in light armor (1 BP), one skill from the rogue's skill list (0.75 BP), proficiency with thieves' tools (0.5 BP), Expertise in two things (2 BP), Sneak Attack which we'll call 1 BP since we only get 1d6, and Thieves' Cant which we'll call 0.25 BP since it's essentially a fixed language. A second level grants Cunning Action, which we'll call 4 BP. That's a total of 6 BP for a single level and 4.5 more for a second.

Wizards use d6 hit dice for 0 BP per level.

Multiclassing into wizard grants no proficiencies. A single level of spellcasting grants 2 1st-level spells per day (2 BP at least) and 3 cantrips from a fixed class's spell list (3 BP). Arcane recovery gets you one 1st-level spell slot back, so we'll call it 1 BP. A second level grants an additional 1st-level spell per day (1 BP at

least), as well as Arcane Tradition. The Evocation tradition included in the basic rules grants Evocation Savant which we'll call 0 BP and Sculpt Spells which we'll call 2 BP. That's a total of 6 BP for a single level, and 3 more for a second.

For groups that use multiclassing rules, it's interesting to note how these approximations illustrates the varying effectiveness of taking a single level in different classes. For example, many power gamers like to take a single level of cleric because the class grants excellent options at 1<sup>st</sup> level, even if you're multiclassing. For the purposes of templates, it gives us a rough BP range that we can target to keep template levels reasonably balanced.

We'll shoot for 8-10 BP for the first level of a template and 4-5 BP for additional levels. However, these are only vague guidelines. The features granted by class levels grow in power as characters gain levels, and most templates need to be both available and viable at any level. Templates may require the character to take all levels in the template before allowing them to take other levels, but won't always do so. Templates which do so may fluctuate in BP cost between levels, so long as levels beyond the first average to our 4-5 BP range.