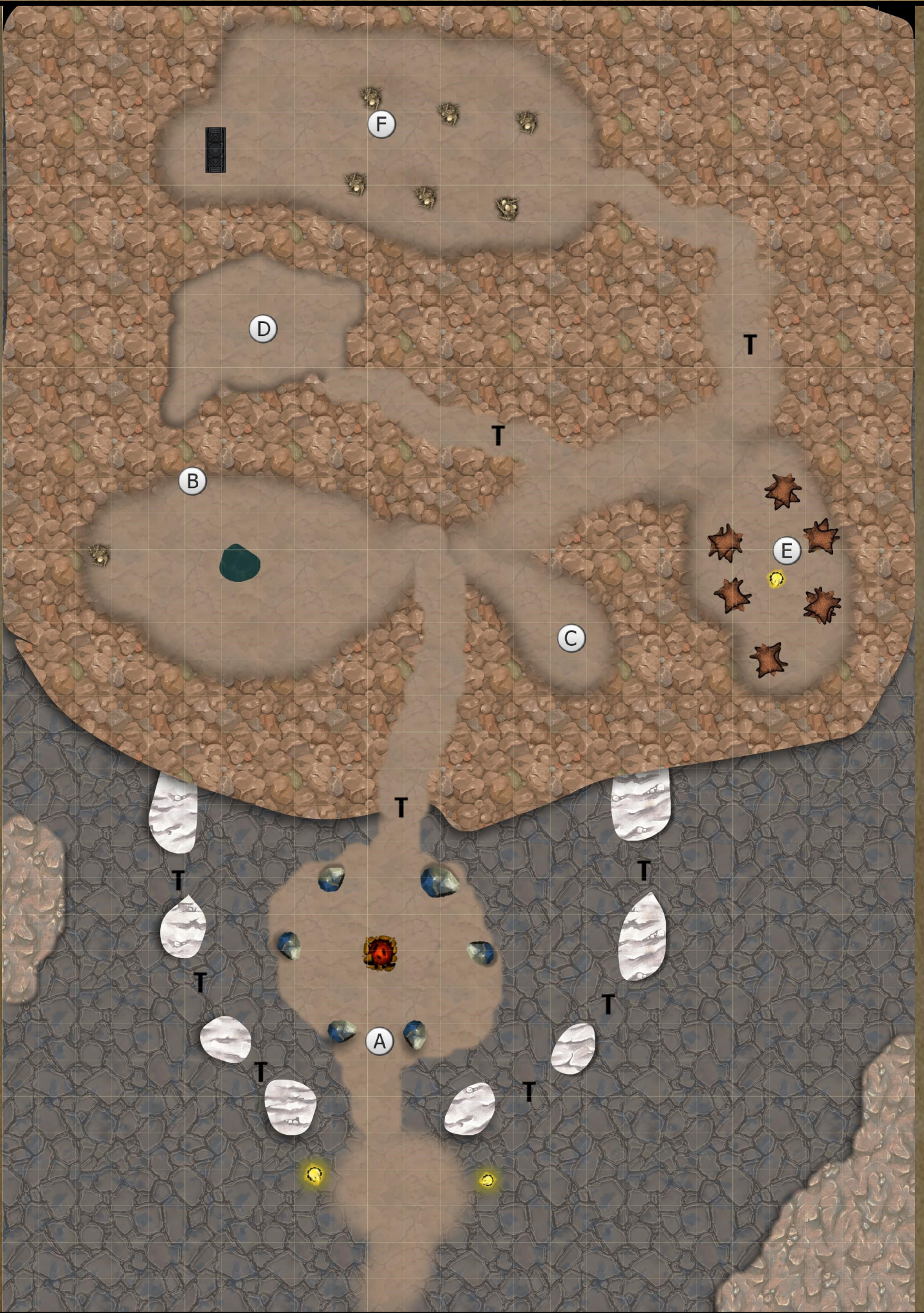


ORCS OF THE  
HOWLING BONES  
LAIRS AND LABYRINTHS FOR  
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS 5TH EDITION

**Written by: John Adams**



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## Using This Book

The information contained in this book can be used as a standalone dungeon crawl adventure or inserted into an existing campaign with ease. Included is all of the information regarding the creatures that have made the Howling Bones their home and the traps and treasures they use to defend it. There is also a brief entry regarding other orc tribes in the area if you wish to expand the scope of your game beyond just this dungeon.

## Dungeon Overview

The Howling Bones are home to a particularly brutal, but small, tribe of orcs called the Howling Horde that worship a bestial wolf spirit. The orcs are cunning hunters and have defended their territory from rival tribes for generations through a combination of supernatural might, clever traps, and shrewd tactics. They frequently raid other tribes both as a means of testing their own mettle and capturing the strongest members of other tribes to fill their ranks.

The Horde has made their home within the skull of some ancient titanic beast embedded within a cliff surrounded by rocky bluffs. Recruits and neophytes guard the entrance to the sacred cairn while the tribe's more dangerous members can be found within the bloodstained caverns, behind insidious traps and feral beasts.

## Running the Dungeon

This dungeon is meant to challenge adventurers of levels 6 through 8. If your group is composed of PCs outside of those parameters or you are playing with a larger, or smaller, group then some of the challenges may have to be adjusted for a balanced experience.

The orcs of the Howling Horde are blessed with lycanthropy. New recruits are offered this boon after their first successful hunt or raid with "The Pack".

This blessing makes the orcs a formidable foe, far beyond the abilities of your typical orcish warband.

The lair is riddled with a bevy of traps meant to immobilize or incapacitate those who would dare assault the beasts on their home ground. The tribe's bond with beasts has also allowed them to dominate a pack of dire wolves that they use to harry fleeing foes and overwhelm their defenses.

Even before your PCs encounter the first shapeshifter of the Howling Horde, you should try and play up the bestial cunning of these orcs. Evidence of recently devoured kills surrounded by a mix of wolf and humanoid tracks, survivors of a raid that offer chilling tales of the wolves that stalked their caravan for days, or totems crafted from assorted bones and etched with crude arcane markings are examples of foreshadowing that could be used to clue your players in that these orcs are more than just the simple rabble that comprise a typical raiding band. Likewise, if your players are without any type of silver weapon, you may want to add such an item early on in the dungeon or they will likely have a very difficult experience.

## The Approach

Rounding a massive stone butte, you can see before you the great skull of a titanic beast jutting from the stone façade of a jagged cliff. The jaw of the skull is open as if the beast had been frozen in a defiant roar at the moment of its death. Flickering light burns in its empty eye sockets and the metallic scent of blood wafts over you with the biting wind.

The Howling bones lies within the badlands of the Cragfang Wastes. The area is so named for the clusters of granite buttes that jut from the sandstone permeating the region. The bones themselves protrude from the base of a sandstone cliff that

stretches almost 300 feet high with a cluster of the granite buttes obscuring the gargantuan skull.

A single well-worn path weaves through the buttes marked by strange bone totems hung from the nearby granite. The occasional howl can be heard echoing from the buttes signaling either the end, or beginning, of a hunt. The Howling Horde rarely patrols beyond the buttes, but there is a pack of wolves that has developed a fondness for humanoid flesh that stalks the area which could alert the Horde of interlopers with their eerie hunting calls.

### A. The Jaws

A worn sandstone path leads into the bone jaws of a massive beast's skull. The ivory teeth of the lower jaw surround a ring of six large standing stones capped with the assorted bones of beasts. Beyond the stones, a cave winds its way into the cliffside. The musky scent of wild beasts mixed with blood clings to the area.

The jaws serve as a gathering place for would be recruits as well as a sentry post guarding the entrance to the tribe's den. The tribe often gathers in this area after a successful raid to inspect their spoils and captives before bringing them into the den to be devoured.

At the moment, 6 orc warriors await their trial to become members of the Howling Horde. They have not eaten in days, and are spoiling for a fight to prove themselves to the Horde. A single member of the Howling Horde surveys the area while in the form of a wolf. Several of the recruits have come with offerings to the Horde to better their chances of being accepted. While many of these offerings are skulls of vanquished foes or shattered shields or armor, one orc berserker has come with a +1 *greatsword* taken during a raid on an elven village border-

ing the Wastes.

A simple tripwire trap is strung up between the teeth of the lower jaw. The trip wire can be noticed with a DC 12 Perception check. Once spotted the trap can be easily avoided, or disabled with a DC 12 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) check.

A trap also protects the entrance to the caverns, though this one is much more malicious. The trigger is, once again, a hidden trip line. A DC 13 Perception check is required to locate the trap. Anyone passing through the entrance must make a Reflex saving throw DC 13 as a large spiked tree branch lashes out from the eastern wall about 1 foot off the ground. The trap deals (2d6) piercing damage and the victim is knocked prone. A successful save halves the damage and negates the prone effect.

[Orc Berserkers \(4\)](#)

[Orc Hunters \(2\)](#)

[Howling Horde Hunter](#)

### B. The Proving Pits

Passing through a curtain of stitched animal skins, the tunnel opens into a much larger cavern. Crude paintings cover the walls depicting bestial hunts and bloody sacrifices. The floor of the cavern bowls downward towards the center of the chamber that contains a shallow puddle of brackish water. A mound of skulls lies against the western wall with the topmost skull facing the entrance. Water drips sporadically from a crack in the ceiling, echoing through the chamber.

This chamber serves as a venue for the various ritualized fights common to the Howling Horde. New recruits that survive their first hunt are pitted against each other in bare knuckle fights to the death to ensure only the

strongest are allowed to join the Horde. Arguments and disagreements between members of the Horde are also settled here, though they are generally not to the death unless both parties desire those stakes.

A single elder orc oversees the fighting pit.

Truushk can typically be found in this area either painting the latest tribal conquests upon the walls or speaking with the skulls of those orcs that have fallen in the pits of past glories. The old orc's mind is somewhat addled and his senses are not as sharp as his younger kin, but he is a fierce and brutal combatant that views his position as pit master with spiritual reverence. Anyone caught by Truushk upon entering this room that is not an orc is immediately set upon the elder warrior. Truushk views any intrusion by outsiders as a desecration of the fighting pits that can only be cleansed with the blood of the transgressors. As such he immediately shapeshifts into his hybrid wolf form when engaged.

### *Truushk*

*Medium Humanoid*

**AC:** 11 (in humanoid form) 12 (in wolf or hybrid form)

**HP:** 67 (9d8+27)

**Speed:** 25 feet (35 feet in wolf form)

**Str:** 15 **Dex:** 12 **Con:** 16 **Int:** 9 **Wis:** 13 **Cha:** 10

**Saving Throws:** Constitution +5, Wisdom +3

**Skills:** Insight +3, Perception +3

**Immunities:** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

**Senses:** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 3 (700xp)

**Aggressive:** As a bonus action, Truushk can move up to his speed toward a hostile creature that he can see.

**Shapechanger:** As an action Truushk can polymorph into a wolf, wolf hybrid, or his humanoid true form. His statistics (other than AC and speed) are the same in every form.

### **Reaction**

**Brutal Retaliation:** When Truushk is struck by a melee attack he may use his reaction to quickly lash out with a vicious strike using one of his melee attacks.

### **Actions**

**Multiattack (humanoid or hybrid form only):**

Truushk makes two attacks with his greataxe or one with his bite and one with his claws.

**Greataxe:** Melee attack +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d12+2) slashing damage

**Bite (Wolf or Hybrid form only):** Melee attack +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d8+2) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

**Claws (Hybrid form only):** Melee attack +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (2d4+2) slashing damage.

## C. The Bloody Larder

The stench of rotting meat and blood hangs thick in the air of this chamber. Thick leather mats are draped over four tables that rest against the cavern walls. An amalgamation of humanoid and beast carcasses are piled on top of the tables in various states of decomposition. The buzzing of countless flies fills the room.

A single dire wolf is currently feeding in this room and may spot the PCs even if they choose not to enter. The wolf has developed quite a fondness for human flesh and will attack the nearest human PC that it perceives.

This room is used to store the meat brought in from the Horde's hunts. Newer kills are simply dropped on top of the older ones that

haven't been devoured yet, which contributes to the rotting scent.

Any character that inspects the corpse piles is at risk of contracting a disease called the red shakes if they fail a Constitution saving throw DC 13. Any character inspecting the piles can also make a Perception check DC 12 to notice that the bodies stored here are covered in savage bite marks from some sort of large canine beast. A few minor trinkets can also be found on some of the corpses, the total value of which is around 50 gold pieces.

### Dire Wolf

## D. Feasting Hall

Blood soaked fur rugs cover the floor of this cavern along with an array of bones that appear disturbingly humanoid in origin. To the southwest an alcove is closed off by a crudely constructed grid of dry logs and thick, heavy, bones..

The passage leading toward this chamber is secured with a trap that encloses the victim in a spiked bone cage. Anyone passing through the square must make a Dexterity saving throw DC 13 or become trapped as two thick bone meshes snap together to form a cage. The inside of the cage is lined with sharp spikes and any attempt to pry open or break the cage from the inside results in the victim suffering (3d6) points of piercing damage.

The Howling Horde typically prefers to devour their meals live. Captives are often taken by the tribe to be devoured later in this room. On occasion, some of the captives are forced to witness the feast and what is to be their ultimate fate. There are currently four captives being held in the southwestern cell. Two of the

captives are orc males from the Black Skull tribe captured in a recent raid, another is a young human male taken from a nearby farmstead on the edge of the badlands, and the last is a young female halfling that is the sole surviving member of an adventuring group that was hunting orcs for a bounty.

The halfling has already made one attempt to escape, but was unsuccessful, and now the Horde has posted four guards to keep watch over the cell until the next feast.

### Howling Horde Orcs(4)

## E. The Den

Piles of matted furs dot the floor of this chamber, at the center of which lies a smoldering fire pit. Lining the walls are dozens of crude, yet brutal, looking weapons of all kinds. The musty scent of beasts fills the room.

This area serves as the main sleeping chamber and general social area for the Howling Horde. When the tribe is not on a hunt or performing their sacred rites to the beast spirit, the majority can be found here either sleeping, boasting of their deeds, or copulating with one of the orcish women kept by the tribe.

At the moment there are approximately half a dozen Horde warriors in the room, along with the remains of the dire wolf pack and 2 dozen orc females and children. If combat ensues, the females and children will huddle in the southern portion of the cave to not get caught in battle. Tucked away amidst several of the piles of furs are a few valuable trophies taken from worthy hunts and raids. Anyone that inspects the furs can make an Investigation check DC 13 to find a set of *boots of elvenkind*, *Bracers of archery*, a pair of signet rings from a nearby human kingdom, and a bone earring carved to

form a twisting spike worth about 9 gold pieces.

The path leading north out of the chamber is protected by one of the only lethal traps in the caves. Anyone who passes through the marked square falls 20 feet into a spiked pit suffering (6d6) piercing damage. A Dexterity saving throw DC 14 avoids the trap.

[Howling Horde Orcs \(3\)](#)

[Howling Horde Hunters \(2\)](#)

[Howling Horde Berserker](#)

[Dire Wolves \(3\)](#)

## F. Shrine of the Howling Beast

This grand chamber is lined by macabre pillars of bones that form a path to a large black stone slab at the western portion of the room. Two immense wolf skulls flank the slab, their eyes ablaze with firelight. The air in the room is thick and heavy making it difficult to breath. Images of an immense wolf devouring all manner of prey adorn the walls in a color startlingly similar to that of blood.

This is the heart of the Howling Horde's den. It is here that the tribe performs their ritual sacrifices to the beast spirit, inducts new members into the tribe, and prepares for the hunt. The entire room is suffused with the power of the beast spirit granting the effects of a *bless* spell to any member of the Howling Horde in the chamber. This effect can be negated temporarily by a good cleric casting *bless* on the stone slab.

Goretusk, the shaman and leader of the Howling Horde, spends much of his free time within this shrine communing with the beast spirit through various profane rites and blood rituals. He is always accompanied by his apprentice, Nartuuk, and a pair of warriors that remain in their hybrid wolf form at all times.

This shrine was once a place druidic worship in reverence to the majestic wolf spirit Atuuli. Decades of corruption from the Howling Horde's blood rites has twisted the spirit into a ravenous beast of slaughter. It may be possible to return the spirit to her more balanced state, but the orcs would have to be dealt with before any sort of healing could be done.

**Treasure:** Goretusk and the Howling Horde have collected a sizable hoard of treasures and trophies gathered during their raids which can be found spread across the top of the stone slab altar at the western portion of the shrine. The following can be found within the pile: 1000 gp in assorted coins, a diamond worth 800 gp, a +1 *shireld* of dwarven make, and a dragon skull helm that works like a *circlet of blasting*.

*Goretusk*

*Medium Humanoid*

**AC:** 11 (in humanoid form) 12 (in wolf or hybrid form)

**HP:** 96 (13d8+39)

**Speed:** 30 feet, 40 feet in wolf form

**Str:** 16 **Dex:** 12 **Con:** 16 **Int:** 7 **Wis:** 16 **Cha:** 12

**Saving Throws:** Strength +6, Wisdom +6

**Skills:** Intimidation +4, Nature +1, Perception +6, Religion +1

**Immunities:** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

**Senses:** darkvision 60 feet, passive Perception 16

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 8 (3,700 xp)

**Aggressive:** As a bonus action, Goretusk can move up to his speed toward a hostile creature at he can see.

**Shapechanger:** As an action, Goretusk can polymorph into a wolf, wolf hybrid, or his humanoid true form. His statistics (other than AC

and speed) are the same in all forms.

**Spellcasting:** Goretusk casts spells as a 7th level druid. He uses Wisdom as his casting ability (DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks)

Cantrips: *produce flame, resistance, shillelagh*  
1st Level (4 slots): *cure wounds, fog cloud, thunderwave*

2nd Level (3 slots): *barkskin, flaming sphere, hold person*

3rd Level (3 slots): *conjure animals, win wall*

4th Level (1 slot): *blight, stoneskin*

#### **Bonus Action**

**Rage of the Beast:** Once per day, Goretusk can draw upon the primal fury of the beast spirit and fly into a frenzy. The frenzy continues for 1 minute as long as Goretusk makes an attack or is attacked. While in the frenzied state, Goretusk adds +2 damage to any attack and is resistant to all damage except psychic damage.

#### **Action**

##### **Multiattack (humanoid or hybrid form only):**

Goretusk makes two attacks with his beastfang spear or one with his bite and one with his claws.

**Beastfang Spear:** Melee or ranged attack +7 to hit, reach 5ft. or range 20/60, one target (1d8+4) piercing damage. On a successful ranged attack, the spear polymorphs into a giant poisonous snake that continues to attack for 3 rounds before reverting back to a spear. The snake also reverts to a spear if it is killed

**Bite (Wolf or Hybrid form only):** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d8 +3) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid they must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

**Claws (Hybrid only):** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (2d4+3) slashing damage.

*Nartuuk*

*Medium Humanoid*

**AC:** 11 (in humanoid form), 12 (in wolf or hybrid form)

**HP:** 67 (9d8+27)

**Speed:** 30 feet, 40 feet in wolf form

**Str:** 18 **Dex:** 12 **Con:** 16 **Int:** 7 **Wis:** 13 **Cha:** 10

**Saving Throws:** Constitution +5, Wisdom +3

**Skills:** Perception +3, Nature +0

**Immunities:** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made by silvered weapons.

**Senses:** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 4 (1100 xp)

**Aggressive:** As a bonus action, Nartuuk can move up to his speed toward a hostile creature that he can see.

**Shapechanger:** As an action, Nartuuk can polymorph into a wolf, wolf hybrid, or his humanoid orc form. His statistics (except AC and Speed) are the same in all forms.

**Apprentice:** Nartuuk can cast spells as a 2nd level druid. He uses Wisdom as his casting ability (DC: 11, +3 to spell attacks).

Cantrips: *druidcraft, poison spray*

1st level (3 slots): *entangle, faerie fire, healing word*

#### **Actions**

##### **Multiattack (humanoid or hybrid form only):**

Nartuuk can make 2 attacks with his greatclub or one bite attack and one claw attack.

**Greatclub:** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d8+4) bludgeoning damage.

**Bite (wolf or hybrid form only):** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d8+4) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid they must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

**Claws (hybrid form only):** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (2d4+4) slashing damage.

[\*Howling Horde Berserkers\*](#) (2)



# Bestiary

## *Orc Berserker*

*Medium humanoid, chaotic evil*

**AC:** 13 (Hide armor)

**HP:** 45 (6d8+18)

**Speed:** 30 feet

**Str:** 18 **Dex:** 12 **Con:** 16 **Int:** 7 **Wis:** 12 **Cha:** 10

**Saving Throws:** Constitution +5

**Skills:** Athletics +6, Intimidation +2

**Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 2 (450 xp)

**Aggressive:** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Frenzy:** As a bonus action, the orc can work themselves into a frenzied state. This grants them a +2 to their damage rolls and they become resistant to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

### **Action**

**Greataxe:** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d12+4) slashing damage.

**Cleaving Strike:** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., two adjacent targets, (1d12+2) slashing damage.

## *Orc Hunter*

*Medium Humanoid, chaotic evil*

**AC:** 14(leather armor)

**HP:** 32 (5d8+10)

**Speed:** 30 feet

**Str:** 15 **Dex:** 16 **Con:** 14 **Int:** 7 **Wis:** 11 **Cha:** 10

**Saving Throws:** Dexterity +5

**Skills:** Survival +2, Perception +2

**Senses:** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 1 (200 xp)

**Aggressive:** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

### **Actions**

**Javelins:** Melee or ranged attack+5 to hit, reach 5ft.

Range 30/120, one target (1d6+3) piercing damage plus (2d6) poison damage

*Dire Wolf*

*Large beast, unaligned*

**AC** 14 (natural armor)

**HP:** 37 (5d10+10)

**Speed:** 50 feet

**Str:** 17 **Dex:** 15 **Con:** 15 **Int:** 3 **Wis:** 12 **Cha:** 7

**Skills:** Perception +3, Stealth +4

**Senses:** passive Perception 14

**Languages:** —

**Challenge:** 1 (200 xp)

**Keen Hearing and Smell:** The wolf has advantage on Perception checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Pack Tactics:** The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally is not incapacitated.

**Actions**

**Bite:** Melee attack +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (2d6+3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

*Howling Horde Orc*

*Medium Humanoid, chaotic evil*

**AC:** 13 (hide armor)

**HP:** 67 (9d8+27)

**Speed:** 30 feet

**Str:** 17 **Dex:** 12 **Con:** 16 **Int:** 8 **Wis:** 11 **Cha:** 10

**Skills:** Perception +2, Survival +2

**Senses:** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 2 (450 xp)

**Aggressive:** As a bonus action, the orc can move p to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Pact of the Wolf Spirit:** Wolves will never willingly attack the orc, and it can, as an action, perform a hunting howl that bolster allies fighting a single target. The orc designates a hostile creature within 5 feet. All allies have advantage when attacking the target until the start of the orc's next turn. Only one howl can be in effect at a time.

**Actions**

**Multiattack:** The orc makes two attacks with their spear.  
**Spear:** Melee or ranged attack +5 to hit, reach 5ft. Range 20/60, one target (1d8+3) piercing damage.

### *Howling Horde Hunter*

*Medium humanoid (shapechanger), chaotic evil*

**AC:** 11 (in humanoid form) 12 (in wolf or hybrid form)

**HP:** 64 (10d8+20)

**Speed:** 30 feet, 40 feet in wolf form

**Str:** 16 **Dex:** 18 **Con:** 15 **Int:** 8 **Wis:** 11 **Cha:** 11

**Saving Throws:** Dexterity +7, Constitution +5

**Skills:** Perception +3, Stealth +7, Survival +3

**Immunities:** Bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silver weapons.

**Senses:** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 5 (1800 xp)

**Aggressive:** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see,

**Beast Mark:** As a bonus action, the orc can mark a hostile creature to more readily inflict grievous wounds. The mark requires concentration and lasts for 1 minute.

Whenever the orc hits the marked target with an attack, it deals an additional 1d6 damage.

**Shapechange:** The orc can use its action to polymorph into a wolf, wolf hybrid, or its humanoid true form. Its statistics (other than AC and speed) are the same in all forms.

**Keen Hearing and Smell:** The orc has advantage on all Perception checks that rely on hearing or smell.

#### **Actions**

**Multiattack (Hybrid or humanoid form only):** The orc makes either two attacks with its spear, or one bite attack and one claw attack.

**Spear (Humanoid Form Only):** Melee or ranged attack +5 to hit, reach 5ft. Range 20/60, one target (1d8+3) piercing damage.

**Bite (Wolf or Hybrid form only):** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d8+4) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid it must succeed at DC12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

**Claws (Hybrid form Only):** Melee attack +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (2d4+4) slashing damage.

### *Howling Horde Berserker*

*Medium Humanoid (shapechanger), chaotic evil*

**AC:** 13 (scarred hide in humanoid form) 14 (In wolf or hybrid form)

**HP:** 117 (11d12+44)

**Speed:** 30 feet, 40 feet in wolf form

**Str:** 18 **Dex:** 11 **Con:** 18 **Int:** 7 **Wis:** 10 **Cha:** 10

**Saving Throws:** Strength +7, Constitution +7

**Skills:** Intimidate +3

**Immunities:** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silver weapons.

**Senses:** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 5 (1800 xp)

**Aggressive:** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward any hostile creature that it can see.

**Rending Frenzy:** All of the orc's melee attacks deal half damage to foes adjacent to the target and within 5 feet of the orc.

**Bestial Rage:** When the orc is polymorphed into its wolf or hybrid form its attacks gain a bonus of +2 damage and they are resistant to all damage except psychic. Included in attack statistics.

**Shapechange:** The orc can use its action to polymorph into a wolf, wolf hybrid, or its humanoid true form. Its statistics (other than AC and speed) are the same in all forms.

**Keen Hearing and Smell:** The orc has advantage on all Perception checks that rely on hearing and smell.

#### **Actions**

**Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid form only):** The orc makes either two attacks its greataxe or one bite attack and one claw attack.

**Greataxe (Humanoid form only):** Melee attack +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d12+4) slashing damage.

**Bite (Wolf or Hybrid form only):** Melee attack +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (1d8+6) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed at a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

**Claws (Hybrid form only):** Melee attack +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target (2d4+6) slashing damage.

## Orcs of the Cragfang Wastes

Dozens of minor orc tribes call the windswept wastes of the Cragfang their home. They survive by raiding border villages in neighboring nations, mining expeditions venturing into the wastes, and, of course, each other. Life for these minor tribes is harsh and brutal as they compete with each other for hunting and raiding territories. Many tribes are lost or absorbed by others throughout the year. These are often replaced by tribes that splinter from larger groups due to disagreements, leadership conflicts, or outright violence.

Rising above the smaller clans of the Wastes are three tribes that have existed for decades. These tribes hold vast swaths of territory, claiming the best hunting grounds found in the Cragfang Wastes and leave the scraps to be squabbled over by lesser tribes. These three tribes are: The Howling Horde, The Blooded Scars, and The Black Fang Riders.

### The Howling Horde

The Horde is an anomaly amongst the other two more powerful tribes in that it is a comparatively small tribe yet they have been able to hold their territory against encroachment by the, much larger, Blooded Scars. This is made possible through the Horde's close ties with a corrupted beast spirit that grants them the "gift" of lycanthropy which allows them tremendous strength in battle.

The tribe's reverence for this beast spirit combined with their shamanic leadership makes the tribe more like a cult than a marauding band of thugs. They hold bloody ritual hunts by moonlight, raid other orc camps to capture their strongest warriors to join the tribe or become its next meal, and mark their territory with strange animalistic bone totems. Cannibalism is also much more prominent amongst the Horde than the other

tribes in the Cragfangs and they frequently prefer their meals to be alive when they are being devoured.

The berserkers of the Blooded Scars have a long standing feud with the Horde and the two frequently clash along the borders of their territory. The Horde has extremely contentious relations with the other small tribes of the area as they tend to view them as potential food or recruits. The Horde is unique in that they actively seek to bolster their ranks with members of other tribes, though they only consider the strongest to be worthy and devour any orc that shows weakness.

### The Blooded Scars

Living in the canyons east of the Bloodstone Spire, are the berserkers of the Blooded Scars. These orcs are renowned for their tremendous strength, size, and terrifying battle frenzy. While they are not as numerous as the Black Fang Riders, The Blooded Scars count almost a thousand warriors amongst their ranks and are one of the few tribes that actively engages in metalwork to create their weapons and armor rather than using stone, bones, and hide. Combined with their insatiable bloodlust in battle, this makes them a terrifying opponent.

Extremely distrustful of magic, the Scars frequently war with other tribes operating near their territory which they perceive to be invoking ill omens through their shamanic magic. Most of these tribes are utterly crushed, but the Howling Horde has fought off countless attempts to drive them from their territory which only serves to infuriate the Blooded Scars more. The Scars view the Horde as having bargained away their orcish heritage to some fiendish entity in exchange for immaterial power. Thus they are unworthy of holding territory, as it was not taken with their own

strength, but something borrowed from another source. This long standing feud has given rise to the prominence of metalwork within the Blooded Scars as weapons laced with silver can only be crafted in the forge. The forge masters of the Blooded Scars may not create weapons of equal beauty as those of dwarven smiths, but they are every bit as lethal.

### **Black Fang Riders**

The orcs of the Black Fang hold an immense territory in the Cragfang Wastes. They accomplish this with their vast numbers and the use of many of the Waste's most dangerous beasts as mounts. In all likelihood, the Black Fang could control the entirety of the Wastes if they were not plagued by constant infighting brought on by the, all too frequent, death of a war chief. The territory held by the Black Fang Riders presses up to the borders of three major nations on the southern edge of the Cragfang Wastes. These nations; Clan Guldenturm, Aelonia, and Mithandor; are frequent targets of Black Fang assaults. When a war chief gets too bold and moves the Riders against a more fortified city or fortress rather than the border towns and forts, they are all too often slain during the ensuing attack. As the only means of securing the position of war chief is through force of arms, the multitudes of orcs that believe they should be the next war chief clash in savage civil wars.

Unlike the other two major tribes, The Black Fang Riders openly accept exiled members of other tribes, provided they can at least show aptitude with riding some sort of beast. Axe beaks, grizzly bears, giant boars, and sabre-toothed tigers (called crag cats by the orcs) are the most common beasts used by the Black Fang Riders, though more exotic creatures like wyverns and basilisks have occasionally been spotted as well.

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