

DARK CREEPER

Small Humanoid (Dark Creeper)

Hit Dice: 1d8+1 (5 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft

AC: 18 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +4 clothing)

Attacks: Dagger +1 melee

Damage: Dagger 1d4 and poison

Face/Reach: 5 ft by 5 ft/5 ft

Special Attacks: Darkness, death throes

Special Qualities: Detect magic, light blindness, armor, darkvision 60 ft

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +0

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +5, Hide +13, Listen +1, Move Silently +8, Pick Pocket +3, Spot +1

Feats: Blind-Fight

Climate/Terrain: Temperate forest, mountain, and underground

Organization: Gang (2-4), or clan (20-80 plus 1 dark stalker per 20 dark creepers)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: Standard coins; standard goods; double items

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: By character class

The dark creeper (a folk name for the race since the race name is unknown and their language is incomprehensible to all save the dark creepers) appears as a humanoid about 4 feet tall. They are of slight-build and light of weight. Members of the race dress in somber clothing, concealing as much of their pallid skin as possible.

It is rumored they never remove clothing. Instead they add new layers of clothing as the layers beneath molder away.

Dark creepers speak their own language and nothing more.

COMBAT

A dark creeper will always seek to create darkness in a combat situation, using its power repeatedly until expended. Once darkness is achieved, the dark creeper will move into the party to steal or destroy sources of illumination. Its second priority is magic, the more powerful, and portable the better. Daggers, rings, and jewelry are particular favorites. Dark creepers know how to most efficiently find such items, and it will attempt to take them in the quickest and easiest way, as many a four-fingered adventurer can attest. A dark creeper will always fight to the death or flee, understanding neither surrender nor negotiation.

Darkness (Su): 3/day—*darkness* as the spell cast by an 8th-level sorcerer.

Death Throes (Ex): When killed, the dark creeper spontaneously explodes in a flash of white-hot flame. All creatures within a 10-foot radius must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 11) or be blinded (as the *blindness* spell) for 2d4 minutes.

Other dark creepers who witness this self-immolation must make a Will save (DC 15) or flee in terror for 1d6 rounds. Illusionary or other simulated death-fires may be similarly effective against those dark creepers that fail to save against the illusion.

Detect Magic (Su): A dark creeper can continuously detect magic as the spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action.

Light Blindness (Ex): Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds dark creepers for 1 round. In addition, they suffer a –1 circumstance penalty to all attack rolls, saves, and checks while operating in bright light.

Armor: Dark creepers rarely ever remove clothing. They add layer after layer as the ones underneath rot away. This grants them a +4 armor bonus.

Skills: Dark creepers receive a +4 racial bonus to Climb, Hide, and Move Silently checks.

DARK CREEPER SOCIETY

Little is known of the habits and social organization of the dark creepers. They live in villages of 20 to 80, deep underground and shrouded in constant darkness. It is not uncommon for the approaches to the villages to be littered with traps, pits, and deadfalls. The villages are generally centered around a pit or crude stairway that leads to lower levels of the subterranean caverns in which they dwell, and can be used as a means of rapid escape. Because the village is cloaked in darkness, this pit presents a significant danger to reckless adventurers who charge into the village. Small magical items have been found along the rim of the pit or hole, leading some to believe that the dark creepers use their innate detect magic ability to place and locate path markers.

DARK CREEPER CHARACTERS

The favored class of a dark creeper is rogue. Multiclass dark creepers always include the rogue class. Strangely enough, however, they tend to shy away from the magical classes—perhaps it is inability with magic that fuels their relentless hunt for magical treasure.

The Dark Creeper first appeared in the 1e FF (1981).