



# DARK SUN CAMPAIGN GUIDE



Rules Book for Players on Athas

# INTRODUCTION

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## ATHAS

*"I live in a world of fire and sand. The crimson sun scorches the life from anything that crawls or flies, and storms of sand scour the foliage from the barren ground. This is a land of blood and dust, where tribes of feral elves sweep out of the salt plains to plunder lonely caravans, mysterious singing winds call travelers to slow suffocation in the Sea of Silt, and selfish kings squander their subjects' lives building gaudy palaces and garish tombs. This bleak wasteland is Athas, and it is my home." —The Wanderer's Journal*

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Beneath a crimson sun lie wastelands of majestic desolation and cities of cruel splendor, where sandal clad heroes battle ancient sorcery and terrible monsters. This is Athas, the world of the DARK SUN campaign setting, a dying planet of savagery and desolation. Life hangs by a thread in this barren land, it is unforgiving to the weak, and now it is up to you to write your own story in blood and glory.

## EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF ATHAS

### 1. THE WORLD IS A DESERT

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From the first moments of dawn until the last twinkling of dusk, the crimson sun shimmers in the olive-tinged sky like a fiery puddle of blood. It climbs toward its zenith and the temperature rises relentlessly: 100 degrees by midmorning, 110 at noon, 130 - sometimes even 150 - by late afternoon. A man cannot drink fast enough to replenish the fluids he loses. As the days drag on, he feels sick and feeble. If he does not have enough water, he grows too weak to move. His mouth becomes dry and bitter, his lips, tongue, and throat grow swollen. Before long, his blood is thick and gummy. His heart must work hard to circulate it. Finally his system overheats, leaving him dead and alone in the sands.

There are no rivers or lakes and pockets of civilization are concentrated in isolated oases where water is more precious than life. But, this is not all a wasteland. Under the sands lie ancient ruins, testament to a time before the desert, and the city-states are a wonder in and of themselves.

### 2. THE WORLD IS SAVAGE

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Life on Athas is brutal and short. Bloodthirsty raiders, greedy slavers, and hordes of merciless savages overrun the deserts and wastelands. The cities are not much safer; each choke in the grip of an immortal tyrant. Slavery is widespread on Athas, and many unfortunates spend their lives in chains,

toiling for brutal taskmasters. Every year, hundreds of slaves, perhaps thousands, are sent to their deaths in bloody arena spectacles. Charity, compassion, kindness—these qualities exist, but they are rare and precious blooms. Only a fool hopes for such riches.

### 3. METAL IS SCARCE

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Most weapons and armor are made of bone, stone, wood, and similar materials. Mail or plate armor exists only in the treasuries of the sorcerer-kings. Steel blades are nearly priceless; many heroes never see such weapons during their lifetimes.

### 4. ARCANES MAGIC DEFILES THE WORLD

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Reckless use of arcane magic during ancient wars reduced Athas to a wasteland. To cast an arcane spell, a magic user siphons power from the living world. Nearby plants wither to ash, crippling pain wracks animals and people, and the soil is permanently sterilized. It is possible to cast spells with care, avoiding any more damage to the world, but defiling is easier and faster than preserving. As a result, sorcerers, wizards, and other wielders of arcane magic are reviled and persecuted across Athas regardless of whether they preserve or defile. Only the most powerful spellcasters can use their arcane abilities without fear of reprisal.

### 5. SORCERER KINGS RULE THE CITIES

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Terrible defilers of immense power rule all the city-states. These mighty spellcasters have held their thrones for centuries; no one alive remembers a time before the sorcerer-kings. Some claim to be gods, and some profess to serve gods. Some are brutal oppressors, while others are subtle in their tyranny. The sorcerer kings govern through priesthoods or bureaucracies of greedy, ambitious templars, who channel their power. In all appearances, they are gods of this world.

### 6. THE GODS ARE SILENT

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Athas is a world without deities. No clerics, no paladins, and no prophets live here. Religious orders are dedicated to sorcerer-kings who claim godhood. Old shrines and crumbling temples lie amid ancient ruins, testimony to a time when unknown agents spoke to the people of Athas. Those who lay claim to clerical powers do so through worship of the elements: the sun, the sand, the storm, and the rarest of all, water.



## 7. FIERCE MONSTERS ROAM THE WORLD

The desert planet has its own deadly ecology. Many creatures that are familiar sights on milder worlds have long since died out or never existed on Athas. The world has no cattle, swine, or horses; instead, people tend flocks of erdlus, ride on kanks or crodlus, and draw wagons with inixes and mekillots. Wild creatures such as lions, bears, and wolves are almost nonexistent. In their place are terrors such as the id fiend, the baazrag, and the tembo. Perhaps the harsh environment of Athas breeds creatures tough and vicious enough to survive it, or maybe the touch of ancient sorcery poisoned the wellsprings of life and inflicted monster after monster on the dying world. Either way, the deserts are perilous, and only a fool or a lunatic travels them alone.

## 8. FAMILIAR RACES AND CLASSES AREN'T WHAT YOU EXPECT

Typical fantasy stereotypes don't apply to Athasian heroes. In many fantasy settings, elves are wise, benevolent forest-dwellers who guard their homelands from intrusions of evil. On Athas, elves are nomadic herders, raiders, peddlers, and thieves. Halflings aren't amiable river-folk; they're xenophobic headhunters and cannibals who hunt and kill trespassers in their mountain forests. New races thrive here: the monstrous half-giant, the insectoid thri-kreen, the half-breed mul. There are no paladins, bards serve as assassins, and the mental force of psionics can be found even amongst the lowliest beggar and slave.

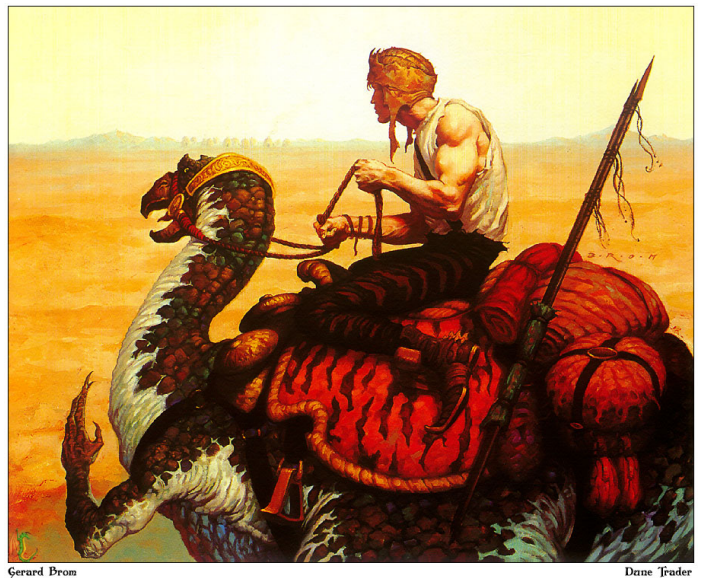
### THE CALL

*"Athas is an endless wasteland, yet it has a majestic and stark beauty. When first light casts its emerald hues over the Sea of Silt, or when sunset spreads its orange flame over the Mekillot Mountains, the world's feral beauty stirs the untamed heart in each of us. It is a call to take up spear and dagger, to flee the cities, to go and see what lurks out in the barrenness."* - The Wanderer's Journal

### PLAYER TIP

The DARK SUN setting isn't a place for your typical bearded dwarf with a love of beer and gems, cherubic halfling, or charging knights and gnome wizards. In this setting, some races don't exist, and the dwarf might instead be a hairless devotee to the sun, the halfling a stealthy cannibalistic hunter, and any wizard likely hides her spellcasting lest a mob hang her for defiling what precious life clings to the earth. Half-giants and thri-kreen are part of the dominant races, and the scarcity of metal leads crafters to creative uses of alternative materials and an entirely different economy. This book expands your usual options and will help you and your friends create characters uniquely invested in this world.

Athas waits to challenge you. Whether you are a mul gladiator, competing for the cheers of thousands, or the elven trickster selling contraband goods as part of your cover for the Veiled Alliance, or a thri-kreen hunter enthralled by the irregular behaviors of humanoids, you will face the same basic question: are you here simply to survive, or do you dare to do more?



Gerard Brom

Dane Trider

# PART 1

## Character Creation

### 1. CHOOSE A RACE

This guide provides the racial traits and roleplay aspects of the eight available classes: dwarf, elf, half-elf, half-giant, halfling, human, mul, and thri-kreen.

### 2. CHOOSE A CLASS

The traditional classes and archetypes may have been modified or do not exist. This Guide lists any changes to each class. The classes of Athas are: barbarian, bard, cleric, druid, fighter, monk, psion (new), ranger, sorcerer, warlock (templar patron, new), and wizard. The Paladin does not exist on Athas.

### 3. ASSIGN ABILITY SCORES

Standard array (15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8).

### 4. DESCRIBE YOUR CHARACTER

- No evil characters allowed.
- Literacy is banned in cities, so consult the DM when choosing a background as to whether your social class enables your character to read and write.
- Decide whether to run your character in the first person ("I throw a dagger") or third person ("Grok throws a dagger") and stick with it.
- The following backgrounds are available: Charlatan, Criminal, Entertainer, Folk (slave) Hero, Guild artisan (merchant or trader), Hermit, Noble, Outlander, Sage, Soldier, Urchin.
- The social hierarchy in cities generally is: templar (city official), noble, freeman, laborer/soldier, slave. Decide where you fit in during this phase.
- Be descriptive! A character is more than numbers or a "build." Come up with personality traits and use the Ideals, Bonds, and Flaws to assist with remembering to play the character itself.

### 5. CHOOSE EQUIPMENT

Consult the Dark Sun Money and Equipment Guide for purchases, currency, and changes in material. Because of the rarity of metal and water, the economy and gear of Athas has developed quite differently from other settings. For example, the primary currency is a "ceramic piece (cp)."

### 6. ASSIGN WILD TALENT

Non-psion characters are likely to have a Wild Talent. Known as the "Will and the Way," most sentient creatures on this world have some form, even if limited, of psionic ability. For the people of Athas, psionics are special because it's the one source of extraordinary power that does not make them beholden to someone or something else. Templars need a sorcerer king. Clerics must pray to the elements. Wizards leech life from plants. Soldiers need someone to make and maintain armaments. Consult the Wild Talent section if you are a non-psion.

### 7. COME TOGETHER

Most campaigns begin with a starting hook or story. The DM is encouraged to run a Session 0: Prologue, in which players should bring a character concept to the table, roleplay how they arrived at their current situation with one another, and work together in developing a narrative that may affect your choice of assigning scores, features, and background to your character.

### 8. OPTIONAL RULES

Consult the DM for which optional rules will be in use and which supplements are permitted. This Guide makes reference to *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* but it is not necessary to play in Athas.

# PART 2

## Races of Athas

### DWARF



*"The worst thing you can say to a dwarf is 'It can't be done.' If he's already decided to do it, he may never speak to you again. If he hasn't decided to take up the task, he may commit himself to it simply out of spite. 'Impossible' is not a concept most dwarves understand. Anything can be done, with enough determination." - Sha'len, Nibenese trader*

On Athas, dwarves are not subterranean miners but rather, a long-lived, slowly dying race known for their relentless focus on a task to the single exclusion of all others. A dwarf's chief love is toil, and one is never happier when tasked with a cause he can approach with a stoic, single-mindedness for weeks, months, years, or even decades. Once his mind is committed to a task, it is near impossible to sway him away from it as he will fail to listen to reason. Dwarves live for their focus, for those who die unable to complete a focus return from the dead to haunt their unfinished work. A dwarf rarely divulges his focus to anyone.

#### SHORT AND STOUT

Short and powerful, dwarves stand between 4 ½ and 5 feet tall. Their frames are massive and an average dwarf weighs in the vicinity of 200 pounds. Life in the Athasian wastes makes them rugged, tanned, and callused. Dwarves are hairless and find the very idea of it repulsive.

#### THE FOCUS

A dwarf's relation is often a function of his focus. Those who help him are respected, sensible companions. Those who hinder him are obstacles that must be removed. There is very little room for compromise in a dwarven mind.

##### Focus

Focus is the central point of your existence, and no simple job will suffice. Work with your DM to come up with a starting focus and a new one if completed. None should be easy to complete and should take at least 1 week or longer to finish to be worthwhile.

*For example, Grelak, protector of his village, makes the retrieval of a sacred book stolen by raiders his focus. After a week of gathering clues, he sets out to liberate the artifact from its current owner in a trading post weeks away. On the way there, he gains the benefit of his dwarven focus for anything that would slow him because he is trying to reach the book. Later, he stops in Nibenay to rest and gets in a brawl. He doesn't receive any bonuses because he isn't actively pursuing his focus.*

#### DWARVEN SOCIETY

Dwarves are close-knit, formed around clans and focused on family. Ties of blood are honored above all but the focus. Family honor or dishonor is passed down to generations. A community is led by the *Urhnymous* (over-leader), and each clan by an *uhrnius* (leader). There are 3 main dwarven settlements in the Tablelands: Kled, near Tyr, and the twin villages of North and South Ledopolus on the southwestern edge. Dwarven oral tradition shares that they were once a mighty people living in vast cities, and many of these ancient ruins are still out there, buried and forgotten.

## DWARF NAMES

Names are granted by the clan leader, the *uhrnius*, after completing one's first focus. Dwarves do not have a surname and like many on Athas prefer just one name, using a town (Drog of Kled) if distinction is needed.

**Male Names:** Baranus, Biirgaz, Bontar, Brul, Caelum, Caro, Daled, Drog, Fyra, Ghedran, Gralth, Gram, Jurgan, Lyanius, Murd, Nati, Portek, Rkard, Sa'ram, Sult, Veso.

**Female Names:** Ardin, Erda, Ghava, Greshin, Gudak, Lazra, N'kadir, Palashi, Vashara.

## DWARF TRAITS

Dwarves are nonmagical by nature and abhor arcane casters. They cannot take an arcane casting class. Their priests lean towards steady earth and avoid chaotic air, and they take to psionics with a vengeance. Dwarves leave villages at times to further a focus and to search for ancient dwarven ruins. They are highly prized as mercenaries because once contracted, their loyalty will never change.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 2, and you choose to increase your Strength or Wisdom by 1.

**Age.** Dwarves mature around age 35 and live up to 250 years, though the dangers of Athas often claim them well before this time.

**Alignment.** Dwarves tend lawful and good to neutral. Their devotion to an established hierarchy in villages means they tend to follow rules even to the point of ridicule.

**Size.** A typical dwarf stands about 4 ½ to 5 feet tall and weighs 200 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 feet. You are not slowed by wearing heavy armor.

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

**Dwarven Focus.** When making an ability check or saving throw directly related to your Focus, you are considered proficient and double your proficiency bonus.

**Dwarven Resilience.** You have Advantage on poison saves and resistance to poison damage.

**Tool Proficiency.** You gain proficiency with the artisan's tool of your choice: smith's tools, brewer's supplies, or mason's tools.

**Dwarven Toughness.** Your hit point maximum increases by 1 and it increases by 1 every time you gain a level.

**Languages.** You can speak Common and Dwarvish. With DM permission, your character might be able to read Dwarvish with an appropriate background. Dwarves keep a long and proud oral history, and they have an old written language mostly used for writing history that they will never share to outsiders. Their native language is deep and throaty, full of guttural sounds and harsh exclamations that cause most non-dwarves to get raw throats if spoken for long.

## ROLEPLAYING A DWARF

Remember the intensity of your focus. Breaking it has social, philosophical, and spiritual repercussions. If you die before completion, your spirit will return as a banshee and you will have shamed your clan for generations to come. For someone to intentionally stand in the way of your focus is an assault on you. Your greatest satisfaction is completing the focus. Keep a serious attitude always. The only time you show your festive side (you have one) is when you have recently fulfilled a focus or between setting a new one. At this time, your full joy and humor show, but you are vulnerable in some ways because you are lost in purpose.



# ELF



*"Honor? The word does not exist in the elven language."* –  
Tharak, human guard

*"Better to die with a spear in your hands than to live with  
shackles around your wrist."* – Elven adage

Athas' wilderness is home to the long-limbed elves, a race of traders, herders, and fast moving raiders. Running is the key to acceptance and respect amongst them. Elves who are injured and cannot run are often left behind to die. Most rarely stay in one place for long, both physically and emotionally, and this is seen as a sign of strength in their people - an absolute freedom.

Elf culture, while savage, is also rich and diverse. They have turned celebrating into an art form, and elf song and dance is captivating and seductive to non-elves. Elven war parties are greatly feared in the deserts, for they are a deadly force of endurance and maneuverability.

Others see elves as dishonest and lazy; generally, a fair assessment. Elves idle for days until compelled to exert themselves, but they can run for days without complaint. No self-respecting elf will ride an animal, and it is a severe dishonor to do so. Custom dictates those who cannot keep up are left behind, and this includes the pregnant and the elderly. Elves prefer to live short, happy lives rather than long, boring ones. Unlike traditional settings, Athasian elves rarely live past 140 years. Seeing the future as a dark, deadly place, they prefer to live in the "here and now." They thrive in open spaces and tend to wither in captivity, making them poor choices on the slave block.

## LONG AND LEAN

Elves are long-limbed sprinters who stand between 6 ½ and 7 ½ feet tall with slender yet muscular builds, averaging 175 pounds. They have deeply etched features with rugged skin as varied as the other races of Athas. They grow no facial hair but the locks atop their heads comes in from lightest blond to darkest black. They dress in garb designed to protect them from the elements.

## TRUST IS FOR FOOLS

Elves keep to their own tribe – there is no racial unity - and the rare friend, unless there's an angle to be gained. Strangers are potential enemies waiting to take advantage of an elf, so they look to get the advantage first. If a companion shows promise, the elf devises a series of "tests" of trust that allows them to prove their friendship is "stronger than the bonds of death," as elves say. Once gained, one is forever a friend, but if that trust is betrayed, it is gone forever. In the tribe, elves are all equals, except the Chief. The Chief is elected and rules for life, making all major decisions for the tribe, and elves are expected to tithe a choice piece of loot. Holding out suggests a lack of loyalty to the tribe. Your natural enemy are the thri-kreen who view your people as a delicacy.

## THE RUN

Those who cannot keep up die, and freedom in all matters is life. Most elves don't lie, cheat, or steal out of malice. They see an opportunity and the gullible can't keep up. In their culture, an elf is rewarded for being faster, both in wit and running. If you stop running, if you settle down, you wither.

## HOME IS WHERE YOU RUN

Elves are nomads by nature, though they maintain semi-permanent settlements in the wilderness. Their ability to cover vast distances makes them master raiders, and they consider anywhere their legs can take them as their territory to take from as they see fit.

Elves may flippantly adventure for wanderlust, but those who persist often do so for a desire for profit, glory, revenge, or loyalty. They like to boast about their accomplishments, weaving these into song. Elves often take keepsakes from memorable raids and sew these into their cloaks. Elves are pleased by flaunting a stolen item before an owner. Elven custom dictates the victim congratulate the thief on his possession of such an attractive item (those who don't are poor sports).

Unlike most other races, elves have no issue with defiling magic and arcane practice.



## ELF NAMES

Naming of young runners is a sacred responsibility, given after the first interesting thing the child does while learning to run. With the right name, an elf child can grow to greatness, but the wrong name may cause one to vanish in the wastes. A child's name can be changed because of an extraordinary deed performed during the rite of passage. Elves take the surname of their tribe.

**Male Names:** Botuu (Water Runner), Coraanu (First Elf, the Warrior Thief), Dukkoti (Wind Fighter), Haaku (Two Daggers), Lobuu (First Runner), Mutami (Laughs at Sun), Nuuko (Sky Hunter), Traako (Metal Stealer).

**Female Names:** Alaa (Bird Chaser), Ekee (Wild Dancer), Guuta (Singing Sword), Hukaa (Fire Leaper), Ittee (Dancing Bow), Nuuta (Quiet Hunter), Utaa (Laughing Moon)

**Tribe (Clan) Names:** Clearwater Tribe (Fireshaper, Graffyon, Graystar, Lightning, Onyx, Sandrunner, Seafoam, Silverleaf, Songweaver, Steeljaw, Wavedivers, Windriders clans); Night Runner Tribe (Dark Moons, Full Moons, Half Moons, Lone Moons, New Moons, Quarter Moons clans); Shadow Tribe; Silt Stalker Tribe (Fire Bow, Fire Dagger, Fire Sword clans); Silver Hand Tribe; Sky Singer Tribe (Dawnchaser, Dayjumper, Twilightcatcher clans); Swiftwing Tribe; Water Hunter Tribe (Raindancer, Poolrunner, Lakesinger clans); Wind Dancer Tribe (Airhunter, Breezechaser clans)

## ELF TRAITS

Elves tend to any profession and trade that let's them act freely. This makes them poor students of the rigorous study of psionics, and rarely does anything but Air draw them to clerical study.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2, and you choose to increase your Intelligence or Charisma by 1.

**Age.** Elves reach physical maturity at the same rate as humans but must pass the tribe's rites of initiation before being recognized as adults, typically around 20. Elves can live to 140 years.

**Alignment.** Elves tend chaotic because of their love of freedom, variety and self-expression. They tend neutrality, though they tend good (self-sacrifice) when the tribe is concerned. Although they will steal everything in sight, they are not murderous and avoid unnecessary violence.

**Size.** A typical elf stands about 6 1/2 to 7 1/2 feet tall and around 175 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 feet.

**Burst of Speed.** Your heritage allows you to move in sprints. When you move on your turn in combat, you can double your speed until the end of the turn. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you move 0 feet on one of your turns.

**Elven Resilience.** You are conditioned to the extreme weather of the wastelands and have advantage on all saves against extreme heat and cold.

**Mask of the Wild.** You can attempt to hide even when you are only lightly obscured by terrain, weather, or other natural phenomena.

**Elf Run.** You add your Constitution score to the number of miles you can travel in a day. You have advantage on forced march saves.

**Languages.** You can speak Common and Elvish. Each tribe has a distinct dialect. The language is filled with short, clipped words, run with a rapid staccato pace difficult for others to pick up. They disdain the slow, tedious languages of others but condescend to learn Common. Elves that learn other tongues hide it to gain advantage.

## ROLEPLAYING AN ELF

Rely on guerilla combat skills – distance, maneuverability and speed. The elven philosophy is never to stand up in a fair fight, and running is prized, whether it be from an equal combat, an awkward situation, or a pregnant lover. When someone professes to be your friend, dismiss them at first then offer them a test of trust (don't tell them). Ask them to give you a prized possession or see if they take one of yours left out in a conspicuous place. Pretend to sleep and listen to what they say about you. Maybe allow yourself to be captured and see if this presumed friend will rescue you!

# HALF-ELF



*"People are no good. You can only trust animals and the bottle."* – Delmao, half-elf thief.

Unlike the parents of mules, elves and humans are often attracted to each other, but just as often, they are the unwanted product of a casual encounter. Born from two worlds but not welcome in either, they find an attraction to the solitary wastes. In conjunction with a lack of unifying culture, most turn into lonesome, self-sufficient folk. Elves have no tolerance for them (the mother is expected to get rid of the child or be cast out) and most, though not all, humans believe their ears make them just another lazy thief and trickster. When everyone sees you as the worst quality of your parent race, the half-elf turns away and has found a kinship in the animal world unmatched by either of their parent races.

## HALF AND HALF

Half-elves are taller than most humans, standing 6 to 6 1/2 feet tall, bulkier than elves and able to pass themselves off more as humans than full elves. The men can grow beards and they have a full range of skin tones and hair colors. Some enjoy proving themselves better than humans or elves at a task, and others simply turn to different cultures, such as thri-kreen or muls, for friendship. They rarely maintain a friendship for long as it is their experience that everyone is going to let you down or betray you eventually, but at times it is necessary to ally or simply not be alone.

## NO CULTURE

Half-elves don't form communities despite their numbers, and they can reproduce with either parent race. Most will never know their elven parent and they aren't welcome in elven tribes, seen as an embarrassment who can't keep up. Their affinity to beasts leads them to be valuable animal handlers. Some find acceptance in the ranks of templars, where service to the sorcerer king or queen provides a welcome home. In adventuring parties, they tend to be aloof because it's likely to be a short-lived experience.

## HALF-ELF NAMES

Most have human names as they cannot run as elves to gain a given name, nor an accepted tribal name. Some warp the elvish custom and simply take a name, much to the anger of elves. Like most races, half-elves use only one name, though they may adopt a city or village surname, or a profession, to distinguish themselves.

**Male Names:** Boaz, Brazin, Ero, Fyrian, Gathalimay, Laban, Lafus, Luris, Melestan, Mirch, Navarch, Poortool, Regg, Ruach, Solzak, Vok, Wek, Wheetan, Xutan.

**Female Names:** Alie, Arya, Aso, Drewet, Feera, Feykaar, Krysta, Lorelei, Mila, Ranis, Sareka, Thania, Vaerhirmana.

## HALF-ELF TRAITS

Half-elves are influenced by both parents, even if not accepted by either race.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Wisdom score increases by 2, and two other ability scores of your choice increase by 1.

**Age.** Half-elves mature as humans, reaching adulthood around 20, and some live to 130 years.

**Alignment.** Lawful and neutral half-elves labor for acceptance from a parent race while chaotic ones have given up, rejecting a society that has rejected them.

**Size.** A typical half-elf stands close to 6 1/2 feet tall and weighs 140 pounds. Your size is Medium.

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

**Nomadic Life.** You have proficiency in the Survival and Animal Handling skills.

**Speak with Animals.** You can communicate simple ideas with medium size or smaller beasts using sounds and gestures. This does not make the animal friendly to you or able to respond in kind.

**Animal Affinity.** At 3rd level, you can use an Action to attempt to charm a medium size or smaller beast with Intelligence 3 or lower. You must be able to touch and talk to the beast. It must pass a Wisdom save or be charmed for 24 hours. The saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier. If you or a companion damage the beast, the charm ends. You cannot use this trait again until you complete a long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak Common and Elvish, and if a city dweller, likely you adopt the distinct dialect of your home.

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## ROLEPLAYING A HALF-ELF

You don't consider yourself a separate race. You pride yourself on your self-reliance and refuse patronizing offers to help you. You'll do fine on your own, thank you very much. Take any chance to show humans you're just as talented as them or elves you're just as clever. If others view your attempts as irrational, well, they get to be wrapped in the blankets of racial acceptance. You're left out in the cold. Praise should be viewed with suspicion because no one hands that out without an angle in mind. Other half-elves don't interest you by default. Just because they have the same ears doesn't mean you suddenly have anything in common. In an adventuring group, you don't need charity and don't need someone else to cook your food or take your watch.

This does not mean you'll never form a lasting friendship. But it's hard to get over a lifetime of being on the outside and being constantly reminded of that. This is why you feel affinity with the beast. They're simple. They don't judge, and they don't act with malice.

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# HALF-GIANT



*“Mind of a child, strength of three grown men. I’ve seen a half-giant tear the walls out of a building because he wanted a better look at the tattoos on a mul inside.” – Daro, human trader*

Legend holds in ages past a sorcerer king or queen used wizardry to beget a union of giant and human to make a race of powerful slaves. Whatever the truth, the half-giant race has thrived, able to reproduce with one another, and are sought out as gladiators, soldiers, guards and mercenaries across the tablelands.

Because of their artificial origins, there is no half-giant culture, tradition, or homeland. They readily imitate customs and cultures of those they admire or associate with. They are very imitative, eager to fit into a world that is not built for their size. One observing a dwarf quarry might watch for a time then try his hand at it, moving on if he does not excel at it. Many find they excel at breaking bones and imitate those who are also skilled at this practice.

## BIG AND STRONG

Half-giants are enormous individuals, generally 10 to 12 feet high and weighing in upwards of 1600 pounds. Though they have human features, these tend to be exaggerated in some ways. Skin tones range from light brown to deep tan, like sand. They vary in hair color and tend to wear whatever hair style or fashion they currently are emulating. Absent that, their giant heritage makes for thick hair amenable to braids. There is no economy for half-giant stature, so their clothing would likely consist of several human-sized articles of clothing stitched together. A tavern would charge extra for filling enough plates for a half-giant sized appetite, and any armor would have to be specially crafted. Most nobles, templars, and merchant houses feel the investment is worth the return when they have 1500 pounds of enforcement at their command.

## IMPRESSIONABLE

The most powerful warriors on Athas, half-giants seem content to dwell in humanity’s shadow and drift towards charismatic leaders of all races. For example, if a half-giant village is near elven raiders, they are likely to emulate the guerilla tactics of the elves. However, this innate need to fit in is more than a whim. It is inherent to the half-giant’s creation. A half-giant farmer’s village might be raided, and he may soon adopt the morals of the invaders because they seem to know what they’re doing, and the half-giant finds he’s pretty good at smashing heads too.

## ALIGNMENT ON A WHIM

One axis of your alignment will be fixed and the other subject to change, even daily, based on influential events or persons around you that you find a reason to emulate or admire. You will try out their morals or philosophies and perhaps stick with it for a time if you’re good at it. This does not mean half-giants are unreliable - the influence must be strong for them to change, and they have a core philosophy that is fairly unchanging. A half-giant soldier might see a dwarven cleric of the sun and be impressed by her unflappable devotions. He may try shaving himself and praying to the sun until he finds he cannot stare at the sun without hurting his eyes and cannot make fire appear.

This can make role-playing a half-giant a challenge.

## HALF-GIANT NAMES

Slaves are given human names while free half-giants will take names based off the adopted culture. See other races for name suggestions.



## HALF-GIANT TRAITS

Half-giants inherit a solid balance of their bestial and human parents.

**Ability Score Increase.** You have 4 points to split between your Strength and Constitution scores. Your Strength score may reach a maximum of 22 instead of 20. Your Intelligence and Wisdom scores are decreased by 2 each.

**Age.** Half-giants mature around 24 years of age and can live up to 220 years.

**Alignment.** Your alignment may fluctuate as described in *Alignment on a Whim*. You begin with one fixed alignment axis (good-neutral-evil or lawful-neutral-chaotic) that will never change. The other axis may change depending on who you are emulating. Subject to DM approval, when imitating a charismatic leader, select an appropriate Ideal or Flaw and replace your current one. If the new Ideal is tied to a non-fixed axis of your alignment, change that aspect of your alignment.

**Size.** A typical half-giant stands 10 to 12 feet tall and weighs 1,600 pounds. You occupy a 10-foot by 10-foot space and have a 5 foot reach. Your size is Large.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 35 feet.

**Giant Body.** You cannot wear ordinary gear sized for smaller creatures such as boots, gloves, and rings. All clothing, armor, meals, and lodging cost double for you.

**Giant Appetite.** You require double the daily amount of food and water as a human.

**Large Hands.** You may use versatile weapons in one hand as if wielded with both hands.

**Colossal Endurance.** Your immense body mass allows you to occasionally shrug off injury. When you take damage, you can use your reaction to reduce that damage by your Constitution score. After using this trait, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

**Giant's Toughness.** You gain +3 hit points per level.

**Languages.** You can speak Common. Your voice is always low, making it difficult for most to hear and understand more than a rumble.

## ROLEPLAYING A HALF-GIANT

Always remember how much bigger and heavier you are than everyone else. Take advantage of your height in combat, but remember the disadvantages. Between your size and your lesser wits (even if you are a relatively intelligent half-giant people will assume you to be dull), you find yourself an object of comic relief. You are used to being teased and will endure more witty remarks than most people, but when you have been pushed too far your personality can suddenly shift, and you can unleash astonishing violence on your tormentors and any who stand in your way. Less frequently, these shifts can happen to you without provocation — you just wake up with a different ethos and altered disposition.

Remember you are influenced by powerful personalities, and can shift your personality and ethics. You tend to imitate the tactics, clothes and demeanor of your “little master.”

## SIZE AND MAGIC ITEMS

Magical gear adjusts for the size of the wearer from Small to Large. A half-giant or halfling can wear the same pair of boots if magical, but ordinary kank leather boots sized for a human simply won't fit. For creatures with an alien physique, such as a thri-kreen, certain items like boots will never work, magical or not.

# HALFLING



*"Be wary of the forest ridge. The halflings who live there would as soon eat you alive as look at you. Chances are you won't even notice them until you've become the main course."*  
—Mo'rune, half-Elven ranger

Halflings are masters of the jungles of the Ringing Mountains. They are small, quick and agile creatures steeped in an ancient and rich culture that goes back far into Athas' past. Although they are not common in the Tablelands, some halflings leave their homes in the forests to adventure under the dark sun. While omnivores, halflings prefer raw flesh and let no meat go to waste, including that of enemies, humans, and other sentient creatures.

Halflings have difficulty understanding others' customs or points of view, but curiosity helps some halflings overcome their xenophobia. Little concerned with material wealth, halflings are more concerned with how their actions will affect other halflings.

## SMALL AND SAVAGE

Halflings are small creatures, standing only about 3 1/2 feet tall and weighing 50 to 60 pounds. Rarely affected by age, halfling faces are often mistaken for the faces of human children, even the elderly among them. They dress in loincloths, sometimes with a shirt or vest, and paint their skins with bright reds and greens. Forest halflings rarely tend to their hair, and some let it grow to great lengths, though it can be unkempt and dirty.

## ANCIENT CULTURE

Halfling culture dominates their relations with others and predates human civilization. Rarely will they ever draw the blood of another halfling. Halflings of different tribes share a tradition of song, art and poetry, which serves as a basis of communication. Creatures that do not know these cultural expressions are often at a loss to understand a halfling's expressions, analogies and allusions to well-known tales. Halflings can easily become frustrated with such "uncultured" creatures lose patience with outsider intolerance of their ways, such as eating other humanoids. They abhor slavery and most halflings will starve themselves rather than accept slavery.

## FEAR OF OUTSIDERS

Halflings have no desire to see their home become like the rest of Athas. They are fierce and merciless in its defense, uncaring about the struggles and excuses of other races. Halflings' bond with nature extends into most aspects of their culture. A shaman or witch doctor, who also acts as a spiritual leader, often rules their clans. This leader is obeyed without question. Halfling fighters willingly sacrifice themselves to obey their leader, leaving outsiders to perceive them as fanatics when halflings dearly love and enjoy life.

Exploring the Tablelands gives curious halflings the opportunity to learn other customs. Although they may at first have difficulty in understanding the numerous practices of the races of the Tablelands, their natural curiosity enables them to learn and interact with others. Other halflings may be criminals, renegades or other tribal outcasts, venturing into the Tablelands to escape persecution by their kin. Most tribes reject arcane magic, but a few have preserver chieftains who would sacrifice an entire tribe to keep one defiler out.

## HALFLING NAMES

Halflings have only one name assigned at birth.

**Male Names:** Basha, Cerk, Derlan, Drassu, Entrok, Kakzim, Lokee, Nok, Pauk, Plool, Sala, Tanuka, Ukos, Zol.

**Female Names:** Alansa, Anezka, Dokala, Grelzen, Horga, Jikx, Joura, Nasaha, Vensa.

## HALFLING TRAITS

Halfling traits reflect their savage nature.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2 and your Wisdom score by 1.

**Age.** Halflings reach adulthood at the same rate as humans and live to be about 120 years old.

**Alignment.** Halflings tend towards law and evil. Uncomfortable with change, halflings tend to rely on intangible constants, such as racial identity, family, clan ties and personal honor. Halflings generally have little respect for the laws of the big people.

**Size.** Halflings average around 3 ½ feet tall and 50 to 60 pounds. Your size is Small.

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

**Halfling Nimbleness.** You can move through the space of any creature that is of larger size than yours.

**Savage Attacks.** When you score a critical hit with a melee 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.

**Fury of the Small.** When you damage a creature at least one size larger than you with an attack or spell, you can cause the attack to add extra damage equal to your level. Once you use this trait, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak Halfling and Common. Your culture uses drawings and tales rather than a written language. Halflings rarely teach others their language, but some individuals of the Tablelands have learned the wild speech. Halflings found in the Tablelands learn Common to survive, but it is generally unknown past the Ringing Mountains.

## ROLEPLAYING A HALFLING

Remember to consistently take your height into account. Role-play the halfling culture described above: eating opponents, treating fellow halflings with trust and kindness, suspicion of big people, and general lack of interest in money. Conquest and plundering have no place in your society; rather the most important value is the ability of the inner self as it harmonizes with the environment. You should be sickened by the landscape of the Tablelands and desperately want to avoid any risk that devastation ever spreading to your homelands in the Forest Ridge. You will learn about other cultures, but you should firmly believe halfling culture to be innately superior to all others. However, you don't try to change other's cultures, no more than you would try to convince a tembo to change its diet. While omnivorous, you vastly prefer meat, and everything is a source of food. You should presume most other races will eat anything, including halflings, if they are hungry enough, and this makes it hard to trust them.

# HUMAN



*“Humans are fools and hopelessly naïve as well. They outnumber us; they are everywhere, and yet they have no more sense of their strength than a rat. Let us hope that the Datto stay that way.”* —Dukkoti Nightrunner, elven warrior

Humans are the dominant culture in the explored parts of Athas, known for their versatility and adaptability. Most tend to be ambitious and individualistic; even the tyranny of sorcerer kings hasn’t stamped out this diversity. Other races often don’t know what to expect when meeting a human for the first time because predicting their behavior based on cultural norms is difficult. “It’s human nature” is a common saying when humans appear to take action for no apparent reason.

Humans tend to get along well with races they come in contact with (most often dwarves and muls). Half-giants and thri-kreen are seen as dangerous monsters. Elves and half-elves are considered flighty and untrustworthy. Halflings are exotics. Humans often serve as a go-between when one race deals with another.

## A BROAD SPECTRUM

Men average 6 feet tall and 200 pounds while women range around 5 ½ feet tall and 140 pounds. They tend to dark-skin and bronzed tones with darker hair, though all colors exist with nobility tending to the greatest variety. Humans are prone to mutations, and it is not uncommon to find exaggerated features, webbed feet, or even extra digits on hands and feet.

## MUTATIONS

Centuries of abusive magic have taken their toll on the human body. Some humans have marked alterations to their appearance, such as a bizarre symmetry, exaggerated facial feature, pointed ears, no facial hair, unusual skin coloration like copper or grey, etc. Humans are familiar and generally unsurprised by such differences. Ultimately, these give no benefits or hindrances in gameplay and are for flavor.

## HUMAN NAMES

Human names vary by region. For most a single name suffices. A noble will have a family surname but often revert to use of one name. Freeman occasionally refer to their occupations to avoid being taken for laborers or slaves, such as “Barek the Weaver.”

**Tyr/Urik Male Names:** Agis, Amilanu, Baal, Banoc, Duzi, Ea, Gulkishar, Igigi, Markduk, Rim-Sin, Sargon, Silani, Tithian, Utuaa, Zu

**Tyr/Urik Female Names:** Amata, Bau, Belili, Damkina, Gula, Ishtar, Kishar, Mummu, Mylitta, Neeva, Ninsunu, Rubati, Shala, Zakiti.

## HUMAN TRAITS

Humans are hard to generalize.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your ability scores all increase by 1.

**Age.** Humans tend to reach adulthood in their late teens and can live to around 80 years.

**Alignment.** Humans tend to no particular alignment. The best and worst are found among them.

**Size.** Men average 6 feet tall and 200 pounds while women range around 5 ½ feet tall and 140 pounds. Your size is Medium.

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

**Languages.** Common and one other language of your choice.

## HUMAN VARIANT

Instead of increasing all ability scores, you may increase two different ability scores by 1, gain proficiency in a skill, and gain one feat.



# MUL



*"See, the trick is to break their will. Not too much, mind you. Nobody wants to watch a docile gladiator, and muls are too expensive to waste as labor slaves. But, you don't want them trying to escape every other day. Would you like to tell the arena crowd that their favorite champion will not be appearing in today's match because he died trying to escape your pens?" —Gaal, Urikite arena trainer*

Born from the unlikely parentage of dwarves and humans, a mul (pronounced "mull", from the dwarven word "*mulzhennedar*" which means "*strength*"; "mule" is used as a derogatory pronunciation) combines the height and adaptable nature of humans with the musculature and resilience of dwarves. Muls enjoy traits that are uniquely their own, such as their robust metabolism and almost inexhaustible capacity for work. The hybrid has disadvantages in a few areas as well: sterility, and the social repercussions of being created for a life of slavery. Humans and dwarves are not typically attracted to each other. The only reason that muls are so common in the Tablelands is because of their value as laborers and gladiators: slave-sellers force-breed humans and dwarves for profit.

While mul-breeding practices are exorbitantly lucrative, they are often lethal to both the mother and the baby. Conception is difficult and impractical, often taking months to achieve. Even once conceived, the mul takes a full twelve months to carry to term; fatalities during this period are high. As likely as not, anxious overseers cut muls from the dying bodies of their mothers.

## STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE

Second only to the half-giant, the mul is the strongest of the common humanoid races of the tablelands. Muls grow as high as seven feet, weighing upwards of 250 pounds, but carry almost no fat at all on their broad muscular frames. Universal mul characteristics include angular, almost protrusive eye ridges, and ears that point sharply backwards against the temples. Most muls have dark copper-colored skin and hairless bodies. They are always sterile.

## BRED TO SLAVERY

Muls are bred to fight or labor. Most mul laborers master the conventions of slave life, figuring out through painful experience who can be trusted and who cannot. Muls learn from their mistakes in the slave pits to a greater extent than other races not because they are cleverer, but because unlike slaves of other races they tend to survive their mistakes, while other slave races are less expensive and therefore disposable. Only the most foolish and disobedient mul would be killed. Most masters will sell a problem mul slave rather than kill him. Their mastery of the rules of slave life and their boundless capacity for hard work allows them to gain favor with their masters and reputation among their fellow slaves.

## LIFE OF A SLAVE

All gladiators who perform well in the arenas receive some degree of pampered treatment, but muls receive more pampering than others. Some mul gladiators even come to see slavery as an acceptable part of their lives, being given good food, good housing, and mates.

However, those that acquire a taste of freedom will fight for it. Stoic and dull to pain, muls are not easily intimidated by the lash. Masters are loath to slay or maim a mul who tries repeatedly to escape, although those who help the mul's escape will be tormented in order to punish the mul without damaging valuable property. Once a mul escapes or earns his freedom, slavery remains a dominant part of his life. Most muls are heavily marked with tattoos that mark his ownership, history, capabilities and disciplinary measures. Even untattooed muls are marked as a potential windfall for slavers: it is clearly cheaper to "retrieve" a mul who slavers can claim had run away, than to start from scratch in the breeding pits.

## MUL NAMES

Muls are given names, and for gladiators, Draji names with harsh tones are favored to strike fear. Lacking families, a mul might use a place for a surname, such as “Mersten of Nibenay.”

**Male Names:** Aram, Athalak, Borthomar, Bost, Darok, Darus, Durn, Eben, Erekar, Gard, Harask, Marok, Morg, Rikard, Sanozar, Tomak, Uskan, Zedath, Zorus.

**Female Names:** Aisa, Aivel, Brithis, Callia, Demosis, Elina, Faivel, Himithis, Laivi, Mersten, Narisel, Raina, Reshel, Saditha, Tirshel, Uisel, Zerima.

## MUL TRAITS

The mul is bred for physical attributes but can inherit a parent's quick mind. A mul cannot be an arcane caster, having inherited their dwarven heritage.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 2 and your Constitution and Wisdom by 1.

**Age.** A mul ages like humans, tending to reach adulthood a year or two year earlier and given their lot in life rarely reach the age of 85.

**Alignment.** Muls tend towards neutrality with respect to good and evil, but run the gamut with respect to law or chaos. Many lawful muls adapt well to the indignities of slavery, playing the game for the comforts that they can win as valued slaves. A few ambitious lawful muls use the respect won from their fellow slaves to organize rebellions and strike out for freedom. Chaotic muls, on the other hand, push their luck and their value as slaves to the breaking point, defying authority, holding little fear for the lash.

**Size.** A typical mul is 7 feet tall and weighs over 250 pounds. Your size is Medium.

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

**Relentless Endurance.** When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. Once you use that trait, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

**Inexhaustible.** You have advantage on Forced March saves and all saves to resist non-magical exhaustion. If you spend 1 minute focusing yourself, you can remove one level of non-magical exhaustion. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak Common plus a language of your choice.

## ROLEPLAYING A MUL

Born to the slave pens, you never knew love or affection; the taskmaster's whip took the place of loving parents. As far as you have seen, all of life's problems that can be solved are solved by sheer brute force. You know to bow to force when you see it, especially the veiled force of wealth, power and privilege. The noble and templar may not look strong, but they can kill a man with a word. You tend towards gruffness. In the slave pits, you knew some muls that never sought friends or companionship, but lived in bitter, isolated servitude. You knew other muls who found friendship in an arena partner or co-worker. You are capable of affection, trust and friendship, but camaraderie is easier for you to understand and express – warriors slap each other on the shoulder after a victory, or give their lives for each other in battle. You don't think of that sort of event as “friendship” – it just happens.

Muls dislike what they fear, and they fear wizards. They resent that a wizard's power comes from without, with no seeming effort on the wizard's part, while the mul's power is born of pain and labor. You may never have been exposed to psionic study or clerical ways, but there is nothing preventing you from learning.

# THRI-KREEN



Race 7: Thri-Kreen

Board Set

*"This one does not speak with the quivering soft shells that lay about all night. This one might eat you, but never speak."*  
—Tu'tochuk

Thri-kreen ("kreen" for short) are the strangest of the intelligent races of the Tablelands. These insectoid beings born from eggs possess a mindset very different from any humanoid being encountered. They roam the wastes in packs, hunting for food day and night, since they require no sleep. Thri-kreen are quick and agile and make fearsome fighters, feared throughout the wastes. They refer to thri-kreen who have become city dwellers as "tohr-kreen," meaning "settled person," whereas thri-kreen means "wanderer-person."

## INSECT BODY

Mature Thri-kreen stand about 7 feet tall, with a rough body length of 11 feet. Their four arms end in claws; their two legs are extremely powerful, capable of incredible leaps. However, kreen are unable to jump backwards. Their body is covered with a sandy-yellow chitin, a tough exoskeleton that grants the Thri-kreen protection from blows. Their head is topped with two antennae, and their two eyes are compound and multifaceted. The kreen mouth consists of small pincers. Male and female Thri-kreen are physically indistinguishable. Thri-kreen usually do not wear clothing, but wear some sort of harness to carry weapons and food.

Many wear leg or armbands, or bracelets. Some attach rings on different places on their chitin, though this requires careful work by a skilled artisan. While most thri-kreen appear identical to non-kreen, their nuances of exoskeleton development render them quite unique in their view. Pheromones release modifies their eye coloration: light for pleasant feelings and dark for distress. They are carnivores and become sick if eating plants, the only exception being a handful of common spices and fruit-based potions.

## NO SLEEP REQUIRED

Since Thri-kreen do not require sleep, they have difficulty understanding this state of "laziness" in others. Other behaviors of humanoids seem unnecessarily complex. A kreen's life is simple: hunt prey. Kreen live for the hunt, and own only what they can carry. Their knowledge is largely passed by an instinctual racial memory shared with the clutch. At birth, they already know what animals make the best prey and ways to catch them.

## A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

The pack mentality dominates a kreen's relation with others. Kreen hunt in small groups and will move to other areas rather than depopulate an area of prey. A kreen that joins a group of humanoids will often try to establish dominance in the group. This can be disconcerting to those unaware of the kreen's behavior, since establishing dominance usually means making threatening gestures. Once the matter is settled, they will abide by the outcome. Thri-kreen view humanoids as possible sources of food but rarely hunt them as humanoids are not simple prey. Many kreen have a particularly fond taste for elves; as such, meetings between these two races are often tense. However, once part of a clutch, Thri-kreen will never turn on their humanoid friends, even in the worst of situations.

Kreen have a severe fear of any water smaller than a puddle as they cannot swim or float. They have no idea how to ride another creature and find the concept alien and non-sensical.

## RACIAL MEMORY

Contrary to the variety of humans, thri-kreen are largely predisposed to tasks due to their racial memory. They have no wizards; their lack of natural sleep and need to hunt makes it impractical, but kreen take to psionics as a way of life and the hunt. They revere the elements and ancestral memory causes them to revere the Great One, a legendary leader from many clutches past.

## THRI-KREEN NAMES

The Kreen language is very different from those of the other intelligent races. They have no lips or tongues, and so cannot make the same sounds humanoids make. Kreen language is made up of clicks, pops, or grinding noises. They do not distinguish male and female names.

**Names:** Cha'ka, Chuka-tet, Drasna, Drik-chkit, Hakka, Ka'cha, Ka'tho, Klik-chaka'da, Lakta-cho, Qhak'cha, Qhik-ik-cha, Sa'Relka, T'Chai, Tak-tha.

## THRI-KREEN TRAITS

Kreen physiology gives it several natural advantages that compensate for not being able to use items used by other races.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2, and your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Age.** A thri-kreen is born from an egg and becomes fully mature at 6 years. They demonstrate no effect of aging until they reach the end of their life cycle around 30 years. Sensing their death, such thri-kreen go on a final hunt.

**Alignment.** Most Thri-kreen are chaotic, acting in whatever fashion benefits the pack mentality, and this rarely leads them to philosophies of good and evil.

**Size.** A typical thri-kreen is 7 feet tall, 11 feet long, and weighs 450 pounds. Unlike other races, variation in height and weight is nominal and a few inches or pounds at most. You occupy a 10 foot by 10 foot space and have 5 foot reach. Your size is Large.

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

**Carapace.** Your chitinous plate provide a natural armor class of 12 + Dexterity modifier. You cannot wear armor but you may carry a shield.

**Thri-kreen Physiology.** You only require 1 gallon of water per week. You cannot swim. You cannot wear gloves, boots, helms, suits of armor, or other items worn by humanoids except jewelry and rings.

**Sleepless.** You require no sleep and are immune to *sleep* effects. You need only 4 hours of light activity to gain the benefits of a long rest. You are not required to make saves for a Forced March.

**Thri-kreen Weapon Training.** You are proficient with the gythka, chatkcha, and your claws and bite.

**Claws.** Your claws can be used to make a single attack for 1d4 + Strength modifier slashing damage. At 5th level, this increases to 2d4.

**Bite.** Your bite can be used to make an attack for 1d4 + Strength modifier piercing damage. At 5th level, you add thri-kreen venom to your bite. A target must make a Constitution save or be poisoned for 1 minute; if failed by 5 or more, the target is paralyzed for the duration. The target repeats the save at the beginning of its turn to end the effect. The DC is 8 + proficiency bonus + Constitution modifier.

**Venom Immunity.** You are immune to thri-kreen venom.

**Additional Arms.** You have two ancillary arms below your main ones. Each of these weaker arms can hold items but not effectively wield weapons or shields. You may use your extra arms to stow or retrieve one item each turn without using an action and may freely swap items between your arms without using an action.

**Leap.** At 3rd level, your legs have grown powerful enough to jump 50 feet forward or 20 straight up, without a running start. You cannot jump backwards.

**Languages.** You can speak Thri-Kreen and Common. Thri-Kreen is a language composed of clicks and whirring, antennae movements, and pheromone emissions that non-kreen find too difficult to interpret and impossible to duplicate. When you speak other languages, you use a high-pitched voice.

## ROLEPLAYING A THRI-KREEN

You tend to rely on your natural attacks and special kreen weapons. Everything you kill is a potential dinner. You have a strong need for a party leader – obedience to this leader in the party is important to you. If you seem to be the most powerful and capable, then you will assume leadership; if someone challenges your authority then you will wish to test whether they are in fact stronger than you. It is not a question of vanity; you won't want to fight to the death, but merely to ascertain who is worthy to lead the party. You do not have the focus of a dwarf to complete a project, but you would give your life to protect your companions. If you did not trust and honor them as your own family, then you would not travel with them and work together with them. You do not understand the concept of sleep. It disturbs you that your *dra* (sentient meat creatures like humans) companions lie unconscious for a third of their lifetimes. Spend your rest periods watching them in this state. You own only what you can carry, caring little for money or other items that other races consider as treasure. Your philosophy of ownership sometimes leads you into conflict with presumptuous *dra* who think they can own buildings, land, and even whole herds of carru!



# PART 3

## Character Classes

### BARBARIAN



The main sources of barbarians are slave tribes and hunter-gatherer cultures from beyond the Tablelands. Life among slave tribes is often brutal and short. A barbarian might be a sole survivor of a raid or monster attack. She might be an exile or returned to her tribe to find it gone. Barbarian halfling tribes that draw power from the spirits can be found in the forest ridge, and no matter their location, all share a common manifestation of fury. For some, it comes from within, amplified by horrific life events, and for others, it may come from unity with ancient spirits, contacted through rituals whose ways are documented only in oral tradition, to be lost if the tribe is ever lost.

Use the default rules for barbarians unless a change is indicated below.

- At 3rd level, choose to draw power from the Black, a nether realm (necrotic), or a clerical element (radiant). Those who draw from the Black cannot have a good alignment. When choosing an element, your back-story should include how the element came to accept you. See the **Cleric, Elemental Pact** for a description of how a character submits herself to the elements.

### CHANGES

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#### Path of the Totem.


- Replace Bear with *Klar*, a massive Kodiak bear with chitinous plate on the back, a stub tail that helps it balance when standing, and covered in thick sandy fur. It is one of the most feared predators in the land.
- Replace Eagle with *Kes-trekel*, a deadly carrion bird with black plumage and crimson red head whose croak is considered a harbinger of death.
- Replace Wolf with *Dagorran*, a fearsome frog-like reptilian pack hunter able to track prey psionically for days or week without relenting.

#### Path of the Storm Herald (Xanathar)

- No changes to Desert.
- Replace "Sea" with "Air." At 6th, replace breathe underwater and swim features with "you take half damage from falling." At 14th, replace "struck with wave" with "struck by a powerful gust of wind."
- Replace "Tundra" with "Mountains." At 3rd level, change "icy spirits" to "earthen spirits." At 6th, replace resistance to cold with force. Replace immunity to extreme cold with "gain advantage against effects that would knock you prone." Replace make ice with "as an action, you can touch sand or silt and turn a 5 foot square of it into a solid, non-difficult terrain that can support any amount of weight for 1 minute. At 14th, replace "magical frost" with "magical stone."

#### Path of the Zealot (Xanathar)

# BARD

he bard class is a form of wizard who disguises her casting with performance. This level of deception leads many bards to learn the intricacies of intrigue and covert activities. The term *Bard* is known to the people of Athas as a skilled entertainer employed by nobles and kings, widely accepted to likely be a skilled blackmailer, thief, spy, and even assassin. Those in the bard class try to keep their magical abilities secret, no matter their fame and familiarity in the circles of nobles and merchant houses.

Use the default rules for bards unless a change is indicated below.

## CHANGES

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**Instruments of Athas:** Common instruments and their prices if not listed in the PHB are: lap harp (30cp, 6lbs.), lyre, lute, reed pipe (2cp, 1 lb.), horn trumpet (3cp, 2 lbs.), and drum. Unless one has access to extravagant resources, these have no metal components.

**Music of Athas.** Slower, haunting voices punctuated with the pluck of stringed instruments are the most popular kind. For an example, see [Stef Conner's the Flood](#).

**Defiling.** Bardic magic but not class abilities are subject to defiling rules.

**College of Glamour (Xanathar).** Does not exist.

# CLERIC

Unlike most D&D campaigns, Dark Sun has no true gods. Instead, clerics draw their power from one of the elemental planes. Some treat their element with obeisance akin to worship while others are more mercenary, describing their relationship in terms of power exchanged for fealty. An elemental cleric must take Air, Earth, Fire, or Water as her domain. Elemental clerics tend to be loners, preaching the power of the elements from the wilderness or street corner. There isn't an organized hierarchy nor grand temples or cathedrals. Elemental clerics can be of any alignment, arriving at the same goal of advancing their element by different paths. They all share one common universal trait: all distrust undead and wizards, recognizing both as a severe threat to a dying planet.

## ELEMENTAL PACT

Not everyone who wants to become a cleric will. To make a pact with the elemental powers, a would-be-cleric must put herself completely at the mercy of her chosen element. This means acts like throwing herself off a tall cliff (air), being buried alive (earth), burning at the stake (fire), or falling down a well (water). Those who survive the experience – through direct intervention of the elemental power – become elemental clerics. Many fail to capture the attention of the elements or are not truly devoted to the task, and they become just one more casualty of the harsh world of Athas.

Use the default rules for clerics unless a change is indicated below.

## CLASS CHANGES

**New Domains.** The traditional domains are replaced with **Air** (also known as storm), **Earth** (sand), **Fire** (sun) and **Water** (rain).

**Holy Symbol.** Traditional symbols are replaced with a physical embodiment of your element. Earth clerics commonly use small chunks of granite, quartz, or precious metal, and those with resources may mount it in a staff or medallion. A water cleric likely has a vial of pure water worn around the neck, though a waterskin of untainted water could suffice. Fire clerics prefer obsidian stone, often carved into the shape of flames. Air clerics are the most fortunate, not tied by material possessions, and may use a gentle puff of their own breath as a holy symbol.

**Bonus Language.** You can speak the Primordial language of your element at 1st level.

**Spell changes:** *Create or Destroy Water* affects and produces only 1 gallon per casting and at each higher spell slot. Only Water clerics can learn this spell. The spell *Create Food and Water* does not exist.