

# Monster ENCyclopedia: Ettin

This is a series of articles about specific monsters from D&D's history. Each entry takes a look at the origin of one D&D creature, and tracks its appearances and evolution across different editions. For the fifth installment in the series, we have reached the letter "E", and this time it is the turn of the ettin.

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## Origins

The word [ettin](#) comes to us from the Old English word *eoten*, which means "giant, monster, enemy". Most likely the path from this fairly generic meaning to a two-headed giant is via Tolkien. In Middle Earth, the Ettenmoors is a region infested with trolls, and in his *Guide to the Names in The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien notes that this place name includes "eten" which means "troll, ogre".

In the second chapter of *The Hobbit*, Tolkien implies that these trolls are usually two-headed with the following line: "Yes, I am afraid trolls do behave like that, even those with only one head each." It isn't much of a leap to assume that Gygax was aware of this when compiling the *Monster Manual*, and thus decided to use the word ettin as the name of what has since become an iconic two-headed giant. In any case, the *Monster Manual* is where our bicephalic journey begins.

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## 1st Edition

There isn't much of a description in the *Monster Manual*, perhaps because the ettin isn't a terribly complicated creature. They are nocturnal, two-headed giants (13 feet tall) that dwell in remote places and lair underground. They wear tattered animal skins, and are filthy. Although they are described as "giant-like", the initial text stresses their similar appearance and likely relation to orcs. Ettins are very rare, and occur in groups of 1-4. They are encountered in their underground lairs 20% of the time, they have low intelligence and are chaotic evil in alignment. Ettin treasure is usually heaps of coin, with a small chance of gems, jewelry and magic items.

Ettins have a fairly low armor class (3), and are relatively fast (12" movement). They are 10 hit dice creatures. Typical ettin weapons are spiked clubs. Their two heads make them hard to surprise, and let them control their left and right arms separately. They seem to be always right-handed, since a blow from the right arm causes 3-18 damage, compared to 2-16 from the left. The *Dungeon Masters Guide* notes that ettin tribal spell casters exist but can reach only 3rd level.



*Monster Manual (1977)*

The first color picture of an ettin is in *Monster Cards, Set 3*, where the ettin's orc-like face is apparent. The text on the back of the card gives the ettin a bit more of a role in the D&D ecology, mentioning that they sometimes cooperate with hill, frost and fire giants, and that they have been known to lair with cave bears and ride titanotheres.



*Monster Cards, Set 3 (1982)*

There are ettin encounters in several of the early, classic AD&D modules. In *G3: Hall of the Fire Giant King*, two ettins guard the Grand Hall and a group of four ettins guard the Hall of Dead Kings. One of the two ettins in the barracks in *Q1: Queen of the Demonweb Pits* is delightfully carrying a dead two-headed snake

among his possessions. *I12: Egg of the Phoenix* includes an encounter with an orc tribe accompanied by a number of skeletons, including one of an ettin.



*Temple of Elemental Evil* (1985)

An ettin serves as guard and beastkeeper in dungeon level three of *T1-4: Temple of Elemental Evil*; he doesn't get on well with his troll neighbors. On level four, there is another ettin with one head suffering from paranoid delusions and poor sleeping habits. *REF4: The Book of Lairs II* includes an encounter with a male and female couple. These ettins are slightly better combatants than most of their kind; they prefer to lob rocks at opponents before engaging in melee combat. They also have clubs with spikes sufficient to puncture armor and impale flesh, and have prepared a pit to trap intruders. In *A1-4: Scourge of the Slavelords*, there is a clash with raiders on the way to Highport. The half-orc leader of the raiders employs four ettins as bodyguards.



*A1-4: Scourge of the Slavelords* (1986)

Some early issues of *Dungeon* have adventures with ettins, including *The Dark Tower of Cabilar* in issue #1. This ettin is named Fred and Ned and is described as so stupid that Fred constantly forgets his own name. Ned is slightly brighter and knows how to activate one of the magic powers of the *ring of night* the ettin wears.



Fred and Ned, *Dungeon* #1 (1986)

The ettin in *The Jingling Mordo Circus* in *Dungeon* #7 is unusually short for his species (only 7' tall). He is working as a “two-headed” human in the circus’s House of Freaks. The adventure *For a Lady’s Honor* in *Dungeon* #8 is partly set in Club Ettin, but it doesn’t involve any ettins, with or without clubs. *Dungeon* #12 has a rare solo adventure titled *Scepter of the Underworld*, but the encounter with the ettin is fairly dull, as the solo format doesn’t provide for any interactions with the creature. *Dungeon* #16 has an ettin named Gond and Gand working as a torturer in a cloud castle. He is bored and ill-tempered but friends with a nearby giant two-headed troll. The ettins in *Ravager* in *Polyhedron* #31 are also allied with a giant two-headed troll.



*Dungeon* #7 (1987)

A few early *Dragon* magazine articles mention ettins in passing. *Dragon* #35 includes errata for the ettin's damage in the first printing of the *Monster Manual*, and *Sage Advice* in *Dragon* #58 notes that unlike most giants, an ettin doesn't get a -4 penalty when attacking dwarves and gnomes (because of its heads). In *Realistic Vital Statistics* (*Dragon* #91) we learn that a typical 13 foot tall ettin specimen weighs 1783 lbs. This is pretty close to the 1930 lbs given for a 13 foot tall giant back in *Dragon* #13. In *Polyhedron* #12, it is clarified that the ranger's ability to surprise cancels out the ettin's ability to not be surprised.

In a *Dragon* #92 article titled *Duh 'Cology of Duh Ettin*, Ed Greenwood greatly expands D&D's ettin lore. We learn more about an ettin's diet (any raw flesh except ettin, unless they are really desperate) and food preparation habits (flailing the carcass against rocks before eating). Ettins are described as largely solitary, with mated pairs coming together only until their offspring is self-sufficient. They lair in caverns or disused mines and conduct raids on aboveground locations, usually at night. They hunt well in darkness as they have infravision and keen senses, especially smell. Ettins dislike sunlight, but it doesn't hurt them. They are capable of ambushing opponents and setting traps. Occasionally, they will band together under a strong-willed or slightly more intelligent leader. The group dissolves if the leader's influence wanes. Ettins are stupid, but sometimes cunning; they are slow to trust strangers.

Their right-body dominance is confirmed in the article, and it is noted that ettins do not — despite popular belief — argue with themselves, but having two brains does give an ettin special resistance to *sleep* and *charm*, and some other spells. Although an ettin cannot regrow a lost head, an ettin who survives the loss of one head is able to continue a normal life with just one, but will lose any respect from other ettins, who will view it as deformed. The one-headed ettin is, in any case, unlikely to care what other creatures (including other ettins) think of it.



*Dragon* #92 (1984)

Ettins speak a little of whatever language is used in their vicinity, usually orcish, goblin or common, as well as the chaotic evil alignment “dialect”. Some established ettin populations use a dialect of orcish that could be considered as “ettintongue”. A female ettin carries a child for seven months, and young grow to maturity in

just over a year. Ettins have pink to brown flesh, usually darkened by layers of dirt. The skin of their hands and feet tends towards yellow. Ettins collect treasure to use in bargaining with other creatures, and female ettins sometimes wear jewelry as adornments. Male ettins may offer females valuable trinkets during courtship; they are more gaunt and wiry than females, who always have long hair. Ettin clothes are uncured, rotting animal skins frequently riddled with parasites and disease.

The combat tactics of ettins are to crush and batter opponents, but they will resort to throwing things if necessary. An ettin might bargain with opponents if it thinks that will get it more food, but won't necessarily stick to the bargain. Cultural and societal connections with hills giants are mentioned, as are the facial similarities with orcs. The article concludes that the genetic background of the ettin may never be fully known.

The letters page two issues later (*Dragon* #94) contains an *Ettin addenduh*, which answers a reader's question of whether an ettin which has survived the loss of a head has impaired combat abilities. The answer is a long-winded "no" because the ettin's physiology bypasses a non-functioning head almost immediately. *Dragon* #127 contains a Battlesystem scenario with three ettins with the cringeworthy names of Joebob, Samendave and Puddentane. *Dragon* #133 has a lengthy article on creating NPC berserkers, and lists an ettin as an appropriate ally for a chaotic evil berserker.

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## 2nd Edition

The 2nd Edition ettin first appears in the *Monstrous Compendium Volume Two*, and it is one of three creatures depicted on the folder cover. Both this color picture and the interior illustration more closely resemble other giants than orcs. (The cover picture appears again on the *1991 AD&D Trading Card*, below.) Their description suggests that ettins might be mistaken for stone or hill giants at first glance, but also notes the strong resemblance to orcs in an ettin's facial features — large watery eyes, piggish snouts and large mouths. This similarity includes the ettin language, which is described as a mish-mash of orc, goblin, giant and the chaotic evil alignment tongue. Someone who speaks orcish can understand about half of what an ettin says.



*Monstrous Compendium Volume Two* (1989)

This ettin is consistent with its 1st edition incarnation and the material from Ed Greenwood's *Dragon* article. The writing places more emphasis on how revolting ettins are. They are described as having long, stringy unkempt hair (although the pictured specimen seems to be bald), large yellowing teeth and a very bad smell. Their lairs are also a haven for parasites and vermin, and it isn't unusual for ettins themselves to be infected with various parasitic diseases. As well as being filthy, an ettin's skin is thick enough to improve its armor class.

Ettin children mature slightly faster in 2nd Edition — eight to ten months instead of more than a year. Their most common servants are specified as goblins and orcs, and they still keep cave bears as pets. They tend to tolerate other creatures in the vicinity of their lairs only if they are useful. Everything else is generally crushed without question.

Additional snippets from the stats block are the ettin's organization (solitary), diet (carnivore — no surprise), size (now huge, but still 13' tall) and elite morale. The ettin's damage is listed as 1-10/2-12, but these are for attacks with its bare hands. Holding weapons, it still inflicts the 2d8/3d6 damage it did in 1st Edition. As might be guessed from the damage, ettins are still right-side dominant. The description goes as far as to state that an ettin's right leg and arm will appear more muscular and developed than its left.

Throughout 2nd Edition, the ettin seems to have drifted — at least visually — away from an orcish appearance and towards a more general humanoid/giant look. By the time the early *Monstrous Compendium* series was collected into the hardcover *Monstrous Manual*, not only does the ettin look very similar to a hill giant, but the monster entry (which has the same text as that in *Monstrous Compendium Volume Two*) is even sorted under "Giant, Ettin".



*Monstrous Manual* (1989)

There are a few more bits of ettin lore hidden in 2nd Edition sources. The adventure *Thiondar's Legacy* in *Dungeon* #30 suggests that a young and rash giant demigod by the name of Gul provoked terrible wars that

fragmented the giants into different races and created the “mutant” ettins, cyclopes and fomorians. The *Sage Advice* in *Dragon* #193 contradicts the earlier ruling in *Dragon* #58 that the -4 penalty for attacking gnomes doesn't apply to ettins, by specifying the ettin as a type of giant that *does* get the penalty.

*The Bigger They Are...* in *Dragon* #254 is an article all about giant NPCs. From this, we gather that a 13' tall ettin weighs 5200 lbs, which is three grizzly bears heavier than the 1930/1783 lbs given back in *Dragon* #13 and *Dragon* #91! We also learn that an ettin adventurer requires three times more provisions than a human, and its equipment costs and weighs twice as much.

Ettins appeared in many 2nd Edition adventures, often just as a simple combat encounter. In *Dungeon* #23 the ettins Jim-Jem and Mick-Rick are kept as pets by Sefnu (a demon-like abhir) for the specific purpose of softening up any visiting adventurers before she has to deal with them. The ettin looking for an easy meal in the Blizzard Woods in *Dungeon* #78 is also a straightforward combat encounter, although he flees if he starts losing the fight.



*Dungeon* #78 (2000)

Not all engagements with ettins are simple combats. The *Deck of Encounters, Set Two* contains an encounter with an ettin where one of the suggested resolutions for the encounter is to trick the ettin's heads into arguing with each other. This shouldn't work, as we know from the *Dragon* ecology article that this is just a folktale (at least for the next edition or so).

In *Dungeon* #48, the adventure *Melody* involves an unusual harpy held captive by a band of ettins. The harpy was raised by an elven bard to be good, as well as *polymorphed* to resemble a beautiful golden eagle rather than having the vulture-like appearance of most harpies. Unfortunately, her adopted father has been slain by the ettins, who now use her voice to lure others into their ambushes.



*Dungeon #48 (1994)*

*Labyrinth of Madness* includes a mind-switching device, where the adventurers risk switching bodies with an umber hulk, a nightmare, a roper, a xorn, a basilisk and an ettin. Because an ettin has two minds, there is a possibility of two different PCs being mind-swapped into each of the ettin's heads! In *The Rod of Seven Parts*, both of the ettins being held captive by the naga can be negotiated with in return for their freedom, and that's clearly the preferred way of resolving those encounters.

*Against the Giants: The Liberation of Geoff* is the sequel to the original giants series. It reprints the three adventures in the original *Giants* series and includes a significant amount of new material on the surrounding area. There are three ettins living with the orcs in the occupied settlement of Oytmeet, but their relationship has soured, as the ettins' voracious appetite is having a negative impact on the orcs' food supplies.

The ettin appears in all three sets of the *AD&D Trading Cards*. In the 1991 set, card #121 uses the picture from the *Monstrous Compendium Volume Two* cover. The 1992 set's card #123 is a less impressive ettin picture, and the 1993 card #334 is part of the "Mini-Series: Miniatures" set and is a picture of a painted Ral Partha metal miniature, which we'll see again at the end of this article.



*1991-1993 Trading Cards*

One of the ettin's last appearances before 3rd Edition was in the 1999 *Dungeons and Dragons Adventure Game*. This was a starter set released between 2nd Edition and 3rd Edition, and used a simplified version of the 2nd Edition rules; almost a "Basic" version of AD&D 2nd Edition. The ettin's entry is unremarkable except for a note that it is related to the cyclops.

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### 3rd Edition

The ettin was one of the first creatures published for 3rd Edition, appearing even before the *Monster Manual*. [\*The Ettin's Riddle\*](#) was the first of a series of original adventures published on the Wizards of the Coast website, and, of course, included statistics for an ettin. These statistics were lifted directly from the *Monster Manual*, which was released the following month.

The picture of an ettin the *Monster Manual* looks more orc-like than most of the 2nd Edition ettins, and the text confirms that they have orclike facial features and pink to brownish skin. Their appearance is pretty vile, covered in grime and dirt with stringy unkempt hair and yellowing rotten teeth. The ettin is still 13 feet tall, and the weight of 5,200 lbs established in *Dragon* #254 is repeated here.



*Monster Manual* (2000)

The ettin formally gets the creature type of giant, and the description notes that one can live to about 75 years. Ettins speak a pidgin of orc, goblin and giant, and a lone ettin often chats with itself. The notes on ettin society have been lifted from the 2nd Edition *Monstrous Manual* description and don't add any new lore, but the organization entry details gangs (up to four ettins), troupes (up to two ettins plus up to two brown bears), bands (up to five ettins and a couple of bears) and colonies (a band plus a dozen or so orcs and up to sixteen goblins).

Mechanically, these are still 10 hit dice creatures, but they no longer have a dominant side for attacks. Instead, their *superior two-weapon fighting* gives them equal attacks with each arm/head combination,

wielding either greatclubs (1d10+6 damage) or longspears (1d8+6 damage) in each hand. They are a little faster than they were before (a speed of 40 ft.), but their keen senses are reflected in their 90 ft. darkvision and the *alertness* and *improved initiative* feats. The *power attack* feat lets them turn some of their +12 attack bonus into extra damage against minor foes.

The *Monster Manual v.3.5* keeps the same text and picture for the ettin, but there are some minor adjustments to the ettin's stats block. The climate/terrain entry has changed from "cold and temperate hills, mountains, and underground" to just "cold hills". The ettin's speed drops back to 30 ft. while it is wearing its default hide armor, and its default weapons have suddenly changed to morningstars (2d6+6 damage) and javelins (1d8+6 damage). Darkvision has become low-light vision.

Rules for player character ettins are contained in *Savage Species*. Ettins have a fairly high ECL (effective character level) of 15, making them appropriate only for a high level party. One of the fringe benefits of having two heads is an extra magic item space, so a PC ettin can use two magical necklaces, for example. *Savage Species* also introduces a number of new templates. An umbral ettin made of living darkness is the sample creature for the "umbral" template.



Umbral ettin, *Savage Species* (2003)

As well as debuting in a website article, the ettin continued to get lots of online support during the early 3rd Edition era. [Monster Mayhem: Tricks for Tackling Ettins](#) gives some first-person advice on dealing with one (or more) ettins. [D&D Fight Club](#) presents a smart ettin named Gorg, who is both a barbarian and a sorcerer. One head controls a barbarian's weapon attack, while the other head uses an arm to cast spells. [NPC Closeup](#) presents a few different versions of an ettin bard named Durj. Finally, in [Elite Opponents: Ettins](#), the threat level ratchets up slightly, starting with Grush, a run-of-the-mill ettin barbarian, progressing on to Broggen, an ettin dire wereboar, and finally reaching Therrik, a tauric ettin-elephant based on a variation of the rules from *Savage Species*.

As 3rd Edition progressed, so did stranger variations of ettins appear. The adventure *Blind Man's Bluff* in *Dungeon #97* features an ettin-wight.



Ettin-wight, *Dungeon* #97 (2003)

*Dragon* #314 presents a fire-souled ettin in the article *Brotherhood of the Burning Heart*. The *Monster Manual III* has a boar-faced spellwarped ettin.



Spellwarped ettin, *Monster Manual III* (2004)

*Libris Mortis* introduced an ettin with an interest in necromancy — the hooded pupil ettin.



Hooded pupil ettin, *Libris Mortis* (2004)

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#### 4th Edition

The 4th Edition ettin appears in the *Monster Manual*, but as with many early monster entries for that edition, there is more crunch than fluff in its entry. The introductory text is a single sentence describing ettins as ravenous two-headed giants found in wild borderlands, forested mountains, and dark caves. Other than a pair of extended fangs in its lower jaw, the illustration of the ettin doesn't appear to have a particularly orc-like face, and more closely resembles the hill-giant style ettin of 2nd Edition.



*Monster Manual* (2008)

The basic ettin (now called an ettin marauder) has 222 hit points, and a club attack which does 1d8+9 points of damage. It can also *swat* creatures moving in to flank it as a reaction. The ettin gets two initiative rolls and a double set of actions, so it effectively has two club attacks per round. Its *dual brain* also means that it automatically saves against mental incapacitation (being dazed, stunned or charmed). It gets one action point to spend in combat. As well as two clubs, an ettin typically wears hide armor (for an AC of 28). It speaks Giant and is chaotic evil in alignment.

There is also a more advanced version presented, called an ettin spirit-talker, and this ettin has — for the first time in D&D lore — a connection to demons. One of the creature's abilities (*spirit call*) enables it to summon demonic spirits to harass its opponents. These spirits can do a fair amount of necrotic damage (2d6+6 points). The spirit-talker also has a *curse of shattered bones* which allows it to increase the odds of a critical hit on its next attack. It usually alternates between using this curse and striking with a club during its turns. The spirit-talker otherwise has similar stats to the marauder, with slightly higher hit points (252) and trading some strength and dexterity for higher wisdom and intelligence.

From the *Monster Manual* we also learn that 4th Edition ettins aren't above cannibalism, since they will hunt creatures of every sort, including intelligent creatures and even rival ettin bands. Ettins don't necessarily eat all of their foes though. One of the first encounters in *H3: Pyramid of Shadows*, is with an ettin headtaker named Gurrak, who carefully preserves and collects the heads of his opponents; you can see part of his collection displayed on the wall in the picture below. The only difference between an ettin marauder and an ettin headtaker is that the headtaker wields two cleavers instead of two clubs.



Gurrak, *H3: Pyramid of Shadows* (2008)

The connection to demons hinted at in the ettin spirit-talker's entry is expanded in the *Monster Manual 2* entry for Demogorgon, which details Thrarak, a female ettin who serves as the exarch of the demon lord (or more accurately, as the exarch of Aameul, one of Demogorgon's two heads). In 4th Edition lore, Demogorgon once battled a primordial called Storral. After defeating Storral, the demon lord called forth ettins from the primordial's spilled blood, and Thrarak was one of the first of these ettins. Now known as the Flayed Maiden, she is often dispatched to visit agony on those who cross the Prince of Demons.



Thrarak, *Monster Manual 2* (2009)

The *Dungeon Master's Guide 2* uses an ettin as an example of using the Demogorgon cultist theme. The ettin spirit-talker of Demogorgon has the *lashing tentacles* aura added to the spirit-talker from the *Monster Manual*.



Ettin spirit-talker of Demogorgon, *Dungeon Master's Guide 2* (2009)

The *Monster Vault*, published as part of the *Essentials* line towards the end of 4th Edition, provides a lot more background for the ettin than the *Monster Manual* had. Some of this contradicts earlier lore. These ettins have two quarrelsome heads that squabble constantly. They manage to reach a level of tenuous cooperation only because the ettin cannot survive without both of them. Hungry for power, ettins enjoy victimizing the weak and defenseless. This makes them susceptible to ambushes baited with potential victims, preferably

screaming. Lone ettins sometimes function as leaders of a group of weaker humanoids that it bullies into servitude. Large groups of ettins form tribes who go rampaging through borderlands, leaving a trail of smashed caravans and collapsed buildings behind them.

The *Monster Vault* repeats the Storralk's-blood origin story from the *Monster Manual 2*, but notes that few worldly ettins know the story. Only an ettin native to the Elemental Chaos might be aware of its racial history, and would then consider Demogorgon as the father of its race. Tribes of demon-worshipping ettins have many members possessed or maddened by demons.



*Monster Vault* (2010)

In addition to an updated ettin marauder (slightly lower AC and attack damage increased to 1d12+12), the *Monster Vault* also presents stat blocks for an ettin thug, an ettin wrath chanter, and an ettin hunter. The thug is a lower level version of the marauder with only 110 hit points and a *kick* instead of a *swat*. It isn't intelligent enough to benefit from the marauder's *dual brain* ability to shrug off mind control. The ettin wrath chanter has more hit points (184) and an *invoke fury* ability instead of a *swat*. This forces opponents to charge the ettin, likely putting them in range of its *rage song* aura which penalizes the attacks of enemies and boosts the attacks of allies, while increasing the damage caused by both enemies and allies. The ettin hunter has the fewest hit points of any 4th Edition ettin (just 86), but is a ranged attack specialist, hurling javelins which it can use to *pinion* opponents into place until they can escape or teleport free.

*Dungeon #199* has an ettin berserker in the revised *Glacial Rift of the Frost Giant Jarl* adventure. By far the most potent ettin of this edition, the berserker has 336 hit points, a battleaxe attack that does 3d12+7 damage (twice per round, of course) and a *berserker's threat* aura preventing opponents from retreating.

*Weapons of Legacy* details a powerful weapon called the *fiendkiller's flail*. The flail, hidden on the Material Plane, was recently unearthed by an ettin named Kardun and Mordek. This situation provides us with a useful map of an ettin mountain cave.



Ettin Mountain Cave, *Weapons of Legacy* (2005)

There is an ettin guarding the doors to the ruined keep of Gardmore Abbey in *Madness at Gardmore Abbey*. His heads (Spike and Bruse) pose the adventurers a riddle. If they can get the answer (or just confuse the errin), they can gain entry to the keep without fighting him.



*Heroes of Shadow* (2011)

## 5th Edition

The first glimpse of the 5th Edition ettin was in the *D&D Next Bestiary*, where it gets statistics but no description. It is a chaotic evil large giant with 6 hit dice, an armor class of 11 (hide armor) and a speed of 40 ft. It can make two greatclub attacks, each with a +7 attack, doing 2d8+5 bludgeoning damage. The ettin's two heads mean it is never surprised, and has an advantage on checks to detect hidden creatures, and on saving throws involving blindness, deafness, charm spells, fear, being stunned or being knocked unconscious.

James Wyatt's *Wandering Monsters* column [They Might Be Giants](#) provides more of a description, and remains true to the lore from previous editions, painting ettins as brutal, degenerate offshoots of the giant races, with orcish facial features and thick filthy hides. Ettins remain difficult to surprise, and their heads can still control each arm independently and even sleep at different times. They are found in hills and wastelands.

In *Ghosts of Dragonspear Castle*, a D&D Next preview adventure released at GenCon in 2013, the playtest stat block is accompanied by some interesting descriptive text. Here, the idea that an ettin's heads constantly argue with each other is carried over from the 4th Edition ettin, and it is suggested that ettins sometimes seek work as scouts or guardians. The text pegs the height and weight of an ettin at about 13 feet tall and in excess of 5,000 pounds, which is consistent with 3rd Edition. The adventure introduces us to Harglevargle, chieftain of the Clotskull tribe. His Hargle head is serious and narrow-minded, while Vargle is curious and imaginative. Harglevargle is on the short side for an ettin, at only 11 feet tall.

The final version of the ettin in the *Monster Manual* is more powerful than its playtest cousins. Like its 1st, 2nd and 3rd Edition ancestors it once again has 10 hit dice (85 hit points), and carries two different weapons: a battleaxe and a morningstar. It can attack with both weapons on its turn both with +7 to hit and does 2d8+5 damage with each blow. The ettin's heads give it advantage on perception checks and saving throws that affect the senses or consciousness. The heads never sleep at the same time, always taking turns. An ettin has 60 ft. darkvision, and speaks Giant and Orc.



*Monster Manual* (2014)

The *Monster Manual* expands on the theme of dual personalities, describing the ettin as two individuals trapped in the same body, and confirming that the heads are constantly bickering. For the first time, a convention for naming ettins is detailed — each head has its own name (Hargle and Vargle, for example) and when the whole ettin is referred to, the two names are just combined into one (Harglevargle).

At long last, we also get an origin story which explains the ettin's orcish appearance. Like the ettin's 4th Edition origin story, this one also involves Demogorgon, but in a different way. Legend has it that orcs once stumbled upon a temple of Demogorgon, and the magic of this temple transformed the orcs into giant mockeries of the twin-headed Prince of Demons. These creatures scattered into the wilderness to become the first ettins. We are also told that the word "ettin" means "ugly giant" in an ancient dialect of common.

The ettin reproductive cycle is also covered, with female ettins noted as the dominant gender. The would-be mother conquers a mate, who then cares for and feeds her during a six month pregnancy (one month less than in 1st Edition). The male is released from this servitude once the child is born, and when the child is

able to hunt for itself, its mother sends it away. Other than this brief marriage, the ettins of 5th Edition are almost exclusively solitary creatures, with the heads of an ettin being even less tolerant of other ettins than they are of each other.



*Xanathar's Guide to Everything* (2017)

Broog and Norb are the heads of a particularly large and grumpy ettin in *Princes of the Apocalypse*. So poorly do these two get on that the door to their lair has both “NORBS RUM. KEEP OWT BROOG.” and “BROOGS RUM. NORB IZ STOOPID.” painted on it. In *Out of the Abyss* there are ettins in the Wormwrithings that were orogs before the region’s *faerzress* (magical radiation) and the influence of Demogorgon transformed them into ettins.



**Ettin Rampage**, *Adventures Outlined Coloring Book* (2018)

An angry ettin is making short work of an adventuring party in a picture titled *Ettin Rampage* in the *Dungeons & Dragons: Adventures Outlined Coloring Book*.

The 2019 [Extra Life](#) adventure *Infernal Machine Rebuild* reveals the secrets of the crazed artificer named Thessalar (yes, he of thessalhydra fame). One of the creatures he has been experimenting on is an ettin who has come to believe he is actually Demogorgon. The ettin wears a pouch containing eyeballs and still-beating dragon hearts connected to his internal organs by silver wires, somehow granting the giant an array of special powers including fire breath, cold breath and a number of gaze attacks.



“Demogorgon”, *Infernal Machine Rebuild* (2019)

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### Ettin gods

In *Dragon* #92, ettins are described as worshipping the hill giant god Grolantor (detailed in *Deities and Demigods*), but under variant names such as “Grolettinor” or “Grelinor” and as a two-headed aspect. An article in *Dragon* #141, titled *Orcs Throw Spells, Too!* provides a little more detail on the relationship between ettins and Grolantor. It seems that ettins don’t so much worship Grolantor as their god, but simply pay him homage as an extremely powerful ettin. Grolantor, for his part, rewards this lack of proper faith by not granting any spells to ettin shamans. (In 1st Edition rules, this means that ettin shamans are limited to casting 1st and 2nd level spells.)

The updated entry for the intermediate god Grolantor in *Monster Mythology* incorporates ettins as worshippers, in line with the *Dragon* magazine lore. Ettin priests can reach a maximum of 7th level, while shamans are limited to 3rd level. *Monster Mythology* also notes that Grolantor’s avatar may take the form of an ettin. Grolantor apparently gave rise to the race of ettins by mating with a monstrous serpent with heads at either end of her body. As we’ll see in the next section, it seems that ettins, like their god, will mate with nearly anything.

In 3rd Edition, Grolantor’s flock still includes ettins, but *Defenders of the Faith* notes that he refuses any title but his given name, so presumably he’s now had enough of being called Grolettinor or Grelinor. One edition later, nobody is calling Grolantor anything, as he gets dropped entirely. Instead, as mentioned above, the 4th Edition origin story for ettins involves Demogorgon and primordial blood, and ettins are likely to revere demons, if they worship anything at all. The *Monster Manual 3* mentions that ettins give service to temples of Ogrémoch, even if they do not embrace the Prince of Elemental Earth’s faith.

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## Ettins and other monsters

From early in the history of D&D, it was clear that ettins were not at all fussy about who or what they would mate with. The giant two-headed troll in the 1st Edition *Fiend Folio* is an ettin/troll crossbreed. It is basically an ettin with troll heads and limited regeneration, but it is a little more aggressive, with two claw attacks and two bite attacks each round.



Giant two-headed troll, *Fiend Folio* (1981)

An updated 5th Edition version of this crossbreed appears in *Rashemen: Unapproachable East Campaign Guide* as the fell troll. The fell troll can make five attacks, a grab attack and four additional attacks which are either bite or claw attacks. It still has regeneration, and an impressive 203 hit points.



Fell troll, *Rashemen: Unapproachable East Campaign Guide* (2021)

Similarly, the biclops in the *The Dragon's Bestiary* in *Dragon #172* is a cross between a cyclopskin and an ettin. Other than a 50% reduction in eyes, there isn't much differentiating a biclops from an ettin. They are fond of

throwing rocks, but lacking binocular vision, they have a penalty to such attacks unless both heads assist with aiming.



Biclops, *Dragon* #172 (1991)

In *The Tribes of Thar* in *Dragon* #362 there is a two-headed ogre named Zar-Umak. To be fair, this article suggests that ettin ancestry is just one possible explanation for his twin heads, but given what we know about the apparent willingness of ettins to mate with other creatures, it doesn't seem unlikely. There is less doubt about Harrigus and Skaltath in *Hall of the Fire Giant King* in *Dungeon* #200. This two-headed fire giant is definitely the result of crossbreeding between ettins and fire giants. So is Gargluth, a "fire ettin" living in Mount Bellows in *Dungeon* #74. He was deliberately bred by his fire giant masters in the hope of getting a great warrior with improved weapon skills. Unfortunately he is woefully stupid, and has instead been trained to butcher rothé. Amusingly, he can hurl rothé carcasses as a special attack. In case you are wondering, a rothé carcass has a range of 40 yards and does 2d8 points of damage on impact.



Hiveblood ettin, *Dragon* #127 (2005)

It seems that as the different editions of D&D progressed, so did the ettin's willingness to mate with, well, just about anything. *Bastion of Broken Souls* features Krushar, a half-dragon ettin. There are other half-dragon ettins in *Dungeon* #127 and in the 5th Edition adventure *DDEX1-10: Tyranny in Phlan*. Issue #127 of *Dungeon*

also contains a hiveblood ettin who has been (half-)transformed into a formian. There are fiendish ettins in *Shadowdale: The Scouring of the Land* and in *Fields of Ruin*, and the *Epic Level Handbook* details Ignition/Inferno, who is half-fire elemental, half-ettin. Best not to think too hard about the mechanics of producing that particular offspring!



Ettin werewolf, *Dragon* #266 (1999)

Ettins can become infected with lycanthropy, although according to *Dragon* #266, they can only become werewolves, wererats or wereboars. They are also unable to assume the full animal form, presumably because of their dual heads, which remain present in all forms. It is possible (although rare) for only one head of an ettin to become infected with lycanthropy. The unaffected head is terrified by the resulting transformation of its partner. Clearly the limitations on the sorts of lycanthropy affecting an ettin don't apply to 3rd Edition ettins, since *Dungeon* #137 features an ettin dire werebat named Sina and Mesrak.



Ettin dire werebat, *Dungeon* #137 (2006)

Ettins seem to be just as voracious when it comes to the types of creatures they will lair with or co-operate with. As mentioned earlier, the *Monster Cards, Set 3* has ettins sharing their homes with cave bears and using titanotheres as mounts, and the picture in *The Official Advanced Dungeons and Dragons Coloring Album* shows an ettin riding a titanotheres. The ettins in the the adventure *Aersirhamar* in *Dragon* #90 keep dire wolves as pets, and one of them is encountered while taking two wolves for a walk. *Dragon* #308, suggests that boars

also make good companions for ettins. The article ...*The Harder They Fall* in *Dragon* #254 lists potential allies for an ettin as cave bears, orcs, goblins, and green dragons. *Dragon* #173 indicates that some tribes of gnolls include ettins as hunters.



*The Official Advanced Dungeons and Dragons Coloring Album* (1979)

*The Ecology of the Gulguthra* in *Dragon* #96, notes that otyughs sometimes exists in symbiosis with ettins, and in the 4th Edition *Monster Manual*, ettins may be encountered with creatures as diverse as banshrae, basilisks, barlgura demons and wyverns. An ettin in *Dungeon* #169 has a pet owlbear. The ettin Marlgran in *Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil* has a pet rust monster. *WGR1: Greyhawk Ruins* has a group of spriggans telling bad jokes about their “stupid ettin friends”, as well as a group of ettins which act far more civilized than usual, but only because a nearby aboleth is in control of their minds. An ettin in *Red Hand of Doom* is similarly enslaved by a hobgoblin mindbender. In a throwback to 3rd Edition, the 5th Edition *Monster Manual* says that green dragons accept the servitude of ettins, and in *The Rise of Tiamat* the dragon Chuth has several ettins as guards. *Volo’s Guide to Monsters* lists ettins among the greater minions that a beholder might have.

Ettins also occasionally have a business relationship with smaller humanoids, including their distant relatives, the orcs, but it isn’t clear who is the employer and who is the employee. The 3rd Edition *Monster Manual* tells us that ettins sometimes use treasure to buy the services of goblins or orcs, but the 5th Edition *Monster Manual* reverses this relationship, and we learn that orcs treat ettins as distant cousins, and entice them to serve as guards or scouts with the promise of food and loot. *Dungeon* #119 has a pair of gnolls recruiting an ettin to serve in a band of mercenaries.



*Dungeon #119 (2005)*

### Ettin parts

According to *Infernal Machine Rebuild*, distilled ettin blood is worth 25 gp to an alchemist. The artificer Thessalar uses it as part of the process of creating new two-headed lifeforms.

### Ettins and magic items

Ettins aren't particularly magical beings, but there are still a few items scattered through D&D lore which involve ettins. One of the cards in the *deck of illusions* in *EX1: Dungeonland* pictures an ettin, and in *FRA1: Storm Riders*, there is a *crystal of answers* which has an obese ettin imprisoned inside. This crystal functions rather like a magic 8-ball. When asked a yes/no question, the ettin nods both its heads for "yes", shakes them for "no", or nods one and shakes the other to indicate "maybe".



*Ettin Axe of Uruth, City of Splendors: Waterdeep (2005)*

The *Ettin Axe of Uruth* from *City of Splendors: Waterdeep* is a unique orcish double axe imbued with two different personalities, the lawful evil Ur and the chaotic evil Krypt. Intelligent magic items frequently do their best to persuade their hosts to either ignore or destroy nearby rival items, but in this case the two sentiences are constantly denigrating each other. It seems doubtful if the benefits of wielding this argumentative blade would outweigh the disadvantages.



Sign of the Ettin, *Dragon #340* (2006)

*Dragon #340* is an astrology-themed issue, and includes several ettin references. The Sign of the Ettin is presented as a potential constellation. Those born under this sign are excitable, passionate and given to drama, and may sometimes seem to be at war with themselves. The master astrologer is a spellcaster class drawing power from the influence of the stars on the cosmos. A member of this class born under the Sign of the Ettin has a number of appropriately themed bonus feats to select from, including two-weapon fighting and twin spell. Finally, the *ettin's club* is a new magic weapon from *Items of the Zodiac*. This barbed greatclub provides a +2 attack bonus and a bonus 1d6 damage, but its wielder attacks a random creature within reach and cannot choose a target. Any adventurer choosing this as a preferred weapon should expect companions to provide support only from afar.

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### Al-Qadim

The appendix of *MC13: Monstrous Compendium Al-Qadim Appendix* confirms that ettins are found in Zakhara.

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### Birthright

The *Birthright Campaign Setting* includes the ettin on the list of monsters found in Cerilia. Not unexpectedly, they are numerous in the Giantdowns, where they tend to band together with other types of giant for hunting and defense (*King of the Giantdowns*).

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### Blackmoor

Ettins are found in the Black Hills region of the Blackmoor setting (*Dave Arneson's Blackmoor*) as well as in the dungeons of Castle Blackmoor (*The Dungeons of Castle Blackmoor*).

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### Council of Wyrms

Ettins can be found in the arctic mountains and subterranean areas of Io's Blood Isles, according to the random encounter tables in the *Council of Wyrms* boxed set.

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### Dark Sun

According to the *Dark Sun Boxed Set*, ettins are found in the stoney barrens and mountains of Athas. In particular, there are a number of ettins residing in the Greater Mekillots mountains (*The Ivory Triangle*). Athasian ettins sometimes have wild psionic powers. They can be charmed, and may also become followers for high-level Athasian rangers.

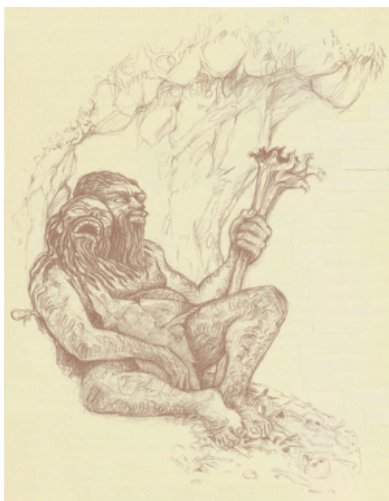
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## Dragonlance

Two ettins featured in the original Dragonlance adventure series. Highlord Verminaard has one serving him as an officer when he shows up for the final battle at the end of *DL4: Dragons of Desolation*. There is also one living in the Ruins near Kendermore in *DL12: Dragons of Faith*. He is sly enough to be able to imitate the cries of wild animals to lure creatures into his snares.

*Time of the Dragon* includes the ettin on the encounter tables for the New Mountains in Southern Hosk and *MC4: Monstrous Compendium Dragonlance Appendix* has ettins in the encounter tables for subarctic plains or scrub and subarctic rough or hills.

In the short story *Catch of the Day* in the *Rebels and Tyrants* anthology, an ettin is one of a series of creatures that picks up a seemingly cursed fishing rod which once belonged to one of Krynn's greatest sorcerers. Like all of the creatures who try to use the rod, this ettin eventually comes to an unfortunate end.



*The Bestiary* (1998)

*The Bestiary* (an accessory produced during the period that Dragonlance was supported by the SAGA Game instead of the AD&D rules) describes ettins as simply two-headed giants, and notes that there are rare ettins with three or more heads who are even more brutal and aggressive than the two-headed sort. On Krynn, other giants view ettins as freaks that should be destroyed.

The delightful description of an ettin's face in *The Bestiary* is worth quoting in full: "At first glance, their faces resemble a hill giant's, but once you've dealt with both types, you can easily tell the difference. Ettins have large watery eyes, pug noses, and mouths filled with large, yellowed teeth. Their thick black hair grows long and tangled, and smells like an overheated horse". *The Bestiary* also provides a few insights into the Ettin language, which is a distinct one on Krynn. It consists mainly of grunts and howls, has only eight distinct sounds, and no adjectives or adverbs.

Sovereign Press produced a line of licensed 3rd Edition Dragonlance products. *War of the Lance* notes that 2% of the population of Icereach (3400) consists of ettins, which works out to 68 ettins. Highlord Feal-thas has enlisted their help to maintain Takhis's grip on the glacier. *Spectre of Sorrows* has a gang of ettins working for Grand Lord Golgren on the Kern Peninsula. They are accompanied by a pet brown bear and several

goblins. The *Bestiary of Krynn, Revised* also lists an ettin on the random encounter table for the Kern region. *Price of Courage* details an ettin named Two-Faced Grom who leads a band of goblinoids and nomads in the town of Throtl. Grom is a multiclassed barbarian/blackguard and his forces are known as the Malfesan Horde.



Two-Faced Grom, *Price of Courage* (2006)

*Races of Ansalon* assumes that with the aid of the Sikk'et Hul freedom fighters the adventurers were successful in slaying Grom. It also provides some additional lore on the history of Krynnish ettins. During the early Age of Might ettins were numerous, but the primary clan in Ansalon — the Gromax Clan — was all but wiped out by the Knights of Solamnia. Since then, ettins are occasionally born to hill giant parents. This matches the treatment of ettins as not much more than two-headed hill giants in *The Bestiary*. However, ettins can also be born to ogre parents. Children of ettins and ogres are half-giants, while children of ettins and half-ogres are just half-ogres. Although ettins are sometimes called “two-headed trolls” they are only distantly related to trolls.

Circling back to the original Dragonlance adventure series, the 3rd Edition update *Dragons of Winter* includes an encounter with ettins in the Wilds of Ergoth.

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## Eberron

*Sharn: City of Towers* notes that ettins may act as agents of the Daask criminal organization, suggesting that some reside in Droaam. This is confirmed in *Exploring Eberron* which states that ettins are native to Khorvaire and reside in the mountains of Droaam. It also mentions their genetic link to orcs, to be consistent to 5th Edition lore. Ettins must also be found in Xen'drik as *Voyage of the Golden Dragon* features an encounter with an ettin skeleton (as well as some ettin skeletons in sarcophagi that remain safely inanimate).

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## Forgotten Realms

Ettins have been a feature of the Realms for a long time. One of the earliest entries in the Roll of Years is the Year of the Clever Ettin (-595 DR), and during the Netherese historical era in which *How the Mighty Are Fallen* is set, there is a possible encounter with one or more ettins in the Trek Through the Eastern Forest portion of the adventure. Judging from the detailed treasure which may be found in their lair, ettins were wealthier in the past.

Both *FR5: The Savage Frontier* and the expanded *The North: Guide to the Savage Frontier* set mention that ettins roam the Cold Wood in the northern reaches of Faerûn. Presumably they wander far enough south to occasionally be captured and, um... eaten, since *Volo's Guide to Cormyr* mentions a scroll shop in Espar which sells instructional chapbooks on topics including "how best to cook an ettin's foot".



*Undermountain: The Lost Level* (1996)

*FR3: Empires of the Sands* places ettins in the Forest of Mir in southern Faerûn. *Silver Marches* confirms that they occur in the Cold Wood and Lurkwood and also includes them on the encounter tables for the Moonlands, Abdar Vale, Cold Vale, Evermoor, Moonwood, Nether Mountains, Rauvin Mountains, Spine of the World and Ice Mountains — so pretty much anywhere in the north! *Unapproachable East* has ettins on the encounter tables for the Dragonjaw, Thesk, Forward, Icerim and Northern Sunrise Mountains as well as in Rashemen. *Shining South* lists ettins on the encounter tables for the Dustwall, Giant's Belt, Gnollwatch and Toadsquat Mountains and in Veldorn. *Mysteries of the Moonsea* includes ettins as potential wandering monsters encountered in Thar.

In the 4th Edition era of the Realms, the Iron Keep on Oman island in the Moonshaes is ruled over by an ettin named Hathfell (*Backdrop: Moonshae* in *Dungeon* #196). The *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide* notes that ettins have recently increased their attacks on settlements along the coast of Moray. It also mentions ettins as being present in the Glimmerwood in Luruar, which is consistent with *Silver Marches*.

The Bent Helm, Elturel's "rowdiest dive" relies on two firm but friendly ettins as bouncers (*Volo's Guide to the Sword Coast*). In *Undermountain: The Lost Level* three hungry ettins appear from nowhere, apparently called forth by new summoning magics created by Halaster. Elsewhere in Undermountain, two ettins named Huorgh and Uluth keep their treasures hidden in their hair (*The Ruins of Undermountain*).

In *FRA1: Storm Riders*, there is an encounter with a pair of ettins on the Sacred Mountain of Kushk. The various paths form a set of convoluted tests, and the ettins block the Path of Resolve. In order to pass, the adventurers need to resolve not to fight the ettins, but instead climb over their "sweaty, stinking mounds of hairy flesh" in order to continue along the path. Delightful!

In *New Rogues Gallery* in *Polyhedron* #60 we are introduced to an unusual ettin named Nicknack Two-Heads. An accident involving a *helm of opposite alignment* and a *gem of insight* caused one of his heads to become good while the other remained evil. Only the help of an old druid helped Nicknack remain sane, eventually balancing the conflicting heads, and becoming neutral in alignment. Nicknack travels the Realms, often astride a white elephant *figurine of wondrous power*.



Nicknack Two-Heads, *Polyhedron* #60 (1991)

In *FOR7: Giantcraft*, a Realms-specific origin story for the ettin is given. The greater giant god Annam All-Father married a lesser demigoddess who manifested as a great mountain on the edge of the Cold Lands. Their sons founded the dynasties of the giant races, including the twisted brood of Annam's two-headed son, Arno/Julian. "Ettin" means "runt" in the ancient form of the giant tongue. Arno/Julian features again in the *Twilight Giants* trilogy of novels. Disguised as "Prince Arlien" he uses magic and drugs to seduce Queen Brianna Burdun, who later gives birth to a son Kaedlaw who is (magically) the son of both the ettin and Brianna's husband Tavis. Brianna and Tavis eventually kill Arno and Julian, freeing their son from the enchantments that he has carried since birth.

R. A. Salvatore's short story *The First Notch* in *Dragon* #152 was also his first short story. Since Bruenor Battlehammer had seemingly perished at the end of *Streams of Silver*, this story was intended as a tribute to the dwarf. It featured a young (beardless!) Bruenor and some dwarven companions teaming up unexpectedly with a small band of goblins to fell an ettin.



*Dragon #152 (1989)*

The citizens of Faerûn seem to have a mild obsession with undead ettins, as there are a surprising number in Realmslore. In the Skeletal Mountain in *H4: The Throne of Bloodstone*, there is a 4,000 foot high pile of bones that manifests as various types of skeletons, including skeletal ettins. More ettin skeletons guard the burial chambers in *FA1: Halls of the High King* and the north tower in *Cormyr: The Tearing of the Weave*.

As mentioned in *Seeing the Sights in Skullport* in *Dragon #172*, a shop in central Skullport belonging to Cryptkey Facilitations is guarded by an impressive skull-headed ettin. A slightly updated description of this creature in *Skullport* seems to imply that it is actually some kind of monster zombie. Two ettin zombies (mentioned in *Volo's Guide to Cormyr*) also guard a wharf belonging to Falconstar Wayshipping in Wheloon.



*Storm King's Thunder (2016)*

The 5th Edition adventure *Storm King's Thunder* confirms that there are still ettins living in the Evermoors and Forlorn Hills. An ettin with the unfortunate name of Oinker-Boinker is in charge of pig keeping in the gigantish settlement of Grudd Haug in the Savage Frontier.

*Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage* has two ettins (Krung-Jung and Mokka-Nokkin) serving as Xanathar's minions and another surprisingly friendly ettin named Jibber-Jabber, who requires only a small bribe to persuade him to assist the adventurers with information. Deeper in the dungeon, four less amiable, rather scrawny ettins are under the thrall of a group of illithids.

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## Greyhawk

Ettins are included on the random encounter tables for subarctic marshes/swamps and temperate forests in *MC5: Monstrous Compendium Greyhawk Adventures Appendix*. They are also listed as random encounters in the forests of White Fanged Bay (*WGS1: Five Shall Be One*) and near Kelten (*WGS2: Howl from the North*) as well as in the Bone March, Pomarj, Geoff, Sterich, and the Kingdom of Fruztii (*From the Ashes*).

According to *Dragon #131* a raiding group of hill giants, ogres and ettins dwells close to the point where the Jotens meet the Little Hills. In *WGR1: Greyhawk Ruins* ettins appear on the wandering monster tables and in a couple of locations inside the Tower of Power. Ettins are said to man the guardhouse of the fortress of Bloodcrystal in *WGR4: The Marklands*. In *Dungeon #117*, there is an ettin imprisoned beneath the coliseum in Istivin, ready to fight in an upcoming gladiatorial match.

In *Ivid the Undying*, the site of an ancient battle called Ettin's Mound is described. Here, a tribe of roughly fifteen ettins is led by Iron Grandfather, their unusually powerful chieftain. Uncharacteristically for an ettin, he uses magical items, including a *horn of fog* and a *brooch of shielding* which has the added benefit of *hasting* its wearer without also aging him. Punctuating their ferocity, this tribe has, as its prized delicacy, spit roast of ogre stuffed with orc.

In the Statuary on level four of Maure Castle (detailed in *Dungeon #112*) there is a two-headed giant stored in suspended animation. Although it behaves in a similar manner to an ettin if the storage vessel is shattered, this creature isn't actually an ettin, but a fire giant who has had a frost giant's head and blood added to its body by the necromancer Afelbain.

*WG7: Castle Greyhawk* there is an ettin having a pleasant lunch with a salamander, an umber hulk and some xvarts. There is also an encounter with a cretin, which is "sort of like an ettin but not as smart". The two-heads are named Burt and Jimmy. They speak with a cockney accent. Wait, didn't we decide back in the drider article not to dwell on anything from *Castle Greyhawk*?

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## Historical Reference

*Thrills and Chills* in *Dragon #68* lists ettins on the encounter tables for a campaign set during the Pleistocene epoch. The ettin is also an appropriate monster for a Celtic campaign, according to *HR3: Celts Campaign Sourcebook* and *DMGR5: Creative Campaigning*.

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## Mystara

Along with a variety of other giants, ettins can be found in the lands of Glanti, everywhere except in Glantri City itself (*Glantri: Kingdom of Magic*).

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## Nerath

According to *Nerathi Legends: The Iron Wolf Barbarians* in *Dragon #400*, ettins roam the Forests of Harthia in the Iron Wolf Hold in northern Nerath.

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## Ravenloft

The adventure *Jigsaw* in *Dungeon #61* is set in the realm of Gothic Earth, as detailed in *Masque of the Red Death*. It features the ettin Garth/Barth, who was discovered hiding in the mountains of North Carolina by Dr. McGinnis, and who now works as part of Doctor McGinnis's Traveling Marvels. He dresses in Arabian-styled blue pantaloons and wears two bright yellow turbans. Short for an ettin (only 8' tall), he has also learned to play the flute.

*Ravenloft Gazetteer: Volume IV* notes that ettins may be encountered in the domain of Invidia. The article *Domains of Dread: Sunderheart, the Funeral City* in *Dragon #368* mentions that two rival ettin bands occupy the lower city and engage in on-again-off-again warfare. So far, they have not noticed that members of their bands are being taken by the mists during foggy nights.

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## Strixhaven

A troll and an ettin pretending to be students at Strixhaven is one of the random encounters suggested for second-year students in *Strixhaven: A Curriculum of Chaos*.

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## Miniatures

The ettin has been a popular figure in D&D miniatures lines over the years. There was a metal ettin in the Ral Partha *Monsters* line for AD&D, and in both of Wizard of the Coast's AD&D 2nd Edition and Chainmail series.



*Ral Partha 11-410: Ettin* (1987), image from [DNDLead](#)



*Wizards of the Coast D&D Miniatures 40021 (1999)*, image from [Minibase](#)



*Chainmail 88461: Ettin Trooper (2002)*, image from [Wizards of the Coast](#)

Ettins also featured in Wizards of the Coast's pre-painted plastic miniatures line, with an ettin skirmisher in *Deathknell* (#52/60), an ettin jack-of-irons in *Dungeons of Dread* (#38/60) and an ettin spirit-talker in *Demonweb* (#42/60).



*D&D Miniatures: Deathknell (2005)*, image from [MinisGallery](#)



*D&D Miniatures: Dungeons of Dread (2008)*, image from [MinisGallery](#)



*D&D Miniatures: Demonweb* (2008), image from [MinisGallery](#)

The most recent ettin mini was produced by WizKids as figure #27 of the *Elemental Evil* set.



*Icons of the Realms: Elemental Evil* (2015), image from [MinisGallery](#)

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## Computer games

Ettins have made appearances in many D&D computer games over the last few decades, starting with 1988's *Pool of Radiance*.



*Pool of Radiance* (1988), image from [CRPG Addict](#)

The appearance of the ettin had improved a little by the time *Pools of Darkness* was released three years later, but not much.



*Pools of Darkness* (1991), image from [CRPG Addict](#)

The quality of the ettins continued to improve in *Al-Qadim: The Genie's Curse*.



*Al-Qadim: The Genie's Curse* (1994), image from [Resulka](#)

By the time we reach *Icewind Dale*, the digital ettins have a much more three dimensional appearance.



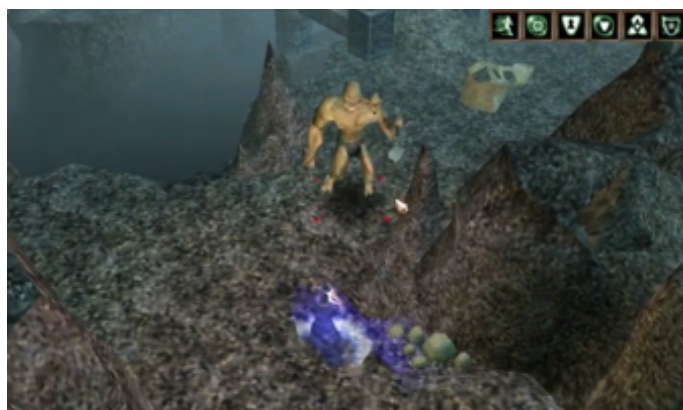
*Icewind Dale* (2000), image from [Enverxis](#)

More ettins can be found in *Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn*, which was released the same year as *Icewind Dale*.



*Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn* (2000), image from [Montresor\\_SP](#)

The *Neverwinter Nights* ettin is less impressive. It appears to be a giant with an extra head grafted onto one shoulder, rather than a proper two-headed creature.



*Neverwinter Nights* (2002), image from [Modunhanul](#)

More recently, *Baldur's Gate: Siege of Dragonspear* features an encounter with a ghostly ettin who cannot depart to the afterlife until he is reunited with his lost club.



*Baldur's Gate: Siege of Dragonspear* (2016), image from [Raking Claw](#)

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## Ettin names

Arno-Julian, Bokk-Nokking, Brekelrak, Broog-Norb, Broggen, Durj, Fred-Ned, Gargluth, Garth-Barth, Gond-Gand, Gorg, Grunda-Gurga, Grush, Gurnash, Gurrak, Hargle-Vargle, Harrigus-Skaltath, Hathfell, Hebediah-Emmanuel, Hrukka, Huorgh, Iron Grandfather, Jibber-Jabber, Jim-Jem, Joebob, Kardun-Mordek, Korg-Lurg, Krung-Jung, Krushar, Marlgran, Mick-Rick, Nicknack Two-Heads, Oinker-Boinker, Puddentane, Samendave, Sina-Mesrak, Spike-Bruse, Stern Uncle, Strewth, Therrik, Thrarak, Two-Faced Grom, Ulf-Tharg, Uluth, Ysl.



*Tome of Battle* (2006)

## Comparative statistics

					
Edition	<b>AD&amp;D (1st Edition)</b>	<b>AD&amp;D 2nd Edition</b>	<b>D&amp;D 3.X Edition</b>	<b>D&amp;D 4th Edition</b>	<b>D&amp;D 5th Edition</b>
Source	<i>Monster Manual</i>	<i>Monstrous Manual</i>	<i>Monster Manual v.3.5</i>	<i>Monster Manual</i>	<i>Monster Manual</i>
Size	L (13' tall)	H (13' tall)	Large	Large	Large
Type			Giant	Natural humanoid (giant)	Giant
Alignment	Chaotic evil	Chaotic evil	Usually chaotic evil	Chaotic evil	Chaotic evil
No. Appearing	1-4	1 or 1-4	Solitary, gang (2-4), troupe (1-2 + bears), band (3-5 + bears), or colony (3-5 + bears/orcs/goblins)		
Armor Class	3	3	18	28	12
Hit Dice/Points	10	10	10d8+20 (65 hp)	222 hp	85 (10d10+30)
Speed	12"	12	30 ft. in hide armor	6	40 ft.
Abilities	Int Low	Int Low (5-7) Morale Elite (14)	Str 23, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 11	Str 28, Dex 12, Con 23, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 9	Str 21, Dex 8, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 8
Senses			Low-light vision, alertness	Perception +12	Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Saves			Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +5	Fort 26, Ref 18, Will 19	
Attacks	2	2 (THAC0 10)	Morningstar +12 melee or javelin +5 ranged	Club +15 vs. AC	Battleaxe +7 melee Morningstar +7 melee
Damage	2-16/3-18	1/10/2-12 + weapon	Morningstar 2d6+6 or javelin 1d8+6	Club 1d8+9 and push	Battleaxe 14 (2d8+5) slashing Morningstar 14 (2d8+5) piercing
Special Attacks	Nil	Nil	Superior two-weapon fighting	Swat Double Actions	Multiattack
Special Defenses	Surprised only on a 1	Surprised only on a 1		Dual Brain	Two Heads Wakeful
XP	1950 + 14/hp	3,000	CR 6	1,000	Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)
Treasure	25% 1-4 x 1000 copper 20% 1-3 x 1000 silver (more in lair)	10-40 copper 10-30 silver (more in lair)	Standard		

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