

# GNOLL

I USED TO THINK THEM BEASTS. PRIMITIVE SAVAGES taking what they could from civilized people. The longer I watched them, however, the more their true identity showed itself. On the battlefield their brutality is their strength, and seems to serve as a distraction for their foes, creating openings for their deft hunters to sneak by and break their enemies from within. At home, they craft and they smith. Mothers and fathers alike care for their children with compassion and love. There is a complicated society hidden beneath that bestial visage; one that the world could see, if only they'd stop trying to eat everyone.

—Idrex Rivaan, *A World Beyond*

Born from the chaotic perversion of the hyena, gnolls are large bipedal beasts that bear a striking resemblance to the creature of their origin. Their pointed teeth are much larger than that of a wolf, and are uniquely made for crushing bone. Claws, capable of tearing through flesh like a knife through linen, cap their fingers and toes.

Like hyena, gnolls typically live in matriarchal clans. However, unlike hyena, this matriarchy is based on strength, not on social standing. Female gnolls tend to be taller, heavier, and stronger than the males, and it is the strongest among them that earns the right to lead the clan. Strength that is proven repeatedly throughout the matriarch's life as she leads her hunting parties and war bands in to battle.

## CURSE OF ENDLESS HUNGER

The corrupted origin of the gnoll's creation gave them a single purpose. Devour. Consume everything, and everyone. They are a race cursed by this endless hunger, and it has been their driving force for generations. As the centuries passed, some of the more isolated clans of gnolls began to assert their own will over this unbreakable curse. These clans flourished, and over time they spread across the world.

The gnolls will always struggle against the corruption that created them, but a strong will and focussed mind can keep their nature at bay for a time.

## BIG EARS, SHARP NOSES

Gnolls primarily use loud yips and barks to communicate with each other over long distances. Under ideal conditions, a gnoll can hear another gnoll's call from several kilometers away. When speaking in close proximity a gnoll will often add grunts and growls to their vocabulary, coupled with subtle body language. Incorrectly interpret a flick of their tail, and you may find yourself the target of their appetite.





## GNOLL NAMES

Before speaking the languages of other races became commonplace with gnolls, they didn't use names. Instead, they would identify each other by scent. That has a tendency to not translate very well, however, and so gnolls have adapted the use of names when necessary.

Gnoll names are not gender specific, and a surname is rarely used; in cases where a surname is necessary a gnoll will use the name of the location of their birth.

**Gnoll Names:** Anek, Arta, Bara, Keth, Khel, Mena, Met, Nera, Neya, Rhael, Rhith, Rill, Xek, Xella, Xera, Yen, Yherta, Yhith, Zael, Zharek

## GNOLL TRAITS

A gnoll character has the following racial traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 2.

**Age.** Gnolls reach maturity at age 10, and adulthood at age 15. Though rare for a gnoll to reach its full lifespan, it is estimated to be around age 70.

**Alignment.** Work with your DM to determine which alignment would be right for your gnoll based on their heritage, history, and location in the world. Gnolls can fall anywhere on the alignment scale, but Good gnolls are a very rare sight.

**Size.** Females are typically taller and have more muscle and fat than males, standing as high as 8 feet tall and up to 300 pounds. The latter standing no more than 6 and a half feet tall, and on average weigh 230 pounds. Your size is medium.

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

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You cannot discern colour in darkness, only shades of grey.

**Reposition.** When you take the Disengage action, your base walking speed is increased by 10 until the end of your turn.

**Heightened Senses.** Hearing and scent-based ability checks are done with advantage.

**Natural Weapons.** Your teeth and claws are powerful natural weapons that you can use to attack your foes.

You can attack with a bite (1d6 Piercing damage) and with your claws (1d10 Slashing damage) instead of weapons. You can only make a bite attack once per turn. You are proficient with your bite and claws, and they have the finesse property.



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

**Subraces.** Environment, heritage, and caste has given rise to a number of different racial options for your gnoll. Though not technically subraces of the species, they are classed as such for ease of use. Choose one for your gnoll.

## SUBRACES

### FROST GNOLL

High in the mountains, deep in the frozen tundra, or hidden away on a frozen coastline, wherever there is frigid temperatures there was likely once a clan of frost gnolls. Their coats of whites and greys often see these wintery gnolls mistaken for lycanthropes and other northern canids. Outside of their home climates frost gnolls are a very rare sight. They live a nomadic lifestyle, and their small clans rarely stay in one place for very long.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Scrounge.** While camping outside of a settlement, you can always find your way back to your camp. Whenever you make a Wisdom (Survival) check to gather natural resources (food, water, flora, etc.) you may do so at advantage, and add double your proficiency modifier to the roll.

**Rampage.** When you reduce a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on your turn, you can take a bonus action to move up to half of your speed and make a bite attack.

### GNOLL STALKER

An asset to any war band, gnoll stalkers are lean and very quick on their feet. Some gnolls are born stalkers, others train relentlessly to become them. No matter the path, a stalker knows just how much power they wield, and often flaunts that power within their clan. This has the side effect of



making them a target for up-and-comers looking to prove their worth, or for older, tougher gnolls that grow irritated of the boasting.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

**Vengeful Strike.** As a reaction to an ally that you can see being reduced to 0 hit points, you may move up to 30 feet and make a melee attack against a target of your choice.

**Dominant.** When you make a Charisma (Intimidation) check against a creature that is equal to your size category, you may do so at advantage.

## DESERT GNOLL

The shifting sands and suppressing heat of a desert is no place for someone of weak constitution. If the terrain doesn't kill you, the desert gnolls that hunt these lands likely will. Known to stalk a target for days at a time without a break, desert gnolls are expert hunters; and have the tendency to gorge themselves on their kills. A habit that is born out of necessity, as it may be a week or more before they find their next meal in this unforgiving land. Desert gnolls are fierce and very quick to temper.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 1.

**Rugged.** When you make a saving throw versus becoming diseased or poisoned, or against the effects of disease or poison, you do so at advantage.

**Rampage.** When you reduce a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on your turn, you can take a bonus action to move up to half of your speed and make a bite attack.

## GNOLL LEADER

Scarred and marked, battle is an old acquaintance to a gnoll leader. You are the front line of war. You are the pinnacle of your clan's strength. It is through your direction that those around you will flourish. You fight for your people, until blood pours from your maw and you draw your last breath. No exceptions.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Charisma score increases by 1.

**Aura of Blood Thirst.** Any ally within 15 feet of you that has the Rampage trait may make a single bite attack as a free action on their turn if they take the attack action.

**Sudden Rush.** As a free action, you can increase your speed by 60 feet until the end of your turn.

Using this ability prevents opportunity attacks against you for the duration. You can only use this ability once per combat encounter.

**Commanding Presence.** As a reaction to an attack roll made on a creature you can see, before damage is rolled, you can let out a bellowing roar, imposing disadvantage on the roll. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier.

## GNOLL WITHERLING

A promise made in life to fight alongside your brothers and sisters even after death. This is a choice that every gnoll can make; barring their clan has a shaman capable of the ritual required. Witherlings are commonplace among Gnoll clans, but to outsiders you are a skeletal, decayed monster. A being cursed with Endless Hunger, but unable to eat. A creation made for slaughter, for war, for death. Of death. But outsiders can often be shortsighted; and many Witherlings are created out of the desire to protect and preserve.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 1.

**A Life Lived.** Your creature type is Undead. You retain the personality and memories you had in life. Though you still feel the allure of feasting on a fresh kill, you are unable to eat; nor does your body require the nourishment of food, drink, or the need to breathe.

**Feast on my Flesh.** Your decayed flesh can be processed in to a potent elixir that, when imbibed by a creature, has the same effects as the Lesser Restoration spell. This can be done once every 3 days, and the elixir must be used within 1 hour of its creation or lose its potency.





# GNOLLISH LANGUAGE

## GNOLLISH SCRIPT: SAMPLE ALPHABET

B	D	F	G	H	K	L	M	N
ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ
P	R	S	T	W	Y	Z	DG	SH
ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ
DOUBLE CONSONANT	A	E	I	O	U	OU	EA	DOUBLE VOWEL
ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ	ƚ

## WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Written language is still fairly new for gnolls; their primitive script is a simplification of abyssal symbols. The abyssal heritage is easily recognizable in any given symbol, assuming the reader has basic knowledge of the Abyss, however when the gnollish symbols are strung together it simply looks like gibberish to anyone that has not studied gnollish.

Gnolls have a tendency to write in a way that is similar to their speech. Individual letters can convey a multitude of sounds. Specific sounds strung together convey feelings or emotions,

rather than words. Rarely are gnollish words a 1-to-1 translation of common; for ease of use, however, the above chart is aimed at doing just that.



## GNOLLISH EXAMPLES

Gnollish script follows a fairly loose set of rules. Its typically written left to right, but can also be written top to bottom.

If a vowel follows a consonant it is written above that consonant. If a word starts with a vowel, or a vowel stands alone, it is written in its own space. The double consonent symbol is written in place of the second consonant, as is the double vowel symbol.

Gnollish script does not make use of any punctuation, outside of a single horizontal line denoting

the end of an idea or sentence. If the script is written top to bottom, the horizontal line is vertical instead. Numbers follow this same general principle. Gnollish script can be written with spaces between each word, or without spaces.

Below you'll find examples of gnomish script and numerals, written horizontally left to right.

*I will devour anyone that stands in my way.*

$\therefore \dot{z} = k_{\text{反}} \cdot z^{\frac{1}{2}} \cdot t^{\frac{1}{2}}$

*The total comes to 32,749 gold. Do we have a deal?*

𐌲𐌿𐌺𐌰 𐌱𐌴𐌹𐌸 𐌱𐌴𐌹𐌸 𐌱𐌴𐌹𐌸 𐌱𐌴𐌹𐌸 𐌱𐌴𐌹𐌸 — 𐌵𐌶𐌳𐌴𐌹𐌸 · 𐌵𐌶𐌳𐌴𐌹𐌸 —

*Matriarch Zael died 217 years ago; her bloodline lives on.*

[illegible]

*There was a dragon spotted not far from here.*

[illegible]