



WOLVES

These majestic and deadly hunters roam many of the world's forests and tundras, using their brutally effective pack-hunting tactics to fell much larger and more dangerous animals. Wolves strike fear in the hearts of humanoids who venture too far into the wilds, and their notoriety has earned them a place as common monsters and villains in many fables and children's tales. The sounds of distant howling will alert travelers that they are entering wolf territory, and few do so willingly unless traveling in a well-armed group. Any travelers who become lost and isolated in the woods will have little hope of survival should a pack of wolves pick up their scent.

Master Pack Hunters. Those who catch the attention of a wolf pack will often be oblivious to their peril as the pack silently stalks its prey, slowly closing in until they are noticed. Once the pack is spotted, it will close in and attempt to drive its prey into fleeing. Sufficiently powerful prey that stands its ground and proves intimidating enough may be able to drive the wolves away. Wolves that press the attack will attempt to separate the weakest-looking target from its companions and drag it to the ground, where it can be subdued with vicious bites. Even if the prey manages to flee, the wolves will relentlessly pursue it until they are able to surround and slaughter their victim.

Fiercely Loyal Allies. The group dynamics and hunting strategies of wolves are similar enough to most humanoids that they are often able to integrate themselves into tribes living far from civilization. These wolves might live amongst druidic circles, barbarian tribes to the north, orcish warbands, or goblinoid warrens. Regardless of the group, the wolf's instinct toward teamwork and loyalty to hierarchical packs leaves it well suited to many vital roles. Wolves will serve their adopted families as sentries, hunters, and war beasts in combat. They are adept at following verbal and somatic instructions from their humanoid companions to coordinate their efforts.

Dire Wolves. These primeval wolves are a more primitive and savage version of their modern kin. They are more often found in wilder regions that have remained untouched by civilization. Here, they prey on large game as well as any humanoids attempting to eke out an existence in the unforgiving wilds. Like ordinary wolves, dire wolves are prized allies amongst any humanoids able to humanoids able to tame or befriend them, though this is a difficult and dangerous prospect for any without druidic abilities. As dire wolves are often favored by gods of winter or the hunt, they may also be sent to aid those who curry the favor of such gods. Though, just as likely to be sent to hunt and devour those who displease the gods by daring to challenge the might of the wilds.

WOLF

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills Intimidation +1, Perception +4, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

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

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.



DIRE WOLF

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 37 (5d10 + 10)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	4 (-3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2, Perception +4, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

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

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

ASCENDANT PACKLEADER

Wolves blend ferocity, beauty, and teamwork in such a way that many humanoids regard them with a sense of awe that borders on reverence. As such, they are a favored animal among many celestial beings and a common form for sacred beasts to assume. Ascendant packleaders are a form of divine wolf created to lead wolf packs on the Material Plane in service of a higher purpose. They may have once been ordinary wolves elevated to divine status or celestials who took on a lupine form when they entered the Material Plane.

Once an ascendant packleader has taken command of a wolf pack, it leads its lupine brethren with supernatural efficiency. Packleaders can bark orders at their pack mates, enabling them to perform complex tactical maneuvers normally beyond the capabilities of such creatures, and their supernatural howls can break the resolve of prey while driving their allies to victory.

Using these powers of command, the ascendant packleader also drives its pack to pursue higher-level goals normally beyond the comprehension of ordinary wolves. These goals may simply be to protect a sacred wood, or they may involve furthering large-scale agendas in service of a god or other divine being. The nature of these goals and the packleaders pursuing them are as varied as the gods they serve. Noble packleaders act in service to gods seeking to protect the sanctity of life and nature, while brutal packleaders sent by wicked gods of the wilds take cruel pleasure in hunting humanoids and undoing the works of civilization.



ASCENDANT PACKLEADER

Large celestial, any alignment

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)

Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +6, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Keen Hearing and Smell. The packleader has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Resistance. The packleader has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects as long as at least one of the packleader's allies is within 5 ft. of it and the ally isn't incapacitated.

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

Actions

Bite. **Melee Weapon Attack:** +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 17 (3d8 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Hunter's Howl (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The packleader may move up to its speed before emitting a howl that terrifies its prey and rallies its pack. Up to 6 allies within 120 feet of the packleader can use their reaction to perform one of the options described in its Bark Order ability. They must all use the same option, which the packleader chooses. Each other creature within 120 feet of the packleader must then succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of it for 1 minute and must immediately use its reaction, if available, to move as far as its speed allows away from the packleader. The creature doesn't move into obviously dangerous ground, such as a fire or a pit. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Bonus Actions

Bark Order. The packleader emits a commanding bark and chooses one creature other than itself within 60 feet of it that can hear it. That creature can then use its reaction to do one of the following:

- It moves up to half its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.
- It makes one melee weapon attack or unarmed strike. If the attack has advantage from at least two sources, and one of them is due to the target being prone, the attack deals an extra 7(2d6) damage.
- If the creature is suffering an effect that requires it to make a saving throw at the beginning or end of its next turn, it immediately makes that save.

WOLVES IN YOUR ADVENTURES

The following tables provide some adventure hooks for incorporating wolves into your adventures. Example encounters with battle maps for the hooks written in bold can be found in the *Wolves Creature Guide* available to members of our Patreon.

WOLF ADVENTURES

d8

Plot Hook

The players are traveling on a wagon that breaks down on 1 a remote trail deep in the wood. While attempting repairs, they are attacked by a pack of wolves.

2 The players find a town recently razed by a roving group of raiders, with hungry wolves now scrounging through the burning wreckage for survivors.

3 The players find a group of travelers lost in a blizzard who claim they are being picked off one by one by a pack of wolves.

4 A cattle merchant tasks the players with guarding a caravan of his best cows through wolf-infested territory.

5 Tired of seeing his forest home slowly whittled away by humanoids, an ambitious druid begins amassing an army of dire wolves to conquer and reclaim lost lands in the name of the wilds.

6 A shrine in the wilderness contains an inscription informing petitioners they may ask for the aid of the gods of the wild if they are willing to prove their worth. Those who offer prayers at the shrine soon find themselves hunted by a pack of dire wolves. If the wolves are defeated, the gods will grant the players their blessing.

7 A group of bandits raiding a temple have been transformed into a pack of dire wolves by the god they angered. This transformation has not curbed their raiding tendencies.

8 A retired hunter tries to settle into a new life with his family but finds himself beset by vengeful forest spirits in the form of dire wolves. He asks for the players' aid in protecting his family and putting these threats down once and for all.

ASCENDANT PACKLEADER ADVENTURES

d8

Plot Hook

1 An aberrant artifact placed in a sacred glaive has driven the local wolves and their celestial guardian mad.

2 A fallen celestial has taken the form of an unholy wolf and now leads a pack of wolves intent on purging every frontier town it finds of all life.

3 In the dead of winter, wicked spirits have begun preying on the weak and infirm of a woodland village. Those who survive tell of a divine wolf who drove the wraiths away.

4 A group of mystics has ritually transformed a wolf into an ascendant packleader under their control. They now use the creature and its wolf pack to purge their forest of rival powers.

5 An ascendant packleader has begun preying on hunters and loggers who've taken too much from the forest or displayed cruelty to wild creatures.

6 A fallen hero who died attempting to purge a forest of a wicked green dragon has been given a second chance in the form of an ascendant packleader. The fallen hero will aid the players should they take up the quest to slay the dragon.

ART CREDIT

- Sarulf's Packmate - Ilse Gort, Wizards of the Coast
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CHANGELOG

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