



DEMONS OF DECAY

Demons represent the dark, chaotic impulses of humanity made manifest. Different demons represent different aspects of this darkness, but none are as revolting as the demons of decay. These demons are born from the tendency of mortals to neglect

themselves and the world they live in, thus allowing disease and entropy to run their course unopposed. In some worlds, these fiends operate independently to spread plagues and decay. On others, they act in service to a mighty demon lord or demonic god who presides over the domain of rot and disease.

Unnatural Vitality. Demons of decay are easily recognized by their bloated, rotting, disease-ridden forms. The decaying nature of their bodies does not mean these fiends are fragile or easy to slay. Demons of decay can shrug off incredible amounts of punishment relative to their size while their would-be slayers slowly succumb to terrible afflictions. Many who worship these demons do so in hopes of gaining this unnatural vitality, even if it means subjecting themselves to horrific rot and disease.

Cheerful Nihilists. Demons of decay represent the inevitable deterioration of all things. Those who have succumbed to nihilism and apathy are especially vulnerable to their influence. Yet, these demons and their followers are almost always jolly and cheerful. They revel in the pointlessness of life and celebrate the perpetual state of rot to which existence is subject. Those who worship these fiends often seek a means of escaping despair and fear of death, and by accepting the gifts of rot and disease, these worshippers cheerfully shed all their worries and woes.

Promoters of Life. The dark irony of these fiends is their genuine love of life. They hold a motherly love for all living things, including diseases and parasites, which they fail to see as any less important than other lifeforms. These fiends cast no judgments on the intrinsic worth of any lifeform and hold a deadly parasite in just as much esteem as a humanoid whom they believe should provide a home for as many parasites as possible.

They spread diseases not out of malice but out of a desire to see life thrive, even if it is in the form of a plague. Those who resist diseases, or worse, cure them, are seen as cruel destroyers of life by these fiends and their followers. Death and decay are inevitable, and the best one can do is provide a loving home for as many other forms of life as possible while letting go of the need to hold onto what can't be maintained.

Beasts of Decay. These disgusting and ungainly fiends lurch across the ground with their slug-like bodies, bringing rot and death to everyone in their path. The beast's legless lower body is topped with a vaguely humanoid upper body, and its head features a slobbering tongue and leech-like hair that constantly spews toxins. Though their bodies appear bloated and awkward, beasts of decay have no trouble pulling themselves toward any creature that catches their attention, leaving a trail of acidic slime in their wake.

Despite the beast of decay's horrid appearance and deadly nature, it is a jovial and affectionate fiend, virtually incapable of viewing any other creature as an enemy. "Enemies" are simply potential playmates, and the beast is eager to earn their affection with big slobbering licks. The fact that these licks rot, kill, and bring untold suffering to their "playmates" is beyond the beast's understanding. A creature killed this way is transformed into another demon of decay, thus providing the beast with a more permanent playmate.

Great Unclean One. These jolly greater demons are masters of rot and disease, which they happily spread to anyone they meet. They have the appearance of massive, bloated corpses with entrails spilling forth from their open wounds and slimy horns topping their grinning, oversized heads. This enormous body constantly oozes acidic slime and debilitating gasses, and its rotting girth makes it difficult to meaningfully damage. Once it is in motion, the unclean one can easily crush other creatures under the momentum of its vile flesh, all while laughing merrily.



BEAST OF DECAY

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (13d10 + 65)

Speed 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +7

Skills Perception +7

Damage Resistances cold, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak it.

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

Living Plague. The beast is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Magic Resistance. The beast has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects

Regeneration. The beast regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn.

The beast dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Slime Trail. The beast ignores difficult terrain, and any land it occupies is covered in slime for the next minute. This slime-covered land is treated as though it is under the effects of the *puddle of ooze** spell with a DC 17 save.

*New spell described later in this document

Bonus Actions

Attention Seeker. The beast moves up to its speed toward any creature it can see without provoking opportunity attacks.

Actions

Slobbering Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, plus 22 (5d8) necrotic damage and the ground beneath the target is beneath the target is under the effects of its Slime Trail trait. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the beast's diseases. Whenever the creature takes necrotic or poison damage while it is infected, its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0, at which point it is instantly transformed into a **plaguebearer**. This transformation can only be undone by a *wish* spell.

Unclean ones wield rusted and decaying weapons, crusted with filth and disease, and their dreaded plague flails deliver an affliction that can transform victims into new demons of decay. Enemies outside the reach of an unclean one's weapons are no safer, for these fiends can vomit streams of rotting bile over ridiculous distances. These deadly combat abilities are supplemented by the unclean one's powerfully putrescent magic, which specializes in rotting and poisoning enemies as well as restoring vitality to its fellow demons.

While an unclean one's presence inevitably brings death and decay, it behaves as though it is at a grand party. There is a joyousness to its actions, and its diseases, spells, and attacks are simply how it spreads good cheer. The unclean one has a parental fondness for its followers, and those who have given themselves over to the influence of these demons view their afflictions as loving presents. Together they spread their pestilent gifts far and wide as they revel in the decay of all things.

GREAT UNCLEAN ONE

Huge fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 364 (27d12 + 189)

Speed 50ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +13, Wis +13, Int +12

Skills Athletics +11, Arcana +12, Insight +19, Nature +18, Perception +19, Persuasion +12, Religion +12

Damage Resistances cold, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., darkvision 300 ft., passive Perception 29

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 300 ft.

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

Corpulent Mass. The unclean one regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes 20 or more fire or radiant damage in a single turn, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. The unclean one dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Distant Caster. When the unclean one casts a spell with a range of 5 feet or greater, the range of that spell is doubled. When it casts a spell with a range of touch, the range of that spell becomes 30 feet.

Horrid Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the unclean one must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the creature's speed is halved, it can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, but not both, and it can't take reactions. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the stench of all unclean ones for 1 hour.

Living Plague. The unclean one is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Magic Resistance. The unclean one has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Slime Trail. The unclean one ignores difficult terrain, and any land it occupies is covered in slime for the next minute.

This slime-covered land is treated as though it is under the effects of the *puddle of ooze** spell with a DC 21 save.

Actions

Multiaction The unclean one makes three attacks. Alternatively, it makes one attack and casts one at will spell.

Bilesword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 16 (3d10) necrotic damage.

Plague Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the flail's diseases. Whenever the creature takes necrotic or poison damage while it is infected, its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0, at which point it is instantly transformed into a **plaguebearer**. This transformation can only be undone by a *wish* spell.

Noxious Bile. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, Range 120/240ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (4d8 + 5) necrotic damage.

Mountain of Loathsome Flesh. The unclean one moves up to 50 feet in a straight line. At the end of this movement, each creature within 10 feet of Unclean One must make DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or take 19 (3d12) bludgeoning damage. The area within 10 feet of the unclean one is then subjected to the effects of the unclean one's Slime Trail trait.

Spellcasting. The unclean one casts one of the following spells, requiring no components and using Wisdom as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 21):

At will: *blight, cure wounds* (5th level and only affects undead and demons), *contagion, dispel magic, locate object, stinking cloud, stream of corruption** (4th level)

1/day each: *circle of death, cloudkill, finger of death* (A creature killed by this spell becomes a **plaguebearer**), *horrid wilting, mass cure wounds* (9th level and only affects undead and demons)

*New spells described later in this document

Reactions

Blubber and Bile When the unclean one takes damage, it halves the damage and then reduces it by 1d12.



PLAGUEBEARER OF DECAY

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d8 + 32)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (0)	18 (+4)	10 (0)	16 (+3)	10 (0)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +5

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +5

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning

Damage Immunities poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Fetid Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the plaguebearer must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the creature can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, but not both, and it can't take reactions. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the stench of all plaguebearers for 1 hour.

The save DC increases by 2 for each other plaguebearer within 10 feet of the creature, up to a maximum of 18.

Living Plague. The plaguebearer is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Regeneration. The plaguebearer regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. The plaguebearer dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Plaguesword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the sword's diseases. Whenever the creature takes necrotic or poison damage while it is infected, its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0, at which point it is instantly transformed into a plaguebearer. This transformation can only be undone by a *wish* spell.

Plaguebearer of Decay. These fiends are created from the souls of mortals who have succumbed to demonic diseases. Their shambling humanoid bodies are bloated, rotten, and nearly zombie-like in appearance, though they can be distinguished from other undead by their cyclopean visage, which is topped with a single knarled horn. Each of these fiends wields a rusted plaguesword, which carries the same disease that originally birthed it and is used to continue the proliferation of its kind.

Plaguebearers feel the responsibility not just to spread disease but to count and catalog all diseases they encounter in hopes of establishing a complete record of every pathogen in existence. Despite the impossible nature of this task, these neurotic fiends can often be heard counting illnesses they spot on the battlefield, groaning in frustration every time a distraction causes them to lose count.

ART CREDIT

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LORE OF DECAY

In the Warhammer world, the daemon god Nurgle represents disease, decay, and entropy, and there is an entire school of spells devoted to his magic. While many existing D&D spells can represent Nurgle's magic, the following new spells provide even more ways of bringing his putrescent style of sorcery into your campaigns.

INFILCT ROT

4th-level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 minute

Classes: Cleric, Warlock

Make a melee spell attack against a creature you can reach. On a hit, the target takes 3d10 necrotic damage and is afflicted with a disease that lasts until the spell ends.

A creature afflicted by this disease takes 3d10 necrotic damage at the end of each of its turns and must make a Constitution saving throw, ending the disease on a success.

If a diseased creature drops to 0 hit points before this spell ends, you can end the disease on the creature and cause it to unleash a wave of rot. Each creature of your choice that you can see within 30 feet of it must make a Constitution saving throw, taking 3d10 necrotic damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. You may choose to have one of the creatures that failed the saving throw become infected with the same disease.

MIASMA OF PESTILENCE

1st-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 20 feet

Components: V S M (A bit of durian fruit)

Duration: Concentration, Up to 1 minute

Classes: Bard, Sorcerer, Wizard

A cloud of putrescent vapor appears in a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on a point within range. The cloud spreads around corners, and its area is lightly obscured. The cloud lingers in the air for the duration or until a moderate wind (at least 5 miles per hour) disperses it after 4 rounds. A strong wind (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses it after 1 round.

Each creature completely within the cloud at the start of its turn must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both, and can't take reactions. Creatures that don't need to breathe automatically succeed on this saving throw.



PUDDLE OF OOZE

3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S, M (a bit of slug slime)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Classes: Sorcerer, Artificer

The ground in a 20-foot radius centered on a point within range is covered in acidic ooze, becoming difficult terrain for the duration. When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 1d4 acid damage for every 5 feet it travels.

When the ooze appears, each creature standing in its area must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 3d4 acid damage. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 3d4 acid damage.

STREAM OF CORRUPTION

2nd-level evocation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self (30-foot cone) or 100 feet

Components: S, M (a vial of meltwater)

Duration: Instantaneous

Classes: Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

Bile spews forth from you in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 3d8 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

When you cast this spell, you may instead choose a creature within 100 feet of you that you can see and force it to make a Constitution saving throw. On failed save, it takes 3d8 necrotic damage, and you may cause the cone of bile described above to spew forth from the creature in the direction you choose. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and does not spew bile.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, increase the necrotic damage dealt to targeted creatures and by the cone of bile by 1d8 for each slot level above 2nd.



DEMONS OF DECAY IN YOUR ADVENTURES

The demons in this document are based on the daemons of Nurgle from the Warhammer franchise. However, they can be adapted to fit any setting where demons carry disease and seek to spread rot and entropy. In more traditional Dungeons and Dragons settings, they could serve other demon lords such as Orcus or Zuggtmoy, though they would likely be less jovial in this case. The following tables provide examples of ways to incorporate these demons into your adventures.

BEAST OF DECAY ADVENTURES

d6

Plot Hook

- 1 A mad cultist takes her pet **beast of decay** out on walks in the dead of night. Anyone who crosses their path is subject to its deadly affection.

- 2 A **beast of decay** has taken residence near a local pond, playing in the now polluted water and killing all nearby wildlife in the process.

- 3 A pack of **beasts of decay** has begun roaming the sewers of a major city, surfacing in the night to find new playmates.

- 4 A **beast of decay** has taken a liking to a party member, who it now follows and regards as its best friend.

- 5 An old lady asks the party to find her lost puppy in the woods. If they find the "puppy," they discover that it's a **beast of decay**.

- 6 A greater demon has unleashed a pack of **beasts of decay** to play in a now panic-stricken town as it prepares for a larger invasion.

GREAT UNCLEAN ONE ADVENTURES

d4

Plot Hook

- 1 A town has fallen into disrepair as its citizens suffer from a series of plagues, all heralding the arrival of a **great unclean one**.

- 2 A **great unclean one** has corrupted a circle of druids and now uses them to unleash nature's virulent gifts upon civilization.

- 3 A decaying city slowly sinks into a swamp, its remaining citizens succumbing to diseases as a **great unclean one** leads a pestilent parade of the damned through its crumbling streets.

- 4 A **great unclean one** has emerged from a fetid swamp, leading a horde of demons of decay on a merry march as they spread rot and disease throughout the land.

PLAGUEBEARER OF DECAY ADVENTURES

d6

Plot Hook

- 1 The party is sent to find a lost regiment of soldiers said to have succumbed to terrible diseases and finds they have risen as a horde of **plaguebearers of decay**.

- 2 **Plaguebearers of decay** roam a swamp, counting every disease they can find and sharing their findings with anyone they meet.

- 3 A group of exiled lepers has returned to their town as **plaguebearers of decay**, ready to exact their revenge.

- 4 In a rotting manor house, a "family" of **plaguebearers of decay** act out the roles of a noble household.

- 5 A terrible plague ravages a small hamlet, causing those who succumb to the disease to transform into **plaguebearers of decay**.

- 6 A doctor being pursued by a group of **plaguebearers of decay** seeks the party's protection as she attempts to find a cure for a deadly disease.

0.0.0 CHANGES

- Gus's first draft

0.0.1 CHANGES

- Revised plaguebearer statblock

0.0.2 CHANGES

- Revised beast of decay statblock

0.0.3 CHANGES

- Revised great unclean one statblock

0.0.4 CHANGES

- Review from Gus
- Added art

0.0.5 CHANGES

- First draft of intro

0.0.6 CHANGES

- First draft of beast of decay and great unclean one

0.0.7 CHANGES

- Completed descriptions for all demons

0.0.8 CHANGES

- First draft of adventure hooks

0.0.9 CHANGES

- Add lore of decay spells