

AX&X: BESTIARY

The source of truth for monsters in AX&X.

THE BESTIARY

Every creature here is one line of numbers and one of rules. The numbers are the floor; the rules are what make it worth fighting, or worth running from. The stat blocks on the following pages are generated from **bestiary.csv**, so adding a row to that file adds a monster to the book.

The conventions match the core rules. A monster has about **5 HP per Hit Die**, attacks at **+ its HD**, and forces saves at **10 + HD or higher**. Armor Class is ascending. To bring a creature from 1st Edition, set its AC to 19 minus the old number and keep its HD.

ENCOUNTERS AS PUZZLES

A monster is a problem to solve, not just a sack of HP. Every fight offers four answers: Fight, Flee, Talk, or Exploit a weakness. The job of a stat block is to arm that choice before it is made.

- **Read the Foe:** A look at the scene, or a Lore check with INT, tells the party what the creature shrugs off, what cuts it deep, and what it wants. The notes carry this: an **Immune** line it ignores, a **Resistant** or **vulnerable** line for damage, a weakness to name, and often a Tell (how it reads on sight) and a Want (what might buy it off).
- **Fight or Run:** Armor the decision with the numbers. HD and damage say how hard it hits; an immunity may make a fight hopeless, a vulnerability may make it quick. Let the players weigh this while they still can, not after the first blow.
- **Telegraph the Trick:** A deadly effect, a gaze, a breath, a drain, shows a round before it lands. That round is the warning. A party that reads the Tell can ready the counter, per the core The Answer rule, and turn the signature trick aside.
- **Be Ruthless, Be Fair:** Because the trick is telegraphed and answerable, the GM can trigger it without pulling the punch. The danger stays real; the puzzle stays solvable.

READING A STAT BLOCK

- **HD:** Hit Dice. Also the attack bonus, and the number appearing often scales with it.
- **HP:** A typical total. Roll 1d6 per HD for variety, or just use this.
- **AC:** Ascending. The target an attacker needs.
- **Atk:** The attack bonus, equal to HD, and the damage in parentheses with its type. Slashed dice, as claw/claw/bite, are several attacks a round, one roll each at the same bonus.
- **Notes:** Number appearing, behavior, and the abilities below, named by keyword.
- **Trick:** One line on the puzzle of the fight: the defense to get past, or the weakness to exploit. The notable foes carry one; a plain fight needs none.

Number appearing and treasure are the GM's call, guided by the core Stocking and Treasure tables. Morale is the core rule: when a group first loses one and again at half strength, roll 1d6, and on 1 to 3 the rest break.

MONSTER ABILITIES

The full list of monster keywords, and the source of truth for them. The core picks up the few its starter foes need and summarizes them; every tag and its rule lives here.

- **Mindless:** Immune to Sleep, Charmed, Poisoned, and Frightened. Most undead, oozes, and constructs.
- **Berserk:** Fights in a fury: **+2 to attack**, never tests morale, and never yields, fighting to the death. Immune to Frightened. A fury it cannot switch off, it attacks the nearest target, friend or foe, if no enemy stands.
- **Silver or Magic:** Only silver or magic weapons bite it. Plain steel passes through.
- **Regeneration:** Regains the listed HP each round, unless the wound came from its bane, usually fire or acid. Damage past 0 only keeps it down if the bane did it.
- **Drain:** A hit, Body save or lose a Level: its HP, and a point from attacks and saves. A week of rest or a Remove Curse restores one Level.
- **Petrify:** A gaze, breath, or touch turns flesh to stone on a failed Body save. See Petrified.
- **Poison:** A hit, Body save or Poisoned. A few venoms do worse, as the note says.

- **Blood Drain:** On a hit it latches and drains automatically each round. An action or a STR Check tears it off.
- **Rust:** A touch corrodes metal armor or a weapon to ruin. Wood and stone it may eat too.
- **Swallow:** A large creature gulps a smaller one down. Inside, take automatic damage each round and cut your way out.
- **Breath:** An area attack, once per fight or now and then, Dodge save for half.
- **Gaze:** Works only eye to eye. Fight with averted eyes at -4, or turn it back with a mirror.
- **Surprise:** Catches a party off guard more easily. Lower the surprise odds in its favor.
- **Flies:** Moves through the air. If it stays high, ground attacks are at -4.
- **Split:** A blow divides it into two weaker copies. Only its bane kills it whole.

MAKING NEW MONSTERS

Reskin a line with a new name and one ability, or build from scratch: **HP 5 per HD, Atk + HD, AC 10 to 18, saves at 10 + HD**. One strong trick is plenty. See the core Improvise rule.

1D12 RARE ENCOUNTERS

Not an everyday fight, a legend crossed. Roll or pick one when a long journey or a deep delve has earned a wonder or a terror, then stat it from the lines that follow.

- 1 **Dragon:** Aloft on the high wind, or coiled on a hoard that could ransom a kingdom.
- 2 **Lich:** A dead archmage at its work, wardens around it and its phylactery near.
- 3 **Treant:** An old wood that moves, and will not forgive the axe.
- 4 **Roc:** A shadow the size of a field, and the herds gone silent.
- 5 **Sphinx:** A riddle cut into the only pass, and the bones of wrong answers below.
- 6 **Pegasus:** A wild winged horse at a high spring, watching, poised to bolt.
- 7 **Will-o'-Wisp:** A kindly light bobbing over the bog, where no road runs.
- 8 **Unicorn:** A white glimmer in a hidden glade that heals, and judges.
- 9 **Medusa:** A garden of statues caught mid-step, and a veiled figure among them.
- 10 **Basilisk:** A lair of stone beasts, frozen where the gaze found them.
- 11 **Chimera:** Three-headed death quartering the crags, fire on its breath.
- 12 **Manticore:** A ridge strewn with spent tail-spikes, and more on the wing.

THE BEASTS

Generated from **bestiary.csv**. Each block is one creature.

HUMANOIDS

- **Goblin Band** HD 1, HP 4, AC 13, Atk +1 (1d6). 1d6 goblins ambush from cover.
- **Orc Patrol** HD 1, HP 5, AC 13, Atk +1 (1d8). 1d4 warriors demanding blood or toll.
- **Rival Adventurers** 1d4+1 NPCs of the party's Level, one per class. Roll Reaction.
- **Dark Cultist** HD 3, HP 12, AC 12, Atk +3 (1d4). Casts Cause Light Wounds for 1d8 on a touch. Chaotic.
- **Kobold** HD 1/2, HP 2, AC 13, Atk +0 (1d4). Scheming and cowardly. Warrens of 4d6, thick with traps. Breaks morale fast.
- **Hobgoblin** HD 1, HP 6, AC 14, Atk +1 (1d8). Disciplined soldier. 1d6 patrol under a 2 HD sergeant.
- **Bugbear** HD 3, HP 14, AC 15, Atk +3 (1d8). Surprise despite its bulk. Hits like an ogre.
- **Gnoll** HD 2, HP 9, AC 14, Atk +2 (1d8). Hyena-headed raiders. 1d6 pack, cruel to captives. Tell: hyena laughter and captives roped in a line. Want: loot, slaves, or a cut of your spoils.
- **Lizardfolk** HD 2, HP 11, AC 15, Atk +2 (1d6). Swamp hunters. Hold their breath 10 turns. 2d4 near water. Tell: reed nests and fish-bones at the water edge. Want: their eggs safe, or tribute of fish and meat.
- **Berserker** HD 2, HP 11, AC 12, Atk +2 (1d10). Berserk, so +2 more to hit; never breaks and fights to the death. 1d6 frenzied raiders, heedless of wounds. Tell: old scars, a foaming fury, a warband that will not stop. Want: slaughter and glory, seldom plunder.

BEASTS

- **Giant Rats** HD 1/2, HP 2, AC 12, Atk +0 (1d3 piercing). 2d6 rats. A bite on a natural 20 also gives disease (Poisoned).
- **Giant Spider** HD 2, HP 9, AC 14, Atk +2 (1d6 piercing). Poison on a hit (Body save). Webs: Dodge save or stuck 1d4 rounds.
- **Wolf** HD 1, HP 5, AC 13, Atk +1 (1d4 piercing). 2d6 pack. Harries and surrounds. Breaks if the leader falls.
- **Dire Wolf** HD 3, HP 14, AC 14, Atk +3 (1d6 piercing). Great pack-hunter. 1d4+1 run together.
- **Brown Bear** HD 5, HP 24, AC 14, Atk +5 (1d6/1d6/1d8). Two claws and a bite. A hug for 2d8 more if both claws land.
- **Boar** HD 3, HP 14, AC 14, Atk +3 (1d6). Charges. Fights on for a round past 0 HP.
- **Giant Bat** HD 2, HP 9, AC 14, Atk +2 (1d4). Flies. A swarm fouls the air: -2 to anyone within.
- **Giant Centipede** HD 1/2, HP 2, AC 12, Atk +0 (1). A bite brings weak Poison: Body save or Poisoned, though the venom only sickens.
- **Constrictor Snake** HD 4, HP 18, AC 13, Atk +4 (1d6). A hit coils: automatic 1d6 each round until a STR Check breaks the grip.
- **Stirge** HD 1, HP 4, AC 14, Atk +1 (1d3 piercing). Flies. Blood Drain: latches on a hit, 1d3 each round until torn off.
- **Giant Scorpion** HD 4, HP 18, AC 16, Atk +4 (1d4/1d4/1d6). Two claws and a sting. Sting Poison (Body save).
- **Giant Toad** HD 2, HP 9, AC 13, Atk +2 (1d4). Tongue 10 ft drags you in; the next bite hits free. Swallows a small creature.
- **Roc** HD 12, HP 60, AC 15, Atk +12 (1d8/1d8/2d6). Flies. A titan eagle. Two talons and a bite; a talon hit snatches a rider or mount aloft, STR Check or be carried off and dropped. Nests on high crags among bright wreckage. Tell: a shadow sweeping the fields, herds gone in the night. Want: meat and glittering things for the nest.

UNDEAD

- **Skeleton Guard** HD 1, HP 5, AC 13, Atk +1 (1d6). Mindless. Resistant to piercing and edged, vulnerable to blunt.
- **Ghoul** HD 2, HP 10, AC 14, Atk +2 (1d3/1d3/1d3). Two claws and a bite; any hit forces a Body save or Paralyzed. Mindless. Tell: gnawed bones and a carrion stink. Want: fresh meat, living or not.
- **Wight** HD 3, HP 14, AC 15, Atk +3 (1d4). Drain on a hit (Body save or Injured). Silver or magic only. Mindless. Tell: a barrow chill, and its victims rising behind it. Want: to drag you under, and it rarely talks. **Trick:** Silver or magic weapons only.
- **Restless Sailor** HD 2, HP 9, AC 13, Atk +2 (1d6). Chilling touch. Silver or magic only. Passive unless disturbed.
- **Wraith-Librarian** HD 5, HP 22, AC 15, Atk +5 (1d6). Drain on a hit (Body save or Injured). Silver or magic only. Hushes a caster for 1d4 rounds (Will save).

- **Zombie** HD 2, HP 9, AC 12, Atk +2 (1d8). Mindless and slow, always acts last.
- **Wraith** HD 4, HP 18, AC 15, Atk +4 (1d6). Drain on a hit. Flies. Silver or magic only. Mindless. **Trick:** Silver or magic only; kill it fast before it drains your Levels.
- **Spectre** HD 6, HP 28, AC 16, Atk +6 (1d8). Drains two Levels on a hit. Flies. Magic only. Mindless. **Trick:** Magic weapons only; it drains two Levels a hit.
- **Mummy** HD 5, HP 24, AC 16, Atk +5 (1d12). Touch brings rot: wounds heal at quarter rate until Remove Curse. Fear on sight. Fire or magic only. Tell: dry rot, bandage dust, a curse cut over the door. Want: its tomb left undisturbed. **Trick:** Fire or magic only; its rot heals at a quarter rate until Remove Curse.
- **Vampire** HD 7, HP 32, AC 17, Atk +7 (1d10). Drain on a hit. Charm gaze (Will save). Regeneration. Becomes mist or a bat. A stake, sunlight, or running water undoes it; else magic only. Tell: no reflection, a graveyard cold, charmed thralls. Want: blood, servants, and its secret kept. **Trick:** A stake, sunlight, or running water undoes it; else it reforms.
- **Lich** HD 11, HP 50, AC 18, Atk +11 (1d10). A dead archmage, cunning and cold. Casts as a Magic-User of its HD, the full book. Touch: 1d10 and a Body save or Paralyzed. Fear on sight (Will save). Silver or magic only. Its life hides in a phylactery; unmade, it reforms in days unless that is found and broken. Tell: a chill that gutters small flames, coal-light in a dry skull. Want: lore, the dead multiplied, and its phylactery kept secret. **Trick:** Cut down, it reforms in days unless its phylactery is found and broken.

OOZES

- **Green Slime** HD 2, HP 9, AC 10, Atk +0 (special). Drops from above. Devours flesh and wood: fire or a STR Check scrapes it off before it eats through. Only fire and cold kill it. Mindless. **Trick:** Only fire and cold kill it; a blade or bare hand just feeds it.
- **Grey Ooze** HD 3, HP 14, AC 12, Atk +3 (2d6). Like wet stone. Rust: corrodes metal on a hit. Immune to cold and lightning. Mindless.
- **Ochre Jelly** HD 5, HP 24, AC 11, Atk +5 (2d6). Split by a blunt or edged blow, each half the HP. Fire or cold kills it whole. Mindless. **Trick:** Blunt or edged blows split it; only fire or cold kills it whole.
- **Gelatinous Cube** HD 4, HP 18, AC 10, Atk +4 (2d6). Fills a corridor, near-invisible: Surprise. A hit Paralyzes (Body save) and swallows. Immune to lightning. Mindless. Tell: a too-clean hall, with bones hanging in the air. Want: nothing, so just do not walk into it. **Trick:** Near-invisible: prod ahead with a pole or the lead walker is swallowed.
- **Black Pudding** HD 10, HP 45, AC 11, Atk +10 (3d6). Dissolves metal and wood. Splits under blows like an ochre jelly; only fire harms it whole. Mindless. **Trick:** It splits under blows and eats metal; only fire harms it whole.

LYCANTHROPES

- **Werewolf** HD 4, HP 18, AC 14, Atk +4 (2d4). Silver or magic only. A bite may pass the curse. A man by day. **Trick:** Silver or magic only; a bite may pass the curse.
- **Wererat** HD 3, HP 13, AC 14, Atk +3 (1d4). Silver or magic only. Commands rats and slips into shadow.

FEY

- **Dryad** HD 2, HP 9, AC 15, Atk +2 (1d4). Charm (Will save) to lure you deep into the wood. Dies if her tree dies.
- **Pixie** HD 1, HP 4, AC 16, Atk +1 (1d4). Flies. Invisible at will, often unseen until it strikes.
- **Centaur** HD 4, HP 18, AC 14, Atk +4 (1d6/1d6). Hooves and a bow. 2d10 roam the open plains.
- **Treant** HD 8, HP 40, AC 16, Atk +8 (2d6/2d6 blunt). Two slams. Wakes 1d2 nearby trees to fight at its side. Vulnerable to fire. Looks a weathered tree until it steps. Tell: a grove gone silent, deep-pressed roots like footfalls. Want: the wood unharmed; axe or torch makes a patient enemy.

CONSTRUCTS

- **Gargoyle** HD 4, HP 18, AC 16, Atk +4 (1d6). Flies. Mindless. Silver or magic only. Tell: stone that waits stock-still until you pass. Want: tribute, or just to guard its roost. **Trick:** Silver or magic only; plain steel skids off stone.
- **Engine Guardian** HD 5, HP 24, AC 16, Atk +5 (1d8). A gargoyle grown fat on stray magic. Will not leave its post.
- **Animated Rigging** HD 2, HP 10, AC 12, Atk +2 (special). Grab: Dodge save or stuck 1d4 rounds. Mindless. Fire frees the caught.
- **Gargoyle Chieftain** HD 6, HP 28, AC 17, Atk +6 (1d8). Flies. Mindless. Silver or magic only. Proud, and open to tribute.
- **Clockwork Sentinel** HD 4, HP 20, AC 17, Atk +4 (1d8). Mindless. Vulnerable to lightning.

MONSTERS

- **Troll** HD 6, HP 30, AC 16, Atk +6 (1d4/1d4/1d8 edged). Two claws and a bite. Regeneration 3 each round unless the wound was fire or acid. Tell: wounds knitting shut as you watch. Want: a toll of meat, or your slowest companion. **Trick:** Regenerates each round; only fire or acid keeps it down.
- **Harpy** HD 3, HP 13, AC 13, Atk +3 (1d4). Flies. Song: Will save or walk toward it, even off a ledge, until struck. Tell: a sweet song on the wind you cannot place. Want: to lure and feast, but it hushes for shiny trade.
- **Owlbear** HD 5, HP 24, AC 14, Atk +5 (1d6/1d6/1d8). Two claws and a bite, a hug for 2d8 more if both claws land. Never checks morale. Tell: torn trees and drifting feathers mark its ground. Want: nothing but its range, though it can be drawn off.
- **Rust Monster** HD 5, HP 24, AC 16, Atk +5 (special). Rust: a touch corrodes metal armor or a weapon to flakes. It wants iron, not blood. Tell: it passes over flesh and noses toward your iron. Want: your metal, so feed it a spare blade to pass. **Trick:** It devours metal; strike with wood, stone, or fists or lose your gear.
- **Carriion Crawler** HD 3, HP 14, AC 14, Atk +3 (special). Eight tentacles, each a strike at +3; any hit Paralyzes (Body save) 1d4 turns, then it feeds.
- **Cockatrice** HD 5, HP 22, AC 14, Atk +5 (1d6). Flies. A peck Petrifies (Body save). **Trick:** A touch petrifies; keep it at spear reach.
- **Basilisk** HD 6, HP 28, AC 15, Atk +6 (1d10). Gaze Petrifies (Body save). Turn its own gaze on it with a mirror. Tell: creatures frozen mid-step around its lair. Want: only to feed, though a mirror turns it. **Trick:** Its gaze petrifies; avert your eyes at -4, or turn it with a mirror.
- **Medusa** HD 4, HP 18, AC 15, Atk +4 (1d6). Gaze Petrifies (Body save). Snake-hair Poison. Fight her blind at -4. Tell: terror-faced statues, and she keeps veiled. Want: to be left alone, or a gift of fine things. **Trick:** Its gaze turns flesh to stone; fight with averted eyes at -4, or a mirror.
- **Minotaur** HD 6, HP 28, AC 14, Atk +6 (1d6/1d6). Gore and bite. Never lost in a maze. Charges for double damage. Tell: tally-scratched walls and a bellow down the maze. Want: to keep its maze, though a true way out may turn it.
- **Manticore** HD 6, HP 28, AC 15, Atk +6 (1d3/1d3/1d8). Flies. Two claws and a bite in reach. Looses 1d6 tail spikes 90 ft, 1d6 each.
- **Chimera** HD 9, HP 40, AC 15, Atk +9 (1d4/1d4/2d4). Flies. Three heads strike together. The dragon head breathes fire 3d6 (Dodge for half).
- **Wyvern** HD 7, HP 32, AC 15, Atk +7 (1d8/1d6). Flies. Tail sting Poison: Body save or Poisoned and 2d6 more.
- **Hydra** HD 8, HP 40, AC 15, Atk +8 (1d10). Bites once per living head, eight at full, each +8 for 1d10. A head falls to 8 damage in one blow; two regrow unless the stump is burned. **Trick:** Each head attacks; cut or burn them down one at a time.
- **Gorgon** HD 8, HP 36, AC 17, Atk +8 (1d6). Iron-scaled bull. Breath Petrifies in a 60 ft cone (Body save). **Trick:** Its breath petrifies in a cone; scatter and take it from the flank.
- **Griffon** HD 7, HP 32, AC 15, Atk +7 (1d4/1d4/1d6). Flies. Two claws and a bite. Hunts horses above all.
- **Unicorn** HD 4, HP 18, AC 15, Atk +4 (1d8/1d6/1d6). Horn and hooves. Immune to Charmed and Poison. Its horn cures. Serves only the pure.
- **Pegasus** HD 4, HP 18, AC 15, Atk +4 (1d6/1d6). Flies. A noble winged horse, shy of the cruel and the loud. Two hooves. Will bear a rider it judges worthy, won by patience, never by force. Tell: hoofprints that run to a cliff and lift away. Want: to stay wild, or be gentled by a kind hand.
- **Sphinx** HD 9, HP 45, AC 16, Atk +9 (2d4/2d4). Flies. Lion-bodied, grave, and old. Sets a riddle: answer true and it may aid you or wave you past; answer false and it falls on you. Roar once a day: all within 30 ft Body save or deafened and -2 for the fight. Tell: a riddle cut into the pass, bones of wrong answers beneath. Want: a riddle well met, or a finer one in trade.
- **Will-o'-Wisp** HD 3, HP 14, AC 18, Atk +3 (2d8). Flies and darts, almost impossible to strike (AC 18). A bobbing light that lures travelers into bog and mire, then feeds on their terror as they sink. Can snuff itself dark to vanish. Tell: a warm lantern where no road or house stands. Want: to drown you, and drink the fear of it. **Trick:** It lures you into the mire; ignore the light and it finds no prey.

GIANTS

- **Ogre** HD 4, HP 19, AC 15, Atk +4 (2d6 blunt). Heavy club. Keeps a crude hoard. Tell: a reeking club and a tally of skulls. Want: food, bright coin, or a fight it can win.
- **Thalros the Cloud Giant** HD 8, HP 40, AC 17, Atk +8 (2d8). Slam. Thunder-call: a 20 ft burst, Dodge save or 3d6 and shoved to the deck's edge.
- **Hill Giant** HD 8, HP 36, AC 16, Atk +8 (2d8 blunt). Hurls rocks 60 ft for 2d8. Keeps a cave hoard.
- **Stone Giant** HD 9, HP 40, AC 17, Atk +9 (3d6 blunt). Hurls boulders 120 ft for 3d6, and can catch one thrown back.
- **Frost Giant** HD 10, HP 45, AC 17, Atk +10 (2d10 blunt). Immune to cold. Hurls ice for 2d10.

- **Fire Giant** HD 11, HP 50, AC 18, Atk +11 (2d10 blunt). Immune to fire. Hurls burning rock for 2d10.

DRAGONS

- **Young Dragon** HD 8, HP 40, AC 18, Atk +8 (2d8). Fear on first sight (Will save). Breath 6d6 fire in 30 ft, Dodge for half. Immune to fire. Tell: scorched ground, a sulphur reek, bones picked clean. Want: tribute, flattery, or word of a richer hoard. **Trick:** Immune to fire; take the breath on a Dodge, then close so it cannot line up another.
- **Wick the Pseudodragon** HD 1, HP 4, AC 15, Atk +1 (1d3). Sting: Body save or Asleep. Flies. A friend, not a fight, once fed.
- **Dragon** HD 10, HP 50, AC 18, Atk +10 (1d8/1d8/2d8). Flies. Fear on sight (Will save). Breath once in 1d4 rounds: 10d6 in a 40 ft cone or line (Dodge for half), of its element, fire, frost, acid, lightning, or gas, which it is immune to. Claws and bite, or a breath, each round. A vast hoard, and cunning enough to bargain. Scale by age: a wyrmling near HD 5, a great wyrm HD 14 with breath to match. Tell: the reek of its element and a mountain of plundered gold. Want: tribute, flattery, and its hoard untouched. **Trick:** Immune to its own element; survive the breath, deny it the line for another, or bargain.

ELEMENTALS

- **Fire Elemental** HD 8, HP 36, AC 15, Atk +8 (1d8 fire). Sets all it touches alight. Immune to fire; water wounds it. Cannot cross water. **Trick:** Immune to fire; water wounds it, and it cannot cross a stream.
- **Earth Elemental** HD 8, HP 36, AC 16, Atk +8 (1d8 blunt). Rises from stone and moves through it. Slow but relentless. Cannot cross water.

1D8 LAIRS AND HAUNTS

Dungeon dressing. Roll or pick the shape of the place a thing has made its own.

- 1 **Ruined Keep:** Collapse-prone stone, moldering tapestries, echoing footfalls.
- 2 **Sunken Crypt:** Knee-deep water, damp granite, the smell of rot.
- 3 **Fungal Caverns:** Glowing spores, slick floors, choking haze.
- 4 **Defiled Temple:** Shattered altars, blood-stained pillars, a low hum.
- 5 **Obsidian Dungeon:** Razor-edged black stone, sulfur vents, sigils that glow when touched.
- 6 **Labyrinth:** Shifting corridors, minotaur runes, dust-covered bones.
- 7 **Flooded Mine:** Rotten timbers, tunnels ending in black water, the tap of digging.
- 8 **Giant's Barrow:** Doors too tall to reach, grave goods sized for titans, a cold that does not lift.