

GRIMOIRE OF THE GRAVE

PROMO:
THE INFINITE SHAPES
OF UNDEATH



Produced by

2CGAMING

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THE INFINITE SHAPES OF UNDEATH

Undeath is a dark mirror of life. Just as one marvels at the infinite beauties of the living world, so too should we regard the countless manifestations of the living dead. Simply categorizing these mysterious beings as “undead” is as inarticulate as describing all humanoids as “alive.” Vampires, zombies, skeletons, ghosts, and liches are far more different than they are similar, and they are but a sample of the countless forms of undead observed across the multiverse. There is so much about undeath to be explored and understood. These pages illuminate the seemingly infinite faces of undeath. Here, we explore the very nature of undead beings by dividing them into various befitting subtypes, uncover what drives and motivates them, discover how they “live” and reproduce, and so much more. Whether you seek a weakness to exploit or an understanding to build a bridge of diplomacy, the knowledge herein will aid you.

Undead Subtypes

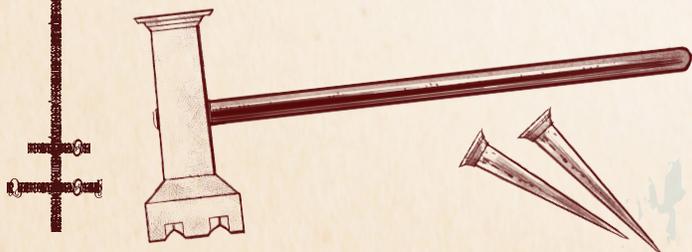


If I had hundreds more years to further my research before unvigiling this grimoire, I still couldn't account for all the fascinating types of undead to be discovered. But we living folks are impatient, I know, so we'll just have to make do with what I have so far.

Come over for tea in a couple centuries and we'll chat about what to include in the second edition!

To better catalogue the undead, they are organized here into four categories: accursed, anomalies, defilers, and hollows. Each subtype answers key questions about an undead's existence. What force animated or reanimated them? How do they behave? What can one typically expect when encountering them?

For the purposes of play in 5th Edition, treat an undead's subtype the way you would any other subtype in 5th Edition. Often this dynamic is more narrative than mechanical. For example, whether a fiend is a demon or a devil tells the players a lot more about how the creature is likely to behave and what motivates it rather than what powers it possesses. The same holds true here, and you should reward players who take the time to learn more about the undead they encounter by providing them with information from this chapter and opportunities to identify to which subtype an undead may belong.



Accursed

In many cultures, the prospect of undeath spells a grim fate, one that often befalls those who experience or commit great evil. Forced to walk the world of the living as a shadow of their former selves, accursed are undead who exist in a state of perpetual torment. Their souls are mangled and broken, leaving behind angry, bitter beings whose resentment for the living is given form by the nature of their curse. From the infamous ghost to the dreaded death knight, accursed are rightly feared for their hostility and obsessiveness. These undead are victims as often as they are guilty. Some are born of atrocities and evils visited upon them, leaving wounds upon the soul that prevent them from finding peace. Others are depraved villains who have received their just rewards in death for the evils committed in life. Whatever their nature, the motivations and behaviors of accursed are echoes of their past. The oldest among them are ancient beings, trapped in torment for so long they have forgotten all but the vaguest memories of life—a tragic fate for even the most diabolical souls.



Anomalies

- Boneclaw
- ✓ Bone Splinter
- Nightwalker
- ✓ Tangle of Limbs
- Shadow
- Vampiric Mist
- ✓ Voided Soul
- Will-o-wisp



Anomalies

The mortal desire to understand the mysteries of death is ultimately futile and often dangerous. This terrifying truth is embodied by the category of cryptic undead known as anomalies. Their existence is as inexplicable as it is terrifying. Some simply appear from lands unknown, possessing incomprehensible natures and minds. Others are the result of cataclysmic events or freak accidents, spawning unnatural terrors the likes of which have never before been seen. For these reasons, anomalies are among the most dangerous and feared undead. Unlike their undead cousins, anomalies challenge scholarly assumptions of life itself, inviting troubling existential questions about death and what lies beyond. Whatever their form, an anomaly is an undead mystery, prone to behaviors and possessing powers found nowhere else.

✓ The bone splinter, tangle of limbs, and voided soul are from 2CGaming's 5E supplement *Total Party Kill Bestiary: Volume 2*.
● The allip, boneclaw, deathlock, nightwalker, skull lord, and vampiric mist are from the official 5E sourcebook *MotM*.

Defilers

While most undead are dangerous in some way to the living, some exist to feed upon and harm the living by nature. Often these fearsome undead earn their name through reproducing via the corruption of living flesh, transforming others into beings like themselves. This is a fate many understandably prefer to avoid, but defilers are nothing if not persistent. Their entire existence requires them to conspire against the living, making them untrustworthy allies at best and insidious enemies at worst. This isn't to say defilers are evil by nature, only that they have an overwhelming instinct to corrupt the living that is nigh impossible to resist. The legendary vampire, whose sophisticated nature and generally amicable demeanor is undercut by its insatiable thirst for blood, is one such being. Unfortunately, many defilers exist for no other reason than to bring ruin and death upon the living world. Such specimens are mystically imbued with an unquenchable drive that overwhelms all reason. The nefarious shadow has proven this principle through the slaughter of countless fledgling adventurers. The living would do well to respect a defiler's supernatural urges, for like predator and prey, the two can rarely peacefully coexist.

Hollows

- Bone Naga
- Brain in a Jar
- Crawling Claw
- Demilich
- Flameskull
- Lich
- ✓ Paramour Lich
- Skeleton
- Zombie



- ✓ The paramour lich and apocalypse dragons are from 2CGaming's 5E supplement *Total Party Kill Bestiary: Volume 1*.
- ✓ The bloodcount(ess), dreadwyrms, shroudling, and silencer are from 2CGaming's 5E supplement *Total Party Kill Bestiary: Volume 2*.
- The brain in a jar is from the official 5E sourcebook *VRGtR*.

Defilers



- Apocalypse Dragons ✓
- Ghast
- Ghoul
- Vampire
- Bloodcount(ess) ✓
- Dreadwyrms ✓
- Shroudling ✓
- Silencer ✓
- Wight

Hollows

Undeath is not exclusively the product of mystical forces beyond comprehension. Necromancers are quick to consider the countless possibilities offered by simply raising the dead. But why should they constrain themselves to the reanimation of corpses and the harnessing of wild beings birthed from supernatural powers? With a combination of arcane science and a healthy disregard for laboratory safety, many set out to create entirely new undead beings from their imaginations, truly unnatural creations that could never have existed if not for their efforts. These undead are called hollows, for they are the product of artifice and necromancy. Ranging from mere zombies to truly indescribable horrors from the darkest nightmares, hollows are as varied as the minds that animate them. The result is some of the most bizarre (and sometimes loathsome) undead ever to exist. The infamous lich is an iconic example, born of mortal wizards desperate to unnaturally prolong their lives in pursuit of power. Hollows can be a strange and unpredictable lot. Some are shackled to their creators by command protocols and know only obedience. Others are incomprehensible terrors birthed from the nightmares of deranged necromancers. Many are strangely beautiful, forged with artistry and creativity to last an eternity. Whatever their shape, hollows are not to be underestimated, for they are as mercurial and changeable as their creators.