

# Dungeon Module B2

## The Caves of Chaos

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### An Adventure for Character Levels 1-3

*General Notes: This module, originally titled B2: The Keep on the Borderlands, has been the standard introductory module from the earliest boxed editions of the D&D® rules. The adventure consisted of a detailed keep, to be used as a base, and a cave complex known as the Caves of Chaos. The latter has been included here.*



## What Is This Adventure Testing?

*The Caves of Chaos* isn't meant to be a hard test of the play balance between player characters (PCs) and monsters. That process is a continuing one as we refine the rules for monsters, characters, and encounter building. Although you should keep an eye on how elements of the rules interact, this adventure is intended to explore how well the rules support different styles of play.

We've created a fairly faithful rendition of the original adventure because we're hoping to see how players use this material. In other words, you can choose to play in the "theater of the mind" style or as a series of set-piece encounters using a grid and miniatures. The free-form nature of the adventure also gives the Dungeon Master (DM) and players many options for play: hack-and-slash battles, political negotiations, cloak-and-dagger deceptions, dungeon crawls, guerrilla warfare, comedic interactions, or any mix of those elements.

Do the rules allow you the freedom to play the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game way you like? How about the adventure? What elements of it didn't work out? What things did you change to suit your tastes?

## Make This Your Adventure

*The Caves of Chaos* isn't a module in the typical sense. It does not present a single storyline, the motivations of the PCs are not set in stone, and the actions and the villains don't always have obvious motivations—nor do they work to a common end.

With this module, you don't need to belabor any plot points. Players don't have to move through encounters in a specific order. There's no railroad to ride: You and your players can make the adventure happen however you like.

## What's My Motivation?

For many DMs and players, the simple existence of dungeons full of monsters and treasure is reason enough to get involved. But if you're looking for something more, you can link these encounter locations with any story that you think works best. Below are some suggestions for what's going on at the Caves of Chaos and why the PCs get involved. You don't have to take any of these ideas as they are; you're free to change them or ignore them all and come up with something that you like better.

## Questions and Answers

One way to create a plot for the *Caves of Chaos* is to ask yourself questions when you read through the adventure, then come up with answers to them. For example, you might wonder why the monsters aren't already at war with one another. The answer to that question is a great starting point for exercising your creative control. You can use one of the examples above, or you can alter the adventure to make sense for you. Maybe the different tribes are in fact at war and the caves are like trenches in World War I, with each side of the multifront battle making infrequent attacks and then retreating into its bunker. Perhaps the caves aren't as close together as shown on the map, and the canyon is more like a hundred miles long, so that the different tribes don't come into contact with one another. Alternatively, you could collapse one or more caves to create space between the inhabitants and cut down on the elements that you have to track.

**Looming War:** The cultists in the Shrine of Evil Chaos (cave K) recently gathered an army of monsters to the caves (slaughtering all but one group of kobolds that had long occupied the ravine) and are planning an assault on a nearby city. The various tribes are preparing for war in the manner that best suits their talents (orcs as shock troops, hobgoblins as archers, goblins as sappers, and so on). The city leaders learned of this threat from a new acolyte who regrets joining the cult and seeks a way out. They call on the PCs in hopes that a small group can play the part of cultists, infiltrating the caves and setting the fractious tribes against one another so that the army never reaches the city's walls.

**Find the Heir:** The tribes took many captives from a caravan raid and have been trading the prisoners among themselves as a sort of currency, based on each one's ransom value. Unknown to their captors, one of the prisoners is the heir to a nearby kingdom. So far the other captives have kept this fact a secret, fearing that they might become disposable once the heir is known. The king hires the PCs to get the heir out, but he or she won't leave without the others, or first wants to rescue a love interest held by another tribe.

**Under Evil's Thumb:** The various tribes of the Caves of Chaos are slaves to the Shrine of Evil Chaos, forced to worship its power instead of their own gods. Each month the cultists demand tribute, and the tribes engage in a competition for the best

offering. The tribe that makes the weakest gift must sacrifice one of its members, whereas the one with the best offering gains privileges and feasts on goods the cultists procure from nearby towns. Striving for ever more wondrous offerings is driving the tribes into a frenzy of raiding each month. The PCs are called in to discover the reason for the raids and deal with the problem.

**Drawn to Power:** The ravine was carved in ancient days when a piece of the eye that Corellon cut from Gruumsh crashed into the landscape. The various tribes were drawn there by the eye's power and mined the rift's walls in hopes of finding it. They continue to be held in its thrall—the orcs in particular seem to be in a trance, breaking into bloody-eyed fury whenever something interrupts their search. Any group that finds the fragment of Gruumsh's eye would have tremendous power over the others. A seer who has divined this danger approaches the PCs with a dire warning: The fragment will be found before the next full moon. For the sake of all, the PCs should be the ones who find it.

**The Devil You Know:** The tribes in the Caves of Chaos have begun raiding nearby settlements after a long period of relative peace, and the leaders of those communities ask the PCs to open negotiations with the tribal leaders. (The citizens of the surrounding area are willing to pay tribute in return for an end to the attacks and a promise of mutual protection.) In fact, a change of leadership has brought about the raids: The cultists of Evil Chaos usurped control of the tribes from their old queen, the medusa who is now held prisoner in area 64. Certain elements of the various tribes desire the return of the medusa's rule and promise to leave the surrounding communities in peace if the PCs can arrange this, but others have benefited from the raids and the shift in power. Who can be trusted?

## Dynamic Dungeons

One way to make the adventure more engrossing and fun is to have things change, or stay the same, depending on the PCs' actions. If they kill some of the hobgoblins and then leave, perhaps they encounter a funeral feast when they return. If their assault weakens the orcs enough, the PCs might return to find goblins in the orc caves, celebrating their victory. Character actions might have important and long-lasting effects. Clearing the kobold caves might provide a fine redoubt for other assaults (once the PCs figure out what to do with

the corpses)—or turn the complex into a base for another, tougher group of monsters.

## Killer Encounters

Most adventures published for the 3rd and 4th editions of D&D have encounters finely tuned for play balance and a structure meant to take the PCs steadily from one set-piece battle to the next (sometimes with safe resting places built in at just the right points). *The Caves of Chaos* doesn't work like that.

Instead, the PCs have the freedom to go where they want and pick their own battlegrounds. They can block a cave entrance and try to smoke out the inhabitants. They can trick one tribe into blaming another for the party's attacks and set them both to fighting. They can lay an ambush for hunting parties. (Of course, the monsters might get the hint and start ambushing the PCs in return.) They might forgo combat entirely and opt for a political approach.

In return, though, the free-form nature of this adventure can get the PCs into trouble quickly. The ravine is full of areas boasting far more monsters than a typical group of 1st-level adventurers can handle. Ten orcs can be big trouble for the party, especially when those orcs can give as good as they get. Pile on another ten, and the adventurers' careers might very well end abruptly. The players need to know that some places hold too many monsters for their characters to defeat all at once. A nonplayer character (NPC) could warn the party that the caves house tribes of humanoids, many at least fifty warriors strong, or you can describe evidence of the passage of many individuals through the area as the party draws near. If all else fails, just tell the players up front that they need to watch their step.

The Caves of Chaos is a living, breathing environment. Large groups of intelligent creatures are not likely to sit in their rooms, waiting for adventurers to kill them. Half or more probably range through the countryside, hunting and foraging, or ambushing travelers on nearby roads. Others might be sent to spy on a rival tribe, trade with others, raid them, negotiate with the cultists of the Shrine of Evil Chaos, and so on. If the PCs wipe out the remaining denizens of one cave, the returning members might stay to replace those lost, form a war party to hunt down the PCs, or wage open war against another tribe in an attempt to seize new territory.

This is your adventure. Nothing stops you from reducing—or increasing—the number of creatures in an area, making it easier or harder to suit the needs of your story.

### In Over Their Heads?

Even the best plans sometimes go wrong, and encounters that are supposed to be easy can become deadly if the dice turn against the players. If the PCs get in over their heads and you want to avoid killing them all, consider one of these ways give them an out.

**Random Encounter:** Another group of monsters arrives on the scene, providing a distraction to let the PCs get away (unless they decide to fight the new monsters too). For example, if the kobolds have the PCs on the ropes, the sudden appearance of a flock of stirges could send everyone running for cover.

**Negotiation:** The monsters might be willing to bargain, even if the PCs are on the defensive. Perhaps their foes promise to cease the attack if the PCs are willing to help them raid another tribe's cave.

**Jailbreak:** Enemies might capture one or more of the PCs instead of killing them, and then barter them to another tribe. That other tribe might negotiate with the captives, or the adventurers might find a way to escape during the transfer. Alternatively, their captors hold the prisoners for ransom. The PCs might be able to buy their freedom or make a daring prison break.

**Enemy of My Enemy:** Another tribe shows up partway through the fight, hoping to take advantage of the party's earlier successes by looting the rival tribe's cave. The PCs could attempt to negotiate an alliance with the invaders, set both groups of foes against each other, or take advantage of the confusion to escape.

**Run Away:** Players don't always agree on when to run from a fight, especially with actions dictated by the initiative order. A character might want to make just one more attack or stay behind to make sure someone else can get away. If the players are talking about running, feel free to give them that option, dropping out of initiative order and segueing to a chase scene. The PCs' success in escaping should be dictated by their choices instead of by rules minutia, such as whether one character is slightly slower than another. Do they slam doors shut as they run through them or use another tactic to slow pursuers? Do they escape one danger only

to run into more trouble? If they do get out of sight, can they find a place to hole up?

## Running the Adventure

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No one can predict perfectly how players will interact with the presented material. You're the Dungeon Master: When the adventure leaves something open to interpretation, fill in the gaps to suit your needs. Final decisions are up to you. The guidelines presented below offer general directions for handling exploration and encounters.

### Overview Map

Woods and contour lines shown on the map are mostly for surface movement reference.

**Woods:** These groves are thick growths, tangled and forbidding. Within them, characters might encounter monsters from nearby caves. Woods count as difficult terrain (generally, every 5 feet of difficult terrain that you move costs 5 extra feet of movement); they might also provide cover or concealment.

**Underground:** The passages and rooms of the complex are on different levels. Passages slope between the surface map contours, even where no stairways are shown. Except where noted otherwise, interiors are natural or hewn rock (DC 11 Strength to climb).

### Task Resolution

Some tasks indicate DCs and relevant abilities. You can adjust the difficulty of these tasks as necessary for the abilities of your party. This adventure does not define every possible task or DC, which allows you to reward creative play.

**Area Entries:** Each area includes a notation about light (bright, dim, or dark). Some areas list sensory information, such as noise, which might include a check DC. Such checks are usually for active detection (usually using Wisdom). You might allow passive detection, using Wisdom or another appropriate ability, possibly assigning a higher DC to the check. Remember to account for monsters' movement in a complex—if inhabitants left a room to support an attack elsewhere or to investigate evidence of intruders, the normal sounds of conversation will be reduced or absent.

### Monster Statistics

Each lair (a cave complex) includes general notes for its residents' organization and behavior, presented in a sidebar at the beginning of that



section. Encounter areas generally list condensed statistics for monsters: Armor Class (AC), hit points (hp), and attack bonuses and damage. If the monsters have treasure, or follow specific tactics, this information is presented in a separate entry.

Once you become familiar with the monsters in the *Caves of Chaos Bestiary*, the shorter statistics are usually all you need during the game. (You can always refer back to the *Bestiary* if necessary.) Attacks always target AC. Many monsters have a choice between a couple of attacks (usually melee and ranged). Some attacks have special effects if they hit, which are described in detail after the attack numbers. If an effect requires a saving throw to negate or end, the DC and relevant ability are provided in the entry.

**Ability Score Modifiers:** Condensed monster statistics don't list ability scores. If you need to make a check for a monster, such as for a saving throw, you can either consult the *Bestiary* or, to save time, estimate the modifier. For unique creatures, assume that they have the base abilities listed for the creature in the *Bestiary*.

## Monster Tribes

Several groups of monsters are organized into tribes that inhabit specific cave complexes. Make their presence clear to players when their characters approach densely populated areas: Describing the associated noise is usually enough. Armed with such information, the party can make informed decisions before they blunder into an overwhelming encounter.

**Tribal Interactions:** Many of the creatures inhabiting the Caves of Chaos have formed alliances and rivalries; for example, goblins and hobgoblins on one side and orcs, sometimes with giant allies, on the other. Others are unallied: Kobolds hope to be overlooked, and bugbears pick off stragglers from all conflicts. If the characters become aware of skirmishing between factions, they could set tribes against one another and then take advantage of the feuding groups' weakened state. On the other hand, they could turn to political maneuvering. Such strategies require careful play, using wits instead of force when the opportunity arises.

**Learning from Experience:** Intelligent monsters adapt their strategy and tactics to observed behavior. For example, if the party uses flaming oil in battle, surviving tribal members might use oil later in a similar way. If adventurers consistently sneak up on the monsters, their targets could

respond by setting alarms and traps. If they observe that characters flee from overwhelming numbers, the monsters might shout and make noise to seem more numerous. Monsters that have been attacked before are likely to be on high alert, posting extra guards in entrances or sending out scouts to watch for enemy approach.

**Taking Prisoners:** Some tribes might take prisoners rather than killing enemies—you decide to what end. For example, the hobgoblins in cave F might hold captives in the prison (area 24), perhaps to eat later.

**Ransom:** Organized tribes might demand ransom to free the captives, perhaps releasing one character to fetch the payment. Set the sums low: 2 to 20 gp per prisoner, or a magic item that the ransoming tribe might find useful, should suffice. If the ransom is paid, the monsters release the characters. Such success might bring fame to the tribe, increasing its numbers by 2d6 in addition to growing its wealth. The tribe might be extra alert for 1d4 weeks afterward, in case the adventurers return to take revenge (or some other party comes to seize the loot).

**Cleared Areas:** When the PCs clear all monsters out of a cave complex, it remains deserted for a time; 1d4 weeks is a typical interval. If the party does not enter the lair again before the end of that period, it might be repopulated. Perhaps the surviving former inhabitants return or another monster moves in: For instance, a troll might take over the deserted minotaur's cave complex (I), bringing with it whatever treasure it has.

## Introduction

You have been passing through the forest for some time, as it grows denser and gloomier, until the misshapen trees and grasping briars suddenly give way to a ravine. Its walls—dark, streaked rock mingled with earth—rise steeply to either side to a height of about 100 feet. Clumps of trees, some dead, stand even on the slopes. The opening you are in is about 200 feet wide, and the ravine runs at least 400 feet west. At varying heights on all sides of the ravine are the black mouths of caves in the rock walls. The sunlight is dim and the air is dank, with the oppressive feeling of something evil watching. A flock of ravens rises croaking from the ground, the terrain magnifying the beat of their wings and their cries into a horrible sound. Among the litter of rubble, boulders, and dead wood on the ravine floor, you can see bones of humanoids, animals, and

other creatures. You have discovered the Caves of Chaos.

## A. Kobold Lair

*A thick clump of trees doesn't quite hide the black mouth of an opening in the ravine wall.*

**Light:** Dim (daylight under the trees) or none

Eight kobold guards are in hiding in the woods around the cave mouth (DC 15 Wisdom to notice). They attack if the party attempts to enter, with surprise if unnoticed beforehand.

**Kobolds (8, XP 75):** AC 14; hp 2 each; spear +0 (1d8 - 2) or dagger +2 (1d4 + 2)

### Running the Kobolds

The kobolds' main dwelling is area 6. You can have a group of 1d4 + 4 kobolds from this area sneak out every few minutes to outflank or ambush intruders they know about. At least eight kobolds remain in area 6 at all times.

**Dark Dwelling:** Kobolds can see 60 feet in the dark.

**Strength in Numbers:** As long as kobolds outnumber their foes, they have advantage on attacks.

**Light Sensitivity:** Kobolds have attack disadvantage in areas of bright light.

Kobolds are notorious for their traps. You might want to supplement the existing defenses of the tribe with simple devices such as tripwires and concealed pits. The inhabitants are aware of their own traps and have a good chance of evading those laid against them.

### 1. Guard Room XP 450

*You enter a roughly cut tunnel that diverges ahead, offering two different paths. Several planks poke out of a pocket chamber to the northeast.*

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Intermittent conversation in high-pitched Draconic

**Pit Trap (DC 13 Wisdom to find):** A pit is hidden at the junction 30 feet inside the entrance. If the trap goes undetected, each character in the party's first rank must succeed on a DC 15

Dexterity saving throw (DC 11 for those in the second rank) to avoid falling 10 feet into the pit and taking 1d6 damage. The pit lid then slams shut (DC 13 Strength to open from inside). Noise from the sprung trap attracts the monsters from areas 1 and 2.

Six kobold guards are stationed in area 1, which also contains a number of planks used to cross the pit. They use their daggers during the first round if they win initiative.

**Kobolds (6):** AC 14; hp 2; spear +0 (1d8 - 2) or dagger +2 (1d4 + 2)

**Treasure:** Each kobold carries 1d6 sp.

### 2. Garbage Heap XP 550

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Squeaking and rustling

**Smell:** Rotting food and garbage

*Mounds of garbage, waste, and offal foul the area.*

Cave rats and a dire rat burrow in and feed on the piles of garbage. These pets of the kobolds rush to the sound of the pit closing or battle nearby.

**Cave Rats (18):** AC 12; hp 1; bite -2 (1)

**Swarm Attack** A rat gains advantage on melee attacks if its target is within the reach of at least two other rats.

**Dire Rat:** AC 12; hp 5; bite +2 (1d6 and pestilence)

**Pestilence** A living creature bitten by a dire rat must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 extra damage. Creatures immune to disease are immune to this extra damage.

**Treasure:** The dire rat is a favored pet. It wears a thin silver chain around its neck, set with 5 semiprecious gems (total 15 gp).

### 3. Food Storage

The door is locked (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools).

**Light:** None

**Smell:** Rotting meat

*This storage area is filled with sacks, boxes, barrels, and piles of unidentifiable stuff, as well as a large wine cask.*

*The floor is covered with rotting, gnawed parts of humanoid bodies.*

Food (preserved and otherwise) is stored here, along with drink. The cask contains vinegary wine.

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#### 4. Elite Guard Room XP 375

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**Light:** None

**Noise:** Intermittent conversation in high-pitched Draconic

*This small, simply furnished chamber has a recessed wooden door in the east wall.*

**Elite Kobolds (3):** AC 17; HD 3; hp 10; short sword +4 (1d6 + 2)

**Dragonshield** An elite kobold can go on the defensive, raising its shield to block attacks. As a reaction, the dragonshield interposes itself between an attacker and an ally within 5 feet of it. An attack made against that ally instead targets the dragonshield.

**Treasure:** Each kobold carries 2d10 sp.

**Development:** If combat occurs here, the kobold chieftain and his retinue (area 5) join the fight at the start of the second round of combat.

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#### 5. Kobold Chieftain's Room XP 625

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**Light:** Dim (guttering lantern)

**Noise (DC 11):** Piping arguments

*All manner of savage trophies hang on the walls of this stifling cave, including furs, tapestries, and old blankets. Heaps of cloth and bits of battered furniture litter the floor. A lantern on a plank table burns dimly.*

The outsize (Medium) kobold chieftain rules the tribe from this room, along with several attendants.

**Kobold Chieftain:** AC 16; hp 44; handaxe +2/+2 (1d6 + 1) or call reinforcements (1/combat)

**Kobolds (5):** AC 14; hp 2 each; spear +0 (1d8 - 2) or dagger +2 (1d4 + 2)

**Treasure:** The chieftain wears a necklace with a gem (5 gp), and he has keys to the storage room (area 3) and a locked chest (DC 15 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools). Hidden in an old blanket hanging on the wall (DC 13 Wisdom to

find) is 50 gp. The chest holds 203 cp, 61 sp, and 22 ep.

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#### 6. Kobold Common Chamber XP up to 3,000

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**Light:** Dim (banked bonfire)

**Noise:** Babble of many squeaking voices

*A banked bonfire lights this smelly chamber. A few dozen kobolds are sleeping, cooking, eating, or arguing amid heaps of foliage, tattered fabric, and junk of all sorts.*

Most kobolds in the tribe live and sleep here. During the day, up to forty adult kobolds and eight whelps (noncombatants) are resting here. At other times, some of the adults are out foraging, hunting, and raiding. At least eight kobolds always stay behind to guard the young.

You can use these kobolds to supplement or replenish their numbers in other encounters. (Remember to account for any kobolds that have already left the chamber.) If the PCs have killed the chieftain, they might cow these kobolds into surrendering.

**Kobolds (up to 40):** AC 14; hp 2 each; spear +0 (1d8 - 2) or dagger +4 (1d4 + 2)

**Treasure:** Any search of the heaps uncovers a fine piece of silk worth 15 sp. Each adult kobold has 1d4 - 2 sp.

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## B. Orc Lair

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*The northern wall is decorated with the heads of humans, elves, and dwarves in various stages of decay. These grisly trophies sit in small niches that dot the wall.*

**Light:** Dim (daylight from cave mouth) or none

**Noise:** Harsh voices from both directions, louder from the west

**g. The Watcher (XP 125):** An orc guard here watches the entrance through a small stone opening, making the guard's head look like one of the others decorating the entry wall. A character who closely examines the heads (DC 13 Wisdom) discovers that this one is alive.

If intruders enter, the guard ducks and places a goblin head where hers was (DC 15 Wisdom to notice the switch during or after the fact). She then hurries to alert the orcs in area 8. If the characters

are paying attention to the orc head, they notice the switch the next time they check.

**The Watcher (Orc):** AC 13; hp 11; battleaxe +3 (1d8 + 1) or shortbow +2 (1d6)

### Running the Orcs

The orcs' main dwelling is area 10. If they know about intruders, you can have a group of 1d4 + 3 orcs from that area sortie every few minutes to confront them. At least seven orcs remain in area 10 at all times to guard the young. If the intruders flee the lair, orcs from area 10 are likely to give pursuit.

After they become aware of intruders, six orcs from area 10 move to area 9 to set up an ambush (DC 15 Wisdom to notice).

If the orc leader in this lair is killed, surviving orcs retreat to the lair in cave complex C, taking everything of value with them.

**Darkvision:** Orcs can see 60 feet in the dark.

**Furious Charge** As an action the orc can move up to its speed in a straight line and attack. On a hit, the target takes 1d6 extra damage. The orc then grants advantage until its next turn starts.

## 7. Guard Room

XP 500

**Light:** Dim (daylight from cave mouth) or none

**Noise:** Harsh voices to the east

*Ratty pallets are strewn on the floor, and shabby clothing hangs on wooden pegs set in the wall.*

Four orc guards are stationed here. When they become aware of intruders, they howl to alert others and rush forward into combat.

**Orcs (4):** AC 13; hp 11; spear +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Development:** If the watcher (area g) went to area 8, orcs from there might join those here. If the characters pursued the watcher to area 8, the orcs here rush to attack the invaders there.

**Treasure:** Each orc guard carries 1d4 ep.

## 8. Guard Room

XP 500

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Harsh voices to the east

*Ratty pallets are strewn on the floor, and shabby clothing hangs on wooden pegs set in the wall.*

Four orc guards are stationed here. When they become aware of intruders, they howl to alert others and rush forward into combat.

**Orcs (4):** AC 13; hp 11; spear +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Development:** If the watcher (area g) alerts the orc guards here, they rush to attack intruders threatening area 7 or 9, or anyone approaching this room.

**Treasure:** Each orc guard carries 1d4 ep.

## 9. Banquet Area

**Light:** Dim (fire in fireplace)

**Noise:** Many harsh voices to the west

**Smell:** Smoke

*A great fireplace in the south wall glows with a small charcoal fire. Benches and tables fill the chamber. One chair, which is larger than the rest and is set at the head of a big table, is carved with an inscription in a crude alphabet.*

The inscription is in Orc. It reads, "For the Leader."

## 10. Orc Common Room XP up to 3,750

**Light:** Dim (smoldering bonfire)

**Noise:** Many harsh voices

**Smell:** Body odor, rot, and smoke

*A smoldering fire in the center of the chamber dimly illuminates a large number of orcs going about daily business in a chamber full of sleeping pallets and refuse heaps.*

Most of the tribe's members live and sleep in this chamber. During the day, up to thirty adult orcs and nine whelps (noncombatants) can be found here, resting, fighting, or bickering over food and imagined offenses. Even orcs engaged in quiet activities such as stitching clothes together are shouting to be heard above the general din. During the night, most of these orcs spread out through the ravine and surrounding lands. They leave behind 1d6 + 3 adults to watch over the young.

You can use these orcs to supplement or replenish their numbers in other encounters. Remember to subtract any orcs you sent elsewhere from those here.



**Orcs (up to 30):** AC 13; hp 11; battleaxe +3 (1d8 + 1) or shortbow +2 (1d8)

**Treasure:** Each adult orc carries 1d6 - 3 sp.

## 11. Storage Chamber

The door is locked (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools).

**Light:** None

**Smell:** Rotting meat

*This rudely cut room is filled with sacks, boxes, and barrels. Wall racks contain several shields and weapons.*

The room holds various sorts of dried and salted meat (some of it not well preserved), grain, and vegetables. The weapon racks hold three light shields, seventeen spears, and two greataxes. A small crate in the northeast corner contains a light crossbow and 60 bolts.

## 12. Orc Leader's Room XP 550

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional comment

*A carpet covers the room's floor, and tapestries hang on its walls. Worn furniture includes a cot and floor pillows.*

The orc leader, a cunning brute, lives here with his two mates. The leader wears chainmail and carries a +1 heavy shield.

**Orc Leader:** AC 16; hp 45; battleaxe +6 (1d12 + 6)

**Death Strike** When the leader drops to 0 hit points, he uses a reaction to make a melee attack.

**Wounded Retaliation** Each time the leader is damaged, he gains a +1 bonus to his next melee attack. This bonus stacks.

**Orc Mates (2):** AC 13; hp 11; battleaxe +3 (1d8 + 1)

**Development:** If hard pressed, the leader goes behind the tapestries on the south wall, opens the secret door to area 13, and seeks help from the tribe in cave complex C. Otherwise, the secret door is revealed only by a search (DC 13 Wisdom to find).

**Treasure:** In addition to his armor and +1 heavy shield, the orc leader has 11 gp in a pouch, and he

wears a jeweled ring (20 gp). He has a key to the storage chamber (area 11) and to the locked iron chest in area t (see below). Each orc mate carries 1d4 gp.

**Area t:** Hidden behind a tapestry on the west wall, this small room holds two suits of chainmail, four longswords, and a locked iron chest (DC 15 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools) that holds 205 cp, 386 sp, 81 ep, and 13 gp.

**Niche:** A boulder covers a tiny recess in the south wall (DC 13 Wisdom to find; DC 13 Strength to roll the boulder aside), which contains a healing potion.

## C. Orc Lair

*Tunnels snake off into the darkness in three directions.*

**Light:** Dim (daylight from cave mouth) or none

**Noise:** Harsh voices from both directions, louder from the east

**Net Trap:** A series of thin wires (DC 15 Wisdom to notice) runs across the passage about 10 feet in from the entrance. When a creature trips a wire, a weighted net (10 feet wide by 20 feet long) drops from the ceiling on up to eight creatures adjacent to it (DC 11 Dexterity saving throw to avoid), and metal pieces tied to the net create a racket that alerts nearby orc guards. Any creatures who fail the saving throw are restrained (DC 13 Strength or Dexterity saving throw ends). Six orcs from area 14 show up on the next round, and nine orcs from area 15 arrive at the start of the following round.

### Running the Orcs

The orcs' main dwelling is area 15. If alerted, you can have a group of 1d6 + 3 orcs from that area sortie to confront intruders. The rest remain in area 15 at all times to guard the young. After they become aware of intruders, half the orcs from area 15 move to fortify the entrance against further invasion.

If this lair's orc leader is killed, surviving orcs retreat to the lair in cave complex B, taking everything of value with them.

**Darkvision:** Orcs can see 60 feet in the dark.

**Furious Charge** As an action the orc can move up to its speed in a straight line and attack. On a hit, the target takes 1d6 extra damage. The orc then grants advantage until its next turn starts.

### 13. Secret Room

XP 50

Secret doors (DC 13 Wisdom to find) allow access to this room from both orc complexes. Orc leaders meet here to plan and parley.

**Light:** None

**Noise (DC 15):** Occasional clicking

*In the room's center are a small table and two chairs. A cracked barrel stands nearby. To one side is a small wooden chest, above which hang two small shields. Junk lies everywhere: broken crates, cracked shields, old bones, and cast-off boots.*

The old barrel is open on its bottom. Nesting under it are two giant centipedes (the source of the clicking sound), which attack only if the barrel is moved.

**Giant Centipedes (2):** AC 11; hp 1; bite +1 (1 and centipede venom)

**Centipede Venom** A living creature bitten by a giant centipede must immediately make a DC 7 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 1d4 poison damage, and makes Dexterity saving throws and checks with disadvantage for 1 minute.

**Treasure:** Two light shields hang on the south wall. Under the barrel are the two gems (15 gp each). Two gems are also under the barrel (DC 15 Wisdom to notice them sparkling in any light). The wooden chest holds a longbow, a quiver with 20 arrows, 2 daggers, 2 longswords, and a small sack (holding 6 gp, 40 sp).

### 14. Sleeping Chamber

XP 750

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Harsh voices

**Smell:** Body odor, rot, and smoke

*This damp chamber is home to a number of orcs that don't care much for neatness or cleanliness.*

Six adult orcs and three whelps (noncombatants) have their quarters in this room.

**Orcs (6):** AC 13; hp 11; longsword +3 (1d8 + 1) or light crossbow +2 (1d8)

**Treasure:** Each adult orc has 1d10 sp and 1d4 cp.

### 15. Orc Common Hall

XP up to 2,125

**Light:** Dim (smoldering cook fire)

**Noise:** Many harsh voices

*This smoke-stained chamber holds wooden tables, stools, and a large fire pit over which several rusted pots hang. It also contains more than a dozen sleeping pallets.*

Most of the tribe's members live and sleep in this chamber. During the day, up to seventeen adult orcs and four whelps (noncombatants) can be found here, resting, fighting, or bickering. During the night, many of these orcs spread out through the ravine and surrounding lands. They leave behind 1d6 + 3 adults to watch over the young.

You can use these orcs to supplement or replenish their numbers in other encounters. Remember to subtract any orcs you sent elsewhere from those here.

**Orcs (17):** AC 13; hp 11; longsword +3 (1d8 + 1)

**Treasure:** Each adult orc carries 1d10 sp and 1d4 cp.

### 16. Orc Leader's Room

XP 840

**Light:** None

**Noise (DC 13):** Harsh breathing just on the other side of the door

**Antechamber (g):**

*Barrels, boxes, and sacks are stacked in this chamber. A hall leads to the east.*

An elite orc sentry stands just inside the door. She shouts an alarm if intruders try to enter, then attempts to hold the passage, making a fighting retreat to join her comrade in area 16.

**The connected room to the east:**

*Furnished nicely for an orc lair, this room contains a small chest of drawers. A copper bowl filled with garbage sits on a small table near a bed.*

Another elite orc guards the leader in this room. Use the standard orc stats except they gain the Hacking Frenzy ability and a +2 bonus to attacks. They also wear chainmail.

**Battle-Tested Orcs (4):** AC 15; hp 11; battleaxe +5 (1d8 + 2) or handaxe +4 (1d6 + 2) or hacking frenzy

**Hacking Frenzy:** The orc uses its action to make a melee attack each creature it chooses in its reach. The orc is disadvantaged on each attack it makes.

**Orc Leader:** AC 15; hp 45; longsword +7 (1d8 + 6) or +1 *handaxe* +6 (1d6 + 5)

**Death Strike** When the leader drops to 0 hit points, he uses a reaction to make a melee attack.

**Wounded Retaliation** Each time the leader is damaged, he gains a +1 bonus to his next melee attack. This bonus stacks.

**Tactics:** When the orc leader takes his first turn, he immediately makes one ranged handaxe attack, then draws his sword and charges the nearest enemy to attack again.

**Treasure:** The orc leader wears damaged plate armor and a silver belt with a gold buckle (30 gp), and his sword has a jewel in the pommel (15 gp). He is carrying 13 gp. Each sentry wears an ivory bracelet etched with gold (5 gp apiece) and has 5 gp. The copper bowl has silver inlay (3 gp).

## D. Goblin Lair

**Light:** Dim (daylight from cave mouth) or none

*The area past the cave mouth features roughly worked stone tunnels that snake off into the darkness.*

Six goblins regularly carry messages along the entry tunnel. When the PCs first enter, they have a 50% chance per 30 feet traveled of encountering the patrol. These wandering goblins are encountered only once.

**Goblins (6; XP 100):** AC 14; hp 5; mace +2 (1d6) or shortbow +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Development:** When encountered, the goblins cry out, “Bree-Yark!” and attack. Three goblins from area 17 come immediately, and three goblins from area 18 arrive at the start of the second round. The remaining guards in area 18 coordinate to open the secret door to area 22, toss a sack of 250 sp to the ogre (see area 22), and ask for his help. If they succeed, the ogre arrives at the start of the third round.

**Treasure:** Each goblin carries 1d10 arrows, 1d6 sp, 1d10 cp, and 1d6 bags of edible food.

## Running the Goblins

The goblins’ main dwelling is area 19. If they know about intruders, you can have a group of 1d4 + 3 goblins from that area sneak out every few minutes to ambush them. At least six goblins remain in area 19 at all times. If the intruders flee the lair, goblins from area 19 might give pursuit.

If they are being soundly defeated, the goblins attempt to hide or flee to the east. Those who escape go through area 17 and down the stairs to area 23, where they warn the hobgoblins and join forces with them.

**Darkvision:** Goblins can see 60 feet in the dark.

**Dirty Tricks:** When a goblin has advantage with an attack, it deals 1d6 extra damage.

### 17. Guard Chamber

XP 600

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional curse or idle phrase

*The tunnel widens into a chamber containing a table, benches, a keg, and a barrel of loose spears.*

**Goblins (6):** AC 14; hp 5; spear +2 (1d6)

**Tactics:** The guards throw and then make melee attacks with spears.

**Treasure:** Each goblin carries 1d6 sp and 1d10 cp. The barrel holds 60 spears, and the keg is half full of water.

### 18. Guard Chamber

XP 600

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional curse or idle phrase

*A table, benches, a keg, and a barrel of loose spears occupy this room, which serves as a guard station.*

**Goblins (6):** AC 14; hp 5; spear +2 (1d6)

**Tactics:** The guards throw and then make melee attacks with spears.

**Development:** If intruders show up here without triggering the “Bree-Yark!” alarm, half the goblins coordinate to open the secret door, toss a sack of 250 sp to the ogre in area 22 (see that entry), and ask for his help. If they succeed, the ogre enters the battle on the next round. If the secret door remains closed, it remains hidden (DC 13 Wisdom to find).

**Treasure:** Each goblin carries 1d6 sp and 1d10 cp. The barrel holds 60 spears, and the keg is one-quarter full of water. The sack of 250 sp is normally hidden (DC 13 Wisdom to find) in the water keg.

## 19. Goblin Quarters XP up to 2,200

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**Light:** Dim (smoldering cook fire)

**Noise:** Babble of many voices

*Tables set with large rocks as stools stand near a dim cook fire and among piles of bedding and trash.*

Much of the goblin tribe dwells here. During the day, twenty-two adult goblins and six young (noncombatants) are resting or eating. Although not as riotous as the orcs, the goblins here make a lot of noise, particularly during religious ceremonies, such as funerals. At night, some goblins might be away hunting, raiding, negotiating with the hobgoblins or bugbears, or spying on another tribe, such as the orcs. They leave behind at least eight adults at all time to watch the young.

You can use these goblins to supplement or replenish their numbers in other encounters. Remember to subtract any goblins you sent elsewhere from those here.

**Goblins (up to 22):** AC 14; hp 5; mace +2 (1d6) or shortbow +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Tactics:** If the wandering goblins have yet to be encountered, they show up here at the start of the second round of combat.

**Treasure:** Each adult goblin carries 1d10 arrows, 1d3 sp, and 1d6 cp.

## 20. Goblin Chieftain's Room XP 1,100

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**Light:** None

**Noise:** Piping arguments

*Goblin-sized furniture is scattered about, including a bed, a bureau, a table, a low bench near the bed, and a crude stand displaying a pewter bowl. Small bows hang on the wall.*

The goblin chieftain, his elite guards, and his mates live here.

**Goblin Chieftain:** AC 15; hp 27; short sword +6 (1d6 + 3) or spear +6 (1d6 + 3)

**Cunning Tactics** When the chieftain hits an enemy next to one of his allies, the target grants advantage to all attackers until the chieftain's next turn ends. When the chieftain hits an enemy granting him advantage, he deals 2d6 extra damage.

**Goblins (3):** AC 15; hp 5; battleaxe +3 (1d8 + 1)

**Goblin Mates (3):** AC 14; hp 5; mace +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Development:** If they have time, the chieftain and his guards take down the shortbows hung on the wall, gaining this attack: shortbow +3 (1d6).

**Treasure:** The goblin chieftain carries 2 pp, 4 gp, and a sack containing 75 sp. Each skullcleaver carries 4 ep and 3 sp. The goblin mates have among them a ring, a bracelet, and a necklace (each worth 4 gp). The pewter bowl is sealed with wax, which if broken open reveals 273 sp and 321 cp. A secret drawer (DC 13 Wisdom to find) in the bureau contains a tapestry with silver and gold threads (15 gp).

## 21. Storage Chamber XP 400/900

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Four goblin guards watch in the corridor at position g.

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Casual insults (from position g)

**Goblins (4):** AC 14; hp 5; short sword +2 (1d6)

**Within area 21:**

*Crates, sacks, boxes, barrels, and piles of items are stacked with little regard for organization.*

The room contains clothing, food, stale beer, and sour wine.

**Development:** Unknown to the goblins, hobgoblins from cave complex F use a secret door (DC 13 Wisdom to find) to steal supplies from this area. If adventurers stay in here for more than 10 minutes, they encounter four hobgoblins (XP 125) opening the secret door.

**Hobgoblins (4):** AC 15; hp 11; longsword +4 (1d8 + 1) or spear +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Treasure:** Each hobgoblin carries 2d10 sp.

## E. Ogre Lair

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A grove of trees hides the entrance to this cavern. From inside the grove, the cave is visible only to someone within 20 feet of it.

**Light:** Dim (daylight under the trees) or none

### 22. Ogre Cave XP 350

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**Light:** Dim (daylight from cave mouth) or none

**Noise (DC 13):** Occasional bass grumble

**Smell:** Strong, sour odor from the cave mouth or the open secret door

#### West Cave:

*A foul stench assaults your senses as you peer into this small cave. On a pile of dried leaves is the slumbering form of a bear.*

The ogre killed a huge bear some time ago and uses its skin as a bed, making it comfortable by heaping leaves underneath. The true nature of the “bear” becomes apparent to anyone who comes close. Noises here attract the ogre from the east cave.

#### East Cave:

*This small cave has a foul stink. In its midst is a huge leather sack, and a small keg stands nearby. A heap of old bones lies against the south wall.*

The ogre usually lounges here, atop a giant leather bag filled with his treasure. A secret door hidden in the southeastern wall (DC 13 Wisdom to find) leads to area 18 in the goblin lair.

**Ogre:** AC 15; hp 88; greatclub +6 (2d4 + 6) or spear +6 (1d6 + 4)

**Development:** The ogre has grown wealthy serving as a mercenary for various factions in the caves, usually the goblins. If offered a greater reward than he is working for, he’s 90% likely to take it (as well as the other party’s money) and return to his lair. He is also willing to take a bribe (8 gp minimum per person) to let intruders leave his lair unharmed. If he catches the same interlopers again, he kills them without entertaining the offer of a bribe.

**Treasure:** The ogre’s leather bag holds 2,287 cp, 51 ep, 70 gp, a hard cheese, and 658 “gp” (actually copper coins with a wash of gold, which the ogre is too dim to recognize). The keg contains brandy

worth 100 sp. Hidden under the heap of bones (DC 11 Wisdom to find) are 6 +1 arrows, a *potion of invisibility*, and a *healing potion*.

## F. Hobgoblin Lair

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**Light:** Normal for time of day

*A stout oak door reinforced with rusted iron panels stands closed at the back of the entry cave. Skulls line the walls. Several are affixed to the door over letters written in the Common tongue reading, “Come in—we’d like to have you for supper!”*

**Barred Door:** The door is barred from the inside. A hidden mechanism (DC 13 Wisdom to find) allows someone outside to slide the bar back. If the door is forced open (DC 15 Strength check), or a *knock* spell is used to drop the inner bar, the noise alerts the hobgoblins in area 26. Five of those hobgoblins arrive within a round, while the last goes to warn those in area 27, who arrive at the entry along with the runner at the start of the third round.

### Running the Hobgoblins

Most of the hobgoblins dwell in area 23. They are organized and alert. If they know about intruders, 1d4 + 2 hobgoblins leave that area to systematically search the cave while the rest guard the young. Hobgoblins are likely to hunt down fleeing invaders.

If their warlord is killed, the hobgoblins seek a tactical withdrawal unless they face weak opponents. Survivors reinforce the goblins in cave complex D, unless the attackers are very dangerous and threaten the whole area. In that case, the hobgoblins undertake a strategic retreat from the ravine.

**Darkvision:** Hobgoblins can see 60 feet in the dark.

### 23. Hobgoblin Quarters XP up to 1,625

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**Light:** None

**Noise:** Babble of many voices

*Cloth and animal skins are piled along the chamber walls. Odds and ends, such as barrels and crates, serve as furniture.*



**Barred Door:** The eastern door to this chamber is barred on the west side (DC 15 Strength to force open).

This chamber quarters up to thirteen adult hobgoblins and three young (noncombatants). Usually, half of the adults are out on business in the valley and surrounding lands. Because the eastern door connects to the tunnel leading to the goblin lair, five of the hobgoblins are always on watch.

You can use these hobgoblins to supplement or replenish their numbers in other encounters. Remember to subtract any hobgoblins you sent elsewhere from those here.

**Hobgoblins (up to 13):** AC 15; hp 11; longsword +4 (1d8 + 1) or longbow +3 (1d8 + 1)

**Treasure:** Each adult hobgoblin has 2d6 sp.

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## 24. Prison XP 250

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**Light:** Dim (fire pit)

**Noise:** Occasional scream and hiss of burning flesh

*A couple of brutish hobgoblins are taunting several humanoid prisoners, who are chained to the walls and who show evidence of cruel treatment. Various weapons and implements of torture are scattered about the chamber, and one hobgoblin stands over a slumped human figure. Two chairs and a small table stand near a central fire pit. A key ring hangs on the wall in the southwest corner.*

**Hobgoblin Jailers (2):** AC 15; hp 11; battleaxe +4 (1d8 + 1)

**Treasure:** Each hobgoblin has 2d6 sp. Keys on the ring fit the locks on the prisoners' chains.

**Development:** The hobgoblins took a number of human prisoners to be the main course in an upcoming feast. An orc captured during a raid, and a marauding gnoll that ran afoul of a hobgoblin patrol, round out the captives. The PCs might converse with or free prisoners; brief summaries are provided here to aid in roleplaying. Alternatively, a player whose character has been killed can use this opportunity to bring in a new character, taking the part of one of the humans (rolling ability scores normally), replacing one of the prisoners, or being held as another captive.

**Finn (Male Human):** AC 9; hp 4. This portly merchant has been whipped into a stupor. He is an influential member of his guild and promises a reward for his rescue. (If he is safely returned, the guild pays the party 25 gp per character and grants each character honorary guild membership for one year, exempt from dues, which can help them with price breaks on mundane supplies.) Finn has no combat ability but accepts armor for additional protection.

**Anara (Female Human):** AC 12; hp 7; Dex 14 (+2). Finn's wife and business partner, Anara is a capable combatant. She gladly accepts simple weapons and light armor, but she prefers to wield a +1 dagger she has hidden in her shoe.

**Eddard, Paul (Male Humans):** AC 11; hp 7; Str 13 (+1), Dex 12 (+1). These two guards, though dedicated, were unable to hold off the hobgoblin raiding party that attacked their master's caravan. They are eager to take up arms and help to return Finn to safety; they can use simple and martial weapons and wear armor. If the party helps them protect their charges and escape, Finn offers the services of his guards to their rescuers for one year, at the cost of room and board only.

**Ishrak (Male Orc):** AC 10; hp 5; Str 13 (+1). Ishrak belongs to the orc tribe in cave complex B. He was captured while foraging in the ravine and says he wants only the chance to kill goblins and hobgoblins. If he is released, he flees at the first opportunity, taking whatever he can with him, to tell the rest of his tribe what happened.

**Gnoll (XP 125):** AC 10; hp 11; Str 16 (+3). This gnoll is crazed with pain and bloodlust. If freed, it snatches up a weapon and attacks the nearest creature, including one of its rescuers; if its attack reduces a creature to 0 hit points or fewer, the gnoll immediately makes a melee attack against the nearest creature within its reach.

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## 25. Common Hall XP 1,125

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**Light:** Dim (cook fire)

**Noise:** Babble of many voices

*This chamber contains several benches and tables in poor repair. The tables are set with mismatched dishes, as if in preparation for a feast. One table, set apart from the others, is laid with nicer-looking pewter. A cooking fire burns low in one corner.*

The hobgoblins use this area for meals, and its occupants are readying it for a feast.

**Hobgoblins (9):** AC 15; hp 11; longsword +4 (1d8 + 1)

**Treasure:** Each hobgoblin has 2d6 sp. The set of fine pewter dishes is worth 35 sp.

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## 26. Guard Room XP 750

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**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional comment

*This chamber contains a few ratty pallets, a bench, a stool, and clothing hanging on wooden pegs set in the wall.*

These guards here react to noise at the entryway.

**Hobgoblin Guards (6):** AC 15; hp 11; mace +4 (1d6 + 1); heavy crossbow +3 (1d10)

**Development:** If these hobgoblins are alerted to intruders or attacked, one guard goes to alert the guards in the armory (area 27). The runner and the other hobgoblins arrive at the start of the third round of combat.

**Treasure:** Each guard has 3d4 sp.

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## 27. Armory XP 375

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The eastern door is locked (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools). The door in the western wall, as well as the one at the end of the corridor, are secret (DC 13 Wisdom to find).

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional comment

*Armaments are in evidence everywhere, filling open chests and hanging from pegs, racks, or stands, or adorning sackcloth dummies.*

**Hobgoblins (3):** AC 15; hp 11; longsword +4 (1d8 + 1) or longbow +4 (1d8 + 1)

**Development:** If the guards hear intruders at a door, two move to that door to wait in ambush. If possible, the third goes to alert the guards in area 31 and the warlord in area 30. All such alerted hobgoblins and the runner return at the start of the third round. Even if a runner doesn't bring reinforcements, the sound of combat here has a 50% chance each round to alert the guards in area 31. They enter combat at the start of the next round.

**Treasure:** Each guard has 3d4 sp. The room contains the following items:

- 1 suit of plate mail
- 5 suits of chainmail
- 7 suits of leather armor
- 11 light shields
- 6 daggers
- 1 battleaxe
- 4 maces
- 3 broadswords
- 2 shortbows
- 1 longbow
- 13 light crossbows
- 206 arrows
- 14 silver-headed arrows
- 180 crossbow bolts
- 51 spears
- 19 halberds

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## 28. Storeroom XP 125

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**Light:** None

**Noise (DC 11 from the corridor):** Snoring

*Crates, barrels, and sacks are piled along the walls.*

Supplies, including goods stolen from the goblins (see area 21), are kept here until needed. A guard named Thrag is supposed to stand guard but, displaying laziness unusual for a hobgoblin, he's asleep.

**Thrag (Hobgoblin):** AC 15; hp 11; longsword +4 (1d8 + 1) or spear +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Treasure:** The stores include normal and fine foods, three casks of wine (20 sp each), and a keg of fine ale (5 gp). Thrag has 9 ep.

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## 29. Guard Room XP 500

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**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional comment

*This small room contains a couple of cots, a bench, a stool, and a large box that serves as a table.*

**Hobgoblins (4):** AC 15; hp 11; longsword +4 (1d8 + 1) or spear +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Development:** If the guards are attacked or if they notice intruders, one of them tries to alert the guards in area 31 and another tries to warn the

warlord in area 30. If they succeed, the alerted hobgoblins and runners return at the start of the third round of battle.

**Treasure:** Each hobgoblin has 2d8 ep.

### 30. Hobgoblin Warlord's QuartersXP 850

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**Light:** Dim (fire in fireplace)

**Noise:** Excited conversation

*Furniture and junk crowd this room—divans, a huge iron box filled with animal skins, a grand table, several broken chairs, and more. A prodigious heap of kindling leans near a wide fireplace on the south wall.*

The hobgoblin warlord and her consorts live here. They are eagerly awaiting and discussing the upcoming feast.

**Hobgoblin Warlord:** AC 20; hp 75; spear +5/+5 (1d8 + 3)

**Lead from the Front** When the hobgoblin warlord hits an enemy with an attack, the target grants advantage on the next attack against it.

**Hobgoblin Consorts (4):** AC 15; hp 11; longsword +4 (1d8 + 1) or spear +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Tactics:** The chieftain wants more prisoners to eat, so she doesn't kill those she defeats, ordering her followers to likewise take enemies alive. She commands that captured characters be stripped of their equipment and sent to the prison (area 24).

**Development:** The sound of combat here has a 50% chance each round to alert the guards in area 31. They enter combat at the start of the next round.

**Treasure:** Beneath the skins in the iron box is a secret compartment (DC 13 Wisdom to find). It holds 25 gp, 50 ep, 115 sp, and 400 cp. Concealed (DC 13 Wisdom to find) amid the heap of kindling is a *wand of binding*.

### 31. Guard RoomXP 500

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**Light:** None

**Noise (DC 11):** Occasional comment

*This spartan room holds two pallets, a stool, and a large water barrel.*

**Hobgoblins (4):** AC 15; hp 11; longsword +4 (1d8 + 1) or spear +3 (1d6 + 1)

**Development:** These guards are assigned to the warlord. If notified or alerted, they move to support hobgoblins fighting intruders in another area.

**Treasure:** Each hobgoblin has 2d6 ep and 2d6 cp.

## G. Shunned Cavern

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A grove of trees hides this cave mouth. From inside the grove, the cave is visible to anyone within 20 feet.

**Light:** Dim (daylight under the trees) or none

**Smell:** Horrible rotting stench (from cave)

*The fetid air here is unnaturally still and quiet. Many of the trees in this grove, especially those closest to the cave mouth, are dead.*

Even the monstrous inhabitants of the ravine, including the ogre, stay away from here, because the creatures dwelling in these chambers are exceptionally dangerous. Anyone foolish enough to venture nearby at night becomes fair game.

### 32. Gallery of DeathXP varies

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**Light:** Dim (daylight from the cave mouth) or none

**Smell:** Horrible rotting stench

*Bones and bits of decaying corpses are strewn amid dead leaves and old branches.*

The hungry creatures inhabiting these caves constantly prowl about in search of prey. Each minute the PCs spend here, a wandering monster from another area might happen by. Roll a d6 and consult the table below. Each encounter can occur only once.

d6	Encounter
1	Owlbear (from area 34)
2	2d6 cave rats (see below)
3	Gray ooze (from area 33)
4–6	Nothing

**Cave Rats (18; XP 25 each):** AC 12; hp 1; bite -2 (1)

**Swarm Attack** A rat gains advantage on melee attacks if its target is within the reach of at least two other rats.

**Treasure:** Many of the corpses are humanoid, either inhabitants of the ravine or previous adventurers who fell afoul of the predators here. Inedible possessions lie amid their remains. In addition to damaged armor and poor-quality weapons, some coins are buried in the rubbish. Each round a character searches, he or she turns up a coin of a random value (maximum 300 coins). Roll a d6 and consult the table.

d6	Coin
1-3	1 cp
4-5	1 sp
6	1 ep

### 33. Murky Pool XP 600/900

**Light:** None  
**Noise (DC 11):** Occasional splash  
**Smell:** Rotting stench (from gallery) and an acidic tang

*The air is damp, and the cavern walls and ceiling drip. A few blind, white fish swim in the large pool of shallow water that half-drowns the cavern.*

Three gray oozes lurk here (DC 15 Wisdom to spot), or two if one wandered into area 32.

**Gray Oozes (2 or 3):** AC 12; hp 66; slam +4 (1d6 + 2 plus 1d6 acid, and *corrosion*); **Special Traits** blindsight 60 feet; cannot be blinded, charmed, knocked prone, affected by gaze attacks, or frightened; immune to cold and fire damage; ooze

**Corrosion** A gray ooze's corrosive slime eats through metal at an alarming rate. When a gray ooze slams a creature wearing metal armor or when another creature hits the ooze with a metal weapon, the creature must immediately make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw with a bonus to the saving throw equal to the armor's or weapon's magic bonus. On a failed saving throw, a suit of armor's AC is reduced by 1. A weapon suffers a -1 penalty to attack rolls and damage rolls made with it. A weapon or suit of armor is destroyed if the penalty it suffers is -4 or greater. A damaged suit of armor or weapon can be repaired by paying half its cost to a smith or similar artisan.

**Treasure:** A jeweled goblet (15 gp) is submerged in the murky water (DC 13 Wisdom to spot).

### 34. Owlbear Den XP 400

**Light:** None  
**Noise (DC 13):** Soft growl-hoot snoring  
**Smell:** Rotting stench (from gallery)

*Scattered over the floor are bones of varied sizes, broken and gnawed clean. A huge nest of sticks and bones fills the southern end of this chamber.*

An owlbear sleeps in the nest.

**Owlbear:** AC 13; hp 110; claws +5/+5 (1d6 + 3) and bite +5 (1d8 + 3)

**Hug** If the owlbear hits the same target with both claw attacks, it wraps its victim in a crushing embrace, dealing 2d6 extra damage.

**Treasure:** Amid the sticks and bones where the owlbear sleeps, a bone tube is buried (DC 17 Wisdom to find). It contains a *scroll of protection from undead*.

## H. Bugbear Lair

A grove of trees hides this cave mouth. From inside the grove, the cave is visible to anyone within 20 feet.

**Light:** Dim (daylight under the trees) or none

*Many trees in this grove, especially those closest to the cave mouth, are hacked and scored. A broken tower shield nailed to a tree next to the cave reads in Common, "Safety, security, and repose for all who enter—welcome! Come in, and report to the first guard on the left for a hot meal and bed assignment."*

### Running the Bugbears

Unless noted otherwise, bugbears stay in their respective areas rather than aiding one another.

The bugbears' main dwelling is in area 38. If they are aware of intruders, you can have a group of 1d3 + 1 bugbears from that area sneak out to ambush them. At least five bugbears remain in area 38 at all times to guard the young. Bugbears are likely to chase fleeing intruders, and they might even mount an expedition to kill those who dare to harm their young.

**Catnip:** These particular bugbears relish catnip, which can be found throughout the lair.

**Darkvision:** Bugbears can see 60 feet in the dark.

**Bushwhack:** A bugbear deals 2d6 extra damage on attacks against creatures from which it is hidden.

### 35. Guard Room XP 450

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**Light:** Dim (brazier)

**Noise:** Occasional comment of appreciation

**Smell:** Savory fire-roasted meat

*Three bugbears lounge on stools near a flickering brazier. Skewers of meat sizzle over the coals. A few cots line the walls, and a large gong hangs from a stand near the bugbears.*

If intruders enter, the bugbears first offer their “guests” some meat, then use the skewers to strike with surprise.

**Bugbears (3):** AC 15; hp 16; skewer +4 (1d8 + 2) or morningstar +4 (2d4 + 2)

**Tactics:** If the battle goes badly, one bugbear smites the gong to warn the others in the complex. Rather than summoning aid, this alarm allows other bugbears in the cave to set up ambushes.

**Development:** Two hunting bugbears return to this room with a human corpse and 23 gp the day after the characters first enter this cave.

**Treasure:** Each bugbear has 1d3 gp.

### 36. Bugbear Leader's Quarters XP 450

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**Light:** None

**Noise:** If the bugbears have been alerted to intruders, none; otherwise, occasional murmured endearments

*Battered and crude furnishings—bedding, crates, chests, chairs—crowd this room. A big gray chest sits on a ledge near the ceiling.*

The bugbear's leader, an especially muscular specimen, has claimed this defensible chamber for himself and his mate. He has the same statistics as a standard bugbear, except his Strength is 18 and other changes noted below.

**Bugbear Leader:** AC 16; hp 30; greataxe +5 (1d12 + 3) and predatory command

**Predatory Command** The leader chooses one enemy he can see within 30 feet. The next creature other than the leader to hit the enemy before the leader's next turn starts deals 1d6 extra damage.

**Bugbear Mate:** AC 15; hp 16; morningstar +4 (2d4 + 2) or javelin +4 (1d6 + 2)

**Development:** The bugbear leader knows of the secret door (normally DC 15 Wisdom to find). If fighting a losing battle, he uses it to escape. He might seek the aid of the minotaur in area 45, promising a *healing potion* (see “Treasure” below) and one slave (see area 40) as payment. If the minotaur accepts, it accompanies the leader back by way of the minotaur's cave entrance (I). It directly assaults intruders, while the bugbear leader uses the distraction to attack from hiding. The minotaur is willing to help for about 4 hours before returning to its lair.

**Treasure:** Six pieces of silk (20 sp each) are mixed up with the bedding. The big chest contains 462 sp, an alabaster and ivory statue of Hruggek the bugbear god (30 lb.; 200 sp), and two *healing potions*. The potions might break if the chest is handled roughly (DC 17 Strength to bring it down gently; a few characters can work together).

The bugbear leader also has a key to the spoils room (area 37).

### 37. Spoils Room

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**Light:** None

The door is locked (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools; DC 15 Strength to break). Loud noise here brings guards from area 35 and the chieftain and his mate from area 36.

*This chamber is packed with supplies and loot, including various boxes and crates, a stack of leather, three barrels, a large cask, and a small keg, as well as a shiny shield heaped with dried herbs.*

**Treasure:** The shield is a +1 *heavy shield*, and the herb is catnip. The boxes and crates contain high-quality dried and salted food. The barrels hold ale and the cask wine; the keg stores oil (about 20 flasks' worth). The other trade goods (including the leather) are worth around 30 gp.



### 38. Bugbear Common Room XP up to 1,500

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**Light:** Dim (cook fire)

**Noise:** Several voices conversing

*Piles of bedding and old garments are heaped about the floor. A fire burns low in a great fireplace on the north wall. Next to the grate stands a black urn.*

Ten adult bugbears and three young (noncombatants) live here. During the night, at least half of the bugbears are out hunting or on patrol.

You can use these bugbears to supplement or replenish their numbers in other encounters. Remember to subtract any bugbears you sent elsewhere from those here.

**Bugbears (up to 10):** AC 15; hp 16; morningstar +4 (2d4 + 2) or spear +4 (1d6 + 2)

**Treasure:** Blackened by soot and tarnish, the urn is silver (275 sp).

### 39. Guard Room XP 750

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**Light:** None

**Noise:** If the bugbears have been alerted to intruders, none; otherwise conversation

*A collection of bedrolls and sacks lie around a bench, a long table, and a water pail. A key ring hangs on the wall opposite the stairs. The hallways leading east and west contain more sacks, small boxes, and barrels.*

The bugbears here watch over the prisoners in areas 40 and 41.

**Bugbears (5):** AC 15; hp 16; morningstar +4 (2d4 + 2) or spear +4 (1d6 + 2)

**Treasure:** Each bugbear has 1d3 gp. The sacks contain grain or meal, and the boxes and barrels hold food and drink of poor quality. The keys open the doors to areas 40 and 41, as well as the chains that bind the captives.

### 40. Slave Pen

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A bar, a chain, and a heavy padlock (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools) seal the iron door (DC 15 Strength to break).

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional moan and clink of chains

*This chamber's floor is lined with soiled straw. A bucket sits in a corner, and an assortment of prisoners are chained to the wall. They plead for help.*

All the slaves are fastened to the wall with a common chain and heavy padlock (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools; DC 15 Strength to break).

**Slaves:** The warriors are willing to fight the bugbears if given weapons. The kobolds and the goblin say anything to get free, but they desert the party at the first chance.

*Liam, Sonja (Human Warriors):* AC 11; hp 7; Str 13 (+1), Dex 12 (+1)

*Macarn (Dwarf Warrior):* AC 10; hp 8; Str 13 (+1)

*Shara, Vindil (Elf Warriors):* AC 12; hp 5; Dex 15 (+2)

*Nirk, Pex, Meepug (Kobolds):* AC 12; hp 2

*Glepe (Goblin):* AC 11; hp 5

### 41. Prison

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A bar, a chain, and a heavy padlock (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools) seal the iron door (DC 15 Strength to break).

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional growl and clink of chains

*This chamber's floor is lined with soiled straw. A bucket sits in a corner, and an assortment of feral-looking prisoners are chained to the wall. They turn to you with snarls.*

All the prisoners are fastened to the wall with a common chain and heavy padlock (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools, DC 15 Strength to break).

**Prisoners:** These vicious humanoid are untrustworthy. If freed, unless otherwise noted, they attempt to flee, although they grab weapons and attack any bugbears that try to block their escape.

*Hobgoblins (3):* AC 11; hp 11

*Gnoll:* AC 10; hp 11

*Shadrag (Rebel Bugbear):* AC 12; hp 16; Str 15 (+2), Dex 14 (+2). This captive hates his fellows and is willing to fight against any inhabitants in the bugbear cave complex for as long as the party stays here.

**Ragnar (Chaotic Evil Human Berserker):** AC 11; hp 15; Str 15 (+2), Dex 13 (+1). This wild-eyed, muscular human is prone to fits of violence. If armed, he is willing to fight alongside the characters for a while—but the first chance he gets, he either tries to kill them or, if they seem too strong, attempts to steal their treasure and sneak off. When he first takes damage in an encounter, he flies into a rage for his next 5 turns. While in a rage, he has 5 extra hit points, a +2 bonus to Strength checks and saving throws, and his melee attacks deal 1d6 extra damage.

## I. Minotaur Caves

**Detect Magic:** Powerful enchantment magic (see “Curse of the Labyrinth” below)

**Light:** Dim (daylight from cave mouth) or none  
**Noise (DC 15):** Faint whirring from the north

*This wide cave mouth leads into darkness. Coins and discarded weapons are spread across the floor just inside the entrance.*

**Curse of the Labyrinth:** Immediately upon passing through the cave mouth, the PCs feel a passing dizziness, a side effect of a curse that affects any creature (other than the minotaur) that enters the cave here. Affected creatures are disoriented and have difficulty finding their way through the twists and turns of the minotaur’s lair. Each affected creature can attempt a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw every hour to overcome the effect.

### Running the Curse

Once the characters have moved into the caves, the curse makes them lose their way. To keep the players from using out-of-game knowledge to bypass these effects, you can misdirect them: Call out different directions the next time the party enters a previously explored area, or even describe the same passage in a different way.

**Treasure:** On the floor just inside the entrance are 2d6 sp, 1d6 ep, and 2 gp, as well as a few Medium chainmail hauberts, longswords, and other weapons common to the humanoids in the area.

#### 42. Stirge Nest XP 975

**Light:** None  
**Noise:** Loud whirring

*The cavern’s walls and roof are covered by tiny creatures. They’re not bats—each has four wings and a long snout.*

These hungry bloodsuckers attack almost anything that enters the cave. They avoid the minotaur, though, who eats stirges.

**Stirges (13):** AC 15; hp 4; fly 50 ft.; proboscis +5 (1d4, plus attach and blood drain)

**Attach** When the stirge hits with its proboscis attack against a living creature, the target must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the stirge attaches itself to the target. An attached stirge cannot attack, but on each of its turns, it deals the target 1d4 damage and blood drain (see below). While attached, the stirge moves with the target. The target has disadvantage with attack rolls against the attached stirge. A creature can use its action to detach the stirge on its turn by winning a contest of Strength against the stirge’s Dexterity. At the end of each of the stirge’s turns while it is attached, roll a d20. On a result of 1–5, the stirge detaches.

**Blood Drain** If the stirge begins its turn attached to a creature, that creature has disadvantage on all Constitution checks until its next long rest. If the creature already has that, it falls unconscious. If the creature is already unconscious, it dies.

#### 43. Fire Beetles XP 300

A secret door (DC 13 Wisdom to find) on the north wall leads to a short corridor connecting to the bugbear leader’s room (area 35). The secret door into area 35 is not hidden on this side.

**Light:** Bright red light  
**Noise:** Loud clicking

*Three glowing red beetles the size of dogs scurry about.*

**Fire Beetles (3):** AC 16; hp 5; bite +2 (1d6)

**Treasure:** Adventurers can harvest 1d3 glow glands from each dead beetle (DC 13 Intelligence to know). Each gland sheds bright light (10 feet) for 1d6 days.

#### 44. More Fire Beetles XP 200

**Light:** Bright red light  
**Noise:** Loud clicking

*Two glowing red beetles the size of dogs scurry about.*

**Fire Beetles (3):** AC 16; hp 5; bite +2 (1d6)

**Treasure:** Adventurers can harvest 1d3 glow glands from each dead beetle. See area 43 for details.

#### 45. The Minotaur XP 450

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**Light:** None

**Noise (DC 11):** Loud breathing and occasional snorts

*Skulls and bones are arrayed around this wide, many-tunneled chamber in patterns that suggest an intelligent mind laying out model labyrinths.*

**Minotaur:** AC 14; hp 132; greataxe +6 (1d12 + 4) and bite +6 (1d6 + 4) or charging gore +6 (3d6 + 6, target is knocked back 10 feet and falls prone)

**Treasure:** The minotaur keeps its treasure in a niche behind a secret door in the western wall (DC 15 Wisdom to find). The door is a huge slab of stone (DC 19 Strength to open; a few characters can work together). Hidden in a panel within is a ring of keys to the coffer and chests (DC 15 Wisdom to find).

**Locked Iron Chest (DC 15 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools):** This lock to this chest contains a poison needle (DC 15 Wisdom to find, DC 13 Dexterity to disarm). If the chest is unlocked without the key and before disarming the needle, the character opening it takes 2d10 + 4 poison damage. Inside are 130 gp and 50 ep, a +1 spear, a staff of curing, and +1 plate mail.

**Locked Coffers (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools):** The coffer contains oil of etherealness, a potion of delusion (healing), and a potion of strength.

**Locked Chest (DC 13 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools):** Inside are a silver ring, a brooch containing a small gem, and a gold necklace worth 10 gp, 15 gp, and 20 gp, respectively.

### J. Gnoll Lair

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This cave mouth is small and on a steep slope.

**Light:** Normal for time of day

**Noise (DC 13):** Faint yelps and barks from inside

*A hole leads into the ravine wall near its summit. Beyond is a crudely worked tunnel.*

If the gnoll guards in area 46 (see below) become aware of the characters, they might engage the party in the entrance tunnel.

#### Running the Gnolls

These gnolls have a loose alliance with the orc tribes. Gnolls that survive the party's attacks might move to either of the orc caves, and likewise the gnolls welcome orc refugees into their cave.

Most of the gnolls live in area 49. If they know about invaders, 1d6 + 4 gnolls might leave area 49 to attack. At least seven gnolls remain in area 49 at all time to guard the young.

Gnolls like to surprise and bewilder their enemies. They are bloodthirsty creatures and, once alerted to intruders, are likely to track down any who retreat from this cave.

**Low-Light Vision:** Gnolls need light to see, so the lair is illuminated (albeit dimly). Gnolls on the move carry torches.

**Pack Attack** A gnoll's melee and ranged attacks deal 1d6 extra damage against targets that are in the threatened areas of two or more hostile creatures.

#### 46. Guard Room XP 500

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**Light:** Dim (daylight from cave mouth; torches at night)

**Noise:** Barking

*Arranged along the north wall are stools, a few circular pallets, and a wide barrel top serving as a table.*

**Gnolls (4):** AC 14; hp 11; handaxe +3 (1d6 + 2) or shortbow +2 (1d6 + 2)

**Tactics:** The gnolls fire arrows at intruders until melee begins, then two attempt to run to area 47 and alert the guards there. At the start of the fourth round, the runners return along with the gnolls from area 47.

**Treasure:** The gnolls each have 1d4 ep, 1d8 sp, and 1d20 cp.

#### 47. Guard Room XP 1,000

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**Light:** Dim (torchlight)

**Noise:** Barking

*Crude furniture and heaps of bedding fill this chamber. Several hides and pelts hang on the walls, and a barrel of water rests in the southwest corner. Humanoid bones, still wet and pink, are heaped on a platter in the middle of the floor.*

**Gnolls (8):** AC 14; hp 11; handaxe +3 (1d6 + 2) or shortbow +2 (1d6 + 2)

**Treasure:** The gnolls each have 1d4 ep, 1d8 sp, and 1d20 cp.

#### 48. Storeroom

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The door is locked (DC 15 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools).

**Light:** None

**Smell:** From beneath door, the aroma of fine ale

*The inviting odor of ale suffuses this room from a barrel stamped with the maker's mark of a dwarven brewery. Otherwise, the chamber is cluttered with provisions, arms, and armor, including a longsword set aside from the others in a red leather scabbard.*

**Treasure:** The food here is edible and plentiful. Weapons and armor include three light shields, two heavy shields, a suit of chainmail, twelve battleaxes, three longbows, and five quivers of arrows (30 in each).

**Dwarven Ale:** This ale is particularly potent! Any character who drinks more than one cupful risks becoming intoxicated (DC 13 Constitution save negates; increase the DC by 1 for each extra cup) for 1d4 hours.

#### 49. Common Area XP up to 975

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**Light:** Dim (cook fire)

**Noise:** Barking

*Worn furniture, nests of ratty fabric, and rusted cooking implements circle a central cook fire.*

This area quarters seventeen adult gnolls and eighteen young (noncombatants).

You can use these gnolls to supplement or replenish their numbers in other encounters. Remember to subtract any gnolls you sent elsewhere from those here.

**Gnolls (up to 17):** AC 14; hp 11; handaxe +3 (1d6 + 2) or shortbow +2 (1d6 + 2)

**Treasure:** Each adult gnoll carries 1d8 sp, 1d4 ep, and 1d2 - 1 gp.

#### 50. Gnoll Pack Lord's QuartersXP 1,175

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**Light:** Dim (low fire in the fireplace)

**Noise:** Barking

*Crude and battered furniture decorates this lair. A fire gutters in the hearth on the southeast wall.*

The ferocious leader of this gnoll tribe dwells here with his three warrior offspring and several mates.

**Gnoll Pack Lord:** AC 15; hp 66; flail +5 (1d10 + 4) or demonic frenzy or feed on the weak (1/day)

**Demonic Frenzy** As an action, the pack lord can imbue one creature within 50 feet with a demonic frenzy. The target gains advantage on its attack rolls but grants advantage on all attacks against it.

**Feed on the Weak** Each time a creature within 50 feet of the pack lord is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer, the pack lord regains 5 hit points.

**Gnoll Heirs (3):** AC 14; hp 11; battleaxe +4 (1d8 + 2) or shortbow +2 (1d6 + 2)

**Gnoll Mates (4):** AC 14; hp 11; handaxe +3 (1d6 + 2) or shortbow +2 (1d6 + 2)

**Development:** The fireplace chimney is wide enough to accommodate a Medium creature and extends a fairly short distance to the top of the ravine. If hard pressed, the pack lord might attempt to escape by scattering the fire's embers and climbing up the chimney.

**Secret Door (DC 15 Wisdom to find):** A secret door and passage connects to the Shrine of Evil Chaos (area 63). It is unknown to the gnolls. Just inside the passage is a human skeleton with a broken leg—the remains of a hapless adventurer. Rotten leather armor and corroded weapons are still on the body, as are a pair of fine-looking boots (see "Treasure" below). The skeleton has a purse at its belt.

**Treasure:** The pack lord wears two silver armbands (30 sp each) and carries 20 gp. Each heir has 1d10 ep. Each mate wears a silver necklace (20 sp each).

*Loose Flagstone (DC 13 Wisdom to find):* The pack lord concealed most of his loot under this stone in the fireplace. It conceals an alcove containing 200 gp, 157 sp, 16 ep, and 10 gp.

*Skeleton:* The pouch holds 12 gems (5 gp each), and on the skeleton's feet are *boots of elvenkind*.

## K. Shrine of Evil Chaos

A worn path switches back and forth up the steep slope to this cave mouth.

**Detect Evil:** Faint evil radiates from beyond the cave mouth

**Light:** Normal for the time of day

**Noise:** Occasional faint groaning and shrill piping

*Trees are obscenely bloated and twisted near this cave mouth, which opens onto a deathly still corridor with high, vaulted ceilings. Red strata intertwined with bulging black veins run through the hewn rock walls.*

### Running the Shrine's Inhabitants

Mindless undead roam throughout the shrine, supported by robed and hooded cultists in major areas. Undead attack anyone not dressed in robes like those of the cultists. The priests here can override this exception, ordering the undead to attack anyone. Undead in specific rooms might have specific orders as well.

Many of the undead stay on guard in area 57 but might be summoned to supplement the defenses in other areas under attack.

Living residents of the shrine generally need light to see and carry torches when moving about.

#### Zombies

**Senses:** Darkvision 60 feet

**Immune:** Immune to disease, necrotic damage, paralysis, poison, and sleep; can't be charmed or frightened

#### Skeletons

**Senses:** Darkvision 60 feet

**Immune:** Immune to disease, necrotic damage, paralysis, poison, and sleep; cannot be charmed or frightened

**Resist:** Resistance to piercing, slashing, and necrotic damage

Footsteps echo alarmingly in the halls. If the party does not take care to muffle such sounds, a group of eight zombies (XP 125 each) arrives to investigate.

The zombies wear filthy red-and-black striped robes, and four carry cleaverlike axes.

**Zombies (4):** AC 13; hp 15; battleaxe +3 (1d8 + 1)

**Zombies (4):** AC 13; hp 15; slam +3 (1d4 + 1)

## 51. Boulder-Filled Passage

**Light:** None

*Boulders, rocks, sand, and sandbags block this corridor.*

The cultists purposely sealed off this tunnel. Clearing a way large enough to pass through takes several days of hard labor. The passage beyond leads to a location of your choosing beyond the bounds of this adventure.

## 52. Hall of Skeletons XP 1,500

**Light:** None

*This hall appears to be an audience chamber, but it is deathly still. To the south, the red-streaked stone floor extends toward a circular dais on which stands a throne set with four large red gems. Motionless thin figures, clad in dilapidated chainmail and carrying battered shields and rusty scimitars, stand at attention along the east and west walls.*

The skeletons remain unmoving unless they are attacked, or anyone (including someone in cult robes) touches the dais or throne. Then they move to attack.

**Skeletons (12):** AC 13; hp 9; scimitar +3 (1d6 + 1) or claws +3 (1d4 + 1)

**Treasure:** The red gems are garnets (20 gp each). It takes a few minutes to remove each one.

## 53. Guard Room XP 1,000

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional faint groaning

*Red-streaked stone that contains with black veins forms the walls of this chamber, in which stand several figures in filthy red-and-black striped uniforms. Several of them*



carry cleaverlike axes. None of them speak, except to voice an occasional anguished groan of hunger.

Four zombies stand at the north end of the hall, and four at the south end.

**Zombies (4):** AC 13; hp 15; battleaxe +3 (1d8 + 1)

**Zombies (4):** AC 13; hp 15; slam +3 (1d4 + 1)

## 54. Acolytes' Chamber XP 500

**Light:** Bright (brazier)

**Noise:** Conversation in Common (discussing demons)

*This grand chamber is furnished with hard pallets, a glowing brazier, a cabinet for clothing, a water pail, a waste bucket, stools, and a table, on which stand a flagon of wine and cups.*

*Dressed in red robes with black cowls over chainmail are four humans, each bearing the symbol of a burning spiral and a mace.*

**Development:** These acolytes are the most recent to take the dark pledge and the least certain of their choice. They might talk to the characters, but they know little of the area.

**Dark Acolytes (4):** AC 16; hp 11; mace +3 (1d6 + 1 plus unholy smite)

**Unholy Smite** Once per day, a dark cultist can call upon profane power to smite a foe he or she strikes. The cultist can use this power when he or she hits with a weapon attack to deal 1d6 extra damage.

## 55. Evil Chapel

**Detect Evil:** Bronze vessels on the altar radiate strong evil (see "Relics of Evil" below)

**Light:** None

**Noise:** Occasional faint groaning

*The floor of this imposing chapel is a checkerboard of ebony and scarlet. A tapestry on the south wall depicts a desolate landscape of dead trees and barren rock. Demonic silhouettes hold aloft a struggling child in the foreground. The gray sky is torn by wisps of purple clouds, and a bloody moon with a skull face and a single burning eye leers over all.*

*Four black pillars support the domed ceiling. Between them, just in front of the tapestry, is a stone altar of red-veined black rock, rough-hewn and crusted with dried*

*blood. Upon it are four ancient bronze vessels—a shallow bowl, a pair of goblets, and a vasselike pitcher. All glow an ugly purple.*

**Development:** Moving or attempting to destroy the vessels causes the great bell in area 58 to ring, and all the shrine's living residents come running in 3 rounds.

## Unholy Relics of Evil

The vessels on the altar are ancient relics, used in vile rituals for centuries, that have absorbed the evil of their wielders. A character who touches one of these vessels in particular must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a save, the character senses its unholy nature and can put the item down if he or she wishes. On a failed saving throw, the character falls under a demonic curse and refuses to part with the vessel or allow others to handle it. After 6 days, the character becomes a servant of the cult and returns to this chapel; if still in possession of the relic, he or she replaces it on the altar and then stays on as a guard.

Casting both *dispel magic* and *bless* on the afflicted character has a 60% chance of removing the curse; *remove curse* works automatically. Each day the character remains cursed after the first, the 60% chance drops by 10%. When the chance drops to 0%, even *remove curse* fails. Such spells might be available from friendly, high-level clerics, assuming the characters have made such allies.

**Treasure:** The relics would be worth 25 gp each if they were ordinary. The tapestry is worth 10 gp to the right buyer.

## 56. Adepts' Chamber XP 700

**Light:** Bright (brazier)

**Noise:** Conversation in Common (discussing demons)

*This vaulted chamber contains four beds with a chest at the foot of each, a table with chairs, and a shelf stacked with tomes and scrolls. Dressed in red robes with black cowls over heavy armor are four humans, each bearing the symbol of a burning spiral and a mace.*

**Dark Adepts (4):** AC 17; hp 22; mace +3 (1d6 + 1 plus unholy smite)

**Cultist Spells Prepared**

1st (2/day)—*command* (DC 12), *cure light wounds*

**Unholy Smite** Once per day, a dark cultist can call upon profane power to smite a foe he or she strikes. The cultist can use this power when he or she hits with a weapon attack to deal 1d8 extra damage.

**Development:** If they are losing, surviving adepts attempt to flee to area 58 and ring the great bell, which alerts the undead warriors in area 57.

**Treasure:** The books and scrolls, all on evil or demonic topics, are worth 10 gp total. Good characters who destroy the evil writings earn 300 XP; evil adventurers earn the same for keeping and reading the works. The chests at the foot of each bed hold a total of 1 pp, 4 gp, 200 sp, and 800 cp, plus clothing and personal items.

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## 57. Hall of Undead Warriors XP up to 2,500

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**Light:** None

**Noise (DC 11):** Low groaning

*Here stand four ranks of ragged figures clad in red-and-black robes or battered chainmail.*

Two rows of five skeletons face south, and two rows of five zombies face north. The cultists use these undead to replenish any that are destroyed; remember to subtract any so reassigned.

**Skeletons (up to 10):** AC 13; hp 9; scimitar +3 (1d6 + 1) or claws +3 (1d4 + 1)

**Zombies (up to 10):** AC 13; hp 15; slam +3 (1d4 + 1)

**Development:** If the bell in the temple (area 58) rings, the skeletons exit through the south door and line that room's south wall. The zombies leave through the north exit to line the temple's north wall. The undead attack intruders who enter area 57 or who are in the passage to the temple or the temple proper.

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## 58. Temple of Evil Chaos

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**Light:** None initially, then bright candlelight

*As you step into this high-domed space, black candles in eight tall candelabras on either side ignite magically, shedding disgusting red light. You can see a great iron bell in its midst, three stone altars beyond, and an impressive*

*throne flanked by smaller chairs on a dais against the west wall. Amorphous purple, yellow, and green forms dance on that wall, a mirrorlike surface of translucent red stone. Hanging from the other walls are purple draperies with evil symbols and vile phrases embroidered in scarlet, gold, and black thread.*

**Seductive Shapes (Enchantment):** If intelligent creatures (other than those loyal to the cult) look at the shapes in the western wall for more than a moment, they are mesmerized into chanting a single stanza of a hymn to the gods of chaos and evil (DC 11 Charisma saving throw negates). Three or more voices chanting cause the bell to sound, but even one such chant alerts the guards in area 59.

**Temple Features:** The dome rises 30 feet above a floor of polished black stone with swirling patterns of red veins. Walls behind the draperies and the ceiling are dull black rock.

**Altars:** The northern altar is black, the middle one streaked with red and black, and the last is red with black flecks.

**Bell:** Forged of black iron, the bell has pair of mallets beside it.

**Dais:** On this platform of black stone stand bone chairs and an ivory throne, all set with gold and adorned with red gems and black gems. Evil sigils and demonic signs adorn these seats.

**Treasure:** The chairs and throne hold a total of 21 gems, each worth 10 gp. Removing a gem takes 2 rounds.

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## 59g. Anteroom

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XP 375

**Light:** None

**Noise (DC 11):** Low groaning

*Apparently a waiting area, this room is furnished with fine divans and chairs. A golden flagon and nine gold-leafed cups sit upon a tiled table.*

The cult's high priest takes audience here, attended by undead guards. If the bell in area 58 rings, these undead move to the temple and attack intruders.

**Zombies (3):** AC 13; hp 15; slam +3 (1d4 + 1)

**Treasure:** The flagon is worth 10 gp; each of the cups is worth 2 gp.

## 59. High Priest's Chamber XP 450

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**Light:** Bright (lantern)

**Noise (DC 15):** Faint chanting

*Fine décor includes ebony furniture with red velvet upholstery, a large bed covered with black silken covers and red cushions by the northern wall, and a silk dressing screen along the southern wall. On the wall, directly over the bed, leans a demon idol with gleaming gem eyes.*

The chaotic evil leader of the cult resides in these sumptuous quarters. He wears a black cape with a red cowl, and red robes over plate mail.

**Dark Priest:** AC 20; hp 65; +2 *snake staff* +6 (1d6 + 4, see appendix) or mace +4 (1d6 + 2 plus 1d8 necrotic)

**Writhing Darkness** The dark priest communes with the forces of chaos and evil. While in the presence of an altar or other religious structure dedicated to a chaotic and evil power, the dark priest can use his or her action to create worms of utter darkness to seize and crush his foes. If a good-aligned creature moves within 30 feet of the altar or begins its turn within that area, it must make a DC 13 Dexterity save or suffer 1d6 unholy damage and a -10 penalty to speed for its turn.

**Tactics:** If he hears the bell in area 58 ring or the sounds of combat in area 59g, the priest darts behind the screen in the southeast corner and enters the wardrobe there. He slips through a secret door in the wardrobe's back (DC 13 Wisdom to find), and then runs down a short passage and through another secret door (DC 15 Wisdom to find from the corridor) into the corridor near area 56. From there, the priest rallies the shrine's forces or, if most of his followers and servants are dead, makes his escape.

**Idol:** This fiendish statue topples on anyone touching it, dealing 2d6 damage (DC 13 Dexterity negates).

**Treasure:** The priest wears +1 *plate mail* and a gold ring set with a black gem (520 sp). He carries a +1 *heavy shield*, the *snake staff*, a mace, , *oil of etherealness*, and a purse containing 5 pp. The idol has two gem eyes (10 gp each).

## 60. Guest Room

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**Light:** None

*A large bed stands beside a table draped with velvet cloth, chairs, and similar furniture. Tapestries depicting cruel acts and obscene rites adorn the walls.*

Visiting dignitaries are put up here. Beneath the velvet cloth on the table is a highly polished mirror.

## 61. Torture Chamber XP 250

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**Light:** Bright (fire pit)

**Noise:** Occasional sound of shears snipping, iron ringing on iron

*A rack; an iron maiden; a collection of tongs, pincers, skewers, and whips; and a stoked fire clearly indicate a torturer's domain. Comfortable chairs line the walls.*

**Dark Acolytes (2):** AC 16; hp 11; mace +3 (1d6 + 1 plus unholy smite)

**Unholy Smite** Once per day, a dark cultist can call upon profane power to smite a foe he or she strikes. The cultist can use this power when he or she hits with a weapon attack to deal 1d6 extra damage.

**Treasure:** Hidden in one of the chairs, which folds out to become a bed, are 135 sp and a finely wrought bracelet (200 sp).

## 62. Crypt XP 350

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**Light:** None

The door is bolted shut from the outside.

*Six dusty sarcophagi line the east wall of a long, low-ceilinged hall of roughly hewn stone.*

The sarcophagi are sealed, and opening any of them requires a round of applied effort. Most contain dusty and rotted robes. The southernmost one imprisons a wight, which attacks if released.

**Wight:** AC 15; hp 44; claws +4/+4 (1d4 + 2 piercing, and enervation/1d4 + 2 piercing, and enervation); create spawn; darkvision 90 feet; resistance to weapons that are not magical or silvered; immune to disease, necrotic damage, paralysis, poison, and sleep; cannot be charmed or frightened

**Enervation** A wight feeds on life energy. A living creature hit by a wight's claw attack reduces its maximum hit points by 3. This effect stacks and

lasts until the target takes a long rest. If this effect reduces a creature's maximum hit points to 0, the target dies and rises as a wight 24 hours later unless a *bless* spell is cast upon the corpse.

**Treasure:** Hidden inside the wight's sarcophagus is a compartment (DC 13 Wisdom to find) containing a +1 *longsword*, a scroll of *protection from undead*, and a bejeweled silver dagger (50 gp).

### 63. Storage Chamber XP 350

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**Light:** None

*Boxes, crates, barrels, and sacks are stacked in the northeastern corner of this chamber.*

The containers hold the temple's mundane supplies. A gelatinous cube lurks among the boxes, and is hidden until it attacks or is noticed with a DC 21 Wisdom check.

**Gelatinous Cube:** AC 12; hp 88; slam +3 (1d6 + 1 plus 1d6 acid and engulf); blindsight 60 feet; cannot be blinded, charmed, knocked prone, affected by gaze attacks, or frightened; immune to lightning and psychic damage; ooze; transparent

**Engulf** A gelatinous cube can enter any Medium or smaller creature's space, and if the cube does, the creature must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw. On a save, the creature moves aside or back. On a failure, the creature becomes trapped inside the cube, moving with the cube, and taking 1d6 acid damage whenever it starts its turn. The cube can engulf up to four creatures at a time.

An engulfed creature can use its action to make a DC 13 Strength check with disadvantage. If successful, the creature frees itself and lands prone next to the cube.

**Secret Door (DC 13):** This hidden door leads to area 50.

**Treasure:** Inside the cube are 6 cp, 7 sp, 7 ep, 6 gp, and 6 pp, as well as bones.

### 64. Cell XP 450

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The iron door is locked (DC 15 Dexterity to unlock, requires thieves' tools), but a barred window is set in the door.

**Light:** None

#### Noise: Weeping

*This dreary prison contains the remains of several humans hanging from chains on the wall. The sound of soft weeping comes from the south. You can make out a huddled female form bound to the western wall.*

If the weeping figure becomes aware of the characters, she pleads to be rescued, claiming that the high priest plans to sacrifice her in demonic rites. In fact she is a medusa; the reason for the monster's imprisonment is up to you.

**Medusa:** AC 13; hp 66

**Snaky Hair** A knot of writhing serpents crowns the medusa's head in place of hair. These serpents snap and bite at anyone they can reach. Whenever a creature moves or starts its turn next to a medusa, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be bitten by one of the snakes, taking 1d4 piercing damage and 1d10 poison damage.

**Petrifying Gaze** The medusa's gaze can turn living flesh to stone. Unless a creature averts its eyes from the medusa, which causes the creature to have disadvantage on all attacks against it and anyone attacking it to gain advantage against it until its next turn, it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw on its turn before taking any actions or moving. A creature can decide to avert its gaze or make the saving throw. A surprised creature cannot choose to avert its gaze. On a failed save, it instantly and permanently turns to stone.

**Tactics:** The medusa tries to convince the characters to release her. If they refuse, she uses her gaze to petrify some of them, promising to restore them in exchange for freedom. She is a treacherous creature; if freed she petrifies the remaining rescuers and flees.

**Treasure:** The medusa has a small vial containing an elixir that can restore up to six petrified creatures to normal.

## Appendix: Treasure

The Caves of Chaos are home to a number of wondrous treasures. They are described below.

**Magic Weapons and Armor:** A suit of magic armor or a shield grants a bonus to AC equal to its listed plus. Magic weapons grant their plus as a bonus to damage and attack rolls made with the weapon.

**Boots of Elvenkind:** While wearing these boots, your steps make no noise. You gain advantage on all stealth checks made when creatures cannot see you.

**Oil of Etherealness:** As an action, you can pour this oil on yourself. You become ethereal for 1 minute.

**Healing Potion:** Drinking this potion is an action that allows you to regain 1d8 hit points.

**Potion of Invisibility:** Drinking this potion is an action that makes you invisible for 10 minutes. If you attack or cast a spell that requires a saving throw, you become visible.

**Potion of Strength:** Drinking this potion is an action that grants you a Strength of 18 for 1 hour.

**Scroll of Protection from Undead:** The vellum scroll contains a potent incantation in a spidery script and a faint odor of rot wafts up from the page. You can use this scroll as an action, and using it causes it to disappear in a flash of light. An undead creature that tries to move within 20 feet of the spot where you read the scroll must make a DC 18 Wisdom save. If it fails, it cannot enter the area. An undead creature already in the area when you use the scroll, or one that makes the saving throw, ignores this effect.

The scroll's effect lasts for 1 hour.

**Snake Staff:** This is a +2 *quarterstaff* that, when wielded by a cleric, can be commanded to wrap around a target on a hit, transforming into a great python. The target becomes restrained and cannot move its arms. It can use an action to attempt to break free as a DC 14 Strength check. If the creature breaks free, the snake transforms back into a staff and falls to the ground.

A second command by the cleric causes the snake to transform back into a staff and teleport to its owner's hand.

**Staff of Curing:** As an action, you can touch a creature with this staff. That creature regains 2d8 hit points. A *staff of curing* can be used 5 times per day, but no more than once on a specific creature.

**Wand of Binding:** As an action, pick a creature within 30 feet of you. That creature must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 13) or be paralyzed until the end of its next turn. This wand has 10 charges. Each use of the wand expends a charge.

In addition, this wand is an implement. You can use one implement at a time. This implement grants a +1 bonus to your magic attacks with arcane spells and the save DCs of your arcane spells.



