

# Let there be ZOMBIES

## 20 delectable zombies for your campaign

I LOVES ME SOME ZOMBIES AND I'M QUITE SURE THAT A LOT OF OTHER DMs SHARE MY FONDNESS FOR THE RESTLESS DEAD. So to that end and in spite of the fact that the bog standard B/X or AD&D Zombie is already made of complete and utter win, sometimes you may enjoy throwing your players a curve ball. Maybe the old ruined keep was once home to a perverse cult of necromancers and the zombies therein are substantially different than the run-of-the-mill variety. Perhaps the zombies found dwelling in the Forbidden Crypts of Omeror, Petty God of Gratuitous Bloodshed and Violence are of a particularly vile strain. Or maybe a glowing green comet just struck that small village lying in the path of the hapless heroes.



1. Rabid Zombies: The zombies in this dungeon are not undead (can't be turned) so much as they are "stricken by some bizarre disease" that fills them with a hatred for the living and a desire to spread their disease through blood, which they freely belch and spew. All combatants within 5' of these fellows need to save each round vs poison or contract the disease. Failure means conversion to a Rabid Zombie within 2d6 rounds (DM takes control). The disease requires both a Cure Disease and Remove Curse to cure those afflicted. Rabid Zombies fight in a berserk fashion and add +2 to attacks. Consider 2HD\*\*\*\* for awarding experience.
2. Bloated Zombies: These poor wretches are filled with all sorts of unpleasantness and explode in spectacular fashion when a killing blow is landed. All living creatures within 30' of the exploding zombie are covered by vile substances and fluids requiring a save vs poison. Failing this save results in violent sickness, throwing up, etc. Those sickened fight at -2. Missile fire, undead turning and spell casting are impossible during this period

of illness, which lasts for a full turn. The Bloated Dead are hefty fellows and have HD 3+2. The DM should count them as 3HD\*\* for awarding experience.

3. **Rotting Dead:** Sharing the same shuffling, brain-dead characteristics of the standard zombie, your PCs in their initial encounter with the Rotting Dead will surely be reminded of a certain zombie subtype created by a well-known vampire many, many years ago. These zombies are quite sturdy in spite of their withered and rotting appearance and have 4HD. Any blow of 5 or more HPs removes an arm/claw, which continues to fight on its own (doing a d6 of damage on a successful hit). A Rotter that loses both arms, still fights on by biting viciously. Claws are Scrubs (any blow of more than 2 points rolled on a damage dice destroys them, otherwise place a wound token, glass bead, etc. beside the mini, or make a note if you're rolling without miniatures) but fight as 4HD monsters. Award experience as 4HD\*\*\*.
4. **Stirge Zombies:** Possessing a ferocious thirst for mortal blood and attack with great ferocity these grizzly undead can make for a very dangerous encounter and are often confused with vampiric spawn. Any successful hit by 5 or more indicates that the zombie has become attached to its victim just like a Stirge. On subsequent rounds of combat, 1d3 of blood loss is inflicted and the undead will continue to pummel their victim at +4 to hit. Stirge Zombies may only be removed after their demise or by making a successful open doors roll, which causes a d3 damage of torn flesh. Consider 2HD\*\*\* for awarding experience.
5. **Relentless Zombies:** Whatever Hell-wrought energy that animates these zombies gives them a superior toughness. They are 3+3HD creatures and Regenerate 3 HPs per round. They can withstand tremendous abuse (bashing weapons do a mere 1 point of damage) and enjoy the effects of a Stoneskin spell when first attacked. Given their Hellish nature, these undead turn as Mummies. Consider 4HD\*\* for awarding experience.
6. **Brain-Hungry Zombies:** The dreaded hordes of Omeror, Petty God of Gratuitous Bloodshed and Violence hunger for the flesh of the living, particularly brains and other squishy bits. These fiends are very dangerous to hirelings and the like as their predatory senses guide them to attack the weakest members of a party. Woe to anyone who falls unconscious during melee since d3 of the Brain-Hungry zombies will immediately begin to feed on the poor unfortunate (thus killing them). These undead are not all that different from the standard undead variety, though they are considerably slower with a Move 60/20. The key difference though is that a "headshot" is required to finish the Brain-Hungry Zombie. They will remain at 1 HP until someone succeeds in a headshot, thus dispatching them. Any Brain-Hungry that is successfully targeted by a headshot must save vs Paralysis or be slain, regardless of HP totals. Consider 2HD\* for awarding experience.
7. **Brain-Dead Zombies:** These beings aren't really undead at all, but are rather dead bodies animated by evil, possessing spirits. Unlike other undead, they have no connection with the Negative Material plane and are in fact a construct similar to a flesh golem, only far weaker. To further confuse the issue, they are not overtly hostile and only shamle around out of curiosity. They will attack if the PCs become aggressive, but they are otherwise content to follow the PCs at range. Creepy no doubt, but otherwise harmless. Play these as normal zombies with the only change being their immunity to turning. Experience as 2HD\*.
8. **Voodoo Zombies:** Victims of devilish Ju Ju these are living humans who only vaguely resemble zombies. Still, there is enough similarity that PCs will initially be confused. They are of course immune to Clerical turning, but fight as a 2HD Berserker in every fashion. Consider 2HD\* for awarding experience.
9. **Frenetic Zombies:** Some unknown, yet Hellish energy animates these restless undead. They are very fast (Mv 150/50), add +1 initiative (even if group init is used), and have an AC of 6 due to their agility. Due to their speed, they get 2 attacks per round (d6), but are a bit less sturdy than the standard Zombie (1HD +4). Consider 1HD\*\*\* for awarding experience.
10. **Rapidly-Decaying Zombies:** These undead are in an advanced state of decay and are literally falling to pieces as they attack the PCs. The first hit from weapon or spell, causes a random limb or other bit to fall to the floor with a sickening splat. The zombie of course, ignores all damage from this first blow. Any successful

turning attempt destroys these creatures as they literally fall apart in their attempt to flee. Consider 2HD\* for awarding experience.

11. **Legions of Hell Zombies:** Hell spawn zombies have a particularly evil aspect about them and each encounter features an additional number of zombies which are Newbs (Any successful attack that rolls more than a 1 on the damage dice will slay Newb.) even though they attack at full value, etc. Newbs are indistinguishable from the regular monsters of their type, and kindly DMs may or may not allow extra attacks for fighters if they are only engaging Newbs. Add 100% to the normal zombie encounter numbers, all of which are Newbs. Hell Zombies are menacing in the extreme and this in addition to their numbers will cause all henchmen and hirelings to check morale at a -2 penalty (-25% for OSRIC) or flee as per a Fear spell. Standard experience award.
12. **Knights in Rotting Satin Zombies:** These undead fellows are quite often confused with animated statues or similar. Once engaged in melee, it becomes quite obvious from the stench that they are indeed undead of some sort. These zombies are identical to the standard zombie, except they have AC 3 and move of 90/30. Consider 2HD\*\* for awarding experience.
13. **Flaming Zombies:** My son Connor's idea... These shambling fellows are the product of some fire-obsessed necromancer and their combustible animating fluids cause them to smolder in an alarming fashion as they shuffle toward the hapless PCs. Striking them with edged weapons of any sort will cause them to spark and begin to burn violently for d6 turns at which point the flammable necromantic fluids expire, leaving the zombie to continue its undead existence as a normal zombie (should it survive the efforts of the PCs that is). While burning, they do an extra d6 damage and will set things alight much as a Produce Flames spell (bad news for PCs toting lanterns or flasks of oil). Consider 2HD\*\* for awarding experience.
14. **Acid Zombies:** Connor again... These deliciously-decaying zombies are quite obviously in an advanced state of decay and have an odd, stringent odor about them. They are in fact animated via some bizarre, Herbert Westian fluid that is itself a very potent acid. Each blow from a weapon of any sort will create a splash effect that potentially ruins both the weapon that struck them and the armor of the splashed victim (normal save for those items vs Acid, does not affect magical items). Those splashed by the viscous reanimating goo suffer d3 damage from incidental acid. Consider 2HD\*\*\* for awarding experience.
15. **Gelatinous Zombies:** Extended exposure to some unknown vile, briny substance has played havoc with the necromancy which animates these unfortunate souls. The resultant undead creature though bloated, vile and thoroughly revolting in both aspect and odor, is actually a rather weak example of its kind. Damage from Jelly Zombies is a mere d3 and their AC is one point worse than the standard Zombie. Such is the revolting nature of these creatures that PCs suffer a similar effect to that experienced when fighting Ghosts. Consider 2HD for awarding experience.
16. **Zombie Giants:** Typically only encountered alone, in pairs or triplets, these ghastly nightmares are often turned loose into the world by powerful necromancers to wreak vengeance on the living. Zombie Giants are usually of the Hill or Stone variety in life and share the same HD, Move, AC & Damage abilities that they possessed before being animated. Some unknown Hellish energy drives them to collect the corpses of their fallen foes, stuffing them into their garments, bags, etc. all to be used in later encounters. They employ these bodies as both missiles to be hurled at opponents who do not close with them (doing 3d6 damage out to 150') and as makeshift melee weapons when battle is joined. The sickening damage caused by these "weapons" can cause a random disease (save once at the end of combat, and only once, vs poison if stricken by either missile or melee attack) and extreme nausea to anyone within 10' of the Zombie Giant or anyone stricken by one of the disgusting missiles (a failed save equates violent, disabling nausea). Victims are unable to take normal actions other than movement and may save vs poison at the start of each subsequent round at -2, success indicating that the victim has "emptied their tummy" and may fight on as normal). Note that the disease effect and the nausea effect can only be triggered once per combatant no matter how many times



they are hit. Zombie Giants carrying d6+2 of their special weapons and will close to combat once there supply is down to a single corpse. Of course, they are more than happy to restock with the PCs' limp bodies should the opportunity present itself. Experience should be awarded as per the HD of the original Giant w/ 4 special abilities (as an example, the B/X Hill Giant converted to a Giant Zombie would be worth 8HD\*\*\*\* for calculating XPs).

17. **Zombie Hordes:** Yet another favored troupe of the Necromancers of Omeror, Petty God of Gratuitous Bloodshed and Violence, these undead minions seek to wear the PCs down through weight of numbers, overpowering them and pulling them to the ground in order to more readily dine upon their innards. A true Zombie Horde is represented by an additional 400% zombies added to the encounter and the entire group of zombies are considered Scrubs (any blow of more than 2 points rolled on a damage dice destroys them, otherwise place a wound token, glass bead, etc. beside the mini, or make a note if you're playing without miniatures). Zombie Hordes are pathetic combatants and attack in a swarming manner. Opponents engaged by 2 or more Horde Zombies take automatic damage (d2 if the PC is wearing chain mail or better, d4 if less than chain mail) though from the sheer weight of numbers. At the end of each round, if a target is engaged by 2 or more Horde Zombies, they must make a save adjusted by any Str bonus (Petrify/Paralysis seems the likely saving throw, individual DMs may decide some other means is appropriate). Failure means they are pulled to the ground where the Horde Zombies can really get at them, with damage rising to d6+2 and d10+2 according, once again, to the relative armor of the victim. Tackled victims may fight from a prone position OR attempt a saving throw (as above) to rise to their feet. Individual Horde Zombies attack for only d3 damage if unable to gang up on an individual. Horde Zombies are very difficult to Turn, being Turned by clerics and the like as if they were 5 HD undead and then only ½ the normal number will flee. You really do have to mow these guys down. Consider 2HD\*\* for awarding experience.
18. **Cyborg Zombies:** Yet another example of a creature that ostensibly, looks like a zombie, but is actually something else entirely. These zombie-look-alikes are in fact a very advanced Animated Statue (Iron type see p 98 LL) with zombie skin stitched over the iron frame and then slathered in blood and gore. Of course, being statues, they're immune to Turning and will certainly puzzle your PCs as their weapons become jammed into the armature of the creature. Particularly diabolical DMs, or those who have higher level PCs no longer concerned with common zombies, may decide that perhaps the underlying armature is in fact a Command Cyborg from Mutant Future (MF p. 68). Experience should be awarded based on the actual creature used (either animated statue or the Commando Cyborg which will require some XP calculations on the DM's part).
19. **Flying Zombies:** One final idea by Connor... Surely the result of some delirious necromancers fevered dreams, these wretches possess rudimentary wings, mere strips of necromantic skin stretched from wrist to ankle, allowing them to attack from above the hapless PCs. Due to their agile nature and speed, these undead gain a +1 to initiative and unlike the common zombie do not strike last in the round. Flight speed is 150' (50'). Consider 2HD\*\* for awarding experience.
20. **Doom Zombies:** The apex predator of all zombie kind, the Doom Zombie is occasionally mistaken for a ghoul due to the ferocity of their attack. They are however a zombie and in fact, a variant of the dread JuJu Zombie. Doom Zombies are superb combatants with M 120 (40) AC 5 HD 5+3 Attk 3 (d3, d3, d8, special) and possess all the characteristics of undead. Unlike standard zombies, they roll initiative normally and are immune to electrical, cold and magic missile attacks in addition to the standard undead spell immunities. Any opponent struck by both claw attacks will be savagely bitten for an additional 2d4+2 damage. Most frightening of all is the Doom Zombie's delayed Regeneration ability. A Turn (10 minutes) after being dispatched, if the bodies are not completely burned, disintegrated, or the heads removed, they will bounce back up at 50% of their original HP total and ready for more carnage. Some Hellish magic imbues the Doom Zombie with the ability to track the living and they will pursue PCs with unerring accuracy (90%) often doing so after the initial encounter once they have reanimated. Such is the strength of the necromantic magic

that created them, they are turned as a 6 HD Undead. Truly they are fearsome foes and wily necromancers will often include them within a pack of normal zombies to disguise their true nature. Other zombies will of course follow the Doom Zombies. A skilled cleric may discern them from the standard zombie by their more substantial bulk and the leathery nature of their hides. Consider 5HD\*\*\*\*\* for awarding experience.

Just a final note on Newbs and Scrubs, this is a trope that I developed and it is clearly derived from both Savage Worlds and 4E D&D. It certainly makes combats entertaining and may puzzle your PCs the first time you use it. Alert them to the fact that some of the creatures you are using have special qualities that are keyed to minimum weapon damage. Alternatively, if you've only a few players, you can simply watch the damage dice they roll. The number on the damage dice is key here so total damage is irrelevant. It simply comes down to "did you roll a 1 or a 2". Newbs die in droves and Scrubs very nearly so.