

CHAPTER 1: RACE OPTIONS

The following details the eight different subraces that exist on Faerûn, describing their history, habits, appearance, and abilities.



BORN FROM THE MOUNTAIN

History counts the dwarves among the interloper races, but their roots are ancient and deep even if the Stout Folk are not native to Abeir-Toril. Dwarves first emerged in the Realms at the dawn of recorded time from Yehimal, the great mountain range that rises between Faerûn, Kara-Tur, and Zakhara. Spreading over and under the lands, these early migrants carved their kingdoms from the earth and are from which all dwarves on Faerûn descend. The greatest of these kingdoms was bright Bhaerynden, shining deep beneath the savannahs of Shaar. The dwarves in these early days were free to mine, build, and toil in peace, taking satisfaction and comfort in their creations.

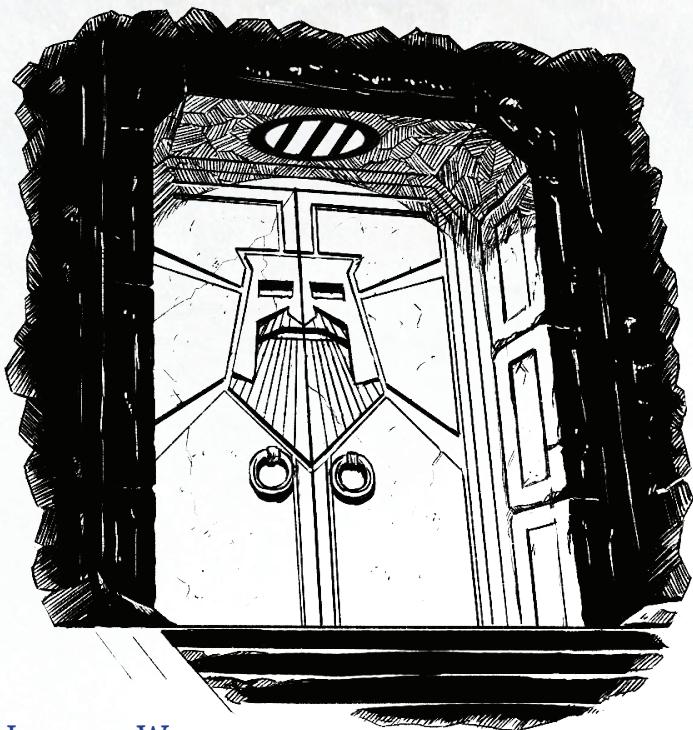
Unfortunately, this age of prosperity did not last. The following millennia are marred by great schisms, wars with numerous and formidable foes, and world-shaking upheavals that separated and divided the dwarves into the disparate races they are today. The fortunes of the dwarven peoples fell and their empires crumbled into ruin, dotting the Realms with long-forgotten dungeons. However, like the stone, they have endured and the great holds that now stand are a testament to the dwarves' strength, willpower, and ingenuity.

SHIELD DWARVES

Centuries of wandering and unrelenting conflict with orcs, goblins, and giantkind have made shield dwarves the most widespread of all the Stout Folk. Indeed, they are the most ubiquitous dwarves across western Faerûn, with a significant presence in the North and Western Heartlands. More so than other dwarves, they are less defined by their environment, having had endured as a people by adhering to family, clan, and tradition.

CHILDREN OF DELZOUN

Tracing their lineage back to Bhaerynden, shield dwarves followed Taark Shanat the Crusader west during the first great schism and founded the Shanatar Empire in southwestern Faerûn. Centuries of war and vying over the Wyrmskull Throne continually pushed Shanatar's borders further and further toward the surface, and when the Great Empire fell, the shield dwarves escaped north. These refugees eventually settled and formed kingdoms throughout the North, and the greatest of these was Delzoun. The dream of Delzoun did not last, but as the forefather to the mighty dwarfholds of Mithral Hall, Citadel Abdar and Citadel Felbar, the spirit of northern a dwarven kingdom united shield-to-shield against the monstrous hordes lives on.



INTREPID WANDERERS

Trekking from south to north across western Faerun, shield dwarves differ greatly in appearance, dress, and outlook compared to other dwarves. They are among the tallest of the dwarves, with fair skin even though they are not unaccustomed to spending time in the sun. Shield dwarves have eyes that are green, hazel, or silver-blue and have brown, blond, or red hair. Although tastes vary from place to place, both men and women are known to grow full beards and mustaches. Although as a whole they tend to be slow to trust and slower to forgive, their roving has led them to associate with other races and even form tight-knit dwarven enclaves in human dominated cities, such as Waterdeep and Baldur's Gate.

ALTERNATIVE SHIELD DWARF TRAIT

Shield dwarves have the racial traits of mountain dwarves in the *Player's Handbook*. When making a shield dwarf character, you can choose the following trait below.

Enduring Lore. All shield dwarves are raised on the stories of the great kingdoms and battles won or lost. You have proficiency in the History skill. This trait replaces **Dwarven Armor Training**.

GOLD DWARVES

Gold dwarves are the direct inheritors of Bhaerynden and reside throughout the southern and eastern lands surrounding the Sea of Fallen Stars and the Old Empires. They see themselves as the true keepers of dwarven traditions and culture, and thus the favored children of Moradin. While dwarves are known to be fierce warriors and skilled craftsman, gold dwarves are also known, or are notorious, for being shrewd traders and adventurous entrepreneurs.

RISE AFTER THE FALL

The great vault in which Bhaerynden once resided was overwhelmed and occupied by the drow following the Crown Wars, scattering the dwarven inhabitants throughout the Underdark and the southern lands of the Realms. While gold dwarves believe Moradin returned the favor by collapsing the ceiling with a blow from his axe, scholars point to the excessive tunneling and use of magic to support the great dome. Whatever the true cause, the ground quickly swallowed Bhaerynden and opened to the sky what is now known as the Great Rift. The armies of the gold dwarves were able to take advantage of the ensuing chaos and reclaimed their fallen home. While dwarves elsewhere fell victim to exile, enslavement, or worse, the Deep Realm has been home to unbroken generations of gold dwarves and has endured centuries of upheaval.

A LIGHT IN THE DARK

Centuries of stability have allowed their craftsmanship to flourish, building on the efforts of successive generations. Wears crafted by gold dwarves tend to have more artistry while losing none of its functionality, which often fosters the belief that gold dwarves bedeck themselves in finery. Gold dwarves otherwise are much like other dwarves, short, stocky, with brown skin, brown eyes, and dark hair. Hazel or green eyes are rare and seen as fortuitous. Men grow thick beards and women tend to wear their hair long, and both tend to weave or braid their hair with adornments.

ALTERNATIVE GOLD DWARF TRAIT

Gold dwarves have the racial traits of hill dwarves in the *Player's Handbook*. When making a gold dwarf character, you can choose the following trait below.

Iron Will. Serving as a bulwark against the terrors of the Underdark for millennia, the gold dwarves are renowned for their bravery and unshakable will. You have advantage on saving throws against being frightened and have resistance to psychic damage. This trait replaces **Dwarven Toughness**.

DUERGAR

Like a shadow on a wall, the gray dwarves are a dark distortion of dwarvenkind. They bitterly resent other dwarves and, in their eyes, their abandonment by and blame them for their enslavement by the mind flayers. Millennia of torture and experimentation twisted Clan Duergar into the people they are today. Although their ascended champion, Laduguer, led them to freedom long ago, they lead a grim existence of constant toil deep in the Underdark.

DARK REFLECTION

Gray dwarves are stout like other dwarves, but are lean and wiry. Their ashen skin ranges from slate to charcoal gray and have thin pale hair. Duergar men are bald and women are unable to grow beards. Their pale pupils are sensitive to light and are so faint that their eyes appear nearly white. They wear no adornments and only covet wealth for the value it holds, not for the artistry or beauty it may possess.

TIRELESS TASKMASTERS

Duergar produce as tenacious warriors and skilled craftsman as other dwarves, but they take no satisfaction from their accomplishments. They are brutal slavers, regularly raiding their neighbors and forcing captives to dig their deep and dangerous mines. This allows them to plot against their kin, such as when Deep Duerra led them against the gold dwarves during the Time of Troubles. They can be just as ruthless to each other, having very little tolerance for those who do not conform to this harsh way of life and edicts of the clan. Pessimistic by nature, few duergar dare dream of the world above and those that do are exiles.

ALTERNATIVE DUERGAR TRAIT

Duergar appear in the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide* and *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*. When making a duergar character, you can choose the following trait below.

Psychic Magic. While duergar are commonly known for their ability to turn invisible and grow to giant proportions, some practice the Invisible Way as taught by the priests of Deep Duerra. Once you reach 3rd level, you can cast the *charm person* spell once per day as a 2nd-level spell. Once you reach 5th level, you can also cast the *detect thoughts* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells. This trait replaces **Duergar Magic**.

ARCTIC DWARVES

Inuggakalikurit (pronounced EE-GA-ka-LEE-ku-rit) as they call themselves, are descended from an isolated offshoot that settled in the Great Glacier and throughout the most northern reaches of Faerun. Their tales tell of a time when frost giants enslaved their people, forcing them to craft their weapons and armor. They have long-since won their freedom and approach taking joy in life with zeal, seeming to relish being inhaled to all but the most extreme cold.

BOREAL BOUND

The physical appearance of arctic dwarves implies their affinity for the cold and snow-covered heights. They are squat by dwarven standards, with

blocky frames and blunt hands and feet. Their striking blue eyes penetrate through curly manes of snow-white hair. Their pale skin often appears wind or sunburnt and is ruddy around the nose and cheeks. This is also because arctic dwarves spend much more time in the sun than most dwarves and enjoy activities that promote their survival, such as hunting, climbing, wrestling, and storytelling over a warm open fire.

WARM HEARTS

Arctic dwarves are generally outgoing, quick to laugh, and fast to make friends. They care very little for formality and do not distinguish station or status from others. Most have little interest in labor or pursuing material wealth. Instead, a fulfilling life is one full of experiences shared with family and friends. As such, most are loathed to leave their homes but those that do often do so with great enthusiasm, seeing it as an opportunity to accumulate more experiences and stories.

ARCTIC DWARF TRAITS

The arctic dwarf subrace has the dwarf traits on page 20 in the *Player's Handbook*, plus the subrace traits below.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 1.

Cold Resilience. You are immune to exhaustion from exposure to freezing temperatures and have resistance against cold damage.

Extra Language. You can speak, read, and write Giant.

FEAT: BOREAL BLOODED

Prerequisite: Arctic dwarf, Constitution 13 or higher

- Increase your Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You suffer no penalty for walking on ice or in snow.
- You are immune to cold damage.

URDINNIRIN

Whereas other dwarves simply work the earth, urdunnirin (singular: urdinnir) see it as a thing of living beauty. The Children of Dumathoin descend from the first great schism, leaving Bhaerynden with the shield dwarves but followed the call of their god deeper and deeper underground. Sometimes also called 'orecutter' dwarves, they were rewarded for their devotion with the secrets of shaping stone and metal through sheer will.

HIDDEN SPLENDOR

After leaving Bhaerynden, urdunnirin established the kingdom of Oldonnar under the Alimir

Mountains near the Lake of Steam, where they have dwelled in splendid isolation for centuries. There they were free to marvel at the wonders of their deity and nature's splendor. This peace and solitude means that urdinnirin have a tendency to see the good and beauty in everyone. In fact, it is only after having their curiosity piqued by interacting with outsiders that some urdinnirin are drawn to exploring the surface world.

DIVINE LUSTER

Just as some humans view elves in awe, so do most other dwarves see the urdinnirin. Everything about them and surrounds them reflects their magical nature. They are tall for dwarves, with light gray skin and hair, and striking silver eyes that hint at hidden wisdom. Their stone and metalwork is impossible for any chisel or hammer to replicate, with lines and contours that almost seem to give the objects life.

URDINNIR TRAITS

The urdinnir subrace has the dwarf traits on page 20 in the *Player's Handbook*, plus the subrace traits below.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Extra Language. You can speak, read, and write Undercommon.

Orecutter. You can effortless form stone and metal with your bare hands. You do not require artisan tools when crafting or repairing objects made from metal or stone.

Urdinnir Magic. When you reach 3rd level, you can cast the *shape metal* spell once per day. When you reach 5th level, you can also cast the *meld into stone* spell once per day. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

SPELL: SHAPE METAL

2nd-level transmutation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M (a piece of wire)

Duration: Instantaneous

You touch a non-magical metal object and it immediately becomes as pliable as clay. You can make a melee spell attack against a metal creature or that is wearing metal armor to reduce its Armor Class by 1d4 points. You can likewise make a melee spell attack against a metal weapon to make the wielder have disadvantage on all attack rolls with it. Lastly, you can shape a Small size or smaller piece of metal no more than 3 feet in any dimension and form it into any shape that suits your purpose. For example, you could use a silver coin to make a key or an iron ingot to make a crowbar. This spell



allows you to bend but not break a metal objects. So, for example, you couldn't use this spell to break the lock on a prison door but you could use it on one of the metal bars to bend it wide enough for you to potentially squeeze through. This spell also has no effect on adamantine or mithral.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the Armor Class is reduced by an additional 1d4 for every two slot levels above the 2nd.

FEAT: ONE WITH THE STONE

Prerequisite: Urdinnir, Wisdom 13 or higher
You gain the ability to use **Channel Divinity: Earth Glide** once per long rest (see Chapter 2: Class Options). You also learn *stone shape*, which you can cast once without expending a spell slot. You regain the ability to cast this spell when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

WILD DWARVES

Wild dwarves are the enigmatic inhabitants of the deep jungles. Calling themselves the dur Authalar, or "the People," wild dwarves lead a comparatively primitive existence of survival. They have lost all trappings of dwarven craft and culture, but are extremely deadly with their poisoned blow darts and are as at home in the jungle as any hunting animal.

LOST DWARVES

Wfter the fall of Bhaerynden, the ancestors of the wild dwarves fled south to the thick jungles of Chult. They never again reached the heights of civilization, instead losing themselves and their ways to their new homes. It is unknown what happened to them during the Second Sundering, as

their hunting-bands have disappeared from Chult. Rumors tell that a few scattered groups have been seen in Mhair and the Black Jungles. Wherever they have gone, the few individuals who escaped Chult or were kept as curiosities elsewhere yet live and continue on the legacy of the dur Authalar.

MORE BEAST THAN DWARF

Wild dwarves are the least dwarf-like among their kin, foregoing the traditions clans and craftsmanship for barbarism and the struggle for survival. Wild dwarves are the smallest of the dwarves, but are no less stocky and are very hairy. They weave their long, dark hair and beards around themselves in a way that serves as clothing and often cover themselves in foul-smelling grease to ward off insects. Wild dwarves have more respect for animals than people. They emulate the deadly grace of great jungle cats and are known to be fond of leopards and ocelots, often keeping the latter as pets.

WILD DWARF TRAITS

The wild dwarf subrace has the dwarf traits on page 20 in the *Player's Handbook*, plus the subrace traits below.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Jungle Weapon Training. You have proficiency with the blowgun and net. This trait replaces **Dwarven Combat Training**.

Nimble. You have a +1 bonus to AC against melee attacks from Medium or larger creatures.

Poison Lore. You gain proficiency with the poisoner's kit. You can also extract poisons from living or recently slain creatures safely without poisoning yourself. A variety of blow gun poisons are described in Appendix X. This trait replaces **Tool Proficiency**.

Slippery. As part of short rest, you can slather yourself in grease, making you difficult to grasp onto. Once applied, you have advantage on skill checks and saving throws against becoming grappled or restrained for 6 hours. This trait replaces **Stonecunning**.

ALBINO DWARVES

Albino dwarves were once more similar to other dwarves until they were forced to flee from their mountain homes during the volcanic cataclysm that wracked Chult one hundred years ago. While some sought shelter among civilization along the coast, most came to inhabit the deep jungle. They struggle to maintain their traditions while adapting to their new homes, all the while trying to survive in a hostile environment beneath the feet of dinosaurs.

ACCEPTANCE OUT OF SUSPICION

Albino dwarves resemble the shield dwarves from which they descend, with the exception of their stark white skin, flaxen hair, and pink to crimson eyes. Since Tabaxi superstition correlates the color white with death, they have had very little contact with other races and were mentioned only in myth. Having few friends and surrounded by danger, albino dwarves have little use for holding onto racial enmities. In past ages they traded gems and other works in exchange for food and raw materials with the Batiri goblins, something most other dwarves would severely frown upon, and often make allies where they can find them. These arrangements are rarely warm, but are honest and serve to benefit both parties.

LOST, NOT FORGOTTEN

Although they have retained their gift for shaping stone and metal, most albino dwarves that sought refuge in the dense jungles make due with the materials at-hand. These include exotic rare woods, obsidian, and dinosaur bone, and legends tell that the diamond-edged weapons they previously made may yet lie amidst the vast jungle floor. This effort to adapt has led some to become more primitive and become more attuned to their environment. Some other even become what are called 'spirit warriors,' and are gifted with magical abilities tied to the jungle spirits.

ALBINO DWARF TRAITS

The albino dwarf subrace has the dwarf traits on page 20 in the *Player's Handbook*, plus the subrace traits below.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Natural Cunning. You gain proficiency with two of the following skills of your choice: Animal Handling, Perception, Stealth, and Survival.

FEAT: SPIRIT WARRIOR

Prerequisite: Albino dwarf, Wisdom 15 or higher

You learn the magic of the spirit warriors. You learn *hunter's mark*, *jump*, and *pass without trace*, each of which you can cast once without expending a spell slot. You regain the ability to cast these spells in this way when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for all these spells. You can also sacrifice some of your vitality to commune with nature. As part of a short or long rest, you can expend one Hit Dice to cast *speak with animals* or *speak with plants*.