

Gobbers



Gobber, 1st-Level Warrior

Small Humanoid (Gobber)

Hit Dice:	1d8+1 (5 hp)
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares)
AC:	15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 studded leather), touch 12, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple:	+1/-3
Attack:	Dagger +3 melee (1d3/19-20) or dart +3 ranged (1d3)
Full Attack:	Dagger +3 melee (1d3/19-20) or dart +3 ranged (1d3)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Camouflage, low-light vision
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -1
Abilities:	Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8
Skills:	Craft (alchemy) +6, Escape Artist +2, Hide +8*, Move Silently +3
Feats:	Weapon Finesse
Environment:	Any plains, urban, or marsh
Organization:	Family (8-20), tribe (10-50), kriel (50-150)
Challenge Rating:	1/2
Alignment:	Usually neutral
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	—

Bogrin, 1st-level Warrior

Small Humanoid (Gobber)

Hit Dice:	1d8+1 (hp 5)
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares)
Armor Class:	19 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +5 breastplate, +2 heavy steel shield), touch 12, flat-footed 18
Base Attack/Grapple:	+1/-2
Attack:	Shortspear +3 melee (1d4+1) or short-bow +3 ranged (1d4/x3)
Full Attack:	Shortspear +3 melee (1d4+1) or short-bow +3 ranged (1d4/x3)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	—
Special Qualities:	Camouflage, low-light vision
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -1
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 6
Skills:	Bluff -4, Climb +3, Craft (alchemy) +4, Diplomacy -4, Hide +8*, Move Silently +3
Feats:	Weapon Focus (dagger)
Environment:	Any hill, mountains, forest, or desert
Organization:	Family (8-20), tribe (10-50), kriel (50-150)
Challenge Rating:	1/2
Alignment:	Usually chaotic neutral
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	—

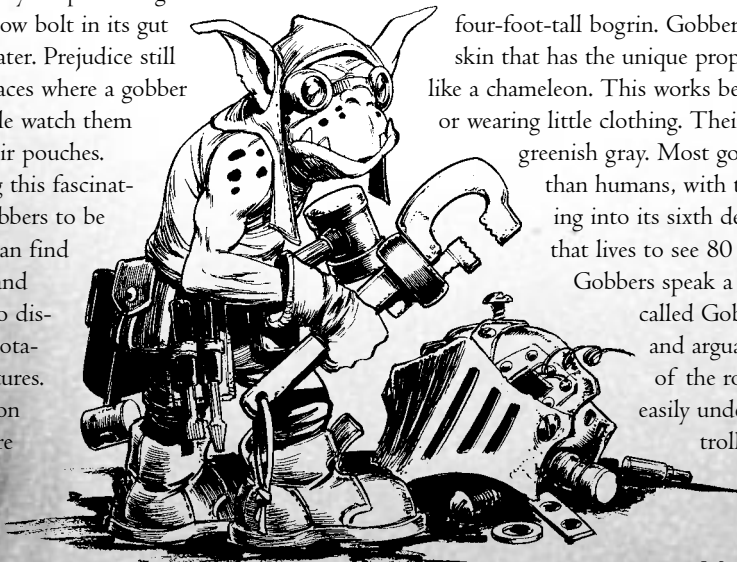
In my grandfather's day if you spotted a gobber near town, you'd put a crossbow bolt in its gut first and ask questions later. Prejudice still abounds, and even in places where a gobber wagon can sell its wares, people watch them warily and keep a hand on their pouches.

I have spent years studying this fascinating species and have found gobbers to be exceptionally adaptable. You can find them in virtually any climate and terrain. There are basically two distinct breeds of gobber, with notably different physiological features. The first are the clever common gobbers, while the second more warlike breed are the bogrin, sometimes called boggers.

All gobbers are hairless, with large feet and nimble hands. They are small, ranging

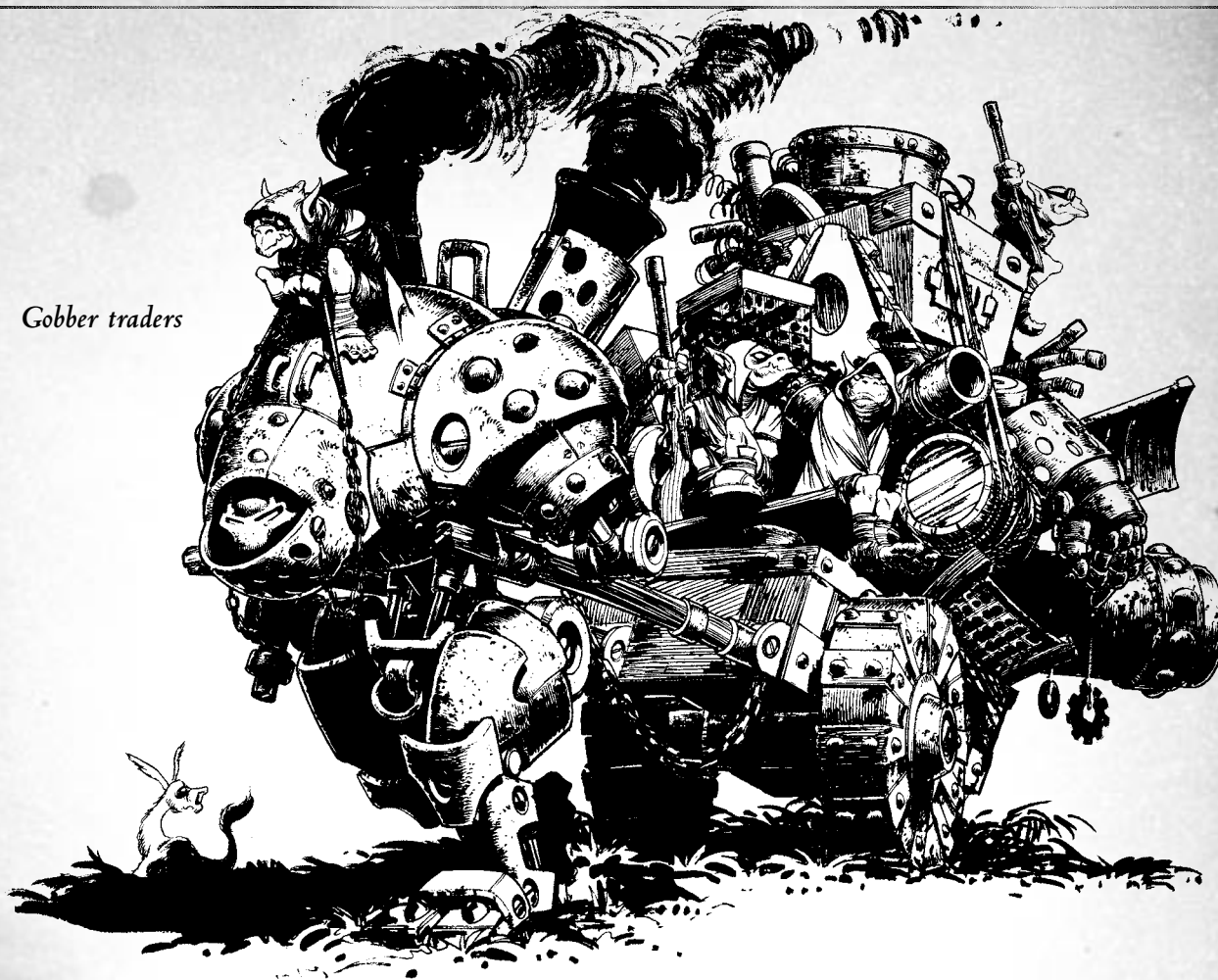
from three feet with the common gobbers up to almost four-foot-tall bogrin. Gobbers have smooth greasy skin that has the unique property of changing colors like a chameleon. This works best if they are naked or wearing little clothing. Their natural skin tone is greenish gray. Most gobbers live shorter lives than humans, with the average gobber living into its sixth decade. It is a rare gobber that lives to see 80 years.

Gobbers speak a dialect of Molgur called Gobberish, a rapid-fire and arguably mangled version of the root language. It is more easily understood by ogrun and trollkin who speak similar dialects, but it bears less resemblance to the human Molgur tongue. Most gobbers also speak the common human language of



Gobber mechanic

Gobber traders



their region, usually Cygnaran.

Local attitudes toward gobbers vary considerably. Near Corvis, swamp gobbers (a variety of the common gobbler) have an unsavory reputation and are considered particularly primitive and treacherous. As in most places, these gobbers are more interested in making off with food and valuables than killing people. Areas inhabited by bogrin have strong local prejudices against the entire species, and the kingdom of Llael has never accepted gobbers of any kind.

Yet gobbers are becoming increasingly widespread and accepted, and the most common variant carries on a nomadic tradition between human cities. Some dress in gray hooded ponchos treated via alchemy to change colors like their own skin. They travel in huge wagons, containing everything they own. These wagons are covered with hanging pots, tools, and other items for trade, clanging loudly enough to be heard from far away as they creep down the road.

These particularly sociable variants of the common gobbler are sometimes called "scavenger gobbers" and have a reputation for picking among trash heaps and junk yards. Over a period of weeks I observed one group working in the Corvis

scrap yards where they patched together a functional steam engine from rusty pieces of detritus. Checking on them later, I learned the engine was traded for a supply of brandy and wine, which was in turn traded for a collection of weapons, including crossbows and even several old pistols. Quite a profit given they started with trash; reminds me of the proclivities of certain junker relatives of mine.

There are more primitive gobbler variations in several locations, including the aforementioned swamp gobbers common in the Widower's Wood. Even these gobbers establish tenuous contact with the nearest dominant species in order to barter with those who could use their wares. Nonviolent by nature, common gobbers are capable of defending themselves and sometimes misunderstand the violent way other races respond to their acts of theft.

Much of the traditional distrust of gobbers is due to the second breed, the bogrin, or bogggers. These are a distinctly different stock of gobbler, nearly a foot taller and weighing almost half again. They are strong physically and far more aggressive. Bogggers can be recognized by the pronounced ridge of bone along their skulls, starting at the bridge of the nose and end-

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ing at the back of their cranium. Bogrin are just as adaptable as the common gobbers, although they prefer to settle in the wilds. There are distinct varieties of bogrin found in the mountains, forests, and desert wastes. They are particularly well entrenched in Cygnar's Wyrmwall Mountains as well as the northern mountains of Khador and Rhul.

Bogrin conduct bloody ambushes against other races when they believe they can overwhelm them. They are usually cowardly and avoid a direct assault, stacking the odds in their favor with traps and their knowledge of local geography. The gobbers are particularly fond of arson, setting habitations ablaze in the dead of night. However, even though most are brutal and violent, there are some bogrin who have become integrated into civilization and amended their ways. It is far less common to find this breed dwelling among humans compared to their more intelligent and peaceful gobber relatives.

All gobbers have an intuitive knack for alchemy. Some scavenger gobbers have been accepted into machine and alchemy shops in Fharin and Ceryl, where they have proven as capable as any humans working there. Skill at least with primitive alchemy is also prevalent with the bogrin, which are noted for creating excellent flammable concoctions as well as some ingenious poisonous gases.

Don't let a few positive experiences with civilized gobbers blind you to their danger in the wilderness. The bogrin can be vicious when their courage is up. I saw a tribe set an entire mining camp afire in the Cardare Mountains, laughing while their victims screamed and burned. It was a chilling sight to behold.

Note on Lexicon: Some of my colleagues have criticized me for my preference for the colloquial term "gobber." It is true that goblin is the proper name for these creatures, however gobber has become so universal in Cygnaran and other tongues that I see no need to fight it. There are few outside the halls of academia who still refer to them as goblins, and all gobbers I have spoken to prefer the less formal term as well.

Combat

Most goblins are cowardly in battle, but ambush travelers occasionally, especially in winter when food supplies have run low. Ambushes usually start with some sort of trap, followed by a barrage of darts or other ranged attacks before charging with melee weapons.

Gobbers rarely attack a group of more than ten opponents, unless they have overwhelming numbers. Their goal in most cases is to surprise the enemy and make off with food and other valuables; they will only fight to the death when they have no other choice.

Gobber Traits (Ex): All gobbers benefit from a number of shared racial traits.

Low-light vision:
Gobbers can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, or similar conditions.

+1 racial bonus to



Gobber rogue

Bogger warrior

sav-
ing
throws
against poi-
son.

+2 racial bonus
to Craft (alchemy)
checks. Gobbers have
an innate curiosity and
love of mixing substances and
experimenting with their effects.
They do not automatically have ranks
in Craft (alchemy) without training, how-
ever.

+2 racial bonus to Escape Artist and Move
Silently checks. Gobbers are taught from infancy
the ways of stealth and wriggling loose from capture.

*Camouflage: Gobbers can blend into their surroundings by
subtle changes in skin color. This grants a +4 circumstance
bonus to Hide checks, adjusted down depending on how much
skin is covered. (+4 for virtually nude, +3 for 25% covered, +2
for half covered, and +1 if 75% covered.)

The gobber and
bogrin warriors presented here had the fol-
lowing ability scores before racial adjustments: Str
13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Common GOBLINS ("Gobbers")

These are the most numerous, intelligent, and socially
adept gobbers. There are several variants of this breed, but
all share the same physiology and basic nature. They stand
just over 3 feet tall, with green skin by default, although they
sometimes use their camouflage ability to match their pigment
to the skin of humans with whom they have regular contact.
Those who deal regularly with humans are easily spotted by
their noisy trade wagons that serve as both a home and a

source of livelihood. Nomadic gobbers travel in tribes of 10–
30, composed of loosely related families under the leadership
of a patriarch or matriarch.

Gobbers are most rare in Llael, where some people still
attack goblins on sight. In the other kingdoms local laws
sometimes protect them. Some tribes have formal treaties guar-
anteeing their right to travel the roads and sell their wares. Most
gobbers are nomadic, although families may settle down in
human towns if they are able to find a niche for themselves, and
some gobber villages have sprung up near human cities. There
are particularly large gobber towns on the outskirts of Fharin in
Cygnar, Berck in Ord, and Khardov in Khador. They enjoy loca-

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tions noted for lively merchant trade and open markets.

The most notable primitive variant are the swamp gobbers, which are numerous in marshy terrain across the Iron Kingdoms. These reclusive goblins are wary of nearby humans and prone to ambushes and attacks, although primarily for the purpose of acquiring food or useful items. Swamp gobbers are less technically adept than their urban relations, but have invented some tools to aid in ambushes, such as a device using bellows and an alchemical mixture to create fog-like smoke. Another primitive variant can be found in the plains of southern Khador, adept at stalking the grasslands and bringing down large game by steering them into pit traps. These plains gobbers may be the ancestors of the modern urban variant.

Gobbers prefer daggers or short swords and craft excellent darts. Particularly well-equipped scavengers might have light crossbows or even a repaired old pistol. Gobbers sometimes wear armor, generally leather, studded leather, or homemade chain armor.

Bogrin (“Boggers”)

This breed is noticeably larger and stronger than the standard goblin, with warriors standing almost four feet tall and considerably more muscular and stout. Bogrin have a distinct ridge of bone the length of their skulls. Some boggers are fond of body markings such as ritual scars or tattoos, particularly if sharing territory with trollkin. Although they are less sociable than common gobbers, bogrin sometimes ally themselves with stronger races for purposes of survival. This is particularly common in the Scharde Islands, as well as the Wyrmwail Mountains. There is a longstanding relationship between Devourer-worshiping trollkin and bogrin and the two species generally get along. In the majority of these situations the bogrin are subservient to the trollkin, but not always.

The most numerous are the mountain bogrin, noted for their large tribes (called “kriel”) and extremely aggressive behavior. Mountain boggers are the least nomadic of all variants, settling into territories for long periods of time. They make their homes in cave networks and abandoned mines. They are passable miners in their own right, and if they have access to ore will smelt their own iron and craft weapons and tools, which are generally of good quality. Bogrin can also be found in most major forests, in smaller tribes, and living in impermanent dwellings usually near a good source of prey. They have also adapted to life in the Bloodstone Marches, but these desert boggers are very elusive and avoid contact with other races entirely.

Bogrin are capable of sophisticated ambushes including extensive use of traps and diversionary tactics, with fire as a favorite weapon. They wear hides, can climb exceptionally well, and are adapted to the high mountains. They are particularly bloodthirsty and sometimes kill with little provocation.

Boggers wield daggers or halfspears and also employ short bows. A favorite tactic is to attack from above by pouring a sticky flammable substance onto invaders, then firing flaming arrows into them (with a combined effect similar to alchemist’s fire, PHB). Some bogrin have rigged their villages with fire-traps and are willing to destroy their homes to kill invaders. Forest bogrin are noted for mixing potent poisons and have developed a poisonous gas-blowing device similar to the fog-blower used by swamp gobbers. This device creates an effect nearly identical to the spell *stinking cloud*, but it is somewhat less effective (Fort DC 10 negates). The desert boggers of the Marches have invented a substance that can turn regular sand into quicksand, miring victims with the same effect as the spell *entangle*.

Bogrin Traits (Ex): These are in addition to the base goblin traits above except as noted.

Immune to the dangers of natural extreme cold or heat. This makes them perfectly comfortable in any temperature from 0–110° F, suffering none of the regular exposure consequences. +2 racial bonus to Climb checks. Bogrin do not gain the +2 bonus to Escape Artist like regular gobbers. Bogrin have a –2 racial penalty to Bluff and Diplomacy skill checks.

Gobber Characters

For information on gobbers as player characters, consult the the Iron Kingdoms Character Guide (pp. 48–50).

Treasure

Gobbers keep whatever they have managed to acquire by scavenging, raiding travelers, or trading. They prefer barter to coinage, although leaders sometimes keep a stash of currency. The homemade weapons of the civilized gobbers are of surprisingly good quality, although often made of inferior substances like bone or an amalgam of lesser metals. Some gobbers have special ponchos that smell peculiar but allow full racial camouflage bonus as if they were naked. They are secretive about how these are made, but it is rumored the alchemy involves gobber sweat and even urine. These articles do not function for non-gobbers, but can be patched together and are receptive to enchantment.

Gobber villages are often amazingly intricate, such as this one near Merydyn.



Legends & Lore

COMMON: Gobbers make thievery a habit, but most aren't particularly violent.

UNCOMMON: Gobbers enjoy barter and will not ambush those who are willing to trade. The wild bogrin are far more dangerous and prone to attacking strangers without provocation.

RARE: Gobbers have a knack for alchemy and provide good fortune to wizards who take them in as assistants.

OBSCURE: A knowledgeable wizard of 9th-level or higher can create an enchanted human-sized robe from three gobber ponchos for 1,000 gp which provides a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks. This is commonly referred to as a robe of gobberkind.

Water wheels and other simple industrial fixtures are quite common. -VP