

Skin-Changer

Skin-changers are an offshoot of the larger human race, a group of people with the latent ability to take on the form of small creatures and animals. Although this ability appears to be passed from parent to child like lycanthropic curses, skin-changers have no relation to were-creatures, and occasionally a skin-changer is born to normal human parents. The ability is most similar to the shapeshifting powers of a druid in nature, though limited in scope, and it is thought that skin-changers have a closer connection to nature. But the question of whether this connection exists *because* of these abilities or vice versa remains academic. Even in human form, a skin-changer has subtle traits in their appearance and behavior, such as thick hair and long teeth, sensitive senses of hearing or smell, a tendency to vocalize their thoughts and emotions loudly, and even a penchant for undercooked meat.

Skin-changers have no real culture of their own, as they are relatively few in number. However their abilities and behaviors often drive them to nomadic or gypsy lifestyles, and most skin-changers one encounters will have adopted the cultural ideals of such a group. If a skin-changer is malicious in demeanor or unfortunate in their choice of friends, they may form a Pack -- a group of bandits driven by a perversion of natural instinct, where human cruelty meets the animal will for hunting and survival.

Skin-changer Traits

You begin the game with the following traits:

Ability Scores: +1 to 2 attributes of your choice

Age: You age as humans do

Alignment: Skin-changers are driven more towards chaotic and neutral tendencies

Size: You are more or less the same size as other humans

Speed: Your base walking speed is 30 feet

Languages: You can speak, read, and write Common and 1 other language of your choice.

Skin-changers will often learn the first or second most common language in whatever region they live in as a means of practicality, but some learn sylvan or elven out of an appreciation for nature and the connection to these languages.

Heightened Senses: You have advantage on perception checks in both human and animal form

Slippery Devil: In both human and animal forms, you have advantage on acrobatics checks, but not athletics checks, to escape grapples, restraints, or similar effects.

Shapeshift: Once per short rest, you may use your bonus action to take the form of a tiny creature such as a cat, rat, or squirrel, that does not have a flying speed. You may revert back to human form as a bonus action. In animal form, you are proficient in Stealth even if the animal selected is not. Your equipment becomes part of you in this form, and you cease to gain any benefits from it. You cannot communicate lingually in this form, but you retain your intellect and memories. If you take damage in this form in excess of the selected creature's hit points, you revert back to your human form and any extra damage is applied to your own hit points.

Fleet-Footed: When you shapeshift from animal form to human form and make a melee attack in the same turn, you have advantage on the first attack. When you shapeshift from human form to animal form, opportunity attacks against you have disadvantage until the start of your next turn.

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