

B/X ESSENTIALS

Demihumans of Dolmenwood



Necrotic Gnome

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Foreword

B/X Essentials

B/X Essentials is a modular rules set, 100% compatible with the classic Basic/Expert rules from 1981, laid out for optimum usability as a reference during play.

At the time of writing, the available rule books encompass the entirety of the content in the original Basic/Expert rules. A series of expansion rules modules is planned, seamlessly integrating classes, magic, monsters, and treasures for alternative genres and settings.

Recommended resources:

- [Print, PDF, and plain text editions of the rule books.](#)
- [Rule books in Google Doc format.](#)

A compiled, all-in-one rule book and a boxed set are in production, at the time of writing, to be taken to Kickstarter in 2019.

Dolmenwood

Dolmenwood is a weird, fairy-tale campaign setting for **B/X Essentials** and roleplaying games of similar vintage. The setting describes a murky, mouldy, old forest, criss-crossed with ley lines and paths into Fairy.

Recommended resources:

- [Dolmenwood Referee's Map \(FREE\).](#)
- [Welcome to Dolmenwood \(FREE\).](#)
- [Wormskin Magazine.](#) Each issue describes elements of the setting: character classes, monsters, hex descriptions, setting background, random tables, etc.

A complete **Dolmenwood Campaign Book** is in production, at the time of writing, to be taken to Kickstarter in 2019.

Play Testing

The material in this document represents prototype content from the in-development **Dolmenwood Player's Handbook**. As such, it is intended for use in play tests.

We would be delighted to hear of your experiences using these classes, and of their exploits in your games. The following is especially of interest:

- Are the new classes appealing and fun to play?
- Do they feel balanced compared to the standard B/X classes?
- Do all the mechanical features of the new classes make sense and feel good in play?
- Does all of the above hold true at higher experience levels?

Please send feedback to:

`summon@necroticgnome.com`

Or post in our MeWe group:

`mewe.com/join/necrotic_gnome`

Useful play test feedback will be credited in the final book.

Keep in Touch

For updates on events, the **Dolmenwood Campaign Book**, and other new books, sign up for our newsletter at:

`necroticgnome.com`

Elf (Fairy)

Requirements: Minimum CHA 9, minimum DEX 9, minimum INT 9

Prime Requisite: CHA

Hit Dice: 1d6

Maximum Level: 10

Allowed Armour: Any, including shields

Allowed Weapons: Any

Languages: Alignment language, Woldish, Sylvan, High Elfish

Ageless denizens of Fairy who sometimes cross over into the mortal world for reasons that they seldom reveal. Player character elves are assumed to be rare individuals who spend most of their time in the mortal world—they may be exiles from the undying land or adventurers fascinated by the exotic scents of time, decay, and mortality.

Physically, elves are similar to humans, though they tend to be lithe of frame and fair of face. Despite their surface similarity to mortals, it is always possible to identify an elf for they carry an air of “otherness” about them, seeming somehow more vibrantly present than mortals. Additionally, most elves have at least one physical characteristic that makes them obviously non-human: pointed ears, violet eyes, or iridescent skin are examples of common qualities.

Prime requisite: Contrary to the standard rule, an elf may raise his or her CHA score by point swapping during character creation.

Abilities

Combat: Elves are naturally talented fighters and may use any weapons and armour.

Immortality: Elves can be killed but do not die naturally. They are immune to the mundane illnesses of mortal-kind, but are affected normally by diseases of magical origin (e.g. *cause disease*, lycanthropy, the touch of a mummy). Elves also cannot die of thirst or starvation, though a lack of sustenance drives them insane and sadistic.

Unearthly beauty: Elves—both benevolent and wicked—are beautiful, by mortal standards. For CHA tests based purely on physical attractiveness, an elf is always treated as having a CHA score of at least 14.

Subtle sight: Elves have a 3-in-6 chance of noticing passages to Fairy.

Magic resistance: As beings of Fairy, where magic is in the very fabric of things, elves have an increased resistance to magic. They are immune to sleep spells, gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against charms and illusions, and are unaffected by the paralyzing touch of ghouls.

Glamours: Elves are able to make use of a number of minor magical abilities known as glamours. The number of glamours known by an elf are determined by his or her level and are selected at random. Glamours may be used any number of times per day. (Though mortals regard these abilities as “magic”, elves do not view them as such.)

- 1. *Beguilement:*** The elf’s words have great power over mortal minds. A single mortal, addressed by an elf using this glamour, must save versus spells or believe the elf’s words, if only for a moment. When the moment has passed, it is immediately obvious that a magical deception has occurred.
- 2. *Changeling:*** The elf’s facial features are malleable according to his or her will. Subtle features (e.g. eye colour, hair colour) may be switched in a moment. More dramatic changes take a turn of concentration to effect. It is not possible to duplicate the appearance of another using this glamour.
- 3. *Disguise object:*** An object in the elf’s hand is made to appear as something else (of similar dimensions). The glamour lasts until the object is touched by another being.
- 4. *Moon child:*** The elf’s eyes perceive night as it were day. Even the blackest tomb is perceived as if by gentle moonlight.
- 5. *Seeming:*** The elf may make his or her garb appear as he or she wishes. The glamour is only visual, however, and is revealed by touch.

6. Silver tongue: By using ancient modes of the high elfish tongue, the elf is able to communicate with any being, including dumb animals. This ability may only be used to communicate in one language per day (e.g. one mortal tongue or the speech of one species of animal).

7. Vanishing: The elf disappears from another creature's sight for one round. This glamour may only be used on any individual once per day.

8. Walk in shadows: The elf can walk circuitous pathways between worlds, seemingly stepping out of the mortal world and, moments later, reappearing at a different location. There is a 2-in-6 chance of a suitable shadow door existing in any given 10' by 10' area of darkness. Searching for such a door takes one round. Stepping through a discovered shadow door, the elf disappears for one round, then reappears at a random location within 60'.

Runes: An elf may be granted the use of magical runes by performing services for a fairy lord or lady. See **Favours for the Elf Lords**. An elf may know a maximum number of runes equal to his or her level.

Read magic: Given an hour of solitude, an elf may read magical scripts and runes, as if by the magic-user spell *read magic*.

Magic items: Elves have a natural affinity for the arcane and are able to use any magic item usable by arcane spell casters. This includes casting spells from scrolls (with the use of their *read magic* ability).

Weaknesses

Cold iron: As fairies, elves are vulnerable to iron weapons, suffering double damage on a successful hit.

Silver: Elves find mortal silver base and disgusting. An elf in physical contact with silver is sickened and suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and saving throws.

Resistance to divine aid: There are no gods in Elfland and the gods of mortals are loath to aid its folk. If an elf is the subject of a beneficial divine spell, there is a 2-in-6 chance of it having no effect on the elf.

Reaching 9th Level

Upon reaching 9th level, an elf may establish a stronghold and domain in either the mortal world or Fairy. Elves and other fairies in the region may come to live under the character's rule.

Elf Level Progression

Level	XP	HD	AC0	Glamours	Saving Throws				
					D	W	P	B	S
1	0	1d6	19	1	12	13	13	15	12
2	4,000	2d6	19	2	12	13	13	15	12
3	8,000	3d6	19	3	12	13	13	15	12
4	16,000	4d6	17	3	10	11	11	13	10
5	32,000	5d6	17	4	10	11	11	13	10
6	64,000	6d6	17	5	10	11	11	13	10
7	120,000	7d6	14	6	8	9	9	10	8
8	250,000	8d6	14	6	8	9	9	10	8
9	400,000	9d6	14	7	8	9	9	10	8
10	600,000	9d6+1*	12	8	6	7	8	8	6

* Modifiers from CON no longer apply

AC0: Modified attack roll needed to hit AC 0

Saves: D=death/poison; W=wand; P=paralysis/petrify; B=dragon breath; S=rod/staff/spell

Woodgrue (Demi-Fey)

Requirements: Minimum CHA 9, minimum WIS 9

Prime Requisite: CHA

Hit Dice: 1d6

Maximum Level: 10

Allowed Armour: Leather, no shields

Allowed Weapons: Any, though they prefer clubs and cudgels

Languages: Alignment language, Woldish, Sylvan

Hooting and cavorting through the deeps of Dolmenwood are the capricious, bat-faced goblins known as woodgrues. These little beings have a head and chest coated in soft, downy fur, while the rest of their body appears like that of a child or little man. They are a frivolous and unsavoury lot, known for their gallows humour and enchanting woodwind songs that lure folk down deep trails and into the woods. Humans cautiously welcome these demi-fey into their towns, because they know that barring them entry would only cause greater misfortune. While a woodgrue celebrating is cause for concern, they will only cause grave mischief if slighted.

Prime requisite: Contrary to the standard rule, a woodgrue may raise his or her CHA by point swapping during character creation.

Abilities

Combat: A woodgrue can make use of any weapon in combat, though they are noted for their love of slings, clubs, and cudgels. They will also use musical instruments that do not take their fancy as improvised clubs.

Dark vision: A woodgrue can see normally in darkness, viewing the world as though it glows in faint moonlight.

Hiding: A woodgrue who hides in the woods or in shadows has a 3-in-6 chance of going unnoticed. If they are given a minute, a woodgrue may hide a small object (1' around or smaller) in a cunning location. For anyone else to discover this hidden item, apply the rules for finding secret doors.

Woodwinding: Woodgrues can communicate on the winds by blowing a tune upon a woodwind instrument. Such communications can be heard by all other woodgrues and any indentured servants of the woodgrue within a number of miles equal to the woodgrue's level. Such songs can be heard even in the Otherworld.

Mad revelry: Once per day per level of experience, a woodgrue may play one of the following enchanted melodies on a woodwind instrument, while dancing terribly and hooting like an insane barn animal being skinned alive. Anyone—man, elf, or beast alike—hearing the tune must save versus spells or be afflicted. (Fairies and demi-fey gain a +2 bonus to the save.) The effects last as long as the woodgrue keeps playing.

- **Imbibe!** Subjects ravenously consume any liquids (potable or not), drugs, or mushrooms they have on them. Even if no mind-altering substances are consumed as a result, subjects will act as though drunk, suffering -2 to-hit until the revelry ends.
- **Jubilate!** Subjects burst into irrepressible laughter, preventing them from speech. There is a 1-in-6 chance each round of falling prone in a laughing fit.
- **Dance!** Subjects begin dancing terribly, their footwork following a profane jig that doesn't make any sense. Those affected cannot move while dancing, but gain a +1 to AC.
- **Jape!** Subjects mock the immediately preceding occurrence, be it a deed of words or acts.
- **Confide!** Subjects speak in a slurred voice, confessing a sin or secret about one of their allies or about some deeply hidden emotion.
- **Strip!** Subjects doff clothing and armour.
- **Revel!** Subjects cannot speak, instead they bark out terrible scats of sound, in an attempt to keep up with the woodgrue. Movement speed is halved if they are not headed in the direction of the woodgrue.

- **Mount!** Subjects attempt to mount an adjacent creature, be it friend or foe, and ride it piggyback. If the bottom creature is unwilling, it can buck the rider off, dealing 1d4 damage.

Weaknesses

Code of hospitality: Like other goblins, woodgrues are bound to ancient rites of hospitality and charity. If a woodgrue is invited into a place by way of handwritten invitation or swearing an oath of good behaviour, he or she is unable to use *mad revelry* while within the place.

Cold iron: As demi-fey, woodgrues are vulnerable to iron weapons, suffering double damage on a successful hit.

Compelled to jubilation: A woodgrue who witnesses a party, feast, celebration, or festival must partake; they are utterly compelled with every fibre of their being. If, for some reason, a woodgrue wishes to resist this compulsion, he or she may save versus paralysis (but will feel drained and downtrodden for the length of the engagement).

Silver: While woodgrues appreciate the colour and sheen of silver, they find it horribly uncomfortable to touch. A woodgrue in contact with silver is sickened and suffers a -2 penalty to attacks and saves.



Reaching 9th Level

Upon reaching 9th level, a woodgrue may construct a manse or secret lair. 2d6 1st level woodgrues from the surrounding region will congregate around the PC, accepting him or her as their master.

Woodgrue Level Progression

Level	XP	HD	ACO	Saving Throws				
				D	W	P	B	S
1	0	1d6	19	13	12	14	16	14
2	2,000	2d6	19	13	12	14	16	14
3	4,000	3d6	19	13	12	14	16	14
4	8,000	4d6	19	13	12	14	16	14
5	16,000	5d6	17	11	10	11	14	11
6	32,500	6d6	17	11	10	11	14	11
7	65,000	7d6	17	11	10	11	14	11
8	130,000	8d6	17	11	10	11	14	11
9	250,000	9d6	14	8	7	9	11	9
10	400,000	9d6+1*	14	8	7	9	11	9

* Modifiers from CON no longer apply

ACO: Modified attack roll needed to hit AC 0

Saves: D=death/poison; W=wand; P=paralysis/petrify; B=dragon breath; S=rod/staff/spell

Favours for the Elf Lords

The portion of the mortal world in which Dolmenwood lies is claimed not only by the Duke of Brackenwold, but also falls partly within the dominions of the lords of Elfland. While these ancient and mighty beings are seldom encountered in the mortal realm of Dolmenwood, one who dares tread the perilous paths of Fairy may come to their great castles and treat with them.

Quests

The lords and ladies of Fairy are fickle, wilful, and perilous to deal with, but they sometimes wish to send adventurers on errands or quests. There is, of course, a chance that such quests may be quixotic or imaginary. It is also likely that magical geases will be liberally applied to ensure the trustworthiness of the applicant.

Rewards for Completed Quests

When a character (or adventuring party) completes a quest for an elf lord, the referee should make a reaction roll to determine their reward: 2d6 modified by the character's CHA score and the following factors:

- **Mortal:** -2
- **Demi-fey:** -1
- **Magnitude of service:** +0 (minor favour) to +3 (mighty deed)
- **Experience level 5+:** +1
- **Experience level 10+:** +2

The modified reaction roll indicates the reward granted:

2d6	Reaction
2 or less	Fickle displeasure. No runes.
3-5	One lesser rune.
6-8	One greater rune.
9-10	One greater and one lesser rune.
11	One mighty rune.
12 or more	One mighty, one greater, and one lesser rune.

Elf Runes

One who completes a quest for an elf lord, however petty or grand, may be granted knowledge of an *elf rune* — one of the secret, magical sigils guarded by the lords of Elfland. Note that elf runes are not physical objects — they are magical blessings that may only be granted by fairy lords and ladies. Each rune has strict limits on the number of times it may be used by the one on whom it is bestowed.

Limit on Possessed Runes

As noted in the description of the elf class, individuals of that race may possess up to one elf rune per level of experience. Non-elves may only ever possess a single elf rune.

Using Runes

Activating the power of a rune takes a mere thought. Unlike normal spell casting, this cannot be disrupted in melee.

Rune Usage Frequency

The frequency with which a rune may be used is determined by the magnitude of the rune and the experience level of the character who possesses it. See the table opposite.

Common Runes

Certain runes may be granted by all elf lords. These common runes duplicate the effects of magic-user or cleric spells or magic items.

- **Lesser:** *Charm person, sleep.*
- **Greater:** *Charm monster, invisibility, dispel magic.*
- **Mighty:** *Raise dead, wish (as per a ring of wishes).*

Special Runes

Some elf lords possess special runes known only to them, which they can grant to those who aid them. The special runes known by a selection of elf lords are listed to the right.

Rune Usage Frequency

Rune Power	Character Level		
	1-4	5-9	10+
Lesser	Once per day	Twice per day	Thrice per day
Greater	Once per experience level	Once per week	Once per day
Mighty	Once ever	Once ever	Once per year

Special Runes

Duke Mai-Fleur

Summon Wild Hunt

This *mighty rune*, when used, invokes the blasting of ghostly hunting horns, summoning forth a hunting host from the wild woods of Diuthurina (the Duke's dominion in Fairy).

The Wild Hunt is composed as follows:

- 4d6 fairy hounds.
- 4d20 elf hunters on foot.
- 4d20 elf hunters mounted on fairy horses.
- 1d6 goblin hornblowers.

The owner of the rune may direct the host to chase a specific quarry. The host remains in the mortal realm until the hunt is successful, or until 1d6 hours have passed.

The Duke Who Cherishes Dreams

Dream Ship

This *mighty rune* summons a phantasmagoric galleon, which sails down from the sky and docks as close to the summoner as is possible. The summoner and up to 12 companions may board the ship and be carried off to any named destination within Dolmenwood. The passengers experience a delightful voyage aboard the ship, drifting through pink clouds and encountering sylphs. Whatever the perceptual time aboard, the journey takes a mere ten minutes of real time.

The Earl of Yellow

Emissary of the Earl

This *greater rune* summons a great, golden wolf, equipped with saddle and bridle. The beast will serve its summoner until dawn.

Golden Wolf: HD 4+1, AC 7, Att 1 × bite (1d8), MV 180' (60'), AI N.

Fairy Gold

Using this *greater rune* conjures 2d100 gold coins from the Earl's mint. They vanish after 1d6 hours.

The Lady of Spring Unending

Deathly Blossom

This *lesser rune* conjures an exquisite, white rose. One who smells the rose must **save versus death** or fall into a deep faint—appearing dead—for 1d6 turns.

The flower remains in existence until it is used or one turn passes.

Eternal Slumber

This *mighty rune* puts a mortal into a state of stasis and eternal sleep. They may only be awoken by magic or by a condition set by the one who wields the rune.

Rune of Death

This *mighty rune* brings death to up to 4d8 Hit Dice of creatures within a 60' cube area. Each target may **save versus death** to resist. Undead and creatures with greater than 7 Hit Dice are unaffected.

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In these moss-encrusted pages ye shall find two brand new, quirky, fairy-tale character classes straight from the hoary glades of Dolmenwood. Slot them into your **B/X Essentials** games!

- **The elf:** Natives of Fairy, who may venture into the mortal world out of curiosity or a sense of adventure. The fairy elves of Dolmenwood are very different from the standard B/X elf class, both in terms of character and class abilities.
- **The woodgrue:** Bat-faced goblins who once dwelt in Fairy, but are now denizens of the mortal world. They love music, feasting, and arson.



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