

Kobold Story

A Role Playing Game by Ilya Bossov

Once upon a time, there was a happy shiny town. You don't live there. And around that town grew a happy shiny beautiful forest. You don't live there, either. And near that forest, there was a happy shiny beautiful majestic mountain. Nope, not there either, but getting close. You see, under the mountain there sprawled a network of dark stinky moldy caves. That's the home, sweet home of your Kobold tribe. You rent the place from the necromancer downstairs. He's tough, but fair. The rent is usually services rendered, such as keeping happy shiny heroes from disturbing his work, but on occasion he demands a “volunteer” to feed his other minions. Don't be that guy.

Tribe Creation

Collectively decide on the tribe's name. Shouting helps. Then roll 1d6 for each player and the Game Master, then sum them up. That's how many Kobolds are in your tribe. Keep track of this number. It counts down to defeat.

Kobold Creation

A Kobold's life is short and violent. Each player (except the Game Master) must make a new Kobold at the start of the game and every time their previous Kobold dies. Each time this happens, subtract 1 from the tribe. At 0, the tribe faces extinction, as the players are the last Kobolds left.

To make a new Kobold, write down one advantage and one disadvantage the Kobold has over its peers. For example, “hemophiliac berserker”, “invisible but blind”, “obese chief of the tribe”, “can fly but has fear of heights” are all valid pairs. Imagination is the limit.

Then you roll 1d6. That's your hit points. Give the Kobold a name and join your friends.

You can do anything!

Kobolds have the blood of dragons, but they need superior numbers to face any challenge taller than a 4 year old Human. When a Kobold faces a challenge, the Game Master announces whether it is Easy (1d6), Hard (2d6) or Legendary (3d6). The player rolls 1d6, then the Game Master rolls the challenge dice, adding them together. If the player wins the die roll, he succeeds. Otherwise, he takes the difference between the player's die roll and GM's dice roll as damage taken due to mishaps. If you lose all your hit points, you die.

Before the Game Master rolls the dice, however, other Kobolds may contribute to the result by using Teamwork! Each other Kobold who joins the team also rolls a die. The team then picks the best die from the dice rolled, and adds +1 to it for each team member. If the team fails, they distribute the failure damage among themselves.

Every time a team succeeds on a test, each team member earns 1 XP. Every time a Kobold survives a team failure, that Kobold earns 2 XP. If a Kobold attempts a test without a team, that Kobold earns no XP. Kobolds are a social species.

Fight or Flight

Kobolds treat any fight as a challenge. A Kobold-sized creature is Easy, a Human-sized creature is Hard, and anything bigger or scarier is Legendary. If two Kobolds fight over something, they just roll dice at each other until one of them gives up or dies trying to surrender.

Advantages and Disadvantages

If a Kobold faces a challenge where their advantage is applicable, that Kobold rolls two dice and picks the best one. If the Kobold's disadvantage applies, that Kobold rolls two dice and picks the worst. If both apply, then they cancel each other out. The Game Master decides whether any given advantage or disadvantage is applicable to the situation.

Learning Stuff

When a Kobold's XP is equal to or higher than his maximum hitpoints, he can level up by spending all XP to gain an extra hitpoint and pick another advantage.

Resting

A good day's rest (Kobolds are nocturnal) heals all of the Kobold's hit points. Kobolds can't rest alone – they must be back with the tribe to take shifts on guard duty. It's instinctual.

Making Kobold Babies

When a tribe survives a mission (those are usually given by the landlord), and retires to rest for the day, any Kobold that has leveled up that night can trade XP they earned since leveling up to add new members to the tribe, 1 XP per baby Kobold. Congratulations on your litter. Momma!

For Game Master Eyes Only: Mission Ideas

Another day, another group of adventurers are climbing down your hole in search of treasure. Treasure! What is this treasure they speak of? Surely they don't mean Kobold eggs? To arms brothers and sisters! We must protect our home!

The Necromancer demands you go to Happyshinyton and bring him a Human virgin for something or other. The virgin must be alive. You haven't the foggiest what “virgin” means, but he looked too grumpy to ask.

The ghost of the last “volunteer” to feed the Necromancer's pets is haunting the caves! It's spooking the sentries and the babies and nobody can get any rest until that ghost does. But what does it want? It speaks a warning... a prophecy! “When the tree sings and the rock weeps, the tyrant flees and frees the meek!”

The Necromancer is losing his marbles. Someone ate the list of required reagents he gave you earlier and nobody could read it anyway. Now he demands a bucket of spider venom, three frozen giggles and a pound of silk. Why does he go crazy during every thunderstorm?