

# The Dwarves

## Background

### People

The Dwarves are similar in appearance to humans, but they are shorter & stockier. They tend to be as broadly (or more broadly) built as a human, but Dwarves rarely achieve much more than five feet in height. Dwarven men invariably wear beards, and the hair of both men and women is worn long unless their specific task makes it unwieldy. They are the only people on Torok who habitually wear metal armor, and they pride themselves on their endurance and strength, claiming the lesser races have forsaken the practice due to their own weakness.

Dwarves speak their own language in addition to speaking either Marotian or Tradespeak. They have innate resistance's to poison and magic. Most Dwarves also suffer from a profound fear of the Changed world. Their culture values tradition and constancy and the Changed world Offers them neither. Most Dwarves live in underground cities where they are (they believe) shielded from the horrors Of the Changed world by their Marotian allies.

### History

Dwarven history is among the longest written histories in the world and the Dwarves pride themselves on knowing and recording it. The first written Dwarven records are over two thousand years old, and some of the original documents still survive. The history of the Dwarves is pretty simple.

They believe they were created from the Earth itself by a deity they call the all-father. This deity then created the Other Gods from the original Dwarves and passed special knowledge to them. These original Dwarves became the members of the Dwarven pantheon as it is known today. The rest of their history is fairly straight-forward and

primarily factual.

They know their forefathers traveled here from another continent about seven hundred years ago and were allied with the Marotians. The Marotians were traders and middlemen, exactly the things Dwarves weren't very skilled at. They had discovered mineral deposits, but they couldn't mine them, as even then the Marotians were not skilled at such tasks. An alliance was born; the Dwarves would provide the Marotians with the gold and with some limited smith work; in return, the Marotians would take one coin in ten to the Dwarven king under his mountain. This worked reasonably well, and the Dwarves worked hard and enjoyed their lives much as Dwarves do.

When the wars broke out, the Dwarves stayed neutral and traded with everyone, not deigning to lower themselves to interfere in mere human squabbles. When their long-standing allies, the Marotians were forced from their lands, the Dwarves faced a terrible decision. Never in their long history had they been on a side that lost without hope of regaining ground, and they were none too happy about it now. Still, they valued constancy and they retreated from some of the claims on the coast to new inland claims.

The first word the Dwarves had of the Change came from travelers and gadabouts in their own clans. There were stories of fierce man-eating beasts and even killer plants. The Dwarves, never very fond of the outside world, were hardly surprised; after all, the old tales told of such things, and the old tales never lied. The Dwarves were very concerned by this turn of events and even more concerned when they learned that the Change could affect people.

At first, the King was certain that Dwarves were safe, owing to their hardier souls, but he was incorrect. Actually, Dwarves turned out be somewhat more susceptible than some of the other races, though none could explain this phenomena. The Dwarven king resolved to close his kingdom and pull the gates in behind him lest his people disappear from the world altogether.

The Marotians came though, and they offered a bargain. Like the Dwarves, they were on the move, and they were scared about this change. They thought the Dwarves might have food and wanted to share in it. They offered to provide guidance and protection from the dangers of the Changed world in return-for the assistance of the Dwarves. The King accepted their offer, and so the pact was struck.

The Marotians and the Dwarves have now lived as peaceful neighbors for four hundred years. Most of the Dwarves believe the Marotians fight a near constant battle against both internal and external threats. They're glad the Marotians are on their side. For the Marotians, the agreement is wonderful — they do no extra work and get a lot done by the Dwarves that they'd otherwise have to do themselves.

## Culture

Culturally, the Dwarves are a nation of independent craftsmen. With the Change outside, the ranks of the Dwarven army are greatly depleted, since warriors are generally only needed against the monsters sometimes found in the great depths. The crafters rule the Dwarves, followed by priests. Officially, the army and its warriors are still very important, but in day-to-day power, they have lost most of their glory and honor.

Dwarves pride themselves on their traditions and are committed to maintaining them. Dwarves never do something just to see what will happen, although they are not stagnant. They are willing to accept new ideas and techniques, as long as they can see the roots of the old way in them. This dedication to the old order and resistance to change is at the roots of the Dwarven hatred and fear of the outside. The world out there is not orderly and is full of new things, some of which have no history whatsoever.

Dwarves do not like to have things one way and then another; they are legendary for their stubbornness. Likewise, no Dwarf likes to have to change his statement. They don't lie often, but when they do, no force on Torok can make a Dwarf admit it. Similarly, Dwarves do not apologize for their words or actions; to do so would be to say they were wrong, and Dwarves would not say such a thing. The best one can hope for is for a Dwarf to admit that the situation has changed, even if he was wrong. Dwarves do not enter into friendships or agreements easily, but they almost never break them once their word is given.

The Dwarves, although strong allies of the Marotians, see the Marotians as a culture in peril. They are making too many changes too quickly and without enough investigation into the outcome of their changes. Dwarves work with the Marotians to craft many of their inventions, for the Marotians often have more vision than skill. The Dwarves do not do all that the Marotians ask though, for some of it violates the old ways and most Dwarves will not do that.

Dwarven society is basically patronymic, with the average Dwarf able to name his father's father for several generations. The leaders of the various clans in a city serve as a council and then one of their number serves as Prince. In the current arrangement, most of the Dwarves in each city are from the same clan, and the largest clan typically rules with the others forced to go along. The only major sticking point for the Dwarves is communication with the other settlements.

The Dwarves are eager to make contact with the Other Dwarves of Marotia and for the moment, rely on their Marotian friends to convey messages from city to city. Some Dwarves say this is not good enough. They wish to see the members of their own clans again, but this is not generally possible. Most Marotians would not take a Dwarf from one city to another (technically, it is illegal to do so) and most Dwarves would not be willing to make the trip.

There are, however, some Dwarves who have overcome their fear of the outside well enough to travel. These few are seen as violators of the old ways, for most are perceived to prefer the sky to stone, and that is a great wrong. Very few Dwarves trust these surface dwellers, and the stories they tell are not helpful. They claim the world is not so dangerous and the Marotians not such good friends, two things that most Dwarves do not believe. There is some question about the normally intelligent Dwarves not being willing to entertain these thoughts. Some attribute it to their legendary stubbornness.

## Government

Each of the four cities of the Marotians has a Dwarven settlement associated with it and the four settlements are each run by one of four powerful clans. Other clans may live within the same settlement, but this is increasingly rare, since the Dwarves do not travel much. Their interaction between clans is run by messengers from the Marotians and is not particularly good as the Marotians try to control information as much as possible and so do not always deliver accurate responses or news.

There is a faction among the Dwarves that is beginning to see the Marotians as a plague on the Dwarves, but it is small and secretive. Very few Dwarves know of its existence and those that do whisper of connecting the clans and reclaiming the world. Most Dwarves, with their fear of the surface, find the clans ideas unsettling, but that could change over time.

## Settlements

Dwarves are known to exist in only four settlements, that of Clan Kazdur in Marotia, Clan Farak in Dalish, Clan Baktol in Garleth, and Clan Hektal in Farvoia. Each of these clans is remarkably similar with a patriarch at the top and his brothers occupying most positions of importance. There are rumors that Kazdur and Farak have completed underground passages to connect their clans, but these are firmly denied by both sides. In general, the Dwarves of each clan are similar to their Marotian brethren — they are more concerned with their clan than with their people

## Technology

The Dwarves are beneficiaries of many of the advances of the N4arotians. Their farmers have benefited from improvements in fungus techniques and in the keeping of fish and other animals. Their craftsmen are often called upon to work on the latest projects the Marotians have devised, as Marotian craftsmen are usually not as skilled and sometimes have their own egos to contend with.

Their love of tradition, coupled with fewer threats, means that they have not progressed much in weapons and armor technology from the earlier years, and they still use middle ages technology. They have seen and are capable of making firearms and the new lighter swords, but they see no use for them and so market them only for export.

## Arts

Dwarves appreciate beauty just as the other races do, although in some cases beauty is in the eye of the beholder. To a Dwarf, any finely crafted object, from an exquisite painting to a tavern cup, can be beautiful. What matters most is the quality of the work, not its aesthetic values.

For purely decorative objects, the Dwarves rely primarily on stones and gems, although painting is beginning to catch on. The Dwarves are the acknowledged masters in stone carving, gold smithing, and gem cutting. Dwarven jewelry is the most beautiful in the world, and many Marotians visit the Dwarven Clans to acquire a trinket or two. The Dwarves make such items purely as trade goods; their own jewelry designs tend to be much heavier and thicker; not delicate enough for Marotians.

Dwarves are not great musicians, but they do passably well. Their music usually takes the form of chants and marches; there are no Dwarven airs. Most Dwarven music is either used to mark time or record history, although a few love ballads do exist. Dwarven singers are far too coarse for Marotians, and their instruments are too clumsy. Dwarves use primarily percussive instruments, along with a few simple horns. Dwarves do have their own version of "classical music", music played without singing purely for its own beauty. Such songs usually reverberate with the richness of the earth. They are played in special concert halls on special instruments like pipe organs and kettle drums.

## Leisure and Recreation

Dwarves do very few activities for the sheer joy of it; they find their work enjoyable enough. They do have a few games they enjoy playing, but most of them are fairly simple and incomprehensible to non-Dwarves. Dwarves of Clan Hektal have begun playing Kehlal, the Marotian game, but they see little point to it other than being neighborly. Some common Dwarven games include:

**Trivia** - Dwarves are fond of trivia games including general and specific topics — clan, skill and historic trivia are the most popular.

**Fishing** - Dwarves enjoy fishing in underwater streams and pools for its own sake — it is a demonstration of patience and craft to catch a large fish.

**Labyrinth** - played by both adults and children, labyrinth pits either individuals or teams against each other in a maze. For children, it's always a race to test skills and escape. Sometimes adults include elements of mock combat.

## Fashion

Dwarves prefer function over form in almost all cases. This doesn't mean their clothing can't be attractive, but it does mean that they would never use a fabric that wouldn't take wear or sew on more (or less) buttons than are needed to secure the garment. Their clothing is simple, sturdy, and well-made. The colors tend to be shades of gray and stone. Any other colors would be heavily muted or washed out.

Dwarves often wear jewelry to decorate their clothing. Most Dwarves wear a clan pin showing their family. These pins can become very ornate, with the complexity of the design reflecting the relative status of the wearer of the pin. The stone at the center of the pin identifies the clan.

Members of certain guilds and clubs may also wear jewelry denoting their membership and rank. In this case, the symbolism is reversed; the symbol of the smith's guild is a hammer, and the usual pin is a simple hammer of silver. A leader of the guild might embellish the pin with gems or special filigree, but the shape must remain the same. Some Dwarves combine the two, wearing a guild pin with a clan stone, but this is rare.

As mentioned earlier, Dwarven men invariably wear beards. These beards are usually worn chest length, although some elders may grow them much longer. They are usually kept trim and neat, without any special braiding or other adornment. Likewise, Dwarves do not usually adorn their hair in any way, preferring a straight fall to anything else.

## Politics

Dwarven society is not particularly political. The clan elders sometimes disagree with the decisions made by the settlement's Prince, but there aren't enough members of any of the alternate clans to challenge his authority. If the clans were to somehow be reunited under a king, or if there were to be enough non-majority clan Dwarves in a settlement, that might change.

The Dwarves basically believe the Marotians are in a constant state of readiness against attack by enemy forces. They are grateful to their Marotian allies because their readiness allows the Dwarves to devote more time to other pursuits. Generally, the Dwarves would side with the Marotians in any conflict, including one against a rival Dwarven clan.

The reliance of the Dwarves on Marotian messengers means the Dwarves have almost no secrets from the Marotians. Additionally, the Marotians have been known to deliver garbled or wholly inaccurate messages in order to keep the Dwarves guessing. This occasional stirring of the pot has left most clans feeling that only they still follow the old ways. In truth, the four Dwarven settlements are all very similar, more similar than any two Marotians settlements.

## Societies, Orders & Groups

Like their Marotian counterparts, the Dwarves are organized into guilds dedicated to specific crafts and arts. These guilds usually have relations with one or more human guilds, although they try to remain apolitical, especially as compared to their surface-dwelling friends.

There are two other Dwarven groups of note, both of which are very political. The first is the group known as Dwarves Deep, a secret group led by the worshippers of Muamman and dedicated to the creation of safe passages between the clans. Their work is difficult as it must be done in secret and because most of their members fear the surface. They sometimes communicate through coded messages carried by Marotians and are also believed to be allied with some surface races including the Tribals and the K'Pak.

The other group is the Blue Sky movement, and they advocate a return to the surface world by the Dwarves. They believe that the Marotians have kept them down and will continue to do so. They do not believe all the stories they've been told, and they consider the Marotians to be soft; real Dwarves would not have to fear the surface world if only they could see it. Their membership is small still, but it does include a number of worshippers of Clangeddin and, strangely enough, Kravek.

## Religion

The Dwarves still worship many of the Gods they worshipped before the change, although there have been some changes. There are five Gods in the pantheon, all of whom answer to Kravek the mountain king. In modern Dwarven society, most worship either Kravek, Berronar or Dumathoin. Clangeddin and Muamman are both seen as declining Gods and their worship is confined to less than 10% of the population between them. Muamman, in particular, is seen as a useless God and there are some legends that tell of his death while others say he has a disease and is dying. The inclusion of Kravek in the Marotian pantheon is seen by some Dwarves as a sign of their importance in Marotian society; Others view it as a half-hearted attempt to achieve final vengeance on the Dwarves.

The Dwarven Gods are:

**Kravek, the Mountain King** - leader of the Gods and provider of safety, laws and the very sustenance of life. He is at least placated by every Dwarf.

**Berronar**, the mistress of hearth, home, safety and married love. She represents all the best things of home and is increasingly important in the Dwarven pantheon. She may one day eclipse even her husband in importance.

**Dumathoin**, the keeper of secrets - originally seen as the force which puts valuable metals in the mountains Dumathoin has also become the God of knowledge and skilled crafts, for it is he who reveals these secrets to the Dwarves who are worthy.

**Clangeddin Silverbeard** - the Father of Battle is still worshipped by some Dwarven warriors who see him as an embodiment of Dwarven stoicism and heroics in battle.

**Muamman** is the finder and keeper of the ways - he is the God of adventurous Dwarves and of those who travel. His worship is limited to less than 1% of the Dwarven population. It is rumored that he and his followers are behind attempts to unite the clans.

## Passages

For the Dwarves, nearly every major event in life is accompanied by a ceremony of some sort. There are also ceremonies throughout the year to commemorate various historical events and personages. Finally, there are ceremonies held to recognize the achievements of specific crafts and professions.

**Birth** - the day of birth for a Dwarf is very important. Each day is associated with specific omens and legends, and it is believed that these ancestors will guide the young Dwarf. Dwarven babies are always named immediately at birth and keep their name throughout their life. It is common for the parents to receive gifts appropriate to child care when a baby is due.

**Coming of Age** - for Dwarves, coming of age is always 45. On this day, the young Dwarf is given his own tools for the first time. The tools are not usually of the best quality or the most complete — they give the youngster something to work for. In most cases, if the Dwarf is male, he moves out of his parents' house and into his own. For females, they are usually provided for by their father even if they have careers of their own.

**Marriage** - When Dwarves marry, they marry for life. A newlywed couple is usually given gifts by their close friends. The wedding ceremony and any celebration following it are paid for equally by the parents of the couple.

**Death** - When a Dwarf dies, his deeds are recorded in a special book held by the matriarch of the clan. This is the one area where the women are in charge. The body is usually interred in a stone grave, and then sealed over with a plaque naming the Dwarf, a few of his most famous deeds, and the time of his birth, marriage, and death. Following this, there is a brief mourning period amongst his close friends and family. This period usually ends when the next couple announces an impending baby. Dwarves believe that their spirits are reborn. It is common for the deceased's family to give a gift to the new baby; usually something the deceased considered very important.

## Playing a Dwarven Character

### Common Roles

Dwarves are not commonly found as adventurers; they tend to stay underground with only a brave (or crazy) few ever venturing into the outside world. On the whole, Dwarves have better sense than most party members and are likely to be prepared for a variety of circumstances (they like to have the gear on hand to maintain the status quo). They are better strategic than tactical planners, and are prone to over-preparing if given a chance. The words "close enough" are not normally in the Dwarven vocabulary.

Dwarves make excellent warriors as well, and their heavy armor can make them a match for many of the dangers of Torok. Many Dwarven adventurers serve as the lead combatant in a group. They do not do well as the leader of a group, since they don't like to make the sort of rash decisions which can be required.

Dwarves can also do a good job as scouts, particularly some priests and thieves. They are unmatched in their skill with stone constructions and can be invaluable as tomb raiders and archeologists. Finally, Dwarven priests are usually good healers and occasionally excellent scouts.

### Adventuring Archetypes

Dwarven adventurers are nearly always outcasts from Dwarven society. The very gift which allows them the freedom to walk outside makes them aliens in their own society. For their part, many Dwarven adventurers don't understand this; it's not their fault the others are afraid. Some adventurers turn on their old clans while others dream of returning to them in victory.

**Searchers** - Searchers are looking for someone or something, usually in order to meet or learn about that thing. The most common search is for other clans or hidden settlements, but some search for a legendary person.

**Avengers** - Avengers have been wronged by someone in the past and they seek to find that person and punish them. In rare cases, a Dwarves will be trying to recover some stolen item; more often, they seek Only to harm the party who harmed them.

**Brash Youth** - The strain of living under oppressive clan leaders or too much tradition can sometimes cause a young Dwarf to feel the need for some space. Most brash youths eventually turn into one of the other archetypes, depending on their adventuring experience.

**Ambassador** - Some Dwarves live with the conviction that all the clans should be united and they adventure hoping to meet the other clans and to somehow unite them all. In Some cases, these Dwarves are hoping to become king of the united clans, but not always.

**Pathfinder** - These Dwarves believe that the key to uniting the clans is establishing a safe, secure passage between the various settlements. They seek to find all the settlements and then begin the construction of safe pathways between them. In most cases, they are hampered by the need to make the path completely underground

**Axe-grinder** - These Dwarves are convinced that the Marotians are the embodiment of evil and of all that is wrong with the dwarves today. They seek to gather evidence to prove to their clan leader that the Marotians are taking advantage of them.

**Emulator** - Some Dwarves who are exiled wind up hating their own Dwarven nature. They reject as much of their culture as they can and embrace some other culture, most often Marotian, as their own. In many cases, these Dwarves come to know more about the culture than a normal member of it ("more Marotian than Marotian"). Some of these characters truly reject all that is Dwarven; others, less bitter, try to forge a blend of the two cultures.

### Role-Playing Hints

Dwarves like things to stay as they are. They tend not to initiate changes but can be valuable once a change starts. Dwarves make plans, contingency plans, plans within plans and... all with the goal of making things go exactly as

they thought they would. For a Dwarf, it's best if things go exactly right. Barring that, they'll settle for things ending up exactly right.

Dwarves do not apologize for their actions and they consider apologies, especially profuse ones to be embarrassing. They do not ask for apologies either and rarely acknowledge them if issued. To a Dwarf, the hardest thing is to admit you're wrong. In most cases, a Dwarf who wrongs someone will work to set it right without ever saying he did something wrong in the first place.

Dwarves like to think about the past and the future. They carefully analyze everything they do with an eye towards doing it better the next time. They do not usually tell others the results of this analysis. If a Dwarf is in a party and some characters do not follow the agreed plan or hold up their end of the bargain, he will tell them about it in no uncertain terms. Dwarves do not join or leave groups lightly, nor do they make friends lightly. Most non-Dwarves attach little significance to the statement "This is my friend", but to a Dwarf it is profound.

## Relations

**Marotians** - The Dwarves see the Marotians as their good friends and staunchest allies. They tend to turn a blind eye to any abuses the Marotians might engage in. Likewise, in any battle, the Dwarves would do what they could to aid their Marotian friends.

**Tribals** - To Dwarves, the tribal humans are the embodiment Of the Change and therefore both frightening and dangerous. Dwarves rarely see any Tribals, but their legends and tales say that Tribals are dangerously unstable and should not be trusted, a fear the Marotians have gone to great lengths to instill.

**Avariel** - the Dwarves have heard tales of the Avariel only from the Marotians; there is no known case Of an Avariel entering a Dwarven city. The two races embrace opposite environments and opposite views Of the Marotians.

**Wanak** - the Dwarves are also largely unaware of the Wanak. There are records of a minstrel called Drums in Darkness who did not understand the truth and tried to convince the Dwarves that the outer world was safe and the Marotians were not their friends.

## Creating a Dwarven Character

### Naming Conventions

Dwarves generally have a personal name combined with a series of patronymics. Dwarven given names tend to be ancestral, so that most Dwarves will have at least one ancestor with the same name. The patronymic part of the name usually includes a number of stock phrases intended to identify the Dwarf (and perhaps glorify his heritage).

Some typical phrases include:

- **Son of** - just what it says
- **Grandson of** - again, just what it says
- **Blood of** - usually refers to a more distant ancestor; less honorable Dwarves may use it to refer to an uncle or cousin.
- **Line of** - refers to an ancestor by marriage; the character's spouse is actually related to the person named.

Dwarves who accomplish great deeds may have an epithet added to their name; most often, this epithet replaces the patronymic name. When citing patronyms, only the personal name of the relative is used in most cases. Most Dwarves will cite at least their own father and grandfather. Some cite their mothers as well, especially if her blood line is better.

### Racial Abilities

**Height:** Dwarven males start at a height of 43 inches, female 41 inches. Both modify this with the roll of a single d10.

**Weight:** Dwarven males start at 135 lbs., females at 120. Both modify this with the roll of 4d8.

**Age:** Dwarves begin at 40 + 5d6 years. They live to about 350 years of age.

Dwarves have the following common abilities & statistics:

- Infravision to 60'
- Resistance to Poison (+1/3.5 pts of Constitution (Constitution/Fitness))
- Resistance to Magic (+1/3.5 pts of Constitution (Constitution/Fitness))
- Resistance to Mind-altering effects that would change their mind or plan 1+1 per five points of Wisdom is +1, 2-10 is +2, etc. This is in addition to any normal saving throw bonus for high Wisdom (Wisdom/Willpower).
- Fear of the open sky (Must make a wisdom check at 1/2 every turn or collapse)
- Endurance (as the proficiency)

## Character Class

Dwarves may become Fighters of up to 9th level. They can become Clerics of T level, Specialty priests of up to 1 level, and Thieves of unlimited level. They may also become Bards of up to 9th level, although their spells are limited to those in the schools of song and universal magic

## Equipment

Dwarven characters have access to the weapons & armor as listed under the Hundred Years War 122) with the following exceptions:

- Bows are not available; Dwarves prefer crossbows
- Dwarves generally use size S or fast weapons only in their off-hand. The only exception to this is the short sword.
- Lances are, of course, unknown.
- Armor is unlimited and most Dwarves wear the heaviest armor they can afford..

Like the Marotians, they have access to the Renaissance equipment list (DMG, p53,) with some exceptions as noted below:

- None of the listed animals or associated equipment are available.
- Waterborne vessels are not available.
- Ignore any weapons or armor entries on the table.

In addition, Dwarves may purchase and use a number of unique pieces of equipment, including:

**Sextant** - a device used to determine the angle and depth of a tunnel. The side of the device mounts a level. When used in conjunction with a knowledge of mathematics it can be invaluable for determining depth underground.

**Compass** - a relatively simple device consisting of a magnetized needle floating in a viscous fluid. It always points in the same direction. Many models include marks on the rim to allow more precise usage.

**Healing Salve** - this powder is a mixture of various minerals and several fungi. When mixed with water it becomes a thick, phosphorescent gel. When applied to a wound this salve heals 1d3 points of damage. When used, this substance causes a very painful burning which effectively cauterizes the wound. The Marotians ridicule it's use, making jokes about slathering mud upon your wounds. The Dwarves just shake their heads and mutter about their lack of iron.

**Farak Pistol** These flintlock pistols are made of solid steel, with the hardware being made as sturdy as possible. They have proven unpopular with the Marotians as they are "lacking anything resembling style". In fact, if given proper maintenance they are much more reliable than Marotian firearms. They do 1d8/1d8, but only misfire 1 time in 20.

## Dwarven Legends, Heroes, Celebrities, and Landmarks