

The Complete
Guide to
DROW

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The Complete Guide to DROW

\$13.00^{usa}



**NO ADVENTURER IS SAFE
WHILE THE DARK ELVES
STILL PROWL THE
UNDERDARK**

*This definitive sourcebook opens the
door to a new world of power and intrigue...*

Drow are the most feared denizens of the underdark, and with good reason. Since the civil war that first exiled the dark elves under the earth, they have been forced to fight for survival in a hostile environment. Watched over by dark gods with cruel ambitions, the drow have spent thousands of years evolving into scheming, power-hungry warlords. This book tells their story.

The Complete Guide to Drow is a stand-alone, world-neutral sourcebook covering everything you ever wanted to know about drow. It focuses on aspects of the drow that escape coverage in conventional sources. You'll learn about:

- Drow mutations and half-breeds, including the half-demon shur and half-goblin urbam.
- The secretive professions found only amongst the drow: the demon-calling Keepers, the shadowy Dark Blades, the perverse Blood Druids, the half-machine Adamantine Soldiers, and others.
- The magic, equipment, poisons, and feats of the drow.
- The subterranean society of the drow, including the horrific war machines they build from the hollowed-out shells of giant beetles.

The Complete Guide to Drow is 100% stand-alone and world-neutral. It can be integrated easily into any fantasy setting.



Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons®,
Third Edition Core Books,
and the Psionics Handbook,
published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
This product utilizes updated material
from the v.3.5 revision.

GMG 3006



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The Complete Guide to DROW

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*Dedicated to T. Jane McDevitt, mom to me
and entirely too many other people around
here! April 1, 1934- September 9, 2003*



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Introduction

The fierce drow have haunted the history of the elves since time immemorial. Those surface-dwellers brave enough to venture into the dark realms underground always find an unfriendly reception from the hated dark elves. Few return to the lands of the sun and sky to share their terrible tales of the perverted drow world. In the underworld, the drow are known as among the cruelest creatures in an already cruel land. They compete with the vile derro and corrupt duergar in an eternal struggle for dominance in a place where ferocity is the only option for survival. Their use of slaves and fondness of the fighting pits make them feared by all whom they would war against, and most defenders would rather kill themselves than be taken alive by the drow. Even the great powers of the underworld respect the drow, and sometimes fear them outright, for their sorcerous talents go unmatched by most other races.

This book offers a complete guide to including the feared drow in your campaign, whether as characters or monsters. Everything you need to role-play drow in your campaign is included, from social structure and cultural habits to combat strategies and new character options. Players will find a wealth of new ways to field drow, and GMs will discover several new opportunities for encounters. The Complete Guide to Drow is world-neutral and stand-alone, so the information found within can be integrated easily in any campaign.

Chapter One Origins and Physiology

There are many conflicting stories as to the origins of the drow. The elves of the surface tell one story, and the drow tell another. There are regional variations, and clerics of some deities proclaim one truth while other clerics speak differently. Regardless of the details, one thing is certain: all elves, including the drow, were once one people. The wars that drove them apart were the beginning of an eons-old hatred.

The wars that ripped the elven nations asunder were known as the Kindred Wars. During the years before these conflicts, a select group of alpine elves grew in power. They began to sing their battle hymns to the darkest gods then known to the elves. They called themselves the ben'docian, and they were tall, fierce, and proud. They clung to the cliffs and crags of their mountainside citadels, raining terror and death down on the grey and high elves that assaulted them. The other elves called the ben'docians the drouin, or "dark elves."

As the Kindred Wars progressed, and the drouin began to call even darker powers from the depths of the chaotic Abyss, humans and dwarves allied with the other elves to exterminate this hated foe. The drouin fortresses were shattered by the combined strength of the mighty human, dwarven, and elven armies that chased the merciless drow, as the humans called them, from the mountains.

As the years stretched into decades, the drow searched for a place to call home. They split into three nations. One of these nations settled in the tropical jungles, and another in the arid deserts. They soon fell back to the nomadic ways of their ancestors. They still had the six-foot height, purple eyes, and platinum blonde hair of the ben'docian, but they exhibited changes as they conformed to their new environments.

The ben'docian of the jungle began to develop green skin. Their ears elongated, almost becoming double their original size. They dis-

covered that their attunement to arcane magic was beginning to shift to a more nature-based aspect. They still called to the dark gods for guidance and support, but of these dark powers few answered them. Their strength increased, even as their numbers began to dwindle from constant attacks by dinosaurs, aranea, and other elves. Soon the last of the true ben'docian elves died off, leaving a legacy of forgotten and deadly shrines to very fierce and evil gods in the most inhospitable jungles of the world.

The ben'docian that moved to the desert took the name of the drouin, as remembrance of what their cousins had done to them. As they roamed the deserts, they darkened in coloration to deep caramel and rich brown hues. They moved faster than they had before; generations of running across the sandy dunes strengthened their legs and hardened their hearts. They became nomadic bandits, feared by all who crossed their path. But their line did not end in bloodshed. Instead, they were bred out of existence by mixing too often with the humans that called the desert home. This became the root of the Bedouin tribes that inhabit the desert to this day.

It was the third group, which had retreated to the deep halls and caverns under the surface of the earth, that came to be what we now call drow. This group was led by a few strong warrior-priestesses who had escaped the genocide of their mountain fortresses. Under their iron leadership and careful plotting, the drow came to settle the deepest corridors of the underworld, where even the dwarves feared to mine.

After a few generations of hard work, and by the dark blessings of the evil gods above, the drow forged a society based around their collective hatred of their surface cousins. With this hatred and newfound devotion to their gods came physical changes. The first was darkened skin. As a drow grows older, her skin takes on an ashen

