

# AWAKENED UNDEAD

You are the skeletal remains of what once was a living creature; you are both the power that animates these remains and bound to remains themselves. The source of your second life varies - perhaps risen as a mindless undead by a necromancer you eventually awakened sentience, perhaps you are fey spirit that inhabited the bones and got stuck, or perhaps you fiendish creature bound to this form to walk the material plane - there are many options for how you ended up in this predicament, but beware, your new life is as fragile as any mortal, and you can die as they do.

This is a unique and flexible race where your exact nature depends on several factors of your circumstance and it presents unique traits and challenges, including some large conveniences and inconveniences that can lead to nonstandard circumstances, particularly around healing.

## AWAKENED UNDEAD TRAITS

### BEING UNDEAD IS NOT NORMAL

...usually. This is a race that will always be under the approval of a DM if fits with their setting and campaign. Being undead will not be a normal player experience - the vast majority of creatures - if your nature is revealed, will find you either terrifying or a threat to be destroyed. Various disguises or illusions will almost always be required to interact with the living.

### ABILITY SCORE INCREASE

As an undead, you have increased resilience. Your Constitution score and one other ability score of choice increase by 1. You gain one additional ability score increase from the type of Remains selected in your subrace choice.

### AGE

Awakened undead are effectively ageless. Their age can be measured from when they have awakened, but they do not change with age beyond their lived experience from that point.

### ALIGNMENT

While typical undead are nearly universally evil due to the negative energy that animates them, there are other sources of undead animation that run a broader range of possibilities. Regardless of your animating force, what differentiates an Awakened Undead is awareness and control, and as such they can freely choose their alignment. Some will still choose evil, but others find a new path upon awakening.

### SIZE

Undead are typically animated from medium sized humanoid corpses, and have sizes based on the creature they once were. Your size is Medium unless otherwise specified by your Remains type.

### SPEED

Your base walking speed is 30 feet.



### DARKVISION

Due to the unique nature of your sight, you can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

### LANGUAGES

You can speak, read, and write Common.

### UNDEAD NATURE

Your creature type is undead, rather than humanoid. As a result of being undead, you have the following benefits:

- You don't need to eat, drink, or breathe.
- You are immune to disease.
- You are immune to poison damage and the poisoned condition.

### DIVINE HEALING

Note that being of creature type Undead precludes the vast majority of divine healing effects. This can prove a challenge, but is somewhat mitigated by Magical Vitality below.

### MAGICAL VITALITY

As you are powered by magic, your vitality can be restored by magical power. Any creature (including you) with access to spell slots can expend a spell slot an action with a range of touch to restore  $1d6 +$  their spell casting modifier hit points donating their magical power to your vitality. The amount restored increases by  $1d6$  per level of the spell slot. Whenever you are healed in this fashion, you can expend hit dice (rolling them as normal) equal to the spell slot level used to regain additional hit points.

Additionally, you can be returned to life with the *animate dead* spell, which has the effects of *revivify* when cast targeting only you.

### REASSEMBLY

Your body can be assembled if pieces are broken off. A lost limb can be reattached over a short rest while spending 1 or more hit dice as long as the limb is in your possession, and your corpse counts as intact if all pieces of it can be found and assembled for resurrection spells.

## TURN RESISTANCE

Due to your awakened nature, you have advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

## ANTIMAGIC SUSCEPTIBILITY

As a magically alive force, you are weakened while in the area of an *antimagic field*. At the start of each turn you spend it, you must make a DC 10 Charisma saving throw. On failure, you have disadvantage on all attack rolls and ability checks, and your speed is halved. If you fail by 5 or more, you are stunned until the end of your turn. If you are the target of *dispel magic*, you must succeed a Charisma saving throw against the caster's spell save DC (even if the caster is an allied creature). On failure, you are stunned until the end of your next turn.

## SUBRACE

Awakened Undead are extremely varied by their nature, and consequently create their subrace in a unique way by selecting two values: their remains, and their animating force. Their remains indicate what sort of corpse you are animating, and your the animating force dictates what sort of force is driving the animation.

Your selection of remains gives you an ability score (listed in the table below) which is increased by one, and a feature that is defined below. Your animating force gives a language known as well as a feature (also defined below). If the language is listed as "matching remains" it means the language of the type of corpse you are animating spoke in life (for example, for an elf corpse, Elvish).

## REMAINS

Remains	Ability Score	Feature
Human	Any	Universal Parts
Elf	Dexterity	Mystic Bones
Dwarf	Constitution	Sturdy Bones
Minotaur	Strength	Ramming Horns
Beast	Strength or Constitution	Bestial Configuration
Tabaxi	Dexterity	Climbing Configured
Aasimar	Charisma	Relic Bones
Kobold	Dexterity	Scurrying Frame
Turtle	Constitution	Bone Shell
Centaur	Strength	Galloping Frame

## ANIMATING FORCE

Force	Language	Feature
Necromancy	<i>Matching Remains</i>	Emotional Void
Wandering Spirit	<i>Any</i>	Spirit Soaring
Returned Spirit	<i>Matching Remains</i>	Remembrance
Fey Energy	<i>Sylvan</i>	Fey Spirit
Infernal Energy	<i>Infernal</i>	Flaming Skeleton
Blight Growth	<i>None</i>	Blightborn

## REMAINS TRAITS

### Bestial Configuration *Beast Remains*

Inconveniently, you don't have hands.. You cannot do anything that requires hands (such as holding weapons or casting spells with somatic components, but you can grapple a single target with your mouth.

Your movement speed becomes 35 feet, and you gain natural weapons of fangs that deal 1d10 + your Strength modifier piercing damage, and claws that deal 1d6 + your Strength modifier slashing damage. Your claws have the Light property, you are considered to be holding them for the purpose of using them as weapons.

### BEWARE A LACK OF HANDS.

This option has broad ramifications. It's a choice that offers some unique advantages, but in many cases not a good one.

### Bone Shell *Turtle Remains*

Your remains have a study bone shell that can be used to deflect attacks. When you aren't wearing armor, your AC is 17. You can use your natural armor to determine your AC if the armor you wear would leave you with a lower AC. A shield's benefits apply as normal while you use your natural armor.

### Climbing Configured *Tabaxi remains*

Your remains are well configured for climbing, being light and with built in claws. You gain a climbing speed of 30 feet.

### Galloping Frame *Centaur Remains*

Your movement speed becomes 35 feet, but any climb that requires hands and feet is especially difficult for you because of your equine legs. When you make such a climb, each foot of movement costs you 4 extra feet, instead of the normal 1 extra foot.

### Mystic Bones *Elf Remains*

You have advantage on Charisma saving throws for Antimagic Susceptibility, and you cannot be put to sleep by magical means.

### Ramming Horns *Minotaur Remains*

Your horns are natural melee weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal piercing damage equal to 1d6 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

### Relic Bones *Aasimar Remains*

Your bones have a lingering holy aura. You are immune effects that turn undead and have resistance Radiant damage.

### Scurrying Frame *Kobold Remains*

Your size becomes Small, and you can move through other creatures' spaces as if you were one size smaller (Tiny) but cannot end your turn inside their space unless you otherwise could.

### **Sturdy Bones** *Dwarven Remains*

Your bones are particularly sturdy. Your speed becomes 25 feet. Your hit point maximum increases by 1, and it increases by 1 every time you gain a level.

### **Universal Parts** *Human Remains*

You can often find useful spare laying about, and your parts are easier to repair in general. When you complete a long rest, you regain an additional hit die. The number of hit dice you regain increases when your proficiency bonus does.

## **ANIMATING FORCE TRAITS**

### **Emotional Void** *Necrotic Energy*

You are animated by a thread of negative energy that has somehow gained greater awareness. You still feel the innate urge to destroy all life, and can control and channel that urge. As bonus action, you can unleash your normal undead nature for 1 minute. You become immune to the *charmed* and *frightened* conditions, but lose your Turn Resistance feature.

Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you complete a long rest.

### **Fey Spirit** *Fey Energy*

Sometimes a fey spirit finds itself inhabiting a pile of bones, often not entirely aware of who, what or why, as is their way. Your creature type is both Fey and Undead. You have access to additional fey magic, and cast *faerie fire* and *speak with animals* each once without expending a spell slot, regaining the ability to do so when you finish a long rest. Your spell casting ability for these spells is Charisma.

### **Flaming Skeleton** *Infernal Energy*

You glow with an inner flame. As a bonus action, you can burst alight, becoming a flaming skeleton for 1 minute. For the duration, you have resistance to fire damage and any creature that starts their turn within 5 feet of you takes 1d4 damage. While this effect is active, once per turn when you hit a creature within 5 feet of you with an attack or deal fire damage, you can add bonus damage to that damage roll equal to your proficiency bonus (affecting one target of the damage roll).

Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you complete a long rest.

### **Remembrance** *Returned Spirit*

You've come back for your own bones... or at least you think you have. You retain some of the skills you had in life. You can select one of the following:

- Proficiency in a simple or martial weapon of your choice.
- Proficiency in two skills or tools of your choice.

You additionally gain proficiency in one Artisan Tool or Language of your choice.

### **Spirit Soaring** *Wandering Spirit*

You're loosely bound this shell and capable of soaring free of it. As an action, you can cast *gaseous form*, but rather than transforming you leave your body behind, incapacitated, and when the spell ends you return to your body's location.

Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you complete a long rest.

### **Blightborn** *Blight Growth*

Uniquely your animating force is a physical (though still magical) phenomena, twisting vines growing through your remains. Your creature type is both Plant and Undead, and you can leverage your vines to constrict your enemies. You can grapple a number of creatures equal to your Constitution modifier without using your hands.

## **FEATS**

The following are optional feats you can take as an Awakened Undead, furthering your specialized powers and abilities.

## **MODIFIED REMAINS**

### *Prerequisite: Awakened Undead*

You've found your remains to be somewhat... customizable. After all, what's the harm in swapping out a few parts here and there? You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution ability score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- Gain a natural weapon that deals 2d4 damage (piercing or slashing, your choice) or Increase your AC by 1. If you already have a natural weapon and select a natural weapon, you can increase the damage of your existing natural weapon by a d2 step instead (from a d6 to a d8, for example).

## **TWICE AWAKENED**

### *Prerequisite: Awakened Undead*

You've mastered a second power of Awakening, gaining control of a greater set of powers over your condition. This can be from infusing yourself with energy of that source, or simply learning to imitate the powers natural to that source (for example, a returned spirit may find themselves mastering the powers of a Wandering Spirit after getting used to the condition). You gain the following benefits:

- Increase you Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma ability score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- Select an additional option from the Animating Force table, gaining its features.



## SOULBINDING

*Prerequisite: 13th-level Awakened Undead*

You're life and your body are not one in the same anymore, and the destruction of one need not lead to the other. You can connect an item to your soul; this item must absorb 1 soul or 3rd level (or higher) spell slot a week to be active (a creature can willingly expend a spell slot to power the item, expending it as normal as if casting a spell). If you die while it is active and on the same plane as you, your body crumbles to dust and your body reforms after 1d10 hours within 5 feet of the soulbound item, returning to life with 1 hit point.

Additionally, your remains become further antithetical to life. When you make an attack with a natural weapon, unarmed strike, or spell with the range of touch, on hit you can force the target creature to pass a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 8 + your Charisma or Constitution modifier (your choice) + your proficiency bonus becomes Paralyzed until the start of their next turn. Once you do attempt to use paralyzing touch, you cannot use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

### STEP TOWARD LICHDOM?

Soulbinding certainly has an aspect of a lich's phylactery to it. If this is a step down that path or related to it depends on the narrative you and your DM decide on based on your nature - a fey spirit may simply return to a familiar item to them, never truly dying, while a necromantic horror may fuel itself on consumed souls.

## REFINED CONTROL

*Prerequisite: Awakened Undead*

You gain more granular control over your body, even when it is not all attached, allowing it to take advantage of its unnatural properties. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma ability score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You can remove a limb and continue to control it. It gains the statistics of a *crawling claw*, but has a blindsight of 5 \* your proficiency bonus instead of 30 feet. This *crawling claw* gains all the abilities of a familiar as per the *find familiar* spell. You lose use of the limb for anything else while it is not attached. If it is destroyed, you can attach a new limb over the course of a long rest.
- Being beheaded (for example, by vorpal sword) is no longer fatal to you, though your body cannot move than 120 feet from your head.



### ART CREDITS:

- Manor Skeleton - Magic the Gathering - Wizards of the Coast
- Moss Pit Skeleton - Magic the Gathering - Wizards of the Coast
- Sidsi Undead Vizier - Magic the Gathering - Wizards of the Coast

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## CHANGELOG

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- Magical Vitality changed to 1d4 + their spell casting modifier (from 1d8). This is usually a small buff.
- New Remains added: Tabaxi, Aasimar, Kobold, Turtle, Centaur.
- New Animating Force added: Blight Growth
- Added Refined Control
- Various grammar fixes.
- Soulbinding Paralyzing Touch now adds Charisma or Constitution modifier to the DC and lasts until the start of your next turn (instead of the end of theirs)