

DRAGON BIOLOGY

Description

Dragons are massive reptilian creatures, typically at least fifteen foot long from nose to tail and with powerful leathery wings however they cannot fly. Very young dragons possess sufficient musculature to be capable of walking or crawling unaided. As dragons age, their bones become heavier and denser. This makes them even more difficult to kill, but also makes it impossible for them to move without assistance.

Dragons are immortal. They age slowly until they reach late maturity after a hundred and fifty years. At this point they become fertile and cease ageing. Dragons do not pair; they mate for political gain only. The female produces a single egg which is laid after just six months but takes seven years to hatch. Dragons cannot die of increasing years or disease and they tend to be very resistant to most mundane poisons. Wounds are the only reliable way to kill a dragon.

Dragons are particularly hard to kill as their entire body is protected by variably sized rigid scales that provide protection like mail. The armour thickens as the dragon ages; extremely old dragons sometimes have armour so thick that they struggle to move their head, neck and claws easily.

Dragons are able to breathe fire from a young age, producing small wisps of flame to play around their jaws when they smile. The practical benefits of this are limited for immature dragons, but fully grown dragons are able to use their breath as a weapon, exhaling a vast column of flame in a great gust of breath.

All dragons have powerful claws; some of them are strong enough to use their claws as weapons. Most have difficulties using fine implements, such as a quill, with their claws and some dragons trim or clip their claws to make such things easier.

The strength and longevity of a dragon flows in his blood. If a human drinks a pint of a dragon's blood then he begins the transformation into a dracoscion. The change takes place rapidly, happening over the space of the next eight hours, which can be very disturbing for the recipient - but the blood has a strongly narcoleptic effect on the imbiber so that the majority sleep through the experience. The skin around the face grows darker and harder and scales quickly develop.

The extent of the change is generally an indication of the strength and power of the dragon whose blood is drunk. Many dracoscions eventually grow scales all over their body and some even grow claws and small draconic wings.

Whatever the extent of the change, the colour of the scales will always match those of the dragon that has blooded the human. All dracoscions are entirely sterile and seldom pair. Indeed, whatever partnerships they might have had before they became dracoscions are typically forgotten in favour of their new life.

The most important physical change that takes place is the onset of immortality. Although dracoscions remain entirely mortal, they gain exceptional constitution from the change that they undergo and they appear to cease aging. If the dragon who blooded a dracoscion brood dies then the surviving dracoscions begin to age normally. There are no reliable accounts of dracoscions reaching dotage or dying of natural causes while their dragon is still alive. There are verified accounts of dracoscions who have survived for five hundred years and more.

If a dragon dies then it is possible for their dracoscions to be blooded by a new dragon and restore their immortality. It is extraordinarily rare for a dracoscion to be blooded a second time whilst their dragon is still alive, so rare that reports of the results are inconsistent.

Racial rules

- You should not pass these rules on to other players

Please note that the following rules have not been released to the general player base and are only given to those players playing, or intending to play, dragon characters. The Maelstrom campaign is enhanced if players are able to discover information about the game through purely IC sources so we ask players not to pass these sheets to other players. We believe that some of the advantages available to you will be lost if these rules become widely known.

Claws

- You may have claws

If you have suitable, weapon safe, phys-reps for claws may use them to call SINGLE in combat. The rules for using claws are described in chapter four of the Event Rules.

Strong jaws

- You are capable of destroying a body in five minutes

Your jaws are strong enough to crack bones and they are capable of reducing a body to an unrecognizable state within a few minutes. You will receive a show-me lammy to allow you to use this ability at an event. You should show this lammy to any player who is roleplaying a corpse you wish to destroy.

Draconic constitution

- You have increased resistance to poison

All dragon characters have a formidable resistance to most poisons and diseases, better than an equivalent human character. You may still gain additional resistance to poisons by gaining constitution and great constitution as normal.

Draconic vulnerability

- You are affected differently by some substances
- You must show any rip-open lammy to a referee if it has a substance code beginning with D written inside

It is well known that dragons are affected differently by some drugs and preparations. Brandyblend, for instance, is highly poisonous to dragons. All rip-open lammies have a two digit code written inside the lammy. Any substances beginning with a 'D' code will have a different effect on your character. You must ignore the written effect, and show the lammy to a referee within the next 30 minutes.

Bleeding

- You may turn a human character into a dracoscion by giving them a pint of your blood
- You lose one body hit if you blood another character
- You die if you attempt to blood another character while incapacitated or debilitated

Removing one pint of blood takes thirty seconds and will reduce your body hits by one. This damage can be healed normally. If this blood is immediately drunk by a human character then they will transform into a dracoscion. Your blood loses its potency within a few minutes of removing it if it is not drunk. You will receive a show-me lammy to allow you to use this ability at events. You will die if you attempt to use this ability while you are incapacitated or debilitated.

Draconic heritage

- You may increase the potency of your blood during downtime
- Any character who then drinks your blood gains additional abilities

All dragons are capable of enhancing the potency of their own blood through unknown means. The benefits of this are not felt by you but by the members of the your brood, who typically gain additional draconic features accompanied by increases in body hits, natural armour and more. These benefits are lost if you die. Only characters who drink your blood after you have increased its potency will gain new skills, but you may reblood a dracoscion at any time.

The benefits of draconic heritage apply to all characters who are part of your brood, including all primary characters, retainers and men-at-arms who have been blooded by you.

Draconic age

- If you can walk unaided then you are a young dragon
- If you cannot walk unaided then you can play an old dragon

Dragons grow slowly as they age becoming denser and heavier as their bulk increases. Old dragons are physically more powerful than young dragons but cannot move. If you can walk unaided in your dragon costume then you are classed as a young dragon; if it is clearly out of the question then you are classed as an old dragon and receive additional special abilities as noted below.

If you wish to increase the size and immobility of your costume then you may do so at any time. Aging takes years IC, but the practical effects of this are impossible to rationalize within the rules, so you can choose to become an old dragon at any time if you wish to do so and have modified your costume accordingly. You gain the additional benefits of age if you modify your costume to become an old dragon.

Dragon breath

- You can breath fire in combat
- You may improve the damage caused by your fiery breath during downtime

All dragons are capable of breathing fire at any character within five metres a maximum of once every thirty seconds. This attack follows all the normal rules for ranged damage and special attacks described in chapter four of the Event Rules.

If you are a young dragon then you begin play able to call DRAGON BREATH SINGLE. If you are an old dragon then you begin play able to call DRAGON BREATH DOUBLE or DRAGON BREATH SINGLE STUN.

You may spend time during downtime working to improve the damage caused by your dragon breath.

Ageing bones

- You have six or nine body hits depending on your age

All dragons grow increasingly tough as they age, and their bones become denser and heavier and their heart rate slows. A young dragon begins with six body hits as standard, an old dragon begins with nine body hits as standard. You may increase your body hits by gaining endurance or great endurance as normal.

Natural armour

- You have two or four points of natural armour depending on your age
- Natural armour stacks with normal armour
- Natural armour cannot be healed with normal magic
- You may increase the thickness of your natural armour during downtime

All dragons possess a bright scaly skin, which grows thicker and tougher as they age. A young dragon, one still able to walk unaided, receives the equivalent of two armour points. An old dragon, one no longer able to walk unaided, receives the equivalent of four armour points. The protection provided by natural armour stacks with that provided by normal armour. If you are wearing armour then you have a number of armour hits equal to the armour value of the armour plus either two or four natural armour points. Normal armour points are always lost before natural armour points.

Natural armour can not be restored using any ability that restores armour unless it explicitly states that it will heal natural armour. Natural armour is regained at the rate of one point per week by a dragon on full body hits.

You may spend time during downtime training to improve the physical protection provided by your natural armour.