

Kobolds

Introduction

These statistics are for those people who remember kobolds as described in the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons rules from the nineteen-eighties: unfathomably inhuman, utterly evil, and perfect cannon fodder to



The illustration of a kobold from the original AD&D book. This seems to be an exceptionally advanced individual, with clothes and fencing skills..

throw at low-level characters. They bear no relation to the kobolds as described in the GURPS Fantasy Folk, which are rather more gentle and amusing. I have taken a few liberties in the adaptation, departing from Gary Gygax's originals in details such as their relationships with other races, minor details of their appearance, their tolerance of light, and their technology level.

German mythology describes kobolds as either house-spirits, similar to Brownies, or gnomes that work in mines or forests.

Although a fantasy race, it is not intended that these kobolds be used as player characters, since their mentality is completely alien to the mammalian mind. However, for the record, the basic kobold is a -28 point character.

This document contains the following sections:

- ❖ Description
- ❖ Statistics
- ❖ Combat Tactics
- ❖ Hit Locations
- ❖ Example kobolds

Description

Kobolds are reptile-men, around three to four feet tall, with dog-like faces and large ears. Small, tough scales

cover their bodies, providing a low-level of natural damage resistance. Skin colour varies from rusty red to dark green but their eyes are invariably large, protruding and opaline. Although they walk upright like humans, each possesses a short, expressive tail that can change colour to reflect their mood.



Kobolds use their tails extensively when communicating with each other and this, combined with their odd, barking language makes it impossible for a non-kobolds to understand them without the aid of magic. It should be noted that kobolds from different regions have different languages, much as humans from different countries do.

The different sexes are indistinguishable, save for a short pair of horns born by some but not all of the males. To confuse matters, females occasionally have horns as well. As in many other reptiles, the Kobold's sexual organs are concealed within a cloaca on their tails, making dissection the only certain way of telling the sex of an individual that isn't gravid. The young hatch from eggs and mature quickly, reaching adulthood at around their ninth year. They are a long lived race and do not begin aging until 100 years.

They are primitive in culture and technology (TL 0) but will readily make use of anything they can obtain from other races. The smelting of metals is beyond their comprehension, so tools and weapons are generally of bone or stone unless stolen from another race. Likewise, with armour, they will not have anything more advanced than animal skins unless looted from previous victims.

The weapons they wield are usually made of bone or stone. This is not to say these weapons are inefficient since napped flint has an edge as keen as steel. However, they will blunt more quickly and are much less effective at penetrating armour. Hence, double the DR against bone/stone cutting and impaling weapons.

In addition to hatchets, picks, javelins and stone knives, kobolds also use slings, bolas and occasionally blowpipes with poisoned darts. They will also attempt to trap the unwary with nets or concealed pits.

They fear fire and dislike temperatures much above 15 degrees centigrade. They are more tolerant of cold, being able to withstand freezing temperatures without any undue effects.

Their adaptations to life in the dark are so extreme that sunlight causes them distress and even damage after sufficient exposure. The kobold's senses of smell, taste and hearing are very acute and it is almost impossible to sneak up on them.

To the human mind, kobold behaviour is unfathomable. While they clearly form tribes, have leaders, and possess a social code towards each other, their behaviour towards mammalian life, particularly humanoids, is obsessively depraved. Captured humanoids of any age are tortured and devoured in a religious ceremony seemingly designed to celebrate pain. Quarter is neither offered or taken - a kobold that cannot flee will fight to the death. On the other hand, kobolds will not willingly abandon their comrades and will attempt to rescue their wounded and dead before retreating in good order.

Fortunately, the kobold's small size makes them naturally cowardly. They will generally only initiate melee at close quarters if they outnumber their foe by odds of two-to-one or if their foe is clearly in a weakened state. They will often harry their foe guerilla style with bone-headed javelins and sling shots for hours before making a full frontal assault.

Magic use by kobolds is limited and part of their shamanist religion. A kobold magician/priest will generally have spells in the following spheres:

- ❖ Earth spells
- ❖ Elemental spirit spells
- ❖ Water spells
- ❖ Air spells

If kobold eggs are captured, the young can be hatched out successfully if brooded at between 0° and 7° C. At 0°, all will be female, at 7°, all male. At 3-4°, half will be female, half male. Kobolds raised by humanoids do not share their kin's dysfunctional hatred of mammals. However, their biology does not permit them to vocalise human sounds, so they will be effectively mute, only able to communicate through grunts and sign language. They can be trained and integrated into a tolerant society. Wild kobolds will always attempt to "rescue" domesticated ones, usually through kidnapping.

Statistics

Racial Advantages:

- ❖ Acute Hearing +5 (10 pts). Kobolds are superbly adapted to life in the dark and have excellent hearing.
- ❖ Acute taste/smell +5 (10 pts). Like snakes, kobolds possess a Jacobson's Organ, imparting excellent taste and smell.
- ❖ Dark Vision (25 pts). Kobolds see into the ultraviolet and the infrared. They can see in the normal visible spectrum too but their photo-receptive cells are so sensitive they can be easily damaged by anything brighter than deep shade on a sunny day. They are happiest in complete darkness, where they see as well as a human does in daytime. They have their own set of "colours", derived from differing shades of infrared and ultraviolet, with names humans could never comprehend.
- ❖ Damage resistance 1 (5 pts), imparted by their tough scales
- ❖ Long teeth (1 pt) Bite as per strength for cutting damage - for strength 8 this means 1d-3
- ❖ Extended life span 1 (2 pts) - kobolds do not begin to age until 100 years of age
- ❖ Early maturation 2 (10 pts) - kobolds reach maturity at around 9 years of age
- ❖ Tolerance of cold - their tolerance range is 0° to 55° Fahrenheit, -18° to 12° Celsius.
- ❖ Absolute Direction (5 pts) - kobolds are able to sense the Earth's magnetic field.
- ❖ Reduced Consumption 3 (6 pts) - The kobold's low metabolism and lack of sweat glands allows them to eat and drink as infrequently as once per week with no ill effects. However, they will eat more regularly if given the opportunity.
- ❖ Catfall (10 pts) - The kobold's small size and agility allows it to withstand falls that would kill a larger humanoid.
- ❖ Enhanced Swim +2 to move (10 pts) - Kobold's tails help them to swim well.

Racial Disadvantages

- ❖ Size modifier -2
- ❖ -3 reduced hit points (-6 pts) - the kobold's small size reduces its hit points
- ❖ -2 reduced move (-10 pts) - the kobold's little legs work as hard as they can but small legs give a small stride. Their speed is unaffected
- ❖ Strength -2 (-20 pts)
- ❖ IQ -1 (-20 pts)
- ❖ Primitive culture -3 (-15 pts)
- ❖ Intolerance -3 (-10 pts). Kobolds are completely intolerant of all mammalian life-forms, at best viewing them as food, at worst viewing them as objects on which to inflict pain as part of a religious duty (see above).

- ❖ Blind in direct sunlight or bright light (-25 pts, i.e. half the full blindness penalty). When the light is at its brightest - for example at midday in low to medium latitudes - this imparts a -10 penalty on any activity. At lower light levels, such as dusk or in deep forests, the penalty is reduced. Torches in a cave will not induce a penalty but a bright magical light will - this has to be at the GM's discretion
- ❖ Bad Reputation -4 (-20 pts). The Kobold's indiscriminate barbarity to other humanoids makes them very unpopular.
- ❖ Weakness in direct sunlight (-8 pts). Kobolds suffer fatigue damage in direct sunlight. Once their fatigue drops to zero, they take physical damage. The rates per 30 minutes are as follows:
 - ☞ Direct sunlight: 1d6
 - ☞ Cloud/light shade: 1d6-2
 - ☞ Thick cloud/heavy shade: 1d6-4
 - ☞ Dense cloud/deep shade: None

Racial Quirks

- ❖ Fear of fire (-1 pt). All kobolds fear fire and will suffer a reaction roll of -3 if attacked with it. Characters not bearing torches will be attacked in preference to those with. However, unless a torch is used as a weapon, kobolds will not flinch from attacking a character holding a torch.

Racial Skills

- ❖ Swimming at HT+2 (4 pts)
- ❖ Climbing at DX+2 (8 pts)

Common Kobold Skills

- ❖ Blowpipe (exceptional kobolds)
- ❖ Bolas
- ❖ Brawling (to give +1 damage on bites)
- ❖ Dancing (part of the kobold's complicated social interactions)
- ❖ Jumping
- ❖ Leadership (for exceptional kobolds)
- ❖ Melee weapons
- ❖ Poisons (exceptional kobolds)
- ❖ Religious ritual (exceptional kobolds)
- ❖ Sling
- ❖ Spear thrower
- ❖ Stealth
- ❖ Survival
- ❖ Throwing
- ❖ Thrown weapon

Combat tactics

When push comes to shove, kobolds fight dirty. They take full advantage of being able to see in the dark, staying just outside the radius of the player's torchlight and hurling missiles.

When they do close to attack an individual, they will attempt to surround them. They will use their weapons if they have them but may also bite and grapple as one action. If a bite is successful, they will hang on, automatically doing bite damage on the next turn.

Because of their small size, up to three kobolds may combine to takedown a human sized foe and up to four may attempt to pin. Three kobolds with grappling skill can be quite effective at taking down an average human.

Hit Locations

Because of the kobold's elongated jaws they are able to bite as if they had a size modifier of 0 (See "Teeth", GURPS Martial Arts, P.115). However, this means their

Roll	Location (penalty)
-	Eye (-6)
3	Skull (-7)
4-5	Face (-4)
6-7	Right Leg (-2)
8	Right Arm (-2)
8-10	Torso (0)
11	Tail (-3 / -6 for attacks from the front)
12	Left Arm (-2)
13-14	Left Leg (-2)
15	Hand (-4)
16	Foot (-4)
17-18	Neck (-5)
-	Vitals (-3)

face can be targeted at -4.

Also, the kobolds large, laterally placed eyes are an easier target than in other humanoids: the penalty for hitting them is only -6 rather than -9.

Example Kobolds

Overleaf are a number of kobolds that can be used for encounters. Note that bone and stone weapons are far less effective against armour - double the damage

The following table lists those weapons commonly used by kobolds, showing the damage, range etc. Applicable for the default strength of 8. The weapons are all assumed to be bone or stone tipped.

Weapon	Damage	Notes
Stone bladed hatchet	1d-3 cut	1 turn to ready. Double DR of armour against this weapon
Bone pick	1d-2 impale	1 turn to ready, may get stuck. Double the DR of armour against this weapon
Stone headed mace	1d crush	1 turn to ready
Stone dagger	1d-4 impale	Double DR of armour against this weapon
Stone tipped javelin	1d-2 impale	Used in melee - see below for thrown

Ranged Weapon	Damage	Accuracy	½ Dam Range	Max Range	RoF	Shots
Stone tipped javelin	1d-2 impale	3	12	20	1	T(1)
Sling	1d-2 crush	0	48	80	1	1(2)
Thrown rocks	1d-4 crush	0	16	28	1	T(1)
Bolas	1d-4 crush	0	N/A	24	1	T(1)
Blowpipe	Poison	1	N/A	32	1	1(2)

Basic Kobolds

The following table lists the stats for the basic, -28 point kobold, along with 20 individuals for use in an encounter. Refer to the weapons table above to see how much damage they will do should they hit. Each can be assumed to have the basic DX skill in the weapons they own unless noted otherwise. None have shields, all have a size modifier of -2.

ST DX IQ HT Speed Move Each kobold can bite for 1d-2 cutting damage. They can also swim at 5 MP with swimming skill 12, and have climbing skill 12.

Will Per DR Blck Dodge Parry

Kobold	Hits	Fatigue	Weapons	Notes
1	5	10	Hatchet, 3 rocks	Throwing 12
2	5	10	Javelin, dagger	Brawling 12 (+1 to bite damage)
3	5	10	2 javelins	Brawling 12 (+1 to bite damage)
4	5	10	Sling (5 shots), pick	Sling 12
5	5	10	Sling (5 shots), mace	
6	5	10	Pick, javelin	Has DR 2 on head as he wears a fur cap.
7	5	10	Mace, dagger, 2 rocks	
8	5	10	Dagger	Brawling 12 (+1 to bite damage)
9	5	10	Dagger, 3 rocks	Throwing 12
10	5	10	Bolas, javelin	
11	5	10	Bolas, pick	Bolas 12
12	5	10	Pick, 2 javelins	
13	5	10	Blowpipe, mace	Will use blowpipe. Poison causes 1d damage unless save vs HT. Can only hit bare skin
14	5	10	Bolas, pick	As kobold 12 but has skill 12 in bolas
15	5	10	Javelin, sling (5 shots)	Sling 12, Spear throwing 12
16	5	10	Mace, 3 rocks	Has skill 12 in mace.
17	5	10	Hatchet, sling (5 shots)	Sling 12
18	5	10	Hatchet, 3 rocks	Hatchet 12
19	5	10	Dagger	Dagger 12, Brawling 12 (+1 to bite damage)
20	5	10	Dagger	

Above Average Kobolds

Kobold Mage / Leader

This Kobold is a venerated leader mage. He will use his leadership to give +1 to fright and morale checks for the Kobolds following him. In combat, he will fire off a few 1FP stone missile spells (1d+1 CR damage) and will then rely on his poison darts. He will not engage in close combat himself. He keeps his Walk Through Earth spell in reserve should he need to escape. He is wily and cunning and will rely on ambush and surprise attacks.

Name: Kobold Mage / Leader		Reaction +/-	-4	Point Total	100																																																	
Appearance: Bright orange, long horns, 3' tall, 90 years old.		Advantages, Disadvantages, Quirks																																																				
<table border="1"> <tr><td>ST</td><td>8</td><td>HP</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>DX</td><td>10</td><td colspan="2">Basic Damage</td></tr> <tr><td>IQ</td><td>11</td><td>Thrust</td><td>1d-3</td></tr> <tr><td>HT</td><td>10</td><td>Swing</td><td>1d-2</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>FP</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>Will</td><td>11</td><td>Per</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>Speed</td><td>5</td><td>Move</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>Dodge</td><td>8</td><td>Parry</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>Block</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">Encumbrance</td><td>0</td><td>Shield DB</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>Size Mod</td><td>-2</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>Block</td><td>0</td></tr> </table>		ST	8	HP	5	DX	10	Basic Damage		IQ	11	Thrust	1d-3	HT	10	Swing	1d-2			FP	12	Will	11	Per	11	Speed	5	Move	3	Dodge	8	Parry	0			Block	0	Encumbrance		0	Shield DB	0			Size Mod	-2			Block	0	Magery 1, High Status 3, Acute hearing/taste/smell, Dark Vision, Damage Resistance, Long teeth, Extended life span, Early maturation, Cold tolerance, Absolute Direction, Reduced consumption, Catfall, Enhanced swim, Primitive culture, Racial intolerance, Blind in sunlight, Bad reputation, Weakness in sunlight, Fear of fire (quirk)			
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		Earth Vision 12, Walk Through Earth 12, Stone Missile 12, Create Earth 12, Earth to Stone 12, Shape Earth 12, Seek Earth 12, Innate Attack (firing stone missiles) 12, Blowpipe 11, Poisons 10, Leadership 13, Swimming 12, Climbing 12																																																				
		Weapons and Possessions																																																				
		Blowpipe, Acc 1, Range 32. 6 Poison darts: 10 second delay, 3 cycles causing 1-6 FP loss 2 point power stone in pouch around neck. Wears a thick, feather-covered headdress and a scale armour tunic of leather and stone slithers.																																																				

Kobold Warrior - 1.

This kobold is huge - for a kobold, at least. He has +2 on his health roles to avoid unconsciousness. Because of his brawling skill, he bites for 1d-1 cutting and can parry barehanded at 10. He will use his sling while still at a distance. Once he is closing for combat, he will hurl his spear and then close and use his shortsword. If he is with the other kobold warriors listed below, he will cooperate with them to grapple.

Name: Kobold Warrior 1		Reaction +/-	-4	Point Total	50																																																	
Appearance: A huge, powerful dark-green Kobold, 4'6" tall		Advantages, Disadvantages, Quirks																																																				
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		Brawling 14, Shortsword 12, Sling 13, Spear Throwing 13, Throwing 10, Swimming 13, Climbing 11																																																				
		Weapons and Possessions																																																				
		Owns a plundered shortsword (1d-2 thr / 1d cut), a throwing spear (1d+1) and a sling (1d pi) Wears a scale armour tunic of leather and stone slithers.																																																				

Kobold Warrior - 2.

This young, overconfident kobold is eager to prove himself to the tribe and in awe of Kobold Warrior 1 above. His sense of duty will not let him abandon a wounded or dead kobold. Because of his brawling skill, he bites for 1d-1 cutting and can parry barehanded at 10. He will hurl his spear as he closes for combat and then engage in close combat, grappling, biting and stabbing with his knife.

Name: Kobold Warrior 2		Reaction +/-	-4	Point Total	50																																																	
Appearance: A young, overconfident kobold, eager to prove himself to the tribe.		Advantages, Disadvantages, Quirks																																																				
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		Brawling 14, Spear 14, Spear Throwing 14, Knife 13, Swimming 13, Climbing 14																																																				
		Weapons and Possessions																																																				
		A spear (1d / 1d+1 if thrown), knife (1d-3 imp / 1d-3 cut)																																																				

Kobold Warrior - 3.

This kobold is unusually agile for his kind, with enhanced speed. He is skilled with his net and will attempt to ensnare his opponents with it and then stab them with his spear. He will engage in close combat if another kobold has already started. His bite does 1d-1 cutting.

Name: Kobold Warrior 3		Reaction +/-	-4	Point Total	50
Appearance: An extremely agile kobold, dull-green in appearance.		Advantages, Disadvantages, Quirks			
		Acute hearing/taste/smell, Dark Vision, Dam Resistance, Long teeth, Extended life span, Early maturation, Cold tolerance, Absolute Direction, Reduced consumption, Catfall, Enhanced swim, Primitive culture, Racial intolerance, Blind in sunlight, Bad reputation, Weakness in sunlight, Fear of fire (quirk)			
ST	9	HP	6		
DX	11	Basic Damage			
IQ	9	Thrust	1d-2		
HT	10	Swing	1d-1		
		FP	11		
Will	9	Per	9		
Speed	6	Move	4		
Dodge	8	Parry	9	Block	0
		Size Mod	-2		
Encumbrance		0	Shield DB	0	
		Head	Torso	Arms	Hands
		Legs	Feet		
DR	1	1	1	1	1
		Skills			
		Net 13, Spear 13, Spear Throwing 13, Brawling 13, Swimming 12, Climbing 13			
		Weapons and Possessions			
		A spear (1d / 1d+1 if thrown) and a net			

Kobold Warrior - 4.

This kobold is strong, agile and vicious. Because of his brawling skill, he does he does 1d-1 damage with his bite. Like all kobolds, he will keep his distance until his foe is weakened by missile fire. He will then close and grapple/bite, followed up with attacks with his dagger while he continues to bite.

Name: Kobold Warrior 4		Reaction +/-	-4	Point Total	48
Appearance: An extremely agile kobold, dull-green in appearance.		Advantages, Disadvantages, Quirks			
		Acute hearing/taste/smell, Dark Vision, Dam Resistance, Long teeth, Extended life span, Early maturation, Cold tolerance, Absolute Direction, Reduced consumption, Catfall, Enhanced swim, Primitive culture, Racial intolerance, Blind in sunlight, Bad reputation, Weakness in sunlight, Fear of fire (quirk)			
ST	10	HP	7		
DX	12	Basic Damage			
IQ	9	Thrust	1d-2		
HT	10	Swing	1d		
		FP	10		
Will	9	Per	9		
Speed	5.5	Move	3		
Dodge	8	Parry	9	Block	0
		Size Mod	-1		
Encumbrance		0	Shield DB	0	
		Head	Torso	Arms	Hands
		Legs	Feet		
DR	1	1	1	1	1
		Skills			
		Brawling 16, Swimming 12, Climbing 14, Sling 15, Knife 15			
		Weapons and Possessions			
		A small metal knife (1d-3 cut, 1d-3 thrust), A sling(1d pi, range 60/100)			

Credits

Written by Michael Amos. For more free GURPS material, see www.michaelamos.net/GURPS. For more information about Michael Amos and his novels, see www.michaelamos.net. If you found this document useful, please drop him an email to let him know - you'll find his email address on his webpage.

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The black and white picture of a kobold on page is from the original AD&D Monster Manual by Gary Gygax (TSR 1977, ISBN 0-935696-00-8) and was drawn by D.A. Trampier. All other illustration are by Michael Amos.