

HOLSTAUR

A 5E PLAYER RACE BY DM TUZ



HOLSTAUR

"There, there, little one. You were strong and went as far as you could on your own. I will carry you from here."

More commonly known as Cowfolk, Holstaurs are revered across both land and sea. Do not be fooled by their intimidating stature, for under their formidable forms beat gentle hearts.

The bards tell of their kindness: the way they pause to lift fallen carts, the way they offer silent comfort during mourning rites, the way their strong hands restore broken things. It is said the mere presence of a Holstaur is a blessing, and they are often welcomed into communities with open arms. Their reputation as dependable, warm-hearted souls often precedes them, making their arrival in villages and cities alike a welcome sight.

Though rumors persist of a kinship with minotaurs, no distinct connection has been determined beyond shared features. Holstaurs themselves are little interested in tracing their own history. Their attention, as ever, lies outward—they are endlessly fascinated with the traditions, stories, and songs of others.

Holstaurs are large-built humanoids, often taller and broader than the average traveler. Their bodies feature bovine traits: cloven hooves that carry them long distances without tiring, soft or bristly patches of fur depending on their subspecies, curling horns in varied shapes, and expressive tails that twitch with mood. Their subspecies vary across climate and continent, but all share a certain rooted gentleness in their eyes.

GENTLE CARETAKERS

Holstaurs are known to have calm, benign temperaments, possessing immense patience even in trying circumstances. Most display a nurturing instinct that expresses itself in different ways: some tend to wild groves, others nurse sick animals back to health, while still others stand guard against threats that would harm their neighbors. No kindness is too small for a Holstaur to offer.

This deep well of compassion has led some to underestimate them. A Holstaur will never start a fight, but they will finish one. Returning a Holstaur's kindness with cruelty is a mistake few make twice—for that's when one learns their gentleness is a choice.

Their generosity can, although, be perceived as patronizing, particularly to proud cultures where accepting outside help is seen as weakness. Further, there are also those who may seek to exploit a Holstaur's kindness for their own gains. Fortunately for the Holstaur, most of them are good judges of character and wise enough to know when their help is not welcome or when it is exploited.

Holstaurs rarely remain in one place for long. While they sometimes migrate in herds, these groups thin as each mem-

ber finds a community to help and settles there—at least for a time. Many grow restless once their work is done. What others may call abandoning a home, the Holstaur sees as releasing it. Yet their departure can leave a void. Some communities have gone so far as to sabotage their own stability to entice a beloved Holstaur to stay.

Because of their wandering nature, Holstaurs often seek nomadic companions willing to travel with them from one place of need to another. The one exception is among the Arcadian Holstaurs, who tend to remain longer in a single place, content to serve in areas where hardship is stubborn and slow to change.

Arcadian Holstaur
Artwork by QueenChikkibug



HOLSTAUR TRAITS

As a holstaur, you possess innate traits and capabilities.

Ability Score Increase. Increase one ability score by 2 and increase a different one by 1, or increase three different ability scores by 1.

Size. Holstaurs grow between 5 to 7 feet, and are commonly heavy built. Your size is medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common and another language of your choice. Holstaurs usually make an effort to learn other languages common in the communities they inhabit.

Horns. 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 1d4 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

Burden Bearer. You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift. Additionally, moving, dragging, or carrying a willing creature of your Size or smaller does not half your speed.

Subrace. Choose one of the following subraces: Arcadian, Catoblepas, Gorgon, Mist Horn, Urbos.

ARCADIAN

Robust and devoted, Arcadians are considered the most nurturing and sociable of all Holstaurs, known for their gentle hearts and deep capacity for love. They are most often found in rural areas, living harmoniously within more developed communities. Arcadians thrive when surrounded by others, and they gravitate naturally toward roles centered on care; tending to livestock and crops, supporting a spouse, or raising children with tireless affection. They are ill-suited to isolation or sparse company, often growing melancholic when cut off from communal life.

Meadow Dew. You can perform a ritual to materialize a dew of natural vitality. With 10 minutes of uninterrupted work or as part of a short rest you can perform a ritual and magically produce a number of Meadow Dew potions equal to your proficiency modifier. A Meadow Dew potion needs to be filled into a container like a vial. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you have finished a Long Rest.

A creature can use its action to consume a Meadow Dew potion. Drinking the Meadow Dew potion restores hit points equal to 1d6 + your Constitution modifier (minimum of 0) and nourishes the creature for one day. Once a creature drinks the potion, it can't benefit from its properties again until it finishes a Short or Long Rest. Your Meadow Dew potion spoils after 24 hours or until it is further refined with Cook's Utensils (no check required), which will make your Meadow Dew potion a common food item without special properties.

Vitality. Whenever you finish a short rest, you regain hit points equal to your character level.

Charming. You are proficient in Animal Handling and Persuasion.



Mist Horn Holstaur
Artwork by QueenChikkibug

DM Tuz Note for Meadow Dew:

Listen, the exact nature of the Meadow Dew is up for you or your DM to decide. I provided a fitting but also gender neutral solution to an obvious expectation that people will have towards the Holstaurs. I will grant you creative freedom to do with it as you please, but be considerate at others at your table.



Catoblepas Holstaur
Artwork by QueenChikkibug

CATOBLEPAS

Catoblepas are reclusive Holstaurs who dwell in mist-choked moors and marshlands, shaped by a hostile world into shy, melancholic beings. Unlike their kin, they avoid eye contact from an instinct to protect others from their dangerous gaze. Their eyes carry a curse-born magic which can fell a man where he stands with a single glance.

Earning a Catoblepas' trust takes time, but beneath their wary silence lies a reservoir of affection long held back. Once bonded, they become deeply devoted, their loyalty rivaling even the nurturing Arcadians. Yet where Arcadians know when to part, Catoblepas often struggle to let go and begin to cling.

Their need to feel needed runs deep. When their bond feels threatened, they may react with desperation. Linger nearby, watching from afar, intercepting conversations, offering unsolicited help, or subtly isolating those they've grown attached to—their actions can become quietly invasive. This possessiveness originates from an overabundance of love, hoarded through years of solitude, yearning to be given. And though they rarely voice it, many dread a return to solitude. But not all bear this intensity. Some remain distant, content with rare companionship. But when they get to love and care, they do so fully.

Dark vision. You have surperior vision in dark and dim conditions. 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.

Death Beam. You can use an action to look at a creature within 30 ft. of yourself that can see you. The creature must make a Constitution saving throw, taking 2d8 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. If the creature fails the saving throw by 5 or more, you roll the damage dice twice and take the higher result. The saving throw is equal to 8 + your Constitution modifier + your Proficiency bonus. The damage increases to 3d8 at 5th level, 4d8 at 11th level, and 5d8 at 17th level. You can use this action a number of times equal to your Proficiency Bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a Long Rest.

Swamp Walk. Difficult terrain composed of swamps, marshes, or water, does not impede your walking movement speed.

Voyeur. You are proficient in Perception and Stealth.



Check out these other Player Races!

Aside from the Holstaur I also have created 2 other player races: the [Lamia](#), ambitious snake folk who are so often misunderstood, and the [Slime Folk](#), affable ooze-like humanoids that want to experience what the world has to offer and make new friends.



Gorgon Holstaur
Artwork by QueenChikkibug

GORGON

Feared even among their own kind, Gorgon Holstaurs are a rare and formidable offshoot known for their fierce temper and standoffish demeanor. Found in jagged mountain ranges and deep cavern networks alike, their bodies are covered in rugged, iron-like scales—organic armor formed from the minerals around them. These plates lend them both an imposing stature and a toughness only few can match.

Gorgons are quick to assert their dominance and far more prone to violence than even the Urbos cousins. Territorial by nature, they do not shy from confrontation. When angered, they exhale a petrifying miasma capable of turning flesh to stone, shutting down resistance with a single huff. A leading theory suggests the gas is produced as a byproduct of breaking down trace minerals in their diet or from licking exposed mineral veins found underground.

And yet, beneath the bristled hostility lies the same fundamental urge to nurture and care as Holstaurs do—twisted by pride and irritability. Gorgon care tends to take the shape of overbearing control. Some fight this instinct, striving to offer aid without overpowering others. Others cannot help but impose, believing stability and safety can only be ensured by their strength. And a few embrace the role of tyrant entirely, convinced that love means ruling, and protection demands obedience.

They seldom earn trust easily, nor do they seek it. But for those who can live with their rough affection, life under a Gorgon's watch is secure, but potentially very intense.

Natural Armor. As long as you are not wearing heavy armor, you have a +1 bonus to your AC.

Petrifying Breath. As an action you can exhale petrifying gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the area must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes

2d6 poison damage and its speed is halved until the end of your next turn. On a successful save a creature takes half as much damage and suffers no other effects. Starting at 11th level, the damage increases to 2d8 poison damage.

A creature reduced to 0 hit points by this damage is stable but petrified for 24 hours or until it comes in contact with your blood. A creature immune to being petrified is unaffected by this gas.

You can use this trait a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Bully. You are proficient in Athletics or Intimidation.

MIST HORN

The studious Mist Horn prefers to live in tranquil corners of the world. Often bookish by nature, they dedicate much of their time to quiet study. Though somewhat aloof when conversation drifts beyond their work, they are far from inhospitable, and often eager to share what they know by teaching others. Mist Horns dislike manual labor, but find true joy in learning and understanding the world and those who inhabit it. They can spend many hours—or even days—discussing the subjects of their studies.

Academic Mastery. Because of your own studies, you are proficient in two of the following skills: Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion. Whenever you take a Long Rest in an area with readily available knowledge, such as a local library or books of a relevant field in your own possession, you can change one of these proficiencies to another one of the skills listed above that you are not proficient in.

Private Lesson. Over the course of a Long Rest, you can have a study session with another willing creature, to do so the creature must have an Intelligence of 5 or higher and you must both share at least one language. You choose a subject, Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion; At the end of the long rest, the creature gets a bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier on all checks it makes using the chosen knowledge skill until it finishes a long rest.

Mystic Studies. You learn a wizard cantrip of your choice. When you create the character, you choose Charisma, Intelligence or Wisdom as your spellcasting ability for it. Whenever you finish a Long Rest you can exchange the cantrip for another wizard cantrip.

URBOS

The original kin from whom all Holstaur species descend, Urbos are the largest and strongest of the Cowfolk. Most often found in high mountain regions, they are headstrong and instinctively territorial. Unlike their younger cousins, they are quicker to anger, yet possess a powerful protective instinct toward those who cannot defend themselves. Urbos are often seen guiding travelers through treacherous paths and have been known to rescue the lost from extreme weather or savage beasts. They are willing to trust—just as they are willing to harm if that trust is betrayed.

Great Horns. Your horns deal 1d6 piercing damage instead of 1d4.

Impact Blow. When you move at least 10 ft. straight towards a creature and immediately attack it with your horns or shove it, you have advantage on the attack roll or on your Strength (Athletic) check to shove it.

Mighty Stride. You can move through spaces of any creature that is of a smaller Size than your own.

Undercoat. You are resistant to cold damage and accustomed to cold climates.

Trailblazer. You are proficient in Athletics and Survival.



Urbos Holstaur
Artwork by QueenChikkibug



Artwork by DM Tuz

HOLSTAUR UNIQUE FEATS

Holstaur characters have access to unique feats when they level up in a class. Some DMs allow the use of feats to further customize a character, see chapter 6, “Customization Options”, of the Player’s Handbook.

The following special feats allow your character to deepen and expand upon their heiritage, as each feat represents an evolution of your character’s innate powers.

MARK OF BAPHOMET

Prerequisite: Holstaur, Level 4+

You gain the following benefits:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Strength or Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Ferocity. If you are reduced to 0 hit points and not outright killed, you can use a reaction to make a melee weapon attack before falling unconscious.

Strike and Gore. Whenever you hit a target with a melee weapon attack, you can use your bonus action to attack or push the same target with your horns until the end of your turn.

Labyrinthine Recall. You can always retrace all steps that you took within the past month and cannot get lost except by magical means.

GENEROUS BOON

Prerequisite: Arcadian Holstaur, Level 4+

You gain the following benefits:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Constitution or Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Share Vitality. You can use an action to expend one hit dice to restore hit points to a creature within 5 ft. of you. The hit

points healed are equal to your hit dice + your Constitution modifier (minimum of 1). If the creature is below half of its maximum hit points it regains hit points equal the highest number of your hit dice + your Constitution modifier (minimum of 1) instead. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency modifier before you have to finish a long rest to use it again.

Gifted Boon. Whenever a creature regains hit points from your **Share Vitality** or **Meadow Dew** potion, it gains a Generous Boon for 10 minutes. A creature can expend a Generous Boon when it makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, to add a bonus equal to your Constitution modifier (minimum of 1) to it.

IRON TYRANT

Prerequisite: Gorgon Holstaur, Level 4+

You gain the following benefits:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Strength or Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Deep Breath. When you use your **Petrifying Breath** trait, you can expend one additional use of it to increase the area to a 30-foot cone.

Iron Carapace. Your **Natural Armor** trait now gives you a +1 bonus to your AC regardless of what armor you wear.

Lethal Huff. You learn the *Poison Spray* cantrip. Constitution is your spellcasting ability for it. A creature reduced to 0 hit points by it becomes petrified as described in your **Petrifying Breath** trait.

MAGICAL TEACHINGS

*Prerequisite: Holstaur (Mist Horn),
Spellcasting Class Feature*

You gain the following benefits:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Constitution or Intelligence score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Magical Teachings. When you use your *Private Lesson* feature you can expend the use of a spell of a level equal to half of your proficiency bonus (rounded down). If the spell requires material components, they are expended as if you cast the spell over the course of your *Private Lesson*. The creature you perform the *Private Lesson* with gains the ability to cast the spell (never as a ritual) once without expending a spell slot until it finishes a Long Rest, using the same ability score that you used to cast the spell. The creature must have 10 or more in the same ability score that you use as spellcasting ability score.

If you choose to teach the creature a cantrip spell, the creature can cast it an amount of times equal to your Proficiency Bonus until it finishes a Long Rest instead.

MELANCHOLY

Prerequisite: Catoblepas Holstaur, Level 4+

You gain the following benefits:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Charisma or Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Aura of Melancholy. On your turn, you can use a bonus action to manifest an aura of melancholy that lasts for 1 minute. A creature that starts its turn within 10 ft. of you must succeed a Charisma saving throw or has disadvantage on attacks or skill checks until the end of your next turn, as they are overcome by thoughts of sorrow. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to your melancholy for 1 hour. Creatures with a Charisma of 5 or less are unaffected and creatures immune to the charmed automatically succeed the saving throw. The DC is equal to 8 + your Wisdom or Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus. You choose between Wisdom or Charisma when you take this feat. You can use this feature an amount of times equal to your Proficiency Bonus before you have to finish a Long Rest to use it again.

Dreaded Solitude. When you see an allied creature within 30 feet of you be reduced to 0 hit points or killed, you can use a reaction to manifest your Aura of Melancholy. If you activate your aura this way each creature previously immune to your melancholy due to a successful save are no longer immune to it.

Arcadian Holstaur & Gobbo
Artwork by DM Tuz



PROTECTOR OF THE MEEK

Prerequisite: Urbos Holstaur, Level 4+

You gain the following benefits:

Ability Score Increase. Increase your Strength or Constitution score by 1, to a maximum of 20.

Protect the Meek. While you are within 5 ft. of an allied creature that has 0 hit points, you have advantage on all attack rolls, and all attack rolls against that allied creature have disadvantage.

Additionally, when you see an allied creature within 30 ft. of yourself be reduced to 0 hit points and fall unconscious, you can use a reaction to move up to your speed towards the allied creature.

Warding Horns. When a creature you can see attacks an allied creature other than you within 5 ft. of you, you can use your reaction to attack the attacking creature with your horns or attempt to push the attacking creature. (You use this reaction after the triggering attack.)

MY OTHER WORKS

If you like my work, consider checking out my other freely available works:

[Horrors of the Dark](#) - A complete bestiary fan adaptation of Red Hook Studio's *Darkest Dungeon*

[Bloodstained Notes](#) - A Hunter's Bestiary - A complete bestiary fan adaptation of From Software's *Bloodborne*

[Unbound Monsters: Slaughterhouse Horrors](#) - A small collection of horrific monsters given as a free sample of my patreon exclusive monsters

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