

BARGH BACKBLADE

Writing and Design by DM Tuz

From seedy taverns to upscale markets redound tales of a notorious bandit. A bugbear clad in black fur, wielding a brutal blade, leads a mob of blood-thirsty goblins across the land, sparing no homestead, village, or caravan in their path. He continues to wreak havoc on the land despite the best attempts of lords and law; he is known as Bargh Backblade.

Bargh is an enigmatic and terrifying character. His origins are unknown, as he merely arrived one day and began on his path of infamy. Bargh Backblade is a master of ambush, befitting of his bugbear blood, but also a cunning leader, capable of planning fiendish traps and daring maneuvers, leading him to victory in the face of overwhelming odds. The bugbear himself is a terrifying sight, with his muscular frame, distinctive black

fur coat, piercing red eyes, and, of course, his moniker- a big, primitive blade designed to sever exposed flesh with savage efficiency- always held in his massive hands.

Bargh leads his band of bandits with an iron hand, not just for his own gains. Depending on who had the coin to pay him, Bargh has led his goblins on numerous occasions as mercenaries for the forces of evil, either as guerrilla soldiers or shock troops to turn the tides of battle.

In truth, though, riches, food, and other worldly goods are not the reason why Bargh is ravaging the land. His needs are of a darker nature, for he only seeks a steady supply of souls. Bargh is a fiend, a barghest that takes on the unique shape of a bugbear, using its guise to rally goblinoids under his services and lead them on repeated raids. It doesn't matter who perishes in the numerous massacres this wicked bandit leads because the dead all satisfy his insatiable appetite.



BARGH BACKBLADE

Large fiend (shapechanger), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)

Speed 60 ft. (30 ft. in bugbear form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +8, Con +7

Skills Deception +6, Intimidation +6, Perception +5, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, Common, Goblin, Infernal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency** +4

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Bargh fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Shapechanger. The Bargh can use his action to polymorph into a Medium Bugbear or back into its true form. Other than its size and speed, its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. The Bargh reverts to his true form if it dies.

Fire Banishment. When Bargh starts his turn engulfed in flames that are at least 10 feet high or wide, he must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or be instantly banished to Gehenna. Instantaneous bursts of flame (such as a red dragon's breath or a fireball spell) don't have this effect on him.

Keen Smell. Bargh has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Soul Eater. Whenever a goblinoid within 20 ft. of Bargh dies, he regains 10 hit points if he is in his Bugbear form, or 20 hit points if he is in his true form.

Opening Assault. During the first round of combat, the first time a creature takes damage from one of Bargh's weapon attacks, it takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage.

Distracting Attacks (Bugbear Form Only). When Bargh makes a melee weapon attack against a creature, it can't make opportunity attacks against creatures other than Bargh until the beginning of Bargh's next turn or until the creature is no longer within 5 ft. of Bargh.

BARGH'S TACTICS

Bargh is an experienced leader and knows how to utilize his followers to the best of his abilities. First, Bargh will always try to set up a favorable condition for a battle. Due to his fiendish nature, there is no taboo he is not willing to cross to force a battle under his conditions. He will set up an ambush, using diversions, hostages, and other trickery to lure his opponents into place. To do so, he will readily make use of his enchantment and illusion spells. Once he springs his ambush, he will try to deal a devastating initial blow with his Opening Assault, targeting as many different targets as possible, while his bugbears make full use of their surprise attack feature.

In combat, he will remain in his bugbear form for as long as there are enough of his minions to command. He will try to have them keep all members of the group's

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Bugbear Form Only). Bargh makes two weapon attacks.

Greatsword (Bugbear Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Throwing Axe (Bugbear Form Only). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Multiattack (True Form Only). Bargh makes three weapon attacks; one bite and two claw attacks.

Bite (True Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws (True Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Innate Magic. Bargh casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14), requiring no material components:

At will: *Levitate*, *Minor Illusion*, *Pass Without Trace*

1/day: *Charm Person* (3rd Level), *Dimension Door*, *Suggestion*

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Bargh can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Bargh regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Claws (True Form). Bargh attacks with his claws.

Command (Bugbear Form Only). Bargh commands one allied goblinoid of Challenge 2 or lower within 60 ft. of himself that can hear him. The goblinoid can then use a reaction to move up to its speed and make a single weapon attack.

Move. Bargh moves up to half of his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Stride and Strike (2 Actions). Bargh moves up to half of his speed and makes a single weapon attack.

True Form Revealed (2 Actions, 1/Day). Bargh polymorphs back into his true form and then makes three attacks; one with his bite and two with his claws. Any goblinoid within 20 ft. of Bargh that sees him polymorph that way must succeed a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of Bargh's next turn.

party in melee combat, and Bargh himself will target less armed party members with his brutal strikes and use his Command legendary action to control the battlefield.

If the tide of battle turns against him, but a member of the player's group is vulnerable, he will use them as leverage to force the group to retreat. Otherwise, if cornered and below half of his hit points, Bargh will reveal his true form, at which point he no longer differentiates between friend or foe. To regain hit points, Bargh will remain close to his goblin minions and, if need be, execute goblinoids to regain hit points.

As an ace in the hole, Bargh will use his Dimension Door spell to escape a doomed battle and ensure his survival for another day.

INFORMATION GATHERING

Before heading out to face Bargh Backblade and his mercenaries, players might want to gather some information on him and his mercenaries. You can let them roll Intelligence (History), Intelligence (Investigation), Charisma (Persuasion), or other suitable skill checks to learn more about Bargh Backblade.

DC 13. Bargh Backblade is a notorious bugbear bandit leading a group of raiders. One can immediately recognize him by his black fur and piercing red eyes. His preferred targets are hamlets, villages, and unprotected caravans. So far he has successfully evaded capture several times, but several authorities have set a handsome reward for his head.

DC 13 (Investigation/Persuasion). The group learns about the current location Bargh Backblade currently operates in.

DC 15. Supposedly, Bargh Backblade's bandits have been dealt with several times by local lords. Even though his crew has been dismantled several times, Bargh himself always escaped and would eventually rally new members once more.

DC 15 (History). Most of Bargh's bandit's consist of goblinoids, but no hobgoblins can be found among their ranks.

DC 20. There exists a single report of a goblin who supposedly was once a member of Bargh's bandits. She spoke of how she was overtaken by fear when first meeting the bugbear, as if she just met a terrifying beast. After a few weeks in his service, her and a few other newcomers decided to quit, unable to stand his terrifying presence. During their escape in the dead of night she witnessed most of them getting picked off one by one by a black furred creature that exuded the same terror as Bargh just outside of camp.

DC 15 (Religion, and success in the DC 20 check). With the information gathered so far, the group concludes that Bargh Backblade may be a unique type of Barghest in disguise.

AFFILIATED CREATURES - BARGH'S CREW

Bargh commands a crew of goblinoids, who sought him out because of his fearsome reputation, expecting that under his command, loot and safety are practically guaranteed. Despite the fact that they know little about his true nature, many of them feel an instinctive fear when they face the notorious bandit in the flesh. Bargh has neither interest nor patience for the weak and thus deals quickly with all who falter in his presence with a strike of his mighty blade. Thus, one can expect only hardened individuals to be met among Bargh's ranks, who not only earned their stay by resisting their fear but also whose battleprowess was tempered in countless raids.

Goblins and bugbears found the base of his crew, though ogres and other malcontents occasionally can be found among his ranks as well. Many of the bandits may be new arrivals and have yet to earn their stay, while Goblin- and Bugbear Mercenaries represent senior members of Bargh's group. These are seasoned and merciless raiders who have perfected the art of ambush and follow their boss' orders without question.

The most notable thing about Bargh's crew is the absence of hobgoblins. Bargh is confident in his ability to maintain his position of authority and to swiftly put an end to any challengers, but the Barghest has found hobgoblins' innate desire for authority to be too bothersome.

GOBLIN MERCENARY

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 14 (4d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	15 (+2)	11 (0)	10 (0)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)

Skills Acrobatics +4, Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Proficiency +2

Sneak Attack (1/turn). The goblin deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the goblin that isn't incapacitated and the goblin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

BONUS ACTION

Cunning Action. The goblin takes the Dash, Disengage, or Hide Action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The goblin makes two melee weapon attacks with its daggers.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Dagger (Thrown). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

BUGBEAR MERCENARY

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 39 (6d8+12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6, Survival +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency +2

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the bugbear hits with it (included in the attack).

Ambush. When the bugbear rolls for initiative at the start of combat, it can use a reaction to move up to its speed towards a hostile creature it can see.

Surprise Attack. If the bugbear surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage or 14 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage if wielded with both hands.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

BARGH'S BAG OF TRICKS

Bargh is a cunning leader and will use any trick in the book to lead a group of adventurers into an ambush. In the following are several example scenarios of how Bargh might set up a trap for unsuspecting adventurers.

Classic "Tactical Retreat". Bargh will send out a small group of his most expendable goblins to ambush the group. After an initial skirmish "and being outmatched," they will quickly turn and make a run for it. Their escape path will lead right through the actual ambush site where Bargh and his bugbears lay in wait, hoping that the hot-headed adventurers will pursue the goblins and right into their trap.

Curiosity Killed the Cat. Along the road, the group will find a crashed transport cart. It will carry the lable of a local winery and is loaded with several barrels. These barrels are not filled with wine though. Bargh previously has stolen this cart, distributed the wine among his men, and exchanged it with explosive oil.

Several of his goblins lie in ambush, readying fire arrows or alchemical oils and will ignite the barrels of "wine" the moment the players have approached to investigate. After the initial explosion, Bargh and his bugbears will move in to finish off the group.

Disappearing Act. Either Bargh leaves behind a trail for a group of adventurers to follow, or he has one of his goblins voluntarily captured and disclose his current base of operations. Regardless of how, the group is lured towards a cave set at the base of a cliff. Inside, Bargh will taunt the adventurers to pursue him, but will quickly use *Dimension Door* to teleport outside of the cave. At the same time, his goblins are positioned on top of the cliff, ready to drop several boulders at Bargh's signal to seal the cave's entrance and trap the group inside.

Oh, and as if things couldn't get any worse, the commotion has awakened a starving monster that was hiding deep inside the cave.

Goblin Sports. In a small forest clearing, a group of goblins are tormenting a few prisoners who have been tied up to trees. The goblins are taking turns firing arrows at their victims who are desperately calling out for help.

In truth, the victims are long dead and Bargh is using his *Minor Illusion* spell to imitate their pleas for help. The goblins are playing inattentive, pretending to be absorbed in their game. Meanwhile, Bargh and his bugbears lurk in the nearby forest, waiting for the group to close in.

Holding out for Heroes. The group comes across a small village ransacked by bandits. They are beckoned by cries for help. A building is on fire, and echoing out of it are cries for help. People are still trapped inside. The moment the group reaches the blazing building, bugbears and goblins emerge from the surrounding buildings and attack!

After Bargh had sacked the village he rounded up any surviving villagers and locked them in one of the buildings. Awaiting the group's arrival, he ordered his goblins to set the building on fire the moment they see the group. Meanwhile, his bandits are hiding within the surrounding ruins, waiting for the group to rush towards the burning building to save the villagers trapped inside.

Unwilling Participant. Bargh uses his *Suggestion* spell to force a helpless human to approach the group to ask for help. They will be instructed to lead the group to an ambush spot under the pretense that their elderly father fell and lost consciousness.

LICENSE

OPEN GAME License Version 1.0a The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, LLC. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc („Wizards“). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) „Contributors“ means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) „Derivative Material“ means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) „Distribute“ means to reproduce, License, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) „Open Game Content“ means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) „Product Identity“ means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, Spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and Special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, Equipment, magical or supernatural Abilities or Effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the OPEN Game Content; (f) „Trademark“ means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to Identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) „Use“, „Used“ or „Using“ means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) „You“ or „Your“ means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or Conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, nonexclusive License with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original Creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.
6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT

NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a Challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, LLC.

System Reference Document 5.1 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, LLC.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Tuz's Fearsome Foes
Copyright 2022, DM Tuz.

END OF LICENSE