

The Undead Revisited

Undead Profiles for Making Unique Undead in WFRP

One of the problems with the Undead in the WFRP rulebook is that the profiles are generic and serve only humanoids, namely humans. But what if a GM wants to introduce a Ghost Dragon, or a Zombie Ogre. While the Vampire is a profile that can be added onto any creature or PC/NPC, the others are not. This article enables GMs to make their own undead by applying a profile to the existing creature's profile.

First the GM should create the original entity, find a creature from the bestiary, give it a champion, minor or major hero advance scheme if they want or create a character and put it through its worldly career progression. Once they have the original mortal creature devised, they simply add the advance scheme and new traits to the character and they have personalized undead.

Note: Some of the profiles use a +/- 5 increments that are not typically standard advances, but have appeared in official WFRP products (Drachenfels page 99).

Corporeal Undead

Ghoul

The transformation to a ghoul who has passed into an undead state without actually dying, but they qualify as Undead. The transformation leaves one lean, wiry and tough, but withered as well. Their fingers become thin and dexterous, the better to break open bones and reach the tasty marrow, while their intellect degenerates and they become more savage and basic tool use seems beyond them.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	-5	0*	-	+1	-2	-	+1	+15	-20	-10	+15	+15	0*

* Indicates that the score for that characteristic is reduced to zero.

Attacks become claw attacks and claw attacks are *venomous* – victims who fail a Poison paralyzed for d8+4 rounds.

Alignment changes to evil.

Becomes a glutton for flesh – Ghoul must make WP test to pursue fleeing enemies rather than pause to feast upon the fallen or paralyzed.

Liche

The transformation to liche is one of the secrets of Necromancy, and only the most powerful of liches may mock death. The transformation gives them great power but their

body is still subject to the rot and decay that affects zombies. The profile below should be added to a 4th level necromancer.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	-	-10	-	-	+8	-	+3	-	89*	89*	89*	89*	0*

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

Alignment changes to Evil.

Causes fear and terror.

Immune to all psychology.

Unaffected by non-magical weapons, may only be hurt by spells or magic weapons.

Gains *Transfix*. Affects one opponent not engaged in combat. A magical Hypnotism Test required modified as if a magic spell by magic points, failure results in the victim unable to attack or move and counts as a prone target for all intents and purposes. While *transfixing* an opponent the liche may not act or move but may still control undead.

Mummy

The rituals for creating a mummy have a profound impact upon the subject, for the body becomes dried but the brain is carefully prepared to ensure that it survives the transition intact, creating a creature with inhuman strength and a powerful intellect.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-1	-	-	+1	+2	+15	-	+1	-5	89*	+15	+15	89*	0*

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

Attacks have a 40% chance of causing Tomb Rot.

Cause fear in all living creatures and terror in living creatures under 10 feet tall.

Becomes *flammable*.

Subject to Stupidity – the transformation to a mummy often disorients the mummy and they are subject to stupidity if not controlled by a Necromancer.

Skeleton

Most skeletons are simply remains animated not by some malignant spirit or a soul unwilling to pass on, but by necromantic energies controlled by a necromancer. Lacking any will, they are weak servants.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	-5	-10	-	-	-2	-10	-	-10	18*	18*	18*	18*	0*

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

Wounds from Skeleton have a 35% chance of causing *infected wounds*.

Cause Fear.

Immune to Psychology.

Subject to *Instability*, and if they become *unstable* they automatically collapse never to rise again.

Must be *controlled* by a necromancer or powerful undead, otherwise they are subject to *stupidity*.

Skeleton Champion

Unlike the normal Skeleton, the Skeleton Champion is partly possessed by the spirit of some great hero called forth. The Skeleton Champion is disoriented and bound to serve its summoner and thus it seems little more intelligent than any other skeleton.

Simply apply the “Champion” profile from the bestiary to a normal skeleton or use the profile below and add to the original creatures profile.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	+5	-	+1	-	-2	-	-	-10	18*	18*	18*	18*	0*

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

As per normal skeleton except:

Not subject to Stupidity

May control Undead within 24 yards.

Freethinking undead: Not subject to instability and they retain original Ld, Int, Cl and WP with a -10 penalty rather than the standard “18” scores.

Zombie

Zombies are little more than rotting corpses animated by magical energies. The mightier and more powerful the body, the more awesome the zombie, but its mental faculties will always be substandard.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	-5	0*	-	-	-2	-20	-	-20	10*	14*	14*	14*	0*

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

Hits caused by Zombies have a 20% chance of causing Tomb Rot.

Hits caused by Zombies not causing Tomb Rot have a 50% of causing *infected wounds*.
Cause Fear.

Immune to Psychology

When a zombie loses combat, must make Ld test to remain in combat.

Subject to Instability, if a zombie becomes unstable they are destroyed.

Must be controlled, if not subject to stupidity

Ethereal Undead

Ethereal Undead may pass through walls and barriers with ease and are not affected by non-magical weapons. Most however are required to remain within the area of their death.

Ghost

Unlike many of the undead, Ghosts are not necessarily malignant. More often than not they are prevented from moving on into the afterlife because their murderer has not been brought to justice or that their remains have not been laid to rest. So they remain trapped between worlds until someone assists in discovering their killer or giving their remains a proper burial.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	-5	0*	0*	3	+10	-	1*	0*	-10	-10	-10	-10	-

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

Attack is a touch attack that *causes fear*. *Fear* test must be made at -10%, if failed they flee the area.

Cause Fear in living creatures.

Immune to all psychological tests and cannot be forced to leave combat.

Subject to Instability only when outside their haunted area.

Cannot be wounded by non-magical weapons.

Spectre

Spectres resemble ghosts, but the difference is in the motivation. A spectre is fated to haunt the world until it can fulfill some vow or escape a curse. As such Spectres may not be evil, but merely desperate and often require the assistance of mortals so that they can rest eternally.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	+10	0*	0*	+1	+15	+10	4*	0*	-10	-10	-10	-10	-

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

Touch attack causes paralysis for 2d6 minutes.

Subject to Instability only when outside their haunted area.
Cause fear in living creatures, may choose to cause terror if they so desire. Immune to all psychology

Wight

Wights are human, although it is possible for dwarfs, elves, or others to possibly come a wight if a GM so desires. What has robbed the Wight of its eternal rest is its own greed and attachment to the things with which it was buried. They wait in their graves, delighting in their worldly possessions and jealously guarding them from any would be thieves.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	-	0*	?	+1	+10	-	-	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	0*

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

Cannot be wounded by non-magical weapons.
Attacks in combat do not cause Wound damage but deduct a point from strength per successful hit while increasing the Wight's own Strength by one (up to a maximum of 6) and adding d10 Magic Points to its total. See the WFRP rulebook page 253 for more information.

Alignment changes to Evil.
Subject to instability outside their tomb or burial location.
Causes fear in living creatures.
Immune to all other psychology and cannot be forced to leave combat.

Wraith

Wraiths are the dead not allowed rest due to some sort of obligation from before they died. This compulsion has left them deranged and mad, twisting their nature so that they seek to see the living suffer like them.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	-10	0*	-	+1	+4	-	2*	0*	-10	-10	-10	-10	0*

* Indicates that this characteristic is automatically changed to this number.

Cannot be wounded by non-magical weapons.
Attacks in combat reduce victim's Strength by one, when reduced to zero opponent is dead.

Alignment changes to Evil.
Subject to Instability outside their tomb or burial location.
Causes fear in living creatures.

Immune to all other psychology.

Variations on the Undead

There is no need to adhere to the way that the undead are presented in the book. A GM can draw upon a whole range of ideas to make the undead more formidable, more frightening. A few suggestions are listed below.

Brain eating Zombies

Popularized in movies, everyone knows that zombies crave human flesh, in particular brains. A GM can make a Zombie subject to the same rules about eating the fallen as a Ghoul, or the GM can devise a “Brain Hunger” which acts the same as Blood Lust for a minotaur: if a Zombie kills or disables an opponent, it must test against its Cool lest it pause to devour the brains. If attacked while eating, its Attacks score is doubled until it is allowed to resume eating.

Free-Willed Undead

There is no reason that a great and powerful wizard, or a deeply troubled and guilt ridden dwarf can't stay long past their time. Such free-willed undead keep their same profiles and can act as whatever type of undead the GM decides. A great warrior whose crypt is disturbed may rise as a Skeleton using his original profile as the basis and keeping his personality characteristics the same. A recently murdered man may return as a zombie to hunt down those that murdered him, while a long dead dwarf may live on as a ghost to tell of a prophecy that it learned and was never able to share.

Mighty Liches

Perhaps the schemes are too weak for such creatures as liches, a GM should feel free to toughen the advance profile by adding the bonuses of the Champion, Minor Hero or Major Hero from the introduction of the WFRP rulebook's Bestiary.

Terrifying Ghosts

Ghosts and other ethereal undead have little power other than to scare or frighten the living. To make them more fearsome or fearful, when subject to fear or terror from ethereal undead the player must make a Cool test as usual, but if they fail by more than 30% their heart stops and they die instantly from fear. Or a GM may allow them to make a Toughness test, if they succeed they are stunned for a d3 rounds while failing the Toughness test results in immediate death.

Unstoppable Zombies

Zombies don't feel pain, and they don't stop when they lose a few fingers. For those familiar with horror films, zombies are some of the toughest things to destroy. For those

GMs who want their zombies to be more resilient, the characters may have to destroy the zombie piece by piece. Once a zombie is down to zero wounds, the characters may have to chop its head off (a hit to the head) or lop its limbs off (hits to both arms) before the zombie collapses – hits to the torso are simply not enough to destroy it.

-Reverend Lepper