



# AGE BESTIARY

# GIANTS

# AGE BESTIARY: GIANTS

Larger than life threats, giants are a staple in fantasy, mythology, and folklore. There's something about angry, powerful humanoid of truly monstrous size that sparks terror and wonder. Giants come in various sizes, types, and range from savvy tricksters to near-mindless brutes. This PDF provides background and rules for using giants in your AGE campaign.

## MYTH & FOLKLORE

Giants appear in nearly every mythology in the world. The Greeks had the cyclopes and titans, plus various bizarre giant-sized monsters such as the hundred-handed Hecatonchires. These creatures predated mankind, and in some cases the gods themselves. The Norse cast giants as the enemies and eventual slayers of their gods. The Hindus also made their giants, the Daityas, common foes of their gods. Native Americans had everything from handsome cliff dwelling giants to terrible towering cannibals. In Britain, giants helped build Stonehenge, menaced folk heroes like Jack, and were used to represent a variety of larger than life threats. Even the Bible has its share of these monsters, from Goliath to the angel-spawned Nephilim.

Giants are usually linked to the pre-history of various cultural myths. They are the things that walked the earth long before man. They are often enemies of the gods, though sometimes they are their servants, shock troopers, or malformed offspring. They often protect or hoard strange treasures and make their lairs in the wild, far enough from civilization to be rare sights but close enough that all know the threat they pose.

## GIANTS IN POP CULTURE

Most of the giants we see in modern media draw heavily from their mythological roots. From the stop-motion animated giants of old Ray Harryhausen films to the modern giants from TV's *Once Upon a Time* and movies like *Jack the Giant Slayer*, it's a rare giant that doesn't draw heavily and many cases directly from some myth or legend. Some original giants exist, like the giant aliens of *Alien* and *Prometheus* but they serve the same purpose; threats that look a lot like us and yet are vastly different in power and danger even from others of their kind. Smart giants are fairly rare in modern media, though when present they are often among the major villains of a piece, such as Laufey of the Frost Giants in the recent *Thor* film.

## GIANTS IN PLAY

GMs looking for inspiration for games based around giants have a plethora of options. With their physical power, giants make an

obvious threat to throw at mighty warriors and powerful mages. However, giants are so powerful that avoidance and trickery are often the greatest weapons to use against them. Encounters with giants can give rogues and other sneaky characters a chance to shine, using misdirection and deception to overcome the monsters' obvious physical advantages.

Not all giants are big, strong, and dumb. Some are big, strong, and very smart. These monsters make boss-level threats, as they cannot be easily overcome by might or cunning. Some of them, such as Norse mythology's Utgard-Loki, might even be masters of magic and illusion. GMs should use such epic giants sparingly. They are terrible threats and defeating one is a major achievement, but if overused they lose their dramatic effect. For this reason such giants are often surrounded by siblings, children, or followers who are less intelligent and powerful. This gives PCs lesser threats to overcome until they are ready to take on the ultimate challenge.

**"Fee-fi-fo-fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman..."**

**—The Giant, *Jack and the Beanstalk***

In all forms, giants can cause a lot of damage if left unchecked. The largest of them can crush buildings and even whole settlements in moments. They can fight whole armies. A force of even lesser giants could lay waste an entire kingdom. Though sympathetic or friendly giants may exist in a setting, the

worst of them are among the biggest threats around. Giants tend to hoard treasure, though it's more often a handful of exceptional items than a dragon-style hoard of gold and riches. This makes them attractive options for GMs needing a monster to guard a special object or treasure but care should be taken that they don't simply grind PCs to paste after a few turns.

Adding giants to a setting that normally doesn't have them changes things. Likely some of the biggest creatures around, they will interact with not only humans and smaller races but other massive monsters. Their arrival can throw whole nations into chaos and panic.

Still, it's easy to justify such creatures if desired, especially if they have ties to the ancient history of the setting. Perhaps these creatures have only recently awakened, summoned by some god, evil mage, or other threat. Maybe their return is part of an ancient prophecy. Or maybe they even come from another realm or dimension.

## GIANT THEMES

Giants are all about excess. They have grand appetites, flaws, and tempers. They represent humanity's negative impulses and physicality turned into a rampaging angry brute. Even heroic or highly intelligent giants often lack subtlety in their plans, motivations, or tactics. In general, don't use a giant for high intrigue or as a hidden threat. They're all about menace, might, and mayhem.





GMs using giants shouldn't be afraid to really go over the top and make use of their size and strength. If a lesser foe might burn a building, a giant could raze a village. If a less human threat would rend with teeth and claw, a giant could use a club the size of a tree to smash opponents.

## DIFFERENT BREEDS

The following represent just a few of the many types of giants that might show up in a game. They can be augmented as necessary with templates and by applying modifiers such as epic or heroic to create even greater menaces.

### LESSER GIANT

The smallest and least advanced of the giant races, lesser giants still stand over a dozen feet tall and are deadly foes. Often operating in small bands in remote hill or mountain regions, they typically organize around one strong leader who is often the toughest, smartest, and oldest among them. Lesser giants favor pelting foes with massive rocks from the distance while steadily advancing so they can bring the crude but mighty weapons to bear.

While not generally known for their smarts, lesser giants can vary wildly. Smarter, more civilized versions (+1 Communication and Cunning, may use better quality weapons and armor) may exist, living in small settlements deep in the wilderness, while others might be more like carnivorous ape men and forgo weapons entirely (+2 Dexterity, -1 to Communication and Cunning, drop the Big Weapon attack). Ogres and even large humans like Goliath from the story of David can be treated as lesser giants.



#### LESSER GIANT

LARGE, BRUTISH, AND OFTEN STUPID, THESE CREATURES ARE NEVERTHELESS VERY DANGEROUS.

##### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

-2	COMMUNICATION
8	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)
-1	CUNNING
0	DEXTERITY (BRAWLING, THROWING)
0	MAGIC
2	PERCEPTION (SMELLING)
10	STRENGTH (INTIMIDATION, MIGHT)
2	WILLPOWER (COURAGE)

##### COMBAT RATINGS

13 SPEED	80 HEALTH
10 DEFENSE	5 ARMOR RATING



##### ATTACKS

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
BASH	+2	1D6+10
BIG WEAPON	+10	3D6+10
THROWN ROCK	+2	1D6+8

##### POWERS

**FAVORED STUNTS:** Mighty Blow (1 SP), Pierce Armor, Threaten

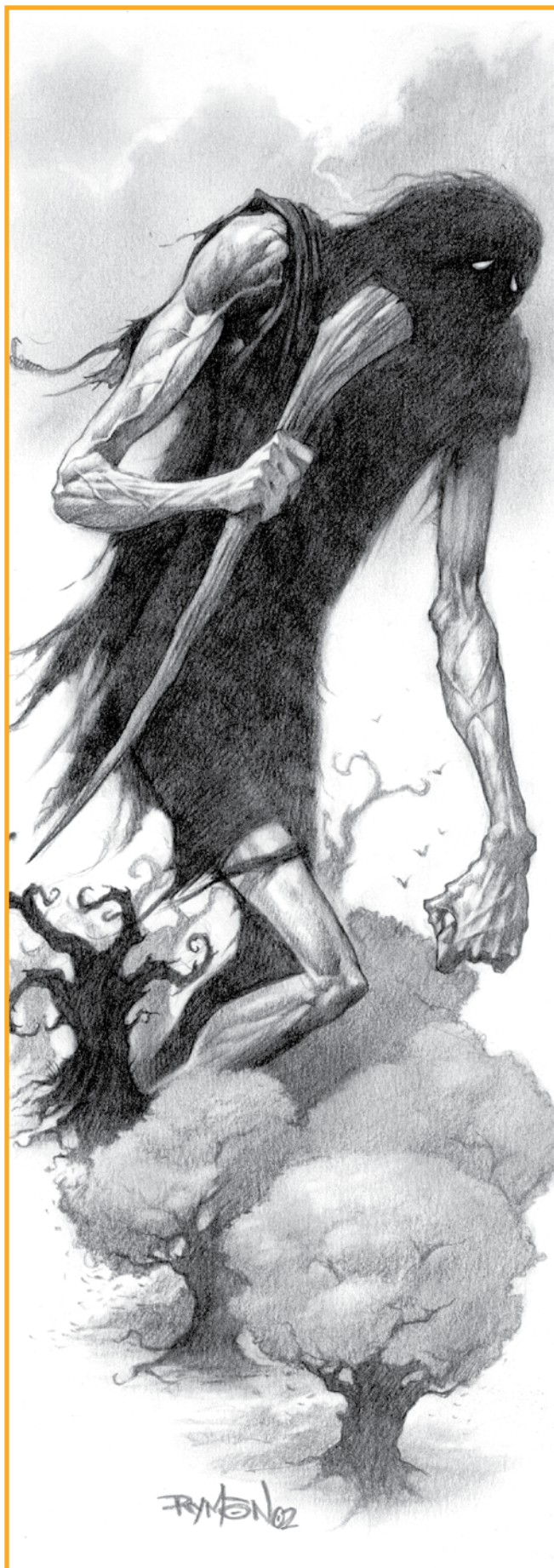
**BIG:** Must spend 3 SP to use the Defensive Stance and 4 SP to use Lightning Attack stunts. Since their blows can more easily catch more than one target, however, they can perform the Dual Strike stunt for only 2 SP.

**STAND STILL SO I CAN SMASH YOU!:** Due to their size, lesser giants suffer a -2 penalty to hit targets smaller than they are with Strength-based attacks such as their Big Weapon strike.

**TOUGH HIDE:** A mixture of thick leathery skin and crude furs grants Armor Rating 5.

**WEAPONS GROUP:** Axes, Bludgeons, Brawling, Heavy Blades, Spears

**EQUIPMENT:** Massive crude club, sword, spear, or axe. These all count as "big weapons."



## GREATER GIANT

LARGER AND MORE ADVANCED THAN THEIR LESSER COUSINS, FEW CAN RIVAL THIS CREATURE FOR PURE MIGHT.

### ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

0	COMMUNICATION
12	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)
1	CUNNING
2	DEXTERITY (BRAWLING, THROWING)
2	MAGIC
2	PERCEPTION (SEEING, SMELLING)
14	STRENGTH (CLIMBING, INTIMIDATION, MIGHT)
4	WILLPOWER (COURAGE)

### COMBAT RATINGS

16 SPEED	105 HEALTH
12 DEFENSE	7 ARMOR RATING

### ATTACKS

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
BASH	+4	1D6+14
HUGE WEAPON	+14	3D6+17
HUGE ROCK	+4	2D6+14

### POWERS

**FAVORED STUNTS:** *Dual Strike* (3 SP), *Mighty Blow* (1 SP), *Pierce Armor*, *Stunned Silence*, *Threaten* (1 SP)

**BIG:** Must spend 3 SP to use the *Defensive Stance* and 4 SP to use *Lightning Attack* stunts. Since their blows can more easily catch more than one target, however, they can perform the *Dual Strike* stunt for only 2 SP.

**STAND STILL SO I CAN SMASH YOU!:** Due to their size, lesser giants suffer a -2 penalty to hit targets smaller than they are with Strength-based attacks such as their *Huge Weapon* strike.

**TOUGH HIDE:** A mixture of thick leathery skin and armor grants Armor Rating 7.

**WEAPONS GROUP:** Axes, Bludgeons, Brawling, Heavy Blades, Spears

**EQUIPMENT:** Massive crude club, sword, spear, or axe. These all count as "huge weapons."

## GREATER GIANT

Also known as true giants, greater giants are the real deal. Towering well over twenty feet tall, these beings are unmatched for their strength. Greater giants are often solitary creatures, though giant kingdoms may exist in remote areas or various mythic realms. Lesser titans and other such creatures can be considered greater giants, though some are so massive and powerful they merit special consideration (see the **Really Big Giants** sidebar).

## CYCLOPS

One-eyed humanoids, cyclopes are the children and servants of the gods. They rarely associate with others, preferring solitude or the company of their own kind. A few serve their divine parents





## REALLY BIG GIANTS

Some giants are so massive that they defy normal statistics. For these mountain-sized threats, treat it as multiple characters for purpose of damage. So a giant hundreds of feet tall might have health and armor ratings for each limb, torso, and its head and to kill it a character either needs to bring it down by taking out the legs to get at its more vulnerable spots, or find some way to strike these spots directly. Ranged weapons are a good option here, but some giants might be so large that their head and vital organs are out of range of arrows and spells shot from the ground.

Such mega-giants also do damage well beyond the norm. Adding +10 or more to base damage or allowing attacks to strike multiple opponents easily are just a few ways to represent this. If using the mass combat rules in a campaign, you can treat this giant as an army all by itself.

## MIGHTY ELEMENTAL STRIKE

For 4 SP the elemental giant can add 2d6 + Magic damage to their attack. The damage corresponds to the elemental type of the giant.

## ELEMENTAL STUNT

An heroic elemental giant can use the following spell based on their element as a special stunt for 2 SP without making a casting roll or spending MP: Flame Blast (Fire), Rock Armor (Stone), Shock (Storm), or Winter's Grasp (Frost).

## MIGHTY ELEMENTAL STUNT

An epic elemental giant can use the following spell based on their element as a special stunt for 3 SP without making a casting roll or spending MP: Flaming Weapons (Fire), Frost Weapons (Frost), Lightning (Storm), or Shape Earth (Stone).

# GIGANTIC CREATURE

**REQUIREMENT: CANNOT ALREADY BE A GIANT**

In addition to the giants described here, some creatures may grow to massive size. Giants may keep such beasts as pets or guards. In some settings, gigantic versions of other races might exist. From giant elves to massive guard dogs the size of a house, apply the following.

- ♦ **ELITE:** +1 Strength and Constitution; +10 Health; add two focuses; +1 Armor Rating; and may use the Mighty Blow and Threaten stunts for 1 SP.
- ♦ **HEROIC:** +2 Strength and Constitution; +15 Health; add three focuses; +2 Armor Rating; and may use Lethal Blow stunt for 4 SP.
- ♦ **EPIC:** +4 Strength and Constitution; +20 Health; add four focuses; +4 Armor Rating; and may use Dual Strike stunt for 3 SP and Stunned Silence stunt for 2 SP.

In addition these bonuses, gigantic creatures have their natural abilities scaled up to reflect their larger size. All gigantic creatures also get the Big power.

## BIG

Must spend 3 SP to use the Defensive Stance and 4 SP to use Lightning Attack stunts. Since their blows can more easily catch more than one target, however, they can perform the Dual Strike stunt for only 2 SP.

# EXTRAS

The following section includes a background for playing giant-blooded PCs and rules for weapons designed to slay these monsters.

## HALF-GIANT BACKGROUND

Some settings have characters descended from larger and less human true giants. These characters are large, strong, and dangerous but appear more human in size and form. Half-giants are usually admired for their strength and feared by those who assume they will crush and bully weaker beings. The following background can be used in games that allow half-giants as playable characters.

## HALF-GIANT OUTCAST

Usually between eight and ten feet in height, a half-giant is the spawn of a human or other humanoid race and a giant. They are often outcasts among both races, too large and strange for non-giants and too small and weak for giants. Many find work as bodyguards, adventurers, and hired muscle.

## PLAYING A HALF-GIANT OUTCAST

If you choose to play a Half-Giant Outcast, modify your character as follows:

- ♦ Add 1 to your Strength ability and Constitution but reduce your Communication by 1. All half-giants are incredibly strong and tough, but few outside their kind seek their company.
- ♦ Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Constitution (Stamina)** or **Strength (Intimidation)**.
- ♦ You can speak and read the languages of your giant and non-giant parent.
- ♦ Choose a class. You can play either a rogue or a warrior. Half-giant mages are possible in some settings, but rare and subject to GM approval.
- ♦ Roll twice on the **Half-Giant Outcast** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.
- ♦ Pick two stunts you can use with -1 SP cost: Mighty Blow, Lethal Blow, Knock Prone, Threaten, and Stunned Silence. Pick two stunts that cost +1 SP to use: Defensive Stance, Lightning Attack, Seize the Initiative, and Sway the Crowd.

- ♦ Can use normal-sized two-handed weapons in one hand with no penalty but can't wear armor that's more than rough hides and skins unless they are specially made (double cost and requires a special craftsman). Many smaller normal-sized items and weapons are either unusable by half-giants or provide a -2 penalty.

HALF-GIANT OUTCAST	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 Constitution
3-4	Focus: Constitution (Drinking)
5	Focus: Perception (Smelling)
6	Focus: Strength (Might)
7-8	+1 Strength
9	Focus: Dexterity (Brawling)
10-11	Focus: Willpower (Courage)
12	+1 Perception

Note that half-giants can be terrors in combat and may be unbalancing in some games. GMs should decide if they want to allow a PC with such innate damage potential and physical power.

## GIANT-SLAYING WEAPONS

Various weapons in myth and fantasy stories are known to have the power to slay the mighty giant. Most of these weapons are empowered in some way by the divine, be they great hammers crafted at a sacred forge or a simple sling wielded by a deity's chosen champion. To reflect such weapons, apply the following bonuses to the weapon:

- ♦ Attacks made against a giant with this weapon gain a +2 bonus.
- ♦ When a giant-slaying weapon strikes a giant, roll 1d6 and spend the result as SPs. This is in addition to any other stunt points generated by the attack.
- ♦ When using the Pierce Armor stunt, you ignore all of a giant's armor, not just half.
- ♦ The wielder of the weapon gets a +2 bonus to resist Intimidation attempts by any giant they encounter.



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