

Nosferatu Conversion

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Conversion Notes

This is a conversion of the nosferatu to third edition D&D. The nosferatu is a vampire-variant that is much closer to the legendary vampire than the standard energy-draining vampire of D&D. It originally appeared in the Grand Duchy of Karameikos Gazetteer by Aaron Allston. The sources for this conversion include the Grand Duchy of Karameikos, "The Price of Revenge" by Steve Kurtz from *Dungeon* 42, and a 2e conversion available at WOTC's website at <http://www.wizards.com/dnd/files/NOSFERAT.TXT>

Nosferatu

The nosferatu is a powerful and fearsome undead creature strongly resembling the vampire. Contrary to its dark cousin, the nosferatu neither drains levels nor fears sunlight. Common people often fear it, although some nosferatu are not evil. The nosferatu is the victim of a dark fate, torn between pain, thirst, and disgust. Just like its cousin, it hungers for blood, but it does occasionally show compassion.

One must be very observant to recognize the nosferatu for what it truly is. It can easily pass among mortals since it does not show any obvious clues to its true nature. It appears monstrous only when it attacks. Like its cousin, however, Nosferatu fails to cast either a shadow or a reflection in a mirror.

Nosferatu are usually a character of some importance in the region (a dashing nobleman, a reclusive wizard, the laird of a domain, etc.). Nosferatu do not necessarily dwell in morbid cemeteries and tombs. They thirst for the blood of the living and stay close to them.

Nosferatu tend to spend less time thinking and more time acting relative to the other long-lived undead. They also feel at ease among unsuspecting mortals. They often change identities as the living pass on and the nosferatu must maintain its activity among the newcomers. Clever disguises to modify the nosferatu's apparent age or to impersonate progeny remain common tactics. If all else fails, they disappear for a decade or so.

Evil nosferatu act more like standard vampires, loving to torture and prey upon humans. Good-aligned nosferatu exist more as unfortunate victims, driven by an overpowering need.

Creating a Nosferatu

Nosferatu is a template that can be added to any humanoid or monstrous humanoid creature (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). The creature's type changes to "undead". It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Same as the base creature. If the base creature has a swim speed, the nosferatu retains the ability to swim and is not vulnerable to immersion in running water (see below).

AC: The base creature's AC improves by +6.

Attacks: A nosferatu retains all the attacks of the base creature and also gains a bite attack if it does not already have one.

Damage: The nosferatu does damage with its bite according to its size: Fine 1, Diminutive 1, Tiny 1d2, Small 1d3, Medium 1d4, Large 1d6, Huge 1d8, Gargantuan 2d6, Colossal 2d8. Creatures with a natural bite attack retain their damage or use this new damage, whichever is better.

Special Attacks: A nosferatu retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of 10 + 1/2 nosferatu's HD + nosferatu's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Domination (Su): A nosferatu can dominate anyone by looking into his eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack, except that the nosferatu must take a standard action, and those merely looking at it are not affected. Anyone the nosferatu targets must make a Will save or fall instantly under the nosferatu's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. The ability has a range of 30 feet.

Blood Drain (Ex): A nosferatu can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, inflicting 1 point of temporary Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. This loss can be recouped at the standard rate of 1 point per day.

Children of the Night (Su): Nosferatu command the lesser creatures of the world and once per day can call forth servitors as a standard action. They can call a pack of 3d6 wolves, a pack of 4d8 dire rats, during the day a flock of 5d10 ravens, or during the night a swarm of 10d10 bats. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the nosferatu for up to an 1 hour.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid or monstrous humanoid slain by the nosferatu's blood drain may rise as a nosferatu three days later, but only if the nosferatu wills it. Such victims are under the domination of the master nosferatu until his death or he releases them. The nosferatu may also preserve the alignment of the victim in this process or change it to better reflect his own. Good-aligned nosferatu will only create a spawn if the victim wills it (i.e. a lover). Evil-aligned nosferatu may preserve the good-aligned alignment of the victim to create even more torment. Such nosferatu usually seek to destroy themselves or cause the doom of their evil master.

Special Qualities: A nosferatu retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains those listed below along with the undead type.

Damage Reduction (Su): A nosferatu's undead body is tough, giving the creature damage reduction 15/+1.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A nosferatu has +4 Turn Resistance.

Resistance (Ex): A nosferatu has cold and electricity resistance 20.

Gaseous Form (Su): As a standard action, the nosferatu can assume *gaseous form* at will, as the spell cast by a 5th-level sorcerer, but can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 with perfect maneuverability.

Spider Climb (Ex): A nosferatu can climb sheer surfaces as with a *spider climb* spell.

Alternate Form (Su): A nosferatu can assume the shape of a dire bat at night or a raven

in daylight hours and the form of a dire wolf at any time as a standard action. This ability is similar to a *polymorph self* spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer, except that the nosferatu can assume only one of the forms listed here. It can remain in that form until it assumes another or until the next sunrise.

No Fear of Sunlight: In contrast to the vampire, a nosferatu has no fear of sunlight and can walk about at will during the day, but casts no shadow.

Fast Healing (Ex): A nosferatu heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points or lower, a nosferatu automatically assumes *gaseous form* and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin home within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in 2 hours.) Once at rest in its coffin, it rises to 1 hit point after 1 hour, then resumes healing at the rate of 5 hit points per round.

Saves: same as the base creature.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +6, Dex +4, Int +2, Wis +2, Cha +4. As undead creatures, nosferatu have no Constitution score.

Skills: Nosferatu receive a +8 racial bonus to Bluff, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks. Otherwise same as the base creature.

Feats: Nosferatus gain Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, and Lightning Reflexes, assuming the base creature meets the prerequisites and does not already have these feats.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary, pair, gang (2-5), or troop (1-2 plus 2-5 lesser nosferatu)

Challenge Rating: same as the base creature +2

Treasure: double standard

Alignment: varies

Advancement: by character class

Nosferatu Weaknesses

For all their power, nosferatu have a number of weaknesses.

Repelling a Nosferatu

A nosferatu cannot tolerate the strong smell of garlic and will not enter an area laced with it. Nosferatu find mirrors and bright lights distasteful, since they cast no shadows and have no reflection in mirrors. However, neither mirrors nor bright lights nor holy symbols keep them at bay. They are also unaffected by holy water.

Nosferatu generally avoid running water, but can cross it if absolutely necessary. They are utterly unable to enter a home or other building unless invited in by someone with authority to do so. Once invited, nosferatu may freely come and go. Magical charm, disguise, or any other trickery used to obtain the invitation is enough to allow Nosferatu entrance to someone's home. They may freely enter public places, since these are by definition open to all.

Blood of the Living

A nosferatu craves the blood of the living. It can go no more than a week without blood before pain begins to twist its body. The pain causes all of its ability scores to drop 1 point per day after the first week of fasting, down to a minimum of 9. It requires 9 points of Constitution drain of blood per week to avoid the pain. To recover each lost point of ability score due to the pain, Nosferatu requires another 1-4 points-worth of fresh blood. Non-humanoid blood only serves to numb the pain for a day. It cannot restore lessened ability scores.

Slaying a Nosferatu

Simply reducing a nosferatu's hit points to 0 or below incapacitates but does not destroy it. However certain attacks can slay a nosferatu.

Immersing a nosferatu in running water robs it of one-third of its hit points each round until it is destroyed at the end of the third round.

Driving a wooden stake through the nosferatu's heart instantly slays the monster. However it returns to life if the stake is removed, unless the body is destroyed. One must behead the undead and stuff its mouth with dirt taken from hallowed burial grounds to seal its fate forever. The definition of "hallowed burial grounds" varies with the nosferatu's own alignment, but it should be as far removed as possible.

Optional Qualities

There are many different versions of nosferatu since their appearance in the *Karameikos Gazetteer*. Below are some of those variant powers.

Permanent Domination: In addition to the standard effects of the nosferatu gaze, the victim becomes susceptible to the nosferatu's command for life, or until a *remove curse* spell is cast.

Animal Blood: The blood of animals will sustain the nosferatu indefinitely and cause no pain. This is a good variant for those who wish to have good-aligned nosferatu.

Fear of Sunlight: The nosferatu could suffer from the same fear of sunlight as vampires. They suffer from sunlight and are destroyed if they stay in it for more than two rounds.

Running Water: The nosferatu could be completely unable to cross running water, as a standard vampire.

Nosferatu Characters

Nosferatus can have any alignment, so character classes retain their class abilities when they become nosferatu, unless they change to a new alignment that is incompatible with their class.

Clerics: Clerics lose the ability to turn undead but gain the ability to rebuke undead. This ability does not affect the nosferatu's controller or any other nosferatu that the master controls.

Sorcerers and Wizards: These characters retain their class abilities, but if the character has a familiar other than a bat, rat, or raven, the link between them is broken and the

familiar shuns its former companion. The character may summon another familiar, but it must be one of the three above choices.

Sample Nosferatu

This example uses a 5th level human sorcerer as the base template.

Nosferatu

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 5d12 (32 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 21 (+4 Dex, +6 natural, +1 bracers of armor)

Attacks: Bite +4 melee, shortspear +4 melee, masterwork light crossbow +8 ranged

Damage: Bite 1d4+2, shortspear 1d8+2, crossbow 1d8

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Domination, blood Drain, children of the night, create spawn

Special Qualities: Undead, damage reduction 15/+1, cold and electricity resistance, fast healing 5, turn resistance, gaseous form, spider climb, alternate form, nosferatu weaknesses

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +8

Abilities: Str 14 Dex 18 Con - Int 10 Wis 14 Cha 20

Skills: Spellcraft +8, Concentration +8, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Diplomacy +6, Ride +5, Bluff +13, Hide +12, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Search +8, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10

Feats: Combat Casting, Iron Will, Silent Spell, Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Combat

The nosferatu possesses standard undead immunities. The Will save against this nosferatu's domination is DC 17.

Spells: (6/8/5): (0) *resistance, daze, ghost sound, arcane mark, detect magic, read magic* (1) *shield, obscuring mist, true strike, magic missile* (2) *Melf's acid arrow, alter self*

Magic Items Carried: 1 scroll of *invisibility*, wand of magic missile [5th-level caster], bracers of armor +1

Other Items Carried: shortspear, masterwork light crossbow, 10 masterwork crossbow bolts, 2 tanglefoot bags, alchemist's fire

Challenge Rating: 7

Raven Familiar

This is the raven familiar of the above nosferatu.

Raven familiar: CR 3; Tiny Animal; HD 5d8; hp 16; Init +6; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft.; AC 17; Atk claws +4 melee (1d2-5); AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +10, Spot +10

The raven has the following abilities: alertness, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, touch, speak with master