



# HOBGOBLIN OUTPOST

A *Monster Manual*  
v.3.5 Web Enhancement

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The organization entries in the *Monster Manual* give some indication of what kinds of groupings various creatures might form. These entries are intended as examples to get you thinking about how the creatures live and act from day to day. When you sit down to create an adventure or encounter featuring a group of creatures in their lair, you can use the organization entry (along with other elements of the creature description) as a creative springboard.

The sample lair presented here is an outpost used by a hobgoblin war party. It also embodies some elements of a hobgoblin tribal lair.

## LOCATION AND PURPOSE OF THE LAIR

This outpost is located in a hilly area of the sort hobgoblins favor (see the Environment section of the *Monster Manual's* Hobgoblin entry). The lair serves as a sort of advanced base for a group of hobgoblins bent on doing some raiding. Their targets might include human or elf settlements, passing caravans, or perhaps even mining camps in the area.

The lair itself lies below ground. Thick vegetation (trees, tangled bushes, or a combination thereof) covers the surface above the lair, and the various entrances are well hidden.

## FEATURES

The outpost consists of a series of tunnels and chambers carved out by the hobgoblins' slaves. It has a single floor that lies about 15 feet below the surface, though a few areas are slightly lower than others are. Unless otherwise stated in the text for a specific area, the outpost's major features are as follows.

**Walls:** The walls are made of packed earth mixed with stones. The Climb DC for such a wall is 20.

**Ceilings:** The ceilings within the outpost are 8 feet high.

**Floors:** Floors are made of packed earth and stone. Their composition is similar to that of the walls, except that the floors have been smoothed over with clay and covered with reeds and twigs that tend to crackle underfoot. Anyone moving along a floor takes a –5 penalty on Move Silently checks.

**Doors:** The few doors in the outpost are made of reinforced wood, and all of them have locks unless otherwise noted. The adept in area 7 and the sergeant in area 8 have keys to all the doors.



☛ Strong Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 23; Open Lock DC 20.

**Light:** The hobgoblins rely primarily on their darkvision to see, and no areas are lit except as noted.

## WITHIN THE OUTPOST

The numbered sections that follow are keyed to the map. A short description of each area follows.

Hobgoblins are highly organized and very disciplined. When invaders enter the outpost, its personnel don't just sit in their rooms waiting to be killed. Instead, they react according to a prearranged plan. The Development section in each area description explains what the hobgoblins there have been instructed to do. They follow their standing orders unless you decide that circumstances warrant different actions from them.

Vuroosk, the hobgoblin sergeant in area 8, takes charge whenever trouble arises. The development section in the area 8 description includes the plan that Vuroosk is most likely to use. If circumstances call for a different approach, feel free to alter the sergeant's actions accordingly.

### AREA 1: ENTRANCES (EL 1)

Each of these three areas provides access to the surface via a vertical shaft about 20 feet long. The top of each shaft is capped with a trapdoor disguised as a stump, a rock, or a tuft of bushes. A searcher who has not actually seen another creature using an entrance needs a successful Search check (DC 20) to find it. The hobgoblins are careful not to use any single entrance so often as to create a trail or path leading to it, and they usually double back on their own tracks when entering or leaving the outpost.

These entrances reflect the hobgoblins' passion for defense. They usually employ crude wooden ladders (Climb DC -5) to move between the outpost and the surface, but the ladders are stowed against the nearby walls when not in use. The guard on duty places a ladder in a shaft only when he hears someone open the trapdoor at the top and speak the correct password for that day—in Goblin. The ladder is removed and stowed again immediately after each use. Getting a ladder into place usually takes about 1 minute. The hobgoblins have, however, made provisions for a rapid descent (see the Trap section, below).

The walls of the entrance shafts look just like the walls in the rest of the outpost. However, the stones in

these walls are exceptionally loose, so the surface tends to crumble and break away when touched. This feature gives the shaft a base Climb DC of 30.

The raised ledge near each entrance is about 5 feet high. It's a fairly easy matter for a creature of at least Medium size to scramble up to one of these ledges (Climb DC 10), but a smaller creature must make a DC 20 Climb check.

**Creatures (EL 1/2):** A single hobgoblin warrior always keeps watch at each entrance.

☛ **Hobgoblin Warrior:** hp 6; see page 153 in the *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** The guard typically remains atop the raised ledge near the base of the shaft he guards, watching and listening for any activity at the trapdoor above. When a visitor gives the correct password, the guard maneuvers a ladder into position. If the correct password is not forthcoming, the guard unlocks the cover of the pit trap (see below) and shouts out in Common for the visitor to "stop wasting time and just jump." Should an intruder who has not given the correct password seem reluctant to jump, the warrior jumps up and down atop the latched pit cover and assures the intruder that all is well, then steps off the cover and unlatches it.

If an intruder manages to get down the shaft without falling into the pit trap at the bottom, the guard tries to block off the passage. He stands at the top of the raised ledge and uses the total defense action until his comrades from area 2 arrive (see area 2).

The extra hobgoblins take up positions in the alcoves to either side of the raised ledge. The one in the middle attacks the intruder, gaining a +1 bonus on his attack rolls for being on higher ground. Both of the additional hobgoblins use the aid another action—one to improve the center warrior's Armor Class, and the other to improve his attack rolls.

**Trap:** A pit with an exceptionally sturdy cover lies at the bottom of each shaft. These pits can provide a rude shock for intruders who try to force their way into the outpost.

☛ **Covered Pit Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset, DC 15 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1 spike for 1d6); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). Market Price: 1,000 gp.

The pit cover is hinged in the middle and can spin freely when not latched. One side of it is thickly padded, so that anyone who deliberately jumps down onto it from the trapdoor above takes only 1d6 points of nonlethal damage, or no damage at all with a successful



Jump or Tumble check (DC 10). Normally, the damage and the check DC for such a jump would be greater, even for a landing on a soft surface, but the pit covers are specifically designed and built to cushion falls.

When the cover is unlatched, anyone jumping or falling from the shaft takes damage from it as noted above, but the pit cover also spins and dumps the victim into the pit below. The pit is 10 feet deep, and the bottom is lined with spikes. Together, the fall and the spikes deal 2d6 points of damage. Anyone merely stepping on the unlatched pit cover can attempt a Reflex save (DC 15) to avoid falling in.

**Development:** Any combat here is certain to attract the attention of additional guards at the nearest guardpost (area 2). Any prolonged negotiation or other noise that doesn't involve a fight eventually draws the attention of the sentries at the nearest guardpost (see the Development section of area 2).

The entrance guards tend to stay at their posts no matter what else happens in the outpost. If called away by the warriors at area 2 (see the Development section there), the guard here unlatches the pit cover before leaving.

## AREA 2: GUARDPOSTS (EL 1)

These areas serve as backup guardposts for the entrances. The guards here have a table, chairs, and a few provisions, so their duty is somewhat easier than that of the entrance guards.

**Creatures:** Two hobgoblin warriors are always on duty here. Each hour, one of them switches places with a guard at the nearest entrance. This arrangement helps keep everyone rested and fairly alert.

👉 **Hobgoblin Warriors (2):** hp 6 each; see page 153 in the *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** These hobgoblins are charged with preventing unauthorized entry to or exit from the outpost. These guards overhear most activity at the entrance nearest them, but they ignore anything short of a pitched battle unless it continues for 1d4+1 rounds. If they hear fighting at the entrance, however, one goes to help defend the warrior there, while the second takes 1 round to dash to area 4, raise the alarm, and dash back here. Once that task is completed, the second guard also joins the fight at the entrance.

Noise of combat inside the outpost alerts the guards here after 1d4+1 rounds. They do not react immediately because martial noises of various kinds occur frequently in the outpost. Off-duty hobgoblins hold sparring matches, gladiatorial fights between slaves and prisoners from areas 10 and 11 are staged from time to

time, and worship in area 9 can get noisy, too. Once they decide to investigate, however, one guard goes to the scene of the disturbance, and the other carries a warning to area 4, then returns here to wait for her comrade. If the absent sentry fails to return after 1d4+3 rounds, the sentry here calls the guard at the entrance, and the two go off to join the fray themselves. The pair first goes to area 4 or 8 to get orders, but if no one is present in either area to instruct them, they seek out the battle themselves.

Should any intruders get past the guard at the entrance without making a lot of noise, these guards try to delay them as long as possible, using tactics similar to those described for area 1.

**Development:** Should a fight develop in any of the guardposts, the hobgoblins from the rest of the outpost eventually converge there, as noted in the various Development sections.

## AREA 3: TRASH DUMP

The door to this chamber is not locked, and it opens easily.

The hobgoblins pile all their refuse here. The place features a great, smelly heap of used bedding and cooking scraps, plus several casks full of night soil. When this chamber gets full, the hobgoblins force their slaves to haul the waste to the surface, where they dump it far from the outpost.

## AREA 4: MAIN BARRACKS (EL 3)

The hobgoblins eat, sleep, and relax here. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters enter this area.

Light from two charcoal firepits bathes this long hall in a feeble, ruddy glow. The air in here smells strongly of smoke, seared meat, and sweaty bodies.

Low beds with log frames line the area's north and south walls. Along the center of the room are a couple of tables and perhaps a dozen stools, also made of logs. Two deeply scarred wooden dummies, roughly humanoid in shape, stand against the short east wall. Someone has added big, pointed ears made of leather to both dummies, which makes them look pretty ridiculous.

At the west end of the north wall is a small, dark alcove. One wall section near the middle of the south wall appears to be made of fitted stone, not packed earth, like the walls in the rest of this complex. Set in the center of that wall section is a sturdy wooden door

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Six beds stand along the north wall, and nine along the south. (Some of the hobgoblins are obliged to share bunks with their comrades.) The beds are very low, and their mattresses are made from canvas ticks stuffed with leaves. Each bed has a few personal items (see the Treasure section, below) stored near it or under it. Also under each bed are a covered bucket for slops, a clay pitcher of water, and one or two sets of battered eating utensils.

The hobgoblins use the firepits for cooking, and they usually keep the fires burning around the clock. The ceiling has a couple of small vents that let out the worst of the smoke, which is so dispersed by the time it reaches the surface that it's unnoticeable. The system isn't very efficient, but the hobgoblins are accustomed to the smoke. A small collection of cooking utensils is stacked near each pit.

The two wooden dummies serve as targets for weapon practice. The leather ears have been added to make the figures look more like elves.

See areas 4A and 4B for details on the dark alcove and the stone wall section.

**Creatures:** This chamber is home to twenty-three hobgoblin warriors, but only six are ever here at once.

Nine are standing guard in areas 1 and 2, and another eight are out on patrols or raids at any given time.

Three goblin slaves are here at all times here as well, doing domestic chores for their hobgoblin masters.

**Hobgoblin Warriors (6):** hp 6 each; see page 153 in the *Monster Manual*.

**Goblin Slaves (3):** CR 1/3; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +0; Grp -5; Atk +0 melee (1d2-1, unarmed strike); Full Atk +0 melee (1d2-1, unarmed strike); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9.

**Skills and Feats:** Craft (woodworking) +1, Hide +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Ride +5, Spot +2, Use Rope +2.

**Tactics:** Three of the six hobgoblins in this chamber are awake, and the other three are asleep. They sleep in their armor and keep their weapons handy—either hanging from their bedframes or stashed under their beds. The sleepers tend to snooze through any disturbance except other hobgoblins shouting for help. It takes the sleepers a full-round action to wake up and



get out of bed, and a move action to pick up their weapons. Once armed, the sleepers tend to use the tactics described below.

The three hobgoblins that are awake lose no time responding to an intruder in this area. They form a battle line, and one of them orders one slave to area 6, one to area 7, and the third to area 8 (a free action). Then the warriors hurl javelins at whichever targets they think they have the best chance of hitting. They choose foes without cover over foes with cover, and unarmored targets over armored ones. Against foes within melee reach, the warriors try to maneuver into flanking positions if they can. Their general strategy is to eliminate weaker foes first. If they have difficulty hurting a foe, they either switch to easier targets or use the aid another action to improve their attack bonuses.

The slaves obey their orders with alacrity because they know the price of disobedience only too well. See the Development sections of areas 6, 7, and 8 for details.

**Development:** The hobgoblins here react quickly if one of their comrades brings a warning. They immediately wake their companions and send their slaves off to areas 6, 7, and 8, as described in the Tactics section. As soon as all six hobgoblins are ready, they march off to the scene of the action, unless they receive orders to the contrary (see the Development section of area 8).

Fighting in area 1 or 2 draws the attention of the hobgoblins here after 1d3 rounds. Once they notice something amiss, they react as noted above.

Any fighting in this area eventually draws guards from areas 1 and 2, as noted in the Development sections for those areas. It also brings the sergeant from area 8 and the adept from area 7, along with a pair of dire apes from area 6 (see the Development sections in those areas for details).

**Treasure:** A small bag or box of valuables is stowed near each bed in this room. The container either lies underneath the bed or hangs from the frame. If the PCs search all the beds, they can collect the following: 300 gp, 600 sp, 12 pieces of hematite (worth 10 gp each), 8 pieces of malachite (worth 10 gp each), 10 moss agates (worth 10 gp each), a set of eight of ivory dice with gold and amber pips (worth 8 gp each), 2 silver cups (worth 12 gp each), 3 gold armbands (worth 25 gp each), and a serpentine statuette of an erinyes devil (worth 80 gp).

#### Area 4a: Storeroom

The walls, ceiling, and floor of this area are all made of stone. The hobgoblins keep their food and drink here. Most of their provisions consist of game taken from the surface, so several dressed carcasses hang from hooks

in the ceiling. A few barrels of hardtack, a crate of dried fruit, and several casks of ale and wine round out the food stores.

#### Area 4b: Well

This area features a stone-lined shaft about 100 feet deep. Very cold water fills the shaft to a height of 30 feet. A big wooden bucket is attached to a ring on the west wall with an 80-foot rope. The slaves use this assembly to draw water from the well.

#### AREA 5: SMITHY

This alcove contains a crude forge built out of rocks collected from the surface. A pile of charcoal, a big, flat stone that serves as an anvil, and two stone troughs full of dirty water give mute testimony to its purpose. Hooks on the walls hold a couple of bellows, plus some hammers and a few sets of tongs.

A barrel next to the forge holds miscellaneous bits of steel and iron—mostly old horseshoes, nails, and pieces of chain, but also arrowheads, notched axe blades, bent daggers, broken swords, and smashed helmets. A successful Search check (DC 15) through all this junk reveals a tarnished silver holy symbol of Pelor (taken from a cleric's shield) with some of its rays bent or broken off. The symbol is worth 10 gp as is, or 25 gp if cleaned up and repaired.

The hobgoblin adept from area 7 occasionally plies his metalworking craft here, but only when the hobgoblins are sure no enemies are nearby to see the smoke from the forge. An airshaft about 6 inches wide leads from above the forge directly to the surface.

#### AREA 6: APE DEN (EL 5)

The south door to this chamber is barred from the south side, but not locked.

The hobgoblins keep a pair of dire apes in this room. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters enter.

The door opens to reveal a dingy chamber that reeks of excrement and rotted flesh. By the light of a single touch set in the north wall, two gaunt, feral apes, both well equipped with claws and teeth, are visible. In the northeast corner beyond the apes stands a massive-looking wooden ladder. Its top is out of sight in a vertical shaft that is easily wide enough to accommodate the apes.

The apes don't seem too pleased with the intrusion. They bare their bloodstained teeth and bellow out inhuman sounds that seem half growl, half scream.



The ladder in the northeast corner leads up about 12 feet to a dead end. Three feet of packed earth separate the end of the shaft from the surface. The hobgoblins created this feature to serve as an emergency exit for the outpost. With about 1 minute of digging, a character working with a shovel or a sword can clear away the dirt and open a path to the surface.

The torch stuck in the north wall is an *everburning torch*, set here to give the apes some light. It can easily be removed.

**Creatures:** As noted above, this chamber serves as the lair of two dire apes.

🔥 **Dire Apes (2):** hp 35 each; see page 62 in the *Monster Manual*.

**Tactics:** The adept in area 7 has reared and trained these apes to serve as fighting creatures. They attack any creature they see, except goblins or hobgoblins. If a foe should enter through the south door, both apes move to attack. Should the foe come from the west, where there's room for only one ape to fight, the closest one charges in while the other tries to burst through the south door and attack the foe through area 7. (The apes aren't very smart, but they know the outposts' layout and they're eager to fight.)

**Development:** If the PCs get this far without alerting the hobgoblins to their presence, the screams of the apes serve as an effective alarm. If Hoortchuc, the adept from area 7, is still alive, he is the first to arrive.

If a general alarm has been raised before the party gets this far, the hobgoblins in area 4 have already sent a slave here (and one each to areas 7 and 8). Upon arriving, the goblin goes to the south door and waits for the adept in area 7 to release the apes. If Hoortchuc does not appear within 3 rounds, the goblin lifts the bar to the south door and releases the creatures himself.

Once out of their chamber, the apes first try to go to area 7 to find the adept, if he is not present. If Hoortchuc is dead or absent, or if the apes can't get into area 7, they go to area 4 and attack the first enemy they see or scent. If the adept is not on hand to take charge of the apes, the goblin slave picks up the *everburning torch* from the north wall and follows the apes. If the adept does take over, the goblin follows along but slips off to area 10 at the first opportunity.

### AREA 7: ADEPT'S CHAMBER (EL 4)

This room contains a comfortable bed with an iron frame, a feather mattress, and pillows. A charcoal brazier provides heat, and a small writing desk in one corner holds a pile of parchments, pens, an inkwell,

and a small water clock. About half the parchments are blank; the rest contain notes that form a sort of personal journal (see the Creatures section, below, for details).

In a niche in the north wall is a pile of humanoid skulls (mostly human and elf). Set into the wall above them is a small, double-bitted axe made from a single piece of silver. An artful combination of black and red enamel makes the blades appear to be dripping blood. The axe is the symbol of the deity Maglubiyet, patron of goblins and hobgoblins. Though useless as a tool or weapon, it's worth 75 gp.

**Creature:** The hobgoblin adept Hoortchuc calls this chamber home. He spends most of his time here considering plans for future raids, composing sermons to deliver to the rest of the outpost, and scribbling in his journal in Goblin.

The journal features a careful accounting of the passing days, since Hoortchuc must give a sermon every eight days. He also fills many pages with theological musings, and these notes form the basis of his sermons. In addition, the adept keeps notes on all the loot and slaves the warband has collected. His journal indicates that the band has captured far more slaves and taken considerably more loot than the outpost actually contains at present. Most of the missing treasure and slaves have been passed on to the local tribal chieftain. The hobgoblins have spent the remaining cash and killed the remaining slaves, either in gladiatorial matches or as sacrifices to their god, Maglubiyet.

Hoortchuc also handles the feeding and ongoing training of the apes in area 6. He isn't too concerned about their hygiene, which accounts for the stench in the apes' den.

🔥 **Hoortchuc:** Male hobgoblin Expert 2/Adept 2; CR 4; Medium humanoid (goblinoid); HD 2d6+2 plus 2d6+2; hp 18; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +1; Atk +1 (1d6-1, quarterstaff) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Full Atk +1 (1d6-1, quarterstaff) or +3 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 12.

**Skills and Feats:** Appraise +9 (+11 for appraisals relating to metalwork or traps), Concentration +6, Craft (metalworking) +7, Craft (trapmaking) +7, Diplomacy +3, Handle Animal +8, Heal +7, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (religion) +3, Ride +3, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7; Combat Casting, Iron Will.

**Adept Spells Prepared:** (3/2; save DC 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds*, *light mending*; 1st—*bless*, *command*.

**Possessions:** Quarterstaff, light crossbow, case of 10 bolts, scroll of *dispel magic*, scroll of *cure critical wounds*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *wand of burning hands* (38 charges), *wand of cure light wounds* (22 charges).

**Tactics:** If attacked in this chamber, Hoortchuc flees to area 6, where his apes can help him. He uses his *bless* spell as soon as he can, followed by his *command* spell, which he aims at the foe that appears most physically imposing. He uses his *wand of cure light wounds* on the apes when necessary. Otherwise, he plies his *wand of burning hands* and his crossbow whenever suitable targets present themselves.

**Development:** Any disturbance here brings the apes from area 6. Likewise, Hoortchuc goes to help his apes if they're attacked in their lair (see area 6).

Hoortchuc remains lost in his own musings and unaware of activity elsewhere in the outpost until a messenger (typically one of the goblin slaves from area 4) comes to rouse him. When informed of trouble, Hoortchuc goes to area 6 and sends the apes to area 4, then takes down the *everburning torch* and follows them. Once the trio reaches area 4, all three attack any enemies they find, using the tactics described in the entries for areas 4 and 6. If there is no enemy in area 4, Hoortchuc and the apes either go where the sergeant sends them or follow the sounds of battle and press the attack as best they can.

If the alarm is raised, the goblin sent to summon Hoortchuc to area 4 tags along behind when the adept takes the apes to fight but slips away to area 10 as soon as possible. Should the goblin find Hoortchuc absent or dead, she immediately heads for area 10.

## AREA 8: SERGEANT'S CHAMBER (EL 5)

Vuroosk, the sergeant in charge of the outpost, lives here. His chamber is similar to area 7, except that it has no water clock or niche with skulls and holy symbol.

A neatly kept ledger on the writing desk details captives and loot the hobgoblins have taken. The sergeant's notes are nearly identical to those kept by the adept in area 7, but easier to read. Vuroosk also keeps a roster of the outpost's warriors, a pay ledger, and records of supplies both used and needed. A packet of reports detailing the exploits of Vuroosk's troops (all addressed to the local hobgoblin chieftain, named Nygraag) lies at the bottom of the stack. All the records here are written in Goblin.

**Creatures:** Vuroosk spends most of his time laying plans for future raids. He accepts suggestions from the adept and from his troops, incorporating the

best of them into his schemes. He also spends a fair amount of time keeping records and writing reports for his chieftain.

**Vuroosk:** Male hobgoblin Fighter 2/Ranger 2; CR 4; Medium humanoid (goblinoid); HD 2d10+2 plus 2d8+2; hp 29; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +9 ranged (1d8+2/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str bonus]); Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/19–20, masterwork short sword) and +6 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +9 ranged (1d8+2/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str bonus]); SQ combat style (two-weapon fighting), favored enemy (elves +2), wild empathy +2; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

**Skills and Feats:** Climb +7, Hide +6, Jump +7, Spot +11, Survival +6; Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (short sword).

**Favored Enemy:** Vuroosk has selected elves as a favored enemy. He gains a +2 bonus on his Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against elves. He gets the same bonus on weapon damage rolls against elves.

**Possessions:** +1 *studded leather armor*, 2 masterwork short swords, masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str bonus), 3 *potions of cure light wounds*, *eyes of the eagle*.

**Tactics:** Vuroosk prefers to fight behind a wall of his own troops, using his bow to harass enemy spellcasters when possible or to help defeat fighter-types when necessary. The sergeant is equally skilled in melee combat. Like the warriors in area 4, Vuroosk prefers to eliminate weaker opponents first, so as to strip more powerful foes of their support.

If fighting alone, Vuroosk tries to stay out of melee range as long as he can. If he can't avoid melee, he tries to stand in a doorway or corner, where he can't be flanked.

**Treasure:** Vuroosk keeps a locked strongbox under his bed. He has the only key.

**Ironbound Strongbox:** 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 35; Break DC 27; Open Lock DC 25.

Inside the box are a leather bag containing 350 gp, a leather pouch containing 28 pp, an unlocked wooden box that holds three strings of pearls (worth 500 gp each), eight packets of rare spices (worth 25 gp each), and a *cloak of elvenkind*. The gold coins represent Vuroosk's pay chest; the other items are treasure that the hobgoblins wrested from their victims.

**Development:** When foes try to enter the outpost, word of the assault eventually reaches Vuroosk.



The sergeant tries to make a stand in area 4, where there is space to bring the apes from area 6 into play. He sends a few warriors off to delay the attackers but holds back at least half of his troops for the main battle in area 4.

When fighting in area 4, Vuroosk tries to draw the foe to the east end of the chamber, so that any reinforcements arriving from areas 1 and 2 can come up behind the foe.

### AREA 9: FANE OF MAGLUBIYET

In the center of this chamber is a large firepit (usually cold). South of the firepit stand two rows of benches made of split logs, and north of it lies a big chopping block with a great, black, double-bitted axe embedded in it. Both axe and block are well spattered with bloodstains.

The block is just a piece of bloodstained wood with hollows and channels cut in it to facilitate beheadings. The axe is a masterwork greataxe with a head made of blackened steel and a handle made of dark wood, stained black.

### AREA 10: SLAVE QUARTERS (EL 1)

The door leading to this room is barred from the outside but is not locked.

**Creatures:** Seven goblin slaves (see area 4 for statistics) live here in squalid conditions, but only four of them are here at any given time, and they are asleep unless the PCs have been very noisy. They don't really mind the filth.

Each goblin has a pile of straw and twigs for a bed. The slaves also have their own cooking pit and utensils, plus a small cache of supplies.

**Tactics:** If the PCs enter this chamber, the goblins promptly hurl themselves at the characters' feet and beg them to have mercy on poor, abused slaves. If attacked, the goblins do their best to evade blows and escape from the outpost.

**Development:** Once the alarm is sounded, the goblin slaves from area 4 carry out their assignments and then try to make their way here and release their fellow goblins. If they manage to do so, all the goblins try to slip away from the outpost, either through one the entrances or via the emergency exit in area 6.

If the PCs try to question the goblins here, the level of cooperation they get depends on what has happened to the hobgoblins in the outpost thus far. If the goblins believe (or know) that their hobgoblin masters have been defeated, they fawn on the PCs and truthfully answer any questions put to them. The goblins know

the outpost quite well, but if the PCs have already defeated the hobgoblins, such information does them little good. The goblins know nothing about the hobgoblins' plans for the surrounding area. They do know that the two chief hobgoblins, Vuroosk and Hoortchuc, answer to some "hobgoblin bigwig" in the area, but they don't know who. They've never heard of Nygraag (see the area 8 entry), and they have no idea where such a person might be found.

The goblins are much less helpful if they believe the PCs have not defeated the hobgoblins in the outpost. They pretend to be utterly cowed, and they usually reply to questions by cringing and whining.

In any case, the goblins bide their time and try to escape from the PCs (and the hobgoblins) at the first opportunity.

### AREA 11: PRISON

This long, narrow chamber features two rows of covered pits that the hobgoblins use as prison cells. Each pit is 20 feet deep, and its walls are similar to those at the entrances (Climb DC 20). The pit covers are padlocked from the top; otherwise, they are just like the doors in the rest of the outpost.

Four 1st-level elf warriors are presently incarcerated here. (Use the statistics from page 102 in the *Monster Manual*, except that these elves have no equipment and 2 hit points each.) They are starved nearly to death and in no shape to fight, but they are willing to give it a try if the PCs insist.

If the PCs release these captives, the local elf lord offers them each a reward of 75 gp.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Skip Williams has been active in the game industry since 1974, when he took up wargaming and roleplaying while still in high school. He soon got an after-school job at TSR, Inc., the original publisher of the D&D game, and the rest (as they say) is history. Skip is a codesigner of the 3rd Edition D&D game (versions 3.0 and 3.5) and the chief architect of the *Monster Manual*. He also coauthored the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*. Skip keeps busy with freelance projects for several different game companies and has been *Dragon Magazine's* Sage since 1986. When not devising swift and cruel deaths for player characters, Skip putters in his kitchen or garden (his borscht gets rave reviews).