

Character Generation

The People of the Bear are the descendants of a group of survivors of the Magic Wars. He brought them to his Valley and showed them how to protect themselves from the outside world. Without exception the people of the Bear love their leader.

The Valley of the Bear is a long Alpine valley that stretches almost 100 miles from end to end. There are five large permanent sources of water in the valley which of course correspond to the locations of the five main settlements, the Basket, the Knee, the Stomach, the Reach and the Den. There is also one river known as The Leap, that runs leaping down the mountainside where it vanishes into a deep cave within the valley.

Characteristics

Roll 4D6 for all characteristics except INT and SIZ. Drop the lowest value. For those two roll 3D6, drop the lowest and add 6 points. You can move up to five points around up to a maximum of 18.

Your starting age is $17+1D6$.

Magic

Most of the People of the Bear use folk magic and everyone starts with $\frac{1}{2}$ INT in folk magic spells.

Sorcery is known and anyone with a POW of 16 can learn it. Starting spells equal:

- Sorcerer – $\frac{1}{2}$ INT in spells
- Priest, shaman, cultist¹ – $1D6+3$ in spells. Note that the people of Bear Valley don't follow these occupations.
- Anyone else – 3 spells.

For the purpose of character generation you start off knowing $\frac{1}{2}$ INT in individual spells.

E.g. Njal with an INT of 18 starts off knowing 9 individual spells no matter what their level.

Except that you cannot start with any spell that has a level equal to more than $\frac{1}{2}$ your INT.

E.g. you cannot start with Banish Tumult (level 20) or Beckoning Earth (level 10)

¹ If there even were such occupations they would have no contact with gods or spirits.

Note that you are still restricted to your total INT for the number of levels of spells you can have in mind at one time.

E.g. Ivar the Toothless with an INT of 18 knows nine spells:

- Clumsiness (1-3)
- Flames of the Sun (4)
- Frailty (1-3)
- Fury (1)
- Resolve of Iron (3)
- Sorcerer's Speed (1-3)
- Sorcerer's Strength (1-3)
- Sorcerer's Vitality (1-3)
- Undo Sorcery (1-4)

This is a total of 27 spell levels so he can only keep 18 levels in mind. This is what he decides upon.

- Clumsiness (1)
- Flames of the Sun (4)
- Frailty (1)
- Fury (1)
- Resolve of Iron (3)
- Sorcerer's Speed (1)
- Sorcerer's Strength (1)
- Sorcerer's Vitality (2)
- Undo Sorcery (4)

Spells with Variable Levels

Spells with variable levels like Cloak of Night (1-4) or Clumsiness (1-3), etc. count as a single spell and you learn them at their maximum level. You can however keep any level in mind.

Social Structure

People live in clans organized along family lines. The head of each clan is the oldest mentally competent man or woman. Each of these clan heads sits on the local council which is overseen by a leader called a Reeve who is chosen by the settlement through an election but has to be approved by the Old Bear as well. All citizens of the Valley are trained in weapons and expected to help protect their home if they come under attack. Everyone between the ages of

16 and 50 congregate during one of the three two week long training sessions that take place during the year. During this time the People are trained in fighting in a shieldwall and taught tactics useful for fighting ogres and giants.

Society

The People of the Bear are a tribal society. Each member can add 10% to three of the following skills:

- Climb
- Craft
- Move Quietly
- Nature
- Oratory
- Ride
- Track

Occupation

Pick one of the following occupations. You get +60 in one skill listed under your occupation, +40 to three skills, and +20 to four skills.

The People of the Bear do not have coinage so no one starts with any money.

- Astrologer
- Crafter, Tribal
- Hunter
- Merchant
- Minor Noble
- Peasant, Farmer
- Physician, Apothecary
- Small Trader
- Soldier/Guard/Watchman
- Sorcerer
- Troubador/Entertainer

Other than the money your character gets all the possessions listed.

Next pick four skills that are not part of your occupation and add +40 to one of them and +20 to the other three. These cannot be skills you've added points to already.²

Economics

The People grow rye, barley and oats. They herd sheep, goats and some cattle and horses. They mine and work iron and gold. They make pottery and carve wood. One craftsperson living in the Den is experimenting with glassworking but there isn't a good supply of sand in the valley. The people brew beer and do have one vineyard. They also distill alcohol.

Warfare

The People of the Bear's main threat are ogres and giants. They only encounter minotaurs and centaurs if they leave the valley. They fight in shield walls with spears and shields to give them an advantage against their traditional foes. The militia train in heavy leather, long spear and large shields. Other combinations are known. The Bearkin serve as heavy shock infantry.

All weapons are known (other than pikes) but full plate armour is not present in the valley. The People ride but they never fight on horseback as the ponies they raise are ill-suited to such combat and are terribly afraid of the ogres and giants.

Languages

The People of the Bear speak a language called Common which most humans and many other races speak. There are other languages in existence. The following is a list of known languages. There is little opportunity to speak merperson.

- Ancient – the language used in sorcery.
- Shadow – an elemental language.
- Ogre
- Giant
- Minotaur
- Centaur
- Merperson

The Bearkin

Anyone can be a bearkin if they are prepared to sacrifice the five points of POW required.

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² These could be additional languages even if Other language is an occupational skill.