

Ashbound elf*Talenta halfling**Talenta halfling*

Countdown to EBERRON Races of the New World

by Mat Smith · illustrated by Dana Knutson, Steve Prescott, and Mark Tedin

Myrriad races populate the expansive world of EBERRON. Many are familiar, while others are unique to the setting. Regardless, each race has its own look, its own feel, and its own place in the world. Most importantly, each race has its share of heroes ready for the pulp-noir action, adventure, and intrigue that await them in every corner of the cinematically exciting *EBERRON Campaign Setting*.

FAMILIAR BUT DIFFERENT

If you explore any fantasy realm in any D&D game, you can expect to encounter elves, dwarves, gnomes, half-elves, halflings, and half-orcs, along with an assortment of humans. In that respect, the *EBERRON Campaign Setting* is no different from any other. As you travel across the various continents of EBERRON, you'll eventually encounter each of those standard races. Yet in the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*, all of these familiar character races have their own flavor and style—their own place in the world. It's how and where each of those familiar character races fits into the magic-filled world of EBERRON that gives them, and the world around them, a “feel” that's distinct to the setting.

One of the truly unique things about the standard character races in the *EBERRON Campaign Setting* are the dragonmarks they carry. Unique, arcane sigils that manifest on certain members of a particular dynastic family, dragonmarks grant magical abilities that provide both power and influence.

Humans

Like in many D&D worlds, humans are the most common character race in EBERRON. They are also the race that has most recently (in a historical sense) come to civilization. The first human settlers sailed from their continent of Sarlona, arriving in the region of Khorvaire now known as the Lhazaar Principalities. Humans slowly spread across the entire continent of Khorvaire, encroaching upon both elven empires and goblin kingdoms alike.

human sailor

elven sailor

Kharzaar human



Dwarves

Expanding upon their traditional roles as miners and smiths, the dwarves of EBERRON have used their control of precious metals and skills at the forge to become the most influential bankers and merchants in Khorvaire. A loose-knit confederation of dwarven clans living in the mountainous region of eastern Khorvaire form the backbone of the dwarven homeland known as the Mror Holds.

Elves

Whether from the rainforest island-continent of Aerenal, or from the human-influenced nation of Valenar, the elves of EBERRON have distinct cultures. The Aerenal are a traditional people closely tied to their ancestral heritage, so much so that their ancestors continue to live among them as an undead link to ancient times. The horse-riding nomads of Valenar are a savage but sophisticated race of elves who have special ties to their mounts. Many other elves have chosen to emigrate to the assorted nations across the continent, taking up residence and integrating with the human-dominated civilizations.

Gnomes

Meticulous and curious, the gnomes of EBERRON are possessed by a dire thirst for knowledge. As prolific, passionate gatherers of information, gnomes are extremely well suited to occupations as librarians and accountants, and take up more adventurous roles as bards and

artificers. The gnome homeland of Zil'argo is known for its great libraries, schools of learning, and grand shipyards in which they construct vessels powered by magically bound elementals.

Half-Elves

Half-elves in the *EBERRON Campaign Setting* are a distinct race descended from both human and elven ancestors. While some exhibit the boldness of elves, others are able to comfortably blend in with human society. The society of the Aerenal and its fascination with death draws some half-elves to become accomplished necromancers, while others go to Valenar, choosing to help establish and expand the new elven nation.

Half-Orcs

The humans and orcs of Khorvaire have never lived in close proximity to one another, which makes half-orcs somewhat rare in EBERRON. However, in regions such as the Shadow Marches and the western parts of the Eldeen Reaches and Droaam, half-orcs are more common. Despite their size and strength, half-orcs often look almost human and are just as civilized as the humans of any given region. While half-orcs don't have a homeland of their own, they can be found in both orc and human communities, even thriving within the larger towns and cities of Khorvaire.

DEVELOPING THE SHIFTER

"After the designers finish their work on a book, a three-person development team spends time reviewing the new game elements, comparing the book's goals with the actual design, and addressing any issues that come up in this process.

"During the development process of EBERRON, our goal for the shifter was to make sure that players were excited about using and improving their shifting ability. There were great ideas built into the race already, so we just wanted to emphasize what was already there. The first thing we did was to make shifting a free action, encouraging its use in combat. From there, the mechanics of the shifting ability began to look a lot like the mechanics for the barbarian's rage ability. To differentiate between the two, and to allow the shifting ability to improve as the character increased in level, we came up with the idea that every shifting feat would also extend the duration of the character's shifting ability as well as improve the shifting power in some other way. This encourages players who build their characters around the shifting ability to focus more and more resources on it as they go up in level and makes a shifter rogue or fighter different from a human rogue or fighter in a really interesting way. You can see how this mechanic works in the example feats provided in the article."

—Jesse Decker

Halflings

The expansive Talenta Plains are the homeland of EBERRON's cultured, nomadic race of halflings. Possessed of sharp wits and glib tongues, the halflings of EBERRON have also taken up residence in virtually every city of Khorvaire. Whether riding domesticated dinosaurs across the vast plains or making a place in the most cosmopolitan cities of the continent, these diminutive people are well established as merchants, politicians, barristers, healers, and criminals.

*Eldeen human**inspired**inspired*

SHIFTER FEATS

Because shifters aren't specifically tied to any single animal type, each individual may manifest bestial characteristics of any of a variety of predatory creatures. The choice of lycanthrope characteristics (Armored, Biter, Climber, Render, Runner, or Tracker) provides a player the flexibility to create any sort of animal-themed shifter desired. For example, a shifter descended from a lycanthropic cheetah might display the Runner characteristic, while a shifter with a grizzly bear heritage could exhibit the Biter or Tracker characteristic. A wide array of shifter feats offers additional options to further explore the feral nature of the shifter. By reinforcing a particular aesthetic or extending the general beast-like qualities inherent in the race, each shifter you encounter can be a completely different animal.

SHIFTER DEFENSE [SHIFTER]

By delving into your shifter heritage, you develop the ability to ignore a little damage from nearly every attack.

Prerequisites: Shifter, two other shifter feats.

Benefit: When shifted, you have damage reduction 2/silver.



HEALING FACTOR [SHIFTER]

When shifting ends, you heal a limited amount of damage.

Prerequisites: Shifter, Constitution 13.

Benefit: When a period of shifting ends, you immediately heal a number of hit points equal to your character level. The healing factor doesn't kick in if you die (-10 hit points) prior to the end of the shifting.

EXTRA LYCANTHROPE CHARACTERISTIC [SHIFTER]

When shifting, you can manifest one additional lycanthrope ability.

Prerequisites: Shifter, two other shifter feats.

Benefit: Select a second lycanthrope characteristic from the list in the shifter race description. You manifest all of the benefits of the second characteristic except for the temporary bonus to your ability score.

GREAT REND [SHIFTER]

You know how to hit where it hurts with your claws.

Prerequisites: Shifter, the Render characteristic, +4 base attack bonus.

Benefit: If you hit with both of your claw attacks in a round, you deal additional points of damage equal to 1d4 + 1/2 of your Strength modifier, rounded down.



NEW RACES

In addition to the seven standard races from the *Player's Handbook*, EBERRON is also home to a handful of character races unique to the setting. These new races exhibit powers and abilities that are right at home in the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*, but they could also easily fit into any other D&D game.

Changelings

A race evolved from the mixing of humans and doppelgangers, changelings possess a limited ability to alter their appearances at will. This subtle shapeshifting ability allows changelings to easily create highly effective disguises, making them ideal spies and criminals. While not every changeling lives a clandestine life, most seek to avoid direct confrontations, preferring stealthy attacks and swift retreats. Their ability to adopt nearly any guise, coupled with a natural aptitude for learning languages and an inherent talent for interpersonal skills (such as Bluff, Intimidate, and Sense Motive), allow changelings to blend easily into virtually any society. Changelings have no homeland to call their own, and most commonly live among humans and the other races in the larger cities of Khorvaire.

The Kalashtar

An elegant and beautiful race, the kalashtar are created through the merging of humans and psychically projected entities from the alien plane of Dal Quor. Possessing keen intellects and a desire to perfect their minds and spirits, the kalashtar often seek to develop their natural psionic abilities. While the kalashtar population is relatively small, even in their homeland of Adar, they can still be found in the largest human cities. Natural-born diplomats, the kalashtar are able to get along well with members of all races across EBERRON, particularly the humans which they so closely resemble.

Shifters

Descended from individuals born from unions between humans and lycanthropes, the third character race unique to the *EBERRON Campaign Setting* is able to manifest bestial characteristics for short periods of time. Details of the shifters are below.

Shifter Racial Description

Shifters, sometimes called "the weretouched," are descended from humans and natural lycanthropes. Shifters cannot fully change shape, but can take on animalistic features—a state they call shifting. Although descended from humans and the lycanthropes that are now nearly extinct on Khorvaire, shifters are a unique species that breeds true. They have a distinct culture with its own traditions and identity.



Personality: Shifters' personalities tend to be influenced by their animal natures. Many are boorish and crude, while others are quiet, shifty, and solitary. Just as most lycanthropes are carnivores, shifters have a predatory personality and think of most activities in terms of hunting and prey. They view life as a challenge to survive, striving to be self-reliant, adaptable, and resourceful.

Physical Description: Shifters are basically humanoid in shape, but their bodies are exceptionally lithe. They often move in a crouched posture, springing and leaping as their companions walk. Their faces have a bestial cast, with wide, flat noses, large eyes and heavy eyebrows, pointed ears, and long sideburns (in both sexes). Their forearms and lower legs grow long hair, and the hair of their heads is thick and generally worn long.

Relations: Many races feel uncomfortable around shifters, the way they feel around any large predator. Of course, some individuals grow to love individual shifters despite the natural aversion, and halflings in general get along well with them. For their part, shifters are used to distrust and generally don't expect better treatment from members of the other races, although some shifters will try to earn respect and companionship through acts and deeds.

Alignment: Shifters are usually neutral, viewing the struggle to survive as more important than moral or ethical concerns about how survival is maintained.

Shifter Lands: Shifters have no lands of their own. Being descended from human stock, they generally live in human lands. Unlike changelings, however, shifters often live in rural areas away from the crowded spaces of the cities. They are most commonly encountered in the Eldeen Reaches and other remote areas that can be found in all of the nations. Many shifters earn



their way as trappers, hunters, fishers, trackers, guides, and military scouts.

Dragonmarks: The fact that none of the dragonmarked houses includes shifters cements their place outside the mainstream of society.

Religion: Most shifters are inclined toward the druidic religion of the Eldeen Reaches, believing in the divinity of the earth itself, the elements, and the creatures of the earth. Many shifters who do revere the Sovereign Host are drawn toward Balinor and Boldrei, while others follow the Traveler.

Language: Shifters speak Common and are not often inclined to learn other languages.

Names: Shifters use the same names as humans, often names that sound rustic to city-dwellers.

Adventurers: Moving from the rugged, self-reliant life of a trapper or hunter to an adventuring life is not a big step. Many shifters find themselves embarking on adventuring careers after something happens to disrupt their everyday routines—a monstrous incursion into their villages or forests, for example, or a guide job gone sour.

Shifter Racial Traits

- +2 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma. Shifters are lithe and agile, but their fundamental bestial nature detracts from both their reasoning and their social interactions.
- Medium: As Medium creatures,

shifters have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

- Shifter base speed is 30 feet.
- Shifting: A shifter can tap into his lycanthropic heritage to gain short bursts of physical power. Once per day, a shifter can enter a state that is superficially similar to barbarian rage. He gains one lycanthrope characteristic at 1st level that sets him apart and manifests when he is shifting and provides a +2 bonus to one of his physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution). The ability score boost is based on which lycanthrope characteristic is selected.

Shifting is a free action and lasts for a number of rounds equal to 3 + the shifter's Constitution modifier. A shifter can take feats to improve this ability. These feats are identified as shifter feats in Chapter 3: Heroic Characteristics.

Every shifter feat a character takes increases the duration of shifting by 1 round. Every two shifter feats a character takes increases the number of times per day he can tap into the ability by 1. So, a shifter character with two shifter feats can shift two times per day (instead of the usual one) and the shifting lasts for a number of rounds equal to 5 (instead of 3) + the shifter's Constitution modifier.

Shifting, although related to and developed from lycanthropy, is neither an affliction nor a curse. It is not passed on by bite or claw attacks, and a shifter can't be cured—shifting is a

Mror Dwarf



Zil'argo gnome



gnome merchant



CREATING THE RACES OF EBERRON

"Magic is a powerful force in the world of EBERRON. It has been incorporated into civilization, but it is also a part of the natural world. From the beginning, the goal was to add races that reflected the influence of magic on evolution.

"I've always been intrigued by the idea of doppelganger civilizations. Doppelgangers are intelligent humanoids, but people rarely stop to consider what their culture might be like. However, some of the abilities of the doppelganger—most notably, *detect thoughts* at will—can really spoil a game when placed in the hands of a player character. Changelings were designed to keep the mystique of the doppelganger while toning down the powers that can really ruin a story. Full-blooded doppelgangers are still out there, but changelings are more common and more likely to embrace the life of the adventurer.

"The kalashtar are an offshoot of another race from the original proposal: the inspired, humans possessed by outsider spirits. The inspired exist on two planes simultaneously, and their mirrored spirits provide them with psionic abilities and the power to survive the death of the host body. This virtual immortality is wonderful for a villain, but like the doppelganger's telepathy, it is problematic for a PC. When the kalashtar turned against the more malevolent spirits, they had to sever their ties with their home plane and permanently bond with their human hosts. This created a new race, with some of the psionic aptitude of the inspired, but without the near-immortality of the psychic tyrants. The kalashtar in the present day are the descendants of the original rebels, and they are few in number. They are still hunted by the Inspired, and a kalashtar PC must decide whether she will take up this ancient battle or find her own path in life.

"The shifters appeared when the proposal was expanded from 10 to 100 pages, as another way of exploring the impact of magic on the world. While they were not part of the original one-page proposal, shifters are one of my favorite things about EBERRON. Shifters are versatile, and between natural abilities and shifter feats, there are many ways to fine-tune your shifter character to fit your particular character concept. A shifter monk can develop feline speed and tiger's claws, while a barbarian might focus on ursine strength or boar-like tenacity. This also provides a clear roleplaying hook for your character: How is his bestial nature reflected in his personality?

"Each of these three races brings something new to the world and adds a new dimension to stories and adventures. Hopefully you'll enjoy using and interacting with them."

—Keith Baker

natural ability for the race.

Shifting abilities are considered to be supernatural.

Shifters select their unique lycanthrope characteristic from the following list: Armored, Biter, Climber, Render, Runner, or Tracker, as described below.

Armored (Su): While shifted, the shifter temporarily gains a +2 bonus to Constitution and manifests a natural armor bonus equal to +2.

Biter (Su): While shifted, the shifter temporarily gains a +2 bonus to Strength and manifests fangs that can be used as a natural weapon, dealing 1d6 points of damage (plus an additional +1 for every four character levels he has) with a successful bite attack. He cannot attack more than once each round with his bite, even if his base attack bonus is high enough to give him multiple attacks. He can attack with his bite as a secondary attack (at -5 from his base attack bonus) while using a weapon, and suffers no penalty on other attacks that round.

Climber (Su): While shifted, the shifter temporarily gains a +2 bonus to Dexterity and manifests a climb speed of 20 feet.

Render (Su): While shifted, the shifter temporarily gains a +2 bonus to Strength and manifests claws that can be used as natural weapons. These claws deal 1d4 points of damage (plus an additional +1 for every four character levels he has) with each successful attack. He can attack with one claw as a standard action or with two claws as a full attack action. He cannot attack more than once each round with a single claw, even if his base attack bonus is high enough to give him multiple attacks. He can attack with a claw as a secondary attack with a light off-hand weapon while using a weapon in his primary

hand, but all his attacks that round suffer a -2 penalty.

Runner (Su): While shifted, the shifter temporarily gains a +2 bonus to Dexterity and manifests an increased base speed of +10 feet.

Tracker (Su): While shifted, the shifter temporarily gains a +2 bonus to Constitution and the scent ability. This special quality allows the shifter to detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. A shifter can identify familiar odors just as a human does familiar sights.

The shifter can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet; if downwind, it drops to 15 feet. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents, such as skunk musk or troglodyte stench, can be detected at triple normal range. These stronger scents block other scents, so they can sometimes be used to confuse or hamper this shifter ability.

When a shifter detects a scent, the exact location of the source isn't revealed—only its presence somewhere within range. The shifter can take a move action to note the direction of the scent. Whenever the shifter comes within 5 feet of the source, he pinpoints the source's location.

A shifter with the Track feat can follow tracks by smell, making a Wisdom (or Survival) check to find or follow a track. The typical DC for a fresh trail is 10 (regardless of the surface that holds the scent). This DC increases or decreases depending on how strong the quarry's odor is, the number of creatures producing the odor, and the age of the trail.



For each hour that the trail grows cold, the DC increases by 2. The ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat. Shifters tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

When not shifted, the shifter gains a +2 bonus to Survival checks due to the lingering manifestation of the scent ability—not as strong as when shifted, but useful nonetheless.

- Low-Light Vision: Shifters can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- +2 racial bonus on Balance, Climb, and Jump checks: A shifter's animalistic heritage enhances his balance.
- Automatic Language: Common. Bonus Languages: Elven, Gnome,

Shifting, although related to and developed from lycanthropy, is neither an affliction nor a curse.

Halfling, Sylvan.

- Favored Class: Ranger. A multiclass shifter's ranger class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

The exciting, new *EBERRON Campaign Setting* hits the shelves of your favorite bookstore or hobby shop in July. Until then, we'll keep showing you more and more of what you can expect to see inside.

Next month, you'll get a good hard look at the fourth unique race created for *EBERRON Campaign Setting*—a race of sentient constructs, built to fight in the Last War, now seeking to find their place in the uneasy peace that has settled upon the magically charged world of *EBERRON*—the warforged. **D**

GET YOUR FIX OF MEDIEVAL MIRTH AND META-KID MAYHEM!

COMING SOON!

NODWICK SAGA

From the pages of *Dragon Magazine*, it's *Nodwick*! In this issue, our intrepid henchman and his adventuring employers are hired to rid a Viking village of a marauding sea serpent, sent by the gods themselves! Will our heroes be able to save the day, or will they be the only ones with a happy ending be the ship-builders? We're gonna need a bigger boat! Pick up *Nodwick* 24 in a few short weeks!

Ps238 is the public school for the children of superheroes, and some of its students have stumbled on a secret about the school! A mysterious section of the underground academy has been shut off and locked down tight. With a little superhuman effort, four kids have been able to penetrate its defenses. What will they find inside, and will they live to tell anyone? School is now in session! Pick up *ps238* #5 today!

ON SALE NOW!

ASK YOUR LOCAL COMIC AND GAME STORE TO CARRY YOUR FAVORITE COMICS FROM DORK STORM PRESS!
BUY THESE BOOKS AND MORE ON-LINE AT WWW.NODWICK.COM AND PS238.COM!