

GIBBERING TROLL

GIBBERING TROLLS ARE VERY RARE CREATURES. Sometimes, when great numbers of trolls are slaughtered, their many limbs piled up, the trollish tendency towards mutation combines with dark magic. Instead of dying, as troll limbs and heads that do not reconnect with their body usually do, these pieces are imbued with the magical radiation of the World Below and fuse together, creating an undulating and aberrant creature that looks like a huge misshapen troll around 16 feet tall that is covered in countless mouths, eyes, noses, and ears. Entire other heads emerge from its back, chest, or shoulders as do multiple arms and legs - some fully functional, others stunted and vestigial. These features are constantly growing or being reabsorbed. The shifting of their flesh makes a disturbing sound, though not as disturbing as the incessant gibbering and chattering done by its many mouths.

While Gibbering Trolls understand trollspeak, they cannot or will not speak in any language that makes sense to anyone. Stories exist of powerful trolls or giants controlling a Gibbering Troll, but such stories always end with the creature turning against its master in time.

Chaotic Horrors. Gibbering Trolls are murderous and hard to slay, absorbing the flesh of those they kill while also driving those around them mad. Allowed to grow unchecked, they eventually explode into a horrifying cascade of undulating flesh, eyes, and mouths, slaking off Gibbering Mouthers in the process. While a Gibbering Troll may look like a form of troll, it is really an aberration instinctively seeking more flesh to absorb into itself. There are few creatures that don't feel terror at the sight of these monsters tearing off one of their own heads to hurl at foes. While most common trolls avoid Gibbering Trolls and tales explain them as a curse sent by an angry god, some trolls and other creatures of the World Below try to foster the conditions for one to be born. In these cases, those trying to make a Gibbering Troll may sacrifice dozens of weak trolls, stacking their parts and hacking them up to get their regenerative mutation into overdrive.

Twisted Reality. The arcane mutagenic nature of the Gibbering Troll makes it a focal point for strange extraplanar energies. As its flesh undulates and changes, it also deteriorates and oozes to such a degree it warps reality itself. In its final stages, the flesh of these trolls transforms into Gibbering Mouthers, their fallen flesh inhabited by alien consciousnesses from beyond space and time. The lifecycle of the Gibbering Troll is unclear, but sages think they rarely live in this form for long. As a Gibbering Troll absorbs more



A WizKids Dire Troll mini used as a Gibbering Troll

victims and gets bigger, the rate at which the pustules on its flesh explode into more mouths and eyes increases, and the gibbering becomes wilder, giving a warning of its potential to explode. Even if it doesn't explode, it eventually falls apart into a chorus of Gibbering Mouthers or transforms into a huge Gibbering Mouter itself.

Notes for the DM. Gibbering Trolls should be played as nearly random in their actions. There will be rounds where they will not get many attacks but they can be devastating in rounds where they get six claw and/or four bite attacks, especially if several of the attacks are aimed at the same target. Their constant gibbering and their snatch ability make these trolls difficult to approach. If one of these aberrant trolls approaches the size at which it will explode, you should give visual and auditory warnings that this might happen to give PCs a chance to move away.

A Gibbering Troll reacts to pain and can get angry but is mostly looking for flesh to absorb so it can get bigger. As such, it might break off an attack to go after a smaller or vulnerable target or stubbornly grapple a foe when it would be more advantageous to use its claws and bite. Gibbering Trolls work best when tied to a specific magical or cursed place. It might also represent foul rites performed to bring it into being, as when I used Gluklux the Gibbering Troll in my version of "The Wayward Wood" (from *Dungeon Magazine* #32). Eydral the Troll Chieftess chopped up her own sons in an offering to a dark god to make Gluklux. She hoped to set it loose as an opening salvo in a war against the surface world.

GIBBERING TROLL

Huge aberration, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 175 (18d10 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +8

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, frightened, petrified, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Understands trollspeak

Challenge 9 (5000 XP)

Keen Smell. The troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Gibbering. If a Gibbering Troll is not incapacitated and can see or smell any creature, its many mouths babble incoherently. Each creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the troll and can hear the gibbering must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does on its turn.

GIBBERING CONFUSION RESULT

Roll:1d8 Result

- 1 to 4 The creature does nothing.
- 5 to 6 The creature takes no action or bonus action. It uses all its movement in a randomly determined direction.
- 7 to 8 The creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

Regeneration. The Gibbering Troll regains 15 hit points at the start of its turn even when at 0 hps. Acid or fire damage is subtracted both from its current *and* maximum hit points and cannot be regenerated. It can only heal such damage after a long rest. A troll only dies when its maximum hit points are brought to 0 or if 20 or more points of fire or acid damage are dealt to it while its current hit points are at 0.

Aberrant Arms (and Legs). A Gibbering Troll's twisted limbs, while freakishly strong, are prone to being chopped off. Whenever a troll suffers a critical hit from an enemy that does 15 hit points or more of slashing damage they lose a limb or a head. Roll 1d8 on the table below

ABERRANT ARMS RESULT

Roll 1d8	Result	Effect
1 to 4	Arm	-1 claw attacks per lost arm
5 to 6	Leg	Fall prone and can only crawl
7 to 8	Head	-1 bite attacks per lost head

All of these effects last until the end of its next turn, when it finishes growing another limb or head. Heads that are removed and remain in reach can be thrown (see *Head Hunting* ability)

At the end of the troll's next turn, any removed limb transforms into a gibbering moulder. The Gibbering Troll cannot reabsorb

or reattach these monsters, which act independently and move away from the troll.

Immutable Form. The Gibbering Troll is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Legendary Resistance (4/day). If the Gibbering Troll fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

REACTIONS

Snatch. If a Large-sized or smaller creature comes within 10 feet of the Gibbering Troll, it may use a Reaction to attempt a grapple.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Gibbering Troll can make 1d3+1 bite attacks and 1d4+2 claw attacks each turn. Subtract the number of missing limbs or heads from the die roll to determine the number of attacks.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit. Hit: 1d8+5 (piercing). Bite attacks are made with advantage against grappled targets.

Claw. Melee (Reach 10) Weapon Attack: +9 to hit. Hit: 2d6+5 (slashing). If two or more claw attacks strike a Large-sized or smaller creature on the same turn, the target is automatically grappled. On its own turn, the grappled target may take an action to make an opposed STR (Athletics) or DEX (Acrobatics) check against the troll's Strength check to break free. Those held by three or more limbs make the roll at Disadvantage. On its own turn, the Gibbering Troll may use a bonus action to squeeze doing 4d8+5 bludgeoning damage. A target that is killed by this damage is automatically absorbed into the troll at the end of the troll's next turn (see **Absorption**). While grappling a creature, subtract the number of limbs involved from its possible claw attacks.

Absorption. As long as a dead or dying creature is Large Sized or smaller, the Gibbering Troll can move into its space and attempt to absorb it into its form. By using an Action and foregoing movement once they are in its space, they can absorb the creature. Dead targets are fully absorbed at the beginning of the troll's next turn. Dying targets automatically suffer a failed death save at the end of each of the troll's turns, until it is dead. Once it has absorbed a creature, the Gibbering Troll gains a permanent bonus to its maximum hit points equal to 1d10 + Creature CR (or Level +3). It effectively gains an additional hit die. This amount is also added to its current hit points. It grows as it absorbs.

Absorbed creatures cannot be raised from the dead with any power short of a *wish*. If a Gibbering Troll manages to increase its hit dice by 9 or more, it becomes a gargantuan creature and explodes one round later. Every creature within 60 feet of the explosion makes a Dexterity save (DC 13) or takes 9d12 bludgeoning damage. Those who successfully save take half damage. The exploded carnage then transforms into 2d10+4 gibbering moulthers.

Head Hunting. Ranged (60/120) Weapon Attack: +9 to hit. Hit: 2d8+5 (bludgeoning). The troll tears off one of its own heads (or use a removed one within reach) and uses it as a missile. On a successful hit, the target must make a Dexterity save (DC 13) or also suffer 1d8+5 from a bite attack. After using this ability, the Gibbering Troll makes one fewer bite attacks until the end of its next turn.