

Tales of the Goblin Horde

For time immemorial, goblins have been mercilessly hunted down and murdered by the so-called “civilized” humans, slaughtered in droves for the entertainment of bloodthirsty adventurers. But everyone has their limits, even the underdogs.

The pathetic goblins who eke out a living near the human lands are weak and timid, the aggression bred out of them through generations of culling, with only the most cowardly among them managing to survive. But the goblins of the western tribes are another matter entirely, as the rapidly encroaching scourge of human civilization is about to discover.

You are ferocious goblin bosses from the Redfang tribe, leading your gangs on a series of dangerous missions against the humans and other enemies. Chief Bignose is confident you won't let him down!

Character Creation

Each player creates a gang boss as follows:

1. Choose a **trait**: Agile (*used for reflexes, dexterity, stealth, and ranged combat*), brawny (*covers strength, vigor, athletics, and melee combat*), or crafty (*used for smarts, spirit, perception, and magic/social combat*).
2. Select a **concept**: Acolyte, warrior, thief, scout, trickster, savant (choose subject), or scavenger.
3. Pick a **perk**: Bugbear, pyromancer, trapmaker, wolf rider, berserker, mutant (specify), or alert.
4. Select a **quirk**: Vengeful, proud, one eye, cruel, vile stench, hallucinations, or gluttonous.
5. Grab 3 **karma**, 3 **resolve**, and 3 **gang** tokens.
6. Make up a **name**, and introduce yourself to the group (e.g., “I am *Big Brak*, a *brawny warrior* who is also a huge *bugbear*, but only has *one eye*”).

Shenanigans

Goblin flunkies can get up to all sorts of mischief when their boss's back is turned! Players with at least 1 **gang** token may recover 1 spent **karma** by rolling 2d6 on the Twist table (see next page) and d6 on the table below, narrating the outcome:

Your gang member's actions result in...

- Betrayal! Lose 1 **resolve** and 1 **gang** token.
- Horrific death. Lose 1 **gang** token.
- AWOL. Lose 1 **gang** token until next scene.
- Distraction. Next challenge is at +1 difficulty.
- Stupid antics. GM introduces a complication.
- Luck! May recover 1 **resolve** instead of **karma**.

Resolving Challenges

If a player attempts something risky, they roll 1-3 six-sided dice and must equal or beat a difficulty of 4-6 on *at least* one die. Succeed on *multiple* dice for an exceptional success (narrate an additional benefit). Rolling “1” on *all* dice is a critical failure (introduce a complication to the scene).

The GM assigns a **trait** and difficulty for each challenge. Most tasks should be difficulty 5.

Players usually roll 2 dice, but roll 3 dice if the challenge matches their **trait**. If a challenge falls *completely* outside the scope of their **concept** (e.g., an acolyte disarming a trap), they lose 1 die.

Some challenges have effort tokens—eliminate 1 token for each die that succeeds. The challenge is repeated until all effort tokens are gone.

Karma and Resolve

Each player has 3 **karma** and 3 **resolve**. Spend 1 **karma** *after* rolling to *reduce* the difficulty by 1, if you can justify how your **perk** helps you. Recover 1 **karma** if you *increase* the difficulty by 1 *before* rolling, narrating how your **quirk** hinders you.

If you use a **quirk** and succeed at the challenge, you may recover 1 **resolve** instead of 1 **karma**.

For dangerous actions (such as combat), failure costs 1 **resolve** (or 2 on a critical failure). If a PC runs out of **resolve**, they are eliminated from the scene—but death is primarily a narrative conceit, and the PC usually returns later at full **resolve**.



Author

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System

Tricube Tales

Setting

Saga of the Goblin Horde

Background

Lord Zsezse Works

Story Symbols

Delapouite, Lorc, Skoll

Game-icons.net

Illustration

Publisher's Choice Quality

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Fat Goblin Games

Telling the Tale

Roll on the following tables to randomly generate the goblins' latest assignment from Chief Bignose (see the next page for examples):

The goblin bosses are ordered to...

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| ■ Slaughter the enemy | ■ Sabotage something |
| ■ Capture someone | ■ Kill some adventurers |
| ■ Steal something | ■ Recruit more goblins |

On, near, or within...

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| ■ The human lands | ■ Northside Plateau |
| ■ Hightree Ridge | ■ Twilight Wood |
| ■ Shadowglade Forest | ■ A deep cave or mine |

While dealing with...

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ■ Rival gang bosses | ■ A monstrous beast |
| ■ Aggressive beastfolk | ■ Another goblin tribe |
| ■ A psychopathic druid | ■ Chief's special orders |

Running the Game

The GM should describe the opening scene, react to the players' decisions, and assign the **traits** and difficulties for challenges. Offer players **karma** in return for complications based on their **quirks**!

For combat and other major encounters, assign the challenge 2-5 effort tokens per goblin boss.

The players make all the rolls and narrate their actions. They can spend 1 **karma** to influence the story or discover a clue through their **perk**, at the GM's discretion. If a PC is about to lose **resolve** from physical damage, they may use a flunky as a “meat shield,” and sacrifice a **gang** token instead.

Missions

Described here are examples of missions for the adventure generator (first table):

1. There Goes the Neighborhood

A rather cheeky town, mountain or forest human colony has established a new home within (or on the edge of) Redfang territory. Eradicate them!

2. A Gremlinch in Time Saves Nine

A gremlin necromancer of the Bonedigger tribe is rumored to have learned the secret to lichdom. Kidnap him, and bring him back to the chief.

3. Taking the Horns From the Bull

A virile young minotaur has been hunting goblins to impress potential mates. Chief Bignose wants the creature's large horns as a trophy.

4. Hot Cross Nuns

The Delightful Sisterhood of the Bearded Axe has established a new convent nearby. Bignose views the warrior nuns as a serious threat, and he wants their monastery burned to the ground.

5. The Quest for the Holy Pail

A party of human adventurers has been exploring ancient ruins, searching for a lost relic—a magical bucket?! It's time for them to kick the bucket!

6. Moot and Recruit

Chief Bignose orders the gang bosses to organize a large public event on his behalf, as part of a new recruitment drive to attract more goblins.

Locations

Described here are examples of locations for the adventure generator (second table):

1. The Human Lands

Many human towns and villages lie to the east of the goblin lands, over the other side of Hightree Ridge. Those fools have no idea what's coming!

2. Hightree Ridge

This chain of hills and mountains forms a crest around the southern and eastern border of the goblin lands, serving as a natural barrier against the human scourge.

3. Shadowglade Forest

This thin stretch of forest hugs Hightree Ridge, on the southern border of Redfang territory.

4. Base of the Mountains

The rocky land of Northside Plateau extends to the base of the Longtooth Mountains. This is the territory of the Stonefist tribe, riddled with caves and underground passageways.

5. Twilight Wood

This low-density forest lies on the eastern side of Redfang territory, under the shadow of Hightree Ridge, and is populated by many strange beasts.

6. Swallow Hole

A network of deep caverns situated on Hightree Ridge, Swallow Hole is a popular raiding spot for greedy human adventurers.

Complications

Described here are examples of complications for the adventure generator (third table):

1. Race to the Bottom

Chief Bignose has decided to treat the mission as a contest, and he has ordered several other gangs to compete with the characters.

2. Trial by Wombat

A small colony of wombatfolk is picking fights with random goblins, trying to prove their mettle to the other beastfolk, who view them as a joke.

3. Tree-Hugging Tyrant

Another human druid has gone on a murderous rampage, animating trees and controlling beasts, and sending them after goblins.

4. Twelve Heads Are Better Than One

A massive twelve-headed hydra has been spotted recently, hunting to sate its voracious appetite.

5. Green, Mean, and Mostly Unseen

A gang of assassins from the Longknife tribe is on a mission of their own, putting them at cross-purposes with the Redfang tribe.

6. The Unstoppable Flying Machine

The insane gremlin inventor Hunchy Flatface has designed yet another ornithopter prototype, and Chief Bignose wants the bosses to take it on a test flight for this mission. Hunchy still hasn't worked out how to add breaks, so landing may be tricky.

Adding a Twist to the Tale

For further inspiration, roll two dice on the table below and use the symbol as an improvisational prompt (you don't need to interpret it literally). For example, ■■ might indicate followers, a pasture, warm clothing, or a plant-eater, while rolling ☞☞ could signify an underground mushroom farm, a fungid attack, or a hallucinogenic drink, and ☞☞ might represent a party of adventurers, a pile of loot, a long journey, or a heavy burden.



Expanded Gameplay

Tales of the Goblin Horde is a *Tricube Tales* adaption of *Saga of the Goblin Horde*. If you want to expand your game, download **Tricube Tales** for the rules, and **Saga of the Goblin Horde** for its setting lore, configurable map, and library of adventures.

Character Options

The concepts, perks and quirks described in *Tales of the Goblin Horde* should be viewed as examples, rather than an exhaustive list. Feel free to add or make up your own.

Combat and Monsters

The “Hack and Slash” genre rule in *Tricube Tales* is a good fit for *Tales of the Goblin Horde*, if you need more structure for your combat encounters. But don’t worry too much about precisely calculating each monsters’ rank, just eyeball it based on their approximate threat relative to the goblin bosses.

Running a Campaign

For a longer campaign, you should definitely use the advancement and affliction rules from *Tricube Tales*, with the following additions:

Advancement

Characters earn a new **perk** or **quirk** after every adventure. Every second adventure, *instead* of the **perk** or **quirk**, they may add a **karma**, **resolve**, or **gang** token (up to a maximum of 6 each).

Afflictions

The blue circles on the character cards are used to track afflictions. The GM must note what each represents, as *they* will be activating them.

Recovering Lost Gang Members

Players usually recover all gang tokens at the start of an adventure. However, the GM can also allow replacements to be recruited during a session.

Converting the Saga

Keep the following in mind when running *Saga of the Goblin Horde* adventures in *Tricube Tales*:

Trait Rolls vs Challenges

A *Saga of the Goblin Horde* trait roll with a penalty of –1 to –3 is resolved as a standard challenge in *Tricube Tales*. Any trait rolls outside that range are treated as easy or hard challenges.

Effort Instead of Complexity

Don’t overcomplicate things. If an encounter uses special rules that usually require multiple turns to resolve, just assign it some effort tokens.

Boastful Interludes

Whenever an adventure calls for one of these, the player rolls 2d6 on the Twist table and narrates a short tale. They earn 1 **karma**; this can take them over their normal maximum by up to 1 token.

Gruffle Slobberchops

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Agile scavenger

Perks

Wolf rider

Quirks

Cruel

Feskar Foulbottom

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Brawny warrior

Perks

Bugbear

Quirks

Vile stench

Sissi Hotlips

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Crafty acolyte

Perks

Pyromancer

Quirks

Proud

Izzy Toecutter

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Agile scout

Perks

Alert

Quirks

Vengeful

Amalia Bloodylocks

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Brawny princess

Perks

Berserker

Quirks

Reckless

Squiggle Mushroomhead

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Crafty trickster

Perks

Premonitions

Quirks

Hallucinations

Krusty Snaggleteeth

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Agile thief

Perks

Trapmaker

Quirks

Gluttonous

Raff Hamfist

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Brawny thug

Perks

Mutant (huge hand)

Quirks

Bully

Maeson Crispyface

KARMA

KARMA

KARMA

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

RESOLVE

3

GLORY

GLORY

GLORY

3

Crafty savant of sorcery

Perks

Pyromancer

Quirks

One eye