

The Fey Kindred

IN ADDITION TO THE MANY kinds of elves and gnomes commonly known in the Material Plane, there are elves and gnomes who have grown inextricably attached to the Courts of the Feywild, through one of many different means. Perhaps they have lost all memory of how they or their ancestors joined the Courts, and conclude that the fey kindred of elves and gnomes are the original kinds, of which other races are offshoots. Perhaps they were once like their kindred from the Material Plane, but have been changed by the immeasurable time they have spent among the Archfey.



WRITING BRANDES STODDARD
COLOR ART ELLIS GOODSON
EDITING JAMES J. HAECK
LAYOUT ERIC LIFE-PUTNAM

It is possible, though rare, for one of the Seelie or Unseelie to change their nature, usually through interactions with those they regard as petty mortals. In those circumstances, they might change Courts, such as when an Unseelie elf comes to reject the bitterness and vengeful nature of her Court and embraces love, valor, and beauty. The character's subrace features change from one Court to the other in an instant. Former allies become bitter foes, and former enemies become new rivals.

In other cases, the fey kindred might be forever banished from the Feywild, to live among their long-lived but mortal kind. At the moment of banishment, they lose all of their subrace features, but do not gain new ones in their place immediately. Only once they have lived among one of the other subraces of their people for a time or completed a quest to magically transform do they begin to take on the traits of that subrace.

These four subraces carry dangerous prohibitions along with their beneficial features. These reflect some of the vulnerabilities of the fey in folklore. In most campaigns, such prohibitions would not often be invoked, so it would not significantly unbalance the subraces to remove the prohibitions entirely.

SEELIE ELVES

The Seelie elves exemplify the courtly grace for which all elves are famed. Trained by the treachery of the two Courts and gifted in subtle magic, they discern details of their rivals' capabilities. Cold iron is a deadly poison to Seelie elves, much like it is to their Unseelie counterparts, though this does

not stop them from taking up blades of cold iron with leather-wrapped hilts when their Unseelie foes come calling.

A Seelie elf looks like an elf of the Material Plane (of any subrace), but with skin that glimmers in the moonlight. Most would describe the Seelie as "like other elves, but more so." It is their devotion to the Seelie Queen and the virtues she espouses—love, valor, and beauty—that separates them from the Unseelie. But apart from analyzing their motivations, in general, it is only possible to distinguish a Seelie elf from an Unseelie elf if they wish it so.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Courtly Graces. If you spend at least 1 minute observing or interacting with another creature, you can glean information about its nature and capabilities relative to your own. The DM tells you if the creature is your equal, superior, or inferior in regard to two of these characteristics:

- ▶ Intelligence score
- ▶ Wisdom score
- ▶ Wisdom (Insight) bonus
- ▶ Charisma score
- ▶ Charisma (Deception) bonus
- ▶ Charisma (Persuasion) bonus
- ▶ Social status
- ▶ Total class levels (if any)

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Sylvan.

Prohibition. When cold iron touches your bare skin, you take 1d4 necrotic damage per round of contact. When you take damage from a weapon made of cold iron, you take an additional 1d4 necrotic damage.



Open Game Content

The game rule information in this article is designated Open Game Content. All of the other material in this article, including maps and illustrations (including illustrations in the public domain), narrative and descriptive text, character and place names, trade dress, "EN Publishing," "EN World," "EN5ider," EN Publishing product and article titles, and EN World and EN Publishing logos, are designated Product Identity.



UNSEELIE ELVES

The Unseelie elves raise treachery and vindictiveness to art forms. They are not intrinsically evil any more than the Seelie are intrinsically good; like all fey, their conceptions of morality are personal and largely alien to mortals. From their own perspective, they have surpassed the often misleading and self-serving concepts of an absolute morality, and do not worry about rationalizing their actions as others do. If something feels appealing, they do it; if something hurts them, they stop it from doing so ever again.

Objects made of cold iron, especially weapons, are toxic to Unseelie elves, and thus are favored murder weapons when it comes time to purge the Court of one's rivals, or go to war against the Seelie Court.

An Unseelie elf could look like any of the elven subraces of the Material Plane, but their skin glimmers in the moonlight. Their features are sharp and disposed toward expressing their disdain, though many of them possess charm and grace equal to their Seelie counterparts. Their terror and admiration of the Unseelie Queen—the Queen of Air and Darkness—drive them to avenge every slight against their honor or their queen's, and that is ultimately what makes them Unseelie. Most Unseelie elves can make themselves indistinguishable from Seelie elves.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Harbinger of Death. You can cast the *hunter's mark* spell, as if cast with a spell slot equal to half your character level (maximum 5th). Once you do so, you may not use this feature again until you complete a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Sylvan.

Prohibition. When cold iron touches your bare skin, you take 1d4 necrotic damage per round of contact. When you take damage from a weapon made of cold iron, you take an additional 1d4 necrotic damage.

SEELIE GNOMES

Seelie gnomes are among the most purely goodly of all the fey, as they work in secret to aid desperate people and ask almost nothing in return. The most famous Seelie gnomes are those who live hidden in human houses or shops, notably shoe-makers' shops. Names like "brownie" and "domovoi" are mere cultural variations for this subrace of gnome. Their nature compels them to kindness, as they are stripped of their gifts when they receive payment for their labor instead of a generous gift. Indeed, a crass offer for payment can anger a Seelie gnome and trigger transformation into an Unseelie gnome.

A Seelie gnome has longer pointed ears than other subraces of gnomes; otherwise they resemble their mortal kin. The trait that makes them Seelie is their industrious aid, given freely. Most take no interest in the dealings of the Courts or the Queens.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Gift of Making. You gain proficiency with one type of artisan's tools.

Gift of Mending. You know the *mending* cantrip. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for it. An object you repair with this gift becomes twice as hard to break or wear out as a normal object of its kind.

Hidden Folk. Starting at 3rd level, when you roll initiative and are not surprised, you may become invisible as a reaction. You remain invisible for 1 minute, or until you cast a spell other than mending, make an attack, or use the Dash or Help actions. You can't use this feature again until you complete a long rest.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Sylvan.

Prohibition. When you receive payment for anything you make or mend, you lose your Gift of Making and Gift of Mending features for one month. Receiving a gift thanking you for what you have made or mended does not trigger this prohibition. The difference between payment and a gift is at the discretion of the giver.

UNSEELIE GNOMES

Driven by an overdeveloped sense of mischief, Unseelie gnomes bring chaos and property damage into the lives of those around them. In some lands, they are called names like boggart and gremlin, but they are all simply Unseelie gnomes. They are petty and vindictive, and have a poor sense of proportional response. What they can do, they reason that they should do. Only those who have shown kindness and consideration by invoking ancient laws of hospitality avoid this. Even the most depraved Unseelie gnome does not raise a hand against one who has offered food and drink, unless they proceed to break that bond of hospitality by attacking the gnome.



Unseelie gnomes have ears that are longer and more finely pointed than those of other gnomes, though they are otherwise indistinguishable from their mortal kin. The thing that makes them Unseelie is their casual malice, though even they have friends that they exempt from their pranks—a prankster with no friends is in grave danger. Sometimes they receive sufficiently generous gifts of food, drink, and other considerations that they let go of their destructiveness and become Seelie.

Consider carefully how you will play out an Unseelie gnome's destructive tendencies. Work on directing your character's mischievous tendencies against common enemies, especially those who have clearly deserved some chaos in their lives. Needling your friends may be fun, but alienating your allies is disastrous.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 1.

Gift of Haunting. You know the *mage hand* cantrip. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for it. When you cast *mage hand*, the spectral hand is invisible. It may lift a number of pounds equal to 10 or your Strength score, whichever is greater.

Gift of Ruin. Starting at 3rd level, when a creature within 30 feet of you activates a magic item, you may spend a reaction to force the creature to roll an Intelligence saving throw. The DC is 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus. On a failure, the item's magic is negated, but not expended. The wielder may not attempt to activate it again for 1 minute. You must complete a long rest before you use this feature again.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Sylvan.

Prohibition. When you make an attack or cast a damaging spell against any creature that has offered you food or drink, you lose your Gift of Haunting and Gift of Ruin features for one month. This prohibition is lifted if the creature has made an attack against you or forced you to roll a saving throw.

NEW FEATS

These feats are intended for Seelie and Unseelie elves and gnomes, but other characters might earn knowledge and power from the Courts in their adventures. For those characters, selecting these feat might carry additional complications, such as accepting a fey prohibition along the lines of the ones described above.

FEY-COURT NOBLE

You have been transformed by your time in the Courts of the fey, gaining the following benefits:

- ▶ Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- ▶ If you are part of the Seelie Court, you may cast *enthrall* and *sanctuary* once each. You regain the ability to cast these spells when you complete a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.
- ▶ If you are part of the Unseelie Court, you may cast *enthrall* and *bane* once each. You regain the ability to cast these spells when you complete a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells. You cast *bane* as if using a 1st-level spell slot.



FEY TALENT

You have inherited or awakened the magic of the fey within yourself. You can cast *unseen servant* without expending a spell slot. Further, you can cast *misty step* once. You regain the ability to cast *misty step* when you complete a long rest.

PLAYING HEROIC UNSEELIE

The Unseelie generally do not align with heroic virtues, and unlike other races with tarnished histories, they are not looking for redemption; those who seek redemption typically become Seelie. With these characters, it is particularly important to talk to the other players at the table to make sure that your character shares goals with theirs, so that you have reasons to stay together as a team.

Here are some possible motivations for heroic Unseelie:

- ▶ The destruction of a different Unseelie fey, particularly an Archfey
- ▶ Pure profit—make sure you have a clear contract of who gets what share of the haul
- ▶ Preventing an existential threat to mortals and Unseelie fey alike
- ▶ A doomed romance with a more ethical character – all the better if the Queens of the Courts oppose your relationship
- ▶ Fulfilling a contract with another party member, or between a party member and an Archfey

Again, it's important to remember that no character choice, no matter how interesting, gives one player permission to ruin the game for others. Discuss your Unseelie character with the GM and the rest of the players before your first session as the character. 🧙‍♂️