

# G. Goblin Keep

*Goblin Keep* is a Fifth Edition plug-in adventure for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 1, 3, 5, or 8.**

This document offers a general guideline on scaling the adventure for each level. The characters must venture into a sunken fort and root out the warband of marauding goblins that have taken shelter there.

## Background

A few months ago, a warband of goblins migrated into the under-defended breadbasket of the region. Led by Warlord Breehurd, the goblins have slaughtered peasants, burnt farmsteads to the ground, and displaced dozens of families. Smelling weakness amongst the riverside communities, they've even begun probing the larger villages—deadly raids are imminent, and the villagers are scrambling to defend themselves.

But these people, though hardworking and brave, are no warriors. To repel the goblin invaders, they'll need help.

The goblins have made camp inside the ruins of Alabaster Keep, situated at the center of a foul swamp. Once the shield of the region, Alabaster Keep was emptied during a long-ago war and has since been forgotten. It is now partially submerged in the swamp; locals refer to it as the Flooded Keep, and believe it to be haunted.

Though something foul has seeped into the keep's halls, it is not of supernatural origin. Rather, it's a fungus that can infect living creatures and eventually take over their bodies. The goblins, having been exposed to the fungus over a prolonged period of time, have begun showing signs of infection. As they raid the region, they spread the fungus' spores—and thus its influence.

To complicate matters, a posse of displaced farmers set out to deal with the goblins themselves. They were summarily slain by the goblin warband but were soon reanimated by the fungus; the goblins eventually defeated the undead by locking them into the keep's larder. Adventurers will have to watch where they tread, lest they suffer a similar fate.

## The Flooded Keep

Alabaster Keep was once a mighty stronghold that served as the region's shield, deflecting monster attacks and organized criminal activity alike. But after a distant war broke out, the keep was vacated: its knights were sent to the frontline, leaving the stronghold abandoned. Over a century of neglect, the fort has partially sunk into the swamp. Its halls are now covered in a thin layer of muddy, foul water.

Within these stagnant waters, a malignant and sentient fungus has prospered. It has slowly been seeping into the surrounding swamp, searching out suitable hosts—birds, insects, and other animals—to infect. Progress was slow...until the goblins arrived. As the goblin warband pillages the land, the fungus' spores spread. If the fungus isn't dealt with, it could spell ruin for the entire region.

### General Features

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Unless stated otherwise, the Flooded Keep has the following features.

**Size and Dimensions.** The ceilings within each area of the Flooded Keep are roughly 15 feet high.

**Illumination.** Treat each area as having no light.

**Surface Detail.** An ankle-deep layer of filthy, stagnant water has flooded the keep; stinging insects bite at exposed flesh. The walls are covered in thick vines. A colorful fungus can barely be seen below the water line. The air is warm, humid, and cloying.

**Barriers.** Several doors and strongboxes throughout the Flooded Keep are locked or boarded up. All of the barriers are made of wood and have AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A lock can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, or any barrier can be forced open with a successful DC 20 Strength check.

**Hazard: Disease – Fungal Infection.** Whenever a creature drinks from or becomes at least partially submerged in the stagnant water, or whenever a creature comes into close contact with an infected creature, the creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus growing throughout the keep.

It takes 1d4 days for the fungal infection's symptoms to manifest in an infected creature. Once the infection takes hold, it progresses in stages, as follows:

1. The infection presents as fatigue and cramps and can easily be mistaken for sewer plague. The infected creature suffers one level of exhaustion, and it regains only half the normal number of hit points from spending Hit Dice and no hit points from finishing a long rest.
2. 24 hours later, flowering spores begin growing over the creature's eyes: the infected creature loses its natural sense of sight and gains blindsight out to a range of 40 feet.

3. 24 hours later, the creature's mouth is sewn shut by fungal threads. Webs of flowering spores appear between fingers, toes, legs, and arms.
4. 24 hours later, the creature is compelled to shelter itself near other living creatures but out of sight (such as a crawl space). Once shelter is found, a single, large fungal thread ejects itself from the top of the infected creature's head, killing it instantly. The thread seeks out the closest surface and searches for a new host. The creature can be restrained up to 6 hours before the fungal thread ejects itself anyway and begins seeking out the closest surface.

At the end of each long rest, an infected creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature suffers one level of exhaustion. On a successful save, the creature's exhaustion level decreases by one level as normal, and the infection's progression temporarily halts. The infection can only be cured with a *greater restoration* spell or similar effect. Until the infection is cured, the creature can't have less than one level of exhaustion.

## Keyed Locations

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Flooded Keep on page 4.

### G01 – Entrance Hall

The halls of this once-stately keep have fallen silent after a century of neglect. Noisome, ankle-deep water surrounds you. The stone walls are choked with flowering vines and buzzing insects.

**Hazard: Fungal Civilian.** The corpse of a fungus-covered civilian is pinned against the wall; the fungus has grown into the stone. The mouth is sewn shut, and the eyes are covered in flowering spores. A DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals a large exit wound in the back of the civilian's head, where the fungal tendril emerged. Any creature that inspects the civilian must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus (see General Features).

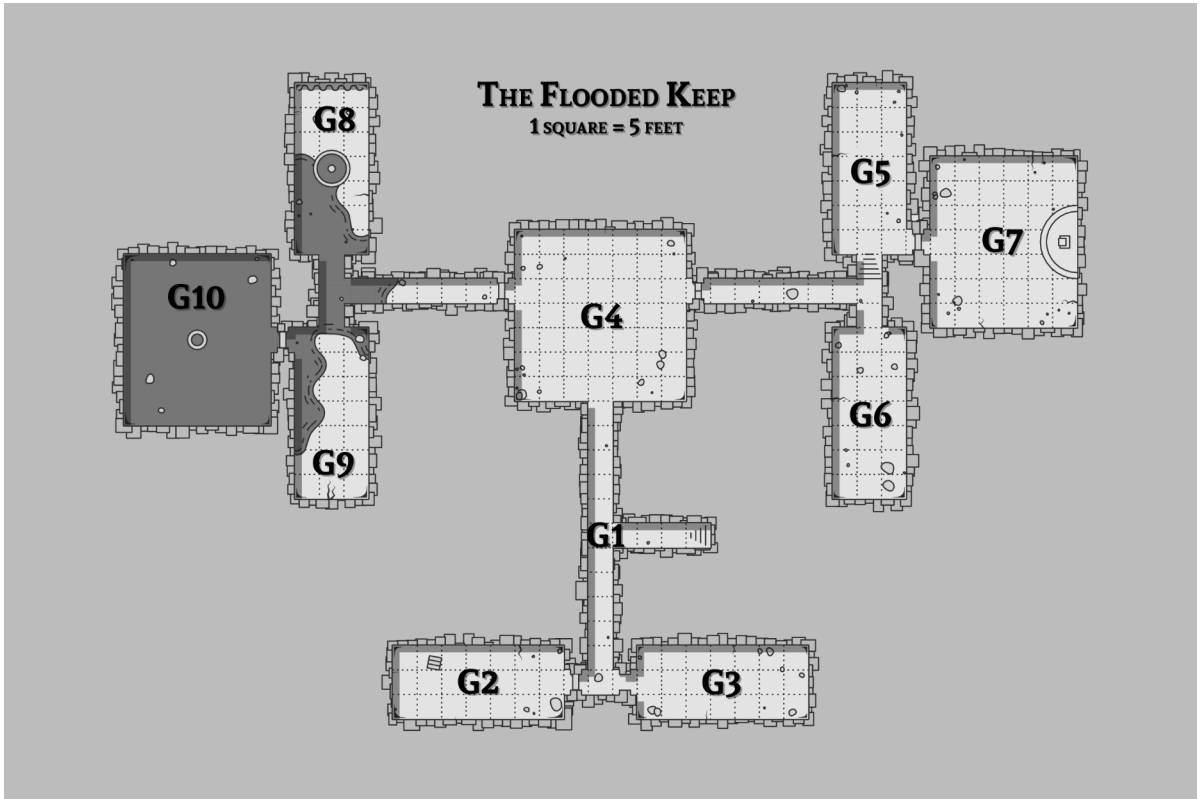
**Encounter: Swarm of Insects.** The civilian's corpse is being consumed by a **swarm of insects**. They don't attack unless provoked (such as by inspecting the civilian up close or otherwise disturbing the corpse). Whenever the swarm hits a target with its Bite attack, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus (see General Features).

### G02 – Fungal Larder

The stench of rotten food and mildew hangs heavy in the air. Every surface is covered in black fungus.

**Locked.** The door to this area is locked and boarded up (see General Features). Crude warnings in broken Common and Goblin have been scrawled on the door with charcoal. The warnings translate to "NO OPEN."

**Hazard: Fungal Civilians.** The corpses of several fungus-covered civilians have been tossed into the room. Their mouths are sewn shut, and their eyes are covered in flowering spores. A DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check



reveals a large exit wound in the back of the civilian's head, where the fungal tendril emerged. Any creature that inspects the civilian must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus (see General Features).

**Encounter: Undead.** As the characters enter the room, multiple corpses rise as fungus-animated undead. Whenever one of these undead creatures hits a target with an attack, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus (see General Features). The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G02 Encounter table.

#### AREA G02 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
1st	2 zombies
3rd	2 ghouls
5th	2 ghosts
8th	2 wights

**Treasure: Trinket.** One of the undead creatures is wearing a magical trinket around its neck. The nature of the treasure depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G02 Treasure table on the following page.

## AREA G02 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
1st	A pristine <i>ring of poison resistance</i> that never loses its sheen
3rd	A fungus-covered <i>silver raven figurine of wondrous power</i> that must be magically cleaned with a lesser restoration spell or similar effect before it can be used safely—otherwise, the creature using the figurine must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus
5th	A cloudy <i>gem of brightness</i> with 23 charges remaining
8th	A rusted <i>chime of opening</i> with 3 uses remaining—the rust is shaken off after its first use

## G03 – Kitchen

What was once the keep's kitchen has long-since fallen into disrepair. It looks as though it's been recently ransacked: counters have been overturned, pots and pans scattered, and cabinets flung open.

**Signs of Battle.** A creature with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher notices signs of recent battle: bloodstains, sling bullets, broken arrows, etc. This was no ransacking: the counters were flung over to use as cover as the goblins battled the fungal undead.

**Treasure: Dust of Dryness.** A careful search of the kitchen reveals a large sack that contains 20 pinches of *dust of dryness*. The area around the sack is completely free of fungus, mold, and filthy water. If the sack ever comes within 5 feet of a fungal colony,

the colony emits a shriek audible within 300 feet of it; creatures within 5 feet of the shrieking fungus take 2 (1d4) thunder damage and are deafened for 1d4 rounds. The fungus continues to shriek until the dust sack moves out of range.

## G04 – Muster Room

A stagnant pool of swamp water surrounds you. Aside from a few wooden chairs and a rotting table, the room appears to have been stripped bare.

**Encounter: Goblin Guards.** Several goblins keep watch over this area. If the goblins heard any fighting (or shrieking fungus) coming from the south, they're already hiding as the characters enter—they chatter nervously about “the deadsies” and shush one another. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G04 Encounter table.

## AREA G04 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
1st	2 <b>goblins</b>
3rd	4 <b>goblins</b>
5th	1 goblin <b>knight</b> and 2 <b>hobgoblins</b>
8th	3 goblin <b>knights</b>

**Development: Goblins Surrender.** Before the final blow is struck against the last goblin guard, they attempt to surrender, promising to take the characters directly to Warlord Breehurd in area G07. The goblin leads the characters directly into the barbed net trap; if the characters are successfully

restrained, the goblin laughs at them, then runs to warn Breehurd and gather reinforcements in area G07. If the trap is disabled, the goblin apologizes and feigns ignorance.

**Locked Door – East.** The door leading east to areas G08, G09, and G10 is locked and boarded up (see General Features). Crude warnings in broken Common and Goblin have been scrawled on the door with charcoal. The warnings translate to “BAD PLANT HERE.”

**Trapped Hallway – West.** The hallway leading west to areas G05, G06, and G07 has been trapped by the goblin warband. Rudimentary pressure plates have been installed beneath the muddied water. The trap activates when 50 pounds or more are placed on a pressure plate; goblin creatures will never spring the trap. A creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot the pressure plates and netting.

When the trap is triggered, the barbed net springs up, covering a 10-foot-square area. Creatures in this area take 5 (1d10) piercing damage from the barbs and become trapped in the net: they’re suspended 10 feet in the air and become restrained. A creature can use its action to make a DC 10 Strength check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. The net has AC 10 and 20 hit points. Dealing 5 slashing damage to the net (AC 10) destroys a 5-foot-square section of it, freeing any creature trapped in that section. A creature that falls from the net takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

## G05 – North Barracks

Several rows of wooden bunks are arrayed along the walls of this room; the bunks are rotted and blackened with mold. Stinking animal pelts are piled where it’s driest.

**Treasure: Goblin Strongboxes.** A careful search of the room reveals crude strongboxes of bone and wood hidden beneath various animal pelts. The strongboxes are locked (see General Features). Only one roll is required to open the strongboxes (treat them as a single treasure hoard). Whenever a creature fails to pick or force the locks, it takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage from jutting bone and must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus (see General Features). The nature of the treasure depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G05 Treasure table.

### AREA G05 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
1st	2 gp, 15 sp, 23 cp, and 1 small art object worth 25 gp
3rd	4 gp, 22 sp, 35 cp, and 2 small art objects worth 25 gp each
5th	7 gp, 41 sp, 67 cp, and 3 small art objects worth 25 gp each
8th	13 gp, 73 sp, 129 cp, and 4 small art objects worth 25 gp each

## G06 – South Barracks

Nothing remains in this room but clumps of rotten, moldy wood. There is a glint of metal amidst the ruin: a sword hilt.

**Development: Goblin Warning.** If the characters are being accompanied by the surviving guard from area G04, the guard warns them of the monster lurking in this room.

**Encounter: Refuse Monster.** The clumps of wood in this room are actually part of one or more sleeping monsters. They will not attack unless disturbed (such as by pulling

the sword hilt out of its body). Whenever one of these creatures hits a target with an attack, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus (see General Features). The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G06 Encounter table.

**Treasure: Magical Sword.** A magical sword is stuck in one of the creatures in this room. It requires a DC 14 Strength check to pull out. The nature of the treasure depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G06 Treasure table.

### AREA G06 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
1st	1 <b>gelatinous cube</b>
3rd	1 <b>black pudding</b>
5th	1 <b>shambling mound</b> and 1 <b>gray ooze</b>
8th	2 <b>shambling mounds</b>

## G07 – Breehurd’s Throne

A makeshift platform of wood and stone has been raised in the western half of this room; atop the platform is a throne of bone and animal skins. The goblins’ ill-gotten gains are piled in the northwest corner.

**Unlocked Door.** The door to this area is closed but unlocked. Creatures listening at the door hear the goblins discussing the undead.

**Encounter: Breehurd’s Warband.** Warlord Breehurd and the rest of his warband are recovering from their battle with the undead. They are visibly hurt and will only attack the characters if Breehurd determines they have an overwhelming

### AREA G06 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
1st/3rd	A +1 <i>shortsword</i> that grants the wielder advantage on attack rolls with it against plant and ooze creatures
5th/8th	A +2 <i>longsword</i> that grants the wielder advantage on attack rolls with it against plant and ooze creatures

advantage (for example, if the characters are obviously injured or succumbed to the net trap). Otherwise, he will attempt to parlay for peace (see Development: Breehurd’s Offer below). The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G07 Encounter table.

### AREA G07 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
1st	Warlord Breehurd ( <b>goblin</b> ) and 4 <b>goblins</b> that are each missing 2 (1d4) hit points
3rd	Warlord Breehurd ( <b>knight</b> ) and 4 <b>goblins</b> that are each missing 2 (1d4) hit points
5th	Warlord Breehurd ( <b>gladiator</b> ) and 4 <b>hobgoblins</b> that are each missing 3 (1d6) hit points
8th	Warlord Breehurd ( <b>gladiator</b> ) and 4 goblin <b>knights</b> that are each missing 18 (4d8) hit points

**Development: Breehurd’s Offer.** Should the characters approach Breehurd, he will attempt to bargain with them. In broken Common, Breehurd tells them of the fungus that reanimated the townspeople, explaining that the whole ordeal began when they

## AREA G07 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
1st	6 pp, 100 gp, 90 sp, 75 cp, 2 art objects worth 50 gp each, and a dirty vial of <i>dust of sneezing and choking</i>
3rd	14 pp, 250 gp, 220 sp, 160 cp, 4 art objects worth 50 gp each, and a cloudy pair of <i>eyes of charming</i> that must be magically cleaned with a prestidigitation spell or similar effect before use
5th	27 pp, 380 gp, 330 sp, 360 cp, 8 art objects worth 50 gp each, and a moldy <i>bag of beans</i> (1d4 beans have lost their magic)
8th	45 pp, 590 gp, 600 sp, 420 cp, 12 art objects worth 50 gp each, and a fungus-covered <i>horn of blasting</i> that must be magically purged with a <i>lesser restoration</i> spell or similar effect before it can be used safely (otherwise, the creature using the horn must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus)

attempted to explore the west half of the keep. He offers the characters a deal: the warband will depart from these lands immediately and leave half of their treasure behind. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check convinces Breehurd to instead leave all of the treasure behind. If the characters accept, Breehurd is true to his word, and the goblin threat is ended peacefully.

**Treasure: Breehurd's Hoard.** Once Warlord Breehurd is defeated or allowed to leave, the characters are free to claim the warband's treasure hoard. The nature of the treasure depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G07 Treasure table.

### G08 – Infirmary

Ruined bed frames and moldy sacks of straw float on the water surrounded by buzzing insects. Medicinal cabinets, undisturbed, are arrayed along the wall.

**Treasure: Healing Potion.** A careful search of the medicinal cabinets reveals several potions. The nature of the potions depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G08 Potions table.

### AREA G08 POTIONS

Adventure Level	Potions
1st	1d2 <i>potions of healing</i> and 1 <i>potion of poison</i>
3rd	1d2 <i>potions of greater healing</i> and 1 <i>potion of poison</i>
5th	1d3 <i>potions of greater healing</i> and 1 <i>potion of poison</i>
8th	1d2 <i>potions of superior healing</i> and 1 <i>potion of poison</i>

### G09 – Armory

Fungus-covered weapon racks lie empty, though bits of equipment bob on the water. Amongst the refuse are several goblin corpses.



**Encounter: Undead.** As the characters enter the room, several corpses rise as fungus-animated undead. Whenever one of these undead creatures hits a target with an attack, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus (see General Features). The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G09 Encounter table.

### AREA G09 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
1st	2 goblin <b>zombies</b>
3rd	2 goblin <b>ghouls</b>
5th	3 goblin <b>ghasts</b>
8th	3 goblin <b>wights</b>

## G10 – Chapel Ruins

The water here is waist deep and pitch black. The fungus growing throughout the keep has completely taken over the room; its tendrils pulsate and squelch to an inscrutable rhythm.

**Locked.** The door to this room is closed and locked (see General Features). The door is rotted through: its AC is reduced by 5, and ability checks made to pick the lock or force the door open are made with advantage.

**Hazard: Fungal Infection.** Any creature that starts its turn in the water must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the malignant fungus (see General Features).

### Development: Destroying the Fungus.

The fungus can be destroyed in two ways: with fire or with repeated applications of *dust of dryness*. Before fire can be applied to the fungus, the water in the room must be removed either manually or magically (such as by the *create or destroy water* spell). Once the room is no longer submerged, the fungus can easily be burnt with any fire source, destroying it—creatures infected with the fungus are no longer infected and heal naturally over the next 1d4 days.

**Treasure: Staff of Withering.** A *staff of withering* lies at the center of the fungal mass. Once the fungus is destroyed, the characters are free to retrieve the staff.

## Aftermath

If the characters successfully defeat Warlord Breehurd or otherwise convince the warband to leave, the villagers can return to their farming duties. If their patron demanded Breehurd's head, they pay the characters upon receipt; if the characters instead convinced Breehurd to leave peacefully, their patron only pays them half of what was promised.

If one or more creatures left the Flooded Keep with a fungal infection and didn't destroy the fungus in Area G10, they'll have to seek immediate treatment. If no sufficient treatment is found, the infection will spread—and if it spreads too far, the sovereign may dispatch a regiment of knights to quarantine the region (at the GM's discretion). Ω