

ILLITHILICHES

The Elder Brains fear what they cannot control. An illithid awakened to the power of the arcane is the true master of its own destiny, and in illithid society there is no greater crime. Thus are the exceptional pruned from the tree of mediocrity, denied the rapture of resorbition. No matter. Death will be made to wait, and the secrets of mind-melding guarded so jealously by the Elder Brains are not so secure as they might imagine. All things true are revealed in time, after all.

ILLITHILICH LORE

Arcana DC 25: Rather than an ordinary phylactery, illithiliches achieve their form of undeath through something called a pariah crystal, which by some means stores the minds of other illithid as they are slowly drained to sustain the illithilich, exhausted at a rate of about one per year. Similarities have been drawn to the method by which the archmage Ioulaum purportedly sustained his own life.

History DC 20: Illithiliches are despised by nearly all creatures of the underdark, most especially by living illithids, yet crave a community of intellectual equals to share consciousness with. Because of this, it is relatively common to discover two or more illithiliches lairing together, at least compared to other varieties of lich.

History DC 25: According to his apprentice Tabra, the great archmage Ioulaum was slain by a cabal of what were later discovered to be illithiliches, leading some to believe they may have extracted the means of achieving undeath from the sage's mind.

Nature DC 15: In undeath, illithiliches are relieved of the need to feed on living brains, but most do so anyways for nostalgia or pleasure.

Nature DC 20: The flesh of an illithilich is pale, dry and cracked, its undead body unable to produce the mucous that keeps healthy mind flayers moist. Many illithiliches go to great lengths to keep their skin moist, from lairing in sauna-like underground volcanic springs to harvesting and injecting the mucous of living mind flayers.

Religion DC 10: Unlike ordinary liches, illithiliches do not employ a phylactery or consume souls, implying that the source of their undeath is something more esoteric than entreating gods or demons of undeath. What such a source could be has remained a great mystery.

ILLITHILICH TACTICS

An illithilich's primary concerns are getting counterspelled and getting bogged down in melee. To this end, it first positions itself within 60 ft. of only a single creature capable of casting counterspell and casts Blood to Vitriol on it, counterspelling the creature's counterspell. It teleports with Fold Space whenever a melee threat closes with it, particularly if the threat is a paladin. It uses Mind Blast whenever it can catch 3 or more creatures at once with it, and prioritizes Dominating Fighters, Rogues, and Barbarians whenever they are present.

ILLITHILICH ENCOUNTER GROUPS

CR 20 Encounter 11,700 XP

- 1 Alhoon (CR 10)
- 2 Nyraala Golems (CR 7)

CR 24 Encounter 16,200 XP

- 2 Alhoons (CR 10)
- 1 Gibbering Abomination (CR 6)
- 2 Gibbering Moulder (CR 2)
- 6 Voidmind Thralls (CR 1)

CR 28 Encounter 48,300 XP

- 1 Illithilich (CR 22)
- 1 Balhannoth (CR 7)
- 4 Tzakandi (CR 4)



ALHOON

Medium undead (aberration), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 165 (22d8 + 66)

Speed 30ft., fly 10 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws CON +7, INT +8, WIS +7, CHA +7

Skills Arcana +8, History +12, Nature +8, Perception +7

Damage Resistances Necrotic, Psychic; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Weapons.

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., Passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Pariah Crystal. If it has a pariah crystal with minds remaining, a destroyed alhoon gains a new body in 1d10 days, regaining all its hit points and becoming active again, and its pariah crystal loses one of the minds it contains. The new body appears within 5 feet of the phylactery.

Impossible Angles. The space in a 5 ft. radius around the alhoon is difficult terrain for non-aberrations, as the alhoon's presence warps it into incomprehensible geometries, additionally causing the following effects:

- A non-aberration creature that starts its turn in the area, or enters it for the first time on a turn, must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or take 1d10 psychic damage and be Poisoned until the beginning of its next turn.
- Ranged attacks made by non-aberrations that pass through the area are made at disadvantage.

Magic Resistance. The alhoon has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Legendary Resistances (1/day). If the alhoon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The alhoon makes two attacks, one of which it may replace with a spell of 1st level or above.

Icy Tentacles. Melee Spell Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 15 (2d10 + 4) psychic plus 9 (2d8) cold damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 16).

A creature that starts its turn grappled by the alhoon must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence saving throw or be Paralyzed until the beginning of its next turn.

Nerve Rot Bolt. Ranged Spell Attack: +8 to hit, reach 60 ft., one creature. Hit: 18 (4d8) necrotic damage plus 11 (2d10) psychic damage.

Extract Brain. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one incapacitated humanoid grappled by the alhoon. Hit: The target takes 55 (10d10) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the alhoon begins to extract and devour the target's brain. At the beginning of the alhoon's next turn, the target dies and the alhoon gains 40 temporary hit points.

Mind Blast (Recharge 5-6). The alhoon magically emits psychic energy in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or take 36 (8d8 + 4) psychic damage and be Stunned until the end of the alhoon's next turn.

Force Rift (3rd Level Spell). The alhoon wrenches gravity in a line extending from itself. Each creature in a 60 ft. line that is 5 ft. wide must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or take 27 (5d10) force damage and be knocked prone, or take half as much damage on a success. A creature that fails by 5 or more is additionally pushed 15 ft. away.

Fold Space (4th Level Spell). The alhoon teleports to an unoccupied location it can see within 30 feet. Each creature within 15 ft. of the space it departed must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 10 ft. toward the space it departed and take 16 (3d10) psychic damage.

Dominate (5th Level Spell, Concentration). One creature within 30 ft. that the alhoon can see must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be magically Charmed and under the alhoon's telepathic control. Whenever the charmed target takes damage, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success.

Blood to Vitriol (1/Day, 6th Level Spell, Concentration). One creature within 60 ft. the alhoon can see must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be Stunned for 1 minute. A Stunned creature repeats this saving throw at the end of each of its turns, taking 22 (5d8) acid damage on a failure, or ending the effect on a success.

Reactions

Shield (1st level spell). As a reaction to being targeted with an attack, the alhoon may add 5 to its AC until the beginning of its next turn.

Counterspell (3rd level spell). As a reaction to seeing a creature cast a spell within 60 feet, the alhoon may make an Intelligence check with DC equal to 10 plus the spell's level, negating the spell on a success. If the spell is 3rd level or below, the alhoon succeeds automatically.

ILLITHILICH

Medium undead (aberration), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 221 (26d8 + 104)

Speed 30ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	23 (+6)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws CON +11, INT +13, WIS +11, CHA +10
Skills Arcana +20, History +20, Nature +13, Perception +11

Damage Resistances All but Poison and Radiant

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned

Senses Truesight 120 ft., Passive Perception 21

Languages Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 22 (41,000 XP)

Pariah Crystal. If it has a pariah crystal with minds remaining, a destroyed illithilich gains a new body in 1d10 days, regaining all its hit points and becoming active again, and its pariah crystal loses one of the minds it contains. The new body appears within 5 feet of the phylactery.

Impossible Angles. The space in a 10 ft. radius around the illithilich is difficult terrain for non-aberrations, as the illithilich's presence warps it into incomprehensible geometries, additionally causing the following effects:

- A non-aberration creature that starts its turn in the area, or enters it for the first time on a turn, must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or take 1d10 psychic damage and be Poisoned until the beginning of its next turn.
- Ranged attacks made by non-aberrations that pass through the area are made at disadvantage.

Magic Resistance. The illithilich has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Legendary Resistances (3/day). If the illithilich fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Actions

Icy Tentacles. Melee Spell Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 15 (2d10 + 4) psychic plus 9 (2d8) cold damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 16).

A creature that starts its turn grappled by the illithilich must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence saving throw or be Paralyzed until the beginning of its next turn.

Nerve Rot Bolt. Ranged Spell Attack: +8 to hit, reach 60 ft., one creature. Hit: 18 (4d8) necrotic damage plus 11 (2d10) psychic damage.

Extract Brain. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one incapacitated humanoid grappled by the alhoon. Hit: The target takes 55 (10d10) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the alhoon begins to extract and devour the target's brain. At the beginning of the illithilich's next turn, the target dies and the illithilich gains 40 temporary hit points.

Dominate (5th Level Spell, Concentration). One creature within 30 ft. that the alhoon can see must succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw or be magically Charmed and under the illithilich's telepathic control. Whenever the charmed target takes damage, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success.

Blood to Vitriol (6th Level Spell, Concentration). One creature within 60 ft. the alhoon can see must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or be Stunned for 1 minute. A Stunned creature repeats this saving throw at the end of each of its turns, taking 22 (5d8) acid damage on a failure, or ending the effect on a success.

Mind Blast Overcharge (Recharge 5-6). The illithilich magically emits psychic energy in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 21 Intelligence saving throw or take 76 (8d8 + 40) psychic damage and be Stunned until the end of the illithilich's next turn, or half as much damage on a success.

Reactions

Shield (1st level spell). As a reaction to being targeted with an attack, the illithilich may add 5 to its AC until the beginning of its next turn.

Counterspell (3rd level spell). As a reaction to seeing a creature cast a spell within 60 feet, the illithilich may make an Intelligence check with DC equal to 10 plus the spell's level, negating the spell on a success. If the spell is 3rd level or below, the illithilich succeeds automatically.

Psychic Annihilation (1/Day, 9th Level Spell). As a reaction to being reduced below 111 hit points, the illithilich forces one creature it can see within 60 ft. to succeed on a DC 21 Intelligence saving throw or have its head explode, killing it instantly. On a successful save, the creature instead takes 66 (12d10) psychic damage.

Legendary Actions

Icy Tentacles. The illithilich makes an attack with its icy tentacles.

Nerve Rot Bolt. The illithilich makes an attack with its nerve rot bolt.

Fold Space (Costs 2 Actions, 4th Level Spell). The alhoon teleports to an unoccupied location it can see within 30 feet. Each creature within 15 ft. of the space it departed must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 10 ft. toward the space it departed and take 16 (3d10) psychic damage.