

Orcus

(Prince of the Undead, the Demon Prince of Undeath, the Goat-Horned Demon, the Blood Lord, the Forgotten One)

Demipower (formerly Lesser Power) of the Abyss, CE

PORTFOLIO:	Undeath, the undead, shadows, revenge
ALIASES:	Tenebrous
DOMAIN NAME:	Unknown (formerly 113th Layer/Thanatos)
SUPERIOR:	None
ALLIES:	Yeenoghu (formerly)
FOES:	Anubis, Bahamut, Baphomet, Bwimb II, Camaxtli, Demogorgon, Eltab, Graz'zt, Kanchelsis, Kelemvor, Kiaransalee, Maanzecorian, Mellifleur, Myrkul (dead), Nerull, Primus, Quetzalcoatl, Tomeri (dead), Wee Jas, various other good powers and powers of death and the dead
SYMBOL:	Goat's head in portrait (Orcus) or shadowy head and shoulders of a humanoid with blazing eyes (Tenebrous)
WOR. ALIGN.:	LE, NE, CE

Once one of the most powerful tanar'ri of the Abyss, Orcus (OR-kuss) for a time was dead and nearly forgotten. As befitting the Demon Prince of Undeath, however, he did not stay dead and managed to return as a shadowy wraith of a deity before regaining some of his lost power. He now plots to reassert his role and authority and regain all that he lost.

The history of Orcus, as with almost all of the tanar'ri lords and princes, is murky and conflicting. Some claim him older than time itself, one of the first creatures to be known as tanar'ri. Others claim he was a wicked mortal who worked his way up through the existing ranks of Abyssal fiends before eventually carving out a small realm as a balor. There is even a small and ridiculed group that does not believe he ever truly existed at all, being instead an elaborate ruse by another lord of the Abyss or some godling or other. Whatever the case, the Prince of Undeath was one of the great movers and shakers in the Abyss—until he wasn't. In fact, he not only lost all of his power and even his godly existence, his very name was erased from the minds and memories of living beings across the multiverse.

Long before this event occurred, the Demon Prince of Undeath grew complacent. He thought none could challenge him in his fortress in the Abyss. He acted through his avatars, and even his rivalries with other Abyssal powers such as Demogorgon, Eltab, and Graz'zt were handled through minions and followers rather than directly involving any of the lords and princes themselves. He schemed and actively sought to expand his power on the Prime Material Plane, making little effort to hide his cults or the deals he struck with power-hungry wizards. One particularly powerful wizard he bestowed great powers on was the terrible Zhengyi the Witch-King, conqueror of the remote frontier land of Vaasa on the world of Toril. Around this lich-king arose a prominent and powerful cult that made no secret of its worship of Orcus. Inevitably the Witch-King's forces met their match when there arose a great leader in conquered portions of neighboring Damara. However, Zhengyi himself was heavily protected by the boons of Orcus; seeing little other recourse this hero, Gareth Dragonsbane, and his close companions made a daring raid into the very realm of the Prince of the Undead. With the blessing of Bahamut, they faced and slew the demon prince himself, destroying the power of the Witch-King, or so they thought. What they actually faced was one of Orcus's few avatars with a facsimile of his famed wand; but this was enough of a blow to the Prince of Undeath that he found himself open to attacks from other enemies. Indeed, within short order his realm was invaded by the drow deity of vengeance and necromancy, Kiaransalee. Just what slight the Revenancer was seeking revenge for is unknown, although speculation abounds that he worked against her in a way that guaranteed her subservience to Lolth. Whatever the case, she surprised the Demon Prince of Undeath and slew him in his own realm. To further this insult she worked great magic, possibly with the aid of an unknown artifact, which erased Orcus's name from the multiverse; it couldn't quite completely eliminate knowledge of the Prince of the Undead, but it came close. She then hid the true Wand of Orcus and claimed his realm for her own.

For most entities, this would be the end of their story. But Orcus was no mere minor power; as the demon prince of undeath, death apparently could not hold him, and a spark of his divinity returned as an unliving shade. No longer a true power, but still powerful, Orcus hid himself away lest his foes learned of his return and began calling himself Tenebrous. He began a search for his lost wand, as well as a means of exacting revenge upon Kiaransalee and his other foes; in the process, he discovered ancient magic known as the Last Word, a word of power that is said to be able to unmake even a god. Using this power, the Demon Prince of Undeath cut a swath through the movers and shakers of the planes trying to recover his missing Wand. Proxies and powers fell before him in this quest, widely believed to include the powers Tomeri, Maanzecorian, Camaxtli, and Bwimb; but the most significant power Orcus eliminated as Tenebrous was Primus, the head modron. Normally the death of Primus would lead to an ascension of a Secundus to the position; however, Orcus masqueraded as the Supreme Modron and unleashed the Great Modron March early in order to further his search for his Wand. Ultimately this quest was futile, however, and the power of the Last Word brought death to Orcus's existence as Tenebrous. This was still not the end of the Demon Prince of Undeath, for his last remaining living priest managed to carry out a ritual on his Astral corpse that returned Orcus to life once again, but this time without the power of the Last Word. Weakened but alive, Orcus has hidden himself away once again, plotting first and foremost to take back his realm of Thanatos from Kiaransalee.

The sloth that afflicted Orcus before his downfall had already cost him any ancient alliances he may have once had, and his current hidden status has prevented him from acquiring any new ones. He briefly had an alliance with Yeenoghu, the Demon Prince of Gnolls, but this had soured with that fiend's claiming of the title Demon Prince of Ghouls and his forced vassalage of Doresain. Whether this alliance had been forged to aid the Prince of Undeath's struggle against his Abyssal rivals is unknown but widely assumed to be the case. Rumors claim that Baphomet was once imprisoned by Orcus, and sages speculate this may have been done as payment to Yeenoghu, but this has never been confirmed. Finally, Orcus has earned the ire of a whole host of powers of a beneficent nature, with Bahamut perhaps his most ancient foe in this category. More recently, Quetzalcoatl has sworn vengeance on the slayer of Camaxtli, although he has yet to discover that the Prince of Undeath is responsible. Whether Orcus seeks out new alliances in the near future in order to ensure his survival remains to be seen.

Before his fall, it was said that the Prince of Undeath had conquered numerous Prime Material worlds. What has happened to these worlds and his governing forces during his absence is unknown, with one exception. On some backwater Prime world, a city of death-worshippers turned to the Prince of Undeath as their favored patron. This world of mortals had many such death-obsessed cities, each with a different death deity as a patron. For some reason, the residents of this particular city, known as Moil, began to turn their prayers to other powers. Incensed by this betrayal, Orcus sent all the residents into a deep slumber and ripped it from the surface of the planet and sent it hurtling into the deep ethereal, forming a new demiplane that has come to be known as the City That Waits. Whatever Orcus's plans for this city were will remain unknown, for his death disrupted them. Portals still open onto the world Moil once inhabited, once called Ranais but now known as the Funereal World, as it seems the Prince of Undeath's actions caused significant harm to it, leaving it a cold and dim world.

Orcus is also widely credited with many creations of a magical and necromantic nature. His most famous creation is the so-called Wand of Orcus, also known as the Death Wand. This ancient artifact is said to be able to slay any mortal creature with a touch and is believed to be infused with a significant portion of the Prince of Undeath's divine power. It is likely this connection that allows him to reform it even when it is destroyed. Little is known about the original crafting of the wand, but certain obscure texts hold that the skull atop it is the skull of a skeleton warrior, possibly even the first such undead, named Anarchocles. Little is known about this individual, however. Like that skeleton warrior, Orcus is often credited with creating, or assisting in the creation of the first of many types of undead. The most common types he is said to be responsible for are ghouls and death knights, as well as liches, vampires, and wraiths. All such creations are hotly contested by other deities or competing myths.

The Demon Prince of Undeath is currently extremely secretive, operating very carefully. He is not able to dispatch an avatar directly to the Prime Material Plane but is working to rebuild his cults and power base.

He was far more active in the past, answering many summons and granting considerable power to evil wizards who called upon him, but this has changed, at least temporarily. Now instead he tries to work through minions and keep the true source of his aid hidden. He actively hunts down followers of Kiaransalee, hoping to inflict fear and paranoia upon the Revenancer.

Orcus's Avatar (Necromancer 28, Cleric 22, Fighter 14)

Orcus primarily appears as a grossly obese human with grey skin and covered in coarse animalistic hair. He has the head of a goat with the curved horns of a ram, and his eyes glow like white-hot coals. He has a pair of hooved goat legs covered in thick hair, and from his back sprout a pair of great bat-like wings. Finally, he has a long whip-like tail tipped with a sharp, envenomed stinger. He also sometimes appears in this form but with a skeletal head. As Tenebrous, he also takes the form of a tall, thin humanoid of pure shadow. His eyes burn with hatred, and his lower body disappears into misty nothingness. Orcus draws his spells from all schools and spheres but favors those of a necromantic nature.

AC -6; MV 9, FI 18 (A); HP 172; THAC0 6; #AT 7/2 or 2
Dmg 1d6+13 (*mace* +2, +8 STR, +2 spec bonus in mace)/2d4+poison (tail) or 2d6+1 (fist)/2d4+poison (tail)
MR 85%; SZ H (15 feet tall)
STR 20, DEX 18, CON 19, INT 21, WIS 18, CHA 20
Spells P: 11/11/10/10/9/6/3, W: 7/7/7/7/7/7/7/7*
Saves PPDM 2; RSW 3; PP 5; BW 5; Sp 4
* Numbers assume one extra necromancy spell per spell level.

Special Att/Def: Orcus favors using his magical abilities over melee combat, but if enraged he will wade into battle wielding the *Mace of the Damned*, a Chaotic Evil-aligned *mace of disruption* +2. This mace deals double damage to good priests, paladins, and upper planar creatures, and all good creatures struck must save versus spell or be turned away from Orcus for 2d6 rounds (as if undead turned by a cleric). If he does not have this mace, he strikes with his fists for 2d6+1 points of damage, and even a slap from his great hands deals 1d4 points of damage. His venomous tail can strike any creature in front or behind him, and any creatures struck must make a saving throw versus poison with a -4 penalty or die instantly. He also often carries his *Wand of Death*, known colloquially as *Orcus's Wand*. While the wand is rumored to have a variety of powers, Orcus typically only uses it as a last resort to instantly slay any creature it touches with no save, except powerful, unique planar creatures, avatars, and deities. He is also known to utilize lesser copies of his Death Wand, in which saves are allowed versus the death effect with a -4 penalty.

At will, the Prince of Undeath can cause *fear* (as a *wand of fear*), create an *illusion* (as the *wand*), unleash a 12-die *lightning bolt*, and use *telekinesis* with a maximum limit of 1200 lbs. Further, he is able to cast, at will, *charm person*, *clairaudience*, *clairvoyance*, *comprehend languages*, *darkness*, *15' radius*, *detect magic*, *detect invisible*, *dispel magic*, *ESP*, *infravision*, *polymorph self*, *pyrotechnics*, *read magic*, *suggestion*, *teleport without error*, and *wall of fire*. Orcus can use any of the *symbols* once per day each, and he can also cast *feblemind*, *polymorph any object*, *project image*, *shape change*, and *time stop* once per day as well. He can *speak with dead* at any time he wishes, and is able to *gate* in 1d6 vrocks, hezrou, glabrezu, or nalfeshnee with an 80% chance of success, or a marilith or balor with a 50% chance of success once per day. Finally, as the Prince of the Undead, he is able to summon (at random) 4d12 skeletons, 4d8 zombies, 4d6 shadows, or 2d4 vampires once per day. The types of undead he can summon can vary based on those in close proximity, and he can choose to summon specific named undead if he desires.

Orcus is immune to *sleep*, *charm*, cold, lightning and poison, and takes half damage from fire and gas attacks. He can be turned as Special undead, and can only be struck by weapons of +3 or better enchantment.

Other Manifestations

In times past, Orcus favored granting power directly to powerful followers in the form of unique items and powers, as well as the servitude of tanar'ri and undead. For example, among the magic granted to Zhengyi the Witch-King of Vaasa was the power to raise Castle Perilous in one night. All powers and items he granted are unique to the individual in question, and the Prince of Undeath only cared for his goals, not his followers. He never

directly aided or defended a follower if there were others who could take up the mantle and achieve the goal in question. Whether these tactics will change with Orcus's return is unknown.

The Prince of Undeath is served primarily by visages; in addition, he is served by bodaks, goats, rams, shadowhounds, tanar'ri of all sorts, and undead of every variety. He never expresses his pleasure through discoveries, but he is harsh in his punishment of abject failure. Those who fail him through incompetence or blundering are often slain and animated as an intelligent undead creature permanently bound to Orcus's will. While not a display of his favor, natural pools of mercury are considered sacred, for they are believed to offer an easy means of summoning him or his minions, and so the discovery of such a pool is considered especially favored.

The Church

CLERGY:	Clerics, specialty priests, shamans, necromancers
CLERGY'S ALIGN.:	LE, NE, CE
TURN UNDEAD:	C: No, SP: No, Sha: No, Nec: No
CMND. UNDEAD:	C: Yes, SP: Yes, at priest level +2, Sha: Yes, Nec: No

All clerics, specialty priests, and shamans of Orcus receive religion (Orcus) as a bonus nonweapon proficiency.

With his first death, all priests of Orcus found themselves losing their powers. This led to most cults collapsing, either from attacks by their foes or conversions to rival powers. Those few priests who maintained their faith have begun to receive spells once again with the return of the Prince of Undeath, and so his cults are slowly reappearing. However, it is likely to take a considerable amount of time before his following on the Prime Material Plane is anywhere near where it was at the time of his death. Until that time, Orcus is exercising caution and warning his followers to maintain secrecy, so his ancient foes do not catch wind of their return.

Many temples and shrines dedicated to the Prince of Undeath were lost or destroyed when he was slain. Some of the more secretive ones have since been reclaimed, but there has been little move to reclaim those temples that were already well known to the faith's foes. In construction, Orcus's temples were generally built underground and followed natural formations, so the layout of each temple is unique. The main worship chamber frequently holds a large idol of a goat-headed figure carved from black stone such as onyx, and scenes of undead and fiends performing grotesque acts of butchery typically adorn the walls. Skulls and bones are frequently used as decoration, and if the temple is large enough to have acolytes and lay followers, a decorated iron bell is used to mark the various time periods of rest and worship. Statuary of undead abound throughout the halls in larger temple complexes, and undead themselves are used for labor and defense. Pools of mercury are sacred to the Prince of Undeath, for they are believed to operate as portals to his realms; some temples are built around naturally occurring pools, while wealthier temples may create artificial pools. Shrines of Orcus tend to be small alcoves within hidden chambers in other buildings and feature a small idol of a goat-headed figure centrally placed. Human and humanoid skulls are common decorations as well.

Novices in the service of Orcus are known as Corpses. Full priests in the service of the Prince of Undeath are known as Necrotic Ones. Collectively, the faith of the Demon Prince of Undeath is known as the Cult of the Goat's Head. In ascending order of rank, titles used by the clergy are Clattering Skeleton, Shambling Zombie, Ravenous Ghoul, Stalking Shadow, Frightful Wight, Wrathful Wraith, Terrorizing Spectre, Destructive Death Knight, and Dread Lich. High ranking priests are called Skull Lords, and all must perform some great service to advance Orcus's goals before they can have such a title conferred upon them. Specialty priests are called tenebrans. Clerics (47%) dominate the priesthood for now, although specialty priests (25%) are becoming increasingly common as the cults actively recruit members; necromancers (8%) make up a solid minority within the clergy and shamans (20%) can be found among tribal human and humanoid groups. Males (61%) tend to be drawn to Orcus's faith in larger numbers than females (39%). While most of the Prince of Undeath's worshippers are human (62%) or humanoid (orcs, goblinoids, etc.; 24%), dwarves (3%), other demi-humans (2%), intelligent undead (8%), and other races (1%) such as dragons and illithids are drawn to worship the Demon Prince of the Undead.

Dogma: Death is the greatest power in the multiverse. Death is the ultimate equalizer, for all things die. However, through the power of the Prince of Undeath, even death can be overcome and surpassed. Bring death to your enemies and use their corpses as your tools. Engage in necromancy, the most powerful of all realms of magical study.

Day-to-Day Activities: With the need to keep cults secret, most members of Orcus's faith maintain facades of respectability. In those cults that live apart from society and thus only need to keep their outward activities secret, members animate undead to add to the legions that they plan to eventually unleash on their enemies. They have dreams of conquest and domination, and work towards those goals. These cults often have members dedicated to caring for and preserving their undead, members dedicated to arming them, and other basic tasks necessary to keep their forces in fighting shape. Higher ranking priests often research new forms of undead, methods to summon minions of the Prince of Undeath, and plan out their sacrifices and rituals. All activities are directly in the service of Orcus's goals.

Important Ceremonies/Holy Days: Individual cults tend to have varying ceremonies, usually related to their founding and various victories. All ceremonies include sacrifices of living creatures, although the method of sacrifice varied. The ceremonies culminate in the animation of the sacrifices and zombies or skeletons to serve the priests or are added to their military legions.

Major Centers of Worship: The City that Waits, Moil, trapped in the Ethereal Plane, as well as the world it was pulled from, are holy sites to the clergy of the Prince of Undeath. Typically only the most powerful members of the priesthood are aware of these locations, and if possible they travel to one of the locations in hopes of meeting an Abyssal servitor of the Demon Prince of the Undead. Here they also receive direct orders from Orcus's tanar'ri and undead servants. In regions where his faith is strong enough to be open, there are also often infamous temples or battle sites that the clergy attempt to visit.

Affiliated Orders: In the past, before Orcus's first death, his clergy often maintained military arms of the priesthood, and some even sponsored societies of assassins. All of these were lost with the erasure of the Prince of Undeath's name, and none have been restored at this time.

Priestly Vestments: While cultic garb varies somewhat, the most popular ceremonial robes include a hood made from the head and horns of a goat or ram. The robes themselves are typically white with blue or black fringes, with high-ranking priests wearing blood-red cloaks overtop gold emblems of rank are worn on the front, typically on chains. High-ranking priests further carry staves of office as well. Some cults favor black and red robes instead. The holy symbol most often used by the priesthood is an amulet with a goat's head in portrait. A geometric design recalling a goat's head is used by those cults that wish to maintain secrecy.

Adventuring Garb: Heavy armor, maces, and shields are the common equipment of the Demon Prince of the Undead's clergy when engaging in military actions. Otherwise, they tend to wear nondescript garb when traveling in order to maintain the secrecy of their cult. If secrecy is unneeded, they will often wear their formal robes and the leader of a group will carry a staff denoting their office.

Specialty Priests (Tenebrans)

REQUIREMENTS:	Intelligence 11, Wisdom 9
PRIME REQ.:	Intelligence, Wisdom
ALIGNMENT:	CE
WEAPONS:	All bludgeoning (wholly Type B) weapons
ARMOR:	Any
MAJOR SPHERES:	All, chaos, combat, divination, elemental (earth), healing (reversed), necromantic (reversed), summoning, sun (reversed)
MINOR SPHERES:	Protection, war
MAGICAL ITEMS:	As clerics
REQ. PROFS:	Mace
BONUS PROFS:	Necrology

- While any race capable of becoming priests can join the clergy of Orcus, most tenebrans are humans or humanoids.
- Tenebrans are not allowed to multiclass.

- Tenebrans may cast wizard spells from the school of necromancy as defined in the Limited Wizard Spellcasting section of "Appendix 1: Demihuman Priests" of *Demihuman Deities*.
- Tenebrans may use any magical items restricted to necromancers.
- Any undead within 10 feet of a tenebrans is more difficult for other priests to turn or control; all those trying to turn such undead do so as if two levels lower.
- Tenebrans can cast *animate dead* (as the 3rd-level priest spell) once per day. They may animate 1 HD worth of undead for each level they have obtained. They may only create skeletons and zombies with this power.
- At 3rd level, tenebrans can cast *cloak undead* (as the 2nd-level wizard spell) or *resist turning* (as the 2nd-level priest spell) once per day.
- At 5th level, tenebrans can cast *skulltrap* or *wraithform* (as the 3rd-level wizard spells) once per day.
- At 7th level, tenebrans can cast *charm undead* or *enervation* (as the 4th-level wizard spells) once per day.
- At 9th level, tenebrans can cast *summon shadow* or *wall of bones* (as the 5th-level wizard spells) once per day.
- At 12th level, tenebrans can cast *death spell* (as the 6th-level wizard spell) or *summon undead* (as the 6th-level priest spell) once per day.
- At 15th level, tenebrans can cast *destruction* or *energy drain* (as the reverse of the 7th-level priest spells *resurrection* and *restoration*) once per week.

Orcan Spells

2nd Level

Bonebolt (Pr 2; Necromancy)

Sphere:	Necromantic
Range:	180 yds.
Components:	V, S, M
Duration:	Instantaneous
Casting Time:	5
Area of Effect:	1 target
Saving Throw:	Special

When this spell is cast, a sharp shard of bone launches at a target specified by the priest. The priest makes an attack roll as a fighter of the same level to determine if the *bonebolt* strikes its target with no attack or damage bonuses. If successful, the shard of bone enervates the target for 2d4 points of damage; this damage cannot be healed for 2d6+2 turns; after that period of time, damage is recovered at a rate of 1 point per turn. If a saving throw versus death is successful, this damage is non-enervating which can be recovered with rest or magic normally. Any creature brought to a maximum hit points of 0 due to the enervation is slain and rises as a juju zombie under the control of the spellcaster.

The material components for this spell are the priest's holy symbol, a fragment of bone from a juju zombie, and a fragment of bone from a wight.

3rd Level

Mace of Doom (Pr 3; Conjunction/Summoning)

Sphere:	Necromantic
Range:	0
Components:	V, S, M
Duration:	1 rd./level
Casting Time:	6
Area of Effect:	1 mace
Saving Throw:	Special

By means of this spell, the caster creates a mace-like force of pure negative energy. This weapon is wielded exactly as a mace, meaning a character without proficiency suffers their normal non-proficient penalty. The *mace of doom* strikes as if it were a +2 weapon and has the +2 bonus that such an enchantment would entail, but it gains no bonus to the damage. However, creatures struck by this force are enervated for an additional 1d6 points of damage unless a saving throw versus death magic is successful. Magic such as negative plane protection offer complete protection from this enervation. Hit points lost through enervation cannot be regained through curative spells and return at the rate of 1 hit point per turn. Thus, if a creature with a full 10 hit points suffers a loss of 5 hit points due to this

enervating energy curative spells can only restore them to a maximum of 5 hit points until the other lost hit points return naturally. *Restoration* or similar magic will completely restore all enervated hit points immediately.

Any creature slain by the *mace of doom* must make a saving throw versus death magic or be immediately animated as a zombie under the control of the wielder. Any creature who is brought to a maximum of 0 hit points through the enervation effect, as well as those who fail their saves with a natural 1 are instead animated as juju zombies, also under the control of the wielder. Control of these zombies cannot be transferred to another, although control can be wrested with the appropriate magic. The mace of doom cannot be wielded by anyone other than the caster of the spell. Should they intentionally drop the weapon, it dissipates immediately.

The material components for this spell are the priest's holy symbol and a pinch of wraith dust.

4th Level

Tenebral Skeleton (Pr 4; Conjuraton/Summoning, Necromancy)

Sphere: Necromantic
Range: 30 yds.
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 2 rds./level
Casting Time: 7
Area of Effect: 1 skeleton
Saving Throw: Special

When this spell is cast, raw shadowstuff from the Demiplane of Shadow and negative energy are brought forth and formed into a humanoid skeleton. This skeleton attacks any creatures as directed by the caster and remains for 2 rounds per level of the caster. As a creature of negative energy and shadowstuff, it can only be struck by magical weapons with a +1 or better enchantment, but it may be turned by a priest as if it were a wraith; it may not be controlled by another priest, however. Any creatures struck by the shadow skeleton are *enervated* for 1 level/hit die unless a saving throw versus death magic is successful. As with normal skeletons, the *tenebral skeleton* takes half damage from piercing and slashing weapons.

The material components for this spell are the priest's holy symbol and a shard of bone from a wight.

Tenebral Skeleton: AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+special; SA enervates 1 HD on hit if a save vs. death is successful; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons, turned as a wraith, immune to cold, *sleep*, *charm*; SZ M (6'); ML Special; INT Non- (0); AL N; XP 2,000.