

Appearance

Halflings generally resemble small Humans with thick sideburns, eyebrows, and body hair.

Their clothing is usually plain and earth-toned, and they accent their outfits with colorful sashes and other accessories.

Behavior

The average Halfling is rather adventurous—they enjoy tinkering with strange devices, are outgoing around strangers, and love to be the center of attention. They also have a sweet tooth, and take a liking to sweets, baked goods, drinking, singing, and dancing.

Given their social nature, some Halflings have a tendency to pay visits to their associates—often with little to no reason for doing so, and usually unannounced.

When met with confrontation, Halflings would prefer to settle matters with a friendly conversation and striking a deal, rather than coming to blows. As such, Halflings are more often found in a tavern, marketplace, or similar venue, as opposed to in the middle of a battlefield.

History

Throughout time, Halflings have proven to be some of the greatest cooks the world has known. Many aspiring chefs seek training at the Wodale Academy of Brewing, Botany, and Baking to this day.

The Halfling nation of Misho, has maintained a strong trade partnership with its Dwarven neighbors for centuries, and unlike the Dwarves, joined the Empire in 878. Despite joining the Empire, the Halflings were able to avoid influences from foreign cultures.

During the Great War, most Halflings took a neutral stance and avoided becoming involved with either side of the conflict. However, one Halfling—Isiphous Coppernut—made a huge contribution to the rebellion by developing the automaton warriors, known as the Obern.





Society

In most Halfling communities, the population functions as a collective, by working together, sharing resources, and sharing the same responsibilities. Typically, the people take turns acting as the leaders of their communities, with each turn lasting a given period of time which varies by community. The people make most decisions that affect a community through a majority vote, but in the case of a tie, the acting leader would make the final decision. Otherwise, Halflings are self-governing individuals who place a great emphasis on personal freedoms.

Coming of Age

Halflings do not partake in a specific ritual or celebration for recognizing that a member of their family or community has come of age. Simply, when a Halfling turns 30 years old,

they are recognized as an adult, and are offered the opportunity to vote and join the rotation to act as the community's leader.

Religion

Most Halflings focus on seizing the moment, rather than devoting their lives to the gods and their worship. However, a fair number recognize those gods with domains that affect the world around them.

Some particularly devout individuals however, leave a bit of bread and a cup of ale out overnight as a friendly offering to the particular god they wish to honor on a given day.

Superstitions

A traditional saying for Halflings suggests that one must always keep something borrowed and something to lend on hand, lest they have no reason to return home when they next leave it.

Though widely contested, some Halflings believe that eating the greenest part of an apple first is enough to maintain one's youth, both in body and in mind. Similarly, some believe that the first mug of ale from a fresh keg will impart the blessings of the gods, as it is said that benevolent spirits take a portion from each keg for the gods to judge and enjoy; the first pour is believed to have made the closest contact to these spirits.

Courtship

While young couples often spend time together, share gifts, or dine together, one of the unique ways Halflings express their feelings for each other, is through poetry or song. It is not uncommon for those who find difficulty in writing their own poetry, to recite the works of others to their partners, or for multiple suitors to attempt to outperform one another's works.

Marriage

Marriage is a simple matter among Halflings, as they do not hold a high regard for the gods, and are more self-governing than reliant on an authoritative figure or institution. As such, marriages are little more than verbal agreements between a couple.

Funerals

When a Halfling dies, their body is laid to rest dressed in their finest clothes. Their favorite object, such as a favored book, is usually buried with the body. Relatives of the deceased often place offerings of food and drink at the grave, for about a week after they die; believing that as the soul feasts on the food set out, the food becomes stale as a result.

Following a funeral, personal belongings of the dead are distributed amongst their relatives. If no relatives are available to claim the items, they are taken to a communal building, where they are auctioned off to members of the community.

Festivals

Halflings enjoy celebrating festivals of all sorts, enjoying the feasting, dancing, and merriment more than focusing on the meanings of a given holiday.

Despite its religious origins, Halflings celebrate seven days of Yule with feasting, song and dance, and gift exchanging. Originally, oranges studded with cloves were given as gifts, and are still used out of tradition. The Halfling version of the holiday lasts from December 15th, until the Solstice on December 21st.

Games

Halflings enjoy games of all sorts, and often adapt or adopt those that prove popular among other cultures.

Aside from games however, many Halflings find entertainment in playing practical jokes on their peers.

Gender and Family Roles

There are no true gender roles in Halfling societies—all members of a given community are offered the same respect and expectations as their peers, and they are all brought up to share responsibilities in gardening, housekeeping, childcare, and cooking.



Traditional Occupations

While Halflings thrive as merchants, bards, weavers, clothiers, artists, and writers, they are also well known as chefs, brewers, and bakers.

Economics

Halflings—being lovers of food and the enjoyment of life—deal primarily in foodstuffs, wine, art, and literature. However, several tinkers make a living by selling their inventions, while numerous others find their wealth in selling the crops of their herb gardens, or by tending livestock such as chickens, pigs, and sheep.

Aging and Life Expectancy

Halflings age at half the rate of the average Human, and can live for about 140 years.