

HALFLING

Halflings (Plural) / Halfling (Singular)
HALF-lings / HALF-ling

It is widely believed that the key to the survival of Halflings - be that as an individual or as a species - is their focus on community, cleverness, and comfort. Lacking the physical gifts of hardiness or strength that other species might possess, likewise any particular affinity for magical prowess or longevity by which to make their mark, they instead have relied upon their quick wits and the relationships they have built or been born to to thrive all across the Realms of Refuge. It is this focus on comfort, on steadiness, on reliability, that leads them to forge such strong bonds of family and community, as a delight shared is a delight multiplied.

Halflings live to tell great stories. Their very essence seems embedded in the art of story-crafting. Some Halflings enjoy stories that are as factual as can be. These people, often referred to as Chroniclers, are often entrusted with the keeping of the knowledge of the past alive and well. Although not every tale is of bravery and heroism, Halflings know these tales serve the people well to remember. These Chroniclers may keep the stories orally or in written form, but neither is regarded as better than the other. Halflings telling stories from parchment, however, are NEVER dull. They read with vigor and life, providing a variety of intonation and inflection as much as possible.

Some Halflings prefer tall tales to factual accounts. These story-tellers, called Bardics, keep the basis of the story true and embellish as necessary for an enlightening and lively story. They would never call this lying, and in truth, would rarely see the point in outright lying about a thing. The truth is so much more interesting, after all!

This is not to say that Halflings cannot lie. Halflings are a wide and varied people, but the society itself places no value on the concept of lying. Quite the contrary: Halflings lying to their own people often face sanctions and blow-back on their reputations, and their reputations amongst their own kind are foremost in most Halflings minds.

One of the biggest goals of any Halfling story is a lesson of some kind. Halflings are prone to communicating their beliefs about the world and the lessons they've learned in life in story form. Many stories end with the line "and that's why you..." with some moral at the end. While common in many other species, it is a characteristic of Halfling stories across all types.

The love of fine craftsmanship burns in the blood of Halflings. Tradespeople in Halfling society are considered especially high-ranking, with those who make the finest of crafts in the highest of positions. Crafts ranging from swords and shields to handmade goods are often touted about in Halfling society to demonstrate prowess in the acquisition of goods and earn reputation. The best wares are a coveted thing to possess in Halfling society. Halflings have been known to engage in acts of heroism to earn prized treasures. As a people, Halflings would rarely ever stoop so low as to steal fine treasures from another person, and most certainly not another Halfling. That being said, like all species, some don't always ask the questions they should when presented with glorious specimens of craft.



Halflings are often misidentified by outsiders as strictly materialistic. However, the opposite is closer to the truth. Halflings are known to share freely with those of their family who have less - be that a chosen family or a birth family. They are wildly more interested in comfort than material possessions. If an item is causing pain or stress, even if it is excellently crafted, they would be rid of it to ensure the pain or stress leaves. When comfort is on the line - physical, emotional or mental - Halflings will always choose the comfortable option. This does not compel a Halfling to get rid of an object they prize, unless they choose to prioritize their friend or family member. Halflings may often choose that course.



Halflings and Other Species

Halflings' relationships with other species can be wonderful and can be fraught - occasionally at the same time. Halflings live life for comfort and tranquility, and as such, can remind other species that such things exist and are worthy of their time. Halflings are often sought as bards by other species. Some species prefer Chroniclers for their accurate histories, while others prefer Bardics for their lively banter, but without a doubt, Halflings are treasured by other species for their ability to tell grand tales. As quick people, Halflings tend to have great ability in combat, evading blows and resisting poisons. Halflings, with their quick fingers, make skilled archers that are well-valued, but can be talented with many melee weapons as well.

As a whole, Halflings find the politics of their own interpersonal relationships to be far more important than what noble sits on what throne. After all, one's reputation amongst those dear to you and those who understand you is

far more important - and leads to far greater comfort - than minding the affairs of duchies and dragons. Many species find this dichotomy strange - and occasionally infuriating.

Reputation

Reputation is key to Halflings. A good reputation amongst your people is the key to a good and happy life. It doesn't take a brilliant person to see that those who don't have good, strong families are often miserable. Your reputation should be a guarantee of how you shall act, be it notorious, famous or infamous.

Traditions

Halflings are masters of tradition. They are a people who are very set in their ways, once they have their ways. Tradition plays a role in almost every day in the life of a Halfling. Some traditions are small - the way a Halfling always has toast and tea for breakfast, or the way the Halfling pulls off their boots before going to bed. Some traditions are larger, like how the Halfling is always the person to split loot after a fight, or how a Halfling might utter a particular string of curses when they are annoyed. Others are much larger, like the traditions surrounding a new year dawning, or a birthday occurring.

Large traditions tend to be shared with many Halflings or family members, while smaller traditions are owned by perhaps one or two. Common Halfling traditions tend to be shared regionally, although the occasional Halfling will transplant and bring their traditions with them from other places. The sharing of a tradition is considered a powerful and meaningful thing by Halflings, and is revered as a high honour.

Traditions may be very solemn, or may be quite fun. The words said at the passing of a friend are, after all, quite different than the words said when celebrating a successful harvest. Examples of traditions are as wild and varied as the Halflings themselves who practice them. (NOTE: Please talk to your local plot team to discuss ideas for local Halfling traditions.)

Special Abilities

1. Species Evade
 2. Resist Poison
 3. Create Trap purchased as -1XP per rank
-

Appearance Requirements

Halflings are visually distinguished by distinctive, dramatic eyebrows and metallic birthmarks. Eyebrows can be prominent, colored, hairy, or distinctive in other ways. Use makeup or prosthetics to meet eyebrow alteration requirements, AND, as a second component, have a prominent metallic birthmark (makeup, tattoo, or prosthetic) on the face. Birthmark colors must have a notable metallic sheen.

Halfling eyebrows are a personal point of pride for every halfling, in part because it's a way for each individual to express a preferred aesthetic and it also helps reinforce the concept of a well-circulated reputation in Halfling society, by giving people something to talk about. Your eyebrows are also a bit of a calling card - an outward introduction to other halflings and the world at large that makes each halfling distinctive. It's also a way of cultivating tradition as an individual can wear them in a signature way, a family, guild, or social group can wear them as signifiers of inclusion, or they can change as a way of marking seasons, holidays, and other important points on the Halfling calendar.

Eyebrows don't have to be silly, though they can be if the halfling in question likes that aesthetic. They can be dyed any color. They can be glittery. They can be shaped into designs, tied into bows, braided, or made into artistic statements (examples: birds, trees, rainbows). They're both individual statements, points of pride, and high or low fashion. In terms of reference points, how Stanley Tucci is made up as Caesar Flickerman in The Hunger Games movies. The character's eyebrows always match and compliment his hair color and his hair color is constantly changing. They're groomed but distinctive both in shape and that they are fashion colored and sometimes glitter.

Roleplaying a Halfling

Halflings make surprisingly good adventurers, all things considered. Although they don't have the strongest fighting instincts, they are quick to defend their families and their comforts if challenged. They make brilliant commanders of troops, if they can be convinced to do such a thing, because of their quick-thinking and careful planning. Halflings tend to care a great deal about treasures, which makes them emotionally prepared to participate in standard adventurer life, although their love of comfort makes it a challenge to keep them motivated towards those goals, on occasion.

Halfling society values those who ask questions first and act later, which occasionally leads to some challenges with the adventuring lifestyle, but Halflings are a valued and valuable member to a team of adventurers off on a quest because of this skill.

If you can become family to a Halfling, you know that you have your back protected for life. Halflings are devout to their families, and don't offer that term to others lightly. To become a family member means that you are someone whose

reputation matters to the Halfling, and that Halfling's reputation matters to you. It is expected that that will be taken seriously and appreciated for what it is.

Halflings are slow to age and reach maturity around 30 years of age. They excel at the creative and productive, valuing craftsmanship in all of its forms, especially if they then get to enjoy the fruits of their labours. Whether that fruit is borne of farming or carpentry matters little.

Halflings prize steadiness above fairness or justice. They tend to disfavour notions that would "rock the boat." Wagging their heads at iconoclasts and troublemakers, in their hearts many bear a contradictory yearning for the same. They thrive on stability, while simultaneously secretly craving spontaneity. Boredom is rare, as they value the satisfaction of a job well done - and any job worth doing is worth doing well. When they do become bored or idle, those nagging thoughts of "what if" that beckon towards adventure may bear unexpected fruit.

For Halflings, risk is a balance of trouble vs. comfort. Altruism may occasionally move them to greater purpose, but the idea of "if they got themselves into it, they can get themselves out of it" is a popular one. Necromancy is likely to cause more trouble than it's worth, and its spoiling of otherwise good things can present great moral discomfort.

