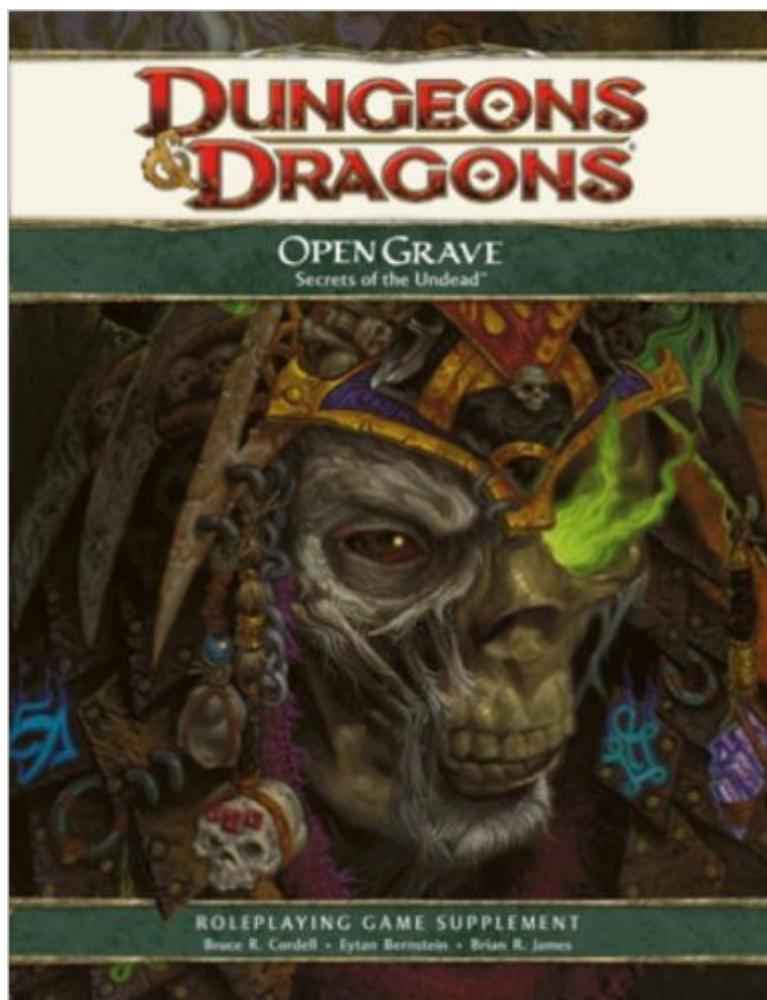


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Open Grave: Secrets Of The Undead: A 4th Edition D&D Supplement



Synopsis

All about the most horrifying monsters of D&D(R)--the walking dead!The sourcebook provides information about undead origins, tactics, myths, lairs, behaviors, and more. In addition, this book provides elaborate lair entries (including tactical encounters) for undead at each tier of play. Broad story and campaign elements in Open Grave give DMs ready-to-play material than can be easily incorporated into a game, such as undead templates and power substitutions, adventure hooks and quests, and statistics for unique undead such as Acererak and Vecna. Open Grave: Secrets of the Undead depicts a host of new undead, including new varieties of zombies, wraiths, skeletons, ghouls, and vampires. Open Grave also introduces several completely new types of undead, such as moongaunts, forsaken shells, and death oozes, to name just a few.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'll get right to the review: The book is very useful, probably 60/40 flavor/function split.-Undead Lore: This section deals with the most flavor. It talks about the creation of undead, their physiology, mentality, and society. The most useful parts pertained to locations, especially Hantumah, a totally undead city, which seems a nice place to siege. My major gripes about this section are the attempts to mix magic and biological processes, and the fact that the author can't seem to go three paragraphs without bringing up Orcus, Demon Prince of the Undead, and how he wages a constant struggle with the very generic Raven Queen.-DM's Guide to Undead This might be my favorite part of the book. Right off, it gives some skill challenges, which are predictably of the 'appease this creature or else' sort, but welcome nonetheless. Then it goes into hauntings, presenting them as

plot, traps, terrain, and skill challenges! Three short undead adventures are then given, culminating with advice on running a big zombie battle. A swarm of medium creatures which is also a skill challenge? Looks good to me. The chapter also gives three short campaign arcs about undead, a good quantity of pro- and anti- undead artifacts, a handful of rituals, and undead grafts. I am taking an extra bit here to talk about undead grafts, because I feel it is a great idea that wasn't handled very well. The book explains grafts first by saying it's an unorthodox way to enhance characters in a macabre setting, but the first example is a giant flaming bone claw! Uhh? Two more examples- a graft that gives you fangs... and also a vampire's thirst for blood. The last example gives you a Lich's brain, and I have no idea how. So, grafting undead body parts? Sure. These particular ones? Nahhh.

Quickly: interesting, basically an addition to the Monster Manual. Summary: This is a hardcover Dungeons and Dragons 4th edition sourcebook containing 223 pages about Undead. This is mainly a DM book and I would actually suggest players not read it in the way I suggest they not read the Monster Manual: it takes away some of the fun and discovery. The book is divided into 4 chapters. Chapter 1 deals with undead lore. This strongly reminded me of the Draconomicon: Chromatic Dragons book (which I just realized I failed to review here). There are details about Physiology, Outlook and Psychology and Society with a section in the back looking at The Shadowfell. Chapter 2 is called the DM's Guide to Undead and contains some great out of the ordinary encounter ideas. By out of the ordinary I mean social encounters, skill challenges and even ideas on using Undead as Patrons. Three different Campaign arcs are given as well. Quite a few artifacts, some new rituals and a great section of undead Grafts round out this chapter. Chapter 3 presents a series of lairs. These are fully detailed encounter locations including 2-3 set combat encounters and many suggestions for more. There are 3 lairs included for each Tier of play. Chapter 4 contains almost 100 pages of new monsters. Most of these are typical Monster Manual style monsters and include some great new mobs like: "The Brain in the Jar" and "Crawling Gauntlet". Many old mobs are given new types (your typical undead, zombies, ghouls, skeletons etc). There are 7 famous undead stated out near the end of the book. These include famous characters like Vecna and Strad. Quite a few new templates are included.

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