

ORCS & GOBLINS

TROLLS

Playtest rules

“Strength that can crush a Longbeard in his armor. Hardiness that can survive a Ballista’s volley. And a smell that can stagger a Forge Warden at sixty paces. That’s a troll.”

- Ormr Greyfell, Gate Warden of Runeguard

Trolls are the beasts of burden among Orcs & Goblins, not unlike how the other peoples of the Known Realms cultivate horses for both labor and war. When Orcs march to war, these brutish creatures carry supplies and loot. On the battlefield they are unleashed on the enemy after being starved and whipped by their Goblin handlers.

Trolls are only semi-domesticated, captured in the wild while young rather than raised in captivity, and can be murderously dangerous when not fed regularly. Famously considered stupid, trolls are relatively intelligent when compared to animals, and can be directed in battle with similar training. One legend that is true is their ability to consume nearly anything, their powerful stomach acids melting even steel and stone.

In battle trolls are directed by their handlers, not unlike how a hunter guides his dogs on a leash. Although in this case the trolls massively outweigh the goblins on the other end of the leash. Trolls fight with only the most rudimentary weapons, usually giant clubs made from a tree or the bone of a large creature. They wear no armor, but their flesh visibly heals from even the most grievous wound. The most horrific weapon they have is the ability to vomit their corrosive bile onto an enemy, melting away armor and the warrior inside it.

These are Playtest Rules. They are draft rules under consideration by our Rules Team, and are unofficial. If you wish to use them in a game you must have your opponent’s consent beforehand. If you play in any Battleground event (such as a tournament), they may not be used without the organizer’s agreement.

	Attack	Defense	Range	Courage	Move	Hit Boxes	Points Cost	Type
Trolls	✗(5) 5 / 7	♣ 1 / 3	-	13	5"	7 0 7	360	Elite

Fearsome, Large, Regeneration, Vomit. If Trolls make Free Attacks, erase marked [vomit] box.

Regeneration - At the start of your Movement and Command Phase, this unit heals one damage. Once this unit is in the Yellow, it may only heal Yellow boxes. Once this unit is in the Red, it may only heal Red boxes.

Vomit - This unit can vomit instead of its regular Engaged attack. The unit cannot vomit if it is Charging or has a marked [Vomit] box. When the unit vomits, make a ✗(2)7/7 ranged attack against one Engaged enemy. This attack is not modified for being in the Yellow or Red and is unaffected by Command Cards of either player. After rolling to-wound, count up the successful wounds. Then roll an additional to-wound roll using that number of dice, but at ✗(-0)-0/-1. Any successes are added to the number of wounds inflicted. Repeat this process until either you roll no successes or cause 4 wounds. After making a vomit attack, mark this unit’s [vomit] box.

design notes

Trolls are an example of small changes having a big impact. Unlike the actual Orcs, we didn't make massive changes to Trolls. Because if we did, the Trolls wouldn't feel very "troll-like." The stats for Trolls fit them very well. It's just their stats meant that they stayed in the box a lot.

Trolls have what we call an Elf Problem: a 400pt Troll unit can basically be tied down forever by a 190pt High Elf Battle Squad. Trolls spend a lot of points to get that Power 7, but they have only an average Offensive Skill 5.

This means that Trolls are very vulnerable to being pinned down by a Defensive Skill 3 unit (i.e. Elves). Even a regular Defensive Skill 2 unit can pin them down for some time with Blue cards like Parry. All the strength in the world doesn't mean a thing when you whiff.

But again, our hands were pretty well tied when it came to adjusting stats. We couldn't really increase their Offensive Skill (would you believe Trolls were as skilled as High Elves?). Nor could we reduce their Power (Trolls with the same strength as puny humans with a big sword?). And really the problem was only in one matchup, albeit a fairly common one.

Our solution was the Vomit ability. The math works out that for one turn the Trolls hit that 'Elf unit' like it was a normal unit. It's a slight improvement in how it fights against those high Defensive Skill units. And it's an attack that cannot be countered by Command Cards.

Obviously the continual damage represents the acid burning through the armor or tough hide of the enemy. Eventually though, even the acid is neutralized and the attack can only do so much damage.

You can imagine in combat as the nimble enemies dodge the Trolls' wide blows that the infuriated Trolls chunk up a cone of stomach acid on the enemy. Agility means little when an entire zone is filled with corrosive bile.

Being that the attack is only once, it doesn't make the Trolls into Elf Hunters. A high Defensive Skill unit is still an answer for Trolls. As it should be. A unit of nimble Elves should flummox the lumbering Trolls. This just gives the Trolls the slight nudge they need.

Now, you may be comparing these new Trolls with the ones of old and asking how they got this super gross (and super cool) ability...yet their points cost went down. And not just down, but down by over 40 points (almost 10% of their previous cost!).

Simply put, Regeneration was overpriced. This is a commonly accepted fact and previously there had been an errata that allowed Trolls to regenerate all damage (instead of being limited to only Red boxes when knocked into the Red).

This change created a degenerate endgame where a Troll unit could drag out the game by sitting in the back as it healed all back from its last Red box. This issue was exacerbated when playing games like Total Warfare, which requires the complete destruction of one side.

We simply didn't think that was fun, and so we changed Regeneration back to the original wording. Instead, we lowered the points cost. The unit got fewer chances to regenerate, so the ability had less value.

At the same time, the Trolls picked up another cost reduction due to other changes to the faction. The Hatred and War Cry abilities supplanted Lash as the main abilities of the faction. The Trolls didn't have access to either ability, and any time there's a limit like that on the unit, it gets a points discount.

These changes are relatively minor compared to others in the faction. They amount to an ability that can be used once per game, or maybe twice if the Trolls "reload" by attacking routing units (i.e. eating fleeing warriors), and a points decrease.

However these changes do alter the unit. A 40 point deduction is not nothing. And the Vomit ability gives them enough of a boost that if they get caught in a bad matchup, they're not just completely neutralized.

Also, we think both the theme and mechanics of the rule fit well together. Weaponized projectile vomit is juvenile dark humor that fits in Orcs & Goblins like nowhere else. And a Vegas-like approach of continual damage really represents acid burning away the enemy's armor.

The good news for those of you who already have Orcs & Goblins is that this is a rule you can try at home, right now! All you need to do is adjust the points cost and have a copy of these trial rules.

We'd love to hear what you think of these rules on our Facebook group or our Your Move Games Facebook page!

Till the Next Missive. . .

The Outlaw Alchemist