



WEEKLY CRITTER CRATE

SIREN

An immaculate, well-dressed, pale-skinned humanoid with straight black hair and unusual swept-back ears filled with glittering piercings stands square before you. The top of its head reaches a little more than 4 feet high. While its eyes are clear and focused, it occasionally tilts its head this way or that, as if listening to something far off. Every movement is measured and precise, and you have no doubt that it knows how to use the blade at the small of its back.

Creatures of song with largely noble bloodlines, sirens are clever, diminutive elfish humanoids that live in close-knit families at home in the largest centres of civilization. A noble bearing and a smooth, cultured remark are prized to sirens, but they are also well-suited to living as scouts, spies, entertainers, or thieves.

Sirens prefer tight-fitting clothing that accentuates their fit bodies. This clothing is always of high-quality silks or more exotic materials, but where they really splurge is in ornamentation. Siren men and women both often wear multiple resplendent earrings, sometimes joined by fine links of chain to studs in their eyebrows or noses. Hair colour ranges from chestnut to a deep navy, and siren women let this grow very long before wearing it up in elaborate, precise hairstyles held together by shining pins and jewelled combs and rings. Their skin ranges in colour from pale cream to brown, and their eyes are usually as dark as their hair. Their sensitive ears sweep back for several inches along both sides of their heads. While often hidden by their hair, a siren's ears are striated with intricate convolutions that gather sound as well as any canid's.

The siren's voice develops at puberty, and is one of its greatest treasures. While most sirens are able singers or poets, every siren old enough to access its full voice can be deadly in combat. As their screams often shatter vials and potions, wreck objects of art, deafen, or even kill, sirens have been notoriously poorly treated in war times—few soldiers would willingly keep a siren prisoner without having it badly beaten, gagged, and tied facing another siren. This has nurtured a deep resentment between sirens and many of the other common races, and while this is seldom revisited publicly, sirens are fastidious in accumulating knowledge for their family history songs which are always marked by long periods of torture or slaughter best left undescribed.

Sirens hold weapon mastery in high esteem, and are famous for conducting formal duels where using their potent voices is taboo (although battles to the death forego this). Several siren festivals revolve around dueling, and there are tiered tournaments for weapons of all types. Favoured siren weapons range with personal taste and familial traditions, but all sirens wear small blades horizontally across their lower backs as a matter of ceremony and self-defense.

SIREN RACIAL TRAITS

+2 Charisma, +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution: Sirens are attractive and nimble, but slight.

Dual Size: Male sirens are generally medium creatures, and have no bonuses or penalties due to their size. Female sirens are generally small creatures, and gain a +1 size bonus to AC, a +1 size bonus to attack rolls, and a +4 size bonus to stealth checks. The tallest medium sirens are 4'5" tall, with the shortest being 3'7" or so.

Speed: Sirens are quick, but their short legs limit them. Both medium and small sirens have a base speed of 25 feet.

Low-Light Vision: Sirens can see twice as far as humans in low-light conditions.

Skill Focus: Sirens are highly social creatures and learn to affect others through tact, moderation, or passionate rhetoric. Sirens apply the skill focus feat to either the bluff, diplomacy, or intimidate skill.



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Perfect Pitch: Every siren has an ear and a voice for music. Sirens receive a +4 racial bonus to any perform checks related to voice.

Keen Hearing: Sirens receive a +4 racial bonus to sound-based perception checks.

Selective Hearing: Sirens receive a +4 racial bonus to saving throws against sonic spells and effects, like a harpy's song.

Sonic Affinity: Sirens cast sonic spells or create sonic effects at +1 caster level.

The Siren's Voice: Sirens can produce either a powerful shout or a damaging scream with their voices. A siren's scream or shout drowns out most other local sounds, and can often be heard for miles. Shouting and/or screaming more than once between rest periods (at least 8 hours) causes the siren to lose its voice for 24 hours, during which it can speak only hoarsely and quietly (the siren's voice can't be heard by creatures who are more than 10 feet away from it), suffers a -4 penalty to most charisma-based skill checks (DM's prerogative), and cannot shout or scream. After 24 hours these penalties go away.

Shout: As a move action a siren can unleash a powerful shout in a 20-foot cone. Creatures caught in the blast are granted an immediate saving throw against charms, compulsions, or ongoing sonic effects. Alternatively, shouting at the source of an ongoing sonic effect interrupts the sound for one round.

Scream: As a full-round action a siren can unleash a devastating scream in a 20-foot cone. The blast deals 1D6 sonic damage/2 levels to creatures and objects, and deafens creatures that can hear. A successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 10+1/2 Siren's character level + Con modifier) halves the damage and negates the deafness.

Sound-Dependent: A siren that is deafened, placed in a zone of silence, or otherwise deprived of its hearing is disoriented, suffering a -2 penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks (in addition to the normal effects of deafness).

Noble Born and Raised: Sirens receive special training as they are raised and can choose to be proficient in any one martial weapon. Sirens that are already proficient in martial weapons are trained with any one exotic weapon.

Fey Blood: Sirens count as fey for any effects related to race.

Languages: Sirens begin play speaking common and sylvan in smooth, even, or melodious voices. Sirens with high intelligence scores can choose any of the following: Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Halfling, and Orc.

Favored Class: The favoured class of sirens is bard or rogue. This choice must be made at first level and cannot be changed.