

# Umbur Hulk

(400 Points)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
30*	str	10	15-	6d6
8	dex	-6	11-	dcv 2 / ocv 8
20	con	20	13-	
20*	body	16	11-	
8	int	-2	11-	per 11-
8	ego	-4	11-	ecv 3
20	pre	10	13-	
0	com	-5		
12	pd	6		Total: 20 pd / 8 r pd (8r is Hardened)
8	ed	4		Total: 16 ed / 8 r ed (8r is Hardened)
6	spd	42		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
10	rec	0		
40	end	0		
55*	stun	8		Figured +8

\* Includes Growth

**Total Characteristics Cost: 99**

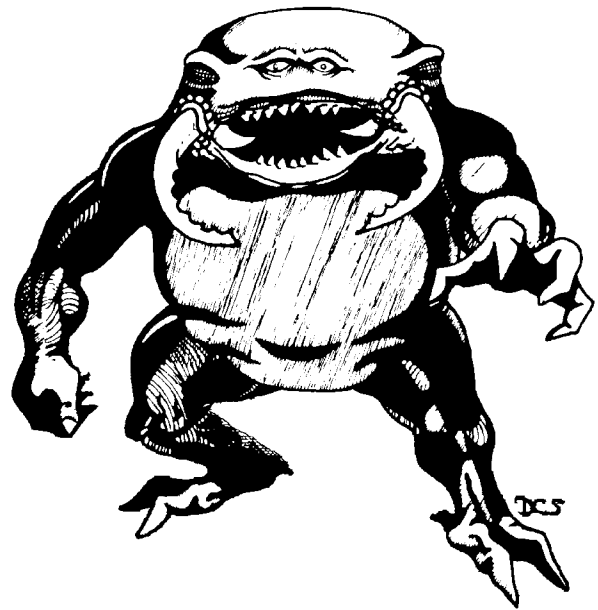
**Movement:**

Running:	3" (6" per turn or 1" per phase)
Swimming:	2" (4" per turn)
Tunneling:	1" (see below)

## Cost Powers

60	<b>Gaze of Paralytic Confusion:</b> Entangle 4d6 (40 points), only 2 def (-10 points) (30 Base Points); Continuous (+1), Damage Shield (per roll instead of attack roll; +½), boecv (+1), Reduced END (0 END; +½), Transparent to Physical Attacks (+¼), Works against ego instead of str (+¼) (135 Active Points), Requires Eye Contact (-½), Mental Defence adds to ego (-½), Not vs UMBER Hulks (-¼).	0
40	<b>Claws:</b> hka 1d6+1 (2½d6 with str) (20 Base Points); Penetrating x2 (+1), (40 Active Points).	4
37	<b>Mandibles:</b> hka 2d6-1 (3d6+1 with str) (25 Base Points); Armor Piercing (+½), (37 Active Points).	5
30	<b>Armor:</b> 8 pd / 8 ed (24 Base Points); Hardened (+¼) (30 Active Points).	0
30	<b>Damage Reduction:</b> 25% Resistant pd/ed.	0
13	<b>Hulking:</b> Growth (+10 str, +2 body, +2 stun, -2" kb, -1 dcv, +1 per, 400kg or 800lbs, 2½m or 8' tall, 1½m or 5' wide, +1m reach) (10 Base Points); 0 END (+½), Persistent (+½), (20 Active Points); Always On (-½).	0
2	<b>Burrowing (Earth):</b> Tunneling 1" through 1 def (5 Active Points); Extra Time (per Minute; -1½).	1
9	<b>Burrowing (Stone):</b> Tunneling 1" through 8 def (26 Active Points); Extra Time (per 5 Minutes; -2).	3
5	<b>Infravision:</b> can see in dark up to 90'	0
28	<b>Tremor Sense:</b> Spatial Awareness (25 Base Points) plus 360 Degree Sensing (10 Base Points) (35 Active Points); Can only sense what is touching the earth (-¼), only within a 60' radius (-0).	0
1	<b>Vestigial Gills:</b> Life Support – Breath Water (5 Active Points), Only for 10 minutes per hour (-4).	0

**Total Powers Cost: 255**



## Cost Skills

25	+5 in melee combat
0	Native: UMBER Hulk Language, Customs, and History
3	KS: Geology of the Subterranean World
0	AK: Home Tunnel Network and Surrounding Areas
3	PS: Miner
3	Climbing
3	Concealment
3	Stealth
3	Survival: Subterranean
3	Tracking

**Total Skills Cost: 46**

## 200+ Disadvantages

6	Running -3" (Always, Infrequently)
25	Distinctive Features: Hulking Bipedal Insectoid (Not Concealable, Extreme Reaction)
10	Hunted: Various Subterranean Races and Miners (As powerful, Harsh, 8-)
10	Physical: Great Bulk (Frequently, Slightly)
15	Physical: Voracious/Great Hunger (All the Time, Slightly)
10	Psychological: Agoraphobia (Uncommon, Strong)
15	Psychological: Craves Humanoid Flesh (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological: Vicious/Bloodthirsty (Common, Strong)
5	Reputation: Subterranean Predator that digs through solid stone (8-)
20	Susceptibility: Sunlight (Uncommon, 3d6 stun/minute)
5	Unluck
20	Vulnerability: Elemental Air & Electrical Attacks x2 stun
44	Monster Bonus

**Total Disadvantages: 400**

**Characteristics: 99**  
**Powers: 255**  
**Skills: 46**  
**Total Cost: 400**

## DESCRIPTION

Umber hulks are powerful subterranean predators whose iron-like claws allow them to burrow through solid stone in search of prey.

Umber hulks are tremendously strong, standing nearly 8 feet tall and over 5 feet wide. Muscles bulge beneath their thick, scaly hides and their powerful arms and legs all carry great claws. They have no necks to speak of, but the head features a powerful maw with rows of triangular teeth and 8-inch mandibles capable of biting through any hide or bone. Most peculiar of all are the four round eyes, space evenly across each umber hulk's forehead. Umber hulks are black, shading to a lighter shade of yellowish gray on the front. Their eyes are mere blackened dots each the size of a small coin. Umber hulks have their own language.

**Combat:** For all of their monstrous features, umber hulks are intelligent opponents. They usually dig to a point adjacent to a main corridor, then wait, peeking through a crack they've made, until likely prey walks by. The umber hulks then springs out upon its startled victim. When using this technique, opponents have a -5 modifier on their surprise rolls. Other tactics involve planned cave-ins and dead-end tunnels where an umber hulk can wait for victims to come to him. Their burrowing rate varies from 10 feet per turn in solid stone to 60 feet per turn in soft earth.

In melee, umber hulks can deliver a vicious bite but, understandably, their main weapon is their great claws. Worse, looking into an umber hulk's eyes causes confusion, as per the spell, unless a saving throw versus spell is made. In addition to this special confusion attack the outer eyes of an umber hulk provide the creature with infravision to a distance of 90 feet.

The one saving grace when fighting an umber hulk is their speed. Their gait is slow and ponderous and their balance is poor in wide spaces.

Umber hulks never fight to the death unless cornered (which is rare, since the creature can dig through stone). If hard pressed, an umber hulks won't hesitate to cause a cave-in (25% chance of success per round) and then dig his way to freedom.

**Habitat/Society:** Umber hulks dwell in the depths of the earth. They raid dungeons for food, much the way anteaters raid ant colonies, eating their fill and then moving on to let the "colony" recover.

Umber hulks are usually solitary hunters. Males and females mate, then go their separate ways. One to three young are born about a year later in a special nursery which has been hollowed out by the female. Two years later, once the hulklings are big enough, the female begins taking them with her when hunting. It is during this period that unfortunate victims may stumble across more than one umber hulk at a time.

No umber hulk culture is known, but it is rumored that there may be entire cities of these beings underground with tunnels that radiate out, like threads in a spider's web, toward the nearer dungeons and mountain ranges. If true, this would explain much, for umber hulks seem to disappear or spring up on a region at will and always take great care in hiding their tunnels behind them.

**Ecology:** Umber hulks eat young purple worms, ankhegs, and similar creatures. Their favorite prey, however, is humankind.

**Vodyanoi:** These aquatic predators are closely related to the umber hulk. Vodyanoi live in deep bodies of fresh water. They are similar in appearance to umber hulks but have only two eyes and thus lack the ability to confuse opponents. Their skin is green and slimy to the touch, but beneath it is a thick, knobby hide. Their claws are webbed.

Vodyanoi prey upon all manner of creatures but prefer human flesh. They can rend the hulls of small vessels and frequently sink or overturn small boats. Once per day a vodyanoi can attempt to summon 1-20 electric eels with a 50% chance of success. The existence of a saltwater variety of vodyanoi of twice the size and greater ferocity is rumored but unconfirmed.

## Background/History:

[Rewrite these sections based on original sources...]

## Personality/Motivation:

## Quote:

## Powers/Tactics:

## Campaign Use:

## Appearance:

## SOURCES:

AD&D Monster Manual (1977) p.98  
 AD&D Module C2 - Ghost Tower of Inverness (197?) p.?  
 AD&D Dungeon Master's Guide (1982) p.213  
 AD&D Monster Card (1982)  
 AD&D 2nd ed. Monstrous Manual (1993) p.352  
 D&D 3e Monster Manual (2000) p.180-181  
 Dragon Magazine (December 1989) p.10-13  
 Hackmaster Hackpedia of Beasts, Volume VIII (2002)  
 Hero conversion by Mitchel S (199? or 200?)  
 Hero conversion in Surbrook's Stuff (199? or 200?)  
 Hero System 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Writer's Guidelines, version 1.0 (2002)



## CONVERSION NOTES:

Umbur hulks are classic dungeon monsters - they've been around for 25 years!

**Opponents:** A single umbur hulk is designed to be a challenge for a party of 7th level characters, whether in 1st or 3rd edition of (A)D&D - i.e., 1 umbur hulk vs. a 7th level party, 1-2 umbur hulks vs. an 8th level party, 1-4 umbur hulks vs. a 9th level party (1e: Dungeon Levels, number encountered, monster summoning VII spell; 3e: = CR7.)

In Grey Hero terms, the combat-obsessive *fighters* in the party facing an umbur hulk tend to have +4 to +5 *combat skill levels* and that the battle-magicusing wizards tend to have attack spells that inflict 7-9 DC of damage (7d6 N to 9d6 N, or 2d6+1 K to 3d6 K).

**Characteristics:** Using my own greyhero tables, I converted the d&d 3e abilities and compared the results to Mike and Mitch's hero write-ups and used the numbers that agreed (if any) with slight roundings down to get to the nearest commonly used Hero number (3,5,0). I reduced the con (from 21 to 20), int (from 9 to 8), and ego (from 11 to 8) to get the round numbers and to keep umbur hulks from being quite at normal human level of intellect but rather more at the slightly lower orc level (thus keeping them stronger, tougher, and more vicious than humans but not quite as smart or wise), ymmv.

For **dex**, however, I focused on the phrase "their gait is slow and ponderous and their balance is poor in wide open spaces" as justification for giving them a score of only 8. I prefer to give csl instead of increased dex for creatures that are more skilled in combat and umbur hulks just didn't seem to be any more dexterous than humans - rather a bit less! Using 8 let them stay in the same cv range, but I like to consider each monster write-up as a base racial package and I didn't want it to seem like umbur hulks were particularly dexterous.

For **body** I used 10 + hd + growth.

For **pre** I looked at what both Mike and Mitch did and tried to figure out how they might have got there; so I used a base of 10 +1/hd +1/level of growth which nicely matched with the 20 that they gave.

For **pd/ed** I simply doubled the figured. For **stun**, I used figured +8 because of d&d umbur hulks being 8+8 hd.

The most controversial conversion is likely to be **spd**. I gave umbur hulks a spd of 6 because in d&d they get 3 attacks per round while a normal man only gets 1 attack per round and in hero a normal man gets 2 attacks per turn, so to keep the triple attack ratio I think 6 is fair [thanks to Ed Hastings for this tip!]. I think that a lot of hero gamers will balk at a spd of 6, but that's my rationale.

What I have a real problem with isn't the spd but rather what it does to the movement! Umbur hulks attack three times as fast as normal humans but they only move half as fast! This spd and movement thing seems to be an ongoing problem with the hero system; the simplest solution seems to be to base the movement on a per-turn instead of a per-phase which is what I'll be using as a house rule unless someone can convince me otherwise. If you aren't doing movement on a per-turn basis, you'll either want to further buy down the running or use another way to simulate the multiple attacks besides giving more spd - regardless, let me know what you do.

**Claws:** Since umbur hulks burrow through solid stone with their bare claws, it seemed reasonable that they could rip through pretty much any armor. I made the claw attacks *double penetrating* so that they could shred their way through *hardened* defences. (1e: 3-12, 3e: 8-14; average 5.5-13 = 2d6+1 K = 7 DC)

**Bite:** The bite didn't quite seem to have the same ability to shred stone but I reasoned that, due to the nature of the creature, it would still be impressive at getting by solid defences so I made it *armor piercing* just to give it an attack that wasn't just lesser but ever so slightly different in kind, if similar in effect. (1e: 3-10; 3e: 5-19; average 4-14.5 = 2.5d6 K = 8 DC). Also, in the *Fantasy Hero Companion* (p.68) a Giant Beetle (Insect, Giant) has mandibles which to 1.5d6 HKA (3d6+1 w/ STR).

**Armor:** In ad&d umbur hulks have ac 2 (10-2=8) and it seemed to me that none of this came from dex (see characteristic comments) despite the fact that 3e d&d had +7 natural armor and +1 from dex (see characteristic comments). So, I just gave them the full converted 8 points. In the *Fantasy Hero Companion* (p.68) a Giant Beetle (Insect, Giant) has 8pd/4ed Armor - which seemed to confirm my conversion. I consider 2 points of this armor to be from the umbur hulk's size making the armor thicker (see size comments) and Mike gave his umbur hulk 6 points of armor, so it seemed reasonable to me (I considered that mine only has 8 dex while his has 18 as a more than fair trade-off). This makes an umbur hulk as resistant to damage as a human wearing enchanted platemail armor - respectable protection for a big, tough deep dungeon monster but not invulnerable.

Since an umbur hulk digs through the hardest stone with its bare claws, I figured that their whole body would be incredibly hard - thus the *hardened* defences.

**Size:** Big creatures aren't hard enough to kill - imo, the bigger they are the harder it should be to make them fall. As a general rule, when converting monsters I give them +1 def per level of *growth* and add *damage reduction* proportionate to their size (relative to a human) - e.g., if twice as tall, they take half the damage and so have 50% *damage reduction*. The umbur hulk isn't quite this big but it is significantly larger than a large man, so it gets 25% *damage reduction* in my game. Feel free to ignore this if you like your big monsters to be glass-jawed wimps :).

**Tunneling:** When I sat down to figure this one out, I was surprised at how little it actually cost. Most HERO write-ups tend to handle tunneling in a way that lets creatures move through earth and stone almost as fast as they would through air! The umbur hulk, however, has to claw its way through the rock and dirt at a much slower and, IMO, reasonable rate. When you think about it, digging through one foot of rock-solid stone per minute is still a mighty useful and impressive feat!

Reinforced Concrete = 8 DEF & 2m of Stone = 13 BODY (H4e.178)

60'/turn = 60'/10 minutes = 6'/minute ~ 1 area (2m) per minute  
10'/turn = 10'/10 minute = 1'/minute ~ 1 area (2m) per 5 minutes

or

1 turn = 10 rounds in AD&D  
= 10 turns in HERO x12 seconds = 2 minutes

60'/2 minutes = 30'/minute ~ 39'/minute  
= 5-6 areas (10-12m) per minute

10'/2 minutes = 5'/minute ~ 6.5'/minute  
= 1 area (2m) per minute

There's a slight difference when converting from the Imperial system (used in D&D) to the metric system (used in HERO); therefore, round the numbers up to the nearest convenient HERO equivalent.

Why do Umbur Hulks Dig? Just for food? Or are they digging for some greater purpose? Is this purpose their own or are they directed by

someone, or something, else? What, or whom, might they be looking for?

How and when were umber hulks first created/born. By who and why?

Answering these questions might give the monster a real reason to exist. [omit secret DM's notes on this! Save for module, have it be powers the secret masters not disadvantages of the umber hulks which would give it away to anyone reading the MM and would be less useful in other campaigns not using that plotline.]

**Gaze:** This was the hardest part of the umber hulk to convert. A strict conversion of the confusion power was difficult.

The best strict solution I've seen is Mike Surbrook's int Drain to negative int. I seriously considered using this, but I liked the option that he presented for mental paralysis (boecv Entangle) as per the *Ultimate Mentalist* better ... It made sense that it would be a good evolutionary adaptation for creatures meeting an umber hulk's gaze to be paralyzed and thus unable to get away from the slow-moving monstrosity. I just couldn't think of any reason why the gaze should make the victims turn on their friends, so I broke from canon a bit to get an umber hulk that makes more sense to me.

I wasn't sure how strong to make this entangle, but I figured that, since 3e made it equal to a spell cast by an 8th level sorcerer, I'd go with 40 base points (8 level x 5 points per level).

One mistake in the Hero rules for Entangle/Mental Paralysis is that the def in the 4<sup>th</sup> ed Rules is 1/10 the Active Points (which would make Mental Paralysis almost impossible to break out of! 16 def vs 4 def in this case), but in the *Ultimate Mentalist* the examples are for 1/10 of the base points. The latter fits with my own house rules for using base points instead of active points (e.g., a gun doesn't suddenly get 1½ times the range when loaded with an armor piercing bullet!)

Other things that I am considering are:

How to simulate the fact that the confusion wears off after a while even if the victim can't break out of it? Maybe the attack should have continuing charges that last for 1 minute (3-12 ad&d rounds = 3-12 normal human attacks = 6-24 phases @ 2 spd = 3-12 turns = avg of 7½ turns = 90 seconds ~ 1 minute) – 4 charges that continue for 1 minute each give a -¼ limitation; 6 charges that continue for 1 minute each give a -0 limitation. Or just a limitation that it wears off after a minute or so (-¼?).

It must effect those who look into its eyes: *Active*: requires an attack roll by the umber hulk which would be its only attack on that phase. Or: *Passive*: would allow the umber hulk to actively attack physically and passively the confusion would just happen to anyone who happened to meet the gaze (*Trigger* +¼)? But how would this work with the AoE and 'Requires Eye Contact'? Or, perhaps, like a *Damage Shield* (+½) but one that would come into effect whenever an opponent made a successful per roll against the umber hulk instead of when they make a successful attack roll (as per a normal *Damage Shield* does). It seems like a pretty powerful ability, so I'd go with the *Damage Shield* (+½) over the *Trigger* (+¼). From the examples in the *Writer's Guidelines*, It seems that 5<sup>th</sup> edition might require the Continuous (+1) Advantage for *Damage Shield*.

Consider that the archetypical thief Chiron who has 13 ego, so he would get 2½d6 to break out and he'd need the maximum roll just to barely get by 4 def; and a normal human with 10 ego would only roll 2d6 to break out, so he'd only ever be able to meet the def not do any body to the entangle, so he'd never break out. This might be a bit much, the original was supposed to give a 'saving throw'.

How can we make this tough but not nigh impossible to avoid? Maybe the umber hulk having to make an ecv attack roll is enough on its own (if it misses, you saved).

Or maybe an *Activation* limitation to keep it from being a sure thing would fit? And/or maybe the effect could be Reduced by Range (-¼), or an *Explosion* (+¾), so that the closer a potential victim is (the better look they get at the umber hulk's eyes) the more they are confused (entangled).

Maybe less dice of Entangle?

Maybe a reduced def Entangle? Perhaps 0 def so that pretty much "anyone can get out given time" (h4e.68) (0 def is a -½ limitation, so what would ½ def or ¼ def be? Well, for Concentration ½ dcv is ½ the limitation that 0 dcv is, so ½ def would be ½ the limitation that 0 def would be, right? Therefore, ½ def could be a -¾ limitation, or maybe ½ def could be a -½ limitation and ¼ def could be -1 limitation) or a ¼ def is a -1¼ limitation.

Remember, ideally (in a strict conversion), the average man with 10 ego should be able to break out in as little as 6 phases and as many as 24 phases but in an average of 15 phases. Typically, the Entangle would be 4 body (1/die) and the maximum would be 8 body (2/die). An average man's 2d6 would inflict an average of 2 body and maximum of 4 body per phase before def. Giving the Entangle a 0 def would let an average man out of an umber hulk's average entangle in 2 phases. Giving the Entangle a 1 def would let an average man out of an umber hulk's average entangle in 4 phases. Giving the Entangle a 2 def would only let an average man break out of an umber hulk's entangle by rolling above average and doing 3+ body, he couldn't do this regularly (so it's hard to predict how many phases it would take on average), but given enough time enough 6's would be rolled for him to break out (anyone with less than 8 ego, however, wouldn't be able to break out of the entangle without help, and this seems appropriate for such weak-willed fools). With this in mind 2 def seems about right to simulate this but how much should the limitation of ½ def for the Entangle be (-½ or -¾ as above)?

Actually, from a close examination and calculation of the examples in the 5<sup>th</sup> edition *Writer's Guidelines*, it seems that each +1 def of an Entangle costs 5 points, so each -1 def could cost -5 points (see examples of *Grasp of Earth* and *Ice Bonds*). Therefore, I think that it is alright to use a 4d6 Entangle with -2 def which would cost 30 Base Points (40-10). This works better, so I'll use this until I can finally get my hands on the 5<sup>th</sup> ed!

**Tremor Sense:** is a new power from the 3e d&d rules, but it makes a lot of sense for creature like this, so I included it.

**Skills:**

Combat: +5 CSL because: in 1e: 8+8 HD monsters fight as 9th level, and 9th level fighters get +5 CSL; in 3e: UMBER HULKS have +11 with claws and +9 with bite, this averages +10 which converts to +5 CSL.

One could consider giving csl to improve the ecv with the gaze attack.