



Gremlins Take Ostenwold

Gremlins Take Ostenwold is a Fifth Edition for **three to five characters of 3rd level**. The adventure begins when the characters discover a small town is under attack by a horde of small green creatures called gremlins. They must find the source of the gremlins and put a stop to them before they multiply and cause more chaos.

Running the Adventure

To run the adventure, you need the three Fifth Edition core rulebooks. If you don't have these books, you can access a free basic ruleset from the official source.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under specific circumstances, as described in the text.

When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block as a way of saying, "Hey, game master, make sure you get this creature's stat block ready—there's going to be an encounter!" If the stat block appears in the Appendix of this adventure, the text tells you so; otherwise, you can find the stat block in the core rulebook.

Spells and nonmagical equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core manual for players.

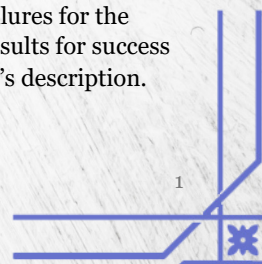
Magic items are described in the core manual for game masters unless the adventure's text directs you to an item's description in the Appendix.

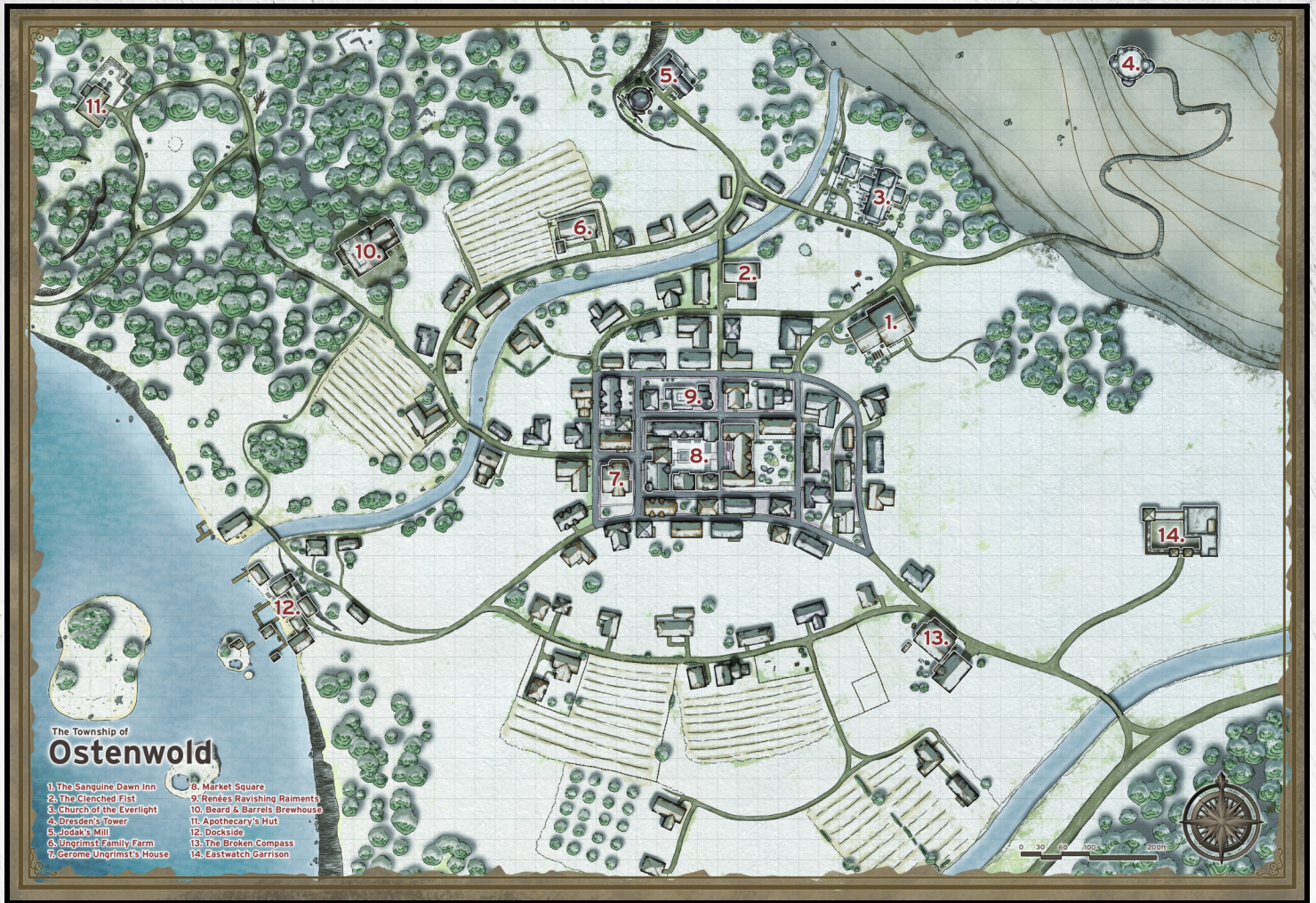
Skill Challenges

Skill challenges simulate an attempt to perform a task that takes longer and is usually harder than a single ability check. In its most basic form, the characters make a series of ability checks with the goal of earning a required number of successes before accumulating a maximum number of failed checks (similar to how death saving throws work).

Usually, the players decide which checks they want to contribute to the skill challenge. Typically, the characters may perform a given ability check only one time; if they attempt to repeat an ability check, they make the second check with disadvantage. The ability checks they make are lumped into two categories: primary and secondary. Both types of ability checks have their own DCs—more often than not, the secondary check DCs are 5 or higher than the primary check DCs. The skill challenges usually list the primary skills used for the challenge. All other skill checks contributed to the challenge are considered secondary. The characters are free to use any skill they like for secondary so long as they can give a good (and creative!) reason why it would help with the overall skill challenge. Any character can contribute a skill check to the challenge, and a character can make more than one check if they like.

So long as the characters achieve the required number of successes before achieving the number of failures for the challenge, the challenge is successful. The results for success and failure are detailed in the skill challenge's description.





Set-up

The characters arrive in a small town or village of your choice in the middle of the night. If you don't have a village in mind, simply use the Ostenwold maps that come with the adventure. Set near a major winter holiday, the village is alight with red, gold, and green *continual flame* spells, scented-garland wreathes, and other pleasant reminders of goodwill. Despite the festive spirit, the town seems to be totally empty. There isn't a soul in sight.

Scene 1 - Gremlins Attack

As the characters walk through the curiously quiet streets, the character with the highest passive Wisdom (Perception) score catches something out of the corner of their eye. If the characters investigate, they discover a strange, reptilian creature standing no more than 2-3 feet tall digging through the garbage.

At first, the creature pretends to fear the party. But as soon as the party approaches, four more creatures just like it appear and attack—the creatures are **gremlins!** And the town is overrun with them.

Scene 2 - Hiding Out

Just as the characters finish their combat with the vile monsters, a young man named Billy, Billy's girlfriend Kate (both **commoners**), and their friendly golden retriever (**mastiff**) invite them to hide in the nearby moneylender's office.

Billy explains the situation.

"A few weeks ago, my dad brought home a gift from a distant land. He told me that the creature was a mogwai, and that it came from a far-off plane of existence. The mogwai, I got, Gadget, was very friendly. However, there were three simple rules that came with the mogwai.

"First, you should never get a mogwai wet. If you do, it multiplies.

"Second, bright light hurts it, and sunlight kills them outright.

"Third, you can never feed a mogwai between the hours of midnight and dawn. If you do, it transforms into one of those creatures that you just met.

"I accidentally got my pet mogwai wet when I first got him, creating more fuzzy versions just like him. But then the others tricked me into feeding them after midnight. That's when these gremlins appeared. They've been killing nearly everyone in town. Everyone else is in hiding.

"Can you help us defeat the gremlins before they create a new batch?"

If the characters agree, the boy Billy tells them that their leader is a dangerous-looking gremlin with a tall, white mohawk. While chatting with Billy, the character with the highest passive Wisdom (Perception) score notices that there's a creature hiding in Billy's backpack: it's Billy's friendly **mogwai**, Gadget. See the Appendix for Gadget's statistics. Billy is very close to Gadget, and won't easily let go of his friend. Harming Gadget angers both Billy and Kate.

Scene 3 - Finding the Source

After the characters agree to help the kids, they need to spend a little time finding the source of the gremlins. Billy believes that they must have found another water source, since there are now dozens—if not hundreds—of them prancing around town, causing mischief.

Thankfully, it's been extremely cold lately, so most of the water throughout the town—including that covering the lake—is frozen over.

Have the characters make a skill challenge, using the rules below.

Finding the Gremlins' Source

Setup: The characters must figure out where the gremlins are gathering and what water source they're using to duplicate themselves.

Level: The DC for all primary checks is 10, and the DC for all secondary and repeat checks is 15.

Complexity: Finding the gremlins' source requires 4 successes before they achieve 2 failures.

Primary Skills: Investigation, Nature, Persuasion, Survival

Intelligence (Investigation). The characters recognize that the gremlins seem to enjoy eating candy and sweets. The only place that offers such goods is the apothecary's shop at the northwestern corner of town.

Intelligence (Nature). Surface water is frozen over or too cold for the gremlins to enter. To multiply, the gremlins will need to find a water source below the town's frost depth. If the characters mention this to Billy, he suggests that there is a series of submerged tunnels below the apothecary's den. He and his friends used to hide there when he was younger.

Charisma (Persuasion). Although the gremlins have killed dozens during their infestation, there are plenty of Ostenwolders still alive, many of whom hide in their homes. If the characters successfully communicate with the Ostenwolders, the Ostenwolders share that they saw many of the gremlins head to the northwestern part of town, but aren't quite sure where.

Wisdom (Perception or Survival). The gremlins' footprints can be found everywhere around town. However, insightful characters notice that the footprints all seem to lead to the apothecary's den at the northwestern corner of town.

Success: When the characters succeed on four ability checks related to tracking the gremlins, they gather enough information that points them toward the apothecary's den at the northwestern corner of town (see the map).

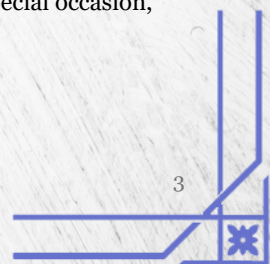
Failure: If the characters fail their ability checks, they get poor information that sends them to a random residence, shop, or some other building in town. Inside these wrong spots, they encounter 1d6 + 2 **gremlins**. If the gremlins flee and the characters think to follow them, the gremlins lead the characters to the apothecary's den at the northwestern corner of town. Otherwise, they will have to spend another hour and repeat the skill challenge.

Scene 4 - The Apothecary's Den

The apothecary's den is a small cabin located on the outskirts of town in its northwestern corner. The cabin itself is divided into four rooms.

- A large, front room that includes the cabin's kitchen as well as a common area for the apothecary.
- The apothecary's modest bedroom.
- A small workroom and office where the apothecary stores her books detailing nature and herbalism as well as the ingredients to her concoctions.
- A storage room used to hold bulk supplies and food preserves. There is a trapdoor hidden here—DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to find—that leads down to a hidden series of caverns below the den.

When the characters enter the cabin, they find it ransacked. The apothecary (**acolyte**) is still alive, although she's down to only 1 hit point. The silver-haired woman explains that the gremlins attacked her, then slipped through the trapdoor hidden in the storage room. Before the characters leave, she gives them a single bead from a *necklace of fireballs*. "I was saving it for a special occasion," she says. "I think this is that occasion."



The Tunnels Below

The tunnels below the apothecary's den were once used by smugglers working off Ostenwold's lake. There are two ways to enter: first, through the trapdoor hidden in the apothecary's cabin, and second, through the well to the north of the cabin.

When the characters first enter the tunnels, they hear the gremlins singing and dancing. If the characters follow the festivities, they discover that all of the gremlins—fifty in all—are gathered in the largest cavern. One of the gremlins—a nasty-looking bugger with a big white mohawk—plays the lute (terribly) while the other gremlins dance and cackle around him. One by one, the gremlins use a rope and pulley to dip themselves into a small puddle of water at the northwesternmost part of the caverns. Each dip causes the gremlin to sprout 1d4 more of its kind. This is the only part of the cavern where the water isn't frozen.

The gremlins are so enamored with the stripe-headed gremlin's performance, they won't notice the characters. If the characters toss the bead, the resulting explosion kills all of the gremlins in the room. They writhe and scream as they melt to puddles of stinking, green, and yellow ooze.

Here Comes Stripehead

Unless the characters specifically targeted the stripe-headed gremlin, it managed to escape the blast and hide in the tunnels. Frustrated by the characters' intrusion, the gremlin uses the tunnels to perform hit-and-run attacks against

them. The stripe-headed gremlin uses the **elite gremlin** stat block included in The Appendix.

Wiser than the rest, the stripe-gremlin knows when it's beat and will try to flee the characters, using the trapdoor through which the characters came. When it pops back up into the storage shed, Billy's mogwai, Gadget, is there waiting for him. Gadget flings open the exterior door to the storage room and allows the sun to shine inside—Gadget quickly flees to the shadows. The stripe-headed gremlin shrieks in agony as it is instantly destroyed by the light of morning.

Aftermath

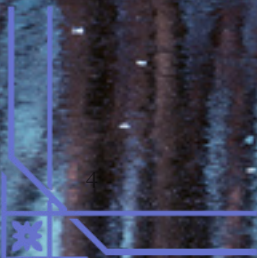
With all of the gremlins destroyed, Ostenwolders can once more leave their homes. If Gadget survived the encounter with the characters and the gremlins, eventually, a strange old man arrives. He hums a familiar tune, one that invites Gadget to climb into a small box that he carries. The old man then turns to Billy—and the characters—and says, "The Material Plane is not yet ready for a responsibility." He then disappears. Ω

Credits

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Cartographer: Tom Cartos

Art: Paper Forge, Shutterstock



Appendix

Gremlin

Small monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 3 (1d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +6

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Multiplies in Water. If the gremlin touches or starts its turn in water, it spontaneously sprouts and ejects 1d4 gremlin buds which land in unoccupied spaces within 10 feet of the gremlin. At the start of the gremlin's next turn, the buds grow into full-sized **gremlins**. The new gremlins roll initiative and act on their own turn.

Nimble Escape. The gremlin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Pack Tactics. The gremlin has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the gremlin's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The gremlin takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight or bright light, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 slashing damage.

Throw Object. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage (gremlin's choice, determined by the type of object it throws).



Elite Gremlin

Small monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Stealth +7

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Multiplies in Water. If the gremlin touches or starts its turn in water, it spontaneously sprouts and ejects 1d4 gremlin buds which land in unoccupied spaces within 10 feet of the gremlin. At the start of the gremlin's next turn, the buds grow into full-sized **gremlins**. The new gremlins roll initiative and act on their own turn.

Nimble Escape. The gremlin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Pack Tactics. The gremlin has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the gremlin's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The gremlin takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight or bright light, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Throw Object. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage (gremlin's choice, determined by the type of object it throws).



Mogwai

Tiny monstrosity, neutral good

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (0 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Gremlin Transformation. If the mogwai eats food between midnight and sunrise, it undergoes a gruesome metamorphosis and becomes a green, oozing cocoon. The cocoon is a Small object with AC 10 and 5 hp. A full grown gremlin emerges from the cocoon 1d12 hours later.

Multiplies in Water. If the mogwai touches or starts its turn in water, it spontaneously sprouts and ejects 1d4 mogwai buds which land in unoccupied spaces within 10 feet of the gremlin. At the start of the mogwai's next turn, the buds grow into full-sized **mogwai**. The new mogwai roll initiative and act on their own turn.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The mogwai takes 5 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight or bright light, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

A **mogwai** has no effective attacks.

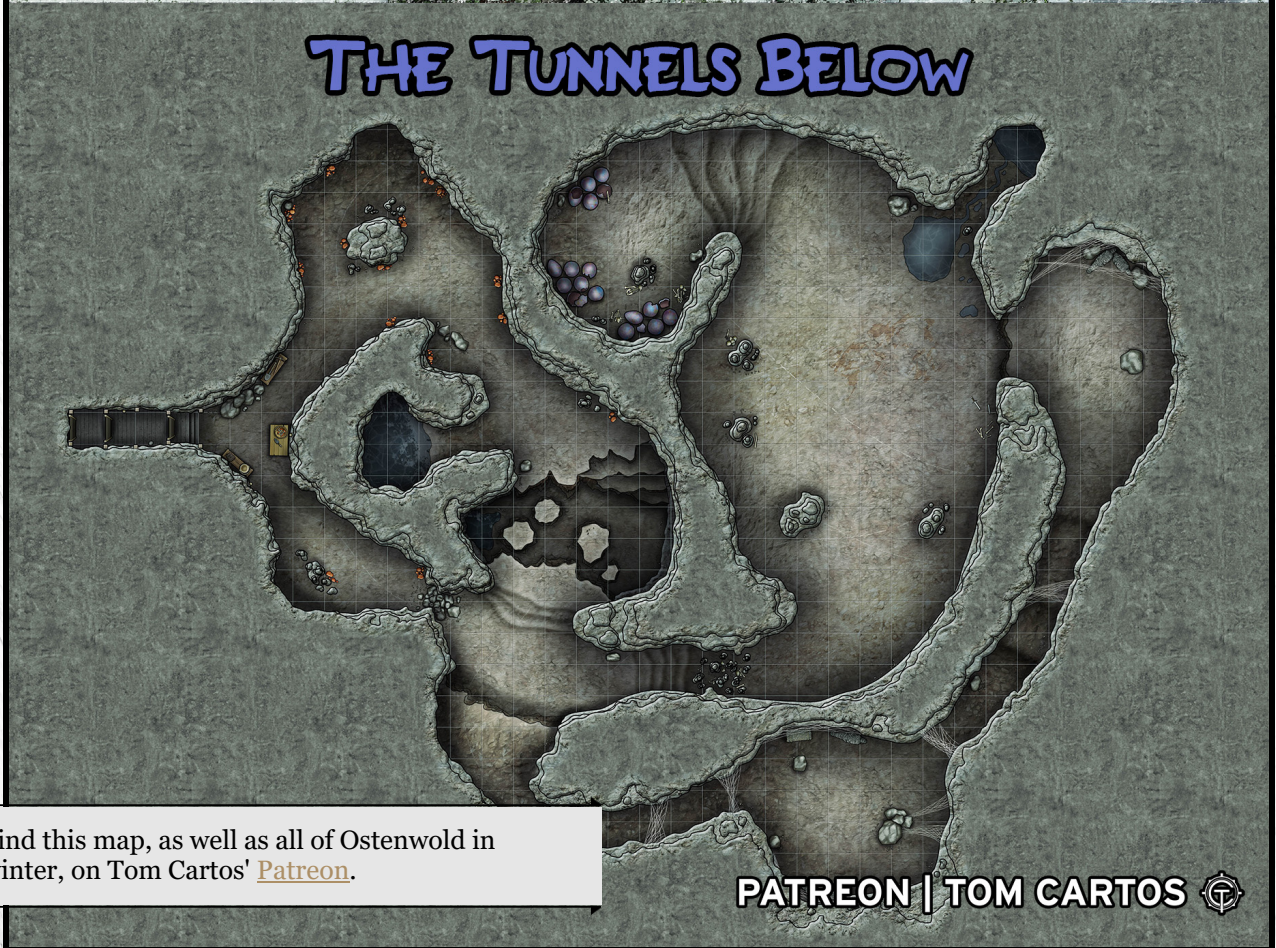


THE APOTHECARY DEN



1 SQUARE EQUALS 5 FEET

THE TUNNELS BELOW



Find this map, as well as all of Ostenwold in winter, on Tom Cartos' [Patreon](#).

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