

## Ammut (Arch-Demoness)

(illustrations and description from the book "Gods and Monsters" and Wikipedia. Stats and expanded description by DM Superelf.)

FREQUENCY: Unique

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 24"

HIT DICE: 36

% IN LAIR: 0%

TREASURE TYPE: (determine)

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3 (claw/claw/bite)

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-12/1-12/2-20

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Extraordinary

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

SIZE: L (25' long)

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil/nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: (determine)

(from "Gods and Monsters")

The ammut was a demon feared by ancient Egyptians. Its body was made up of a lion, a hippopotamus, and a crocodile because those were the three largest "man-eating" animals known to the ancient Egyptians. In the Underworld, a dead person's heart underwent judgment. If it was deemed impure, An ammut was given the heart to eat once the dead person was not allowed to

continue his voyage to immortality. Once the heart was swallowed, the soul of the dead would become restless forever. Sometimes the ammut stood beside a lake of fire and watched as impure hearts were thrown into the lake to be destroyed.

One legend tells of a man who knew he had sinned in life, but hoped his papyrus of spells was enough to persuade the gods in the Underworld to let him reach immortality. Entering the Underworld, he stopped at caves and gates, reading a spell to the animal-headed people. He



passed each stage and finally reached the jackal-headed god Anubis, and Ammut. Anubis weighed the man's heart: was he sinful or not? The man had almost made it to immortality. But Anubis handed the heart to Ammut—the man had been too sinful in life and would not find peace in death.

It is said that Ammut lived near the scales of justice in the Egyptian Underworld. Ancient Egyptian civilization developed along the Nile River.

In the Underworld, the test of a person's purity was the weight of their heart. If it weighed the same as the feather of Anubis, it was found to be pure. If it weighed more than the feather or less, then the heart was impure and was given to Ammut to eat or thrown into a lake.

The Underworld was known as Duat, a vast area under the Earth, where not only the dead but some gods, such as Osiris, god of the underworld, lived. The sun god Ra traveled through Duat each night, starting from the west in order to arrive in the east in time for dawn each morning.

Ammut was known as the "devourer of the dead."

Ammut's image was thought to ward off evil. Though terrifying, she was a force for good, reminding people to live an honest life in order to die with a pure heart.

(background information from [Wikipedia](#))

Ammut (/ˈæmɪt/; Ancient Egyptian: ꜥm-mwt, "Devourer of the Dead"; also rendered Ammut or Ahemait) was an ancient Egyptian goddess with the forequarters of a lion, the hindquarters of a hippopotamus, and the head of a crocodile; the three largest "man-eating" animals known to ancient Egyptians. In ancient Egyptian religion, Ammut played an important role during the funerary ritual, the [Judgment of the Dead](#).

Ammut (Ancient Egyptian: ꜥm-mwt; ʒmt mwtw) means 'devourer of the dead' ('Devoureress of the Dead') or 'Swallower of the Dead', where ꜥm is the verb 'to swallow', and mwt signifies 'the dead', more specifically the dead who had been adjudged not to belong to the [akhu](#) 'blessed dead' who abided by the code of truth ([ma'at](#)).



Depiction of Ammut without a mane from the [Book of the Dead](#) of Nebqed. ca. 1391-1353 BCE, late [Eighteenth Dynasty](#).

Ammut is denoted as a female entity, commonly depicted with the head of a crocodile, the forelegs and upper body of a lion (or leopard), and the hind legs and lower body of a hippopotamus. The combination of three deadly predators: crocodile, lion, and hippo, suggests that no one can

escape annihilation, even in the afterlife. She is part lioness,<sup>1</sup> but her leonine features may present in the form of a mane, which is usually associated with male lions. In the [Papyrus of Ani](#), Ammut is adorned with a tri-colored [nemes](#), which were worn by pharaohs as a symbol of kingship.



Ammut shown at the Weighing of Ani's heart from the [Papyrus of Ani](#). ca. 1250 BCE, [Nineteenth Dynasty](#).

Versions of the [Book of the Dead](#) from the [New Kingdom](#) started

to include Ammut. During the [eighteenth dynasty](#), the crocodile-lion-hippopotamus hybrid was the conventional depiction of Ammut. She appeared in scenes showing the [Judgment of the Dead](#), in tombs and funerary papyri. In this scene, Ammut is shown with other [Egyptian gods](#) in [Duat](#), waiting to learn if she can consume the heart of the deceased. A stylistic shift occurred during the [Third Intermediate Period](#). Around the [twenty-first dynasty](#), the Judgment of the Dead scene was painted on the interior and exterior of coffins. The coffin lid of [Ankh-hor](#), a chief from the [twenty-second dynasty](#) featured Ammut bearing the head of a hippopotamus, and the body of a dog with rows of paps. While the [Papyrus](#) of Nes-min (ca. 300-250 BCE) from the [Ptolemaic Period](#), portrayed Ammut with the head of a crocodile, and the body of a dog.

Unlike other gods featured in ancient Egyptian religion, Ammut was not worshiped. Instead, Ammut was feared and believed to be a demon rather than a deity, due to her role as the 'devourer of the dead'. During the [New Kingdom](#), deities and demons were differentiated by having a cult or center of worship. Demons in ancient Egyptian religion had supernatural powers and roles, but were ranked below the gods and did not have a place of worship. In the case of Ammut, she was a guardian demon. A guardian demon was tied to a specific place, such as [Duat](#). Their appearance was based on a hybrid of an animal or a human and was denoted so the dead could recognize them. Guardian

demons that appeared as a hybrid of animals were an amalgamation of traits meant to be feared and to differentiate them from deities associated with humanity.



[Ptolemaic](#) depiction of Ammut standing on top of a pedestal left of the scale. She has the head of [crocodile](#), the [mane](#) of a [lion](#), and the body of a [dog](#). From a [Book of the Dead papyrus](#) (ca. [2nd century BCE](#)) in [Thebes](#).

Prior to the [New Kingdom](#) and the creation of [Chapter 125](#) in the [Book of the Dead](#), Ammut did not have a large presence in ancient Egyptian religion. However, [Khonsu](#), the god of the moon, was depicted as a 'devourer of the dead and hearts' in [Old Kingdom](#) pyramid texts and [Middle Kingdom coffin texts](#).

Throughout the [First Intermediate Period](#) and the [Middle Kingdom](#), a collection of spells was created to form the [Coffin Texts](#). In Spell 310, [Khonsu](#) burned hearts heavier than the [feather of ma'at](#) during the [Judgment of the Dead](#). In Spell 311, Khonsu devoured the hearts of the gods and the dead.

Divine hearts were devoured for their power.

Hearts deemed impure during judgment were devoured, leaving the deceased trapped in [Duat](#).

These spells were among those adapted into the [Book of the Dead](#) starting in the [New Kingdom](#).

Spells 310 and 311 of the [Coffin Texts](#) are referred to in [Chapters 79](#), and [125](#) in the [Book of the Dead](#).

Chapter 79 refers to the burning of the heart, while the scene of judgment and devouring of hearts is found in Chapter 125.

Instead of [Khonsu](#) devouring the heart of the dead, Ammut was referred to as the 'devourer of the dead'.



Ammut was present during the weighing of the heart, usually near the scale waiting to learn the results. If the heart of the dead was impure, she ate their heart leaving them soulless and trapped in [Duat](#).

The [Book of the Dead](#) was a collection of [funerary texts](#) used to guide the dead to [Duat](#), the Egyptian underworld. The process of the [Judgment of the Dead](#) was described in [Chapter 125](#). The ruler of Duat, [Osiris](#), presided over judgment. [New Kingdom](#) depictions of this scene occurred at the Hall of the Two Truths (or Two Maats). [Anubis](#), the Guardian of the Scales, conducted the dead towards the weighing scale. Ammut would be situated near the scale, awaiting the results. While [Thoth](#), the god of hieroglyphs and judgment, would record the results. The heart of the deceased was weighed against the [feather of Ma'at](#), the goddess of truth. The feather of Ma'at symbolized the balance, and truthfulness needed to be present during one's lifetime. The heart or [Ib](#), represented the individual's soul and was the key to traveling to [Aaru](#).

In [Chapter 125](#) of the [Book of the Dead](#), the deceased is given a series of declarations to recite at the Judgment of the Dead. The Declaration of Innocence was a list of 42 sins the deceased was innocent of committing. The Declaration to the Forty-two Gods and The Address to the Gods were recited directly to the gods, proclaiming the deceased's purity and loyalty.

After the declarations are recited, their heart is weighted. If the heart was weighed and found to be less than the [feather of Ma'at](#), the deceased was ruled to be pure. [Thoth](#) recorded the result and [Osiris](#) would allow the deceased to continue their voyage toward [Aaru](#) and immortality. If the heart was heavier than the feather of Ma'at, the deceased was deemed impure. Ammut would devour their heart, leaving the deceased without a soul. Ancient Egyptians believed the soul would become restless forever, dying a second death. Instead of living in Aaru, the soulless individual would be stuck in [Duat](#).



Wall carving of Ammut on a pedestal in a scene depicting the [Judgment of the Dead](#) from the [Temple of Hathor](#) in [Deir el-Medina](#).

Ammut is often depicted sitting in a crouched position near the scale, ready to eat the [heart](#). Ancient Egyptians were buried with a copy of the [Book of the Dead](#), guaranteeing they would be successful at the [Judgment of the Dead](#). Thus, Ammut was left hungry without any hearts to eat, and the consecrated dead was then able to bypass the [Lake of Fire](#), featured in [Chapter 126](#) of the Book of the Dead.



Full view of the Weighing of the Heart from the [Papyrus of Ani](#). Ammut is shown at the far right, near [Thoth](#). Ca. 1250 BCE, [Nineteenth Dynasty](#).



Full view of the Weighing of the Heart from the Papyrus of [Hunefer](#). Ammut is shown next to the scale. [Anubis](#) is on her left, and [Thoth](#) on her right. Ca. 1275 BCE, [Nineteenth Dynasty](#).



Full view of the Weighing of the Heart from the [Temple of Hathor](#) in [Deir el-Medina](#). [Thoth](#) is seen to the right of the scale, while to the right, Ammut sits on top of a pedestal.

See also: [Book of the Dead](#), [Cerberus](#), a chthonic creature in Greek mythology