

# Bearfolk

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## Codex Entry

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**Name:** Bearfolk, Bears, a.k.a: Ursines.

**Sexes:** Males, females.

**Height:** 5'2 to 9' (152 cm to 275 cm) with males typically being taller.

**Weight:** Anywhere from 180-700 lbs, depending on gender and fitness.

**Fur:** Furrieness varies greatly bear to bear. At the very least, both sexes have fur on their limbs, with males typically having very hairy skin elsewhere. At most, either sex can have full body fur, which comes in similar colors as their hair.

**Skin:** Same range of colors as humans.

**Neck:** Men's beards often continue into a bit of a mane on the neck, and some females have small manes. Males can have quite thick necks and deep voices. A bear's roar is one of the loudest vocalizations across Savarra.

**Face:** Some bearfolk naturally have humanoid faces, but other bearfolk sport animalistic muzzles like their ancestors, either naturally or via alchemy. Bear Muzzles are thick – slightly shorter and broader than, for example, lupine muzzles.

**Hair:** Black, Brown, white, gray, and sometimes blonde or red. Hair color sometimes differs from body-fur colors.

**Eyes:** Resembling human eyes in the same array of colors (plus gold). Bearfolk have good night vision; It is comparable to a cat's, just like real bears in the wild.

**Ears:** Round, fluffy, furred ears - both males and females.

**Tail:** Short, fluffy, furred tails - both males and females.

**Genitals:** Bearfolk have naturally humanoid genitalia. The males tend to be known for their girth while females tend to be size queens, able to sleep through childbirth!

**Lifespan:** Bearfolk have life spans roughly the same as humans, longer if they hibernate (up to 120 years).

**Maturity:** 18 years.

## Description

Bearfolk are large, semi-furry omnivores that favor moderate to cold climates. More commonly than humans, bearfolk will have a bear, buff, thick, or overweight physique. They can be quite hairy too – and the women, curvy [silly]and THICC[and thick].

Some bearfolk have full-body fur and animalistic muzzles. This is sometimes the result of alchemy, and sometimes due to a recessive trait from ancestral times being bred to the surface.

The women are a good bit shorter, lighter, and much less hairy than men typically are, but they are still “big and tall” when compared to human women. Their breasts can fluctuate from being slight to massive, on the same woman, depending on the time of year or diet. Most bears, both male and female, have a bubble butt. Men rarely have flared hips or a small waist, though – they are solid and stocky in build.

There are 5 main subcategories of bearfolk from antiquity. Today they have interbred. In order from largest to smallest: Polar, Grizzly, Brown, Black, and Panda. Grizzlies can be anywhere from blonde to black-furred. Pandafolk sometimes have a form of facial vitiligo (splotches of dark/light skin) around the eyes resembling a panda bear not only in fur but also skin color.

Ursine limbs are furred and have clawed digits. Women and some men have more humanoid-looking hands and feet, skinned and with fingernails that appear like claws only if left untrimmed.

Male bearfolk are best suited to be warriors while females excel in leadership, much like the minotaur race. Some are adept at alchemy because they like to forage and experiment with food they find. Personality-wise, some are hardworking, others lazy; some are ferocious and some are soft-hearted. All of them foster a deep sense of loyalty to their kin and tend to value family above all else.

## History

Before the Godswar, bearfolk were segregated into their 5 respective subspecies. Isolationist and insulated, they had full body fur and muzzle-mouths. After the war, they

came out of hiding and took on human partners, diluting the gene pool until at present some bearfolk can resemble a human hybrid of their ancient ancestors, while still being considered “full-blooded” bearfolk.

Due to their large appetites, and hunter/gatherer instincts, alchemy has played a large role in bearfolk history. Clans who lived closely to harpies, for example, would scout their eggs to use in gender-transformation alchemy that became embedded in their culture. Other clans who found themselves near vesparans/“hornet folk” acquired a taste for their honey, forming a sort of symbiotic relationship as willing vessels for hornet eggs – the honey was its own reward. Some such clans still concoct honey lactation droughts and/or birth control tools using chemicals and hormones derived from hornet folk.

Bearfolk have always lived in matriarchal societies, which have been falling apart more and more throughout history. They tend to keep track of history via stories from their matriarchal line, propagated by oral tradition. Bearfolk who hibernate (brown, black, and grizzly) have a fall festival wherein they feast before sleeping. This was ubiquitous in the past, but now is less common, reserved for the wealthier clans of western bearfolk.

To the north hail the boreal polarbearfolk, whereas pandafolk hail from the same outer islands of the Old Country that Tanuki and Kitsune come from. Their cultures had less interaction than one might think, though; before the Godswar, all bearfolk were quite isolationist, and afterwards, they mostly emigrated to the mainland. Almost none can be found as far east as Jassyra; the hot climate alone is enough to deter them. However, generally speaking, modern day bearfolk can be found anywhere as they have no formal society of their own, living in pockets across Savarra.

As the bronze age rolls on, and as the influence of corruption takes its hold on Savarra, a trickle of bearfolk have begun to break completely from tradition and become lone adventurers, explorers, and wanderers. Bearfolk can be found in the Marches and elsewhere who may have been drawn away from family by corrupt matriarchs or drawn to the area by resources such as vespran honey.

## Society & Culture

Bearfolk have a colorful variety of customs, but all share a few characteristics: The vast majority of bear clans are matriarchal societies with the grandmother acting as the matriarch. Much like a Queen, she has authority to shape and re-write the customs of her clan until the day she dies. Then, the clan splits and branches off, her daughters becoming matriarchs of their own until they die.

Some but not all bearfolk observe the fall festival, during which families gather around the matriarch to spend time together and eat. It can last a few days, weeks, or even months. Family, however, is important to all bearfolk regardless of observation of this holiday.

In antiquity, hibernation was undertaken by all brown, black, and grizzly bear folk. Today, not all bearfolk hibernate, but the wealthy and powerful families do to extend their lifetimes. Before hibernation, it is necessary to fatten up on enough calories for 2~3 months of sleep.

This is where some female bearfolk get the reputation for being able to grow their breasts and rear ends from slight to near-wardrobe-destroying. Their skin also happens to be quite stretchy and resilient to accommodate the yearly fluctuations.

Due to hibernation being a unique feature of bearfolk culture, magics pertaining to the sleep and the subconscious such as dreamwalking may come naturally to bearfolk. However, very very few bearfolk are well-read or intelligent enough to grasp such arts.

Another sleep-related detail pertains to fur. The sexual dimorphism between furry males and hairless females means that a male's fur and hair is often important to protecting the warmth of their females, who only have fur on their limbs. Some males take great pride and care in maintaining a clean coat. There are certainly clans who look different (such as the northern and southern minotaur example) where bearfolk women and/or men have retained their ancestral full body fur and muzzles.

For a female, her pride is often her home or den, rather than her coat – or at least, this used to be the case centuries ago when every mother bear was expected to one day become a matriarch. Nowadays, all females are given this option, but not all are as domestic as they used to be. Maybe one daughter out of a group of siblings will choose to become matriarch, and will look after the den that will one day become the go-to destination for family gatherings, events, and holidays.

## Reproduction

Bearfolk reproduce like humans, with similar pregnancy times and birth 1-2 offspring at a time. Pandafolk have twins more often than not, just like in the wild. It's possible to give birth during hibernation and not notice. The cubs survive by breastfeeding until their mother wakes up.

The use of infertility drugs, even permanent ones, is more common in bearfolk culture than others – for, again, family-related reasons. The matriarchal line is an important item to protect, and as such, the ruling matriarch may craft rules or regulations on fertility and who is allowed to be fertile at what time.

To prevent inbreeding, bearfolk seek out mates from outside their own clan. They tend to gather into clans in the fall, keeping up with love interests from other clans via taeleer courier. At other times, they live in nuclear family homes (dens) and keep up with extended family the same way.

Not all bear clans gather in the fall, but they do like to organize family gatherings for events such as marriage. Marriage is common, but its rules vary from clan to clan.

In the event of a polygamous marriage or lesbian matriarch, matriarchs have been known to function as a counsel, or settle who is the true matriarch among themselves. It is traditional for the husband to be considered joining the wife's clan upon marriage, but this is left ambiguous when both partners are male. Therefore gay bearfolk tend to choose freely which of their mothers' clan they belong to, which matriarch they like best.

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Ursus bulb additions found in separate document