

THE APEX PREDATOR

Beastgrave is a deadly place at the best of times, with vicious predators roaming the caverns and passageways of the ancient mountain in search of prey. Yet there are rumours of an even darker threat, a predator beyond compare known as the Apex.



Deep in the labyrinthine tunnels of Beastgrave howls a lost and hungry sentience. Known to the Silent People simply as the Apex, it has no corporeal form, appearing only as an ethereal mass of claws, teeth, and mad, red eyes. Though it longs to sink its fangs into living flesh, to feel the glorious wetness of hot blood dripping from its jaws, it is forever denied that thrill, for the Apex can never experience the glory of the true kill itself. It satisfies its lust for the hunt only vicariously, by using another as its puppet so it can sustain itself in an eternity of hunger and madness.

The Apex was once a powerful shaman of the Knifeclaw tribe. Though his name is long forgotten, even to him, his legend lives on across the Ghurish Hinterlands. A consummate and inventive hunter, he learned how to take the aspect of the beast by slaying powerful predators, then flaying them, wearing their skin, and then – under the light of the beast-moon – transforming into the very creature whose hide he wore upon his back. For a time, the shaman roamed at will, wearing a variety of shapes from that of the great stone bear to the crevasse serpent. He even donned a cloak of feathers made from a Beastgrave roc, hunting the skies as well as the lands. For a time, he ruled as the apex predator of all humanity across Ghur.

Drunk on power and intoxicated by the thick blood liquor he distilled as a transformative elixir, the Apex made a critical mistake. Whilst hunting the Silent People on the slopes of Beastgrave he met his match, for they fought as one. Seeking a new edge, he donned not one skin, but six, placing one atop another even as his body swelled, buckled, and bulged under the strain of becoming half a dozen predators at once. It was too much for even him, and weltering in great pools of blood, his physical form wrenched itself apart.

The shaman's composite spirit, however, lived on, screaming into the night from the still-steaming ruin of his sixfold form. He dived into the passageways of that vast mountain, intent on revenge against the Silent People that he saw as responsible for his death. Skilled in the matter of spirit magic, the shaman's ghost possessed those it saw as powerful predators and wore them much as he once wore flayed skin.

Those he took as his host forms became more muscular, savage, and atavistic, the Apex's bestial ferocity enhancing their speed, strength, and killer instinct with those weapons they saw as part of themselves – or even, should it come to it, their clawed hands and teeth. Those who proved unworthy of his savage blessing by failing in their hunt he would abandon, reeling and confused, only to possess another host form when one was revealed as a worthy hunter. As yet, the shaman has not found the perfect hunter-form he so desperately seeks. But with Beastgrave's call growing ever more insistent and its depths plumbed by fighters from across the Mortal Realms and beyond, it can only be a matter of time before the champion of that fell peak is transformed into the ultimate apex predator.

Apex is an alternative way to play Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave. In games of Apex, a powerful spirit is watching the ongoing conflict, intent on possessing what it sees as the apex predator on the battlefield. A fighter possessed by this spirit becomes the Ur-Predator, an almost unstoppable warrior, and their warband is all but guaranteed victory. But should that fighter be slain, their killer will be possessed and become the Ur-Predator in turn. The battle to gain the power of this bestial spirit will be bloody indeed!

PLAYING GAMES OF APEX

AIM OF THE GAME

The aim of the game is to have a surviving friendly fighter with the Ur-Predator upgrade at the end of the game.

HOW TO PLAY

You need a copy of Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave to play Apex. Apex uses all of the Beastgrave rules with the additional rules presented here. If a rule in Apex contradicts a rule in Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave, the rule in Apex takes precedence.

Display of Dominance

If no fighter has the Ur-Predator upgrade (which will always be the case at the start of the game), when a fighter takes another fighter out of action with damage dealt by an Attack action (not, for example, by driving them back into a lethal hex) give the attacker the Ur-Predator upgrade.

A New Challenger

If the fighter that has the Ur-Predator upgrade is taken out of action by an enemy fighter's Attack action, give the attacker the Ur-Predator upgrade.

Unworthy Death

If the fighter that has the Ur-Predator upgrade is taken out of action in any other way, remove the Ur-Predator upgrade from that fighter (it does not go into a discard pile).

No True Predator

If the fighter that has the Ur-Predator upgrade at the end of the round did not make at least one Attack action in that round, remove the Ur-Predator upgrade from that fighter (it does not go into a discard pile).

VICTORY

Whichever player has a surviving fighter with the Ur-Predator upgrade at the end of the game wins. If no player has a surviving fighter with the Ur-Predator upgrade at the end of the game, determine the victor as for a normal game of Warhammer Underworlds: Beastgrave.



The Ur-Predator card comes free with this very issue of *White Dwarf*, meaning that you can start playing Apex straight away!

