

## URBAN ODDITIES

---



Every village, town or city has its own laws, traditions and customs. Others have notable buildings and features. Some are normal. Some are decidedly odd.

### ODD FESTIVALS

---

1. **Dance of the Dead:** In this macabre celebration, held every year to mark the village's deliverance from a necromancer's undead army, the villagers dress as skeletons and zombies and dance through the streets in wild abandon. Some of the villagers' costumes are disturbingly realistic—comprised as they are of actual bones. The festival is held at night, and adventurers witnessing it without knowledge of the celebration's significance could be forgiven for thinking an evil cult is at work in the village.

### ODD FEATURES & BUILDINGS

---

1. **The Great Ditch:** In olden times, the settlement was often beset by marauding bandits and evil humanoids. The villagers excavated a huge ditch around the village to keep the raiders out. Over the years, it has become traditional for villagers guilty of minor crimes to continue excavations. Currently, the ditch is 15-foot-wide and up to 30-foot-deep. Most days, at least one villager can be seen toiling in its depths.
2. **Demon Statues:** Several of the village's houses have old statues incorporated into their outer walls. These statues uniformly depict terrifying and horrible demonic figures. Most of the statues' fine features have long since been chipped off or been eroded by countless years of weather. The villagers have affectionate nicknames for all the figures and use them when giving directions to (invariably baffled) visitors.
3. **Sir Ozloc's Folly:** Sir Ozloc was an adventurer with a reputation for always surviving the most dangerous and difficult adventures through dint of his finely honed sense of impending danger and his much-practising sprinting skills. Sir Ozloc built this tall tower to keep watch for approaching threats. The folly is 80 feet high and commands excellent views over the surrounding land. Only one heavily fortified door leads into the interior, and local rumour has at least one escape tunnel leading away from the tower.
4. **Crypt of Shadows:** This macabre-sounding crypt is nothing more than the remains of an old church destroyed by fire decades ago. Seeing the fire as a mark of their god's displeasure with the church and its clergy, the villagers rebuilt their temple elsewhere. The old church's crypt survived the fire but has lain neglected and all but abandoned ever since. Sometimes children

dare each other to creep within, or itinerant beggars use it as shelter during bad weather. No one believes the wild stories of hidden rooms, mass burials and a secret fane hidden below the crypt.

### ODD TRADITIONS

---

1. The villagers—even the children—all wear jangling necklaces or bracelets. Some are made of bone, while others are of silver or even gold. The villagers believe the jangling keeps evil spirits away. All the houses also have wind chimes (for the same reason).
2. No children are allowed out after dark without an adult. The villagers will not speak of the reason for this, but if a child does go out alone after sunset, panic ensues.
3. The local tavern serves an array of fine ales. Each of the regulars has their own named flagon—each with a flip-up lid to keep out flies, dust and suchlike. Some are ornate works of art passed down through the generations. Travellers must make do with an array of battered and cheap normal flagons.
4. The village has a vast population of cats; every family seems to have at least three or four such pets. Consequently, there are no vermin whatsoever in the village. It is illegal to harm a cat in the village. Those doing so much apologise to both the owner and the cat.

### ODD LAWS

---

1. It is forbidden to wear blue in public during daylight hours. At night, no such restriction exists.
2. It is illegal to die on the streets. Anyone doing so is prosecuted, and if found guilty, their family must pay a hefty fine.
3. The locals are exceptionally religious. Three times a day, the populace must pray at the nearest church. Failure to do so leads to a fine.
4. It is legal to shoot a half-orc with a crossbow within the village only if the half-orc is judged to be acting aggressively by three witnesses.

---

### CREDIT

This is a short system-neutral extract from *20 Things #72: Urban Oddities* by Creighton Broadhurst. *20 Things #72: Urban Oddities* is available from Raging Swan Press as a System Neutral resource.