

## Hitogoi

Hitogoi, also known as koi-men, are explorers and inventors from deep freshwater lakes and rivers. They are great innovators and pioneers, and many wear specialized breathers that allow them to breathe both saltwater and air without discomfort. They have a burning need to explore and migrate, thus far acting as “tourists”, yet many races fear a wave of colonists to follow.

**Physical Description:** At first glance, many would easily mistake a hitogoi for some sort of kuo-toa. They are both humanoid fish, of around the same height and build. However, the similarity stops there. Hitogoi have large, often brightly colored scales covering their bodies, bulbous eyes, and fish-like tails. Skin colors are often in the gold or orange range, but can be found in any variation found in koi fish including black, white, and calico. Eye color is usually bright yellow.

Another unusual feature of the hitogoi is that they are all male. Females of their species are called river ningyo (a type of merfolk) and have entirely different physical features and traits. The two genders rarely interact and behave as separate species. Even the mating practice is non-interactive, as the river ningyo lay eggs in a special spawning pool, and the hitogoi visit sometime later. The parents then visit at different times to collect offspring of the appropriate gender.

**Society:** Hitogoi are natural explorers and inventors. Their curiosity and thirst for experience leads them towards constant tinkering and experimentation. However, despite this curiosity, they are not particularly more intelligent than other races. Often, their inventions and contraptions are overcomplicated, fragile, and prone to malfunction. Most are completely unworkable for a non-hitogoi. Regardless, many of these devices are highly sought after for their miraculous-yet-nonmagical powers, even if those powers might be fleeting or unreliable.

Among their most iconic inventions is the “breather” which, when properly fitted over the gills of an aquatic creature, allows that creature to breath air and saltwater without ill effects. The breather, being a mechanical invention, is not subject to failure due to dispelling or antimagic. In addition, in contrast to many magical items, it is somewhat affordable and operable for the average person. Since it has been around a while, most of the kinks have been worked out and it can be tailored to nearly any aquatic creature.

Hitogoi often gather in large conclaves to work on burning questions or sort out new contraptions. As they all seem to think in similar ways, these conclaves are remarkably successful. While these meetings are open to non-hitogoi, outsiders often feel lost or ignored, as they have a hard time relating to the hitogoi’s haphazard, trial-and-error, hands-on style of getting things done. Hitogoi work from pure experimentation rather than cultivated intellect or study.

### HITOGOI RACIAL TRAITS

**+2 Constitution, +2 Charisma, -2 Wisdom:** Hitogoi are healthy and have friendly personalities. They are sheltered and only see the best in others, however.

**Medium:** Hitogoi are Medium-sized creatures.

**Speed:** 30, Swim 30

**Low-light vision:** Hitogoi see well in low light areas.

**Gills:** Hitogoi are aquatic, and suffocate on dry land without the aid of mechanical apparatus or magic (which they often have one or the other).

**Freshwater Denizen:** Hitogoi suffer no ill effects from being immersed in freshwater.

However, without protective spells or specialized equipment, they cannot tolerate saltwater for very long. When a hitogoi becomes fully immersed in saltwater, it must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or become fatigued. Even on a success, it must repeat the save attempt every 10 minutes it remains immersed.

**Skilled:** Hitogoi gain a +2 to any one Craft skill, chosen at character creation.

**Languages:** Hitogoi begin play speaking Goi and Common.

Hitogoi with high Intelligence scores can choose from among the following bonus languages: Boggard, Hanran, Imperial, Kamigei, and Yokai.

**Relations:** When not mountain climbing, deep-sea diving, or inventing devices to make those things possible, the hitogoi are always asking questions. This combined with their incurable naivety, causes most races to avoid interaction with them. If it were not for the technological fruit of their exploits, the hitogoi would likely be avoided altogether.

**Alignment and Religion:** Hitogoi have a wide range of alignments, but few are particularly lawful. They find rules to be not only too restrictive for their curiosity, but few laws hold up under their scrutiny. They are good at finding loopholes in any law that prevents them from doing what they want to do.

Likewise, hitogoi rarely find any religion that satisfies their burning inquisitiveness. Religion and spirituality often relies on faith. The only faith that a hitogoi has is in its ability to figure out answers to nearly any question through incessant trial and error.

**Adventurers:** Hitogoi are born adventurers and will often adventure just for the sake of it. Some will test out new inventions, or seek out new ones. Many just want to see what is over the new hill or under the next wave.

Many hitogoi become alchemists or tinkers, as this skill often enhances their ability to create new devices. Rogues and gunslingers are not uncommon either, as both classes require some measure of mechanical aptitude. Arcane magic users of this race are less common, but not unheard of.

**Names:** Hitogoi enjoy multisyllabic, nonsensical names that sound somewhat like rushing or bubbling water. Some examples include Blubbloopbop, Pippapplip, Glubbabap, Shashashiss, and Shiaplublub.

