

First Edition Knight



The Knight Character Class for OSR Campaigns

Version 1.0

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What is a Knight?

The knight is a mounted warrior who fights for honour. Some are completely selfless, whereas others seek glory, riches or political power. With few exceptions, knights are from noble families and start their training in early childhood. The knight is bound to a god, a scared order or a certain cause and has to abide by the code of chivalry.

Class Basics

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Attribute Requirements | STR 15, INT 10, WIS 10, DEX 15, CON 15 |
| Prime Requisite | None |
| Races | Human, Elf, Half-Elf |
| Hit Die | d12 (max 10) |
| Alignment | Any Good |
| Weapons | Any |
| Armour | All except leather, studded leather and padded armour |
| Attack Progression | As Fighter |
| Saving Throws | As Fighter |
| Weapons Proficiencies | 3+1 every 2 levels |
| Non-Proficiency Penalty | -3 |
| Weapon Specialisation | N/A |

The Path of the Knight

Only humans, elves and half-elves of noble decent are eligible for knighthood. However, a commoner sponsored by a nobleman may start a career as a squire with -1,500 XP and 1d4+1 hit points. After gaining 1,000 XP, the squire becomes a trooper (and has to acquire a lance and become proficient with lances) and gains an additional 1d4 hit points. After earning another 500 XP, he finally becomes a horseman with another 1d4 additional hit points. Knights from aristocratic families start their career as a horseman, but will have 1d10+3 instead of 3d4+1 hit points.

Attribute Requirements

The life of a knight is physically demanding. Thus, a knight has to have a score of 15 in Strength, Constitution and Dexterity. Furthermore, knights are expected to be of good judgement and require a Wisdom and Intelligence score of no less than 10. A knight can increase certain ability scores later (see below under *Ability Score Increase*) but still has to have the aforementioned minimum scores. Knights profit from a Constitution score as fighter do.

Prime Requisite

A knight does not have a prime requisite and does not gain an experience bonus from any ability score.

Races

Only humans, elves and half-elves can become knights.

Hit Die

The knight uses the d12 to determine his hit points and can gain a maximum of ten hit dice at level 10. After that, he gains three additional hit points per level, but no additional hit dice. At first level, an aristocratic knight starts with 1d10+3 hit points. A knight from a common family will have 3d4+1 hit points instead, as described above under *The Path of the Knight*.

Alignment

All knights have to start their career being Lawful Good, Neutral Good or Chaotic Good. They can change their alignment later on, though.

Table 1: Knight Experience Progression

| Level | XP | Hit Dice | Title |
|-------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| - | -1,500 | 1d4+1 | Squire |
| - | -500 | 2d4+1 | Trooper |
| 1 | 0 | 3d4+1 | Horseman |
| 2 | 2,500 | 2 | Equestrian |
| 3 | 5,000 | 3 | Cuirassier |
| 4 | 10,000 | 4 | Ridder |
| 5 | 20,000 | 5 | Cavaller |
| 6 | 40,000 | 6 | Cavalierato |
| 7 | 80,000 | 7 | Chevalier |
| 8 | 160,000 | 8 | Gallant |
| 9 | 240,000 | 9 | Knight |
| 10 | 320,000 | 10 | High Knight |
| 11 | 600,000 | 10+3 | High Knight |
| 12 | 900,000 | 10+6 | High Knight |
| 13 | 1,200,000 | 10+9 | High Knight |

Weapons and Armour

A knight can use all weapon but will refrain from use any weapon that have range (including missile weapons, polearms and two-handed sword), as these could be considered cowardly. However, elven and half-elven knights may use composite short bows. A knight who starts his career as a squire from a common family has to acquire a lance once he becomes a trooper. and become proficient with it as soon as possible. Furthermore, a knight will focus on these weapons before learning how to handle others: Long sword, broad sword, bastard sword, short sword, horseman's mace, horseman's flail, horseman's military pick, dagger, scimitar, and javelin. A knight has to become proficient in all of these weapons before attempting to master other weapons. A knight can wear any armour but leather, studded leather and padded armour. He will always wear the armour with the lowest basic armour class, independently from enchantments. Only evil knights may use poison.

Attack Progression

A knight's combat ability progresses like that of a fighter.

Saving Throws

The knight uses the fighter's saving throw matrix and gains a +2 saving throw bonus against illusions.

Weapon Proficiencies

Knights start with three weapon proficiency slots and gain another one every two levels. If he uses a weapon he is not proficient with, a knight suffers a -3 penalty to attack rolls. Knights are not eligible for weapon specialisation. They can become with any weapon, but have to focus on a number of knightly weapons first as described above under *Weapons and Armour*.

Experience Progression

To advance to level 2, a knight has to be trained by another knight of level 4 or higher. To reach levels 3 to 6, he has to be trained by a knight at least two levels above him. Past level 6, training with anybody with weapon training is sufficient.

Special Abilities

Weapon Bonuses

While knights will refrain from using certain weapons like bows or polearms, they excel while using knightly weapons (see **Table 2**). While he progresses in his class, a knight receives attack roll bonuses to attacks with his lance at levels 1, 7 and 13. These bonuses only apply when the knight is mounted. Furthermore, a knight receives a damage bonus equal to his level

to lance attacks while mounted. While dismounted, he receives a +1 damage bonus at all levels. At level three, a knight chooses to focus on either the long sword, the broad sword or the scimitar and gains a +1 attack roll bonus with one of these swords. This bonus increases to +2 at level 9 for the same sword type. Likewise, knights gain an attack rolls bonus for one (and only one) horseman weapon at levels 5 and 11. These bonuses do not count as magical bonuses for the purpose of hitting creatures immune to mundane weapons.

Bonus Attacks

Like the fighter, the knight gains additional attacks at certain levels. While he uses a weapon of choice (a sword, horseman weapon or lance as described above in *Weapon Bonuses*), the knight is treated as being five levels higher than he actually is for the purpose of calculating roundly attacks (see **Table 2**).

Armour Restrictions

A knight will always try get the most prestigious of all armour: Plate mail. If no plate mail is available, he will wear banded or splint mail, chainmail, scale mail, and ring mail in this order. Knights do not wear leather, studded leather and padded armour for it is below their status. A knight will rather wear no armour at all than wear non-metal armour. Enchantments are ignored for the purpose of determining which available armour a knight wears e.g. he will prefer mundane plate mail over magical splint mail.

Table 2: Knight Special Abilities

| Level | Attack Roll Bonus | Roundly Attacks, Common Weapons | Roundly Attacks, Weapons of Choice | Horsemanship |
|-------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Lance (mounted) +1 | 1 | 3/2 | - |
| 2 | - | 1 | 3/2 | - |
| 3 | Long Sword, Broad Sword or Scimitar +1 | 1 | 3/2 | Vault into saddle in heavy armour with one action |
| 4 | - | 1 | 3/2 | Elven female knights can ride unicorns |
| 5 | Horseman's Mace, Horseman's Flail or Horseman's Military Pick +1 | 1 | 3/2 | Mount can increase speed by 20' for six turns |
| 6 | - | 3/2 | 2 | - |
| 7 | Lance (mounted) +2 | 3/2 | 2 | Knights can ride pegasus |
| 8 | - | 3/2 | 2 | - |
| 9 | Sword of Choice +2 | 3/2 | 5/2 | Knight can ride hippogriff |
| 10 | - | 3/2 | 5/2 | - |
| 11 | Horseman's Weapon of Choice +2 | 2 | 5/2 | Knight can ride griffon or comparable mount |
| 12 | - | 2 | 3 | - |
| 13 | Lance (mounted) +3 | 2 | 3 | - |
| 14 | - | 5/2 | 3 | - |
| 15 | - | 5/2 | 3 | - |
| 16 | - | 3 | 3 | - |

Parry

When a knight decides to parry rather than attack, all attack roll bonuses of the passed attack (including bonuses from enchantments, high Strength and class bonuses) are subtracted from one of the attacker's attacks. If the knight has shield, he can parry an additional attack and the shield's armour class bonus, enchantments included, is subtracted from the attacker's attack roll. If a knight parries once or twice in a round, he cannot attack, no matter how many roundly attack he has.

Horsemanship

Knights are intensively trained to fight from the saddle. While on a horse or other mount suitable for a knight, he makes all attacks as if one level higher than he actually is. This applies only to human knights, not to elven or half-elven ones. All knights have a 85% chance of not being thrown from the saddle and even if they are, they have a 85% chance of not taking any damage. These chances increase by 1% per level of the knight. While gains experience, a knight also gains certain abilities and learns to handle non-equine mounts (see **Table 2**). Furthermore, a knight can determine a mount's value and judge whether it is of low, medium or high quality (meaning it has about one third, two thirds or almost all of its potential hit points in regard to the mount's hit dice). A knight's chosen mount will always have two additional hit points per hit die, but not more than the maximum number of hit points available.

Ability Score Increase

A knight is expected to train every day, which allows him to increase his physical ability scores over time. At level 1, a percentile die is rolled for the knight's Strength, Constitution and Dexterity score. These percentile values are added to the scores but have no direct effect except when the knight gains (or improves) percentile Strength. Every time a knight gains a level, 2d10 is rolled and the result added to his percentile values for Strength, Constitution and Dexterity. If a percentile value reach or surpass 100, the respective ability is increased by one. All three scores can reach a maximum value of 18/00 with this method. If the knight loses a level of experience, he loses the percentile bonus for that level as well.

Fearlessness

Knights are not affected by mundane or magical fear and radiate a 10' *Protection from Fear* aura that all allies benefit from. Furthermore, knights gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against illusions and have a 90% of being immune to mind-affecting magic in addition to any saving throw.

Stamina

Knights do not fall unconscious when they reach negative hit points. However, they cannot keep on fighting and have to rest and seek healing. The number of negative hit points a knight can have before falling unconscious is equal to the hit points he had at

level 1 without bonuses from Constitution taken into account.

Fast Healing

For every week of rest, a knight heals an additional 1d4 hit points.

The Code of Chivalry

The knight is a respected member of society and has a number of privileges as well as certain obligations.

Coat of Arms

A knight has a unique coat of arms that allows others to identify him. He may cover his insignia while travelling, but has to reveal them if he meets an opponent that might challenge him to an honourable duel. Knights are permitted to participate in tournaments without revealing their identity (but have to do so should they win).

Pennon

From level 4 on, a knight can fly his pennon on his lance or on the battlefield. Losing the pennon is highly dishonourable and requires the knight to recover it as soon as possible.

Hospitality

A knight can expect (and is expected to grant) hospitality from other knights of the same alignment.

Knightly Virtues

A knight has to uphold the knightly virtues: Liberty, honour, good faith, glory, selflessness, pride, courtesy, and bravery as well as any other requirements from his code of chivalry (which is determined by the game master). Failure to adhere to the code results in the knight becoming a fighter. He loses all his special abilities with the exception of his specialisation in his weapons of choice. The former knight will not have access to regular fighter weapon specialisation, though.

Rules of Battle

A knight is not permitted to run from combat, not even to save one of his fellow adventurers. If he does so, he gains only half the XP he would normally have received for that battle. Likewise, a knight gains no XP for goals achieved by infiltration and stealth. On the battlefield, a knight will always engage huge and terrifying creatures like dragons and devils first. Afterwards, he turns on his other opponents starting with mounted, noble and otherwise high-ranking people. Peasants and other commoners are killed last. A knight will always charge into battle like a complete idiot, disregarding formation, being in the way of allied troops and ignoring tactical advantages.

Alignment Chance

Initially, all knights have to be Lawful, Neutral or Chaotic Good. Before reaching level 4, a knight can

change his alignment without any penalties. If a knight changes his alignment at level 4 or later, the usual penalties for an alignment change apply. Neutral and evil knights do not have the *Protection from Fear* aura and cannot stay conscious at negative hit points. Evil knights can use poison and are free to not grant hospitality to other knights.

Magic Items

A knight can use all magic items usable by a fighter.

Henchmen and Followers

The knight is treated like a fighter in regard to henchmen and followers. Knights will only hire henchmen with the same alignment as the knight.

A Knight's Stronghold

After having reached level 10 and acquired the title of high knight, a knight can settle down and construct a stronghold, provided he does not inherit one anyway. A knight's stronghold will be pompous and representative, with a large staff. The annual revenue a knight's stronghold generates is determined by the game master.

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