The Beast Within

The Werewolf Class for Basic Era Games

By Timothy S. Brannan

"Even a man who is pure at heart, and says his prayers by night, may become a wolf when the wolfbane blooms and the autumn moon is bright." - The Wolfman (1941).

Werewolf Class

Prime Requisite: Strength and Constitution
Required Abilities: 13 or greater on Strength and Constitution; 10 or greater on Wisdom.
Experience Bonus: 5% for Strength 15-16, 10% for Strength 17-18.
Hit Dice: 1d10 per level up to 9th level. At 10th level, +1 hit point per level.
     Bonuses due to high Constitution are not applied after level 10.
Maximum Level: 10/20
Armor: None* (see text) **Weapons:** Any
Special Abilities: Lycanthrope powers and weaknesses

> **Note:** This class is designed to be used with Basic Era games and there expansion sets from circa 1980-1983. It should also be roughly compatible with the "Retro-Clones" of those games.
> As with all new material, please consult with your GM before use.

Werewolves are the most well-known and perhaps the most feared of all the lycanthropes. Werewolves, like most lycanthropes, come in two general varieties; natural and infected. Infected, also known as cursed, lycanthropes have almost no control over their bestial natures and are often hunted by others. Natural lycanthropes are more common and no less bestial, but their greater control makes blend into communities much easier.

It is said that one can easily spot a natural lycanthrope as they tend to look like their animal counterpart in their human forms, but this isn't always the case. Some live in extended family groups and even are active, productive members of their society, both human, and lycanthrope. Some can even take on careers as adventurers.

Natural werewolves, like wolves, live in a pack and have a territory. The order in the pack is absolute with pups and whelps at the bottom and the Alpha on top. Some are solitary, lone wolves, and have no claim to kin or pact. These wolves, most often males just entering adulthood, are most often encountered as adventures.

Only natural werewolves may become player characters. Cursed werewolves are too chaotic. Also, most adventuring player character werewolves are lone wolves, wolves without a pack. The reasons for this may be many, but typically the lone wolf is looking for the things a werewolf treasures the most, a life-mate and a pack.

Werewolves, natural and cursed, like most lycanthropes are made from human or originally human stock. Demi-humans that contract lycanthropy will get sick and die (save vs. death) in 2d6 days.

All werewolf characters begin at 1st level. Often they will disguise themselves as either a fighter or even some sort of specialist tracker. Their lack of armor and overall skills at weapons though will soon betray these falsehoods. The character is assumed to be a lone wolf

unless the player and the Game Master decide on something different. A lone wolf is not trusted in the territory of another pack unless an overture is made to that Pack Alpha. Another pack wolf though is treated as a hostile visitor. Lone wolves when entering another pack's territory (and they will always know, the signs are obvious to all werewolves) must seek out that pack's Alpha for permission to be in that territory. Some packs do welcome lone wolves, but most treat them with suspicion.

Werewolves use a d10 to determine their hit points per level. Werewolves are particularly robust and may add any benefits of high Constitution to their total hit points.

Powers and Weaknesses
Werewolves gain powers above and beyond that of normal humans, but they also have a fair number of weaknesses.

Werewolves have a greater sense of smell and hearing, so they are only surprised on a roll of "1" on a 1d6. They can detect secret doors, much like and elf, on a roll of "1" or "2" on a 1d6.

Werewolves also gain Darkvision, the ability to see in the dark as if it were normal light.

Animal Form
The greatest power of the werewolf and any lycanthrope is their ability to transform into an animal. At first level, they may shift into a normal wolf. At 4th level, they can assume a hybrid form of a part wolf and part man, or a "wolf-man" form. At 7th level, they can assume a dire-wolf form.

Each form has it advantages in regard to hit and damage. All forms use the human as a base.

Form	Bonus to hit	Damage
Human	Normal	As weapon
Wolf	+1	1d4+1
Hybrid	+2	1d6+2
Dire	+2	1d8+2

The wolf forms get two claw attacks per round. On two successful claw attacks the werewolf may also bite for the same damage. These rolls are unmodified.

Any critical bite (a roll of "20") on attack will result in the victim contacting infected lycanthropy as per the rules.

Transformation requires one round. The werewolf may transform any number of times per day, but if more than three transformations are performed it gets more difficult requiring an additional round. So transforming to wolf, then to hybrid form and then back to human would be three transformations.

Tracking
Werewolves are peerless trackers. Using a combination of smell, keen eyesight, and hearing, plus a combination of animal-like instinct and human intelligence they are among the best.

Outdoor Tracking
Outdoors, the basic chance for successful tracking (on a day-to-day basis) is 90%. This score is modified by a −10% for each day old the tracks are, and modified by −10% (for the entire effort thereafter) for each day of rain (or snow) that has fallen on the trail. If the werewolf is familiar with the scent being tracked, say that of a friend or a sample of the scent, then this can be modified up to 10% to 20%.

Underground and Urban Tracking
Tracking in the city (any urban or populated area) or underground makes it considerably harder to find and follow a trail. First, the beginning of the trail must be no more than six hours old. The base chance to track is still 90%. Each time the trail changes (as described below), there is a chance for the werewolf to lose the trail and be unable to track it further; that is, the werewolf cannot pick up the trail even by circling the area where the trail was lost.

The circumstances under which the prey can "lose" the werewolf are as follows:

Turns down a side passage: 25% chance to lose the trail.
Goes through a door: 35% chance to lose the trail.

Goes up or down through a trap door or ladder: 40% chance to lose the trail.

Climbs a wall up or down (including pits and shafts): 50% chance to lose the trail.

Urban tracking can be modified by familiarity as described in Outdoor Tracking.

This tracking improves by 1% per level.

Resistances

Werewolves are harder than normal humans. They gain +2 to natural (not brewed or crafted) poisons and venoms. So poisons that come from nature would include anything from a plant or the bite of spider or snake. Poisons that are used to treat blades or darts are often crafted, even if they are crafted from "natural" ingredients.

Werewolves become immune to Polymorph magic at 5th level. But not the turn to Stone effects of spells or a medusa or gorgon.

After 2nd level, normal weapons only do 1 point of damage per hit. Magical and silvered weapons are required to hit the werewolf. Regardless of level silvered weapons always do double damage to the werewolf.

Regeneration

Starting at 6th level, a werewolf can regenerate lost hit points at the rate of 1 hp per round. Damage from weapons treated with wolfsbane cannot be regenerated this way, but can be healed via magic or normal healing over time. See **Weaknesses** below.

Animal Empathy

The werewolf can communicate with other non-lycanthropic wolves. This power begins at 3rd level and increases by level for each wolf type. So at 5th level they can communicate with winter wolves and at 8th level Wargs or Dire Wolves.

Summoning

The werewolf can summon other normal wolves to aid it. The wolves are not charmed and are responding as if the werewolf were a member of their pack and visa-verse.

A werewolf may summon the following creatures, once per day of each type.

Level	Wolf	Number
4th	Wolves	2d4
6th	Winter Wolf	1d6
9th	Dire wolf	1d4

These creatures will arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the werewolf for up to 1 hour.

These creatures are subject to what is at hand. A werewolf is not likely to be able to summon wolves on a boat, or in a dungeon. In a wooded area, for example, the numbers could be greater.

A GM can also rule that there no creatures of the appropriate type in the area of the summons at any point.

The werewolf cannot summon wolves controlled by another werewolf or creature.

Weaknesses

A werewolf regardless of level is always affected by silvered weapons. These weapons must either be made of silver or be coated with a layer of silver. These weapons always do double damage. Since these weapons also erupt in a blueish glow when striking a werewolf they are favored by those who hunt these creatures.

Wolfsbane, also known as Monkshood, is a deadly poison to all were-creatures, and werewolves in particular.

If presented to a werewolf it will keep them at bay and they will not be able to approach the wielder (5' distance).

For the price of raw materials and a 100 gp fee an alchemist can create a wolfsbane elixir that is a deadly poison. If consumed the werewolf mush make a save vs. Poison or die. Weapons coated with this poison cause an extra 1d10 points of damage and can be used for 3 rounds. Werewolves that can regenerate under normal circumstances cannot do so with damage from wolfsbane.

During the night of the full moon the werewolf must switch to their animal form. Preferably they would shift at least once per month in order to continue to regenerate,

but the need to shift is greatest on the three nights of the full moon and they cannot control it. GMs may allow a PC that wishes to avoid shifting a saving throw vs. polymorph to avoid shifting each night with a cumulative -1 for each night. If they avoid shifting due to will they will not be able to regenerate until they spend at least 4 hours in wolf form.

Also as noted before any critical bite (an attack roll of a natural "20") will transmit the lycanthropy infection.

Armor

A werewolf may not wear any form of armor since it impedes their transformation and can actually cause them damage. One of the most sought after magical items prized by any lycanthrope is something known as "Shifter Armor". This is a pelt made from a retired (read "killed") Alpha. Typically it is worn by the Alpha that killed the previous Alpha. The armor is a pelt of the same sort of animal as the were-creature. The armor provides a base AC 6 but can be made magical like any other armor. The armor will shift with the creature. It only provides AC 6 when in human form. Any additional bonuses due to magic will aid the werewolf in any form.

Levels and Alphas

Werewolves live in a strictly organized and regimented society. Each werewolf knows his or her place in the pack hierarchy. This pack placement is equal to their level. Lone wolves are treated as two levels lower than their actual level when dealing with pack wolves in terms of pack placement only (not attacks or saves).

The rank and file members of the werewolf pack will under 4th level and they will typically avoid encounters with outsiders.

Werewolves of 4th to 6th level are the ones that adventure outside of the pack more often. Typically these are also werewolves that have left their pack to survive on their own and have become a "lone wolf". Some do this knowing they have no chance to challenge their Alpha or they may have even been forced out by an Alpha that sees an up and coming rival. These are the werewolves that are most commonly encountered outside of the pact.

At 9th level any werewolf, pack or lone, may start their own pack provided they have territory that is not claimed by another werewolf. If there is a current Alpha then the werewolf must challenge and defeat the Alpha before gaining 9th level and starting a pack.

Levels 10 to 20 are reserved for Alpha werewolves only. GMs can rule that only NPC werewolves are capable of such levels.

Special Note: Elven Lycanthropes

Game Masters with a flair for the unusual may opt to allow Elven weres.

Werefoxes and Werecoyotes

Lycanthropy among the elves is rare. Most will die when infected by a curse human-lycanthrope. There are however legends of a time when elves were simple hunter-gathers of elven shamans that could become coyotes and elven women that were cursed to becoming foxes at night.

Werefoxes, also known as Foxwomen, only affect elven and half-elven women. Elven males die when contracting this disease. This causes the infected, cursed or natural foxwoman to seek out a solitary life or find company in other weres.

Werecoyotes are an even more rare breed and come from a time when elves practiced ancient nature worship. There are still werecoyotes among the elves, both male and female, but they are extremely rare. Natural werecoyotes are often considered to be natural shamans.

Elven lycanthropes are much the same as werewolves in stats and powers but are limited to sixth level (6th) of advancement.

Special thanks to Chris Tamm for reading an early draft of this.

Werewolf

WEREWOLF EXPERIENCE TABLE				
Level	XP		Hit Dice	Powers
1	0		1d10	Wolf form, Senses, Track
2	2,300		2d10	Resistance to normal weapons
3	4,600		3d10	Animal (Wolf) Empathy
4	9,200		4d10	Hybrid form, Summon wolves
5	18,400		5d10	Immune to Polymorph, empathy with Winter wolves
6	38,000		6d10	Regeneration, Summon Winter wolves
7	76,000		7d10	Dire Wolf form
8	152,000		8d10	Empathy with Wargs and Dire wolves
9*	310,000		9d10	Alpha, Summon Dire wolves
10	430,000		9d10 +1	Alpha Levels
11	550,000		9d10 +2	Alpha Levels
12	670,000		9d10 +3	Alpha Levels
13	790,000		9d10 +4	Alpha Levels
14	910,000		9d10 +5	Alpha Levels
15	1,030,000		9d10 +6	Alpha Levels
16	1,150,000		9d10 +7	Alpha Levels
17	1,270,000		9d10 +8	Alpha Levels
18	1,390,000		9d10 +9	Alpha Levels
19	1,510,000		9d10 +10	Alpha Levels
20	1,630,000		9d10 +11	Alpha Levels

WEREWOLF SAVING THROWS

Level	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-20+
Death Ray or Poison*	8	6	4	2
Magic Wands or Devices	10	8	6	4
Polymorph, Paralysis or Turn to Stone**	9	7	5	3
Dragon Breath or Breath Weapons	13	11	9	6
Rods, Staffs and Spells	12	10	8	6

*Werewolves gain +2 to natural (not brewed or crafted) poisons.
**Werewolves are immune to Polymorph magic at 5th level. But not the turn to Stone effects of spells or a medusa

WEREWOLF HIT ROLLS (on 1d20)

Level	Target's Armor Class																		
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9
1-3	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
4-6	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
7-9	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	20	20	20
10-20+	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	20

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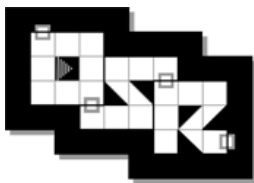
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Werewolves…

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