



## PALADIN

The opposite of barbarians, a paladin fights only when necessary. He carries a strict faith in himself or in the religion he is associated with and swears absolute loyalty to that devotion and its tenets. He believes the shields of truth and virtue protect better than any armor forged by man.

A paladin need not be tied to a lord, house, or kingdom. He may wander the world, dispatching evil when encountered. Oddly enough, though trained from an early age to fight, a paladin often avoids violence unless necessary. Even though a stereotype exists claiming a paladin egotistical and vain, the majority are far from this cliché. He remains humble, giving of himself to those in need, regardless of the strain on body and soul.

Pride is a sin not often seen in the modern paladin. When one sees arrogance and condescension in a lowly warrior or even a fully knighted lord claiming membership in a paladin order, this declaration of virtue spills from a liar's lips.

A paladin stands as the iconic knight of legend, the quintessential guardian in shining armor known previously only in story and myth. He possesses neither a specific creed

nor a code. Across many barriers of language and culture, such a valiant defender reveals himself through his determined purpose, ironclad beliefs, and unwavering integrity. He maintains his moral fiber, especially when those morals are the most inconvenient. The paladin respects the laws of his faith, not necessarily the laws of where he resides. If they are in conflict, the paladin's morals take precedence. A paladin believes in chivalry and honor, mercy and valor. He will never take the life of one unarmed. He will always prefer to protect the innocent, the poor, or the weak over the defeat of his enemies. Courage is important but a paladin must temper that courage with common sense—to know when to fight and when not to. The paladin must maintain his faith in the

**Table: Paladin**

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Virtuous Arsenal, Aura of Courage, Divine Perception
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Pure body +1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Inspire Greatness
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Inspire Heroics
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path, Sanctified

integrity and kindness of civilized people and / or to his god or gods. He may not need to pray every single hour nor does his faith require him to pray a specific way in a specific tongue. Since a good and merciful god never asks a follower to die needlessly, the paladin is not required to die for his faith, his lord, or even for his own honor. He only willingly dies to protect others or to defeat evil in whatever forms it takes.

Though rare, one may follow no gods at all. He claims he requires neither the promise of eternal reward nor the threat of everlasting damnation to behave in a manner that is selfless or even "holy." Whatever power taps the shoulder of a potential paladin, it is capable of seeing into the heart and finding the goodness that resides within.

A paladin gives to charity but not to the point of poverty. He will be courteous to others, forgive the sins of anyone if asked in sincerity, and act in humility of his own strengths and abilities. The paladin of legend must also be loyal to his brothers, to his sworn lord, or most importantly, to any woman he takes as wife. A paladin is not celibate but seldom takes lovers or seeds bastards. If exceptions occur, his morals demand the paladin support and care for whatever family he has.

The paladin follows simple edicts: benevolence, faith, humility, integrity, loyalty, mercy, and patience. The paladin must adhere to these and keep the standards he himself wishes to uphold. Breaking any of these ideals brings upon a personal shame even if no others witness the act. If allies attempt to convince the paladin the act was morally justified, the paladin's own guilt may prevent absolution. He never looks for an excuse to bypass his morals. If an enemy asks for forgiveness, the paladin must accept it unless the request is not genuine. The paladin must never slay an enemy unarmed or helpless, never turn against an ally for selfish motives, and never ignore those in need.

A paladin may appear in the most unlikely of circumstances, rising seemingly spontaneously to confront the darkness. He may emerge unexpectedly in the midst of grief and loss as an avenger and guardian, or may wander for years or decades, drawn towards his destiny before finally manifesting his abilities. This, combined with their relative rarity, propensity to wander, and short life expectancy, has made the source of their abilities almost impossible to study.

Though many may claim divine power and declare their actions were bequeathed from a higher order, few are true paladins. There are less in this world than one might think, as god seldom invests his veneration with uncertainty. If one acts commonly against his ethics on a whim or professes his honor justifies acts others claim criminal, chances are, he is a paladin in title only.

**Hit Dice:** d10

## REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a paladin, a character must meet all of the following criteria.

**Alignment:** Lawful good.

**Skills:** Perform (Oratory) 8 ranks, Knowledge (Religion/Philosophy) 8 ranks.

**Feat:** Weapon Focus (any martial or exotic weapon) OR Improved Unarmed Strike.

**Special:** A player choosing this class is expected to follow the guidelines and beliefs put forth above. Play the class with respect. Don't sully this one.

## CLASS SKILLS

The paladin's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Knowledge (religion/philosophy) (Int), Perform (Oratory) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Sense Motive (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

At first level, a paladin must behave with charity, temperance, forbearance, and honor. He must conduct himself at all times in a manner that is consistent with a Lawful Good alignment with the following additional restriction: a paladin may not instigate conflict and only uses force in self-defense, the defense of allies, or the defense of the helpless or innocent.

All of the following are class features of the paladin.

**Virtuous Arsenal (Su):** at 1st level any weapon that the paladin wields becomes both lawful and good aligned for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction for as long as the paladin wields it. If the paladin can cast spells, his spells acquire [Lawful] and [Good] spell descriptors.

**Aura of Courage (Su):** The paladin at 1<sup>st</sup> level is immune to fear (magical or otherwise). Each ally within 10 feet of him gains a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects. This ability functions while the paladin is conscious, but not if he is unconscious or dead.

**Divine Perception (Su):** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the paladin gains a sacred bonus to Sense Motive checks equal to the paladin's Wisdom modifier. A paladin may also use Detect Evil and Detect Good at will as a spell-like ability using their class level as their caster level.

**Spells per Day/Spells Known:** When a new paladin level is gained, the character gains new divine spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) if he had also gained a level in the divine spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefits a character of that class would have gained. The paladin does not gain the ability to cast divine spells unless previously able to do so.

**Exalted Path (Su):** If the paladin cannot, or wishes not to progress in spell casting, he may instead follow the exalted path, taking one of the abilities listed below. A character able to cast spells previously may alternate. Each ability lasts for as many rounds as the paladin's Wisdom modifier. Paths may be chosen in any order though several require other paths as prerequisites. He may only use each ability once per day. Each time the paladin uses an exalted ability, he generates a powerful lawful good aura that cannot be concealed or hidden in any way. This white radiance acts as a *light* spell for the duration of the ability and 1d4 rounds afterward.

To activate an exalted path ability takes a free action, however certain rules must be followed:

**Paladin Level 2:** The paladin cannot operate more than one exalted ability at any time. He may prematurely end one to begin another, also as a free action, though the terminated ability still counts as a use per day.

**Paladin level 6:** The paladin may activate two exalted abilities at once instead of one. He may prematurely end the two together to begin others, also as a

free action, though the terminated abilities still count as uses per day. The two abilities must be activated on the same round.

**Paladin Level 10:** The paladin may activate four exalted abilities at once instead of two or one. He may prematurely end the four together to begin others, also as a free action, though the terminated abilities still count as uses per day. The four abilities must be activated on the same round. Also, the paladin's radiance during the duration is upgraded from a *light* spell to a *daylight* spell for the length of the ability and 1d4 rounds afterward.

**Aftereffects:** After an exalted ability ends (naturally or prematurely), the paladin must make a fort save or suffer the following effects. Single ability--DC15 or suffer fatigue until rested. Two abilities simultaneously--DC20 or suffer exhaustion until rested. Four abilities simultaneously--DC25 or the Paladin drops to 0 hit points instantly and falls unconscious regardless of feats taken, spells currently in effect, or if employing the hero rule (see later). No matter the healing process, the paladin cannot be roused from his slumbering state for 2d6 minutes. Upon waking, he suffers 2d4 points of ability damage to all his physical abilities (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution).

Further exalted abilities cannot be used until the paladin has fully recovered from ability loss.

The available exalted abilities are as follows:

**Supreme Tolerance:** The paladin gains unseen fortitude when facing certain death square in its eyes. He gains temporary hit points equal to his character level x3. These hit points are removed first when taking damage.

**Armor of Glory:** The paladin shrugs off all but the greatest blows. He screams in defiance against mortal injuries, striking fear in enemies confronted with such mettle. The paladin gains DR 5/Evil, which increases to DR 10/Evil at 10<sup>th</sup> level. He also gains spell resistance equal to his character level +10.

**Prerequisites:** Supreme Tolerance

**Wrath of Will:** The paladin wields his weapon with remarkable skill and force never before encountered. Any weapon the paladin wields that strikes an evil opponent may automatically confirm a critical strike without having to re-roll. This effect does not apply to any weapon already enchanted with a magical effect related to critical hits, such as a keen weapon or a vorpal sword. The paladin may automatically confirm a critical strike 3 times while Wrath of Will is in effect.

**Line in the Sand:** The paladin declares his intentions with words or a firm stance of defiance against the approaching evil. Any enemy struck by an attack of opportunity from the paladin ends its movement within the threatened square and is automatically tripped (per the attack). Any tumble checks to move past a square threatened by the paladin have their Skill DCs raised by the paladin's combined attack bonus (BAB, ability, feats, spells, and primary weapon enhancement). This ability only works on opponents up to one size category larger than the paladin. The paladin may move while this ability is activated.

**Divine Strength:** Channeling an inner light, the paladin brings forth all remaining might of mind and muscle, saving nothing for his recovery and victory march later. The paladin's Wisdom bonus is applied to all melee damage rolls for the duration of the effect against evil opponents.

**Prerequisites:** Wrath of Will.

**Faithful Bodyguard:** The paladin swears loyalty to and protection of a specific person (must be a living target). His fidelity is so absolute, he will gladly lay his life for the other. At the beginning of the ability, the paladin selects a single ally within 10 feet. The paladin subjects himself to all attacks in the ally's stead. If the attack hits the paladin, he takes damage normally. If it misses, it also misses the ally. The paladin cannot change his ally for the duration of the ability.

**Last Stand:** Surrounded on all sides by evil, the paladin will not fall. Impalements, severed limbs, mortal wounds aplenty—the paladin cares not. Despite how much damage the paladin receives, despite how many hit points he has left, even if well past -10 (or -Con if using the Hero rule), the paladin is alert and able to commit full round actions. The paladin automatically passes all fort saves for death from massive damage and all death effects do not take effect until Last Stand expires. After Last Stand expires, the paladin must acknowledge the effect/s of damage and spells sustained, even if he drops stone cold dead.

**Prerequisites:** Armor of Glory

**Pure Body (Ex):** The paladin at 3<sup>rd</sup> level becomes immune to all diseases, including supernatural and magical diseases.

**Inspire Greatness (Su):** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the paladin's beaming charisma and rousing words inspires greatness in a single willing ally within 30 feet, granting him extra fighting capability. For every three character levels beyond 5<sup>th</sup> level (including past paladin level 10), the paladin can target one additional ally with a single use of this ability. To inspire greatness in others, the ally/allies must see the paladin and hear the stirring words of his speech. The paladin does not gain this ability for himself. He must also pass a DC20 Perform (Oration) skill check.

The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears the paladin and for 5 rounds thereafter. A creature inspired with greatness gains 2 bonus Hit Dice (d10s), the commensurate number of temporary hit points (apply the target's Constitution modifier, if any, to these bonus Hit Dice), a +2 competence bonus on attack rolls, and a +1 competence bonus on Fortitude saves. The bonus Hit Dice count as regular Hit Dice for determining the effect of spells that are Hit Dice dependant. Inspire greatness is a mind-affecting ability. He may activate this ability once per day / 3 character levels. The speech requires at least a full round action to commit though the paladin may take 10 or even 20 for a truly awe-inspiring opus. The paladin may affect more allies if they are less powerful. One ally counts as two if both are less than 4 hit dice or lower than the paladin.

**Inspire Heroics (Su):** At 9<sup>th</sup> level, the paladin can inspire tremendous heroism in a single willing ally within 30 feet. For every three character levels beyond 9<sup>th</sup> level (including past paladin level 10), the paladin can inspire heroics in one additional creature. To inspire greatness in others, the ally/allies must see the paladin and hear the stirring words of his speech. The paladin does not gain this ability for himself. He must also pass a DC25 Perform (Oration) skill check.

A creature so inspired gains a +4 morale bonus on saving throws and a +4 dodge bonus to AC. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears the paladin and for 5 rounds thereafter. Inspire heroics is a mind-affecting ability. He may activate this ability once per day / 3 character levels. The speech requires at least a full round action to commit though the paladin may take 10 or even 20. By

increasing the Perform (Oration) skill check to DC35, the paladin may combine the effects of both Inspire Heroics and Inspire Greatness. The paladin may affect more allies if they are less powerful. One ally counts as two if both are less than 4 hit dice or lower than the paladin.

**Sanctified (Su):** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, because of his consecrated body, a slain paladin is blessed with a permanent gentle repose effect (per spell). Slain paladins cannot be turned into any undead, regardless of their state (even if hacked into pieces). No part of a paladin's body may be used in any corrupt/necromancy spell or spell-like effect. If used as ingredients in a neverborn or cipher, the construct still awakens but cannot be controlled. It also becomes good aligned. Neverborns cease becoming totems.

## EX-PALADINS

If the paladin wanders from these constraints in a moment of weakness or due to a tragic conflict of

circumstances, the paladin loses all paladin abilities and will remain so until atoned.

This castigation comes not from divine punishment, but from a personal choice to redeem one's self for the actions committed. A paladin dishonors himself by his cowardly actions and seeks redemption.

The paladin must rest and seek to cleanse his soul by its stain. There is no set ritual or sacrifice, nor can one simply cast a spell and magically whisk away one's personal duty for salvation. This penance falls to the GMs discretion as the severity of the breach dictates the extent of the redemption. It should be noted that this form of atonement should only be granted once. Paladins learn their lessons quickly. Until salvation is found, he may not progress any further in levels as a paladin. He regains his abilities and advancement potential if he atones for his violations.