

Elite Lancer

An elite lancer is a mounted combat specialist par excellence. He is skilled in the arts of formal jousting, with all its pomp and ceremony and its intricate courtly rules of etiquette, but he is no less talented on the battlefield when the time comes to ride down his enemies and drive them into the dust on the point of his lance. Elite lancers are found in virtually every culture, and in many are accorded great esteem for their noble bearing and for their puissance in contests of arms. Their fame often precedes them, but some work to keep a low profile and let their steel and their steed do the talking.

Hit Die: d10

Requirements:

To qualify to become an elite lancer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Mounted Combat, Weapon Focus (lance)

Skills: Handle Animal 5 ranks, Ride 5 ranks

Proficiency: Must be proficient with lances and light and heavy shields.

Class Skills

The elite lancer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nobility) (Int), Ride (Dex), and Sense Motive (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

| Table: The Elite Lancer | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Level | Base Attack Bonus | Fort Save | Ref Save | Will Save | Special |
| 1 st | +1 | +1 | +0 | +0 | Mount, Unseat, Limit Break |
| 2 nd | +2 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Jousting Trick, Lance Training |
| 3 rd | +3 | +2 | +1 | +1 | Jousting Trick, Save Mount |
| 4 th | +4 | +2 | +1 | +1 | Jousting Trick, Lance Mastery |
| 5 th | +5 | +3 | +2 | +2 | Jousting Trick, Mighty Charge |

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the elite lancer prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Elite lancers gain no armor or weapon proficiencies.

Limit Break (Su): At 1st level, the elite lancer receives the Limit Break (Charging Blow).

Charging Blow (Su): This Limit Break allows the elite lancer to make a single charging attack. The elite lancer gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Attack and Damage rolls plus an additional +2 for every elite lancer level after 1st. In addition, if the elite lancer hits, he also deals an extra 2d6 points of damage plus an additional 2d6 for every elite lancer level after 1st.

Mount (Ex): An elite lancer gains the services of a special mount, as the chocobo knight class feature, using his elite lancer class level as his chocobo knight level. If the elite lancer already has a similar class feature that grants him a mount, his elite lancer levels stack with levels in that class to determine the mount's abilities. If such an ability grants him a non-mount companion, he may retain the effects of that ability and instead treat his elite lancer levels separately for the purpose of the mount gained from this prestige class.

Unseat: At 1st level, an elite lancer gains Unseat as a bonus feat.

Jousting Tricks (Ex): At 2nd level and each level thereafter, an elite lancer learns a wide variety of tricks for using his lance to mow down his opponents, especially when facing off against other mounted elite lancers in a formal joust. Unless otherwise noted, he can take each jousting trick only once.

Banner (Ex): An elite lancer can fly his personal standard upon his lance, a symbol of renown that inspires his allies. This functions as the chocobo knight's banner class feature, using his elite lancer level +4 in place of his chocobo knight level. Elite lancer levels stack with chocobo knight levels for the purpose of the banner class feature.

Caparisoned Steed (Ex): An elite lancer's mount reduces the armor check penalty for any armor it wears by an amount equal to the elite lancer's class level, and in addition his mount can move at normal speed in medium armor or when carrying a medium load and can sleep in medium armor without becoming fatigued. This ability can be selected twice. If taken a second time, the elite lancer's mount takes no armor check penalty for any armor it wears, and in addition his mount can move at normal speed in heavy armor or when carrying a heavy load and can sleep in heavy armor without becoming fatigued.

Challenger (Ex): When the elite lancer is mounted, he can challenge a foe once per day, as the chocobo knight class feature, treating his elite lancer level as his chocobo knight level. If an elite lancer also has levels as a chocobo knight, these levels stack for the purpose of his challenge class feature. He can take this jousting trick more than once. Each time he does so, he gains one additional challenge per day and increases his effective chocobo knight level by 1 for the purpose of this ability. If he is not mounted, an elite lancer cannot use this class feature, except against a creature that has slain or incapacitated his mount or that has confirmed a critical hit against the elite lancer.

Charge Breaker (Ex): When the elite lancer is wielding a weapon with the brace property, he can ready it against a charge as an immediate action. In addition, if he is wielding a light or heavy shield and is attacked by a creature using the charge action, he can make a shield bash attack against his attacker as an attack of opportunity or as an immediate action. This attack is resolved before the charging creature's attack. If the elite lancer does not threaten his attacker, he can still make this attack against the creature (if it attacks him with a natural weapon) or as a sunder combat maneuver targeting the attacker's weapon (if it attacks him with a manufactured weapon). If the attack hits or the sunder maneuver succeeds (regardless of the damage dealt), the charging creature's attack is partly deflected and it takes a penalty equal to the elite lancer's level on any attack and damage rolls it makes against the elite lancer as part of its charge action.

Combined Charger (Ex): When the elite lancer uses the charge action while mounted and his mount does not attack, he can combine the creature's power and momentum with his own. He adds his mount's size modifier to all combat maneuver checks he makes when mounted. He also adds an additional bonus on combat maneuver checks equal to his elite lancer level or the mount's Strength modifier, whichever is less, and he adds the same bonus to any hit point damage dealt by a successful attack made as part of a mounted charge.

Crooked Courser (Ex): When the elite lancer uses the charge action while mounted, or when his mount uses the run action, his mount can turn up to 90 degrees during its movement. This can be a single 90-degree turn or two 45-degree turns.

Expert Trainer (Ex): The elite lancer learns to train mounts with speed and unsurpassed expertise. The elite lancer gains a bonus equal to his class level whenever he uses Handle Animal on an animal that serves as a mount. In addition, he can reduce the time needed to teach a mount a new trick or train a mount for a general purpose to 1 day per 1 week required by increasing the DC by +5. He can also train more than one mount at once, although each mount after the first adds +2 to the DC.

Lancer's Charge (Ex): The elite lancer no longer takes a penalty to his AC when using the charge action, and he increases his attack roll bonus when charging to +4.

Mounted Combat Master (Ex): The elite lancer may select any one of the following as a bonus feat: Animal Affinity, Signature Skill (Ride), Skill Focus (Ride), or any feat for which the Mounted Combat feat or ranks in the Ride skill is a prerequisite. He may take this jousting trick more than once, and he must meet all prerequisites for the feat in question.

Nimble Charger (Ex): When the elite lancer uses the charge action while mounted, he can charge even if his mount must move through difficult terrain or squares occupied by friendly creatures.

Performance Combat (Ex): The elite lancer's style is flamboyant and flashy, ideally suited for playing to the crowd and currying the favor of onlookers. He treats the lance as if it had the performance weapon quality, gaining a +2 bonus on combat performance checks prompted by an attack or combat maneuver with the lance. In addition, he gains one performance combat feat as a bonus feat. He may take this jousting trick more than once, gaining a different bonus feat and increasing the bonus he gains on combat performance checks with a lance by 1 each time.

Shatter Shield (Ex): The elite lancer can attempt a combat maneuver check to sunder the shield of his target, adding a bonus equal to his elite lancer level to his attack and damage roll for the purpose of this sunder maneuver. If the target's shield gains the broken condition but is not destroyed, the target takes damage equal to the elite lancer's class level. If the target's shield is destroyed, any damage dealt to the shield over and above that required to destroy the shield is dealt to the target.

Shield Mount (Ex): When the elite lancer is mounted upon his special mount and wielding a shield, his mount also adds his shield bonus (including any enhancement bonus) to its AC. This AC bonus does not apply if the elite lancer is unaware of the attack or is denied his Dexterity bonus to AC.

Stay in the Saddle (Ex): When an elite lancer would be forced off his mount as the result of a combat maneuver check, as an immediate action he can attempt his own combat maneuver check, adding his elite lancer level as a bonus. If the result of this check equals or exceeds the attacker's combat maneuver check, the elite lancer remains mounted (though any other effects of the attack apply normally). If the elite lancer would be removed from his mount by a magical effect, as an immediate action he can attempt a Reflex save against the effect's DC, adding his elite lancer level as a bonus on the save. If this second save against the effect succeeds, the elite lancer stays in the saddle (even if killed, knocked unconscious, or otherwise unable to take actions) for a number of rounds equal to his elite lancer level. If he remains helpless at the end of this time, he may fall from the saddle (GM's discretion). In the case of an effect that would cause the elite lancer or his mount to become frightened or panicked.

Terrifying Onset (Ex): When using the charge action, the elite lancer can make an Intimidate check as a free action to demoralize the target of his charge. This check is made immediately prior to resolving the attack, and if the check succeeds the elite lancer may choose not to attack but keeping the result of the Intimidate check.

Trip Mount (Ex): Although a violation of traditional jousting etiquette in formal matches, elite lancers are nonetheless skilled in the art of tripping up the mounts of their enemies, a tactic which is fair game against the ignoble and villainous. Whenever he attempts a combat maneuver check to trip a creature carrying a rider, he adds his elite lancer level to his CMB for the purpose of the roll. If the mount is tripped, he adds twice his elite lancer level to the DC of any Ride check made by that creature's rider to avoid damage or falling prone after its mount is tripped. If the elite lancer exceeds the DC to trip the target mount by 5 or more, he may choose to injure the mount's legs as well, reducing its speed by half as if it had stepped on caltrops.

Weaving Point (Ex): When using the charge action, the elite lancer can catch his foe off-guard with a sudden shift in the point and angle of his lance. Treat this as a Bluff check to feint, but it is a free action made as part of the charge, and the elite lancer may use his bonus on Intimidate rather than Bluff for the purpose of this feint. If the elite lancer exceeds the DC of the Bluff check by 5 or more, the target is denied its shield bonus to AC as well as its Dexterity bonus to AC.

Lance Training (Ex): At 2nd level, an elite lancer gains the benefits of a fighter's chosen weapon class feature with lances. He begins with a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls, and this bonus increases to +2 at 4th level. If the elite lancer already has chosen weapon (spears), this bonus stacks with that bonus. This functions as the fighter's chosen weapon ability for all purposes, including feats, items, or other effects that enhance that ability.

Save Mount (Ex): At 3rd level, an elite lancer can use Mounted Combat to protect his mount one additional time per round, increasing to two additional times per round at 5th level. This stacks with the Trick Riding feat. In addition, whenever an elite lancer's mount fails a saving throw while the elite lancer is within 30 feet, the elite lancer can expend one use of Mounted Combat for that round as an immediate action to allow his mount to reroll the save, with a morale bonus on the saving throw equal to his elite lancer level. If the elite lancer is riding his mount, this reroll uses the mount's immediate action rather than the elite lancer's.

Lance Mastery (Ex): At 4th level, an elite lancer gains Weapon Specialization (lance) as a bonus feat. In addition, he may treat his base attack bonus as his fighter level to meet prerequisites for Greater Weapon Focus (lance) and Greater Weapon Specialization (lance).

Mighty Charge (Ex): At 5th level, an elite lancer learns to make devastating charge attacks while mounted. Double the threat range of any weapons wielded during a charge while mounted. This increase does not stack with other effects that increase the threat range of the weapon. In addition, the elite lancer can make a free bull rush, disarm, sunder, or trip combat maneuver if his charge attack is successful. This free combat maneuver does not provoke an attack of opportunity.