

Hardened Veteran

There are those who have overcome adversity, thrust into a life filled with battlefields and encounters with both monsters as well as man. Through their experiences, they grow more accustomed to the lifestyle, allowing them to better deal with adventures lush with violence.

Hit Die: d12

Requirements

To qualify to become a hardened veteran, a character must fulfil all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-chaotic alignment.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Skills: Diplomacy 2 ranks, Knowledge (local) 2 ranks.

Feats: Toughness.

Special: Must have served at least 1 term (generally 4 years) in the armed forces or have cleared out 10 dungeons during adventures.

Class Skills

The hardened veteran's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (int), Knowledge (geography) (int), Knowledge (history) (int), Knowledge (local) (int), Knowledge (nobility) (int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points Per Level: 2 + Int modifier

Table: The Hardened Veteran					
Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+1	+1	+0	+0	Sword and Shield Master, Veteran's Training, Limit Break
2 nd	+2	+1	+1	+1	Hardened Talents
3 rd	+3	+2	+1	+1	Prolonged Regime
4 th	+4	+2	+1	+1	Hardened Talents, Master of the Fight
5 th	+5	+3	+2	+2	Sword and Shield Master, The Never-Ending Fight
6 th	+6	+3	+2	+2	Hardened Talents, General's Grip
7 th	+7	+4	+2	+2	Trust of Comrades
8 th	+8	+4	+3	+3	Hardened Talents
9 th	+9	+5	+3	+3	Sword and Shield Master
10 th	+10	+5	+3	+3	General's Grip, War Is Ever-Changing, Hardened Talents

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the hardened veteran prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The hardened veteran is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and all armors (light, medium, heavy) and all shields.

Limit Break (Su): At 1st level, the hardened veteran receives the Limit Break (Charge Down).

Charge Down (Su): This Limit Break fills the hardened veteran with the confidence and wills to take down all foes, even if they aim to reposition or retreat. For a duration of 1 round + 1 round per two hardened veteran levels after 1st, the hardened veteran can use an amount of movement equal to his base speed to follow any enemy during their turns if they move any distance, if the hardened veteran ends up in an adjacent square, he is allowed to make an attack of opportunity against the enemy. This movement does not provoke. This limit break requires only a swift action.

Veteran's Training (Ex): The hardened veteran makes sure to further increase his previous training with harder regimes and constant practice. He counts his hardened veteran levels as both fighter and knight levels when qualifying for feats and talents.

Sword and Shield Master (Ex): At 1st level, the hardened veteran selects to either focus into fighter or knight for further progressing his past experiences. Once this choice has been made it cannot be changed. The hardened veteran gains continual progression with his selection as detailed below and in other features later on.

- **Fighter:** The hardened veteran progresses his chosen weapon feature of the fighter, gaining a +1 at level 1st, 5th, and 9th.
- **Knight:** The hardened veteran progresses his defensive stance feature of the knight, treating his hardened veteran levels and knight levels for the number of rounds per day he can keep it active. At 5th level, he gains an additional +1 to the bonuses provided by defensive stance, this increases to an additional +2 at 9th level.

Hardened Talents (Ex): At 2nd level, and every two hardened veteran levels thereafter, the hardened veteran gains access to talents from his choice made at 1st level.

- **Fighter:** He continues to gain fighter talents at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level. He is allowed to choose from fighter advanced talents at 8th level and 10th level instead of a normal fighter talent.
- **Knight:** He continues to gain knight talents at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level. He is allowed to choose from knight advanced talents at 8th and 10th level instead of a normal knight talent.

Prolonged Regime (Ex): At 3rd level, the hardened veteran is a master of repetition, training in both his offense and his defense.

- **Fighter:** The hardened veteran adds +1 to his dogged obstinacy class feature of the fighter.
- **Knight:** The hardened veteran reduces the armor check penalty of armor by 1 and increases the maximum Dexterity bonus of his armor by 1, working alongside the armor training class feature of the knight.

Master of the Fight (Ex): At 4th level, the hardened veteran has seen countless foes in combat on both sides of the field. Studying closely, he is more able to replicate fighting styles. When selecting combat feats, the hardened veteran can ignore BAB, Ability Score, and Skill Rank prerequisites. He may also select 2 Core Races and 1 Base Race for which he can count as for combat feat prerequisites (like Dwarf, Elvaan, and Bangaa), once this choice has been made it cannot be changed.

The Never-Ending Fight (Ex): At 5th level, the hardened veteran has hardened both his body and his mind, allowing for prolonged skirmishes. Whenever he would fall to 0 hit points or lower, as a free action, he can activate this ability, allowing him to continue fighting even if he would be reduced to a negative amount of hit points equal to his Constitution score or less, for a number of rounds equal to his Constitution modifier, to a maximum number of rounds equal to his hardened veteran levels. This ability does not prevent death from massive damage or from spell effects. He may use this ability up to 3 times per day.

General's Grip (Ex): At 6th level, the hardened veteran focuses heavily on his tools of war, utilizing them in new ways while improving their destructive or defensive powers.

- **Fighter:** The hardened veteran reduces the penalty imposed by power attack, or piranha strike, and fighting defensively by 1, this reduction improves to 2 at 10th level.

- **Knight:** The hardened veteran reduces the armor check penalty and increases the maximum Dexterity bonus of both his shields by 1, this reduction and increase improves to 2 at 10th level. He may also transfer an additional point of his AC to an ally with the defend ally class feature of the knight, these increases to 2 additional points at 10th level.

Trust of Comrades (Ex): At 7th level, the hardened veteran is able to work alongside his partners in arms as he places complete trust in them.

- **Fighter:** The hardened veteran counts as the square he is in as well as 2 adjacent squares of his choice when calculating flanking, he makes this choice as a swift action each round he is adjacent to an enemy.
- **Knight:** The hardened veteran counts as the square he is in as well as 2 adjacent squares of his choice when determining his distance from an ally for the shield ally and defend ally class features of the knight. He makes this choice as a swift action each round.

War Is Ever-Changing (Ex): At 10th level, the hardened veteran has formulated plans and engaged in so many battlefields that he is prepared for all it can throw at him. Once per day as a standard action, he may activate one of the following abilities:

- **Fighter:** The hardened veteran ignores any penalties imposed by power attack, or piranha strike, and fighting defensively for a number of rounds equal to his Constitution modifier or he can benefit from pounce for a number of rounds equal to half his Constitution modifier.
- **Knight:** The hardened veteran ignores his armor check penalty and has no maximum Dexterity bonus to his armor and shields for a number of rounds equal to his Constitution modifier or he can gain a deflection bonus to his AC equal to half his hardened veteran level for a number of rounds equal to half his Constitution modifier.