

The Warden – A New Class for Swords & Wizardry Whitebox

The warden is a woodland protector and all-around expert on all things out-of-doors. They have the base skills of the fighter class (including the same saving throw progressions, and access to all the fighter's weapons), along with a few specialty skills that lend themselves to outdoor-themed campaigns. With respect to armor, wardens prefer to travel lightly, so will only wear leather armor.

If the GM decides to use the warden as a NPC, they will typically patrol a large woodland area that encompasses several small villages or towns, providing healing, protection from the more fearsome wooded creatures and even dispatching the occasional group of bandits. In return, the towns will give their warden access to any food, water, horses or other supplies they may need.

Warden Advancement

Level	Exp. Points	Hit Dice (d6)	Healing Poultice
1	0	1+4	1d4
2	2,250	2+3	1d4+1
3	4,500	3+2	1d6+1
4	9,000	4+1	1d6+3
5	18,000	5	1d8+3*
6	36,000	6	1d8+5
7	72,000	7	1d10+5
8	144,000	8	1d10+7
9	288,000	9	1d12+7
10	576,000	10	1d12+9

Wardens are quite hardy and have bonuses to their hit dice at levels 1-4. Thereafter they match fighters. This is in addition to any constitution bonuses. They get +2 to any saves vs. magic, death or poison.

Wardens get no XP bonuses due to ability scores.

They are experts with the short or long bow, and get to-hit bonuses with either, in addition to any other dexterity or racial bonuses they might have. This to-hit bonus is +1 at 1st level, and an additional +1 every 4 levels (so +2 at 5th level and +3 at 9th level). They incur no penalties for the use of bows while riding a horse or otherwise moving.

Wardens are skilled in medicinal herbs. They can prepare healing poultices that will heal an increasing number of hit points based on the warden's level (see table, above). These healing poultices can be used once per day, per PC. At the referee's option, this can be in addition to any binding of wounds that may be allowed. At fifth level and above, the warden's healing poultices act as a cleric's cure disease spell, albeit not for magically induced ailments. The healing is relatively slow, however, taking 1d4 hours to cure disease or restore hit points. They can carry enough herbs and materials to make four such poultices, before having to forage for more raw materials.

Wardens are capable of living off the land, and in a suitable environment (access to water, plant life, small game) can live indefinitely, including the construction of natural shelters. They are not fond of groups, however, and cannot provide for more than one or two others in such a fashion.

Wardens are not easily surprised. In their native outdoor environment, they will surprise foes generally on a 1-3/1d6, yet they themselves are surprised only on a 1/1d6.

The warden's stealth in the outdoors allows them to move silently to within 20 feet of a foe and observe them undetected (but there must be some form of concealment available, such as trees, boulders or undergrowth), with a 1-4/1d6 chance of success.

Beginning at 2nd level, Wardens can seek out and train one animal companion who will travel with them and obey them unconditionally. Such a companion is limited to 1+1 HD initially, and thereafter gains one HD every time the animal's master gains a level, to a maximum of 5HD. Typical companions include dogs, wolves, or wild cats such as the lynx or bobcat. The warden can use their companion's heightened senses to their advantage and can train them to perform certain skills. Choose 1d3 skills initially and add one per level from the following list:

1. Come – Return even over great distances to a special call
2. Stay – Stay in place and defend if attacked, but do not challenge
3. Fetch – Fetch a specific object on command, or a random one if not specified
4. Blend – Stay motionless and hidden in shadows or natural camouflage 1-5/d6
5. Escape – Escape bonds or fences and return to his master
6. Fight – Attack on command. A morale check may be required for supernatural creatures
7. Guard – Stay in place and prevent others from approaching, attacking if necessary
8. Track – Track by scent, sound or sight
9. Rescue – Pull his master from danger if possible, or lead others to his rescue
10. Jump – The animal can jump longer and/or higher than normal on command

Wardens are accomplished trackers. There are no specific rules to cover this, as success or failure will vary based on the terrain, weather, age of tracks and time of day. It is left up to the referees' discretion, however in an ideal environment (non-rocky terrain, daylight, good weather, recent tracks), the track should always succeed.

Wardens are distrustful of certain forms of magic, and will not use potions or scrolls. Only in dire situations will they use or administer such magic. They will, however, make use of any magical armor or weapons they come across (those that can be used by fighters).