

Steel Dragons' Guide to

Warlords

*Subclasses and additional character options.
"Old School" sensibilities for "New school" systems.*



*A supplement for Players & Dungeon Masters of
the 5th edition of the world's first role-playing game.*

The Warlord

A human charges ahead of the duke's army, brandishing his longsword and shouting a battlecry. The common soldiers beside and behind him are filled with confidence, pride, and a desire not to let this paragon of combat prowess down.

A half-orc waits calmly in the shadows while his "associates" await the signal on the other side of the clearing. With a speed belying his size, the would-be "bandit king" dispatches the guards at the rear of the carriage while others of his band make quick work of the team's driver. Before the noble in the cart can make a sound, the scoundrels are off to the taxman's coffers.

An elf surveys the map and markers sprawled across the table of the command tent. Recognizing the gambit being employed by her opponent she issues swift instruction to counter the maneuver. She takes a sip from her goblet and ponders a plot to remove the bothersome orc-king from the field...for good.

A dwarf takes a moment after removing her battleaxe from the bugbear's skull. In an instant she assesses the battle raging about her. It does not go well for her companions. With a steadying breath and long exhale, the dwarf's mind reaches out into the chaotic fray of thought and emotion permeating the scene. Fear, bravery, rage, sacrifice swirl



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into form and force and blast out from her mind, a wave of psychic power drapes over her and her companions to slow bleeding, knit wounds, and refresh spirits. "The day may yet be won!", she calls out to her fellows.

The Warlord is a class, as their name indicates, primarily concerned with "war" or combat. Conflicts, however, are not necessarily nor always best met with physical force on the front line of battle. The warlord can share features and elements of a variety of other classes, like the cleric or rogue. Like these secondary classes that influence, warlord's are excellent "support" characters, capable of being wise advisors or gifted leaders. While not always present on the front lines, wherever they prefer to act, you can be sure the warlord is acting, giving their all to ensure they are on the winning side.

Battle Leaders: The warlord is, unsurprisingly, a "lord of war." The majority of their features and specialized skills are meant to increase the battle effectiveness and efficiency of others as much as, if not more so than, themselves. Masters of strategy and tactics, the warlord sees through the frenetic chaos of a battlefield to create order with their array of possibilities. From an international war to a border skirmish or a single group of adventurers just trying to survive, the warlord can see and create opportunities for success. Of course it is possible for adventuring groups to succeed in battle without a warlord's skill and ability. But it is a rare thing, indeed, that a group with a warlord suffers defeat.

Forceful Influencers: The warlord's prowess with armor and weaponry notwithstanding, it is really in their application of their battle knowledge and ability to influence others that the warlord truly shines. Whether through inspiring speeches, valorous deeds, subtle compliment, or even base intimidation, the warlord's skill at getting other's how to exploit the weaknesses and openings they find in their enemies. Their impact rallies morale, increases effectiveness of blows, aids in durability and, possibly if necessary, ensures a safe retreat. The warlord's personality and force of will is as much a threat to their enemies as their swordarm, in many cases, more so.

Class Features

HD: d8 per level.

HP at 1st level: 10. So start with 10 + Con mod.

HP at Higher Levels: d8 + Con. mod. at every level.

Proficiencies

Armor: Light and Medium armors. Shields.



TABLE X.X: WARLORD FEATURE PROGRESSION

Ranger lvl.	Prof. Bonus	Features
1	+2	Tactical Options, Stalwart Presence
2	+2	Inspiring Word
3	+2	Warlord Archetype
4	+2	Ability Boost
5	+3	Extra Attack
6	+3	Archetype feature, Archetype Option, Inspiring Word boost
7	+3	Tactical Option boost
8	+3	Ability Boost
9	+4	Archetype Feature
10	+4	Lead by Example
11	+4	Archetype Feature
12	+4	Ability Boost
13	+5	Archetype Option
14	+5	Inspiring Word boost
15	+5	Tactical Option boost
16	+5	Ability Boost
17	+6	Archetype Feature
18	+6	Devastating Offense
19	+6	Ability Boost
20	+6	Lead by Example boost

Weapons: Any.

Tools: one Gaming Set of your choice.

Saving Throws: Strength & Charisma

Skills: Choose any 2 of the following: *Athletics, History, Intimidate, Insight, Medicine.*

Equipment

The Warlord begins with the following in addition to the equipment granted by your background.

- a) sword (any kind), b) scimitar, or c) rapier.
- a) Scale mail or b) leather armor,
- a) light crossbow/20 bolts or b) a simple weapon.
- a marital weapon or b) shield.

1st: Tactical Options

At 1st level you have a variety of tactical choices that you can use in battle. When the warlord uses their action to take the Help action, instead of that action's normal use, the warlord can choose to assist their allies in one of the following ways:

- **Spur to Action:** You grant advantage on the next initiative roll of an ally that can see and hear you.

- **Coordinate Offense:** You grant advantage to an ally within 10' who can see and hear you on their next Attack roll.
- **Move!:** You push allies to action. Allies within a 10' radius who can see and hear the warlord are permitted an additional 10' of movement on the Warlord's turn, if they so choose, even if they have already taken their movement for the turn. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

As you increase levels, you may use additional commands with your Help action, as follows, 2 per Help Action at 7th, and 3 per Help action at 15th.

Stalwart Presence

When you use your action to evoke your Stalwart Presence, through inspirational words, decisive action or sheer force of personality, allies within a 20' radius who can see and hear you, can add the warlord's Charisma bonus to a save roll or ability check they take before the end of your next turn. This radius is extended to 20' if you are mounted or otherwise easily viewed by those at such a distance. You must complete a short or long rest before you can use your stalwart presence effects allies again.

2nd: Inspiring Word

As a bonus action, the warlord lets themselves or an ally within a 20' radius who can see and hear them use one of their HD to refresh hit points during combat.

Additionally, the warlord can expend one use of Inspiring Word following a short or long rest to grant 1 extra HD for 1 + Cha. modifier allies who can see and hear them.

The warlord may use Inspiring Word 1 + Cha. modifier times before needing a short or long rest. At 6th level, the warlord can effect themselves **and** one other ally within range at the same time. At 14th the warlord can effect themselves and up to four allies within range with a single Inspiring Word.

3rd: Battle Strategies

The warlord's battle strategies grant additional Tactical Options and other archetype specific features at 3rd, 6th, 8th, and 17th levels. Choose a specialty: *Vanguard*, *Maurauder*, *Strategos* or *Ardent*.

4th: Ability Boost: as normal. Increases at 8th, 12th, 16th, 19th.

5th: Extra Attack: You may attack twice instead of once when you take the Attack action.

10th: Lead by Example

When you make a successful weapon attack that deals maximum damage or brings a foe to 0 or less hit points, all allies who can see you roll their next attack roll with advantage.

At 20th level, all allies who are aware of your presence roll their next attack with advantage if you make a successful weapon attack (regardless of damage).

13th: Tactical Assist

At 13th level, when you or an ally within 20' who can see and hear you have been hit by an attack, you can apply one Tactical Option as a reaction. You must complete a short or long rest before using this feature again.

18th: Devastating Offensive

At 18th level, all attacks made by allies within 50' who are aware of your presence add your Cha. modifier to damage rolls.

Battle Strategies

The Vanguard

The Vanguard warlord seeks to lead from the front. They are, more often than not, the first into battle and, usually, the last to leave. Whether as a formal military leader or just another warrior in the fray, they are of the highest caliber of valor and sacrifice. Most commonly found on the "formal" fields of combat, engaged in large scale combats or fighting for grand ideals, the vanguard is a most beneficial presence on battlefields of any size.

3rd: Bonus Proficiency: You gain proficiency with Heavy Armors.

Vanguard Tactical Options

Your choice of warlord archetype grants you the following Tactical Options that can be used, as normal, when you take the Help action.

- **Inspiring Charger:** At 3rd level, when you make an Attack, allies within 20' who can see and hear you add your Str. mod. to hit with their first attack roll of their next turn against the same target.
- **Coordinate Onslaught:** At 6th level, when you use the *Coordinate Offense* Tactical Option, allies within 20' who can see and hear you add your Cha. modifier (minimum 1) to their attack roll and damage.



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- **Hold the Line!:** At 13th level, you use this Tactical Option to grant allies within 20' (and yourself) your Cha. modifier to saves against being frightened, charmed, or other mind/emotion manipulation. If successful, allies are immune to same effects from the same source for the next 24 hours.

6th: Field Medic

When you try to stabilize unconscious creatures (0 HP), you add your proficiency bonus to the Wisdom roll. If a creature is not at 0 hit points but below their hit point maximum, you can use your action to provide first aid that restores Cha. modifier [minimum 1] HP.

9th: Indomitable

as the 9th level fighter feature. You can reroll a failed save roll and must use the second roll. You must complete a long rest before using this feature again.

17th: Inspiring Presence

When you use your Inspiring Word to spend HD on yourself during a battle, it now effects all allies within a 50' radius who can see and hear you. You must complete a long rest before using this feature again.

The Maurauder

Out for themselves or leading motley crews of followers, for glory, gold or simple gore, the Maurauder warlord uses their strategic know-how and forceful influence to strike hard and fast, fulfill their goals, and get out. Prolonged battles or formal war are not the maurauder's preferred combat situation. Willing and able to fight for their causes which are, most often, their own.

3rd: Bonus Proficiency: You gain proficiency with the *Stealth* [Dex] rolls and a language of your choice.

Maurauder Tactical Options

Your choice of warlord archetype grants you the following Tactical Options that can be used, as normal, when you take the Help action.

- **Horde Leader:** At 3rd level, when you make an Attack, allies within 20' who can see and hear you add your Str. mod. to the damage of their first attack on their next turn against the same target.
- **Coordinate Withdrawal:** At 6th level, when you use the *Move* Tactical Option, allies within 20' who can see and hear you can *Disengage* as a bonus action.
- **Heads' Up!:** At 13th level, you use this Tactical Option to grant yourself and allies within 20' who can see and hear you your Cha. modifier (minimum 1) to their next save roll relying on Dexterity.

6th: Ranging Stride

Your base movement rate is increased by 5'. Also, your



speed is not slowed while moving through non-magical difficult terrain. With your assistance, up to warlord level allies are similarly unaffected by difficult terrain. Magically altered/enchanted terrain, such as the *Entangle* or *Wall of Thorns* spells, effects the warlord and his allies normally.

9th: Into the Ground: As a bonus action following a successful melee weapon attack, you force the target not more than 1 size category larger than you to make a Strength save to beat DC 10 + proficiency bonus + Str. or Dex. modifier (whichever is higher). Failure means you have successfully imposed the prone condition on the target.

17th: Superior Critical

You deal a critical hit when you roll a 18 or 20, as the 15th level Champion Fighter feature.

The Strategos

Unlike other warlord archetypes, the Strategos focuses more on "the game" of battle and less on direct involvement. Experts of the "arts" and philosophies of war and manipulation, they are the warlord to "lead from behind", if not fully "behind the scenes." Their knowledge and cunning make them as formidable an opponent off the battlefield as on it,

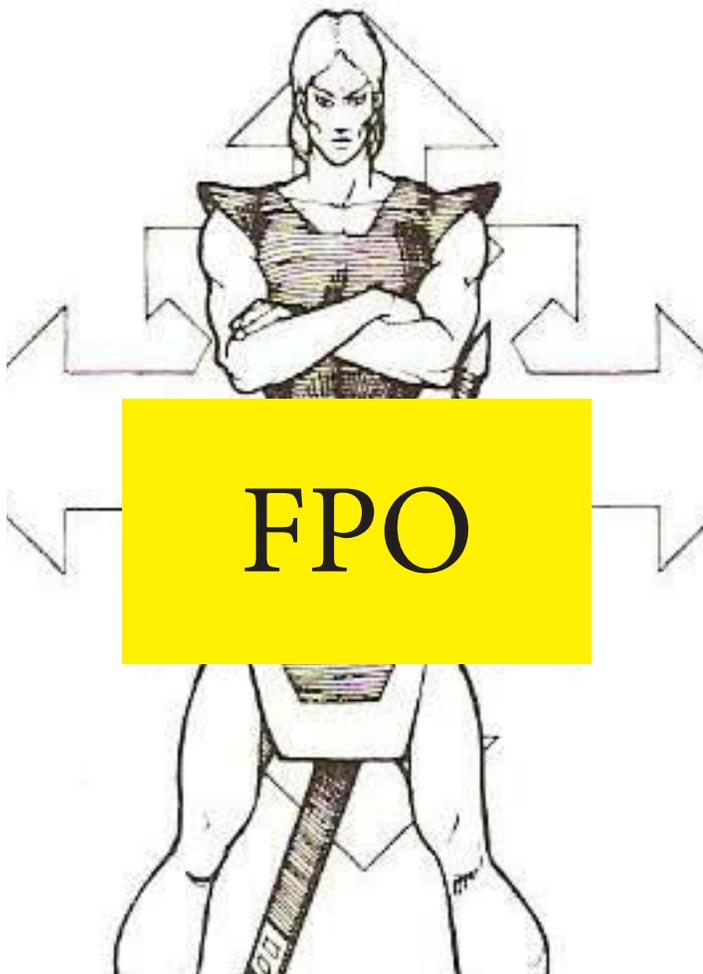
to be sure, and their capacity to bend others to their will and bidding is second to none save the most adept enchanter.

3rd: Bonus Proficiencies: You gain proficiency with *Persuasion* [Cha] and a bonus language of your choice.

Strategos Tactical Options

Your choice of warlord archetype grants you the following Tactical Options that can be used, as normal, when you take the Help action.

- **Scheming Striker:** At 3rd level, when you make an Attack, allies within 20' who can see and hear you add your Str. mod. to either the hit or damage roll of their first attack on their next turn against the same target.
- **Coordinate Assault:** At 6th level, when you use the *Spur to Action* Tactical Option, allies within 20' who can see and hear you gain advantage on their next initiative roll.
- **Keep it Together!:** At 13th level, you use this Tactical Option to grant allies within 20' (and yourself) your Cha. modifier to their next save roll relying on Wisdom.



6th: Cutting Words

This is similar to the 3rd level Lore Bard feature of the same name, but can be used to diminish rolls made for saves, ability checks or attacks. Instead of the Bard's Inspiration Dice, the Strategos subtracts their Cha. or Int. modifier (whichever is higher) from the target's roll. Targets are immune if they can't hear you or are immune to being charmed. The warlord can use this feature once before requiring a short or long rest.

9th: Mastermind: You add proficiency bonus to any ability or skill rolls that use Intelligence or Wisdom. You double your proficiency bonus for Charisma-based rolls.

17th: Opportunist: When a creature within 5' of you is hit with an attack other than yours, you can use your reaction to make a melee attack against that creature, as the 17th level Shadow Monk feature.

The Ardent

The Ardent warlord is a supernatural battlemaster unlike any other. Through natural gift, innate talent or learned techniques, the ardent is able to muster and harness their mental energies and manipulate the psionic forces around them. These powers are used, most often, to the benefit of their companions, to excel and provide longevity in combat, whittling down their opposition.

3rd: Cantrips: You know, through how to psychically duplicate the effects of the *Guidance*, *Resistance*, and *Spare the Dying* cantrips.

Ardent Tactical Options: Psionic Powers

You have developed your mental faculties and expanded your awareness to grant the following magic-like abilities that are gained and expended as if by spell-casting. They require no components or, necessarily, visual effect, but otherwise adhere to the spell description details, as best makes sense. They do require the ardent's action and Concentration to maintain as stated in their spell description.

Your "Casting Ability" for these effects is Charisma. Your Save DC is 8 + proficiency bonus + Charisma modifier. Your attack DC is 8 + Charisma modifier. You may choose these Psionic Powers, at the requisite levels, as indicated below. You use these psionic powers, one at a time on your turn, a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier + half your warlord level [rounded down] before requiring a short or long rest.

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Warlord level	Psionic Powers
3rd	<i>Cure Wounds, Detect Evil/Good, Sanctuary, Shield of Faith</i>
5th	<i>Aid, Calm Emotions, Warding Bond</i>
7th	<i>Beacon of Hope, Mass Healing Word</i>
9th	<i>Freedom of Movement</i>
11th	<i>Mass Cure Wounds</i>

6th: Psionic Mantle: As an action, the ardent can extend their mental power to assist their allies within 20' by adding their Cha. or Wis. modifier (whichever is higher) to one the following situations:

- **Clarity:** make any Insight, Perception, Intimidate or Persuasion rolls
- **Impulse:** use a reaction to make an attack roll with a weapon already in hand or a cantrip.
- **Momentum:** take Dash or Dodge as a bonus action
- **Power:** use one of your Psionic Powers but effect all allies within the 20' radius. This expends one of the power uses, as normal, in addition to one of your mantle manifestations.

The mantle remains in effect as long as the warlord maintains concentration on it, up to 1 minute. The warlord can use this feature once + Cha. or Wis. mod. (whichever is higher) times before requiring a long rest.

11th: Ardent Surge: As an action, you expend up to 5 HD to regain HP in battle, as if using the Inspiring Word feature. The dice rolls are doubled and divvied up among allies within 20', as the ardent desires. You can not use this ability again until completing a long rest.

17th: Extended Mantle: The ardent's Psionic Mantle now extends out to all allies within 50'. Also, the ardent has advantage on all saves to maintain concentration of a Mantle. As a bonus action, with a successful Wisdom check vs. DC10, the ardent can shift the mantle effect from one to another, on their turn, within a single mantle manifestation.