Weekly Wonders

Archetypes of War Volume I

Footsoldiers

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Introduction

The *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* is full of combat and bloodshed. They are, in many ways, the bulk of what the game is, and what it is about. But there is a difference between simply fighting, even fighting for one's life, and fighting in a war. Wars are chaotic and bloody things, and a battlefield is not a single, neat, orderly conflict, but in fact hundreds, perhaps thousands of small life-and-death struggles, each of which impacts the others around it. It is an order of magnitude larger than the standard battles of an adventurer, and while many adventurers can certainly contribute in a true battle between opposing armies, that's not the same as being specifically trained and equipped for it. Each installment of *Weekly Wonders: Archetypes of War* presents six new archetypes for military characters, focused on a particular theme.

For this book, we focus on archetypes relating to those who make up the bulk of armies, without whom wars would be an impossibility: the footsoldiers. These rank and file military men and women are the ones who do the most of the fighting, and the dying, and they must learn to use their surroundings to their advantage, work together with one another, and rely on shock and awe tactics if they are to have any chance of surviving to see another battle. The archetypes in this book promote these themes, transforming members of their class into frontline warriors ready to dive into the fray.

New Archetypes

The following archetypes are presented in alphabetical order.

Military Bloodline (Bloodrager)

You are descended from a long line of warriors, and a strong part of you lusts for blood and battle. You find that combat comes particularly easy to you, but you have quite a legacy of heroic combatants to live up to.

Bonus Feats: Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization.

Bonus Spells: *magic weapon* (7th), *protection from arrows* (10th), *heroism* (13th), *stoneskin* (16th).

Bloodline Powers: Combat flows through your veins, and in the heat of battle, your warrior heritage takes over, allowing you to perform incredible feats of martial might.

Martial Training (Ex): At 1st level, your martial heritage allows you to effortlessly adapt to new weapons. While bloodraging, you are considered proficient with all weapons, including exotic weapons and improvised weapons. Additionally, you treat your bloodrager level as your fighter level for the purposes of meeting the prerequisites of feats. *Concentrated Assault (Ex):* At 4th level, your warrior instincts allow you to make the most of openings created by your allies. While bloodraging, you gain a +2 competence bonus on attack and damage rolls made against creatures that have been damaged by one or more of your allies since the end of your last turn.

Tactical Advantage (Ex): By 8th level, your warrior heritage allows you to make the most of advantageous surroundings. While bloodraging, the benefits you gain from cover and partial cover are doubled, and the bonuses granted by improved cover are increased by half again as much (+50%). Further, if you have concealment from any source while bloodraging, that concealment is increased by 20%. Finally, while bloodraging, you gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls for having higher ground, instead of the normal amount, and you gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls made against flanked creatures, whether you are flanking them or not (if you are flanking them, this stacks with the normal benefits of flanking).

Make an Example (Su): At 12th level, you can slay a foe in a gruesome fashion that strikes fear into the hearts of his allies. The first time each bloodrage that you kill an opponent, you can make an Intimidate check to demoralize each foe within 30 feet as a free action. Make a single check and apply the results to each creature separately. Creatures whose CR is higher than that of the creature you killed are immune to this effect, but creatures whose CR is at least 2 lower than that of the creature you killed are frightened, rather than shaken, if you succeed (the duration of the effect remains the same).

Maneuver Expert (Ex): At 16th level, while bloodraging, you never provoke attacks of opportunity for performing a combat maneuver. Additionally, you add your Charisma modifier to your CMB while bloodraging.

Survivor (Ex): At 2oth level, your martial blood allows you to survive and keep fighting long after many others would have given up or died. While bloodraging, you do not die until your negative hit points are equal to or greater than twice your Constitution score. Additionally, you do not fall unconscious when reduced to o or fewer hit points. You are staggered, and continue to take damage each round, as normal for a dying character, unless you are stabilized, but can otherwise act normally.

Versatile Combatant (Brawler)

Brawlers are well known for their martial flexibility, and their canny knack for adapting to differing circumstances by adopting a variety of fighting styles. In war, however, many generals are skeptical of soldiers that wear no armor and fight with no weapons, and so train their brawlers to use more conventional weapons and protection. Trained for war, and not for brawls, these warriors are versatile combatants.

Weapon Training (Ex): A versatile combatant is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, as well as with a single exotic weapon of her choice.

At 4th level, a versatile combatant can select one group of weapons from the fighter weapon training class feature. She gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls made with weapons in the chosen group. At 8th level, and every four levels thereafter, she may select an additional weapon group to which this bonus applies. Additionally, she may select any weapon group she had selected previously, and increase the bonuses for that weapon by an additional +1.

This ability replaces the unarmed strike class feature.

Armor Training (Ex): At 4th level, a versatile combatant becomes proficient with medium and heavy armors. Additionally, she reduces the armor check penalty of any armor she wears by 1 (to a minimum of o) and increases the maximum Dexterity bonus allowed by any armor she wears by 1. At 9th, 13th, and 18th levels, these bonuses increase by +1, to a maximum -4 reduction of the armor check penalty and a +4 increase of the maximum Dexterity bonus.

This ability replaces the AC bonus class feature.

Stalwart (Ex): Beginning at 4th level, three times per day, a versatile combatant can completely shrug off the effects of a single devastating blow. As an immediate action, after being hit by an attack or failing a saving throw to resist a spell or ability, but before any of the consequences of that attack, spell, or ability are declared, she may use this ability to completely negate its effects on her. This causes her to ignore any damage, ability score damage or drain, poison, disease, negative condition, or other effects of the attack, spell, or ability that apply to her specifically, but not other effects (for example, if used on a *web* spell, the versatile combatant could avoid becoming immediately entangled, but would still treat the affected area as difficult terrain, and might become entangled later).

This ability replaces the knockout class feature.

Versatile Flurry (Ex): Beginning at 5th level, a versatile combatant becomes able to perform a brawler's flurry with a wider variety of weapons. She can choose a single light or one-handed weapon (such as a rapier or a longsword). When performing a brawler's flurry, she can make up to half of the attacks made as part of the brawler's flurry with a weapon of the chosen type (the other attacks must be made with some other type of weapon that she can use with brawler's flurry). At 9th level, and every four levels thereafter, the versatile combatant can choose an additional light or one-handed weapon that she can use to make attacks with as part of a brawler's flurry.

This ability replaces the brawler's strike class feature.

Versatile Combatant (Ex): At 5th level, a versatile combatant learns to adapt some of the methods of other combatants as her own. Each day, she can choose one of the following abilities to emulate for that day.



Challenge: The versatile combatant can issue a challenge against a single foe. As a swift action, the versatile combatant chooses one target within sight to challenge. The versatile combatant's attacks deal extra damage whenever they are made against the target of her challenge. This damage is equal to 1/2 her brawler level. Challenging a foe requires much of the versatile combatant's concentration. She takes a -2 penalty to her Armor Class, except against attacks made by the target of her challenge. The challenge remains in effect until the target is dead or unconscious, or until the combat ends. The versatile combatant can use this ability once each day that she selects it.

Favored Enemy: The versatile combatant chooses a single creature type (and, if necessary, subtype) from among those available in the favored enemy class feature of the ranger. The versatile combatant gains a +1 bonus on Bluff, Knowledge, Perception, Sense Motive, and Survival checks against creatures of that type, as well as a +1 bonus on weapon attack and damage rolls against such creatures.

Rage: The versatile combatant can rage, as the barbarian class feature, for a number of rounds per day equal to her brawler level.

This ability replaces the close weapon mastery class feature.

Career Soldier (Fighter)

For some, war is all there is. Mercenaries and soldiers travel from campaign to campaign, losing track of who they were fighting for and against, and treating the carnage and the chaos as just another job. These career soldiers quickly learn the tricks of the trade, adapting what tactics they need to survive skirmish after skirmish, battle after battle.

High-Ground Master (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, a career soldier learns to make the most of higher ground. In addition to the normal benefits of higher ground, the career soldier gains a +1 bonus on damage rolls made against creatures he is on higher ground than, and also gains a +1 bonus to AC against attacks made by such creatures.

This ability replaces the bravery bonus gained at 2nd level.

Forced Marcher (Ex): At 6th level, a career soldier is a veteran of long marches. He gains a +4 bonus on Constitution checks made to resist fatigue and exhaustion, as well as a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist those conditions.

This ability replaces the bravery bonus gained at 6th level.

Take Cover (Ex): At 10th level, a career soldier is able to take full advantage of cover. When benefitting from cover, the bonus to AC the cover provides him increases by +1.

This ability replaces the bravery bonus gained at 10th level.

Line Fighter (Ex): At 14th level, a career soldier learns to use the allies fighting on either side of him for his protection. As long as he is flanked by two or more allies, he gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC.

This ability replaces the bravery bonus gained at 14th level.

Cautious Charge (Ex): At 18th level, a career soldier learns how to charge without opening himself up to attack. When he takes the charge action, he can choose to reduce the bonus to his attack roll by up to +2. If he does, the penalty to his AC imposed by charging is reduced by a like amount (to a minimum of +0 on the attack roll and -0 to AC).

This ability replaces the bravery bonus gained at 18th level.

Battle Mage (Magus)

While most arcane spellcasters find their places elsewhere, for the magus, it is no surprise that they find their way to the front line. Those that specialize in using their magic to shape the battlefield, blasting foes and shoring up defenses, are known as battle mages.

Arcane Burst (Su): At 4th level, a battle mage learns to expend his arcane energy in order to create a short-range torrent of raw magic to assault his foes. As a standard action, he can expend one point from his arcane pool in order to create a 15-foot cone of energy, which deals 2d6 points of damage to each creature in its area. A Reflex save (DC 10 + 1/2the battle mage's magus level + the battle mage's Intelligence modifier) halves this damage. When he uses this ability, the battle mage must choose acid, cold, electricity, or fire. The energy of the burst matches the chosen energy type, and deals the corresponding type of damage. At 5th level, and every two levels thereafter, the damage inflicted by this ability increases by 1d6.

At 7th level, the battle mage can expend an additional point from his arcane pool when using this ability in order to choose force or sonic damage, instead of one of the normal damage types.

At 10th level, the battle mage can expend an additional point from his arcane pool when using this ability in order to increase the area of the burst to a 30-foot cone.

This ability replaces the spell recall class feature.

War Mage (Ex): By 7th level, a battle mage is an expert at using magic to harm others. Whenever he casts a spell that deals damage, that spell deals 1 additional point of damage per damage die (for example, a *fireball* spell would deal 7d6+7 points of damage). Additionally, the saving throw DC for any of his spells which deals hit point damage is increased by 1.

This ability replaces the knowledge pool class feature.

Arcane Wall (Su): At 11th level, a battle mage can use raw arcane energy in order to craft fortifications with pure magic. As a standard action, he can expend one point from his arcane pool in order to create a wall of energy, which lasts for a number of rounds equal to his Intelligence modifier. At least some portion of the wall he creates must be within 30 feet of the battle mage at the time he uses this ability. Walls created in this way are stationary. He must choose one of the following when he does so: air, earth, fire, or water. This choice determines the type of wall created, as outlined below.

Air: This wall is made of swirling currents of air, and is transparent, requiring a DC 15 Perception check to notice. It takes the form of a wall 20 feet high, 1 foot thick, and 10 feet long per magus level, which can be shaped in any way the battle mage desires, provided that it forms one contiguous shape. Alternatively, the battle mage can have it take the form of a dome with a diameter of 5 feet per magus level he possesses. Regardless of its shape, the wall's area is filled with 51 mph winds, causing normal ranged attacks made through it to fail (and even massive ranged attacks, such as from siege engines, suffer a -4 penalty). Further, Medium and smaller creatures attempting to pass through the wall are unable to move forward unless they succeed on a DC 10 Strength check if on the ground, or a DC 20 Fly check (with a -8 penalty) if in the air.

Earth: This wall is made of loose dirt and soil. It takes the form of a wall 10 feet high, 5 feet thick, and 5 feet long per magus level. It can be shaped in any way that the battle mage desires, provided that it forms one contiguous shape, and each 5-foot-square length of the wall is in contact with the ground. The wall blocks movement and provides appropriate cover and concealment from creatures on the other side. The wall can be climbed with a successful DC 20 Climb check (while there are numerous handholds, the loose soil shifts easily, making it difficult to find purchase to climb). A given 5-foot section of the wall can also be collapsed with a successful bull rush combat maneuver (DC = 15 + the battle mage's magus level + the battlemage's Intelligence modifier).

Fire: This wall is made of a thin sheet of flames. It takes the form of a wall 10 feet high, 1 foot thick, and 5 feet long per magus level, which must form a single, continuous straight line. Alternatively, the battle mage can have it take the form of a ring with a diameter equal to 5 feet per magus level. When the wall is created, the battle mage must designate a single side of the wall to radiate heat (in the form of a ring, this is either "inside" or "outside"). Creatures that begin their turn within 10 feet of the wall on the chosen side suffer 1d4 points of fire damage per 4 magus levels the battle mage possesses. Additionally, creatures attempting to pass through the wall suffer 1d6 points of fire damage per 4 magus levels the battle mage levels the battle mage possesses.

Water: This wall is made of water. It takes the form of a wall 10 feet high, 5 feet thick, and 5 feet long per magus level, which can be shaped in any way the battle mage desires, provided it is a single contiguous shape. The wall provides cover and concealment to creatures on the other side. Additionally, any creature attempting to pass through the wall must succeed on a DC 20 Swim check or remain trapped within the wall.

At 14th level, the battle mage can expend an additional point from his arcane pool when using this ability in order to choose one of the following types of wall, instead.

Force: The wall takes the form of a transparent pane of force energy, 10 feet tall, 1 foot thick, and 5 feet long per magus level. Alternatively, the battle mage can choose to have it take the form of a dome with a diameter of 5 feet per magus level. Other than its dimensions, this functions as the spell *wall of force*.

Sonic: This functions as an air wall, but any creature attempting to pass through the wall must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the battle mage's magus level + the battle mage's Intelligence modifier) or be deafened for 1 hour.

This ability replaces the improved spell recall class feature.

Retributive Spell (Su): At 16th level, a battle mage can expend 1 point from his arcane pool when he casts a spell in order to cause it to remain dormant, and affect the next creature that damages the battle mage with a melee attack. The spell in question must target a single creature. It has no effect at the time it is cast, but occurs automatically the next time the battle mage is damaged by a melee attack, targeting the attacker. If the spell offers a saving throw, the target suffers a -2 penalty on that saving throw, and if the spell requires an attack roll, that attack roll is treated as hitting automatically (the battle mage still makes an attack roll to determine if the attack is a critical threat). A battle mage can have only a single retributive spell dormant in this way at any given time.

This ability replaces the counterstrike class feature.

Spellsword (Su): At 19th level, a battle mage can infuse a held weapon with elemental energy. Any weapon he wields deals an additional amount of damage equal to his Intelligence modifier with each successful hit. This damage can be acid, cold, electricity or fire, and the battle mage can change the type of damage dealt in this way with a move action.

This ability replaces the greater spell access class feature.

Military Discipline (Psychic)

Your psychic powers are a result of intense military training, which honed your mind into a deadly weapon. Intended as a powerful shock troop who could use psychic powers to overwhelm lesser foes, you may be as blindly obedient as your trainers intended, or you may have struck out on your own, but either way, you remain a deadly force.

Phrenic Pool Ability: Constitution.

Bonus Spells: true strike (1st), protection from arrows (4th), versatile weapon^{APG} (6th), mass invigorate^{APG} (8th), wall of force (1oth), blade barrier (12th), defending sword^{AA} (14th), iron body (16th), massacre^{HA} (18th).

Discipline Powers: Your mind has been rigorously trained to be a deadly weapon on the battlefield.

Psychic Strike (Su): Whenever you make a melee attack, you can psychically guide your weapon, causing it to strike true. This grants you a +1 competence bonus on the attack roll for that attack. At 4th level, and every four levels thereafter, this bonus increases by 1 (to a maximum of +6 at 20th level). If the attack hits, you regain 1 point in your phrenic pool. You can use this ability on multiple attacks during a full-attack action (or a similar action involving multiple attacks) if desired, but each attack it applies to requires a separate use of the ability. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your Constitution modifier.

Warrior Training (Ex): You are trained for war. You are proficient with martial weapons, as well as with light and medium armor and shields (except for tower shields).

Telekinetic Warrior (Su): Beginning at 5th level, you can telekinetically wield a shield or weapon, effectively granting you an extra hand. The shield or weapon remains in your square, and you are considered to be wielding it, although it does not require a hand to do so. You cannot wield a two-handed weapon in this way, although you can wield a two-handed weapon normally while using this ability to wield a shield. Activating this ability is a move action, and includes drawing the object to be wielded. When the ability ends, the object falls to the ground in your square unless you have a free hand and choose to catch it. You can use this ability for a total number of minutes per day equal to your Intelligence modifier, which must be spent in 1-minute increments.



Conqueror's Aura (Su): At 13th level, you can project a mental aura that weakens the wills of your foes and urges them to surrender. Each opponent within 60 feet must succeed on a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 your psychic level + your Intelligence modifier) or be shaken for as long as they remain within the aura, plus 1 minute thereafter. Further, the DC of Intimidate checks made against affected creatures is decreased by 5. Activating this ability is a move action. You can use this aura for a number of minutes per day equal to your psychic level, which must be spent in 1-minute increments.

Warmonger (Warpriest)

Most warpreists pursue war to further their faith, but for some warpriests, faith is merely a means to their true end, which is battle. Known to some as warmongers, these men and women live for the thrill of combat, and find their spiritual fulfillment only in the carnage of the battlefield.

Devotee of War (Su): A warmonger gains only a single blessing, and it must be the war blessing. The total number of times per day that he can use his blessings is equal to 2 + 1 per 4 warpriest levels (to a maximum of 7 times per day at 20th level). Additionally, he gains a single revelation from the battle mystery of the oracle class. He treats his warpriest level as his oracle level for the purposes of the effects of this ability, and he uses his Wisdom score in place of his Charisma score for determining saving throw DCs and similar effects.

This ability modifies the blessings class feature.

Warrior's Fervor (Su): A warmonger does not gain the ability to heal or harm creatures, and instead his fervor is a pure and unadulterated lust for battle. At 2nd level, he can expend fervor to perform a variety of different effects. This ability can be used a number of times per day equal to 1/2 his warpriest level + his Wisdom modifier. He can expend these uses in the following ways:

- The warmonger can expend one use of fervor as part of making a full-attack action in order to make an additional attack at his full base attack bonus as part of that full attack. He can declare that he is using this ability at any point during the full-attack, including after the final attack. The warmonger can use this ability only once per round.
- The warmonger can expend one use of fervor as an immediate action to make an attack of opportunity, even if he is flat-footed or has already used his attack of opportunity for the round.
- The warmonger can expend one use of fervor when he hits with a melee attack in order to cause all damage dice rolled as part of that attack to be treated as though they had rolled the maximum result. If the attack is a critical threat, the warmonger must declare he is using this ability before the confirmation roll is made, and it does not apply to any bonus dice rolled as a result of the critical hit.
- As a swift action, the warmonger can expend one use of fervor to cast any one warpriest spell he has prepared with a casting time of 1 round or shorter. When cast in this way, the spell can target only the warmonger, even if it could normally affect other or multiple targets. Spells cast in this way ignore somatic components and do not provoke attacks of opportunity. The warmonger does not need to have a free hand to cast a spell in this way.

This ability replaces the fervor class feature.

Burst of Rage (Su): Beginning at 4th level, a warmonger can unleash a wave of pure hostility by expending one use of his warrior's fervor class feature. Each creature within 6o feet must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the warmonger's warpriest level) or be affected as though by the spell *rage*, and also be compelled to attack a creature each round if possible. This effect lasts for 1 minute. If the warmonger expends 2 uses of his warrior's fervor class feature when activating this ability, each ally in the area gains the benefits of a *heroism* spell, as well.

This ability replaces the channel energy class feature.

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There is battle, and then there is warfare. Many adventurers are familiar with wading into combat against monsters and small groups of enemies, but this is nothing next to the glory and chaos and carnage that is true war. More than simply a change in scale, the difference between war and other combat can be profound. In a war, the characters are part of something larger than themselves, contributing to the efforts of their armies, or perhaps leading those armies themselves. The priorities of a soldier are different from those of an adventurer, and often the challenges that they face are, as well. While many characters can translate their talents as adventurers to the battlefield, one who specifically focuses on warfare and battlefield tactics will have the edge on others when it comes to true war. Each installment of Weekly Wonders: Archetypes of War provides six new war-themed archetypes for a variety of classes.

For this book, we focus on archetypes of the common soldier. These brave men and women comprise the bulk of every army, and it is through their hard work, courage, and determination that an army is able to accomplish anything at all. While it may not be glamorous to be one of the grunts, these tough-as-nails soldiers are nonetheless each a hero in their own right. This book includes the following archetypes:

• The military bloodline, for bloodragers with a long ancestry of soldiering and war, who find unnatural combat instincts and training seem to come to them suddenly in the haze of battle.

• The versatile combatant, a brawler archetype that retains its incredible flexibility in combat, while focusing on fighting with more traditional arms and armor, rather than unarmed strikes.

The career soldier, a fighter archetype that replaces bravery with a series of minor benefits, allowing them to march, take cover, flank, and charge more effectively.
The battle mage, a magus archetype that specializes in the manipulation of raw arcane energy to blast foes, or create barriers to help hold the line.

• The military discipline, a psychic discipline for those whose psychic abilities come from military programs to create psychic soldiers.

• The warmonger, a warpriest archetype for those that worship battle above all, and trade out some of their healing powers for the ability to better make war.

Whether you're about to embark on a campaign of military exploits (such as the official Paizo adventure path dealing with invading forces), or you just want to play a more military character, this book has lots of tantalizing options to offer.

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