

# Countdown to **EBERRON**

## Encounter the Warforged

by Mat Smith · illustrated by Sam Wood



The world of **EBERRON** boasts an array of different character races. There you will encounter such familiars as dwarves, elves, gnomes, half-elves, half-orcs, halflings, and humans. You will also discover new races unique to the setting, including changelings, the kalashtar, and shifters. Whether old or new, each of the character races has a look and feel that's distinct to the cinematic, pulp-noir flavor of the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*. No other race, however, is so closely linked to the spirit of this magically infused, war-torn world as the race of sentient constructs known as the warforged.

### BUILT FOR BATTLE

The master crafters of House Cannith originally conceived the warforged as constructs for labor and industry. As a new age dawned on the kingdom of Galifar, experimentation led to the development of newer models—constructs designed for exploration and defense. It was around this time that King Jarot began to perceive innumerable threats to Galifar, threats which he imagined were gathering all around the kingdom—hordes of monsters from the western reaches, the mysterious elves of Aerenal, the barbarians of Argonnessen, and many others. Seeing the potential of the versatile constructs and how they could play a part in protecting Galifar from the dangers arrayed on all sides, the king urged House Cannith to develop new constructs designed for war.

Merrix d'Cannith created the first warforged prototype. When King Jarot died, and his children sundered the kingdom, each faction was bolstered by its own compliment of warforged. While the initial warforged model was a remarkable achievement, Merrix believed he could create an even better soldier. Within twenty years of the beginning of the Last War, Merrix introduced near-sentience into his warrior constructs. Several years later, Merrix's son, Aarren, made the final breakthrough that resulted in the warforged becoming truly living constructs.

During the last thirty years of the war, House Cannith created and sold warforged soldiers to anyone who could afford them. While Breland, Thrane, and Cyre fielded the largest armies of warforged, virtually every nation involved in the conflict was strengthened by

## MAKING THE MOST OF THE MACHINE

While many warforged seek to embrace their "humanity" or to pursue vocations beyond the battlefield, some instead concentrate on finishing the task that Merrix and Aarren d'Cannith began: to become the most highly refined instruments of battle ever conceived.

From the moment they emerge from the creation forges of House Cannith (or that of the renegade Lord of Blades), each of these warforged focuses on the rigorous self-improvement, enhancements, and augmentations that will shape it into a deadly living weapon—the warforged juggernaut. The warforged juggernaut prestige class appears in the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*.



The first warforged miniature appears in the *Giants of Legend* miniatures set, due to release in June.

at least a small force of the combat-hardened warrior constructs. By the final years of the Last War, the warforged were thoroughly associated with the continually escalating, seemingly endless battle.

The Treaty of Thronehold brought an end to the Last War and established two important factors regarding the warforged. First, the status of warforged was changed: They were no longer property—they were people. Second, House Cannith was forbidden to produce any more warforged. While some nations, such as Thrane and Karrn'ath, retain control of some warforged through indentured servitude, most of the warrior constructs are free to make their way in the world. Some of these warforged choose to continue in their roles as soldiers; others pursue different options that suit their own individual desires. In the aftermath of the Last War, many warforged discover that the adventurer's life is one to which they are well suited.

### WARFORGED

Built as mindless war machines to fight in the Last War, the warforged developed sentience as a side effect of the arcane experiments that sought to make them the ultimate weapons of destruction. With each successive model that emerged from the creation forges of House Cannith, the warforged evolved until they became a new type of being—living constructs.

Warforged are renowned for their combat prowess and their single-minded focus. They make steadfast allies and fearsome enemies. Earlier models of warforged are true constructs, and some of these remnants of the Last War appear in monstrous varieties, such as the warforged titan (described in the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*).

### Warforged Racial Traits

- +2 Constitution, -2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma: Warforged are resilient, but their difficulty in relating to other creatures makes them seem aloof or even hostile. They are also less perceptive than humans.
- Living Construct: Warforged are living constructs with some of the advantages and disadvantages of both

living creatures and constructs, as detailed below.

- Medium: As Medium constructs, warforged have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Warforged base speed is 30 feet.
- Composite Plating: The composite plating used to build the warforged provides a +2 armor bonus. This plating is not natural armor and does not stack with other effects that give an armor bonus (other than natural armor). This composite plating occupies the armor/robe body location, and thus, a warforged cannot wear armor or magical robes. Warforged can be enchanted just like armor can be, though they must be present for the entire time it takes to enchant them.

Composite plating also provides a warforged with a 5% arcane spell failure chance, similar to the penalty for wearing light armor. Any class ability that allows you to ignore the arcane spell failure chance for light armor lets you ignore this penalty as well.

- Living Construct (Ex): A living construct is a subtype of construct, given sentience and free will through powerful and complex creation enchantments. A living construct is a sentient, artificially constructed creature that combines aspects of both constructs and living beings. As a living construct, a warforged has the following features:

- A warforged gets its Hit Dice, base attack progression, saving throws, and skill points from the class it selects.
- As a created life form, a warforged has a Constitution score.
- A warforged only has normal vision.
- As a living construct, spells that target constructs as well as those that target living creatures affect the warforged. Because of this, damage dealt to a warforged can be healed by a *cure light wounds* spell or a *repair light damage* spell, and a warforged is vulnerable to *disable construct* and *harm*. However, spells from the healing subschool provide only half effect to a warforged.
- A warforged is not immune to mind-affecting effects.
- A warforged is immune to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, disease, nausea, and energy drain. A warforged is not immune to death effects or necromancy effects, except those mentioned here.

—A warforged responds slightly differently to reaching 0 hit points than other living creatures do. At 0 hit points, a warforged is disabled, just like a living creature. He can only take a single move action or standard action each round, but strenuous activity does not risk further injury. When his hit points are between -1 and -9, a warforged is inert. He is unconscious and helpless, and he cannot perform any actions. However, an inert warforged does not lose additional hit points unless more damage is dealt, exactly like a living creature that is stable.

- A warforged cannot heal damage naturally. It must be healed or repaired.
- A warforged is subject to critical hits (but see the light fortification feature), nonlethal damage, ability damage, and ability drain.
- A warforged does not need to eat, sleep, or breathe, but he can still benefit from the effects of consumable spells

## WARFORGED AND THEIR WORLD

"The warforged draw on two of the central themes of *EBERRON*: the important role that magic plays within civilization and the impact that the recent war has had on the nations of *EBERRON*. Golems are mainstays of the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* game, but golems are mindless creatures and require the work of extremely powerful spellcasters (and a secondary element of *EBERRON* is trying to limit the number of high-level NPCs in the world to ensure that the player characters are important). The warforged are a bridge between human and golem. A warforged soldier lacks the full power of an iron golem, but it is sentient and capable of responding and adapting to evolving tactical situations. What it lacks in raw physical power, it can make up for in skill, since unlike a golem, a warforged can gain class levels. Meanwhile, it remains a tireless soldier, capable of fighting for days without food, water, or sleep—a useful tool to have in your arsenal in a major war.

"Now the war is over, and the country that used the greatest number of warforged no longer exists. As a warforged, a player character must determine the role it played in the war and what role it will play in the future. Will it embrace its warrior nature, honing its martial skills and searching for new battles to fight? Will it turn its back on its original purpose, embracing the study of magic or the religions of its creators? How does it feel about the Lord of Blades, the warforged insurgent who seeks to rally the other constructs against the organic beings of the world?

"Shaped by magic and tempered in battle, the warforged embody the core ideas of *EBERRON*. Between the roleplaying potential of these warrior constructs and the interesting game mechanics associated with the race, I would be surprised to see an adventuring party that does not include a warforged in its ranks."

—Keith Baker

and magic items such as *heroes' feast* and potions.

—A warforged is immune to the effects of fatigue and exhaustion.

—As a living construct, a warforged can be *raised* or *resurrected*.

- **Light Fortification (Ex):** When a critical hit or sneak attack is scored on a warforged, there is a 25% chance that it is negated, and damage is instead rolled normally.

- **A warforged has a slam attack that deals 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage. This is a natural weapon.**

- **Automatic Languages:** Common. **Bonus Languages:** None.

- **Favored Class:** Fighter. A multiclass warforged's fighter class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

## WARFORGED FEATS: FINE-TUNING THE MACHINE

In addition to all the other feats available to any character, warforged may take advantage of a specialized collection of feats that augment or enhance properties of their construct bodies. Here are a few of the feats available to warforged characters.

### ADAMANTINE-LACED BODY [WARFORGED]

At the cost of mobility, a warforged character's body can be crafted with a layer of adamantine that provides formidable protective armor and some damage reduction.

**Prerequisites:** Warforged, 1st level only.

**Benefit:** Your armor bonus is increased to +8 and you gain DR 2/adamantine. However, your base speed is reduced to 20 feet, and for all purposes, you are considered to be wearing heavy armor. You now have a maximum Dexterity bonus to AC of +1, a -5 penalty to all skills that armor check penalties apply to (Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble), and an arcane spell failure chance of 35%.

**Normal:** Without this feat, your warforged character has an armor bonus of +2.

**Special:** Unlike most feats, this feat must be taken at 1st level, during character creation. Warforged druids who take this feat cannot cast druid spells or use any of their druid supernatural or spell-like class abilities. This feat cannot be combined with the Mithral-Laced Body feat.

### IMPROVED DAMAGE REDUCTION [WARFORGED]

You improve warforged damage reduction.

**Prerequisite:** Warforged.

**Benefit:** You gain DR 1/adamantine or improve your existing DR by 1.

**Special:** If you have the Adamantine-Laced Body feat, you may take this feat multiple times.

### IMPROVED FORTIFICATION [WARFORGED]

You improve your warforged fortification to gain immunity to critical hits and sneak attacks.

**Prerequisite:** Warforged, base attack bonus +6.

**Benefit:** You gain immunity to critical hits and sneak attacks; however, you lose the ability to be healed by magical healing.

### MITHRAL-LACED BODY [WARFORGED]

A warforged character's body can be crafted with a layer of mithral that provides some protection without hindering speed or grace.

**Prerequisites:** Warforged, 1st level only.

**Benefit:** Your armor bonus is increased to +5, and for all purposes you are considered to be wearing light armor. You now have a maximum Dexterity bonus to AC of +5, a -2 penalty to all skills that armor check penalties apply to (Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble), and an arcane spell failure chance of 15%.

**Normal:** Without this feat, your warforged character has an armor bonus of +2.

**Special:** Unlike most feats, this feat must be taken at 1st level, during character creation. Warforged druids who take this feat cannot cast druid spells or use any of their druid supernatural or spell-like class abilities. This feat cannot be combined with the Adamantine-Laced Body feat.

### MITHRAL FLUIDITY [WARFORGED]

Your movements are smoother and more fluid than other warforged.

**Prerequisites:** Warforged, Mithral-Laced Body.

**Benefits:** The maximum Dexterity bonus you can apply to AC is increased by 1. In addition, the armor check penalties to Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble are reduced by 1.

**Special:** This feat can be taken multiple times. Its effects stack. However, armor check penalties cannot be reduced to less than +0.

The exciting, new *EBERRON Campaign Setting* hits the shelves of your favorite bookstore or hobby shop in June. Until then, keep coming back to see more of what you can expect to find inside.

Next month, you'll get to explore the different aspects of magic that pervade the entire world of EBERRON, including the magewright, an assortment of new spells and cleric domains, a glimpse at the cosmology of EBERRON, and a look at one of the more interesting and dangerous creatures spawned by the Last War—the living spell. ♣

#### CRAFTING THE WARFORGED

"The warforged, one of many unique elements to the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*, first appeared in Keith's 125-page setting bible. I can't remember whether they came out of discussions we had with Keith prior to sending him off to write the bible, or whether we just found them when we were reviewing it. In the bible, the warforged had a different name and a slightly different origin, but the basics of the idea were in place. James Wyatt and I discussed them a bit, and I believe it was James who suggested the name that stuck—the warforged. We even played with that as the name of the setting for a time, before deciding to go with the name of the world.

"The artists love the warforged. Steve Prescott, one of the concept artists we

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brought in to help us visualize the world, created the look of the basic warforged character. Another of our concept artists, Mark Tedin, developed one of the larger versions that will grace the monster section of the campaign setting book. And our cover artist, Wayne Reynolds, has illustrated a few different individual warforged that you're just going to have to see to believe. The thing about them, as with any core race, is that while they may have a class or two they are best suited for, any individual warforged might select any class. So, in addition to the fighters and barbarians, we've seen versions of the other extreme—warforged wizards and sorcerers.

"My goals for the race were simple. I wanted to maintain the spirit of Keith's idea: that the warforged were sentient constructs built for war trying to find their place in the newly achieved peace. Other key parts of the idea as originally put forth is their alien nature, that they would maintain some construct traits, and that bonding magic items to themselves would be a key feature of character improvement.

"I wanted to make sure we could build the rules so that the warforged wouldn't need a level adjustment. For a core race in the setting, it's important that there are as few obstacles as possible. You don't have to give up class features to make a dwarf or elf character, for example, and I wanted that to be true of the warforged (and the other new races we've developed for the setting). This was one of the hardest aspects of the race to balance, and it took the work of all three designers (Keith, myself, and James Wyatt), our development team (led by Andrew Finch), and our playtesters.

"I wouldn't be surprised if most adventuring parties in EBERRON have a warforged character among them, and I know we'll see the warforged begin to migrate to other campaign worlds—not necessarily in products, but certainly among gaming groups everywhere. The warforged are just that cool and new. They're definitely *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS*, but they're also definitely something new built within the parameters of the game system."

—Bill Slavicsek

