# FantasyCraft



## CALL TO ARMS:
## BLOODSWORN

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **Call to Arms**, a series of character expansions for Fantasy Craft. In each installment we offer a new class, appropriate for any fantasy setting. Some, like this volume's **Bloodsworn**, come with additional character options and other supporting material. For more information on this and many other great products, visit the Crafty Games website at **www. crafty-games.com**, your home for all things Fantasy Craft.

# BLOODSWORN (EXPERT)

Death can lurk anywhere: around the next dungeon corner, in the shadows of a dark alley, or even in the cellars and gardens of noble homes. The Bloodsworn is blessed with preternatural awareness and uncanny toughness, and stands at eternal vigil to defend the weak and helpless. With a select few he shares a supernatural bond, a union that binds them in body and soul.

Depending on the campaign, a Bloodsworn could be…

* A mystical guardian, obliged by ancestral oath to guard the lives of his masters
* A devoted father who will go to any length to protect his child
* A blood-brother of mages who's absorbed some of their arcane power
* A sacred warrior sent by the gods to protect the innocent from the scourge of evil
* A royal guardian whose duty is fueled by sublime zeal
* A grizzled sellsword whose love of gold drives him to ever greater (and perhaps reckless) action

**Party Role:** Backer/Combatant. The Bloodsworn is steward to the party's most vulnerable members, shielding them from the slings and arrows (and blades, bullets, and ballistae) of common foes. He also pretty consistently kicks the crap out of the bad guys.

## CLASS FEATURES

**Requirements:** Notice 4+ ranks, Lighting Reflexes, The Extra Mile

**Favored Attributes:** Wisdom, Constitution, Dexterity

**Class Skills:** Athletics, Intimidate, Medicine, Notice, Resolve, Ride, Sense Motive, Tactics

**Skill Points:** 4 + Int modifier per level

**Vitality:** 12 + Con modifier per level

## CORE ABILITY

**Devoted Defender:** Your toughness is legendary. Your Heroic Renown increases by 1. Also, at Level 1 and for each Class Level thereafter, you gain 1 additional wound point.

## CLASS ABILITIES

**Harm's Way I:** You guard your friends with your life. At Level 1, at the beginning of each session, you may select 1 ally who can see and hear you as your ward. Each time your ward is adjacent to you and is struck by an attack, you may make a Reflex save (DC equal to 1/2 the attack check result, rounded up). With success, you suffer the hit as if you were the target instead. You gain DR 1 against this attack.

**Harm's Way II:** At Level 5, you may select your ward at the beginning of each scene, and your DR against this attack increases by an additional 1 (total DR 2).

**Harm's Way III:** At Level 9, you may select your ward at the beginning of each combat, and your DR against this attack increases by an additional 1 (total DR 3).

**Ever-Vigilant I:** You're always on the lookout for trouble. At Level 2, you gain an additional Basic Combat feat and your maximum Notice rank increases to your Career Level + 5.

**Ever-Vigilant II:** At Level 7, you gain an additional Basic Combat feat and your maximum Notice rank increases to your Career Level + 7.

**Watch Out!:** At Level 3, while your ward can see and hear you and his Initiative Count is lower than yours, it becomes equal to yours.

At Level 7, while your ward can see and hear you and his Defense is lower than yours, it becomes equal to yours.

**Armor Use I:** At Level 4, you gain a +1 bonus to Defense while wearing armor and receive a 20% discount when purchasing armor.

**Armor Use II:** At Level 8, this Defense bonus increases to +2 and this discount increases to 25%.

**Blood-Bound I:** Your devotion to your ward goes beyond mere protection — it binds you together in spirit. At Level 4, once per scene as a full action, you may select 1 condition your ward currently suffers. Your ward loses that condition and you gain it instead. If the condition persists beyond the end of the scene, your ward regains the condition at the end of the scene.

**Blood-Bound II:** At Level 6, as a full action, you may transfer up to 1/2 your remaining vitality to your ward (rounded down). This may not increase your ward's vitality points beyond their normal maximum. Also, you may use your *blood-bound I* ability an additional time per scene (total 2).

**Blood-Bound III:** At Level 8, when your ward is the target of a spell with the range of Self or a saving throw of Harmless, the caster may target you with an identical copy of that spell as well. Also, you may use your *blood-bound I* ability an additional time per scene (total 3).
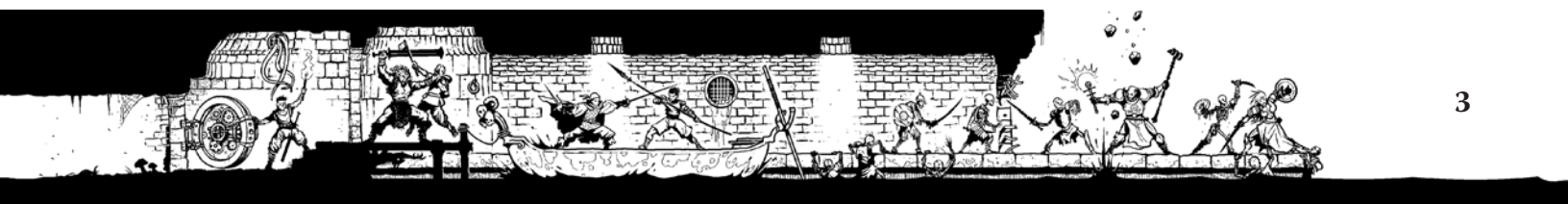
**Ultimate Sacrifice:** You always keep your ward alive — even if it *kills* you. At Level 10, once per session when your ward is killed within Close Quarters, you may choose to die as well (by leaping after them when they plunge off a cliff, stepping before a *coup de grace* attack that impales you both, etc.). In this case, you and your ward both Cheat Death with the same Petty Fate and return to play at the beginning of the next scene (*see Fantasy Craft, page 384*).

# BUILDING THE BLOODSWORN

The Bloodsworn must both soak up damage and keep an eye out for trouble (so he doesn't have to *keep* soaking damage), and so Species with good Constitution bonuses like Dwarves, Orcs, and Ogres are great fits for the class. Likewise, Humans with Talents that increase Constitution, Wisdom, wounds, and combat reaction time are all welcome options.

Specialties most beneficial to the Bloodsworn boost his Defense, Initiative, and critical skills like Medicine and Resolve. Also keep an eye out for Specialties with support abilities like the Vanguard (*stand together*) and Guardian (*step in*). One surprisingly good choice is the Druid — the Animal Partner feat gives the Bloodsworn a buddy to protect his ward and fill gaps in his own skill base, Attribute Training bumps up his two core attributes, Practiced Medicine and Survival better his party's chances of long-term survival, and Trackless Step helps him avoid enemies he doesn't feel like fighting.

It's an obvious choice to enter this Expert Class from a fightin' base class like the Soldier, but as a team player the Bloodsworn may be better off with the Captain or even the Sage to further enhance his ward's odds of survival, plus the effectiveness of party members. Lancer is another strong option for its high durability and strong combat skills, not to mention the social acumen to guard bodies in less hostile surroundings.

**Suggested Species:** Dwarf, Ogre, Orc, Human

**Suggested Human Talents:** Grizzled, Ruthless, Unpredictable, Vigilant

**Suggested Specialties:** Druid, Fencer, Guardian, Shield-Bearer, Vanguard

**Suggested Entry Classes:** Captain, Lancer, Sage, Soldier

# PLAYING THE BLOODSWORN

The Bloodsworn is an excellent team player and can become a force multiplier for any party that relies on coordinated tactics. When close at hand, he spots and reacts to trouble quickly thanks to *ever-vigilant* and a high Initiative bonus, and he protects vulnerable teammates with *harm's way* and *watch out!* He soaks up hits with the best of them thanks to *devoted defender* and *armor use*, and can bring friends back from the brink with *blood-bound* and *ultimate sacrifice*. Yet the Bloodsworn's ultimate value is even greater in parties *without* a combat focus, particularly if they include Burglars, Keepers, and Mages, who can lean on the character when the going gets hostile.

Though the Bloodsworn may seem like a fairly straightforward "tank" at first glance, he also has a tremendous capacity to control the flow of battle through misdirection and interference. Taunts and Diversions are a Bloodsworn's stock in trade, but devious use of his class abilities — in combination with carefully selected tricks and feats — can quickly upset enemy plans. For example, a well-armored Bloodsworn might use *harm's way* to draw an attack that can't penetrate his armor (or one that he can deflect with Arrow-Cutting, Parry, or Shield Block). Likewise, when the Bloodsworn and his ward are mobbed by mooks, he could use the Elusive feat in combination with *watch out!* to keep his ward's Defense high, even when *flanked* or *flat-footed*. Should his ward suffer debilitating conditions like *fatigued* or *shaken*, a clever Bloodsworn can use *blood-bound* to yank the condition and follow up with the Iron Will feat or No Pain Origin feature to cancel them entirely. Just a little ingenuity when choosing character options and using tactics, and the Bloodsworn can quickly become a thorn in nearly *every* enemy's side.

Feat-wise, the Bloodsworn stands to benefit most from increased toughness, teamwork, and crowd-control capacities.

## Table 1: The Bloodsworn

| Level | BAB | Fort | Ref | Will | Def | Init | Lifestyle | Legend | Special |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | +0 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +0 | +2 | +0 | +0 | *Devoted defender,* harm's way I |
| 2 | +1 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +1 | +3 | +0 | +1 | Ever-vigilant I |
| 3 | +2 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +1 | +4 | +1 | +1 | Watch out! (initiative count) |
| 4 | +3 | +4 | +4 | +2 | +2 | +5 | +1 | +1 | Armor use I, blood-bound I |
| 5 | +3 | +4 | +4 | +3 | +2 | +5 | +1 | +1 | Harm's way II |
| 6 | +4 | +5 | +5 | +3 | +2 | +6 | +2 | +2 | Blood-bound II |
| 7 | +5 | +5 | +5 | +4 | +3 | +7 | +2 | +2 | Ever-vigilant II, "watch out!" (Defense) |
| 8 | +6 | +6 | +6 | +4 | +3 | +8 | +2 | +2 | Armor use II, blood-bound III |
| 9 | +6 | +6 | +6 | +4 | +4 | +9 | +3 | +2 | Harm's way III |
| 10 | +7 | +7 | +7 | +5 | +4 | +10 | +3 | +3 | Ultimate sacrifice |

Choices that grant extra attacks, like Contempt and Cleave Basics, can help thin out a veritable flood of mooks, while Shield Basics and Combat Instincts can improve the Bloodsworn's ability to react to incoming attacks. Also of particular use are feats that dictate the flow of battle — Coordinated Attack and its kin, for instance, which let you choose the best part of your team to act, and Aggro Basics (*see below*), which commands enemy attention and preserves vital teammates, letting them do the work of winning the day. Finally, Quick Healer, Iron Will, and Great Fortitude are invaluable for ensuring the Bloodsworn remains standing until the battle's over.

Bloodsworn gear is pretty basic, his most important investment being a good set of armor. Since he's likely to stick close to his ward in most cases, weaponry should be fit for close-range fights and should ideally improves his ability to nullify foes or keep them at bay long enough for his ward to get to safety.

**Suggested Feats:** Aggro Basics, Armor Basics, Cleave Basics, Combat Instincts, Coordinated Attack, Iron Will, Quick Healer, Shield Basics, Surge of Speed

**Suggested Adventuring Equipment (250s):** Axe with the *hook* upgrade OR bar-whip with the *bleed* and *hook* upgrades, 3 javelins, metal shield, moderate studded leather armor with heavy fittings, doctor's bag

# BASIC COMBAT FEATS

*For more about Basic Combat feats, see Fantasy Craft, page 85.*

## AGGRO BASICS

You're skilled at drawing enemy attention… by any means necessary.

**Benefit:** You may Taunt up to 3 opponents at once. You roll only once for the action, while each opponent rolls to resist separately. Also, you gain a stance:

*Easy Prey (Stance):* You gain a +4 bonus with Taunt checks, and suffer a −2 penalty to Defense.

## AGGRO MASTERY

Your barbed insults sting worse then arrows — and have saved your friends far more often.

**Prerequisites:** Aggro Basics

**Benefit:** Once per round, after a teammate is attacked within Close Quarters, you may spend 1 Edge to Taunt his attacker as a free action.

*Your Father Smelt of Elderberries! (Taunt Trick):* If this check is successful, you gain 1 Edge. You may use this trick once per round.

## AGGRO SUPREMACY

To say you know how to get your enemy's goat is a *bit* of an understatement.

**Prerequisites:** Aggro Mastery

**Benefit:** When you hit an opponent with a melee or unarmed attack, you may Taunt him as a free action. Also, you gain a trick:

*Mortal Insult (Taunt Trick):* You may spend up to 5 Edge to make your target *enraged* for a number of rounds equal to the Edge spent. Opponents *enraged* in this way do not fall unconscious when the condition ends.

# NEW CLASS ABILITY NPC QUALITIES

The following Bloodsworn abilities are available to NPCs using the *class ability* NPC quality *(see Fantasy Craft, page 231).*

| Class Ability | XP Value |
| --- | --- |
| Blood-bound I-III | 4 per grade |
| Harm's way I-III | 2 per grade |
| Watch out! | 2 per grade |

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