

TOTEMIC WARRIOR

The totemic warrior is a ranger variant found among tribal societies practicing shamanic religion and philosophy. In such an environment, several of the abilities of a traditional ranger are inappropriate, such as access to wizard spells and use of wizard magical items. At the same time, the general theme of the ranger class, as a warrior specifically trained in woodcraft, stealth, and survival, is particularly relevant. To bridge this discontinuity we have the totemic warrior.

In all respects not mentioned, a totemic warrior has the same advantages and disadvantages as a traditional ranger. Totemic warriors have the same experience table, hit dice, combat table, saving throws, weapon proficiencies, non-weapon skills, stealth, and tracking abilities as a ranger. Likewise, totemic warriors also do not keep more wealth than they can carry nor operate in groups larger than three totemic warriors. Much like shaman, totemic warrior are usually of good alignment (60%), although unlike traditional rangers, there are also neutral (30%) and evil (10%) members of this class. Totemic warriors have all the same attribute requirements as a ranger, except the minimum intelligence is only 9. Totemic warriors also have a minimum charisma of 9. A totemic warrior gains a +10% to earned experience if his strength, wisdom, and constitution are all 16 or higher. Since demi-humans and non-humans do not hold a shamanic worldview and culture, totemic warriors may only be human.

The main distinctions between a traditional ranger and a totemic warrior are as follows:

- No bonus to damage against giant-class creatures or other monsters
- No ability to learn or cast mage spells starting at 9th level
- No power to use scrying or ESP items at 10th level
- May only wear leather, padded, studded leather, or hide armor
- May only use a non-metal shield

- Gain shaman spells instead of druid spells starting at 8th level
- Gain various animal allies instead of other followers at 10th level
- Lose totemic warrior status for killing an animal of totem's species instead of changing alignment

- Gain totemic abilities as a shaman of equal level (q.v.)
- Gain charisma bonus and raise reactions one category when interacting with animals of totem's species
- Learn the language of totem animal at 6th level
- Raise negative reaction by animals of totem's species one category, in addition to all other bonuses at 9th level
- Will not be harmed or molested by animals of totem's species unless provoked at 12th level

Just like shaman, totemic warriors are usually found in simple, tribal societies. The archetypical model for shamanic culture is that of the Native Peoples of North America. Shamanism, however, are also found in an amazingly wide variety of cultures as well, from the Siberian taiga to the Serengeti veldt and from the Islands of Indonesia to the Jungles of the Amazon. Each of these tribal societies subsist by a combination of hunting, small-scale farming, and animal husbandry. Rarely do such cultures have any weapon more complex than the bow or more than minor metalworking skills.

Proficiencies: 3/2 + 1/1 every 3 levels
Armor: leather, padded, shield
Weapons: any (no poison)
Hit Dice: d8
Saves: as a fighter
Combat: as a fighter
Alignment: any (see above)
Races: Human
Attributes: Str 13 (16)
Int 9
Wis 14 (16)
Con 14 (16)
Chr 9

While there is no mythological hero that precisely matches the totemic warrior, the niche this class fills is obvious in a fantasy universe. Indeed, many historical individuals could be viewed as a blend of the totemic warrior and shaman. As neither rangers nor paladins are appropriate in a shamanic setting, the totem warrior in part fills the role of spiritually-gifted fighter. Totemic warrior are also sometimes known as forest-walkers.

Please note, this work is meant to be used in a medieval fantasy role-playing setting. It is not meant to make social, political, or archeological claims about the inherent strengths or weaknesses of any real or fictional culture. It is an attempt to weave the real-world philosophies of shamanism into the warp of the Dungeons and Dragons milieu in order to offer players another human tradition distinct from the perennial Euro-centric options.