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Pathfinder paladin optimization

Last Updated: Mar 21, 2017 I support a limited set of Pathfinder rule content. If you want help with pathfinder player options not covered here, please email me and I am happy to provide further assistance. RPGBOT uses a color-coding scheme that has become common among Pathfinder building help books. Please also note that many colorful items are also links to Paizo SRD. Red: Bad, useless options, or options that are very situational. Orange: Certification options, often essential to the function of your character. Prelude to Paladin is a divine fighting sing-in. Much like a fighter, Paladin does effective Defender and Striker, but Paladin's other options also allow them to serve as a face as a healer, though you'll need to take traits to get missing class skills to serve as a face, and Paladin can't match Cast's full healing ability as a cleric. Despite a fairly limited set of roles, Paladin's natural ability and self-satisfaction make it a great choice for single-character campaigns. Paladin Class features hit points: D10 points hit is standard for fighting rates. Base Attack Bonus: Full Bab. Save: The Paladins have the best saves in the game without making any specific efforts to improve them. And divine grace adds a tremendous bonus piled up with almost everything else skill: heavy armor, shields, and military weapons. Skills: 2+ skill lines and a very sparse skill list. Aura of good (former): Hardly ever matters. Identify evil (Sp): Not always important, but I've seen a lot of Paladins get into social situations with this run so they know who they can trust, and who needs a good live. Smite Evil (Sp): Fantastic offensive option. Divine Grace (Su): One of Paladin's best abilities, it adds a huge bonus to your savings shots. Lie on your hands (Su): Excellent healing mechanic. Graces allow you to remove harmful conditions, and you can use it on yourself as a quick action so you don't have to cut into your full attack. Aura of Courage (Su): Status. Divine Health (formerly): Diseases are becoming more common at high levels, which can make it very useful. Mercy (Su): Graces offer the ability to heal conditions which usually require a cleric. However, keep in mind that your Paladin spells can often handle the same conditions. Tired base: Tired is one of the least problematic conditions in the game. Horrified: Frustrating, and effects which make you shaken can be quite long durations. An aura of courage should improve your party's savings against these effects, but it doesn't work to scare and it's not 100% effective. Sick: Effects that make you sick tend to be very short durations, but losing a turn always hurts. Of course, if you spend your standard action to remove Dazed, you probably lose the same amount of actions by wasting your turn to heal the target. Diseases: Diseases can be irritating to deal with, and some have horrific secondary effects which make it tend to be very short durations. The exception is to be at 0 hit points, which will be solved by healing and lying on hands. Level 9 Cursed: Curses are constant and exhausting, but Paladins can also cast a curse to remove. Exhausted: Go take a nap. Frightened: Potions of feat remove cost 50 gp. Go buy one. Nausea: Effects that cause nausea tend to be very short durations. Poisoned: Poison very rarely kill your party, but sometimes it gets scary. Blind Level 12: Being blind sucks, which is often permanent. Deafening: Being deaf is annoying at worst. Paralyzed: A paralyzed figure just waiting for a coup de grace. Shocked: Being shocked makes you very vulnerable to attack. Positive Energy Channel (Su): Paladins are not good at channeling energy, but if you need to cure more than two people in the party it is more effective than using lay hands on each of them. If you insist on using channel energy, see my practical guide to energy channel. Spells: Paladins are 1/2 casters, and get very few spells per day from a limited spell list. However, their choice of spell complements their other abilities really well. They get almost no service options, but they get spells that help them serve as healers, pioneers, and protectors. See the Spells section, below, for some notable spells. Divine Connection (Sp): Both options are fantastic. Being able to improve your weapon can solve a lot of problems, including DR, but Mount is an essential part of any mounted fighting build. For help with the Paladins Mountain, see my practical guide to animal partners. Spells: Paladins cast spells at cast level 3 lower than their class level, which seriously disability their spells, then consider the magical Knack feature to boost your cast level. Aura of Determination (Su): Hantastic, but remember that allies must still use quick action to run a good Smite. Aura of Justice (Su): Fantastic for fighting badly aligned foreigners, and saves you the hassle of casting weapons and bless. Aura of Justice (Su): DR 5/Evil will protect you from anything but enemy divine spellings and evil strangers like demons. Holy Champion (Su): Good, but not great. You're the... A forced effect terminates the Smite even if it fails, and nothing you can choose will regulate the effect. Personally, I'd rather kill the outsider so he can't come back. Paladin abilities can look similar to any other scuffle fighting figure, but divine grace drastically reduces the need for Texas and wisdom to fix bad saves. Seter: Paladins are almost exclusively scuffle characters, so power is essential. In heavy armor and with divine grace, Texas is not pettically important. Take 12 at most, but you can survive with less. Con: Essential for hit points, but Fortitude Saves shouldn't be an issue. Int: Paladin's skill list is better than the fighters, but 2+ skill lines offer you very limited options. Wis: With divine grace and saving success you can easily throw wisdom 8 without any problems. Che: Fuels Paladin's humidity and abilities. 25 points Buy 20 points Buy 15 Point Buy Elite Array Str: 16 Dex: 12 Con: 14 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 16 Str: 16 Dax: 12 Con: 14 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 14 Str: Str 14 Dex: 12 Con: 14 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 14 Str: 15 Dex: 12 Con: 13 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 14 Str: 15 Dex: 12 Con: 14 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 14 Str: 15 Dex: 12 Con: 13 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 14 Str: 15 Dex: 12 Con: 14 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 14 Str: 15 Dex: 12 Con: 14 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 14 Str: 15 Dex: 12 Con: 14 Int: 10 Wis: 8 Cha: 14 Str: 15 Dex: 15 Dex: 15 Dex: 16 Dex: 17 Dex: 17 Dex: 18 other racial traits still make it a viable option. The constitutional bonuses and wisdom offset most of the lost bonus from divine grace, and the dwarf preferred class bonus adds concentration, which is almost worthless for paladins. Elf: Nothing useful for Paladin, and bonuses for two of Paladin's less important abilities. Dwarf: Constitutional bonuses and charisma are enough to offset the penalty for power, making the dwarf a solid choice for small for horses. Gnome's preferred status bonus improves the healing/damage provided by lying on your hands. Half Elf: The flexible ability bonus is nice, and the elf half has some nice alternative racial traits which can work well for Paladin. The half-elf's preferred bonus extends paladin's halo area. Considering Paladin has 5 halo (not including Aura's good), it can be a fantastic enthusiast. Half Orc: A flexible ability bonus and some nice racial abilities that complement the Paladin Well. Unfortunately, the preferred half-orc status bonus is terrible, so take the human preferred class bonus instead. Halfling: A little less effective than the dwarf because the Texas bonus is terrible, so take the human preferred class bonus instead. Halfling: A little less effective than the dwarf because the Texas bonus is terrible, so take the human preferred class bonus instead. 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Remember that this resistance stacks up with magical energy resistance such as the spell to resist energy. Grind hack features (fighting): Paladins spend a lot of time in the scuffle themselves, so it can complete frequently if you don't have any other scuffle allies. Deft Dodger (Fighting): Reflex rescues are your worst save, although they will still be fantastic thanks to divine grace and goodwill savings. The free holy symbol is neat, but not really necessary. Moman (Faith): Scare is one of your missing facial skills. In addition to the regular +1 free bonus and class skill, you also get suppressed once a day as a quick action! Magical talent (magic): +2 Cast level adds hours to your enthusiasts. Almost every Paladin has to take it. Dangerously intriguing (magic): Strange choice for Paladin, but you have the charisma to use UMD, which is still the best skill in the game. Unscathed (magic): If you're human, it deals closely with magical talent. The human preferred status bonus is an easy way to get a few points of energy damage. Even if you skip voice damage you still get 8 levels worth of preferred grade bonus from one feature. Normally I don't worry about vocal damage, but I think you can save one point to get 3 resistance points, especially for the smug satisfaction of telling people that you have vocal damage resistance points, especially for the smug satisfaction of telling people that you have vocal damage resistance. A better sign was funded. Quick Talker (Social): Bluff is one of your missing facial skills, though as Paladin you may have moral obejctions to lie. Impact (Social): Pick up any missing facial skill you haven't been getting. Looking (social): The most rolled up skill in the game. Unpredictable (social): Bluff is one of your missing facial skills, though as Paladin you may have moral obedience to lie. Brut (half racial orc): Better sign. Skills Diplomacy (Cha): Essential to all faces. Dealing with animals (cha): Beneficial for guidance and treatment of your mountain, but you probably won't have to maximize it. Cure (Wis): A beneficial addition to magical healing, but Paladins usually throw away wisdom so that they won't be as effective as someone with a decent wisdom score. Knowledge (Nobility) (Int): My situation, and very far-fetched in your campaign. Knowledge (Int): One of the most important knowledge skills in the game. Traveling (Dax): Useful if you take the possibility of a mountain of divine connection, but otherwise useless. Sensory motive (Wis): Beneficial to any face. Spellcraft (Int): Mode, and Paladins are not particularly suitable to do anything with the information they can obtain. The paladins' antics fight much like a fighter with a similar combat achievement available, this section will focus primarily on feats which cater specifically to Paladin. Skilled Champion: It can add an impressive bonus to your CMB at the expense of damage, which is fantastic if you build Defender. Unless you're fighting the unsumed, it won't help you deal with damage. Larger Channel Smite: Allows you to split the bonus damage cubes from the Smite channel. Largely pointless. Guided hand: It's for clergy. Channeled revival: If your party lacks someone who can cast the breath of life, it's a great investment. It takes three uses of an energy channel, which means 6 uses of lying on your hands so you won't be able to use it until level 12 unless you take Extra Lay on hands or your party. Another lay on your hands: if you like lying on your hands a lot (and you should), it's worth considering. More Mercy: It's hard to know what graces to choose, but you can probably choose ones that work well enough that you don't have to spend an achievement on it. If you feel absolutely compelled to pick up extra graces, buy Compassionate Baldric. Radiant charging: Consumes all your remaining uses of lying on your hands for the day so you can only use it once a day. The most effective use is to use the achievement. Grace Award: Probably only useful if you use lay on yourself a lot. Tiny bonus with one round duration. Sacred bonuses are really rare, but focus weapons are probably better. Life Award: If your party doesn't have a cleric or someone else who is better at healing. Un sprayed knowledge: Un sprayed knowledge can open up a lot of really great witchcraft options. Clergy in particular have a lot of great fans, and many people have long durations. Magic And Staments, for example, is a Level 3 cleric spell with hours/duration level that can save you a fortune on improving armor. However, remember that paladins get very few spells per day and paladin's cast level is 3 lower than their class level. Word of Healing: Standard action range 30 feet to heal half of normal. Walking to your goal would usually be better. Falchion Weapon: If you want a weapon with two hands without a hand, Falchion is the two-hand equivalent of Scimitar. Longsword: Iconic and extravagant, but in the past the critical threat range low levels of Falchions would be better bribery. Reach Weapons: Every weapon to reach is a good choice for Defender. You plan to use combat maneuvers, Guisarme is an obvious choice, but the threat range will pay better beyond low levels when damage to your bonus overshadows the base damage of your weapon. Heavenly armor is the best armor in the game if all you need from your armor is AC. For more information, see my practical guide to heavenly armor. Hide: Well, armor start cheap if you don't want to spend the gold to get four looks. Four Shows: The best AC bonus where you can afford level 1. Heavy Shield: Unless you plan to use a weapon with both hands, a heavy shield is a good choice. Full Plate: The best armor you can get. Link Sponsored Spelling Tracker Manage the spelling casting of your characters, special abilities, and magic items all from the comfort of your phone. Follow ready spells and spelling slots, cast spells and follow ongoing spells and effects with a built-in combination of each department and spelling this section will not refer to any spell in your spelling list, but it will indicate some particularly prominent options. For a complete list of spellings, see the SRD spelling index. Level 1 Spells Evil Challenge: Very tempting, but since the Paladins don't have charisma-caster supremacy and since then they've been getting spell levels so late DC is going to be really low. Don't expect it to work crediblely. Even when it works, it just makes you sick, which can't be daunting enough to force targets to attack you. Force hostility: a fantastic option for defenders. You will have a problem with your DC spell, but since target makes savings for each attack individually, it is likely that at least some of the saves will fail. Defiance of the Hero: You need it, no doubt. This means you can afford to waste you quick action on something other than healing, even if your hit points get low. Honey Tongue: Excellent for the front, but I'd only prepare it if you have time to rest before you go to a series of negotiations or something like that. Knight's Call: More effective than the evil challenge, but only one round duration and all those DC problems. If it works, it's fantastic. Second level fire spells of entanglement: Paladins always have a problem with spell DCs, but even if target succeds they are still entangled for round one. A completely essential way to keep enemies in our cases. If you can don't suck at spell DCs, this would be an amazing way to boost your billing damages. Paladin's Sacrifice: Works only once per casting, but as an instant actions cost your quick action as the next one, so you can't take a quick action to use Lay on Hands as the next one. Humble: Combined with evil Smite this is an absolutely amazing option. The temporary kill points will allow you to focus entirely on the attack, and the scariest enemy you can find. Saddle Surge: Absolutely essential for mounted beaver. The damage should be multiplied by wind payment and by lance use. Get as far as you can, increase your mountain speed as much as possible, and get massive damage spike on your charge. The horse has a base speed of 50, so you can move 30 feet on the onslever. Horse speed adds another 10 meters. Imagine charging 150 feet, adding 32 to your usual damage, and then tripping it all up. Horrible. Other Shield: You have the ability to heal yourself as a quick action, so absorbing some damage treated sea ally means you're wasting your turn fighting things instead of healing your ally. However, it can be difficult to know which ally to use it on. You can use it and find out it never comes into play. Level 3 Deadly Spells Juggernaut: In encounter with some weak enemies to feed into this spell, it is simply amazing. Luck bonuses are hard to find, and luck bonuses for damage are even less common. With minutes per level duration, you may be able to carry it to multiple single-casting sessions. Fire of Judgment: By creatures of this level should almost always go through your spell saving, then you will get only one round of it. Even if the creature fails to save it, damage to 1d6 is not much of a deterrent unless the creature has a myriad of attacks. Still, quick action casting time makes it reasonably sustainable if you can make the 1-round duration work for you. Magic Weapon, Bigger: With hours per level duration, there is no excuse to buy magic weapons with more than +1 improvement bonus. If you have a full cast ready to cast it for you, let them do it. If not, plan to cast that spell every day. Sanctify Armor: Effectively magic vests, but with minutes/level duration and DR component if you use evil Smite. Fourth level flame spells of fame: It's a tricky spell, and I'm not sure how effective it will be in a real game. Normally I prefer to use Hiro's resistance when I hit 0 hit points, but if you have multiple unexpected allies it might turn the tide of a fight. The damage is orderly, but not significant enough to realistically kill anything. The prayer effect is great, and does not seem to be affected by the savings shot. Magic Break: By it Other spell transmissions will easily outpace the maximum caster level bonus on magic break, so you will have trouble using it effectively. Revenge Fire: Quick action, no rescue, no resistance to the ping, and enough 3D8 damage to be a likely deterrent. However, it only works on one attack. Judging fire may be better unless your enemy is particularly low on points of impact. Sacred Sword: Really good, but standard action cast and only rounds/level duration means it will be difficult to bring it to the game easily without cutting into your normal actions. The effects also coincide with the weapons option for divine Bond, a resounding blow: it's easy to ignore, but with quick action casting time a resounding blow is a big fight buff. An innings/level duration and 1d6 damage per attack means you can get an impressive amount of additional damage from that. The shock effect works even against creatures you don't wreak, so strongly consider using a weapon with a high critical threat range. Sacrifice Oath: Much like another defender, but you can choose to take the effects, and it also works on failing to save shots. If you're willing to absorb everything they've been going to create, this is the way to do it. Magic Items Holy Avenger Weapon: +5 Holy Cold Iron is guite great on its own, but the ability to cast magic to dispel greater as many times as you want is absolutely amazing. You're limited to a version in the area, but it's still enough to do it like dispel static magic effects or debuff rooms full of spotless enemies. Armor/Champion Kids (+1): +2 AC bonus against the target of your scrum is nice, but flat +1 will be much more helpful unless you are somehow able to hit almost any fight. Protection Rings: Although Smite provides a shifting bonus, a ring of protection is still a good investment since you won't be able to hang any enemy you're facing. You also have protection from good/law, which can provide the same bonus. Metamagic rods in Pathfinder are cheap, and since your spellcasting only goes up to level 4 you can cover almost all your spells with fewer rods. If your party has devoted spelling trials that have used fewer metamagic rods at low levels, you may be able to buy them from your ally at a significant discount. For help with metamagic options, see my metamagic rods at low levels, you can re-roll diplomacy checks for 10 minutes. If you're the face of your party, it's a fantastic investment. Saddle Surge: If you're using mounted fighting, it's worth considering. You have to cast a saddle surge as a standard action anyway and come back to get as far away as you can. The rounds per level duration will get you a minimum of up to 5 rounds, but the baton will be expensive since the minimum The level for the spell is 5 instead of 3 as most spells at level 2. Wondrous items and a belt of huge power/belt of physical strength: You need strength and a law, but most paladins won't be of use for Texas. Bracelet of Mercy: Good, but not worth 15,000qp. Get a bridge of the merciful knight instead. Avenger Knight Bracelet: Four more levels of Smite means 4 more damage per hit. Neat, but the compassionate knight bracelet costs less and is much more useful. Bracers of the Merciful Knight: Four additional levels of lay on your hands means 2d6 more healing and 2 additional uses per day. The least good recovery effect, but it's a first-class spell for Palladin so it's not a huge advantage. Boots of Speed: Only 12,000gp of these are to steal. Run them as free action one round at a time, and you can easily stretch their use throughout the day. Essential to almost every scuffle character. Clot of Resistance: Too vital to give up, even with divine grace. Crystal of the healing hands: This is something that those allies need to buy so you can charge it for them. Signy's Valor: Paladins aren't big on energy channel unless you're banking on it, and if you really want to use an energy channel as a quick action you want to get a quick channel. And Compassionate Embers: Once a day is not enough. If you are using lay hands it is rare that you will be removing more than one condition, then expect to go long periods without these being useful. Headband of seductive charisma: critical. Boosts all your savings, plus the usual benefits of charisma. Compassionate Baldrick: You probably don't need it. You get enough favors for most campaigns, and if you can't cover everything it's much cheaper to buy scrolls of spells that will remove the conditions of the situation you can't cover. Decoration of healing light: 15 feet is not enough range to warrant 10,000gp. The shepherd's philacteria costs 7,500, does more, and then use lay on your hands at 30 ft. Range as a quick action when one of them picks up a nasty state. Power gem: Paladins get very few spell slots, but their spells can be stronger than their spell level suggests. Power 1 on a high-level wizard is largely useless; The Pearl of Power 1 on Paladin means further use of the hero's resistance. Constant spells increase man: bonus power and reach. Excellent for any Paladin scuffle unless you are using mt. If the hesitant penalty is a problem, you can offset it with an ioun stone instead of adding a bunch of extra cost to your belt. See Invisibility: Expensive, but you have no way of dealing with invisible enemies. Enemies.

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