

CREATE-A-TRADITION

A MONK TRADITION CREATION GUIDE



WRITTEN BY MATTHEW GRAVELYN

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A how-to guide for creating a monk Tradition in 5e



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Create-A-Tradition: A Monk Tradition Creation Guide by Matthew Gravelyn

INTRODUCTION

TAKING A TRADITION

Nearly all monks start their journey in the same fashion, approaching a monastery and seeking guidance from the wizened masters there. The vast majority of the early training is standardized, providing each student with the same lessons and assessments. At some point, each fledgling monk exhibits a particular aptitude or characteristic that inspires the masters to specialize their training.

While most monasteries offer a single method of teaching advanced monastic arts, some are known to house many masters of many Traditions who seek out pupils based on their personal growth. This is not inherently part of the Tradition itself but rather a choice made by the masters.

Your Tradition will lay the groundwork for the specialized training and skills that monks might achieve through strict mental and physical training, but it is more than just lessons. There is a style to each Tradition, a way of thinking and acting that is the true point of the teachings. In this regard, honorable or aggressive monks may not take to the teachings of Traditions that focus on stealth and subtlety. Consider this when thinking about what type of person would follow this Tradition.

USING THIS SOURCEBOOK

This book is meant to be a template, a guide to help you create your very own monk Tradition that is compatible with virtually any 5e setting or campaign. In this way, you have nearly limitless potential to entertain yourself and find new ways to bring the monk to life in your game.

Each section covers an area of Tradition creation, including an overview of existing options, concepts to consider during creation, and how to balance the features that go into a Tradition.

This book is based on research of the official monk Tradition options as well as many other homebrew and self-published options. Using that research as a framework, I created this guide to help you create a Tradition as quickly and easily as possible.

EXAMPLES

Included at the end of each section are two example Traditions that I have created following this guide. Feel free to use these Traditions in your game, but their true purpose is to illustrate the practical application of the guide.

Examples are found in blue boxes at the end of each section and detail the choices of that section. Complete versions of **Way of the Beast** and **Way of Ebb and Flow** can be found at the end of this guide.



TRADITION CREATION

The wrappings of your Tradition, specifically the name and background, can be a helpful tool in defining the features offered within. That said, sometimes it is easier to think about the features you want to offer and then go back and design a wrapper to fit those points. In either case, here are some tips for creating the larger lore of your Tradition.

TRADITION NAME

All the official Traditions have an obvious naming convention that is easy to follow and build upon. All Tradition names follow the form “Way of the _____” or “Way of _____”. While I’m a stickler for adhering to form and standards, I believe this naming convention also implies a deeper adherence to Tradition for monks. This isn’t just a book of techniques to master, it is literally a way of living.

When deciding on your Tradition name, I encourage you to lean more thematic and evocative than trying for a name that is descriptive of the mechanics. Given that the name and theme of your Tradition should speak more about what kind of monk would follow it and how they would act as a person is more important at this stage than giving hints about the features.

MONASTERIES AND MASTERS

While not something you strictly need to add, thinking about where this Tradition is taught and who does the teaching can add valuable narrative elements to your monk. Think about whether this Tradition is widely practiced or if it is only spoken of in folk tales and legends. Consider if this Tradition is thought of highly or as “less than” by the common folk. Would a follower of your Tradition be more likely to be a personal bodyguard, a stealthy assassin, or a wandering philosopher?

This can also provide the DM with information about NPCs and important locations. If your Tradition is widely practiced, it would make sense that you be able to find a friendly monastery during your travels, giving you and your allies a place to rest or even hide. This can also let the DM know if it’s likely you would run into other monks of your Tradition in the world or if coming across another practitioner would be a surprising occurrence.

Example: Way of the Beast

I want to create a Tradition that makes reference to the trope of animal-inspired fighting styles. I also wanted this Tradition to come with choices, so my plan is to have four animal styles that are an option at each feature level. There will also be bonuses for monks who adopt a single fighting style but those who dabble in multiple styles will have a wider variety of abilities.

Example: Way of Ebb and Flow

This Tradition is based on a concept of balance, of the universe giving and taking in equal measure. Monks who follow this path are taught to look several steps ahead and work within the rules of karma. By tapping into this balance, they can divert energy to and from situations, gaining extraordinary benefits now while paying it back later.

ABILITIES

The monk is one of the most ability-rich classes in the game. Except for ability score improvements and an improvement to Unarmored Movement, every level of progression in the monk class offers a new ability or feature to build on the versatility of the monk.

Below are some of the major milestones in the monk's advancement to consider when creating features for your Tradition.

FIGHTING STYLE

There are a few baseline features of how the monk approaches combat that you should keep in mind when creating Tradition features. These are aspects that define how to play a monk and crafting features that contradict or take away from these assumptions can make for a disjointed or under-powered Tradition.

The first and most important of these styles is that monks have a set of weapons called monk weapons that include short swords and simple weapons that don't have the two-handed or heavy tags. If a monk uses any other type of weapon, they don't gain the benefits of the Martial Arts feature, which augments their attack modifiers, damage output, and ability to make bonus unarmed attacks. Taking this out of the equation will severely alter the way a monk approaches battle.

Monks also gain armor class and movement benefits when not wearing armor or wielding shields. While this is less likely to be affected by your new features, remember that monks will very rarely be wearing armor. This also encourages the dodging or redirecting of damage in features instead of taking the damage directly.

KI

Vaguely similar to spell slots in other classes, Ki is a pool of points that grows with advancement in monk levels and are spent to perform or add enhancements to abilities. This is the primary gate by which more powerful abilities are kept in check while also creating important choices for the monk, such as when to spend Ki points and on which features.

Ki points are less of a restriction on your new features and more of an add-on. If you're on the fence with a feature you think might be too powerful, add a Ki point cost to the mix. Alternatively, you can go with a weaker ability that can optionally be improved by spending Ki points, giving a range of potency depending on what the player is willing to spend.

ABILITIES BY LEVEL

In this and the following sections, I have provided quick reference lists to all the abilities your monk will have access to at the levels they gain their Tradition features. This will help you find suitable abilities for improvements through Tradition features as well as remind you what other options monk players will have to consider alongside your new Tradition feature.

Each feature has a very short description and denotes whether the ability requires Ki points (*) or has options for Ki points (**).

ABILITIES BY 3RD LEVEL

At 3rd level you choose your Tradition and gain the first feature. At this point, your monk will also have access to the following abilities:

- Unarmored Defense – bonus to AC
- Martial Arts – monk weapons, augmented combat
- Ki* – pool of points, three base Ki features
- Unarmored Movement – bonus to movement speed
- Deflect Missiles** – bonus to ranged attack defense

ABILITIES BY 6TH LEVEL

At 6th level, your monk will have access to the following abilities:

- Slow Fall – reduces fall damage
- Extra Attack – bonus to attack action
- Stunning Strike* – attempt to stun
- Ki-Empowered Strikes – “magical” attacks

ABILITIES BY 11TH LEVEL

At 11th level, your monk will have access to the following abilities:

- Evasion – reduced damage via saving throws
- Stillness of Mind – remove charm or frightened
- Purity of Body – disease and poison immunity

ABILITIES BY 17TH LEVEL

At 17th level, your monk will have access to the following abilities:

- Tongue of the Sun and Moon – language bonus
- Diamond Soul** – bonus to saving throws
- Timeless Body – biological need improvement

FEATURES

The features granted by your Tradition are available at 3rd, 6th, 11th, and 17th level. These features will be interlaced with the suite of standard monk class features, creating a nearly endless combination of actions and effects.

Most features found in the official Traditions fall solidly into one of three types: ability improvements, new abilities, and Ki-based abilities. In addition, most Traditions favor one style of feature over the other, with all four of the features being one type. A couple of the official Traditions did bring in one feature from the other type, but this was not common. Below is a quick primer on each of the types.

ABILITY IMPROVEMENT

There is a wide assortment of abilities already included in the monk class that can be improved upon by the features of your Tradition. In this way, you can focus on an existing style of play while still offering new and interesting options.

For example, instead of creating a feature to add a new type of attack, you could write a feature that allows the monk to spend a Ki point or two to increase the effects of an existing ability, like Flurry of Blows.

Alternatively, you can create allowances for your monk to use existing abilities in new ways or with less restrictions than they normally would. An example for this could be improving the Stillness of Mind ability to be a bonus action instead of a full action.

NEW ABILITY

If you're looking to really spice up your monk, you'll often be looking to create a net new ability. This can be challenging for any class, but even more so for monks given the already impressive variety of abilities they have as a base class. If you're going this route, make sure to study up on the existing class features and ensure your new abilities are distinct enough and add enough new value.

For example, at 10th level, every monk becomes immune to poison and disease. Offering a resistance to these or even immunity earlier at the 6th level Tradition feature loses a lot of value when they were going to receive this ability anyway. Likewise, creating a feature to make the monk immune to more damage types might be too powerful.

The best way for me to get inspiration for new abilities is to play the base class and think about how I might want to solve a situation or attack an enemy but

don't have the means to with the base content. Take those situations and flesh out a discrete feature that addresses this gap or need and then balance it for the appropriate level of your Tradition.

KI-BASED ABILITY

Ki is one of the more unique aspects of playing a monk. It has similarities to spell slots or sorcery points but function a little differently. Thematically, Ki represents the metaphysical energy of the monk, whether it's akin to chakras an energy or divine inspiration. If you want to lean heavily into resource management and thematic abilities, look to this category of features.

Since these types of abilities require the spending of a limited resource, they are often more powerful. Keep in mind that these abilities will be used less often than "free" abilities, so make sure players are encouraged to use them. If they're lukewarm in output, players will often view them as not worth the Ki.

From the core rulebook, the elemental-themed monk Tradition is entirely about spending Ki points. This is a great place to start when figuring out what Ki points can be used for at the different levels. The other published Traditions also dabble into Ki-based abilities as well, so there is no shortage of official inspiration to draw from here.

URNS VS. RESTS

This note applies to all features of this Tradition, but doubly so for early level features. Almost none of the official Tradition features are limited by rests, short or long. I believe this is a sign that monk features are intended to be less powerful but used often.

Instead of the typical limits of using features once per short or long rest, there are a few official features that are limited to once per turn and/or only on your turn. Again, this speaks to the monk being a rapid-fire combatant and the major concern you should focus on is making sure individual turns are not overpowered.

FOUNDATION FEATURE

The possibilities for features in a monk Tradition are boundless. To that end, I'm going to focus the majority of this guide on the supporting mechanics of features while giving inspiration on how to craft thematic and useful features for your unique Tradition.

The 3rd level feature you gain when choosing a Tradition, like many other classes, sets the stage for how a monk following your Tradition will approach problems, engage in combat, and essentially “feel” to play. Keep in mind the tips from the **Abilities** section, always work towards the theme of your Tradition, and look for new ways to shape your monk's playstyle.

A GOOD OFFENSE

The features at this level are almost exclusively focused on combat. While I wouldn't say this is an absolute rule, I believe it is important for balancing and for making your Tradition viable in-game.

While this feature most likely will focus on combat, it can still set the stage for future features that are similar in theme or technique that are not strictly related to combat. For example, a feature that grants an extra dodge opportunity by studying your opponent can be parlayed into an overall awareness of body language, which manifests with advantage on all Wisdom (Insight) checks.

CANTRIPS AND PROFICIENCIES

Granting cantrips is a classic first feature move and one I'm quite fond of, especially for non-spellcasting classes. This can add a huge distinction for your Tradition to help it stand out amongst others. It also gives the player a very unique way to play their monk.

Proficiencies are another way to help reinforce a playstyle, giving the player an obvious indication of the type of character their monk will be. These are also great tools for introducing non-combat abilities, like exploration of terrain or navigating social situations. There is still room here for creative players to use these proficiencies in combat as well.

At most, offer a single cantrip at this level and two proficiencies. If offered together, this package should be enough to fill out a feature. Alternatively, you can offer a one of these along with another lower-powered ability to round out the 3rd level offerings.

EARLY KI POINTS

I would advise against gating this first feature behind a required Ki point cost. While there are exceptions to this, the main reason for this is the number of Ki points available to a monk at 3rd level is only 3. Even if your feature costs 1 Ki point, they can only use it three times at most before needing to take a short or long rest. Keep this downtime requirement in mind if you do decide to have a Ki point cost associated with your feature.

Alternatively, you could include a Ki point cost for optional improvements to the feature, such as increasing damage, range, or the number of targets. This gives the monk a baseline ability while still allowing them to choose when to spend their Ki points without as much worry.



Example: Way of the Beast

To start off this Tradition, I wanted to offer a beast choice that grants a thematic benefit. I want this benefit to be core to *how* this monk will approach combat.

Lessons of the Beast: At 3rd level, when you gain feature, choose a beast to emulate in combat. The time spent studying this creature and imitating its movements grant you a unique bonus:

- **Crane:** On your turn, if you move 5 feet or less, you gain advantage on the first attack roll you make this turn. You can also take the dodge action as a bonus action this turn.
- **Snake:** When a creature within 5 feet targets you with a melee attack and misses, you can use your reaction to move to any space within 5 feet of that creature without provoking opportunity attacks.
- **Boar:** If you move at least 10 feet directly at a creature and then hit them with an attack, that creature must make a Constitution saving throw against a DC equal to 8 + your Strength or Dexterity modifier, whichever was used for the attack. A creature that fails is Stunned until the beginning of your next turn or until they take damage.
- **Monkey:** When you are dual wielding and attack with a weapon in your off-hand, you can add your ability modifier to the damage. Additionally, you can use your feet to perform simple tasks, like moving objects or opening doors.

Example: Way of Ebb and Flow

The core concept of this Tradition is being able to gain immediate benefits in the present but need to pay it back in the future. There are also limits to this control that can hinder the monk if they are not careful. This limit can grow with training.

Karmic Balance: Starting at 3rd level, you now have a scale of balance that ranges from -2 to +2. You start at 0. Whenever you receive advantage, whether self-imposed or otherwise, increase your balance by 1. Whenever you receive disadvantage, reduce your balance by 1.

If you are at your maximum balance (+2), you cannot receive advantage from any source. If you are at minimum balance (-2), you cannot receive disadvantage. Whenever you have exactly 0 balance, you are considered "in balance".

Alter the Flow: Starting at 3rd level, you can use a bonus action to grant yourself advantage or disadvantage on one attack roll, ability check, or saving throw.

UTILITY FEATURE

At 6th level your monk will gain the second Tradition feature. As before, there isn't a lot of cohesion between the official Traditions, but I like to think of this feature as a brand-new utility-based ability. This feature should give your monk another tool in their tool belt.

By this point your monk will have a lot of ways to inflict harm but peppering in ways for them to interact socially with other characters or navigate the world at large will go a long way to making them feel like a rounded, balanced character.

MOVEMENT

A classic element of many monastic Traditions is representing how swift and agile the monk is. This can come in the form of unparalleled speed over distances, deftly dodging attacks in combat, or quickly positioning and repositioning themselves on the battlefield. Whatever the method, movement is typically a key feature in Traditions.

This is a great time to introduce a new method of movement for your monk. They have several levels under their belt and have a deeper understanding of how it all works. You can spice that up by allowing them to reach targets they wouldn't otherwise be able to or have more defensive options that allow them to stay in the thick of battle.

UTILITY ABILITY

This feature is a great time to introduce some utility or interaction-focused abilities to your Tradition. By this point, your monk likely has a good deal of combat power and, unless your Tradition is centered around martial prowess, I suggest mixing things up and providing some additional opportunity for the monk to play in the game space.

As with the first feature, this is a fine time to add proficiencies and/or cantrips, but I wouldn't double up on them if you already wrote that into the previous feature. Alternatively, you can write a feature that gives an entirely new utilitarian ability to the monk, like imposing status effects on enemies, augmenting their senses, or allowing them to track enemies.

ALTERNATE SKILLS

One of my favorite types of features in 5e is allowing a character to use a stat or skill in different ways than intended. For example, a raging barbarian may be allowed to use their strength modifier in place of charisma for an intimidation check. While this flies in the face of the written rules, they often make complete sense thematically.

Think about how the monk acts, interacts with others, or looks at the world. Think about how they would solve a problem and then see if you can write a feature to exemplify that.

AUGMENTING DAMAGE

If your Tradition is really leaning into combat, you can use this space to create a net new offensive ability, but I'd recommend considering more of an augment here. There are already a lot of abilities at the monk's disposal here, so adding another may fall by the wayside. Instead, adding a bonus to attack or damage rolls, adding weapon proficiencies, or situational reactions.

Just as a word of caution, your monk is going to be a hardcore fighter without a Tradition. I know fighting is fun and a huge part of 5e, but trust that your monk will be kicking, punching, and stabbing to great effect with a lot of the basic abilities. I urge you to consider leveraging the Tradition features to offer your monk a wide array of options to make playing that character fun and interesting.

Example: Way of the Beast

For this feature I wanted to offer a utility-based ability that was centered around each of the beasts. This could be movement, additional skills, or other abilities that are primarily out-of-combat.

Gifts of the Beast: At 6th level, when you gain feature, choose a beast to guide you. You gain an ability based on your choice:

- **Crane:** You gain an additional 5 feet of range to all melee attacks made with monk weapons.
- **Snake:** You travel without leaving a discernable trail, making it impossible for you to be tracked.
- **Boar:** You can now use two-handed and heavy weapons as monk weapons. Your carrying capacity is increased by your Strength score multiplied by 5. This also increases your push, drag, or lift ability.
- **Monkey:** You gain a climbing speed of 15 feet. You are not affected by difficult terrain imposed by plants and trees. You also gain proficiency in Acrobatics if you don't already have it.

Example: Way of Ebb and Flow

This feature still offers a lot of utility, but in a way that plays into the balancing equation. Effectively the monk can have proficiency in any skill, but it upsets the balance significantly.

Take from Without: Starting at 6th level, when you make a check with a skill you do not have proficiency in, you can use a bonus action to increase your balance by 2 and temporarily gain proficiency in that skill.

Give from Within: Starting at 6th level, when you make a check with a skill you have proficiency in, you can use a bonus action to decrease your balance by 2 and temporarily lose proficiency in that skill.



KI FEATURE

The third Tradition feature becomes available to the monk at 11th level. It is here that most of the published Traditions lean into Ki-based abilities, bringing the concept of metaphysical energy to the forefront. Use this feature to consider how you are representing Ki in your Tradition and craft your ability around that.

As with previous features, this is a very loose recommendation based on the patterns of the officially published Traditions. If your Tradition doesn't focus on Ki, or you have already crafted Ki-heavy features up to this point, feel free to explore other options here.

FLAVOR OF KI

Before tackling the mechanics of your ability, stop and consider how monks of your Tradition interact with their Ki. Is it born of meditation and self-reflection, or through rigorous physical training? Does it come from nature, the divine, or the universe itself? Make sure you have a clear idea of where your monk's Ki comes from and you'll have a solid foundation to build on.

For example, if your monk's Tradition is based on hours of silent meditation and looking deep into one's soul for answers, consider a feature that is based on patience or the ability to see into *other* people's souls. This could become an ability to essentially slow time, allowing the monk to dodge or attack in an instant, or it could be a way for the monk to see intention in others, effectively allowing the monk to plan for attacks that haven't happened yet.

KI-POINTS

Another major consideration here is the amount of Ki this feature will be using. When the monk unlocks this feature, they will have a maximum of 11 Ki Points to spend, so you have some leeway to create powerful abilities gated by the spending of large amounts of Ki Points. Don't go too wild here; your monk still needs to be balanced. That said, if you want to create a once-per-session ability here, you have the opportunity.

Additionally, you can create a feature with a sliding scale of Ki Points. Much like wizards can expend higher spell slots to cast spells with increased potency, so too can a monk's abilities grow in power with additional Ki. If you go this route, link the scale of Ki Points to damage dice, number of targets, distance or duration, or even additional effects. For example, you could create an ability that allows the monk to choose effects from a list, choosing more options by spending more Ki points.

Example: Way of the Beast

Still keeping with the Ki-focused nature of this feature, the monk has access to a new Ki-based ability that is themed around the beasts' unique skills and abilities. Spending Ki on these abilities allow the monk to tap into the primal energy of the beast and emulate their abilities.

Spirit of the Beast: At 11th level, when you gain feature, choose a beast to commune with. You gain an ability based on your choice:

- **Crane:** As an action, you can spend 1 Ki Point to create a gust of wind on a spot within 10 feet of you. Any creature within 10 feet of that spot must make a Constitution saving throw or be pushed away from the spot 20 feet. You can choose to automatically succeed or fail this saving throw.
- **Snake:** As a bonus action, you can spend 1 Ki Point to imbue your weapons or ammunition with the venomous essence of the snake for 1 turn. When you hit a target with this weapon or ammunition, they take an additional 1d4 poison damage. You can spend additional Ki Points to extend this effect by 1 turn for every Ki Point spent.
- **Boar:** When you take damage from a physical attack, you can use your reaction to spend 1 or more Ki Points. For each point spent this way you can reduce the damage by 1d4.
- **Monkey:** When you fail an acrobatics skill check or dexterity saving throw, you can use your bonus action to spend 1 Ki Point to automatically succeed.

Example: Way of Ebb and Flow

At this level, I want the monk to have greater mastery over their balance by increasing the boundaries of their scale. I also want to tie their balance into their Ki, allowing them to alter the scale in exchange for Ki Points.

Increased Balance: At 11th level, your karmic balance scale increases to -5 to +5.

Ki-Infused Karma: Starting at 11th level, as an action, you can spend 1 Ki Point to reduce your balance by 2, or you can gain 1 Ki Point by increasing your balance by 2.

PINNACLE FEATURE

This feature, gained at 17th level, is the capstone of your monk Tradition and should be grand and powerful. It should be extremely potent and very thematic. It should exemplify every facet of your monk's Tradition and be immediately clear what the Tradition is all about.

There isn't a lot of new advice I can give you outside of what has been outlined in the other features. Use those same options here, dial up the power to 11, and make sure it's the most thematic it can possibly be.

NEW THEMATIC ABILITY

Looking at the published Traditions, the majority are net new options for the monk to leverage. Most of them are combat-oriented, but it's not unreasonable to provide an exceptionally powerful utility feature if that's the flavor your Tradition is leaning. Whatever you choose to do, make sure it has some heft to it.

One of my favorite examples of this feature is from the Open Hand Tradition found in the PHB. This feature does some wild and thematic stuff, focusing on subtle vibrations in the body lasting days at a time like a ticking time bomb. The nuts and bolts of the ability are relatively simple: inflict a saving throw that can do a whole lot of damage. This is powerful, but not as interesting. Remember to include some flair with your potency at this level.

BALANCING POTENCY

While this feature should be powerful it still needs to be balanced. There are a few easy ways of doing this without having to nitpick too much. The first is gating it by usage. As mentioned, monk features are more regularly gated by turns and not rests, but this is a fine place to fall back to the more common long/short rest format.

Additionally, you can leverage Ki Points as a way to help reign in this powerful ability. Look to the previous advice on using Ki Points for abilities and ratchet it up to compensate for the increased power of this feature.

Example: Way of the Beast

In this final feature I wanted to offer the monk some powerful abilities that rounded out the journey of each beast.

Heart of the Beast: At 17th level, when you gain feature, choose a beast to embody. You gain an ability based on your choice:

- **Crane:** You can make opportunity attacks whenever a creature moves near you, even if they don't leave your reach.
- **Snake:** Once per turn when you hit with an unarmed attack, the target must succeed a Constitution saving throw against a DC equal to 10 + your Dexterity modifier. On a failure, they are stunned until the end of their next turn.
- **Boar:** When you hit with a melee attack, you can use a bonus action to move the target up to your weapon's range. This effect only works on creatures that are 1 size larger than you or smaller.
- **Monkey:** You gain an extra attack.

Example: Way of Ebb and Flow

I want this ability to focus on the long-term gameplay of the monk, giving a sort of macro lens to how they play. By keeping track of their balance scale, monks can setup devastating combos.

Supreme Balance: Starting at 17th level, when you are in balance you can choose not to receive advantage or disadvantage from any source. You also can use any of your Tradition features at will, still tracking balance as you normally would.

WAY OF THE BEAST

For centuries, monks have looked to the natural world for inspiration. By studying the movements and spirits of wild beasts, they have found ways to emulate these behaviors for both mediation and combat.

Monks that follow this tradition spend a great deal of time ruminating on the behaviors of beasts and incorporating these lessons into their technique. Dedicated monks of this Tradition also find that they become spiritually connected to the beasts.

WAY OF THE BEAST FEATURES

Monk Level Features

3 rd	Lessons of the Beast
6 th	Gifts of the Beast
11 th	Spirit of the Beast
17 th	Heart of the Beast

LESSONS OF THE BEAST

At 3rd level, when you gain feature, choose a beast to emulate. The time spent studying this creature and imitating its movements grant you a unique bonus:

- **Crane:** On your turn, if you move 5 feet or less, you gain advantage on the first attack roll you make this turn. You can dodge as a bonus action this turn.
- **Snake:** When a creature within 5 feet targets you with a melee attack and misses, you can use your reaction to move to any space within 5 feet of that creature without provoking opportunity attacks.
- **Boar:** If you move at least 10 feet directly at a creature and then hit them with an attack, that creature must make a Constitution saving throw against a DC equal to 8 + your Strength or Dexterity modifier, whichever was used for the attack. A creature that fails is Stunned until the beginning of your next turn or until they take damage.
- **Monkey:** When you are dual wielding and attack with a weapon in your off-hand, you can add your proficiency modifier to the damage. Additionally, you can use your feet to perform simple tasks, like moving objects or opening doors.

GIFTS OF THE BEAST

At 6th level, when you gain feature, choose a beast to guide you. You gain an ability based on your choice:

- **Crane:** You gain an additional 5 feet of range to all melee attacks made with monk weapons.

- **Snake:** You travel without leaving a discernable trail, making it impossible for you to be tracked.
- **Boar:** You can now use two-handed and heavy weapons as monk weapons. Your carrying capacity is increased by your Strength score multiplied by 5. This also increases your push, drag, or lift ability.
- **Monkey:** You gain a climbing speed of 15 feet. You are not affected by difficult terrain imposed by plants and trees. You also gain proficiency in Acrobatics if you don't already have it.

SPIRIT OF THE BEAST

At 11th level, when you gain feature, choose a beast to align with. You gain an ability based on your choice:

- **Crane:** As an action, you can spend 1 Ki Point to create a gust of wind on a spot within 10 feet of you. Any creature within 10 feet of that spot must make a Constitution saving throw or be pushed away from the spot 20 feet. You can choose to automatically succeed or fail this saving throw.
- **Snake:** As a bonus action, you can spend 1 Ki Point to imbue your weapons or ammunition with the venomous essence of the snake for 1 turn. When you hit a target with this weapon or ammunition, they take an additional 1d4 poison damage. You can spend additional Ki Points to extend this effect by 1 turn for every Ki Point spent.
- **Boar:** When you take damage from a physical attack, you can use your reaction to spend 1 or more Ki Points. For each point spent this way you can reduce the damage by 1d4.
- **Monkey:** When you fail an acrobatics skill check or dexterity saving throw, you can use your bonus action to spend 1 Ki Point to automatically succeed.

HEART OF THE BEAST

At 17th level, when you gain feature, choose a beast to embody. You gain an ability based on your choice:

- **Crane:** You can make opportunity attacks whenever a creature moves in your range.
- **Snake:** Once per turn when you hit with an unarmed attack, the target must succeed a Constitution saving throw against a DC equal to 10 + your Dexterity modifier. On a failure, they are stunned until the end of their next turn.
- **Boar:** When you hit with a melee attack, you can use a bonus action to move the target up to your weapon's range. This effect only works on creatures that are 1 size larger than your or smaller.
- **Monkey:** You gain an extra attack.

WAY OF EBB AND FLOW

Monks that follow this Tradition believe in a cosmic order, a scale of energy that always returns to balance. By dedicating themselves to intense meditation and inner reflection, these monks can tap into that balance, temporarily altering the scales and drawing power from it.

At the core of this Tradition is a sense of what many would call karma. It is a resource the monk can tap into, but it must always be balanced out. For every boon gained there must be an equal sacrifice to level the scales.

WAY OF EBB AND FLOW FEATURES

Monk Level Features

3 rd	Karmic Balance, Alter the Flow
6 th	Take from Without, Give from Within
11 th	Increased Balance, Ki-Infused Karma
17 th	Supreme Balance

KARMIC BALANCE

Starting at 3rd level, you now have a scale of balance that ranges from -2 to +2. You start at 0. Whenever you receive advantage, whether self-imposed or otherwise, increase your balance by 1. Whenever you receive disadvantage, reduce your balance by 1.

If you are at your maximum balance (+2), you cannot receive advantage from any source. If you are at minimum balance (-2), you cannot receive disadvantage. Whenever you have exactly 0 balance, you are considered “in balance”.

ALTER THE FLOW

Starting at 3rd level, you can use a bonus action to grant yourself advantage or disadvantage on one attack roll, ability check, or saving throw.

TAKE FROM WITHOUT

Starting at 6th level, when you make a check with a skill you do not have proficiency in, you can use a bonus action to increase your balance by 2 and temporarily gain proficiency in that skill.

GIVE FROM WITHIN

Starting at 6th level, when you make a check with a skill you have proficiency in, you can use a bonus action to decrease your balance by 2 and temporarily lose proficiency in that skill.

INCREASED BALANCE

At 11th level, your karmic balance scale increases to -5 to +5.

KI-INFUSED KARMA

Starting at 11th level, as an action, you can spend 1 Ki Point to reduce your balance by 2, or you can gain 1 Ki Point by increasing your balance by 2.

SUPREME BALANCE

Starting at 17th level, when you are in balance you can choose not to receive advantage or disadvantage from any source. You also can use any of your Tradition features at will, still tracking balance as you normally would.

ABOUT

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Thank you for downloading this sourcebook! It was a lot of fun to create.

If you have any feedback or suggestions for this sourcebook, please send it to me via email at matthew@gravelyn.com with the subject line "Create-A-Tradition Feedback". Your input will help to make this sourcebook even better for future players!

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