

LEGENDS & LAIRS

PATH OF THE SWORD

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SYSTEM

A CHARACTER RESOURCE FOR
BARBARIANS, FIGHTERS, MONKS,
AND RANGERS

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d20
system

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INTRODUCTION

Path of the Sword was a great project to work on for me. I've always enjoyed playing the fighting classes, as I like to be able to directly affect my in-game environment. A fighter never runs out of muscles or forgets how to throw his axe.

We introduce several new concepts in this book that will be followed up on in the future Path books. The most notable examples are legendary classes, schools of learning, and organizational templates. Schools of learning and organizational templates are my way of trying to *help players* differentiate their characters in a meaningful way while gaining some benefit for doing so. Options are good. Legendary classes, on the other hand, are just cool. I'm excited about this new format of add-on class and I think you will enjoy them as well. They are different enough from prestige classes to really make it feel as if your character is something special, a child of destiny, a legend in his own time. They are similar enough, I hope, to fit right into any d20 campaign.

So, all you characters who pride yourselves in strength of arms over shadow, magic, and faith, take heed the call and use the knowledge gained herein to kick some serious butt.

Wil Upchurch
Fantasy Flight, Inc.

WELCOME

Fantasy Flight Games is pleased to present *Path of the Sword*, the sixth volume in our Legends & Lairs line of sourcebooks for the d20 System. *Path of the Sword* brings together a host of information for those characters interested in the fighting arts.

Chapter 1 contains more than 20 new classes for use by characters that are well versed in the fighting arts. Twelve new prestige classes, including the mysterious brother of the cloak and the brutal pit fighter, are presented. Each prestige class is accompanied by a new organization, designed to fit into any campaign world. A new concept is also presented, the

legendary class, for characters that are above and beyond the norm. Finally, several variant core classes are presented.

Chapter 2 details more than two dozen new feats. Next, two sections are presented detailing rules for combat while mounted and acrobatic combat.

Chapter 3 includes an essay about maximizing your character's fighting potential. Fighting schools are described next, giving characters new options for building unique fighting styles by specializing in the techniques of a particular school.

Chapter 4 presents information on mounts and a variety of new organizations that characters can join. Next up is a complete system for determining the effects of unique terrains on combat. New equipment, weapons, armor, and tools follow, as well as information on how characters can personalize their weapons. The chapter concludes with a look at some of the tournaments and games that one might find in local faires or royal competitions.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE FIGHTING CLASSES

CHAPTER ONE: THE FIGHTING CLASSES

This chapter contains more than 20 new classes for use by characters that are well versed in the fighting arts. Twelve new prestige classes, including the mysterious brother of the cloak and the brutal pit fighter, are presented. Each prestige class is accompanied by a new organization, designed to fit into any campaign world and to provide a context for the prestige classes presented herein. A new concept is also presented, the legendary class, for characters that are above and beyond the norm. Legendary classes have a high bar for entry, but those who follow the path of destiny are rewarded well for their troubles. Finally, several alternate classes are presented. These are variants of core classes that may be taken from 1st to 20th level, just like a normal class. Enjoy!

All of the text describing prestige classes and alternate classes is considered **Open Game Content**. All text describing organizations and legendary classes is designated closed content.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

BROTHER OF THE CLOAK

Brothers of the cloak are mysterious figures who use a weapon that many regard as strange and fanciful. They rarely take root in any community and tend to be strangers wherever they are seen. This has led to rumors and legends concerning them, that they are vampires or that their cloaks are living creatures who control the minds of their human hosts. While these tales are not true, they serve the brothers well, granting them a wide berth in new communities where tendencies might be toward harassment and foul play rather than guarded suspicion.

The brothers do have a secret mission, although some low-level members do not know of it. Their elders are training a shadow army with which to fight the drow, the ancient enemies of the school's forefathers. Many members are trained specifically to teach the techniques and philosophies of the bladed

BROTHER OF THE CLOAK

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Hide bonus, Weapon Focus
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Cloak bluff, cloak defense, sneak attack +1d6
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Light as a breeze 1/day, Weapon Specialization
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Sneak attack +2d6, swirling shadows
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Cloaker form 1/day
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Instant attack, light as a breeze 2/day
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Defensive disarm
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Greater swirling shadows, sneak attack +3d6
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Light as a breeze 3/day
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Improved cloaker form

cloak, but this goal is geared toward broadening the recruiting pool for the final assault on the brotherhood's subterranean enemies.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a brother of the cloak, a character must fulfill all of the following requirements.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bladed cloak), Lightning Reflexes

Special: Must be sponsored for membership by a senior member of the brotherhood.

CLASS SKILLS

The brother of the cloak's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the brotherhood of the cloak prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A brother of the cloak is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, medium armor and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble.

Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

Hide Bonus: At 1st level, the brother of the cloak learns to hide within the folds of his cloak, granting him a +4 bonus to Hide checks when he is wearing his cloak.

Weapon Focus: At 1st level, the brother of the cloak gains the Weapon Focus (bladed cloak) feat.

Cloak Bluff: At 2nd level, the brother of the cloak learns to use his cloak as a tool for subterfuge in combat. He gains a +4 bonus to any Bluff check when using the Feinting in Combat option (PHB 64).

Cloak Defense: At 2nd level, the brother of the cloak learns to pad his cloak in various places to provide him protection in combat. His cloak now has the same statistics as leather armor, except the arcane spell failure chance is 0%. Furthermore, his cloak counts as armor as well as a wondrous item for purposes of imbuing it with magic properties.

Sneak Attack: This ability functions just like the rogue's sneak attack ability, except the brother of the cloak may only add sneak attack damage to attacks with his bladed cloak. If the character has bonus sneak attack damage from another source, the damage stacks with this ability.

Weapon Specialization: At 3rd level, the brother of the cloak gains the Weapon Specialization (bladed cloak) feat. The character need not have the requisite number of fighter levels to gain this feat.

Light as a Breeze: Beginning at 3rd level, the brother of the cloak gains the ability to fly for short bursts by using his cloak to catch the air. The character can fly up to 90 ft. for a single round each time he uses this ability. He can do this once per day at 3rd level, and gains one additional use per day at 6th level and 9th level.

Swirling Shadows: Beginning at 4th level, the brother of the cloak learns to swirl his cloak about him to obfuscate his true position. Doing so is a move-equivalent action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity and affords the brother of the cloak one-half concealment (20% miss chance) from attacks until the beginning of his next action. At 8th level, the brother of the cloak gains total concealment (50% miss chance) when using this action.

Cloaker Form: This ability works exactly like the druid's *wild shape* ability except that the brother of the cloak can only choose to transform into a cloaker. He gains all of the cloaker's special abilities when doing so. Refer to the core rules (MM 37) for the cloaker's stats. The brother of the cloak may stay in his alternate form for up to one hour before resuming his normal form.

At 10th level, the brother of the cloak may freely shift between his normal and cloaker form at will as a standard action, although he only gains the healing benefits upon the first transformation of the day. There is no limit to the amount of time he may spend in cloaker form per day. In addition, the brother of the cloak may choose to either transform into a standard cloaker or an advanced cloaker of up to 16 HD. See the core rules (MM 12–14) for rules on advancing monsters.

Instant Attack: At 6th level, brothers of the cloak master the art of striking their opponents with blinding speed. The character can make attacks or attacks of opportunity with his bladed cloak even if he is flat-footed. This means that during a surprise round the brother of the cloak may take a partial action to attack with his cloak even if he was surprised.

Defensive Disarm: At 7th level, the brother of the cloak learns to take advantage of clumsy opponents by using his cloak to relieve them of their weapons. Any time an opponent misses a melee attack against the brother of the cloak, the brother of the cloak gains an attack of

opportunity that may only be used for a disarm attempt against that opponent. This action does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If the character has already taken an attack of opportunity in the round, he may not use this ability (unless he possesses the Combat Reflexes feat).

ORGANIZATION:

BROTHERHOOD OF THE CLOAK

PURPOSE

The Brotherhood has a twofold purpose – one apparent, the other hidden. Its apparent purpose is to promote and disseminate the traditions of the bladed cloak. Its hidden purpose is train a cadre of shadow warriors to battle against the drow.

LEADER

Nyrrik Maanhalja (NG elf male Ftr6/Brc10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

To the world at large, the Brotherhood of the Cloak is just another exotic weapons school, one of the dozens that teach their esoteric skills to swordsmen looking for an edge over their opponents. That the Brotherhood's weapon of choice, the bladed cloak (called *tuulakiljunen*, or "thorn mantle," in elven), was once an emblem of the extinct elven warriors called the *Tuulanihen* has gone unnoticed by all but the hoariest of sages – which is exactly how the Brotherhood prefers it. From their citadel deep within an ancient forest, the Brotherhood cultivates an image not of mystery but of eccentricity. Its grand masters operate openly and make little effort to hide their activities, which consist primarily of training warriors interested in a fighting style that emphasizes subterfuge and misdirection, for the bladed cloak demands the utmost subtlety to be effective in combat.

Yet, much like the weapon its initiates employ, the Brotherhood is engaging in dissimulation. The organization is much more than a fighting school. It is in fact a decadent remnant of the *Tuulanihen*, the elite defenders of the rulers of the ancient elven kingdom of Muutlainjen. The kingdom was unique in that most of its holdings existed beneath the surface of the world rather than amidst the beauty of nature. Likewise, its subjects included not only elves but drow who had forsaken their



evil ways because of Muutlainjen's efforts to reach out to them. For a brief shining moment, it appeared as if the breach between the two halves of the elven nation might be healed.

But it was not to be. The unrepentant drow warred against Muutlainjen and destroyed it, enslaving its subjects and scattering the few survivors to various places on the surface world. A few members of the *Tuulanihen* survived and passed on the secrets of their fighting style to a new generation, so that they might one day return to the subterranean lands once held by Muutlainjen and reclaim them from the drow. The leaders of the Brotherhood realize this is a long-term goal that may take generations to achieve, but they are prepared to wait as long as necessary. Until they are properly prepared, they conduct small raids against the drow, both on the surface and beneath it. They are likewise foes to any who ally themselves with or otherwise aid their ancient enemies.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Brotherhood of the Cloak can serve several purposes in a fantasy campaign. At its most basic, the organization is simply a fighting school. Many characters, particularly fighters and rogues, would find its unusual skills to be useful additions to their repertoire. The Brotherhood is very accepting of newcomers – even those whose past history or alignment might seem to be at odds with the deeper mission of the group. This should not be surprising, however. Like the ancient kingdom of Muutlainjen to which it looks for inspiration, the Brotherhood believes fervently in conversion and redemption. Everyone deserves a second chance. Indeed, senior members of the organization sometimes sponsor initiates with the express purpose of bringing them to the light. Consequently, the Brotherhood provides a nice backdrop against which to set adventures or campaigns with salvation or atonement as central themes.

The Brotherhood need not be limited to a group of exotic shadow warriors with extraordinary powers. In some parts of the campaign world, the group might work with civil authorities to rehabilitate criminals or train street urchins to lead productive lives. Though many dismiss them as eccentric idealists, the Brotherhood frequently gets results, which is why characters of many different backgrounds could conceivably join their ranks. Though elven in origin,

CHAMPION OF THE SHINING LIGHT

Level	Base Attack	Unarmed Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Channeling attack +1d6, <i>detect undead</i>
2	+1	+1	+3	+3	+3	Champion's aura 1/day
3	+2	+2	+3	+3	+3	Undead sense
4	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Champion's aura 2/per day
5	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Channeling attack +2d6, hands of power +1
6	+4	+4/+1	+5	+5	+5	Champion's aura 3/per day
7	+5	+5/+2	+5	+5	+5	Soul of energy
8	+6	+6/+3	+6	+6	+6	Improved champion's aura
9	+6	+6/+3	+6	+6	+6	Hands of power +2
10	+7	+7/+4/+1	+7	+7	+7	Channeling attack +3d6, touch of the shining light

the group is extraordinarily open-minded and tolerant, believing that Muutlainjen represented a model of a realm in which many races might live and work side by side. This mindset provides many opportunities for adventure as well, with the Brotherhood striving to overcome prejudice and suspicion in the face of evil. Similarly, the goal of rebuilding Muutlainjen could take several forms, up to and including an epic quest to retake its former subterranean territories and find the heir to its lost throne.

Naturally, the Brotherhood's war against the drow is another important element of the group and makes it easy to include in any campaign where these dark elves feature prominently as villains. Indeed, the organization could well serve as a conduit for information about the drow, a race that is mysterious to many on the surface world. This shadow war between the two groups also gives the DM an excellent way to introduce the Brotherhood into a campaign. The drow frequently attack holdings of the Brotherhood, which may seem odd to characters unaware of the society's origins and ultimate goals.

If the characters become deeply involved with the Brotherhood of the Cloak, the DM should be aware that this organization has the potential to dominate his campaign. That is not necessarily a bad thing, since the Brotherhood has several different aspects and many of its specific details can be easily changed. Nevertheless, the group's devotion to a number of causes, large and small, makes its inclusion something to consider seriously. If the DM is unwilling or unable to introduce any of the

society's elements into his campaign, he might be wise to avoid including it at all. On the other hand, the Brotherhood offers a lot in the way of direction and focus, giving the DM a way to frame a series of adventures or even an entire campaign that is both meaningful and enjoyable. If the DM is looking for a well-intentioned secret society to fight against perfidious evil, the Brotherhood of the Cloak provides that and more.

CHAMPION OF THE SHINING LIGHT

Champions of the shining light are the chosen fighters of their order, an order dedicated to the study and destruction of the undead. While not allied with any particular god, and sometimes finding themselves at odds with paladins and clerics of other faiths, these monks have uncovered many divine secrets by turning their meditations inward. They have been known to channel positive energy from within themselves to defeat their ghastly opponents, while at the same time healing the grievous wounds caused by the beasts' foul talons and fangs.

The champions are a wandering group, having been trained and then sent out with the mission to seek and destroy all that walks the earth by the power of negative energy. They can sense undeath in the air, even when the stealthiest servants of night use tricks and deception to hide their true form. The appearance of a champion of the shining light is both a blessing and a curse for a community; it means the community now has a defender, but it also means it must have a foe.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a champion of the shining light, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: Knowledge (undead) 3 ranks.

Feats: Deflect Arrows, Great Fortitude, Improved Unarmed Strike, Stunning Fist.

Special: Must be chosen by the elders of the monastery to go out into the world as a champion of the shining light.

CLASS SKILLS

The champion of the shining light's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (undead) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at each level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the champion of the shining light prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Champions of the shining light are proficient with basic peasant weapons and special weapons. This list includes club, crossbow (light or heavy), dagger, handaxe, javelin, kama, nunchaku, quarterstaff, shuriken, siangham, and sling. Champions of the shining light do not wear armor.

Monk Abilities: Beginning at 1st level, the guardian of the way advances the unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed monk abilities as if she had gained a level in monk. In effect, her monk levels and guardian of the way levels stack when determining these three abilities.

Channeling Attack: At 1st level, the champion of the shining light learns a technique that allows her to channel her positive *ki* into attacks against the undead. By burning one of her stunning attacks for the day, the champion



can add +1d6 points of damage to her unarmed strikes for one round. This ability increases to +2d6 points of energy damage at 5th level and increases again to +3d6 points at 10th level.

Detect Undead (Sp): At 1st level, the champion of the shining light may *detect undead* at will, as the spell.

Champion's Aura: Upon reaching 2nd level, the champion of the shining light begins to radiate an aura of positive energy. Once per day, the champion of the shining light may channel her aura outward, confusing and hobbling undead in the area. This aura functions exactly like the cleric spell *consecrate*. At 4th level the champion of the shining light may use this ability two times per day, and three times per day at 6th level. At 8th level, the champion acts as a divine focus for this ability, doubling its effects as noted in the *consecrate* spell description.

Undead Sense: At 4th level, the champion of the shining light's ability to *detect undead* becomes more powerful. The range of the detection ability is doubled to 120 feet and she may know within the first round of concentration all of the information that would normally take her three rounds of concentration to discern by using the spell.

Hands of Power: At 5th level, a champion of the shining light's unarmed attack is empowered with positive energy. The unarmed strike from such an attack can deal damage to a creature with damage reduction as if the attack were made by a weapon with a +1 enhancement bonus. At 9th-level, this bonus increases to +2.

Soul of Energy: The positive energy that flows through the champion of the shining light makes her more resistant to the life-draining touch of undead. At 7th level, the champion of the shining light gains the power to counteract the level and ability draining abilities of undead. This ability functions exactly as the *negative energy protection* spell, granting a level check (1d20 + champion of the shining light level) against a DC equal to 11 + the attacking creature's hit dice to resist the drain.

Touch of the Shining Light: At 10th level, the hands of the champion of the shining light are charged with a steady flow of positive energy,

treating them as *disruption* weapons. With any successful unarmed attack against undead, the creature struck must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 14) or be destroyed.

ORGANIZATION:

THE CHAMPIONS OF LIGHT

PURPOSE

The Champions exist to serve the god of light by battling against those who dwell in darkness, particularly undead, whose very existence is anathema to their divine master.

LEADER

Maren Havor (LG human female Mnk10/Co19)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

There are tales that say that at the beginning of time when the gods created the universe as it currently exists, the god of light earned the enmity of the god of death, for wherever light fell, death could not easily go. And so it was that the Temple of Light has always been a dedicated enemy of the god of death and his greatest servants – the undead. For untold generations, the Temple has sought to bring light to the dark corners of the world, flushing out the minions of evil and death that used darkness to cloak their nefarious deeds.

Unsurprisingly, the god of death fought back. He created ever more powerful undead servants, each one more fiendish than the last. He took special pleasure in finding ways to overcome the Temple of Light's greatest members, and from their fallen ranks he brought forth twisted abominations with which he mocked and demoralized his foes. The god of light's servants might be strong, but they were not numerous. Each victory they won cost them dearly, while the legions of the dead grew greater with each passing day. It was only a matter of time before the god of death would have the final say and his dominion over the world would be complete.

Fortunately for the forces of good, the god of light heard the cries of his servants and acted. He endowed his greatest servants with special powers and abilities with which to fight against the god of death. These new

Champions of Light would be his special agents. They were suffused with a fragment of his power and took with them rays of his own divine light, by which they could defeat the undead forever. Moreover, these Champions were protected against the worst of the undead's powers and could better withstand the worst the god of death threw at them. Though they could never defeat death permanently, the Champions could at least limit its dominion and confine it again to the darkest corners of creation.

To this day, the Champions of Light are at the forefront of the battle against the undead. Most members of the order are monastic ascetics devoted to the god of light who have dedicated a good portion of their lives to the development of their spiritual and martial abilities. Others are warriors that have served as temple guards and thus have faced the minions of the god of death on numerous occasions. All are specially chosen by the elders of the Temple, after having received a vision from the god of light enjoining the elders to confer their blessings upon them. The Champions are thus a vocation, a calling that comes from an external source. One cannot seek to be a Champion of one's own accord; one is simply recognized as such by the Temple.

Champions operate in small groups, ranging from one to four in size, and rove about the world to do battle with the undead and other minions of the god of death. More rarely, they are given special missions by the Temple of Light. Most often, though, they follow their own inner voice, which some believe to be the voice of the god of light himself. Consequently, they have acquired a reputation as wandering do-gooders who will often appear out of nowhere to fight against the undead. That reputation is somewhat exaggerated, since the Champions do possess a loose chain of command, with their Grand Master providing guidance and assistance in times of trouble. Even so, the Champions of Light follow their own path, one set out for them by their god untold millennia ago, when he first raised them up to do battle with death itself.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Champions of Light make perfect additions to any campaign in which the undead play a major role as adversaries. As allies, their abilities are almost without equal in

this area. Adventurers would be wise to accept their assistance (or seek it out) when fighting against the forces of death. Their roving and individualistic nature make them excellent choices for player characters as well. Indeed, very satisfying campaigns could be built around the characters working as agents for the Temple of Light and fighting against the god of death and his undead minions.

At the same time, the Champions' abilities are very narrowly focused. If the undead do not play a major role in the campaign, they serve relatively little purpose and a player who chooses this group may find himself without much reason to exist. Similarly, their ability to fight undead is quite formidable. If the DM wishes to keep undead creatures as frightening or mysterious foes, he might not wish to use the Champions in his game. Whereas most characters rightly fear the undead, Champions of the Light see them as little different than any other enemy (except in their zeal to destroy them). Their abilities make the undead much less dangerous and thus much less likely to provoke the terror that many DMs seek to instill in their players.

DRAGON WARRIOR

The draconic races have been mixing their blood with that of lesser races for ages beyond counting. It's said that almost any thinking race has at least a trickle of draconic blood in it, for the ability to tear forth magic from the universe and shape it at will has been found in nearly every species — sometimes as rarely as once in a millennia, but it has almost always been found. For as long as there have been those who use their tainted blood to wield arcane might, there have been those who foreswore that path, and chose another. Only recently, however, have the dragons taken notice of these prodigal children and turned them into pieces in their game.

The first dragon warrior was Aedel Morivan, and the blood of the red dragons was in his heart, though he did not know it for most of his life. He was a man of fury, and chaos, and power, and it is said that even when he had not fought in days, blood would pool where his feet left marks upon the earth. One day, standing in a smoking slurry of ash, blood, and bones which had once been a town, an old man approached him. Aedel turned to cut him



down, but something held him back. He lowered his blade and watched.

For an hour-long minute, the two simply studied each other. Then the old man spoke. "You are great, but you could be greater...far greater. You shall be far more than any of my other children." Then there was a roar of sound and flame, and both Aedel and the man vanished.

A year later, Aedel returned. His naked skin turned back blades and his breath turned wood to ash, and when wizards tried to take him down, he caught their spells and hurled them back, laughing at the astonishment that was seared into their faces as they died. For another year, he rampaged without any purpose but to destroy, and then, at the same place where he had met his father, another warrior came to challenge him.

"I am Edallin, and I am of the gold," said the challenger as both charged into battle. Neither survived that fight, but the opening moves in a centuries-long game had been made. All that remained was for all the players to choose their pieces.

Hit Die: d12.

REQUIREMENTS

To become a dragon warrior, a character must fulfill the following requirements.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Alignment: Chaotic good or chaotic evil.

Feats: Power Attack, Toughness.

Special: Ability to rage. Ability to cast arcane spells spontaneously. Must be recruited by a dragon.

CLASS SKILLS

The dragon warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the dragon warrior prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Dragon warriors are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all armor, and shields.

DRAGON WARRIOR

Level	Base Attack	Base Save	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Special	
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	+0	Drakekin, patron, rage ability
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	+0	Slashing rage, wyrm tongue
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Drakefoe +1
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Elemental resistance
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	+1	Spellrage
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	+2	Drakefoe +2
7	+7	+5	+5	+2	+2	Armored rage
8	+8	+6	+6	+2	+2	Burning rage
9	+9	+6	+6	+3	+3	Drakefoe +3
10	+10	+7	+7	+3	+3	Winged rage

Drakekin: The dragon warrior is considered to be both a dragon and his base creature type (usually humanoid) for all purposes.

Patron: When a dragon warrior is recruited, he gains a patron—a dragon that is a distant relative of the character. The type of dragon is very important, and should be decided on by the player and DM before this class is chosen. (Alternatively, a player may express interest in this class, and have the DM surprise him with what type of dragonblood flows in his veins.) The patron will rarely, if ever, interfere directly in the life of the warrior; the dragon warrior serves the dragon, not vice-versa! Still, a particularly loyal and skilled warrior might make a small request for aid, or might receive a spontaneous gift of a minor magic item or the like. Other agents of the same dragon might be willing to help him. Once the training is complete, a dragon warrior may continue to advance in this class even if his patron is dead. Indeed, there are three cases on record of a dragon warrior slaying his own patron.

Rage Ability: Beginning at 1st level, the dragon warrior advances his rage abilities as if he had gained a level in barbarian. In effect, his barbarian levels and dragon warrior levels stack when determining these abilities.

Wyrm tongue: At 2nd level, the dragon warrior learns to speak Draconic.

Slashing Rage: Starting at 3rd level, the character's hands become claws and his teeth become fangs when he rages. These are now considered natural weapons, his claws

attacking at his highest base attack bonus and his bite at his second highest. The damage dealt depends on the dragon warrior's size, as shown on the following chart.

Size	Claw	Bite
Small	1d3	1d4
Medium-size	1d4	1d6
Large	1d6	1d8

Drakefoe: Against dragons (or dragon warriors) of the opposite alignment (on the good/evil axis) of their patron, dragon warriors gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls. This increases to +2 at 6th level and +3 at 9th level.

Elemental Resistance: At 4th level, the dragon warrior gains elemental resistance 15 versus the element of his patron (fire for red, electricity for blue, and so on).

Spellrage: Beginning at 5th level, the dragon warrior gains the ability to extend his rage by sacrificing stored arcane energy. As a free action, the dragon warrior may sacrifice one or more spell slots to extend his rage for a number of rounds equal to the total number of spell levels sacrificed.

Armored Rage: Beginning at 7th level, the dragon warrior gains damage reduction 2/- when raging.

Burning Rage*: Starting at 8th level, the dragon warrior gains a breath weapon when raging. This weapon can be used once per rage, deals 1d8 points of damage per point of Constitution

modifier, and has additional characteristics based on the chart below.

*This ability is renamed according to the dragon type—Freezing Rage, Caustic Rage, Shocking Rage, and so on.

Color	Breath Weapon	DC
Black	Line* of acid	17
Blue	Line of lightning	18
Green	Cone** of acidic gas	17
Red	Cone of fire	19
White	Cone of cold	16
Brass	Line of fire	17
Bronze	Line of lightning	18
Copper	Line of acid	17
Gold	Cone of fire	20
Silver	Cone of cold	18

*A line is always 5 ft. high, 5 ft. wide, and 60 ft. long.

**A cone is always 30 ft. long.

Winged Rage: When raging, the dragon warrior grows wings (the dragon warrior must have his armor customized, costing 300 gp, otherwise this ability deals him 2d6 points of damage each time it is activated). These wings allow the character to fly at his normal movement speed with average maneuverability.

Ex-Dragon Warriors: Should a dragon warrior ever become lawful, he can no longer rage, and loses all rage-related abilities. Lawful characters may not gain levels as a dragon warrior, even if their patron dragon is lawful—a dragon warrior embodies the raw fury that is in the secret heart of even the most benign and disciplined of dragons.

ORGANIZATION:

BROOD OF VERTHAXIS

PURPOSE

The Brood exists only to serve the whimsical and self-serving interests of its patron, the red wyrm Verthaxis, whatever they may be.

LEADER

Arrixaka (CE human female Bar9/Sor2/Drw9)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

For reasons few can guess, dragons have always taken an interest in humanoid species, particularly humans. This interest takes many forms, including the desire to sire children upon humanoids. These children show the marks of their draconic ancestor to varying degrees, but the ability to cast spontaneous magic is one of the surest signs. Denigrated by many wizards as freaks, the descendants of dragons are rare and misunderstood – and often feared. It is this fear that the powerful red dragon Verthaxis wished to harness when he organized his Brood.

The Brood of Verthaxis is a small but dangerous cult totally dedicated to the wishes of Verthaxis, one of the most destructively evil and immensely self-absorbed dragons in living memory. Verthaxis understood, as all dragons do, that humanoids descended from him possessed powers and abilities beyond those of their fellows. Yet, Verthaxis was one of the first to recognize that those powers could be harnessed toward ends other than simple spell casting. Indeed, he believed he had found the means to encourage his “children” to develop further along the path of dragon-kind than was considered possible – all the while serving his evil ends.

Verthaxis gathered together the strongest and most powerful of his descendants and revealed himself to them. He inculcated them in a philosophy of evil and showed them that strength came through fear and destruction. He encouraged them to turn on each other and to show no mercy and give no quarter. He watched as his children slowly destroyed one another, separating the wheat from the chaff until finally only a few remained. These, Verthaxis decided, were his true children; they were his Brood. They were as like him as any humanoid could be and he would teach them so much more, so that they too might become creatures of unremitting destruction and thoroughgoing evil.

The plan of Verthaxis worked all too well. In short order, his surviving children began to show their draconic heritage even more strongly. Bit by bit, they began to exhibit further powers and abilities to distinguish themselves from ordinary mortals. The more they served Verthaxis, the more they performed according to his will, the stronger they became. It was as if they could transcend

their humanoid forms by behaving more like the bestial creature that was their sire.

The Brood of Verthaxis now act as the great wyrm's personal agents. They travel about the countryside on missions that serve their master's interests – whatever they happen to be at a given time. Most often, they rain random destruction down on anyone who dares to enter the dragon's domain. At other times, they seek out would-be slayers of Verthaxis and destroy them before they have the opportunity to try. The Brood also makes war upon the children of other dragons, some of whom show characteristics similar to their own. Verthaxis seems convinced that he too can gain greater power by indulging in his basest instincts. He uses the Brood to advance his own ascension toward "perfection" and would willingly sacrifice them to achieve that insane end. For now, the Brood remains his good right arm and the instrument of his evil.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Brood of Verthaxis is obviously a good choice as an enemy organization. They are ruthlessly evil and show no regard for common morality. In fact, their sire's mad philosophy is all about overcoming such concepts and becoming perfect as a result. Consequently, they could easily serve as particularly vile and powerful villains for a series of adventures.

More interestingly, the Brood might be used as a good way to involve the characters in the politics of dragon-kind. Verthaxis hates all other dragons, including other evil dragons, who he views as impediments to his eventual ascension to a higher form. Because dragons are extremely powerful creatures, many DMs shy away from using them as villains until characters become very high level. The Brood gives the DM the chance to use a dragon much earlier. They can serve as proxies for Verthaxis. Thus, the characters can do battle against this insane wyrm for many adventures before actually facing him directly. Likewise, their battle against his minions might draw the attention of other dragons, both good and evil, to aid them in their quest.

Another fascinating option is if one of the characters shows draconic heritage himself. He might discover to his chagrin that his dragon ancestor is none other than Verthaxis! The great wyrm is always on the lookout for

new children to add to his Brood. He might come seeking one of the characters, which could lead to a rather exciting campaign, in which the character must come to grips with the evil nature of his ancestor and whether this fact dooms him to eventual corruption as well. This latter option is admittedly melodramatic and introspective, but the rewards for straying beyond more traditional battles against evil can be rich indeed.

BLADE OF THE EMPEROR

In any kingdom or empire of any size, there is often more going on than the official forces of government can handle. Empires grow top heavy and sluggish; the simplest decisions take months to enact. A thousand tiny internal problems, none dangerous in isolation, combine to rot even the greatest state from within.

Thus, in those empires that survive, a particular type of solution evolves. Individuals of great power and loyalty are recruited to solve problems at their source, to be the hands and eyes and voice of the Emperor.

And, sometimes, to be his sword.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To become a blade of the emperor, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Alignment: Any lawful. Despite the fact that the blades were formed to act outside of the established order, everything they do is in support of it, and their authority comes from the source of all authority, the emperor himself. Lawful good blades believe the empire is a source of security and prosperity, lawful neutral blades care for order above all, and lawful evil blades relish the power and position the empire provides for them.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Skills: Gather Information 8 ranks, Spot 8 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Iron Will.

CLASS SKILLS

The blade of the emperor's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Forgery (Dex), Gather Information

(Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the blade of the emperor prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Blades of the emperor are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and all types of armor and shields.

Imperial Charter: This is the basis of the power of a blade of the emperor. By revealing the symbol of membership to anyone sworn to obey imperial law, the blade can request aid, supplies, or information. This is not a charm spell, however, and while the power of a blade is theoretically unlimited, the reality is that many people will find ways to put their own interests first. The Imperial Charter allows the blade to add twice his class level to any Bluff, Diplomacy, or Gather Information checks made when acting “in the service of the Empire” and when he is dealing with someone who generally obeys Imperial Law. Regardless

of the outcome, any requests that he makes will be reported (for compensation, in many cases) and blades who abuse this power may find themselves outcast or dead.

Defend The Empire: When in combat against “enemies of the Empire,” the Blade is consumed with fury, granting him a +1 bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and AC. This bonus increases as the blade rises in level.

Cover Identity: A blade of the emperor often has to establish himself in a location in order to root out traitors. A cover identity creates a complete disguise, with full documentation issued by the appropriate authorities. These documents are not forgeries, they are authentic imperial issue—only the name on them is false. Detecting this requires a successful Gather Information (DC 30) check.

Bonus Feat: The blade may choose any of the fighter’s bonus feats.

Assistance: After reaching 5th level, the blade of the emperor can order almost any loyal citizen of the Empire to work with him, provided the citizen is of a lower level than the blade. For all purposes, the citizen is treated as a



BLADE OF THE EMPEROR

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Imperial charter, defend the empire +1
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Cover identity
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Bonus feat
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Defend the empire +2
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Assistance
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Defend the empire +3
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Loyalty beyond death
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Bonus feat
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Defend the empire +4

cohort of the blade, but will only serve for one week per point of the blade's Charisma modifier. This assistant is not a charmed slave, but someone working for the good of the Empire and obeying the law, and he will act accordingly—he will not go marching into a dragon's mouth, murder close friends, or commit other such acts. Any expenses incurred while acting at the behest of a blade are expected to be reimbursed, and, if the assistant is killed, the family must be compensated appropriately. Such compensation usually comes from the pocket of the blade himself, as a reminder that the lives of the citizens of the Empire are not to be thrown away lightly.

Loyalty Beyond Death: When in battle against an enemy of the Empire, if the blade falls to 0 hit points, he does not go unconscious, but continues fighting. He may keep fighting until he has reached -10 hit points, at which point, he does indeed die. If the blade conquers his enemies, he immediately falls unconscious and begins dying as presented in the core rules (PHB 129).

ORGANIZATION:

THE TWENTY SHARDS OF GLORY

PURPOSE

The Twenty Shards are the emperor's special agents, each of whom has sworn to undertake and complete whatever mission he has

been given, whatever the risks to himself.

LEADER

Valjor Dhorja (LN human male Ftr9/EmB10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Legend has it that during the last imperial civil war, rebel forces besieged the emperor's palace and it appeared as if all hope was lost. While looking out on the destruction wrought by his enemies, the emperor saw that an ancient vase, an heirloom of his family for untold generations, had been shattered. He turned to one of his advisors and asked, "If a vase such as this can scarcely be repaired, how much more unlikely is an empire?" At these words, twenty of his bodyguards stepped forward and each picked up a piece of the shattered vase and said, "You have only to ask and we shall try." At great cost to themselves, the bodyguards spirited him out of his palace to a safe location, where he planned the defeat of the rebellion and the restoration of the empire. From then on, the emperor relied heavily on his Twenty Shards of Glory, as he called them, to solve problems that prove intractable. Every emperor since has upheld this tradition.

The Twenty Shards of Glory are an elite team of men and women who have sworn their lives to the emperor. They are selected from among his regular forces on the *basis of their skill* at arms and loyalty to the imperial throne. Once selected, their old lives are over. They are taken from their families and friends to live in the imperial palace. Their relatives are compensat-

ed for this loss in gold and prestige, but the Shards are never again allowed to see them. While at the palace, they are instructed in all manner of skills, from swordplay to subterfuge. They are also initiated into a quasi-religious cult that reveres the emperor as the chosen of the gods and their agent on the Material Plane. The end result of this intensive regimen is a warrior without peer, an exemplar of devotion, and the most feared agents the emperor possesses.

The Shards undertake a variety of missions, but they are all difficult or otherwise unusual. They are missions that defy the simple application of force and require clever thinking or a unique perspective. They are also frequently missions whose outcome might well demand the death of one or more members of the Shards who undertake them. Skilled as they are, the death toll among the Twenty Shards of Glory is phenomenally high. Few of their missions are suicide missions as such, but a great many are so dangerous that only the luckiest of souls could escape with his life. The Shards accept this as their duty to their emperor. After all, of the original Twenty Shards, fully half of them died while aiding the emperor to escape his palace during the civil war.

Shard missions also frequently skirt the edges of acceptable morality. Though most emperors have the best of intentions and seek to avoid doing evil directly, many have recognized that too narrow an interpretation of ethical behavior is a serious impediment to the security of the empire. Consequently, the Shards occasionally engage in assassination and sabotage against enemies, as well as other equally dubious activities. It is not surprising, then, that some of the Shards drift over into evil alignments in short order, since the tension between their vows and the reality of ends justifying the means is too great for most to escape unscathed. If there is a threat to the future of the Twenty Shards of Glory, it is an internal one, as more and more of the group becomes corrupted in the course of their duties. In time, this may prove a graver danger than anything posed by enemies of the empire.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Twenty Shards of Glory can be used in a variety of ways. The most straightforward is to present them as loyal agents of the emperor, doing his bidding in the never-ending battle against the empire's foes. In this role, they can



function as “the cavalry” that saves the characters when the going gets tough. The nature of their organization makes it unlikely that they would cooperate with the characters in any other fashion, except under extraordinary circumstances. Admittedly, many campaigns regularly feature such circumstances, but the DM should be careful to avoid overusing the Shards for fear that they will lose their special status in short order.

If the characters want to work with the Shards, the DM will either need to re-imagine them as a less secretive or elite organization. Alternately, the characters could all become members of the group. In such a situation, the campaign would quickly become a fantasy version of a techno-thriller movie, with the Shards cast in the role of a special operations team. This nicely provides a rationale for why the characters work together and why they do all the crazy things adventurers regularly do. On the other hand, it could prove limiting to DMs and players who prefer a more freewheeling approach to the game.

The Shards could just as easily be used as adversaries. After all, player characters frequently engage in antisocial behavior that might well threaten the stability of

the empire. In such a situation, the Shards would be a logical choice to defeat the characters. This would be especially true if an evil emperor currently occupies the throne and the characters are dedicated to defeating him. Another option is for the Shards to have been wholly corrupted and now they run the empire from behind the scenes, with the emperor as their puppet. In a case like this, the characters would need to defeat the Twenty Shards of Glory in order to restore the emperor to his rightful place and bring order to the empire. This kind of campaign takes on a conspiratorial flavor, which might be a nice change of pace for many players and GMs, provided they like a little subterfuge and paranoia mixed in with their swordplay.

FRONTIER MARSHAL

In the lawless outlands of a kingdom's frontier or the most remote settlements of a forest kingdom, lawlessness and chaos often reign supreme. Often the kingdom or country in which these outlying areas exist forgets about them, not having the time or resources to devote to keeping the peace for such small communities. Some stout men and women, devoted plainly to the cause of justice, make it their self-imposed mission to establish justice in such wild frontiers. Thus are born the frontier marshals.

These adventurous souls most often work alone, preferring the stealth and flexibility that this gives them. In some cases they will seek out a partner, but only rarely do they work in groups. Their devotion to local law often grants them titles such as warden or sheriff, but more often than not such titles are bestowed by the people of the frontier marshal's protected area rather than the official government that so often ignores these areas.

Hit Dice: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a frontier marshal, a character must fulfill all of the following requirements.

Alignment: Lawful good or lawful neutral.

Skills: Knowledge (law) 3 ranks, Ride 8 ranks, Wilderness Lore 5 ranks.

Feats: Mounted Combat, Track.

CLASS SKILLS

The frontier marshal's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the frontier marshal prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A frontier marshal is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, medium armor, and shields.

Mounted Feat: At 1st level, the frontier marshal gains a bonus feat pertaining to mounted combat. The frontier marshal gains an additional bonus feat at 5th level and another at 10th level. These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Mounted Archery, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Superior Mounted Archery*, and Trample. The frontier marshal must still qualify for any feat he selects by meeting all prerequisites for that feat.

*Found in this book.

Master Tracker: A frontier marshal has well-developed tracking skills when within his assigned territory or native terrain. Beginning at 1st level, a frontier marshal gains a +5 bonus to all Wilderness Lore checks when used for tracking within his assigned territory or native terrain. At 4th level this bonus increases to +10, at 7th level it increases to +15, and at 10th level it increases to +20. The seven terrains are Aquatic*, Desert, Forest, Hills, Marsh, Mountains, Plains, and Underground.

*Aquatic may not be chosen unless the frontier marshal has some natural or magical means to breathe water.

Summon Mount: At 2nd level, a frontier marshal can train an unusually intelligent and quick

FRONTIER MARSHAL

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Master tracker +5, mounted feat
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Summon mount
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Mount ability, quick senses
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Master tracker +10
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Mount ability, mounted feat
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Respected lawman
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Master tracker +15, mount ability
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Judge of character
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Mark of justice, mount ability
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Aura of justice, master tracker +20, mounted feat

steed to aid him in his duties as a keeper of the peace. A frontier marshal's summoned mount is as much a part of his life than anything else, and in many ways is an extension of the frontier marshal himself. This mount is usually a light horse (for a Medium-size frontier marshal) or a pony (for a Small frontier marshal).

The frontier marshal and his mount have a natural affinity for one another, granting a +4 bonus to all Ride checks when they are together. The mount does not suffer from the usual penalties when entering a combat situation, and can act normally as directed by his rider. Usually ponies and light horses are considered frightened in combat and can be difficult to control (PHB 138). In addition, the mount requires only half the normal amount of food, water, and rest that an animal of its type would normally require to survive.

Should a frontier marshal's mount be killed, he can find another with a week of searching for a suitable candidate and a payment of 250 gp.

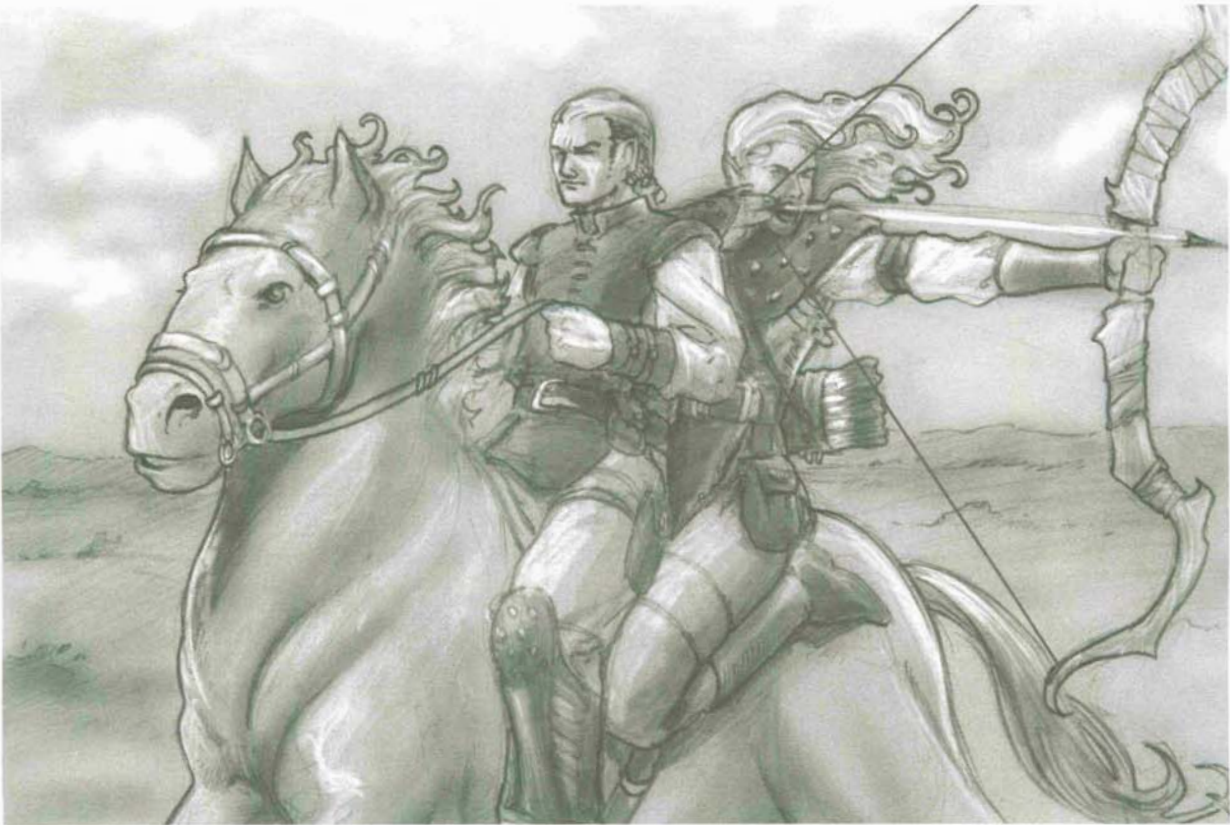
Mount Ability: At 3rd level, a frontier marshal's mount gains a new ability. The mount gains additional abilities at 5th level, 7th level, and 9th level. The mount's new ability may be chosen from the following list:

- *Move +10 feet:* This ability increases the speed of the mount by 10 feet. This ability may be taken multiple times.
- *Combat Reflexes:* As the core rules feat (PHB 80). The mount is adept at making multiple attacks against opponents in combat.

- *Improved Evasion:* The mount takes only half damage on a failed Reflex save against an attack that allows for a Reflex save for half damage. On a successful save, the mount suffers no damage.
- *Tremorsense 10 ft. Radius:* This ability may be taken multiple times, each time increasing the range of this ability by 10 feet. This is an extraordinary ability.
- *Mobility:* As the core rules feat (PHB 83). The mount is skilled at avoiding attacks of opportunity. The mount need not have the Dodge feat to select this ability.
- *Darkvision 30 ft.:* As the core rules ability (DMG 74), with a range of 30 feet. This is an extraordinary ability.
- *Energy Resistance 10:* The mount builds a natural resistance to a particular type of energy (fire, cold, etc.). This ability may be taken multiple times, but a different type of energy must be selected each time. This is an extraordinary ability.
- *Spell Resistance 15:* Over time the mount has developed a resistance to magic. This extraordinary ability grants the mount SR 15 as detailed in the core rules (DMG 81). This is an extraordinary ability.

Quick Response: The frontier marshal is always prepared for the unexpected. At 3rd level, he gains a +2 bonus to all initiative rolls. This ability stacks with the Improved Initiative feat and similar abilities.

Respected Lawman: At 6th level, the frontier marshal has earned a reputation as a keeper of the peace and may reap the benefits as such. This ability grants the



frontier marshal a +4 bonus to each of the following skills: Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate. This ability may only be used in situations where the frontier marshal or his reputation is known and respected, or at least acknowledged.

Judge of Character: Over time, the frontier marshal gains an increased ability to judge the character or sincerity of an individual. At 8th level, a frontier marshal gains a +10 bonus to Sense Motive skill checks.

Mark of Justice: Acting on behalf of the way of justice, a frontier marshal may occasionally be called upon to deliver the sentence of a convicted criminal. At 9th level, a frontier marshal can use *mark of justice* (PHB 226) once per week as a cleric equal to the frontier marshal's character level. This is a spell-like ability.

Aura of Justice: When a frontier marshal reaches 10th level, his very presence causes fear and panic in chaotic creatures and law-breakers (anyone who has broken a local law within the past week). Any chaotic creature within 20 feet of the frontier marshal must make a Will save (DC 15 + frontier marshal's Charisma modifier) or become panicked

(DMG 85). The frontier marshal can activate and deactivate this ability as a free action, otherwise it is always considered active.

ORGANIZATION:

THE ORDER OF JURATS

PURPOSE

Sometimes a kingdom expands its territories faster than its ability to govern them effectively. The Order of Jurats exists to fill that void, bringing justice and peace to regions that have neither.

LEADER

Vadim Kostash (LG human male Rgr8/Frm9)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

For good or for ill, war is a constant companion of civilization. Few nations or realms have avoided its scourge, especially when faced with the threat posed by evil humanoid races such as orcs, hobgoblins, and others even more foul. Many a kingdom has won the battle against its enemies and found itself suddenly in posses-

sion of their lands. While some decide not to occupy these territories permanently, others feel that doing so is the only sensible bulwark against future incursions. In almost every case, doing so taxes their resources to the limit. It may be months or even years after the first settlers arrive before anything more than a token force is sent by the king to maintain order.

This chaotic environment provides rich opportunities for exploitation and injustice. The Order of Jurats arose to combat these very evils. Sometimes called "frontier marshals," the Jurats are a band of fair-minded men and women whose primary purposes are the maintenance of order and the equitable dispensing of justice in otherwise lawless lands. The first members of the order were inspired by the precepts of the god of justice, particularly that "justice recognizes no borders." Over time, though, the connection to that deity's church grew less strong and now the organization has no formal connection to it, although many Jurats are imbued with its teachings.

The order has an extremely elevated view of justice and peace, one that transcends the laws of any particular nation or kingdom. Although not opposed to particular laws or regulations, Jurats respect them only to the extent that they reflect their own notions of right and wrong. Nevertheless, there is some disagreement within the order between those who seek goodness as well as law and those for whom the law is everything. Even so, there is sufficiently broad agreement on general principles that Jurats rarely come to blows with one another. Instead, their disputes are philosophical, and mirror those that typically occur between adherents of the lawful good and lawful neutral alignments.

Because of their belief in transcendent justice, the order sometimes has a rocky, if not antagonistic, relationship with the powers that be. In areas under the nominal control of good realms, Jurats are typically welcomed as agents of justice and peace. However, in neutral or evil lands they are viewed as interlopers and often hunted as enemies of the state. Consequently, these resourceful individuals become figures of popular acclaim, fighting against injustice in areas that otherwise would have no such defenders.

The vocation of the Jurat is not an easy one. Becoming a member of the band requires both

a devotion to the ideals of transcendent justice and the skills needed to survive while constantly on the move. Jurats are renowned horsemen and their remarkable mounts are magical beasts that some say are an enduring gift of the god of justice they once served. Whatever the truth, the Order of Jurats is a bastion of hope in war-torn and anarchic lands. Whether working with or against local authorities, they are proof that some men and women are willing to hold fast to their ideals, despite the personal costs that these principles invariably bring.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Order of Jurats can be used in two primary ways in a campaign. The most straightforward is to have them work with the representatives of a good nation as it attempts to tame a new land. In this respect, the Jurats live up to their nickname; they literally are frontier marshals, serving up justice where there might otherwise be none. Under these circumstances, they are perfect patrons or allies to good-aligned player characters who work toward the same goal. If the characters are actually members of the order, it makes a wonderful basis for a long-term campaign to establish, maintain, and protect a far-flung outpost of a nation or kingdom. The characters can take pride in planting the seeds of peace and order and watching them grow under their care.

Of course, the order is known to operate even in neutral or evil lands. Their function is much the same, to establish peace and justice, but here they do it without the cooperation of the authorities. In fact, the Jurats are singled out as enemies of the state and hunted down. Campaigns based around this concept will acquire a Robin Hood-like quality, with the Jurats being fugitives from a perversion of the true justice they seek to establish. This makes for an exciting guerrilla war-style game, one in which rebellion and insurrection are the tools to establish justice for all. In campaigns like this, the Jurats' survival abilities and quick movement become more valuable than ever.

It is also possible that the order could be used as antagonists to the player characters. Most obviously, evil characters would have much to fear from the order. Yet, that is not the only way to use Jurats in this fashion. Clashes within the order between the lawful good and lawful neutral branches of the organization could finally boil over into physical vio-

lence, drawing the characters into the middle. Alternately, the extreme law and order stance of the lawful neutral Jurats might cause problems by failing to temper its version of justice with mercy. Adventures that revolve around such conflicts would necessarily have a more philosophical tone to them and thus might not be suitable for all characters. If, however, the characters are inclined to dive into ethical and moral conundrums, the Order of Jurats might well give the DM a fascinating new way of framing such issues.

GUARDIAN OF THE WAY

Eventually, a monk's skills surpass those of other monks in his monastery. Once this happens, the monk is asked to become the guardian of the way. The monk must act as the monastery's ambassador, cultivating friendships with important patrons and increasing the fame of his monastery by acts of heroism. Occasionally, the guardian of the way will be asked to take along a new monk and train her in the art while adventuring.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify as a guardian of the way, the character must meet the following requirements.

Skills: Craft (calligraphy) 5 ranks, Diplomacy 8 ranks.

Feats: Deflect Arrows, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Stunning Fist.

CLASS SKILLS

The guardian of the way's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the guardian of the way prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A guardian of the way is not proficient with any armor or shields, and is proficient with

the same weapons as a monk (club, crossbow (light or heavy), dagger, handaxe, javelin, kama, nunchaku, quarterstaff, shuriken, siangham, and sling). Guardians of the way cannot use their special abilities, unarmed attacks, unarmed damage, AC bonus, or unarmored speed while wearing armor heavier than leather armor.

Monk Abilities: Beginning at 1st level, the guardian of the way advances the unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed monk abilities as if she had gained a level in monk. In effect, her monk levels and guardian of the way levels stack when determining these three abilities.

Defensive Spin: As a full round action, the guardian of the way can give himself the equivalent of nine-tenths concealment (granting a 40% miss chance to any attacks aimed against him) until his next action by focusing in on his attacker's blows and deftly avoiding them.

Guarded Thoughts: At 2nd level, the guardian of the way gains a +4 bonus to saving throws against spells that read her thoughts or detect mistruths. If such a spell does not grant a saving throw, the guardian of the way gains one, although without the +4 bonus. Spells affected by this ability include: *detect thoughts*, *discern lies*, and *zone of truth*.

Ki Strike: Starting at 2nd level, a guardian of the way's unarmed attack is empowered with ki. The unarmed strike damage from such an attack can deal damage to a creature with damage reduction as if the blow were made with a weapon with a +1 enhancement bonus. Ki strike is a supernatural ability.

Pain Touch: At 3rd level, the guardian of the way can inflict great pain with a simple touch. This is a melee touch attack that uses up one of the guardian of the way's stunning attacks for the day. The victim must make a *Fortitude* save with a DC equal to that of the character's stunning attack or suffer two points of temporary Dexterity damage and a -4 penalty to attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks. These penalties last for 1 round per class level.

Aura of Friendship: At 4th level, the guardian of the way can emit an aura of goodwill that affects those in his immediate area. This ability is usable once per day and acts in all ways as

GUARDIAN OF THE WAY

Level	Base Attack	Unarmed Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Defensive spin, monk abilities
2	+1	+1	+3	+3	+3	Guarded thoughts, ki strike (+1)
3	+2	+2	+3	+3	+3	Pain touch
4	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Aura of friendship 1/day
5	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Levitation
6	+4	+4/+1	+5	+5	+5	Ki strike (+2)
7	+5	+5/+2	+5	+5	+5	Aura of friendship 2/day
8	+6	+6/+3	+6	+6	+6	Luck of the rabbit
9	+6	+6/+3	+6	+6	+6	Persuasive calligraphy
10	+7	+7/+4/+1	+7	+7	+7	Ki strike (+3)

an *emotion (friendship)* spell cast by a 9th-level bard.

Levitation: When the guardian of the way reaches 5th level, he gains the ability to *levitate* three times per day. Treat this ability as the spell cast by a 10th-level sorcerer, except the character may only affect himself with the spell.

Luck of the Rabbit: At 8th level, the guardian of the way can add his class level to any roll after seeing the results of that roll. This ability modifies the total, not the die result, so it may not be used to achieve a critical threat, although it could be used to confirm a critical. The character can only use this ability once per day.

Persuasive Calligraphy: At 9th level, the guardian of the way learns to invoke powerful magic using his calligraphy. He may draw patterns in the air or on paper that have incredible effects on those around him. This pattern acts as a *symbol of persuasion* cast by a 14th-level cleric.

ORGANIZATION:

GUARDIANS OF THE WAY

PURPOSE

The Guardians of the Way exist to be conduits of monastic wisdom to the outside world. Whether as diplomats, teachers, or even adventurers, the Guardians ensure that monasteries

do not become too detached from the world and thereby have no impact on it in the face of growing evil.

LEADER

Lambent Flame (LG human female Mnk6/Gow10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The Monastery of Harmonious Virtue is an old and powerful order whose abbot rules over many lesser monasteries and whose teachings are rightfully respected by those who know them. Unfortunately, too few outsiders know its wisdom, for the Monastery is located in an isolated mountain range and its monks have only rarely ventured forth—until recently. The rise of evil in the land has not gone unnoticed, even by the abbot, a serene old man who has studied well the lessons of the past. He has realized that far too often the Monastery and its monks did nothing while evil men and creatures were allowed to wreak havoc in the world. Past abbots have dressed up this inaction as “detachment” and “serenity,” but their present successor knows this is a falsehood. Failing to prevent evil is itself an evil and the abbot is unwilling to allow it to continue.

Drawing on ancient texts and his own insights, the abbot has instituted a new training regimen, one that combines diplomacy with fighting skills. His first and brightest student, Lambent Flame, has in turn been tasked to teach others this regimen, hoping that its ranks will swell large enough that the abbot will

have a veritable army of diplomat-monks at his command. Calling them his Guardians of the Way (the Way being the Monastery's teachings), the abbot has begun to send out these monks across the land, where they will seek out allies and do battle against evil. They will also spread the wisdom of the Monastery so that its hard-won insights might be of use to even those who have not devoted their lives to the Way. The abbot strongly believes that the Guardians are an integral part of the wisdom the Monastery teaches, for they offer the means by which it can complement its meditations with actions.

Under the direction of Lambent Flame, the Guardians of the Way have become one of the more common representatives of the monastic vocation in faraway lands. They are still quite rare, but she hopes that will change in time. Many realms have never heard of monks at all and view them with a combination of awe and suspicion. The abbot feels, as does his student, that the Guardians might serve to overcome both these misapprehensions and to foster a proper understanding of monastic life and beliefs. Thus, Guardians travel the world, seek-

ing to teach the Way to any that will listen, as well as to show how the Way impels them to fight evil. It is dearly hoped that this combination will prove a powerful inducement to outsiders, at least some of whom might adopt the Way as their personal creed. Even if they do not, the Guardians of the Way will have served their primary purpose: to fight the darkness that grows with each day.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Guardians of the Way are easily dropped into almost any campaign setting. They provide the DM with a relatively painless way to introduce monks into his game, especially if the class had hitherto been rare or non-existent. The description above presupposes a standard medieval setting in which the Eastern ways of the monks will be a thing of mystery and perhaps even fear. The Guardians exist as roving ambassadors, designed to cast away any doubts about their teachings and to show that monks can be powerful allies in the war against evil. In this respect, they are tailor-made adventure hooks for DMs seeking to introduce a new element into their campaigns.



Even if monks already exist in the campaign, the Guardians can offer a new approach to them. The Way that they espouse is left deliberately vague so that the DM can tailor it to his campaign. Broadly speaking, it is a philosophy of thought given action and wisdom given form, in which spiritual growth is tied to physical deeds. The Guardians are thus “evangelists” of the Way, as well as impressive fighters. Their goal is to convince others of the wisdom of the Way, believing that its adoption is a sure way to protect the world from the darkness that surrounds it. Characters who wish to multi-class in the monk class or become Guardians themselves will therefore have an easy way to frame their character’s addition of the prestige class—they have seen the truth of the Way.

In all likelihood, the Guardians will be allies or patrons of the player characters. Except in an evil campaign, it is improbable that they could be outright villains. It is possible that they could be used in an antagonistic fashion, especially in a nation with a long-established religion whose principles, though good, differ from those of the Way. In this circumstance, the Guardians might meet opposition from high priests and hierarchs, who see them as interlopers or even heretics. Simply because the Guardians are generally good-aligned does not mean that they will be automatically welcomed with open arms. In this scenario, characters that work with or join the Guardians of the Way may find themselves shunned by society and friends—all because they have accepted the “alien ways” of the Guardians. Such a campaign could be melodramatic or philosophical, depending on the interests of the DM or the players. It could also serve as the starting point for plotlines in which the player characters try to bridge the gap between the two points of view in order to forge a lasting alliance against the minions of evil.

KI WARRIOR

The ki warrior is able to perform superhuman feats by channeling his inner power. His entire existence is marked by focus, and he gives supreme attention to every detail of his daily life. Even the most mundane events such as eating and lacing his boots are given the time and care that most would reserve for a great piece of art or difficult problem. It is this focus on the mundane that gives the ki warrior his strength.

Adventuring ki warriors are rare, as most can be found in temples searching for enlightenment. Typically, such ki warriors are fighters or monks interested in the exploration of their spiritual self through new experiences. They desire to see the world and find new challenges for their minds to focus upon. Such behavior is viewed as extravagant by many ki warrior traditions, but some new masters are teaching that this is the only way to achieve ultimate understanding of mind and body.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a ki warrior, a character must fulfill the following requirements.

Feats: Deflect Arrows, Endurance, Improved Unarmed Strike, Skill Focus (Concentration), Stunning Fist.

Skills: Concentration 8 ranks.

CLASS SKILLS

The ki warrior’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the ki warrior prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A ki warrior is not proficient with any armor or shields, and is proficient with the same weapons as a monk (club, crossbow (light or heavy), dagger, handaxe, javelin, kama, nunchaku, quarterstaff, shuriken, siangham, and sling). Ki warriors cannot use their special abilities, unarmed attacks, unarmed damage, AC bonus, or unarmored speed while wearing armor heavier than leather armor.

Monk Abilities: Beginning at 1st level, the ki warrior advances the unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed monk abilities as if she had gained a level in monk. In effect, her monk levels and ki warrior lev-

KI WARRIOR

Level	Base Attack	Unarmed Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Graceful waterfall, monk abilities
2	+1	+1	+3	+3	+3	Fist of iron, ki strike (+1)
3	+2	+2	+3	+3	+3	Swinging monkey
4	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Asp venom
5	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Falcon dance
6	+4	+4/+1	+5	+5	+5	Chameleon eyes, ki strike (+2)
7	+5	+5/+2	+5	+5	+5	Wholeness of body
8	+6	+6/+3	+6	+6	+6	Hydra kick
9	+6	+6/+3	+6	+6	+6	Turtle shell
10	+7	+7/+4/+1	+7	+7	+7	Dragon touch, ki strike (+3)

els stack when determining these three abilities.

Graceful Waterfall: This ability allows the ki warrior to land safely from up to her unarmored speed. The ki warrior does this by spinning her cloak around and letting the winds guide her down safely.

Fist of Iron: At 2nd level, the ki warrior gains the ability to cause massive damage to inanimate objects with her fist. As a full round action, the character can use one of her stunning attacks to break an object. This allows the character to ignore the hardness of an object for purposes of damaging it. The character deals her normal unarmed strike damage to the object, possibly breaking it. This ability cannot be used on creatures. If it is accidentally used on a creature (such as striking a mimic disguised as a chest or a statue that turns out to be a stone golem), it deals no damage.

Swinging Monkey: At 3rd level, the ki warrior gains the ability to swing from and hold on to vines, trees, and ropes. Provided the necessary handholds are present, the ki warrior can swing at $\frac{1}{2}$ her normal speed, or her full speed with a successful Climb check (DC 10 +1 per extra 5 ft. of movement). If she fails this Climb check, she moves at $\frac{1}{2}$ speed only. Failure by 5 or more indicates that she has fallen from the rope.

Asp Venom: At 4th level, the ki warrior can attempt to poison an opponent by forfeiting one of her stunning fist uses for the day. On a successful hit, the victim must make Fortitude save (DC 10 + ki warrior level) or take poi-

son damage (initial damage 1d6 Con, secondary damage 1d6 Str).

Falcon Dance: At 5th level, the ki warrior gains the ability to glide with this special ability. She simply jumps from a high place (at least 10 feet high) and then glides, moving 100 feet per round and losing 10 feet of altitude per round. She can make 90-degree turns, losing an additional 5 feet from her altitude when doing so.

Chameleon Eyes: At 6th level, the ki warrior is able to extend her visual sense by focusing her internal energies. After one full round of concentration, the ki warrior gains several abilities for 10 minutes per level. First, she can see with darkvision out to 30 ft. and she gains a +4 circumstance bonus to all Search checks and Spot checks. In addition, the ki warrior gains 360-degree sight, negating any flanking bonuses gained by enemies.

Wholeness of Body: At 7th level, the ki warrior gains the ability to focus her ki to heal her own wounds. She can cure up to twice her current level in hit points each day. She need not use all her healing at once. This is a supernatural ability.

Hydra Kick: At 8th level, the ki warrior gains the ability to kick all opponents in melee range as a full attack action. Each kick deals normal unarmed damage and uses the ki warrior's full base attack bonus.

Turtle Shell: Ki warriors reaching 9th level gain the turtle shell ability. The character may

activate this ability as a free action once per day, and when she does so she gains a +5 natural armor bonus for one minute per level.

Dragon Touch: At 10th level, ki warriors gain the ability to throw a ball of energy at their opponents. As a full round action, the ki warrior may throw a ball of either fire or electricity at one opponent. This is resolved as a ranged touch attack. The energy ball deals 1d6 points of damage per ki warrior level to the creature struck. This ability is usable three times per day.

ORGANIZATION:

THE DRAGON'S BREATH SCHOOL

PURPOSE

The School exists to perpetuate the esoteric teachings of the Dragon Master and to do battle against the forces that would upset the natural order of the world.

LEADER

Khaa-Lin (LN half-orc male Ftr6/Kiw10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

There are other types of magic beyond the divine and the arcane – or so say certain reclusive sages. These learned people claim that all living beings, no matter how small, possess within them a magical spark given to them by the gods. This spark does more than animate their bodies and give thought to their minds; it unites them with their creators and, in a way, shows their similarity to them. These scholars go on to claim that, by learning to use one's magical spark, a being might begin his ascent toward something greater and along the way manifest powers and abilities that few think possible. This road is a long and arduous one. It is not for the weak-willed or the brash, for it requires discipline and a willingness to learn the unspoken wisdom that the natural world offers to those who will listen. Few are those who have learned such wisdom and passed it on to others.

The Dragon Master was one such man. An ancient ascetic, he spent his days traveling



from place to place, avoiding the contact of other beings. He preferred to wander among the forests and mountains of the world, observing their creatures and learning from them. It was through these observations that the Dragon Master began to hone his remarkable abilities. By heeding the rhythms of nature, he became its highest exemplar – a paragon of human achievement in both body and soul. The Master's peripatetic existence took him many places and he met many individuals, some of whom sought him out as a teacher. He rejected their entreaties, for he believed strongly that nature's lessons could only be learned on one's own, not through the instruction of another. At least that is what he believed until he met Khaa-Lin.

Khaa-Lin was a half-orc warrior in a tribe of bloodthirsty savages. He led a life of pillage and rapine, without any heed for mercy or wisdom. Yet, as is often the case with such men, Khaa-Lin met with misfortune. A neighboring tribe destroyed Khaa-Lin's people and nearly killed him as well. The half-orc escaped into the wilderness, fleeing for dear life – and stumbled upon the Dragon Master's temporary residence. Khaa-Lin mistook the old man for an enemy and foolishly attempted to

kill him. The aged monk easily bested the fighter in combat but spared his life. He saw something in him. He felt a connection to Khaa-Lin like he had never felt before. The Master could not explain it but he knew instinctively that he had at last met the one to whom he could entrust nature's secrets.

For years, the Dragon Master trained Khaa-Lin. It was a long and difficult journey, for the half-orc was chaotic and undisciplined, given to uncontrollable rages. Yet, he too felt a strange connection to the old man and worked hard at overcoming his baser impulses. In time, it worked and Khaa-Lin became a new person. His old persona fell away as he came to understand the wisdom that the Dragon Master imparted to him. Now as serene as he was powerful, the half-orc was ready for his next task: to go out into the world and restore its order.

At first, Khaa-Lin did not understand why his Master had given him this quest. At times, he is still unsure. He had learned that the world teetered on the brink of great chaos, one in which either good or evil threatened to overtake all and send everything into ruin. Even so, such a notion is hard to comprehend and even harder to act upon. The Dragon Master told him not to worry – he would know what he needed to do when the time came. He would know when to take apprentices and pass on what he had learned. And so Khaa-Lin wanders the world, seeking out others who would help him in his mighty quest to keep the world from falling under the sway of good or evil. It is a lonely quest, but one that he is convinced must go on.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Dragon's Breath School is an unusual group in that it can easily be used as either an ally or an enemy depending on the interests of the DM and the nature of the player characters. The Dragon Master taught Khaa-Lin that the world exists in a precarious balance between good and evil and that this balance is the natural law on which everything else depends. Tipping that balance too far in either direction leads to chaos and ultimately destruction. Thus, he ordered Khaa-Lin to work against anything that threatens to give too much power to either good or evil.

In this way, the School could work on the side of good or evil. Its only real concern is

that neither becomes too powerful. In the end, its only interest is in upholding a natural law that the Dragon Master believed to rule over everything. If the DM wishes, he could emphasize the oddity of this philosophy by using the School alternately as allies and enemies. In one adventure they could uphold good against evil, only to have them switch sides the next adventure. To them, this is as it should be, since balance is everything and the petty moralities of mortal beings stand in the way of a more important universal law.

Not surprisingly, this makes the School more easily usable as NPCs, but they could become the basis for an unusual campaign in which good and evil are irrelevant and preventing chaos is the sole reason for adventuring. Such an arrangement is not unheard of in fantasy, even if it is not the norm. Consequently, the DM should think carefully before allowing a player character to join the School. Doing so will have a profound impact on its philosophical tenor, which could derail campaigns built around the more traditional struggle of good versus evil.

ORDER OF THE UNICORN

The Order of the Unicorn, sometimes called the Knights of the Unicorn or the Unicorn Riders, is an "order" only in the loosest sense. Indeed, the free-riding and independent Unicorn Riders seem to exist almost as a rebuke to paladins and their ilk, their existence being a bold statement that nobility, virtue, and heroism are not always bound to discipline and rules. Members of the Order are most often found in regions where law is a corrupt and oppressive force, and they appear almost at random, to strike against tyrants and to liberate the downtrodden.

The exact origins of the Order are unknown, but the earliest records of it date back several centuries. Since then, they have never appeared in great numbers, but they have been a constant presence in the world. The earliest members of the Order, mostly by coincidence, were female humans and elves; this led to a persistent myth that only such people would ever be permitted to ride a unicorn.

Members of the Order deliberately seek out adventure. They do not wish for a quiet life, only taking up arms when danger arises. They are active crusaders, rarely staying in one place

ORDER OF THE UNICORN

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Bonding, plainseeming
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	<i>Detect evil</i>
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Unicorn's touch I
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat, lethal charge
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Swift returning, combat bonding
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Unicorn's touch I
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Tireless ride
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Bonus feat, resist evil
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Unicorn's touch I
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Sky gallop

for long. Some may join a party of like-minded people who are pursuing a long-term goal (killing an elder wyrm, destroying an evil artifact, and so on), but others are rovers.

Fighters, rangers, and bards are the most likely to join the Order. Paladins, for obvious reasons, cannot, but some fallen paladins (fallen from law, but not from good) can and do. Barbarians are rarely refined enough of purpose to be considered candidates, and most arcane casters never develop the combat skills that the Order favors.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for the Order of the Unicorn, the character must meet the following requirements.

Alignment: Chaotic good or neutral good.

Race: Any Small or Medium-size humanoid.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Skills: Ride 8 Ranks, Wilderness Lore 4 Ranks

Feats: Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack

Special: The Order seeks qualified candidates and tests them, most often without the potential recruit even knowing what is going on.

CLASS SKILLS

The order of the unicorn's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str),

Knowledge (nature) (Int), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the order of the unicorn prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Members of the Order of the Unicorn are proficient with all types of armor and shields, and all simple and martial weapons.

Bonding: When someone is inducted into the Order, they are bonded to a specific unicorn. This becomes the basis for all later abilities. The unicorn will serve as her mount, but also as an advisor and friend. The rider cannot be poisoned, *charmed*, or *held* while mounted on the unicorn, and she adds her class level to saving throws against these effects when not on the unicorn. Furthermore, each time the member of the Order gains a level in the class, the Unicorn gains an extra hit die. The unicorn can also use its *cure* abilities once per day on its rider in addition to its normal abilities. (Thus, a bonded unicorn can cast *cure light wounds* on its rider and still have three uses remaining.)

Should a character's unicorn die, she must wait at least one year before bonding another mount. This often drives characters to abandon the life altogether, as the loss of a bonded friend often leads to an incurable melancholy.

Plainseeming: Unicorns tend to attract



attention. Any unicorn bonded to a rider gains the ability to disguise itself as a normal horse, covering itself with an artfully constructed glamer. The Will save to penetrate this glamer is DC 16, and the person making the save must have some reason to suspect something is amiss.

Detect Evil: At 2nd level, members of the Order gain the spell-like ability to *detect evil* as the spell. Using this ability is a free action.

Unicorn's Touch I: At 3rd level, the rider gains the ability to cast *cure light wounds* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. Her order of the unicorn level is considered her class level for purposes of resolving the spell.

Bonus Feat: At 4th level, and again at 8th, the rider may select a feat from the list of fighter bonus feats.

Lethal Charge: Beginning at 4th level, whenever the unicorn uses the charge maneuver and attacks with its horn, the threat range of the horn become 18–20 and the critical multiplier becomes x3.

Swift Returning: Beginning at 5th level, the rider may *teleport without error* once per day to the location of her bonded unicorn, provided they are both on the same plane.

Combat Bonding: Beginning at 5th level, the unicorn gains a bonus to all attack and damage rolls equal to its rider's class levels.

Unicorn's Touch II: At 6th level, the rider gains the ability to cast *cure moderate wounds* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. Her order of the unicorn level is considered her class level for purposes of resolving the spell. This ability replaces any previous unicorn's touch abilities (therefore the rider may no longer cast *cure light wounds* using this ability).

Tireless Ride: At 7th level, the unicorn's overland travel speed is twice normal when not in combat.

Resist Evil: The rider gains the ability to project a *magic circle against evil* up to three times per day.

Unicorn's Touch III: The rider gains the ability to *neutralize poison* a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. Her order of the unicorn level is considered her class level for purposes of resolving the spell.

Sky Gallop: Once per day, the unicorn may cast *air walk* as a 10th-level cleric. It can only do this while being ridden. The unicorn may not use Plainseeming while flying.

ORGANIZATION:

ORDER OF THE UNICORN

PURPOSE

The Order of the Unicorn is a loosely organized group of warriors whose unorthodox methods in battling tyranny and injustice have earned them the respect of the notoriously untamable unicorns, who serve as their steeds and as a symbol of the Order's devotion to good unconstrained by law.

LEADER

Sarelma Nikkaanen (CG elf female Rgr8/Oou10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The Order of the Unicorn (also known as the Knights of the Unicorn or Unicorn Riders) is hardly an order at all – at least from an outsider’s perspective. Its lack of a formal hierarchy of members is one of its most notable characteristics, for the Order is dedicated to spreading good and righting wrongs without concern for the niceties of law. The Order’s origins are unknown to all, save the unicorns themselves, who are the true leaders of the group and provide it with what little structure it possesses. Many centuries ago, a small circle of unicorns recognized that too often the cause of good foundered on an obsession with law. Humans were especially prone to this failing, although most humanoid species have shared it to varying degrees. To combat this, the unicorns sought a way to work with humanoids in the cause of justice, one that combined the strengths of all species. The Order of the Unicorn was the result.

The unicorns choose the members of the Order. There is no way an individual can seek out membership, however worthy they may deem themselves to be. Through their contacts among the fey creatures of nature and other members of the Order, the unicorns become aware of those who share their ideals and possess the talents necessary for the tasks they might eventually undertake. If such a person shows exceptional promise, she will be invited to join the Order by a unicorn, which offers to serve as her steed. Make no mistake, however – it is the unicorns that direct the actions of the Order, not their riders. The riders function primarily as the arms and legs of the unicorns, whose non-humanoid physiognomy makes it difficult for them to do many things necessary for the cause of good.

Their cause pays no heed to laws if they stand in the way of justice. Consequently, the Order often clashes with orders of paladins and others who dismiss the Unicorn Riders as unthinking rebels whose actions could lead to greater evils if not properly reined in. The Order rejects such criticisms as exactly the kind of thinking that allows kingdoms to suffer under the yoke of tyrants and the natural world to be despoiled. The unicorns would rather do something about these affronts, whatever the cost. The Order thus operates wherever evil is allowed to flourish because either the law has been elevated above good and evil, or places where evil uses

the law as a shield to defend itself against those who would overthrow it.

The Order of the Unicorn is not opposed to law as such. Rather, they believe that justice, peace, and freedom trump all laws and that good people should be willing to do whatever it takes to ensure that these ideals reign triumphant. The unicorns that guide the Order do so without recourse to rules or regulations, instead trusting in the natural inclinations of the humanoids that serve them. They rarely act directly and issue orders to the members of the Order. Instead, they rely on a loose network of allies and associates to keep them and their servants abreast of the latest events that require their attention.

When absolutely necessary, the unicorns speak through Sarelma Nikkaanen, a powerful elven member of the Order, who enjoys a special relationship with the unicorns due to her long association with them. However, only the gravest of circumstances would bring Sarelma into the fray, for the unicorns prefer to allow each member to act on her own conscience. They also realize that any attempt to create a stronger hierarchy would not only contradict their own beliefs, but would make the Order easier to destroy. Thus far, its fluidity has been a great strength, enabling it to strike against evil with little concern for widespread consequences. It has also limited the Order’s ability to coordinate its actions – a source of great frustration for those who share its goals, both within the Order and without.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Order of the Unicorn is relatively easy to place into any campaign in which unicorns exist. As unicorns are powerful and intelligent magical creatures, it is not surprising that they might take an interest in humanoid affairs and use their abilities to fight against evil. The Order makes an excellent basis for a rebel movement against the forces of tyranny and injustice, especially in lawful evil lands or places where the beauty of nature is threatened. Because the Order is so diffuse and lacks a clear hierarchy, it will never overshadow the player characters and, in fact, might well enlist their aid to supplement its own limited resources in the war against villainy. In a similar vein, a player character who is inducted into its membership will not have the luxury of vast resources to draw upon.

Thus, any battle she participates in is unlikely to bring the whole of the Order to bear – a great advantage to the DM who wants the struggle against evil to be an uphill battle.

Alternately, the Order could make for an interesting twist, playing the role of benevolent antagonist. The brash and individualistic nature of its members might put them at loggerheads with more lawful characters. In the war against evil, they might be the idealistic rebels without a clue, who rush in where angels fear to tread – leaving the player characters to pick up the pieces. Alternately, they might be a goad to the consciences of lawful characters who might otherwise be inclined to look the other way when injustice occurs. Either way, the Order of the Unicorn presents the DM with the chance to show some of the diversity that exists among the forces of good and that being on the same side does not necessarily mean seeing eye to eye.

Pit Fighter

These dangerous fighters are trained for combat in the brutal gladiatorial pits of lawless and vile cities across the land. Over time, the blood-thirsty crowds and gory combats they are exposed to turn them either into calculating killers or savage beasts. They rarely get to choose the weapons they use and quickly become accustomed to learning new weapons on the fly; those that do not soon meet their graves.

Pit masters, as those who run these sadistic spectacles are called, love to incite the crowd by throwing unexpected obstacles and opponents into the mix. Therefore, pit fighters learn that the fight is never over until they are safely back in their cells. Most often pit fighters are slaves, as only the most sadistic or insane free-man would choose this life. Those that do and succeed, however, are often rewarded far beyond what they could expect in another profession or in a sanctioned combat arena.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a pit fighter, a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

Attacks: The character must have at least two attacks per round that use different base attack bonuses, whether through natural

weaponry or iterative attacks. Two weapon and double weapon fighting do not count towards this requirement.

Feats: Endurance, any two Exotic Weapon Proficiencies.

Special: The character must have survived at least five fights in a gladiatorial pit.

CLASS SKILLS

The pit fighter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the pit fighter prestige class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: A pit fighter is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, medium armor and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a –1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

Battle Sense: Beginning at 1st level, the pit fighter is increasingly aware of the space around him, giving him the ability to react in situations that a normal combatant would not. The advantages he gains are listed below.

At 1st level, the pit fighter cannot be caught flat-footed in combat, as life in the pits has trained him to be constantly on the lookout for ambush. This works exactly like the rogue's Uncanny Dodge ability.

At 4th level, the pit fighter cannot be flanked. He understands and instinctively utilizes special techniques in combat versus multiple opponents. This works exactly like the rogue's Uncanny Dodge ability.

At 7th level, if two or more opponents within his reach have attacked the pit fighter since his last action, he gains an extra partial action that can only be used to attack one of these opponents. This extra partial action is lost if the

number of valid targets is brought below two *before the pit fighter's action*.

Weapon Sense: At 1st level, the pit fighter begins to learn how to use any available weapon effectively. Therefore he only suffers a -2 penalty when using a weapon in which he is not proficient, as opposed to the normal -4.

At 3rd level, the pit fighter no longer suffers any non-proficiency penalties and is effectively proficient with all weapons.

Armor Adjustment: Because of the lack of reliable equipment found in most pits, the pit fighter is incredibly adept at adapting bits and pieces of armor to maximize his protection. As a result, starting at 2nd level the pit fighter may add a bonus to his AC when he is wearing any type of armor. Creatures with natural armor may also apply this bonus.

Skewer: At 2nd level, the pit fighter learns to drive his blade deep into his opponent and keep it there until his opponent stops struggling. Any time the pit fighter damages a foe with a piercing weapon he may attempt to skewer as a free action. He and his opponent make an opposed Strength check. If the pit fighter is successful, he has lodged his weapon inside his opponent's body.

Every round thereafter the pit fighter may use a full round action to twist the weapon and press it deeper into his opponent, automatically dealing damage as if he had rolled a successful hit.

An opponent caught in this manner may make an opposed Strength check to pull the weapon from his body. The pit fighter receives a +2 bonus to this check due to his improved leverage. Either character can make an opposed Strength check to move up to $\frac{1}{4}$ speed while the skewer is maintained. If successful, both creatures move the same distance.

Fighter Feat: The pit fighter may select a feat from the list of fighter bonus feats.

Savage Strike: This crippling blow is meant to disable the pit fighter's opponent so that he may finish him off more easily. Once per day at 5th level, and then twice per day at 9th, the pit fighter may declare one of his attacks as a savage strike. If the attack hits, it deals 2d4 temporary damage to Strength, Dexterity, or



Pit Fighter

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save
1	+1	+2	+0	+0
2	+2	+3	+0	+0
3	+3	+3	+1	+1
4	+4	+4	+1	+1
5	+5	+4	+1	+1
6	+6	+5	+2	+2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2
8	+8	+6	+2	+2
9	+9	+6	+3	+3
10	+10	+7	+3	+3

Special

Battle sense, weapon sense
 Armor adjustment +1, skewer
 Fighter feat, weapon sense
 Battle sense
 Armor adjustment +2, savage strike 1/day
 Fighter feat, poison use
 Battle sense
 Armor adjustment +3, steal the kill
 Fighter feat, savage strike 2/day
 Armor adjustment +4, pure form

Constitution in addition to normal damage. The pit fighter may choose which ability score he wishes to damage.

The savage strike can only affect opponents of Medium-size or smaller, and any creature that is immune to critical hits is also immune to the savage strike.

Poison Use: The pit fighter learns to look for any advantage he can get. Therefore at 6th level he no longer risks poisoning himself when applying poison to his weapons.

Steal the Kill: Pit fighters quickly learn that the less opponents they have to fight the better, so they train themselves to finish off the weak and wounded first. A pit fighter may use an attack of opportunity to strike an opponent who has been damaged by another source in the same round. This counts as the pit fighter's attack of opportunity for the round.

Pure Form: At 10th level the pit fighter's combat training gives him the extraordinary ability to stay alive during the fiercest of combats. As a full round action, the pit fighter may designate each opponent within 10 feet and either take an attack against that opponent or gain a +4 dodge bonus to his AC against that opponent until his next action. He must still be able to reach an opponent to attack him, and may use his 5 ft. step at any time during his round.

Organization:

The Stable of the Outlander

PURPOSE

The Stable of the Outlander is an organization of warriors trained to fight in the gladiatorial arenas of the Great City. Masters of this brutal amusement, they are on the verge of becoming a potent political force as well.

LEADER

Eskander (NE human male Bar7/Pit10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The Stable of the Outlander takes its name from its pit master, Eskander. Born to a barbarian tribe in the wilds surrounding the Great City, he was enslaved as a young man and forced to fight for the pleasure of the debauched citizenry. Eskander proved adept at pit fighting and quickly earned the respect of his fellow slaves as well as the adulation of the jaded crowds. In time, he became one of the most popular men in the city, despite his rivals' numerous attempts to kill – or at least embarrass – him. Through a combination of cunning and luck, Eskander survived all these attempts and his popularity only grew greater.

Seeing the suffering of his fellow slaves weighed heavily on the former barbarian. Eskander came close to believing that the only solution was a slave revolt that he would lead.

He might well have acted on his beliefs – and succeeded – if the City’s ruling council had not recognized this danger and preempted his attempt. The council freed Eskander and lavished riches and luxury upon him. He then used his new position to establish his own stable of gladiators, one in which his own style of fighting was taught. His pit fighters quickly became the best in the City, so much so that, in the minds of many devotees of the arenas, the term “pit fighter” refers only to members of Eskander’s stable. All other fighters are inferior breeds that do not deserve that title.

Though corrupted and decadent like the other lords of the City, Eskander remains unhappy and unfulfilled. His barbarian heart is torn between his youthful love of freedom and the pangs of conscience make him question his original intentions to overturn the City’s order. Yet, Eskander is also ambitious and part of him wonders if it might not be better if he took the reins of power himself. For now, the fighters of his stable ply their trade primarily in the arena, but the time may come when they will serve as Eskander’s army. Only time – and the vagaries of the barbarian heart – can tell whether that army will be used to seize liberty or naked power.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Stable of the Outlander is much more limited as an organization than many of the others described in this book. For one, it is found only in a single locale, the decadent Great City. While it is possible that former members of the stable could buy their freedom and leave the City to journey farther afield, that is not the norm. Indeed, the immense popularity of the stable’s fighters makes this highly unlikely. The rewards for staying in the City – wealth, popularity, influence – far outweigh those to be gained by leaving. This is an important consideration for the DM who is considering using this group in his campaign.

The stable’s pit fighters are the celebrities of the Great City and command far more respect than do many of its political or military leaders. That is, of course, why the ruling council was so keen to pacify Eskander in the first place. It is also the reason why characters may wish to join his stable, for although a great many of its fighters are slaves, the majority of them are not. That is one of the things that distinguishes the Stable of the Outlander from other groups of fighters. Eskander believes fervently in giving his fight-



ers the fruits of their labors. Slaves are far less likely to perform well in the arena, because they have less to gain by success than a free man.

In an adventure or campaign that takes place entirely within the Great City, the Stable of the Outlander offers an attractive way to better oneself in ways beyond the purely monetary. Eskander is an important figure in the Great City, and his fighters share in his influence. That means successful members of the stable can expect deferential treatment in certain circumstances. It also means that the stable will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in deciding the future of the city itself.

Eskander is genuinely torn between his old idealism and his present cynicism. His stable is similarly divided between those who want to reform the government of the Great City and those who simply wish to enjoy its riches. An entire campaign could be built around swaying Eskander to do one thing or the other – or fighting against the decision he ultimately makes. In the end, many pit fighters will choose to oppose Eskander’s decision, whatever it is. Characters who want to turn a fallen hero to his noble roots and overthrow a decadent regime have a chance to use the stable for

that very purpose. Likewise, characters who want to seize power can use the stable in that way as well. Both are viable approaches to the group and offer lots of exciting opportunities for adventure.

The DM would be wise to consider how the characters will relate to the Stable in his campaign. If they become members, do they do so voluntarily? Or are they one of the rare slaves in the group? If so, how do they feel about the legend of Eskander's origins and how he has seemingly abandoned his quest for freedom for the slaves? In most respects, the Stable of the Outlander is a very straightforward group whose only complexity lies in the motivation of its leader. Once the GM knows how Eskander intends to use the Stable – and whether the characters might be able to sway him one way or the other – he will be ready to use the group in his campaign with a minimum of trouble.

REAVER

The reavers are feared in all the lands in which they live. They are known as butchers and savages, nomadic bandits who indiscriminately prey on caravans and travelers, taking everything and often leaving no one alive. They ride on through the night, tracking down every traveling lootpurse in their domain, and return by the light of dawn to feast and celebrate their victories. Authorities have trouble capturing these raiders, as the reavers excel not only at fast riding but also in camouflage and stealth. It is possible to ride past a dozen reavers without ever seeing them; and doing so almost always means an attack is imminent.

Characters who become reavers almost certainly do so in order to track down others of the kind. Perhaps they learn the reavers' secrets from an ex-reaver seeking to atone for the evil that he has committed in his life. In any case, by learning the secrets of the reavers it becomes easier to track them down and capture or kill them.

Hit Die: d12.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify as a reaver, the character must meet the following requirements.

Alignment: Any chaotic.

Skills: Handle Animal 5 ranks, Intimidate 5 ranks, Ride 8 ranks.

Feats: Mounted Combat, Track.

Special: The character must have the Uncanny Dodge ability.

CLASS SKILLS

The reaver's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the reaver prestige class.

Horse Protection: At 1st level, the reaver becomes so proficient in guiding his mount that he can impart his AC bonus due to Dexterity to his mount.

Judge of Horseflesh: When the reaver attains 1st level, he knows just by examining a horse for one minute if the horse has any outstanding attributes. The reaver can identify traits as being weak, normal, or above average as compared to other horses. This gives the reaver a +4 circumstance bonus to any Appraise checks related to horses.

Horse Empathy: At 2nd level, the reaver learns to communicate more complex commands and messages to his steed. The reaver gains a +2 bonus on all Ride checks and a +4 bonus on all Animal Empathy and Handle Animal checks related to horses.

Improved Cover: At 2nd level, the reaver learns improved techniques for taking cover behind his horse. He may now make a single attack each round while taking cover, provided he makes the normal Ride check (DC 15) for the cover maneuver.

At 7th level, the reaver is able to gain even greater cover from his horse, though at greater risk to the beast. He gains three-quarters cover with the cover maneuver, meaning that any attack that misses by seven points or less has a chance of striking his mount.

REAYER

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save
1	+1	+2	+0	+0
2	+2	+3	+0	+0
3	+3	+3	+1	+1
4	+4	+4	+1	+1
5	+5	+4	+1	+1
6	+6	+5	+2	+2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2
8	+8	+6	+2	+2
9	+9	+6	+3	+3
10	+10	+7	+3	+3

Special

Horse protection, judge of horseflesh
 Horse empathy, improved cover
 Spur on
 Archery feat
 Improved tracking
 Camouflage
 Improved cover
 Archery feat
 Ambush
 Spirit horse

Spur On: At 3rd level, the reayer can spur his horse on to greater than normal speeds. During any round in which the reayer's horse makes a double move, the actual distance traveled is equal to three times the horse's speed. So, a horse with a base speed of 40 ft. would travel 120 ft. with a double move. This ability may only be used a number of rounds per day equal to the horse's Constitution score.

Archery Feat: Upon reaching 4th and 8th level, the reayer may take one free archery-based feat from the following list: Far Shot, Mounted Archery, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, and Superior Mounted Archery. The reayer must still have all the necessary prerequisites for any feats that he selects.

Ambush: Upon reaching 5th level, the reayer learns that taking out an enemy quickly can mean the difference between victory and death. On the first round of combat, the reayer gains an extra partial action that can only be used to fire a ranged weapon.

Camouflage: At 6th level the reayer learns to hide his mount and himself beneath the cover of trees and shrubs. Given 10 minutes, the reayer can create a 10 ft. by 10 ft. camouflaged area, granting all within (usually just the reayer and his mount) a +8 bonus to Hide checks.

Improved Tracking: At 9th level, the reayer learns to track while riding his horse. He no longer suffers the -5 penalty for tracking at normal speed, and he may move as fast as his horse's speed during the pursuit.

Spirit Horse: At 10th level, the reayer gains a special mount: the spirit horse. This horse follows the reayer's commands and can communicate with the reayer through a telepathic bond.

SPIRIT HORSE

Spirit Horse Large Outsider

Hit Dice:	5d8+15 (38 hp)
Initiative:	+1 (Dex)
Speed:	70 ft.
AC:	17 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural)
Attacks:	2 hooves +8 melee, bite +3 melee
Damage:	Hoof 1d4+3; bite 1d3+1
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Phase, rider link, scent
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +5
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6
Skills:	Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +7
Climate/Terrain:	Any land
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	2
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	—

The spirit horse is a legendary creature, said to be a normal horse transformed by the ghost of an awakened paladin's mount. It carries its rider in near-total silence, unerringly obeying the rider's unspoken commands.

COMBAT

A spirit horse can fight while carrying a rider, but the rider cannot also attack unless he or she succeeds at a Ride check (DC 10).

Phase (Su): Once per day the spirit horse can go ethereal as though it was the target of an *ethereal jaunt* spell. It can also take its rider and any equipment up to its medium load with it. The spirit horse can remain ethereal for up to 10 minutes at a time.

Rider Link (Su): The spirit horse chooses a rider and bears him and him alone. While it cannot speak, it shares a telepathic link through which it can communicate silently and instantly with its rider if they are within 100 ft. of each other.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a light warhorse is up to 230 pounds; a medium load, 231–460 pounds; a heavy load, 461–690 pounds. A light warhorse can drag 3,450 pounds.

ORGANIZATION:

TROOVAD'S BAND

PURPOSE

Troovad's Band has one purpose only: to make its members rich by any means necessary, preferably through violence.

LEADER

Troovad (CE half-orc male Bar7/Rea10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

No one, not even Troovad himself, knows the half-orc barbarian's true origins. He was found as a young boy by the Poolikhis tribe, hungry and without any memory of his family or place of origin. Rather than let him die as the shaman told them, the tribal elders took the boy in, gave him a name, and inducted him as a member of the tribe. Troovad grew quickly and powerfully and soon became a menace to the Poolikhis people, as the shaman had warned. He proved



wild and uncontrollable and was given to *insane rages* for no apparent reason. Reluctantly, the elders banished Troovad to the Vale of Horses, a harsh place where they expected him to die as had so many before him.

But Troovad did not. Not only did he survive – he thrived. And he found peace. His rages grew more manageable and he saw the world more clearly. Troovad also saw great potential in the wild horses of the Vale. He saw them as kindred spirits, untamed yet suffused with potential. In the horses, he saw his salvation and that of his tribe. Troovad spent many months taming several horses and learning from them. When his learning was complete, he returned to the Poolikhis tribe, much to their surprise and dismay.

The half-orc did not come to punish them, but to thank them. He saw his banishment as a time of spiritual growth and understanding. He now knew what he was meant to do: lead the Poolikhis tribe against the weakling nations of the south and to take their riches for the benefit of his people. The shaman disagreed with his plan and the elders threatened to banish him again, despite his seemingly changed demeanor. Troovad was wounded by their rejection and slew every member of the tribe who did not join him.

The handful of men, women, and children who survived became the original members of his band. Troovad taught them the way of mounted combat and the wisdom of horses. He showed them how to be nimble in battle and quick in retreat. He also showed them how to use what they had learned to enrich themselves and their families. Together, the members of the band became a potent fighting force, one the southern nations called “reavers” and feared for their ferocity and skill.

Now, the reavers of Troovad’s Band have ventured farther into the lands of their enemies and have become even more renowned as mounted warriors. With each month, they find stiffer resistance, including bands of other mounted warriors, who seem to possess the same unique abilities as Troovad’s reavers. But the half-orc is not concerned. He remains convinced that his is a call from the spirits themselves and that he shall be victorious in the end. The time is coming, he believes, when his reavers’ ranks will swell ever greater and he shall conquer one

of the southern lands. Then, his enemies will tremble and know true fear – and there is nothing anyone can do to stop it.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

Troovad’s Band is easy to use as a villainous group in most campaigns. First of all, their simple goal – riches and power – is universal enough that most DMs should have few difficulties using them. Second, they are mobile enough that they could be placed almost anywhere in a campaign setting. All that is really needed is a remote northern locale from which the roving barbarians can hail. Another possibility is for Troovad’s Band to have succeeded in their leader’s goal of conquering a kingdom and swelling their ranks with more reavers. Using this option, Troovad’s Band becomes a longer-term threat that will take much longer to defeat and could well form the basis of an ongoing series of adventures, or even an entire campaign.

Players who wish their characters to become reavers can take several different approaches. The first is to assume that their character disagreed with Troovad’s evil plans and left the Band. This gives them access to its abilities, as well as a nice enemy that the DM can exploit for adventure possibilities. Another option is for the character to be a member of a different reaver band that opposes Troovad and uses its similar abilities to fight him. A last opportunity assumes the character is indeed evil, in which case he may participate in Troovad’s villainy with reckless abandon, watching as the puny civilized folk tremble before the mounted might of the reavers.

SHADOW TIGER

Monks who learn that the arts of stealth can complement their martial prowess are drawn to the teachings of shadow tiger. The shadow tiger clan is a brutal conglomerate of assassins and mercenaries whose motives are not necessarily evil, just mysterious. Although many from the clan keep companions drawn from the shadow world, they are in no way connected to denizens of that plane. They seem to have an understanding of the interaction between the shadow and material worlds, which aids them in their mysterious quests.

Shadow tigers do not often talk, preferring their presence alone to convey a

SHADOW TIGER

Level	Base Attack	Unarmed Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Hook thumb, sliding shadows 10 ft., monk abilities
2	+1	+1	+3	+3	+3	Claws of the tiger
3	+2	+2	+3	+3	+3	Shadow companion
4	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Sliding shadows 15 ft.
5	+3	+3	+4	+4	+4	Tiger's leap
6	+4	+4/+1	+5	+5	+5	Tiger's form
7	+5	+5/+2	+5	+5	+5	Sliding shadows 20 ft.
8	+6	+6/+3	+6	+6	+6	Tiger's hunger
9	+6	+6/+3	+6	+6	+6	Killing strike
10	+7	+7/+4/+1	+7	+7	+7	Sliding shadows 40 ft.

sense of foreboding and awe around them. It is said that if a shadow tiger pays a person a visit, the reason for his presence should already be known. Even the most hidden agendas and cleverly concealed secrets can be extracted by the terrifying prowess of a shadow tiger clansman.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a shadow tiger, a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

Skills: Animal Empathy 4 ranks, Hide 8 ranks, Tumble 8 ranks.

Feats: Deflect Arrows, Improved Unarmed Strike, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist.

Special: The shadow tiger must break the thumbs on both of his hands in order to use the techniques of his particular style.

CLASS SKILLS

The shadow tiger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are the class features of the shadow tiger prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A shadow tiger is not proficient with any armor or shields, and is proficient with the same weapons as a monk (club, crossbow (light or heavy), dagger, handaxe, javelin, kama, nunchaku, quarterstaff, shuriken, siangham, and sling). Shadow tigers cannot use their special abilities, unarmed attacks, unarmed damage, AC bonus, or unarmored speed while wearing armor heavier than leather armor.

Monk Abilities: Beginning at 1st level, the shadow tiger advances the unarmed damage, AC bonus, and unarmored speed monk abilities as if he had gained a level in monk. In effect, his monk levels and shadow tiger levels stack when determining these three abilities.

Hook Thumb: The shadow tiger initiate must have both of the bones in each thumb broken, repositioned, and allowed to grow back as a hooked claw. His thumb is now immobile, imposing a -2 penalty to all Climb and Tumble checks, and a -4 penalty to all attack rolls with weapons. His unarmed strikes do not suffer this penalty. This brutal initiation rarely dissuades those with their minds set on becoming shadow tigers.

Sliding Shadows: Some that have watched a shadow tiger in combat swear that these fighters can dance through the shadows, appearing at various places around the battlefield, seemingly without moving. Beginning at 1st level, a shadow tiger learns to step into shadows, allowing him to move through space instantaneously as if he were teleporting. He can move up to the distance shown as a move equivalent

action, bypassing any barriers as if they did not exist. Thus, a character hiding behind a boulder could shadow slide to the other side of the boulder to avoid searching foes. Moving in this way never provokes attacks of opportunity, and it cannot be performed in or through areas lit by the equivalent of full sunlight.

Claws of the Tiger: Upon reaching 2nd level, the shadow tiger's hands grow sharp claws, granting a +2 damage bonus to his unarmed strikes. In addition, the shadow tiger learns to strike incorporeal opponents as effectively as normal creatures. For up to one round per point of Wisdom bonus per day, the shadow tiger's unarmed strikes act as if they have the *ghost touch* ability.

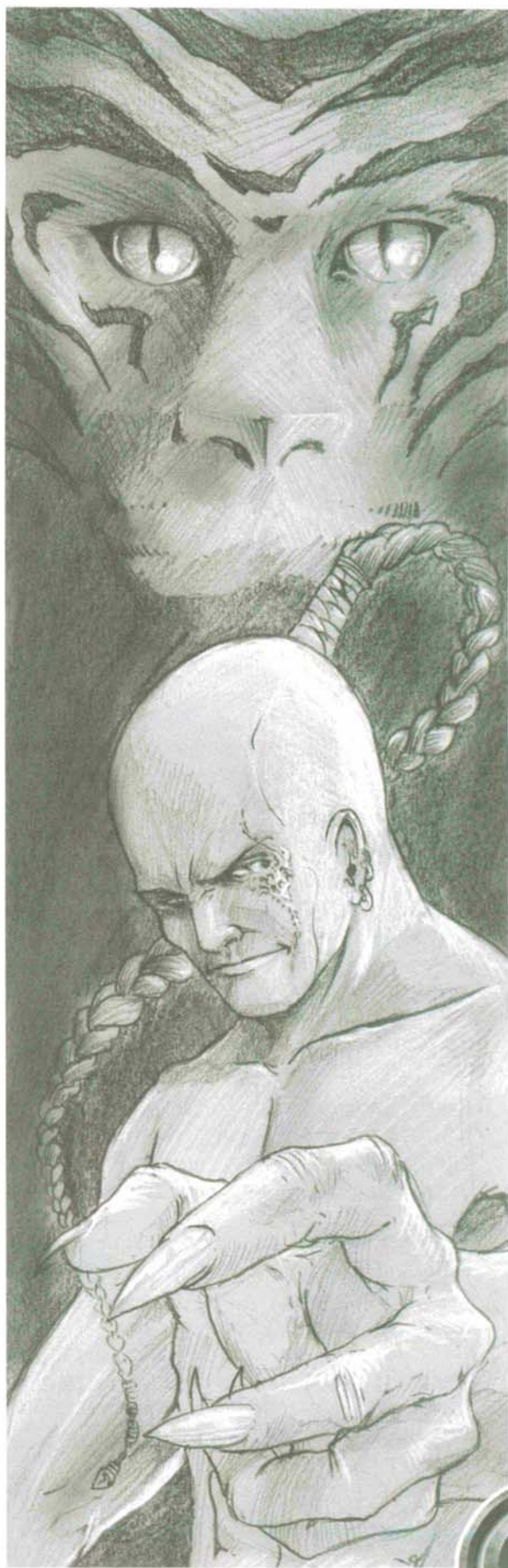
Shadow Companion: Upon reaching 3rd level, the shadow tiger gains the ability to call a shadow companion. This companion is a tiger from the plane of shadow that follows the character and obeys his commands, given via a telepathic link between the companion and the character. If the shadow companion is killed, the character may not call another for a year and a day. See the accompanying sidebar for details on the shadow companion.

Tiger's Leap: Once per combat, the shadow tiger can make a full attack even if he has already taken a move action.

Tiger's Form: At 6th level, the shadow tiger gains the ability to transform into a tiger once per day. This ability works exactly like the druid's *wild shape* ability except that the shadow tiger can only choose to transform into a tiger. The shadow tiger can keep this form for up to one hour before transforming back to his natural form. See the core rules (MM 203) for the tiger's stats.

Tiger's Hunger: At 8th level, the shadow tiger learns a ferocious attack form designed to quickly down a single opponent. Any time the shadow tiger hits with a stunning attack (regardless of whether or not the opponent makes his save) he can immediately start a grapple as a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Killing Strike: At 9th level, the shadow tiger gains access to the most guarded secret of the shadow tiger clan. He uses his hook thumbs to rip out vital organs of an opponent, causing



serious damage and most likely death. Once per day, the character can attempt a killing strike against a Medium-size or Small opponent as a full attack action or as the result of a grapple check. Any creature hit by the attack must make a Fortitude save (DC 18) or take 1 point of Constitution damage per round until he dies or receives either a *heal*, *mass heal*, or *regenerate* spell. Creatures that are immune to critical hits cannot be the target of a killing strike.

SHADOW COMPANION

	Shadow Tiger Medium-size Outsider
Hit Dice:	5d8+10 (33 hp)
Initiative:	+4 (Dex)
Speed:	40 ft., climb 20 ft.
AC:	18 (+4 Dex, +5 natural)
Attacks:	Bite +9 melee, 2 claws +4 melee
Damage:	Bite 1d6+3; claw 1d3+1
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d3+1
Special Qualities:	Blindsight 30 ft., shadow phasing
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +5
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills:	Balance +12, Climb +11, Hide +13*, Listen +6, Move Silently +13, Spot +9
Feats:	Weapon Finesse (bite, claw)
Climate/Terrain:	Any
Organization:	Solitary or pack (5–10)
Challenge Rating:	4
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	6–8 HD (Medium-size)

The shadow tiger is a denizen of the plane of shadow, little more than a faded image of the same creature on the prime. The shadow tiger is comfortable on the prime, but it avoids areas of bright light, often seeking underground shelter during the day. It can only function in areas of shadow, and so for the four brightest hours of each day it cannot be found in the open.

COMBAT

Pounce (Ex): If a shadow tiger leaps upon a

foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the shadow tiger must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can rake.

Rake (Ex): A shadow tiger that gets a hold can make two rake attacks (+6 melee) with its hind legs for 1d3+1 damage each. If the shadow tiger pounces on an opponent, it can also rake.

Shadow Phasing (Ex): The shadow tiger is in a constant flux between the prime and his native plane of shadow. This gives the creature the equivalent of one-half concealment against all attacks. This ability is temporarily negated if the shadow tiger is grappling with a foe.

Skills: Shadow tigers receive a +4 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus to Balance checks. *In areas of shadow or darkness, the Hide bonus improves to +8.

ORGANIZATION:

SHADOW TIGERS

PURPOSE

The Shadow Tigers exist to explore the Plane of Shadow and understand how and why it – and the creatures that dwell within it – grows more powerful with each passing year.

LEADER

Renvat Mhar (LN human female Mnk8/Sht10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The Material Plane that most beings call home is not the center of the multiverse. It would be more accurate to say that it is at a planar crossroads, which is why it is a frequent stopover point for outsiders traveling to other realms of existence. Yet, there are also realms that bear a more significant connection to the Material Plane. One of the most important of these is the Plane of Shadow, a whirling nexus of darkness and evil power. More so than most planes, the Plane of Shadow is strongly connected to the Material Plane and its dark inhabitants move freely between the worlds. For the last several centuries, shadow creatures have become

increasingly common, leading some sages to suggest that something unpleasant is afoot.

Of course, recognizing something and taking action against it are two very different things. While most scholars simply nodded their heads sagely upon discovering this phenomenon, Zhorsi Mhar did not. Instead, he investigated the matter further. He delved deeper into tomes of forgotten lore and sought answers in ancient wisdom. He even conversed with outsiders – fiendish and celestial alike – to discover just what was happening. In the end, his worst fears were confirmed: the Plane of Shadow was growing.

Under the direction of inhuman beings known only as the Shadow Lords, the Plane of Shadow is invading the Material Plane, slowly swallowing it and, in the process, strengthening the dark creatures that dwell within it. In the course of a millennium (the blink of an eye to the Shadow Lords), the Material Plane's very existence may be at stake.

Rather than do nothing, Mhar distilled the wisdom he had learned into a regimen of self-discipline and inner growth, designed to steel the body and soul against the ravages of shadow. Taking inspiration from the deadly shadow tigers (one of many such dark reflections of the Material Plane he encountered) whose ferocity knows no bounds, Mhar decided to devote himself and his descendants to the defeat of the Shadow Lords. In doing so, he founded the Shadow Tiger clan, whose members continue Mhar's work to this very day.

Though not all members of the clan are direct descendants of Zhorsi Mhar, all share in his devotion to defeating the Shadow Lords. Through a combination of meditation, exercise, and a unique alchemical process that involves ingesting small portions of the very stuff of the Plane of Shadow, Shadow Tigers hone themselves into living weapons. Their skills work equally well against material creatures as against shadows, but they prefer to fight the dark creatures that plot the destruction of reality itself.

Shadow Tigers can be found in both the Material Plane and the Plane of Shadow. In either locale, they do battle with the Shadow Lords' minions. The higher-level Tigers, who in some ways exemplify the clan, prefer to spend most of their time on the Plane of



Shadow – a testament to their tenacity and devotion. Shadow Tigers operate wherever the Plane of Shadow has impinged upon the Material Plane and will cooperate with any that oppose the Shadow Lords, regardless of their reasons for doing so. They will occasionally take on more mundane foes for specific purposes, but their stock in trade remains narrowly focused, which is why most adventurers have rarely heard of, let alone encountered, a member of the Shadow Tiger clan.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

The Shadow Tigers are very narrowly focused, making them difficult to incorporate into campaigns that do not deal extensively with the Plane of Shadow or its minions. Even in campaigns where the plane does become involved, it is probably best to restrict this clan to NPCs. Player characters who are members of the clan will devote themselves fully to its goal, which makes it difficult for non-members, who must necessarily follow the same path or be left behind.

However, in a game where the Plane of Shadow does figure prominently or where the Shadow Lords are an important enemy, the clan makes for a great addi-

tion. Either as allies or as patrons, the Shadow Tigers will prove useful. They might even become antagonists, if the clan decides to accept the aid of evil forces for the sake of achieving their own goals. Because the clan is largely unconcerned with matters of good and evil as such (though they are inclined toward good), they sometimes allow themselves to be swept away by their zeal, with disastrous results.

TRIBAL PROTECTOR

Chezin Berall, tribal protector of the clan Berall, stands quietly on the snow covered plains of his tribe's land. He can hear them coming.

Giants.

Not ordinary giants mind you, but frost giants led by the warlord Grigden Frostbane. He is leading his band of marauders to the Berall tribal lands for pillage and destruction.

Only Chezin stands in their way. This is the young barbarian's destiny; it is in his blood. He knows that this moment will define his legacy and honor within the tribes. Will he honor the elder spirits? Or will he bring shame to his tribal lands. It is his destiny. He is the tribal protector.

The tribal protector is a path chosen by few barbarians, but it is a life filled with personal honor and prestige. The bonuses gained as the tribal protector advances helps him in his defense of the tribal lands, while the special abilities granted by the tribe's elder spirits propel the tribal protector further forward on his path to a greater destiny. Feared by his enemy and respected by his tribe, the tribal protector is the living embodiment of barbarian spirituality and honor.

Hit Die: d12.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a tribal protector, a character must fulfill the following requirements.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Alignment: Any non-lawful.

Skills: Intimidate 5 ranks, Wilderness Lore 8 ranks.

Feats: Great Fortitude.

Special: A tribe must choose the character's elders as a tribal protector and have the rage ability.

CLASS SKILLS

The tribal protector's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the tribal protector prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A tribal protector is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, medium armor, and shields.

Ancestral Rage: Beginning at 1st level, the tribal protector advances his rage ability as if he had gained a level in barbarian. In effect, his barbarian levels and tribal protector levels stack when determining rage effects.

Nature's Blood: At 2nd level, the tribal protector gains a natural energy resistance of 5 to an energy type of his choice (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). At 4th level, the tribal protector may choose a second energy type or add an additional 5 to his existing resistance type (raising the resistance to 10). Finally, at 8th level the tribal protector may choose an additional energy type or add a final 5 to his chosen resistance (raising his total resistance to that energy type to 15). This is an extraordinary ability.

Gift of the Elder Spirits: In time, the tribal protector gains the attention of his tribe's elder spirits. At 3rd level, the tribal protector may choose one of the abilities listed below. The tribal protector may choose another ability at 6th level and a final gift at 9th level. He may choose the same ability multiple times.

- +1 bonus to all saving throws
- +8 hit points
- +1 bonus to all melee attacks
- +10 competence bonus to any skill in the tribal protector's list.*
- 1st-level spell-like ability three times per

TRIBAL PROTECTOR

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Ancestral rage
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Nature's blood
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Gift of the elder spirits
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Leadership
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Nature's blood
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Gift of the elder spirits
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	One with the land
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Nature's blood
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Gift of the elder spirits
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Embodiment of the elder spirits

day (chosen from the ranger or druid spell lists).**

* If selected multiple times, each bonus must apply to a different skill.

** If selected multiple times, a different spell must be chosen with each gift.

One with the Land: As his body becomes filled with the power of the elder spirits, the tribal protector soon shares a bond with his tribal lands. At 7th level, the tribal protector no is longer required to eat or drink for sustenance within a 20-mile radius of his tribal lands. The tribal protector also gains a +4 bonus to Wilderness Lore and Intuit Direction skill checks while within his tribe's lands. This is an extraordinary ability.

Embodiment of the Elder Spirits: While protecting the tribe in the name of the elder spirits, the tribal protector is being groomed to join the ranks of the tribe's greatest protectors. At 10th level, the tribal protector is infused with the power of the elder spirits, changing his type from humanoid to outsider. The tribal protector gains damage reduction 10/+1 and the following spell-like abilities: 1/day: *augury*; 1/week: *divination*; 1/month: *commune*.

ORGANIZATION:

SWORD CHILDREN

PURPOSE

As foremost among the servants of the Sword Spirits, the Sword Children exist for one reason alone: to preserve and protect the people and lands of the Shakeeb tribe.

LEADER

Sharath (CG human female Bar7/Tpr10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

More civilized nations may make a distinction between gods and mortals, but the Shakeeb people know better. They understand that the universe is a great continuum, with each step on that path differing only in degree, not kind. What the elder spirits are now, mortals may one day become. Thus, the Shakeeb are not swayed by the sophisticated arguments of outsiders, who scoff at the notion that everything in creation is made from the same eternal spirit-stuff. They dismiss such notions as the products of lazy minds and dulled senses that fail to heed the truth that hides in plain sight.

Thus, the Shakeeb do not doubt for a moment that their tribe's most ardent defenders, the Sword Children, in fact possess shards of the Sword Spirits within them. When these spirits forged the first weapons and gave them to mortals, the sparks from their

otherworldly forge fell to the earth and took on mortal semblance, becoming the first Sword Children. These powerful warriors are therefore intimately linked to the spirits whom they serve and whose constant presence guides them toward the realization of their full potential – as spirits themselves.

Sword Children form a tightly knit brotherhood of barbarian fighters who have dedicated themselves to guarding the lands of the Shakeeb tribe from all manner of foes. Most of the time, they do battle against evil humanoids and other more deadly opponents (such as the troglodytes and their yuan-ti masters). They seek also to appease the Sword Spirits and ensure their continued protection of the tribe. To that end, they train youths in the ways of war and respect for the tribal lands granted to them by the spirits. The Sword Children believe that the failure to do either may result in dire consequences for the Shakeeb. They are thus tribal protectors in more than the martial sense.

Induction into the Sword Children usually occurs late in life, well after a tribe member is recognized as an adult. Existing members of

the brotherhood offer membership to promising warriors who have shown a combination of warrior spirit and mystical connection to the land. The Sword Children teach their ways to any who accept. There is no expectation that anyone will accept the offer, but few refuse as the Shakeeb believe the Sword Children speak for the Sword Spirits. Their word is thus highly regarded and not contradicted without good reason.

On rare occasions, a foreign warrior may be accepted into the Sword Children. The Shakeeb believe that the spirits guide all mortals, even those who fail to hear their call. When someone from outside the tribe aids it in a significant way, the Shakeeb see this as a sign that the elder spirits have guided his actions. An offer of membership in the brotherhood is not automatic, even in this case, but it is one of the only ways a non-Shakeeb might become one of its sworn protectors. Foreigners who take up the call of the Sword Spirits can expect a difficult life, including rejection by their former friends who may not understand their newfound dedication to the well being of a barbarian tribe.



CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

Unless the campaign is centered on a barbarian culture, the Sword Children work best as either allies or antagonists. Their single-minded devotion to the safety of the Shakeeb and their tribal lands makes them unsuitable as characters in a game that takes the characters to many different lands. Many of their special abilities do not function outside of Shakeeb lands and, more importantly, they are the chosen of the Sword Spirits. Wandering about the world in search of glory and gold is largely incompatible with this vocation. It is possible that, in exceptional circumstances, a Sword Child might leave Shakeeb lands on a quest of importance for the tribe. In fact, the appearance of an NPC tribal protector away from his homeland makes an excellent adventure hook for DMs looking to draw the player characters to a remote locale for a series of scenarios. Even so, this is the exception rather than the rule and DMs should bear in mind the Sword Children's intimate connection to their tribal lands before using them in their games.

In a barbarian-centered campaign, the Sword Children are much more appropriate and easily used. Their respected position and heroic exploits make them an excellent group to use as patrons or allies. They also represent a goal toward which barbarian characters might wish to aspire. Membership in the brotherhood is an acknowledgement of skill at arms and honor within the Shakeeb tribe. Consequently, joining the group should be more than a matter of simply meeting its entrance requirements. It should be a reward earned through much hardship and effort. It is recognition that a particular character has achieved much and that the elder spirits smile upon his efforts.

Finally, the Sword Children could easily serve as opponents in games that center around the war between civilized and barbarian nations. The brotherhood exists to defend the Shakeeb against all opponents, including other nations. Though good aligned, they do not necessarily look kindly on the efforts of outsiders to encroach upon their lands in the name of civilization. The Shakeeb have their own traditions and culture, which they believe to be every bit as important as those of other nations. The Sword Children will thus use their gifts to fight against anything that might threaten those traditions. In campaigns like this, the focus quickly becomes a clash of civilizations and the right

of one culture to foist its values on another. This style of story is not appropriate to all campaigns, but it does offer a unique alternative to dungeon delving and monster bashing. A variation on this might involve the characters coming to the Shakeeb as outsiders and eventually sympathizing with their position, culminating in a conversion to the ways of the supposed barbarians.

LEGENDARY CLASSES

So you stole the Kingston diamond, passed the guild's tests, and became a master thief. Or perhaps you've mastered the whirling blades and won a handsome fee in the arena. Maybe you are a wizard who mastered the elements and learned to carry the stuff of fire within your very body. What is left for men and women such as you, who have conquered every challenge, solved every puzzle, and defeated every enemy?

There is one challenge left: to become a legend.

Legendary classes present high-level options for characters on the verge of greatness, whose names will be scribed eternally and against whose deeds each man shall measure his own. Although similar in concept and appearance to prestige classes, they represent far more. They describe the pinnacle of a profession or culture, the kind of opportunity that only appears once in a generation. Someone who decides to walk the path of a legendary class may be fulfilling his people's oldest myth, or a society's greatest fear. It is never an easy path, nor one many would choose. Those who do take up the mantle award themselves great power as well as great danger, and only the boldest are able to fulfill their destiny.

CLASS MECHANICS

Legendary classes have all the same progressions as normal classes: base attack bonus, saving throws, and special abilities. They also have unique class skill packages and proficiencies. Like a prestige class, there are prerequisites that must be fulfilled before the first legendary class level may be selected. Some of these are left open for the DM's

discretion, so that he can customize them to his home campaign. This allows the DM to include feats from official sources that have not been released as **Open Game Content**.

THE PREPARATION

A character must announce his intention to take a legendary class well in advance of ever taking a level in it. In game terms, this represents the character trying to catch the attention of a deity or powerful extra-planar being, applying for a position within an organization, or channeling the spirits of his ancestors. Two levels before the character takes his first legendary class level, he must announce his commitment. This means that if Dran decides to channel the spirit of his great teacher in order to become The Dragon at 13th level, he must announce his intention no later than the point at which he reaches 11th level. Once the character has announced the level at which he will become a legend, there is no turning back.

Each legendary class has among its prerequisites a list of quests, each of which must be fulfilled in between the time of commitment and the acquisition of the first level of the class. The character may not complete them before he announces his intentions. Once each quest has been fulfilled and all other prerequisites are met, the character may take a legendary class level.

Legends wait for no man. If some or all of the quests go unfulfilled, the character may not advance in level until they are. All excess experience gained in the meantime is lost. This means that in the above example, if Dran reached 77,999 experience points without defeating enough challengers, he would gain no more experience until he had done so. The character need not meet all the prerequisites of the class upon announcing his intentions, but he must meet them before taking the first legendary class level. If he does not, the same penalty described above applies.

THE POWER

Legendary characters have access to powers and abilities beyond the reach of those who have chosen ordinary lives and less impressive legacies. They also wield greater control over the development of their powers than other characters, having choices to make as they

rise in level and power. Even though two characters march down the same path, each may end up quite differently depending on these choices.

For each legendary class level gained, the character may choose one special ability from those listed. The power and scope of this ability are determined at that time and do not increase as the character goes up in levels. This is known as the ability's power level. No power may be chosen more than once. This always means a sacrifice for the character, but sometimes the rewards of patience are worth the wait.

EXAMPLE POWERS OF A 5TH-LEVEL DRAGON

Blood of the Dragon I: The character's unarmed attacks are now considered to have a +1 enhancement bonus.

Thunder Strike II: The character adds a +2 bonus to his stunning attack DC, and the stunning effect now lasts two additional rounds.

Mind of the Dragon III: The character gains a +3 legendary bonus to Wisdom.

Stillness of Water IV: The character gains a +4 legendary bonus to AC.

Speed of the Dragon V: The character gains a +5 legendary bonus to Dexterity.

THE PRICE

Once a character has begun to walk the path of a legend, he may not turn back even if his faith is shattered or his kingdom lost. The forces acting upon him are great, and he cannot resist the tidal wave of fate he has chosen to ride. Once a character chooses to take a legendary class level, he may not choose any other classes until the legendary class has been completed. Although this may seem restrictive, it is a small price to pay for the power and prestige afforded a legend.

ADAMANTINE WARRIOR

Fighters face death regularly; it lies in the blades of every opponent and the maw of every beast they face. Renowned fighters gain fame by cheating death, dancing the thin line between living and dying, and returning triumphant where lesser men would have fallen.

But sometimes there is a warrior who goes beyond the line; one who looks death in the face and forces it to back down. This is a warrior who cheats death daily and has managed to live against all odds, against all fate; a champion who regularly emerges victorious from situations in which no one could possibly have survived. This warrior is unstoppable.

Among barbarian tribes, he is known as the Adamantine Warrior and is said to come once every hundred years to cleanse the taint of the humanoid hordes from the lands. He often becomes the leader of a great war host, leading screaming masses of tribesmen against opponents a hundred times their number.

The Adamantine Warrior is a raging machine of death on the battlefield. He soaks up inhuman amounts of damage and continues to fight, butchering opponents in a bloodbath of frenzied slaughter. Even mortal wounds cannot slow him as he fights beyond hope and beyond death. Spells fail against his might and swords shatter against his skin.

Legends passed from generation to generation tell of the Warrior's words spurring the rage within his comrades, urging them to an untold fury. It is said that each Warrior swears a vow to wipe every last orc and goblin from the face of the land. For some warriors the campaign of blood lasts for years, until the humanoids flee at the sight of his axe and sound of his horn, and for some it lasts only days. For all it ends with a final battle against odds too great for even the Adamantine Warrior, and death finally finds him on a mountain of fallen foes.

Hit Die: d12.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an adamantine warrior, a character must fulfill the following requirements.

Base Attack Bonus: +12.

Constitution: 16+.

Feats: Cleave, Leadership, Toughness, any one feat of the DM's choice.

Special: The character must be able to rage and must never have died (if the character has ever been the target of a *raise dead*, *reincarnation*, *resurrection*, or *true resurrection* spell he is disqualified).



THE ADAMANTINE WARRIOR

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Adamantine Warrior Ability
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Adamantine Warrior Ability
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Adamantine Warrior Ability
4th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Adamantine Warrior Ability
5th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Adamantine Warrior Ability

QUESTS

- When a skilled fighter of the barbarian tribes believes he is destined to be the next Adamantine Warrior he must venture into humanoid lands and there challenge an army. He may bring with him what weapons he chooses and any friends foolish enough to stand with him, but his party may number no more than 10, and the only magic he may make use of is that magic which enhances his own abilities. The strength of the gods and the strength of his axe must slaughter his enemies, not the arcane workings of magic. The warrior's party must be outnumbered at least twenty-to-one, and he may not retreat for more than a day to rest.
- Upon returning successfully with the head of the humanoid war chief, the tribe elders will admit that he may be the next coming of the Adamantine Warrior. They then begin to test him. The period of testing usually lasts a full month and consists of endless ordeals to confirm the strength and resilience of the warrior. Examples of tests include: having him chop trees for 24 hours without food, sleep, or rest; having every member of the tribe take their best swing at the warrior to see if he still stands; having the warrior stand in front of a fire or pit (or even a cliff) while the four strongest men try to push him back; forcing the warrior to pull the elders (and often children) on sledges across miles of wilderness. If at the end of his ordeals the candidate has withstood everything the elders could dream up to throw against him, he is announced to be the Adamantine Warrior in a celebration that lasts for days, after which the tribe prepares for the inevitable war that an Adamantine Warrior brings.

NOTES

If a character dies and is raised after he has announced that he's going to try to become an Adamantine Warrior, he can no longer become the Warrior, but may then progress in other class levels, destined to never become a legend.

If an Adamantine Warrior is killed, only a *wish* spell followed by a *true resurrection* may bring him back to life.

CLASS SKILLS

The adamantine warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the adamantine warrior legendary class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: An adamantine warrior is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, medium armor, and shields.

ADAMANTINE WARRIOR ABILITIES

Unrelenting: Tireless and unrelenting, the adamantine warrior gains a +1 legendary bonus to Constitution per power level.

Adamantine Attack: The adamantine warrior can double his base strength for one round per power level per day. He must declare he is using this ability before the attack is made, and both attack and damage rolls benefit from the

increased strength. This is an extraordinary ability.

Cheat Death: When death comes to claim the warrior, he forces it to back down and leave him alive. Once per power level an attack that would normally kill the warrior fails to deal any damage. This works against any effect, be it physical damage, a death spell, or any other means of killing the warrior. Adamantine warriors hold this ability sacred, for once it has been used it never returns.

War Chant: As blood fills the battlefield, the adamantine warrior's song of death lifts to urge his tribesmen on, fueling their rage. Once per day as a free action the adamantine warrior can raise his voice in a war chant, increasing the rage duration of all allies (himself included) by two rounds per power level. He must chant continually, for once he stops for any reason the ability ends, though very little can interrupt the war cry of the warrior in the heat of rage.

Sorcery Overpower: The adamantine warrior shrugs off magical attacks as well as physical. He may ignore up to three spell levels per power level per day. The spell is not dispelled or negated, but simply has no effect on the warrior. He may choose to use this ability after a saving throw has been failed, but before damage is rolled. This is a supernatural ability.

Life of Rage: When the bloodlust is upon him the adamantine warrior's rage sustains him, not only allowing him to ignore wounds, but to actually repair them. The warrior gains the fast healing ability, allowing him to heal one hit point per power level per round while raging. This is an extraordinary ability.

Granite Body: Once per power level per day the Warrior may declare a successful attack against him to have a chance of shattering the weapon that struck him. This ability may only be used after a successful strike that deals damage, but must be announced before damage is rolled. The weapon must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 2 per power level); failure means the weapon still deals damage, but then shatters against the warrior and is destroyed. Magical weapons add their enchantment bonus to their save. Only weapons may be shattered, and this ability does not work on natural weapons (claws, bites, and so on), unarmed strikes, touch attacks, and ranged touch attacks. This is

a supernatural ability.

Unstoppable: The adamantine warrior fights to the brink of death and beyond. There is no longer such a thing as unconscious to the warrior—he fights until he is dead. When raging, the adamantine warrior continues to fight to an extra -10 hit points per power level. Thus if he takes this ability at power level two, he gains the ability to fight to an additional -20 hit points, so he does not drop until he reaches -30. If the warrior falls out of rage while at -10 hit points or lower, death claims him as usual. This is an extraordinary ability.

BLACK KNIGHT

The fallen defender of a noble king brought back to health by a murderous overlord. An expatriate intent on bringing his old domain to its knees for disobeying his wishes and desires. A cruel and merciless general whose lust for power is only overshadowed by his lust for blood.

The black knight of legend has many faces, but each is terrifying and evil to the core. He rides his demonic steed across the deadliest battlefields, spreading destruction and terror across the lands of his lord. This dark general answers to only his lord, and any who disobey his slightest whim are quickly and brutally destroyed. Often these bloody examples are enough to keep even remote populations in line, lest the wrath of the black knight be called down upon their homes.

Black knight characters must pledge themselves to their lord, whether a tyrannical king or upstart warlord who will soon attempt to carve out a kingdom from the surrounding lands. They often travel in search of powerful magic with which to aid their lord or to find suitable territory to conquer. Whatever a black knight's ultimate goal, he brings death and destruction with each fall of his evil steed's hoof.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a black knight, a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

Alignment: Lawful evil.

Skills: Handle Animal 12 ranks, Intimidate 7 ranks, Ride 15 ranks.



Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Great Cleave, Trample, any one feat of the DM's choice.

Special: The character must pledge himself to the service of an evil warlord, becoming the warlord's cohort. He must also own and wear a suit of magical full plate mail.

QUESTS

- The character must track down a nightmare and somehow convince it to be his steed, whether by force or persuasion. The nightmare becomes his companion and ally, but still has its own intelligence, motives, and goals. The nightmare may trade its service in return for some deed from the black knight, which then becomes an additional requirement to fulfill.
- The black knight character must single-handedly deliver an entire village to his lord, most often by intimidating its citizens into servitude or by cutting down the town's defenders one by one until the townsfolk agree to peace. The black knight is responsible for keeping the village firmly under his master's control from that point on, and if he fails to do this some of his abilities may become unavailable (most notably his ability to summon conscripts) at the DM's discretion.

CLASS SKILLS

The black knight's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), and Ride (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the black knight legendary class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: A black knight is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all armor, and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

BLACK KNIGHT

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Black Knight Ability
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Black Knight Ability
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Black Knight Ability
4th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Black Knight Ability
5th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Black Knight Ability

BLACK KNIGHT ABILITIES

Enhanced Strength: The character gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Strength per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Enhanced Charisma: The character gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Charisma per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Aura of Domination: Once per day per power level, the black knight can invoke an aura of fear that emanates up to a 10-ft. radius per power level. All those within the radius must make a Will save (DC 20 + black knight's Charisma modifier) or be considered panicked (DMG 85). Those who make their Will save are still shaken until they leave the area of effect. Each time the black knight invokes this ability, the aura of domination lasts for one minute per power level.

Summon Conscripts: Given one day, the black knight can summon a band of conscripts from his master's lands. These conscripts number 10 per power level and each is a 1st-level warrior. 10% of the conscripts will be leaders with one fighter level per power level. So, at power level three, the black knight could summon 30 conscripts, 27 of whom would be 1st-level warriors and three of whom would be 3rd-level fighters. These conscripts will serve the black knight in any capacity for up to one day per power level before returning to their homes. The black knight can only summon conscripts once per week.

Supernatural Resilience: The black knight gains damage reduction 1/- per power level.

Battle Frenzy: Once per day, the black knight can enter a frenzy in battle. The frenzy lasts for one round per power level and gives the black knight +1 to attack and damage rolls per power

level. The black knight also gains an additional attack at his highest base attack bonus.

Murderous Cleave: The black knight can move 5 ft. every time he uses the Great Cleave feat. He may do this once per power level per round. Thus, if he strikes down four foes in a round using Great Cleave, he can take up to three 5-ft. movements, one in between each strike. This movement does not provoke an attack of opportunity, nor does it count toward his movement for the round.

DEMONIC SERVANT

Those who live and serve in the Abyss are forever attempting to corrupt mortals on the prime. Their foul masters thrive on the souls and deeds of such weak-willed men. Although most legends feature a spellcaster who deals his soul for undreamed of power, demons know better than to only target mortals who have the power to destroy or banish them.

Every once in a while these mundane servants prove so useful to their nether lords that the demons cannot afford to see them fall. The mortal attracts more and more followers to the cause of the demon, and his charismatic leadership persuades them to wreak terrible havoc in the name of the demon. Often it is only the ascension of the demon to a more powerful position that causes it to lose interest in such followers. Rather than leaving them be, however, the demon often appears one last time to bestow the final reward on his long-time assistant in the mortal realm.

Hit Die: d12.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a demonic servant,



a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

Skills: Intimidate 15 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 4 ranks.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Leadership, any one feat of the DM's choice.

Special: Ability to rage. Character must have followers gathered through the Leadership feat, but he must dismiss any cohorts he may have gained. The character must sacrifice 1d8 permanent hit points to create the lifebond between him and his master.

QUESTS

- The character must undergo a ceremony that attracts the attentions of a demon of at least 15 HD. Often a demon will slowly poison a character's thoughts until he is ready to accept the ceremony, at which time the demon sends one of his minions to perform the rites. Otherwise, the character must seek out someone who knows the rite and convince him to perform it, through physical or some other means of persuasion.
- The character must sacrifice at least 10 victims of opposite alignment, each of whom must be captured by the hopeful himself. Once these sacrifices have been carried out, the demon will be assured of the character's willingness to serve and may take him under his wing.

CLASS SKILLS

The demonic servant's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the demonic servant legendary class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: A demonic servant is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor, and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5

DEMONIC SERVANT

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Demonic Servant Ability
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Demonic Servant Ability
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Demonic Servant Ability
4th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Demonic Servant Ability
5th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Demonic Servant Ability

pounds of armor and equipment carried.

DEMONIC SERVANT ABILITIES

Enhanced Constitution: The character gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Constitution per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Enhanced Charisma: The character gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Charisma per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Summon Ally: The demonic servant gains the ability to summon a demonic ally from time to time. Unlike a normal summoning, this ally does not demand anything for payment, having been instructed by the character's dark lord to serve him no matter the task. The summoned ally will aid the character in one task that may not take any more time than one hour per power level. At the expiration of this limit, the summoned ally goes away until called again. The specific ally and the frequency with which it can be summoned are determined by the power level at which this ability is selected, as shown in the following chart:

Power Level	Ally	Frequency
1	Quasit	3/day
2	Succubus	1/day
3	Bebilith	3/week
4	Retriever	3/week
5	Vrock	2/week

Possessed Rage: Through the forging of the bond between the character and his demonic master, the character begins to take on characteristics of the denizens of the Abyss. This manifests itself every time the character rages and has the following effects.

- The character gains immunity to poison.
- The character gains 5 points of cold, fire,

and acid resistance per power level.

- The character gains a +1 natural armor bonus to AC per power level.
- The character takes on the visage of a demon, granting him a +1 bonus per power level to Intimidate checks.

Blood Sacrifice: For each person the demonic servant sacrifices in a single day, up to a number equal to the power level at which this ability is chosen, he gains 1d8 temporary hit points that go away after 24 hours.

Smite Good: Once per day per power level the demonic servant can strike any good being with unholy fury. This attack gains a +2 bonus to the attack and damage roll per power level.

Lure of the Abyss: The demonic servant gains a +1 bonus to his Leadership score per power level, but can only attract evil followers.

THE DRAGON

In the secluded temples atop lonely mountains, disciples of the body study to perfect themselves through strenuous physical and mental training. They teach their bodies to assume the strength of stone and the speed of lightning, their minds to contain the stillness and threat of a waiting avalanche, their spirit to be as indomitable as the mountains on which they train. In the evenings, the old monks tell their pupils the legends of the Dragons, mighty masters of ancient times whose deeds and philosophies defined and inspired warriors for ages.

The Dragon is a warrior who has mastered his body and has become in every way a weapon himself. In battle he is has a preternatural awareness of his enemies, sensing attacks before they have begun. His movements are fluid and graceful; at the last possible

THE DRAGON

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+2	Dragon Ability
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Dragon Ability
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+3	Dragon Ability
4th	+4	+4	+4	+4	Dragon Ability
5th	+5	+4	+4	+4	Dragon Ability

moment he seems never to be where an opponent is striking. When he concentrates his energy into himself he is like the wind; utterly impossible to hit. When he focuses outward he is like a storm, raining fists and elbows in a flurry of attacks that can render an opponent senseless for the duration of the fight, or even channel his power into great blows that extend beyond the range of his fists to strike like thunder.

The Dragon is the perfection of self, the victory of mind over body. Such legendary personalities are commonly founders of monastic orders, attempting to impart the wisdom of what they have learned to their students, and often embark on great quests to discover ancient knowledge or defeat mighty beasts. Some legends say the Dragon is so called because the blood of true dragons runs through his veins, pushing him beyond the limitations of his mortal body. The story of the Dragon appears in the legends of many different monastic orders, and at different points throughout history. Rarely is more than one warrior considered the Dragon in a century, and only one recorded account has ever claimed that there were two warriors of such a level of skill at the same time.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become the dragon, a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

Alignment: Any lawful.

Skills: Balance 10 ranks, Jump 10 ranks, Tumble 15 ranks.

Feats: Improved Evasion, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse (unarmed), any one feat of the DM's choice.

QUESTS

- When a monk feels the pull of his destiny, the legends of his ability have already begun. Other warriors seek him out to test their skill against his, or to crush **one they** see as an unworthy upstart. Once a character has announced that he will attempt to achieve the dragon legendary class, he begins to be challenged by other warriors. The character must accept all challenges and must defeat 20 opponents in a row without losing a fight. If the character is ever defeated, his count is considered zero and he must defeat another 20 opponents. Very likely, the opponent who defeated the character will loudly proclaim that he is no Dragon come again to the world, shattering his reputation.

The character gains no experience from these challenges and may not challenge others or count any other sort of combat toward his total; only when another directly challenges the character will word of his legend spread. If the character has any kind of aid from companions during the fight it does not count towards his total; the challenges are against him alone. Challengers will not always come when the character is at full health. Challengers may be obviously weaker than the character, or obviously stronger; most will be monks, but some may be multi-classed or just fighters and barbarians who wish to see for themselves how tough this legend could be. Sometimes the challenges will be spread out and announced days in advance, sometimes they will come one after the other. Often entire groups will challenge the character at the same time. To become the Dragon, the character must accept and defeat them all.

- Once the twentieth challenge is won, the character need no longer accept all comers; his reputation is secure. He must then journey to a secluded place and meditate on what he has learned and what he wishes to become. Common retreats are mountain peaks and desolate islands, where the character will be uninterrupted as he attunes himself with the world around him. His meditations last for a full month, during which time he studies the movements of the water and the wind, of the mountains and the trees.

CLASS SKILLS

The dragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the dragon legendary class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: The dragon is proficient with all simple weapons. The dragon is not proficient with any armor or shields.

DRAGON ABILITIES

Mind of the Dragon: The rigorous physical and mental training has elevated the dragon's instinctive abilities. The dragon gains a +1 legendary bonus to Wisdom per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Speed of the Dragon: The dragon is capable of near inhuman feats of agility and swiftness. He strikes with speed and accuracy, and attackers find him nearly impossible to hit. The dragon gains a +1 legendary bonus to Dexterity per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Stillness of Water: Years of training and ceaselessly testing his skills has left the dragon prepared for attacks at any time. The dragon gains a +1 legendary bonus to AC per power level. This bonus stacks with all other AC bonuses, and the dragon keeps this bonus even





if he is caught flat-footed or if he would not normally be allowed an AC modifier for any reason. This is a supernatural ability.

Perfect Defense: The dragon has mastered the art of defense. His awareness of his enemies has reached a level where he is aware of attacks from all sides even as they begin. Once per power level per day the dragon can assume perfect defense for one round. He is considered to be taking the full defense action, and so may only make movement actions. During that time, however, any form of attack that requires an attack roll, including touch attacks and ranged touch attacks, automatically fails. This is an extraordinary ability.

Thunder Strike: Every part of the dragon's body moves together to channel maximum power into a strike. The dragon's stunning attack DC is increased by 1 per power level, and the duration of the stun is increased by one round per power level. This is an extraordinary ability.

Strike of the Spirit: The dragon has become so attuned to his inner ki that he can channel it outward through his attacks. For one round per power level per day the dragon may make unarmed strikes at a range of 5 ft. + 5 ft. per power level. The dragon may not use a weapon and may only attempt to strike an opponent for damage or to use his stunning attack. The dragon uses his unarmed attack bonus, but in all other ways it is considered a ranged attack. This is a supernatural ability.

Combat Attunement: The dragon becomes aware of even the intent to attack and can unerringly strike at opponents. For one minute per power level per day the dragon knows the location of all potential combatants within 10 ft. per power level. This ability allows him to suffer no attack penalties due to darkness, blindness, concealment, or invisibility, and he cannot be flanked or caught flat-footed by opponents. This is an extraordinary ability.

Blood of the Dragon: Every part of the dragon's body is a weapon; he strikes with fists, elbows, knees, shins and feet, and nothing can stop his attacks. The dragon's unarmed attacks gain a +1 enhancement bonus per power level.

THE GREAT TEACHER

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+2	Great Teacher Ability
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Great Teacher Ability
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+3	Great Teacher Ability
4th	+4	+4	+4	+4	Great Teacher Ability
5th	+5	+4	+4	+4	Great Teacher Ability

THE GREAT TEACHER

Secure in his mountain fortress, the great teacher continuously ponders the lessons he has learned in his long life. He knows that others will seek him out. Some will be humble students who will ask him to spell out the secrets of his art in easy to understand terms; others will be rivals, burning with hatred, jealousy, and a desire to elevate their names by defeating a great master. Sometimes the great teacher chooses to wander, gaining knowledge and passing on his wisdom to those who might one day take his place. Even those who spend their lives building a serene environment in which to study and train sometimes find that they do not enjoy a sedentary life.

The great teacher has an innate understanding of combat that transcends styles and techniques. He can effortlessly deflect and dodge blows, all the while taunting his attacker with his tittering giggle. Many warriors and monks seek out the great teacher, but only a few gain access to the greatest of his secrets; most get their lessons the hard way.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a great teacher, a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

Skills: Balance 12 ranks, Concentration 8 ranks, Jump 12 ranks, Tumble 15 ranks.

Feats: Deflect Arrows, Improved Evasion, Improved Trip, Spring Attack, any one feat of the DM's choice.

Special: The character must be at least 40 years old and own a stronghold in a secluded area.

QUESTS

- The great teacher must seek out the instructors at three well-known schools of combat and defeat them in a personal duel. This duel must be one on one, and the great teacher may use no weapons, even if his opponent does. The great teacher need not kill his opponents; indeed, many view this as a disgraceful way to prove one's prowess in combat.
- The great teacher must find within himself the wisdom to intuitively understand the nature of the combative mind. He must drop all his defenses in combat in order to learn why creatures attack the way they do. In at least 4 combats, the great teacher may only apply armor and natural armor bonuses to his AC. He must voluntarily lose all dodge, Dexterity, Wisdom, and other bonuses to his armor class and engage in melee for a minimum of 5 rounds.

CLASS SKILLS

The great teacher's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the great teacher legendary class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: A great teacher is proficient with all simple weapons. The great teacher is not proficient with any armor or shields.

GREAT TEACHER ABILITIES

Undisturbed Serenity: The character gains incredible insight and a peaceful mind, adding a +1 legendary bonus to his Wisdom per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Style Mastery: The great teacher has learned so many styles of combat that he can recognize the common building blocks throughout them. This allows him to break down an opponent's fighting style quickly and accurately. Once per day per power level, the great teacher can designate an opponent as a free action. That opponent cannot use any of his feats in combat against the great teacher.

Incredible Agility: The great teacher has an uncanny ability to dodge out of the way of even the most lethal and precise blows. As a result, he gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Unclouded Awareness: The great teacher's mind is not cluttered by everyday worries, therefore leaving it open to perceiving all that goes on around him. Thus, he gains a +2 legendary bonus to Spot and Listen checks and a +1 legendary bonus to initiative per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Sense Life: The great teacher is attuned to the lifeforce of all living creatures, giving him the supernatural ability to sense all of the creatures around him. By concentrating for one minute, the great teacher learns the number, type, and location of every living creature within 100 ft. per power level. This ability can be used once per day per power level and is not stopped by any physical barrier.

Borrow Style: Once per day per power level, the great teacher can designate one creature. For the remainder of the day, the great teacher can use any one feat that he sees the designated creature use in combat. So, if the great teacher designates his party's fighter, who goes on to use Great Cleave against a pack of ghouls, he can then use Great Cleave for the remainder of the day as if he had it. The great teacher can designate the same creature more than once.

Masterful Instruction: Once per day per power level, the great teacher can designate one creature. Given 10 minutes of training, the great teacher can impart any one skill or

feat to the designated character for one hour per power level. This imparts full knowledge of the techniques of a feat, but not the feat's prerequisites, or the skill ranks of any one of the great teacher's skills (the student character adds his own modifiers).

JUSTICAR

The justicar is a wandering loner, seeking to right injustice in lands where it goes unpunished. It is often a thankless job that he pursues. The justicar can even find himself at odds with the local law enforcement, who do not take kindly to either his methods or his successes, which only serve to justify his presence all the more. The motivations of a justicar are varied—perhaps someone who hid behind the law to escape justice slaughtered his true love, or perhaps the perpetrators of some other great crime were simply never caught. Whatever the reason for his existence, his presence makes lawbreakers nervous and at the same time gives hope to the downtrodden that the law so often forgets.

Characters taking on the legendary role of the justicar may find themselves at odds with former party members. The justicar wants to seek out lawbreakers, not loot treasure hoards. Still, he may find some pleasure in the company of his old companions or simply be willing to patiently wait for the time when he can bend them to his pursuits. While justicars often make local law enforcement nervous, they also command a great deal of respect from those whose true allegiance lies with justice rather than law and with common folk who see the justicar as their only means of gaining justice for wrongs committed.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a justicar, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Neutral good or true neutral.

Skills: Intimidate 4 ranks, Move Silently 10 ranks, Sense Motive 7 ranks, Spot 15 ranks.

Feats: Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Sense Motive), any one feat of the DM's choice.

Special: Must have at least 3 favored enemies.

QUESTS

- The justicar must hunt down two law-breakers that have eluded the authorities for a month or more and deliver them to justice. He may have help in these endeavors, but the character must capture the offender himself.
- The justicar must investigate a new crime himself, receiving no help from the local authorities. He must determine the identity of the lawbreaker, track him down, and bring him to justice. By setting this example, the justicar learns to understand the value of justice over procedure and bureaucracy.

CLASS SKILLS

The justicar's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the justicar legendary class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A justicar is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

JUSTICAR ABILITIES

Enhanced Charisma: The justicar gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Charisma per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Enhanced Wisdom: The justicar gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Wisdom per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Sense Injustice: Once per day per power level,



JUSTICAR

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Justicar Ability
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Justicar Ability
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Justicar Ability
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Justicar Ability
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Justicar Ability

the justicar can sense the crimes of those around him. This ability has a radius of 100 feet per power level and does not require the justicar to have line of sight to his targets. If a target within range has committed a crime within one day per power level, the justicar knows this fact. If the target is out of sight at the time this ability is activated, the justicar still knows the crime and will recognize the person as a criminal the first time he sees him. This ability does not give the justicar specific knowledge of the crime, only the fact that a law has been broken.

Hunter of the Guilty: When the justicar gains this ability, he gains a new favored enemy: law-breakers. He gains a +2 bonus on all normal rolls and checks per power level, so if taken at 4th power level the justicar would gain a +8 to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks, as well as weapon damage rolls, against this new enemy. He gains all other bonuses associated with having a favored enemy as well. The justicar never increases this bonus, even if he gains a new favored enemy through another class.

A lawbreaker is any creature that has broken a local law within one month that has not been brought to justice.

Intimidating Presence: The justicar gains a +5 bonus to the following skills per power level: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Sense Motive. This bonus only applies when the justicar is acting on behalf of a legitimate target. So he could shake down a vendor for information on his target's movements, but he could not try to get a good deal on an item he was purchasing unless it was absolutely necessary to the acquisition of his prey.

Survival Instinct: The justicar is often hunted by those he would track down. Assassins are deployed and local roughs bribed to try to kill the justicar before he can reach his target. To help insure that he does not meet an untimely end, the justicar gains a +1 bonus to initiative per power level. He also gains a +2 bonus per power level to Spot and Listen checks to detect hidden enemies.

Aura of Law: All non-lawful creatures within 15 feet per power level of the justicar must make a Will save (DC 10+2 per power level) or be shaken as long as they are in his presence, and for one minute after they leave the aura's radius.

THE SLAYER

Unlike other wilderness warriors and rangers, the slayer cares little for protecting his environment and guarding those in need. The slayer's sole purpose is the destruction of all life he deems unworthy to walk the earth. He sharpens his hunting skills to razor-like precision, practices the stealth necessary to defeat the most perceptive opponents, and studies all manner of living being until he knows the weaknesses of each as well as he knows his own sword.

A character that is drawn to the slayer class does not merely hold a grudge against the orcs that burned his village or the undead monsters that drove his sister insane. He knows that all the evil in the world, all that he deems evil, must be completely eradicated. He makes it his life's quest to do so, unerringly seeking the hearts and blood of every creature that must not be allowed to live. The slayer's motivations are often called into question, as his unyielding quest brings him into conflict with the laws and morality of the nations and communities through which he travels. Although a noble

spirit often drives slayers, their lust for the blood of their foes is most often viewed as raw, uncontrolled contempt for life.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a slayer, a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

Alignment: Any chaotic.

Skills: Hide 8 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks, Search 12 ranks, Spot 10 ranks, and Wilderness Lore 15 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Track, any one feat of the DM's choice.

Special: The character must have at least three favored enemies.

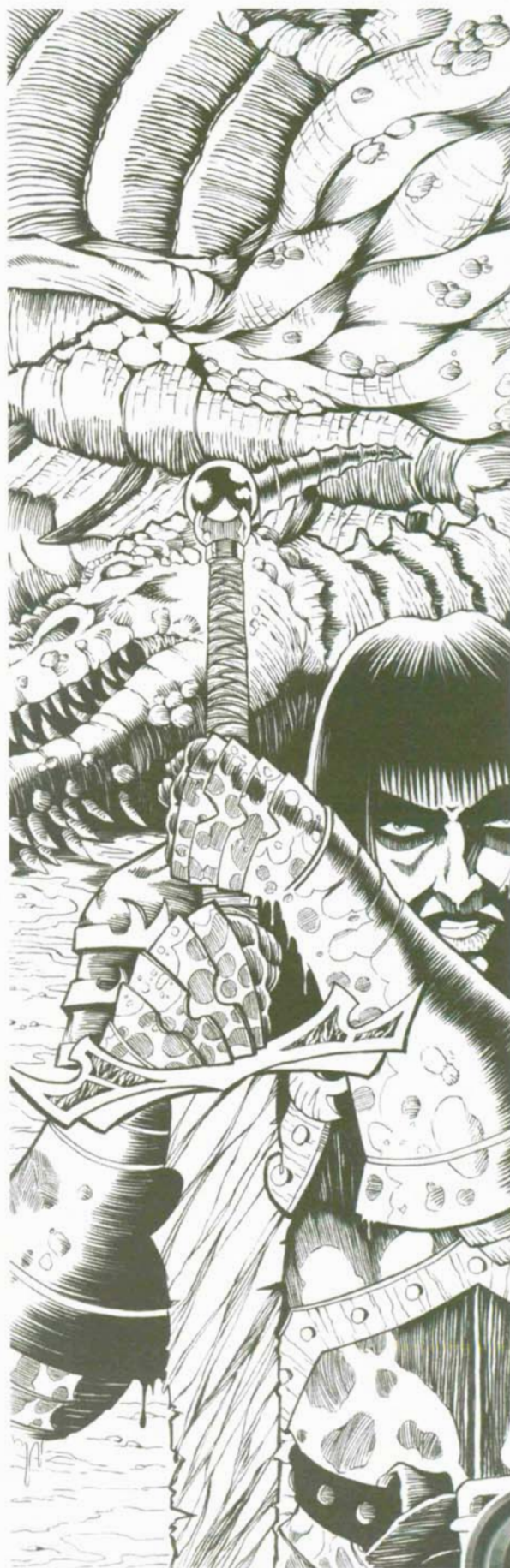
QUESTS

- The slayer must seek out an advanced version of each of his favored enemies (one with at least four more hit dice than an average specimen) and defeat them and their immediate allies. The slayer may enlist help in these quests, but he must deliver the killing blow to each of these special favored enemies. If he does not, he must seek out another advanced specimen to kill.
- The character must tithe at least 1,000 gp to five towns in the vicinity in which he travels. This is a symbolic act meant to seal his break from traditional law in pursuit of his many chosen enemies. He must state his intent and purpose to the authorities in each town and accept whatever punishment they mete out, barring imprisonment or death.

CLASS SKILLS

The slayer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.



THE SLAYER

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Slayer Ability
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Slayer Ability
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Slayer Ability
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Slayer Ability
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Slayer Ability

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the slayer legendary class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: A slayer is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor, and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

SLAYER ABILITIES

Enhanced Strength: The slayer gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Strength per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Enhanced Wisdom: The slayer gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Wisdom per power level. This is a one-time bonus.

Unbridled Hatred: The slayer's hatred for all things that he deems unfit to live knows no bounds. Therefore, when the slayer chooses this ability he gains a new batch of favored enemies, one per power level. These favored enemies give bonuses similar to the ranger's ability, depending on how many are gained. The first new favored enemy gained grants a +1 bonus, and each new one after grants an additional +1 to the appropriate checks and rolls.

So, if this ability is chosen at power level 2, the slayer could have goblinoids at +1 and dragons at +2. These bonuses never increase, and may not be chosen if the slayer already has them on his favored enemy list; they may not be chosen as future favored enemies if the character advances in ranger level.

Death Strike: Once per day per power level, the slayer can change a hit on a favored enemy into an automatic and improved critical. The slayer need not roll to confirm the critical, the death strike automatically deals double his normal critical damage to his enemy.

Defensive Posture: The slayer gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC when in melee combat against his favored enemies.

Knowledge is Power: The slayer knows his enemies and their abilities so well that he gains the supernatural ability to resist their attacks. Once per power level per day, the slayer can name a special attack, special quality, or spell-like ability of one of his favored enemies to which he is then immune for the remainder of the day. This can apply equally to the breath weapon of a dragon, the *fireball* spell of an enemy spellcaster, or the poison of a monstrous spider. The character need not know that a particular specimen has the ability he names, but if it does not he has wasted one of his uses for the day.

Unrelenting Pursuit: The slayer hunts his enemies relentlessly once he catches their trail, whether through the forest, over the mountains, or in the rivers and lakes. To accomplish this tireless task, the slayer gains extraordinary movement abilities when tracking a favored enemy. The slayer gains +5 ft. to his base move, Swim 10 ft., and Climb 10 ft. movement rate per power level. Swim and climb are now considered normal movement rates for the slayer.

STORMWALKER

Among the people of the Aarathisian Hills, the legend of the stormwalker has grown for decades. It is whispered that he is an angel, sent

STORMWALKER

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Stormwalker Ability
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Stormwalker Ability
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Stormwalker Ability
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Stormwalker Ability
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Stormwalker Ability

to defend them from the ogres and giants that prowl their tribal homelands. Others, however, fear him as a demon, come to steal away their children and their lives. Although he has not appeared to them in many years, these shepherds and traders alternately fear and pray for his return.

The truth is not far from the legend. The stormwalker is a man infused with the power of lightning by the denizens of another plane. Although their motives remain a mystery, these lightning demons almost certainly exact a price for the power they give. The original stormwalker, a human by the name of Serelius Mal, sought power to avenge the death of his love at the hands of the giants of the Aarathisian Hills. What he gave in return is unknown, and he has not been seen in over two decades. Once per generation, another feels the pull of the stormwalker, being drawn to the Aarathisian hilltops to receive the blessing of the demons that reside in the storms.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a stormwalker, a character must fulfill all the following requirements.

Base Attack Bonus: +12.

Base Reflex Save: +4.

Skills: Wilderness Lore 7 ranks.

Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw, any one feat of the DM's choice.

QUESTS

- The character must journey to the Aarathisian hilltops, where it storms nearly every night of the year. Once there, he must converse with the demons, indicating his willingness to receive the power

they grant. Although it is unknown what price he pays for this pact, many have since been willing to seek out the demons and receive their gift.

- The character must be brought below 0 hp by an electrical attack of some kind. The source of the attack does not matter, and if the character dies and is raised it still fulfills the quest. Prospective stormwalkers often stand with metal rods in a storm, attracting lightning to them until they fall unconscious.

CLASS SKILLS

The stormwalker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the stormwalker legendary class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: A stormwalker is proficient with all simple and martial metallic weapons, light and medium metallic armor and metallic shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

STORMWALKER ABILITIES

Enhanced Dexterity: The stormwalker gains a +1 legendary bonus to his Dexterity per power level. This is a one-time bonus.



Electricity Resistance: The stormwalker gains electricity resistance with a value of 5 per power level.

Channeled Energy: For up to one hour per power level per day, any melee or ranged weapon wielded by the stormwalker acts as if it had the shock and shocking burst magical abilities. The stormwalker can break this ability up into one hour uses, so it could be activated up to five times per day. Activating this ability is a free action.

Blood of the Storms: The stormwalker gains one or more abilities according to the following chart, depending on the power level at which he selects this ability. The character gains the ability for his power level and each level below. Each of these abilities is usable once per day and is cast at 20th level.

Power Level 1: *protection from elements (electricity)*

Power Level 2: *call lightning*

Power Level 3: *lightning bolt*

Power Level 4: *air walk*

Power Level 5: *chain lightning*

Stormshield: The lightning in the veins of the stormwalker can be focused into a shield that surrounds his body. For up to one minute per power level per day, anyone touching the stormwalker or striking him with metal weapons takes electrical damage equal to 1d8 points per power level. Only one such electrical backlash activates per round, so a creature with multiple attacks will only take the damage once. The stormwalker can activate this ability as a free action on a round by round basis.

Vortex: For up to one minute per day per power level, the stormwalker can surround himself with a vortex of strong wind. This shield causes anyone firing a ranged weapon at the stormwalker to have a 20% miss chance per power level. In addition, the character gains a +1 bonus per power level to saves against gas-based traps and attacks.

Swarm of Elemental Fury: Once per day per power level, the stormwalker can call allies from the elemental plane of lightning. These allies take the form of lightning mephits that obey the wishes of the stormwalker. One mephit per power level is summoned and they will carry out the stormwalker's orders for up to one minute per power level before returning to their home plane.

LIGHTNING MEPHIT

	Lightning Mephit Small Outsider (Electricity)
Hit Dice:	3d8 (13 hp)
Initiative:	+7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed:	30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect)
AC:	18 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +4 natural)
Attacks:	2 claws +4 melee
Damage:	Claw 1d3 and 2 electricity
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Breath weapon, spell-like abilities, summon mephit
Special Qualities:	Electricity immunity, fast healing 2, damage reduction 5/+1
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 15
Skills:	Bluff +6, Hide +12, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +6
Feats:	Improved Initiative
Climate/Terrain:	Any land and underground
Organization:	Solitary, gang (2–4), or swarm (5–12)
Challenge Rating:	3
Treasure:	Standard
Alignment:	Usually neutral
Advancement:	4–6 HD (Small); 7–9 HD (Medium-size)

A lightning mephit is a minor elemental creature that is formed from ambient electricity. They are extremely curious, and seem wholly unconcerned that their mere touch can cause death in other creatures. The lightning mephit appears as a small, winged creature whose body is made of tiny arcing bolts of electricity.

COMBAT

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of sparks, 10 feet; damage 1d4, Reflex half DC 12. Living creatures that fail their saves are tormented by burning shocks and muscle spasms unless they are immune to or protected from electricity. This imposes a –4 morale penalty to AC and a –2 morale penalty to attack rolls for 3 rounds.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/hour—*shocking grasp* as cast by a 3rd-level sorcerer; once per day the lightning mephit can shoot forth an arc of electricity in a 30-foot-long line that deals 3d6

points of damage to all creatures in the area. A Reflex save (DC 14) halves this damage.

Fast Healing (Ex): A lightning mephit heals only if it is within the radius of an electrical effect, such as flying in the midst of a storm. The mephit also heals in any round that it is hit with an electrical effect, such as that produced by a *lightning bolt* spell.

VARIANT CLASSES

This section discusses variant core classes — new versions of the base classes, which are designed for players to take at 1st level.

THE COMMANDER

Throughout the world, there are those who straddle the line between leader and warrior. They learn to rule as they learn to fight, they command on the field and off. The rituals of rulership are as ingrained in them as the reflexes of battle. The Commander embodies the leader/warrior, from the mercenary boss to the noble knight.

Adventures: Commanders can be found in many situations. While they are often leading others, there are times when they must go alone. A child of lesser nobles, born and bred to rule but presently landless, adventures to seek a domain of his own. An unemployed mercenary commander sees the core of a great fighting force in the adventurers gathered at the local inn, and connives to join them.

Characteristics: Commanders are slightly less skilled in pure combat than fighters, but make up for it with a wider range of social and leadership skills. They have the ability to command and inspire those they battle with, and they are exceptionally fearless in combat, knowing that they are battling not just for themselves, but for their family and reputation as well. Off the field, they understand the warfare that occurs in ballrooms and feast halls, and can defend themselves there, as well.

Alignment: Commanders may be of any lawful alignment. They are trained, disciplined, and honor-bound, and even those

who are currently without anyone to command retain these traits. Their class abilities often depend on their strict inner discipline. A commander who becomes non-lawful cannot gain more levels in this class, and will not have access to certain class abilities (noted in the descriptions of these abilities)

Religion: Commanders will usually follow the dominant faith in their culture, as befits rulers. They will usually choose gods of leadership or combat as their personal deities. Some wandering commanders will worship whatever god is prevalent in their current place of residence. Generally, a commander will try to mimic the religion of those he leads, or, if he is truly devout, will only lead those of compatible faiths.

Background: Commanders usually define themselves early. In the thick fog of childhood society, they are the lights that others swarm towards. In situations where a group struggles to find a consensus, they become the voice of the group. During apprenticeships, they quickly find themselves placed in charge of their peers. In battle, they instinctively give orders as needed, and these orders are usually obeyed. Sometimes, though, the gift of leadership comes later in life; a previously undistinguished soldier may suddenly rally a faltering band around him and change the course of battle, or a character with no previous leadership experience may be put in charge of a group and discover that he has a talent for leadership.

Races: All races need commanders, but chaotically inclined races produce fewer of them. Humans, half-elves, and dwarves are the most likely to become commanders. Half-orcs like bossing people around, but most lack the charisma and discipline to become a commander, rather than just a bully. Halflings are disinclined to either give or take orders, and gnomes lack a strong military culture. Elves of an unusually lawful bent often take up this class, helping to unite their more chaotic comrades against a foe.

Other Classes: The commander is a benefit to any group, and he views others as a benefit to him. More than almost any other class, the commander is at his best when working in a group environment; many of his skills are of little use to a loner. Having more than one commander in a group can be interesting,

depending on their personalities. Some will find themselves working together synergistically, while others will continually battle, covertly or overtly, to be top dog.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Commanders have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Strength, Constitution, and Charisma are the most important abilities for a commander. Intelligence is useful for learning tactics and strategy; Wisdom aids in quickly evaluating conditions and responding to them. Since commanders tend to be heavily armored and on the front lines, an exceptionally high Dexterity is not required, but anything less than average can be a serious detriment.

Alignment: Any lawful.

Hit Die: d10.

CLASS SKILLS

The commander's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Jump (Str), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (3 + Int bonus) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 3 + Int bonus.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the commander.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: A commander is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all armor, and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

Bonus Feat: The commander may select any of the fighter's bonus feats, except for Weapon Specialization.

Command: The commander is a skilled combatant, second only to the fighter in skill and flexibility. However, he is also capable of inspiring others. Once per day equal to the com-

THE COMMANDER

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	Command I
2	+2	+0	+0	+3	
3	+3	+1	+1	+3	Bonus Feat
4	+4	+1	+1	+4	
5	+5	+1	+1	+4	Command II
6	+6/+1	+2	+2	+5	Bonus Feat, Leadership
7	+7/+2	+2	+2	+5	
8	+8/+3	+2	+2	+6	
9	+9/+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus Feat
10	+10/+5	+3	+3	+7	Command III
11	+11/+6/+1	+3	+3	+7	
12	+12/+7/+2	+4	+4	+8	Bonus Feat
13	+13/+8/+3	+4	+4	+8	
14	+14/+9/+4	+4	+4	+9	
15	+15/+10/+5	+5	+5	+9	Bonus Feat, Command IV
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+10	
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+11	Bonus Feat
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Command V

mander's Charisma modifier, the commander can activate his Command ability. For each level of this ability, the commander may choose one of the following benefits to confer upon his allies. He may choose the same benefit more than once, and all command bonuses stack with each other. All affected allies are granted the same bonus; the commander may not choose different bonuses for different troops within the same use of this ability. Using Command is a move-equivalent action that lasts until one of the following happens: the commander loses sight of his allies, the commander goes unconscious for any reason, the commander issues a new Command, or 10 minutes passes.

The possible commands are as follows:

- **Offensive Tactics:** Chosen allies gain a +1 command bonus to attack rolls.
- **Defensive Tactics:** Chosen allies gain a +1 command bonus to AC.
- **Stand Fast:** Chosen allies gain a +1 command bonus to Fortitude saves.
- **Heads Up:** Chosen allies gain a +1 command bonus to Reflex saves.
- **Inspiration:** Chosen allies gain a +1 command bonus to Will saves.
- **On the Double:** Chosen allies' speed increases by 5 ft.
- **Coordinate:** Two allies who both threaten the same target in melee are considered to be flanking it, even if they are otherwise not able to do so.
- **First Strike:** Chosen allies gain a +2 command bonus to initiative.
- **Close and Attack:** Chosen allies gain a +2 command bonus to AC against attacks of opportunity incurred by moving into or through a threatened area (but not against those incurred by spellcasting or using ranged weapons).

Command abilities can only be used on allies that the commander can see, and who can see and hear him.

Only a single commander can aid an individual at one time. Two commanders can aid different individuals in the same area.

A commander may not target himself with these abilities.

Leadership: The commander automatically gains the Leadership feat at 6th level. If the DM feels this feat would unbalance or unduly complicate the campaign, the commander may gain another fighter bonus feat instead.

THE HUNTER

There are countless types of life in the world, and, at some point, all of it is going to need killing. While anyone can simply pick up a sword and start hacking, it is the hunter who is the consummate tracker and slayer. The hunter focuses intently on a single foe (or type of foes), and can pursue, catch, and kill (or just take prisoner) with perfect precision. From the

vengeful farmlad who has sworn to slay every orc he sees to the bounty hunter who can trail her quarry across half a continent, the hunter fills a vital role in the workings of the world.

Adventures: A hunter does not need to devote all of her waking hours to pursuing her chosen foes, but most end up doing just that. They will seek out situations where they are likely to meet their preferred enemies in combat, or where their skills can otherwise be honed. A hunter may also be called to battle — a town plagued with orcs may search out a hunter, or a powerful lord may send a hunter after a hated rival.

Alignment: Hunters may be of any alignment, though there is a strong lawful bent. The single minded determination that a hunter uses is unlikely to be found in a chaotic mind. Chaotic hunters tend to be focused more on the thrill of the chase and the freedom of the road as they pursue their prey, while lawful hunters focus on the end goal. To a chaotic hunter, the journey is the reward; to a lawful hunter, the dead body of her foe is the reward. A hunter may likewise be good or evil; good hunters only choose evil



THE HUNTER

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Chosen Foe
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Night Stalker, Trackless Step
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Chosen Foe
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+5	Merciful Strike
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+5	
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+6	
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+6	Sense Foe
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+7	Chosen Foe
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+7	
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+8	Forceful Strike
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+8	
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+9	
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+9	Chosen Foe, Weak Spot
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+10	
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+11	Inescapable Pursuit
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	Chosen Foe

beings as their targets, while evil hunters will take anyone or anything. Some hunters even prefer neutrality; to them, the hunt is all.

Religion: Hunters tend to worship gods of the hunt, justice, vengeance, shadow, or the wild. A few are directly associated with a temple, focusing on the enemies of their faith. Others view the act of pursuit as sacred in itself, viewing the foes they slay as their ticket to a gloried place in the outer planes after death. Still others tend to a “The gods help those who help themselves” attitude, and trust to their own skill and judgment without seeking divine aid.

Background: No single background defines a hunter. Some simply settled on the role early in life. Others find themselves motivated by vengeance after suffering a grievous loss at the hands of some type of creature. Some pick up the skills later, after having spent some time in other pursuits—not a few rogues ultimately end up in this class, either as bounty hunters serving the law or as enforcers for criminal guilds hunting down the guild’s foes. The only common thread is that no hunter is ambivalent about their foes; they hate their chosen enemies

absolutely, and will rarely allow them quarter or safe passage.

Race: All races may become hunters, but humans and dwarves are the most common, as both races place great score by justice and determination, and both are slow to forget a wrong. Elves rarely take up the path, but there are exceptions, and an elf with a thirst for blood has centuries to perfect his skills. Gnome hunters are ingenious tricksters, using a wide range of tactics when bringing down a foe. Half-orcs usually lack the discipline, but when sufficiently motivated, they hunt with a plodding determination few others can match.

Other Classes: Hunters are welcomed in any group going against a hunter’s chosen foes. They, in turn, view the other classes as useful adjuncts. A cleric’s healing, a fighter’s strength, and a mage’s command of arcane forces are all of great use to a hunter. They tend to view bards as too flighty and barbarians as too wild. Good hunters get along well with paladins, who share their dedication.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Hunters have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Hunters need to be strong in several areas, though Strength is less important to them than to most other fighters. Unlike many combat-focused classes, hunters benefit from Charisma, as their pursuits often require them to deal with people.

Alignment: Any

Hit Die: d10.

CLASS SKILLS

The hunter's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), Urban Lore (Wis), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at First Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points as Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS ABILITIES

All of the following are class features of the hunter.

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: A hunter is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor, and shields.

Chosen Foe: At 1st level, a hunter chooses one creature type from the ranger's favored enemies list to be her chosen foe. Against a chosen foe, the hunter gains the following benefits:

- +1 circumstance bonus to attack and damage rolls, or a +1 dodge bonus to AC. This must be decided upon when the chosen foe is named. The bonuses to hit and damage do not apply against creatures that are immune to critical hits.
- The hunter may perform a sneak attack against a chosen foe for an additional 1d6 points of damage. All the normal rules for a sneak attack apply.

- +1 circumstance bonus to Bluff, Intimidate, Listen, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.
- The hunter may attempt to track a chosen foe as if she had the Track feat. If she does have the Track feat, she gains a +4 bonus to Wilderness Lore checks to track her quarry.
- The hunter knows the language of her chosen foe. If the chosen foe has several innate languages, the hunter only knows one (her choice)

At 5th, 10th, 15th, and 20th levels, the hunter may choose a new chosen foe. She gains the bonuses listed above against her new foe. The bonuses are also applied again to each previous chosen foe, stacking with existing bonuses. Therefore, upon reaching 5th level and choosing her second chosen foe, the hunter now also has the following benefits against her 1st level foe: +2 circumstance bonus to either attack and damage or AC, +2d6 points of damage for sneak attack, a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff, Intimidate, Listen, Sense Motive, and Spot checks, and a +8 circumstance bonus to all Wilderness Lore checks to track her original foe.

Note: If the hunter has sneak attack from rogue levels, or any other source, the damage bonuses do not stack. Only the highest bonus is used.

Optional Rule: The DM may allow a hunter to choose a specific organization or other affiliation (such as barbarians of a specific tribe) as his chosen foe rather than basing it on race. A hunter should not be able to choose chosen foes based on class, either, although sometimes prestige classes can be applicable if they are tied to an organization with its own unique methods and motives.

Night Stalker: By 3rd level, a hunter has trained herself to get by on very little sleep, in order to keep the pursuit up while her target rests. A hunter only needs a number of hours of sleep per night equal to 6 – Constitution modifier (minimum 2). Note: multiclassed hunter/spellcasters still need the appropriate amount of sleep and time to prepare spells as described under their class abilities.

Trackless Step: Beginning at 3rd level, a

hunter can no longer be tracked.

Merciful Strike: Against a chosen foe, the hunter may choose to deal subdual damage instead of normal damage with any melee attack. The hunter does not suffer the usual -4 penalty to such an attempt.

Sense Foe: At 9th level, the hunter gains the ability to detect a chosen foe through any type of disguise or illusion. He gains a +10 bonus to Spot checks to see through a mundane disguise, and the hunter automatically sees through alteration magic such as *change self* or *polymorph self* (also negating the Disguise bonuses granted by such spells). Invisible foes are still considered to have full concealment, but the hunter knows their exact location if they are within his normal range of vision (so he can still target them).

Forceful Strike: Beginning at 12th level, the hunter can automatically change any critical threat into a critical hit without a second roll. This ability is usable only once per day.

Weak Spot: Upon reaching 15th level, the hunter may choose one of his chosen foes that is normally immune to critical hits. The hunter can now perform a critical hit on this foe normally. If the hunter has two such foes (constructs and undead, for example), then he must choose only one for which he knows the weak spot. If he has no chosen foes that are immune to critical hits, then this ability grants him no benefit.

Inescapable Pursuit: If a chosen foe moves to another plane within the site of the hunter, whether via spell, magic item, or innate ability, he may choose to follow, moving to the nearest open space to his foe. Note that the hunter cannot see his destination before committing to follow his enemy. This decision must be made within one round of the foe leaving, and the hunter is in no way protected from his new environment.





THE OUTDOORSMAN

Civilization is a few flickering campfires on a dark, empty plain. Most of the world is wild and trackless. Beyond the city walls and tended fields stretches a seemingly endless wilderness. From the densely packed trees of the elder northern forests to the sucking mire of the southern swamps, from the lethal glare of the desert sun to the snowblind Arctic wastes, the outdoorsman travels and fights.

The outdoorsman is most at home in the wilds. He knows how to both fight and survive in the harshest terrain. His skill is such that he gains a significant edge while battling in lands he knows well. He can survive, even thrive, in areas that would kill the less skilled. Some are explorers, seeking new lands and new opportunities; some are brigands, appearing from nowhere, striking hard, and then vanishing again; some are well-traveled mercenaries who have learned that knowing your ground well can be the edge needed for survival.

Adventures: An outdoorsman's adventures usually simply happen to him as he goes about his business. The explorer may find an ancient ruin or a nest of arrowhawks; the

brigand may hear news of a rich caravan braving his favorite haunts. Some outdoorsmen find themselves sought out by other adventurers, seeking a guide through hostile terrain, while others are loners. The outdoorsman prefers to avoid cities and even large towns; trading outposts and border forts are the closest he tends to come to civilization.

Characteristics: Outdoorsmen are equal parts masters of combat and masters of the wild. They are skilled in taking advantage of terrain, gaining several bonuses when fighting in terrain they know well. They are also well versed in natural lore. Without access to towns and smithies, they tend to find a favored class of weapon early in their career and stick with it, becoming exceptionally deadly when using those weapons but less talented with others. They are also masters of motion in their chosen realms, able to move rapidly through the densest forests and pass through snow-cruled mountains without leaving a clear trail.

Alignment: Outdoorsmen may be of any alignment, though most tend to chaotic. The few lawful outdoorsmen are normally agents of civilization in some way, the first explorers, pioneers, or conquerors, out to tame or control the outer wilds. Good outdoorsmen protect travelers and respect the wild; evil outdoorsmen plunder travelers and nature with equal vigor.

Religion: Outdoorsmen usually worship gods of war or nature, though some find themselves followers of gods of travel, and a few even follow gods of knowledge. Some worship no gods explicitly, worshipping rather 'the world' or 'the wild', seeing the divine reflected in all things. A few are as agnostic as possible in worlds with large pantheons, seeing no divine plan in anything, just an endless struggle to survive, with the universe oblivious to who lives and who dies.

Background: Outdoorsmen come from a variety of backgrounds. Many grew up on the frontier and simply learned their skills as part of their maturation. Others joined organizations such as the Pioneer Corps or the Border Patrol and found they had a special love for the deep wilds. Some come from nomadic or barbarian tribes, where they served as scouts or patrollers. A few come from the largest and most decadent cities, where they grew sick of wealth and comfort and chose to leave it all behind.

THE OUTDOORSMAN

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Favored Terrain, Preferred Weapons, Lightstep
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Animal Companion
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Bonus Feat
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Favored Terrain 2, Fast Passage
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Bonus Feat
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Favored Terrain 3
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Bonus Feat
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Bestial Companion
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	Favored Terrain 4
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Bonus Feat
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Magical Companion
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Favored Terrain 5, Bonus Feat

Races: Humans, elves, and half-orcs are the most common outdoorsmen, with halflings following closely behind. Dwarves are masters of the caves, and some intrepid dwarven spelunkers do become outdoorsmen, but dwarves produce few who prefer to explore alone. Gnomes, too, are too tied to the comforts of their burrows and hill cities to seek out the wilderness for its own sake. There are, of course, always individual members of these races who feel an odd calling, or who may find themselves learning the skills of the outdoorsman as an alternative to death in the wildlands.

Other Classes: The outdoorsman is a loner by nature, but his love of survival means he acknowledges the utility of companions. He is good at many things, but not the best at any — a pure fighter is more flexible in combat, a druid commands nature rather than merely surviving it, and a rogue is a better sneak. Wizards and clerics can control powers the outdoorsman cannot even attempt. Outdoorsmen get on well with rangers, bards, and barbarians, all of whom share a common love for independence. Wizards and sorcerers are respected, but not generally liked, at least not at first. Rogues are

often seen as creatures of the city, with some useful skills but wholly out of place in the woods. On the other side of the equation, the outdoorsman's combination of survival and combat skill makes him valuable to any party traveling in any terrain the outdoorsman knows well, as he possesses some skills even the other wilderness classes do not.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Outdoorsmen have the following game statistics.

Abilities: The outdoorsman is a warrior, first and foremost, and thus, must be strong and healthy. Dexterity is important as well, as heavy armor is a bane in many situations. Intelligence and Wisdom help the outdoorsman learn the ways of nature and to be alert to subtle signs. Charisma is of little importance to them, except as a means of dealing with animals, though it never hurts to be able to at least carry on a decent conversation on those occasions when they do have to deal with people.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d10.

CLASS SKILLS

The outdoorsman's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are: Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the outdoorsman.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The outdoorsman is proficient with light and medium armor and with simple weapons. He is also proficient with two preferred weapons, which may be simple, martial, or exotic weapons.

Favored Terrain: At first level, the outdoorsman may select two regions in which he has exceptional experience. A region is comprised of a terrain type and a temperature type. There are seven primary terrain types and three temperature types. Each terrain type chosen represents skill in two of the temperature types, selected by the player when the terrain is chosen. Alternatively, characters can choose to be proficient in one temperature type for two different terrain types, rather than two temperature types in one terrain.

Type	Temperature
Aquatic*	Cold
Desert	Hot
Forest	Temperate
Hill	
Marsh	
Mountain	
Plains	
Underground	

* Aquatic may not be chosen unless the outdoorsman has some natural or magical means to breathe water.

Example: Naret is an outdoorsman who grew up on the edge of the vast Riffing Woods. He chooses Forest as his terrain, and selects both Cold and Temperate terrain types. He does not gain his Favored Terrain abilities if he enters a tropical jungle (a hot forest) unless he later chooses that as an additional Favored Terrain. Alternatively, he could choose Cold Plains and Cold Forest for his terrain types. He could not choose Cold Plains and Hot Forest, because both the terrain type and temperature types are different. He could eventually gain both of these terrains, but they would have to be selected at different levels.

When an outdoorsman is in his favored terrain, he gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC whenever he is not denied his Dexterity modifier to AC. He furthermore gains a +2 bonus to any Hide, Intuit Direction, Knowledge (nature), Move Silently, Search, Spot, or Wilderness Lore checks. Base speed increases by 5 ft. when in a favored terrain. These bonuses do not apply if the character is in a building or other construct within his terrain. (e.g., if Naret enters a castle that is located in a deep forest, he does not gain his Favored Terrain bonuses while he is in or on the castle.)

Every five levels, an outdoorsman may add two new favored terrains and increase the bonus in all existing favored terrains by 1.

Preferred Weapons: Outdoorsmen have little time to learn the ins and outs of every sort of weapon. They tend to pick a specific weapon early and stick to it. An outdoorsman must select one melee and one ranged weapon, which become his preferred weapons. Attack and weapon related feats that are chosen as bonus feats only apply when the character is using his preferred weapons. Any time the outdoorsman gains a new favored terrain, he may choose to substitute new weapons as his preferred weapons. This choice replaces his previously chosen weapons and is permanent until he next gains a favored terrain.

Bonus Feat: The outdoorsman may choose any of the fighter's bonus feats. However, any feats that apply to, or are used with, weapons (Power Attack, Cleave, etc.) only apply when the character is using a preferred weapon. If these feats are chosen when using non-bonus feats, they may apply to all weapons with which the character is proficient.

Animal Companion: The Outdoorsman has befriended an animal, as if he had cast the *animal friendship* spell at a caster level equal to half his class level. Should this companion die, he can gain a new companion after one month. The companion must be native to one of the outdoorsman's favored terrains. The outdoorsman may never have more than one companion of any type.

Fast Passage: The outdoorsman may move at his full speed through any of his favored terrains, despite impediments such as deep bogs or thick forest.

Lightstep: When moving through a favored terrain, the outdoorsman is skilled at not leaving tracks; the DC to track him through these areas is increased by his class level.

Bestial Companion: The outdoorsman is capable of bonding with a beast, and may take any beast with an Intelligence of three or less as a companion. The outdoorsman may never have a bestial companion whose HD are greater than his own. The beast befriends the outdoorsman as does an animal that is the target of the *animal friendship* spell. The outdoorsman may never have more than one companion of any type.

Magical Companion: The outdoorsman is capable of bonding with a magical beast, and may take any magical beast with an Intelligence of three or less as a companion. The outdoorsman may never have a magical companion whose hit dice are greater than his own. The magical beast befriends the outdoorsman as does an animal that is the target of the *animal friendship* spell. The outdoorsman may never have more than one companion of any type.

SHORTER VARIANTS

The following variant classes are only slightly changed from the core classes. As such, they require somewhat less detail.

FIGHTER VARIANTS

URBAN WARRIOR

The urban warrior is a city-based fighter, who has spent little time outside the walls of his



hometown. Urban warriors can be found as the enforcers and the muscle of criminal guilds, as the leaders of the City Watch, or as bodyguards and private police for powerful nobles and merchants. The main advantage an urban warrior gains is skill selection; the main disadvantage they face is fewer armor proficiencies and feats.

Urban warriors tend to travel light. Cities are filled with tight alleys, dead ends, narrow passages, and so on. Moving quietly and keeping to the shadows is vital if you wish to stay alive. For this reason, urban warriors train only in light armor.

Furthermore, in the cities, there is often more to life than combat, and even combat can be complex. No matter how skilled a fighter may be, all of that power is worthless if he cannot locate his enemy. Unlike fighters who battle massed armies of orcs or flamboyantly visible dragons, urban warriors are often unaware of the true identity of their foe. Whether a bodyguard seeking the man who attempted to kill his patron, a guild enforcer looking for a rogue operating without the guild's blessing, or a watchman searching for the same rogue, the urban warrior must be prepared to ask questions and get answers. They have skills to facilitate this, but the time taken to master those skills detracts slightly from their combat abilities.

An urban warrior is identical to a fighter, except as follows:

CLASS SKILLS

The urban warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Urban Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: 4 + (Int mod) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + (Int mod).

CLASS FEATURES

Urban warriors are proficient in light armor, all shields, and all simple and martial weapons.

OTHER

Urban warriors do not gain a bonus fighter feat at 1st level.

NEW SKILL: URBAN LORE

URBAN LORE (Wis)

Use this skill to survive in the urban jungle. You are a skilled scavenger of the streets, capable of finding the essentials of life in any city or urban environment.

This skill is the urban counterpart to Wilderness Lore. Rogues, bards, and rangers may take it as a class skill. Rangers who take Urban Lore as a class skill must make Wilderness Lore a cross-class skill. You must make this decision when you take your first level of ranger.

Check: You can keep yourself safe in a city or town without relying on others to help you.

DC 10: Scrounge enough food and water to stay alive; find a reasonably safe place to sleep on the streets.

DC 15: Determine if an abandoned building is safe or is likely to collapse or be inhabited by monsters.

DC 20: Recognize signs of underworld factions; know whose turf you are on. A successful check against this DC also grants you a +2 synergy bonus to Gather Information checks in this specific area or neighborhood.

Retry: You may try to find food and shelter once per day. You may attempt to gain the +2 synergy bonus on Gather Information checks only once per use of the Gather Information skill.

MONK VARIANTS

SEEKER OF WISDOM

The seeker of wisdom is a monk who combines his quest for inner development with a quest for knowledge. The seeker travels the world seeking enlightenment, both spiritual and temporal. Each has a number of key obsessions, which may or may not be related, and they will go almost anywhere to further their knowledge of their chosen subjects. They are somewhat less combative than their fellow monks, as they have spent their time learning things other than weapon use.

Seekers of wisdom are a fairly diverse lot, but

all share a few common personality traits. They are intelligent, curious, and believe there is no reasonable limit on the search for knowledge. While highly lawful and disciplined, a seeker would think nothing of breaking into a library or violating a longstanding cultural taboo, if, by doing so, he could enhance his knowledge of a certain subject.

A seeker of wisdom will often join up with an adventuring party if their actions are likely to further his personal quest for intellectual enrichment. This overwhelming desire can cause him to lead the party into danger, or at least nudge them towards it. ("It is true that the Caverns of the Red Mountains are filled with deadly giant scorpions. But what better place is there, then, to learn of their mating habits?")

A seeker of wisdom is identical to a monk, except as follows:

CLASS SKILLS

The seeker of wisdom's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (any one) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon proficiencies are even more limited. A seeker of wisdom is proficient in only three of the standard monk weapons.

GHOST HUNTER

The goal of the monk is physical and mental perfection in this life, ending ultimately with a form of transcendence. Because of this, many monks view undead as the ultimate abomination, creatures that failed to achieve enlightenment in life and will not go to their proper place in death. The well-ordered world of the monk cannot abide a creature that is neither alive nor dead, one that cannot truly improve itself or move on to its next stage of existence. Thus, ghost hunters emerge from among the monk orders, forsaking some parts of their training in order to set the dead to rest, permanently.

Ghost hunters are found wandering the world, seeking out undead to destroy. They will gladly join adventurers whose expeditions are like-

ly to place them in contact with the undead. While a ghost hunter does not expect every conflict to involve the undead, he will leave a group that deliberately avoids undead or that refuses to seek them out when the opportunity arises.

Ghost hunters will never willingly bargain with, or make treaties with, undead. Any ghost hunter that knowingly avoids killing undead when the opportunity presents itself will become an ex-ghost hunter, advancing as a normal monk from then on.

A ghost hunter is identical to a monk, except as follows:

ALIGNMENT

Must be lawful neutral or lawful good.

CLASS SKILLS

The ghost hunter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

CLASS FEATURES

Once per day, a ghost hunter can turn undead as a cleric of half his class level. He may not take the Extra Turning feat.

The intense spiritual training of the ghost hunter is not without its drawbacks; time spent studying the ways of ghosts is time not spent in conditioning and exercise. Thus, ghost hunters have inferior Fortitude saves, using the same Fortitude save progression as a rogue.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FIGHTING
ARTS

This chapter contains over two dozen new feats geared toward martial characters, but appropriate for any character that wishes to better defend himself from the dangers of the world. After that, two sections are presented detailing new rules for special types of combat, combat while mounted and acrobatic combat. Get ready for high flying fun!

All of the text in this chapter is considered **Open Game Content**.

NEW FEATS

The following section describes several new feats for use in any d20 system game. Several of the feats have prerequisites that are also listed as class abilities for certain classes, such as Two-Weapon Fighting for the ranger. If a character has a class ability that mirrors a feat, then that will pass for the appropriate prerequisite. If the character somehow loses this ability, however, they will no longer have access to any feats that require it.

RAGE FEATS

This new class of feat is available only to barbarians and other characters with the ability to rage. These new feats can be used while

the barbarian is raging, and cannot be used if the barbarian somehow loses the ability to rage.

NEW FEATS

BARROOM BRAWLER [GENERAL]

You can dish it out and take it in a tavern fight.

Prerequisites: Con 13+, Toughness.

Benefit: You gain +4 hit points for the purpose of defending against subdual damage (PHB 134). In addition, your unarmed attacks deal 1d4 points of subdual damage plus your Strength modifier (1d3 for Small creatures).

Special: A character may not take this feat more than once.

BLOOD OF IRON [GENERAL]

You have a natural resistance to spells thanks to especially strong dwarven lineage.

Prerequisites: You must select this feat at 1st level.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to all saving throws against spells and spell-like abilities.

Special: The bonus may be selected by dwarves and stacks with their natural resistance to spells and spell-like abilities, making their bonus a total of +3 instead of the normal +2.

NEW FEATS

General Feats

Barroom Brawler*
Blood of Iron
Bull's Strike
Clinging Combat
Hunter's Wisdom
Improved Leverage
Improved Soft Step
Lionhearted
Master Tracker
Parry*
Parrying Weapon*
Pressing Attack**
Quick Leap
Riposte*
Rising Strike
Soft Step
Superior Mounted Archery
Taunt
Two-Weapon Defense*
Weapon Trip
Weapons of Opportunity*

Rage Feats

Collective Fury
Furious Strength
Holy Fury
Raging Jump
Savage Health
Warcry

Prerequisites

Con 13+, Toughness
You must select this feat at 1st-level
Dex 13+, base attack bonus +6 or higher, Improved Bull Rush
Dex 13+
Wis 13+
Improved Trip
Dex 15+, Soft Step
Iron Will
Track, Wisdom 15+
Dex 13+, base attack bonus +3 or higher, Expertise
Two-Weapon Fighting
Combat Reflexes
Dex 13+
Base attack bonus +6 or higher, Parry
Dex 15+, base attack bonus +5 or higher, Quick Leap
Dex 13+
Mounted Archery
Bluff 4 ranks, Cha 13+
Dex 13+, Ambidexterity, Expertise, Two-Weapon Fighting
Weapon Focus
Base attack bonus +4 or higher

Prerequisites

Ability to rage, Warcry
Ability to rage
Ability to channel positive energy, ability to rage
Ability to rage, Jump 3 ranks
Ability to rage, Con 15+
Ability to rage, Cha 13+

* This feat was first released in the *Seafarer's Handbook*, also by Fantasy Flight Games.

** This feat was first released in the *Dragonstar Starfarer's Handbook*, also by Fantasy Flight Games.

BULL STRIKE [GENERAL]

You learn to make vicious attacks after throwing yourself into an opponent.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, base attack bonus +6 or higher, Improved Bull Rush.

Benefit: When you perform a successful bull rush, you may also follow it up with one melee attack against that opponent. This melee attack uses your highest base attack bonus and is considered a free action. For example, T'Gal, a 10th-level barbarian, bull rushes an opponent and succeeds. He has two attacks per round, one at +12 and a second at +7. He may immediately make a melee attack with his first melee attack modifier of +12. If the opponent is

knocked down or falls down during the bull rush, he is considered to be prone for the attack.

Normal: See the rules for bull rush in the core rules (PHB 136).

CLINGING COMBAT [GENERAL]

The character is exceptionally skilled at fighting while climbing.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+.

Benefit: You do not lose your Dexterity bonus to AC while climbing, and when you miss while attacking someone while climbing, you do not need to make a Climb check to avoid falling.

Normal: A character who is climbing has no Dexterity bonus to AC, and



risks falling if he attacks someone and misses while clinging.

COLLECTIVE FURY [RAGE]

Multiple characters with the rage ability can cause fear in opponents.

Prerequisite: Ability to rage, Warcry.

Benefit: While a lone berserker is enough to instill fear in the hearts of otherwise stalwart men, a crazed mob of berserkers can rout entire units with the shrill sound of their clan's battle cry. A character with the Collective Fury feat knows how to amplify the terror that a raging mob can generate. When a character with Collective Fury rages, all other characters within 30 ft. who are raging temporarily gain the benefits of the Warcry feat. Multiple Warcry effects stack with each other.

FURIOUS STRENGTH [RAGE]

You can channel your rage into a single burst of incredible strength.

Prerequisite: Ability to rage.

Benefit: You can choose to forego the normal benefits of rage for a single round of incredible strength. To use this feat, a character must still be able to rage at least once during the current day. Furious Strength may be

invoked whenever rage could be activated. When the character uses this feat, he gains +20 Strength for a single action that can last for no more than one minute. This can be used to bash down an obstacle, lift an impossible weight until his friends can run safely through, or deal tremendous damage to a foe with a single attack. After this action, the character is fatigued for one minute, suffering the same effects as if he had just finished a rage.

HUNTER'S WISDOM [GENERAL]

Your knowledge of animals makes you more skilled at killing them.

Prerequisite: Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks.

Benefit: Whenever you are in combat with an animal or beast, you can make a Knowledge (nature) check at a DC of 10 + the creature's hit dice. If you succeed, the threat range of any weapon you use against that creature is increased by 1.

HOLY FURY [RAGE]

You can channel positive energy and rage to deal severe damage to undead.

Prerequisite: Ability to channel positive energy, ability to rage.

Benefit: Characters who can both rage and channel positive energy (turn undead) can combine these two abilities when fighting undead. By sacrificing one turning attempt for the day while raging, the character gains the ability to affect undead with critical hits. This lasts until the end of his current rage.

IMPROVED LEVERAGE [GENERAL]

You are a master of leveraging yourself against opponents, giving you an advantage during unarmed maneuvers.

Prerequisites: Improved Trip.

Benefit: The character adds a +4 bonus to his ability checks when initiating or defending against trip attempts, and a +2 bonus to all grapple checks.

IMPROVED SOFT STEP [GENERAL]

You can move more quickly while maintaining your light step.

Prerequisites: Dex 15+, Soft Step.

Benefit: As Soft Step, except that a character can move his full base speed while maintaining his light footing. In addition, skill check DCs are only increased by two instead of five

when using skills and Soft Step together.

LIONHEARTED [GENERAL]

You possess an incredible level of bravery and determination.

Prerequisites: Iron Will.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to Will saves and a +4 bonus to Will saves against fear effects.

MASTER TRACKER [GENERAL]

You have mastered the ways of the hunter, allowing you to follow enemies through even the most difficult terrain.

Prerequisites: Track, Wisdom 15+.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to all Search checks and Wilderness Lore checks while tracking.

PARRY [GENERAL]

You can deflect a melee attack against you with your own weapon.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, base attack bonus +3 or higher, Expertise.

Benefit: On your action, you may choose to hold one or more of your normal attacks until an opponent attacks. The opponent rolls his attack normally to determine if he hits. If he succeeds, you may then make an opposed attack roll against a DC equal to your opponent's final attack result. If you succeed, you have parried the blow and struck your opponent's weapon (PHB 136). Using parry does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If, at the end of the round, you have any unused parry actions, they are lost and may not be transferred to the next round.

Normal: Characters who do not possess this feat may not attempt to parry.

PARRYING WEAPON [GENERAL]

You can use an off-hand weapon as if it were a shield.

Prerequisite: Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: When wielding a weapon in your off-hand that is at least one size category smaller than you are, you can defend yourself with the weapon as if it were a buckler. No armor check penalty applies, but normal arcane spell failure does. You cannot use the weapon to both attack and defend in the same melee round.

PRESSING ATTACK [GENERAL]

You are skilled at seizing every advantage and keeping your opponent on the defensive.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes

Benefit: This feat allows you to follow an opponent who tries to step back from an area you threaten. The opponent must be in an area you threaten at the beginning of his action. If the opponent takes a 5-foot step to an area you do not threaten, you may immediately take a 5-foot step of your own to any unoccupied space where you again threaten the opponent. If no such space is available, you cannot use this feat. You may only use this feat once per round.

QUICK LEAP [GENERAL]

You can rise from the ground instantaneously.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+.

Benefit: If you are down on the ground in a prone position and are able to stand, you may do so as a free action rather than as a move-equivalent action.

Normal: It is a move-equivalent action to stand from prone.

RAGING JUMP [RAGE]

You can use your rage to extend your leaping distance.

Prerequisite: Ability to rage, Jump 3 ranks.

Benefit: While raging, you can channel some of your energy into a prodigious leap. You gain a +10 bonus on a single Jump check at the cost of shortening your total rage time by one round.

RIPOSTE [GENERAL]

You may attempt to turn a successful parry into an additional attack against your opponent.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +6 or higher, Parry.

Benefit: If you made a successful parry this round, you may make a free melee attack against the opponent you parried. The attack is at your highest base attack bonus and all normal modifiers apply. No matter how many parries you have made, you can make no more than one riposte per round, unless you are affected by magic items or spells that increase the number of actions you can make in a round, such as *haste* or *boots of speed*.

OFFICIAL ERRATA: TWO-WEAPON DEFENSE

The Two-Weapon Defense feat was originally presented in the *Seafarer's Handbook*. The version presented below is slightly modified and is now the official version of the feat.

RIISING STRIKE [GENERAL]

You can make a quick, surprising attack when rising from the ground.

Prerequisites: Dex 15+, base attack bonus +5 or higher, Quick Leap.

Benefit: You catch your opponents off guard by attacking from the ground and rising in one swift motion. If you attack an adjacent opponent in the same round as you rise with Quick Leap, your first melee attack gains a +4 bonus to hit and your opponent loses his Dexterity bonus to AC against that attack.

SAVAGE HEALTH [RAGE]

You gain temporary hit points when you rage.

Prerequisite: Ability to rage, Con 15+.

Benefit: In the first round that a character is raging, he may choose to channel some of his fury into a surge of health. This free action grants them 1d8 temporary hit points for each round by which they shorten their rage. All of these hit points vanish when the rage ends. Damage is taken from these temporary hit points first; if the total damage taken during the rage does not exceed these hit points, the character has taken no real damage.

SOFT STEP [GENERAL]

You are so light on your feet that you avoid an opponent's tremorsense ability.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+.

Benefit: While using this feat you cannot be targeted by an opponent's tremorsense ability. Your base speed is one-half normal while using this ability. Additionally, any skill checks that require extreme movement (Escape Artist, Tumble, and so on) may allow an opponent to detect you. Add five to the DC of any skill check if it is made while using Soft Step. Making an attack roll immediately negates the benefits of this feat. Once you have revealed yourself to a creature, you may not use Soft Step against it until you leave its tremorsense range and then return.

Special: Characters wearing heavier than light armor may not benefit from this feat.

SUPERIOR MOUNTED ARCHERY [GENERAL]

You are a master Bowman while mounted on your steed.

Prerequisites: Mounted Archery.

Benefit: The penalty you suffer when using a ranged weapon with the Mounted Archery feat is halved: -1 instead of -2 if your mount is taking a double move, and -2 instead of -4 while your mount is running.

TAUNT [GENERAL]

The character can distract and anger an opponent with well-chosen mockery.

Prerequisite: Bluff 3 ranks, Cha 13+.

Benefit: As a move-equivalent action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, the character can target a single opponent who can either see or hear the character. The character then insults, mocks, or otherwise attempts to infuriate the target, who must make a Sense Motive check opposed by the taunting character's Bluff check. Should the target fail this check, he will attempt to attack the taunting character, ignoring any present targets in favor of the offensive newcomer. This does not mean he will stupidly charge the taunting character; he will fight as cunningly as is fitting. He will, however, ignore other opponents unless doing so is suicidal. (He will suffer an attack of opportunity to break combat with his current opponent, but he would not run through a gauntlet of the taunter's allies, suffering multiple attacks.)

This feat is often used to draw opponents away from allied spellcasters or to distract foes while the party rogue disables a lock or safely trips a trap.

TWO-WEAPON DEFENSE [GENERAL]

You can attack and defend with a weapon in each hand. You can fight defensively while still making your normal attacks each round.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Ambidexterity, Expertise, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: You can take a penalty of -2 to all attack rolls this round in order to gain a +4 dodge bonus to AC until your next action.

Normal: See Expertise (PHB 82) and Fighting Defensively (PHB 124).

Special: You can only use this feat if you wield a weapon in each hand.

WARCRY [RAGE]

The character can terrify opponents with a fearsome battlecry.

Prerequisite: Ability to rage, Cha 13+.

Benefit: As a move-equivalent action, the character can emit a battlecry that will severely unnerve his opponents. Each opponent within 30 ft. of the character at the time of the cry must make a Will save (DC 10 + the character's Charisma bonus). Add two to the DC of the Will save if the character with Warcry has at least five ranks in Intimidate.

Opponents that fail the Will save suffer a -1 morale penalty to attack rolls, Will saves, and AC for as long as the raging character remains in combat and raging. Using Warcry reduces the character's total rage time by one round.

WEAPON TRIP [GENERAL]

You have trained to be able to trip foes with your melee weapon.

Prerequisites: Weapon Focus

Benefit: Select one melee weapon for which you have the Weapon Focus feat. You may now use that weapon to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop that weapon to avoid being tripped.

Normal: Only specially designed weapons such as the guisarme may be used to trip opponents in combat.

WEAPONS OF OPPORTUNITY [GENERAL]

You can use mundane objects as weapons in combat.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: You can use virtually any mundane object that you can lift as if it were a weapon. You attack with all normal bonuses, including those from applicable feats. Damage for a weapon of opportunity depends on its size. Consult the following table.

Size	Damage	Critical	Range Increment
Tiny	1d3	x2	10 ft.
Small	1d4	x2	10 ft.
Medium	1d6	x2	10 ft.
Large	1d8	x2	10 ft.



ACROBATIC COMBAT

There are as many styles of combat as there are genres of fantasy. One of the most entertaining to watch is the acrobatic style, a collection of moves and tricks that are used in everything from martial arts to pirate skirmishes. For a character who specializes in acrobatic fighting, Dexterity and Intelligence are particularly important. Some of the more complicated maneuvers require a well-rounded character who has practiced Balance, Tumble, and other physical skills in addition to the fighter's class skills. Rogues and bards are often drawn to this style of combat, but anyone with the proper training can perform the moves listed here.

Some of the maneuvers listed below involve leaping, swinging, or walking over the character's opponents. This kind of three-dimensional combat raises the question of which squares around an opponent are threatened. For all purposes of these maneuvers (unless it specifically states otherwise in the maneuver), a person is considered to threaten squares above him with the same reach as around him. So, a character threatens the squares directly above his threatened squares to the same distance as his reach. Some of the maneuvers also require the use of a prop (furniture, rope, enemies, allies, etc.). Any required props will be listed in the descriptions below.

Each maneuver listed below has a list of prerequisites that must be met before the maneuver can be performed. In addition, some of the maneuvers require skill checks in order to succeed. If no skill check is called for, assume any character that meets the prerequisites can utilize the maneuver.

ATTACK FROM ABOVE

Prerequisites: Tumble 3 ranks, Jump 5 ranks.

Benefit: If the character wishes to ambush a passerby from higher ground, he may make an attack from above. He must be at least 5 ft. above the head of his target, which usually means 10 ft. higher than the surface on which his target is standing (assume all

Medium-size creatures are 5 ft. tall for this purpose). The character initiating the attack from above makes a melee touch attack roll, with a +1 modifier for starting from higher ground. Targets hit by an attack from above suffer 1d6 points of subdual damage and are subject to an immediate trip attack. The attacking character gains a +4 bonus to the opposed trip check due to the extra force being applied to the defender. After resolving the trip attack, the attacker must make a Tumble check (DC 15) to remain standing. If this check fails, he falls prone and suffers 1d6 points of subdual damage.

The attacking character can attempt to trip multiple targets with the attack from above. He may target up to four Medium-size creatures with a single attack as long as each target is no more than 5 feet away from all other targets. In order to attack the group as a whole, the character must make a melee attack roll as above, with a -1 penalty to his attack roll for each target to be included in the group. The attack roll is then applied separately against the touch AC of each target. Those who are hit must then make opposed trip checks.

Alternatively, a character attempting an attack from above can initiate a grapple instead of a trip attack. In this case, the target suffers no damage from the attack from above, but may still take damage if he is successfully grappled. The attacker gains a +1 circumstance bonus to his touch attack roll for starting from higher ground and a +4 bonus to the opposed grapple check to start the grapple. Unlike a normal grapple attempt, you may still initiate the grapple even if the target hits you with his attack of opportunity.

BEAMWORK

Prerequisites: Balance 8 ranks, Tumble 5 ranks, Jump 5 ranks, Dex 15+.

Benefit: The character can run or leap from beam to beam across an otherwise open chasm (i.e., open rafters in a building, rare planks in a dilapidated bridge, tree limbs in an ancient forest, a diabolical maze over a pool of acid, etc.). This maneuver allows movement at twice the normal rate with a single Balance check per round (DC 15) at no penalty. The beams must be at least six inches wide for this maneuver to be used. If the beams are above ground level, a successful Jump check is required both to gain access to the beams and to dismount without taking falling damage.

BLADE BALLET

Prerequisites: Blind-Fight, Spring Attack, Int 13+.

Benefit: Through years of intensive training, the character has intuitively mastered graceful and deadly sequences of combat moves, allowing him to effectively fight foes on all sides with a reduced penalty. Opponents attacking the character from flanking positions receive only a +1 flanking bonus to their attack rolls.

CARTWHEELING

Prerequisites: Tumble 5 ranks, Mobility.

Benefit: A character using this maneuver can cartwheel over the back of either an opponent or an ally, thus passing through an occupied space to get to the other side. This movement can only be made in a straight line and the cartwheeling character must land directly opposite the starting point. The ending position can be no further than 10 feet away from the start of the move. This maneuver may not be performed while wearing medium or heavy armor.

In order to cartwheel over an ally, the character must make a successful Tumble check (DC 15). If she is successful, she does not provoke an attack of opportunity at the end, even if she lands in or moves through a threatened space. Should the character fail the Tumble check he does not move, and his ally suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls and AC until his next round.

Cartwheeling over an opponent is more difficult. The character must make a Tumble check (DC 20) to execute the maneuver safely. Failing this check means the character does not move and his opponent gets an attack of opportunity. If the character then makes an attack on the opponent over which she just tumbled, she can add a +2 flanking bonus to her attack roll.

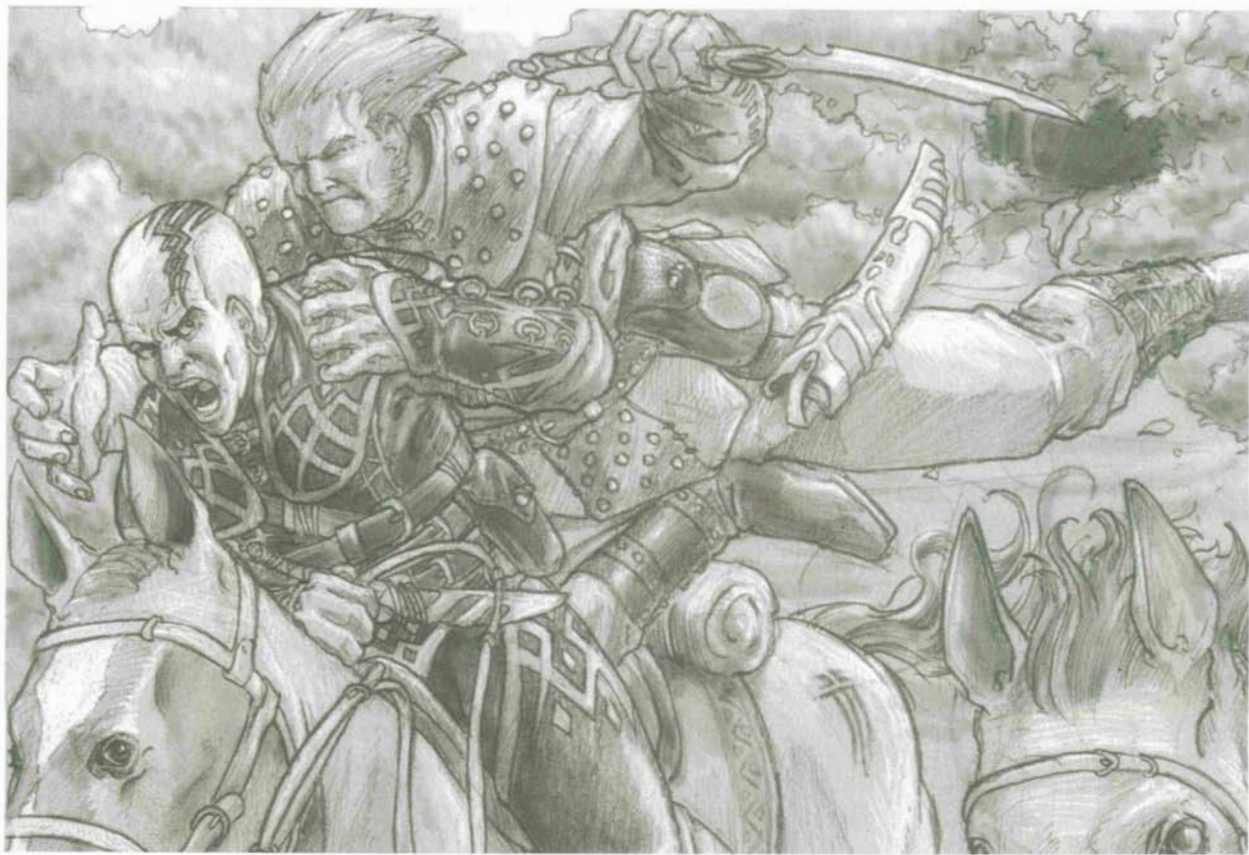
Performing a cartwheel is in all other ways identical to a 5-ft. step.

DANCE AROUND THE MAYPOLE

Prerequisites: Balance 5 ranks, Str 13+, Dex 13+.

Benefit: This maneuver requires two friendly characters, both with the listed prerequisites. When performing this maneuver, the two characters grasp hands and swing around, using the momentum to deliver kick attacks to adjacent enemies. Both characters must go on





the same initiative, and neither can be wearing medium or heavy armor.

Each character may take his full number of unarmed attacks against any opponent within 5 ft. of either character. These attacks may be split up however the character wishes. Each attack deals 1d6 points of subdual damage plus Strength modifier, and the character does not suffer attacks of opportunity even if he does not have the Improved Unarmed Strike feat.

GOING UP

Prerequisites: Climb 5 ranks, Str 13+.

Benefit: A character can use this maneuver to grab a rope that is connected to a counter weight, loosen the counter weight, and be pulled up to a higher elevation (the top of a shaft, the second floor, etc.). This maneuver is a move-equivalent action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

HIGH DIVE

Prerequisites: Swim 5 ranks.

Benefit: A character can use this maneuver to dive off a building or cliff face that is between 50 and 150 feet in height, into water that is at least 10 feet deep for every 30 feet of his dive. The character must make a

Swim check (DC 15) to succeed. He gains a +2 synergy bonus to this check for having 5 ranks in Jump or Tumble, up to +4. On a successful check, the character takes no damage. Failure indicates that the character receives standard damage for falling into water (see the core rules, DMG 112). The character takes the standard penalty to this check: -1 for each 5 pounds of gear he is carrying.

LEAP TO DIFFERENT ELEVATION

Prerequisites: Jump 5 ranks, Tumble 5 ranks.

Benefit: The character can take a running leap and tumble up or down one five-foot level of elevation without changing her speed. She can jump up to a ledge or outcropping from the ground, down to a platform on a lower level, and so on, by making a successful Jump check (DC 18). If the character is jumping down and through an opponent's threatened area, she may make a Tumble check (DC 15) to avoid attacks of opportunity. A character may not leap to a different elevation while wearing medium or heavy armor.

Failure on the initial Jump check indicates that the character botched the landing, taking 1d6 points of subdual damage and stopping her movement. The character still ends up

on the new elevation, but may not move farther *unless she has* another action.

POLEWORK

Prerequisites: Balance 8 ranks, Climb 5 ranks, Tumble 8 ranks, Dex 13+.

Benefit: A character with this maneuver can swing from pole to pole, as well as do flips, handstands, and other acrobatic moves. Polework is useful in that it allows a character to gain greater distance than a leap might normally provide, to control his descent from a higher elevation, to reach places (and things) that are normally inaccessible, and to pick and choose both the method and position of landing. A character cannot do polework while wearing medium or heavy armor.

Characters using polework must have a fixed pole to work with somewhere in their environment. (*Immovable rods* are excellent for this purpose, and every would-be acrobat does well to find one or two.) Polework is often done in series, with a mount, a number of exercises, and then a dismount. The character can use the dismount as a jump, clearing a base of 10 ft. and adding 1 ft. per point above 10 on a Jump check. If used as a high jump, the character can jump 3 ft. higher than the pole, +1 ft. per 4 points above 10 on his Jump check. In order to control the placement of the landing, the character must make a successful Tumble check (DC 15). Failure indicates that the character botches the dismount, does not land where he wished, and suffers 1d6 points of subdual damage upon landing. The character lands 5 feet from his intended destination in a random direction.

RAPPELLING

Prerequisites: Balance 5 ranks, Climb 5 ranks.

Benefit: A character can use this maneuver to slide down a rope, cable, or chain quickly and silently. This can be used either to quickly descend a vertical surface, with the rope fixed at the top, or to cross a horizontal distance, with the rope or chain fixed at both ends and a handle (rope, chain, leather, a wheeled "trolley," etc.) that allows the character to slide down the rope. Either way, a successful Climb check (DC 10) must be made to successfully rappel each round. On a failed check, the character takes 1d3 points of subdual damage and must make a Reflex save (DC 10) or fall the rest of the way down.

Rappelling doubles the character's Climb speed in both situations, as well as adding a +4 circumstance bonus to Move Silently checks made while climbing the rope.

RUNNING UP WALLS

Prerequisites: Balance 7 ranks, Climb 7 ranks, Tumble 5 ranks.

Benefit: This maneuver allows a character to scale a sheer vertical wall of no more than 15 feet in height as part of a normal move action. This maneuver requires a successful Climb check (DC 20) in order to reach the top. Failure indicates that the character fell or ran into the wall, taking 1d6 points of damage and falling prone. This maneuver may be performed on a smooth, flat wall. If the character runs up the wall in an inside corner, where she can use the perpendicular wall to push off, the Climb DC is reduced by 5.

This maneuver can also be used to push off a wall and flip back, landing behind a pursuing opponent. A character may use this only if in the previous round he did nothing but move adjacent to a wall and an opponent followed him. If this is the case, he can make a Tumble check (DC 20) to perform the maneuver. If successful, he lands 5 feet directly behind his opponent and may make an attack with a +2 flanking bonus.

SWING KICK

Prerequisites: Tumble 5 ranks, Dex 13+.

Benefit: This maneuver allows the character to swing over an object or around a vertical pole to deliver a powerful kick attack. This kick deals 1d6 points of subdual damage and initiates a bull rush attack against the target. The attacker does not provoke an attack of opportunity by using this maneuver.

SWINGING ATTACK

Prerequisites: Climb 5 ranks, Dex 13+.

Benefit: Sometimes characters have the opportunity to swing on a rope, vine, chandelier, or other hanging object. This can have a variety of effects depending on the intent of the swinger. If the swinging character wishes to initiate a bull rush, he does not provoke an attack of opportunity by doing so and adds a +1 bonus to his Strength check for every 5 feet he moved. If the character makes a melee attack, he gains the +1 bonus for higher ground and suffers no attack of opportunity for swinging by the defender. *The attacker*



can also attempt to knock his target off its feet, making a trip attack with a +1 bonus to the opposed roll for every 5 feet traveled. The character does not provoke an attack of opportunity for the trip attack, and gains a +1 bonus to the melee touch attack for higher ground. The trip also deals the target 1d6 points of subdual damage. If the character is tripped during his own trip attempt, he is pulled off his rope and takes 1d6 points of subdual damage, falling 5 feet away from his opponent.

In order to dismount next to the target, the character must make a Tumble check (DC 15) or fall prone. Otherwise, the character holds on to the chandelier until his next action.

TUCK AND ROLL

Prerequisites: Tumble 8 ranks, Mobility.

Benefit: A character using this maneuver can somersault through the legs of an enemy at least one size category larger, then pop up into a fighting position. This maneuver can be used to travel up to 20 feet. On a successful Tumble check (DC 20), the character suffers no attacks of opportunity while crossing the area. If the character then makes an attack on the opponent under which she just tumbled, she can add a +2 flanking bonus to her attack roll. On a failure, the character provokes an attack of

opportunity and does not move. A character cannot tuck and roll in medium or heavy armor.

VAULTING

Prerequisites: Jump 5 ranks, Tumble 5 ranks.

Benefit: Vaulting allows a character to leap over terrain, walls, and other obstacles no more than five feet in height without slowing down. She may even do this while at a full run or while engaged in combat, possibly granting herself cover in the process. A character may not vault while wearing medium or heavy armor.

MOUNTED COMBAT

These maneuvers, much like the ones in the Acrobatic Combat section, do not require a feat to use. They are meant to present more combat options to characters based on their existing skills rather than enhancing a character's overall abilities.

CATCHING PREY

Prerequisites: Aerial mount, Trample feat.

Benefits: When performing a trample on an opponent from an aerial mount, a character may decide to grab the opponent instead of dealing damage, provided the mount has claws or arms. On a successful trample, the mount makes a grapple check with a +4 bonus to the attempt. This does not provoke an attack of opportunity. Afterwards, the mount may continue its movement for that round. Opponents suffer no damage from being grappled, but a dropped opponent suffers 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet fallen.

Drawback: A mount can only attempt this maneuver against an opponent at least two size categories smaller than it.

CHARGED JUMP

Prerequisites: Ride 5 ranks.

Benefit: If an experienced rider's mount makes a full double move in a straight line before attempting a jump, the rider can make a Ride check (DC 10) to aid the mount's Jump check (see cooperating in the core rules, PHB 62).

KNOCKING A RIDER FROM HIS MOUNT

Any rider can be knocked from his mount by a blow from an enemy. The enemy must make a successful trip attack to do so, on which the mounted character gains a +1 higher ground bonus. The mounted character can substitute a Ride check instead of a Strength or Dexterity check to oppose the trip attempt. On a success, the character is knocked or pulled from his saddle and suffers 1d6 points of damage, ending up prone on the ground next to his opponent.

A military saddle grants the mounted character a +2 on his opposed roll, an emergency belt grants a +8 bonus, and a flat saddle imposes a -2 penalty on such checks. A character tied into an aerial saddle cannot be pulled from his mount in this fashion. The opponent's mount may be no more than one size category larger than the character initiating the trip, otherwise he is out of reach.

COAX THE BEAST

Prerequisite: Ride 5 ranks

Benefit: An experienced rider can push a mount to run even after it is exhausted. By making a successful Ride check (DC 20 + number of previous checks) the character can delay one point of Constitution damage to his mount from pushing its movement. This does not actually negate the damage, but delays it until the rider and mount stop. Once stopped, the horse takes all of the Constitution damage at once, often killing the mount on the spot. A rider can only coax the beast one time for every three Constitution points the mount has. After this point, the mount begins losing Constitution at a rate of one point per minute until it has reached its total current ability damage, at which time it collapses.

DEFT DODGING

Prerequisites: Mounted Combat, Ride 5 ranks.

Benefit: By focusing on dodging opponents and defensive maneuvers, the character grants both he and his mount a bonus to AC. If both he and his mount perform nothing but a single move in a round, the mount gains a +4 dodge bonus to AC and the rider gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC.

DIVING ASSAULT

Prerequisites: Aerial mount, Ride 5 ranks, Ride-By Attack.

Benefit: When performing a diving assault, an aerial mount flies straight down to an opponent to make an attack. The mount gains a +4 bonus to its attack roll that round.

Drawback: The rider must spend his full effort controlling the mount and may not attack

until the next round.

HIT AND RUN

Prerequisites: Ride 10 ranks, Ride-By Attack.

Benefits: The mounted character can make an attack against any adjacent enemy that he approached in the previous round and then move away without suffering an attack of opportunity.

Drawback: Due to the haste of the attack, the character suffers a -1 penalty on his attack roll.

JUMPING ON HORSEBACK

Prerequisites: Ride 8 ranks, Balance 8 ranks, Dex 15+.

Benefit: A character can stand and jump while on horseback to avoid low obstacles that might otherwise unseat her. This requires a successful Balance check (DC 20). Failure indicates that the character slipped, taking 1d6 points of physical damage, 1d6 points of subdual damage, and falling prone.

LASSO AND DRAG

Prerequisites: Ride 5 ranks, Strength 13+, Use Rope 5 ranks.

Benefits: As a standard melee attack, a character can try to lasso and drag an opponent with a rope. It takes a full round action and a successful Use Rope check (DC 15) to prepare the lasso for the attack. An opponent hit by a lasso can shed it as a move-equivalent action any time before the knot is secured; once secured it requires a full round action and an Escape Artist check (DC 20) to release. The rope can be burst with a Strength check (DC 23). In order to secure the lasso, the character that threw it must make a Use

Rope check (DC 15). If this check fails, the lasso comes loose and falls to the ground harmlessly. If it succeeds, the knot tightens and the lasso grapples the target, pinning him.

If the character's mount continues to move, he must make a Strength check (DC 15) or be yanked off his horse. A stock saddle adds a +2 circumstance bonus to this check. The pinned opponent is dragged behind the horse, taking 1d6 points of subdual damage per round until he escapes.

LEAPING ONTO YOUR HORSE

Prerequisites: Ride 5 ranks, Jump 5 ranks, Dex 13+.

Benefit: A character can leap from a 20-foot height or less into the saddle of his horse without damage to him or the animal. Characters must make a successful Ride check (DC 20) in order to land safely and avoid spooking the animal. On a failed check, the character and the horse both take 1d6 points of damage and the animal spooks. The character's armor check penalty, if any, does apply to this roll.

RIDER'S LEAP

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Ride 8 ranks.

Benefit: The character can combine riding skill, agility, and a bit of luck to manage to jump onto a horse (or any other animal the character can ride) that is both in motion and being ridden by another character. To do this, he must get to within 5 ft. of the target animal and on an elevation at least equal to the target mount's back. This can be accomplished by riding next to it, by leaping from a branch as it passes underneath, or any other such means.

The character then makes a Jump check (DC 15). If the check succeeds, the character is now perched on the target animal, behind the current rider. It is possible to attack the rider from this position, using any weapon that could be used in a grapple. The rider does not gain his Dexterity bonus to AC and may not use a shield. Either rider can make an opposed Ride check as a standard action to attempt to unseat the other. If a defender loses this check, he falls from the mount, taking damage as appropriate.



SIDESWIPE

Prerequisites: Ride 8 ranks, Ride-By Attack.

Benefits: A mounted character can try to knock over a smaller creature by slamming into it from the side as a part of the movement action. To perform a sideswipe, the mount makes a melee touch attack against an opponent that is at least one size category smaller. If the touch attack succeeds, the mount and target must make opposed Strength checks. If the mount wins, the target falls to the ground and takes 1d6 points of subdual damage. If the target wins, the mount fails to knock the target down and takes 1d6 points of subdual damage.

Drawback: The character must make a Ride check (DC 20) or the mount stops moving for the round. If this check succeeds, the mount can finish its move normally.

SNATCH AND GO

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Ride 8 ranks.

Benefits: As a standard action, a character can lean over the side of a moving mount and pick something up. If the object is on the ground, the rider must make an unarmed attack against AC 10. If the character attempts to grab an object or weapon from an opponent's hand, he must make a standard disarm attempt, except the opponent has a -4 penalty to his attack of opportunity. If this attempt fails, the opponent does not get the opportunity to disarm the character.

Drawback: The character cannot have any weapons drawn when performing the snatch.

SPINNING KICK

Prerequisites: Ride 8 ranks.

Benefit: A four-legged mount can make this attack in any round in which it moved 5 ft. or less. The mount spins around and lashes out with its rear legs, causing tremendous damage to anything struck. The attack deals 2d6 points of damage plus one and a half times the mount's Strength bonus. Any target of this attack must also make a Strength check (DC 5 + the damage inflicted) or be pushed 5 ft. back and knocked to the ground.

Drawback: The mount's rider may not attack during a round in which his mount performs a spinning kick, and he must make a Balance check (DC 10) or fall off the mount.

STRADDLING TWO HORSES

Prerequisites: Ride 8 ranks, Balance 8

ranks, Dex 15+.

Benefit: A character can straddle two horses and control them simultaneously. This maneuver can also be used to bring harnessed animals to a stop, or to help control a horse whose rider has been incapacitated. This maneuver requires two horses of roughly the same size (two light warhorses, two riding horses, etc.). In order to straddle two horses, the character must make a successful Ride check (DC 20). Failure indicates that he is unable to control the horses and falls prone, taking 1d6 points of both normal and subdual damage.

SUDDEN HALT

Prerequisites: Ride 4 ranks.

Benefit: If a rider pushes his mount into a run or charge, he can use a full round action to bring the mount to a complete halt rather than slowing it down to a trot first. The rider must make a Balance check (DC 12) or fall off the mount as it rears itself back. The rider may dismount as a free action in the same round.

SWITCHING HORSES IN MID-GALLOP

Prerequisites: Ride 8 ranks, Balance 5 ranks, Dex 15+.

Benefit: A character can switch from his horse to another horse in mid-gallop, as long as the horses are alongside each other with no more than 5 feet between them. He must make a Ride check (DC 15) or miss the target and fall, taking 1d6 points of damage.

If the target horse has a rider, this maneuver provokes an attack of opportunity. Once the two riders are on the same horse, they may struggle to unseat one another. The two characters must make opposed Ride checks, with the first character to lose two consecutive checks being thrown from the horse, taking 1d6 points of damage from the fall and ending up prone.

TACKLE

Prerequisites: Jump 3 ranks, Ride 5 ranks.

Benefit: A character using this maneuver can leap off his mount to initiate a trip or grapple attack on an opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity. The character gains a +2 bonus to the touch attack to initiate a grapple or trip, and a +4 bonus to the Strength check to resolve a trip.

Drawback: If the character fails to trip or successfully initiate a grapple, he automatically falls prone in a square next to his opponent.

CHAPTER THREE

SCHOOLS OF COMBAT

This chapter contains an essay on character creation and ability selection that can help a player maximize his fighting character for whatever he would like to do. Fighting schools are next, giving characters new options for building unique fighting styles by specializing in the techniques of a particular school.

All text in this chapter is designated closed content. All rules-related material derived from the d20 System Reference Document is designated **Open Game Content**.

THE MECHANICS OF MELEE

This section is designed to aid players who are playing melee-based characters (fighter, barbarian, ranger, or monk) for the first time, although some of the topics also touch upon ranged combat as well. By covering topics such as melee archetypes, feat combos, and simple combat tactics this section attempts to educate new players in the finer points of entering melee combat and surviving.

MELEE ARCHETYPES

The term “melee archetype” is used to describe the different styles of execution that melee-based characters have to choose from. Examples range from skilled swordsmen who use dexterity and intelligence to disarm and bewilder opponents to savage barbarians that use brute strength and feats such as Power Attack to pile on massive amounts of damage. Rangers and monks possess a wide variety of styles and tactics in combat as well.

By having a character plan (with skill selection, feat selection, and ability score placement) during the character creation process, new and old players alike will perform more effectively and more comfortably during combat. Listed below are four examples of melee archetypes.

THE SWORDSMAN

This type of character uses speed, skill, and intelligence in combat rather than brute strength.

Ability Scores: The swordsman’s primary ability scores are Dexterity and Intelligence. A high Dexterity score increases the swordsman’s AC, while placing a premium on Intelligence gives the character a few extra skill points to

place where he most needs them.

Skills: Hide, Move Silently, and Tumble are all key skills that play into the strengths of the swordsman character.

Feats: The swordsman's key feats are Dodge, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Mobility, and Weapon Finesse.

Tactics: The swordsman uses his mobility as effectively as his weapon to both keep opponents off balance and always keep his options open. His high Tumble score makes it more likely that he can dodge in and out of combat without suffering attacks of opportunity. By selecting the Mobility feat, he ensures that even if he fails his Tumble check, he gains a +4 to his AC against attacks of opportunity, making him even more difficult to hit. The swordsman's Weapon Finesse and Improved Disarm feats allow him to take advantage of his high Dexterity score, making him more skilled with his melee attacks and better able to disarm opponents without provoking attacks of opportunity. The key to the swordsman is opportunity and mobility; he should never box himself in if it is not absolutely necessary.

Note: after a successful disarm attempt an opponent's weapon falls to the ground at his feet unless the disarming character is unarmed. The disarming character can use a move-equivalent action to pick up the weapon, and he suffers no attack of opportunity unless the opponent has Improved Unarmed Strike or another weapon in hand.

THE DESTROYER

Few things are more intimidating than a skilled and powerful melee character with his weapon in hand. This type of character uses brute strength, intimidation, and destructive tendencies to crush opponents and their possessions.

Ability Scores: The primary ability scores for the destroyer are Strength and Constitution. A high Strength score adds to all of the destroyer's melee attacks and damage rolls. With the destroyer placing himself in the midst of combat, the bonus hit points provided by a high Constitution score are helpful as well.

Skills: While the destroyer rarely slows down long enough to use his skills in combat, a high Intimidate score can help him reduce the num-

ber of viable opponents before the fight even begins.

Feats: The key feats for the destroyer are Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, and Sunder.

Tactics: The high Strength of the destroyer increases the effectiveness of his melee attacks and damage rolls. By using Power Attack and Sunder at higher levels, the destroyer can pile on added damage as well as destroy the armor and weaponry of opponents. The use of the Improved Bull Rush feat allows the destroyer to initiate bull rush maneuvers without provoking attacks of opportunity, forcing opponents out of his threatened area and creating attacks of opportunity for his allies. By placing himself in the middle of multiple opponents, the destroyer can use the Combat Reflexes and Cleave feats to attack all of the enemies within his threatened area. Combining these elements with the barbarian's ability to rage makes the destroyer incredibly dangerous in combat. Subtlety is not the strong point of the destroyer; he is direct and dangerous, almost to the point of recklessness.

THE GRAPPLER

With strength and speed, this character uses grappling attacks to throw opponents off balance and deliver punishing unarmed strikes.

Ability Scores: The primary ability scores for the grappler are Strength and Dexterity. A high Strength score adds to all of the grappler's attack and damage rolls, while a high Dexterity score improves the grappler's AC and important skills such as Escape Artist and Tumble.

Skills: Listen, Move Silently, and Tumble are the grappler's most important skills. A high Listen score aids a grappler's attempts to detect hidden or stealthy opponents, while a high Move Silently helps him avoid detection. Much like the swordsman, a good Tumble score is helpful in avoiding attacks of opportunity while moving through an opponent's threatened area.

Feats: The key feats for the grappler are Combat Reflexes, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, and Power Attack.

Tactics: While in combat, the grappler's

hands are his weapons. His high Strength score gives him an advantage when using the *Improved Trip* feat, and allows him to deal more damage even before factoring in the *Power Attack* feat. *Combat Reflexes* allows him to strike multiple opponents who pass through his threatened area, and his higher-than-average AC combined with *Tumble* checks aid in efforts to avoid attacks from opponents. A monk's stunning fist and flurry of blows abilities increase the melee potential of the grappler as well.

Tripping is a good option against opponents with a high number of attacks, since by standing from prone they are limited to one attack per round. The *Improved Trip* feat allows a character to follow up a successful trip with a grapple attempt at a substantial bonus. In this way the grappler can completely incapacitate a dangerous opponent with a series of touch attacks, followed by a single opposed grapple check. The grappler's use of unarmed strikes allows him to deal massive amounts of damage to grappled foes while maintaining an effective grapple or pin.

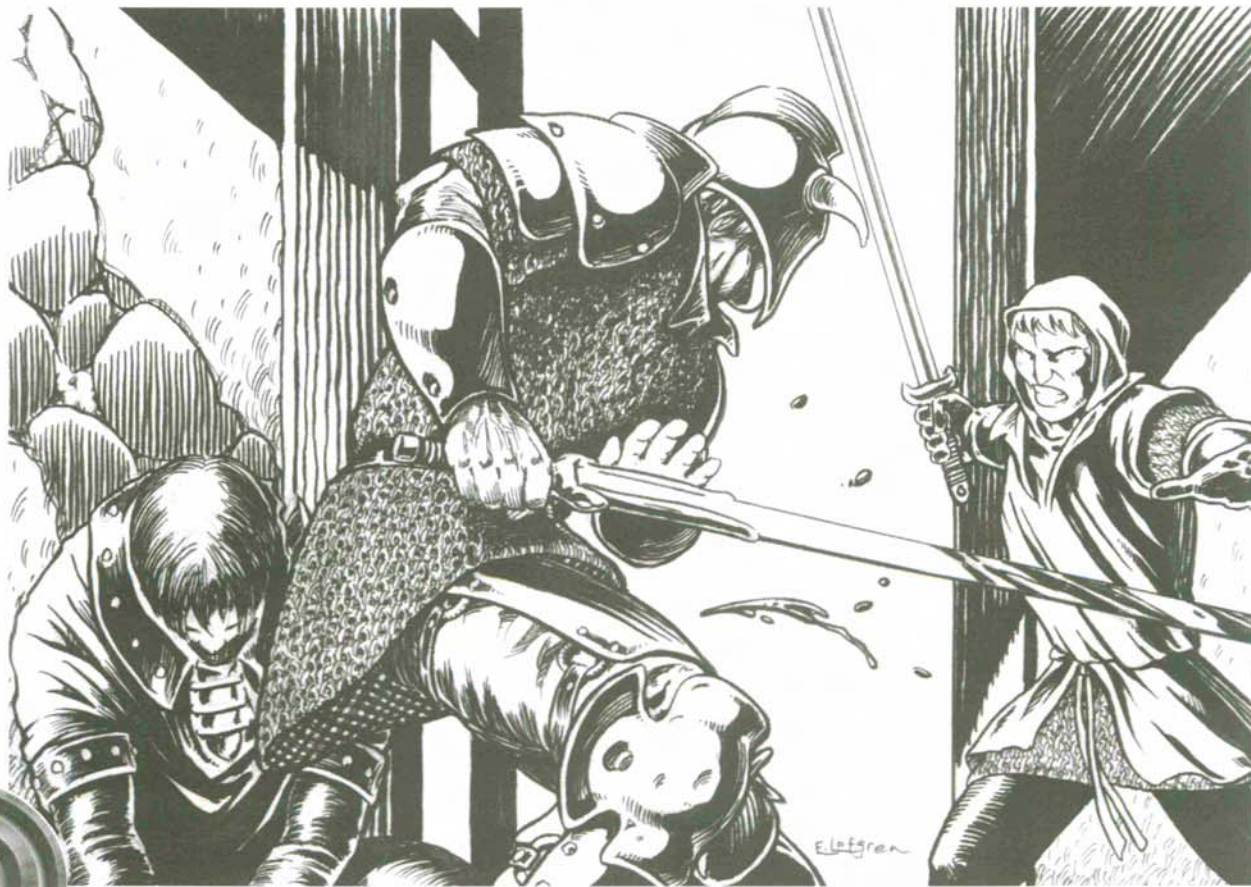
Disarming is another good option against a dangerous and highly armored opponent. Rather than striking to deal damage, the character takes away his opponent's ability to deal damage to him, thus reducing the chances of serious injury. Once the grappler's opponent is weaponless, the grappler is at a great advantage due to his specialized unarmed training.

MELEE TACTICS

This section covers a few of the tactics that melee-based characters can use to aid one another or themselves in combat.

Aiding: This tactic can be very helpful to low-level characters, as the +2 bonus to attack rolls or AC makes more of an impact early in a character's career; and, with only a DC of 10 to perform the aid, it is more often than not a success. You may initiate an aid action any time you and your ally can both attack the same opponent in melee combat.

Flanking: The flanking tactic is helpful to melee characters no matter what level they may be. In fact, higher level characters are even



more dangerous while flanking an opponent. The +2 bonus gained by flanking applies any time you and an ally are positioned on opposite sides of an opponent. This tactic is particularly useful while working in conjunction with a rogue character, as flanking an opponent allows a rogue to use his sneak attack ability.

Positioning: By keeping an eye on your placement during a battle you increase your chances for survival. By staying mobile and avoiding flanking situations you decrease your opponents' opportunities to gain bonuses against you. If faced with multiple opponents, place your back to a wall or similar structure, this reduces the chance for a flank against you. Other positioning options are within narrow passages (where only one opponent may enter your threatened area) or within a doorway (also reducing opponents' flanking opportunities).

Choosing Your Actions: Always be careful when choosing actions in combat. Pulling any item other than a weapon while an opponent threatens you gives him an attack of opportunity. If you need an item, attempt to move away from an opponent before pulling the item. It may take an additional round or two to accomplish your goal, but the chances of taking damage and suffering attacks of opportunity are reduced.

Know When To Run: Standing your ground against a dangerous foe is not always the best plan of attack, and in some cases you will be forced to run away from an opponent. Never be afraid to leave combat if necessary, especially at lower levels, as spells such as *raise dead* may be incredibly difficult to acquire for a fallen ally.

Plan Ahead: During the course of an adventure (or long-running campaign) plan ahead for encounters. Discuss tactics and signals to use while in combat to aid one another. Learn the abilities of allies and discover new ways to aid them. An example is knowing when to force an enemy into an adjacent square with a bull rush attack, one round before the group's wizard unleashes a *fireball* spell that just reaches that square, leaving you unharmed and your opponent singed.

Practice Combat Maneuvers: With the permission of your DM, play through practice encounters to learn what your melee character is capable of in combat. By practicing with the

use of feats, skills, and abilities you will be more comfortable when actual adventure encounters happen.

MOUNTED COMBAT TACTICS

By choosing to use a mount in combat, a melee character chooses to make the mount an extension of himself as well. Both mount and rider must be skilled and aware of their surroundings. This section covers some of the tactics that a mounted melee character may use to increase his effectiveness in combat.

Melee Combat: For melee combat while mounted, characters have a greater selection of feats to aid them. Feats such as Mounted Combat, Spirited Charge, and Ride-By Attack are effective in both keeping a mount focused in combat and giving a mounted character more freedom of movement in the combat area. Combine these feats with a high score in the Ride skill and mounted characters can quickly become an imposing force on the battlefield. This is particularly true for characters who have Spirited Charge and choose Weapon Focus (lance) or Weapon Specialization (lance). This not only increases their charging damage with a lance but also increases their chances to hit with it as well.

Ranged Attacks: Unlike fighters, who gain a significant amount of feats, many melee characters must be selective at lower levels when choosing a style of combat that is right for them. When choosing a style of mounted combat there are two options: ranged or melee. By choosing the Mounted Archery feat, a character is more skilled at firing a bow from horseback and gains the advantage of a mount's increased move rate. By choosing the Weapon Specialization feat in a ranged weapon or selecting feats such as Point Blank Shot or Precise Shot, a mounted archer can even further offset the penalties suffered while firing mounted.

Using a Mount's Natural Abilities: Remembering the natural attacks of a mount can be very helpful. Typically a successful Ride or Handle Animal skill check (DC 15) is required to spur a mount to use its natural attacks in combat. But just as with characters, mounts may only make a standard action and move-equivalent action per round (unless otherwise stated).



Doubling Up: By placing two riders on one mount, characters increase their effectiveness. With a melee-based character leading the mount and performing melee attacks, this leaves room for a second character to make ranged attacks. Using two riders on one mount may reduce the mount's move rate, but the doubled amount of attacks can be very favorable during combat.

RANGED COMBAT TACTICS

Characters using ranged weapons possess a distinct advantage over close-quarters fighters in that they have the aid of distance. By staying out of the threatened areas of opponents, characters using ranged weapons have a better chance of avoiding attacks and being damaged in combat. Described below are several examples of combat tactics that characters using ranged weapons may use in combat to improve their effectiveness.

Shoot and Hide: If your opponents are unaware of your initial location, it is possible to fire on them and hide before they can react. Once they have been shot, however, they are aware of your previous position, so taking a round or two to relocate before shooting again is a wise decision. This can also serve as a distraction while close range fighters move into position, or as the bait when laying an ambush.

Interrupting Spellcasters: By keeping distance in combat, characters using ranged weapons have the advantage of overseeing the battlefield. By delaying in the initiative count until an enemy spellcaster begins to cast, a successful ranged attack has the potential to interrupt the spellcaster's semantics and ruin his casting attempt. By doing this and allowing close-quarters characters to attack the more physical opponents, a character using ranged weapons can significantly improve his allies' chances for success and hinder the efforts of enemy spellcasters.

Use Grenade Weapons: By taking advantage of their high ranged attack bonus characters specializing in ranged weapons can be more effective with items such as thunderstones, flasks of acid, alchemist's fire, and tanglefoot bags. These items are effective and can be very helpful even if conventional ranged weaponry is unavailable. A well-placed thunderstone can disrupt enemy spellcasters and possibly make it

incredibly difficult for them to cast spells at all, while tanglefoot bags can slow down an enemy's advance long enough to get additional shots off before they engage.

MELEE COMBAT VS. MAGIC COMBAT

For the melee character, fighting monsters and evil warlords comes with the territory, but fighting opponents with spellcasting abilities can be another story. This section covers two examples of combat that fighting characters can use to overcome the difficulties of facing spellcasting opponents.

Close-Quarters: The first example is close-quarters combat. Most often this requires a fighter to simply charge in and attempt to overpower a spellcasting opponent (although the inevitable minions that the spellcaster throws at enemies often make this difficult). This style focuses on the use of attacks and maneuvers that deal large amounts of damage and serve to interrupt enemy spellcasting. Closing in quickly on a caster often creates attacks of opportunity for melee characters if the caster attempts to cast a spell while within the melee charac-

ter's threatened area. Use of the Pressing Attack feat (see Chapter 2) makes it even more difficult for a spellcaster to escape once he is engaged. When facing an opponent with a focus or similar item that allows them to cast spells, using Sunder to destroy the item can leave one's opponent helpless. In the case of divine spellcasters, sundering a holy symbol may greatly hinder their abilities. Whenever possible, the use of multiple melee characters flanking a caster can make a large difference, as the +2 bonuses to hit increase the chances of interrupting the caster's spells. This style may be risky for melee characters, however, as many spells require a simple touch attack to cast. For heavily armored melee characters who do not rely on a high Dexterity score and magical bonuses for a high AC, this can lead to trouble.

Ranged Combat: By using ranged weapons, characters stand a better chance of avoiding touch attack spells and other short range effects created by spellcasting opponents. With feats like Far Shot, Precise Shot, and Rapid Shot, characters have a good chance to interrupt an opponent's spellcasting attempts. Most bows and crossbows have a better range than spells, although the shooter may take severe range





penalties for firing in the higher range increments. Often ranged combat is used to aid melee characters by disrupting spellcasters who repeatedly take a 5-ft. step out of melee to cast spells. The ranged character merely reads an action and fires when the spellcaster steps back.

FEAT COMBOS

This section covers a few examples of feat combinations that melee characters can use to increase their combat prowess. By learning to combine feats with others, or even with skills, melee characters can give themselves an edge in combat, offset penalties, or aid their allies. Listed below are examples of feat combos and feat/skill combos.

Power Attack and Sunder: When you attempt to strike a weapon or armor with the Sunder feat, use the Power Attack feat to increase the amount of damage you deal to the item. This allows you to destroy heavy weapons with a single blow, although if your opponent is skilled, it may drastically reduce your chances of success.

Mobility and Tumble: By using the

Tumble skill to pass through or away from an opponent's threatened area, melee characters may be able to avoid attacks of opportunity. Mobility gives a character a +4 AC bonus against attacks of opportunity for leaving or passing through a threatened area. Having a high Tumble skill and the Mobility feat gives a character great freedom when moving through a crowded melee.

Weapon Finesse and Weapon Focus: For melee characters that rely on speed and finesse more than power, this combination is ideal. Taking these feats compliments a fighter with a high Dexterity and low Strength, making him an effective combatant on both the defensive and offensive sides. This feat combo is especially beneficial to low-level characters.

Improved Trip and Stunning Fist: By following up a successful trip attack with a stunning fist, a character prevents his opponent from rising in the following round. This means that the character's (and his allies') next attacks will benefit from the +4 bonus for attacking a prone enemy. It can also give a character extra time to retreat if he is badly wounded or needed elsewhere.

Alertness and Skill Focus: The Alertness feat grants a +2 bonus to all Listen and Spot skill checks. Combining this feat with Skill Focus gives a character a +4 bonus in the chosen skill, instead of the normal +2.

Deflect Arrows and Lightning Reflexes: Lightning Reflexes gives the character a bonus to all Reflex saves, including those to deflect incoming ranged attacks using the Deflect Arrows feat.

Handle Animal, Mounted Combat, and Skill Focus (Ride): The Mounted Combat feat allows a character to attempt a Ride skill check to negate a successful melee hit against his mount. By choosing the Skill Focus (Ride) feat, a character gains a +2 bonus on all Ride checks. By adding 5 ranks in the Handle Animal skill, a character gains another +2 bonus, making the total bonuses for his Ride skill and Mounted Combat ability a +4.

SCHOOLS OF COMBAT

As a discipline grows and matures, it develops into branches. These branches are unique in and of themselves, and yet still tied to the whole. Combat, like the mighty oak, has many branches.

It all begins with an idea of a different way to fight. The idea takes shape and becomes a unique style. The style is refined. It is given boundaries and rules. Specialists emerge. They put the style to use and soon teach others who in turn become the next generation of masters. And thus the cycle continues and a school is born.

Anyone who wishes to learn a unique fighting style is called a student. The student must undertake a series of lessons that break down the philosophies of the school. Once a student has learned at least half of the lessons a particular school offers, he is considered a master and may teach the techniques he has learned to others. A student who learns from more than one school will never be considered a master, although he may still teach lessons as long as he has learned at least half of the lessons from a school.

Most combat schools have 10 individual lessons. Each lesson teaches a special technique, but in order to gain the technique, a student must spend the appropriate time and experience costs necessary to learn the lesson. A student must always learn the first lesson of a school before advancing further. This determines the course of education for the student. That first school is called the primary school and all other schools become secondary. Because each school has its own way of learning, it is more difficult for a student to learn the techniques of a secondary school. As such, a student must pay twice the normal XP cost to learn a lesson from any secondary school.

Only a master can instruct others in a school's secrets, but not all masters can use the techniques they teach. The Veruthian Slayers, for example, are mainly taught by clerics of the

god of death. These clerics cannot use the techniques of the Slayers, but each has spent the time necessary to acquire the knowledge so that they can pass it to others. A master never needs to spend the XP required to teach a lesson, only the time and, if appropriate, the gold.

The level cap listed in Table 3-1 details the ideal level that a student should be before attempting to learn a lesson. If the student wishes to undertake a lesson and does not meet the level cap, the XP costs are increased by 20% to reflect the difficulty of the lesson.

ACADEMIES AND TRAVELING MASTERS

In order to learn the techniques of a school, a student must seek out either an academy or a traveling master.

Academies are large, usually self-funded, organizations dedicated to instruction. Most academies are found within cities and metropolises, but a rare few are mobile. An academy has training rooms, all the necessary educational equipment, and a staff of masters, usually one for every five students. They are cheaper than traveling masters and many offer scholarships for talented, yet destitute, fighters. The local government may sponsor a young student in return for future work with the town guard or army.

On the other side, a traveling master can be found almost anywhere, from the most dangerous dungeons to the corner of a seedy tavern. A character can locate a traveling master by succeeding at a Gather Information check (DC 25) and spending 1d4 weeks searching. These ronin masters are under no obligation to teach and can charge whatever rate they feel like. Some may ask for gold or favors, and a few teach for more personal reasons, such as vengeance or boredom.

Some masters do not teach at all and may require strong convincing to take on a student. Traveling masters are usually expensive, but having the one-on-one kind of education found only with a traveling master reduces the required time to learn a lesson by 15 percent.

TABLE 3-1: SCHOOLS OF COMBAT

Lesson	XP Cost	Time Cost	Level Cap
1	100	1 week	1
2	300	1 day	2
3	600	2 days	4
4	1,000	3 days	6
5	1,500	4 days	8
6	2,100	1 week	10
7	2,800	1 week, 3 days	12
8	3,600	2 weeks	15
9	4,500	3 weeks	18
10	5,500	1 month	20

SCHOOLS

SOLDIERS OF THE WHITE SHIELD

The Soldiers of the White Shield are masters of defense, and are quickly becoming famous for producing reliable guards. They are non-combative by nature but are not afraid of a good fight, preferring to let a foe wear himself out before the real pummeling begins. A dwarven paladin by the name of Nikolai Whiteshield founded the school in preparation for a long war. It is said that his decision to create the school was divinely inspired and he was acting on the premonitions of some great calamity. Some loremasters have found old scrolls written by Whiteshield predicting various events, including a terrible menace that would someday invade the surrounding lands. The dwarf also predicted that a Soldier of the White Shield would defeat it. However, the Soldiers take these claims in stride and with a hearty laugh. Although their founder has been credited with foreseeing several events in history, most dismiss these predictions as mere coincidence.

School Motto: Stand Strong, Stand Firm.

ACADEMY

The Soldiers of the White Shield have a four-story academy in the town of Ralabast called *The Tower*, which has almost 300 students at any given time. The dwarven headmaster, Nikolai Steeljaw, has presided over the

academy for almost 140 years. Costs for *The Tower* are 5 gp per day or 15 gp per week, multiplied by the lesson level the character is attempting to learn. Lessons are taught in order and begin before dawn every morning with a physical exercise. New lesson cycles begin three times per year, once each at the beginning of spring, summer, and fall.

TRAVELING MASTER: ELI MANDRAKE

Male human Ftr12; Size M (6 ft., 1 in. tall); HD 12d10+48; hp 122; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20; Attack +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+5 warhammer), or +12/+7/+2 ranged (1d8 composite longbow); SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +3; AL CG; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 7, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +2, Craft +10, Handle Animal +11, Jump +14, Spot +3, Ride +8, Swim +16; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Expertise, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialization (warhammer).

Possessions: +1 warhammer, chain mail, +2 large steel shield of moderate fortification, 2 potions of cure light wounds, 187 gp.

School of the White Shield Lessons: Lead Footing, Defensive Stature, Block Arrow, Defend Ally, Stubborn Will, Defensive Nature, Disarming Blow.

Eli Mandrake is a 50-year old human with long, scraggly hair and an offensive body odor. He is most often found at the bottom of a bot-

tle in some tavern, but sometimes can be found lying unconscious in the street. His rates range from 5 gp to 50 gp a day, and are usually based on his current gambling debts. He is willing to take on a student, however, and he has a genuinely good demeanor, even while drunk. His skills as a master Soldier are impressive, even if they are sometimes hampered by his weak will.

LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Lead Footing

A strong stance is the basis for all the techniques of the White Shield. As part of his training, a student of the White Shield strengthens his legs through constant running and balance exercises. The lead footing technique bestows a +4 stability bonus when defending against trip attacks and improved grab attempts.

Lesson 2 – Defensive Stature

To learn the defensive stature, a student must undergo a grueling exercise regimen. The master and student engage in a series of battles in which the student may not strike back and must remain totally on defense. The purpose of this exercise is to improve endurance, patience, and the ability to dodge blows. Defensive stature imparts a +1 dodge bonus to AC.

Lesson 3 – Block Arrow

When teaching the block arrow technique, a master fires arrows at a student who tries to block them with a round, wooden shield. This lesson teaches a student to keep an eye out for ranged weapons and to predict their movement in combat. From then on, if the student does nothing but move in a round, he gains twice the normal AC bonus from his shield against ranged attacks. This ability does not work with the *shield* spell.

Lesson 4 – Defend Ally

In combat, a good soldier keeps a friend covered from attacks. When first learning this technique, students are taught to concentrate on protecting another person in combat. As a result, any time the Soldier uses the aid another action in combat, he can impart a +4 bonus to his ally's AC rather than a +2.

Lesson 5 – Stubborn Will

In this lesson, the student and master travel to a secluded spot. The master carries all the supplies. For several days, the student must stand in absolute silence and refuse all offers of food or drink while the master taunts and provokes him. The master may even roast up a disgustingly obscene feast and lay it out toward the



end of the second day. By refusing to give in to temptation, the student learns the stubborn will technique, imparting a +1 bonus to all Will saves.

Lesson 6 – Defensive Nature

By continuing his efforts in balancing exercises, the student learns to be naturally defensive at all times. Defensive nature improves the AC bonus given by defensive stature to +2.

Lesson 7 – Disarming Blow

A disarming blow is an improved strike against a weapon. When learning this lesson, the student and master practice for days with a variety of different-sized weapons and positions. Eventually, the student masters the angle of attack needed to strike a weapon away from an opponent. This technique grants a +2 bonus to all disarm attempts. In addition, a successful disarm knocks the weapon 10 ft. away from the defender.

Lesson 8 – Unexpected Charge

Sometimes the best defense is a good offense. As part of this lesson a student randomly attacks his master without warning, usually with clever ambushes. The unexpected charge teaches the idea that an opponent caught off guard is easier to fight. Once this technique is learned, the character can take a charge action without suffering attacks of opportunity from creatures whose threatened squares he charges through.

Lesson 9 – Energy Resistance

This lesson is a real trial by fire and sometimes scars a student for life. The student first chooses an energy type such as cold or electricity and then travels to an appropriate environment: a frozen wasteland for cold, a volcano for fire, a rotting swamp for acid, a stormy mountaintop for electricity, and so forth. The student then endures this harsh environment wearing as little clothing as possible and using no magical protections. The master checks up on, feeds, and encourages the student on a daily basis. The result of this torture is the development of a natural energy resistance 5 to the chosen energy type.

Lesson 10 – Damage Reduction

The most powerful technique a student of the White Shield can learn is the ability to shrug off damage. The secrets of attaining this ability are carefully guarded, and students wish-

ing to learn this powerful technique are whisked away for a month and return with very little memory of what occurred or where they went. However, upon his return the student has gained the damage reduction technique. With this ability, a character gains a natural damage reduction of 2/-.

THE VINEKEEPERS

There is an old saying, “You don’t see a Vinekeeper until it’s too late,” and there is some truth to this. The Vinekeepers have a knack for camouflage, and move with the silence of a rabbit in snow. To a Vinekeeper, nature is not only a friend, but also a cloak and a shadow. They live for the hunt and sometimes gather together in large parties to track down and kill a powerful beast. There are tales of Vinekeepers going after everything from green dragons to displacer beasts. Sometimes a town will hire a Vinekeeper to rid the area of a destructive monster such as a bulette or a pack of dire wolves. The origin of the Vinekeepers is shrouded with mystery, though some attribute its founding to some great avatar of old.

School Motto: The Wind Has No Fear

ACADEMY

The Rhyecatchers are a mobile academy made up of a small group of master Vinekeepers. They only train about 10 students at a time and require a small test, a Move Silently check (DC 12), for new recruits. Costs are 1 gp per day per lesson level, but students are on their own for food and shelter.

TRAVELING MASTER: FEI STARSHIELD

Female elf Rgr8/Sor3; Size M (4 ft., 10 in. tall); HD 8d10 + 3d4; hp 54; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19; Attack +11/+6 melee (1d6+2 longsword), or +13/+8 ranged (1d8 longbow); SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +8; AL CG; Str 13, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Handle Animal +11, Hide +6, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +11, Profession +5, Ride +10, Search +12, Spellcraft +5, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +7; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Track.

Possessions: +1 longsword, bracers of armor +4, ring of protection +1, gloves of swimming

and climbing, 48 gp.

Vinekeepers Lessons: Nature's Clothing, The Huntsman, Watchful Rest, Quickscape, Stoneface, The Grassblade.

Fei Starshell is a tiny, spry high elf of 168 winters. She is fond of jewelry, music, and good company and will occasionally take a student for about 5 gp a day should the mood take her. Although flighty at times, Fei can instruct even the densest students in the ways of the forest. One of her favorite tactics is to disappear and ambush her student, or her student's friends. This tendency has gotten her compared to a fey many times, a comparison that she is not entirely uncomfortable with.

LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Nature's Clothing

Vinekeepers wear a distinct uniform that makes it easier for them to blend into wooded areas. This clothing has to be specially made by the master for the student. The student receives a series of lectures of how clothing, plants, colors, and sunlight are all important in camouflage. The clothing covers light and medium armor and gives the wearer a +2 circumstance bonus to Hide checks made in forested areas. The clothing cannot be worn by another individual and requires 1 full day to completely replace if destroyed.

Lesson 2 – The Huntsman

As part of being more at home in the wild, a student of the Vinekeepers must learn to be self-sufficient. As such, the master teaches the student how to identify certain tracks, hunt wild animals, and to properly prepare game for eating. The huntsman technique gives a character a +2 circumstance bonus to Wilderness Lore checks and makes it a class skill.

Lesson 3 – Watchful Rest

A Vinekeeper must be ready for anything, prepared to move at a moment's notice. As part of her training, a student spends her nights in meditation while her master occasionally delivers an unexpected slap. This technique improves awareness during periods of rest. A character with watchful rest gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Listen checks when sleeping or resting and may react immediately upon waking (she is never considered surprised after being awoken).



Lesson 4 – Quickscape

Vinekeepers use the quickscape technique to escape quickly from trouble. It takes patience and careful study to know the exact moment that an opponent will blink or otherwise be distracted in combat. With the master's careful guidance, a student learns to use nature as a way to conceal a retreat. Once per battle, the character can use her move action to run away and hide. Even if the opponent's eyes are following the character, it will seem as if she has melted into the background.

She may hide at any point during her movement, although her Hide check suffers a –1 penalty for each enemy combatant. Opponents can make an immediate Spot check as a free action to detect the character's hiding place, but if they fail this check they must search for her as normal. This technique can only be used in heavily forested areas.

Lesson 5 – Stoneface

Stoneface teaches a student the ability to remain perfectly still for hours on end. The lesson begins early one morning and involves hours of remaining motionless in a variety of positions and locations. The master teaches the student how to control breathing



and how to ignore irritations such as mosquitoes. The stoneface technique grants the Vinekeeper a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide checks when the character is in position and motionless before an enemy approaches. The student can remain motionless for a number of hours equal to 1 + her Constitution modifier. She may extend this time by making a Concentration check (DC 20 + the number of previous checks) at the beginning of each hour.

Lesson 6 – The Grassblade

Movement can give away a position and reveal a Vinekeeper, so much of her training focuses on erasing these disadvantages. The grassblade technique focuses on reducing sound and leaving as few traces of movement as possible. For one week, the master and student practice stop and go travel. By learning the grassblade technique, a character gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Move Silently checks and increases the DC of Wilderness Lore checks to track her by 4 when she is traveling through wooded environments.

Lesson 7 – Windwalk

As a supernatural ability, the Vinekeeper can move among the branches of the trees hidden by the sound of rustling wind. This ability

can be used three times per day and it lasts one minute per level each time it is used. A student learns this technique by sitting high in the trees and concentrating on the sound of the wind for several days. When using the windwalk, a character gains a +8 bonus to Jump, Hide, and Move Silently checks while moving among the branches of trees.

Lesson 8 – Nature’s Ally

The Vinekeeper has a good relationship with the plants and animals of the forest. By learning to tap into latent area magic, a Vinekeeper can ask for help from her environment. This ability acts as either a *control plants* or *animal friendship* spell as cast by a 9th-level druid, and can be used twice per day. The character can freely choose between the two effects each time the ability is used.

Lesson 9 – Viper Strike

One of the deadliest abilities of the Vinekeepers is the technique of attacking without warning and then retreating, all in a single action. When using a viper strike, the Vinekeeper draws a weapon, attacks with a +4 bonus on her attack roll, retreats, and hides, all within one round of combat and without provoking an attack of opportunity. This action combined with the quikscaple ability has given rise to legends that the Vinekeepers spring from the forest itself to wreak terrible havoc upon their enemies.

This ability works in all ways like the Spring Attack feat, except the Vinekeeper must be hidden before she initiates the strike.

Lesson 10 – One With Nature

In a forest, the Vinekeeper becomes nigh invisible even when she is not hiding. To learn this powerful technique, a student must spend an entire month in the wild without food, water, clothes, or even friends. The master watches from afar but does not directly intercede, leaving only clues, written suggestions, and odd animal sounds for the student to study. After learning this powerful technique, the Vinekeeper is always considered to have full concealment against attacks in a forest, as she blends in with her surroundings and ducks and weaves in combat, using the terrain to her utmost advantage.

ORDER OF ILLIANEL

The Order of Illianel came into being when a group of knights decided to open a school that taught combat with raw power and strength.; the Order of Illianel is not for the weak of body. Students in this school suffer more than just a bruise or two after a hard day of training. Although it has an incredible history, the Order currently stands on the brink of ruin. Most masters cannot even find work as town guards and must resort to thievery or mercenary jobs to make a living. It has become a political mess and many governments are threatening to ban the school altogether; some are even talking about executions. The Order thinks the future of the school depends on a war, and it is currently trying to instigate a fight between two neighboring kingdoms to give it just such an opportunity.

School Motto: Fight with all your Heart, your Mind, and your Body.

ACADEMY

The Dagworth Academy in southern Kisel has a fine reputation. This is increased no doubt by its headmaster, Sir Cuthwitt, a noble knight and proud father of twenty strapping young men, some of whom are still studying at the school. The price for entry into Dagworth is high, as are the standards for petitioning students, but the knights who teach are first rate and room and board is provided. Costs for study are 50 gp a week.

TRAVELING MASTER: SIR ISSACS OF JYSTUN

Male human Ftr15; Size M (5 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 15d10+45; hp 134; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21; Attack +24/+19/+14 melee (1d8+11 longsword), or +16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8 composite longbow); SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +6; AL LG; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Climb +21, Craft +12, Handle Animal +15, Hide +5, Jump +11, Listen +3, Spot +3, Swim +19; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Sunder, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: +3 flaming longsword, +1 half plate, +1 large steel shield of bashing, ring of protection +2, gauntlets of ogre power, cloak of charisma +4, potion of love, gold bracelet (250 gp), 72 gp.

Order of Illianel Lessons: Focused Attack, Expert Control, Ringing Strike, Power Slam, Balanced Attacks, Double Notch, Last Ditch Effort, Lion's Toss.

Sir Issacs is a young, blonde man with a penchant for danger and romance. *He can* often be found in a tavern telling of his exploits, although most find the narcissistic bent to his stories a bit harsh to listen to for long. He is extremely chauvinistic and will not take a female student, although he may make a few suggestive remarks in the process of turning one down. Even so, the arrogant knight is a renowned tutor and charges 20 gp a day for his services.

LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Focused Attack

The Order of Illianel focuses on good, solid fighting over fancy maneuvers. A disciplined fighter waits for the proper moment before making a move. The focused attack involves the student taking a defensive stance for one or more rounds in order to improve his next attack. The character must be in combat and taking no action other than full defense. For each round spent focusing, the character gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls for one standard melee attack. Subsequent attacks are treated normally. The maximum bonus is equal to the class level of the character performing the action.

If the character takes damage while he is focusing, he must make a Concentration check (DC equals the amount of damage taken) or lose any benefits from previous rounds of focus.

Lesson 2 – Expert Control

The Order of Illianel trains its members to be absolutely controlled in battle. Expert control bestows a character with a +1 bonus to damage rolls in melee combat, and makes Concentration a class skill for the character.

Lesson 3 – Ringing Strike

A well-placed slap can cause an opponent's head to swim. The technique of the ringing strike can only be performed in

unarmed combat and must be declared before the attack roll is made. The ringing strike deals no damage but a foe struck by the attack must make a Fortitude save (DC 12). If the saving throw fails, the foe is stunned for one round. This technique cannot be used against opponents wearing helmets or other protective headgear or who are immune to critical hits.

Lesson 4 – Power Slam

To learn this technique, students spend hours throwing themselves at tied bushels of hay in order to learn how to use weight in a charge. This technique confers a +1 bonus to melee damage when charging, and a +5 bonus to the opposed Strength check when the character initiates a bull rush.

Lesson 5 – Balanced Attacks

Requires multiple attacks. The Order of Illianel can teach a student to balance multiple attacks. Rather than making a single strong attack followed by one or more weaker ones, the student holds back a little on his initial strike to improve his chances of hitting on future strikes. Once a character learns this technique he may take up to a –4 penalty on his first attack and then add the subtracted amount to the second or third attack.

For example, Fenris is a 7th-level barbarian and has a total attack bonus of +10/+5. Fenris may use balanced attacks to subtract two points from his first attack and add it to the second. For one round, Fenris has a +8/+7 attack bonus. The exact amount subtracted must be declared before attack rolls are made and the added bonus must be used in the same round. This technique only works with melee attacks.

Lesson 6 – Double Notch

The double notch technique allows a student to fire two arrows at once by gripping them both at the same time. As such, a character can only use double notch with a composite bow. In a single ranged attack, a character props two arrows on the bow and fires both of them at a –4 penalty. Only one attack roll is necessary, and both arrows must strike the same target. However, damage for each of the arrows is rolled separately. Grabbing and loading two arrows is a move-equivalent action that can be performed during a move (similar to drawing a weapon during a move).

Lesson 7 – Last Ditch Effort

Often used as a final resort, the last ditch effort technique involves flinging a melee weapon at an opponent. Normally, such a maneuver would be very difficult, but the Order of Illianel instructs a student in the nuances of making a melee weapon into a ranged one. After learning this technique, the student can throw any weapon at an opponent with no penalty to the attack roll. Such impromptu thrown weapons have a range increment of 10 feet. The weapon deals its standard amount of damage.

Lesson 8 – Lion's Toss

This maneuver requires at least a 12 Strength to perform. A time honored game for the Order of Illianel is the caber toss, in which players lift huge tree trunks and see who can throw them the farthest. The game demands incredible upper body strength and balance, but it also leads to the lesson of the lion's toss.

When using this technique, a character can grab and throw an opponent for stunning damage. In order to perform the lion's toss, a character must first make a successful grapple check on an opponent of his size category or smaller. The character can then throw the opponent 5 ft. + 5 ft per point of Strength modifier. The unlucky individual takes 1d6 points of damage and is stunned for 1d2 rounds. The opponent can attempt a Tumble check (DC 20); if successful, he suffers only the damage and is not stunned. The lion's toss can be used three times per day.

Lesson 9 – Masterful Control

This technique builds on the ideas learned in expert control. It improves the amount of damage a character can deliver in melee attacks to +2 and grants the character a +1 bonus to damage with thrown weapons.

Lesson 10 – Screaming Strike

The most powerful attack a student in the Order of Illianel can learn is the screaming strike. When the character charges he leaps onto an opponent with such driving force that he gains a +4 bonus to attack and damage rolls, as well as driving his opponent back as if he had performed a bull rush (use the character's attack roll as his bull rush total). The screaming strike can only be used with melee weapons and may be performed three times per day.

THE VERUTHIAN SLAYERS

It would only be a slight understatement to say that the Veruthian Slayers abhor the undead. In all honesty, the Slayers go out of their way to track down and destroy these crimes against nature. The school is mostly taught by clerics of the god of death. The members of this school are almost always few in number since not many survive in the eternal war against the non-living.

The original founder of the school, Elizabeth "The Bloodbeast" Horath, is now perhaps its biggest enemy. Once a good and kindly cleric, Elizabeth was a heroine in her day and performed many great deeds. She put together the Veruthian school and personally trained the original ten Slayers. They were men and women of such power and strength that the world has not seen their like in many a day. Together they successfully battled an undead elder god and destroyed countless vampires and ghouls. But like many such good tales, hers ends in sadness. The complete story of how this charismatic cleric became a monster of unspeakable reckoning is unknown, but many variations can be heard in taverns and schoolyards across the land. It is said that after her fall into darkness, she came back and slew all the remaining eight Slayers, turning them into her undead slaves. They are now fearful black knights whose mere presence scares even the bravest of paladins. The Slayers know the truth in these tales and realize the threat that haunts their every step. Horath still lives, and she despises the Veruthian Slayers with a hatred and pain built over a thousand years. She wages a continual war to destroy the very school that she created.

School Motto: Cheating Death is Not an Option

ACADEMY

The Vandeal Academy has an impressive fortress in the town of Teir. Its founder, Augustus Vandeal, still leads the school even in his aging years. The price for study at the academy is 40 gp per month. It includes room and board.

TRAVELING MASTER: THE HANGMAN

Male half-elf Rgr10/Clr2; Size M (5 ft., 8 in. tall); HD 10d10+10 + 2d8+2; hp 75; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18; Attack +11/+6/+1 melee



(1d8 longsword), or +14/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+2 composite longbow); SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +7; AL CN; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Hide +4, Intuit Direction +8, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (undead) +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Search +5, Spot +9, Swim +6, Wilderness Lore +13; Alertness, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Concentration), Track.

Possessions: +2 composite longbow, 20 +1 arrows, +3 leather armor, boots of levitation, dusty rose prism ioun stone, platinum holy symbol (350 gp), 88 gp.

Veruthian Slayers Lessons: Undead Lore, Focused Slash, Sense Undead, Undead Critical, Drain Resistance, Summon Undead, Vorpall Hack.

No one knows the Hangman's real name, but his presence is considered an omen of impending doom. Not so much because of the man, but because his presence implies the existence of undead in the area, powerful undead. An emaciated man with short, well-groomed

black hair and a wicked longsword, the Hangman asks a mere 2 gp per day from his students. Students must accompany him on his quests, however, so there is some danger involved in attempting to learn from this great teacher. He is not a great conversationalist and gives little verbal direction, forcing his students to learn by his example and not his word.

LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Undead Lore

Requires the ability to read. Knowledge is power for a Veruthian Slayer. For one week, the master provides a prospective student with mounds upon mounds of books on the undead and occult. The student must read through these texts, scripts, accounts, studies, and histories to familiarize himself with the enemy. After acquiring this skill, a character gains a +4 bonus to all Knowledge (undead) checks, which is now considered a class skill.

When encountering a new type of undead or finding evidence that suggests the presence of one, a Knowledge (undead) check may reveal helpful information on how to deal with the monster. The DM should determine the DC of any such check based on the information sought and the resources available (a library may provide a bonus to such checks, as detailed in *Spells & Spellcraft*).

Lesson 2 – Focused Slash

Some undead, such as skeletons, take only partial damage from slashing weapons. With a focused slash, the Slayer deals full damage when using a slashing weapon through his understanding of how and where to strike. This technique only works against non-living opponents.

Level 3 – Sense Undead

Advanced students of the Veruthian Slayers eventually develop a spell-like ability to detect the presence and relative strength of nearby undead. This ability can be used three times per day and acts like the *detect undead* spell as cast by a 3rd-level cleric.

Lesson 4 – Undead Critical

All creatures, even the undead, have their weaknesses. The Veruthian Slayers teach their students to find these vulnerable spots through intense understanding of the creature's link to the negative energy that fuels it. The master and student spend several days tearing apart corpses and observing weak points in mus-

cle and bone tissue, as well as the telltale blackened areas that serve as conduits to the negative energy plane.

Upon learning this technique, a character can inflict a critical hit on undead in combat. Immunity to critical hits is ignored.

Lesson 5 – Drain Resistance

The hours spent preparing for the rigors of fighting horrific undead monsters eventually pay off with improved mental and physical strength. As such, a character with this technique gains an improved resistance to the draining energy attacks of the undead. If a successful energy drain attack is made against the character, he may attempt a Fortitude save (DC 10 + one-half the attacker's HD) to negate the level drain. If the save is unsuccessful, the character gains the negative levels and may attempt to shrug them off the following day as normal.

Lesson 6 – Summon Undead

Why seek the undead when you can make them come to you? In a secret ceremony, the Veruthian Slayers instruct a student in the arts of summoning the undead. This spell-like ability is usable three times per day and requires three rounds of concentration to perform. When this technique is used, the character sends out a mental command to all undead within 60 ft. + 10 ft. per point of Wisdom modifier. The effect lasts for two minutes and does not put the undead under the student's control. It merely makes the character a beacon, or magnet, drawing the undead to him. Intelligent undead can make a Will save (DC 15) to ignore the summons but they will immediately be aware of the character's presence and exact location.

Lesson 7 – Vorpall Hack

A student must show extreme prowess and initiative in defeating the undead before the Veruthian Slayers will teach him this technique. The vorpall hack ability enables the student to chop off a specified limb of an undead creature when wielding a bladed weapon. A character must declare that he is making a vorpall hack and specify which limb he wants to chop off before making his attack roll. The attack suffers a -4 penalty but on a successful attack, the limb is severed completely. This technique requires a full round action and can only be used three times per day.

Lesson 8 – Unnatural Healing

Through intense studies and experimentation with vampire blood, the Veruthian Slayers have unlocked the secret of unnatural healing. They can bestow this ability on a student in a complex ritual that lasts for three days, but leaves the student sick and bedridden for almost a week and a half afterwards. The power bestowed by this ritual enables the body to quickly repair damage delivered by undead creatures. A character with this ability gains a limited form of fast healing, allowing him to repair one hit point of damage per round. This ability only heals damage delivered by the slam attack of an undead creature.

Lesson 9 – Phantom Blade

The phantom blade is a supernatural ability that requires intense spiritual awareness. When using this technique, any melee weapon in the character's hands becomes imbued with the *ghost touch* ability, which enables it to strike incorporeal undead. Should the weapon leave the character's hands for whatever reason it automatically loses the *ghost touch* ability until the Slayer once again wields it.

Lesson 10 – Spectral Blast

Among all of the techniques taught by the Veruthian Slayers, none is more feared than the spectral blast. This unearthly attack emits a bolt of purely spiritual energy that rips through undead like a tornado. The bolt begins from the character's hand and travels in a straight line for 25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels or until it hits an undead target. The spectral blast deals 10d6 points of damage to undead but passes harmlessly through living creatures. A character can perform a spectral blast three times per day.

ANRATH BETRAYERS

The druids of Anrath spent years trying to create the perfect being; a creature that embodied all that was good and noble, combining the morality of the sentient races with the harmonic lifestyles of the animal kingdom. But the experiments were a disaster. These beast-men, as they were later called, became the agents of nightmares, a total opposite of the druids' vision. Savage, cruel, and spiteful, the beast-men traveled from village to village, killing and destroying all that lived. Although the druids were loath to harm the children they had created, they had to cast judgment and the beast-men were no more. Afterwards, the



druids of Anrath outlawed any further experimentation in animalism. And yet, there are still some that seek the old dream.

A student of the Betrayers must undergo three stages of transformation in order to access all the lessons of the school. It is the goal of every Betrayer to discover the fourth stage, which some believe will mean an ascension into a higher being. However, the druids of Anrath are not merciful in their dealings with the Betrayers and they actively seek to destroy the school.

School Motto: One Day, All the World Will Be Like Us

ACADEMY

The last known academy of the Anrath Betrayers is the Cataclysm. The head master Feng Louxian, an elf-tiger, has kept the whereabouts of the academy hidden for centuries; rumors suggest that it might be in the forbidden wastelands of Drail. The academy is maintained by a diamond quarry, which is located under the school and is mined by students. In return for labor in the mines, the school offers free room, board, and study. Students who leave must drink a drug that induces forgetfulness so that they cannot remember or lead others to the academy.

TRAVELING MASTER: BELDAR DREAMSONG

Male elf Bbn14; Size M (5 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 14d12+14; hp 101; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 19; Attack +21/+16/+11 melee (1d8+6 battle axe), or +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d6+5 throwing axe); SQ Scent; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +5; AL N; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +15, Intimidate +6, Jump +11, Listen +4, Spot +2, Wilderness Lore +9; Alertness, Improved Critical (throwing axe), Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Track, Weapon Focus (battle axe).

Possessions: +2 battle axe, +1 returning throwing axe, +4 hide armor, amulet of natural armor +2, ring of jumping, cloak of elvenkind, boots of elvenkind, potion of neutralize poison, potion of fly, potion of cat's grace, 83 gp.

Anrath Betrayers Lessons: Animal Magnetism, Heightened Senses, Claws and

Talons, Natural Defense, Sense Alignment, Danger Sense, Survival Instincts.

Beldar Dreamsong is an aging elf-fox who constantly seeks various holy relics that could help him uncover the secrets of the fourth stage. He has a hearty laugh and a strong body despite his ancient appearance. For 1,000 gp and help in his quest, Beldar will take on a student for as long as the student wishes to study under him.

STAGE ONE

The first stage of transformation, sometimes called the senses stage, is the most important for a student of the Betrayers. It is here that the student determines which animal he will come to resemble. The student can pick any animal he wishes, but he must adhere to this choice and cannot switch once the transformations have begun. In preparation for this stage, the student must acquire the desired animal and then take part in a ceremony that lasts two nights. The ceremony requires incense worth at least 200 gp, a cage for the animal, and a manual that is given only to masters of the school. During the ceremony, the master magically blends aspects of the chosen animal into the student. Upon completion, the student's body mutates to resemble the animal. At least two physical aspects are permanently changed, determined by the DM. Either the student's feet, hands, eyes, hair, legs, tongue, or ears transform, or the student can grow a tail, horns, or small wings when applicable. The student can now learn lessons one through four of the Anrath Betrayers.

LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Animal Magnetism

In the first lesson, the master teaches the student how to respect and behave around other animals. This ability mirrors the *animal friendship* spell as if cast by a 5th-level druid. Animals of the same type as the character's chosen animal receive no Will save against this ability. This technique can be used 3/day.

Lesson 2 – Heightened Senses

Although it comes naturally to animals, a student requires a little training before he can exploit his new senses. With some practice and guidance, the student can enhance his sense of smell, sight, taste, touch or hearing. He may choose two of these to improve. The sense of

TABLE 3-2: ANRATH NATURAL DEFENSES

Animal	Defense	Animal	Defense
Wolf	+2 to Reflex saves	Monkey	Double climb speed
Fox	+1 to all saves	Cat	+2 to Reflex saves
Raven	+1 natural armor	Skunk	Cloud of stench 1/day*

*All within 30 ft. of the character must make a Fortitude save (DC 12) or suffer a -2 penalty to all attack and damage rolls, saving throws, and skill checks.

smell grants the Scent ability. The sense of sight grants the character low-light vision, or darkvision if the character already has low-light vision (if the character already has darkvision, his range is doubled). The sense of taste gives a +8 circumstance bonus to Spot checks involving poison. The sense of touch bestows tremorsense 5 ft. and makes Escape Artist a class skill. The sense of hearing gives a +2 circumstance bonus to Listen checks and makes it a class skill.

Lesson 3 – Claws and Talons

The master eventually teaches a student to harness his animal strength in unarmed combat. Without the aid of weapons, the student engages in hourly combat with the master in order to learn how to defend himself with only his hands. Claws and talons endows a character with the Improved Unarmed Strike feat. If the character fights with a one-handed weapon, he can make an unarmed strike as an off-hand attack incurring the standard penalties for two-weapon fighting. If the character's hands have claws or talons from the transformations, his unarmed attacks get a +1 bonus to damage.

Lesson 4 – Natural Defense

Almost all animals have some form of natural defense, whether it involves a menacing roar or a cloud of ink. The student's chosen animal determines the natural defense he gains. This defense cannot harm others, but may cause irritation (such as a skunk's nasty scent) or be a distraction (such as a cat's reflective eyes). At most, the natural defense can either mimic a 1st-level cleric spell three times per day, or grant a +1 natural bonus to AC or a +2 bonus to Reflex saves. Some common animals and their defenses are listed in Table 3-2.

STAGE TWO

The second stage of transformation, called the instinct stage, is marked by a four day ceremony in which the student is tied to an altar and forced to drink a variety of magical concoctions. The mixtures require 500 gp worth of ingredients and are specially prepared by an Anrath master. As a result of this ritual, two more of the student's physical characteristics, chosen by the DM, are permanently altered. The student can now learn lessons five through seven of the Anrath Betrayers.

Lesson 5 – Sense Alignment

Over time, the student gains the extraordinary ability to determine the alignment of individuals that he meets. With this technique, a character can sense alignment of any individual within a 10-ft. radius. This ability can be used at will, and acts as either a *detect good* or *detect evil* spell cast by a 5th-level cleric. This ability cannot be used to detect alignment along the lawful-chaotic axis.

Lesson 6 – Danger Sense

The Anrath Betrayers are always wary of assassins sent by their druidic enemies. As such, they train young students to fine-tune their senses to alert them of danger. After repeated scares, surprises, and lectures on improving awareness, the student develops an extraordinary ability to spot and avoid danger. This danger sense acts like a 3rd-level rogue's Uncanny Dodge ability, allowing the character to retain her Dexterity bonus to AC in otherwise dangerous circumstances.

Lesson 7 – Survival Instincts

Survival instincts is a dangerous lesson to learn and can make or break a student. As part of this lesson, the master spends several days hunting the student with inten-

tion to kill or seriously maim. The student is stripped of all his equipment, given a two-hour head start and must navigate through a set trail filled with deadly traps while being chased by his master.

After this training, the character learns to spot traps on the move, granting the character a Spot check to notice any trap within 10 feet even if the character is not actively searching. The Spot check DC is equal to the Search DC of the trap, and the trap must have some external trigger in order to be spotted (the character cannot spot a poison needle hidden in a lock, but might notice a pit trap or deadfall).

STAGE THREE

The third stage of transformation, called the appearance stage, is the accumulation of all of the Betrayer's studies. The ceremony necessary to complete this stage lasts an entire week and requires approximately 1,000 gp of material components. For his part, the student must be encased in a stone sarcophagus and forced into a magical slumber for the duration of the ceremony. As the master chants the appropriate incantations, the student's body reaches its final transformation. The student emerges from his makeshift cocoon, a half-breed of the chosen animal. The head now almost totally resembles the chosen animal. The body, legs, and arms remain roughly the same form and mass but grow hair, scales, or feathers. Any remaining animal characteristics are formed.

Lesson 8 – Improved Physique

It takes some time for the student to get used to his new body, but he will eventually discover unexpected strengths and abilities. The master helps the student get used to the new body and experiment with these newfound powers. With improved physique, a character receives three bonus ability points to be added in any combination to Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution.

Lesson 9 – Animal Power

The student can now draw upon the full strengths of his new animal form and exploit its faculties. The unique ability gained by the student is based on the chosen animal and the new form. Wings are now usable for flight, gills allow for underwater breathing, a sturdy hide grants a +2 natural bonus to AC, and so forth.

Only one new ability is gained in this manner and should be determined by the DM.

Lesson 10 – Dire Transformation

The ultimate defense against an assassination, this technique grants the Betrayer the spell-like ability to *polymorph self* into a Medium-size or Large dire animal. This dire form is merely a more powerful version of his chosen animal, so a half-wolf could only become a dire wolf and not a dire bear. The student can use this ability once per day for a maximum of 20 rounds. For creatures not listed in the MM, this dire transformation grants the character +6 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and +2 to Dexterity. The character gains 2 hit points per level as a result of his increased Constitution, but these hit points are temporary and go away at the end of the transformation.

TALAXIAN DUELISTS

The Talaxian Duelists have very high standards for new students and accept only the best candidates from each pool of hopefuls. They prize fighting talent above all else and are always on the alert for a new opponent against whom they can test and challenge their skills. Most duelists are wanderers who seek new challenges and experiences, and a duelist will never turn down a challenge no matter how hopeless the situation might be. Duels are almost always one on one and rarely to the death, for the Duelists have a strong belief that killing is the mark of a sloppy individual. The Duelists hold a yearly tournament called the Skyblade, where they compete in a weeklong competition to determine the best fighter. The tournament is held in a different place each year and is open to anyone. However, killing on the tournament grounds disqualifies a contestant. To win the Skyblade is the highest honor any duelist can hope to achieve.

School Motto: Never Turn Down a Chance to Learn

ACADEMY

The Talaxian Academy of Weathercrane has a strong and proud tradition of being the toughest academy to join. Money and influence means nothing if a prospective student cannot back them up with skill during the academy's rigid entrance exam. All prospective students must defeat a registered student who has achieved at least the 3rd lesson. This defeat has to be witnessed by at least three others and can take place in any location. Costs for study at the academy are 50 gp per month, which does

not include room and board.

TRAVELING MASTER: PHINEOUS DUNSWORTH

Male halfling **Ftr**7/**Rog**5; Size S (3 ft., 0 in. tall); HD 7d10+14 + 5d6+10; hp 79; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20; Attack +19/+14 melee (1d6+4 rapier), or +16/+11 ranged (1d4+1 dagger); SV Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +4; AL NG; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +8, Bluff +8, Climb +11, Craft +6, Disable Device +7, Hide +10, Jump +3, Listen +12, Move Silently +7, Perform +7, Read Lips +8, Ride +13, Spot +4, Swim +6, Tumble +7; Alertness, Dodge, Endurance, Expertise, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier).

Possessions: +1 keen rapier; +2 leather armor of shadow, potion of invisibility, 27 gp.

Talaxian Duelists Lessons: Calm Demeanor, Weapon Mastery, Steady Grip, Parry, Thrust, Fast Hands, Improved Awareness.

Phineous Dunsworth, a halfling with unprecedented skill in the rapier, is an excellent tutor

for a student with a sense of humor. Phineous suffers from wanderlust and only stays in a town long enough to taste all the local vittles and give the resident bullies an embarrassing thrashing. He requires 5 gp per day as payment for his instruction.

LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Calm Demeanor

No duelist worth his salt loses his temper in combat. This is the quickest way to ensure defeat. A duelist remains focused and calm, always keeping his attention on the fight. Since many duels take place in front of a large and often loud audience, the duelist learns to ignore outside distraction that would hinder his fighting performance. The calm demeanor technique makes Concentration a class skill for the duelist and gives him a +2 bonus to Will saves against mind-affecting spells if he is in melee combat.

Lesson 2 – Weapon Mastery

A Talaxian Duelist slowly develops an uncanny affinity for his favored weapon. To reflect this, a character that successfully learns this lesson gains the Weapon Focus feat with his favored weapon. If the character already has



the Weapon Focus feat, the bonus granted by that feat is increased to +2.

Lesson 3 – Steady Grip

The Talaxian Duelists are constantly honing their skills and are very possessive of their weapons. A master teaches his student to maintain complete control over the weapon, thus making the student less likely to drop it. Steady grip gives the character a +2 circumstance bonus when defending against disarm attempts.

Lesson 4 – Parry

At times, defense is as important as the attack, and knowing when to concentrate on blocking incoming strikes can be crucial to winning a duel. When performing a parry, a character can hold off on one standard attack in order to block an attack by an opponent. A parry must be declared at the beginning of the turn so that even if the challenger goes first, the character can still parry (unless the defender is flat-footed). The Duelist loses his highest base attack for that turn, but may still use his movement action or any subsequent attacks.

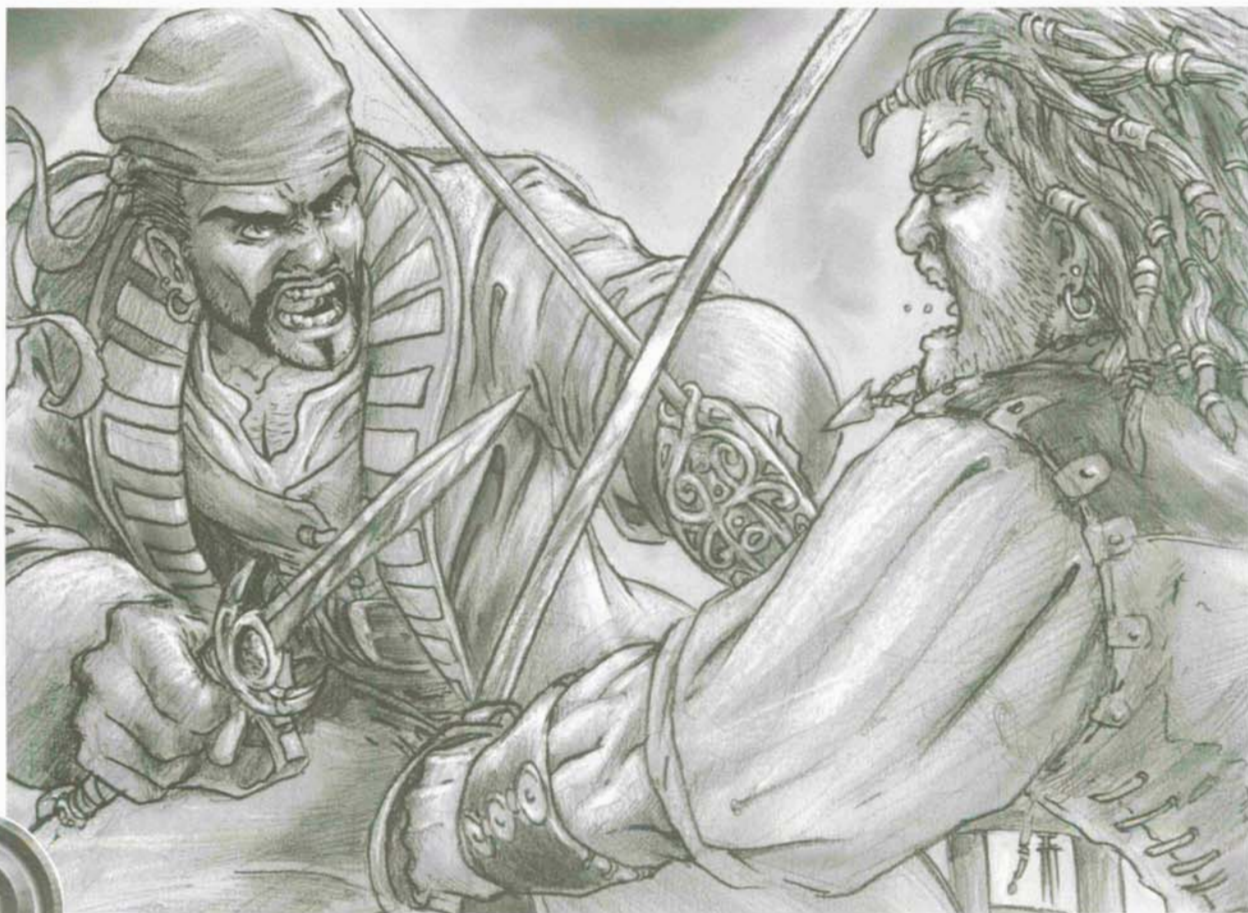
On the challenger's attack, the duelist and the challenger make an opposed attack roll. If the duelist's roll is equal to or greater than the challenger's roll then the attack is blocked and deals no damage. If the challenger's roll is higher then the parry did not work and the attack is resolved as normal. A character may not parry a weapon that is two sizes larger than the one he is using to make the parry.

Lesson 5 – Thrust

A well-timed attack may not deal as much damage to an opponent, but it is more likely to hit. In this lesson, a student learns to study an opponent and to gauge his movements. By predicting an opponent's reaction, the student can land a more precise hit with a small penalty to the damage dealt. A thrust must be declared before the attack roll is made and provides a +2 circumstance bonus to the character's first attack roll in a round, at a -1 penalty to damage.

Lesson 6 – Fast Hands

A Talaxian Duelist must be ready for a fight at anytime and any place. In this first lesson, the master instructs the student on the proper way to sheath a weapon to make it easier for fast



retrieval. This technique allows a character to draw his weapon instantly, as if he had the Quick Draw feat.

Lesson 7 – Improved Awareness

Sometimes a defeated foe disregards the honor of the duel and tries to inflict vengeance on the duelist, usually with a surprise attack or by getting some friends to help him seek revenge. A master teaches the student to expect such attacks and to be wary of large groups. This improved awareness makes it nigh impossible to get a good hit against a duelist. As a result, a character with this technique cannot be flanked, as if he had a 6th-level rogue's Uncanny Dodge ability.

Lesson 8 – Speed of the Cheetah

Usually reserved for quick retreats and emergencies, this powerful technique grants a character the spell-like ability to cast *cat's grace* on himself once per day as by a 3rd-level sorcerer.

Lesson 9 – Blademaster

Duelists prefer to disable an opponent rather than killing him, but some foes are so stubborn that they do not know when to quit. As such, the Duelists developed the blademaster technique, which is the mastery of using a weapon for subdual damage. When using a weapon that the character has a weapon focus in, the character can attack for subdual damage without incurring any penalties.

Lesson 10 – Barrier of Reflection

Sometimes an opponent resorts to magic to cheat in a duel. The Duelists consider this unacceptable, and actually had to find a way to insure that some petty, robed wizard was not knocking around the masters of their school. The barrier of reflection technique allows a character to cast *spell turning* on himself once per day as by a 13th-level sorcerer.

FISTS OF RAMOS

The Fists of Ramos is a small school that focuses on a unique form of unarmed combat. Because their style is based on putting opponents off guard through unexpected motions, the disciples of this school are often mistaken for drunkards, a misconception that the Fists like to encourage. Only a fool underestimates their skills and abilities, however. The Fists are staunch believers in the Path, which is the idea that all things have a destiny. As such, it is the

duty of each student and master of this school to aid others in achieving their unique destinies. But since an individual's fate is not written on his forehead, a follower of the Path must rely on gut instincts and heavenly signs. This can be quite troublesome if an individual's destiny is illegal or goes against the common good.

School Motto: We Must All Walk Our Own Road

ACADEMY

The Sakino School of Ramos inhabits a long, circular building in the town of Keichan. The headmaster, Toya Sakino, is a relatively young man with four sons and four daughters, all of whom serve him in the instruction of the students. The costs for study are 10 gp per week and students may stay at the academy for an extra 5 sp per night.

TRAVELING MASTER: MACHAGUS FROTH

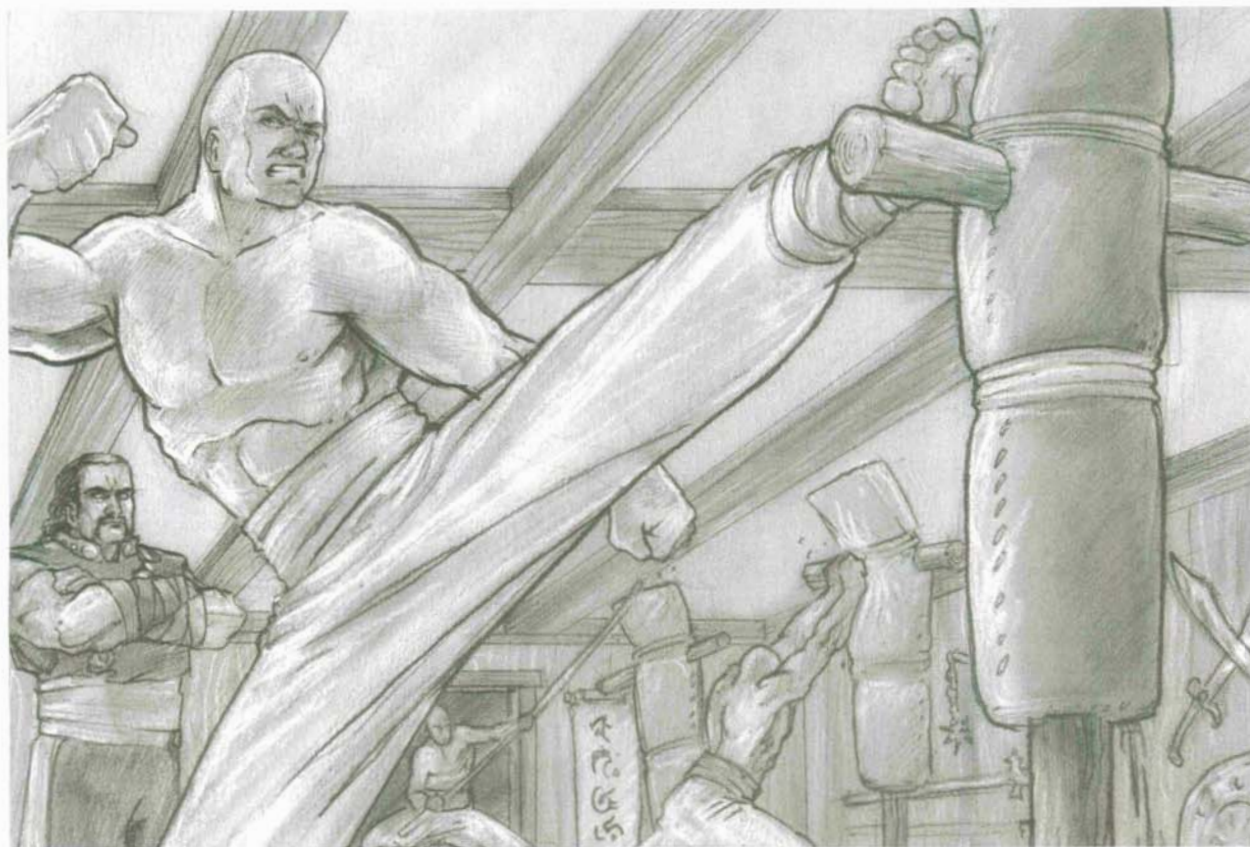
Male human Mnk10; Size M (6 ft., 5 in. tall); HD 10d8; hp 48; Init +2; Spd 60 ft.; AC 19; Attack +9/+6/+3 unarmed (1d10+2 unarmed); SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +10; AL LG; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Climb +8, Concentration +8, Hide +3, Jump +9, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Listen +16, Move Silently +5, Perform +10, Profession +8, Search +9, Spot +7; Blind-Fight, Dodge, Expertise, Mobility, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

Possessions: *ring of protection* +2, *ring of warmth*, *bag of holding*, *potion of truth*, 138 gp.

Fists of Ramos Lessons: Topsy Demeanor, Kamse Strike, Unwary Snatch, The Kaori Defense, Passout, The Roving Eye.

A red-bearded, middle-aged man with a large belly and a deep laugh, Machagus Froth has a keen eye and even keener ears. He charges 5 gp per day for instruction and may unexpectedly quit studies midstream in order to help another individual; he is particularly sympathetic when he sees a poor young man trying to win a lady's love. He will always return to his duties, and does not charge students for time missed because of his own dalliances.



LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Tippy Demeanor

The essence of combat in the Fists of Ramos is to trick an opponent to drop his guard. Usually this is accomplished through erratic staggering, slurred speech, and seemingly weak perceptions. However, this is all an elaborate charade. The master and student spend hours studying inebriated individuals, sometimes even playing games with them, in order to perfect the student's imitation.

By learning the tippy demeanor technique, a character gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Perform checks when pretending to be impaired. The character may also consider Perform a class skill. In order to be used for combat, this technique must be initiated in or before the character's first round of combat. It can be maintained as a free action. Opponents can make an opposed Spot check to see through the ruse, however. If the opponent fails to spot the subterfuge, the character receives a +1 dodge bonus to AC for the duration of the combat.

Lesson 2 – Kamse Strike

The Fists of Ramos learn a variety of specialized unarmed attacks. One of the first

that a student learns is the kamse strike, which is an unexpected head butt often used in the beginning of combat to break through even the most secure defenses. In the first round of combat, the character gets a +4 circumstance bonus to a single unarmed melee attack. A character must declare he is using the kamse strike before making the attack roll.

Lesson 3 – Unwary Snatch

Fast hands and subtle movements are not the sole domain of thieves and pickpockets. The Fists are highly skilled at adept grabs, especially when a dangerous weapon or wand would thwart the gears of destiny. The unwary snatch technique provides a +2 circumstance bonus to all disarm attempts.

Lesson 4 – The Kaori Defense

The kaori defense is a relatively new lesson that was adapted from the Talaxian's parry technique (see above). It works as an unarmed parry, allowing the Fist to parry weapons as easily as if he had one of his own. The Kaori need only give up his highest base attack in a round in which he is not flat-footed in order to make an opposed attack roll with the opponent. If the Fist wins, the attack is parried; if he loses, it resolves as normal. The elven master Kaori

Brightstone refined this technique before disappearing to an unknown quest centuries ago. Her sudden disappearance in the mines of Felwar remains a mystery.

Lesson 5 – Passout

A good way to end unwanted combat or really throw an enemy a confusing bone is to merely fall over and pretend to be unconscious. When initiating the passout technique, a character swoons and hits the ground in a seemingly prone state. A character in this state is neither helpless nor considered prone, and he retains any Dexterity bonus to AC. When using this technique, the character makes a Perform check opposed by the Spot checks of his opponents. The character can then wait and make one surprise attack on any foe that comes within 5 feet and who failed his Spot check. Any opponent that is the target of such an attack loses his Dexterity bonus to AC for that attack.

This technique can only be used once per battle and ends the moment the character initiates a surprise attack or performs any other action that requires more than a minimal movement.

Lesson 6 – The Roving Eye

The Fists of Ramos are keen observers and are trained to carefully study those around them. Masters are often seen talking to the back of a student's head rather than facing them in order to force the student to pay attention to her surroundings. The roving eye technique endows a student with a +2 bonus to all Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Lesson 7 – Floor Sweep

As a follow up to the passout technique, students of the Fist of Ramos are taught how to trip up an adversary in a sweeping kick without provoking an attack of opportunity. The floor sweep grants a +2 circumstance bonus to an unarmed trip attack, and can be made from a prone position without penalty. The attack is treated as if the character had the Improved Trip feat and he can rise as a free action immediately after making the attack.

Lesson 8 – Sleeper Punch

The Fists of Ramos are known for their ability to knock an opponent unconscious with a single blow. Most attribute this ability to the Fists' reliance on strength of arms. However, that is not quite the case. By learning the locations of pressure points and vulnerable muscle struc-

tures, a student of the Fists learns how to strike an adversary in such a way that he falls into a deep slumber. This technique is an extraordinary ability that can be used three times per day. A character must declare that he is using the sleeper punch before making the attack roll.

When performing a sleeper punch, the character makes an unarmed attack with a –4 penalty to the attack roll. If the attack succeeds, the opponent falls asleep as if he was targeted by a *sleep* spell cast by a 3rd-level sorcerer. The opponent gets a Will save (DC 18) to resist. Creatures that are immune to *sleep* or critical hits are not affected by the sleeper punch.

Lesson 9 – Purple Haze

A student must undergo a small ritual in order to learn the purple haze technique. As part of the ceremony she must drink a wild concoction of potions that usually makes the student sick and helpless for several days. However, the benefit for this temporary discomfort is the spell-like ability to cast *blur* on oneself once per day as cast by a 10th-level sorcerer.

Lesson 10 – Tornado Kick

Without question, the Fists are not afraid of being outnumbered in battle. The tornado kick is identical to the Whirlwind Attack feat except that it may only be used with unarmed melee attacks, as well as the following differences.

When performing the tornado kick, a character spins around in a wild flurry of kicking blows that have the chance not only to damage but also knock opponents unconscious. As a full attack action, the character makes one unarmed melee attack at his highest base attack bonus against each opponent with 5 ft. All those struck with the tornado kick must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or fall to the ground unconscious. Unconscious characters can be awakened by normal means, similar to those affected by a *sleep* spell. A character can use the tornado kick twice per day.

THE JADAN SPEARMEN

Few schools are given as much honor and respect as the Jadan Spearmen. The school's origins can be traced to guard posts in the mountainous country of Jadan, although they now have academies in most major cities. The Spearmen were at one time the only protection against orc and goblin attacks



along the mountainous highways of Jadan. They are specialists in reach weapons and are trained to use spears, javelins, tridents, and chains. They received the title of Spearmen, however, because of the ornate magical spears called the Orc Slayers that they once carried. The spearmen wielded these weapons with a deadly efficiency, but the art of making these weapons was lost during the great orcish wars of Jadan and most of the spears were destroyed. The few remaining spears now reside in private collections or are forgotten deep among the goblin caves. An academy is often willing to give a good reward for the retrieval of one of these historic weapons.

School Motto: The Only Good Orcs are Dead

ACADEMY

The Elkbrothers Jadan Academy in the city of Binder occupies an entire city block. They are respectable sorts and give a weekly parade in honor of the local goddess of life. Costs for study are 15 gp per week and they offer a small room and board for an additional 3 gp per week. The headmaster is Samus Warrick, a friendly old man who purchased the academy from the Elkbrothers almost two decades ago.

TRAVELING MASTER: JERIBEL ELKBROTHER

Male human Ftr13; Size M (5 ft., 2 in. tall); HD 13d10+26; hp 117; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23; Attack +19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+8 longspear), or +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d8+7 longspear); SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +2; AL N; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 7, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Craft +17, Jump +13, Listen +4, Ride +17, Tumble +6; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Endurance, Expertise, Improved Critical (longspear), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Sunder, Weapon Focus (longspear), Weapon Specialization (longspear).

Possessions: +2 *longspear of frost*, +3 *chain-mail*, *cloak of protection* +2, *potion of protection from elements (fire)*, 280 gp.

Jadan Spearmen Lessons: Spear Expertise, High Brow, The Iron Curtain, Low Blow, Flying Spear, Backstep, Vaulted Kick.

Jeribel Elkbrother decided some years ago to become a man of travel after selling the academy that he and his brothers Simia and Reginald spent a lifetime building together. Jeribel wants to see adventure and battle before he meets with his ancestors, and so he is always looking for new forms of excitement. Although he wants little to do with them, his brothers still live in the town of Binder, enjoying their wealthy retirements. Jeribel charges 2 gp per day for lessons and is a decent, if distracted, teacher.

LESSONS

Lesson 1 – Spear Expertise

The Spearmen begin their training with the longspear and practice to improve their control and handling of the long and challenging weapon. The swinging thrusts, kicks, and maneuvers are quite impressive to behold, and they take incredible strength and concentration to perform. The spear expertise technique grants a character the Weapon Focus (longspear) feat.

Lesson 2 – High Brow

The first attack the spearmen learn to perform is the high brow. In this attack, a spearman strikes with a reach weapon at a distance using the front end of the weapon and then follows it with a close attack using the reverse end. A



character must declare he is using a high brow attack before the attack roll is made. When using this technique, the character makes one attack at a distance with his full base attack bonus, then the character moves within 5 ft. of the opponent and initiates a second attack at a -5 penalty to the attack roll. This movement does not incur an attack of opportunity. This ability requires a full attack action to perform.

Lesson 3 – The Iron Curtain

By holding out his weapon horizontally in front of him and rushing forward, a Spearman can use his long spear to clothesline enemies. When using the iron curtain technique, a character performs an overrun and can strike all individuals in a 10-ft. wide line. Opponents that do not elect to jump out of the way are subject to a trip attack.

Lesson 4 – Low Blow

This technique teaches a spearman to use his spear as an effective tripping tool. A character that knows this maneuver can make a trip attack on any opponent within 10 feet. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity, and if the attack fails his opponent may not attempt to trip him back.

Lesson 5 – Flying Spear

Often a spearman finds himself the target of ranged attacks, spells, or natural attacks from unreachable foes. In this case, the experienced spearman has an option, albeit one that leaves him deprived of his favored weapon. This advanced Jadan technique allows the spearman to throw his long spear at his enemies. The weapon has a range increment of 15 ft. and deals its normal damage on a successful strike. The Jadan masters teach their students to only use this technique as a last resort.

Lesson 6 – Backstep

It is very difficult to follow through with a hit up close and a Spearman needs room to move after performing a high brow or being pressed in melee. As such, Jadan masters train their students in the art of making a quick backstep. When using this technique, a character can move up to 10 feet back without incurring an attack of opportunity for leaving his opponent's threatened area. He suffers attacks of opportunity for moving through other opponents' threatened areas as normal.

Lesson 7 – Vaulted Kick

In this lesson, a student learns that a weapon can be used both for balance as

well as for attacking. The vaulted kick allows a character to make an unarmed kick attack while using his large weapon as a counterweight. This technique grants the character a +4 circumstance bonus to a single unarmed attack, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity even if the character does not have Improved Unarmed Strike, and requires a full attack action to perform. The target of the vaulted kick must also make a Strength check (DC 10) or be pushed back 5 ft. by the spearman's assault in addition to normal damage.

Lesson 8 – Up-Close Combat

A common misconception that usually gets an enemy killed is that the Spearmen are helpless against foes that come close due to the large size of their weapons. However, the Spearmen are highly trained in this type of combat and merely suffer a –4 penalty to attack rolls with reach weapons against foes within 5 ft. Spears used in this manner use the same weapon statistics as a club.

Lesson 9 – Wall of Blades

When the orcish hordes were attacking, the Spearmen knew that they were hopelessly out-

numbered and could easily be overrun. As such, they developed the wall of blades technique in order to scare the orcs and make their own forces seem more powerful. As a spell-like ability a character with wall of blades can cast *mirror image* as if he was a 3rd-level sorcerer. This ability can be used once per day.

Lesson 10 – Superior Spearfighting

Some opponents are just too tough to keep away, and continue to press a spearman despite his best efforts and the lessons that he has learned. A master Jadan Spearman that has learned this technique can turn his spear on its side, using it as a quarterstaff to form a double weapon. The spear is in all ways like a quarterstaff being wielded as a double weapon, except that its damage is 1d8/1d6. In addition, the Jadan master wields this weapon as if he had the Ambidexterity, Improved Two Weapon Fighting, and Two Weapon Fighting feats, effectively reducing his penalty when fighting in this manner.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE WARRIOR'S WORLD

CHAPTER FOUR THE WARRIOR'S WORLD

This chapter contains information on the mounts that can be used by characters, including several unique new specimens. A variety of new organizations that your characters can join follows, including a template of the benefits and drawbacks to belonging to such a group. Next up is a series of unique fighting locations, where strength of arms is not the only thing needed to survive. A complete system for determining the effects of other unique fighting locales is presented so that DMs can customize their gaming experience. Next, new equipment, weapons, armor, and tools are presented, as well as information on how characters can personalize their weapons and armor and what effects this might have. The chapter concludes with a look at some of the tournaments and games that one might find in local faires or royal competitions.

All of the text describing equipment and fighting locations is **Open Game Content**. All text describing mounts, organizations, equipment personalization, and games is designated closed content. The "Jousting Tournaments" section is **Open Game Content** derived from *Tournaments, Fairs, and Taverns* by Natural 20 Press.

MOUNTS

The strength of mounted combat has turned the tide in many seemingly hopeless battles throughout the ages. A soldier on foot has little chance against a raging charger. As such, experienced fighters understand the value and distinct edge a mount can lend them in battle. The advantages of speed and height almost always outweigh the costs and challenges involved with the purchase and maintenance of a riding animal. A small group of warriors on mounts can overcome a much larger force comprised only of foot soldiers.

There is also a certain romantic mystique that surrounds the image of a heroic knight riding into battle on his noble steed. Bards, in particular, paint numerous majestic tales of heroes and their faithful riding companions. The story of Wilgref, the halfling prince, would be incomplete without mentioning Clipsong, his loyal riding hound that died after carrying its unconscious and wounded master over 87 leagues to safety.

THE SIX TYPES

All riding animals fall into six basic categories based on their training and intended purpose. These categories are stock, trail, recreation, show, hunter, and war. Adventurers typically choose a trail, hunter, or war mount since these types are less likely to bolt when danger arises. The animal's purpose or role is taught from an early age and therefore cannot be changed. A stock horse could not become a warhorse no matter how much barding is laid upon it. The bonuses listed in the descriptions below should be added to the base scores of the mounts described in the next section.

Stock: Stock mounts are commonly called beasts of burden since they are mainly used for manual labor. Pulling carts, skiffs, plows, and carriages are just some of the mundane duties performed by stock animals. These mounts are tireless in their labors and complain very little. However, a Ride check (DC 20) is required each round to keep a stock mount from fleeing in the middle of battle. They spook easily and are extremely hard to control when injured. Stock mounts are cheap, easy to handle in non-combat situations, enjoy stables, and are a good choice for inexperienced riders. All stock mounts have the Endurance feat.

Trail: Trail mounts are bred to travel. They are the ideal riding companion for most merchants, noblemen, and some adventurers along the road. A trail mount is relatively easy to ride, eats and drinks little, and will remain by a master unless wounded or highly frightened. However, because of their innate need to move, trail mounts become restless if forced to stay in one spot for too long. After a long battle in an underground dungeon, an adventurer might emerge to sunlight only to find that his mount has broken its harness and wandered off. When stabled in towns or villages, a trail mount must be allowed to walk and graze daily or it becomes irate. If a trail mount is not ridden each day, apply a -1 penalty per day to subsequent Ride checks for one week. If it is ignored for a week or more, consider the horse hostile until it has been calmed and re-trained (using the Handle Animal skill). Trail mounts have a +1 bonus to Constitution.

Recreation: Bred for the enjoyment of nobility, recreation mounts like to ride and jump for the mere fun of it all. While beautiful

and strong, these mounts tire easily and are highly fickle. Extreme care must be spent on the maintenance and handling of recreation mounts so stable costs should be doubled for these animals. A recreation mount is very self-oriented and requires a Ride check (DC 25) to remain in the presence of a deadly monster. However, the impressive breeding and luxurious nature of these animals bestows a temporary +2 bonus to all Charisma-related skill checks on any rider for as long as the rider and horse remain within 5 ft. of each other. This bonus applies only to targets that would be impressed by such an animal. Recreation mounts automatically have a +2 bonus to Charisma.

Show: Due to the long training necessary to raise a show mount, they are the most expensive type to purchase. Show mounts are trained to entertain and perform. Because of their innate speed and intelligence, show mounts make ideal traveling companions, but they demand extra food and attention from their riders. As such, double the price of food and water for these mounts. Show animals are reliable, if somewhat testy, and require a lot of skill to handle. They are commonly found working as circus or racing animals. Show mounts automatically begin with 10 ranks in the Perform skill and either a +2 bonus to Dexterity or a +2 bonus to Intelligence. A show mount also bestows a +5 circumstance bonus to its rider's Perform checks when they perform together.

Hunter: A mount earns the title of hunter by showing an extreme knack for tracking and hunting in the wild. They are adept at responding to commands, picking the best paths, and traversing obstacles. Courageous and possessed of good stamina, a hunter mount makes a decent traveling companion due to its ease of riding and low maintenance. However, a hunter mount is not the brightest creature in the world and will not wear medium or heavy barding. All hunter mounts have the Track feat and can signal that prey is nearby with either a snort or a pull.

War: The favored mount of soldiers and adventurers, a war mount is raised for battle. They are quick, strong, and fearless. In heavy armor, a war mount can move at half speed instead of one-quarter speed. They do not flinch in battle, and obey a skilled rider with stubborn zeal and devotion. These mounts do not require their rider to control them in com-

TABLE 4-1: GENERAL MOUNT TRAITS

Type	Ride Skill*	Spook %	Price	Special Traits
Stock	None	100	x1	Endurance feat
Trail	1	30	x1.5	+1 Constitution
Recreation	2	100	x2	+2 Charisma
Hunter	2	10	x2	Track feat
Show	3	50	x4	+2 Dex or +2 Int, Perform skill +10
War	4	0	x3	+1 Strength, +1 Constitution

*Minimum Ride skill ranks necessary to ride the mount.

bat and therefore are the only type that gets a separate attack from the rider. War mounts cannot stand an inexperienced rider and will buck and throw an individual that has less than 4 ranks in the Ride skill. War mounts receive a +1 bonus to Strength and Constitution.

MOUNT DESCRIPTIONS

Although horses are the most common mounts to be found and purchased on the open market, many other creatures in the realm make good steeds as well. Dragons, camels, and even the rare pegasi are occasionally seen with a rider in tow. Humans have been known to trample over orc armies with elephants, and elven archers mounted on griffons make a formidable force. The smaller races, halflings, gnomes, and dwarves, have their own set of mounts that they train and raise. Each animal brings its own unique advantages to combat and this section takes a look at the various mounts and their influences in battle and offers some suggestions for specific traders. Unless otherwise stated, all mounts have four legs and are neutral.

Horse: Elegant. Romantic. Graceful. The horse is the premier choice of steed for most adventurers. They come in a wide array of colors and are found in even the most remote villages. Wild horses require time, patience, and sometimes magical encouragement to tame. Cultivated horses are bred and raised to excel in whatever profession is chosen for them. The Equine Guild of Theorne buys and sells horses and has a member in almost every major city. They are fair and honest, albeit slightly more expensive than an independent dealer.

EQUINE GUILD HORSE – LARGE ANIMAL

Price: 100 gp.

Stable Cost: 5 sp/day.

Food/Water Cost: 4 sp/week.

HD 4d8+8 (26 hp); Init +2; Spd 50 ft. AC 14; Atk 2 hooves +3 melee (1d6+1); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent; Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +4, Listen +6, Spot +6.

Donkey or Mule: Stubborn and picky but very cheap, donkeys make good stock animals and very little else. Because of their short build, donkeys can be ridden by both Small and Medium-size characters, although a comfortable ride is always questionable. Mules are the result of a union between a horse and donkey and have characteristics of both. Use the donkey stats below for a mule, but add a +1 bonus to Strength and Dexterity.

One of the biggest drawbacks to a donkey or mule is their tendency to balk. Each time a rider mounts a donkey, there is a 30% chance that the donkey will balk for one hour. Mules have a 15% chance. Balked animals move at 1/8 speed and automatically spook if injured.

Farms are the best places to purchase donkeys, but for the absolute cream of the crop adventurers should visit the town fair of Sacksburg, held yearly, where donkeys and mules are raced and judged.

SACKSBURG DONKEY – MEDIUM-SIZE ANIMAL

Price: 8 gp.

Stable Cost: 2 sp/day.

Food/Water Cost: 2 sp/week.



HD 3d8 (13 hp); Init +1; Spd 35 ft.; AC 13; Atk Bite +1 melee (1d2); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent; Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 14, Cha 5.
Skills and Feats: Balance +2, Jump +1, Spot +5.

Zebra: The exotic zebra, with its telltale black and white stripes, is a rare and beautiful sight. With proper training, a zebra can be a great mount although nowhere near as strong or as quick as a horse. Zebras are highly sensitive to their surroundings and are quick to respond to danger. The Centaurs of Ean raise and sell these magnificent animals at major capital cities, though representatives are sometimes found traveling along the road.

ZEBRA – MEDIUM-SIZE ANIMAL

Price: 200 gp.
Stable Cost: 5 sp/day.
Food/Water Cost: 4 sp/week.

HD 3d8+3 (17 hp); Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 13; Atk: 2 hooves +2 melee (1d6); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent; Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Listen +10, Spot +4; Alertness.

Elephant: Nigh unstoppable when angered, the powerful elephant lumbers where most animals dare not tread. The elephant is a massive force in battle, with legs as thick as oaks, horns that gore, a trunk to fling away obstacles, and a head hard enough to crush a castle wall. However, elephants are expensive to maintain, cannot go inside most buildings, and are rather difficult to hide. As such, elephants are best left outside of cities.

The Hanasi traders have elephants available for purchase, but they are famous for being tough bargainers. They are a desert people, but the elephant traders travel extensively and often pop up in unexpected places.

HANASI ELEPHANT – HUGE ANIMAL

Price: 4,000 gp.
Stable Cost: 10 gp/day.
Food/Water Cost: 7 gp/week.

HD 10d8+50 (95 hp); Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16; Atk: Slam +12 melee (2d6+8) and 2 stamps +7 melee (2d6+2), or gore +16 melee (2d8+12); Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft. SA: Trample (2d8+15); SQ: Scent; Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Spot +5.

Unicorn: No animal has been the subject of more tales and more dreams than the mystical unicorn. They are gentle and intelligent creatures with strong moral tendencies. Only black unicorns willingly let an evil individual ride them, and then only if the unicorn believes that the person can be redeemed. Although seemingly mute, it is said that a unicorn can speak telepathically with one whom it considers a friend. The horns of these great creatures have been known to nullify poisons or poisoned individuals with merely a touch, and rumors of even greater powers are too widespread to be completely false.

For a small fee, the Druids of Mistgrove sometimes allow an individual of pure heart into their unicorn grove. The character must then make a Charisma check (DC 20) to successfully attract a willing mount. The character has three chances to succeed at this roll, making only one attempt per day during the process.

MISTGROVE UNICORN – LARGE MAGICAL BEAST**Price:** 2,400 gp.**Stable Cost:** 5 sp/day.**Food/Water Cost:** 4 sp/week.

HD 5d10+30 (58 hp); Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; AC 15; Atk: Horn +6 melee (1d8+2) and 2 hooves +1 melee (1d4+1); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent; immunities, spell-like ability; AL LG; Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +8, Move Silently +4, Spot +7; Alertness.

Immunities (Ex): Mistgrove unicorns are immune to poison and mind-affecting spells.

Spell-Like Ability: Mistgrove unicorns can cast *neutralize poison* once per day as a 5th level druid.

Pegasi: Flying horses, or pegasi as they are commonly known, course through the sky with incredible speed and daring. Sometimes seen dancing on clouds or chasing birds, a pegasus is a solitary and shy creature. They love to fly, and if a pegasus loses its wings, it eventually dies from grief. These gentle, carefree creatures are known to be incredibly loyal once they befriend another.

Members of the cruel group known as the Skyhunters specialize in tracking and taming these wild beasts through any means necessary. They are efficient, if somewhat heartless, trainers and make a tidy profit in their transactions.

SKYHUNTER PEGASUS – LARGE MAGICAL BEAST**Price:** 7,000 gp.**Stable Cost:** 5 sp/day.**Food/Water Cost:** 4 sp/week.

HD 4d10 (22 hp); Init +2; Spd 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 10; Atk: 2 hooves +4 melee (1d6+1), bite +2 melee (1d3+1); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent, spell-like ability; AL LN; Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Listen +8, Spot +8; Iron Will.

Griffon: Half eagle and half lion, the griffon can move with tremendous speed whether on the ground or in the air. They make for obedient mounts but require great skill to master and ride. Because of their strength, griffons are



sometimes employed to pull elaborate carriages for wealthy nobles who want to make an unusual and eye-catching appearance.

Griffons are hunters by nature, and they prefer meat to barley any day. A pinch of catnip makes a griffon light-headed, causing it to behave as if it were drunk for 1d20 minutes. The Nilahoe Griffon Farmers are famous for producing strong and reliable griffons. They sell these animals at festivals and fairs in big cities.

NILAHOE GRIFFON – LARGE BEAST**Price:** 4,000 gp.**Stable Cost:** 1 gp/day.**Food/Water Cost:** 5 gp/week.

HD 5d10+10 (38 hp); Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 14; Atk: Bite +2 melee (1d6+2), 2 claws +3 melee (1d4+2); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft. SA: Pounce; SQ: Scent; Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 6, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Jump +8, Listen +5.

Pounce (Ex): If a griffon dives on a foe in the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a

move action.

Landwyrn: Tireless and strong, the snake-like landwyrms are found in small packs along the wild plains of Inor. They are legless, and stretch about 15 feet long from head to tail, although 30-foot long landwyrms are rumored to exist. As herbivores by nature they are very gentle, despite their terrifying appearance and long, razor-sharp teeth. The landwyrn glides over the earth by swaying its body side to side and can completely turn itself around at any speed. The plainsmen of Inor train and ride landwyrms in place of horses. Traders from the plains usually carry several of these exotic beasts with them to sell in the big cities.

LANDWYRM – LARGE BEAST

Price: 3,300 gp.
Stable Cost: 3 gp/day.
Food/Water Cost: 4 gp/week.

HD 4d10+12 (34 hp); Init -2; Spd 20 ft.; AC: 14; Atk: Bite +10 melee (1d8+4); Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft. /10 ft. (coiled), 5 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft. (uncoiled or mounted); SQ: Tremorsense; Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 7, Con 18, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Spot +12.

Camel: Often called “the desert tank,” camels are the ideal mount for travel in extremely inhospitable climates such as deserts. After drinking its fill, a camel can go without water, and to a lesser extent food, for periods of up to two months. They can be quite stubborn, however, and untrained riders will find travel by camel very uncomfortable. The nomadic Ghan are always willing to barter for camels. They do not have any use for gold, but are always on the look out for rare or unique magic items.

GHANIC CAMEL – LARGE ANIMAL

Price: 800 gp.
Stable Cost: 6 sp/day.
Food/Water Cost: 2 sp/week.

HD 3d8+6 (20 hp); Init +4; Spd 50 ft.; AC 13; Atk: Bite +4 melee (1d4+3); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent; Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Spot +5.

Swamp Lion: The enormous swamp lion is a living plant covered head to toe in a green, moss-like fur. It has the general shape of a hippopotamus and walks on six shaggy legs, sporting two black holes for eyes. The swamp lion does not eat meat, but it still has a mouth that is lined with numerous thick barbs. It feeds by burying its two back feet into the ground to attain sustenance from the earth. Swamp lions wither and die in extremely dry climates. They cannot run but neither are they slowed by treacherous terrain. First domesticated by the pygmy tribe of Sul Hurrath, swamp lions are sold only in small-town marketplaces because it is illegal to bring these behemoths into most major cities.

SWAMP LION – LARGE PLANT

Price: 1,500 gp.
Stable Cost: 20 gp/day.
Food/Water Cost: Nil.

HD 8d8+48 (84 hp); Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18; Atk: Slam +10 melee (2d6+5), bite +5 melee (1d8+5); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SA: Roar; SQ: Plant, blindsight; Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9*, Listen +4.

Roar (Ex): Twice per day, the swamp lion can emit an ear-piercing roar. All creatures in a 30-ft. radius must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or be stunned for one round.

Plant: Swamp lions are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorph. They are also not subject to critical hits.

*In swamp-like terrain, a swamp lion gains a +10 circumstance bonus to Hide checks.

Sandskipper: Easily mistaken for a flying manta ray, the sandskipper is a favorite among halflings due to its small size and incredible maneuverability. These animals are mountain dwellers, hovering noiselessly in the air as they glide along. Because of a sandskipper's unique physiology, it can only glide above the ground to a maximum height of 10 feet. If it is forced higher, such as by a *levitate* spell or moving off the side of a cliff, it can glide, losing two feet of altitude for every 5 feet traveled.

Sandskippers live in trees and sleep upside

down like a bat. Its diet consists mainly of bugs and fruit, although it can live off the same food as its rider. The halflings of Mount Tenor not only sell sandskippers, but also offer riding lessons for a reasonable price of a mere 200 gp. These lessons last for one week, and if not taken, the DC of any Ride check related to the sandskipper is increased by 5.

SANDSKIPPER – MEDIUM-SIZE BEAST

Price: 1,200 gp.

Stable Cost: Nil.

Food/Water Cost: 2 sp/week.

HD 2d10+4 (15 hp); Init +5; Spd Fly 50 ft. (average); AC 15; Atk Tail slap +5 melee (1d6-1); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 9, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Hide +6, Move Silently +7, Spot +7; Weapon Finesse (tail slap).

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a sandskipper is up to 120 pounds; a medium load, 121–240; a heavy load, 240–360 pounds.

Aurk: Graceful and beautiful, the aurks are a race of gigantic birds akin to the roc. Aurks stand around 12 feet tall and have a 32-foot wingspan. Needless to say, these birds are expensive to maintain and consume large quantities of leaves and coconuts. Aurks are nearly helpless on the ground, requiring flight for combat and maneuverability. They tend to perch in trees when resting, using their two sharp talons to anchor themselves to their chosen perch.

The Sengfen valley humans sell aurks through an expansive network of traders. The initial trader takes down the order and half the final cost, and between one to four weeks later an aurk is sent with an instructional tutor who trains the new owner. This training lasts for two days, at the end of which the tutor collects the rest of the payment and returns to the valley.

AURK – LARGE ANIMAL

Price: 6,500 gp.

Stable Cost: 2 gp/day.

Food/Water Cost: 2 gp/week.

HD 7d8+7 (39 hp); Init +3; Spd 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 14; Atk Bite +7 melee (1d8+3), 2 claw +5 melee (1d3+3); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by



10 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Improved grab; Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Listen +12.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the aurk hits with both claws, it can grab and lift an opponent off the ground.

Riding Dog: No mount is more faithful, friendly, and protective than a riding dog. Mainly used by halflings, and to a lesser extent dwarves, these saddled canines are quick and have a nose for avoiding trouble. Halflings prefer to use the sheplands, a fast and light-framed dog with short hair that can carry up to 80 lbs. Dwarves, on the other hand, like the stockier bullrovers, which have long, flowing locks of thick hair, short legs, and incredible strength. Bullrovers can carry loads of up to 400 lbs. Both breeds are quite common and come in a dazzling array of colors.

The Whortleberry Kennels are a family-run business that sells both breeds of dog and has stores throughout most major halfling and dwarven cities. A Whortleberry trainer can identify a dog purchased at their kennels in a heartbeat.



SHEPLAND DOG – MEDIUM-SIZE ANIMAL

Price: 200 gp.
Stable Cost: Nil.
Food/Water Cost: 8 sp/week.

HD 3d8+6 (20 hp); Init +4; AC 16; Spd 50 ft.;
 Atk Bite +1 melee (1d6+1); Face/Reach: 5 ft.
 by 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent; Fort +5, Ref +6, Will
 +2; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha
 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +3,
 Track.

BULLROVER DOG – MEDIUM-SIZE ANIMAL

Price: 200 gp.
Stable Cost: Nil.
Food/Water Cost: 1 gp/week.

HD 3d8+6 (20 hp); Init +0; AC 14; Spd 30 ft.;
 Atk Bite +4 melee (1d6+4); Face/Reach: 5 ft.
 by 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent; Fort +5, Ref +6, Will
 +2; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha
 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +7.

Dwarf Pony: Standing a mere 4 feet tall, the bright-eyed dwarf pony is no less proud or noble than its taller cousin. These miniature

horses are well suited for Small riders, but are mainly employed as stock animals. They are extremely strong and capable of pulling hundreds of pounds uphill. However, due to their small legs and wide girth, dwarf ponies are usually poor at jumping.

The Kreikervitz Horse Guild exclusively specializes in dwarf ponies. They have traders in most major dwarven cities.

KREIKERVITZ GUILD PONY – MEDIUM-SIZE ANIMAL

Price: 200 gp.
Stable Cost: 5 sp/day.
Food/Water Cost: 4 sp/week.

HD 4d8+8 (26 hp); Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14;
 Atk 2 hooves +4 melee (1d6+3); Face/Reach: 5 ft.
 by 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Scent; Fort +5, Ref +2,
 Will +2; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12,
 Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +6, Spot +7.

Dragon: The epitome of raw, animal strength, dragons are both majestic and terrifying to behold. The freewings are a type of lesser dragon that are more commonly trained as mounts due to their low intelligence and small frames. These dragons are only distantly related to the more powerful and cunning species found in the wild.

The years of controlled breeding have taken away most freewing dragons' ability to breathe fire, but in some rare instances a fire breather is born. These creatures are known as firewings. The freewings subsist mainly on a diet of cooked meat and vegetables, and have a strong affinity for stew. They will not eat raw meat unless starving or desperate.

For years the dragon riders of Kish kept sole possession of these powerful beasts, but with recent famines and new elders they have opened their doors to outsiders. The dragon riders now sell the freewings and train riders to use them, but still carefully guard the secrets of raising the dragons properly. Attempts by other groups to mimic these breeding techniques have always ended in disaster.

FREEWING DRAGON – HUGE MONSTER

Price: 6,400 gp.
Stable Cost: 25 gp/day.

TABLE 4-2: MOUNT EQUIPMENT

Item	Cost	Weight
Bridle	2 gp	1 lb.
Emergency belt	6 gp	7 lb.
Feedbag	3 gp	2 lb.
Grooming brush	5 sp	1 lb.
Jousting key	35 gp	8 lb.
Mount cape	5 gp	2 lb.
Saddle, aerial	60 gp	40 lb.
Saddle, flat	30 gp	25 lb.
Saddle, stock	10 gp	25 lb.

Food/Water Cost: 15 gp/week.

HD 10d12+30 (95 hp); Init +1; Spd 50 ft., Fly 80 ft.; AC 16; Atk: 2 claws +12 melee (2d8+7); Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.; SA: Firebreath*; SQ: Scent; Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 24, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 8.
Skills and Feats: Jump +10, Spot +6, Swim +7.

Firebreath (Su): Once per day, the dragon can issue forth a cone fire that deals 8d8 points of fire damage.

*Only one in 500 freewing dragons is born with this ability, thus they cost four times the regular price.

MOUNT EQUIPMENT

The following equipment can aid a rider immensely in both protecting his steed and increasing its overall effectiveness. At the DM's discretion, a mount may come with any amount of equipment for no cost, but a source of additional equipment and supplies must be found afterward.

Bridle: The bridle includes the headstall, browband, noseband, cheek piece, rein, and bit. Bridles attach to the top of the head and are used for direction and control. The headstall, browband, noseband, and cheek piece are used to keep the bridle in place. The bit is a metal bar that lies on the inside of the mouth and aids in control. The rider grasps the reins for control and direction. Halve the regular cost of the bridle for Medium-size mounts and double it for Huge mounts.

Emergency Belt: A set of thick leather straps

designed to thoroughly tie a *rider into* a saddle. An emergency belt makes it virtually impossible for a rider to fall off his mount. As a result, unconscious riders have a 90% chance to stay in the saddle, and all checks to avoid being pulled from a mount gain a +8 bonus. It takes a full round action to attach or undo the straps.

Mount Cape: A mount cape is merely a large piece of cloth draped around the mount's torso and tied at the nape of the neck. These ornaments are often printed with plain colors or exotic designs and are mainly used to improve the regal appearance of a mount. The cape confers a +1 bonus to Charisma to mounts in jousting tournaments.

Flat Saddle: The flat saddle resembles a normal saddle that is missing some of its strapings, making it easier for a rider to fall off but giving the horse more freedom of movement. Flat saddles grant a mount a +2 circumstance bonus to Jump checks, but an unconscious rider only has a 30% chance of remaining on such a mount. In addition, the character suffers a -2 penalty on all checks to avoid being pulled from his mount.

Stock Saddle: A stock saddle resembles a regular saddle in all aspects except one. It has a horn located on the front end that a rider can use to attach ropes. Stock saddles give a +2 circumstance bonus to Ride checks involving dragging or pulling.

Aerial Saddle: An aerial saddle is necessary for most aerial mounts and attaches directly to the mount's torso with numerous straps and emergency clips. Riders literally attach themselves to the aerial saddle and can-

not fall off without first unhooking themselves. Riders gain a +10 bonus against anyone attempting to pull them from the saddle.

Riding an airborne mount without such a saddle is incredibly dangerous, requiring a Ride check (DC 15) each time the mount changes speeds, lands or takes off, or performs an aerial maneuver. It takes three rounds to attach or get out of an aerial saddle.

Jousting Key: A jousting key connects to the right side of a horse's bridle and has a small circular slot for the placement of a lance. It takes a full round action to slide a lance into the ring and a full round action to slide it back out. The reason for the jousting key is to add extra support so that the lance does not bounce with the rider. Jousting keys convey a +6 bonus to a charging character's attack roll, but only against targets directly in front of the mount.

Feedbag: The feedbag attaches directly to a mount's mouth and allows it to eat while walking. The feedbag must be removed before the mount moves faster than a walk.

Grooming Brush: Only useful for mounts that have hair, a grooming brush keeps a mount happy and healthy-looking.

BARDING

Barding refers to armor specifically made for mounts, a luxury that can greatly increase a mount's survivability. However, the more protection the barding offers the more it slows the mount down, reducing both its speed and its maneuverability. A rider should keep these factors in mind when choosing barding for his mount.

Table 4-3 gives a list of the different bardings available, the AC bonuses conferred, and the armor check penalty. The prices listed are for large mounts. For Medium-size mounts reduce the cost by one half and for huge mounts multiply the cost by two. Exotic mounts also double the cost of barding.

The areas covered by barding include headgear, side shielding, and leg shielding, but not all barding comes with these three pieces. See the descriptions below to determine what a specific piece of barding covers.

Side shielding protects the torso, flanks, and rear of the mount. It is often split in the middle so that the rider's legs remain free. Almost all side shielding attaches directly to the saddle and has a padded inner lining for the mount's comfort.

Headgear acts like a helmet, keeping the head and neck safe from attacks as well as dust, blood, tree branches, or anything else that might affect vision. A mount with headgear gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Fortitude saves involving sight (such as the gaze of a basilisk).

Leg shielding mainly protects the front of the mount's legs, except in the case of shield casing which protects both the front and the back. Since movement is an important part of the mount's usefulness in battle, leg shielding must be minimal and is usually attached with leather straps. Mounts with leg shielding gain a +2 circumstance bonus when defending against trip attacks.

Leather Flank: Made from toughened leather, this armor consists solely of light leather side shielding. Mounts wearing this armor suffer few penalties.

Studded Flank: This armor is made of a series of multi-layered leather pieces connected together by metal, most often steel studs. Studded flank provides a mount with side shielding and headgear.

Chain Flank: This armor is created by sewing interlocking steel rings to a panel of toughened leather pieces. A thin metal mesh covers the mount with headgear, side-shielding, and leg-shielding.

Padded Banding: This armor consists of side shielding made of strong metallic strips wrapped around leather straps that are loosely tied to the saddle.

Spiked Banding: This armor is made from metal strips tightly joined to a metal mesh. It comes with headgear and side shielding. Dull metal spikes protrude from the armor, attaching the metal wrappings and mesh together.

Steel Banding: This armor is similar to spiked banding, only it is made from high quality steel and covers the head, torso, and legs with shielding. It is very uncomfortable and cannot

TABLE 4-3: BARDING

Armor	Armor Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Speed Modifier	Weight	Cost
Light						
Leather flank	+1	+6	0	—	10 lbs	60 gp
Studded flank	+1	+5	-1	—	15 lbs	150 gp
Chain flank	+2	+4	-2	—	20 lbs	250 gp
Medium						
Padded banding	+2	+4	-1	-10 ft.	30 lbs	350 gp
Spiked banding	+3	+3	-2	-10 ft.	35 lbs	500 gp
Steel banding	+3	+3	-3	-10 ft.	45 lbs	860 gp
Heavy						
Half casing	+4	+2	-3	-10 ft.	50 lbs	1,200 gp
Full casing	+6	+1	-4	-20 ft.	75 lbs	2,700 gp
Shield casing	+8	+0	-5	-20 ft.	100 lbs	5,000 gp

be worn for more than one week without causing extreme discomfort to a mount (the mount moves at one-half speed after this period, and for one day after the armor has been removed).

Half Casing: This armor is made of shaped metal plates, bolted together, and padded underneath. It covers the torso with side shielding and has two indentations on either side, which are padded with bear fur for the rider's legs.

Full Casing: Like half casing, this armor extends to cover the body and the head with specially formed metal plates. Some versions of this armor have horns or a disturbing faceplate to make the mount more frightening in battle. Such ornaments grant the mount and its rider a +2 circumstance bonus to Intimidate checks while the rider is mounted.

Shield Casing: This armor completely covers the mount from head to foot in a nigh-impenetrable shell of metal plates. It greatly improves a mount's AC, but reduces its mobility and speed considerably.

MOUNTS IN COMBAT

Having a mount can mean the difference between victory and defeat in combat. A good mount can increase a warrior's mobility, vision, and defensive position, not to mention add a fierce combatant to the fray.

MOVEMENT

The biggest advantage of taking a mount into combat is its range of movement. Walking is the mount's standard speed.

If the mount makes a double move in a round, it is considered trotting for that round. A trotting mount must spend a move-equivalent action to turn 180 degrees on its current position. If it makes a 90-degree turn and moves 10 feet, then it can make another 90-degree turn. A mount can maintain a trot for 20 minutes per point of Constitution before it needs to rest. The Endurance feat adds an additional 20 minutes per point of Constitution to the mount's total trotting time. If a mount is pushed beyond this limit, it suffers one point of temporary Constitution damage for every 20 minutes it is ridden. This penalty can be delayed by the use of the Coax the Beast maneuver outlined in Chapter 2.

When a rider pushes the mount to run or charge it moves at quadruple its speed. Running allows for more freedom of movement, and a charge can significantly increase the damage dealt by the mount's rider in combat. The mount requires at least 10 feet of starting room to build up enough speed for a run. A rider takes 2d6 damage for falling off a mount during a run. It can maintain a run for one minute per point of Constitution before needing to rest. The Endurance feat doubles the amount of time a mount can run. Slowing back down to a trot is a move-equivalent action.



If the mount is forced to move at a running speed for more than ten minutes within a single hour, it must be allowed to rest or it suffers one point of temporary Constitution damage for each additional minute that it is ridden.

A mount can rest intermittently to help it go farther in a day. For each 10-minute period that the mount rests, it can be ridden for an additional time period equal to its base (20 minutes at a trot, one minute at a run).

Turning is perhaps the most challenging aspect of movement on a mount. When standing still, a mount may turn up to 180 degrees from the direction it is facing. In a trot, the mount may turn up to 90 degrees. A mount in a run can only make a 45-degree turn. The mount must move at least 10 feet before making another turn in any case.

MOUNT WEAPONS

Bladed Shoes: Bladed shoes are designed exclusively for horses and dwarf ponies. The tips of the shoes have small jagged blades that deal 1d6 points of damage on a successful strike (heavy warhorses deal 1d8 points of damage on a successful strike with bladed

shoes). Mounts with talons, such as griffons, can be fitted with a variation of these weapons called a talon blade. This weapon deals 1d8 points of damage on a successful strike and costs four times as much as bladed shoes.

Long travel can wear down bladed shoes, so most mounted combatants learn to fit the shoes onto their horses themselves. This way they can arm their mounts when preparing for battle, saving them from having to replace the bladed shoes every few days. Traveling more than 10 miles on bladed shoes makes them unusable in combat, therefore they must be replaced. It requires a Profession (blacksmith) check (DC 20) to successfully fit bladed shoes onto a mount or to remove them after battle.

Horn Talask: Elephants are sometimes fitted with a pair of horn talasks, which attach snugly over the tips of the tusks and have either a sharp blade or a bludgeoning ball at the tips. An elephant with bladed horn talasks deals an additional 1d8 points of damage with its gore attack, while ball and chain talasks increase the elephant's reach on its slam attack by 5 ft.

Unicorn Razorhooves: These exotic weapons are most often forged at the behest of a member of the Order of the Unicorn for his mount. Resembling horseshoes at first glance, closer inspection reveals the sharp, serrated edges and the structural support that makes these weapons of war. A unicorn wearing razorhooves deals 1d8 damage with its hoof attacks instead of 1d4.

Unicorn's Blade: This serrated blade is mounted on a cap that is placed over a unicorn's horn. It increases the critical threat range of the unicorn's horn to 19–20.

CONTROLLING A SPOOKED MOUNT

If a mount is frightened or wounded in combat, it has a chance of getting spooked and bolting. Each time a mount takes damage, and when it first enters combat, the player should roll percentile dice to see if the mount is spooked. See Table 4-1 for the percentage chance that a given mount will spook as a result of combat. If the mount is spooked, the rider may attempt that round to control it with a Ride check (DC 20). In the event of failure, the rider may try again each subsequent round as a move-equivalent action to try and soothe the mount. A character with five or more ranks in Animal

TABLE 4-4: MOUNT WEAPONS

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Bladed Shoes	25 gp	1d6	x2	—	3 lb.	S
Horn Talask	75 gp	+1d8	x2	—	15 lb.	S/B
Unicorn Razorhooves	15 gp	1d8	19-20/x2	—	3 lb.	S
Unicorn's Blade	50 gp	—	—	—	4 lb.	P

Empathy gains a +2 synergy bonus to any such checks. A spooked mount runs as fast as it can away from danger.

ATTACKS FROM UNUSUAL MOUNTS

Medium-size mounts: When you ride a Medium-size mount into battle, you only gain a +1 bonus to melee attacks against opponents smaller than Medium-size due to the advantage of higher ground. In addition, a rider only takes half damage for falling off a Medium-size mount due to its closer proximity to the ground.

Huge and aerial mounts: These mounts do not allow for easy combat with standard reach weapons, as the rider is considered to be 10 ft. from any Large or smaller opponent on the ground. As a partial action, a Huge or aerial mount may lower its rider close to the ground for an attack; although to attempt this, the rider must make a Ride check (DC 15) or provoke an attack of opportunity. A rider who falls off a huge mount suffers 2d6 points of damage.

ORGANIZATIONAL TEMPLATES

Although many members of the fighting classes are loners by nature, some seek out others who share their goals and ideals. Others recognize that there is strength in numbers and that their causes – for good or for ill – are better served by working in a group. Still others believe that organizations are the best means to pass on what they know to others of their kind.

Whatever their reasons, fighting organizations are at least as common as their magical or clerical equivalents and they are excellent vehicles for roleplaying. At their most basic level, they can offer a good way to introduce a new pres-

tige class into a campaign, since many prestige classes are closely tied to a small group or organization. They also give the DM a ready source of adventure hooks as well as a method to frame adventures or even entire campaigns. The rootless adventurer is a common enough archetype in fantasy, but it is not especially well suited to a campaign focused on a particular goal or ideal.

Organizations provide a framing device that can serve as a backdrop for a campaign. They are likewise a convenient means by which the characters can interact with one another, since they might all belong to the same group or to a collection of related groups with shared goals. Finally, organizations offer an outlet for advancement that is not tied to defeating monsters or dungeon delving. Characters can encounter an entirely different set of challenges as they attempt to advance within their chosen organization.

ORGANIZATIONS

When using an organization in a fantasy game, it is important to distinguish between membership in the organization and membership in any prestige classes associated with it. The former is represented by adding a “template” to a character, much in the same way as you would to create certain types of monsters. The following rules explain how to create a character that belongs to an organization such as the Adventurers’ Guild or the Contemplative Order. Also included is advice on just how to choose the right balance of requirements and rewards so that a template is not overly powerful compared to others or so weak as to be unsuitable for player characters.

CREATING AN ORGANIZATIONAL TEMPLATE

The first step to creating an organizational template is having an idea for the organization itself. This idea should be either narrowly focused or at least specific enough that there is a reason for its existence. For example, the Wardens of the Great Wood is a narrowly focused organization devoted to protecting the Great Wood from humanoid incursions. That is a very narrow focus, making it reasonable as an organization. On the other hand, the Adventurers' Guild is not narrowly focused in the same sense. Its members are quite diverse. However, all guild members share a common interest in the craft of professional adventuring, which is also a good basis for an organization. The DM should bear these examples in mind when creating his own organizational templates.

RANKS

One of the primary benefits of an organizational template is its rank structure. Every organization will have a number of different ranks,

which are levels of authority and initiation within the group. Most will have only five ranks, but more are certainly possible, if the DM so desires. Each rank probably possesses a name, which a member may use as a title before his own, as a badge of his position within the organization. The number and names of the ranks is entirely up to the DM and serves only flavor purposes. That is, they have no game mechanical effects. Instead, they are a way to differentiate between organizations and give the characters a chance to mark their progress by appending the title "Master" or "Warden" before their names.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

At each rank, there should be requirements. These requirements must be possessed before the character is allowed to achieve that rank. They are the bare minimum that a character needs before his organization will admit him to the new rank – but there may be other requirements as well. The DM makes this decision and it should be based on campaign considerations, such as whether the character in question has good relations with the guildmaster or proven himself an unstable element. In such cases, the



DM could reasonably make the character perform additional deeds or meet other requirements before his superiors will allow him to advance further. Again, this is a roleplaying consideration and should be used only if the campaign warrants it.

The membership requirements themselves can be many things. Most typically they are a few game mechanical milestones, such as a minimum base attack bonus, a minimum base save, a number of skill ranks, or feats. Their intensity and their number should be linked to both the nature of the organization and the benefits accrued at each rank (see below). In cases where the organization is lenient or where the benefits are especially small, the DM would be wise to make the requirements equally paltry. If, on the other hand, the organization is strict or the benefits are significant, the DM would be reasonable to make the requirements equally impressive.

In general, though, no requirements should be more strenuous than those needed to get into a prestige class. Prestige classes represent elite individuals who have totally devoted themselves to a particular cause, group, or technique. Organizations, on the other hand, are not nearly as taxing on their members – or rarely are. If a character intends to join an organization rather than a prestige class, it is likely he does not want to focus too strongly on a single aspect of his existence. Given that, the DM should try to keep the requirements for membership in a range that is somewhat less than that of a prestige class. This is only a guideline, of course, since it sometimes makes sense for an organization to have stricter requirements, particularly if the rank benefits are impressive enough.

Another consideration is how broadly based the DM wishes an organization to be. It is generally better to make the requirements broad enough that members of many classes and races can join. So, alternative requirements are often appropriate rather than very specific ones that limit which types of characters may join. Again, there are always exceptions to this suggestion, and a DM should bear in mind the purpose and role of the organization before making any decisions one way or the other. In the end, what is most important is the integrity of the group itself. The Wardens of the Great Wood, for example, are very much a “ranger’s



group,” which is why its upper ranks require a favored enemy as a prerequisite. The Adventurers’ Guild, on the other hand, is much less stringent, since it is geared toward all classes who wish to hone their professional adventuring skills, not just fighters or rogues.

BENEFITS

Just as each rank has requirements, so too do they have benefits. These benefits represent the rewards for advancing in the organization’s hierarchy. Consequently, they should have a real effect in a campaign, whether as a roleplaying device or as a game mechanic. The amount of benefit should be tied directly to the requirements for each rank. An organization with lax requirements should, in general, give fewer and less impressive benefits than those with more strict requirements. Likewise, the type of benefits should make sense within the context of the organization. For example, the Contemplative Order allows higher rank members access to its library of ancient tomes. This makes good sense, given the Order’s focus on learning and discipline. However, it would have made no sense to give higher rank Contemplatives Disable Device as a new class skill. The DM should try to tailor the benefits to the purpose of the organization.

Like requirements, it is important to keep prestige and other classes in mind when creating benefits. Benefits should be useful, but not so useful that they undermine the rules of the game. Therefore, giving someone free feats or an ability unique to a class are probably poor choices as benefits. In fact, feats and class abilities are good benchmarks for what is too powerful. If a benefit comes close to being as effective or useful as a feat or class ability, the DM should consider revising the benefit. For magical abilities, these should rarely be more powerful than 0-level spells. Otherwise, the uniqueness of the magical classes is undermined. Likewise, bonuses to saves or base attack bonuses should rarely be more than +1.

Roleplaying benefits are probably the best way to ensure that membership in an organization does not become too powerful. Indeed, these sorts of benefits are one of the best ways to use these templates. They give the characters a solid grounding in the setting and show that there are other ways to advance than through accumulating experience points. Gaining access to the Adventurers' Guild hiring hall, for example, is a true benefit and one that should be the envy of those barred from it. Similarly, the friendship of the Wood Elves of the Great Wood might well be worth more than gold to a Warden who finds himself on his own and being pursued by a band of evil bugbears.

A NOTE ABOUT REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS

Membership requirements and benefits do not stack. That is, if Rank 2 grants a +1 Will save bonus and Rank 3 grants a +2 Will save bonus, the character does not gain a +3 bonus. Similarly, if Rank 1 requires three ranks in Wilderness Lore and Rank 2 requires five ranks in Wilderness Lore, the character does not need 8 ranks in total. Each subsequent level assumes the requirements or benefits of the previous one. If, for some reason, this is not the case, the DM should make this explicit. None of the sample organizations included in this book break this rule, however.

DRAWBACKS

Drawbacks are a bit like requirements in that they are things that place a burden on members in the organization. They differ in that they do not necessarily increase with rank and usually have more to do with ideology than with skill. For example, members of the

Contemplative Order must divest themselves of excess material possessions while the Servants of Ice must sacrifice living beings monthly to their demonic lord.

Drawbacks are tests of the character's devotion and should usually be roleplaying-oriented. Mechanically based drawbacks are possible, of course, but the DM would be well advised to use them only when the benefits are especially good. Depriving a character of an entire school of magic, for instance, should only come as a side effect of especially good benefits.

Drawbacks work hand in hand with requirements. They are a way for the DM to balance out a template's benefits with its requirements. If a group's requirements are minimal and the benefits significant, a good way to balance the equation is by levying some hefty drawbacks. On the other hand, if the membership requirements are already quite strict, adding too many drawbacks might be seen as overkill. Weighing these two elements of the template against one another is an important key to creating a reasonable organizational template for a campaign.

CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

Also related to drawbacks are the causes for expulsion. These are the reasons why an individual can be kicked out of an organization, as well as the consequences for his being ejected. Typically, failing to live up to any of the drawbacks is cause for expulsion, but they need not be the only one. Many organizations will have ideological or theological reasons to expel members, such as someone defying the teachings of a religion or consorting with the enemy. In the end, almost anything could be a cause for expulsion, depending on the focus and stridency of the organization in question.

When deciding on appropriate causes, the DM needs to bear in mind several factors, including how orthodox a group is. Some groups give their members lots of leeway in their behavior; others do not. In general, tightly knit groups with a lot of power (and therefore benefits) will be less freewheeling and open to diversity of opinion and action than looser and less powerful ones. As always, there are exceptions to these guidelines and the DM should try not to characterize all his organizations in the same way. Variety is important and there will undoubtedly be many groups that defy easy categorization.

Any character who is expelled from an organization loses the template's benefits immediately. He may also suffer other penalties, such as ostracism or even threats of violence from his former comrades. Some organizations are secret in nature and they do not expel anyone; they merely kill them. This is an extreme example, of course, but demon cults or conspiracies, for example, cannot tolerate anyone who knows their secrets and leaves their ranks alive. No matter what, the DM should note what ill effects might occur as a result of being expelled from an organization, above and beyond the loss of its rank benefits.

THE GUILD OF ADVENTURERS

The world is rife with amateur adventurers – but only the Guild of Adventurers contains the true professionals. The Guild exists to promote professionalism among the sellswords, tomb-robbers, and rogues who undertake great deeds in quests of glory and gold. Its members recognize each other as kindred spirits who, whatever their differences in demeanor and worldview, have more in common with each other than with the common rabble who will never understand the thrill of stealing from a dragon's hoard or exploring an abandoned dwarf-hold.

The Guild provides professional adventurers with a network of contacts and allies who share their love of excitement and can provide them with food, lodging, rumors, and other services in exchange for monthly dues.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for each rank of this organization, the character must meet the following requirements:

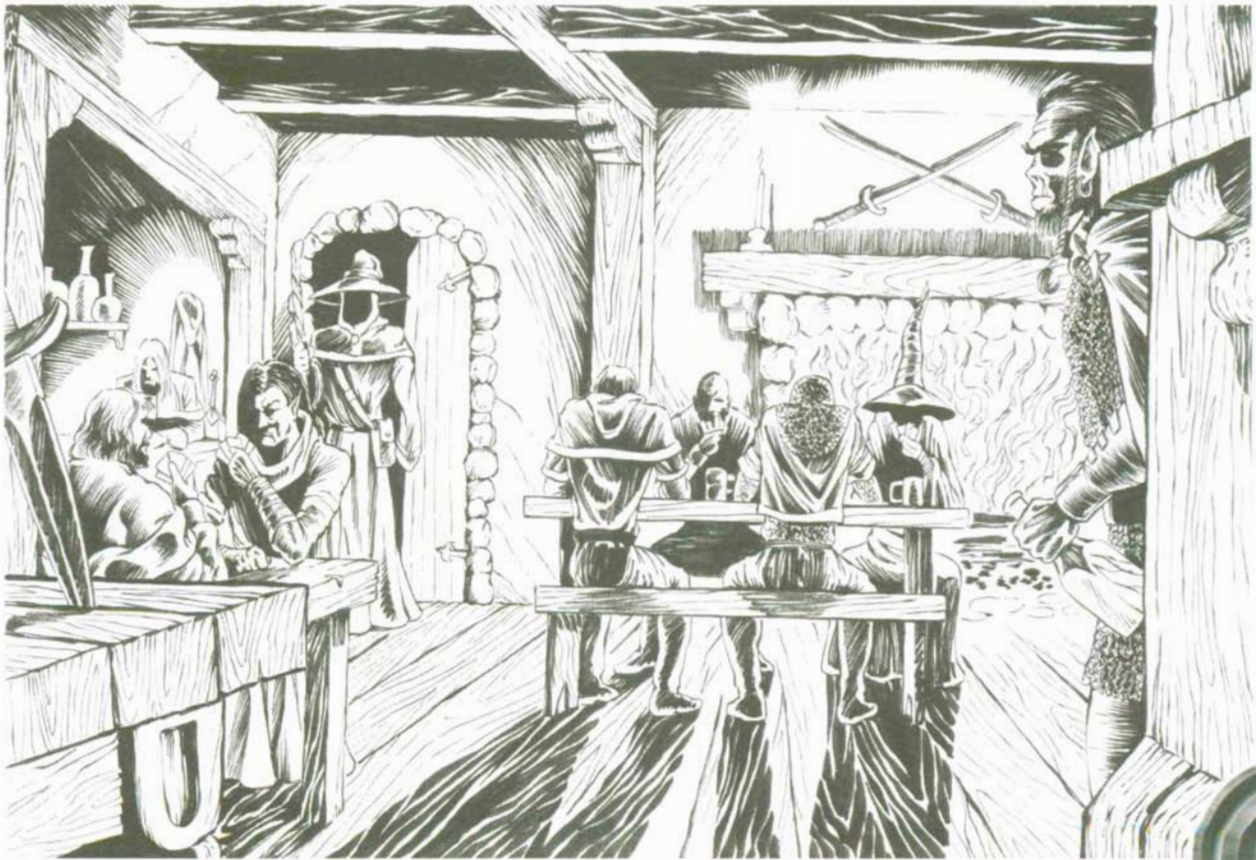
Apprentice: A record of accomplishment as an adventurer (character level 2nd+); recommendation of an existing member of the Guild.

Journeyman: 1 rank in Search; 3 ranks in Climb, Spellcraft, or Wilderness Lore.

Adventurer: Renown as an adventurer (character level 5th+); 3 ranks in Search; 5 ranks in Climb, Spellcraft, or Wilderness Lore.

Expert Adventurer: 5 ranks in Search; 7 ranks in Climb, Spellcraft, or Wilderness Lore.

Master Adventurer: Fame as an adventurer (character level 8th+).





BENEFITS

Immediately upon being inducted to each rank of this organization, the character gains the following benefits:

Apprentice: Access to the local Adventurer's Guildhall and the use of its facilities for a fee. Each new member is also assigned a mentor (Adventurer-level member), who is the character's official advocate and instructor in the traditions of the Guild.

Journeyman: Access to the Guild hiring hall, where rumors of possible adventuring sites are traded, as well as where members seek out others to join them on their own quests.

Adventurer: The permission to recommend new members to the Guild, as well as to act as a mentor to them. The ability to purchase any magic items the Guild may acquire for sale, and to participate in auctions held by other members. A +1 bonus to all Intimidate or Diplomacy checks when dealing with NPCs in a town or city that has an Adventurer's Guildhall.

Expert Adventurer: The ability to host non-members at the local Guildhall, who

may avail themselves of its basic services for a fee. The number of outsiders a member may host is equal to half his character level, rounded up. A +2 bonus to all Intimidate or Diplomacy checks when dealing with NPC class characters in a town or city that has an Adventurer's Guildhall.

Master Adventurer: Lifetime free access to the local Guildhall's services. Waiver of monthly dues, pending a one-time application fee. Position on the Membership Committee of the Guild, which approves or rejects all new sponsorships and adjudicates cases for expulsion. A +3 bonus to all Intimidate or Diplomacy checks when dealing with NPC class characters in a town or city that has an Adventurer's Guildhall.

DRAWBACKS

The Guild of Adventurers is a fraternal, cooperative organization. As such, it demands that its members aid one another in times of need if they are able to do so. In addition, the Guild has a graduated dues structure, in which members must pay an increasing amount per month based on their current status within the Guild. The structure is as follows:

Apprentice:	5 gp per month
Journeyman:	10 gp per month
Adventurer:	25gp per month
Expert Adventurer:	50 gp per month
Master Adventurer:	1,000 gp application fee (one-time fee)

CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

There are only two causes for expulsion from the Guild. The first is bringing disrepute on the name of the Guild and the profession of adventuring. This is admittedly broad in its definition, which is why the Membership Committee must unanimously concur whenever a charge is brought against a member. Illegal (or even evil) acts are not necessarily causes for expulsion, but such acts that threaten the position of the Guild or its members are. Likewise, failure to aid another Guild member in genuine need, even one a character does not like personally, is a violation of the Guild's oath and a betrayal of its most deeply held principles. Members in good standing meet expelled characters with hostility, if not outright violence. Expelled adventurers should also expect mockery by the same common folk they used to deal with as Guildsmen.

THE CONTEMPLATIVE ORDER

There are many mystics who believe that the only path to true wisdom is by quiet meditation upon the world and its inhabitants. The Contemplative Order is an organization of such mystics, who live in remote monasteries and train their minds to concentrate on the hidden truths of the world, the ones easily overlooked by those too wedded to life's physical pleasures. Though eremitic in demeanor, all Contemplatives do not withdraw themselves from interaction with their fellow beings. Indeed, some believe that it is by being in the world but not of it that they can reach their ultimate goal of communion with the Divine that lies beneath all of Creation.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for each rank of this organization, the character must meet the following minimum requirements:

Postulant: Will save +2 or higher; 1 rank in Concentration; acceptance by a Disciple-level member as a student.

Initiate: 3 ranks in Concentration, 1 rank in Knowledge (arcana).

Disciple: Will save +4 or higher, 5 ranks in Concentration.

Immaculate: Iron Will feat, 3 ranks in Knowledge (arcana).

Master: Will save +10 or higher, 7 ranks in Concentration.

BENEFITS

Immediately upon being inducted to each rank of this organization, the character gains the following benefits:

Postulant: A cell and meager food at a Contemplative monastery, as well as a higher-ranked Contemplative (at least Disciple-level) to serve as the character's mentor.

Initiate: Access to the monastery's library of ancient texts and scriptures, which give a +2 library bonus to all Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (religion) skill checks.

Disciple: +1 bonus to Will saves versus spells

from the Enchantment school. Permission to take on a postulant of one's own and train her in the ways of the Contemplative Order.

Immaculate: +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks when dealing with monks or clerics who serve deities or orders that place a high value on contemplation and inner development.

Master: +2 bonus to Will saves versus spells from the Enchantment school.

Special: Any Contemplative who completely divests himself of all her worldly possessions, except the clothes on her back and shoes on her feet, gains a +1 bonus to all unarmed attacks, Will saves and skill checks for as long as she remains true to the ideals of the Contemplative Order.

DRAWBACKS

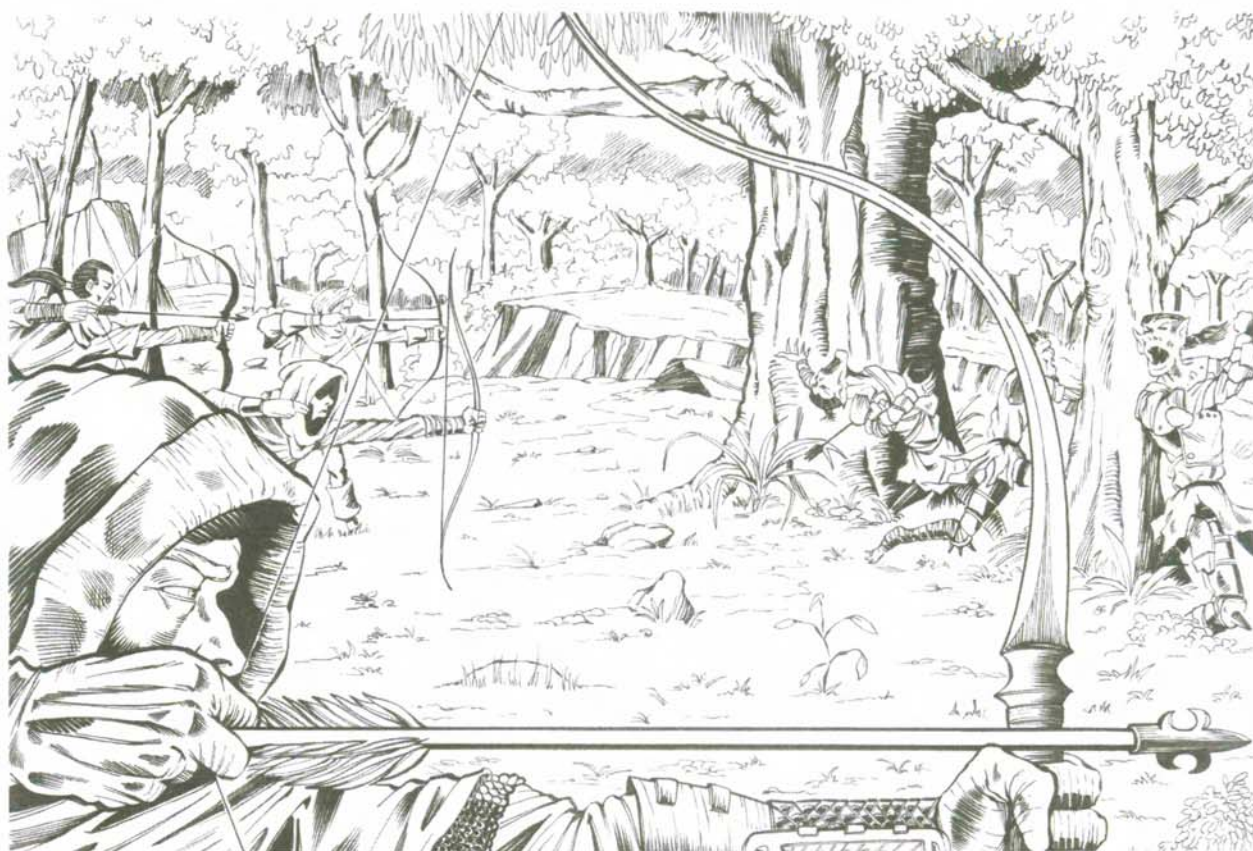
The primary drawback associated with this organization is that its members seek detachment from the world by eschewing material possessions. A Contemplative is encouraged to give up as many of her possessions as she is able, but in any event may never own more than 100 gp and one of each type of equipment (one weapon, one ring, one potion, etc.). The ideal is absolute poverty and detachment but it is not demanded of any member as a condition of membership.

CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

Undue attachment to the world is the primary cause for expulsion from the Contemplative Order. A character that possesses more than the limited possessions allowed to a Contemplative is expelled from the Order and shunned by his former comrades.

WARDENS OF THE GREAT WOOD

The Wardens of the Great Wood are a band of rangers and their allies who exist to preserve and protect an ancient forest sacred to druids and wood elves alike. The Wardens see their mission as divinely ordained by their gods, who have commanded them to battle against the evil humanoids that have overrun the Wood and seek to corrupt it and its inhabitants. They operate in small, highly mobile cells and rely upon their superior knowledge of the forest to engage in hit and run attacks against their enemies.



MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for each rank of this organization, the character must meet the following minimum requirements:

Runner: Sponsorship by an existing member of the Wardens in good standing; Run feat.

Scout: Track feat; 3 ranks in Wilderness Lore.

Courser: 3 ranks in Intuit Direction; 5 ranks in Wilderness Lore.

Pathfinder: 5 ranks in Intuit Direction; 7 ranks in Wilderness Lore.

Warden: Favored enemy (any humanoid race) +2.

BENEFITS

Immediately upon being inducted to each rank of this organization, the character gains the following benefits:

Runner: Knowledge of the names and general *whereabouts* of two other Wardens (of at least Rank 3), who act as the character's mentors and, if need be, protectors.

Scout: Knowledge of the location of one friendly druidic circle within the Great Wood, whose members will provide food, lodging, and healing to the character if asked. Under certain circumstances, the druids may also loan the Warden equipment (including magic items) for a short time to assist in completing a particular mission.

Courser: Permission to induct new members into the Wardens and impart to them knowledge appropriate to their rank within the organization.

Pathfinder: Knowledge of phrases and code words to identify oneself as a friend of the wood elves and thereby gain access to any of their settlements within the Great Wood.

Warden: The ability to cast *guidance* once per day, regardless of whether the character possesses the ability to cast divine spells of any type.

DRAWBACKS

The Wardens exist as itinerant guerrillas without the official support of any kingdom or realm. Consequently, its members can never possess more than they can carry unassisted. The use of horses and pack animals is strictly

forbidden. Similarly, Wardens must turn over any wealth or possessions (including magic items) that they cannot personally carry to either their superiors (if they are Runners) or to a druidic circle (if a higher rank), for use by any other members of the organization.

CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

There are three causes for expulsion from the Wardens. The first is the betrayal of the organization's secrets. Any member who reveals the names or locations of his fellow Wardens, a druidic circle, or a wood elf settlement to anyone outside the group (even if good-aligned) is immediately expelled. Likewise, any member who cooperates with a humanoid enemy of the Wardens (particularly orcs and hobgoblins) is expelled. Failing to turn over excess wealth and possessions to the druids is the final cause for expulsion. Because the organization is small and highly mobile, the Wardens abandon as many of their old strongholds as possible after the expulsion of a member in order to prevent compromising the group as a whole. This is not always possible (particularly in the case of wood elf settlements), which is why the Wardens are reluctantly tasked to slay any former member who dares return to their sanctums after being expelled.

THE SERVANTS OF ICE

The worship of demons is considered unwholesome by most civilized beings, but among the barbarian peoples of the cold north, it is not so ill regarded. Many of these rough men and women have turned to the brutal Lord of Ice to protect them from the ravages of his demons and to turn them against their foes. Some have left their frozen lands and journeyed to urban areas, where they form small cells of demon worshippers that worm their way into the corridors of power – all for the Ice Lord's glory. A harsh and unforgiving organization, the Servants of Ice hide behind masks of normalcy while working to corrupt society from within.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for each rank of this organization, the character must meet the following minimum requirements:

Initiate: Chaotic Evil alignment; pronouncement of vows to serve the Lord of Ice; spending a night naked in the cold and surviving.

Minion: Fortitude save +3 or higher; 3 ranks in Bluff or Hide.

Servant: 5 ranks in Bluff or Hide; 1 rank in Knowledge (the planes).

Master: Great Fortitude feat, 3 ranks in Knowledge (the planes).

Grand Master: Fortitude save +10 or higher, 7 ranks in Bluff or Hide.

BENEFITS

Immediately upon being inducted to each rank of this organization, the character gains the following benefits:

Initiate: Knowledge of safehouses friendly to the Servants, where the character may take shelter should he need to do so.

Minion: Access to the cult's blasphemous tomes, which gives the character a +2 library bonus to all Knowledge (the planes) checks.

Servant: +2 Fortitude save bonus for the purpose of resisting the effects of cold; +1 bonus to Intimidate checks when dealing with anyone of lower rank in the Servants.

Master: +2 bonus to Intimidate checks when dealing with anyone of lower rank in the Servants.

Grand Master: +3 bonus to Fortitude saves for the purpose of resisting the effects of cold; +3 bonus to Intimidate checks when dealing with anyone of lower rank in the Servants.

DRAWBACKS

To remain in the good graces of both the Servants and its demonic lord, a member must give one half of all their wealth to the organization on a monthly basis. They must also sacrifice an intelligent humanoid (whose levels or HD equal twice the character's current rank in the Servants) to their evil master four times a year. Servants are also expected to obey the direct orders of their superiors in the organization without question.

CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

There are only two crimes among the Servants of Ice: failure to obey the requirements listed above and acting in a



way that draws the attention of enemies of the group. In both cases, the penalty is not merely expulsion, but death. Any Servant who acts contrary to the group's precepts is marked to die, probably as a blood sacrifice.

COMBAT LOCATIONS

There is far more to the world than an endless series of 10-foot-wide stone corridors! Battle can occur in all kinds of places—in the narrow, rain-slick alleyways of the city; on the surface of a boat pitching in a storm; on the glistening ice fields near the poles; waist-deep in the thick muck of a fetid swamp; or, in the strange and wondrous realms of the outer planes, where the laws of physics are mere suggestions, oft ignored.

This section details many exotic locales for combat, and provides a number of modifiers to reflect the unique nature of such places. With *these rules as guidelines*, the DM should be able to quickly derive appropriate modifiers for any situation or location not covered

here. (Underwater combat is not discussed here; this topic is very complex, and is dealt with at length in the *Seafarer's Handbook*.)

While many explicit terrains with special effects are described, the core of the rules is the Locale Description System. By noting the degree to which each of the following factors affects combat, DMs can easily handle any situation they may wish to fling at the players!

SLIPPERINESS

The slipperiness of a terrain determines how slick it is. Slick terrain is very difficult to move on, and the rapid motions of combat (sudden dodges, thrusts, spins, and so on) are especially difficult to perform. Slipperiness is rated from 1 to 4, as follows:

Rating 1: Slightly slippery, such as a cobblestone street after the rain.

Rating 2: Quite slippery, such as wet grass or highly polished stone.

Rating 3: Very slippery, such as ice or an oil spill.

Rating 4: Almost frictionless, something which could result from magic or as part of the conditions of another plane.

Each level of slipperiness has the following effects:

Rating 1: A character making a trip attempt receives a +2 circumstance bonus to his opposed check. A character who runs or charges across the surface must make a Balance check (DC 10) or fall when he reaches the end of his move. The DC of this check is increased by two for each size category greater than Medium-size, and decreased by two for each size category less than Medium-size. This level of slipperiness can be traversed without effort when not in combat.

Rating 2: As rating 1, except that trip attempts receive a +4 circumstance bonus. Anyone running or charging through the area must make a Balance check (DC 15), and anyone taking more than a single move must make a Balance check (DC 10). This level of slipperiness can be traversed without effort when not in combat.

Rating 3: As rating 2, except that anyone struck in combat must make a Balance check (DC equals the damage dealt) or be knocked back 5 ft. and fall prone. (Halve the DC if the damage was dealt by a piercing attack; ignore it if an immaterial force, such as a non-Evocation spell, delivered the damage.) Even when not in combat, a Balance check (DC 5) must be made to move at half speed; failing this check results in the character not moving. Failing it by more than five results in the character falling. A bull rush moves the target of the attack back an extra 5 ft., but the character making the attack must make a Reflex save (DC 10) in order to remain standing.

Rating 4: As rating 3, except that moving at more than one-quarter speed requires a Balance check as follows:

1/2 move: DC 15

Full move: DC 20

Greater than full move: DC 25

SLIPPERINESS NOTES

Characters with a low center of gravity (many insects, carrion crawlers, and so on) or with more than two legs gain a +4 stability bonus on all Balance checks to maintain their footing.

Characters larger than Medium-size gain a +2 stability bonus for each size category greater than Medium-size against falling due to damage; characters smaller than Medium-size suffer a -2 penalty to such checks. Obviously enough, flying characters may ignore the slipperiness of a surface entirely, as can any character who can naturally cling to surfaces or who is under the influence of a *spider climb* spell.

Creatures native to a particular terrain (white dragons on ice fields, for example) are unaffected by its slipperiness. Equipment or preparation (throwing gritty sand on oil slicks, wearing skates on ice) may also grant considerable bonuses or cancel all effects entirely, at the DM's discretion.

PARTIAL MOVEMENT (OPTIONAL RULE)

If a character falls while moving on a slippery surface, they did not necessarily just fall down where they started. Roll 1d6, and consult the following chart:

Roll	Distance Moved
1-2	1/4 intended movement
3-4	1/2 intended movement
5-6	3/4 intended movement

While this is optional, and adds time to fights, it can also add some fun and danger. The fighter who charged across the ice field to confront the white dragon may find himself lying on his back within reach of the dragon's claws.

SLOPE

Slope determines how steep the ground is. After a certain point (60 degrees), a slope is considered a wall, and normal climbing rules apply. (Some variant climbing rules, specifically dealing with fighting while climbing, are noted below.)

When fighting on a sloped surface (the DM must determine if the degree of slope is significant enough to merit using these rules on a case-by-case basis), several modifiers apply.

- An attacker upslope from someone he is attacking in melee gains a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls.
- Moving up a slope is more difficult than moving across level ground,

and moving down is easier. Anyone doing a full move upslope loses 5 ft. from the total distance traveled; anyone doing a full move downslope gains 5 ft.

- If the target of a bull rush is downslope from the attacker, the target must make a Reflex save (DC 10) or fall prone at the end of his movement.

CLOSE QUARTERS

The default combat rules assume a character is standing on a surface at least five feet wide, and with clearance on both sides. This is not always going to be the case.

COMBAT

Several factors come into play when dealing with tight quarters in combat. Weapon length is one such factor. If a character is using a slashing or bludgeoning weapon of Medium-size or greater, and the character has less than five feet of total clearance, the character suffers a -2 circumstance penalty on attack rolls. If the character has less than two feet of total clearance, only Small or Tiny weapons or piercing weapons may be used. Furthermore, in such a narrow place, characters lose their Dexterity bonus to AC, as there is no room to dodge, twist, or weave.

Normally, a character may pass through a square occupied by a friendly character without difficulty. In tight places, however, this is not the case. If there is less than five feet of clearance, both the character moving and the character in the square being moved through must use a move-equivalent action as they slow down to get past each other. (This is provided both characters are Medium-size. Characters that are Small may pass each other easily in up to two and a half feet of clearance; Tiny characters can move freely with only a foot of clearance.)

NARROW FOOTING

While fighting in close quarters hinders the choice of weapon, at least there is no additional danger posed by the environment. This is not the case when fighting on a narrow ledge over a gaping chasm.

A character risks falling during normal combat when standing on any surface less than two feet wide. Whenever the character is struck, or misses an opponent by more than five, a

Reflex save must be made against the following DCs:

Width	DC
13–24 inches	10
7–12 inches	13
2–6 inches	15
<2 inches	18

To this, add half the damage done by any bludgeoning or slashing weapon in the previous round.

Should a character be knocked off, he will always have a chance to grab an edge if at least one hand is free (i.e. not holding a shield or weapon). It can be assumed that a character holding a shield and a weapon will drop the weapon in order to save his life! A Reflex save (DC 15) must then be made. If the character succeeds at the save, the character has grabbed onto an edge and is dangling dramatically. Any attack against the character's hand requires a Fortitude save (DC 5+damage dealt) to hold on.

If a ledge is slippery as well as narrow, add the slipperiness rating to the base DC of any check. In other words, someone fighting on a 6-inch wide sheet of ice must make a Balance check (DC 18+one half the damage dealt) to avoid being knocked off when struck in combat.

OBSTACLES

Not all fighting areas are clear. Even if there is generally enough room on either side to swing a weapon and no danger of falling, there may still be obstacles that can hinder combat. For example, fighting in a dense forest is somewhat different than fighting in either an open space or in a tight passage; you do not have total freedom of movement, but neither is your movement wholly constrained.

The amount of general clutter in an area can be rated as follows:

Rating 1: Numerous loose items, small objects on the floor, light objects easily batted away during combat—a typical crowded barroom.

Rating 2: Several large or immobile objects placed so as to minimally impede movement, but which cannot be easily ignored, or a very uneven floor that presents many opportunities to trip—a moderate forest.

Rating 3: Movement in a straight line is almost impossible; a character must continually step around, over, or under blockages, and they cannot be swept aside—a dense rain forest.

Rating 4: Rapid movement is impossible. Every step involves carefully moving around blockages of various sorts—the inside of a clockwork mechanism or a maze of floating bricks in an extradimensional space.

The effects are as follows:

Rating 1: AC suffers a -1 circumstance penalty. Moving more than full movement in a single round necessitates a Balance check (DC 5) or the character falls. Normal (non-combat) movement does not require such a check.

Rating 2: Both AC and attack rolls suffer a -1 circumstance penalty, except for attacks with piercing weapons. Moving more than full movement in a single round necessitates a Balance check (DC 10) or the character falls. Normal (non-combat) movement is only three-quarters base speed.

Rating 3: Both AC and attack rolls suffer a -2 circumstance penalty, except for attacks with piercing weapons. Moving more than half movement in a single round necessitates a Balance check (DC 15) or the character falls. Normal (non-combat) movement is only one-half base speed. Anyone more than 10 feet away has one-quarter cover.

Rating 4: Both AC and attack rolls suffer a -3 circumstance penalty, except for attacks with piercing weapons, which are at -1. Moving more than 5 feet in a single round necessitates a Balance check (DC 10 + 5 for each additional 5 ft. moved) or the character falls. Normal (non-combat) movement is only one-quarter base speed. Anyone more than 5 feet away has one-quarter cover.

GLARE

The harsh desert sun. The glistening ice fields of the arctic wastes. The brilliant glow of the sky itself on some alien plane. All of these can severely hinder combat.

There are two levels of glare: brilliant and blinding. These are described below.



BRILLIANT

This is the level of glare most likely to be found in normal settings on a typical campaign world. The light is bright and harsh, and vision is difficult. Simply staring into the light is painful, and looking down or otherwise shielding your eyes exposes you to attacks. Unless you have the Blind-Fight feat or the ability to sense opponents through sound, smell, or other means, all targets in melee are assumed to have one-half concealment; all ranged targets have three-quarters concealment. It is possible to force yourself to overcome the glare, negating these penalties, but at a cost. If you succeed in a Fortitude save (DC 15) you may attack without penalty, but each round you do so you have a 10% chance of being blinded for 1d4 days, with a 1% chance of the blindness being permanent. (*restoration*, *heal*, or *regenerate* will restore your sight.)

BLINDING

Blinding glare is just that, a light so bright that even the briefest exposure can blind someone. This is likely to be found on other planes, or in particularly extreme conditions (the desert sun reflecting off a field of stone polished to mirror-like refraction). All ranged targets are considered to have total concealment; melee targets have three-quarters concealment. As above, a character can force his eyes open long enough to get a solid bearing, but the Fortitude save DC is 20, and the blinding chances are 20% and 5%, respectively.

Characters with low-light vision are especially susceptible to glare. Increase the Fortitude save DC to overcome glare by three, and the blinding chances by 5% and 2%.

GRAVITY

While it is very rare that gravity will vary during normal adventuring situations, it is not unknown—many spells can affect gravity. Furthermore, it is possible for characters to adventure on other planes where gravity simply does not work as it does on their normal campaign world. The types of gravity are explained below.

Microgravity: This level of gravity is usually reserved for objects in space such as asteroids. There can be no atmosphere at this level of gravity, which is found only on other planes.

Very Low: This level of gravity cannot retain breathable atmosphere long enough to develop life. Any plane or area with this level of gravity will be barren and devoid of life.

Low: This level of gravity can be found on a normal campaign world, as it can retain breathable atmosphere and support life. It might be found in a strange pocket deep within the earth, as part of a strange terrarium in a mad wizard's castle, or as part of a trapped area.

Standard: This is the common gravity level of most campaign worlds.

High: This level of gravity is often found on dense planets, and will have a livable atmosphere. A conflux of powerful magic near an ore mine or similar area full of dense metals might produce a high gravity zone. This is also the component of many traps in the castles of powerful beings such as cloud giants and dragons.

Very High: This level of gravity is rarely found in a standard campaign world, and may be the remnants of an artificially created environment used to house extra-planar or extraterrestrial creatures. Areas of very high gravity are often created in beholder lairs as a means of defense against beings that rely on walking to get around.

Extreme: An area of extreme gravity should only be entered with great caution, as the atmosphere may be too dense to support life. Even if this were not the case, the extremely taxing toll it takes on the bodies of creatures within makes it nearly impossible to traverse for any great period of time.

If your Strength is reduced to 0 or less by the effects of gravity, you are pinned to the ground by your own weight and unable to move.

If your Dexterity is reduced to 0 or less by the effects of gravity, you are unable to move in any kind of coordinated fashion.

AC is reduced by the reduction in Dexterity, while damage and attack bonuses are increased or decreased as appropriate by the change in Strength. Combat in low-gravity environments becomes a lethally comic ballet, with targets easy to hit and damage dramatically increased.

TABLE 4-5: GRAVITY CHECK MODIFIERS

Gravity	Dex Modifier	Str Modifier	Jump Distance	Lifting Capacity	Climbing Speed
Microgravity	-8	+8	x8	x8	x8
Very low	-4	+4	x4	x4	x4
Low	-2	+2	x2	x2	x2
Standard	—	—	—	—	—
High	-2	-2	1/2	1/2	1/2
Very high	-4	-4	1/4	1/4	1/4
Extreme	-8	-8	1/8	1/8	1/8

Gravity	Flying Speed	Falling Damage	Base Speed	Range Increments
Microgravity	x4	1/8	x8	x8
Very low	x3	1/2	x4	x4
Low	x2	1/4	x2	x2
Standard	—	—	—	—
High	1/2	x2	1/2	1/2
Very high	1/3	x4	1/4	1/4
Extreme	1/4	x8	1/8	1/8

FIGHTING WHILE CLIMBING

It is possible, though very difficult, to fight while clinging to a wall. The following limitations apply.

The attacking character may use only a one-handed weapon that is Small or Tiny.

The attacker's reach is limited; he may only attack targets that are above him or on the same level, and on the same side as the hand wielding the weapon. In other words, if you think of the character as lying flat in the center of a group of five-foot squares, a climbing character can threaten the square directly above him, the square to his weapon side, and the square that borders both of them.

If the attack misses by more than five points, the attacker must make a Climb check with the DC set to the DC for climbing the wall + the number of points by which the attack missed.

All other rules for combat while climbing still apply, including the lack of Dexterity bonus to AC.

Example: Jalen is scaling a wall in the city of Delorais. The wall is rough stone, and thus has a Climb DC of 10. Suddenly, on Jalen's right, a window is flung open and a guard peers out. Jalen quickly draws his dagger (in his right hand) and slashes at the guard, hoping to kill him before he can sound an alarm. He misses by six, and must make a Climb check (DC 16) to stay on the wall.

LOCATIONS

The following examples show how to use the modifiers above, as well as location-specific adjustments, to make the location in which a fight takes place as memorable as the opponents fought.

GRYMIR SWAMP

Grymir Swamp can be found in the goblin lands south of New Retalia. Black dragons are known to use it as a hatchery, and the entire area is infested with wyrmlings along with a few adults who guard the nests. The lure of black dragon eggs (and the alchemically invaluable corpses of the relatively weak



wyrmings) attracts adventurers and collectors alike. The swamp is a poor place for a fight, and the unprepared will die quickly, even in battles they could have won had they occurred on solid ground.

EFFECTS

The thick muck of the swamp halves base movement. Anyone who becomes prone will begin to drown, as per the core rules (DMG 85). The thick trees that grow up from the muck cluster close together, creating rating 2 or 3 obstacles. Furthermore, the swamp's draconic inhabitants have had a major impact on the waters of the swamp—anyone with an armor bonus of less than +4 who becomes fully submerged in the swamp must make a Fortitude save (DC 10) each round or take one point of acid damage. Weapons and armor must also make these saves, or else they begin to corrode.

PREPARATION

Items or spells that grant *water breathing* reduce the chance of drowning due to being knocked down or dragged under, and elemental resistance magic can defeat the acid. The tightly packed trees have no simple solutions, but a well-placed *shrink plants* spell might clear a space, effectively lowering the obstacles rating by one point.

ICEFIELDS OF SOUTH AKATAN

While most think of Akatan as home to the sweltering Stone Kingdoms, it also stretches far enough south that the southern end of the continent is forever encrusted with ice. Nomads dwell here, descendants of those who fled the north when the Empire pulled back over a thousand years ago. Many ill-aspected creatures, ranging from winter wolves to ice worms, also call this place their home. Only a few of the boldest dare battle here, but those with the wit to survive can win true glory. Those without win only a well-preserved corpse.

EFFECTS

The icefields have brilliant glare and are slipperiness level 3, all as described above. The only other major effects are the extreme cold (DMG 86) and the occasional gusts of wind. These harsh gusts, which have a 10% chance of occurring each round of combat (out of combat, characters will be well-enough braced that they are not a significant threat), do not deal

damage. They do pose a significant danger to combatants, however. Each time a gust of wind blows through a combat, the participants must make a Balance check (DC 10) to remain standing.

PREPARATION

Dressing in winter garb stops a lot of the cold damage. Gnomes might make goggles of smoked glass that can help reduce the effects of glare. Trading with the nomads can reveal the existence of shoes of walrus-leather that have sharpened bits of bone implanted in the sole; these grant a +4 circumstance bonus to all Balance checks made while on the ice.

THE LEDGE

It is a virtual certainty that, if you are a rogue, you will, sooner or later, end up walking along a narrow ledge high above a street. It is less certain that you will meet someone else on the ledge, but this can indeed happen, and, when it does, one of you is certain to have a very fast, but very short, journey.

EFFECTS

The ledge is narrow, only a foot wide. To one side is a rough brick wall, to the other only open air and a long fall. The wall is both boon and bane. It prevents the use of some weapons, as if in a narrow alley, but it also gives something to hold on to. Anyone with five or more ranks in Climb gains a +2 synergy bonus to all Balance checks to prevent falling from the ledge.

PREPARATION

There is not much that can be done to make fighting in this environment easier. *Gloves of climbing and swimming* or being under the influence of a *spider climb* spell can both lend significant aid to climbing characters. Tying a rope to a drain pipe might prevent a fatal fall, but it can also leave you dangling in midair while crossbowmen take potshots at you, or pikemen treat you like a stuffed toy. Overall, this is a situation in which the best way to survive a fight is to not get involved in one.

THE ALLEY BEHIND EOM'S TAVERN

Iel Vulgis in Arin Retal Va is known as a haven

for criminals, vermin, and lowlifes from all along the Shattered Coast, and Eom's Tavern is known as a haven within the haven. The rule of neutrality is heavily enforced, so when it seems likely a fight is about to break out, the combatants-to-be are forcibly ejected into the narrow alley behind the establishment, a location that has seen more duels than the Great Arena of Delorais.

EFFECTS

The alley is narrow, only four feet wide, and badly cluttered with trash, broken bottles and mugs, organic debris, and the occasional corpse. The net effect is rating 1 obstacles, rating 1 slipperiness, plus the effects of being in a space less than 5 feet wide. Furthermore, the junk that fills the alley is very often sharp and pointy—anyone knocked down must make a Reflex save (DC 10) or take 1d4 points of piercing damage.

PREPARATION

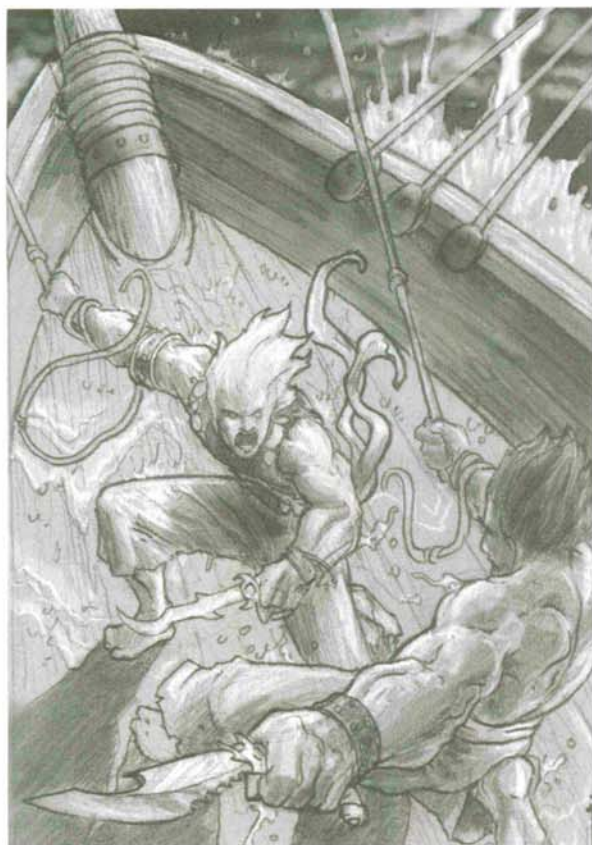
Small or Tiny weapons work well in the close confines of the alley, and an agile person who is light on her feet will do better among slippery muck and immobile lumps of trash than a stronger, but more stolid, opponent. The Alley is a good example of how relatively minor environmental effects can still tip the balance of a fight.

INSIDE THE GNOMISH GREAT CLOCK

Delorais was once known as the City of a Million Clocks, and even though most of them are broken now, the Great Clock in the Ruby Tower of the Imperial War Academy still functions perfectly. While it seems an odd place for conflict, over the years its inner workings have seen a surprisingly large number of battles.

EFFECTS

Obstacles rating 4. The entire interior of the clock is a maze of gears, springs, cogs, pulsing magic crystals, and sparks of electricity arcing from point to point. Use the movement check as noted for rating 4 obstacles when adjudicating fights in the great clock. Furthermore, failing a Balance check inside the great clock means that the character has put a hand or foot in a precarious position. A Reflex save (DC 10) is needed to avoid taking



1d4 points of crushing damage from getting a hand or foot mashed in a gear.

PREPARATION

Being lightly armored and using small, stabbing weapons gives a character a slight edge in the cramped conditions. Anything that improves climbing skills is vital if you wish to move quickly. Five or more ranks in Craft (clockmaking) grants a +2 synergy bonus on Climb checks, simply because you have a good sense of which parts of the mechanism will bear your weight and which will not, as well as which gears are going to turn in the next few seconds.

IN VELDAR'S HOLLOW ON THE PLANE OF EARTH

Veldar the Geomancer discovered this zone on the Plane of Earth during his travels there, and found it a useful place to rest and recuperate while exploring the extraplanar realm. The area is a large empty space, an air-filled sphere perhaps five hundred feet in diameter. Travelers from the prime plane can remain there indefinitely, provided they are careful. Conflict there is dangerous, however, because some-

thing about hostile thoughts reacts with the very substance of the hollow, causing gravity to begin flickering wildly.

EFFECTS

When no combat is occurring, the hollow has a normal gravitational pull; down is always towards the inner surface of the sphere, and up is always towards the center. When combat begins, the emotional energy released reacts with the hollow in a variety of ways. Each round of combat, roll 1d8 and consult the following chart:

Roll	Effect
1-2	No change
3-4	Gravity increases by 1 level.
5-6	Gravity decreases by 1 level.
7	Gravity increases by 2 levels
8	Gravity decreases by 2 levels

If gravity is ever reduced to microgravity, characters will begin to fall upward at a rate equal to their normal movement rate; when gravity returns, they will fall downward.

PREPARATION

Fly or *feather fall* spells can help a character deal with falling or moving in microgravity; *bull's strength* can help to counter the effects of heavy gravity.

A SHIP AT SEA DURING THE WINTER STORMS

The passage along the Coast of Ruins is hazardous during the best of times. During the winter months sudden storms can appear, making a massive merchant craft lurch violently in the once-calm waters. Generally, those caught in such a situation do their best to merely survive, but, sometimes, a fight will break out on deck.

EFFECTS

The freezing rain of the winter storms will cause the surface of the boat to have rating 2 slipperiness, and the constant lurching means all conflict is on a slope. Unfortunately, the direction of the slope changes from round to round. Each round, the ship moves through one stage of slope, from bow high, to level, to bow low. Keep track of the combatants relative to the bow, as who is upslope and who is downs-

lope will change from one round to the next. Characters with five or more ranks in Tumble gain a +2 synergy bonus to all Balance checks made to keep standing. Spellcasters must also make Concentration checks (DC 15+spell level) in order to cast spells.

PREPARATION

Being lightly armored will help with Balance checks, as well as making Swim checks easier should you fall into the sea. *Spider climb* or similar magic might help assure a grip on the deck.

NEW EQUIPMENT

This section presents a variety of exotic and strange arms and armor. All of the weapons presented below are exotic, thus requiring the Exotic Weapon Proficiency to be wielded without penalty.

ARMOR

Elven Warpaint: Elves are often observed patrolling their woodland homes covered in swirls and whorls of color. Those who have seen this gaudy spectacle often wonder how a patrol can avoid being ambushed when they stand out so readily. Those who know the secret of elven warpaint could tell them—except for the fact that they are most likely dead.

When applied, elven warpaint is a riot of clashing colors, usually greens, reds, and tans. It remains thus until the wearer holds still for 1d4 rounds. At the end of this time, the brightly-colored paint slowly changes to match the surrounding foliage—not a perfect match, but close enough to add considerably to Hide checks (+6 circumstance bonus). If the wearer moves suddenly (more than half speed) the paint reverts to its bright coloration. The effect is that the brightly painted, garish elves seem to materialize out of nowhere.

Warpaint also serves to protect the skin slightly. Once dry, it is surprisingly tough, acting as skin-tight armor that provides a +1 armor bonus to its wearer.

Applying elven warpaint takes 15 minutes; removing it takes about 1 minute. No other armor can be worn while using the paint. It is extremely rare for elves to sell this paint to non-elves. An alchemist who has a sample to work with might be able to work up the recipe; finding the formula requires a successful Alchemy check (DC 35), while manufacturing it once the formula has been discovered is DC 25.

Elven warpaint assists in Hide checks only when in forests; it is worse than useless elsewhere, conferring a -2 circumstance penalty on Hide checks instead.

Spidersilk Vest: It is well known that spider's silk is many times stronger than steel. Attempting to farm spiders is impossible, however, as they quickly consume each other. Thus, to do anything practical with spider silk, a large supply must be found and gathered from the wild. This often leads merchants to hire mercenaries to travel to known spider dens deep in the woods or in honeycombed caverns in the bowels of the earth.

Any monstrous spider of at least Large size can provide enough silk for a single spidersilk vest for a Medium-size creature. A Craft (tailor) check (DC 27) is needed to successfully weave the silk into the vest, which counts as light armor.

Chitin Armor: Fey races, and non-fey who dwell near insect-infested swamps, have learned to take advantage of the abundance of giant arthropods, forming useful armor from their discarded husks. While some feel that only shells stripped from living beasts have the flexibility needed to make decent armor, most husk-hunters, as they are known, find a freshly shed exoskeleton to be just as good, and far easier to obtain.

Chitin armor offers decent protection, and is often used by cultures that do not have ready access to metalworking. It has one major drawback, though—it is incredibly brittle. Any attack that deals more than 20 points of damage in a single blow destroys the armor. In addition, if the wearer of the armor takes more than 50 points of damage before he can repair his armor (Craft (armorsmithing) check (DC 20)), the husk is destroyed.

TABLE 4-6: NEW ARMOR AND SHIELDS

ARMOR

Type	Cost	Armor Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Speed	Weight
Chitin Armor	45 gp	+4	+3	-3	20%	30 ft.	25 lb.
Elven War Paint	15 gp	+1	N/A	0	0%	30 ft.	1 lb.
Spidersilk Vest	500 gp	+3	+7	-1	5%	30 ft.	5 lb.

SHIELDS

Type	Cost	Armor Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Speed	Weight
Buzzshield	50 gp	+1	—	-1	10%	—	10 lb.

Anyone wearing chitin armor presents an alien and exotic appearance, at least to those unused to such armor. This grants a +1 circumstance bonus to Intimidate checks, but a -1 circumstance penalty to Diplomacy checks.

SHIELDS

Buzzshield: The buzzshield is an example of what happens when the ingenuity of the gnomes is applied to the art of war. It is the size of a small steel shield, and anyone with shield proficiency can use it as one without penalty. If the wielder also has Exotic Weapon Proficiency (buzzshield), however, it is something more.

The shield contains a powerful spring, a complex gearing mechanism, and a number of retractable metal teeth. When wound up (a full round action that provokes an attack of opportunity) it becomes a lethal weapon, all the while still functioning as a shield. It can be used as an off-hand weapon, and is considered to be a light weapon for that purpose. The buzzshield remains wound for 1d4+4 rounds, and it deals 1d6 points of slashing damage on a successful hit. It has a threat range of 20/x3.

The mechanism is robust, as it is designed for war, but it is not indestructible. After 25 rounds of use, the mechanism will need maintenance. Maintaining a buzzshield requires a Craft (weaponsmithing) check (DC 20) and 10 minutes of work. Gnomes gain a +4 racial bonus to this check and can perform the

work in half the time. If the shield is used without maintenance, it ceases to function as anything but a small shield until repaired.

MELEE WEAPONS

Bladed Cloak: Bladed cloaks are stealthy weapons that are not easily detected by casual observation, thus they are useful for combat in places where weapons would not normally be allowed. A character is always considered armed when wearing a bladed cloak, thus he need not draw his weapon to make an attack. The bladed cloak may not be disarmed or sundered.

Chain-Axe: No one is quite sure when these weapons became favored by minotaurs, or where they learned to make them, but they are extremely popular among minotaur chieftains and other veteran fighters within the ranks. The chain-axe is a large, two-headed axe mounted on a length of chain. The wielder whirls the chain rapidly, controlling the position of the axe by pulling in or letting out the chain. A skilled wielder can inflict considerable damage on his targets. Those untrained in the strange weapon's use or who have not been using it for very long may find themselves in a serious predicament, however, as the weapon can be dangerous to wield.

The rapidly whirling axe is very hard to parry or dodge; wielders gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls against any target that does not have a shield. Exotic Weapon Proficiency (chain-axe) is required to use this weapon. The weapon has

TABLE 4-7: NEW WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

EXOTIC WEAPONS – MELEE

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Bladed Cloak	40 gp	1d6	19–20/x2	—	8 lb.	Slashing
Chain-Axe	45 gp	2d6	20/x3	—	25 lb.	Slashing
False Weapons	var	var	var	var	var	var
Ogre Mattock	50 gp	2d6	20/x2	—	50 lb.	Bludgeoning
Thornblade	10 gp	1d6	19–20/x2	—	2 lb.	Piercing

EXOTIC WEAPONS – RANGED

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Bowreel	40 gp	1d6	20/x3	20 ft.	9 lb.	Piercing
Dart Thrower	35 gp	1d4	20/x2	40 ft.	5 lb.	Piercing
Harpoon Crossbow	100 gp	1d10	19–20/x2	50 ft.	10 lb.	Piercing
Warpipes	10 gp	1-2	20/x2	10 ft.	2 lb.	Piercing

NEW EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION

Item	Cost	Weight
Screaming Arrow	2 gp	—
Weapon Harness	5 gp	5 lb.

a 10-ft. reach and cannot be used against an adjacent foe. If an attack misses by five or more points, the chain-axe has gotten entangled, requiring a full round action to disengage. Missing by 10 or more points causes the wielder to strike himself with the axe blade, also entangling the weapon as above.

False Weapons: These cunning forgeries are an example of the gnomes' sense of humor combined with their expert craftsmanship. False weapons are designed to resemble actual, even masterwork, weapons in every way—until they are used in combat. They use odd mixes of alloys, exotic paints, unusual weighting, etc., to create near-perfect forgeries. It requires a Craft (weaponsmithing) check (DC 25) to detect the false nature of these weapons.

The weapons will function as masterwork weapons in combat for 1d4 rounds, after which time they begin to rapidly deteriorate. On the following round, they are reduced to normal weapons, a change the wielder immediately notices. If used again, the weapon shatters on

its target, dealing no damage and becoming useless.

A false weapon costs half as much as a normal weapon. Traders who make a habit of passing off false weapons as masterworks are often tossed into gladiatorial arenas armed with their own wares. These weapons cannot hold enchantments, and any attempt to do so will be foiled during the ceremony, costing the mage performing the rite half the gold cost in materials and no XP.

Ogre Mattock: Ogres are not normally crafters. Most use whatever weapons they can scrounge or steal, using a greatsword as a one-handed longsword and a large shield as a buckler. A rare few, however, have the discipline and skill needed to actually forge weapons, and one of the weapons that ogre smiths invariably learn to make is the ogre mattock.

Any character of Medium-size or smaller who is struck by this weapon must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the damage

dealt) or be knocked back 5 ft. Characters affected in such a way must also make a Reflex save (DC 15) or lose their footing and fall prone. Ogres find this to be very useful, as their 10-ft. reach means that creatures that are knocked back no longer threaten the ogre, but are still threatened by the ogre.

Thornblade: This weapon is favored by wood elves, since they can easily manufacture them from the material provided by the forest itself. It consists of a rose thorn, plucked from a rose that has been subject to multiple *plant growth* spells in a carefully guarded ritual. The weapon is useful as a short sword or long dagger, but the lifeforce that remains interwoven in the thorn has an effect on extra-planar creatures of an evil bent—any evil outsider struck by a thornblade takes an extra point of damage. Thornblades are considered a simple weapon.

MISSILE WEAPONS

Bowreel: Most missile weapons function poorly underwater (see the *Seafarer's Handbook* for complete rules), but underwater races have devised methods of making effective underwater crossbows. Some races have gone even further, inventing interesting and fiendish variations on the concept. The sahuagin, no strangers to creative sadism, are one such race.

The bowreel looks like a normal crossbow, although it is generally a bit larger than most. Only the trigger mechanism seems odd, being quite oversized. It can be used as a normal heavy underwater crossbow, but, when fitted with appropriate ammunition, its functionality changes. A barbed shaft attached to a light rope of treated seaweed is fitted into the bow and fired. If it hits, the target is impaled on the shaft, and the mechanism of the bowreel is triggered, pulling the target towards the sahuagin.

The bowreel has a Strength score of 20 and drags opponents at a rate of 10 feet per round. Each round the opponent takes an additional point of damage from the mechanism. If the opponent wishes to attempt to break away, he must make an opposed Strength check. He can simply pull free of the mechanism, but in doing so causes grievous aggravation to the existing wound (1d8 points of damage).

Dart Thrower: This small crossbow allows its user to fire darts instead of normal bolts.

The mechanism holds two darts at a time, and the user can choose to fire either one or two with a single action. If two darts are fired, both must have the same target and the attacker suffers a -2 penalty to his attack roll. Darts specially made for the dart thrower come in clips of six, two of which can be attached at any given time. Reloading from a clip is a free action, while retrieving and loading up to two clips can be accomplished as a full round action. The dart thrower has a range increment of 30 feet. Assassins and others who use poison favor the dart thrower as a means of quickly delivering their deadly load at a longer range and a quicker pace than other options.

Harpoon Crossbow: This weapon consists of a two-foot long barbed metal shaft that cranks back in a crossbow-like weapon. The butt end of the shaft has a line in it, and the end of the line can be attached to the wielder's belt. A shaft can be removed by a skilled healer without further damage with a successful Heal check (DC 15), or it can be ripped out. Ripping it out causes excruciating pain (1d6 points of damage). A character hit by a harpoon is restricted in movement to the length of the rope used, and the wielder can make an opposed Strength check to pull the trapped character toward him at up to 10 feet per round.

This weapon can also be used as a grappling hook, shooting special metal-tipped harpoons that can hew through rock and create a solid climbing rope.

Warpipes: Satyrs are not warlike by nature, but even the most peaceful and benign creatures must engage in combat from time to time, whether to defend their homes or themselves from invaders and predators alike. Like most fey, they would rather avoid or trick their enemies than confront them in battle. Thus were born the satyr warpipes, known as kandekin in the satyr's native tongue.

Satyr warpipes resemble musical pipes, and can even be used in that fashion, though at a -2 circumstance penalty to Perform checks. (Satyr warpipes cannot be used as the focus of a Satyr's magical powers.) When used as a weapon, a set of warpipes acts as a powerful blowgun. The warpipes are loaded with barbed needles, which are usually coated with one of a variety of poisons, and each pipe holds 10 such needles. This allows the pipes to be used 10

times before needing to be reloaded. Reloading one pipe is a move equivalent action; a skilled wielder can reload all 10 as a single full round action. The small size of the pipes enables them to be used in melee without provoking an attack of opportunity.

A needle shot from a satyr warpipe deals 1d2 points of damage, plus whatever poison effects the needle may transfer. Satyrs prefer non-lethal poisons in general, but will use deadly venoms if necessary. All satyrs know the use of satyr warpipes; non-satyrs may learn the skill by selecting the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat.

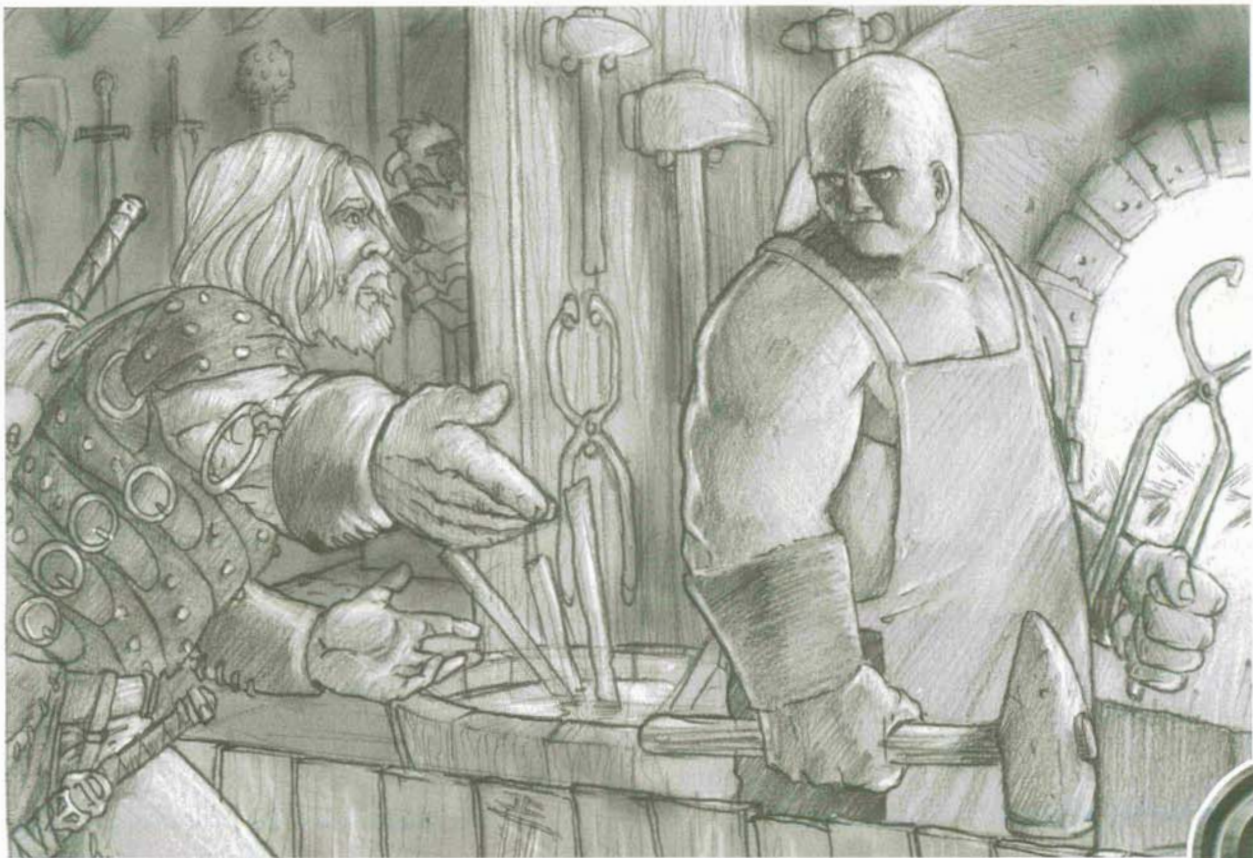
NEW EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION

Screaming Arrows: These arrows are mainly used for signaling, but can be used as a weapon if need be. A screaming arrow has various holes cut into it, causing it to make a loud, shrill, shrieking noise once the arrow has been fired. When shot straight up into the air, the arrow can be heard from up to a mile away. Screaming arrows suffer a -1 penalty to damage rolls due to their light weight.

Weapon Harness: This lightweight harness slips over the user's backpack and over the arms. It has two chest belts (one directly below the chest, the other across the chest) that must be secured lest the harness fall off. The harness has sheathes for two swords on the back, as well as two hooks that snap together and hold two Medium-size weapons on the waist. There is also a sheath on the front of the weapon harness, and six sheaths along the front straps hold daggers.

PERSONALIZING ARMS AND ARMOR

Each weapon and piece of armor in most fantasy settings is an individual, created by the hands of a craftsman. Most weapons and armor created by an average craftsman are going to be relatively similar to their counterparts, but it is possible to commission easily distinguished or custom pieces that are not even necessarily





masterwork-quality enhancements. Below you will find a discussion of several of these enhancements, their costs, and the benefits of taking the time to be unique.

PRECISE FITTING

Armor can be tailored to a specific individual. The character that wears the armor must be measured precisely before the work can commence, and then, the cost of the item is increased by 50%. (Custom fitted armor is always assumed to be of masterwork quality.) Precisely fitted armor has some minor, but useful, benefits, as follows:

- Hasty donning time is reduced by one round if the armor is padded, leather, hide, studded leather, or a chain shirt; by two rounds if the armor is a breastplate, scale mail, chainmail, banded mail, or splint mail; and by one minute if the armor is half-plate or full-plate.
- The armor check penalties to Balance, Climb, and Tumble are reduced by one.
- While the armor is not physically lighter, the precise fit enables you to move more

easily within it, reducing the apparent weight by 10% for purposes of load calculation. This weight reduction also applies to Swim checks.

- Well-made armor simply looks better. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Bluff or Diplomacy checks when, in the DM's opinion, the target of the check would be favorably impressed by someone in high-quality armor.

EMBOSSING AND DECORATING

Both weapons and armor can be covered with decorations, fine enameled designs, intricate embossed patterns, and so on. This does nothing for the armor or weapon's functionality, but it does make the armor extremely distinctive. Characters who are nobles, high-ranking military commanders, or successful merchants might desire such equipment to demonstrate their status and wealth. Decorated and personalized items do grant the following benefits:

- The items are much easier to locate if stolen. Add a +2 circumstance bonus to any Gather Information checks related to tracking down lost or stolen items that have been decorated.
- Those likely to be impressed by wealth, especially ostentatious displays of wealth, are going to be favorably disposed towards a character wearing or wielding decorated arms and armor. Such a character gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Bluff or Diplomacy checks against those individuals.

There is one major drawback to such items, and that is that extensive field use can mar the fine craftsmanship. Any time a character sustains more than 50% of his hit points in damage, decorated armor has been marred and must be repaired. Likewise, if a character scores more than two critical hits with a decorated weapon in a single combat, it is also considered marred and must be repaired.

Decorated items cost a minimum of double the cost of masterwork items. If the character insists on particularly costly decorations – for example, an image of the character slaying a green dragon to be placed on a large shield, with the dragon made of precisely-cut emeralds and the character formed of rubies – the price

can be made as high as the DM thinks is reasonable.

FUNCTIONAL MODIFICATIONS

The following modifications can be made to weapons and armor to improve their functionality or to add abilities. In the case of weapons, making more than one modification to a basic design renders it an exotic weapon, requiring the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to use successfully. Functional modifications can be made to normal or masterwork weapons.

Basket Hilt: This is a complex grip that wraps around the wielder's hand. It can only be used on one-handed weapons of Medium-size or less. It adds 15% to the cost of a weapon, and grants the wielder a +2 circumstance bonus when defending against disarm attempts.

Strengthening: The weapon is made of stronger, thicker, materials. This makes it considerably heavier, but also harder to break. A strengthened weapon has its hardness increased by one and its hit points increased by 25% (round up). This increases the cost of the weapon by 50%.

Armor-Piercing: This may be applied only to light weapons that deal piercing damage. The weapon has been modified to slip between pieces of armor. Against any opponent with an armor bonus (natural armor is not affected) to AC, it grants a +1 bonus to hit. This modification increases the cost of the weapon by 50%.

Weighted: This applies only to weapons that deal bludgeoning damage. The head of the weapon is designed to be extremely heavy by adding extra metal, wrapping it in steel bands, and so on. This increases the weapon's damage by +1, increases the weight of the weapon by 50%, and doubles the weapon's cost.

Hollow Hilt: A weapon with a hollow hilt has a small compartment in the hilt, grip, or shaft, which can store 4 cubic inches worth of material in a light weapon, or 6 cubic inches in a Medium-size weapon. This costs 15 gp in a normal weapon of any size, and the cost is increased to 45 gp for a masterwork weapon.

Quick Removal: Armor can be designed to be removed extremely quickly, by adding snaps, buckles, spring-loaded catches, and so on.



Light and medium armor so designed can be removed in 1d4 rounds, heavy armor in one minute. This modification is often requested by sailors who wish to wear armor on board ship but do not want it to weigh them down should they be thrown overboard. The addition of quick removal elements increases the cost of any armor by 50%.

TOURNAMENTS AND GAMES

Often player characters will encounter a faire, carnival, or other such festivity that includes contests of skill. Or perhaps they must suitably impress a nobleman or king with their prowess before he agrees to send them on a royal quest. There are often times where violence can be avoided by the simple proposal of a contest to vent aggression and honorably (or not so honorably, depending on the nature and character of the participants) determine a victor without resorting to combat.

Regardless of the circumstances under which they are presented, contests of skill can be a welcome diversion for a group of adventurers seeking a break from the constant battling of their chosen profession. This can also be a prime opportunity to introduce any number of roleplaying elements into a game. The charac-

ters could win accolades from the people of a town, perhaps becoming local heroes or engendering the wrath and jealousy of last year's winners (this is particularly common if the PCs are not even from the area in which they are competing). Locals in need of a group of exceptional people might approach victorious PCs with job requests or sorrowful pleadings.

Contests of skill are meant primarily as entertaining diversions for the players, and are especially appropriate after a long string of combat-heavy sessions or a particularly grueling dungeon. While they present interesting opportunities, if overused they can become somewhat of a bore. After all, they are primarily resolved with simple dice rolling, and too much of this can lead players to view their characters as nothing but statistics.

Awarding experience for participation in such contests should be handled carefully. By their very nature, there is probably less to do for a wizard or sorcerer than for a fighter or rogue. Even on the rare occasion that magical contests are included in the festivities, the sheer number of strength and arms-related contests is sure to



favor the martial characters. In the minds of most, magic and skill at arms do not mix. For example, it is rare that a wizard would be allowed to substitute a *ray of frost* for a bow in an archery contest, even though they are essentially the same in terms of game mechanics. If a relatively equal amount of contests are available to different PCs, then individual XP awards should be used. If the majority or all of the contests feature feats of strength, arms, or skill that many classes might not excel at, then a group award might be in order. Tournament games and challenges range anywhere from CR ½ to CR 2, depending mostly on the nature and abilities of the competition.

It could be easy for a group of adventurers to walk into a faire and dominate the games, since they are generally much better trained and equipped than most of the participants. The DM should discourage this in a number of ways, but the simplest is to provide a good challenge to the PCs. Every village has its champion, and every tournament has its favorites, and the PCs should be sure to run up against them at every turn. Certainly most of the participants are not going to measure up to the characters in ability, but it is acceptable that at least one or two of the challenges to be found will not be easily overcome. If the PCs act too cocky as they win events, have the crowd quickly turn against them, even giving bonuses to their adversaries due to the crowd's support. Have shopkeepers spontaneously raise prices on goods and inns suddenly fill up as soon as the characters need a room. It should be immediately evident to the characters that their antics are not welcome. On the other hand, if the PCs win with humility and grace, it is possible that they will become local heroes, or at least legends whose feats will be sung by bards at faires in years to come.

The majority of the games presented here can be resolved quickly so that the DM does not have to worry about the other players getting bored while one resolves his contest. In some cases, such as in many of the equestrian events, the resolution can take longer, and indeed is often more entertaining when it does. In this way the DM can build suspense by presenting worthy adversaries or get the players excited by demonstrating the growing frenzy of the crowd. During longer challenges, the DM might prepare several NPC contestants and allow the other players to take on their roles. In

these cases friendly taunting and other competitive acts between players should be encouraged as far as the participants would take them. In all cases, remember that fun and entertainment are the goals of these diversions.

So, without further ado, let the games begin!

FOOTRACES

These are probably the most commonly held contests throughout the realms, as they require no expenditure or specialized training on the part of the organizers or participants. For this reason as well, footraces are not popular among the upper class and elite. In general, there are two types of footrace: long distance and short sprint. Both have different sets of requirements for excelling at them, and it is rare that one person is able to dominate both types of events.

Short Sprints: These are short races that take place at various times throughout a festival. Typical distances are 150 feet, 300 feet, 600 feet, and 1,200 feet, and anywhere from five to seven contestants generally vie in a single race. Competing in a short sprint is simple: for each 150-foot increment participants roll 1d20 and add their Strength modifier. Participants with base speeds of greater than 30 ft. add 1 to the roll for each additional foot of movement. Subtract 1 from the roll for each foot of movement less than 30 ft. So, a dwarf with a 20 ft. base speed would subtract 10 from his roll, while a human barbarian would add 10. Having the Run feat allows the character to add 10 to each roll as well.

The first roll determines the initial order of the participants after the first 150 feet. The winner becomes the leader of the race, or he wins the race outright if it is only a 150-foot race. Each consecutive roll thereafter determines position relative to the leader in the following manner. All participants roll their checks, and the scores are determined. Then each participant compares his roll to that of the man that was in front of him at the beginning of the race. If he beats that roll, he moves up one spot. Additionally, if someone else has recently fallen to that spot, he may compare his check to that participant to see if he may pass him as well.

Example: There are five participants in a race: A, B, C, D, and E. After the first roll in a 600-foot short sprint they have fall-



en into alphabetical order. The second roll is thus:

- A-20
- B-22
- C-14
- D-18
- E-3 (E is a halfling)

A was the leader going into this race, so first B must compare his roll to A. Since his roll is higher, he moves up one slot and takes over the lead, moving A into second place. Now C compares his roll to B's roll (since B was directly ahead of him at the beginning of the race). C's roll does not beat B, so he does not move. Since A has fallen into second place, C may also compare his roll to A's roll. Alas, he does not beat that either, so C remains in third place, for now. Next comes D whose 18 beats C's 14, so he moves into third place. E, well, E doesn't beat anyone and stays in last. The order of the race is now B, A, D, C, E. There are two more rolls in the race to determine the winner, so things are not looking very good for the poor halfling.

Long Distance: These races tend to be much longer than the short sprints, and are usually *anywhere* from 3 miles to 20 miles in length. If not all day affairs, there is rarely more

than one long distance race in a single day. Each character rolls only once per mile in a long distance race instead of once per 150 feet, and they do not add their Strength modifier to the roll. For each mile run the character must make a Constitution check (DC 10+1 per previous check). Failure indicates that the participant gains a cumulative -1 on subsequent rolls due to fatigue. Characters still modify their rolls depending on their base speed, but using the Run feat to add 10 to the roll imposes a -2 penalty on the subsequent Constitution check to determine fatigue. The Endurance feat gives characters a +10 on their Constitution checks to avoid fatigue.

Determining the leader and relative placement of each participant is handled in exactly the same manner as in short sprints.

ARCHERY CONTESTS

These contests are much more common at games sponsored by nobles or military organizations than in traveling faires or small village tournaments, primarily due to the level of training necessary to compete in such affairs. Nevertheless, there are several options for testing the relative prowess of participants in archery contests.

Target Shooting: This is the most basic, and most common, type of archery contest in which characters might participate. It consists of shooting at targets from various distances and measuring the accuracy of the shots. An archery target is AC 6 and consists of three rings and a central bullseye. Characters advance one ring in for every five points by which they exceed the target's AC. So a character that hits AC 9 hits the target, but not in any scoring position. A character hitting AC 11 hits the outer ring, AC 16 hits the middle ring, AC 21 hits the inner ring, and AC 26 hits the bullseye. The target is moved back one range increment after each participant takes one shot at the board, and there are generally three to five scoring rounds. Scoring is determined thus:

Target	Score
Outer Ring	1 pt.
Middle Ring	2 pts.
Inner Ring	3 pts.
Bullseye	5 pts.
Other	0 pts.
Miss	-2 pts.

A character can attempt to split an opponent's arrow, but such a feat is difficult and risky. An arrow is AC 31, and if the participant misses by five or less his arrow is deflected and fails to hit the target at all. If successful, however, the opponent loses his points scored for the round and the shooter claims whatever points he gets for his arrow's placement. The participant with the most points goes first every round, allowing his opponents to take their shots based on his results.

Speed Shooting: In this type of archery competition, three targets are lined up about 50 feet away from the competitors. Each must attempt to hit the target areas (location does not matter in this contest) of the three targets one at a time in order. Each participant gets 30 seconds to shoot at the targets as many times as he can, scoring one point for each successful hit.

The competition is essentially broken down into five rounds, and a normal character can only fire one arrow per round. Since impact speed and target location do not matter in these contests, even normal archers can choose to increase their rate of fire at the expense of accuracy. Of course, participants with iterative attacks and feats such as Rapid Shot still have advantages over those who do not. Any participant may gain one extra shot per round by taking a -4 penalty to every shot. So, a contestant with no feats who elected to take three shots per round would suffer a -8 penalty to each shot. A character can take up to a maximum of six shots per round. To score with a shot, the contestant must hit AC 11.

HAMMER THROW

The hammer throw is purely a test of strength, wherein the participants try to toss a twelve to fourteen pound hammer the farthest distance. Agility does count for something in the throw, however, because proper balance can help lend momentum to the hammer, thus making it fly farther than normal.

Characters involved in the hammer throw must make a Strength check to determine their result. A check result of 10 means the character has thrown the hammer 20 feet, an average throw, and each point above 10 results in an additional three feet. So, a contestant that rolled a 17 on his Strength check would throw the hammer 41 feet. A Balance check can be

made before the throw to add momentum to the throw. For every point by which the check exceeds 15, add 1 ft. to the distance achieved through the Strength check, to a maximum of +10 ft.

AXE/KNIFE TOSS

These games are not oriented toward pure strength like events such as the hammer toss. They measure accurate aim and dexterity much more than raw power. If throwing at a target, the participants must merely hit AC 11 to succeed at any given throw. Often rather than a normal target, a large piece of fruit is hung before each contestant on a rope, and the first contestant to split the fruit is declared the winner. In order to do this, the character must succeed at increasingly difficult checks. The character must hit AC 6, then AC 11, then AC 16 (another AC 21 check is required for exceptionally large fruits such as a watermelon). A character may attempt a strong blow to the fruit, which skips the need for the next check (so doing a strong blow on the first throw means the contestant's next throw is at AC 16). Doing so, however, imposes a -8 penalty to the attack roll. Longer variants exist in which a new piece of fruit is substituted any time a participant misses the fruit altogether (fails his attack roll by 5 or more). In these contests each participant is usually expected to provide his own fruit.

GYPSY KNIFE FIGHT

This popular diversion is most often found in small town faires or as part of a traveling carnival or circus. It is usually run tournament style, because only two contestants can fight at a time. A ring is drawn in the ground, often built with carved wooden arcs or piled stones, and the two contestants enter. Each carries only a knife; no armor or other equipment is allowed. The contestants must each hold one end of a rope, which both limits their movement and provides them with a means to unbalance their foe. If either contestant lets go of the rope, he is immediately disqualified from the competition. Otherwise, the fight goes on until first blood is drawn. For this reason, contestants are limited to scant clothing so that a wound can be immediately spotted. Either contestant may call for a wound check at any time, though doing so repeatedly or for an obvious break in the action can quickly

turn a crowd against the contestant.

The gypsy knife fight is resolved just like a normal combat, with initiative being rolled by both contestants at the beginning of the fight. Movement around the ring is limited by its small size (usually 15-20 ft. in radius) and the rope that attaches the opponents (usually no more than 7 ft. in length). Characters must follow each other around the ring because of the rope, and it is possible to pull a character off his feet or yank the rope from his hand.

HUNKERHAUSEN

This is a popular two-man tug of war event in which both contestants stand on boxes or tree stumps and attempt to knock the other man to the ground. The contest requires a mixture of balance, strength, and the ability to bluff your opponent into taking a misstep. Each character must make an initial Balance check (DC 5) to grab hold of his opponent—sometimes these events are over before they start! After making the initial grab, opponents take turns making Strength checks opposed by their opponent's Balance or Strength check. Checks must be

made each round.

In any round after making a Strength check (either offensive or defensive) the character can attempt a Bluff check opposed by his opponent's Sense Motive. If successful, the bluffing character may immediately make a Strength check at +4 to throw his opponent from the stump. If he fails, he may take no further action on his round and his opponent gains a +4 to his next attempt.

Having certain feats related to unarmed combat can also aid a character competing in a round of hunkerhausen. Each such feat, such as Improved Trip or Improved Unarmed Strike, grants a +2 bonus to all Strength and Balance checks made during a bout. Monks gain an additional +1 bonus per level on top of any feat bonuses to represent their increased training and knowledge in unarmed combat. Some monks may forgo their training, however, as in some communities using such "tricks" is deemed to be unsportsmanlike or even cheating. In this case they can willfully forgo the bonuses due to class.



WEAPON DISPLAY

This activity is very popular among the martial classes, as well as in cultures that value strength of arms and prowess in war. It is often judged by the crowd, rather than by any objective measures. In more formalized tournaments, such as might be found sponsored by a noble or king, a panel of esteemed warriors and experts judges the competition. Most of the time, the weapon used is not mandated. Participants can choose any weapon or style in which to display their skill at arms. The contests are usually judged for equal parts expertise, application, and aesthetics. Expertise is judged as general knowledge of the weapon, including different styles and attacks. Application entails some show of force with the weapon, be it lancing a straw target or ripping a piece of stretched leather with a double knife attack. The final category is aesthetics, and this is the most subjective. Some judges merely have their favorite weapons, and almost always choose from amongst these. Others enjoy the show put on by the contestants, who can win favor by putting on an exciting show.

The rules of these contests change from site to site, but there are a few rules that are nearly universal. First, contestants must perform alone. They cannot hire or use additional fighters to enhance their performances. This sometimes leads to creativity, such as the archer who rigged up a puppet that appeared to wiggle and moan each time an arrow plunked into the surrounding targets. Second, it is considered bad form to mock another contestant's performance. The use of magic is forbidden in most contests, although some allow minor enhancements via illusion magic or the innate properties of the weapons themselves (a *flaming* sword, for example). Finally, it is quite important that the participants avoid any display that could endanger the crowd. This might seem to be a self-imposed policy (killing fans is a sure-fire way to turn the crowd against you), but in some rougher areas it does bear codification.

The game mechanics behind weapon displays represent the diversity of skills necessary to compete in such affairs. A grim fighter that has mastered his chosen weapon but fails to appeal to the crowd or the judges is not likely to win, be it during a chivalric competition or the celebratory feast of a barbarian tribe.

Expertise is handled by comparing the base attack bonus of each participant. Each contestant gains one point for each point of base attack bonus, representing his knowledge and training with a particular weapon. Several feats can also modify the expertise score, if used in the display, as follows:

Feat	Bonus
Blind-Fight	+1
Spring Attack	+2
Exotic Weapon Proficiency	+1
Expertise	**
Whirlwind Attack	+4
Quick Draw	+1
Two Weapon Fighting	+1
Improved Two Weapon Fighting	+3
Weapon Finesse	+1
Weapon Focus	+1

** Bonus equal to half the character's maximum Expertise bonus, rounded up.

The application score measures how well the participant has integrated his knowledge into a useful combat style. At this point all flash disappears and the character attempts to show how deadly his particular style can be. The character gains points based on the attack bonus he gains from the relevant attribute, either Strength or Dexterity, for his chosen weapon. In the case of Weapon Finesse, the character can gain points for a melee weapon based on Dexterity bonus. In addition, the following feats can modify his score:

Feat	Bonus
Combat Reflexes	+1
Improved Critical	+1
Power Attack	+1
Cleave	+1
Great Cleave	+2
Weapon Specialization	+1

The aesthetics score is by far the most arbitrary of the three. Many people refuse to participate in such challenges due to the nature of this judgment, and truly a good aesthetics score can help a contestant win even where his weapon skill might be lacking. Although this irritates purists, the contests would not be nearly as entertaining without this aspect. Some contestants might dress in wild costumes, or have a signature yell to get the crowd rollicking in the stands. Indeed, having embossed weapons or armor adds a +1 bonus to the

character's final aesthetics check. Others might light the arrows they use on fire, or employ paint and dye to make interesting patterns after they complete their display. Each participant makes a Charisma check, gaining a bonus to their final score for every two points above 10 on their check. A character with an appropriate Perform skill could substitute a Perform check for the Charisma check, although most skills will not confer a bonus. Knowing how to play the lute would not help during a weapon display, for example, but singing or chanting might. It is up to the DM to determine whether or not a certain Perform skill is appropriate, and it is up to the player to be creative enough to convince him. The DM can also give a bonus between +1 and +8 for particularly creative roleplaying or clever ideas for gaining crowd support, such as dressing in a wild costume or telling dirty jokes during the performance (of course, telling dirty jokes at a royal tournament might be cause for a penalty instead!).

“TRAP” DISARM

These contests are usually found in larger cities, and often times will be run by a local thieves' guild as a half-heartedly sanctioned “community outreach” program. Guilds often engage in such activities to show the populace their lighter side, knowing that if the locals were to start demanding their eradication then the lord or city council would have to take notice.

First, a prop is built that simulates a commonly found trap. It is customary to use this prop to somehow poke fun at the authorities, perhaps having it in the shape of a gallows or a jail cell from which the “rogue” escapes. Penalties for failure range from the explosion of a dye-filled balloon to a release of fireworks, both of which delight the onlooking crowd to no end.

The trap is often built so that the turn of a screw or addition of a few well-placed iron rods makes it much more difficult to disarm. It usually begins fairly easy (Disable Device check DC 15) and gets gradually more difficult (add 4 to the DC for each subsequent attempt). Crowd favorites often attempt to disarm the trap with no tools, and a daring few even perform the task blindfolded (–8 to the attempt).

MOUNTED RACING

With its ancient and proud history, horse racing is an extremely popular sport among many cultures. Racers themselves are a curious breed, spending months in training for just a single event. No one else can better handle an extremely sharp turn or tell a trail horse from a racing horse just by its stride while walking. Racers have an intense determination, a purpose, found only in speed. The allure of the track. The excitement of the race. The immense pride and satisfaction found only in crossing the victory line first and being carried across the town. Such are the pursuits of those who choose to race.

DM's Note: The mechanics of these races are without much flavor, so it is suggested that you narrate each as if you were a track announcer. Call for initial Ride checks and then describe the action, calling for additional checks as needed. It will increase the excitement of the players and keep their minds on the race rather than on the numbers and rolls. In addition, if one player has already won the race (such as by winning the first two rolls of a barrel race), do not let the players know that. Continue the race, perhaps having one horse stumble a bit on the track or another pull ahead with a burst of speed. One of the allures of racing is witnessing the miracle comeback or seeing a horse slowly overtake the leader. Let your players have some fun!

Barrel Racing: A common race usually practiced in the middle of small towns or on a large horse farm, barrel racing consists of three barrels placed 30 to 50 feet away from each other in a triangular shape. The goal is to travel around each barrel in a specific order and return to a single starting point within a set time. Control and focus is more important than the speed of the mount in this type of race.

To run a barrel race in a game, have each contestant roll three different Ride checks. The character that wins two of the three Ride checks wins the race. If the third check comes up a tie, the characters have each raced the same time! Have each make a Charisma or Perform check to determine the winner.

Pole Bending: Another popular race with many variations is called pole bending. It involves between two and 10 poles placed in single file over a 100-ft. long line. Contestants must weave

in and out of the poles to the end of the line, then turn around, and weave back to the starting point. Racers compete for the best time.

To run a pole-bending race in a game, have each contestant take turns making Dexterity checks (DC 15) for their mounts. If the character succeeds at a Ride check (DC 10) he can add a +2 bonus to the mount's check. The first mount to make five successful Dexterity checks wins.

Track: A track race takes place in a long, usually oval-shaped field with a dirt track running around it. Competitors line up at a starting point together and race to see who can make it around the track a certain number of times first. Track races are very competitive and require great speed, strength, and cunning.

To play a track race in a game, determine the number of times the contestants must circle the track. Usually this number is three to four for short races or 10 to 20 for longer races. For each revolution, have the racers roll a Ride check (DC 25) and a Speed check for their mount. The Speed check for a mount is $1d20 + \text{the mount's Dex modifier}$. Subtract four from the Speed roll if the rider fails his Ride check, and add or subtract four for each 10 ft. of base speed away from 50 ft. (thus a horse with a 40 ft. base move subtracts four from his Speed check, a horse with a 60 ft. base move adds four). Award points as follows depending on the placement on each lap:

Place	Points
1st	10 points
2nd	8 points
3rd	6 points
4th	4 points
5th	3 points
6th	2 points
7th	1 point
8th+	0 points

The horse with the most points each round becomes the leader, and the leader after the last lap is the winner.

Steeplechase: The unusual steeplechase involves a lot of jumping and moving around an obstacle course composed of hedges, fences, and small pools of water. Style and grace are of equal importance to speed in this type of race.

To play a steeplechase in a game, each mount rolls five Jump checks (DC 12) and one big Jump check (DC 15). The contestant also rolls two Ride checks (DC 20). Finally, the contestant makes a Perform check which the mount can aid, adding +1 for each successful small jump, +2 for the big jump, and +1 for each successful Ride check. The contestant with the highest Perform check wins the steeplechase.

Cross Country: Not exactly a favorite among audiences, a cross country race takes place over a long distance, usually several miles, through rough and treacherous terrain. Cross-country races focus on endurance and good riding skills.

To play a cross-country race in a game, have each player take turns making Ride checks (DC 15+1 for each previous roll). Failing a roll takes a contestant out of the race. Continue rolling until only one contestant remains.

GAMBLING ON MOUNTED RACES

Racers are not the only ones who have fun at races. Gamblers get their fair share of excitement too. By betting on the races, gamblers ensure that they too feel the tension. After all, it is easy to get excited when the winner of a race determines the life or death of your near fortune. A true gambler considers many factors in a race, such as the past performances of the mounts and riders and the mount's current condition.

Most gambling is done parimutually, which means the general public bets against each other. That way, the gambling houses never take a loss. In real odds betting, the numbers change rapidly to match the total bets but for simplicity's sake the system here is broken down into basics.

Odds are determined by the predicted placement of a rider. As such, the rider expected to come in 1st would have the odds of one to one, the rider in second 2-to-1, and so forth. Longshots have odds of 20-to-1 or more. To determine the winnings in odds betting, multiply the amount bet by the odds and add it back to the total.

For example: Tilsa bets 40 gp on a horse expected to come second. Much to her surprise, she was right and her chosen horse wins. Her ticket says the odds are 2-to-1. ($40 \times 2 = 80 + 40 = 120$). Therefore Tilsa gets 120 gp for her winning ticket.

JOUSTING TOURNAMENTS

A joust is a competition between two mounted warriors who charge at each other with lances, attempting to knock each other from the saddle. Usually a low, long barrier is placed along the line of the joust, with one competitor on each side so the mounts ride past each other as the mounted warriors strike. A rider's charge is sometimes called a tilt, and huge crowds often gather to cheer their favorite jousters as they tilt at each other.

The joust is a highly respected competition among knights and nobles, and in a society where mounted knights are the core of military strength, the joust may be the most honored and eagerly anticipated competition in an entire year's worth of festivals. Frequently the first full day of any grand tournament is devoted to the joust, with much ritual and pageantry both before and after the event.

The goal of a joust is to knock the opposing rider from his saddle without being knocked off oneself. Occasionally riders must take several passes at each before one of them is unhorsed. Since the light lances used in entertainment jousts are made to shatter on impact (to reduce the likelihood of killing a knight), a squire who assists the knight is usually present by the side of the field to toss fresh lances to his master after each charge.

If a knight unhorses his opponent, he wins. If both riders are unhorsed simultaneously, the knights typically recover themselves and continue the fight on foot. Since riders usually do not carry weapons other than a lance (sometimes jousts involve swords or spears, but lances are the most common), squires have to hand a melee weapon to their masters if the joust progresses to close combat.

Because jousts are primarily for entertainment and not actually intended to injure, knights typically ride in full plate and carry large shields to absorb most of the shock of a lance strike. Some jousts limit knights so they can only strike at each other's shields as a safety precaution, but not all do. As mentioned above, many jousts also use weak wooden lances that shatter upon impact, making critical hits impossible.

Regardless of the precautions taken, however, jousts always carry an element of risk.

Though occasionally bloody, or even deadly, jousts are beloved by festivalgoers for the thunder of hooves, flashing glint of steel armor, and crack of lance against shield.

MECHANIC

The core rules present most of the necessary information for running jousts, with one exception. According to the rules for the Ride skill, the DC for staying in a saddle when injured is a mere 5, simple for even novice horsemen. Since practical experience shows that it is indeed quite possible to unhorse someone in a joust, the following rule should be implemented to simulate a joust.

To resolve a joust, have each character make an attack roll. Both rolls are resolved simultaneously; there is no initiative. Apply each attack roll to the opponent's AC. If an attack hits, the opposing character must make a Ride check (DC 20 + 1 per point by which the attack roll exceeded the character's AC). Any character that fails this Ride check is knocked from his horse. For this exchange, each character is considered to be charging and applies a -2 penalty to his AC and a +2 bonus to his attack roll.

If one rider falls, the one still on his mount wins. If both riders are unhorsed, the joust turns into melee combat, with each warrior usually having one round to get up and get a weapon before combat renews. Melee combat usually lasts only until one side submits, though some fights are fought to unconsciousness. If neither rider falls, then both knights reach the end of the jousting field, turn, and make another charge at each other, repeating until someone wins.

A knight who is unhorsed can attempt a Ride check (DC 15) to make a soft fall. Otherwise, he takes 1d6 points of damage from the fall. Most knights use warhorses when jousting, since they more readily obey commands, but if for some reason a warrior jousts with a non-warhorse, he must succeed at a Ride check (DC 20) to convince it to charge into combat.

Each combatant may also select from a few options:

Aim at the helm: Using this maneuver applies a -8 penalty to the attack roll, but the Ride DC to stay mounted if the knight is struck increases by 10.

Joust defensively: A knight who chooses to joust defensively has a -4 penalty to his attack roll but a $+4$ bonus to his Ride checks for that pass.

LANCES

Lances may either be outrance, with a standard sharpened point, or may be tipped with a blunting wooden plate, referred to as arms of courtesy. Arms of courtesy deal only subdual damage, although all other effects remain the same. Alternatively, weaker lances may be used that always shatter after one strike. In this case damage is subdual as well. If a lance is intended to break, it cannot inflict critical hits, and any lance that shatters upon impact grants a $+4$ bonus to the opponent's Ride check to remain mounted. A lance that deals more than 15 points of damage automatically breaks. This is desirable in some respects, as breaking a lance on an opponent wins the crowd's favor (the lance is immediately replaced).

VARIANTS AND OPTIONAL RULES

Most jousting tournaments do not simply have lists, but also test knights in other ways. Usually, over the course of a tournament, the various tests are worth points, and preliminary

tilts are worth more points, with the four highest-scoring knights proceeding to an elimination final competition. Each knight competes in each of the small tests, a sample few of which are presented here.

Ring and Wreath: In this competition, a rider must charge at full speed down the length of a field, using his lance to pick up three small rings held out by squires. At the end of the charge, a fourth squire holds a wreath of leaves, which, if the knight succeeds in catching it, he usually gives to a maiden in the audience that catches his eye. The rings and wreath (tiny objects) each require an attack roll against AC 7 to pick up. The knight can try for each ring and wreath regardless of the number of attacks he gets, because this is not actually combat. Each ring is worth one point, and the wreath is worth five points.

Javelin Toss: In the javelin toss, the knight rides at full speed down the field and tosses a javelin at an archery target at the end of the field, from a range of at least twenty feet. Use the rules presented in the archery section above to determine what area of the target the knight strikes and how many points he earns. Each knight is allowed to make two tosses, taking





the best score of the two.

Windmill Tilt: At mid-length down the field, a rotating sign is placed, with one side painted red, the other white. The knight rides at the sign and strikes its edge as hard as possible. For every four points of damage dealt with the attack, the sign rotates once, earning the knight one point per rotation.

Race: A race between two or more mounted warriors, this contest uses the rules presented earlier for mounted races. Each knight participates in only one race, usually involving four laps around the jousting field, and the winner takes 10 points.

Obstacle Course: This competition requires the knight to guide his horse down the field, which is obstructed with bails of hay that must be jumped, high wooden walls that must be ridden around, low bars that must be ducked, or sometimes even ramps that lead up to a long pool over which the horse must leap. The obstacles are made to be more hazardous to the rider than to the horse, so obstacles that could result in a broken leg are usually avoided. The DM should devise a combination of Jump and Ride checks, with points earned equal-

ing one for every five points of DC beyond 10. For jumps, use the lower bonus of either the rider's Ride skill or the mount's Jump skill to determine how far the mount can jump. During a leap, the rider must succeed at a Ride check (DC 15) or fall off the horse.

For example, an obstacle course might require hurdling three bales of hay (Jump or Ride check DC 10, 1 point each), ride through a series of silk curtains that shroud vision and conceal wooden poles at head height (Reflex save DC 8 to avoid, 2 points), and finally jump a 15-foot-wide lake (Jump or Ride check DC 14 for a light horse or DC 16 for a heavy horse, 10 points).

Some obstacle courses include a javelin toss, ring and wreath, or windmill tilt in addition to avoiding the obstacles. The distraction presented by the obstacles incurs a -2 circumstance penalty to the knight's attack rolls for these tests.

Preliminary Tilts: In qualifying tilts, a knight earns eight points for unhorsing an opponent while staying in his own saddle. If he defeats his opponent in melee on foot, he gains only three points. Each knight usually participates in three to six preliminary tilts.

Little Jousts: Instead of using tournament fields, halflings sometimes host jousts on long, narrow bridges over water, which sometimes have their railings removed to add to the tension. The knights and their mounts (riding dogs, most often) charge and make one strike each, then wheel around and continue to fight in the center of the bridge. A mount by the edge must make a Balance check (DC 5) each round it is in combat to avoid falling off. A knight can win either by knocking his opponent from his mount, outfighting him in melee, or knocking him off the bridge. The fall into the water below can be a jolt, but it is rarely dangerous.

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