



GLADIATOR

MARTIAL ARCHETYPE FOR FIGHTERS

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"ARE YOU NOT
ENTERTAINED?"

-Maximus Decimus Meridius, Gladiator



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GLADIATOR

The half-orc brings his axe down on the massive ogre and smashes them down into the dirt. He could deliver the killing blow, but not before he raises the axe to hear the crowd cheer him on.

Elsewhere, a stone golem's fist strikes an elf's face, sending her flying into the air. As she gets back on her feet, she grins through her broken and bloody teeth. Her allies feel it, the excitement of a good fight. That golem is coming down.

Gladiators are trapped between being two things. On one hand, they are warriors and capable fighters on any battlefield. But they are also performers who fighting not just for honor or loyalty, but for gold, glory, and others' enjoyment. On occasion, the ring no longer has the appeal it used to and a gladiator leaves to find new glories and new audiences. Those who do often prefer to travel with others, if not to share with them their past accomplishments then to share in their new ones. After all, it is much better to bring down mighty beasts if there is someone watching.

THEMES & EXPECTATIONS

The gladiator is a trained warrior that combines raw physical prowess with the showmanship of an entertainer. To the gladiator, winning is everything because there is always someone watching. If the crowd isn't watching, the party is, and if the party isn't watching, the gods are. For that reason, the gladiator puts on a show and combines fighting with drama.

The gladiator is thematically dramatic and they incorporate that into their style. They exaggerate their attacks and their wounds, only to rise back up and do something cool. Their features are often more cinematic rather than practical or effective. Many of the features are based on Charisma.

MAKING A GLADIATOR

When building a gladiator, consider why they fight. Some fight for the money, others might be slaves who fight because they are forced to. Even in fantasy settings where slavery is illegal, financial debt can drive them to fighting in the ring.

Gladiators turn fighting into showmanship. It is not always enough to beat the opponent, you also need the audience to like you. That's how you get into the big fights and can earn some real money. Many gladiators have the entertainer background (chapter 4 in the *Player's Handbook*) but they can come from almost any background. A charlatan gladiator might present themselves with some exotic background, pretending to be a princess from a far away land where fighting is just another morning routine. An acolyte might serve a god of war who favors gladiatorial fighting.

Gladiators can also be of any race, although exotic races are often considered more entertaining. Ringmasters often favor the rarer races for the same reason they favor more exotic monsters for the gladiators to fight against. It brings in a bigger crowd. It is exploitive and probably cruel, but gladiators often make more money that way.

GLADIATORS IN EBERRON

The Last War has produced a lot of soldiers who have found themselves without work since the accords. Some find work as adventurers or bodyguards, while others turn to fighting in illegal fighting rings in major cities, and many gladiators in Eberron have the soldier background.

The Boromar Clan operates several fighting rings in the lower districts of Sharn where warriors can fight for money. The big score though, is fighting in one or two of the private fights that are secretly held in the upper districts. Talent scouts attend the Boromar fights to find the best entertainment for those fights, so you better put on a good show.

GLADIATORS IN RAVNICA

Only one guild in Ravnica is more likely than others to provide steady employment for gladiators. The violent hedonism of the Cult of Rakdos operates several fighting rings in Ravnica and although most of the gladiators who fight in them are members of the guild, fights between members of different guilds are highly sought after entertainment.

The fighting rings that Rakdos operates tend to be serve as a much bigger part of the show than fighting rings elsewhere and they are almost more dangerous than any opponent you might face in the ring. Spinning blades, erupting flames, or even pits filled with molten lava are not unheard of.



FEATURES

When you choose to become a gladiator on your 3rd level as a Fighter, the following features become available to you.

GLADIATOR FEATURES

Class Levels	Features
3rd	Bonus Proficiency, Dramatic Fighting, Dramatic Defense
7th	Dramatic Strike, Dramatically Wounded
10th	Dirty Tricks, Extra Fighting Style
15th	Overly Dramatic
18th	Show Must Go On

BONUS PROFICIENCY

When you become a gladiator, you become proficient in either the Acrobatics or the Performance skill.

DRAMATIC FIGHTING

Gladiators fight with drama points. These points allow you to improve your attacks with dramatic flair and effects. You start with a number of points equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1). You also get one more drama point at 7th level and again at 15th level, and you regain all spent drama points after a short or long rest. Once on your turn, when you successfully hit a target with a weapon attack, you can spend a drama point to add one of the following effects to your attack:

- If the target of your attack is no more than one size larger than you, they get pushed 10 feet in a direction of your choice.
- You have advantage on your next attack against the same target, if you make that attack before the end of your next turn.
- If the target of your attack is no more than one size larger than you, they are now grappled by you.
- The target of your attack has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks, and their passive Perception is 5 less, until the start of your next turn.
- The target of your attack can't make an opportunity attack against you before the start of your next turn.

When you spend a drama point in this manner, you may immediately make a Charisma (Intimidation *or* Performance) to either threaten or impress those who saw your dramatic display of combat prowess.

DRAMATIC DEFENSE

If you are not wearing any armor, you add your Charisma modifier to your AC (minimum +0).

DRAMATIC STRIKE

Once on your turn when you've reached 7th level, you may add your Charisma modifier to the damage roll of a successful weapon attack that you make against another creature.

DRAMATICALLY WOUNDED

With a smile after taking a hit, you can bolster the resolve of your allies. When you take damage from an attack or a spell, you can immediately spend a drama point to give all your allies within 60 feet who can see you temporary hit points equal to 1d8 + your Charisma modifier that last for one minute. When you reach the 15th level in this class, the hit points they receive is equal to 2d8 + your Charisma modifier. If the damage you took would reduce you to 0 hit points, the temporary hit points gained from this feature is doubled. Once you've used this feature, you cannot do so again until you've finished a short or long rest.

DIRTY TRICKS

At level 10, you may choose one of these additional options when you spend your drama points to add an effect to your attack:

- The target of your attack is frightened of you until the end of your next turn.
- If the target of your attack is no more than one size larger than you, they are knocked prone.
- The target of your attack has their speed halved until the start of your next turn.

EXTRA FIGHTING STYLE

You can learn another fighting style, chosen from the ones available to the fighter class. You can also choose Net Fighting, which is presented at the end of this class description.

OVERLY DRAMATIC

At 15th level, you can spend two drama points to add two effects from the Dramatic Fighting and Dirty Fighting features to the same attack (target could be pushed back AND fall prone). You can also spend a drama point to add effects to an attack you make as a reaction.

SHOW MUST GO ON

At level 18, when you roll initiative and don't have any drama points remaining, you regain one drama point.

NEW FIGHTING STYLE

This new fighting style is available to gladiators and all characters with levels in the fighter class. It is specifically designed to use a net in a fight.

NET FIGHTING

When you attack with a net as part of your attack action, you do not sacrifice your remaining attacks as per the net's special tag (chapter 5 of the *Player's Handbook*). In addition, if you are holding a weapon in your main hand and a net in your off hand, you can attack with the net as a bonus action without sacrificing your action to attack.