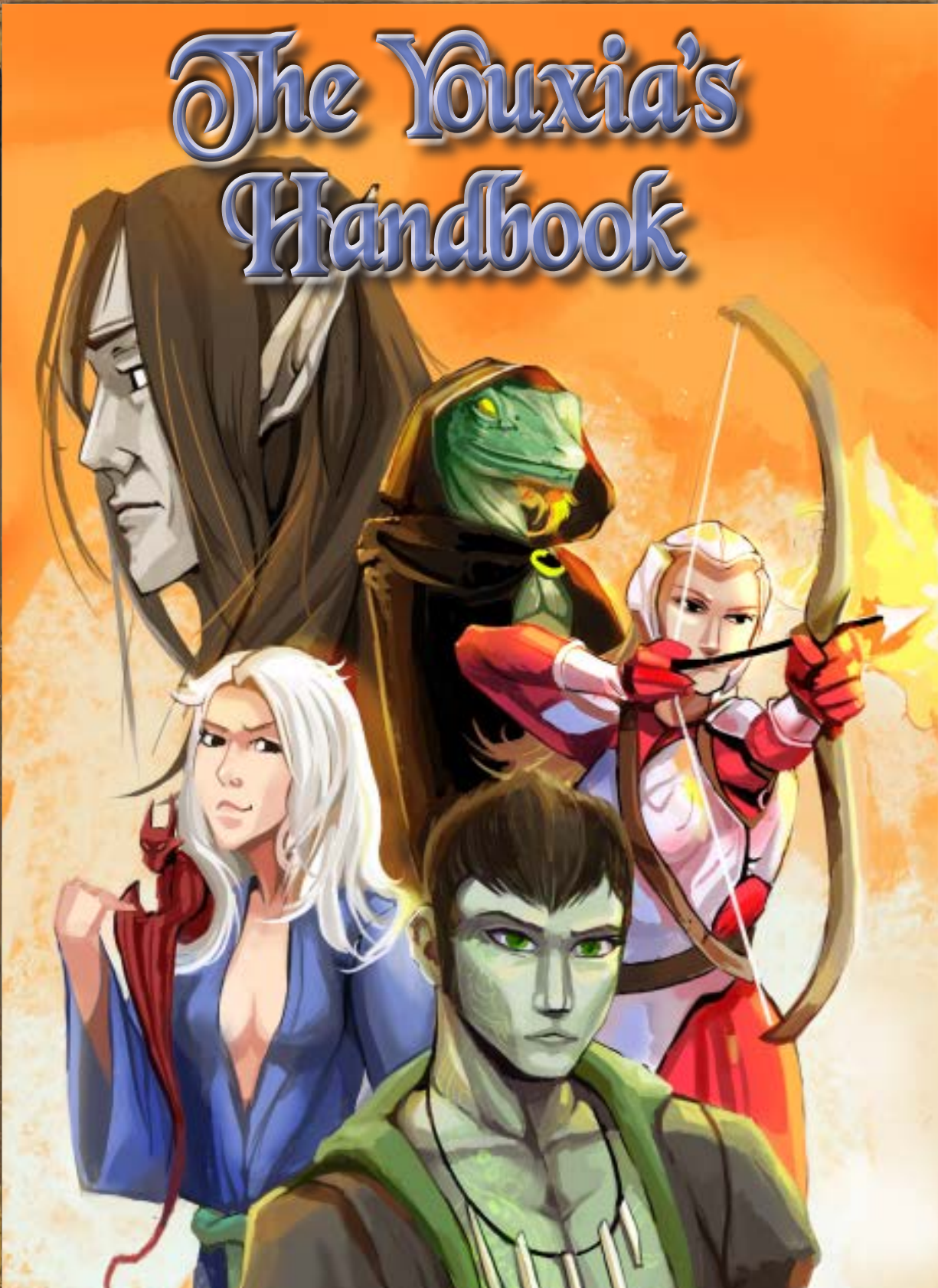


# The Youxia's Handbook





# *The Youxia's Handbook*

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

*The Youxia's Handbook* is a collection of archetypes, *Spheres of Might* talents, and optional rules for any kind of game using *Spheres of Power* or *Spheres of Might*. The primary focus of the book is to introduce new options for martially-focused characters, to introduce (stance) talents to every single martial sphere, and bring more diverse options to the Athletics, Gladiator, and Open Hand spheres.

This book focuses on the wūxiá genre of Chinese fantasy and their characters, known as yóuxiá. Wuxia as a genre stretches back thousands of years through many different media, from epic novels like *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* to films like *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* to even cartoons like *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. Wuxia stories often feature high-flying acrobatics, stunning displays of martial arts prowess, and dramatic heroes with intense personalities. *The Youxia's Handbook* can help capture the feel of these stories with new rules and options while also presenting useful content for any style of game using spheres content. It is my hope that this handbook inspires players who aren't familiar with wuxia to explore the genre, while providing fans of wuxia the tools to add wuxia influence to their games.

This handbook is designed to be used as a companion book with the updated *Spheres of Power* system of magic materials found in *Ultimate Spheres of Power*, as well as materials from *Spheres of Might*. Classes, class features, and spheres from these sources are not marked.

## Navigating This Book

**Section 2 - Class Options:** This section provides new archetypes and class options for bare-fisted martial artists, alacritous warriors, and forces of personality who fight with words and steel in equal measure.

*Acupuncturist:* An investigator archetype that debilitates foes with anatomical knowledge and precision strikes.

*Adamantine Scientist:* A technician archetype that focuses on augmenting their unarmed prowess with power fists.

*Disciple of the Monstrous Arts:* A reaper archetype that draws power from forbidden techniques to blend together magical effects and martial stances.

*Elemental Fist:* A striker archetype that uses the Nature sphere to launch unarmed attacks at range.

*Kung Fu Exemplar:* A bard archetype that turns proficiency with ordinary skills into combat power.

*Laughing Hyena:* A Charisma-based sentinel archetype that focuses on the Gladiator sphere to humiliate and terrify their foes.

*Martial Elementalist:* A simple elementalist archetype that grants combat talents in exchange for their bonus combat feats.

*Martial Thaumaturge:* A simple thaumaturge archetype that grants combat talents in exchange for their bonus casting feats.

*Master of Many Stances:* An unchained monk archetype which leverages multiple (stance) talents to gain versatility on the battlefield.

**Section 3 - Basic Combat Talents:** This section provides a number of new talents, including a large expansion to the Athletics, Gladiator, and Open Hand spheres and (stance) talents for every martial sphere.

**Section 4 - Legendary Combat Talents:** This section introduces a handful of new, powerful talents that can help define unique enemies or help a hero feel heroic.

**Section 5 - Player Options:** This section introduces new martial traditions, feats, and practitioner drawbacks for a number of spheres.

**Section 6 - Equipment:** Acupuncture needles and needle launchers are added in the handbook to support acupuncturists and poison users alike. The *left-handed gauntlet* is a magic item used to give a creature multiple phases, like a video game boss.

**Section 7 - Optional Rules:** A section including the Light Body Technique rule to emulate the physics-bending nature of youxia and the Martial Contracts rule to introduce grandmasters who can grant new abilities to characters through training.



## Chapter 2

# Class Options

### Archetypes

#### Acupuncturist (Investigator Archetype)

Equal parts doctors and martial artists, acupuncturists are able to leverage their training in anatomy to strike at their enemies' pressure points. Using their hands or tiny acupuncture needles, they debilitate and wear down foes by turning their bodies against them.

**Proficiencies:** Acupuncturists are proficient with simple weapons and acupuncture needles, as well as light armor and bucklers. In addition, if this is this character's first level in any class, they may select a martial tradition of their choice.

This alters proficiencies.

**Combat Training (Ex):** An acupuncturist is considered an Expert practitioner, gaining spheres and talents as appropriate. Acupuncturists use Intelligence as their practitioner modifier.

This replaces the alchemy, poison resistance, and keen recollection class features.

**Hands-On Experience:** At 1st level, an acupuncturist gains the Scout sphere as a bonus sphere. Additionally, the acupuncturist may use their Heal skill instead of their Perception skill when using the *scout* ability and uses their Intelligence modifier instead of their Wisdom modifier when using the Heal skill.

**Pressure Points (Ex):** At 1st level, whenever an acupuncturist successfully performs an attack action, attack of opportunity, or additional attack granted by a talent or class feature with an acupuncture needle or needle gun against a creature they have successfully scouted, the creature suffers nonlethal damage equal to  $1d8 +$  the acupuncturist's Intelligence modifier. Additionally, the acupuncturist may treat melee attacks made with acupuncture needles as unarmed strikes for the purposes of feats, talents, or class features. If a creature struck by an acupuncture needle takes nonlethal damage from this ability, treat the attack as if it successfully dealt that much damage for the purposes of feats, talents, or class features.

At 5th level and every 5 levels thereafter, the damage die of the pressure points ability increases by 1 step ( $1d8$  to  $1d10$ ,  $2d6$ ,  $2d8$ , etc.).

This ability replaces trapfinding.

**Inspiration (Ex):** An acupuncturist can use inspiration on Heal rolls instead of Linguistics rolls without expending a use of inspiration. If the acupuncturist gains the expanded inspiration investigator talent, they may use inspiration on Linguistics rolls without expending a use of inspiration.

This ability alters inspiration.

**Stunning Fist:** At 2nd level, an acupuncturist gains Stunning Fist as a bonus feat, even if they do not meet the prerequisites. If they already have Stunning Fist, they instead gain any other feat they would qualify for. Additionally, the acupuncturist treats their acupuncturist level as their monk level for determining the number of uses per day of Stunning Fist and uses their Intelligence modifier instead of their Wisdom modifier to calculate the save DC.

At 4th level, and every 4 levels thereafter, the acupuncturist gains the ability to apply a new condition to the target of their Stunning Fist. This condition replaces stunning the target for 1 round, and a successful saving throw still negates the effect.

- At 4th level, the acupuncturist can choose to make the target fatigued.
- At 8th level, they can make the target sickened for 1 minute.
- At 12th level, they can make the target staggered for  $1d6+1$  rounds.
- At 16th level, they can permanently blind or deafen the target.
- At 20th level, they can paralyze the target for  $1d6+1$  rounds.

The acupuncturist must choose which condition will apply before the attack roll is made. These effects do not stack with themselves (a creature fatigued by Stunning Fist cannot become exhausted if hit by Stunning Fist again), but additional hits do increase the duration.

This ability replaces poison lore.



**Medical Studies (Ex):** At 3rd level, an acupuncturist gains the medical training scholar class feature. At 9th level, they gain the advanced medical training scholar class feature. At 15th level, they gain the expert medical training scholar class feature.

This ability replaces trap sense.

**Practiced Analysis (Ex):** At 4th level, an acupuncturist gains Studied Scout\* as a bonus feat. If they already possess the Studied Scout feat, they instead gain any talent they qualify for from the Scout sphere. Additionally, the acupuncturist no longer takes a -5 penalty to their Heal check when using the *scout* ability.

This ability replaces swift alchemy.

*\*Studied Scout feat published in Archetypes of Power, © 2018, Drop Dead Studios LLC.*

**Ki Power (Su):** Starting at 5th level, an acupuncturist may take ki powers from the unchained monk's list of ki powers instead of investigator talents, treating their acupuncturist level as their unchained monk level and using their Intelligence modifier in place of their Wisdom modifier when determining the effects of ki powers the acupuncturist gains. Instead of spending one or more ki points on a ki power, the acupuncturist may instead spend one point of inspiration per ki point required. As long as the acupuncturist has one or more inspiration points in their inspiration pool, they are treated as having at least one ki point in their ki pool for the purposes of ki powers.

Some ki powers require the acupuncturist to be of a specific level or higher before they can be chosen.

**Instant Death Pressure Point Attack (Ex):** At 20th level, as a special attack action, an acupuncturist may expend their martial focus to perform a melee attack with an unarmed strike or acupuncture needle against a creature that they have successfully *scouted*. If their attack hits, the creature must succeed at a Fortitude save or instantly die. This is a death effect.

Additionally, the acupuncturist increases the bonus from studied combat by 2, and their studied strike damage increases by 2d6.

This ability replaces true inspiration.

## Adamantine Scientist (Technician Archetype)

Science is best learned on the field of combat up close and in person. Rather than focus on more rudimentary pursuits, adamantine scientists seek to master their body in concert with machines, focusing on the most reliable weapon they have: their fists.

**Educated Unarmed Strike:** At 1st level, an adamantine scientist is treated as one size larger (up to Large) for the purpose of the damage their unarmed strike deals.

This ability replaces trapfinding.

**Brawler (Ex):** An adamantine scientist gains the Open Hand sphere at 1st level.

This ability replaces trap specialist.

**Power Fist (Ex):** An adamantine scientist can only select gloves for their invention at 1st level. These gloves deal damage equal to the adamantine scientist's unarmed strike if it would be higher, and have a critical threat range of 19-20 and a critical multiplier of x2, being able to be enhanced as though they were gauntlets. At 5th level, the adamantine scientist can spend a full-round action to transform their gloves into any tool they desire, treating it as a masterwork tool. If their improved gloves have an enhancement bonus, this is added to the circumstance bonus to Craft checks made with this tool.

This ability alters invention.

**Outstanding Blow (Ex):** At 3rd level, the adamantine scientist's improved gloves gain the super punch improvement even if they do not possess the steampower insight. This improvement does not count against the limit of improvements his improved gloves can have. At 11th level, the critical threat range of his improved gloves increases to 18-20.

This ability replaces danger sense.

**Improved Punch (Ex):** At 7th level, an adamantine scientist can build up pressure with the super punch improvement as a swift action rather than a move action.

This ability replaces trapmaster.

**Megaton Punch (Ex):** At 11th level, an adamantine scientist may have two charges of super punch readied simultaneously, though they may only use one charge per round.

This ability replaces greater trapmaster.

**Gigaton Punch (Ex):** At 15th level, once per round, an adamantine scientist can build up pressure as a free action.

This ability replaces supreme trapmaster.

**Final Punch (Ex):** At 19th level, an adamantine scientist can use both uses of their pressure at once. If they do, all damage from it is maximized.

This ability replaces perfect trapmaster.



## Disciple of the Monstrous Arts (Reaper Archetype)

Unlike ordinary reapers who dedicate themselves to hunting down monsters, disciples of the monstrous arts use forbidden techniques to augment themselves with terrible and corrupting powers. While the techniques employed by unnatural beings are powerful, the energy they channel through the disciples' bodies warps them into nearly unrecognizable horrors.

**Basic Stance Training:** At 1st level, a disciple of the monstrous arts gains a (stance) talent they meet the prerequisites for as a bonus talent.

This ability replaces the cult ability gained at 1st level.

**Bewitched Stance (Su):** By meditating for 10 minutes, a disciple of the monstrous arts may assign a magical sphere effect they know to each (stance) talent they know. The sphere effect must have a casting time of a standard action, must target only the disciple of the monstrous arts, and must have a duration of concentration.

The disciple of the monstrous arts may enter a (stance) talent as a move action to cast the magical sphere effect assigned to the stance as part of the action without provoking an attack of opportunity, paying any costs associated with the sphere effect. Spells cast this way use the disciple of the monstrous arts's class level in place of their base caster level. This magical sphere effect's duration is changed to the duration of the stance, and losing the benefit of the stance ends the magical sphere effect. The stance may be maintained as a swift action once entered.

This ability replaces favored prey and reaper trophy.

**Combat Empowerment (Ex):** At 3rd level, whenever a disciple of the monstrous arts successfully damages a creature with a CR of at least half their character level with an attack action, they gain a +1 bonus to their caster level until the end of their next turn. This can not increase their caster level above their character level. At 7th level and every 4 levels after, this bonus to caster level increases by 1.

This ability replaces prey casting bonus.

**Reality Shudders (Su):** Use the creature type (or subtype) that would have been the additional favored prey granted by the cult the disciple of monstrous arts chose for this ability.

This alters reality shudders.

**Eternal Body (Ex):** At 19th level, a disciple of monstrous arts no longer takes ability score penalties or receives ability score bonuses for aging, cannot be magically aged, and cannot die of old age. Additionally, the disciple of monstrous arts no longer needs to sleep, eat, or drink in order to survive in a given day as long as they have meditated for at least 10 minutes.

This ability replaces eternal foe.



## Elemental Fist (Striker Archetype)

Strikers are known for their attunement to the flow of combat, but there are those who focus on the flow of the elements. Combining their talents with the flow of nature, elemental fists border on supernatural, possessing talents that are beyond what others could hope to attain.

**Casting:** An elemental fist may combine spheres and talents to create magical effects. An elemental fist is considered a Low-Caster. (Note: All casters gain 2 bonus talents and a casting tradition the first time they gain the casting class feature.)

**Spell Pool:** The elemental fist gains a small reservoir of energy they can call on to create truly wondrous effects, called a spell pool. This pool contains a number of spell points equal to their class level + their casting ability modifier. This pool replenishes once per day after roughly 8 hours of rest.

This replaces drill knuckle.



**Blended Training (Ex):** Whenever an elemental fist would gain a combat talent from their class levels, they may instead choose to gain a magic talent.

This alters combat talents.

**Elemental Focus:** An elemental fist must choose the Nature sphere with the talent they gain at first level, unless they already possess the Nature sphere.

**Elemental Tension (Su):** An elemental fist gains the following tension technique:

#### 1 Tension

*Natural Fist:* The elemental fist can spend a swift action as a part of an attack action to make an unarmed strike against a creature within a distance equal to their geomancing range as long as they have line of sight and line of effect to that creature. This is a melee attack using their melee attack bonus, including Strength bonus, feats, and other modifiers to determine their attack bonus as normal. Attacking into melee, through cover, and other situations that penalize ranged attacks incurs the standard penalties. The type of damage dealt by this attack is determined by what Nature packages the elemental fist has, chosen each time they use natural fist:

*Air:* Electricity

*Earth:* Bludgeoning

*Fire:* Fire

*Metal:* Slashing

*Plant:* Piercing

*Water:* Cold

This ability replaces the perfect offensive tension technique.

**Elemental Arts (Su):** The elemental fist can select the following striker arts:

*Empower Nature [Tension]:* For each tension an elemental fist spends on this tension technique, they gain a +1 bonus to their caster level with the Nature sphere until the beginning of her next turn, to a maximum of half their elemental fist level (minimum 1).

*Natural Combo:* Whenever an elemental fist uses their natural fist tension technique, all other attacks with unarmed strikes they use that turn can benefit from it.

*Speed Natural:* The elemental fist can use their natural fist tension technique as a free action.

This ability alters striker arts.

## Kung Fu Exemplar (Bard Archetype)

Through deliberate and mindful practice of ordinary skills, one may translate the lessons learned into martial arts prowess. Kung fu exemplars are a diverse range of individuals who are rewarded for their holistic discipline with the ability to fight, inspire others, and achieve mastery in their respective fields with equal measure.

**Proficiencies:** Kung fu exemplars are proficient with simple weapons, as well as light armor and bucklers. In addition, if this is the character's first level in any class, they may select a martial tradition of their choice.

This alters proficiencies.

**Casting:** The kung fu exemplar may combine spheres and talents to create magical effects. A kung fu exemplar is considered a Mid-Caster. (Note: All casters gain 2 bonus talents and a casting tradition the first time they gain the casting class feature.)

This replaces the spells class feature.

**Spell Pool:** The kung fu exemplar gains a small reservoir of energy they can call on to create truly wondrous effects, called a spell pool. This pool contains a number of spell points equal to their level + their casting ability modifier (minimum 1). This pool replenishes once per day after roughly 8 hours of rest.

**Blended Training:** A kung fu exemplar gains a combat or magic talent every time they gain a class level. Kung fu exemplars use their casting ability modifier as their practitioner modifier.

This ability replaces the countersong, suggestion, and mass suggestion class features.

**Skill Discipline:** At 1st level, a kung fu exemplar gains Skill Focus as a bonus feat, except that the skill chosen must be an Artistry, Craft, Perform, or Profession skill. Artistry, Craft, Perform, and Profession skills that the kung fu exemplar has the Skill Focus feat for are considered the kung fu exemplar's kung fu skills. This ability replaces bardic knowledge.

**Bardic Performance (Ex):** A kung fu exemplar uses their practitioner ability modifier in place of their Charisma modifier when determining their rounds of bardic performance per day and bardic performance save DCs with this class feature.

**Weapon Discipline (Ex):** At 2nd level, a kung fu exemplar gains the Weapon Focus feat as a bonus feat. Additionally, they can calculate the damage of weapons they use and have



selected with the Weapon Focus feat using the sacred weapon damage value of a warpriest, treating their kung fu exemplar levels as warpriest levels to determine the damage dealt.

This ability replaces versatile performance.

**Exemplar Strike (Ex):** At 2nd level, whenever a kung fu exemplar performs an attack action, attack of opportunity, combat maneuver, or an attack granted by a martial talent with a weapon they have selected with the Weapon Focus feat, they may replace their base attack bonus with their ranks in any one kung fu skill they have and use that skill's governing attribute to calculate their attack bonus instead of Strength or Dexterity for that attack, up to a maximum of their kung fu exemplar level.

This ability replaces well-versed.

**Ki Power (Su):** At 4th level and every two levels thereafter, a kung fu exemplar gains one ki power from the unchained monk's list of ki powers, treating their kung fu exemplar level as their unchained monk level and using their practitioner ability modifier in place of their Wisdom modifier when determining the effects of ki powers the kung fu exemplar gains. Some ki powers require the kung fu exemplar to be of a specific level or higher before they can be chosen. Instead of spending one or more ki points on a ki power, the kung fu exemplar may instead spend one spell point per ki point required. As long as the kung fu exemplar has one or more spell points in their spell pool, they are treated as having at least one ki point in their ki pool for the purposes of ki powers.

This ability replaces lore master and jack of all trades.

**Skill Unlock:** At 5th level, the kung fu exemplar gains the Signature Skill feat for a kung fu skill they have as a bonus feat.

## Laughing Hyena (Sentinel Archetype)

For some, combat is a means to an end. For laughing hyenas, combat is how they feel alive. Passionate warriors who are always pushing their limits, they care less about protecting their allies than they care about proving their worth by defeating their opponents both physically and emotionally.

**Combat Training:** A laughing hyena may combine combat spheres and talents to create powerful martial techniques. Laughing hyenas are considered Expert practitioners and use Charisma as their practitioner modifier. Additionally, any sentinel class features that previously used the laughing hyena's Wisdom modifier now uses their Charisma modifier.

This ability alters combat training.

**Laughing Warrior:** A laughing hyena must select the Gladiator sphere as their martial talent gained at 1st level. If they already possess the Gladiator sphere, they may select any talent as normal.



**Rocksteady (Ex):** At 2nd level, a laughing hyena gains a +2 circumstance bonus to their CMD against creatures they have demoralized. At 12th level, this bonus increases to +4.

This ability replaces guard wall.

**Taunt Coward (Ex):** At 4th level, whenever a creature that has been challenged by the laughing hyena makes an attack that does not include the laughing hyena as a target, the laughing hyena may perform a *boast* as an immediate action.

This ability replaces sentinel's imposition.

**Braggart's Recovery (Ex):** At 6th level, when a laughing hyena performs a *boast*, they may activate their second wind class feature as part of the same action, spending a reserve point as normal.

This ability replaces counter critical.



## Martial Elementalist (Elementalist Archetype)

**Proficiencies:** Martial elementalists are proficient with simple weapons, as well as light armor and bucklers. In addition, if this is the character's first level in any class, they may select a martial tradition of their choice.

This alters proficiencies.

**Combat Training:** A martial elementalist may combine combat spheres and talents to create powerful martial techniques. Martial elementalists are considered Proficient combatants and use their casting ability modifier as their practitioner modifier.

This ability replaces the elementalist's bonus combat feats.

## Martial Thaumaturge (Thaumaturge Archetype)

**Proficiencies:** Martial thaumaturges are proficient with simple weapons, as well as light armor and bucklers. In addition, if this is the character's first level in any class, they may select a martial tradition of their choice.

This alters proficiencies.

**Combat Training:** A martial thaumaturge may combine combat spheres and talents to create powerful martial techniques. Martial thaumaturges gain a combat talent at 1st level and every 2 levels thereafter and use their casting ability modifier as their practitioner modifier.

This ability replaces the thaumaturge's bonus feats.

## Master of Many Stances (Unchained Monk Archetype)

While many monks dedicate their lives to mastery over a single school of combat, masters of many stances branch out into multiple disciplines in order to remain flexible and throw off their opponents. These virtuosos move between forms effortlessly, able to adapt to any situation and overcome any foes.

**Alignment:** Masters of many stances may be of any alignment.

**Proficiencies:** Masters of many stances are proficient with simple weapons and monk weapons. In addition, if this is the character's first level in any class, they may select a martial tradition of their choice.

This alters weapon and armor proficiencies.

**Combat Training (Ex):** A master of many stances is considered an expert practitioner, gaining spheres and talents as appropriate. Masters of many stances use Wisdom as their practitioner modifier. This replaces unarmed strike, bonus feats, and stunning fist.

**Basic Stance Training:** At 1st level, a master of many stances gains Versatile Fighter as a bonus talent.

**Striking Form (Ex):** At 1st level, whenever a master of many stances uses a swift action to activate a (stance) talent, they may perform an attack with an unarmed strike or monk special weapon as a free action. Attacks made using this ability apply their full Strength bonus to the damage roll, regardless of whether the weapon is wielded with two hands or with an off hand. This ability replaces flurry of blows.

**Stance Blending (Ex):** At 5th level, whenever a master of many stances expends martial focus to enter a (stance) talent for multiple rounds, it does not count as an active (stance) talent for the purpose of stances entered without expending martial focus. This ability replaces style strike.

**Flexible Stance (Ex):** At 9th level, whenever a master of many stances expends martial focus to enter a (stance) talent for multiple rounds, they may temporarily gain one talent from the stance's sphere as a bonus talent for the duration of the stance.

**Focusing Form (Ex):** At 11th level, whenever a master of many stances successfully deals damage with the attack granted by striking form, the master of many stances may regain their martial focus as a free action.

**Improved Flexible Stance (Ex):** At 13th level, a master of many stances may gain two temporary bonus talents from flexible stance.

**Eternal Stance (Ex):** At 15th level, whenever a master of many stances rolls initiative, they may choose one (stance) talent they know. The master of many stances is considered to be in this stance for the duration of the encounter. This stance does not count as an active (stance) talent for the purpose of entering multiple stances.

**Greater Flexible Stance (Ex):** At 17th level, a master of many stances may gain three temporary bonus talents from flexible stance.



# New Class Features

## New Conscript Specializations

### Ki Cultivator (Su) (2 points)

At 3rd level, a conscript gains a pool of ki points, supernatural energy they can use to accomplish amazing feats. The number of points in a conscript's ki pool is equal to  $1/2$  their conscript level + their practitioner modifier. As long as they have at least 1 point in their ki pool, they can make a ki strike.

At 3rd level, ki strike allows their unarmed attacks to be treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

At 7th level, their unarmed attacks are also treated as cold iron and silver for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

At 10th level, their unarmed attacks are also treated as weapons of an alignment (chaotic, evil, good, or lawful) that the conscript has for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. The alignment is chosen when this ability is gained.

At 16th level, their unarmed attacks are treated as adamantine weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction and bypassing hardness.

The ki pool is replenished each morning after 8 hours of rest or meditation; these hours do not need to be consecutive.

Starting at 3rd level and every odd level thereafter, the conscript may select a ki power from the unchained monk's list of ki powers in place of the bonus talent they gain at that level, treating their conscript level as their unchained monk level and using their practitioner modifier in place of their Wisdom modifier when determining the effects of ki powers the conscript gains. Some ki powers require the conscript to be of a specific level or higher before they can be chosen.

## New Ki Powers

### Fuel Stance

You may spend a ki point as a free action to extend the duration of an active (stance) talent by 1 round. For every 5 monk levels you possess, increase the duration by an additional round.

### Stance Dancer

Gain a single talent of your choice with the (stance) tag that you qualify for. You cannot select this ki power if you do not qualify for any (stance) talents. You may select this ki power more than once. Each time it is selected, gain another (stance) talent.

## New Prodigy Link Components

### Adopt Form

Expend martial focus as part of activating a (stance) talent.





## Chapter 3

# Basic Talents

### New Talent Type: Stance

Stance talents (marked with a (stance) tag) are different than normal martial talents, requiring a swift action at the beginning of a practitioner's round to activate and lasting until the beginning of their next round (or a number of rounds equal to the practitioner modifier if martial focus is expended while activating it, minimum 2 rounds).

Offering new benefits and advantages, only a single stance can be active at a time, regardless of if another could be activated, and activating a stance talent while another stance talent is active ends the previous stance's duration, even if it would be longer than the new stance.

## Alchemy Sphere

### Dynamite Throwing Form (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you would make a ranged touch attack with an alchemical item and the attack roll beats the target's non-touch AC, the target takes an amount of damage equal to your unarmed strike's damage dice plus your Strength modifier. This damage is the same type as your unarmed strike's damage type.

## Athletics Sphere

### Blustering Hustle (motion)

Whenever you succeed at an Acrobatics check to avoid provoking an attack of opportunity from an opponent when you move through its space, that opponent is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC against the first melee attack you make against them before the start of your next turn.

**Associated Feat:** Canny Tumble.

### Chargethrough (run)

Whenever you successfully attack a creature with a charge, you may roll an Acrobatics check against the CMD of the creature as a free action, adding the attack bonus from charging to your roll. If you succeed, you may continue your charge's movement any distance as long as you still have movement remaining. This movement does not provoke an attack of opportunity from the attacked creature nor is it halved for moving through squares threatened or occupied by the attacked creature. If you fail this check, you instead provoke an attack of opportunity from the attacked creature and not move further.

### Dolphin Strike (leap, swim)

If you have the (leap) package, whenever you perform an Acrobatics check to attempt a high jump as part of a move action and the movement from this jump would allow you to threaten a creature at a higher elevation with a melee weapon, you may perform an attack action with that weapon as a standard action against the creature. This attack deals an extra 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet of maximum vertical height allowed by the Acrobatics check, up to a maximum of 1d6 per rank in Acrobatics you possess. A creature damaged this way cannot perform attacks of opportunity against you for leaving threatened squares until the end of your turn.

If you have the (swim) package, as part of a move action underwater you may perform a high jump to break the surface of the water by using your Swim ranks and modifier instead of your Acrobatics ranks and modifier. Otherwise it is the same as above.

### Elevation Mastery

Your bonus to melee attack rolls for higher ground increases by 1, and creatures on lower ground take a penalty to melee attack rolls against you equal to your attack bonus for higher ground.



If you have 10 or more ranks in a skill granted by an Athletics package you possess, this bonus increases by 1.

**Associated Feat:** Death from Above.

### Lashing Serpent (stance)

While in this stance, whenever a creature makes an attack against you and misses while you are moving using a movement mode corresponding to a package you possess, you may perform an attack of opportunity against them. You may not use this talent in conjunction with (deflect) talents or any other ability that would grant you an attack or combat maneuver due to a missed attack against you.

### Locust Pounce (leap)

You may roll an Acrobatics check to jump as part of a melee attack action, moving no more than half your land speed before performing the attack action. This movement is not subtracted from your total movement per round. You may expend your martial focus to make this movement without provoking an attack of opportunity.

### Overhead Flip (leap)

As part of an attack action, you may roll an Acrobatics check to jump against the CMD of any adjacent creature. If your roll exceeds their CMD, you may jump to any other square adjacent to that creature that would enable flanking with your starting position without provoking an attack of opportunity for movement, and you may treat the creature as flanked by you for the attack action. If unsuccessful, you instead provoke an attack of opportunity from the targeted creature and do not complete your movement.

### Sinking Blow (fly, swim)

If you are flying or swimming, whenever you make a successful attack action against a creature employing the same movement mode as you while you have martial focus, that creature must succeed at a Reflex saving throw or lose 30 feet of distance to the ground. If you have 10 or more ranks in the used movement mode, a creature who fails this saving throw also has their speed for that movement mode reduced by 1/2 for a number of rounds equal to your practitioner modifier (minimum 1).

### Terror Below (swim)

While beneath the surface of water or another liquid, as an attack action, you can move through the water up to 1/4 your base land speed or 1/2 your swim speed if you possess one and make a melee attack against a creature above the surface of the water. If you do, that creature must succeed at a Reflex saving throw or fall into the water in a square of your choice adjacent to you (even if they are standing on solid ground). If you have 10 or more ranks in Swim, when a creature is forced into water by this attack, they are unable to hold their breath beforehand, and must instantly start attempting checks upon the beginning of their round to avoid drowning.

### Wind-Up Brace (motion)

As long as you move no more than half your base speed, when you succeed at an Acrobatics check to avoid provoking an attack of opportunity from an opponent when you move through its threatened area or its space, any damage the next attack that creature makes against you until the beginning of your next turn deals nonlethal damage. If you are damaged by the attack, you may immediately spend an attack of opportunity to move 5 feet without provoking an attack of opportunity using a movement mode associated with any Athletics package you possess. This talent cannot be used with the 5-foot step action, and you do not convert lethal damage to nonlethal damage with this talent if you are immune to nonlethal damage.

For every 6 ranks in a skill granted by an Athletics package you possess, you may move an additional 5 feet when spending an attack of opportunity to move with this talent.

## Barrage Sphere

### 100,000 Arrows (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you use the *barrage* action you can expend twice the number of thrown weapons or ammunition for each ranged attack while taking a -2 penalty to those attack rolls. If you do, striking a target for the first time in the *barrage* counts as striking a target twice with the same *barrage* for the purposes of *barrage* talents.

## Barroom Sphere

### Improvised Martial Arts (stance)

While in this stance, you may treat melee attacks with improvised weapons as unarmed strikes for the purpose of how much damage they deal and interactions with abilities which require an unarmed strike.

Once per turn while in this stance, when you attack a target adjacent to you with an improvised weapon or a weapon with the fragile weapon special quality, you can give that weapon the broken condition and spend an attack of opportunity to make an attack with an unarmed strike against the same target as a free action.



# Beastmastery Sphere

## Two As One (stance)

While in this stance, you may occupy the same square(s) as your animal allies at no penalty. Whenever you occupy the same square as an animal ally during this stance, you may expend an attack of opportunity to change the target of an attack targeting that animal ally to you as a free action that can be taken even outside your normal turn. Additionally, animal allies who occupy the same square as you in this manner may substitute your base attack bonus for their own, up to their number of Hit Dice, as long as the stance lasts.

# Berserker Sphere

## Sword Eater (stance)

While in this stance, when a creature targets you with a manufactured melee weapon attack, you may attempt to sunder the weapon used to make the attack as an attack of opportunity after it resolves. If the creature attacking you is battered, you may resolve your sunder attempt prior to their attack being resolved.

# Boxing Sphere

## Floating Butterfly (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you ready a *counter punch*, you may choose to forgo the circumstance bonus to your *counter punch*'s damage roll in order to gain a dodge bonus to AC equal to half the bonus damage until the beginning of your next turn. Additionally, whenever you are targeted with a melee attack while benefiting from this dodge bonus, you may expend an attack of opportunity to make a 5-foot step immediately after the attack resolves.

## Punishing Cross

Whenever you take damage from a melee attack, you can expend your martial focus as an immediate action. If you do, you take half of the damage you normally would. The creature who struck you must succeed at a Reflex save or take half of the damage you would have taken.

# Brute Sphere

## Giant Physique (stance)

While in this stance, you are treated as though you were one size category larger for the purpose of calculating CMB for combat maneuvers attempted with unarmed strikes (including any combat maneuver made with your hands, such as grapples), your CMD, and your ability to use combat maneuvers on a creature. For every 5 base attack bonus you possess, you are treated as an additional size larger (if this talent would make

you Colossal or larger, you instead receive a +1 bonus to combat maneuvers made with unarmed strikes and to your CMD).

## Ornery Ox (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you use *shove* as a move action, you may spend an attack of opportunity to perform an overrun maneuver against 1 creature in your path as a free action. For every 5 base attack bonus you possess you may attempt to overrun an additional target, but suffer a cumulative -2 penalty on each additional check made. You cannot overrun a target more than once in the same shove.

# Dual Wielding Sphere

## Snapping Crab (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you miss a creature with a melee attack made as part of a *dual attack*, the first melee attack that creature makes against you until the beginning of your next turn provokes an attack of opportunity from you. You must make the attack of opportunity with a melee weapon you missed the creature with during your *dual attack*, and the attack suffers the same penalties as it did during the *dual attack*. You may not use this talent in conjunction with (deflect) talents or any other ability that would grant you an attack or combat maneuver due to a missed attack against you.

# Duelist Sphere

## Defiant Focus

You may spend a move action to sheathe one held weapon without provoking an attack of opportunity. If you do, you may regain your martial focus. If you have the Dual Wielding sphere, you can sheathe two light or one-handed weapons instead of one.

**Associated Feat:** Quick Stow.

## Vengeful Scorpion (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you deal bleed damage to a creature in the same round that you draw the weapon used to deal that damage, the first melee attack a creature damaged this way makes against you within your reach provokes an attack of opportunity from you until the beginning of your next turn. You may not use this talent in conjunction with (deflect) talents or any other ability that would grant you an attack or combat maneuver due to a missed attack against you.



# Equipment Sphere

## Cloth Snake Puppetry (stance)

While in this stance, you can use any long, flexible objects like strings, ropes, sashes, chains, etc. as an extension of your own body. As part of the action you use to enter this stance, you may draw or pick up an unattended object within reach capable of use with this talent. While holding such an object in your hand, you may use it to increase your natural reach for grabbing objects, manipulating objects, and performing the bull rush, dirty trick, disarm, drag, steal, and trip maneuvers. The increased reach is limited by the length of the object used, to a maximum of 10 feet.

For every 4 base attack bonus you possess, the maximum potential reach of the object increases by 5 feet and you gain a +1 bonus to CMB for combat maneuvers made with the object. These objects count as grappling hooks for the purposes of talents such as Get Over Here! and Rope Swing.

## Dagger Bravo

Whenever you wield a dagger properly sized for you, its critical range is changed to 18-20/x2 (although its critical multiplier cannot be increased) and its range increases to 30 feet. At +10 base attack bonus, its range increases to 50 feet.

**Associated Feat:** Weapon Focus (dagger).

## Dagger Dancer

You can draw or sheath a dagger as a free action and you gain a +3 circumstance bonus on attack rolls to confirm critical hits with daggers. At +10 base attack bonus, this circumstance bonus increases to +6.

**Associated Feat:** Critical Focus.

## Medical Malpractice (discipline)

You gain proficiency with the acupuncture needle, butterfly knife, drow razor, garrote, iron brush, needle launcher, poisoned sand tube, sanpkhang, saw-toothed sabre, shuriken, switchblade knife, syringe spear, and torch.

## Palm Throw

Whenever you perform an attack action, attack of opportunity, or additional attack granted by a class feature or talent with shuriken, you may throw two identical shuriken at once. If you do so, increase the size of the shuriken's base damage die by three steps (1d6 Medium, 1d4 Small) instead of hitting twice. Abilities that would negate a single attack only stop one shuriken per use, removing the damage die increase but failing to prevent the attack entirely if only one shuriken is negated. Abilities that replace the base damage die of the weapon such as the war-priest's sacred weapon do not stack with this talent.

## Versatile Fighter (stance)

This talent gives you access to three stances, listed below. Feats that list the associated feats as prerequisites only work while the stances that grant the associated feats are active.

**Offensive Style:** While in this stance, you gain the benefit of the Deadly Aim and Power Attack feats. Additionally, when you successfully damage a creature with an attack action modified by Deadly Aim or Power Attack, that creature becomes battered for 1 round.

**Associated Feats:** Deadly Aim, Power Attack.

**Defensive Style:** While in this stance, you gain the benefit of the Combat Expertise feat. Additionally, when you successfully damage a creature with an attack action modified by Combat Expertise, increase the dodge bonus to armor class granted by Combat Expertise by 1, +1 per 10 base attack bonus you possess, until the end of your next turn. This increase does not stack with itself.





**Associated Feat:** Combat Expertise.

**Recovery Style:** While in this stance, you gain the benefit of the Heroic Resolve feat. Additionally, when you successfully damage a creature with an attack action while in this stance, your next activation of Heroic Resolve until the end of your next turn does not require expenditure of your martial focus.

**Associated Feat:** Heroic Resolve.

## Fencing Sphere

### Darting Crane (stance)

While in this stance, whenever a creature within reach misses you with a melee attack, you may expend an attack of opportunity to perform a feint against that creature as a free action that can be taken outside of your normal turn. You may not use this talent in conjunction with (deflect) talents or any other ability that would grant you an attack or combat maneuver due to a missed attack against you.

## Gladiator Sphere

### Battering Banter (boast)

Hostile creatures within range become battered for 1 round and must succeed at a Fortitude save or become fatigued for a number of rounds equal to your practitioner modifier.

### Cowing Nightmare (demoralization)

Whenever you demoralize a creature, that creature cannot make attacks of opportunity against you for the duration of the demoralization.

### Duel Of Wills (demoralization)

Whenever you roll initiative or as a swift action, you may expend martial focus to target a creature within medium range (100 feet + 10 feet per rank in Intimidate). That creature must succeed at a Will save or take a -1 penalty to Armor Class and Will saves for a number of rounds equal to your practitioner modifier. For the duration of the penalty, the creature counts as *demoralized* for the purpose of your Gladiator talents. For every 4 ranks in Intimidate you possess, the penalties increase by -1. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

### Fear Eater (demoralization)

Whenever you successfully damage a creature with an attack action while they are demoralized, you can expend your martial focus to gain a number of temporary hit points equal to your ranks in Intimidate as a free action which last for 1 minute. If you have 10 or more ranks in Intimidate, double the amount of temporary hit points this ability provides.

### Iron Roar (boast)

Allied creatures other than yourself in range gain DR/- equal to half your ranks in Intimidate (minimum 1) until the start of your next turn. This damage reduction stacks with any other damage reduction they possess.

### Last Bastion (boast)

Your words are often the last thing an ally hears before victory. The first time an ally within range of your *boast* would be reduced to 0 or fewer hit points during the next minute, they gain a number of temporary hit points equal to your ranks in Intimidate + your practitioner modifier which last one minute. Creatures with temporary hit points granted to them by this ability do not fall unconscious until these temporary hit points are lost.

### Murderous Intent (demoralization, stance)

While in this stance, *demoralized* hostile creatures treat squares adjacent to you as difficult terrain, and they provoke attacks of opportunity for 5-foot steps made to leave those squares. If you have 10 or more ranks in Intimidate, this stance instead applies to all squares within your reach.

### Rattle Confidence (boast)

One hostile creature within range must succeed at a Will save or roll their next attack before the end of their turn twice, taking the worse result.

### Shaken Defense (demoralization)

Whenever you successfully demoralize a creature, it takes an additional -2 penalty to its combat maneuver rolls and CMD for the duration of the demoralization. In addition, if they attempt a combat maneuver against you, it always provokes an attack of opportunity, even if it normally would not. If you have 10 or more ranks in Intimidate, this penalty is doubled.

### Spur Violence (boast)

One allied creature other than yourself within range may make an attack against an enemy within the area of your *boast* using a wielded weapon as a free action that can be taken even outside of their turn. This attack must be taken immediately or it is lost.

## Guardian Sphere

### Defiant Boar (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you damage a creature with an attack action, you may remove an amount of damage from your delayed damage pool equal to the damage dealt by your attack, up to a maximum of your base attack bonus.



# Lancer Sphere

## Defensive Leverage (stance)

While in this stance, as long as you are *impaling* an adjacent creature and controlling the weapon used to *impale* them, you gain a 20% miss chance against all attack rolls made against you. If this talent causes an attack made against you to miss, you may spend an attack of opportunity to redirect the attack against an adjacent creature you are currently *impaling* this way as a free action that can be taken even outside of your turn.

# Leadership Sphere

## Master's Instruction (cohort, stance)

While in this stance, whenever you damage a creature with an attack action or attack of opportunity, you may expend an attack of opportunity to use the aid another action targeting a cohort with close range (25 feet + 5 feet per 2 ranks in Diplomacy) as a free action that can be taken even outside of your turn. The aid another action increases the attack roll of their next attack directed at the creature damaged by you as long as that attack comes before the beginning of your next turn.

# Open Hand Sphere

## Featherlight Positioning (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you make an attack action, attack of opportunity, or additional attack granted by a class feature or talent with an unarmed strike, you may spend an attack of opportunity to take a 5-foot step immediately after the attack as a free action that can be taken even outside of your normal turn. You may make 5-foot steps in this manner even if you have already moved for the round.

**Associated Feat:** Circling Mongoose.

## Hard Landing

Whenever you successfully trip a creature, they become battered for one round. Additionally, you always treat prone creatures within reach as being battered for the purposes of talents and class abilities, and they cannot perform attacks of opportunity against you for performing combat maneuvers as long as they remain prone.

## Leopard's Gambit (stance)

While in this stance, whenever a creature makes a melee attack against you, you may allow the creature to roll its attack twice, taking the better result. If you do, the creature provokes an attack of opportunity from you after the attack and damage is determined. You must make this attack of opportunity with an unarmed strike. If the creature attacking you is battered, you may resolve your attack of opportunity prior to their attack

being resolved. This talent cannot be used in conjunction with the Bloody Counter talent.

## Lotus Touch

As a standard action, you can make a melee touch attack against a creature, dealing damage equal to your Strength modifier (or whichever attribute was used to make the check). The next successful attack action, attack of opportunity, or additional attack granted by a class feature or talent an ally makes against that creature before the start of your next turn has its base critical threat range doubled; this does not stack with other abilities which would increase critical threat range, such as Improved Critical. A critical hit scored while a creature is affected by this ability has its critical multiplier reduced to x2 if it would normally be higher. For every 5 base attack bonus you possess, Lotus Touch applies to one more eligible attack made before the start of your next turn.

**Associated Feat:** Butterfly's Sting.

## Palm Block

You may spend a move action to prepare your defenses. When you do so, the next time you would take damage from a melee attack before the start of your next turn, you may roll your unarmed strike damage die and reduce the damage taken by that result. At base attack bonus +6 and every 5 base attack bonus you possess thereafter, you may reduce the damage of an additional melee attack before the start of your next turn.

## Rippling Blow

When you perform an attack action with an unarmed strike, you may accept a -2 penalty to your attack rolls until the end of your turn to force a creature hit by the attack to immediately provoke an attack of opportunity from you. You must make this attack of opportunity with an unarmed strike.

## Rising Leverage

Whenever you successfully trip a creature while prone, you may restore your martial focus and stand up without provoking an attack of opportunity as a free action that can be taken even outside of your turn.

## Thunderous Punishment

Whenever you successfully perform an attack of opportunity with an unarmed strike, the opponent must succeed at a Fortitude save or become battered and staggered for 1 round. You may not affect the same creature more than once per round with this talent.

At base attack bonus +10, you may expend your martial focus as an immediate action on a successful attack of opportunity with an unarmed strike to instead batter and daze the opponent for 1 round on a failed Fortitude save.



## Vibrating Impacts

Whenever you make a successful attack action or attack of opportunity with an unarmed strike against a battered creature, you may cause the creature to count the damage they took from your unarmed strike as continuous damage for the purpose of forcing concentration checks until the start of your next turn.

## Withering Defense

Whenever a creature within your threatened area misses you with a melee attack, you may expend an attack of opportunity as a free action that can be taken even when it is not your turn to force the creature to succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or become fatigued for 1 round.

This fatigue lasts for 1 additional round for each 4 points of base attack bonus you possess. If your base attack bonus is +10 or higher, a fatigued creature that fails its save becomes exhausted instead of fatigued. You may not use this talent in conjunction with (deflect) talents or any other ability that would grant you an attack or combat maneuver due to a missed attack against you.

# Scoundrel Sphere

## Crouching Tiger (stance)

While in this stance, whenever a creature within reach misses you with a melee attack, you may expend an attack of opportunity to perform a dirty trick or steal maneuver against that creature as a free action that can be taken outside of your normal turn. You may not use this talent in conjunction with (deflect) talents or any other ability that would grant you an attack or combat maneuver due to a missed attack against you.

## Vagabond Nick (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you successfully use a dirty trick or steal combat maneuver against a creature, you also deal damage equal to 1/2 your ranks in Sleight of Hand + your practitioner modifier. At +10 base attack bonus, whenever you deal damage with this stance, you can move up to half your speed (this movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity from creatures damaged by this talent).

# Scout Sphere

## Hidden Dragon (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you succeed at a combat maneuver check against a creature, that creature no longer counts as observing you until the end of your turn for the purpose of Stealth checks to hide.

## Study Technique

You may use the *scout* ability to determine the base attack bonus and martial spheres known of a creature within line of sight and effect in addition to the normal information provided by your *scout* ability.

# Shield Sphere

## Snapping Tortoise (stance)

While in this stance, whenever a creature misses an attack against a creature benefiting from your *active defense*, your next successful attack action against that creature before the end of your next turn forces that creature to succeed at a Fortitude save or fall prone even if you are no longer in this stance.

# Sniper Sphere

## Retaliating Fire (stance)

While in this stance, whenever a creature misses you with a ranged attack, you may make a ranged attack against that creature as an attack of opportunity. You may not use this talent in conjunction with (deflect) talents or any other ability that would grant you an attack or combat maneuver due to a missed attack against you.





# Tech Sphere

## Momentum Transfer (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you successfully damage a creature with a CR of at least half your Hit Dice with an attack action, you may add 1 temporary charge to your charge pool as a free action that can be taken even outside of your turn. This charge expires after 1 minute if not used. You may instantly apply these charges to gadgets you have in your possession.

# Trap Sphere

## Fool's Retreat (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you perform a withdraw action, any hostile creature which threatens your starting square with a melee weapon must succeed at a Will save or give chase, attempting to move to a square adjacent to you by the end of their turn.

# Warleader Sphere

## Marauding Monkey (stance)

While in this stance, whenever you successfully damage a creature with an attack action or attack of opportunity, you may choose to extend the duration of one of your active warleader abilities. If you choose an active *shout*, increase the duration by 1 round. If you choose an active *tactic*, the next time you maintain that *tactic* you may do so as a free action which allows you to recenter the *tactic* as normal. You can only extend the duration of an individual *shout* or *tactic* once per round with this talent.

# Wrestling Sphere

## Embracing Bear (stance)

While in this stance and a creature within reach targets you with a melee attack, before the attack roll is made you may allow the attack to automatically strike you (although the roll is still made to determine if the attack threatens a critical hit). After the damage is determined, you may spend an attack of opportunity to attempt to initiate a grapple against that creature as a free action that may be taken even when it is not your turn, if it is in range. You may not use this talent in conjunction with (deflect) talents or any other ability that would grant you an attack or combat maneuver due to a missed attack against you.





## Chapter 4

# Legendary Talents

### Aerial Hang (leap, stance)

**Prerequisite:** Athletics sphere.

While in this stance and standing on solid ground, you may levitate 5 feet off of the ground until the beginning of your next turn as a free action. While levitating this way, you gain a +2 to your CMD against creatures at a lower elevation. In addition, whenever you successfully attack a creature with a melee attack action while levitating this way, you can make a free 5-foot step. At the beginning of your next turn, you descend back to the ground, although you can instantly kick off of the ground to return to your previous space if this stance is still active (this movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity); if you are not 5 feet above solid ground, you fall as normal. For every 5 ranks in Acrobatics you possess, the bonus to your CMD increases by 1 and you can levitate an additional 5 feet from the ground (and can be an additional 5 feet from the ground before treated as though you were falling).

### Death Blossom

**Prerequisites:** Barrage sphere (Cone Of Death), base attack bonus +5.

When using Cone Of Death, you may change the area affected from a cone into a burst centered on you with the same range. You are excluded from the targeting of Death Blossom.

### Draining Despair (demoralization, stance)

**Prerequisite:** Gladiator sphere.

While in this stance, whenever a creature demoralized by you misses you with an attack roll, they must succeed at a Will save or take nonlethal damage equal to your ranks in Intimidate. An individual creature may only take damage from draining despair once per round.

### Final Judgement

**Prerequisites:** Open Hand sphere, base attack bonus +20.

Whenever you kill a creature with an unarmed strike, that creature's soul is trapped inside of your fists for up to 1 week. While it is inside of your fists, you can communicate with it normally and can influence its nature, being able to change its alignment by 1 step two times unless it has an alignment subtype (you could change a creature from chaotic evil to neutral (chaotic to neutral and evil to neutral) or chaotic good (evil to neutral and neutral to good)). An unwilling soul may attempt a Will save to resist each attempt to change its alignment. You can also choose to resurrect that creature with a full-round action as though using the Resurrection Life sphere talent, inflicting 2 temporary negative levels onto the creature in the process. You cannot affect the same creature more than once a year with this talent.

### Force Redirection Technique

**Prerequisite:** Equipment sphere.

You may use your Strength modifier in place of your Dexterity modifier to AC, up to a maximum of 3 + half of your base attack bonus. Characters who gain Climb or Swim as a class skill may instead choose to have the cap increase by +1 for every 2 ranks in the listed class skill they possess. Your bonus to AC is still affected by anything that would limit or remove your Dexterity modifier to AC such as wearing armor or being flat-footed. You may disable or enable Force Redirection Technique as a free action at the start of your turn, once per turn.

### Foresee Conflict (demoralization)

**Prerequisites:** Intimidate 5 ranks, Gladiator sphere (Duel Of Wills).

Whenever a creature fails a save against your Duel Of Wills talent in combat, the GM pre-rolls the attack roll of the first attack that creature would make against you in the current combat and shows you the result of the d20. At 10 ranks in Intimidate and every 5 additional ranks, the GM pre-rolls the next attack the creature would make against you.



## Friction Manipulation (climb, stance)

**Prerequisite:** Athletics sphere.

While in this stance, you may climb surfaces with one or no hands free at no penalty. Additionally, whenever you take damage while climbing in this stance, you gain a competence bonus equal to your base attack bonus to your Climb check to avoid falling.

## Nightmare Stalker (demoralization)

**Prerequisites:** Intimidate 7 ranks, Gladiator sphere.

You may expend martial focus as a move action to teleport to a square adjacent to a creature within line of sight that you have successfully demoralized. This is a supernatural effect.

## Perfect Attunement

**Prerequisites:** Open Hand sphere, base attack bonus +7.

As long as you have martial focus, you gain tremorsense with a range of 15 feet. At base attack bonus +11 and every 4 base attack bonus higher, the range of your tremorsense increases by 15 feet.

## Reflecting Palm

**Prerequisites:** Boxing sphere (Punishing Cross), base attack bonus +10.

When using Punishing Cross, if the creature who struck you fails their Reflex save, they take all the damage you normally would while you take no damage from the attack.

## Rippling Boast

**Prerequisite:** Gladiator sphere.

Whenever you perform a *boast*, you may target a creature within *boast* range with your voice as part of the *boast*, dealing sonic damage to the target equal to your ranks in Intimidate unless they succeed at a Fortitude save.

Additionally, you may raise the volume of your voice at any time to that of a creature one size larger than you are.

## Soul Punch

**Prerequisites:** Open Hand sphere, base attack bonus +10.

When you make an attack action with an unarmed strike, you can expend your martial focus as a free action as a part of the attack. If you do, until the end of your turn, whenever you deal damage with an unarmed strike, your opponent must succeed at a Fortitude save or gain 1 permanent negative level (you can only bestow a number of negative levels to a creature with this talent equal to 1/2 your practitioner modifier). At base attack bonus +20, they must succeed at two Fortitude saves instead of one to resist the permanent negative level.

## Turbo Knockdown

**Prerequisites:** Athletics sphere (Mobile Striker), Lancer sphere (Whirlwind Knockdown), base attack bonus +10.

When you use Mobile Striker and Whirlwind Knockdown in the same round, you may instead target any creatures you threaten with the weapon used for the attack at some point during your movement. Resolve the attack action after completing the movement from Mobile Striker. At base attack bonus +15, halve the attack penalty from Whirlwind Knockdown, rounded up.

## Turbo Sweep

**Prerequisites:** Athletics sphere (Mobile Striker), Guardian sphere (Sweeping Defense), base attack bonus +10.

When you use Mobile Striker and Sweeping Defense in the same round, instead of attacking multiple adjacent targets, you may instead target multiple creatures you threaten with the weapon used for the attack at some point during your movement. Resolve the attack action after completing the movement from Mobile Striker. At base attack bonus +15, you may instead target any number of creatures threatened during movement.

## Windwake (motion)

**Prerequisite:** Athletics sphere.

Whenever you move at least 30 feet, you may whip up a gust of wind. This wind affects every square adjacent to you during this movement and triggers at the end of your movement. Creatures in affected squares that are at least 2 sizes smaller than you must succeed at a Fortitude save or have their movement speed reduced by half for one round. Creatures in affected squares that are at least 3 sizes smaller than you automatically have their movement speed reduced by half for one round and must succeed at a Fortitude save or be pushed 5 feet and knocked prone. Creatures are pushed in a direction relative to your movement when you were adjacent to them, and do not provoke attacks of opportunity for this movement.

For every 5 ranks in a skill associated with your current movement mode you possess, creatures are pushed 5 feet farther and you treat creatures as being 1 size smaller than they actually are for the purpose of being affected by Windwake.



## Chapter 5

# Player Options

## Feats

### Booming Boast (Combat)

**Prerequisites:** Gladiator sphere, Warleader sphere.

**Benefits:** Whenever you are able to perform a *boast*, you may instead perform a *shout* with the same action.

### Cultivate Ki (Combat)

**Prerequisites:** Improved Unarmed Strike, base attack bonus +4, martial focus.

**Benefits:** You gain one ki power from the unchained monk's list of ki powers, treating your base attack bonus as your unchained monk level and using your practitioner modifier in place of your Wisdom modifier when determining the effects of ki powers you gain. Whenever you would gain ki powers that require the unchained monk to be of a specific level or higher before they can be chosen, use your base attack bonus in place of your unchained monk level.

**Special:** If you do not have a ki pool, instead of spending one or more ki points on a ki power, you may instead spend one spell point per ki point required. As long as you have one or more spell points in your spell pool, you are treated as having at least one ki point in your ki pool for the purposes of ki powers.

### Disciplined Casting (Champion, Combat)

**Prerequisites:** Open Hand sphere, casting.

**Benefits:** As long as you have martial focus, whenever you would deliver a magical sphere effect with an unarmed melee touch attack or unarmed strike as part of the casting action, you do not provoke attacks of opportunity for using that magical sphere effect in a threatened area.

### Extend Stance (Combat)

**Prerequisite:** Any (stance) talent.

Whenever you successfully damage a creature with an attack action, you may choose to extend the duration of one of your active (stance) talents by 1 round.

### Extra Ki Power (Combat)

**Prerequisites:** Cultivate Ki or ki power class feature.

**Benefits:** Gain an additional ki power for which you qualify.

**Special:** This feat may be taken a second time starting at 11th level and a third time starting at 17th level.

### Forbidden Consumption Technique (Combat)

**Prerequisite:** Base attack bonus +5.

**Benefits:** Whenever you would expend martial focus, you may take 1 point of nonlethal damage per character level instead of expending your martial focus, to a limit of once per action. This damage cannot be healed by any means other than getting a full night's rest, which removes all associated nonlethal damage. This nonlethal damage cannot be reduced or redirected, and a character incapable of taking nonlethal damage cannot use this feat.

### Harmonious Swordplay (Combat)

**Prerequisites:** Dual Wielding sphere, Improved Unarmed Strike.

**Benefits:** As long as you have martial focus, dual attacks made with a manufactured weapon and an unarmed strike remove the attack penalty from dual attack for one manufactured weapon (as long as it is not being treated as an unarmed strike), and any unarmed strikes add your full Strength bonus to damage rolls instead of half for an off-hand attack.



### Perfect Calm (Combat)

**Prerequisite:** Martial focus.

**Benefit:** You can expend your martial focus as part of any single Will saving throw or concentration check you make. When you expend your martial focus in this manner, your saving throw or concentration check is treated as if you rolled a 13, similarly to taking 10 on a skill check, except that the number you add to your saving throw or concentration check is 13.

**Special:** This feat counts as having Iron Will for the purposes of meeting prerequisites of feats.

### Pouncing Sweep (Combat)

**Prerequisites:** Athletics sphere, Open Hand sphere.

**Benefits:** Whenever you use the sweep ability of the Open Hand sphere, you may move 5 feet immediately before performing the trip using any movement mode associated with Athletics sphere packages you possess. This movement provokes attacks of opportunity as normal. At +6 base attack bonus and every 5 base attack bonus higher, you may add up to +5 feet of movement to the sweep.

### Rolling Serpent (Combat)

**Prerequisites:** Athletics sphere, Boxing sphere (Shoulder Roll).

**Benefits:** As long as you have martial focus, whenever a creature makes a melee attack against you while you are using a movement mode corresponding to a package you possess, you may use shoulder roll against the attack without it counting towards your one usage per round.

### Style Synthesis (Combat)

**Prerequisites:** Any (stance) talent, any style feat.

**Benefits:** Whenever you spend an action to activate a (stance) talent, you may activate a style feat as part of that action.

## Martial Traditions

### Wandering Martial Artist

Wandering martial artists, also known as youxia, are passionate warriors living on the fringes of society. They exhibit masterful control over their bodies, using diverse combat styles to defeat their foes and leave their mark on the world.

**Equipment:** Force Redirection Technique, Unarmored Training

- **Variable:** Wandering martial artists gain either one (discipline) talent of their choice or the Improved Unarmed Strike feat as a bonus feat.
- **Variable:** Wandering martial artists gain either the Athletics sphere or the Gladiator sphere.

## Sphere-Specific Drawbacks

### Gladiator: Focused Menace

You do not gain the Strike Fear demoralization. You gain Duel Of Wills with this drawback.

**Incompatible:** Braggart

### Scout: Veteran Warrior

You do not gain ranks in Stealth from the base sphere and cannot select talents that rely on or improve the Stealth skill. You gain Study Technique with this drawback.

**Incompatible:** Hidden Eyes



# Alternate Racial Traits

## Catfolk: Soft Style Proficiency

Agile catfolk often have a strong sense of balance, which means they can better exploit their opponents' weight against them. They gain Open Hand as a bonus talent at 1st level. This replaces sprinter.

## Drow: Drow Weapon Training

Drow raised in their own culture often learn how to use weapons associated with subterfuge. Drow with this racial trait gain the Equipment sphere choosing Rogue Weapon Training as bonus talent at first level. If they already possess the Equipment sphere, they gain Rogue Weapon Training as a bonus talent instead. This replaces keen senses and weapon familiarity.



## Hobgoblin: Imperious Demeanor

The militaristic culture of hobgoblins encourages strong personalities, and some hobgoblins take this to heart. Hobgoblins with this racial trait gain Gladiator as a bonus talent at 1st level, but suffer a -2 penalty to Wisdom.

## Strix: Aerial Proficiency

The winged strix naturally take to the sky, and some are so enamored with this ability that they become detached from their cultural struggles. Strix with this racial trait gain the Athletics sphere as a bonus talent at 1st level, but must select the (fly) package. This replaces hatred and suspicious.

## Vanara: Treebourne Agility

The monkey-like vanara have an affinity for climbing, and the craftier among them attempt to integrate this skill into their combat training.

Vanara with this racial trait gain the Athletics sphere as a bonus talent at 1st level, but must select the (climb) package. Additionally, they may use their Dexterity modifier for Climb checks instead of their Strength modifier. This replaces nimble.

# Traits

## Scout's Eyes (combat)

You ignore the -5 penalty on Perception checks when using the Scout sphere's *scout* ability.

## Talented Knuckle (combat)

You are treated as though you possessed 2 additional Boxing, Brute, Open Hand, or Wrestling talents when determining the damage of your unarmed strikes. You must have at least one of the above base spheres to benefit from this trait.



## Chapter 6

# Equipment

<i>Exotic Melee Weapon</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Dmg (S)</i>	<i>Dmg (M)</i>	<i>Critical</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Special</i>
Acupuncture Needles (5)	1 gp	-	-	x2	10 ft.	-	P	see text

<i>Exotic Ranged Weapon</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Dmg (S)</i>	<i>Dmg (M)</i>	<i>Critical</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Special</i>
Needle Launcher	400 gp	-	-	x2	40 ft.	2 lbs.	P	see text

## Weapons

### Acupuncture Needles

*These small, slender needles slip through skin without damaging the body, and can be used to deliver poisons or to manipulate physiology with special anatomical training.*

Attacks made with acupuncture needles deal no damage, but can be made as touch attacks. Although they are light weapons, acupuncture needles are treated as ammunition for the purposes of drawing them and crafting masterwork or otherwise special versions of them, and of what happens to them after they are used for an attack.

Magical acupuncture needles grant proficient users a competence bonus to Heal checks equal to twice their enhancement bonus.

A proficient user may poison two acupuncture needles at once with a single dose of poison, although doing so imparts a -2 penalty to the save DCs of the poison.

### Needle Launcher

*This small wooden tube houses spring-loaded chambers to launch needles at foes. It can be attached to the arm and hidden in sleeves, though they still require a free hand to operate the launching mechanism.*

Needle launchers use acupuncture needles as ammunition, and hold 10 needles at once. Attacks made with needle guns deal no damage, but can be made as touch attacks. The needle launcher may be reloaded as a full-round action, can be fired with one hand, and counts as a hand crossbow when determining what abilities and feats affect it.

Magical needle launchers grant proficient users a range increment increase of 10 feet per point of enhancement bonus.

A proficient user can fire a burst of needles to attack all creatures in a line as a full-round action that counts as a special attack action. This line starts from any corner of the wielder's space and extends to the limit of the weapon's range or until it strikes a barrier it cannot penetrate. When using this weapon to attack all creatures in a line, the wielder makes a separate attack roll against each creature in the line. Each creature in the line can be attacked with only one shot from each burst. Each attack roll takes a -2 penalty. Effects that grant concealment, such as fog or smoke, or the *blur*, *invisibility*, or *mirror image* spells, do not affect an automatic weapon's line attack. Roll to confirm each attack roll that threatens a critical hit separately. A single burst with this weapon consumes 10 uses of ammunition.

## Magic Items

### LEFT-HANDED GAUNTLET

**Aura** faint transmutation; **CL** 15th; **Slot** hands; **Price** 5,000 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

This plain looking silver gauntlet is attuned to the first creature to wear it, bonding with them permanently until destroyed. When it is first donned, the creature gains temporary hit points equal to half of their total hit points (if their total hit points increase while wearing it, they gain additional temporary hit points); these hit points are restored at the rate of 1 per hour as long as the wearer has at least 1 temporary hit point from this item. In addition, the wearer takes a penalty on attack and damage rolls equal to 1/2 their base attack bonus





(minimum 1, and if the wearer's base attack bonus increases while wearing this gauntlet, they can choose to increase this penalty); this penalty is only active during combat after rolling initiative. While wearing this gauntlet, the wearer is unable to use any spells or spell-like abilities. Once all temporary hit points are lost, this item breaks, granting the wearer DR X/- for 10 minutes, with X being equal to the penalty they took on attack and damage rolls.

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#### CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

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**Feats** Craft Marvelous Item, Life sphere, Nature sphere (Nature's Carapace (spirit)), **Cost** 2,500 gp



## Chapter 7

# New Rules

### Light Body Technique (optional rule)

For wuxia-themed games where every notable warrior has a basic understanding of certain martial arts, the Light Body Technique optional rule gives the ability for any important character to fight unarmed and perform acrobatic stunts without sacrificing any resources. Anyone with class levels (not NPC classes) gains bonus talents and feats as they gain Hit Dice. If the character would gain a sphere or talent they already possess, they may instead gain another talent from the Athletics sphere as a bonus talent.

- At 1st level, the character gains the Athletics sphere as a bonus talent, selecting either the (leap) or (run) packages. Additionally, the character gains Improved Unarmed Strike as a bonus feat.
- At 3rd level, the character gains the Wall Stunt talent as a bonus talent.
- At 5th level, the character gains the Air Stunt legendary talent as a bonus talent.
- At 7th level and every two levels after, the character gains a bonus talent from the Athletics sphere.

### Martial Contracts (optional rule)

In the world, there are certain great practitioners who wish for more than to just fight. Destined to pass on their legacies to others, these grandmasters seek to see their talents spread to the next generations... or that is what the less benevolent would like people to believe. In truth, grandmasters have a wide variety of reasons for taking on pupils, and yet they continue to be highly sought after individuals for their ability to enhance the abilities of their students to unheard of levels, making legends out of even the most hopeless of individuals.

A creature must have at least 15 Hit Dice and 15 martial talents to become a grandmaster. In addition, they must spend one year in seclusion with only enough food and water to survive, burning incense worth 100,000 gold in total. At the end of this long process, the creature emerges as a grandmaster, gaining a permanent +2 bonus to their practitioner modifier, all the benefits as if they were under the effects of a martial contract (see below) as well as the ability to create martial contracts for a sphere of their choice (this choice cannot be changed later). A grandmaster can maintain a number of contracts equal to their practitioner modifier; if they would attempt to form another, they must choose one of their previous contracts to end.

A grandmaster can make a contract with any creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher that possesses 1 or more class levels who is not a grandmaster. Generally, grandmasters will require a tribute in order to take on a student, varying between individuals. Some require potential students to complete a trial to prove worthiness, while others wish for monetary reparations (typically 100 gp for the first benefit, 1,000 gp for the second, 10,000 gp for the third, and 100,000 gp for the fourth). Particularly evil ones will request sacrifice of sapient creatures in their name.

A student or grandmaster can choose to end their contract at any time. If a student ends their contract, they lose all benefits of it, although any payment or service to their grandmaster is forfeit. If a grandmaster ends their contract, the student retains any benefits of it, but the grandmaster keeps any payment or service granted. A student who is still receiving the benefits of a martial contract ended by their grandmaster must forsake all benefits of it in order to enter into a new martial contract, and cannot gain new benefits from an ended martial contract.



Yet the benefits of these contracts are enough that those who seek them deem the risk worth it.

- At 1st level, the student gains the grandmaster's chosen sphere; if they already possess it, they gain a talent of their choice from that sphere.
- At 5th level, the student gains the 3rd level ability of the conscript's sphere specialization class feature for their grandmaster's chosen sphere (if they already possess it, they gain an additional talent from the sphere).
- At 10th level, the student gains the 8th level ability of the conscript's sphere specialization class feature for their grandmaster's chosen sphere (if they already possess it, they gain an additional talent from the sphere).
- At 15th level, the student gains an additional talent from their grandmaster's chosen sphere and gains an additional focus (if they possess the Great Focus feat, they gain a third focus), although it can only be used with martial talents from the grandmaster's chosen sphere.

A martial contract can only be broken by the agreement of those involved (which typically involves any payment being returned and any abilities gained from it being forfeited), the death of the student, or by way of challenge. When a creature reaches its 15th character level, they gain the ability to break their martial contract while retaining its benefits by challenging their master to combat on the terms of their grandmaster. This can be to the death, unconsciousness, or any other variance with other terms such as no weapons, magic, or equipment. As long as the match is agreed upon by both participants, the results stand. If the student is victorious, they immediately become a grandmaster without the need for incense or a year of seclusion.

Due to this possibility, many grandmasters demand incredible service before their student gains this benefit in hopes of not having the risk of being defeated. More evil grandmasters even attempt to have their students killed, hoping to take their life force and deeds for themselves. Battles against grandmasters and their machinations can make great inclusions in campaigns, allowing for practitioners to take on new relevance in the setting. Such mighty figures can be adversaries or legendary hermits. Take some time to help players understand the importance of such characters in the setting. If the setting does not have characters who typically reach 15th level, consider lowering the level of grandmasters to one which is appropriate, although avoid lowering the level at which the benefits are gained, as giving too many can be unbalancing. Grandmasters should embody the sphere in which they specialize, and becoming a grandmaster may even cause a person's body to change into a form which better suits their mastery of their chosen sphere. All in all, meeting a grandmaster should be an incredible event from a player's standpoint, so make sure these moments are kept special.

Because of how centralizing an idea like this can be, it is preferred if more than one player has a grandmaster. It also helps the balance of the game if everyone has the granted benefits, keeping anyone from becoming more powerful than the rest of the party. Grandmasters can be a good way to introduce people into the *Spheres of Might* system, allowing them to gain a small taste of what is available without having to dedicate resources to it.



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# The Youxia's Handbook

The Youxia's Handbook is a collection of archetypes, Spheres of Might talents, and optional rules for any kind of game using Spheres of Power or Spheres of Might. The primary focus of the book is to introduce new options for martially-focused characters, to introduce (stance) talents to every single martial sphere, and bring more diverse options to the Athletics, Gladiator, and Open Hand spheres.

This book focuses on the wūxiá genre of Chinese fantasy and their characters, known as yóuxiá. Wuxia as a genre stretches back thousands of years through many different media, from epic novels like Romance of the Three Kingdoms to films like Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon to even cartoons like Avatar: The Last Airbender. Wuxia stories often feature high-flying acrobatics, stunning displays of martial arts prowess, and dramatic heroes with intense personalities. The Youxia's Handbook can help capture the feel of these stories with new rules and options while also presenting useful content for any style of game using spheres content. It is my hope that this handbook inspires players who aren't familiar with wuxia to explore the genre, while providing fans of wuxia the tools to add wuxia influence to their games.

For use with the Spheres of Power and Spheres of Might systems.