

BLADE OILS

Some warriors like to plan ahead, arming themselves for battle against specific types of enemies. Blade oils allow a combatant to prepare their weapon to destroy a certain category of foe. Blade oils consist of a two part alchemical formulation:

One is rubbed into the weapon over the course of a short or long rest. Forcing the warrior to decide ahead of time what they will need.

The other, as a Bonus Action, is poured over the weapon during battle to catalyse the reaction and activate the oil.

INGREDIENTS

Blade Oils are defined by their ingredients, anyone with a pot can mix an oil if they know how. Exact ingredients can be determined by the DM ahead of time or left to the player creativity.

BINDING AGENT

The binding agent ties the oil together, allowing it to bond with the surface of a blade, bludgeon or arrow-heads. The binding agent is the first thing you can use to control the availability of oils in your campaign. They can be fairly ubiquitous, if you want your players to have constant access to blade oils. Or if you prefer the oils be something more carefully considered, they can be a rare or costly material.

Examples of potential binding agents include Adhesives, Thick Oils, Vines and Roots

HONING AGENT

The honing agent determines the creature type to which the oil applies its effect. It also determines the potency of the oil's effect. The honing agent is either purchased or harvested from a defeated creature.

The applicable creature types for oils are Aberration, Beast, Celestial, Construct, Dragon, Elemental, Fey, Fiend, Giant, Monstrosity, Ooze, Plant, and Undead. When a weapon with a catalysed blade oil hits an enemy of the chosen type, it deals bonus damage according to its potency.

(Humanoid is excluded for balance purposes, but could be included if the DM wants to tweak the cost or include societal implication for using it.)

The potency of a blade oil is determined by the CR of the creature from which the Honing Agent was harvested.

POTENCY

CR	Damage Bonus
1 or less	1d4
2 - 4	1d6
5-7	2d4
8+	2d6

If blade oil is used against a creature of precisely the same type as the honing agent was harvested, the damage bonus is increased by one die of the appropriate size. *(For example, oil made with Vampire dust would deal 3d6 damage to vampires, and 2d6 damage to other undead.)*

PRIMING AGENT

The priming agent gives the oil its power and is the source of the extra damage. The choice of priming agent allows the player to choose the damage type of their oil. This is another area where the DM can control the effectiveness of oils to suit their campaign. The basic elemental damages are generally solid bets, but allowing easy access to force, psychic or radiant damage might be worth avoiding.

It is worth considering that some combinations of damage type and creature type could synergise well. For instance, a blade oil honed to plant creatures that deals fire damage is likely to be extremely effective.

You might consider having player characters learn about priming agents through experimentation, and restricting the bonus damage to match the weapon type until they figure it out. You can always restrict access to damage types by specifying specific, rare ingredients and limiting your players' access to them.

CATALYSING AGENT

This is where I recommend adding in an element of skill checks. When a character makes themselves a blade oil, allow them to simply gather and combine the ingredients without making a check. It would feel bad to harvest parts only to ruin them in the creation process.

When the character makes the catalyst however, ask for an ability check. Using your choice of ability score and proficiency in Alchemist Supplies, Herbalism Kit, Brewing Supplies, anything that makes sense. Have this check determine the duration that the catalyst activates an oil for.

DURATION

Score	Damage Bonus
1-5	1 Round
6-10	2 Rounds
11-20	1 Minute
21+	1 Hour

If you don't want them to keep making the check over and over again, apply a cost here in the form of time, gold or both.

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