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MARTIAL ARTIST (Strength)

MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOLS

Martial artists organize in schools, usually focused on a single weapon style and attendant life philosophy/religion. These schools are led by a master martial artist (usually 9th level or better if the master is the founder, but of any level if the leader is of a subsequent generation) and can have anywhere from one to hundreds of students. Many schools also operate with monks and clerics of similar philosophies. Some schools are hidden in distant wilderness, others are found right downtown in large cities. Most martial arts schools spring up in regions where weapon use is restricted or has been historically, as development of the body as a weapon is often a reaction to the limitations on weapons.

Martial arts schools have a history of being in conflict, as much over proving to each other that their own weapons styles are superior as any other overwhelming aspect of their philosophy. Schools are also often politically active, as many schools are havens for dissidents who are not desirous of the complete devotion required for the monastic lifestyle (though many schools espouse a very ascetic lifestyle).

Martial artists can also be found among thieves guilds, where fallen and exiled martial artists train others in their arts for money and fame. Some schools are little more than lightly-disguised thieves' guilds!

Schools often have unusual descriptive names reflective of their style, such as Drunken Monkey School, Soaring Crane Brotherhood, or Pouncing Tiger School. Others are named after colors, philosophies, or even the whims of the founder, such as Golden Blade Brotherhood, Silver Spear Sisterhood, The Invisible Alliance, or Brother Lou's Posse.

Most schools have additional special abilities that their members can gain, either by expending experience points or spending time and money in training. Most of these special abilities are based on the properties of the school's focus weapon. Several suggested examples are included below, along with several new weapons traditionally associated with martial arts. Consult your Judge to find out what schools and special abilities might be available for you to choose from.

SPECIAL: Martial artists do not normally wear armor, as it distracts them from complete concentration on the

practice of their art. A martial artist may wear armor if the occasion demands, but the character suffers several penalties when using class abilities and wearing armor. The martial artist gains no benefit from his unarmored defense ability; his base AC is reduced to 10, and he gains no bonus to his AC from any wisdom bonus. Additionally, any use of hide, move silently, and sixth sense suffers a -1 penalty for each point of armor class the armor confers. Helmets and shields each cause the martial artist to suffer an additional -1 penalty to these abilities. All penalties are cumulative. For example, a martial artist wearing chainmail, which confers a 15 armor class, suffers a -5 penalty. The same martial artist using a large shield suffers a total -6 penalty, and if the same martial artist also wore a great helm, the total penalty would be -7. These penalties apply even if the armor is magical.

HIDE (Dexterity): Martial artists use this ability to conceal themselves from others. A successful check means that the martial artist is hidden so well as to be almost invisible. The martial artist can move up to one-half normal speed and remain hidden. Hide checks suffer no penalty in this circumstance. At more than one-half and up to full speed, the character suffers a -5 penalty to the check to remain hidden. It's practically impossible (-20 penalty) to hide while running or charging.

If the character is being observed, even casually, they cannot hide. If observers are momentarily distracted, though, the character can attempt to hide. While the observer averts its attention from the character, the character can attempt to get to a hiding place. This check, however, is at a -10 penalty because the character has to move quickly to the hiding place. A martial artist cannot hide if there is nothing to hide behind or conceal oneself with. Deep shadows can count as concealment at the Judge's discretion.

Martial artists cannot hide and move silently at the same time until they reach 3rd level. At this level and beyond, a martial artist can attempt both but must make a successful hide and move silently check at -5. In this case, movement is reduced to one quarter the normal movement rate.

MOVE SILENTLY (Dexterity): This ability allows a martial artist to move so silently that others cannot hear the movement. The martial artist can use this ability both indoors and outdoors. A martial artist can move up to one-half the character's normal

speed at no penalty. At more than one-half and up to the character's full speed, the character suffers a -5 penalty. It's practically impossible (-20 penalty) to move silently while running or charging. To move silently and hide, see the hide ability.

SIXTH SENSE (Wisdom): A martial artist has a sixth sense that enables him to detect danger. Any time the martial artist is surprised, or is ambushed, especially through use of the rogue or assassin's stealth ability, through the use of magic such as *invisibility*, or through a trap, mechanical or otherwise, the martial artist may make a sixth sense check. The CL is equal to the level or hit dice of the attacking being (with modifiers as the Judge might require). If the sixth sense roll succeeds, the surprise is negated for the martial artist (but not his allies).

UNARMED ATTACK: A martial artist specializes in unarmed, hand-to-hand combat. Martial artists gain attacks and improve in unarmed combat damage as shown on the Martial Artist Special Abilities table. The martial artist may choose whether the attacks inflict normal damage or subdual damage.

The martial artist also gains the ability to make a special off-hand attack at 6th level. When martial artists gain the extra off-hand attack, they do not incur penalties to their 'to hit' die rolls provided both attacks are unarmed attacks or the weapon or weapons used are the martial artist's focus weapon. A martial artist fighting with a one-handed weapon other than his focus weapon can make an unarmed attack as an off-hand attack, but suffers the standard penalties for two-weapon fighting. Likewise, a martial artist wielding a weapon in his off-hand gets an extra attack with that weapon, but suffers the usual penalties for two-weapon fighting if the weapon is not his focus weapon.

UNARMORED DEFENSE: A martial artist knows how to use his or her body for defense, and gains an armor class bonus that increases with experience as indicated on the Martial Artist Special Abilities table. This armor class is modified by dexterity as normal, and is also modified positively by any wisdom bonus the martial artist might possess. [NOTE: It is suggested by this author that you add this wisdom-based modifier to the armor class of the monk as well.]

WEAPON FOCUS: A martial artist focuses his studies on a single weapon, melee or missile, spiritually melding with that weapon such that it becomes an extension of

his body and soul. With this weapon the martial artist gains a bonus to hit and to damage as outlined on the Martial Artist Special Abilities table. At 3rd level and every three levels thereafter, the martial artist can pick one additional weapon in which to gain proficiency (though these weapons **never** count as a focus weapon). When using any other weapon the martial artist suffers the standard penalty to hit for non-proficiency.

The martial artist can also use his focus weapon in combination with an unarmed attack to perform a "special style strike." A foe successfully struck by the martial artist's special style strike suffers both normal weapon damage and the martial artist's unarmed attack damage, plus double his normal strength bonus (if applicable). The martial artist can use this ability once per round, and no more than once per day per level. The martial artist must declare its use before making an attack roll, and the attack must be with the martial artist's focus weapon. A missed attack roll ruins the attempt and counts against the martial artist's daily limit.

STUNNING ATTACK: A martial artist has the ability to make a stunning attack. A foe successfully struck by the martial artist's stunning attack must make a constitution saving throw or be stunned and unable to act for 1d4 rounds. Those struck by a stunning attack also suffer normal unarmed attack damage, i.e., subdual damage (even if the martial artist is using his focus weapon). The martial artist can use this ability once per round, and no more than once per day per level. The martial artist must declare its use before making an attack roll, and the attack must be with an unarmed attack or the martial artist's focus weapon. A missed attack roll ruins the attempt and counts against the martial artist's daily limit.

A martial artist can combine a stunning attack with a special style strike; if successful, the foe must make his constitution save against stun against double the normal CL, and suffers subdual damage for the weapon, the unarmed strike, and double normal strength bonus.

KI STRIKE: At 3rd level, a martial artist's unarmed attack and focus weapon attack is empowered with ki. This attack can deal damage to a creature as if from a +1 magic weapon. This ability improves as the martial artist rises in levels as follows: +2 at 6th, +3 at 9th, +4 at 14th and +5 at 19th. The attack does not gain any bonus to hit or to damage; the ability merely enables the martial artist to hit the creature.

This ability also enables the martial artist to turn a disarm attack into a weapon-breaking attack at the cost of one daily stunning attack; if the attack is successful, the martial artist destroys the opponent's weapon. Magical weapons are immune to this attack, unless the martial artists' ki strike is equal to the weapon's bonus; in such cases, the wielder of the target weapon must make a strength saving throw, with a bonus equal to the bonus of the weapon, or the magical weapon is shattered.

BATTLE MIND: At 5th level the mere presence of a martial artist in battle can alter the mood of allies and change the tide of combat. This gives the martial artist the ability to inspire companions and followers. Any person friendly to a martial artist's immediate endeavor gains a bonus to hit equal to the martial artist's charisma bonus (minimum +1). This ability can be used once per day and lasts a number of rounds equal to the martial artist's level. Fellow martial artists of the same school add this bonus to damage as well as to hit. The number of persons that are affected increases as the martial artist gains levels. At 5th level, the martial artist can affect up to 12 creatures. The ability affects up to 25 creatures at 7th level, up to 50 creatures at 9th level, up to 100 creatures at 11th level, up to 250 creatures at 13th level, up to 500 creatures at 16th level and 1,000 creatures at 20th level.

FIST OF FURY: At 9th level, the martial artist causes fear and dread in the ranks of foes and enemy forces. Enemies to the martial artist's immediate endeavor suffer a penalty of -4 to charisma checks. In addition, the affected foes must successfully save versus fear at a -4 penalty or suffer a -1 penalty to hit, martial artists of an enemy/opposition school additionally suffer a -1 penalty to damage. This ability can be used once per day and lasts a number of rounds equal to the martial artist's level. The number of creatures that can be affected increases as the martial artist gains levels. At 9th level, the knight can affect up to 25 creatures. The ability affects up to 50 creatures at 11th level, up to 100 creatures at 13th level, up to 250 creatures at 16th level and 500 creatures at 20th level.

MARTIAL ARTIST SPECIAL ABILITIES

Level	Unarmored Armor Class	Primary Unarmed Attack	Secondary Unarmed Attack	Focus Weapon Bonus
1	10	1d4	—	+2
2	11	1d6	—	+2
3	11	1d6	—	+2
4	12	1d6	—	+2
5	12	1d8	—	+2
6	13	1d8	1d4	+3
7	13	1d8	1d4	+3
8	13	1d8	1d4	+3
9	14	1d10	1d6	+3
10	14	1d10	1d6	+3
11	14	1d10	1d6	+4
12	15	1d10	1d6	+4
13	15	1d10	1d6	+4
14	15	2d6	1d8	+4
15	16	2d6	1d8	+4
16	16	2d6	1d8	+5
17	16	2d6	1d8	+5
18	17	2d6	1d8	+5
19	17	2d6	1d8	+5
20	17	2d8	1d10	+5

PRIME ATTRIBUTE: Strength

HIT DIE: d10

ALIGNMENT: Any

WEAPONS: See Weapon Specialization, above

ARMOR: None

ABILITIES: Hide, move silently, sixth sense, unarmed attack, unarmored defense, weapon focus, stunning attack, ki strike, battle mind, fist of fury

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
1	d10	+0	0
2	d10	+1	2,001
3	d10	+2	4,001
4	d10	+3	8,001
5	d10	+4	16,251
6	d10	+5	32,501
7	d10	+6	65,001
8	d10	+7	130,001
9	d10	+8	275,001
10	d10	+9	550,001
11	+4 HP	+10	825,001
12	+4 HP	+11	1,100,001
+1			+275,000

MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS

While martial artists can focus in the use of any weapon, the weapons listed herein are those most commonly used. The martial arts styles and schools all vary depending on the style and requirements of the Judge's campaign setting. The listed special abilities available to specially-trained martial artists are merely suggestions; your Judge will determine if any such abilities are actually available, and if and how your martial artist can acquire them.

Note: Many of the abilities below include disarming or entangling opponents; in the hands of martial arts experts with the requisite training, it is suggested that such special attacks are *in addition to* normal attacks, rather than instead of the normal attacks.

It is also suggested that the use of most special abilities the Judge develops require the use of a daily special style strike and/or a stunning attack.

Arrow/Bolt: Some martial artists focus on use of the bow, more rarely, crossbow. A martial artist can still use his abilities with these ranged weapons. Special abilities tend to focus on trick shots, such as knocking a weapon out of the hands of the target or pinning a target to a wall using an arrow or bolt. Some schools that focus on bows have developed special abilities with shooting multiple arrows at once, shooting arrows rapidly in succession, or even rebounding arrows off obstructions to strike a specific target.

Chakram: This flat, hooped throwing disk ranges from six inches to one foot in diameter, with a sharp metal edge. Most of the time, it is a one-shot weapon, thrown once and retrieved after battle. Martial artists who focus in this weapon, however, have developed special abilities, such as enabling it to return after a successful strike and catching it (a very dangerous action), bouncing the chakram off of obstructions, or even causing it to spin and twist in midair as though controlled by thought.

Chigiriki: This is a spear with a length of weighted chain on the end. It is used as both a spear and a short-range entangling weapon. Unlike most spears, the chigiriki cannot be thrown unless the chain is detached, and even then it only has a base range of 10 ft. due to its lack of proper balance.

Flails: Both the heavy and light flails, with special training, can be used to negate the AC bonus of a shield, and can even be used to capture and tear a shield away from a target.

Flatchet: This weapon is positively devastating in the hands of an expert martial artist. The hooked end of the slicing blade can be used to trip and disarm opponents, while the chopping axe-blade can be flipped to provide a devastating subdual attack with the flat of the blade. The serrated edge, with the right training, can easily destroy hafted weapons, while the filed edge can be used for grinding attacks that cause permanent charisma damage. The spiked end can be used to impale opponents and even staple them to the wall, while the corkscrew can deliver a gut-wrenching twist attack. Master martial artists can use the magnifying glass creatively to make fire attacks, and the legendary uses masters put to the bottle opener, toothpick, and tweezers are, well, *legendary*.

Fork, Military: Special training with a military fork enables the wielder to capture, hold, and possibly even break an enemy's blade, or capture and hold an enemy's arm, leg, or even neck.

Glaive: Special training in use of a glaive enables the wielder to attack two adjacent opponents at once, bouncing the flat of the blade off one and onto the other (though this attack deals only subdual damage). Experts with the glaive can also use it to keep enemies with shorter weapons at bay.

Glaive-Guisarme: The glaive-guisarme combines all the benefits of a glaive and a guisarme.

Guisarme: This long spear with a hook can be used to dismount horsemen and trip infantry; the long spear tip is also excellent for impaling targets and holding them in place.

Hammer, War: Experts with the war hammer are able to use it to knock opponents back or down, controlling their movement. Some schools have also developed stunning attacks above and beyond the usual stunning attack abilities, or developed armor-crushing styles that eliminate the armor benefits from metal-armored opponents.

Hook Sword: Martial artists use this hooked blade to capture and hold opponents and their weapons; some schools have also developed tripping attacks with the hook, dangerous as it is a relatively short weapon.

Jitte: This small poniard has a single tine upon the side, used as much for special stunning attacks and for hooking and holding opponents as for capturing, holding, and disarming blades. Some schools develop special throwing attacks, granting the weapon a base range of 5 ft.

Katana: This single-bladed sword is regarded by

many as the ultimate development in blade technology. Folded over many times for the finest, sharpest, hardest edge, katana special abilities enable the wielder to slice opponent's weapons and armor to bits, cause extensive bleeding, or even remove limbs with precise strikes. Some schools are trained to dual-wield a katana with a wakizashi; these samurai schools often forgo use of their stealth skills and unarmored defenses in favor of heavy armors.

Knife: See *shuriken*, below, for maneuvers possible with a throwing knife.

Kusarigama: This weapon is a sickle with a small chain attached to the end of the handle. Martial artists have developed numerous special maneuvers with both weapons, primarily entangling and disarming attacks.

Main Gauche: This weapon was designed to be as much a defensive item as a weapon, and even non-martial artists can use it in this way. Martial artists with special training in the main gauche can use it to capture, hold, and break opponent's blades, or can make it dance in their hands like magic, applying the whole of their focus bonus to their AC, in addition to the normal AC bonus of the weapon.

Man Catcher: Many warriors laugh at martial artists who focus on the use of the man catcher; they do not laugh once they see the advanced use of this weapon. So skilled are masters of this weapon they can turn and use the trapped enemy as a weapon against other opponents, switching places without warning such that enemies attacks fall upon their ally, or maneuvering the trapped enemy in such a way that his own attacks fall upon his own allies!

Manriki-Gusari: This is a long length of chain, five to 10 feet in length, with weights at both ends. Sometimes the weights are sharp, like a small blade, other times they are dull. Experts with this weapon can make it dance like it were alive, striking multiple opponents with a single attack, entangling opponents and their weapons, tripping opponents and their steeds, or even grabbing and pulling to the wielder weapons and items held by the opponent. The longer examples of these weapons can be used as dual-wield weapons or single, at the whim of the wielder.

Maul: See *war hammer*, above.

Nine Ring Broad Sword: This variant of the classic dao blade has nine rings on the flat side of the blade. Special maneuvers with this fantastic blade include standard weapon capture, hold, and breaking;

frightening attacks that demoralize the opponent; special benefits against having one's own blade be captured, disarmed, or broken; and when facing opponents armed with spears, a man-catcher effect that allows the sword wielder to not only capture and hold the spear, but move the spear-wielder like a rag-doll until he successfully drops the spear. **Note:** The nine ring broad sword is actually a two-handed weapon!

Nunchaku: Perhaps the most definitive martial arts weapon, these two simple sticks connected by a short string or chain extend the reach of the wielder and can transform him into a whirling dervish of death. Experts in their use can be trained to suffer no penalty at attacking opponents to the sides and rear; can use them to disarm opponents; learn special additional stunning maneuvers; and can even learn the infamous Dragon Fury Attack, in which all adjacent opponents are attacked in a single around!

Partisan/Ranseur: These weapons are excellent for parrying, capturing, and disarming enemy weapons. Some schools create double-bladed weapons of this sort, the most famous being the *lajatang*, which dispenses with the central blade entirely in favor of crescent-shaped blades.

Sai: Essentially a poniard with two small tangs on either side, this is a parrying weapon, much like the main gauche. However, experts are able to use these as throwing weapons, with a base range of 10 ft. Many experts dual-wield these weapons.

Shuriken: Throwing stars are an archetypal martial arts weapon; however, few schools specialize in their use. Those that do develop abilities whereby the throwing star can be made to bounce off obstructions, twist and spin in midair, or even hover while awaiting a victim to walk into it! Also, most specialists are able to throw multiple stars as a single attack, at a single or multiple opponents. These weapons are favored by schools associated with thieves' and assassins' guilds.

Sickle: This simple farmer's tool is a terrible weapon in the hands of a martial arts expert.

Sleeve Tangler: Also known as a *sodegarami*, this variant of the man catcher operates in much the same fashion, though it is designed to catch and hold onto clothing rather than the body of the target itself.

Spear: The simple spear is a very popular weapon among martial artists, as it is easy to make and has many uses. It can be used to trip opponents, impale them, keep them at

bay, attack multiple opponents at once, knock horsemen off their steed, trip horses, perform sweeping attacks, pole vault, and can be used as a dual-wield weapon, with one end the spear and the other acting as a staff (some schools develop a double-ended spear with a sharp spear head at each end) It has additional uses as a thrown weapon, with the most infamous attack the Pinwheel Spear Throw, in which the spear is spun like a pinwheel and released down a narrow corridor, striking everyone in range with either a slashing spear attack or a blunt staff attack.

Staff: The staff is as useful as the simple spear, and is preferable by those schools whose philosophy prefers a non-bladed weapon. In addition to the many special maneuvers (the same essentially as those available with a spear), the staff can easily be used to hide other weapons, such as a spear point in one end and a chain in the other. Some staffs are designed to break down into two, three, or more sectioned flails; all useable under the same training as the base staff.

Tessen: The tessen is a war fan, with spokes made of sharp iron or steel. It originally was designed for use as a secondary weapon, but some schools focus on it as a primary weapon (especially those associated with rogues and assassins). The points of the spokes can be used as a cutting weapon, while the folded fan makes an excellent small club. In either form,

with special training, it can be used in defense, with the open fan able to capture, hold, and even shatter blades. The silk fan itself can also be used to block arrows and throwing stars.

Tonfa: These specialized clubs can, in the hands of an expert, be used in defense as well as for attack.

Wakizashi: This weapon is to the short sword as the katana is to the long sword.

Whip: See manriki-gusari, above. Recall however that whips are far less resilient than chains, and can easily be cut or snapped by strong opponents.

NEW MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS CHART

WEAPON	COST	DMG	RNG	WGT	EV
Chakram	6 gp	1d8	10 ft.	2 lbs.	3
Chigiriki	6 gp	1d6		6 lbs.	3
Jitte	2 gp	1d4		1 lb.	1
Katana	60 gp	2d6		6 lbs.	3
Kusarigama	3 gp	1d6		3 lbs.	2
Manriki-Gusari	5 sp	1d6		3 lbs.	2
Nunchaku	1 gp	1d6		3 lbs.	2
Sai	5 gp	1d6		2 lbs.	1
Tessen	3 gp	1d4		3 lbs.	1
Shuriken	5 sp	1d4	10 ft.	0.1 lb.	1/10
Tonfa	3 sp	1d6		2 lbs.	2
Wakizashi	40 gp	2d4		4 lbs.	2