

First Edition Duellist



The Duellist Character Class for OSR Campaigns

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What is a Duellist?

The duellist is a swift and dexterous warrior specialised in blade weapons. Unlike the fighter, the duellist does not rely on heavy armour but brings her footwork and parrying skills to perfection. Duellists are individualists and like to challenge worthy opponents to single combat and, while having a sense of honour, are often for hire.

Class Basics

Attribute Requirements	STR 9 CON 9, DEX 15, INT 10
Prime Requisite	DEX
Races	Human, Half-Elf
Hit Die	d12 (max 10)
Alignment	Any Non-Lawful
Weapons	Dagger, scimitar, quarterstaff, bastard sword, broad sword, long sword, short sword
Armour	None heavier than leather
Attack Progression	As Fighter
Saving Throws	As Fighter
Weapons Proficiencies	3+1 every 3 levels
Non-Proficiency Penalty	-2
Weapon Specialisation	N/A

Attribute Requirements

Becoming a duellist requires wit and swiftness above anything else. A duellist has to have a Strength and Constitution score of at least 9, an Intelligence score of no less than 10 and a Dexterity score of at least 15. Duellists profit from high Constitution like fighters do and are eligible for exceptional Strength.

Prime Requisite

A duellist's prime requisite is Dexterity. Duellists with a Dexterity of 17 or higher receive a 10% XP bonus. To reach level 9, a duellist requires a Dexterity of 17. To reach level 10 and above, a Dexterity 18 is required.

Races

Of all races, only humans and half-elves are suitable for a life as duellist.

Hit Die

The duellist uses the d12 to determine her hit points and can gain a maximum of ten hit dice at level 10. Thereafter, a duellist gains an additional two hit points per level.

Alignment

Duellists are individualists and have little use for rules made up by others. Thus, they cannot be Lawful. However, they have no limits with regard to good and evil.

Weapons and Armour

Heavy armour only hinders a duellist - she wear nothing heavier than leather armour. Duellists use all kinds

of swords except for two-handed swords. They also use quarterstaves, daggers, scimitars as well as similar weapons such as the cutlass or the sabre. Duellists use neither poison nor flaming oil.

Attack Progression

Duellists have the same attack progression as fighters (see **Table 3**).

Saving Throws

Duellists have the same saving throw progression as fighters (see **Table 4**). They gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against fear.

Weapon Proficiencies

A duellist starts with three weapon proficiency slots and gains an additional one every three levels. Duellists are not eligible for weapon specialisation. If they use a weapon they are not proficient in, they suffer a -2 penalty to their attack roll.

Table 1: Duellist Experience Progression

Level	XP	Hit Dice	Title
1	0	1	Apprentice
2	2,000	2	Swordsman
3	4,000	3	Fioretto
4	8,000	4	Schermitore
5	16,000	5	Escrimeur
6	32,000	6	Fencer
7	64,000	7	Expert Fencer
8	128,000	8	Master Fencer
9	256,000	9	Swashbuckler
10	512,000	10	Duellist
11	1,000,000	10+2	Master Duellist
12	1,500,000	10+4	Master Duellist
13	2,000,000	10+6	Master Duellist
14	2,500,000	10+8	Master Duellist
15	3,000,000	10+10	Grande Épéiste

Experience Progression

With each new level, a duellist acquires a new title (see **Table 1**). Unlike assassins, druids and monks, duellists are not limited in the number of holder of a certain title, as they have no umbrella organisation. To reach level 9, a duellist has to have a Dexterity score of at least 17. To reach level 10 or a higher level, a score of 18 is required. The maximum level a duellist can reach is level 15. In a city or town, 5% of all fighters will be duellists.

Special Abilities

Danger Sense

Duellists are only surprised on a roll of 1 on a d6. However, they often find it to be dishonourable to surprise a single opponent and will openly challenge her to a duel instead.

Hitwoman

Most duellists can be hired as killers, just like assassins. However, they tend to be less subtle and often prefer to challenge the target to fight instead of using poison or slit their victim's throat in their sleep. The higher the level of the duellist, the more money she will demand, just like an assassin would. (see **Table 5**). The duellist also receives experience points equal to the money he was paid, but only if the fight was an open one and the opponent had a more levels or a number of hit dice equal to or greater than those of the duellist. Open fights do not have to be public, but they require the duellist to give the opponent time to ready himself. The game master judges whether or not a fight counts as an open one and the duellist is entitled her XP bonus.

Swiftness

Duellists are extremely nimble and make up for their inability to fight in heavy armour by evading attacks entirely. For every three levels, a duellist's armour class improves by one point (see **Table 2**).

Table 2: Duellist Special Abilities

Level	AC Bonus	Expertise Bonus	Expertise Bonus vs. Same Weapon
1 - 3	-1	+1	+1
4 - 6	-2	+1	+2
7 - 9	-3	+2	+3
10 - 12	-4	+2	+4
13 - 15	-5	+3	+5

Table 3: Duellist Attack Progression

Level	-10	-9	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	25	24	23	22	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10
2	24	23	22	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9
3	23	22	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8
4	22	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7
5	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
6	20	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
7	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
8	20	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
9	20	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
10	20	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
11	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
12	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1
13	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2
14	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3
15	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4
16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
17	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6
18	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7
19	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
20+	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9

Table 4: Duellist Saving Throw Progression

Level	Rod, Staff, Wand	Breath Weapon	Death, Paralysis, Poison	Petrification, Polymorph	Spell
1 - 2	16	17	14	15	17
3 - 4	15	16	13	14	16
5 - 6	13	13	11	12	14
7 - 8	12	12	10	11	13
9 - 10	10	9	8	9	11
11 - 12	9	8	7	8	10
13 - 14	7	5	5	6	8
15 - 16	6	4	4	5	7
17 - 18	5	4	3	4	6
19+	4	3	2	3	5

Table 5: Minimum Duellist Assassination Fee (GP)

Level	Level of the Victim							
	0	1 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16+
1	50	100	150	200	250	-	-	-
2	60	20	175	250	300	350	-	-
3	75	150	225	300	400	500	-	-
4	100	200	300	450	600	750	1,000	-
5	150	300	450	700	900	1,100	1,300	1,500
6	250	500	750	1,000	1,300	1,600	2,000	2,500
7	400	800	1,200	1,600	2,000	2,500	3,500	4,500
8	600	1,200	1,800	2,400	3,000	3,750	5,000	7,500
9	850	1,700	2,600	3,500	4,400	6,000	7,500	10,000
10	1,200	2,400	3,600	4,800	6,000	8,000	10,000	15,000
11	1,700	3,500	5,100	7,000	9,000	12,000	15,000	20,000
12	2,500	5,000	7,500	10,000	13,000	17,500	20,000	25,000
13	3,500	7,000	11,000	15,000	19,000	25,000	32,500	40,000
14	5,000	10,000	15,000	20,000	27,500	35,000	45,000	60,000
15	10,000	20,000	35,000	50,000	75,000	100,000	150,000	250,000

Combat Expertise

A duellist cannot specialise in weapons, but he receives her expertise bonus to attack and damage rolls when fighting an opponent with a hand-held mêlée weapons (see **Table 2**). This bonus is even greater if the opponent has the same weapon as the duellist. While the duellist gains new levels, her expertise bonus increases as well.

Fighting Spirit

When a duellist fights humanoids sizes S or M in mêlée combat, she and her allies gain a 10% morale bonus. However, allies only receive this bonus when they are aware that they are fighting alongside a duellist.

Master Parry

Once per fight, when a duellist is hit by an attack of a weapon-bearing opponent in mêlée combat that could take her to nought hit points or below (any damage bonuses of the opponent included), she is permitted a saving throw vs. death. If the save is made, the duellist takes no damage. If the same thing happens again during the same fight, but not during the same mêlée round, a second save halves the damage she would take and leaves her at least one hit point. If she was healed at one point between the first and the second saving throw, the second saving throw negates all damage. A third saving throw is not permitted except when the duellist received healing between the second and potential third saving throw. Duellists that could not be killed with the maximum damage of a blow can decide to attempt to parry it anyway – or save it up for later. If a duellist is hit by more than one mêlée attack that could potentially kill her, she has to decide which she tries to parry.

Two-Handed Specialist

When fighting with two weapons, the duellist's attack roll penalty is reduced by one. However, duellists will

only use two weapons against other opponents with two weapons or against monsters that always fight unarmed. Life-or-death situations are an exception. The game master decides when a situation is a life-or-death situation.

Magic Weapon Identification

From level 10 on, a duellist has a 5% chance per level to identify a magic weapon usable by her. One attempt per weapon per level is permitted.

Item Restrictions

Duellist may use all magical items that fighters can use with the exception of weapons they are not allowed to use in general.

Henchmen and Followers

From level 7 on, duellists can hire henchmen. Unlike fighters, duellists receive no followers, not even when they establish a school.

A Duellist's Stronghold

A duellist's stronghold will be a fencing school. The school has to employ a weaponsmith and will attract students. Training with a duellist or master duellist costs 200 GP per month. Per full training session, a student has a cumulative 10% chance of gaining a +1 attack roll bonus with the weapon he has been practicing with. The chance caps at 60%. The bonus cannot be increased, but can be obtained for several weapons. Duellists will have 5d6 students at a given time plus one per three points of Charisma up to a maximum of 30 students. A duellist with a school cannot adventure for more than three days per month, lest her students will suffer. Duellist will be aware of others of their kind in the area and occasionally challenge one another.

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