

The Genius Guide to: The Talented Fighter



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ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Fighters are the iconic masters of battle, with access to both a high number of combat feats and a static set of armor- and weapon-oriented class features. While this gives them a wide range of options, it can also lead to characters with specific fighting-man concepts having abilities they don't need, such as an unarmored trident-and-shield gladiator having armor training for armors he doesn't wear, or an entirely defensive master of plate mail picking up advanced weapon training. Fighters are supposed to be masters of combat specialization (they even have near-exclusive access to the Weapon Specialization feat), but half their class abilities are static bonuses with little customization beyond what set of weapons they apply to.

At the same time, many cool fighter tropes have been presented as archetypes, allowing fighter characters to specialize to even greater extents at the cost of some of those static bonuses (the bravery class feature is an extremely popular trade-out for fighter archetypes), but never in more than one style of fighting. Flexibility is one of the things the fighter class is supposed to excel at, but the way archetypes work, taking one generally makes a character *less* flexible. That makes sense for many eldritch character concepts – if a wizard is a Master of the Secret Flame, it stands to reason that might change what other magic is available to him – but it's less logical for most fighter archetypes. Like rogues, fighters mostly learn entirely nonmagical knacks, and there's no particular reason why being really good at one should make it impossible to specialize in another. Such double-focused characters would need time to pick up all the required abilities of course, but if they prefer that to being more spread out, why not let them make that effort? Indeed, if any class should have the option to be both a crossbowman and a phalanx soldier, it's the fighter.

It's also worth noting that the same game books that added archetypes for fighters added far fewer such options for rogues. The reason for this is that rogues got additional rogue talents in place of getting as many new archetypes. This allows any rogue to expand their options with new talents without locking themselves down into

an archetype (and, at the same time, reserves archetypes for concepts that are much further from the core rogue). Unfortunately, this approach can't be taken for fighters, because fighters don't have a talent system.

But what if they did?

The Genius Guide to the Talented Fighter rewrites the classic fighter class to use talents rather than static class abilities alternating with bonus feats. Rather than require all fighters be brave and balance their efforts between armor and weapon bonuses, each fighter can custom-fit the classes abilities to match a player's specific concept. This greater flexibility allows the fighter to be the default

combat-oriented character without limiting it to just one or two styles of fighting. Like a rogue, a fighter character can pick and choose from a range of similarly-powered abilities appropriate for the fighter's role without making the class overpowered. The talented fighter still fills the same role in the party but can customize his combat style and abilities to fill a much broader range of concepts.

ARCHETYPES VS. FEATS VS. TALENTS

When building the fighter as a talent-based class the question immediately arises 'what, conceptually, is the difference between fighter-only feats (such as Weapon Specialization) and a rogue's talents?' Answering that question is crucial to determining how a fighter's talents will work, and how to balance talents against existing fighter options.

Talents are about the same power level as feats, as proven by the fact there is an Extra Rogue Talent feat in the *Advanced Player's Guide*, and several talents grant a bonus feat. Fighter feats and rogue talents are conceptually very similar. Both tend to focus on nonmagical abilities (though there are exceptions). Both can occasionally be accessed by other classes (such as through the fighter training class feature of the magus, or monks and rangers eventually gaining improved evasion). Both have higher- and lower-level effects (rated by class level requirements for fighter feats, and as talents vs. advanced talents for rogues).

In many ways, it would make sense to eliminate fighter-only feats entirely and replace them with a fighter talent system – but that's beyond the scope of this product. However, since fighter feats and rogue talents seem to be on par, that also gives us a baseline for developing a talent-based fighter class. Since we're not going to just rewrite feats into talents however, we do need to look around a bit to see what other existing rules we should include in our design.

Most fighter archetypes are in fact, little more, than a selection of talent-like abilities a fighter can take in place of things we have

TABLE 1: THE VANGUARD

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Fighter talent
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Fighter talent
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Fighter talent
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Fighter talent
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Fighter talent
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	Fighter talent
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	Fighter talent
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	Fighter talent
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	Fighter talent
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	Advanced talents, fighter talent
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3	Fighter talent
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	Fighter talent
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	Fighter talent
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4	Fighter talent
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	Fighter talent
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5	Fighter talent
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5	Fighter talent
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	Fighter talent
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6	Fighter talent
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	Grand talents, fighter talent

already decided to replace with fighter talents. In most cases, each archetype's concept is just one of "specialized in a fighting style," which really shouldn't preclude the fighter from taking other similar abilities. That makes many fighter archetypes conceptually ripe for plucking talents. With this system, if a fighter wants to spend all his talents to master one-hand fighting and archery, he pays for that level of specialization with fewer slots dedicated to armor bonuses or more universal damage bonuses.

Those archetype abilities we borrowed have been rewritten to work as talents, and playtesting has revealed no balance issue with allowing fighters to select from talents derived from multiple archetypes. However, there is a broad segment of players who prefer strong niche protection and might prefer even a talent-based fighter be restricted to one archetype-related concept. For campaigns where this is the standard, talents developed from archetype abilities note what archetype they are adapted from.

ALIGNMENT: A talented fighter may be of any alignment.

HIT DIE: d10

STARTING WEALTH: At 1st level, a talented fighter begins play with 5d6x10 gp.

CLASS SKILLS: The fighter's class skills are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (engineering) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

SKILL RANKS PER LEVEL: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the talented fighter.

PROFICIENCIES: A fighter is proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor (heavy, light, and medium) and shields (including tower shields).

FIGHTER TALENTS: As a fighter gains experience, he learns a number of talents that increase his ability to defend himself and overwhelm his foes. At 1st level, a fighter gains one fighter talent. He gains an additional fighter talent at every additional level of fighter attained after 1st level. A fighter cannot select an individual talent more than once unless the talent specifies otherwise.

Upon reaching 4th level, and every four levels thereafter (8th, 12th, and so on), a fighter can choose to learn a new talent in place of a talent he has already learned. In effect, the fighter loses the talent in exchange for the new one. The old talent cannot be one that was used as a prerequisite for a feat, another talent, prestige class, or other ability. A fighter can only change one talent at any given level and must choose whether or not to swap the talent at the time he gains a new talent for the level.

Active Defense (Ex): [Archetype – Shielded Fighter] The fighter gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC when wielding a shield and also fighting defensively, using Combat Expertise, or using total defense. As a swift action, he may share this bonus with one adjacent ally, or half of the bonus (minimum +0) with all adjacent allies, until the beginning of his next turn.

This talent may be selected more than once, but not more than once per 4 levels. Each additional time it is selected, the bonus increases by +1.



Agility (Ex): [Archetype – Mobile Fighter] The fighter gains a +1 bonus on saving throws made against effects that cause him to become paralyzed, slowed, or entangled. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and by +1 for every four levels beyond 6th.

Armor Training (Ex): Whenever the fighter is wearing armor, he reduces the armor check penalty by 1 (to a minimum of 0) and increases the maximum Dexterity bonus allowed by his armor by 1. In addition, a fighter can also move at his normal speed while wearing medium armor.

A 6th level or higher fighter can take this talent a second time, increasing its bonuses by +1 and allowing him to move at his normal speed in heavy armor. It can be taken a third time at 11th level and a 4th time at 16th level, with its bonuses increasing by +1 each time.

Armored Defense (Ex): [Archetype – Armor Master] The fighter gains DR 1/– when wearing light armor, DR 2/– when wearing medium armor, and DR 3/– when wearing heavy armor. If the fighter also has the armor mastery advanced talent, this damage reduction increases to DR 5/– when wearing light armor, DR 8/– when wearing medium armor, and DR 12/– when wearing heavy armor. This damage reduction stacks with that provided by adamantine armor, but not with other forms of damage reduction. This damage reduction does not apply if the armor master is stunned, unconscious, or helpless.

A fighter must be 5th level to select armored defense.

Armored Charger (Ex): [Archetype – Roughrider] The fighter suffers no armor check penalties on Ride skill checks. His mount's speed is not reduced when carrying a medium load or wearing medium barding.

WHERE ARE THE BONUS FEATS?!

The talented fighter gains a talent at every level, and unlike the standard fighter, doesn't have any bonus feats listed. This is because one of their available talents (combat training) gives the fighter access to a bonus combat feat. Of course since that talent can be taken more than once, it means a fighter can just take a bonus combat feat at every level. In fact, this is part of the point of this rewrite of the class.

All of a fighter's class features are at least as powerful as a typical feat. Even bravery, the weakest of their abilities, grants a total of a +5 bonus to saves against fear over the course of a fighter's advancement – easily the match of Iron Will. Since combat feats are already restricted with prerequisites requiring minimum base attack bonuses or minimum levels of the fighter class, even allowing a 3rd level human fighter to have a total of 6 feats (1 for being human, normal feats gained at 1st and 3rd level, and bonus feats from combat training taken at every level) doesn't create an unbalanced character. Instead this versatility allows fighters to keep pace with the rage powers of barbarians, spellcaster's magic options, and the benefits of magic-using fighting classes such as the inquisitor or magus.

The addition of the Extra Rogue Talent feat in the *Advanced Player's Guide* largely shatters the idea that feats and talents are different, and we saw no need to fight that trend. Certainly the talented fighter could have been written with bonus feats at every even level – but with talents that grant feats and feats that grant talents, what's the point?

Armored Pirate (Ex): [Archetype – Corsair] The fighter wears heavier armor than is common aboard a ship. His experience allows him to reduce the armor check penalty of any light armor he wears to 0 for purposes of Acrobatics and Swim checks. At 7th level, this becomes true of medium armor as well. At 11th level, it includes heavy armor.

Backswing (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Handed Fighter] When wielding a two-handed melee weapon, if the fighter makes a full attack he adds double his Strength bonus on damage rolls for all attacks after the first.

A fighter must be 6th level to select this talent.

Bravery (Ex): The fighter gains a +1 bonus on Will saves against fear. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and by +1 for every four levels beyond 6th.

Brawny (Ex): Once per day, a fighter with this talent can roll two dice while making a Climb or Swim check, and take the better result. He must choose to use this talent before making the skill check. A fighter can use this ability one additional time per day for every 5 fighter levels he possesses.

Buckler Bash (Ex): [Archetype – Buckler Duelist] The fighter can perform a shield bash with a buckler (use the same damage and critical modifier as for a light shield).

Buckler Catch (Ex): [Archetype – Buckler Duelist] When wielding a buckler, the fighter can catch his opponent's weapon between his buckler and his forearm, effectively wedging the hafts of polearms and hammers or the flats of blades. This functions as a disarm combat maneuver, and the fighter gains a +4 bonus on the roll. If the fighter's maneuver check fails by 10 or more, he suffers a –2 penalty to his AC until the start of his next turn.

Burst Barrier (Ex): [Archetype – Tower Shield Specialist] The fighter can use his tower shield to screen himself from burst spells and effects. He gains a +1 bonus on Reflex saves against burst spells and effects while employing a tower shield. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and by an additional +1 for every four levels after 6th.

Close Control (Ex): [Archetype – Brawler] The fighter becomes skilled at forcefully moving his opponent around the battlefield, gaining a +1 bonus on bull rush, drag, and reposition combat maneuver checks. The brawler also gains a +1 bonus to CMD when attacked with the bull rush, drag, and reposition maneuvers. These bonuses increase to +2 at 6th level, and by +1 for every four levels beyond.

Combat Training : The fighter gains a bonus feat. This feat must be a combat feat (also sometimes called “fighter bonus feats”). The fighter must meet all the feat’s prerequisites. This talent may be taken more than once. Each time it is taken, it grants the fighter a new bonus combat feat.

Deadshot (Ex): [Archetype – Crossbowman] When the fighter attacks with a crossbow as a readied action, he may add 1/2 his Dexterity bonus (minimum +1) to his damage roll.

Deceptive Strike (Ex): [Archetype – Free Hand Fighter] When he is using a one-handed weapon and carrying nothing in his other hand, the fighter gains a +1 bonus to CMB and CMD on disarm checks and on Bluff checks to feint or create a diversion to hide. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and by +1 for every four levels beyond 6th.

Deck Fighting (Ex): [Archetype – Corsair] The fighter is used to fighting on crowded decks, and isn’t fazed by fighting multiple opponents at once. The fighter does not treat crowds or the deck of a ship as difficult terrain. Additionally, the fighter is considered to qualify for the Cleave feat even if he doesn’t meet it’s normal prerequisites, and does not take the normal –2 penalty to his AC when using the Cleave feat (or Great Cleave) if he takes those feats.

Deflective Shield (Ex): [Archetype – Armor Master] The fighter specializes in using his shield to deflect attacks. When carrying a shield he gains a +1 bonus to his touch AC. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and by an additional +1 for every 4 levels beyond 6th. This bonus cannot exceed the sum of the shield and enhancement bonus to AC provided by the shield that the fighter is currently using.

Deft Shield (Ex): [Archetype – Phalanx Soldier, Tower Shield Specialist] The fighter’s armor check penalty from a shield and the attack roll penalty for using a tower shield are reduced by –1, and his max Dex bonus to AC for using a tower shield is increased by +1. This talent can be taken twice. Its effects stack.

Defensive Flurry (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Weapon Warrior] When wielding two melee weapons or a double weapon in two hands, if the fighter makes a full attack (including off-hand attacks) he gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC against melee attacks until the beginning of his next turn.

This talent may be taken more than once, but not more than once per 4 levels.



Doublestrike (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Weapon Warrior] When wielding two melee weapons or a double weapon in two hands, as a standard action the fighter may make one attack. The penalties for attacking with two weapons apply normally.

A fighter must be 6th level to select this talent.

Disarming Strike (Ex): [Archetype-Swordlord] When he is using a one-handed weapon and carrying nothing in his other hand, if the fighter successfully disarms a target he also deals normal damage to the target, but without the normal Strength bonus to damage.

A fighter must be 5th level to select this talent.

Elusive (Ex): [Archetype – Free Hand Fighter] When he is using a one-handed weapon and carrying nothing in his other hand, the fighter gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and by an additional +1 for every 4 levels beyond 6th. This bonus does not apply when wearing medium or heavy armor or carrying a medium or heavier load.

Equestrian (Ex): Once per day, a fighter with this talent can roll two dice while making a Ride check, and take the better result. He must choose to use this talent before making the Ride check. A fighter can use this ability one additional time per day for every 5 fighter levels he possesses.

Evasive Fighter [Archetype-Archer] (Ex): The fighter gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC against ranged attacks. This bonus increases to +3 at 11th level, and to +4 at 17th level.

A fighter must be 4th level to select this talent.

Flexible Flanker (Ex): [Archetype – Polearm Master] The fighter may choose any square adjacent to him and treat that square as his location for determining who he is flanking, even if that square is occupied by a creature, object, or solid barrier.

Fortification (Ex): [Archetype – Armor Master] The fighter can use his armor to shield critical areas from injury. He treats any armor he wears as if it had the light fortification special ability. At 13th level, his armor gains the moderate fortification special ability. This fortification does not stack in any way with armor that has these special abilities. In these cases the armor master takes the better of the two fortifications.

Hawkeye (Ex): [Archetype-Archer] The fighter gains a +1 bonus on Perception checks, and the range increment for any bow he uses increases by 5 feet. These bonuses increase by +1 and 5 additional feet at 6th level, and again by the same amount for every 4 levels beyond 6th.

Improved Deadshot (Ex): [Archetype-Crossbowman] When the fighter attacks with a crossbow as a readied action, his target is denied its Dexterity bonus to its AC.

A fighter must have deadshot and be 6th level to select improved deadshot.

Leap from the Saddle (Ex): [Archetype – Roughrider] After the fighter's mount takes a single move, he may attempt a fast dismount (DC 20 Ride check). If he succeeds, he can take a full attack action.

Leaping Attack (Ex): [Archetype – Mobile Fighter] If the fighter moves at least 5 feet prior to attacking he gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls. This bonus increases to +2 at 9th level, and by +1 for every four levels beyond 9th.

A fighter must be 5th level to select this talent.

Menacing Stance (Ex): [Archetype – Brawler] The fighter has learned to constantly harry and distract his enemies. While adjacent to the brawler and threatened by a weapon he is wielding, enemies take a –1 penalty on attack rolls and a –4 penalty on concentration checks.

These penalties increase to –2 at 11th level, and by 1 more for every four levels after 11th level (to a maximum of –4 on attack rolls and –7 on concentration checks at 19th level). Creatures do not take these penalties if the fighter is dazed, helpless, staggered, stunned, or unconscious.

A fighter must be 7th level to select this talent.

Overhand Chop (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Handed Fighter] When wielding a two-handed melee weapon, if the fighter makes only a single attack (with the attack action or a charge) he adds double his Strength bonus on damage rolls.

A fighter must be 3rd level to select this talent.

Phalanx Fighting (Ex): [Archetype – Phalanx Soldier] (Ex): When the fighter wields a shield, he can use any polearm or spear of his size as a one-handed weapon.

Pole Fighting (Ex): [Archetype – Polearm Master] As an immediate action, the fighter can shorten the grip on his spear or polearm with reach and use it against adjacent targets. This action results in a –4 penalty on attack rolls with that weapon until he spends another immediate action to return to the normal grip. The penalty is reduced by –1 at 6th level, and by an additional –1 for every four levels beyond 6th.

Quick Sniper (Ex): [Archetype-Crossbowman] The fighter gains a bonus equal to 1/2 his base attack bonus on Stealth checks when attempting to maintain his obscured position when sniping (see the Stealth skill in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* for more information on sniping from a hidden locale.)

Ready Pike (Ex): [Archetype – Phalanx Soldier] (Ex): The fighter can, once per day, ready a weapon with the brace property as an immediate action, gaining a +1 bonus on attack

and damage rolls. At 9th level the bonuses increase to +2 and the ability can be used twice per day. For every four levels beyond 9th, this bonus increases by +1, and he can use the ability one additional time per day. He cannot use this ability when flat-footed.

Return Fire (Ex): When the fighter has a crossbow or firearm loaded and in hand, if he is hit with a ranged attack he may make a single ranged attack at the shooter as an immediate action.

Safe Shot (Ex): [Archetype – Archer & Crossbowman] The fighter does not provoke attacks of opportunity when making ranged attacks with a weapon.

Shattering Strike (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Handed Fighter] When wielding a two-handed melee weapon, the fighter gains a +1 bonus to CMB and CMD on sunder attempts and on damage rolls made against objects. These bonuses increase to +2 at 6th level, and by +1 for every four levels beyond 6th.

Shield Ally (Ex): [Archetype – Phalanx Soldier]: When the fighter is using a heavy or tower shield, as a move action he can provide partial cover (+2 cover bonus to AC, +1 bonus on Reflex saves) to himself and all adjacent allies until the beginning of his next turn.

Shield Buffet (Ex): [Archetype – Shielded Fighter] As a move action, the fighter may make a combat maneuver check to use his shield to impede an adjacent enemy. If successful, the target suffers a –2 penalty on its attack rolls against the shielded fighter and a –2 penalty to AC on attacks made by the shielded fighter until the beginning of his next turn.

A fighter must be 7th level to select this talent.

Siegecraft (Ex): Once per day, a fighter with this talent can roll two dice while making a Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (engineering) check, and take the better result. He must choose to use this talent before making the Knowledge check. A fighter can use this ability one additional time per day for every 5 fighter levels he possesses.

Singleton (Ex): [Archetype – Free Hand Fighter] The fighter gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls when wielding a melee weapon in one hand and leaving his other hand free.

Spinning Lance (Ex): [Archetype – Dragoon] When wielding a two-handed weapon from the polearms or spears weapon group, the fighter may make attacks with the piercing head of his

spear (with reach if using a reach weapon) or with the butt end (treat as a club) against adjacent targets. Unlike a double weapon, the masterwork quality and magical special abilities apply to both ends of the weapon, except for those weapon special abilities that cannot be applied to bludgeoning weapons.

A fighter must have taken weapon mastery with the polearm or spears weapon group and have a base attack bonus of +6 to select the spinning lance talent.

Stand Firm (Ex): [Archetype – Phalanx Soldier] When wielding a shield (other than a buckler), the fighter gains a +1 bonus to CMD against bull rush, overrun, and trip attempts. This bonus also applies on saves against trample attacks. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and by an additional +1 for every 4 levels beyond 6th.



Steadfast Mount (Ex): [Archetype – Roughrider] After the fighter has spent 1 hour practicing with a mount, the mount gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC and a +1 morale bonus on saves, but only while the fighter is mounted on it or adjacent to it. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level, and by an additional +1 for every 4 levels beyond 6th.

Steadfast Pike (Ex): [Archetype – Polearm Master] The fighter gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls with readied attacks and attacks of opportunity made with a spear or polearm. This talent may be taken more than once, but not more than once per 4 fighter levels.

Strong Swing (Ex): [Archetype – Buckler Duelist] When wielding a light or one-handed melee weapon in one hand and a buckler in the other, the fighter may apply any bonus he has to either weapon from the weapon training talent to attacks made by either hand. With a full-attack action, the fighter may alternate between using his weapon or his buckler for each attack. This does not grant additional attacks or incur penalties as two-weapon fighting does.

Swift Positioning (Ex): [Archetype – Tower Shield Specialist] The fighter may position his tower shield to provide cover as a move action, rather than a standard action.

Team Player (Ex): When determining the benefit they gain from a teamwork feat, the fighter's allies may treat him as if he had the same teamwork feat. The fighter does not gain any benefit from such feats unless he actually has the teamwork feat in question.

Timely Tip (Ex): [Archetype – Free Hand Fighter] When he is using a one-handed weapon and carrying nothing in his other hand, as a move action the fighter can make a disarm combat maneuver against a target he threatens, to push aside the target's shield. If successful, the target loses its shield bonus to AC against the fighter's next attack.

Trick Shot (Ex): [Archetype – Archer & Crossbowman] The fighter chooses one of the following combat maneuvers or actions: disarm, feint, or sunder. He can perform this action with one group of ranged weapons (bows, crossbows, firearms, or thrown – see weapon training for more details on weapon groups) against any target within 30 feet, with a –4 penalty to his CMB. These maneuvers expend ammunition as standard ranged attacks.

This talent may be selected more than once. Its effects do not stack. Each time it's selected, the fighter may choose a different combat maneuver to be useable with a ranged weapon group, or select a new ranged weapon group with which he can perform all his trick shot maneuvers (and greater trick shot maneuvers, if any).

Twin Blades (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Weapon Warrior] When wielding two melee weapons or a double weapon in two hands, the fighter gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls when making a full attack that includes off-hand attacks. This bonus counts as (and does not stack with) weapon mastery.

This talent may be taken more than once, but not more than once per 4 levels.

Vital Combat (Ex): The fighter selects one weapon with which he is proficient. If the first attack he makes in round is made with this weapon, he may add the bonus damage dice from Vital Strike to that attack. He may also use this ability with Devastating Strike, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Devastating Strike, and Improved Vital Strike if he has those feats. The fighter cannot benefit from these feats more than once per turn. This overrides Vital Strike's normal limitation that it may only be used with an attack action.

A fighter must be 6th level and have the Vital Strike feat prior to taking vital combat.

This talent may be taken more than once. Each time it applies to a different weapon with which the fighter is proficient.

War College: The fighter gains 5 additional skill points, which must be spent on class skills. This does not allow the fighter to exceed the normal maximum number of ranks in a skill. This is a one-time bonus, not an increase to the number of skill points the fighter gains at each level (though the talent may be taken more than once, granting +5 skill points each time it is taken).

War Face (Ex): Once per day, a fighter with this talent can roll two dice while making an Intimidate check, and take the better result. He must choose to use this talent before making the Intimidate check. A fighter can use this ability one additional time per day for every 5 fighter levels he possesses.

Weapon Training (Ex): A fighter with the talent selects one group of weapons, as noted below. Whenever he attacks with a weapon from this group, he gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls. The fighter also adds this bonus to any combat maneuver checks made with weapons from this group. This bonus also applies to the fighter's Combat Maneuver Defense when defending against disarm and sunder attempts made against weapons from this group.

The fighter may take this talent a second time 6th level, and again at 11th and 16th level. Each time he selects a new weapon group with which he gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and combat maneuvers as outlined above. Additionally, the bonus for weapons groups previously selected with this talent increase by +1. Bonuses granted from overlapping groups do not stack. Take the highest bonus granted for a weapon if it resides in two or more groups.

Weapon groups are defined as follows (GMs may add other weapons to these groups, or add entirely new groups):

Axes: bardiche, battleaxe, dwarven waraxe, greataxe, handaxe, heavy pick, hooked axe, knuckle axe, light pick, mattock, orc double axe, pata, and throwing axe.

Blades, Heavy: Aldori dueling sword, bastard sword, chakram, double chicken saber, double walking stick katana, elven curve blade, falcata, falchion, flambard, greatsword, great terbutje, katana, khopesh, klar, longsword, nine-ring broadsword, nodachi, scimitar, scythe, seven-branched sword, shotel, temple sword, terbutje, and two-bladed sword.

Blades, Light: bayonet, butterfly knife, butterfly sword, chakram, dagger, gladius, hunga munga, kama, katar, kerambit, kukri, madu, pata, quadrens, rapier, sawtooth sabre, scizore, shortsword, sica, sickle, starknife, swordbreaker dagger, sword cane, wakizashi, and war razor.

Bows: composite longbow, composite shortbow, longbow, and shortbow.

Close: bayonet, brass knuckles, cestus, dan bong, emei piercer, fighting fan, gauntlet, heavy

shield, iron brush, katar, light shield, madu, mere club, punching dagger, rope gauntlet, sap, scizore, spiked armor, spiked gauntlet, spiked shield, tekko-kagi, tonfa, unarmed strike, wooden stake, and wushu dart.

Crossbows: double crossbow, hand crossbow, heavy crossbow, launching crossbow, light crossbow, heavy repeating crossbow, light repeating crossbow, and tube arrow shooter.

Double: bo staff, chain spear, dire flail, double walking stick katana, double-chained kama, dwarven urgrosh, gnome hooked hammer, kusarigama, orc double axe, quarterstaff, and two-bladed sword.

Firearms: all one-handed, two-handed, and siege firearms.

Flails: battle poi, bladed scarf, chain spear, dire flail, double chained kama, flail, flying blade, heavy flail, kusarigama, kyoketsu shoge, meteor hammer, morningstar, nine-section whip, nunchaku, sansetsukon, scorpion whip, spiked chain, urumi, and whip.

Hammers: aklys, battle aspergillum, club, greatclub, heavy mace, light hammer, light mace, mere club, taiaha, tetsubo, wahaika, and warhammer.

Monk: bo staff, brass knuckles, butterfly sword, cestus, dan bong, double chained kama, double chicken saber, emei piercer, fighting fan, hanbo, jutte, kama, kusarigama, kyoketsu shoge, lungshuan tamo, monk's spade, nine-ring broadsword, nine-section whip, nunchaku, quarterstaff, rope dart, sai, sansetsukon, seven-branched sword, shang gou, shuriken, siangham, temple sword, tiger fork, tonfa, tri-point double-edged sword, unarmed strike, urumi, and wushu dart.

Mounted: all melee attacks made with weapons the fighter is proficient with while mounted.

Natural: unarmed strike and all natural weapons, such as bite, claw, gore, tail, and wing.

Pirate: crossbow, cutlass, dagger, hook hand, rapier, and short sword.

Polearms: bardiche, bec de corbin, bill, glaive, glaive-guisarme, guisarme, halberd, hooked lance, lucerne hammer, mancatcher, monk's spade, naginata, nodachi, ranseur, rhomphaia, tepoztopilli, and tiger fork.

Siege engines: Ballista, bombard, catapult, corvus, firedrake, firewurm, gallery, ram, siege tower, springal, trebuchet, and all other siege engines.



Spears: amentum, boar spear, chain spear, javelin, harpoon, lance, longspear, pilum, shortspear, sibat, spear, tiger fork, and trident.

Thrown: aklys, amentum, atlatl, blowgun, bolas, boomerang, chakram, club, dagger, dart, halfling sling staff, harpoon, hunga munga, javelin, lasso, kestros, light hammer, net, poisoned sand tube, rope dart, Shoanti bolas, shortspear, shuriken, sling, sling glove, spear, starknife, throwing axe, throwing shield, trident, and wushu dart.

Woodsmen (Ex): Once per day, a fighter with this talent can roll two dice while making a Handle Animal or Survival check, and take the better result. He must choose to use this talent before making the skill check. A fighter can use this ability one additional time per day for every 5 fighter levels he possesses.

ADVANCED FIGHTER TALENTS: At 10th level and every level thereafter, a fighter can choose one of the following advanced talents in place of a fighter talent.

Armor Mastery (Ex): The fighter gains Damage Reduction 5/— whenever he is wearing armor or using a shield. A fighter must have selected the armor training or armored defense talent before selecting armor mastery.

A fighter must be 16th level to select this talent.

Banner (Ex): [Archetype – Dragoon] The fighter may attach a banner to his lance. This is identical to the cavalier class feature. The fighter treats his cavalier level as being his fighter level –5 when determining the bonuses of his banner talent. Cavalier levels stack with his fighter level –5 for determining the effect of his banner.

A fighter must have selected weapon training with the lance group and the Mounted Combat feat before he can take the banner talent.

Chopping Blow (Ex): [Archetype – Buckler Duelist] As a standard action, the fighter can make a single melee attack with a light or one-handed melee weapon. If the attack hits, he may make a sunder combat maneuver against the target of his attack as a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Counterattack (Ex): [Archetype – Swordlord] When he is using a one-handed weapon and carrying nothing in his other hand, the fighter can make an attack of opportunity as an immediate action against an opponent who hits him with a melee attack, so long as the attacking creature is within the fighter's reach.

Deft Doublestrike (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Weapon Warrior] When wielding two melee weapons or a double weapon in two hands, if the fighter hits an opponent with both primary and off-hand attacks he can make a disarm or sunder attempt (or trip, if one or both weapons has the trip property) against that opponent as an immediate action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Devastating Blow (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Handed Fighter] As a standard action, the fighter may make a single melee attack with a two-handed weapon at a –5 penalty. If the attack hits, it is treated as a critical threat. Special weapon abilities that activate only on a critical hit do not activate if this critical hit is confirmed.

A fighter must be 16th level to select this talent.

Equal Opportunity (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Weapon Warrior] When wielding two melee weapons or a double weapon in two hands, if the fighter makes an attack of opportunity he may attack once with both his primary and secondary weapons. The penalties for attacking with two weapons apply normally.

Fleet Footed (Ex): [Archetype – Mobile Fighter] The fighter's speed increases by 10 feet. He can take 10 on Acrobatics checks even while distracted or threatened, and can take 20 on an Acrobatics check once per day for every five fighter levels he possesses.

Greater Deadshot(Ex): [Archetype-Crossbowman] When the fighter attacks with a crossbow as a readied action, he may add his full Dexterity bonus (minimum +1) on his damage roll. This overlaps (does not stack with) the bonus from the Deadshot talent.

A fighter must have the deadshot talent to select the greater deadshot talent.

Greater Power Attack (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Handed Fighter] When using Power Attack with a two-handed melee weapon, the fighter's bonus damage from Power Attack is doubled (+100%) instead of increased by half (+50%).

A fighter must have the Power Attack feat to select greater power attack.

Greater Singleton (Ex): [Archetype – Free Hand Fighter] The fighter gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls when wielding a melee weapon in one hand and leaving his other hand free. This stacks with the bonus from the singleton talent, if the fighter has both.

Greater Trick Shot (Ex) [Archetype-Archer & Crossbowman] The fighter chooses one of the following combat maneuvers or actions: bull rush, grapple, trip. He can perform this action with one group of ranged weapons (bows, crossbows, firearms, or thrown – see weapon training for more details on weapon groups) against any target within 30 feet, with a –4 penalty to his CMB. These maneuvers expend ammunition as standard ranged attacks.

Only piercing ranged weapons may be used to grapple. A target grappled by a ranged

weapon can break free by destroying the fighter's ammunition (a typical bolt or arrow has hardness 5, hit points 1, break DC 13) or with an Escape Artist or CMB check (against the archer's CMD -4).

This talent may be selected more than once. Its effects do not stack. Each time it's selected, the fighter may choose a different combat maneuver to be useable with a ranged weapon group.

Immediate Repositioning (Ex): [Archetype - Tower Shield Specialist] When the fighter is using a tower shield to provide cover, as an immediate action he can reposition his tower shield to another facing. This ability may not be used to interrupt an attack.

Improved Balance (Ex): [Archetype - Two-Weapon Warrior] The fighter's attack penalties for fighting with two weapons are reduced by -1. Alternatively, the fighter may use a one-handed weapon in his off-hand, treating it as if it were a light weapon with the normal light weapon penalties.

This talent may be taken a second time, reducing all two-weapon fighting penalties by an additional -1 (even when using a one-handed weapon in the off-hand as a light weapon).

Indomitable Steed (Ex): [Archetype - Roughrider] The fighter's steed gain DR 5/- when the fighter is mounted.

A fighter must be 16th level to select this talent.

Interference (Ex): [Archetype - Free Hand Fighter]: When he is using a one-handed weapon and carrying nothing in his other hand, as a move action the fighter can make a disarm or trip combat maneuver against a target he threatens to push his opponent off balance. If successful, the target becomes flat-footed. This

condition lasts until the target takes damage from a melee or ranged attack or until the beginning of the fighter's next turn, whichever comes first.

Irresistible Advance (Ex): [Archetype - Phalanx Soldier] (Ex): When wielding a shield, the fighter gains a bonus on bull rush and overrun CMB checks. This bonus depends on the type of shield used: +1 with a buckler, +2 with a light shield, +3 with a heavy shield, or +4 with a tower shield.

Leaping Lance (Ex): [Archetype - Dragoon] The fighter and his mount suffer no armor check penalty on Acrobatics checks while mounted. When charging, the fighter may jump from his mount toward his target. If he jumps 10 feet, his charge modifiers on attack rolls and to AC are doubled and he is still considered mounted for lance damage, Mounted Combat feats, and so on.

Meteor Shot (Ex): [Archetype - Archer & Crossbowman] The fighter can use his trick shot and greater trick shot maneuvers at any range, and deals his normal ranged weapon damage on successful maneuvers.

A fighter must have trick shot or greater trick shot to select meteor shot.

No Escape (Ex): [Archetype - Brawler] Taking a 5-foot step out of the area of the fighter's menacing stance or moving out of the area of the menacing stance with a withdraw action provokes an attack of opportunity from the fighter.

A fighter must have the menacing stance talent to select this talent.

Penetrating Shot (Ex): [Archetype - Crossbowman] When the fighter confirms a critical hit with a ranged piercing attack, the attack pierces the target and can strike another



creature in line behind it. The fighter must be able to trace a line starting at his space and passing through both targets to make this additional attack. The secondary attack is made at a -4 penalty, in addition to any modifiers for added range. If this attack is also a critical hit, the attack can continue to hit another target, but the penalties stack.

Piercing Lance (Ex): [Archetype – Dragoon] As a standard action or as part of a charge, the fighter can make two attacks against a mounted target – one against the mount and the other against the rider – using his highest base attack bonus. Furthermore, if the mount is hit and its rider attempts to negate the hit with the Mounted Combat feat, the dragoon's attack roll is considered 4 higher when calculating the DC of the Ride check to negate the hit.

Piledriver (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Handed Fighter] As a standard action, the fighter can make a single melee attack with a two-handed weapon. If the attack hits, he may make a bull rush or trip combat maneuver against the target of his attack as a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Polearm Parry (Ex): [Archetype – Polearm Master] When the fighter is using a reach weapon to threaten an opponent and that opponent makes a melee attack against an ally, the fighter may take an immediate action to grant his ally a +2 shield bonus to AC and DR 5/– against that attack. He may use this ability to protect himself, but only if the attacking creature is not adjacent to him.

A fighter must be 16th level to select this talent.

Rapid Attack (Ex): [Archetype – Mobile Fighter] The fighter can combine a full attack action with a single move. He must forgo the attack at his highest bonus but may take the remaining attacks at any point during his movement. This movement provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.

Relentless Steed (Ex): [Archetype – Roughrider] The fighter's mount does not reduce its speed when wearing heavy barding or carrying a heavy load. The fighter may also reroll a Ride skill check or a saving throw made by the mount once per day, but must use the second roll even if it is worse. This ability may be used one additional time per day at 15th level, and a third time per day at 19th level.

Reversal (Ex): [Archetype – Free Hand Fighter] When he is using a one-handed weapon and carrying nothing in his other hand, if the fighter is the target of a melee weapon attack made by a creature the fighter is threatening, he may make a special disarm combat maneuver as an immediate action. If successful, rather than disarm the target, the fighter can redirect the melee attack to target any creature within reach of the attacker (other than the attacker itself). The attacker makes his attack roll normally and, if it exceeds the new target's AC, deals damage normally.

A fighter must be 16th level to select this talent.

Ride Them Down (Ex): [Archetype – Roughrider] The fighter can spur his mount on while readying an attack. If the fighter's mount takes a single move, the fighter can make a full attack, taking his attacks at any point during his mount's movement. If he has the Trample feat, he may substitute an overrun combat maneuver for each of his attacks. This movement provokes attacks of opportunity against the fighter but not his mount.

Shield Ally II (Ex): [Archetype – Phalanx Soldier] When using shield ally, rather than the normal benefit, the fighter can instead provide cover (+4 cover bonus to AC, +2 bonus on Reflex saves) and evasion (as a rogue) to one adjacent ally until the beginning of his next turn. This cover does not allow Stealth checks.

A fighter must have shield ally to select shield ally II.

Shield Ally III (Ex): [Archetype – Phalanx Soldier] When using shield ally, the fighter can provide cover to himself and all adjacent allies, or he can provide improved cover (+8 cover bonus to AC, +4 bonus on Reflex saves, improved evasion) to a single adjacent ally.

A fighter must have shield ally and shield ally II to select shield ally III.

Shield Buffet 2 (Ex): [Archetype – Shielded Fighter] The fighter can now use the shield buffet ability as a swift action. A fighter must have shield buffet to select shield buffet 2.

Shield Guard (Ex): [Archetype – Shielded Fighter] When wielding a shield, the fighter may designate one square adjacent to him. He may designate two squares if using a heavy shield or three squares if using a tower shield, but these squares must be contiguous. Enemies in these squares cannot flank the shielded fighter and do not count for flanking with other creatures. This effect lasts until he moves from his position or uses another swift action to change the affected squares.

Stand Still (Ex): [Archetype – Brawler] The fighter gains Stand Still as a bonus feat, even if he does not have the Combat Reflexes feat. Furthermore, he gains a bonus equal to 1/2 his fighter level on combat maneuver checks when using the Stand Still feat.

Step Aside (Ex): [Archetype – Polearm Master] When a creature threatened by the fighter takes a 5-foot step into a square adjacent to him, the fighter can take a 5-foot step as an immediate action. This 5-foot step must be subtracted from his movement on the next turn. He also gains a +2 dodge bonus to his AC against that opponent until the end of his next turn.

Unavoidable Assault (Ex): When not mounted, the fighter's charge is not blocked by friendly creatures or difficult terrain.

Unavoidable Onslaught (Ex): [Archetype – Roughrider] The fighter's mounted charge is not blocked by friendly creatures or difficult terrain.

Volley (Ex): [Archetype – Archer] When using a ranged weapon from a group for which the fighter has taken weapon training, as a full-round action he can make a single ranged attack at his highest base attack bonus against any number of creatures in a 15-foot-radius burst, making separate attack and damage rolls for each creature. Each ranged attack expends ammunition normally. And, even using this talent, the fighter is limited to a number of attacks equal to those he can make without reloading (unless he can reload as a free action).

A fighter must select weapon training with a ranged weapon group before he can select volley.

GRAND FIGHTER TALENTS: At 20th level, a fighter can choose one of the following grand talents in place of a fighter talent.

Deadly Defense (Ex): [Archetype – Two-Weapon Warrior] When wielding two melee weapons or a double weapon in two hands, if the fighter makes a full attack that includes off-hand attacks, every creature that hits him with a melee attack before the beginning of his next turn provokes an attack of opportunity from the fighter.

Indestructible (Ex): [Archetype – Armor Master] The fighter gains complete immunity to critical hits and sneak attacks while he is wearing armor. In addition, unless his armor has the fragile armor quality, it cannot be sundered while he is wearing it.

Mental Fortress (Ex): The fighter is immune to mind-affecting spells and effects. A fighter must have bravery to select mental fortress.

Shielded Fortress (Ex): [Archetype – Phalanx Soldier, Tower Shield Specialist] (Ex): The fighter's shield cannot be disarmed or sundered. He gains evasion (as a rogue) when using a shield (improved evasion when using a tower shield). As a move action, the fighter can provide evasion to all adjacent allies until the beginning of his next turn. As an immediate action, he can provide improved evasion to an adjacent ally against one attack.

A fighter must have selected shield ally all before selecting shielded fortress.

Shield Ward (Ex): [Archetype – Shielded Fighter, Tower Shield Specialist] The fighter gains evasion (as a rogue) while wielding a shield, and adds his shield bonus to his AC (not including enhancement bonuses) on Reflex saves and to his touch AC. In addition, his shield cannot be disarmed or sundered.

Weapon Mastery (Ex): The fighter chooses one weapon, such as the longsword, greataxe, or longbow. Any attacks made with that weapon automatically confirm all critical threats and have their damage multiplier increased by 1 (×2 becomes ×3, for example). In addition, he cannot be disarmed while wielding a weapon of this type.

Whirlwind Blitz (ex): [Archetype – Mobile Fighter] The fighter can make a full-attack action as a standard action. He may also use the Whirlwind Attack feat as a standard action, if he has that feat.

ADDING TALENTS

Of course since the talented fighter isn't an official class from the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, future official expansions won't offer new fighter talents the way they will new rogue talents. However, this doesn't need to mean a GM can't make more talents available if he is inclined to do so!

First, there are numerous products from Super Genius Games that contain abilities that be turned into new fighter talents. The options in *#1 with a Bullet Point: 12 Alternatives for the Fighter's Bravery Class Feature* would all work as fighter talents, as would many of the feats in other Bullet Point pdfs (especially *9 Armiger Feats* and *9 Witch Hunter Feats*). Similarly the talents for the armiger class in *The Genius Guide to the Armiger* could be adapted for fighters (perhaps all requiring shield ally as a prerequisite), as could many from *The Genius Guide to the War Master* (though not those that modify the war master's battle tactics class feature), *Anachronistic Adventurers: The Enforcer*, and *Anachronistic Adventurers: The Tough*. Additionally, any source that offers fighter archetypes may have abilities that could easily become talents.

When going this route, the GM should avoid archetypes that modify what proficiencies a fighter begins with or how many skill points it gains per level, as these archetypes are likely altering the basic nature of the fighter. But for those that simply offer abilities that replace a bonus feat, bravery, armor training, or weapon training, it's generally appropriate and balanced to turn those into fighter talents or (if gained at higher level) advanced or grand fighter talents.

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