



d20 SKILLS-N-FEATS MARTIAL ARTS SYSTEM (VERSION 2.1)

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Introduction

d20 Skill-n-Feats Martial Arts System is a comprehensive martial arts system for use with the Sleeping Imperium d20 Campaign setting, created by Kenneth S. Hood.

The d20 rules for the system are provided in generic terms so that you may implement in settings besides the Sleeping Imperium. The rules are *not* appropriate for all settings. Only settings with ubiquitous martial arts, such as a Hong Kong movie genre, should use these rules.

The rules for this system are a departure from the d20 norm, so they should be applied with care to any pre-existing settings. The unique features of this system include:

- An “entry-level” feat that permits a character to acquire a generic martial arts skill.
- A generic martial arts skill that does not function like a standard skill. Each rank acquired gives the character a new, discrete martial arts ability.
- “Mini-feats” that represent discrete martial arts abilities.
- Feats that represent more comprehensive martial arts abilities.

The abilities provided by this system are not supernatural in scope and attempt to model “real-life” martial arts in an object-oriented, modular approach. With a little forethought, you should be able to use this system to create any martial arts style in d20 rules, even various non-Asian street-fighting, fencing, and wrestling styles.

In the Sleeping Imperium, the ultimate goal of martial arts is to develop the practitioner’s internal, spiritual power and perform extraordinary, sometimes superhuman feats. To this end, these rules are intended to integrate with the rules module, *d20 Skill-n-Feats Psionics System*, and permit a martial artist to acquire special combat-oriented psionic abilities, such as the ability to leap almost as if flying or deliver blows that shatter steel.

This document assumes that you are using *The Grim-n-Gritty Hit Point and Combat Rules*, by Kenneth S. Hood. These rules provide some variants that make combat much more deadly for characters and creatures in your campaign setting. They are available for free from The Sleeping Imperium web site at <http://sleepingimperium.rpghost.com>. If you are not using the Grim-n-Gritty rules, some slight conversions may be necessary to use these martial arts rules in your game.

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The System

This martial arts system is designed as a modular plug-in for the d20 system. Instead of using feats alone to enhance a character's combat ability, this system uses a combination of a skill and feats to increase a character's battle options. At more advanced levels, it integrates with the psionic powers described in *d20 Skill-n-Feats Psionics System* to permit supernatural martial arts abilities.

The Basic Assumption

These rules assume that martial arts are commonly encountered in the campaign setting. (You may not necessarily have a *wuxia* setting, but martial arts permeate the culture.) It assumes that the more spiritual aspects of martial arts, such as harnessing one's *ki* or *chi*, are attempts to develop latent psionic abilities through rigorous physical and mental disciplines. The more fantastic feats of martial arts are expressions of psionic potential.

Attributes of the System

Modularity and Generality

This d20 martial arts system is modular and general enough that it should permit you to create just about any martial arts style in the "real world." You are not limited to Asian martial arts, like kung fu or karate. Through judicious use of this system, you could create fencing or savate schools, Greek wrestling or modern-day groundfighting techniques. These rules make the basic assumption that *any* system of fighting, from street brawling to jujitsu, is a martial art.

Not a Universal System

This system is not appropriate for every game setting. If you are playing in a Chinese or Japanese setting, then they should work fine. If your setting is heavily oriented to the martial arts, like a Hong Kong cyberpunk game or a modern-day spy campaign, they'll work well, too. Generally, a High Fantasy campaign setting will not work very well with these rules.

This system "atomizes" the fighting arts and adds an additional layer of detail to the d20 combat system. In some ways, it is more cinematic than standard d20. In others, it is more realistic. If you do not wish to deal with the additional detail, then these rules are not for you. If you feel that feats alone account for all the combat abilities of highly trained warriors, then these rules are likewise not for you.

Let the needs of your campaign setting determine the integration of these rules into it.

Excluded Core Rules Feats

If you are using these rules, you should *not* use the following core feats: Deflect Arrows, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, and Stunning Fist. These feats are replaced by several martial arts Maneuvers.

How It Works

To acquire martial arts abilities, a character must have the feat, *Initiation into the Way*. This feat is an "entry level" feat. It permits a character to purchase the skill, *Technique*.

Depending on the character's class, the Technique skill can be developed as a class or cross-class skill. For each rank gained in this skill, a character learns a single martial arts *Maneuver*.

A Maneuver is similar to a feat, but more limited in scope. Each Maneuver represents a particular action the character can perform in combat, a special combat-related ability, or a bonus to a particular die-roll or attribute in combat. "Mundane" by nature, maneuvers represent non-supernatural, non-extraordinary combat abilities acquired by focused and intelligent training.

Maneuvers vary in complexity and power. Some of the more powerful maneuvers have weaker maneuvers as prerequisites. By developing a "tree" of abilities, a character can gain extremely potent and flexible combat abilities.

As a character's Technique skill increases, he may become eligible for special martial arts feats. These feats further enhance a character's combat power, but do not provide supernatural or extraordinary abilities.

For a character that possesses Psionic Talent and modicum of skill in Metabolic Control or Extrasensory Perception, a high rank in Martial Arts grants access to advanced martial arts feats. These feats combine psionic and physical discipline to enable the character to perform extraordinary, sometimes superhuman acts. Achievement of advanced martial arts feats represents the pinnacle of spiritual and physical development in the martial arts.

The psionic, advanced martial arts feats are considered outside the scope of this rules module. They are contained in *d20 Skill-n-Feats Psionics System*, available from The Sleeping Imperium web-site at <http://sleepingimperium.rpgghost.com>.

A Final Note

Should you decide to implement these rules in your setting, make sure that they are available to *all* characters that are willing to make the investment in time and effort to learn them. Providing them for a tiny segment of the campaign population can create a serious rules imbalance if everyone else uses standard d20 combat feats. These rules are intended to be a fundamental aspect of a campaign.

The Entry Level Feat

To acquire martial arts abilities in this system, you must first purchase the feat, *Initiation into the Way*.

Initiation into the Way [General Feat]

You have found a master to teach you the martial arts, acquired membership in a school of advanced combat techniques, become part of a monastic organization dedicated to the martial arts, or some other event that has placed you on the path to martial arts knowledge.

Prerequisites: None.

Normal: A character that does not have Initiation into the Way cannot purchase the Technique skill.

Benefit: You may purchase the Technique skill as a class or cross-class skill, depending on your class. This permits you to learn a wide variety of martial arts maneuvers.

Furthermore, some slight side benefit and personal duty should be gained as a result of membership in your school or relationship to your master. This is a role-playing aspect of this feat.

Initiation into the Way Example...

Wu has become a member of the Six Lethal Poisons Clan, permitting him to learn their secret and deadly martial arts techniques. As a member of the clan, he can expect hospitality from clan-members wherever he travels. However, he is expected to reciprocate.

Initiation into the Way Example...

Jack has found an old (and most likely insane) man who wishes to teach him the “sweet science.” His teacher can provide training for free in a wide variety of skills, as long as Jack does not mind the constant foul-mouthed criticism. The old man might also pull Jack’s fat out of the fire should Jack get in trouble during a battle, but only after the old man feels Jack has had a significant learning experience (i.e., gets beaten within an inch of his life).

In return for this generous instruction, the old man demands Jack cook and clean for him. He also expects Jack to take him everywhere Jack goes.

And foot the bill.

And carry the luggage....

The Skill

Technique is the skill associated with this martial arts system. For each rank you gain in Technique, you learn a single new martial arts Maneuver. You can learn the Technique skill after you acquire the “entry level” feat, *Initiation into the Way*.

If you use the core classes, Technique is a class skill for fighters, monks, and rogues. All other classes, particularly spell-casting classes, must develop it as a cross-class skill.

Technique [None; Trained Only]

Prerequisite: Initiation into the Way (feat).

Technique represents the breadth and depth of your knowledge of the martial arts. The more Technique you possess, the greater the number and power of martial arts maneuvers you know.

The Technique skill does not work like a standard skill. Its closest relative amongst the core skills is Speak Language, which allows you to learn a new language every time you spend points upon that skill. With the Technique skill, you do not perform skill checks. There is nothing to roll for success or failure. Instead, each time you acquire a rank in Technique, you learn a new martial arts *maneuver*.

The Technique skill is similar to the Perform skill. For each rank you acquire in Perform, you learn a new form of performance (e.g., ballad, chant, dance, and trumpet). For each rank you gain in Technique, you gain a new maneuver.

A maneuver represents a specific move or countermove you can perform in combat. Each maneuver is discrete, limited in scope. They provide no supernatural powers, but they do increase your options in combat. Some maneuvers will allow you perform new and more effective attacks, others provide defensive options, and still others grant you a bonus to some saving throw or dice roll. Maneuvers are like limited feats.

For each rank in Technique you possess, you may learn *one* maneuver. You learn a maneuver immediately upon acquiring a new rank. You can not save up “undedicated” ranks in Technique.

Note: You may purchase ranks in Technique only if you have the Initiation into the Way feat. For the core classes, Technique is a class skill for fighters and monks; all other core classes must purchase it as a cross-class skill.

Technique Example...

Jack is a 13th level monk and possesses 16 ranks in Technique. This means that he knows sixteen maneuvers. Upon acquiring 14th level, he buys another rank in Technique, for a rank of 17. He gains a new, seventeenth maneuver.

Technique as Knowledge: The Technique skill can also function as a Knowledge skill. You can use it to recognize other martial artist’s style, the specific maneuvers they use, and the counters for those maneuvers. You can use it to recognize prominent martial artists in your campaign setting, as well as major schools of martial arts. For this use (and this type of use only), Technique is based on INT.

The Maneuvers

Maneuvers are like mini-feats. They give you a discrete ability that you can use under specific circumstances. The ability you acquire from a particular Maneuver could be a more powerful offensive attack, a special defensive trick, or a bonus to a die roll. Usually, that circumstance is when you wield a Martial Arts Weapon.

Each time you gain a rank in Technique, you learn a new maneuver. If you acquire the feat, Bonus Maneuvers, you can learn two new maneuvers at once.

Martial Arts Weapons...

Many times in these rules, the use of a Martial Arts Weapon is necessary to gain the benefits of a Maneuver or martial arts feat. Martial Arts Weapons should not be confused with *martial weapons*, a particular category of proficiency.

A Martial Arts Weapon is a weapon associated with your martial arts technique. A simple, martial, or exotic weapon can be a Martial Arts Weapon. A weapon becomes a Martial Arts Weapon when you purchase the Martial Arts Weapon Maneuver and designate that weapon. (It is a purely artificial device intended to add some balance to this system.)

To have your unarmed body designated as a Martial Arts Weapon, you must purchase the Maneuver, *Unarmed Combat Expert*.

Block

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: Once per round, you can attempt to block a melee attack that would have normally hit you. To do so, the following requirements must be met:

- You are not flat-footed, stunned, held, entangled, or in any other situation that causes you to lose your Dexterity modifier to AC (if any).
- You are wielding a Martial Arts Weapon.
- You are aware of the attack you wish to block and can clearly perceive it with a primary, targeting sense, like sight for a human. (It is not possible for you to block attacks from invisible opponents or in total darkness, if you have no extraordinary means of detecting the attack.)

If you meet the criteria, you perform a contested Attack roll against your opponent. Both your opponent and you use your full Attack value for the roll. If you roll higher than your opponent and higher than DC 15, the attack is blocked and you suffer no damage. (A critical hit by your opponent increases the DC by +10.)

Touch Attacks: Touch attacks may not be Blocked.

Exception: If you have an ability that lets you retain your Dexterity bonus while flat-footed, such as Uncanny Dodge, then you may Block while flat-footed.

Flanking: You may not Block blows from an opponent that has flanked you.

Block Example...

Jane rolls to hit Jack with her scimitar. Her attack roll succeeds. Jack decides to block the attack.

Jack and Jane now perform opposed Attack rolls. Jane has a total Attack bonus of +7. She rolls a 12, giving her a result of 19.

Jack has a total Attack bonus of +8. He rolls a 14, which gives him 22 for his result. Since this is higher than Jane's 19 and higher than DC 15, Jack blocks Jane's blow.

If Jane had initially rolled a critical hit with her scimitar, Jack would have to roll higher than Jane and higher than 25 to block the shot.

Blood Choke

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Grappling Expertise, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: A Blood Choke lets you grapple an opponent and establish a hold that cuts off the flow of blood to the brain. In a matter of seconds, your opponent is rendered unconscious.

While grappling (regardless of who started the grapple), you can make an opposed grapple check with a -4 penalty, as an attack. If you win the grapple check, you have initiated the Blood Choke. You inflict your standard unarmed damage against your target.

If you can maintain the choke for an entire round, at the start of your next turn, your opponent must make a Constitution check v. DC 10. If your opponent fails the check, he falls comatose from lack of blood to the brain.

The victim remains comatose as long as you maintain the Blood Choke. Once you release the hold, blood

begins to flow normally to the brain, and your victim awakens in 1d3 rounds.

The DC of the victim's Constitution check increases by +1 per additional round you maintain the Blood Choke. If your target escapes or you release the hold, even for a single round, the DC drops back to 10.

Constructs, oozes, plants, undead, incorporeal creatures, creatures immune to critical hits, and creatures without a circulatory system or centralized brain functions cannot be affected by a Blood Choke.

Limitation: Initiating a Blood Choke is the *only* attack action you can perform in a round. You cannot perform a Full Attack action and a Blood Choke at the same time.

Comatose Condition: Comatose creatures are helpless. Slapping or wounding awakens a comatose character, but normal noise does not. Awakening a creature is a standard action (an application of the aid other action).

Reality Check: It *is* realistic for a person to die, in a short period of time, from a lack of blood flow to the brain. In the Real World, it takes around six seconds.

This may be realistic, but it is also overwhelming in a role-playing game context. To preserve a degree of balance and fun, Blood Chokes do not kill your opponents — at least not immediately.

Blood Choke Example...

Jane and Jack are grappling. Jane attempts a Blood Choke against Jack.

She rolls an opposed grapple check with a –4 penalty as an attack against Jack. Her result is a 21. Jack rolls only a 15. Jane wins and starts the Blood Choke. Immediately, this inflicts her standard unarmed damage against Jack.

It is now Jack's turn. He starts to feel light-headed and decides it's time to perform an escape. He makes an opposed grapple check against Jane, but fails.

The round ends. Jane's next turn arrives. Jack must make a Constitution check against DC 10. He succeeds in the check and manages to stay conscious – at least until Jane's next turn.

Jane decides to maintain the Blood Choke. Since she already has Jack in the hold, she uses her action this round to damage him with an opposed grapple check. She fails her roll.

Jack attempts to escape again. He fails the opposed grapple check against Jane.

The round ends. Jane's next turn arrives. Since Jane has maintained the Blood Choke for a round, the DC of Jack's Constitution check increases by +1 to 11. He rolls his Constitution check and fails, passing out in Jane's arms.

Bonus Attack of Opportunity

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 7+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you gain one additional attack of opportunity per round.

This Maneuver stacks with the attacks of opportunity gained from the Combat Reflexes feat.

Break Weapon

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 6+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: While wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you can attempt to break an opponent's weapon or shield without provoking an attack of opportunity. You may also attempt to break a weapon of any size.

Catch Weapon

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 13+, Block, Combination (Block and Grapple), Expert Disarm, Grappling Expertise, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: The Catch Weapon Maneuver allows you to Block an opponent's attack, grab his weapon, and hold it by the striking surface. This Maneuver allows you to perform the martial arts movie cliché of catching an opponent's sword by clapping it between your hands.

Catch Weapon is difficult and dangerous (not to mention complex in rule mechanics). If you fail to perform the maneuver properly, you will most likely be damaged by your opponent's weapon. The reward of this maneuver: if you do succeed, your opponent cannot use his weapon; he must try to wrench it free or relinquish it, and as long as you hold his weapon, you have a tactical advantage on your attacks against him.

In place of a standard Block attempt, you may try to block a melee attack that would have normally hit you and catch your opponent's weapon. To do so, you must meet the following requirements:

- You are not flat-footed, stunned, held, or any other condition that causes you to lose your Dexterity modifier to AC (if any).
- You must be wielding two Martial Arts Weapons or wielding a Martial Arts Weapon designed to catch other weapons (like a jitte or sai). If you are an Unarmed Combat Expert, you have two hands free to perform a Catch Weapon maneuver, or you have a Martial Arts Weapon in one hand and the other hand is free.
- You must be aware of the attack you wish to Block and catch. You must be able to perceive the attack with your primary, targeting sense. (This is sight for humans.)
- Your opponent must not be invisible or concealed.

If these criteria are met, you perform a Catch Weapon Maneuver. The Maneuver has three steps:

1. Block the attack.
2. Grab the weapon.
3. Hold the weapon.

Step 1 – Block the Attack: You perform a Block, per its normal rules. The DC of the Block increases by +5. If the Block succeeds, you proceed to Step 2.

Step 2 – Grab the Weapon: Make an opposed attack roll against your target. If the weapons used by your opponent and you are different sizes, the combatant with the larger weapon gains a +4 bonus on the opposed attack roll for each difference in size category. If you are unarmed, the defender gains a +4 bonus on the roll.

If you win the opposed roll, you have grabbed your opponent's weapon. You proceed to Step 3.

Step 3 – Hold the Weapon: You performed an opposed grapple check against your opponent. If the weapons used by your opponent and you are different sizes, the combatant with the larger weapon gains a +4 bonus on the opposed grapple roll for each difference in size category. If the defender wields his weapon with two hands, he adds another +4 bonus to the grapple check. If you are unarmed, the defender gains another +4 bonus on the roll.

If you lose this grapple check, you are automatically damaged by your opponent's weapon. The damage equals the weapon's base damage with all bonuses inherent to the weapon. No damage bonuses inherent to the wielder of the weapon are applied. For example, the wielder's Strength and specialization damage bonuses are not applied.

If you win the grapple check, you have caught your opponent's weapon and immobilize it.

Effects of a Successful Catch: Upon immobilizing your opponent's weapon, the following effects take place:

- Neither you, nor your opponent can move.
- Neither you, nor your opponent threaten an area.
- Both you and your opponent lose any Dexterity bonus to AC against foes not engaged in the weapon catch.
- You cannot use the weapons and/or limbs that caught the weapon for anything other than holding the weapon.
- Your opponent cannot attack with the caught weapon.

Ending a Weapon Catch: As a free action, either you or your opponent can release the caught weapon. The person who releases the weapon provokes an attack of opportunity from the other person.

If you are unarmed and your opponent releases his weapon, you now have control over the weapon. It is in your possession, and you may use it. Otherwise, the weapon falls to the ground at your feet.

The defender may attempt wrench the weapon from your grasp. This requires an opposed grapple check using the same modifiers as Step 3, above. If the defender wins, the weapon is pulled from your grasp. Regardless of the result of this attempt, it permits an attack of opportunity against the defender.

Catch Weapon and Deflect Projectile: If you know both Catch Weapon and Deflect Projectile, you can attempt to catch projectiles fired at you. The +5 DC modifier of the Catch Weapon attempt stacks with the +5 DC modifier of the Deflect Projectile for purposes of the Block in Step 1.

In Step 2, you use your Dexterity modifier, instead of Strength, for the opposed Attack roll.

You do not perform Step 3. Success in Step 2 means you have caught the projectile. Failure in Step 2 means the projectile has automatically damaged you.

If you do catch a projectile, you may hurl it back at your opponent as an attack of opportunity.

Logically, neither you nor your opponent are immobilized when you catch a projectile. Besides permitting you to hurl the projectile as an attack of opportunity, there are no additional effects to catching a projectile.

Catch Weapon Example...

Jane strikes at Jack with a dagger. The attack hits, so Jack decides to perform the Catch Weapon maneuver.

He makes an opposed attack roll against Jane. His result is 21. Jane's result is 18. Since Jack rolled higher than Jane and higher than DC 20 (DC 15 for the Block, +5 for the Catch Weapon Maneuver), he blocks her attack and proceeds to Step 2 – Grab the Weapon.

Jack and Jane make another opposed attack roll. Jack is unarmed, and Jane has a small weapon. This gives her a +4 bonus to her roll. Jane rolls a 23, but Jack gets a 25. He wins and proceeds to Step 3 – Hold the Weapon.

Jack and Jane make another opposed grapple check. Jane gains a +4 bonus on the roll because she wields a weapon while Jack is unarmed. She rolls poorly, getting a 15. Jack manages to roll 16. He has caught the weapon.

Jane realizes she's in a bad position. She releases her dagger as a free action.

Jack now has the dagger in his possession. He gets an attack of opportunity against Jane and may use the dagger if he wishes.

Combination

A Combination allows you to perform a second, related attack-type action as an attack of opportunity if you succeed in performing a previous, prerequisite action. For instance, if you successfully Block an opponent's attack, you may strike that opponent as an attack of opportunity.

To perform a Combination, you must wield a Martial Arts Weapon.

Several different Combinations exist. Each must be purchased separately. The different Combinations are as follows:

Block and Grapple

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Block, Grappling Expertise, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully Block a melee attack, you may – as an attack of opportunity – immediately initiate a grapple against the opponent you Blocked.

Block and Strike

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 7+, Block, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully Block a melee attack, you may – as an attack of opportunity – perform a standard melee attack against the opponent you blocked.

Catch and Break Weapon

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 14+, Block, Break Weapon, Catch Weapon, Combination (Block and Grapple), Expert Disarm, Grappling Expertise, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully perform the Catch Weapon maneuver, you may – as an attack of opportunity – attack the weapon you caught and attempt to break it.

Catch Weapon and Throw Opponent

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 14+, Block, Catch Weapon, Combination (Block and Grapple), Expert Disarm, Grappling Expertise, Throw, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully perform the Catch Weapon maneuver, you may – as an attack of opportunity – attempt to throw the opponent whose weapon you caught.

Disarm and Grapple

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Expert Disarm, Grappling Expertise, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully disarm an opponent, you may – as an attack of opportunity – initiate a grapple against that opponent.

Disarm and Strike

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Expert Disarm, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully disarm an opponent, you may – as an attack of opportunity – perform a standard melee attack against the opponent you disarmed.

Grapple and Strike

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Grappling Expertise, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully initiate a grapple against an opponent, you may – as an attack of opportunity – perform a standard melee attack against that opponent.

Strike and Escape

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 6+, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: While grappling (regardless of who started the grapple), if you succeed in a standard melee attack against your opponent or an opposed grapple check as an attack to damage your opponent, you may immediately perform an escape as an attack of opportunity.

Trip and Strike

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully trip or Sweep an opponent, you may – as an attack of opportunity – perform a standard melee attack against that opponent.

Counter-throw

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Grappling Expertise, Throw, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If an enemy initiates a Throw against you, gets as far as Step 2 or Step 3, and fails to Throw you, you may perform a Throw against your enemy as an attack of opportunity.

Defensive Stance

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: You are specially trained in evading blows in combat. Your training could be from any one of a multitude of sources, such as a drunken fighting style, animal-like techniques, a hypnotic movement of the body, or incredible parrying ability.

Possession of this maneuver grants you a stackable +1 dodge bonus to AC while using a Martial Arts Weapon.

Any condition that causes you to lose your Dexterity bonus to AC (if any), also causes the loss of this dodge bonus.

Because Defensive Stance relies on freedom of movement, it grants no AC bonus if you suffer a movement penalty due to armor worn or items carried.

Special: You may purchase Defensive Stance up to five times. Each time you purchase it, your Dodge bonus increases by +1, up to a maximum of +5. The Technique rank prerequisite for the Maneuver increases with each purchase after the first. See table MN-1, below.

Table MN-1: Defensive Stance Prerequisites

Defensive Stance Bonus	Required Technique Rank
+1	1 or more
+2	3 or more
+3	5 or more
+4	7 or more
+5	9 or more

For example, if you wish to purchase Defensive Stance a second time for a total dodge bonus of +2, you must have a Technique rank of at least 3. To purchase Defensive Stance five times and achieve the maximum dodge bonus of +5, you must have already purchased the Maneuver four times and have a Technique rank of 9 or more.

Exception: If you have a special ability that permits you to retain your Dexterity bonus while flat-footed, such as Uncanny Dodge, you also retain your Defensive Stance dodge bonus while flat-footed.

Deflect Projectile

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Block, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: Possession of this Maneuver improves your Block Maneuver, allowing you to Block a muscle or mechanically propelled ranged attack. Hurlled knives and axes, sling stones, arrows, crossbow bolts, and similar "slow" projectiles may be blocked, but not firearm bullets, plasma bolts, lasers, and the like.

The mechanics of the Deflect Projectile Maneuver are like those of Block, except the DC increases by +5. Use of Deflect Projectile counts as a use of the Block Maneuver.

Enhanced Disarm

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Expert Disarm, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapons, you gain a +4 bonus to opposed attack rolls for determining the success of a disarm attempt.

Enhanced Escape

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you gain a +4 bonus on grapple checks for the purpose of escaping, only.

Enhanced Grapple

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you gain a +4 bonus on grapple checks to initiate and maintain a grapple, lock, or pin. The bonus does not apply to escaping a grapple, lock, or pin.

Enhanced Push

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you gain a bonus equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ your Technique rank or +4 (whichever is higher) to Strength checks when you perform a Push or bull's rush.

Enhanced Strike

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: You are trained in striking with great force, increasing the damage inflicted with weapons associated with your martial arts style.

Possession of this maneuver grants a +1 bonus to damage while using a martial arts weapon.

Special: You may purchase Enhanced Strike up to five times. Each time you purchase it, your damage bonus increases by +1, up to a maximum of +5. The Technique rank prerequisite for the Maneuver increases with each purchase after the first. See table MN-2, below.

Table MN-2: Enhanced Strike Prerequisites

Defensive Stance Bonus	Required Technique Rank
+1	1 or more
+2	3 or more
+3	5 or more
+4	7 or more
+5	9 or more

For example, if you wish to purchase Enhanced Strike a second time for a total damage bonus of +2, you must have a Technique rank of at least 3. To purchase Enhanced Strike five times and achieve the maximum damage bonus of +5, you must have already purchased the Maneuver four times and have a Technique rank of 9 or more.

Enhanced Throw

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, Throw, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapon and performing a Throw, you gain a +4 bonus on grapple checks to resolve the Throw.

Enhanced Trip

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you gain a bonus on Strength checks for purposes of tripping. The bonus equals +4 or ½ your Technique rank, whichever is higher.

Expert Disarm

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you can disarm an opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Extra Strike

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: The Extra Strike maneuver permits you to perform one extra attack per round while wielding a *single, light* Martial Arts Weapon.

The extra attack uses your highest base Attack bonus, but this attack and every other attack made during the round of the Extra Strike suffers a –2 penalty. For example, if you can normally make two attacks in a round at +8/+3, you can use Extra Strike to perform three attacks at +6/+6/+1.

Only standard melee attacks may be performed with the Extra Strike maneuver.

If you wield two (or more weapons), you may not use this Maneuver.

If you are an Unarmed Combat Expert and wielding a single, light Martial Arts Weapon, your Extra Strike can either be a blow with your weapon or an unarmed attack.

Flying Strike

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Jump 8+ ranks, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: A Flying Strike works like a charge, except the damage is increased. While wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you charge an opponent and leap, striking with all your momentum in a single, powerful blow.

A Flying Strike is a standard action. The mechanics are as follows:

Movement during a Flying Strike: You must move before your attack, not after. You must move at least 10 feet and may move up to double your normal speed. All movement must be in a straight line, with no backing up allowed. You must stop as soon as you are within striking distance of your target. You cannot run past him and attack from another direction.

While moving you must Jump, per the skill. This Jump must end within striking distance of your opponent.

Attacking: After moving and jumping, you may make a single melee attack. You get a +2 bonus on the Attack roll, because of your increased momentum, but you also suffer a –2 penalty on your AC for 1 round.

If the attack hits, you double the damage dice rolled on the attack. For instance, if you are using a great sword with 2d6 dice of damage, you would inflict 4d6 damage + any modifiers with a Flying Strike.

Even if you have extra attacks, such as those gained from a high Base Attack Bonus or the use of multiple weapons, you may only make one attack during a Flying Strike.

Weapons Readied against a Flying Strike: Just like a charge, spears, tridents, and similar piercing weapons deal double damage when readied and used against a Flying Strike.

Not Grim-n-Gritty: If you are not using the *Grim-n-Gritty Hit Point and Combat Rules*, all damage is doubled with a Flying Strike, not just the damage dice of the weapon.

Forceful Blow

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 10+, Enhanced Strike, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: A Forceful Blow is a powerful, focused strike that can knock down and daze an opponent.

A Forceful Blow is a standard action. A Martial Arts Weapon must be used to perform this Maneuver.

Should a Forceful Blow hit a target, the damage dice for the attack are doubled. For example, if you wield a long sword with 1d8 damage dice, you roll 2d8 with a Forceful Blow.

Not only is the damage of the attack increased, your target must perform a Fortitude saving throw against a DC equal to 10 + your Strength modifier + ½ your Technique rank. If this saving throw is failed, the target is *stunned* for one round.

Furthermore, the Forceful Blow might knock down your target. This requires a second saving throw, using Reflexes against a DC of 10 + your Strength modifier + your Technique rank. If your target fails this save, he is knocked prone.

Even if you have extra attacks, such as those gained from a high Base Attack Bonus or the use of multiple weapons, you may only make one attack per round when using a Forceful Blow.

Not Grim-n-Gritty: If you are not using the *Grim-n-Gritty Hit Point and Combat Rules*, all damage is doubled with a Forceful Blow, not just the damage dice of the weapon.

Grappling Expertise

Prerequisite: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: You can initiate a grapple or Throw without provoking an attack of opportunity from your target.

This Maneuver can be used while you are unarmed or wielding a light Martial Arts Weapon.

Grappling Expertise requires freedom of movement, so if you suffer a movement penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you gain no benefit from it.

Reality Check: It is realistic for martial artists to use larger weapons, like a staff or flail, for grappling. This is permitted under these rules, but in order to do so, you must first acquire the Grapple with Larger Weapons feat.

Greater Throw

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Throw, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: A Greater Throw is an improved throwing technique that allows you to hurl an opponent long distances.

A Greater Throw is a standard action. It is the only attack you can perform in a round, even if you normally

have multiple attacks due to a high Base Attack Bonus and the like.

The mechanics of this Maneuver are the same as those for a Throw. The difference is that your target is hurled 5' + 1' for every point you beat him on the grapple check. Your target suffers damage equal to your standard unarmed damage and also suffers falling damage equal to the distance he was thrown.

Ground and Pound

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, Grappling Expertise and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: While you are pinned or pinning an opponent, you can attack normally with a light Martial Arts Weapon. You cannot perform attacks that require a wide range of movement, like a Forceful Blow or Flying Strike, but you can Nerve Strike or even Throw your target. (A Throw is an effective means of ending a pin.)

To Ground and Pound, you must wield a Martial Arts Weapon. Also, you must suffer no movement or Dexterity penalties from armor worn or items carried.

Improved Iterative Attacks

Prerequisites: base Attack bonus 4+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 7+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: When wielding a single, *light* Martial Arts Weapon, you can perform more attacks per round than normal.

The exact amount of extra attacks depends on your Base Attack Bonus. Compare your Base Attack Bonus to table MN-3 to get your improved rate.

Table MN-3: Improved Attack Rates

Base Attack Bonus	Improved Attack Rate
+4	+4/+1
+5	+5/+2
+6/+1	+6/+3
+7/+2	+7/+4/+1
+8/+3	+8/+5/+2
+9/+4	+9/+6/+3
+10/+5	+10/+7/+4/+1
+11/+6/+1	+11/+8/+5/+2
+12/+7/+2	+12/+9/+6/+3
+13/+8/+3	+13/+10/+7/+4/+1
+14/+9/+4	+14/+11/+8/+5/+2
+15/+10/+5	+15/+12/+9/+6/+3
+16/+11/+6/+1	+16/+13/+10/+7/+4
+17/+12/+7/+2	+17/+14/+11/+8/+5
+18/+13/+8/+3	+18/+15/+12/+9/+6
+19/+14/+9/+4	+19/+16/+13/+10/+7
+20/+15/+10/+5	+20/+17/+14/+11/+8

For example, a character with a Base Attack Bonus of +7/+2 would be able to perform three attacks per round

(+7/+4/+1) if she knew this Maneuver and used a single, light Martial Arts Weapon.

If you are wielding two or more weapons, you do not gain the benefits of this Maneuver.

Also, if you suffer a movement penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you may not use your improved attack rate.

Larger Weapons: If you take the feat, *Improved Iterative Attacks with Larger Weapons*, you may use your improved attack rate with any *one-handed* Martial Arts Weapon.

Instant Stand

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: You can stand up as a free action, usually by performing a flip kick or roll.

Freedom of movement is necessary to use this Maneuver. If you suffer a Dexterity or movement penalty due to armor worn and items carried, then you cannot use Instant Stand.

Lock

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Grappling Expertise, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: While grappling (regardless of who started the grapple), you can make an opposed grapple check with a -4 penalty as an attack. If you win, you immobilize one of your opponent's limbs for each limb you are willing to have immobilized yourself. (For instance, you could choose to immobilize both of your opponent's arms by sacrificing an arm and a leg.) Your opponent's limbs are immobilized until he performs a successful escape.

Martial Arts Weapon

Prerequisite: Initiation into the Way and proficiency with selected weapon.

Description: This maneuver allows you to associate a particular melee weapon with your martial arts style. Whenever you use this weapon, you can also perform your martial arts Maneuvers with it, such as a Block, Enhanced Strike, or Nerve Strike. Only weapons chosen as Martial Arts Weapons can be used with these techniques.

If the weapon is light -- such as a baton or dagger -- it can be used for grappling maneuvers. Also, flexible weapons, such as a flail or chain, may be used for grappling.

In order for your body (i.e., unarmed) to be considered a Martial Arts Weapon, Unarmed Combat Expert must be purchased.

Nerve Strike

A Nerve Strike trains you to strike particular pressure points on your opponent's body and cause a specific neurological response, like intense pain or unconsciousness.

Several types of Nerve Strike exist, but all share the same mechanic: you must perform an Attack roll with -4 penalty against your opponent. If the attack rolls hits, you inflict your normal damage. Also, your opponent must make a Fortitude saving throw against a DC equal to 10 + one-half of your Technique rank + your Wisdom modifier. If your opponent fails the saving throw, the Nerve Strike's additional effect takes place.

To perform a Nerve Strike, you must wield a Martial Arts Weapon.

You may only perform one Nerve Strike per round, even if you know many different Nerve Strikes. If you have multiple attacks per round from a high Base Attack Bonus, dual weapons, and the like, you may perform one Nerve Strike and several standard strikes. The intent to perform a Nerve Strike must be declared *before* you roll the Attack dice; if the attack misses, you waste your Nerve Strike attempt for the round.

Constructs, oozes, plants, undead, incorporeal creatures, creatures without a nervous system, and creatures immune to critical hits cannot be affected by a nerve strike. You cannot perform a nerve strike on concealed, invisible, blurred, and the like targets, nor can you perform a nerve strike while blinded or in total darkness. You must be able to clearly perceive your opponent and target her pressure points to use this ability.

Several different types of Nerve Strike exist. Each different Nerve Strike must be purchased separately. Also, to purchase a specific Nerve Strike, you must meet all of its prerequisites. The different strikes are listed below.

Blindness/Deafness

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 10+, Nerve Strike (Stun), and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: This nerve strike blinds or deafens the victim for 2d4 rounds on a failed saving throw. You chose whether the strike will blind or deafen before the attack is made.

Disable Limb

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 6+, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If the target of this nerve strike fails her saving throw, one of her limbs is paralyzed for 2d6 rounds. You choose the limb affected before the attack is made. If the limb is holding an item, that item is dropped.

Long-term Nervous System Damage

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 12+, Nerve Strike (Pain), Nerve Strike (Stun), and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: This Nerve Strike causes 1d4 temporary ability damage if the target fails his saving throw. This simulates damage to the target's nervous system.

For example, the strike can cause facial ticks and slurred speech to reduce an opponent's Charisma, tremors to reduced Dexterity, cramping and general illness to reduce Constitution, weakness to reduce Strength, misfiring brain neurons to reduce Intelligence, and general euphoria to reduce Wisdom.

The ability score affected is chosen before the strike is performed.

Pain

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 10+, Nerve Strike (Stun), and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: On a failed saving throw, this Nerve Strike stuns an opponent for one round and causes intense pain for 1d4 rounds. The pain reduces the victim's Dexterity by 2 points and imposes a -4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks. To perform any action that requires concentration (e.g., casting spells, using psionics), the victim must make a Concentration roll v. DC 15 while affected by this nerve strike.

Paralysis

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 15+, Nerve Strike (Pain), Nerve Strike (Stun), and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If the victim of this nerve strike fails her saving throw, she is paralyzed for 1d6 rounds.

Pleasure

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 13+, Nerve Strike (Stun), and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: The mechanics of the Pleasure Nerve Strike are similar to the Pain Nerve Strike, but instead of excruciating, burning pain, the victim experiences an overwhelming pleasure stimulus.

A failed saving throw stuns the opponent for one round and leaves them in a dizzy, euphoric state for 1d4 rounds thereafter. This euphoria reduces the victim's Dexterity, Intelligence, and Wisdom by 2 points each. It imposes a -4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks. To perform any action that requires concentration (e.g., casting spells, using psionics), the victim must make a Concentration roll v. DC 18 while affected by this nerve strike.

Sickness

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 18+, Nerve Strike (Long-term Nervous System Damage), Nerve Strike (Pain), Nerve Strike (Stun), and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: The sickness strike overloads the target's nervous system, forcing his body to produce toxins and waste away. For the purpose of game mechanics, the strike acts as if it were a *disease*. The "incubation period" is one day. The DC of the "disease" is the Nerve Strike's DC. The disease's damage is 1d4 Constitution and 1d4 Dexterity. Damage from the "disease" is inflicted on a daily basis.

After the "incubation period" of the strike, the victim begins bleeding internally and shaking uncontrollably. This worsens until he dies from total organ failure.

Stun

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 3+, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: This nerve strike *stuns* an opponent for one round if he fails his saving throw.

Push

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: A Push functions like a bull rush, in that it moves your opponent backwards. Unlike a bull rush, you do not have to enter your opponent's space to perform a Push nor does you provoke an attack of opportunity.

To perform a Push, you must wield a Martial Arts Weapon.

A Push has three steps:

Step 1 — Melee Touch Attack: You must make a melee touch attack against the opponent your wish to Push.

Step 2 — Opposed Strength Check: If the melee touch attack succeeds, you and your opponent roll an opposed Strength check. Add +4 to the roll for each size category a character is above Medium-size. Penalize the roll by -4 for each size category a character is smaller than Medium-size. If a character has more than two legs, add a stability bonus of +4 to the roll.

Step 3 — Push: If you win the opposed Strength check, you push your opponent back five feet in a straight line.

Multiple Pushes: If you have multiple attacks per round from a high Base Attack Bonus, dual weapons, and the like, you may substitute one or more of your attacks for a Push.

Reverse Hold

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and either Grappling Expertise and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: If you successfully escape from a pin, hold, or lock while wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you may attempt — as an attack of opportunity — a pin, hold, or lock against the person you just escaped.

Roll with the Blow

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Tumbling rank 4+, Defensive Stance, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: Once per round, you can attempt to roll with the force of an attack struck you, reducing the damage from the blow.

The intent to Roll with the Blow is declared *after* it has been determined that an attack has struck you, either from a failed saving throw on your part or an opponent's successful Attack Roll. To roll with an attack, you must meet the following

Requirements:

- You are not flat-footed, stunned, held, or any other situation in which you lose your Dexterity modifier (if any) to AC.
- You are wielding a Martial Arts Weapon.
- You are aware of the attack with which you wish to roll. You can perceive the attack with your primary, targeting sense. (In other words, it is not possible to roll with attacks from invisible opponents.)

If these criteria are met, you perform a contested roll using your Tumbling skill against your opponent's full Attack value. If you roll higher than your opponent and higher than DC 15, you only suffer 1/2 damage from the attack.

You have full freedom of movement to use this Maneuver. If you suffer a movement or Dexterity penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you cannot Roll with the Blow.

Critical Hits: In the case of a critical hit, the DC increases by +10. Also, the damage is *not* halved. Rolling with a critical hit converts it back into a normal hit. (In the *Grim-n-Gritty Hit Point and Combat Rules*, this is an effective means of protecting yourself against Called Shots.)

Other Types of Attacks: If your GM permits, it is logical for you to be able to Roll with the Blow against magical and psionic kinetic or force-based attacks, like the *magic missile* or telekinesis.

Exception: If you possess an ability that allows you to retain your Dexterity bonus while flat-footed (like Uncanny Dodge), you can Roll with the Blow while flat-footed.

Roll and Block: You can Roll with the Blow and Block in the same round. You cannot roll with an attack

you failed to Block. You cannot roll with and Block the same attack.

Stable Footing

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: You are hard to knock off your feet.

You add a bonus of +4 or one-half your Technique rank (whichever is higher) to any rolls to resist being knocked down or pushed around, such as the opposed checks for a trip, Throw, Push, Sweep, or bull rush.

In order to gain this bonus, you must be able to move without restriction. If you suffer a movement penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you do not gain the benefit of this maneuver.

Sweep

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and either Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: The Sweep maneuver functions like a trip attempt. However, if you fail your Strength check to trip your target, your target does not get an attempt to trip you in return.

A Martial Arts Weapon must be used for this maneuver. Also, Sweep requires freedom of movement; if you suffer a movement penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you cannot perform this maneuver

Throw

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Description: You can use leverage to hurl an opponent to the ground.

The mechanics of a Throw are similar to grappling. There are three steps in the process:

Step 1 – Close with Target: You must close with your target and enter his occupied square. This provokes an attack of opportunity from your target. If that attack of opportunity deals damage, you fail to initiate the Throw.

Step 2 – Grab your Target: You perform a melee touch attack to grab your target and start the Throw. If you miss, you cannot Throw your target.

Step 3 – Throw your Target: If the melee touch attack succeeds, you and your target make an opposed grapple check. If you win the check, you Throw your target 5' in whatever direction you choose, inflicting your standard unarmed damage to your target and knocking him prone.

Limitation: You may only Throw an opponent who is one size category larger than you, the same size, or smaller.

Weapons and Throwing: Any light Martial Arts Weapon that can be reasonably used to grapple may also be used to Throw an opponent. If you know the

feat, Grapple with Larger Weapons, you may also use larger Martial Arts Weapons to Throw someone.

If you do Throw using a weapon, the damage inflicted equals your *unarmed* damage, not the damage of your weapon.

Unarmed Combat Expertise

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way.

Benefit: You have considerable training in unarmed combat and gain several advantages while fighting without a weapon:

- Your base, unarmed damage is 1d4.
- Your unarmed body is considered a *Martial Arts Weapon*.
- When attacking armed opponents while unarmed, you do not provoke attacks of opportunity.
- Your unarmed strikes may inflict normal or temporary (subdual) damage, as you desire without incurring a negative attack roll penalty.

The Feats

The following feats are Martial Arts feats. They require you to have the Initiation into the Way feat and at least a rank or two in Technique.

Acrobatic Fighting Style [Martial Arts]

You have combined tumbling and martial arts into a unique defensive style, allowing you to dodge blows with relative ease.

Several animal and drunken fighting techniques utilize acrobatic fighting style.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 6+, Tumble 6+, Defensive Stance, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Tumble rolls while wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, because acrobatic movements are incorporated into your fighting style. Also, when you perform the total defense standard action or fight defensively, you gain an additional +2 dodge bonus to AC.

To gain the benefits of this feat, your movement must be unrestricted. If you suffer a Dexterity or movement penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you gain no bonuses from this feat.

Army of One [Martial Arts]

You are specially trained to fight multiple opponents.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Wisdom 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Listen rank 4+, Spot rank 4+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Technique.

Benefit: You cannot be flanked. This feat denies others the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack you.

Exception: A rogue that is four or more levels higher than you can flank you.

Bonus Maneuvers [Martial Arts]

You excel in your martial arts training, increasing the breadth of your technique.

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: By taking this feat, you gain two bonus martial arts Maneuvers.

You may choose any two Maneuvers for which you meet the prerequisites without this feat. In other words, you may not pick a first Maneuver that permits you to qualify for the second Maneuver.

The bonus Maneuvers do not count towards your rank in the Technique skill.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time it is chosen, you gain two more maneuvers.

Countermove [Martial Arts]

You have mastered a style of reciprocal attacks. Whenever an opponent strikes you, you get an opportunity to strike them back.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 16+, base Attack bonus 4+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 13+, Block, Combination (Block and Strike), and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: Whenever anyone attacks you with a melee weapon (whether or not the attack hits or misses), they provoke an attack of opportunity from you.

You must wield a Martial Arts Weapon to gain the benefit of this feat. Also, if you suffer a movement penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you may not Countermove.

You may not Countermove while flat-footed or against opponents flanking you.

Grapple with Larger Weapons [Martial Arts]

You are trained to grapple with larger weapons, such as the staff or spear.

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Grappling Expertise, and Martial Arts Weapon.

Benefit: You may use *any* weapon you have selected as a Martial Arts Weapon to grapple or Throw an opponent.

Gun Fu [Martial Arts]

You can use a firearm as a martial arts weapon.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Firearm Proficiency, Gunslinging rank 8+, Initiation into the Way, and Technique rank 8+.

Benefit: You may treat any firearm (but not heavy weapon) as a Martial Arts Weapon. While wielding a firearm, you may use the following Maneuvers (and only these maneuvers):

- Bonus Attack of Opportunity
- Defensive Stance
- Instant Stand
- Roll with Blow
- Stable Footing

And you may use the following Martial Arts Feats (and only these feats):

- Acrobatic Fighting Style
- Army of One
- Lethal Anatomy
- Martial Defense
- Master of Defense
- Precision
- Prone Fighting
- Situational Awareness

The benefit of Gun Fu is that you gain a high degree of mobility while fighting with firearms.

Hidden Strike [Martial Arts]

You can conceal your intent to strike an opponent and deliver a quick, devastating blow without telegraphing your movement. This often catches your opponents off guard.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 16+, Wisdom 13+, base Attack bonus 1+, Quick Draw, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expert.

Benefit: A Hidden Strike is a standard action. Even if you gain multiple attacks per round from a high base Attack bonus or use of dual weapons, you may only perform one attack with a Hidden Strike. Even though it is a standard action, you can perform only a 5' step with a Hidden Strike.

To perform a Hidden Strike, you must be wielding a Martial Arts Weapon and have some means of hiding your weapon while still readying it. (For example, you could tuck your weapon under a cloak or stand in water, partially submerged it.) You and your opponent then make an opposed roll. If you win the roll, you catch your opponent flat-footed with your attack.

You can either use Bluff or your Technique rank + Dexterity modifier for the roll. Your opponent can use either Sense Motive or Technique rank + Wisdom modifier.

If your opponent does not feel threatened by you or is not actively engaged in combat with you, then you may perform a Hidden Strike with a sheathed weapon. It is not necessary to hide the weapon in this situation.

Hidden Strike Example...

Jane and Jack are dueling in the middle of a shallow stream. Jane decides to perform a Hidden Strike.

She crouches and submerges her scimitar so that Jack cannot predict the angle from which she will strike.

She attacks and performs the opposed roll.

Jane decides to use her Technique rank (10) plus her Dexterity modifier (+3) for the roll. Jack, having a poor Sense Motive skill, uses his Technique rank (8) plus his Wisdom modifier (+0). Jane gets a 30. Jack rolls a 25.

Jane handily beats his roll and catches Jack flat-footed with her blow.

Hurl Weapon [Martial Arts]

You may throw any weapon associated with your martial arts style.

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, and Martial Arts Weapon.

Benefit: You may throw any Martial Arts Weapon. If the weapon is not designed for throwing, it has a range increment of 5 feet.

Improved Iterative Attacks with Larger Weapons [Martial Arts]

You can use your improved attack rate with larger weapons.

Prerequisites: Strength 13+, base Attack bonus 4+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 7+, Improved Iterative Attacks, and Martial Arts Weapon.

Benefit: You may use the benefits of the Improved Iterative Attacks maneuver whenever you wield any one-handed Martial Arts Weapon. This feat also applies to the short spear and staff, if you have selected them as Martial Arts Weapons.

Improved Threat Range [Martial Arts]

Your technique focuses on highly lethal strikes.

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 10+, Enhanced Strike, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: When you wield a Martial Arts Weapon, increase your critical threat range by +1. For instance, if you wield a weapon that normally has a critical of 20, x3, you would have a critical of 19-20, x3.

Iron Fist [Martial Arts]

You have trained your hands to do more than shovel food to your face.

Prerequisites: Meditation, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: You inflict a based of 1d6 damage while unarmed.

Lethal Anatomy [Martial Arts]

You have combined your intimate knowledge of anatomy with your martial arts abilities to develop a technique that allows you to easily strike an opponent in vulnerable spots.

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Heal 8+, Knowledge (Anatomy) 8+, Nerve Strike (any), and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: When you wield a Martial Arts Weapon, increase your critical threat range by +1 and add +2 to damage.

Martial Defense [Martial Arts]

You have superior defensive capabilities.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 10+, Block, Defensive Stance, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: When wielding a Martial Arts Weapon, you gain a +2 stackable dodge bonus to your AC against attacks.

A condition that makes you lose your Dexterity bonus to AC also makes you lose dodge bonuses.

If you suffer a movement or Dexterity penalty from armor worn or items carried, you do not gain the benefit of this feat.

Martial Evasion [Martial Arts]

You can leap or twist out of the way of area attacks.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Wisdom 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 7+, Defensive Stance, Roll with the Blow, and Situational Awareness.

Benefit: If you are subjected to an attack that allows a Reflex save for half damage, you take no damage if you perform a successful save.

In order to use this ability, you must have room to move and evade the area effect attack. If you are bound, in a completely restrictive area, or in an enclosed space without cover and smaller than the area of effect of the attack you wish to evade (e.g., in a 10' x 10' room and hit by a 20' diameter *fireball*), you may not use Martial Evasion. Also, if you suffer a movement or Dexterity penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you gain no benefits from this feat.

Martial Pounce [Martial Arts]

When wielding a weapon associated with your martial arts technique, you can take advantage of an opponent's lack of situational awareness and strike her more effectively.

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: To gain the benefits of this feat, you must be wielding a Martial Arts Weapon.

Any time your target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (whether or not she actually has a Dexterity bonus) or when you flank your opponent, your attacks against that opponent in that round gain a +4 bonus to Attack rolls. (This bonus is often used to lower the penalty of a Called Shot.)

Stacking with Pounce: If you already have the Pounce ability, this feat raises your ability by one step.

Not Grim-n-Gritty: If you are not using the *Grim-n-Gritty Hit Point and Combat Rules*, then this feat gives you a +1d6 sneak attack ability.

Master of Defense [Martial Arts]

You can block more than one attack in a round.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 10+, Block, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Normal: A character without Master of Defense can Block only once per round.

Benefit: You may Block twice per round.

You may Block multiple blows from the same opponent, but you may not try to Block the same attack more than once.

If you know the Roll with Blow maneuver, you may perform that twice per round as well.

Improved Threat Range [Martial Arts]

Your technique focuses on highly lethal strikes.

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 10+, Enhanced Strike, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: When you wield a Martial Arts Weapon, increase your critical threat range by +1. For instance, if you wield a weapon that normally has a critical of 20, x3, you would have a critical of 19-20, x3.

This feat is different from Improved Critical in that Improved Critical applies to a single weapon, while this one applies to *all* of your Martial Arts weapons.

Overwhelming Force [Martial Arts]

You can deliver powerful blows that push back your opponents.

Prerequisites: Strength 15+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 6+, Enhanced Strike, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: If your attack inflict more damage than one-half of your target's current Hit Points, then you automatically push them backwards 5' in a straight line.

You must wield a Martial Arts Weapon to gain the benefit of this feat.

You can choose not to push back an opponent.

Precision [Martial Arts]

You are a master of Called Shots.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13+, Wisdom 16+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, Nerve Strike (any), and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expert.

Benefit: The penalty for performing a Called Shot is reduced by 4, if you are wielding a Martial Arts Weapon. This feat will not reduce the penalty below zero.

Preparatory Stance [Martial Arts]

You can enter a stance that prepares you for your next attack, almost like compressing a spring so that it will leap forward with great force.

Prerequisite: Strength 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expert.

Benefit: A Preparatory Stance is a full round action. You must wield a Martial Arts Weapon to perform it.

By performing a Preparatory Stance, you situate yourself in the best position to strike your opponent and build tension in your muscles to attack with great force. Your next attack after performing the Preparatory Stance gains a +2 bonus to hit and a +4 bonus to damage.

If you deliver multiple attacks in the round after a Preparatory Stance, only the first attack gains the bonus.

Prone Fighting [Martial Arts]

You are able to fight effectively even if lying on the ground.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, and Tumbling rank 4+.

Benefit: When prone, you do not suffer a -4 penalty to your attack rolls, nor do opponents attempting to strike you with a melee weapon gain +4 to their attack rolls. You can move at your normal speed by "slithering" on your back or front, but you cannot perform a double move or run all out.

If you suffer a Dexterity or movement penalty due to armor worn or items carried, you gain no benefit from this feat.

Resuscitation [Martial Arts]

You can tap and massage a stricken person's pressure points to reverse the effects of a Nerve Strike.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 11+, Wisdom 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 10+, Heal rank 6+, any Nerve Strike, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: With a full round action, you can attempt to undo the secondary effects of a Nerve Strike on a single person. This is similar to the Aid Other action.

To do so, you roll 1d20 + your Technique rank + your Wisdom modifier against the DC of the Nerve Strike. If you succeed, the Nerve Strike's effect, such as sickness, stun, daze, or sleep, is negated. The victim does not recover lost Hit Points.

You may also use Resuscitation to undo chemical, magical, psionic, and other effects that alter a target's nervous system, such as alcoholic inebriation, a *sleep* spell, or Telepathic Stun. In this case, you roll 1d20 + one-half your Technique rank + your Wisdom modifier against the DC of the effect to determine if you negate it.

Seeking Strike [Martial Arts]

You can deliver blows that cannot be blocked.

Prerequisites: Base Attack bonus 6+, Dexterity 15+, Wisdom 15+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 8+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: Opponents cannot Block a Seeking Strike, nor may they Roll with the Blow against it.

Seeking Strike is a full round action. Even if you normally get multiple attacks due to a high Attack bonus or wielding multiple weapons, you only get one attack with a Seeking Strike.

Seeking Strike can only be performed with a Martial Arts Weapon. If you suffer any movement or Dexterity penalties due to armor worn or items carried, you cannot use this ability.

Situational Awareness [Martial Arts]

You are in a constant state of mental and physical preparedness that makes it difficult for enemies to catch you unawares.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Wisdom 13+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Listen rank 4+, and rank Spot 4+.

Benefit: You retain your Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible opponent. If immobilized, you still lose the bonus.

Sticky Touch [Martial Arts]

You can lightly place your hand on an opponent and follow his movements in combat. This allows you anticipate his actions, more easily avoiding his attacks and attacking him.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 15+, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 9+, Grappling Expertise, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: To initiate a Sticky Touch, you must have at least one free hand (i.e., no weapon, shield, or other item in that hand). You must be wielding a Martial Arts Weapon. You cannot suffer any Dexterity or movement penalties due to armor worn or items carried.

As a standard action, you perform a melee touch attack against your opponent. If the attack hits, you and your opponent perform an opposed roll using 1d20 + your Dexterity modifier + the highest of either Tumbling, Technique rank, or Base Attack Bonus.

If you win the opposed roll, you have established the Sticky Touch. You gain a +2 bonus to AC and Attack rolls against the target of the Sticky Touch.

You have this bonus as long as you can maintain the Sticky Touch. The only ways to break the touch is for you to voluntarily end it, your target to move away from you in a manner that you cannot follow, or you become incapacitated.

If your target moves, you automatically move with him, up to the limits of your movement ability. Should your target move in a way you cannot follow — such as jumping an extremely long distance or teleportation — contact is broken, and the Sticky Touch ends. If your target moves farther than your movement rate, the Sticky Touch is broken.

If you move, other than automatically following your target, the Sticky Touch ends.

If you perform an action that restricts your movement rate, such as performing a Full Attack Action and limiting yourself to a 5' step, then it is likely that your target can easily outdistance you and break the Sticky Touch.

While maintaining a Sticky Touch, you threaten no areas.

Weapon Oriented Style [Martial Arts]

You are trained in a martial arts style that incorporates a wide variety of weapons.

Prerequisites: Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 4+, Martial Arts Weapon, and proficiency in selected weapons.

Benefit: You gain two + your Intelligence modifier weapons as bonus Martial Arts Weapons. You must be proficient in a weapon to select it.

These additional Martial Arts Weapons do not count towards your total ranks in Technique.

Zen Accuracy [Martial Arts]

You have a Zen-like ability to hit your opponents.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 13+, Meditation, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: With a Martial Arts Weapon, you may use your Wisdom modifier instead of Strength or Dexterity on your attack rolls.

Zen Damage [Martial Arts]

You apply internal, rather than external force to your blows in combat.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 13+, Meditation, Initiation into the Way, Technique rank 1+, and Martial Arts Weapon or Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Benefit: With a Martial Arts Weapon, you may use your Wisdom modifier instead of Strength as a modifier to your damage rolls.

Appendix 1: Mundane Skills and Feats

These feats and skills are related to martial arts (usually as a prerequisite ability).

Skills

Gunslinging

[Dexterity; Trained Only; Armor Check Penalty]

You can ready a firearm quickly.

Check: The Gunslinging skill has two uses.

First, if you are engaged in a Showdown, you may substitute a Gunslinging skill check for your Dexterity check to determine who wins the Showdown.

Second, because you have highly trained reflexes, you can more quickly respond to surprise situations and attack with a gun. If you are armed with an easily accessible firearm (such as a holstered pistol, a slung rifle, or readied submachinegun) and you are surprised, make a Gunslinging skill check against DC 20. If the check is successful, you may act normally in the surprise round and attack.

Note: Gunslinging does not permit you to draw a firearm as a free action. To do this, you must have the Quick Draw feat.

Knowledge: New Fields of Study

This system employs the following additional fields of study for the Knowledge skill...

Anatomy: You possess detailed knowledge of anatomy and physiology. You understand the functions of various organs. Five or more ranks in this Knowledge sub-skill give you a +2 synergy bonus to Heal checks.

Feats

Delicate Aim [General]

You can carefully and precisely aim your attacks at the expense of inflicting damage.

Prerequisites: Intelligence 13+.

Benefit: When you take an attack or full attack action in melee, you can gain a bonus of +1 to your attack roll for every –2 points you reduce your damage. You can gain a bonus of no higher than +5 to attack with this feat.

For example, if you wanted to gain a +2 bonus to hit, you would have to reduce your damage by –4.

Meditation [General]

You can enter a trance-like state that cleanses the mind and rests the body.

Prerequisite: None.

Benefit: Entering a meditative trance requires 2d6 minutes of mind-clearing exercises. At the end of this time, you perform a Concentration skill check. If you succeed, you enter the trance. If you fail, you can try again with another 2d6 minutes. You can maintain the trance for a number of hours equal to your Wisdom score, plus any ranks you have in Concentration.

The DC of the skill check depends on your surroundings. If your surroundings are conducive to meditation, such as a temple or in a quiet forest, the DC is 10. In an area with many distractions, such as an inn, the DC is 15. If you are in physical discomfort, like being trapped in a cramped cage, it is DC 20.

One hour of uninterrupted meditative trance is as restful as two hours of sleep. Also, while you are meditating, you do not feel the effects of hunger, thirst, or physical discomfort, though you still suffer damage from them.

While you are meditating, you have some awareness of your surroundings and may perform Listen and Spot checks at a –4 penalty.

If you engage in any sort of activity, even walking or conversation, your meditative trance ends.

Appendix 2: Martial Savant (Class)

The Martial Savant combines martial arts training with psionics. It fills the same role as the Monk class and should be used as a replacement for the Monk, if you use this system in your campaign. The Martial Savant uses the psionics rules from the *d20 Skills-n-Feats Psionics System*, by Kenneth S. Hood.

Game Rule Information

Martial Savants have the following game statistics:

Abilities: Wisdom powers the Martial Savant's psionic powers, and Intelligence helps him develop a wide variety of strong psionic skills. Dexterity is important because the Martial Savant wears little or no armor.

Class Skills

The Martial Savant's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are

- Balance (Dex),
- Climb (Str),
- Concentration (Con),
- Craft (Int),
- Diplomacy (Cha),
- Escape Artist (Dex),
- Extrasensory Perception (Wis),
- Hide (Dex),
- Hide Mind (Wis),
- Jump (Str),
- Knowledge (Psionics) (Int),
- Listen (Wis),
- Mental Enhancement (Wis),
- Metabolic Control (Wis),
- Move Silently (Dex),
- Physical Enhancement (Wis),
- Profession (Wis),
- Psychic Defense (Wis),
- Self Healing (Wis),
- Swim (Str), and
- Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at First Level: (6 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int mod.

Class Features

Starting Package: A Martial Savant starts with the following feats:

- Initiation into the Way,
- Meditation,
- Psionic Talent,
- Simple Weapon Proficiency, and
- Four proficiencies with specific Martial or Exotic weapons.

A Martial Savant gets Unarmed Combat Expertise, Improved Iterative Attacks, Nerve Strike (Stun), and four Martial Arts Weapons as bonus martial arts Maneuvers.

Superior Unarmed Damage: A Martial Savant is highly trained in the art of unarmed combat. He is able to focus his internal, spiritual energy into his unarmed body and strike for superior damage, regardless of his size. This damage is dependent on the character's level, and can get as high as 1d12 per unarmed blow.

Bonus Feats: At 1st level, 2nd level, and every other level thereafter (4th, 6th, 8th, 10th, 12th, 14th, 16th, 18th, and 20th), a Martial Savant gets a bonus feat. This feat may be a Martial Arts or Psionic Martial Arts feat, or one from the following list:

- Blank Mind,
- Blur of Movement,
- Floating Step,
- Flying Leap,
- Improved Metabolic Control,
- Improved Psychic Defense,
- Lingering Leap,
- See Without Sight, and
- Sticky Feet.

Multi-classing to Martial Savant

If a character chooses to add a level of Martial Savant after 1st level, he must first have the Initiation into the Way and Psionic Talent feat. He does not automatically gain either of them as part of the starting package.

Ex-Martial Savants

The disciplines of the Martial Savant require singular dedication. If a Martial Savant gains a new class or (if already multi-class) raises another class by a level, he may never again raise his Martial Savant level, though he retains all of his old abilities.

A Martial Savant may multi-class freely with certain prestige classes.

Martial Savant Class Progression

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Def Bonus	HP Bonus	Unarmed Damage	Special
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	+2	+0	1d6	Starting Package, Bonus Feat
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	+3	+1	1d6	Bonus Feat
3	+2	+3	+3	+3	+3	+2	1d8	
4	+3	+4	+4	+4	+4	+3	1d8	Bonus Feat
5	+3	+4	+4	+4	+4	+3	1d8	
6	+4	+5	+5	+5	+5	+4	1d8	Bonus Feat
7	+5	+5	+5	+5	+5	+5	1d10	
8	+6/+1	+6	+6	+6	+6	+6	1d10	Bonus Feat
9	+6/+1	+6	+6	+6	+6	+6	1d10	
10	+7/+2	+7	+7	+7	+7	+7	1d10	Bonus Feat
11	+8/+3	+7	+7	+7	+7	+8	1d12	
12	+9/+4	+8	+8	+8	+8	+9	1d12	Bonus Feat
13	+9/+4	+8	+8	+8	+8	+9	1d12	
14	+10/+5	+9	+9	+9	+9	+10	1d12	Bonus Feat
15	+11/+6/+1	+9	+9	+9	+9	+11	1d12	
16	+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+10	+10	+12	1d12	Bonus Feat
17	+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+10	+10	+12	1d12	
18	+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+11	+11	+13	1d12	Bonus Feat
19	+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+11	+11	+14	1d12	
20	+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+12	+12	+15	1d12	Bonus Feat

Not using the Grim-n-Gritty Rules?

Ignore the Defense Bonus and HP Bonus class abilities. Let the character acquire 1d20 unarmed damage at 16th level and beyond.

Hit die: d8 per level

Using Alignment?

If your campaign setting uses alignment, then Martial Savants must be of Lawful alignment. If they assume a non-lawful alignment, they cannot gain new levels as a Martial Savant, but retain all Martial Savant abilities.

Appendix 3: Sample Martial Savant

This character is provided as a sample of the Martial Savant class. It uses the *Grim-n-Gritty Hit Point and Combat Rules*, *d20 Skills-n-Feats Martial Arts System*, and *d20 Skills-n-Feats Psionics System*.

Human, Martial Savant 7th level

The strength of this character lies in his incredibly high Defense score, which results from the combination of several feats and Maneuvers. Physical Enhancement can be used to haste the character, giving him an additional Defense bonus and an extra partial action – perhaps for use as movement after performing a Forceful Blow or Nerve Strike on an opponent. With Candle Punch, he can dance outside the reach of more heavily armored characters. Blur of Movement permits him to rapidly engage an enemy or quickly flee the battlefield after delivering a lightning attack. Mobility combined with Blur of Movement lets him rush through threatened areas with ease. Telekinesis provides a minor, ranged ability for the character, and it serves as a springboard for Telekinetic Battle Armor at higher levels.

If I were to use this character in battle, I'd probably make use of the following tactic.

Round 1: Use Physical Enhancement to hyper-accelerate metabolism.

Round 2: Use Blur of Movement to rush in after the weakest, rear rank opponent. Mobility will help when moving past the front line warriors. Use the extra partial action from my hyper-acceleration to perform a Candle Punch at 10' to avoid provoking an attack of opportunity.

Round 3: Use the partial action for another Candle Punch. Use Blur of Movement to disengage enemy.

Medium-sized Sapien (Human)

Hit Points: 18 (+13 Con, +5 Class)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

Defense: +17 (+3 Dex, +5 Class, +3 Defensive Stance, +2 Martial Defense, +4 Combat Precognition)

Protection: 0 (unarmored)

Attack: Unarmed +7/+4 (1d10+2 damage)

Special Attacks: Forceful Blow (2d10+2 damage unarmed), Nerve Strike (Pain, DC 18), Nerve Strike (Stun, DC 18).

Special Qualities: Psionic Powers, Evasion (Reflex save for no damage), and Situational Awareness (retain Dex bonus).

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +8

Ability Scores: Strength 14 (+2), Dexterity 17 (+3), Constitution 13 (+1), Intelligence 13 (+1), Wisdom 16 (+3), Charisma 10 (+0)

Skills: Balance +7, Concentration +7, Hide +6, Jump +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Spot +7, Technique 10, and Tumble +7.

Psionic Skills: Extrasensory Perception +11, Mental Enhancement +8, Metabolic Control +11, Physical Enhancement +10, Psychic Defense +8, Self Healing +7, and Telekinesis +7.

Feats: Dodge; Initiation into the Way; Martial Weapon (halberd, long spear, long sword, scimitar); Martial Defense; Martial Evasion; Meditation; Mobility; Psionic Talent (Telekinesis); Simple Weapons (all); and Situational Awareness.

Psionic Feats: Blur of Movement, Candle Punch, and Combat Precognition.

Martial Arts Maneuvers: Block; Combination (Block and Strike); Defensive Stance (x3); Forceful Blow; Grappling Expertise; Improved Iterative Attacks; Martial Arts Weapon (long sword, long spear, scimitar, quarterstaff); Nerve Strike (Stun, Pain); Roll with the Blow; Sweep; and Unarmed Combat Expert.

Appendix 4: Sample Core Characters

The following characters use the core classes, with little adjustment, in conjunction with the martial arts rules. No psionics or “Grim-n-Gritty” rules are used.

The changes to the core classes are as follows:

- Fighters, monks, and rogues may purchase Technique as a class skill.
- Fighters may purchase Martial Arts feats with their bonus feats.
- Monks replace their stunning attack with Nerve Strike (Stun), flurry of blows with Extra Strike, and their superior rate of unarmed attacks per round with Improved Iterative Attacks. Monks begin with the Initiation into the Way feat as a bonus feat, as well as Unarmed Combat Expertise. At 2nd level, instead of the Deflect Arrows feat, a monk gains a bonus martial arts Maneuver. At 6th level, instead of the Improved Trip feat, a monk gains another bonus martial arts Maneuver.

Human, Rogue 1st level

This beginning thief has received training in a martial arts style related to the short sword. While wielding this weapon, he gains a +1 bonus to AC and damage. He can also use a short sword to block one attack per round. When not wielding a short sword, he gains no benefits from his martial arts Maneuvers.

Medium-sized Sapient (Human)

Hit Points: 7 (6 + 1 Con)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 15 (+3 Dex, +1 Leather Armor, +1 Defensive Stance)

Attack: Short Sword +1 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks: Sneak Attack.

Special Qualities: Sneak Attack, Block.

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1

Ability Scores: Strength 13 (+1), Dexterity 16 (+3),

Constitution 13 (+1), Intelligence 15 (+2),

Wisdom 12 (+1), Charisma 8 (-1)

Skills: Balance +6, Bluff +0, Climb +5, Disable Device +4, Escape Artist +5, Hide +7, Jump +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +5, Pick Pockets +5, Search +6, Spot +3, Technique 4, and Tumble +7.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Initiation into the Way.

Martial Arts Maneuvers: Block, Defensive Stance (x1), Enhanced Strike (x1), and Martial Arts Weapon (Short Sword).

Class Abilities: Sneak Attack (+1d6).

Human, Fighter 5th level

A walking tank with a bastard sword, this character focuses on martial arts techniques that are not hampered by wearing heavy armor. He inflicts great damage with a bastard sword, and his Exotic Weapon Proficiency allows him to use it in conjunction with a shield. While wielding his bastard sword, he can block attacks, perform a couple of combination moves, and make superior trip, disarm, and push attempts. Unarmed Combat Expertise rounds out his abilities, in case he is disarmed.

Medium-sized Sapient (Human)

Hit Points: 52 (10 + 4d10 + 20 Con)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 20 (+8 full plate armor, +2 large steel shield)

Attack: Bastard sword +10 (1d10+9)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +1

Ability Scores: Strength 18 (+4), Dexterity 10 (+0),

Constitution 18 (+4), Intelligence 15 (+2),

Wisdom 10 (+0), Charisma 8 (-1)

Skills: Climb +7, Jump +9, Listen +4, Ride +5, Spot +4, Swim +8, Technique 8.

Feats: Bonus Maneuvers (x2); Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard Sword); Situational Awareness; Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword); Weapon Specialization (Bastard Sword).

Martial Arts Maneuvers: Block; Bonus Attack of Opportunity; Combination (Block and Strike, Trip and Strike); Enhanced Strike (x3); Enhanced Trip; Expert Disarm; Martial Arts Weapon (Bastard Sword); Push; and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Human, Monk 9th level

This monk is a master grappler. He can close quickly, grab an opponent, tangle him up, and then beat him senseless. Sticky Touch lets him follow an opponent's movements – a powerful ability in conjunction with a monk's high movement rate and Leap of the Clouds ability. Blood Choke lets him incapacitate even the most powerful of opponents, while Ground and Pound lets him pin an enemy, then use his superior unarmed strikes.

Medium-sized Sapient (Human)

Hit Points: 49 (8 + 8d8 + 8 Con)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dexterity, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 60 ft.

AC: 19 (+3 Dexterity, +1 monk, +2 Wisdom, +3 Defensive Stance)

Attack: Unarmed +7/+4 (1d10+1)

Special Attacks: Blood Choke, Nerve Strike (Stun).

Special Qualities: Monk abilities.

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +8

Ability Scores: Strength 12 (+1), Dexterity 17 (+3), Constitution 13 (+1), Intelligence 14 (+2), Wisdom 15 (+2), Charisma 9 (-1)

Skills: Balance +13, Climb +5, Concentration +5, Hide +13, Jump +11, Listen +10, Move Silently +13, Swim +5, Technique 12, Tumble +15.

Feats: Improved Initiative; Initiation into the Way; Master of Defense; Meditation; Sticky Touch; and Weapon Oriented Style (quarterstaff, short spear, kama, nunchuks).

Martial Arts Maneuvers: Block, Blood Choke, Defensive Stance (x3), Enhanced Escape, Enhanced Grapple, Extra Strike, Grappling Expertise, Greater Throw, Ground and Pound, Lock, Nerve Strike (Stun), Roll with the Blow, Sweep, Throw, and Unarmed Combat Expertise.

Class Abilities: Evasion, Still Mind, Slow Fall, Purity of Body, Wholeness of Body, Leap of the Clouds, Improved Evasion.

Appendix 5: Acquiring Maneuvers via Training

Some people may be uncomfortable with a character's ability to acquire "mini-feats" (the martial arts Maneuvers) rapidly with a skill. This variant system is intended to replace the skill-n-feat aspect of acquiring Maneuvers. Characters may purchase maneuvers with experience points, through rigorous training. This variant system is an excellent means of applying martial arts to a pre-existing campaign setting.

Changes to the Standard System

If you wish to use this system, make the following changes to the standard d20 Skill-n-Feats Martial Arts System:

- The *Initiation into the Way* feat is no longer used.
- *Technique* is now a skill based on INT. It functions as a Knowledge skill. It also represents your "finesse" with martial arts, your facility for learning new Maneuvers. In this manner, *Technique* represents your understanding of the philosophy behind martial arts.
- You do *not* acquire a new Maneuver every time you gain a new level in *Technique*. You may only purchase maneuvers by expending experience points.
- The *Bonus Maneuvers* feat is no longer used.

Acquiring Martial Arts Maneuvers

To gain Maneuvers in this system, you must first find a teacher who knows the Maneuver you desire and is willing to train you in that Maneuver. You then spend the XP necessary to learn the Maneuver. Next, you spend a number of days training equal to the DC of learning the Maneuver. At the end of this time, you perform a *Technique* skill check against the Maneuver's DC. If successful, you learn it. If you fail the *Technique* check, you can continue studying the Maneuver. You must again spend a number of days in training equal to the Maneuver's DC. At the end of that time, you can perform a skill check again, and so on, until you learn it.

To study a new Maneuver, you need a suitable place for training that is quiet, reasonably comfortable, and free from distraction. You are assumed to work for at least eight hours *every day* practicing the new move. You cannot rush the process by studying for a longer period of time per day.

You can study only one maneuver at a time. While you are studying it, you can do nothing else. During rest periods, you can engage in light activity, like talking and walking. However, you may not fight, cast spells, use magic items, conduct research, engage in commerce, or perform any other mentally or physically engaging task. You may take short breaks from study as often as you may like (such as a nap), but you must spend *at least* eight hours out of every 24 in practice.

You cannot take a single day off from your studies. Once the process of acquiring a maneuver has started, you may not stop until you have learned it. If you are disturbed (even unwillingly), spend less than eight hours per day studying, or take a day off from practice, your

training is ruined. You lose all XP and time you have spent on learning the new maneuver. If you wish to learn the technique, you must start again from scratch.

Table MVT-1 shows the DC for learning a maneuver and the XP costs associated with it.

In summary, to learn a new maneuver, you must...

1. Find a teacher who knows the Maneuver you desire.
2. Convince the teacher to train you in the Maneuver, usually by paying for it.
3. Spend XP equal to the Maneuver's cost.
4. Spend a number of days equal to the Maneuver's DC in uninterrupted training.
5. Make a *Technique* skill check against the Maneuver's DC to determine if you learn it.

The Advantages of this System

This system lets you occupy your fighter-types while the magi and priests are off enchanting items.

It forces a character to "count the cost" of gaining a new maneuver. He may get a special fighting ability, but he'll also end up a level or two behind the rest of the party. Basically, it keeps everyone's power level – both standard and martial arts characters – relatively equal.

A measure of role-playing is necessary to gain a new Maneuver. You can send a player on a quest to find the right teacher. You can also empty their bank accounts in training expenditures.

Finally, you can easily introduce martial arts into a standard campaign setting. Just have a "wizened master" show up on the players' doorstep, have him stomp one or two of them in unarmed combat, then offer the salivating, power-mongers the opportunity to learn the techniques themselves.

Final Notes

Ignore the *Technique* skill rank requirements for all Maneuvers.

To learn a new Maneuver, you must meet all of its prerequisites.

You may not "Take 10" or "Take 20" on skill checks to learn new Maneuvers.

Table MVT-1: DC and XP Cost for Acquiring Maneuvers via Training		
Maneuver	DC	XP Cost
Block	16	300
Blood Choke	20	1000
Bonus Attack of Opportunity	16	400
Break Weapon	20	500
Catch Weapon	22	1000
Combination (Block and Grapple)	16	500
Combination (Block and Strike)	14	500
Combination (Catch and Break Weapon)	24	600
Combination (Catch Weapon and Throw Opponent)	24	600
Combination (Disarm and Grapple)	18	600
Combination (Disarm and Strike)	18	600
Combination (Grapple and Strike)	16	600
Combination (Strike and Escape)	14	500
Combination (Trip and Strike)	14	500
Counter-throw	14	400
Defensive Stance +1	12	300
Defensive Stance +2	14	600
Defensive Stance +3	16	900
Defensive Stance +4	18	1200
Defensive Stance +5	20	1500
Deflect Projectile	20	1000
Enhanced Disarm	12	200
Enhanced Escape	12	200
Enhanced Grapple	12	200
Enhanced Push	12	200
Enhanced Strike +1	12	300
Enhanced Strike +2	14	600
Enhanced Strike +3	16	900
Enhanced Strike +4	18	1200
Enhanced Strike +5	20	1500
Enhanced Throw	12	200
Enhanced Trip	12	200
Expert Disarm	14	300
Extra Strike	16	500
Flying Strike	16	500
Forceful Blow	16	1000
Grappling Expertise	12	300
Greater Throw	18	500
Ground and Pound	14	300
Improved Iterative Attacks	20	500
Instant Stand	14	300
Lock	16	300
Martial Arts Weapon	10	100
Nerve Strike (Blindness/Deafness)	20	1500
Nerve Strike (Disable Limb)	18	1000
Nerve Strike (Long-term Nervous System Damage)	26	2000
Nerve Strike (Pain)	18	1000
Nerve Strike (Paralysis)	22	2000
Nerve Strike (Pleasure)	24	2000
Nerve Strike (Sickness)	26	2000
Nerve Strike (Stun)	14	500
Push	12	300
Reverse Hold	14	300
Roll with the Blow	16	300
Sweep	14	300
Throw	14	300
Unarmed Combat Expertise	10	300

Appendix 6: Frequently Asked Questions

About Design

Do you believe this system is appropriate for all campaign settings?

No. These martial arts rules should only be used in a setting where martial arts are common, such as a pseudo-Japanese or *wuxia* campaign (though certainly not limited to those two). By using these rules, you are making it possible for almost anyone in the setting to learn highly advanced combat maneuvers. This is inappropriate for more Westernized campaign types, like the typical middle or high fantasy setting.

In other words, these rules are only appropriate for a setting where a *martial arts culture* exists. Martial arts need to be part of the cultural identity of the people in your setting. It should permeate daily life. If not, do not use these rules.

These rules also work well for militaristic campaigns, such as a modern day setting with Special Forces type characters. The rules tend to accurately model the armed and unarmed combat abilities of the highly trained, highly motivated individuals you find in elite military organizations.

No precedent in the core d20 rules exists for a skill giving you specific abilities, like Technique skill grants Maneuvers. How can you justify your system?

Actually, there is precedent for it. The Perform skill gives you a new type of performance, such as an instrument to play, each time a new rank is acquired. The Speak Language skill, while it does not have ranks per se, gives you a discrete ability (i.e., a language), each time you purchase it.

Your Maneuvers seem a lot like feats. Why don't you dispense with the Technique skill and the Maneuver system and just make them all feats that can be acquired by a character normally?

This system is intended to increase the *breadth* of a character's combat skills. In other words, it is intended to *add* to the already extant abilities possessed by characters. Because of this, it runs parallel to the feat acquisition mechanic.

Also, the Technique-Maneuver system is designed to model real world martial arts where even a beginner can know several different special moves. If the acquisition of martial arts abilities is based solely upon feats, a typical beginner would only know one or two abilities at 1st level and would have to wait several levels before acquiring new abilities. To have the breadth of abilities found in a moderately competent real world martial artist, a character would have to reach levels somewhere in the teens. Even then, they'd only know seven or eight moves. This does not follow the pattern of real world martial arts.

About Maneuvers

What is meant by "standard melee attack"?

It means a "plain vanilla" attack. No special maneuvers may be performed as part of the attack, such as a nerve strike, grapple, bull rush, sweep, or crushing blow.

Are the effects of combinations cumulative? For instance, if my character has Combination (Disarm and Grapple) and Combination (Grapple and Strike), can he disarm, grapple, and strike an opponent?

No. Each combination is discrete and must be performed separately.

I'm not using attacks of opportunity in my game. How should Combinations work in this case?

Permit a character to perform only one combination per round.

Does a character get her Enhanced Strike damage bonus when performing a nerve strike?

Yes. The Enhanced Strike damage bonus applies to *all* attacks performed by the character when she wields a Martial Arts Weapon.

Versions

1.0 – Original Version

1.1 – Extended the Imperium “Fela’jha” content.

1.11 – Added limitation to Block that touch attacks cannot be Blocked. (04-17-2001)

2.0 – Split the Sleeping Imperium flavor text from the document. Made slight changes to Master of Defense.

2.1 – Reformatted the document. Added sample characters, the Martial Savant class, several new feats, mundane feats and skills, and the variant rules for acquiring Maneuvers via training.

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