

The Blademaster



BY MICAH MULDOWNY

*A FIGHTER ARCHETYPE FOR
CHARACTERS SWORN TO THE BLADE*



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ON THE COVER

Even Drizzt Du’odren hesitates before crossing blades with Gwyllys Hach’net, marshal in arms and Blademaster champion of House Mizzrym.

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The Blademaster

Having dedicated themselves to the mastery of swordsmanship, Blademasters are swift and felled-handed in a melee, particularly in single combat, where their knowledge of blade form and tactics make them a match for even the most dangerous of foes. As long as they hold a sword in their grasp, a Blademaster can control the flow of battle and flip circumstances in their favor.

Apperceptive Heft

You have a keen eye for a good blade and can discern its strengths and weaknesses. Starting at the third level, if you spend a short rest in uninterrupted practice with a sword, you gain +1 to attack rolls and +1 to AC while wielding it provided you are not using a shield.

Sword Forms

Sword forms – or practiced blade patterns and choreographies – are the foundation of the Blademaster’s art and can’t be used with other weapons. At the 3rd level, you learn 3 sword forms, and learn an additional 2 forms at the 7th, 10th, and 15th levels. Each time you learn new sword forms you may replace one form you know. Sword forms are activated using a bonus action, and its benefits and limitations apply until you use a bonus action to change or dismiss it. For contested attack rolls, the target either makes a dexterity save or an attack roll (if they are attacking) against your attack roll.

Boar on the Scree: Attack and damage rolls gain +2 as long as you move at least 10 feet on your turn before attacking.

Bonetti’s Defense: Other creatures roll attacks against you at disadvantage as long as you are on difficult terrain.



Dance of the Patient Master: You may make *one* contested attack roll with disadvantage. On a success, you hit and can give yourself advantage on one later attack on a target while using this form. You may choose to use that advantage before or after your attack roll, but before the DM declares an outcome.

Heron Wading in Cat Tails: If you choose to make successful contested attack roll against a target, you hit and get a bonus to your AC equal to how much you won the roll by until the beginning of your next turn.

Hummingbird Kisses the Rose: When a creature makes a melee attack against you, you may use a special action to make a contested attack roll against it. On a success, the attack is a miss.

Kingfisher Takes Flight: If an opponent misses on all attacks against you, their movement is reduced to 0 until the end of their next turn.

Low Winds Rising: Once per turn you may choose to turn a miss into a hit. If you do so, you take a -5 AC penalty until the beginning of your next turn.

Moon Rises over the Rushes: You and creatures attacking you cannot have advantage or disadvantage on attack rolls.

Panther Crouched in the Tree: You may force targets to make a strength save against your attack rolls, knocking them prone on a failure.

Parting Silk: If you make no attacks on your turn, you may make a contested attack roll any time an opponent makes a melee attack against you. On a success, the target's attack misses and you score a hit.

Path of the Winter Moon: You may choose to make contested attack rolls. On a success, you hit and don't provoke opportunity attacks from the target until the beginning of your next turn. The target provokes opportunity attacks even if they use the disengage action during that time.

Quivering Glade: You may choose to make contested attack rolls. On a success, you hit and the target's movement is decreased to 0 until the beginning of your next turn.

River of Radiance: You may choose to make contested attack rolls. On a success, the attack hits and deals extra damage equal to 2x the difference between the rolls.

Sparks Off the Anvil: Scoring a critical hit gives you advantage against the target until the end of your next turn, and you score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

Stone Tumbling Down the Mountain: You may force your opponent to move 5 feet in the direction of your choice for every attack you make unless they roll strength save equal to your attack roll.

Tears Falling on Water: You may make contested attack rolls. On a success, they suffer a -8 penalty on attacks against all other targets.

The Courtier Waves Her Fan: Your attacks gain 5 ft. of reach.



The Goshawk Stoops: You gain advantage on your first attack. On a hit, you gain advantage on all attacks against that target until the beginning of your next turn. On a miss, you have disadvantage on all attacks until the beginning of your next turn.

The Vine Embraces the Oak: If you use the ready action to prepare an attack instead of using the attack action on your turn, you gain +2 to AC and double the attack's damage.

Treading the Bull: Once per round on a hit you wound the target. At the start of each of the wounded creature's turns, it takes 1d4 necrotic damage for each time you've wounded it. The target must make a DC 17 constitution saving throw at the start of its turn or use an action to make a DC 12 medicine save to end the effect.

Vengeful Winds: Your first attack to hit a target each turn deals +10 damage if they attacked anyone else during this round.

Viper in the Grass: If you hit with an attack you may make another attack. If you miss, you may not make another attack, even if you have more. If you make more than one attack beyond your normal limit in a turn, you gain one level of exhaustion.

Wind Howls at the Gate: So long as you do not move more than 10 feet during your turn, you can make opportunity attacks without spending your reaction. You can make this attack a number of times equal to your weapon modifier for your current weapon.

Duelist's Focus

Beginning at level 10, you may mark a target as a bonus action. Until you dismiss this mark as a bonus action, you gain a bonus of your choosing up to +3 on all contested sword form rolls against them. You also take same penalty (up to -3) to contested sword forms rolls against any other target.

Iron Defense

Starting at level 10, your AC cannot be lower than 16 as long as you have a sword in your hand, except as a consequence of your improved duelist's focus or Low Winds Rising.

Improved Duelist's Focus

Beginning at level 15, you may mark a target as a bonus action. Until you dismiss this mark as a bonus action, you gain a bonus of your choosing up to +4 to your AC for that target. You take the same penalty to your AC (up to -4) against attacks from any other creature. You may have both benefits of the duelist's focus features active at the same time, but they must be activated and dismissed separately.

Blademaster Ascendant

Your easy fluency in the art of swordplay has made the force of your sword forms nearly ineluctable. At the eighteenth level, you may treat any roll of 9 or less on a contested attack roll for a sword form as a 10.

