Delving Deeper

LABYRINTH LORD
COMPATIBLE PRODUCT

MONK

by Luke Fleeman with Art by Jason "Glad" Thomas

Brave Halfling
Publishing

MONK

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Introduction

The goblins peered out into the large room, readying their rusty axes and dented shields. They watched with curiosity as the unarmed man made prancing, twirling motions across the floor, his hands and feet poking out occasionally in the imitation of a strike.

The goblins looked at each other.

"What he do?"

"He dance?"

"Who care. He have no weapon, we kill him easy."

The three nodded and grunted in laughter. When the unarmed man had his back turned to them, they rushed out of the door, charging him with weapons raised. To their great consternation, he seemed completely prepared for their ambush.

The first goblin toppled over when the unarmed man's foot found a weak spot in his breastplate. As the man completed that kick, the second goblin went in for the kill, only to see a fist loop around his axe and collapse his nose. The third goblin scampered away behind an overturned table.

"Where are you, little one?" The unarmed man spoke in the tongue of humans, but the goblin miraculously understood it. Something in his tone echoed in his soul, striking a universal chord. The goblin said nothing.

The man stood very still for a moment, and the small cut on his arm closed up before the goblin's eyes. The goblin was very afraid of this strange man, who used no weapon but was so hard to kill. He was sure he must be some demon or immortal, sent to punish the goblins. Spotting a weak spot in the wall supports, the goblin threw his axe, hoping to collapse the wall on the man.

With deft footwork and a quick step, the man spun away, rolled, and came up in front of the goblin. The goblin grunted, and threw a punch, being deprived of his weapon. The man parried it, and struck the goblin squarely on the head, rendering him unconscious.

The man bowed. "Peace to you, little one." And he left.

The monk is a Martial arts expert and seeker of enlightenment who travels the world to learn more about himself and to perfect his self-discipline. Are you prepared to walk the path of the mystic?

The monk is completely optional, and players should ask their Labyrinth Lord before making a character of this class. Labyrinth Lords should thoroughly read this document and carefully consider the implications of this class in their game before allowing a monk character to be created.

The Monk

Requirements:	DEX 13 and WIS 13
Prime Requisite:	STR
Hit Dice:	1d6
Maximum Level:	15

Monastic humans who hone their bodies through rigid discipline and devotion to the Martial arts, monks are mystics who devote their lives to mastery of mind and body. Self-denial, poverty, meditation and unarmed combat are used as tools to achieve enlightenment.

Monks journey into the world with the goal of personal growth and a spiritual understanding of human nature. They often join with adventurers, as these special people expose them to a wide range of experiences, and give them ample opportunity to grow, learn, and hone their abilities. Being an adventurer also allows a monk to help the needy and his order through the wealth he will have access to; few monastics will donate wealth as readily as an adventuring monk.

All monks belong to a monastic order. They are at the disposal of their order at all times, and may be recalled at any time to serve the order. Furthermore, all wealth they gain technically belongs to the order, who may use it as they wish, regardless of the monk's desires.

The monk's place in his order is very important, and the hierarchy of monks is a rigid one. There may be, at any time, a limited number of monks above level 9 in each order. For each level above 9 , there are only seven monks. To attain each level beyond 9, a monk must challenge and defeat one of the monks of the that level in single, unarmed combat. If he does so, he may advance to that level.

The only exception is level 15. At any time, there may only be one level 15 monk in an order, the Grand Master. The Challenge of the Grand Master may be attempted but once, and the loser is forever stranded at level 14.

Monks may not use any form of armor; they depend solely on their discipline and their Martial training to protect themselves. They are therefore usually only seen in their recognizable monastic attire. They are only practiced with a few weapons, which include the staff, sling, dagger, club, short sword and scimitar. Instead, they use their lethal fighting techniques to defend themselves.

A Monk's Saving Throws are equivalent to a Thief's of his level (p. 55). He uses the Fighter entry on the Character Attack table (p. 60).

***Martial Arts*:** Monks practice many Martial arts, which give them the ability to defend themselves, but which also require self-discipline, willpower, and openness to learning. Their expertise in Martial arts entitles them to several benefits.

Listed on the chart below are the benefits of their Martial Arts training. The chart is used as follows:

"Level" indicates the monk's level.

"AC" indicates the monk's armor class. Monks may never wear armor; instead, this AC is used in place of their unarmored AC.

The "Attack" column details how many unarmed attacks a Monk may make in one round.

"Damage" signifies how much damage the monk's unarmed strike causes. Unarmed damage need not be from fists or feet alone. Different styles may involve the head, elbows, knees, and other body parts.

"Strikes As" indicates what kind of magical weapon the monk's unarmed attack is the equivalent of, for the purpose of striking monsters. The unarmed attack does not actually gain this enchantment; rather, the monk may strike creatures normally only hit by such weapons.

"Abilities" indicates which special abilities they gain as they master their art and their mind, body, and spirit.

Monk Abilities:

***Awareness*:** A monk is only surprised on a roll of 1, as opposed to a 1 or 2.

***Purity of Body*:** Once per day, a monk may heal himself for a number of hit points equal to his level.

***Friend of the Beasts*:** A monk may speak fluently with any normal or giant animal. The animal understands him fully, and he understands the animal fully. This does not entitle him to any special reactions, it only allows him to communicate clearly, and without misunderstanding.

***Evasion*:** When an effect that causes damage calls for a Saving Throw, a monk only suffers half damage. If his saving throw is successful, he only suffers one-quarter damage.

Monk Abilities Table

Level	AC	Attack	Damage	Strikes As	Ability
1	8	1	1d4		Awareness
2	7	1	1d4	Silver	
3	6	1	1d6		Purity of Body
4	5	1	1d6		
5	4	1	1d8	+1 Weapon	Friend of the Beasts
6	3	2	1d8		
7	2	2	1d10		Evasion
8	1	2	1d12	+2 Weapon	
9	0	2	2d8		Gift of Tongues
10	-1	2	2d10		
11	-2	3	2d12	+3 Weapon	Purity of Mind
12	-3	3	3d8		
13	-4	3	4d6	+4 Weapon	Emptiness of Body
14	-5	3	5d6		
15	-6	4	4d8	+5 Weapon	Endless Purity

***Gift of Tongues*:** A monk may communicate with any living being that has a language. The being understands him fully, and he understands the being fully. This does not entitle him to any special reactions, it only allows him to communicate clearly, and without misunderstanding

***Purity of Mind*:** A monk is immune to *ESP*, *hold* and *slow* spells, magical charms, and *geas* spells.

***Emptiness of Body*:** By concentrating without interruption for 1 round, a monk may disappear. For a number of rounds equal to his level, the monk is completely invisible, and no living or undead being can see him. This ability is usable once per day.

***Endless Purity*:** Once per day, a Monk may use *Endless Purity* on one living creature with fewer hit dice than he has levels. The Monk must make a normal attack roll to hit. If successful, his touch duplicates the effects of one of the following spells: *Death Spell, Charm Person, Cure Disease, Cure Critical Wounds*, or *Hold Person*. There is no saving throw for this effect. Whether the Monk fails or succeeds, he may only use this ability once per day.

***Thief Abilities*:** A Monk may use the following Thief skills as a Thief of his level: Move Silently, Hide in Shadows, Hear Noise.

***Special Restrictions*:** A Monk may not use any form of armor, nor may he employ any protective magical item.

Any material goods or treasure won by the Monk only count toward his experience total if he gives the goods to the poor, or donates them to his order. Anything owned or possessed by the Monk is the property of his order, which may request it at any time.

A Monk is bound by his oath. He must never break his word and must strive to fulfill all promises and debts, if he has sworn to do so. If he breaks an oath, a monk immediately loses all benefits of his Martial Arts abilities, and may not advance in level. He must perform a mission given by his order to redeem this shame.

The Monk in Your Game

Considerations

The Monk will not be a normal class in most *Labyrinth Lord* games. His high entry requirements and special restrictions will prohibit many players from choosing this class, while his Strength prime requisite means it

is unlikely that any who can qualify to be a Monk will also receive any kind of experience bonus.

Nonetheless, the class will produce an able fighter who can replicate the abilities of some other classes, and whose strange panoply of specialties will enable the group to navigate many tricky situations. Particularly, his efficacy as a warrior without any arms or armor and his ability to heal himself will make him a hardy, strong character choice.

Monk Level Progression

Experience	Level	Hit Dice (1d6)
0	1	1
2,035	2	2
4,065	3	3
8,125	4	4
16,251	5	5
32,501	6	6
65,001	7	7
120,001	8	8
240,001	9	9
360,001	10	+2 only*
480,001	11	+4 only*
600,001	12	+6 only*
720,001	13	+8 only*
840,001	14	+10 only*
960,001	15	+12 only*

*Hit point modifiers from Constitution are ignored.

As a PC

A monk PC in your game will require a number of special adjustments. When a player chooses to create a monk, be sure that he is fully aware of the restrictions and hindrances he will face. Many players take great delight in accumulating wealth and treasure, and the monk will rarely be able to take full advantage of this aspect of the game. It is possible that a monk may become stranded for some time at a given level, unable to overcome a Master of the next level to advance. And finally, being bound to a rigid oath and a hierarchical structure may chafe some adventurers with a great love of freedom.

As the Labyrinth Lord, you must consider the special abilities of the Monk during Labyrinth design. Certain puzzles and foes may be rendered powerless due to the ease of communication between the Monk and his would-be foes. Some traps and pitfalls will lack their normal bite because of the Monk's ability to evade damage. And some challenges that can normally only be overcome by a thief may now have a second participant. You must consider the Monk to be, in some situations, an additional fighter or thief in the party.

Additionally, your design must be prepared for the special role of the Monk. While some labyrinths may call to PCs due to their outstanding wealth and treasure content, a Monk may be less inclined to adventure in such an area, as wealth is a low priority to them. You must keep in mind the hierarchical powers of the order as well, as they must be exercised occasionally to enforce game balance for this sometimes potent class.

As an NPC

Monk NPCs can similarly fulfill many roles. The esoteric wandering mystic, who seeks enlightenment and speaks only in riddles, is a Monk. A stealthy, black-clad assassin devoted to a Chaotic order is a Monk. And a brash youngster, confident in his unarmed abilities and his wisdom, is also a Monk. Just as with the other classes of Labyrinth Lord, a Monk NPC can wear many hats.

Monk orders provide an area-, continent-, or world-spanning organization which can either hinder or aid your PCs. They may sometimes be law-abiding, friendly cloisters of happy mystics, or rebellious, dangerous warriors who advocate for greater rights for peasants or slaves. If a PC is included in this order, your setting may have appropriate complications.

Perhaps the most intriguing role of a Monk NPC is as a rival for a Monk PC. Over the many years of practice, different orders of Monks have developed different teachings, methods, and beliefs. These practices occasionally lead to schism and disagreement, spawning new sects and orders, most of which are antagonistic to their parent sect. Monk NPCs may be members of these new orders, intent on proving the impotence or falsehoods of the PC Monk's order. Even Monks from the same order as your PC may have grown up as rivals or enemies within the temple, and they can always return to wreak havoc. These rivalries can produce long-term, valuable nemesis for your group.

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