

FIGHTER: NUANCES

OPTIONS FOR THE FIGHTER BASE CLASS



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Fighter: Nuances

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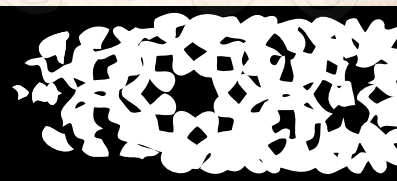
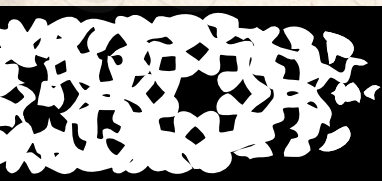
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FIGHTER NUANCES

Fighters devote their careers to being students of combat, as such it is not uncommon for them to develop skills and abilities unique to practitioners of their art.

A fighter can learn a nuance in place of a bonus combat feat granted by levels of fighter.

Nuances

Adaptive Feat Training (Ex): *Your adaptability means that even specific combat conditioning can be overridden for alternative methods.*

Once per day you replace up to a number of combat feats equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum 1) with an equal number of combat feats you qualify for. This takes one hour of intense uninterrupted concentration. You may not select a feat listed as a prerequisite for another feat you possess unless you also trade away the prerequisite feats as well. You must fighter level 10 or higher to select this nuance.

Adaptive Weapon Training (Ex): *By merely switching up your daily routine you can improve your competence with alternative weapons.*

By spending 1 hour a day in training (this hour must be served consecutively), you may transfer up to any +2 bonus granted by *weapon training* from one weapon group to another. You may not exceed the maximum *weapon training* value granted by fighter class features.

Armsmaster (Ex): *Warrior-smithing has long been considered a noble profession, one which you are honored to claim.*

You may treat your fighter levels as caster levels for the purpose of item creation feats. You may select item creation feats in place of combat feats for bonus feats.

Brave Confidence (Ex): *You treat all situations with the same confidence you do in battle.*

You may substitute your Bravery bonus for your Charisma modifier on any Charisma based skill check. You must fighter level 4 or higher to select this nuance.

Designers notes: Nuances are made to function nearly identical to the wizards arcane discoveries class feature, which added a lot of interesting, exclusive options to that class. Now the question, "why not Fighter feats?" is simple to answer, because by making an opt-in class feature you can design, without having to consider classes like Brawler, Warpriest, Swashbuckler, or Magus you avoid a lot of unplanned synergy. This is a chance to add some unique features to the fighter class with thematic roots. That being said - if you want to allow these options for any class that gains bonus feats and counts as a fighter then doing so could allow for interesting options.

Brute Style (Ex): *It takes less effort for you to wield weapons designed for two hands in one.* You may use any weapon that requires two hands as a one handed weapon, however doing so grants a -2 penalty on attack rolls. You must fighter level 4 or higher to select this nuance.



Certain Grip (Ex): *They can take your weapon away from you when they pry it from your cold dead fingers...*

You cannot be disarmed of any weapon with which you have *weapon training*. You must have the *weapon training* class feature to select this nuance.

Confident Disruption (Ex): *Spellcasters who face you see the certainty of success in your eyes as they try their best to spell you away.*

You add your bravery bonus to the concentration DC of any spells cast defensively by all enemies that are within your threatened area. This increase to casting spells defensively only applies if you are aware of the enemy's location and are capable of taking an attack of opportunity. If you can only take one attack of opportunity per round and have already used that attack, this increase does not apply. This stacks with *disruptive*. You must be fighter level 6 or higher to select this nuance.

Compensative Specialization (Ex): *Your training allows you to overcome your limitations when it comes to styles of combat.*

You may add your fighter levels to your ability scores in order to meet the prerequisites of combat feats. For example you if have 4 levels of fighter and an 11 in Dexterity you may treat your Dexterity as 15 to qualify for *two weapon fighting*.

Conditioning (Ex): *You grit your teeth and guard your body to fight off the ravages that would impede you by virtue of tenacity and training.*

You gain a bonus to saves against any effects that grant the *fatigued* condition. This bonus is equal to your current bravery bonus +1 for every 4 levels of fighter you possess.

At level 10 you may choose to select this nuance again to apply it to saves against effects that apply the *exhausted* condition. At level 14 you may select this nuance a third time to gain this bonus against effects that apply the *paralyzed* condition. If you have the *fantastical warrior* nuance you may expend one use of that ability to roll twice against any save for which you receive this bonus and take the better result.

You must be fighter level 4 or higher to select this nuance.



Critical Master (Ex): *Gaining advantage from your opponent's weak points is one of your many skills.*

You gain *critical focus* as a bonus feat. You may treat your base attack bonus as 2 higher for the purposes of meeting the prerequisites of any feat that list *critical focus* as a bonus feat. If you possess both the *fantastical warrior* nuance and the *vital strike feat* you may expend one use of that nuance to apply the *vital strike* feat as a critical hit when used. Enemies are allowed a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 14 + ½ your fighter level + the higher of either your Strength or Dexterity modifier) to negate the effect of critical feats used in this fashion. You must be fighter level 8 or higher to select this nuance.



Daring Payback (Ex): Opportunity comes to those brave enough to seize it.

You add your *bravery* bonus to the total number of attacks of opportunity you may make a turn. If you possess the *fantastical warrior* nuance and an opponent successfully hits you more than twice in a full attack, you may choose to make an attack of opportunity on them. If the attack of opportunity hits, you can choose to make an Intimidate check - success immediately ends their turn. Using this nuance in this way consumes one use of the *fantastical warrior* nuance. You must be fighter level 14 or higher to select this nuance.

Exotic Mastery (Ex): All weapons are familiar to you.

You gain proficiency in all exotic weapons.

Evasion (Ex): You know how to move out of harms way.

You gain the *evasion* class feature as the rogue. If you have the *armor training* class feature, you gain the benefits of *evasion* so long as you are unencumbered and have an armor check penalty of 0. You must be fighter level 8 or higher to select this nuance.

Fantastical Warrior (Ex): You are awe inspiring, performing feats that normally only those of a spellcasting persuasion are normally capable of.

Choose one of the following spells: *blurred movement*^(ACG), *endure elements*^(UC), *expeditious retreat*^(CRB), *jump*^(CRB), *monkey fish*^(ACG), *thunderstomp*^(ACG), *true strike*^(CRB), or *unerring weapon*^(UC). Through completely non-magical but incredible means you are able to use the selected spell as if it were a spell-like ability a number of times per day equal to your Constitution modifier and using half your fighter level as your caster level. Doing so does not provoke an attack of opportunity and uses a swift action. You may select this nuance more than once, each time you select an additional spell to use with this ability. Every spell-like ability used with this nuance counts toward your daily uses of this ability. You must be fighter level 8 or higher to select this nuance.

Fearless Leader (Ex): Your reputation for facing terror head on encourages others to follow.

You gain *leadership* as a bonus feat, without meeting the prerequisites. You add your *bravery* bonus to your leadership score when determining the level of cohort and followers granted to you. You must be fighter level 12 or higher to select this nuance.

Fully Trained Soldier (Ex): Those who have been trained in the ways of warfare often have to fill a variety of duties. Being the ultimate form of soldier, you excel by virtue of your exceptional training.

You may use your Profession(soldier) skill in place of any of the following; Heal, Perception, Sense Motive, and Survival. You cannot substitute a greater number of ranks in Profession (soldier) than your current fighter level. You must be fighter level 2 or higher to select this nuance.

Greater Bravery (Ex): *As you continue to fight and develop your skills, your confidence grows.*

You increase your current *bravery* bonus by 1. If you do not possess the *bravery* class feature, then you gain *bravery* with a bonus of +1. This granted *bravery* does not scale as a fighter. If your *bravery* bonus would exceed +5, then you become immune to *fear* effects. This nuance may be taken more than once. You must be fighter level 2 or higher to select this nuance.

Insurmountable Strikes (Ex): *Your expertise with weapons extends to finding and striking at exposed weak points.*

When you make an attack with a weapon you may ignore an amount of damage reduction equal to 2 + the highest *weapon training* bonus you are applying to your current attack. You must be fighter level 6 or higher to select this nuance.



Maneuver Specialist (Ex): *You are a natural at manipulation in combat.*

You gain one of the following feats; *improved bull rush*, *improved sunder*, *improved dirty trick*, *improved disarm*, *improved feint*, *improved reposition*, or *improved steal*. You do not have to meet the prerequisites for this feat. This nuance

may be selected more than once, selecting a different bonus feat each time. If you have the *fantastical warrior* nuance you may expend one use while performing a combat maneuver to ignore an enemy's immunity to that maneuver for one turn. You must be fighter level 2 or higher to select this nuance.

Mental Battlefield (Ex): *There are those among fighters who are so totally immersed into a combatants method of thought that navigating their minds is like traversing an active battlefield.*

You may add your Intelligence modifier to your Will saves against mind-affecting effects. Any creature attempting to affect the your mind in this fashion using spells or spell-like abilities who fails to do so takes non-lethal damage equal to your Intelligence modifier plus your fighter level. You must be fighter level 4 or higher to select this nuance.

Observant Guard (Ex): *You are a master of seeing attacks and reacting accordingly.*

You may add your Wisdom bonus (if any) to your Dexterity bonus to armor class when wearing light or no armor. This bonus doesn't stack with any other bonus that grants Wisdom to armor class. This bonus is lost if you are caught flat-footed or otherwise denied your dexterity bonus. You must be fighter level 10 or higher to select this nuance.

Preternatural Movement (Ex): *You can call upon a touch of mysticism for a dramatic burst of speed for a fraction of a second.*

If you have moved half or less than your full movement speed this turn you may still make a full attack. You may expend one use of your *fantastical warrior* nuance to make a full attack action as part of a charge or full movement instead. If you have *armor training* and are wearing light or no armor, as well as being unencumbered, you may still take a 5 foot step in the same turn you make a charge. You ignore any difficult terrain when you charge using *instant movement*. You must be fighter level 10 or higher and possess the *fantastical warrior* nuance to select this nuance.

Recovery (Ex): *You can draw upon your training and confidence to endure many of the most devastating wounds and conditions.*

You gain the *resolve* class feature of the Samurai. You may use this ability a number of times per day equal to your current *bravery* bonus. If you have the *fantastical warrior* nuance you may also expend uses from it to use this ability. You must be fighter level 4 or higher to select this nuance. If you are at least fighter level 10 you gain the greater *resolve* class feature.

Road Warrior

(Ex): You march on through all trials and tribulations, all battles and conflicts, your determination and training keeping you steady through many a cold night.

You gain *endurance* as a bonus feat. You increase the bonus granted by this feat by half your fighter level. If you have at least your second armor training you may sleep in heavy armor without becoming fatigued. You must be fighter level 2 or higher to select this nuance.

Shield to Bear (Ex): For you blocking with a shield is as natural as breathing. You may add your shield bonus to your Reflex saves against cones and breath weapons. In addition you may treat any shield as if it were a weapon with the *brace* quality. You must be fighter level 4 or higher to select this nuance.

Size Matters Little (Ex): You know that tripping a giant and a pixie entail entirely different approaches. You may choose to ignore up to your fighter level in size modifiers to an opponent's CMD. You must be fighter level 6 or higher to select this nuance.

Team Player (Ex): You have a knack for positioning yourself just so, in order to benefit your allies. You may grant allies the ability to use any teamwork feat they possess without possessing it yourself, although the feat's prerequisites must still be met.

You do not gain the benefits of any feat granted in this fashion. For example if you are adjacent to an ally with the *coordinated maneuvers* feat, they gain the benefits of that feat. You must be fighter level 4 or higher to select this nuance.

Ultimate Soldier (Ex): You have put your time in, fought a lifetimes worth of battles. For you there is little else other than combat anymore.

Any worn armor or gear does not count towards your total weight when determining encumbrance, although items stored in packs still do. You are treated as if you are under the constant effects of the *endure elements* spell, although the temperature range is doubled.

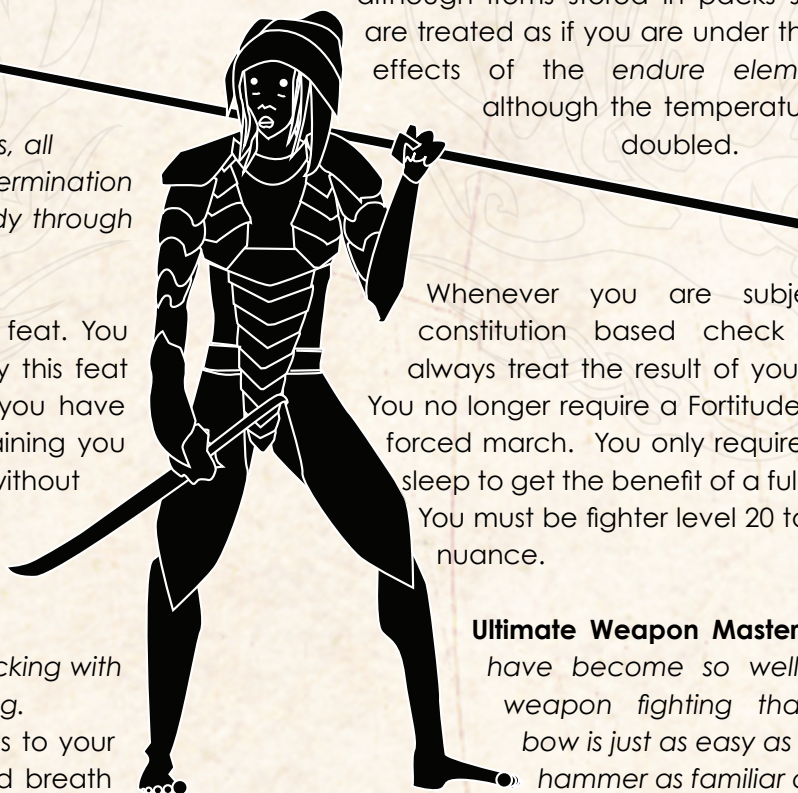
Whenever you are subject to a constitution based check you may always treat the result of your roll as 20. You no longer require a Fortitude save for a forced march. You only require 2 hours of sleep to get the benefit of a full nights rest. You must be fighter level 20 to select this nuance.

Ultimate Weapon Master (Ex): You have become so well versed in weapon fighting that using a bow is just as easy as a blade, or hammer as familiar as a lance.

All weapons you wield receive the benefits of the highest weapon training bonus you possess. You must be fighter level 20 to select this nuance.

Ultimate Veteran (Ex): You have put your body through a long and arduous process, slowly honing it to perfection. Now it has reached the point where you have mastered aging itself.

You no longer receive penalties from aging. Any penalties already accrued are lost after a week after selecting this nuance. You gain an insight bonus on knowledge checks to identify enemies in battle equal to 10 + your wisdom or intelligence modifier, whichever is higher. You must be fighter level 20 to select this nuance.



Without Limits (Ex): *Pushing the limits of physical limitations means nothing to you anymore.*

You no longer have a limit on the number of times per day you may use your *fantastical warrior* nuance. You must be fighter level 20 and possess the *fantastical warrior* nuance to select this nuance.

Alternate Options

Fighter nuances have the potential to change the power level of the fighter, and for that reason the method presented here is not necessarily the best way to use nuances for every type of player in every type of game. Keeping that in mind here are some other ways to incorporate nuances, some of them can even be used together. However it should be noted that these options do have an effect on the power nuances grant to the fighter class, and that should be considered accordingly when deciding whether these fit more for your game style.

Nuance Feats: Instead of having these be fighter exclusive options, you can instead have them be fighter exclusive feats for them to be used by other classes who count as fighters for the purpose of combat feats. Using these in this capacity could lead to more powerful synergy than the fighter, such as *observant guard* for martial artists and warpriest or *mental battlefield* for magus. Consider imposing a qualifying level penalty of -2 for any non-fighter picking these up. For example a level 20 magus would count as a level 8 fighter for the purposes of which nuances they qualify for.



Nuance Deeds: Instead of being a menu of options you can treat all nuance as available options once their requisite levels are met, this could even be done as an archetype that trades out bonus feats. Another alternative is to only grant one deed per feat, basically granting the same progression as normal, as a more restrictive method of granting nuances to the fighter.

When using this option the fighter gains a pool of *grit* equal to the mental stat of their choice (or Constitution if you are feeling generous). In lieu of firearms they may regain *grit* with critical hits and killing blows with any weapon they have *weapon focus* or *weapon training* with. Nuance deeds are a swift action to activate unless otherwise stated. Nuances that grant feats instead grant the benefit of that feat for 1 minute at the cost of 1 *grit*. Unless otherwise stated nuances the consume *grit* last for a number of rounds equal to your fighter level. Nuances as deeds use the following progression:

Level 1
Armsmaster, 0 grit
Compensative Specialization, 0 grit
Exotic Mastery, at least 1 grit
Level 2
Fully Trained Soldier, 0 grit
Maneuver Specialist, 1 grit
Road Warrior, at least 1 grit
Level 4
Brave Confidence, 1 grit
Brute Style, at least 1 grit
Conditioning (<i>fatigued</i>), at least 1 grit
Recovery, 1 grit
Level 6
Confident Disruption, 1 grit
Insurmountable Strikes, 1 grit
Shield to Bear, 1 grit
Level 8
Critical Master, at least 1 grit
Evasion, at least one grit

Fantastical Warrior (1st chosen SLA), 2 grit
Team Player, 1 grit
Level 10
Adaptive Feat Training, 2 grit
Conditioning (<i>exhausted</i>), 1 grit
Fantastical Warrior (2nd chosen SLA), 2 grit
Instant Movement, 2 grit
Observant Guard, 2 grit
Level 12
Fantastical Warrior (3rd chosen SLA), 2 grit
Fearless Leader, at least 1 grit
Size Matters Little, 1 grit
Level 14
Conditioning (<i>paralyzed</i>), 1 grit
Daring payback, 1 grit
Fantastical Warrior, 2 grit
Level 20
Fantastical Warrior (4th chosen SLA), 2 Points
Ultimate Soldier, at least 1 grit
Ultimate Weapon Master, 2 grit
Ultimate Veteran, 0 grit
Without Limits, at least 4 grit

Greater bravery should be treated as a feat with bravery as a prerequisite.



What's in a Feat: Instead of just bonus combat feats ANY feat can be exchanged for a nuance. This option is admittedly more powerful than a standard game, but it does allow for some very interesting fighter builds to be produced. Your mileage may vary depending on your playgroup.

The Whole Kit and Caboodle: Why bother trading anything away, just grant a nuance every time the fighter receives a bonus feat. This option is for higher power games or to grant a player with a lower system mastery a method to keep up with other players with higher system mastery. Alternatively you could go through the nuances, find the ones that would least disrupt the game when granted for free, and simply grant those as class features (typically ones without a minimum fighter level and that don't build off *weapon training* or *armor training* are almost straight up safe in any game).

Greedy Feat lovers: So your player wants to be a two weapon sword and board sundering fighter or some equally feat taxing build - no problem. With this alternative rule you can replace either *weapon training* or *armor training* for a nuance granted at each of those levels. Archetypes that have abilities that swap out for those class feature on a one for basis are reasonable to trade away as well.



A Touch of magic: It has been asked by some why the fighter doesn't have easy access to some mystical options like basically all other classes (including cavalier) have. Here is a way for players who want to work that angle for fighters to get some more magical nuances in the form of an archetype

Mystic Fighter

A mystic fighter has access to the following nuances:

Mystical Warrior (Sp): *While your calling is on the battlefield with steel and blood, the magics of the world permeate even you.*

You may select one 1st level spell from the bloodrager or magus spell lists. You may use this as a spell-like ability a number of times per day equal to your Constitution modifier using your fighter level as your caster level. You may select this nuance more than once, each time you select an additional spell to use with this ability. Every spell-like ability used with this nuance counts toward your daily uses of this ability. You must be fighter level 8 to select this nuance. This replaces *fantastical warrior*.

Dimension Warrior (Su): *The world shifts as you appear in front of your enemy, catching them off guard.*

You may expend one use of your mystical warrior ability to use *dimension door* as a spell-like ability. You also gain the *dimensional agility* feat. You may select any feat that lists *dimensional agility* as a prerequisite as a bonus feat. You must be fighter level 10 to select this nuance. This replaces *instant movement*.

Awakened Potential (Su): *Not all who come from magical stock and circumstance are potent sorcerers or raging bloodragers. For you awakening mystical potential comes hand in hand with mastering martial prowess.*

You gain a lesser bloodrage power available to a barbarian. You must be at least fighter level 4 to select this nuance. This nuance can be taken again at fighter level 10 for the middle blood rage power, and again at fighter level 14 for the greater bloodrage power. The fighter is considered to be always raging for the purposes of these powers.

In addition the fighter may choose from any of the bonus feats available to a bloodrager whose bloodline matches the bloodrage power in place of a bonus combat feat or nuance. This replaces *conditioning*.

Living Weapon (Su): *Your channeling of mystical energies into martial has made you worthy of wielding one of the enigmatic black blades.*

You gain a *blackblade* as the bladebound magus class feature. You use your fighter level as you magus level to determine the abilities of your *black blade*. Instead of an arcane pool you can choose to expend a use of your *mystical warrior* nuance to activate your *black blades* abilities. You must have the *mystical warrior* nuance to select this nuance. This replaces *armsmaster*.





Building your own nuances

Things to consider when designing your own nuances (note that a good nuance does not necessarily have to meet all these criteria, but it should fall upon several points.)

- 1. This is not an archetype builder.** Avoid abilities that step on fighter archetypes' toes.
- 2. Few to No Chains.** Each nuance should stand on its own, even if they end up better than feats by proxy. So much of the class still requires feats to do what it does that you shouldn't see an over reliance on these over many types of builds. That being said if the reason was thematically strong enough, and they draw from the same resource (such as *fantastical warrior* and the nuances that require it) then a single prereq could be ok.
- 3. Prerequisite-lite.** Out of 21 arcane discoveries only 1 has a prerequisite other than wizard level, and they grant stuff like binding outsiders or gaining the lycanthropy template when using *shapechange* or *beast shape IV*.
- 4. Focused specific effects.** Many of these effects should be potent but somewhat specific. See the *golem constructor* arcane discovery, which grants 3 craft feats but restricts their use to the creation of a specific type of golem. That's not to say there cannot be a few universally applicable ones, very few wizards cannot find a good use of *fast study* and *split slot*. *Staff like wand* is also crazy good.
- 5. Scalability.** Try to make some of these scale to at least some small degree, the value of a nuance shouldn't decrease at higher levels.
- 6. Dip Avoidance.** Try to avoid giving anything away too early, lowest should be like fighter level 3 or an ability that doesn't show up before then. There are exceptions if the scale is small enough.
- 7. Bravery Love.** Can't hurt to show some support for the least loved fighter feature.
- 8. MAD Love.** As it is the fighter doesn't have a lot of reason to invest in mental ability scores outside of shoring up weak points. It would be advantageous to reward players who put more into more diverse fighters (though it may seem like *compensative specialization* does a lot to avoid this, it really just opens the door for diversity).

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