

Chapter 6: Weapons, Armor, and Combat Skills

There are a great many weapons and fighting styles in Dust to Dust. Weapons range from the smallest Dagger to the largest Halberd, but each one requires training to effectively wield. Armor and Shields are used as defensive tool for the warriors of the world. All martially inclined individuals may pick up special maneuvers to defend themselves and perform fighting feats, such as disarming an opponent's weapon.

Weapons

Category	Weapon	Cost
Blade	Dagger	1
	Short Sword	5
	Long Sword	10
	Bastard Sword	18
	Great Sword	15
	Weapon Breaker	8
	Blademaster	25
Hafted	Cleaver	1
	Axe, Short	3
	Axe, Long	7
	Glaive/War Axe	18
	Halberd/Great Axe	15
	Spear	7
	Haftmaster	23
Blunt	Club/Hammer/Mace, Small	1
	Club/Hammer/Mace, Short	3
	Club/Hammer/Mace, Long	6
	Maul/Cudgel	12
	Club/Hammer/Mace, Great	9
	Staff	5
	Bluntmaster	14
Missile	Bow	10
	Crossbow	8
	Thrown Weapon	4
	Missile Master	15
Melee	Meleemaster	40

Bladed Weapons

The character has the ability to use one of the several bladed weapon types. A character is not automatically skilled at using weapons shorter than the type she has chose. Fighting styles for each length of weapon are extremely different and each must be bought separately.

Dagger

Base Damage: One Wound

A dagger must be at least 12" and cannot exceed 20" in length. Blade length can be no less than 8" and no more than 16".

Short Sword

Base Damage: One Wound

A short sword must be at least 21" and cannot exceed 33" in length. Blade length can be no less than 17" and no more than 24".

Long Sword

Base Damage: One Wound

A long sword must be at least 34" and cannot exceed 46" in length. Blade Length can be no less than 25" and no more than 36".

Bastard Sword

Base Damage: One Wound (Two Wounds if used Two-Handed)

A bastard sword, also called a hand and a half sword, must be at least 48" and cannot exceed 52" in length. Blade length can be no less than 30" and no more than 42".

Great Sword

Base Damage: Two Wounds

A great sword must be at least 53" and cannot exceed 62" in length. Blade length can be no less than 43" and no more than 48". A great sword held in one hand may be used to block attacks, but cannot be used to attack or used with the Parry skill.

Weapon Breaker

Base Damage: One Wound

A weapon breaker must be at least 12" in length and cannot exceed 33" in length. Blade length can be no less than 8" and no more than 24". These weapons must have knobs of at least 2"x2" foam every 3" up one side of the blade.

Blunt Weapons

The character has the ability to use one of the several blunt weapon types. A character is not automatically skilled at using weapons shorter than the type she has chose. Fighting styles for each length of weapon are extremely different and each must be bought separately.

All Blunt Weapons MUST have a noticeable head. It should be clear what the weapon is from a safe distance away from the character. All Blunt Weapons MUST be approved by the staff for their category. The staff is the final say on if a weapon is approved or not. If there is any question on what the weapon is supposed to be, then the weapon will not be allowed, no exceptions.

All shaft lengths refer to the length of the weapon past the grip.

Club/Hammer/Mace, Small

Base Damage: One Wound

A small blunt must be at least 12" and cannot exceed 20" in length. You cannot thrust with a short blunt weapon. The shaft length can be no less than 8" and no more than 16", including the head.

Club/Hammer/Mace, Short

Base Damage: One Wound

A short blunt must be at least 21" and cannot exceed 33" in length. You cannot thrust with a short blunt weapon. The shaft length can be no less than 17" and no more than 24", including the head.

Club/Hammer/Mace, Long

Base Damage: One Wound

A long blunt must be at least 34" and cannot exceed 46" in length. You cannot thrust with a long blunt weapon. The shaft length can be no less than 25" and no more than 36", including the head.

Cudgel/Maul

Base Damage: One Wound (Two Wounds if used Two-Handed)

A cudgel or maul must be at least 48" and cannot exceed 52" in length. You cannot thrust with a cudgel or maul. The shaft length can be no less than 30" and no more than 42".

Club/Hammer/Mace, Great

Base Damage: Two Wounds

A great blunt must be at least 53" and cannot exceed 62" in length. You cannot thrust with a great blunt. The shaft length can be no less than 43" and no more than 48". A great blunt held in one hand may be used to block attacks, but cannot be used to attack or used with the Parry skill.

Staff

Base Damage: One Wound

A staff must be at least 60" and cannot exceed 72" in length. When wielding a staff, the player must hold it in the middle three feet. You can thrust with a staff. A staff held in one hand may be used to block attacks, but may not be used to attack, or to use the Parry Combat Maneuver. A staff may be covered in foam for its entire length, or it may have a grip in the middle. A staff must have at least 18" of foam covering on each end.

Hafted Weapons

The character has the ability to use one of the several hafted weapon types. A character is not automatically skilled at using weapons shorter than the type she has chose. Fighting styles for each length of weapon are extremely different and each must be bought separately.

All Hafted Weapons MUST have a noticeable head. It should be clear what the weapon is from a safe distance away from the character. All Hafted Weapons MUST be approved by the staff for their category. The staff is the final say on if a weapon is approved or not. If there is any question on what the weapon is supposed to be, then the weapon will not be allowed, no exceptions.

All shaft lengths refer to the length of the weapon past the grip.

Cleaver

Base Damage: One Wound

A cleaver must be at least 12" and cannot exceed 20" in length. The shaft length can be no less than 8" and no more than 16", including the head.

Axe, Short

Base Damage: One Wound

A short axe must be at least 21" and cannot exceed 33" in length. The shaft length can be no less than 17" and no more than 24", including the head.

Axe, Long

Base Damage: One Wound

A long axe must be at least 34" and cannot exceed 46" in length. The shaft length can be no less than 25" and no more than 36", including the head.

Glaive/War Axe

Base Damage: One Wound (Two Wounds if used Two-Handed)

A glaive or war axe must be at least 48" in length and cannot exceed 60" in length. The shaft length can be no less than 30" and no more than 50", including the head.

Halberd/Great Axe

Base Damage: Two Wounds

A halberd or great axe must be at least 60" in length and cannot exceed 72" in length. The shaft length can be no less than 42" and no more than 62", including the head. A halberd or great axe held in one hand may be used to block attacks, but cannot be used to attack or used with the Parry skill.

Spear

Base Damage: One Wound

A spear may only be used as a thrusting weapon. A spear may never be thrown. A spear must be at least 48" and cannot exceed 58". The shaft length can be no less than 30" and no more than 48", including the head. The head is the only surface of the spear that deals damage. The head of the spear may be no more than 12".

Spear is a one-handed weapon, and will only do one Wound, whether it is used with one hand or two. If a spear is wielded in two hands, it may be used to slash as well, though, again, the head is the only legal striking surface.

Claws

Some creatures or magically-gifted individuals have the ability to fight with small claws or short claws in combat, representing natural weaponry. All natural weaponry should be red. There is no standard build cost for claws, as the ability to use claws comes from some other source. All claws are used in pairs by default, but characters can wield a single claw and a second weapon or a shield according to normal Style rules, found below. When purchasing Wounding Blows for claws, characters do not have to specify "small claw" or "short claw." Claws otherwise interact normally with Master Wounding Blows.

Claws are inherently immune to Drop, Fling, Disarm, Break, and Destroy effects. Boffer arrows or thrown weapons that strike a claw deal damage to the limb instead of Disarming the claw.

Small Claws

Base Damage: One Wound

A small claw must be at least 12" and cannot exceed 20" in length. Blade length can be no less than 8" and no more than 16".

Short Claws

Base Damage: One Wound

A short claw must be at least 21" and cannot exceed 33" in length. Blade length can be no less than 17" and no more than 24".

Missile Weapons

The character can use thrown weapons, a bow or crossbow in combat. Please refer to Chapter 16: General Rules for Play for full rules detailing the use of bows. Arrows must be made entirely of foam or have any metal tip removed and have a 2" open-cell foam padded tip. All bows and arrows must pass a safety test before they can be used.

Bows and crossbows may never be intentionally struck by a melee weapon, nor may they be used to intentionally block a melee strike. A player doing either of those things will receive a safety warning and possibly be removed from combat. If a bow or crossbow is accidentally struck by a melee weapon, the blow should be applied to the arm holding the weapon. If both arms are holding the weapon, the blow applies to the limb closest to where the blow landed.

Bow

Damage: Two Wounds

Bows must have between a 20 lb. and a 30 lb. pull. Anyone wishing to use a bow must pass the Archery Safety Test. Arrows should be no more than 34" in overall length, including the head and nock. Anyone using a 30 lb. pull bow must be specifically approved by a head Safety Guide.

Crossbow

Damage: One Wound, or Two Wounds with Aiming

Most crossbows have too strong a pull to be used safely. However, there are several toy crossbows on the market that may be used. If one of these varieties is used, the player should make an attempt to paint or otherwise alter the crossbow so that it does not appear to be made of plastic, at least from a distance. A crossbow may be fired with one hand, but it must be loaded with two hands. This means that neither hand may be holding anything other than the crossbow or the bolt while loading. A crossbow struck with a melee weapon suffers a Breaking effect. Crossbows may be used with bucklers, as long as they are not held in the hand.

Aiming: By taking careful aim against a target, a crossbow wielder can deal an additional Wound. Aiming is a silent three-count, during which time the wielder keeps the crossbow trained on her target. If she aims the crossbow elsewhere during this time or before firing, she must repeat her three-count. Otherwise, she may maintain Aim until she fires. Aim is a concentration effect. The extra damage of Aiming stacks with damage from Wounding Blows as well as other sources.

Thrown Weapon

Damage: One Wound

Thrown weapons include anything from thrown rocks to thrown knives. Silly thrown objects will not be approved. Thrown weapons must be at least 3" long and can be no longer than 10". Thrown weapons must be made entirely of foam, either open or closed cell.

Shields and Armor

Category	Item	Cost
Shields	Buckler	3
	Small Shield	5
	Large Shield	10
Armor	Light Armor	2
	Medium Armor	4
	Heavy Armor	6
Mastery	Armor Mastery – requires three (3) Mortal Blows	15

A character must buy the ability wear a shield or wear armor. The greater the size of the shield, or the heavier the armor, the greater the cost to utilize the armor or shield.

Shields

A character must purchase the shield size he wishes to use, though a character that can use a large shield may use all shields of a smaller class. A character that already possesses the ability to use a smaller shield need only pay the difference in the cost to upgrade. For example, Miranda wants to learn Small Shield, but already possesses Buckler. She needs only to pay two (2) additional character points to learn Small Shield.

When a shield becomes Broken or Destroyed, the shield no longer stops blows, and any hit delivered will be taken on the arm wielding the shield. When removing a shield that is Broken or Destroyed, please be aware of the surroundings when dropping or tossing the shield aside.

A character may use a weapon in the same hand/arm as a buckler. No character may use a weapon in the same hand as a small shield or a large shield, even if the shield is designed for doing so. No character may use more than one (1) shield at a time, even if one (1) or more is a buckler.

Shields must be padded with at least 5/8" closed cell foam padding around the outside edge. No uncovered bolts or other protrusions can be on the front side of the shield.

Buckler

The maximum dimensions of a buckler are 216 sq. in. (12"x18", or a circle with an 8" radius are good examples). A buckler may have no dimension in excess of 21". The minimum size on bucklers is 36 sq. in. with a minimum of 6" on any side. Bucklers must be made of a rigid material and appropriately padded.

An armored gauntlet is also a legal phys-rep for a buckler. Armored gauntlets must be substantial enough to be distinct from any suit of armor that the character is wearing. The gauntlet may not extend past the elbow and may not be more than 10" wide along its length. Even if wearing two gauntlets, a character may only count one of them as a buckler.

Small Shield

The maximum dimension of a small shield is 30". The maximum area cannot exceed 454 sq. in. (a 24" in diameter circle). This skill includes, and replaces, the Buckler skill.

Large Shield

The maximum dimension of a large shield cannot exceed 36". The maximum area cannot exceed 531 sq. in. (a 26" in diameter circle). This skill includes and replaces the Small Shield skill.

Armor

While it may be possible for many people to put on armor, knowing how to move and how to compensate for the extra weight and bulk is harder than it seems. Any character may wear armor, however she may not utilize any Advantage, Talent, Weapon Skill, or cast spells while doing so and may only move at a slow walk.

Armor values cannot be stacked to increase protection beyond the maximum limits. For example, Karl wants to wear both a suit of leather armor and a suit of chain armor. He does not receive both the two (2) points from leather and the four (4) points from the chain to receive six (6) points. Instead, he receives the value of the highest suit, which is four (4) points.

Please see Chapter 16: General Rules for Play and Appendix 1: Armor Rating for more information on armor values and types of armor that may be worn.

Wear Light Armor

The character can fully function while wearing Light Armor. Leather armor counts as Light Armor. Light Armor provides 1-2 points of protection and may never be breached. This means that the armor always refits to its full value of either one (1) or two (2) points.

Wear Medium Armor

The character may fully function while wearing Medium Armor. Chainmail, heavily studded leather or brigandine armor all count as Medium Armor. Medium Armor provides three (3) to four (4) points of protection. All Medium Armor refits to a minimum of two (2) points of armor, even it has been breached fully. This skill includes, and replaces, the Wear Light Armor skill.

Wear Heavy Armor

The character may fully function while wearing Heavy Armor. Plate mail, or strong and rigid facsimiles, is about the only type of armor that fits into this category. Heavy Armor provides five (5) points of protection. All Heavy Armor refits to a minimum of two (2) points of armor, even it has been breached fully. This skill includes, and replaces, the Wear Medium Armor skill.

Armor Mastery

The character is so familiar with the use of armor that any unbreached suit of armor he wears has its armor rating increased by one, as long as he is wearing it. This only increases the armor rating, and no other values. This ability does not stack with any other abilities with the Armor Mastery tag associated with them.

Styles

The character is familiar with one or more of the fighting styles described below.

Style	Cost at Character Creation	Cost after Character Creation
Ambidextrous	5	10
Blademaster	25	25
Bluntmaster	14	14
Haftmaster	23	23
Missilemaster	15	15
Meleemaster	40	40
Florentine	5	5
Two Weapons (requires Florentine)	5	5
Twin Blades (requires Two Weapons)	5	5
Long Weapons (requires Twin Blades)	5	5

Ambidextrous

The character has the ability to use both her left and right hands with equal proficiency in combat. It does not convey any special abilities out of combat.

Rules: The character may use Wounding Blows and other Combat Maneuvers with both hands. This does not automatically allow a character to use two weapons. The character must still purchase Florentine, Two Weapons or Twin Blades to do so. This also does not allow a character to ever use more than three (3) Wounding Blows or Combat Maneuvers in a single combat.

Blademaster

The character may use all weapons from the Blade category. Humans from Tarsikka and Returned from Mazhan pay two fewer CP for this skill. As this skill supersedes all other Blade proficiencies, points paid for those skills reduce this cost of this skill.

Bluntmaster

The character may use all weapons from the Blunt category. As this skill supersedes all other Blunt proficiencies, points paid for those skills reduce the cost of this skill.

Haftmaster

The character may use all weapons from the Haft category. Humans from the Caliphate of Dusk and Returned from Ophira pay two fewer CP for this skill. As this skill supersedes all other Hafted proficiencies, points paid for those skills reduce the cost of this skill.

Meleemaster

The character may use all weapons from the Melee category. As this skill supersedes all other Melee Weapon proficiencies, points paid for those skills reduce the cost of this skill.

Missilemaster

The character may use all weapons from the Missile category. Humans from Athral Isle who took a cost reduction on Bow, Crossbow, or Thrown Weapon pay two fewer CP for this skill. As this skill supersedes all other Missile Weapon proficiencies, points paid for those skills reduce the cost of this skill.

Florentine

This skill allows a character to fight with two (2) weapons. One (1) weapon can be no longer than a dagger. The other weapon can be no longer than any long sized weapon.

Two Weapons

A character must possess Florentine to use this skill. A character with this skill can fight with two (2) weapons. One (1) weapon may be no longer than any short sized weapon. The other weapon can be no longer than a long sized weapon.

Twin Blades

The character may use two (2) weapons of equal length up to the size of any long weapon. The character must possess Florentine and Two Weapons to use this skill.

Long Weapons

This skill allows the use of a long weapon, and any weapon wieldable in one (1) hand. The player must demonstrate the ability to safely use this style of fighting first. The character must possess Florentine, Two Weapons, and Twin Blades to use this skill.

Combat Maneuvers

There are two types of Combat Maneuvers, “Per Use” abilities and “Intrinsic” abilities. Per Use abilities, such as Parry, Striking Blow, and Armor Pierce may be purchased a maximum of three (3) times and may only be used one (1) time per combat for each time they are purchased. “Intrinsic” abilities are always considered active and the character need only buy them one (1) time.

Most Per Use Combat Maneuvers fall into a Group. A character may never call more than three (3) Combat Maneuvers from a particular Group during a single battle, even if the character possesses a full set of each of the Maneuvers in a Group. For example, Parry and Dodge are both part of the same Group. A character with a full set of Parries and a full set of Dodges is still limited to only three (3) Parries or Dodges, in any combination during a battle. Note that Intrinsic maneuvers, such as Blindside, are not grouped and do not have the Rule of Three limitation.

Group	Maneuvers
Wounding	All Wounding Blows
Defense	Dodge, Missile Dodge, Parry, Counter Magic
Break	Weapon Break, Shield Break
Pierce	Armor Pierce, Shield Pierce
Disarm	Disarm, Recover
Knockdown	Knockdown
Strike	Trick Shot

Possessing three (3) of any Combat Maneuver is called a “set.” Each Per Use Maneuver can only be used one (1) time per combat for each time it is purchased, and each level may be purchased a maximum of three (3) times.

Combat

A combat is considered to be a single skirmish which may involve any number of opponents. The player must have at least ten (10) minutes to collect her wits between combat before these Maneuvers reset, and she is able to use them again. The player may take other actions during this time, but may not engage in any sort of combat, such as casting spells, swinging weapons, countering spells, or even parrying an attack. While waiting the ten (10) minutes for Wounding Blows to refresh, a character may not activate any abilities or items, with the exception of ingested formulations. Any abilities previously activated continue to function normally.

Special Maneuvers

Maneuver	Requirements	Cost
Blindside	Appropriate Weapon Skill	10
Toughness 1	3 Striking Blows	10
Toughness 2	Toughness 1, 3 Mighty Blows	10
Second Wind	3 Crippling Blows	15

Blindside

Pre-requisite: A melee weapon

Cost: 10

Type: Intrinsic

Group: None

Rules: This maneuver allows a character to render most humanoids and some creatures unconscious with a quick strike. In reality, this would be a blow delivered to the head. However, head shots are illegal, and the blow is instead delivered to the shoulder.

When attempting to Blindside someone, the character must tap her target on the shoulder with the pommel of a melee weapon and say "Blindside." The blow must be delivered from behind, and the character must be holding the weapon at a point within one (1) foot of where it impacts the target's shoulder. A character delivering a Blindside must be standing squarely behind the target. A Blindside may not be delivered while standing beside someone. The character being Blindsided can be aware that someone is behind him, and still be affected by the Blindside. Surprise is not necessary for a Blindside to be effective, but the blow must be delivered from behind. Blindside may not be preceded by any other form of attack, such as a spell cast or a weapon strike, or the Blindside fails automatically. If the initial Blindside is stopped by any Protective, a second Blindside may be attempted, but only after three (3) seconds have passed.

Blindside may not be Parried or Dodged.

When Blindsided, a character remains unconscious for fifteen (15) minutes before waking. Shaking a Blindsided character will not awaken him, though an Awaken spell or Smelling Salts will. Nearly any weapon may be used for Blindside, though Blunt Weapons are most common. Missile weapons may not be used. Players may only Blindside with legal, tagged weapons.

A character wearing an approved helmet or coif is immune to the effects of Blindside. Helmets and coifs need to be evaluated as three or more points of armor to grant this benefit. A spell that provides a Shield against Physical grants protection from Blindside. Weapons or shields worn on the back do not grant protection. The Acute Hearing Advantage prevents Blindside. A Blindside should never be delivered with much strength, as a slight tap is all that is required.

Toughness

Pre-Requisite: 3 Striking Blows for Toughness 1, 3 Mighty Blows and Toughness 1 for Toughness 2

Cost: 10 per point

Type: Intrinsic

Group: Toughness

Rules: Toughness represents a character's intrinsic ability shake off minor wounds. Toughness is lost after Skins, but before the character begins taking Wounds. Toughness functions very much like a Skin effect. However, a character may have her Toughness healed, whereas a skin may not be healed. Toughness protects all locations, exactly the same as a Skin.

Toughness heals naturally at a rate of one (1) point per one (1) hour. After receiving a Stabilize effect, such as Healing Ways, all Toughness heals in one (1) hour. This may heal along with Wounds, if Wounds are being tended with Healing Ways. An Accelerate Healing effect restores all Toughness in thirty (30) minutes. Rapid Healing allows the character to recover all Toughness in thirty (30) minutes. A character with Rapid Healing who receives an Accelerate Healing effect recovers all Toughness in fifteen (15) minutes.

Toughness may be healed via Magical Healing, as well. A healing spell greater than Accelerate Healing may be directed to heal Toughness instead of Wounds. Heal Minor Wounds heals one (1) point of Toughness, Heal Wound heals two (2) points of Toughness, Heal Grievous Wounds heals four (4) points of Toughness, Heal Mortal Wounds heals eight (8) points of Toughness, and Restore heals eight (8) points of Toughness.

Second Wind

Pre-requisite: 3 Crippling Blows

Cost: 15

Type: Per Use

Group: Second Wind

Rules: Second Wind allows a character to force himself to calm down and regain his focus. After spending one (1) minute concentrating, a character may regain three (3) spent Wounding Blows as Mighty Blows, regardless of what his top end Wounding Blow might be. This ability may only be used once all Wounding Blows have been expended. He also refreshes up to two (2) points of Toughness, if he currently has no Skin or Toughness. The character may only perform Second Wind one (1) time per battle, even if he has Second Wind from another source.

Defensive Maneuvers

Maneuver	Pre-Requisite	Cost
Parry	3 Piercing Blows	10
Missile Dodge	3 Piercing Blows in a Missile Weapon or Alchemy 1	10
Counter Magic	10 Bones or 2 nd Circle in Celestial Arts or Totemic Power 3	10
Dodge	3 Parries and 3 Striking Blows or 3 Missiles Dodges and 3 Striking	10

	Blows or 3 Missile Dodges and Alchemy 2	
Dodge	None	20/30/40

Dodge

Pre-requisites: 3 Parries and 3 Striking Blows, or 3 Missile Dodges and 3 Striking Blows, or 3 Missile Dodges and Alchemy 2, or None

Cost: 10 if met with prerequisites; or 20 for the first, 30 for the second, and 40 for the third if purchased with no prerequisites.

Type: Per Use

Group: Defense

This Combat Maneuver allows the character to avoid the effects of any single attack that is not a Voice or a Point attack, or Blindside. Weapon blows, missile weapons, or spell packets may be Dodged. Upon being struck the player must call out "Dodge" to indicate that she avoided the attack. Dodge may be used at any time, even to avoid an attack that comes from the rear or by surprise. Effects from locks, traps, or Warding Glyphs may not be Dodged with this ability.

Dodge should never be used never be used to deliberately block an attack on another character. A character with Dodge should never deliberately leap in front of an incoming attack and then call "Dodge." This is considered an inappropriate use of the skill. If this occurs, the player doing so may be issued a Sportsmanship Warning.

The Dodge skill can be used to take an incoming attack for another character. As long as the intended target is within five (5) feet of the character with the Dodge skill, the character may call "Dodge – Block" and take the attack instead. An attack blocked in this manner is assumed to strike the character's torso. If any armor is worn on the torso it may be applied to reduce any damage taken by the attack. The Blocking character cannot then Parry or Dodge the attack, though all magical protections still apply.

A character may purchase Dodges once she possesses either a full set of Parries or Missile Dodges and Striking Blows, or a full set of Missile Dodges and Alchemy 2. After purchasing three (3) Parries or Missile Dodges and three (3) Dodges, the character may use three (3) of these in any combination in a single battle.

Unlike Parries or Missile Dodges, Dodges may also be bought individually without having first purchased Parries or Missile Dodges, though at an increasing cost. The cost for buying Dodge without having purchased Parry or Missile Dodge first is twenty (20) points for the first Dodge, thirty (30) points for the second Dodge, and forty (40) points for the third Dodge.

Missile Dodge

Pre-requisites: 3 Piercing Blows in a missile weapon or Alchemy 1

Cost: 10

Type: Per Use

Group: Defense

Rules: This Combat Maneuver allows the character to avoid the effects of any single missile attack: arrows, bolts, thrown weapons, natural attacks and any thrown brew or formulation. Upon being struck the player must call "Dodge" to indicate that she avoided the attack. Effects from locks, traps, or Warding Glyphs may not be Dodged with this ability.

Missile Dodge should never be used to deliberately block an attack for another character. A character with Missile Dodge should never deliberately leap in front of an incoming attack and then call "Dodge" This is considered to be an inappropriate use of the skill. If this occurs, the player doing so may be issued a Sportsmanship Warning.

The Missile Dodge skill can be used to take an incoming attack for another character. As long as the intended target is within five (5) feet of the character with the Missile Dodge skill, the character may call "Dodge – Block" and take the attack instead. An attack blocked in this manner is assumed to strike the character's torso. If any armor is worn on the torso it can be applied to reducing any damage taken by the attack. The Blocking character cannot then Parry or Dodge the attack, though all magical protections still apply.

Parry

Pre-requisite: 3 Piercing Blows in a melee weapon

Cost: 10

Type: Per Use

Group: Defense

Rules: This Combat Maneuver allows the character to parry any one (1) blow from a melee weapon. The player must have a melee weapon in hand to be able to Parry. Upon being struck with a blow, the player may call "Parry" to indicate that he Parried the blow. A Parry may also be used to block a blow taken by another player, as long as the Parrying player is within five (5) feet of the target with his weapon. A Parry must be used with the weapon for which the character has Piercing Blows. A Parry cannot be used to block the effects of spells or Missile Weapons. Effects from locks, traps, or Warding Glyphs may not be Parried with this ability.

Counter Magic

Pre-requisite: Ten (10) bones in Ritualism, Second Circle in Celestial Ways, or Totemic Power 3

Cost: 10

Type: Per Use

Group: Defense

Rules: This Combat Maneuver allows the character to Counter any one (1) spell that is being cast at her. Counter Magic cannot remove magical effects already in place. To use this ability, the caster with this ability must state "Counter Magic" followed by the name of the effect that was cast. This must be said within two (2) seconds of the completion of the verbal of the effect being Countered. A Counter Magic may also be used to block a spell taken by another player, as long as the Countering player is within five (5) feet of the target of the spell effect. Only voice, point, packet delivered or weapon delivered effects may be Countered. The spell effects of a Warding Glyph, or magic triggered by a lock or trap, cannot be Countered. This ability is a Defense, and only three (3) Defenses may be used in a single combat, unless allowed by a Combat Discipline or other special ability, regardless of how many Defenses the player possesses.

A character may not use the Counter Magic Talent while all of his ties to magic are Disrupted, but may Counter Magic normally if he has at least one undisrupted tie to magic with which he qualifies for Counter Magic. If a Celestial shifts phase to Dual Realm, has not yet paid for Second Circle in the second Realm, and is Disrupted in his primary Realm, he may not Counter. A Disrupt that is not specified against a particular Realm or Form applies to all magic, such as the Disrupt that is inherent in the Disease effect.

Special Attacks

Maneuver	Pre-Requisite	Cost
Armor Pierce	3 Striking Blows, or three Piercing Blows in Crossbow	10
Shield Pierce	3 Mighty Blows in Spear or a Missile Weapon	10
Disarm	3 Mighty Blows	15
Recover	1 Disarm or 1 Shield Disarm	5
Weapon Break	3 Striking Blows in Weapon Breaker or 3 Mighty Blows in a Great Weapon	15
Shield Break	3 Crippling Blows in a Great Weapon or Blunt Weapon	15
Shield Disarm	3 Mighty Blows in any non-spear Hafted Weapon	15
Knockdown	3 Crippling Blows in a Bow or Great Weapon or Staff	15
Trick Shot	3 Striking Blows in a Missile Weapon, or Alchemy 2	10
Weapon Specialization	3 Strikes of Death	20

Armor Pierce

Pre-requisites: 3 Striking Blows, or 3 Piercing Blows in Crossbow

Cost: 10

Type: Per Use

Group: Pierce

Rules: A character that possesses this ability has such great skill at arms that she can deftly maneuver her weapon as to avoid an opponent's armor and strike a blow directly to the body.

This Maneuver allows a character to completely bypass an opponent's armor when making an attack. When using this Maneuver, the player calls "Armor Pierce." If the blow lands on a legal hit location, the target then suffers a Wound to whatever location the blow struck. Armor Pierce does not bypass Skins and Toughness, only armor. This ability is stopped by all applicable magical protectives.

No other Maneuvers may be called in conjunction with this Maneuver, though Blade Poisons and Magical Effects on the weapon or the weapon's wielder will still take effect. A character may purchase three (3) Armor Pierces. No more than three (3) Pierces, either Shield or Armor, may be used in any one (1) battle.

Shield Pierce

Pre-requisites: 3 Mighty Blows in a missile weapon or spear

Cost: 10

Type: Per Use

Group: Pierce

Rules: Usable with missile weapons and spear only, a character may call "Shield Pierce" when attacking a shield. If the weapon strikes the target's shield, the attack is considered to have pierced the shield and scored a hit on the target's arm. The target then suffers a Wound to the arm carrying the shield. Shield Pierce does not bypass Armor, Skins, or Toughness, only the actual shield. This ability is stopped by all applicable magical protectives.

No other Maneuvers may be called in conjunction with this Maneuver, though Blade Poisons and Magical Effects on the weapon or the weapon's wielder will still take effect.

If the attack misses target's shield, but hits the target, normal damage is dealt. Once an arm is incapacitated, subsequent Shield Pierce attacks that strike the shield have no effect and the ability is wasted, as if the attack had missed the target. A character may purchase three (3) Shield Pierces. No more than any three (3) Pierces, either Shield or Armor, may be used in any one (1) battle.

The area covered by the shield must be covered in armor for armor to apply to mitigating the damage from Shield Pierce.

Disarm

Pre-requisites: 3 Mighty Blows

Cost: 15

Type: Per Use

Group: Disarm

Rules: This Maneuver may disarm an opponent. When the player swings, she may call "Disarm" and if she strikes the target's weapon, the target must drop the weapon at least five (5) away from them. Missile weapons only need to strike a legal target area in order for the target to be Disarmed. Missile weapon users should call "Disarm" when the weapon is released. The target should toss the weapon safely and gently away from them.

A character may only purchase disarms after possessing a full set of Mighty Blows.

The Disarm skill is not a reversible skill that allows the user to negate someone else's Disarm. A character with Disarm may never Disarm a shield. Only Shield Disarm may Disarm a shield.

Recover

Pre-requisites: 1 Disarm or 1 Shield Disarm; you may not have more Recovers than you have Disarms or Shield Disarms

Cost: 5

Type: Per Use

Group: Disarm

Rules: This Maneuver allows the character to counter a Disarm by calling "Recover." A character may purchase up to three (3) Recovers. A character may never use more than three (3) Disarms and Recovers in any combination in a single battle.

Weapon Break

Pre-requisites: 3 Striking Blows with a Weapon Breaker or 3 Mighty Blows in a Great Weapon

Cost: 15

Type: Per Use

Group: Break

Rules: This Maneuver allows the character to Break any weapon with the use of a weapon breaker or great weapon. Shield cannot be broken with this skill.

Upon striking a weapon with the weapon breaker or great weapon the player may call out “Weapon Break.” If the strike is successful, the weapon suffers a Breaking effect. Some magical Enchantments or superior craftsmanship may make a weapon resistant or immune to the effects of this Maneuver.

Shield Break

Pre-requisites: 3 Crippling Blows in a Great Weapon or Blunt Weapon

Cost: 15

Type: Per Use

Group: Break

Rules: This Maneuver allows a character to Break any shield with the use of a great weapon or blunt weapon. Weapons cannot be broken with this skill.

Upon striking a shield with the great weapon or blunt weapon, the player may call out “Shield Break.” If the strike is successful, the shield suffers a Breaking effect. Some magical Enchantments or superior craftsmanship may make a shield resistant or immune to the effects of this Maneuver.

Shield Disarm

Pre-requisites: 3 Mighty Blows in any non-spear Hafted Weapon

Rules: This Maneuver may disarm an opponent. When the player swings, she may call “Disarm” and if she strikes the target’s shield, the target must drop the shield at least five (5) feet away from them. The target should toss the shield safely and gently away from them. A character may only purchase Shield Disarms after possessing a full set of Mighty Blows in a non-spear hafted weapon.

The Shield Disarm skill is not a reversible skill that allows the user to negate someone else’s Shield Disarm. A character with Shield Disarm may never use Shield Disarm to Disarm a weapon. Shield Disarm may only Disarm a shield. Recover may be used to counter Shield Disarm.

Knockdown

Pre-requisite: 3 Crippling Blows in a Great Weapon or Bow or Staff

Cost: 15

Type: Per Use

Group: Knockdown

Rules: This Maneuver allows a character to Knockdown a target. Knockdown ignores all Armor and Skin, but is stopped by any applicable Defensive Maneuvers or magical protectives, such as Shield against or Resist against Knockdown.

The character may call out “Knockdown” after striking a target. The strike must land in a legal target location. After being struck, the target falls to the ground for ten (10) seconds. While Knocked Down, a character may perform no actions other than to ward off a Killing Blow; he may not otherwise defend himself. A maximum of three (3) Knockdowns may be used in a battle.

Trick Shot

Pre-requisite: 3 Striking Blows in a Missile Weapon or Alchemy 2

Cost: 10

Type: Per Use

Group: Strike

Rules: This Maneuver allows the character to call “Strike – Location” when using a missile weapon to indicate that the attack automatically hits the named location. The attack must still actually hit the subject in a legal area, but the effect of the attack is applied to the named location. This Maneuver may never be combined with Wounding Blows or Combat Maneuvers. If used with Alchemical Formulations, it allows the target to specify where their formulation strikes, including weapons or shields. It may be combined with Blade Poisons and Magical Effects, if applicable. This may be countered by any of the normal defenses applicable to this type of attack.

An attack delivered with a Trick Shot that strikes a weapon or shield first resolves any effects resulting from striking the weapon or shield. For example, a Dart that strikes a hand-held shield does no damage, and the Trick Shot does not relocate the effect to another location.

This skill also encompasses all of the spectacular role-playing feats that one might want to be able to perform with a missile. Examples of this include cutting a rope, shooting an apple off someone’s head, or using an arrow to push a button. It always requires the presence of a Guide in order to use Trick Shot in this fashion. It may only be used one (1) time for each time purchased in these scenarios, up to a maximum of three (3) times per scenario.

Weapon Specialization

Pre-requisites: 3 Strikes of Death

Cost: 20

Type: Intrinsic

Group: None

Rules: The character with the skill permanently increases the base damage of the weapon by one (1) for which the weapon the character has three (3) Strikes of Death. The character should call “2” for a one-handed weapon, and “3” for a two-handed weapon. All Wounding Blow damage should be increased by one (1) once this ability is purchased.

Wounding Blows

These attacks allow a character to inflict more damage with a single strike than just the base damage of the weapon. When the attack is used, the player must call out the attack as she is swinging the weapon. Once the Wounding Blow is called, it is expended, no matter the outcome of the swing.

Once a player has purchased her limit of three (3) Wounding Blows, she may then begin to buy the next level of Wounding Blows. For example, one she possesses three (3) Piercing Blows, she may then begin to purchase Striking Blows. A character must have purchased three (3) of one type of Wounding Blow before advancing. Having all three (3) of a given level is known as “having a complete set.” A character may always call a lower level of Wounding Blows, if desired.

Wounding Blows must be purchased for a specific hand and weapon. For example, “long sword, right hand.” When wielding a hand-and-a-half weapon, the chosen hand must be one of those grasping the weapon. Wounding Blows may be bought for additional weapons, though it is more efficient to simply purchase Master Wounding Blows where applicable. In order to qualify as having a complete set of Wounding Blows, the character must have three of the same type of Wounding Blows in a specified hand and in a specified weapon, or the character must possess Master Wounding Blows.

Wounding Blows

Wounding Blow	Pre-requisite	Cost for 1 st	Cost for 2 nd	Cost for 3 rd
Piercing Blow	None	10	5	5
Striking Blow	3 Piercing Blows	10	10	10
Mighty Blow	3 Striking Blows	15	15	10
Crippling Blow	3 Mighty Blows, 3 Offensive Maneuvers	15	15	15
Mortal Blow	3 Crippling Blow	15	15	15
Strike of Death	3 Mortal Blows	15	15	15
Master Wounding Blows	Any Wounding Blow	+2	+2	+2

Master Wounding Blows

Master Wounding Blows may be used with any weapon for which the character has the skill. Master Wounding Blows cost an additional two (2) per Wounding Blow. Normal Wounding Blows may be upgraded to Master Wounding Blows of the appropriate type at a cost of two (2) per Wounding Blow, but a character must upgrade Wounding Blows in order.

For example, if Miranda has three (3) Striking Blows in long sword, but she wishes to upgrade these to Master Striking Blows so that she may use them with her dagger, she must upgrade her Piercing Blows first, and then her Striking Blows, for total cost of twelve (12). She may then buy Mighty Blows in any one weapon she is proficient in, or she may buy Master Mighty Blows for the cost of 17/17/12, for a total additional cost of six (6).

Master Wounding Blows are hand-specific.

Piercing Blow

Pre-requisites: Weapon Skill

Cost: 10 for the first, 5 for the second and third.

Type: Per Use

Group: Wounding

Rules: For one (1) swing, the character calls +1 damage, calling "Piercing Blow #."

Striking Blow

Pre-requisites: 3 Piercing Blows

Cost: 10

Type: Per Use

Group: Wounding

Rules: For one (1) swing, the character calls +3 damage, calling "Striking Blow #."

Mighty Blow

Pre-requisites: 3 Striking Blows

Cost: 15 for the first and second, 10 for the third

Type: Per Use

Group: Wounding

Rules: For one (1) swing, the character calls +5 damage, calling "Mighty Blow #."

Crippling Blow

Pre-requisites: 3 Mighty Blows, 3 Offensive Maneuvers in total

Cost: 15

Type: Per Use

Group: Wounding

Rules: For one (1) swing, the character calls "Crippling Blow." Crippling Blow bypasses all Skins, Armor, and Toughness, and the target suffers a Wound to the location struck. This attack is stopped by magical

protectives, and may be blocked with weapons and shields. Skins, Armor, and Toughness are not breached or destroyed, they are just bypassed.

Mortal Blow

Pre-requisites: 3 Crippling Blows

Cost: 15

Type: Per Use

Group: Wounding

Rules: For one (1) swing, the character calls "Mortal Blow." Mortal Blow removes any Skin and Toughness, but bypasses Armor. This attack causes a Wound to the Torso, regardless of location struck. This attack is stopped by magical protectives, and may be blocked with weapons and shields. Skins and Toughness are depleted, and Armor is not harmed, just ignored.

Strike of Death

Pre-requisites: 3 Mortal Blows

Cost: 15

Type: Per Use

Group: Wounding

Rules: A successful strike to any legal target area instantly kills the subject as if he were the target of a Killing Blow. This attack breaches all Armor, and depletes any Skins or Toughness. The target must fall to the ground, immediately dead. This attack may be blocked with magical protectives or with a weapon or shield.

Warrior Orders

Following the Great War, much knowledge was lost to the world. Feats of strength and cunning with weaponry were seemingly lost, forever. No one thought to transcribe how these feats were accomplished, as they were an intrinsic part of the world, and the people living in it. However, once they were lost, there were those who sought to replicate those glorious feats of the past, and to develop their own styles of fighting, that matched their philosophies and physical techniques. While incompatible with one another, many styles have emerged, handed down by masters and their successors. It is commonly debated which of these orders holds superiority over the other, and is sometimes cause for duels or spirited competitions, particularly among the students of the Sand Spire and between the Shildeaters and the Dane's Bulwark.

Originally these were very secretive and selective orders. Masters of these orders screened possible pupils from the military, in various battles and skirmishes, or even unknowns who simply showed promise. Each order has its own set of requirements for entry, and the focus is so intense that no student may ever learn more than one at a time, lest the training conflict with that already received. Overtime, this secrecy has become less the case, as many of the organizations are no longer secretive, and are publicly seen throughout the known world.

The Tower of Glass, home of the Sand Spire, is the only public military institution in the world. Members of the Sand Spire accept all who wish to learn their ways, focused on fighting the threats of the desert and their homelands as they are. The Sand Spire is very close to a Mystery Cult, with their veneration of the Molten Sheik. It is by his epic that many of their maneuvers are taught. However, their praxes are well known and not secretive in the least, nor do they have any physical representation of the Sheik that they direct their adulation. The Sand Spire has excellent relationships with both the Shielddeaters and the Dane's Bulwark, whom they invite to their competitions as often as possible.

Many of the orders are along racial boundaries, with the Celestials practicing their own forms, and the homunculi keeping the Krudrunis a secret, while their ritualists freely expound upon the virtues of the Paths of Ultaf. The Returned from Mazhan practice their own form, one of the earliest known examples of Warrior Orders, and perhaps the only in the age of the ancients. Returned, Celestials, and Homunculi are the only ones that may start with their respective orders. Returned, Celestials, and Homunculi wishing to join other orders may do so, but must do so in-play. Returned may join any order appropriate to their culture, though at the first event, and only the first event, they must first be inducted in-play before using their abilities. Homunculi are accepted into several of the orders, as well and will be listed on the orders appropriately. Anything not explicitly listed must be found out during the course of play.

System

All Maneuvers in the Warrior Orders are not stopped by Armor or Skin unless it is a Wounding Blow or specifically stated as being stopped by Skins and Armor. Any Maneuver that is stopped by Skins and Armor normally continues to be stopped by Skins and Armor. These are not attacks of the Natural Source, but are Maneuvers. Any ability that is considered Natural will explicitly state the Source as Natural, and may then be stopped by Armor, as any other Natural attack.

Characters are limited in purchasing the Warrior Order Talent depending on their culture, race and other requirements. A character may never be trained in more than one Warrior Order.

Performing a Maneuver learned through a Warrior Order alters the form, execution and appearance of the Maneuver, making it impossible to keep the Maneuver a secret when it is performed. If the Warrior Order is not accepted, it is possible that this could have repercussions on the character performing the Maneuver. Any expressly forbidden or questionable Warrior Orders will be explicitly stated in the description of the Warrior Order. Taking one of these Orders is a conscious decision on the part of the player, and allowances will not be made. All drawbacks of a particular Order or technique are fundamental to it, and may not be avoided in any fashion.

Every Warrior Order possess three (3) powers available at Basic level, two (2) powers at Intermediate level, and two (2) powers at Master level. A character must purchase all of their core Basic powers to advance to Intermediate, and both of their core Intermediate powers to advance to Master. A character may not purchase a power more than once. In addition to these powers, every Order possesses three optional (3) powers at both Intermediate and Master, and only one (1) of these optional powers may be learned at each level, for a total of six (6) possible optional powers across the two (2) levels, in which two (2) are selected. These optional powers are not required for advancement within the Order and do not need to be purchased, though the option is available. These optional powers must be learned in-play, and discovery of these powers is a part of the game world, though general ideas of the powers are included in each Order. Should a character purchase both optional abilities, she would possess three (3) abilities at each level. These optional abilities are not publicly available and must be pursued in-play.

Talent: Warrior Order – Name

Cost: 10

Restrictions: See individual school

Rules: The character is a member of a Warrior Order. Only a Master may instruct new students into the Order, though players who become Masters may do so, with the collaboration of the Plot committee. Any tests or trials that a Master that is a player performs counts directly as their volunteer time provided it is approved by the Plot committee before hand. These orders all have a specific structure, and it is possible that the character might be recognized and acknowledged by others of her specific craft. She is subject to certain permanent advantages and limitations as part of her unique fighting style. A character may only possess one Warrior Order.

To purchase a Warrior Order, the character must meet all requirements for the Order. The character may choose on ability to learn immediately out of the three (3) available options, and may purchase the other two (2) at the listed cost.

Standard weapons may be used for any Order at the Basic level, except for the Silver Swordsmen. Order specific weapons are required for any Intermediate or Master abilities, excepting where specified. All Intermediate and Master members of an Order are able to instruction others on crafting their weapons. Even passive or non-weapon warrior order abilities may not be used if the character does not have equipment appropriate to the school.

Dane's Bulwark

The Dane's Bulwark is an Order of Guardsmen trained to defend the Dane, the monarch of Gaunt. These Dane's personal guard itself is steady at one hundred members, and only rarely admits new members from the students of the Order. They prove themselves worthy of this honor through contests of valor and skill. Kimmernaq (kim mair NAHQ), the Baroness of House Risten (REE sten), is the currently the Helm, or leader, of the Dane's Bulwark. The positions of station are divided into the Helm, Pauldrons, Hauberk, and Gauntlets, respectively. There is only ever one Helm at a time, though the Pauldrons are Masters of the Order, and command almost as much respect. The Hauberk are those who have proven themselves

competent in battle, and often take positions guarding the nobles of Gaunt. The Gauntlets are those who have yet to prove themselves in battle, and spend most of their time looking for ways to rise above the other Gauntlets, to show their worth. The Dane's Bulwark consider themselves honorable, and will offer surrender as an acceptable means of victory conditions.

The Dane's Bulwark and the Shieldeaters of Gaunt are two brother Orders that grew up from continual conflict with each other. During the early years of House Voluspa's rise to power, the bodyguards of the Dane had to constantly defend him, and the rest of the House, from the fierce tribes that fought against this rise. While the Shieldeaters found ways to break through the defenses of the Bulwark, the Bulwark found ways to increase their offense to fight against their unarmored foes. Over time, the two have come together as the Dane has become more accepted. While the Shieldeaters consider themselves the better warriors, the Dane's Bulwark consider them naïve to the forms of battle, but cannot deny their ferocity.

Both the Dane's Bulwark and the Shieldeaters have a burgeoning relationship with the Sand Spire. The warriors from the Caliphate have reached out to both Orders, inviting them to partake in tests of skill and battle. As the Orders form bonds of competition and brotherhood, the rulers have begun talking as well. Trade and political overtures have begun as a result of these Orders, much to the dismay of the Redwood Throne.

The members of the Bulwark craft their shields to proudly display the fierce Ice Dragon, Lavine (lah VEE nay) on their shields.

Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order – Basic

Pre-requisites: Shield (This must be a Round Shield in design; no other shapes are allowed), Long Sword or Long Axe, Acute Hearing, Strong Will

Available to: Gaunt, Athral Isle

Cost: 10

Rules: The initiate may use up to Medium Armor and still perform Dane's Bulwark Maneuvers. The initiate must be using a Round shield and either a long sword or long axe. When purchasing the Order, the initiate may choose between the High Ward, Plow Ward, and Ox Ward abilities, and learn one (1) them for no additional cost.

Initiates may not wear Heavy Armor.

High Ward

Pre-requisites: Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order – Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Parry – Bulwark

Required Equipment: Standard Dane's Bulwark Weapons

Description: The initiate is in a guardian position and is able to quickly parry a blow that would otherwise be a successful hit.

Rules: One (1) time per combat, the initiate may use a Parry Defensive Maneuver. This does not count toward the maximum of three (3) Defensive Maneuvers per combat. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Plow Ward

Pre-requisites: Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order – Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Wounding Blow – Bulwark

Required Equipment: Standard Dane's Bulwark Weapons

Description: The Dane's Bulwark member changes from a defensive position to an offensive position.

Rules: One (1) time per combat, the initiate may refresh his highest Wounding Blow after expending a Parry, and only a Parry. The High Ward Parry does not count for this purpose. This does not count toward the maximum of three (3) Wounding Blows per combat. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Ox Ward

Pre-requisites: Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order – Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Dodge Block – Bulwark

Required Equipment: None

Description: Members of the Bulwark are trained to give their life for another at a moment's notice.

Rules: One (1) time per combat the initiate may use a Dodge – Block in order to shield an ally from harm. This does not count toward the maximum of three (3) Defensive Maneuvers per combat, and does not require an existing Dodge.

At Intermediate this ability may be used two (2) times per combat. At Master this ability may be used three (3) times per combat.

This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order – Intermediate

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, One (1) Parry

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the initiate to pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Intermediate abilities. Intermediate level Dane's Bulwark powers require Order specific equipment in order to perform these abilities.

Shield Bind

Pre-requisites: Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order – Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Disarm – Bulwark

Required Equipment: Dane's Bulwark equipment

Description: The member knows how to use his shield to his advantage, using it to press in close and remove a weapon once he has blocked a blow.

Rules: One (1) time per combat, the Dane's Bulwark member may use a Disarm after successfully blocking with her shield. This does not count toward the maximum of three (3) Disarms per combat. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Serpent Ward

Pre-requisites: Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Natural Awaken - Bulwark

Required Equipment: Dane's Bulwark equipment

Description: The members of the Bulwark know they are only as strong as their weakest link, and have perfected giving their comrades a good, strong strike with a blade in order to snap them back into the battle.

Rules: One (1) time per combat the Dane's Bulwark member may strike someone with their weapon to cause damage, the flat of the weapon may not be used, and call "Natural Awaken." This damage may be reduced by Skins, Toughness, and Armor. If this is stopped by magical protectives, the Awaken does not take hold. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

There are rumors of members that are not yet masters being able to perform such feats as striking out with the strength of a troll behind their weapon, being able to withstand blows that would normally shatter a shield, and being able to hold a door against a horde singlehandedly.

Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order – Master

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Parries, One (1) Disarm

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires the member to pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Master abilities. Master level Dane's Bulwark powers require Order specific equipment to perform the abilities.

Shield Wall

Pre-requisites: Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Shield Wall – Bulwark, Shield Parry

Required Equipment: Dane's Bulwark equipment

Description: Setting their shield to weather the onslaught, students may focus their skill with a shield during times of duress.

Rules: The master must keep her feet planted for the duration of this effect. She may turn in place or pivot, but she may not otherwise move. Doing so ends this effect immediately. Any successful strike with a missile weapon, spell, or alchemical formulation ends this effect immediately. Missile weapons must hit a legal target area. Any melee attack that ignores the Parry defense and strikes the master ends this effect immediately. Protective spells being triggered do not end this effect. Any other Defensive Maneuvers being used do not end this effect.

For one (1) minute the master may drop into a defensive position and may call "Shield Parry" to any melee swing that strikes them or an ally within five (5) feet. This ability takes no activation time and may only be used one (1) time per battle. These Shield Parries may be used in any way that a normal Parry would be used. This may be used one (1) time per combat.

This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Badger Ward (Armor Mastery)

Pre-requisites: Dane's Bulwark Warrior Order – Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: None

Required Equipment: Any Light or Medium Armor

Description: The Dane's Bulwark master is at one within her suit of armor and is able to use it more efficiently.

Rules: The master gains the Armor Mastery skill. This does not stack with any other Armor Mastery skill.

Masters of the Dane's Bulwark have been known to raise and lower morale with the sound of their voice alone.

The Displaced Hand

After the Gauntish conquered Athral Isle, the majority of the citizens were not allowed to carry weapons or continue martial pursuits. Many of the festivities, tournaments and celebrations that Athrals practiced before this period fell by the wayside. The competitions that the people of Athral loved so much went unpracticed for years. However, one tradition saw resurgence during this time period. Carnivals of archers and knife-throwers date back to ancient times, when the mysterious Firstborn ruled the isle.

As the carnivals of the Displaced Hand have become more common, they have begun to travel not only around Athral, but have crossed over through the Hulder and now can be found throughout the Principalities. Many Tharici have latched on to this idea, either joining existing carnivals or forming their own.

Carnival performers are allowed to practice the throwing of knives and the shooting of bows and crossbows when other citizens are not allowed to do so. Some of these performers are brought before lords and ladies to entertain them, and must learn skills to do so if they hope to remain alive. Many of these carnival workers hone their skills under the cover of night, and many are said to take contracts from the commoners as they travel from town to town, killing those who have wronged the citizens. This tradition, too, dates far back into Athral Isle's history, and there are those who claim this is part of a Grand Cycle.

The organization of the Displaced Hand is a secretive one. However, whispers tell of the leader of the Displaced Hand as a wealthy nobleman, one that is striking against the Gauntish oppressors. The stories say that the Displaced Hand possesses two names for all of the different ranks of members. One of the names is a public name that they may address each other in public, and another, secret, title that is used during Order-only meetings. The leader is known as the Governor publicly, most likely as a poke at the Athrals who have sided with the Gauntish and taken lucrative gubernatorial positions. Privately he is known as the Specter. The masters are known as Managers or Phantoms. The members are known as Performers or Ghosts. The initiates are Stagehands or Shades.

Displaced Hand Warrior Order – Basic

Pre-requisites: Acute Sight, Thrown Weapons or Bow or Crossbow, ambidexterity

Cost: 10

Available to: Athral Isle, Principalities of Verdien, Tharici

Rules: The Displaced Hand initiate may only wear Light Armor and shields no heavier than bucklers, needing a full range of motion to perform his feats. When purchasing the Order, the initiate may choose between the Missile Expertise, Piercing Shot, and Pinning Blow abilities and learn one (1) of them for no additional cost. Displaced Hand warriors using Thrown Weapons may have a melee weapon in their other hand and still use these abilities.

Missile Expertise

Pre-requisites: Displaced Hand Warrior Order – Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: None

Required Equipment: Standard Displaced Hand equipment

Description: Initiates of the Displaced Hand are trained to be proficient with anything that flies through the air.

Rules: Any Wounding Blow or Offensive Maneuver may be use with any Displaced Hand weapon, without purchasing Master Wounding Blows. This is not true Mastery, and only applies to Thrown Weapons, Bow, and Crossbow.

Piercing Shot

Pre-requisites: Displaced Hand Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Armor Pierce – Displaced Hand

Required Equipment: Standard Displaced Hand equipment

Description: The training an initiate of the Displaced Hand undergoes allows them greater control over their projectiles; allowing them to find a way around the toughest of defenses.

Rules: One (1) time per combat, the initiate of the Displaced Hand may call “Armor Pierce.” This Maneuver does not count toward the limit of three (3) Armor Pierces per combat. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Pinning Blow

Pre-requisites: Displaced Hand Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Pin Foot – Displaced Hand

Required Equipment: Standard Displaced Hand equipment

Description: An initiate of the Displaced Hand is of little use in melee combat. They are trained to keep their opponents at bay by pinning their feet to the ground with their missiles.

Rules: One (1) time per combat the initiate may call "Pin Foot" with their projectile. This works in all ways like a normal Pin Foot effect, except that it is stopped by Physical Shield rather than other magical source protectives. This is a Lesser Restrict effect, the same as any other Pin Foot effect. This ability may be used two (2) times in a battle at Intermediate, and three (3) times in a battle at Master. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Displaced Hand Warrior Order – Intermediate

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, One (1) Missile Dodge

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the initiate to pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Intermediate abilities. Intermediate level Displaced Hand abilities require an Order specific weapon in order to perform them.

Slapping Blow (Armor Mastery)

Pre-requisites: Displaced Hand Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Disarm – Displaced Hand

Required Equipment: Displaced Hand equipment

Description: Target practice is required amongst members of the Displaced Hand. The member is able to precisely aim their weapons to knock objects out of the hands of others. Members use each other as target practice, increasing their dexterity.

Rules: One (1) time per combat the member may call "Disarm." The missile must hit the target in a legal location, not specifically the held item. This does not count against the limit of three (3) Disarms per combat. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

In addition, the ability grants the member one (1) point of Dexterity Armor. This ability is an Armor Mastery ability and does not stack with any other Armor Mastery. This Armor stacks with an actual suit of Armor and is lost first and does not refit as normal Armor, but instead resets as Wounding Blows. This increases to two (2) points of Amor at Master.

Throat Shot

Pre-requisites: Displaced Hand Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Silence – Displaced Hand

Required Equipment: Displaced Hand equipment

Description: Displaced Hand members must exercise exquisite control over the placement of their shots. Displaced Hand members know they are still vulnerable against magic wielders that need to speak, and are trained to go for the throat.

Rules: One (1) time per combat the member may call “Silence.” The missile must hit the target in a legal location. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Stories persist that members of the Displaced Hand practice stunts in their shows in order to be more effective in combat. Being able to carefully bounce missiles off of various objects in order to perform tricks, learning to juggle in order to learn to quickly recover dropped weapons, and being able to quickly escape being tied up are all things whispered members may perform.

Displaced Hand Warrior Order – Master

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Additional Maneuvers

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires the member to pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Master abilities. Master level Displaced hand abilities require Order specific weapons in order to perform them.

Keen Eye

Pre-requisites: Displaced Hand Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: True Strike <Maneuver> - Displaced Hand

Required Equipment: Displaced Hand equipment

Description: The masters of the Displaced hand are adept at following their prey and landing a calculated blow that slips between the enemy’s defenses.

Rules: One (1) time per combat the master may call “True Strike <Maneuver>.” Any Wounding Blow or Maneuver may be used with this ability. The attack must land in a legal target location. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Hail of Missiles

Pre-requisites: Displaced Hand Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Hail of Missiles – Displaced Hand, Piercing Blow

Required Equipment: Displaced Hand equipment

Description: Clearing her mind, the master of the Displaced Hand focuses her whole being into providing more force behind her missiles.

Rules: This may be activated at any time, without preparation, and lasts one (1) minute. For that one (1) minute, the master may call “Piercing Blow” with every projectile. The master must keep her feet planted during this time, though she may turn in place or pivot. Moving, taking a Wound, losing use of any Order required equipment, falling unconscious, or otherwise becoming incapacitated during this time immediately ends the Hail of Missiles. All other maneuvers may be used during the Hail of Missiles, but the strength of other Wounding Blows is not increased. This may be used one (1) time per combat. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Masters of the Order are said to sometimes be brilliant close knife fighters, able to knock projectiles out of the air with their own, and are able to kill a man with a single knife, arrow, or bolt.

Krudrunis

The Krudrunis, known to the members of the Order as the Path of Exaltation, are a group of secretive homunculi that believe a truth that is ill permitted by most of the world. The truth is simply this: homunculi are people, just like any other. They have hopes, dreams, personalities, emotions and, above all, souls. They believe that they, like any culture and society, deserve to have a history, and a government, and the right to rule themselves. To this end, the founder of the Path of Exaltation, Stanchion, focused his alchemical knowledge on the preservation of grafts.

He believed, as followers of the Path now believe, that each graft carries the memories and emotions of the homunculus or creature that wore the graft before them. Stanchion believed that grafts dissolving after being removed were a result of improper planning in the original creation ritual, and a challenge set forth by a Higher Power for the homunculi to overcome and prove their worth. The followers of the Path of Exaltation refer to this being as The Most Refined. Followers believe that in embracing their grafts and working to make them beneficial to not only themselves, but all homunculi, they embark on the Path of Exaltation.

To that end, followers of the Path work on truly becoming one with their grafts and their true homunculus natures. Over time, the followers have been able to glean more knowledge from their grafts than even other homunculi would be able to glean. The common name of the followers, the Krudrunis, stems from works originally referencing homunculi. Stanchion deciphered many of their secrets, old and timeworn though they were. In many places, the word that was used to describe homunculi was nearly intelligible due to age, but over time Stanchion was able to find common elements in all of the old works. The letters Kru drun is were common enough in all of them for Stanchion to adopt it as a nickname for himself and

those like him. Like the word he had cobbled together, he was incomplete, with missing parts that would complete him.

The positions within Krudrunis are strictly defined. Initiates are referred to as Frames, members are referred to as Canvases, masters as Brushes, and the leader, and the one who follows in the work of Stanchion, is referred to as the Paint. All members, regardless of rank refer to each other as Brother or Sister. The titles are only used for formal gatherings. For example, a member might introduce herself as Sister Chapel, Canvas of Krudrunis.

This Warrior Order is difficult to play and should be avoided if the player is uncomfortable with intense conflict. This Warrior Order is considered dangerous in many nations, particularly in the Principalities and in Tarsikka, and homunculi of this order are often in imminent danger in those lands, should they reveal their abilities.

Krudrunis Warrior Order - Basic

Pre-requisites: Grafts (Claw or Gland to use any abilities, though only the graft racial ability is required), Chirurgery, Healing Ways

Cost: 10

Available to: Homunculi

Rules: The followers of the Path of Exaltation may wear any type of Armor. They may not use any shields or any non-Graft weapons when performing their abilities. Some advanced powers require specially prepared Grafts in order to perform the maneuvers of the Order.

When purchasing the Warrior Order, initiates may choose between the Self-Reliance, Refined Body, and Coax Secrets abilities and learn one (1) of them at no cost.

Self-Reliance

Pre-requisites: Krudrunis Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Natural Accelerate Healing - Krudrunis

Required Equipment: Chirurgery Kit

Description: Initiates of Krudrunis are taught to take care of themselves first, and their brothers and sisters second. This is one of the first things all initiates are taught.

Rules: Unlike the normal restriction of Chirurgery, followers of the Path of Exaltation may perform Chirurgery on any of their own limbs, but never the torso, provided they have one (1) arm free and are still conscious. When using Chirurgery on other homunculi, Krudrunis members are able to stitch the flesh back together more efficiently. At the end of the time when stitching a homunculus, the Krudrunis initiate

may apply a Natural Accelerate Healing. This Natural Accelerate Healing only works on other homunculi. This may never be applied by the initiate to herself.

Refined Body

Pre-requisites: Krudrunis Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Refined Body – Krudrunis, Resist - Krudrunis

Required Equipment: None

Description: “Embrace who and what you are, accept the created nature of the body, if not the soul” – Stanchion. Initiates of Krudrunis are taught to accept their form and increase their knowledge of the self, allowing for alchemy to bond more efficiently with their bodies, and allowing for some of the innate alchemy to emerge.

Rules: Alchemical Skins function more effectively for the followers of the Path of Exaltation. Alchemical Skins are increased by two (2) in value once they are applied Krudrunis practitioners. Skins cannot be increased past six (6) in total value. In addition, this ability grants the homunculus one (1) Resist usable when a Poison, blade or otherwise, would cause effect from hitting the skin of the homunculus, per battle. This Resist takes ten (10) seconds to activate, and fades immediately after a battle. This is never usable with ingested poisons.

At Intermediate, this Resist is able to stop Disease and Poison attacks. At Master, this ability is able to Resist Acid, as well.

Regardless of what the Resist stops, it is only ever usable one (1) time per battle. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Coax Secrets

Pre-requisites: Krudrunis Warrior Order – Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Natural Acid <Dart, Arrow, Lance>, Strength <Number>

Required Equipment: Gland Grafts or Claw Grafts

Description: To followers of the Path of Exaltation, Grafts are more than just a piece from another being that allows the homunculus to do different things. The Krudrunis believe that each homunculus can form a deeper bond with the Graft, unlocking the mysteries of the flesh to work as well for the homunculus as it did for the original bearer. The ability to Coax Secrets from the Grafts is amongst the greatest abilities that the Krudrunis possess.

Rules: Homunculi that have a Gland Graft, allowing them to spit a type of attack, are able to coax the Gland into working more efficiently. In addition to the power of the Graft itself, the homunculus may generate a number of additional expectorants equal to the number of Wounding Blows they know. Regardless of the type of projectile normally created by the Gland, the type of these expectorants is always Acid, seemingly made from the body of the homunculus.

Each battle, the homunculus may throw an Acid packet that gains in strength based on the homunculus expending his Wounding Blows. When this Acid packet is thrown, the highest known Wounding Blow is expended. Piercing Blows confer Natural Acid Darts, Striking Blows confer Natural Acid Arrows, and Mighty Blows confer Natural Acid Lances. No matter the Wounding Blow after Mighty, it may never be exchanged for anything higher than Lance. However, a full set of Crippling Blows confers an additional Acid Dart. This additional Acid Dart becomes an Acid Arrow once a full set of Mortal Blows is obtained, and once a full set of Strikes of Death are learned, it becomes an Acid Lance. This additional Acid expectorant does not require any Wounding Blow to be sacrificed. This ability may be used one (1) time per battle at Basic. Each use of this ability expends one (1) Wounding Blow.

This ability may be used two (2) times at Intermediate, and three (3) times at Master. The additional expectorant granted from Crippling Blows and above may be used at any level.

Homunculi that have a Claw Graft, allowing them to strike with natural weaponry, are able to coax the claws into striking with the force of their previous owners. One (1) time per battle, a homunculus may strike with his claws with extra force behind the claws, dealing one extra Wound from Strength. This maneuver may not be used in conjunction with any Wounding Blows. This ability resets as per combat maneuvers.

At Intermediate the Strength increases to three (3) extra Wounds, and increases to five (5) extra Wounds at Master.

In addition, the homunculi are able to place Blade Poisons on their claws. These Blade Poisons act as Blade Poisons in all other regards. Also, all Wounding Blows the homunculus possesses are able to be used with her claws, regardless of the weapon for which they were originally purchased.

This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Krudrunis Warrior Order – Intermediate

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, Lore: Alchemy 1

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the initiate to pass tests set before her by her instructors. Until these tests are passed they may not purchase Intermediate abilities. Intermediate Krudrunis powers require a specially prepared Graft in order to perform the abilities.

Remembered Destruction

Pre-requisites: Krudrunis Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Natural Acid Break – Krudrunis, Weapon Break - Krudrunis

Required Equipment: Krudrunis equipment

Description: Further delving into the secrets and past of the Graft, the homunculus is able to produce feats that would astound most people. They harness their natural abilities to smash through the weapons and equipment of even the most stalwart foe, be it with claws, or dissolving it in a stream of Acid.

Rules: Those with Claw Grafts are able to strike out at a weapon, smashing it with ease. This grants the Krudrunis member one (1) Weapon Break per battle. This Weapon Break does count against the limit of three (3) per battle, and opens up the ability to purchase Weapon Breaks with claws. These Weapon Breaks are considered Master Weapon Breaks for the purposes of Krudrunis equipment.

Those with Gland Grafts are able to spit a stream of Acid, consuming and dissolving whatever it strikes. This grants the Krudrunis member one (1) packet delivered Natural Acid Break per battle. This does count against the limit of three (3) Weapon Breaks per battle. This opens up the ability to further purchase Weapon Breaks with Glands, usable as packet delivered Natural Acid Break. These Weapon Breaks are considered Master Weapon Breaks for the purposes of Krudrunis equipment.

This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Refined Defenses

Pre-requisites: Krudrunis Warrior Order – Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Triggered Cleanse - Krudrunis

Required Equipment: Krudrunis equipment

Description: Being able to carefully control how the body reacts is one of the keys to being a successful member of the Krudrunis.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the homunculus may use the Cleanse ability on herself. Cleanse removes all Poisons, Diseases, Weaken or Disrupt effects from the homunculus. This ability triggers the first time any of these abilities affects the member. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Members of Krudrunis have been rumored to be able to keep Grafts usable, even after being removed from another homunculus. In addition to this, stories circulate that they are able to shunt aside the magic of the mind, and can overwhelm the mind of their opponents with the horrors of their own flesh.

Krudrunis Warrior Order – Master

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Lore: Alchemy 2, Three (3) other combat maneuvers

Cost: 20

Description: Advancing to Master requires the member pass tests set before them by his instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Master abilities. Master Krudrunis powers require a specially prepared Graft in order to perform the Master abilities.

Monster

Pre-requisites: Krudrunis Warrior Order – Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Unleash Monster – Krudrunis, Strength 3, Natural Acid Arrow

Required Equipment: Krudrunis equipment

Description: The Krudrunis master is able to get her body working together in perfect harmony in short bursts of perfection. To observers that have seen this happen, they believe that the homunculus has become a full monster and is out of control, though nothing could be further from the truth. However, this designation has stuck, and the members of the Order jokingly refer to this ability as Unleashing the Monster.

Rules: This state of perfect harmony and coordination lasts one (1) minute, or until the homunculus is unconscious or otherwise incapacitated. This effect also ends if the homunculus has her Grafts removed during the effect.

For homunculi with Claw Grafts, they are able to cause their grafts to sharpen and harden. This allows the claws to rend and tear even more easily than normal. For one (1) minute the homunculus may call “Strength 3” with every swing of each claw. This is able to be used in both hands. These strikes may not be increased by any other means.

For homunculi with Gland Grafts, the homunculi cause their Glands to overflow with acid and vitriol, waiting to be expelled rapidly, before it is dispersed back into the system. This allows the homunculus to rapidly expel the liquid, causing a Natural Acid Arrow with every thrown packet for one (1) minute. This cannot be combined with any other attacks the homunculus might possess with Glands, and the damage may not be increased by any other means.

After performing either one of these feats, the homunculus’s body rebels against the imposed perfection, leaving them Weakened and Slowed until such time as they are able to rest and recover her Wounding Blows. This cannot be avoided or cured in any way.

This may be used one (1) time per combat. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Evolved Memories

Pre-requisite: Krudrunis Warrior Order – Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: None

Required Equipment: Krudrunis equipment

Description: The homunculus has fully adapted to her Graft and has become one with them. The body of the homunculus has begun to adapt to the placement of the Graft, as well as the past memories and experiences that the Graft contains. The Krudrunis practice ways to cultivate these memories and experiences into new evolutions to further her fighting prowess and to advance the knowledge of the self. Without the teaching of the Krudrunis, and the knowledge the Path of Exaltation provides, these advancements are impossible. This is one of the most closely guarded secrets of the Order, and the one which people covet above all else.

Rules: For homunculi with Claw Grafts, the homunculus causes his forearms to toughen and strengthen, and he absorbs the secrets of the Grafts themselves. The homunculus may extend the representation for his Claw Grafts to his elbow on each arm. These extended Grafts function as bucklers, stopping all attacks that would be stopped by a buckler.

For homunculi with Gland Grafts, they are able to cause their neck, torso, and shoulders to toughen and strengthen, as they absorb the secrets of the Graft. Due to this, the homunculus is under a permanent Stoic Body effect. This also allows the master to use his Chirurgery skill on his own torso, provided the master has a functioning arm. Finally, the mouth and olfactory senses strengthen and become more attuned, granting the homunculus Acute Taste and Acute Smell.

Masters of the Path of Exaltation have been known to take harmful effects into themselves, only to expel them back out through their grafts, move gracefully when others would falter, and become immovable statues with incredible strength.

The Lost Blades of Mazhan

While they are primarily known as the Blades of Mazhan to those Returned who lived during the First Age, the order has become known as the Lost Blades, as the Order was thought lost to the ages. The Blades of Mazhan were the first known Warrior Order, and many Warrior Orders originally followed tenets modeled on theirs.

The Mazhani were fierce warriors that had a strong sense of honor. This honor was visible in the traditional Warrior Order of Mazhan. The Blades of Mazhan were known for their use of hand and a half blades and short swords, though some used long swords and short swords. Members were also expected to maintain care of a ceremonial dagger or short sword for ritual purposes. They specifically wield blades of mismatched length.

The Blades of Mazhan follow a very traditional style of leadership. Each master selects one apprentice and teaches them until such time as they attain mastery. At that point, the new master is expected to take on

her own apprentice. Each master has an equal say in the activities of the Order, with the words of the eldest members carrying more weight in times of indecision.

The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order – Basic

Pre-requisites: Pain Tolerance, Florentine and two of the following: Dagger, Short Sword, Long Sword, Bastard Sword

Cost: 10

Available to: Returned from Mazhan

Rules: The Order requires weapons of mismatched lengths in order to perform their maneuvers. Order members may wear up to Medium Armor and may not use shield of any kind. The warriors must announce their presence before attacking an enemy, considering anything else to be dishonorable. This does not mean they must face their foe, but merely inform them.

When purchasing the Warrior Order, the initiates may choose between the Blademaster, Halt Follow Through, and Slice abilities and may learn one (1) of them at no additional cost.

Blademaster

Pre-requisites: The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order – Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: None

Required Equipment: Standard Lost Blades of Mazhan equipment

Description: The initiates of the Blades of Mazhan must be proficient with all of the Order's style of weaponry.

Rules: The initiate may use Wounding Blows and Maneuvers in any of the Order approved weapons without having to purchase Master Melee Maneuvers. These are not true Master Melee Maneuvers, and only apply to weapons usable by the Order.

Halt Follow Through

Pre-requisites: The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Dodge - Mazhan

Required Equipment: Standard Lost Blade of Mazhan equipment

Description: The Mazhani learned long ago that there were benefits in halting your swing at just the right moment, to barely slice into the vitals of your opponent, but saving the blade from being tangled in the spine and allowing them time to jump out of the way of triggered effects.

Rules: One (1) time per combat, the initiate may call "Dodge" against a single Triggered effect. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Slice

Pre-requisites: The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order – Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Piercing Blow – Mazhan

Required Equipment: Standard Lost Blade of Mazhan equipment

Description: The Mazhani had perfected the art of slicing with their blades in such a manner as to inflict maximum damage.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the initiate may strike with a non-thrusting attack to call "Piercing Blow." This resets as per Wounding Blows. This Maneuver may not be used in conjunction with any other Wounding Blows or Maneuvers. This ability does not count against the limit of three Wounding Blows per combat.

The damage done by this Slice increases to Striking Blow at Intermediate, and to Mighty Blow at Master.

The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order – Intermediate

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, One (1) Armor Pierce

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the initiate to pass tests set before them by his instructor. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Intermediate abilities. Intermediate Lost Blades of Mazhan powers require Order specific weapons in order to perform the abilities.

Blade Ward

Pre-requisite: The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order – Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Parry - Mazhan

Required Equipment: Lost Blades of Mazhan equipment

Description: The teachers of the Blades of Mazhan require that their pupils be quick with their hands, even quicker than most other masters of the blade. They spend days perfecting drawing a second blade to deflect a killing stroke.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the member of the Blades of Mazhan may call “Parry.” This is not subject to the limit of three (3) Defensive Maneuvers per combat, and resets as per Wounding Blows.

Thousand-Fold Blade

Pre-requisites: Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Resist - Mazhan

Required Equipment: Lost Blades of Mazhan equipment

Description: The weapons of the Mazhan were known for their exquisite craftsmanship. They were incredibly hard to break, and would often end up harming the weapons of those that attempted to sunder them.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the member of the Blades of Mazhan may call “Resist” to any Breaking, Destruction, Drop, Disarm or Fling effect that targets either of their weapons. This does not require activation beforehand. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

This may be used two (2) times per combat at Master.

Members of the Lost Blades were rumored to be able to strike with the speed of the falcon, tearing through armor, battle with the tenacity of the crab, snipping weapons in twain, and be able to never miss a mark with a single swing.

The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order – Master

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Combat Maneuvers

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires that the member pass the tests set before them by their masters. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Master abilities. Master Lost Blades of Mazhan powers require Order specific equipment in order to perform the abilities.

Eternal Grip

Pre-requisites: The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Resist against Drop, Disarm, and Fling, Resist - Mazhan, Reduce - Mazhan

Required Equipment: Lost Blades of Mazhan equipment

Description: The Mazhani knew that the key to victory was maintaining the weapon in their hand. In a struggle, the person with their hand on the hilt of the weapon is generally the victor. The intense concentration and discipline required for this Order allows the master to focus her energy into always maintaining a grip on her blade.

Rules: After ten seconds of concentration, the Lost Blade may grant themselves two Resists against Drop, Disarm, and Fling. This allows them to Resist two of these effects, in any combination. The Lost Blade may further then Reduce these effects to a single wound, taken on the appropriate arm. This wound ignores hand-held shields or gauntlets, but may be taken on Armor, Skins, and Toughness. The initiation of this ability that grants Resists may only be used once per combat, and resets as per Wounding Blows. Any Resists remaining fade upon entering the resting state.

Forest of Blades

Pre-requisites: The Lost Blades of Mazhan Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Forest of Blades – Mazhan, Piercing Blow

Required Equipment: Lost Blades of Mazhan equipment

Description: “In the passion of our war, they shall know us, and we shall each be a forest of blades surrounding them. The one will seem as many, as from the fury of our steel flashing at every side and opportunity. Each blow shall be as one true, and one person as a forest” – Vyrakotha

Rules: A master of the Blades of Mazhan may fall into a meditative trance before battle, practicing combat moves and various battle scenarios for one (1) minute. This practice must be vocal and loud, to indicate her passion for battle. Once she enters the fight, which must happen within ten (10) minutes of this focusing, the master may call “Piercing Blow” until she is Wounded in battle. Parries, Dodges, Armor, Skins and protectives will allow the master to continue in the Forest of Blades maneuver. If the master loses her weapon, falls unconscious, or becomes otherwise incapacitated, she loses this effect immediately. Forest of Blades may be enhanced by Strength effects, but not by other Wounding Blows or used in conjunction with any other Maneuvers.

This ability may be used one (1) time per battle, and resets as per Wounding Blows.

Masters have been known to bat aside smaller magics with their blades, never miss with deadly strikes, and even use their secondary weapons to strike hard against a foe.

Sand Spire

The name of this Warrior Order is derived from the place they practice, the Tower of Glass, also known as the Sand Spire. The Tower of Glass is one of the marvels of the Caliphate, being a structure built from a mixture of limestone, glass bricks, and sandstone. Standing almost five hundred feet tall, the Tower was built following the Noble's War and the establishment of the Caliphate as its own nation.

Before this time, this Warrior Order was known as the Sheik's Spear, named after the Molten Sheik, and started by one of his friends and companions, Shihab Kaya (suh HUP KUH ya). Shihab was the original Komutan (Ko mu tahn) of the Sheik's military forces, and following the Sheik's death returned to the then lands of Ophira to carry on his legacy and teachings. Students originally carried spear-banners with the symbols of the Sheik, a crown with a flame, or a mountain with an urn, but as time wore on, the practice of the spear-banners was abandoned after the poem chronicling the life of the Sheik was written by Eket (EE kit) of the Desert, the *Bu Alev*.

Members of the Sand Spire are indoctrinated in part through this poem. Each member of the Sand Spire is made to recite sections of the poem over and over as they practice their tactics and maneuvers as a mental exercise in discipline and skill. It is common for these chosen sections of the poem to be painted or inscribed on the shields or weapons of the members. The practical result of this is that members of the Sand Spire give thanks to the Molten Sheik in an almost religious manner. They recite pieces of this poem for many occasions, such as before meals, entering combat, the death of a friend, the death of a foe, or even at marriages. The poem is a way of life that helps them to fight their battles and follow a code to help guide their lives. One of the tasks members must undergo before becoming a master is creating their own Chest of Atonement, in the footsteps of the Molten Sheik.

The leader of the Sand Spire is the Komutan, currently Komutan Serkan Zalim (Sehr kahn ZAH leem), head of the Caliph's military forces. The Komutan of the Sand Spire always holds this position. Below him is the position of Vekil (WIH kil), the other masters within the Tower, and then the Rahip (RAH heap). Initiates in the order are called Stajyer (STAHJ yair).

The Sand Spire is the only public military institution in the known world. The Tower of Glass accepts any and all who would learn their ways, regardless of who they are or where they are from. They have even been known to accept homunculi, though a ritualist or alchemist must watch them at all times until they have proven themselves. It is rare that people from the Principalities join their ranks, as animosity between the Redwood Throne and the Caliphate can run high. The Redwood Throne considers the members of the Sand Spire to be heathens, as the Redwood Throne claims that the warriors follow a false prophet. The Sand Spire is highly competitive and is always looking for challenges from other warriors so that they might prove themselves.

The Sand Spire doesn't worry that their teachings will be used against them, as the skills and maneuvers learned are used to defense against the threats of the desert. Ghuls, rogue alchemists, thrals, creatures of Shadow in the northern mountains, and the new threat of the Marrashi occupy much of the Sand Spire's time.

Sand Spire Warrior Order – Basic

Pre-requisites: Halberd or Glaive or Spear, One (1) Level of Resist Disease, Acute Hearing

Cost: 10

Available to: Caliphate of Dusk, Tharici – All others are possible, but must be discussed with Plot first

Rules: Students of the Sand Spire may wear up to Large Shields, if their weapon permits, and up to Medium Armor. They may learn to wield other weapons in the off-hand, but may not call Sand Spire maneuvers with those weapons, and the benefit of Lancer does not apply. When purchasing this Warrior Order, the student may choose between the Lancer, Skewer, and Shifting Feet abilities and learn one (1) of them at no additional cost.

Lancer

Pre-requisites: Sand Spire Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: None

Required Equipment: Standard Sand Spire equipment

Description: The student must learn to use all weapons of the Order, to be able to fit any situation and tactic the Order calls upon him to fulfill.

Rules: The student may use any Wounding Blows or Maneuvers with any Sand Spire weapon. The character does not have to purchase Master Wounding Blows in order to do this. These are not true Master Wounding Blows, and only work with Sand Spire weapons.

Skewer

Pre-requisites: Sand Spire Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Piercing Blow – Sand Spire

Required Equipment: Standard Sand Spire equipment

Description: Being able to strongly thrust and keep enemies at a disadvantage is one of the first things all students learn.

Rules: One (1) time per battle, the student may execute a thrusting attack and call "Piercing Blow." This Maneuver may not be used in conjunction with any other Wounding Blows or Maneuvers. This ability does not count against the limit of three Wounding Blows per combat. This must be a thrusting attack.

This resets as per Wounding Blows.

At Intermediate, the Skewer deals a Striking Blow. At Master, the Skewer deals a Mighty Blow. It may still only ever be used one (1) time per combat.

Shifting Feet

Pre-requisites: Sand Spire Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Resist - Sand Spire

Required Equipment: None

Description: Training endlessly on the unstable sands of the desert and the loose dirt of the plateaus has given the Sand Spire a sense of increased balance and terrain awareness.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the student of the Sand Spire may Resist any one (1) Knockdown or Stun effect. This does not stop the Pain effect. Regardless of which one (1) is Resisted, this Resist may only be used one (1) time per battle. This takes no time to prepare.

This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Sand Spire Warrior Order – Intermediate

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, Blindside

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the students to pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Intermediate abilities. Intermediate Sand Spire powers require Order specific weapons in order to perform the abilities.

Diving Roll

Pre-requisites: Sand Spire Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Missile Dodge – Sand Spire

Required Equipment: None

Description: Archers and Alchemists play a huge role in the danger present in the Caliphate. Unrest and insurgence due to recent events has made this more prevalent. As such, the Sand Spire members spend a considerable amount of time practicing dodging projectiles.

Rules: One (1) time per battle, the member may call "Missile Dodge." This does not count toward the limit of three (3) Defenses per battle.

This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Breach

Pre-requisites: Sand Spire Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Shield Pierce – Sand Spire, Armor Pierce – Sand Spire

Required Equipment: Sand Spire equipment

Description: Members of the Sand Spire are adept at exploiting weaknesses and slipping in between their opponent's defenses.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the member may call either "Shield Pierce" or "Armor Pierce", but never both. These Maneuvers do not count against the limit of three (3) Pierce Maneuvers per battle.

This may be used two (2) times per battle when the member becomes a Master. This resets as per Wounding Blows

Members have been seen to hold on to their weapons no matter what is occurring, to quickly use the haft of their weapons to block attacks, and to even quickly tend Wounds in battle.

Sand Spire Warrior Order – Master

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Disarms

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires that the members pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Master abilities. Master Sand Spire powers require Order specific weapons to perform their abilities.

Deter Onslaught

Pre-requisites: Sand Spire Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Deter Onslaught – Sand Spire, Reduce

Required Equipment: Sand Spire equipment

Description: The Sand Spire teaches how to set their spears, halberds or glaives to deflect the force of most incoming blows onto the haft of their weapon.

Rules: This ability takes no time to prepare and lasts for one (1) minute. While under the effects of this ability, the Sand Spire member may call "Reduce" to any damaging melee or ranged attack that strikes,

them, including Alchemical Formulations, but not spells. Any amount of damage is reduced to one (1) Wound, which may be taken on Skins or Armor. Lances and Crippling Blows may be reduced, but Blast, Mortal Blow, and any Death effect may not. This only works for weapon delivered attacks, and any packet delivered Natural attack. Spell or spell effects may not be reduced in this manner. The Sand Spire student must keep his feet planted for the duration of this effect. He may turn in place or pivot, but he may not move. Doing so ends this effect immediately. This effect lasts for one (1) minute, or until the master loses his weapon, falls unconscious, becomes otherwise incapacitated, or is struck successfully by any magical attack. Spells that are stopped through protectives or Defenses do not cause this effect to end. This ability may be used one (1) time per combat and resets as per Wounding blows.

Heart Strike

Pre-requisites: Sand Spire Warrior Order – Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: True Strike Crippling Blow – Sand Spire

Required Equipment: Sand Spire equipment

Description: The Sand Spire emphasizes waiting until the right moment to strike a fatal blow. This defensive and patient teaching is important to the Order.

Rules: One (1) time per combat the Sand Spire student may call “True Strike Crippling Blow” when attacking an opponent. This may not be used with any other Wounding Blow or Maneuver. This does not count toward the limit of three (3) Wounding Blows per battle. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

The true masters of the Order are said to be able to unleash a flurry of stinging blows that carry increased force behind them, maneuver in armor more efficiently, and even perform feats of medicine and healing on the battlefield.

The Shieldeaters of Gaunt

The Shieldeaters and the Dane’s Bulwark are clear cases where two groups of warriors developed to fight each other. In the early days of House Voluspa’s rise to power, the lawless tribes and clans would often strike out against them in order to halt their ascent. The bodyguards of the Dane would eventually develop into the Dane’s Bulwark, while those that fought against them would develop into the fearsome Shieldeaters of Gaunt.

The Shieldeaters are wild berserkers consider things such as armor and shields to be crutches that lesser warriors rely on to shore up their inadequacies. The Shieldeaters are so named for the ease with which they tear through shields to shatter the puny warriors beneath them. Centuries of conflict between the two Gauntish Orders drove the Shieldeaters to develop and refine their powers. Now, the two work in harmony to make the army of Gaunt into a fighting force that is feared for the order and chaos that it holds. The Shieldeaters consider themselves the better warriors, but they recognize the role of the

Bulwark and have grown to respect them. While the Shieldeaters consider themselves to be the foremost warriors, the Bulwark is surely the second.

Much of the rest of the world refers to them simply as berserkers, and that is very apt. Their strength and rage are truly fearsome to behold in battle. They fear neither man nor death, and will only stop swinging their hammers and axes if they have no limbs left to drag themselves over to their weapons to swing it with their teeth.

Both the Dane's Bulwark and the Shieldeaters have a burgeoning relationship with the Sand Spire. The warriors from the Caliphate have reached out to both Orders, inviting them to partake in tests of skill and battle. As the Orders form bonds of competition and brotherhood, the rulers have begun talking as well. Trade and political overtures have begun as a result of these Orders, much to the dismay of the Redwood Throne.

The Shieldeaters are headed by Volter Janneksen, the head of House Hybbert. Volter holds both the Gauntish title of Baron, and the Shieldeater position of Helt (HEELT). Those beneath him that command scores of berserkers are known as Mester (MAY stah), while most are just known as Kriger (KREE yah). New inductees are known as Grynte (GRIN tay).

The Shieldeaters of Gaunt Warrior Order – Basic

Pre-requisite: Pain Resistance, and either any Two-Handed Weapon (two-handed weapons maybe of any type) OR Florentine and any Axe, Club or Hammer (these types of weapons must be wielded in each hand if two weapons are used in order to perform maneuvers, including if one weapon is a hand and a half weapon), War Axe/Glaive, or Maul/Cudgel

Cost: 10

Rules: The Shieldeaters may not wear Armor other than Helmets, or Shields of any type. Shieldeaters may either wield two weapons or a single two-handed weapon.

When purchasing the Warrior Order the initiate may choose between the Strong Arm, Thundering Hurl, and Gaunt Arsenal abilities to learn one (1) of them for no additional cost.

Strong Arm

Pre-requisite: The Shieldeaters of Gaunt Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Required Equipment: Standard Shieldeater equipment

Tagline: Strength # - Shieldeater or Ignore Wound - Shieldeater

Description: The muscles of the Shieldeater bulge with fury as rage courses through her.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the initiate may use Strength on one (1) swing, calling “Strength #.” This is a Strength effect. This ability resets as per Wounding Blows. Alternately, the initiate may call one Ignore Wound – Shieldeater against a limb wound.

At Intermediate this Strength becomes Troll Strength, granting +3 damage on a single swing. At Master this becomes Giant Strength, granting +5 damage on a single swing. This may only be used one (1) time per battle. The Ignore Wound power does not change at Intermediate or Master ranks.

Thundering Hurl

Pre-requisite: The Shieldeaters of Gaunt Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Required Equipment: Thrown Hammers or Thrown Axes

Tagline: Shield Pierce - Shieldeater

Description: The might behind a single toss of a weapon is enough to ignore a shield and strike the armor beneath.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the initiate may use a thrown weapon and call “Shield Pierce.” This follows all of the standard rules for Shield Pierce. This does not count toward the limit of three (3) Pierces per battle. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Gaunt Arsenal

Pre-requisite: The Shieldeaters of Gaunt Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Required Equipment: Standard Shieldeater Equipment

Tagline: None

Description: Shieldeaters must be skilled with any of the weapons of their Order, in order to answer challenges from those who pick the weapons to use.

Rules: The initiate may use any Wounding Blows or Maneuvers with any Shieldeater weapon, including thrown axes and thrown hammers. The character does not have to purchase Master Wounding Blows in order to do this. These are not true Master Wounding Blows, and only work with Shieldeater weapons.

The Shieldeaters of Gaunt Warrior Order – Intermediate

Pre-requisite: Three (3) Striking Blows, One (1) Armor Pierce

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the initiates to pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Intermediate abilities.

Intermediate Shieldearer of Gaunt powers require Order specific weapons in order to perform Maneuvers.

Permafrost

Pre-requisite: The Shieldearers of Gaunt Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Required Equipment: None

Tagline: None

Description: These Shieldearers have withstood their first battles and have survived the conditioning set forth by the Order. No longer are they looked down upon and ridiculed. They are as tough as the tundra.

Rules: The Shieldearer gains Toughness 2. This stacks with other sources of Toughness.

The Shieldearer can also refresh up to two (2) points of Toughness with a minute of uninterrupted roleplay. She may do this once per battle at Intermediate, and twice per battle at Master.

Resounding Blow

Pre-requisite: The Shieldearers of Gaunt Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Required Equipment: Shieldearer equipment

Tagline: Shield Break - Shieldearer

Description: Shields are puny and should be smashed to unleash the warrior beneath them.

Rules: The member may perform one (1) Shield Break per battle, striking a shield and calling "Shield Break." This Maneuver does not count toward the limit of three (3) Breaks per battle. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Members have been known to drive people to their knees is one massive strike, to never release the hold on their weapon, and to never let their foe escape.

The Shieldearers of Gaunt Warrior Order – Master

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Armor Pierces, One (1) Other Maneuver

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires the members to pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Master abilities.

Master level Shieldearer of Gaunt powers require Order specific weapons to perform the abilities.

Fury of the Ancients

Pre-requisite: The Shieldearers of Gaunt Warrior Order – Master

Cost: 20

Required Equipment: Shieldearer equipment

Tagline: Fury of the Ancients – Shieldearer, Piercing Blow

Description: The Shieldearer channels the fury of their ancestors in order to enter a frenzy.

Rules: Entering into this frenzy allows the Shieldearer to call “Piercing Blow” with every swing for one (1) minute. This may not be used in conjunction with Wounding Blows or any other Maneuver, though it may be used with Strength effects, including Strong Arm. This may be done at any time the Shieldearer chooses and takes no time to prepare. The player should role-play being in a frenzy for the duration. This is usable one (1) time per combat, and resets as per Wounding Blows.

Glacierborn

Pre-requisite: The Shieldearers of Gaunt Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Required Equipment: None

Tagline: Reduce “Effect” – Shieldearer, “Reduce – Shieldearer”, “Slipping Free 1...Slipping Free 2...Slipping Free 3”

Description: The Shieldearer is an unstoppable force of nature. She may shrug off effects that would spell death for most others.

Rules: The Shieldearer is able to Reduce Pain, Knockdown, Befuddle, and Decree to a Dart effect to the Torso, which they may take on Skin or Toughness. This Dart effect may not be avoided or prevented in any way. If the Shieldearer has defenses or protectives against the listed effects, those apply before the Reduction occurs. The Shieldearer may choose not to Reduce the effect, but then is subject to the effect as per normal. Pin Foot, Bands, and Entangle effects are Reduced to ten (10) seconds in duration, at the end of which the Shieldearer may begin to slip free on a three (3) count, calling “Slipping Free 1...Slipping Free 2...I slip free.” This ability may be used any number of times per battle.

Two (2) physical attacks may be reduced to one (1) Wound during each combat, as well. Only melee and missile weapons may be Reduced. Crippling Blow may be Reduced to five (5) Wounds, and Mortal Blow

may be Reduced to ten (10) Wounds. Strike of Death may never be Reduced. These Wounds are able to be taken on Skin or Toughness, but are not avoidable in any way. This portion of the ability resets as per Wounding Blows.

The masters of the Shieldeaters are rumored to be able to shatter a shield and cripple the arm beneath in a single swing, to be resistant to the cold and harsh environments of the North, and to live on to fight, even after they should be long dead.

The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka

The Warrior Order of the Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka was formed at the behest of the Silver Circlet, the ruling body of Tarsikka at the time, in 882 RE, following the signing of the Laws of Kingship and Rule established at the end of the War of Brothers, which occurred swiftly on the heels of the Crawling War, which had ended the line of Tarsikkan kings. The two wars played equal roles in the establishment of the Order, and must be looked at fully to understand how the Order arose.

It was during the Crawling War that the Tarsikkans made the discovery that silver greatly harmed the creatures of Shadow. Silversmiths in the town of Mereu (may ROO) discovered that their silver coated implements caused agony and great distress in the strange creatures. After the end of the War of Brothers, after the land was consolidated, the nobles decreed that all taxes must be paid in silver, so that blades might be made for the defense of the land. It was the nobles and their knights that created the Silver Swordsmen, a name that grew organically from the blades they wield, and it has been the knights and nobles that have continued the Order.

It is seen as a landed noble's duty to have one family member in the Silver Swordsmen at all times. It is the duty of the nobles to protect the land, and the Silver Swordsmen are seemed as the clearest example of that. Some Silver Swordsmen travel outside of Tarsikka, looking for external threats to the nation.

The Order is one of the few paths to nobility in Tarsikka. Peasants may apply to be a squire of one of the members of the Order, and if they prove themselves, may ascend to the ranks of knighthood. Nobles have a much easier route into the Order, as it is seen as their filial duty.

These knights do not hold land, though they may submit themselves for such if land holdings become vacant. It is the duty of the Silver Swordsmen to patrol the land and defend it against the creatures of Shadow. A Swordsman who fails in this duty is stripped of his right and title and is exiled from the land. His family may follow him into exile, or vacate all holdings and become part of the peonage once more. This is a life of hardship, and the penalties of betrayal are impressed early and often into the squires.

Swordsmen often patrol on horseback, and have developed fighting styles easily used while mounted or on foot, and allow them to transition between the two. Many Swordsmen are versed in tracking and pursuit, allowing them to follow creatures through the harsh wilderness and even into Troll Country. Swordsmen usually don the heaviest armor possible, to protect them from the rending claws of shadow creatures.

The chief concern of the Silver Swordsmen is the threat of the werewolves in Tarsikka and the shades that plague the land. The mountains hold hidden horrors that give even the stalwart Tarsikkans pause.

The Silver Swordsmen are often called upon to act as judicial officials while patrolling the lands. They take decisive action when needed, and their sense of justice is fair, but harsh. They are compassionate in their own way, but those suspected of being twisted or infected by the Shadow are sure to meet a swift, yet merciful, end at the hands of the Silver Swordsmen.

The hierarchy is very clear. Knights make up the bulk of the Order, squires are the lowest rank and serve them, and the lords are the masters of the Order. The Council of Silver guides the actions of the Silver Swordsmen.

The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order – Basic

Pre-requisite: Short Sword or Long Sword or Bastard Sword or Two-Handed Sword, Acute Hearing, Strong Will

Cost: 10

Available to: Tarsikka

Rules: Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka may use their maneuvers with any sword, individually or in combination. The Silver Swordsmen may wear up to Heavy Armor, but may wear no shield larger than a buckler. Silver Swordsmen require a Silver-Tempered, Silver Coated, or Permanent Silver Sword to perform even Basic Maneuvers.

When purchasing the Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order the squire may choose between the Swordsman, Just Blade, and Abate Shadow abilities and learn one (1) of them at no cost.

Swordsman

Pre-requisites: The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: None

Required Equipment: Silver Swordsman equipment

Description: The Silver Swordsmen are trained to use all swords with equal skill.

Rules: The squire can use Wounding Blows or Maneuvers with any Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka weapon. These are not true Master Melee Wounding Blows and Maneuvers and only work only with Silver Swordsmen weapons.

Just Blade

Pre-requisites: The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Piercing Blow - Light

Required Equipment: Silver Swordsmen equipment

Description: The Silver Swordsmen pass down secrets of fighting the creatures of Shadow to all of their squires. One of the first lessons is to strike out strongly against the weak points of the creatures. As such, they are able to strike more strongly, as if it were using the magic of Light.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the squire may call "Piercing Blow – Light" when striking out. This blow causes grievous injuries to creatures of Shadow, but causes no damage to anyone or anything else. This Maneuver may not be used in conjunction with any other Wounding Blow or Maneuver.

At Intermediate the Just Blade increases to a Striking Blow, and increases to a Mighty Blow at Master.

This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Abate Shadow

Pre-requisites: The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Resist - Swordsmen

Required Equipment: None

Description: The Silver Swordsmen quickly develop a tolerance to the magic of Shadow, due to their extended pursuit and exposure.

Rules: One (1) time per battle, the squire may call "Resist" against any Shadow effect that strikes her. This Resist takes no time to apply. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order – Intermediate

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, One (1) Armor Pierce

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the squire to pass tests set before them by her instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Intermediate abilities. Intermediate level powers require Order specific weapons in order to perform the abilities.

Silence the Foul

Pre-requisites: The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Disrupt Shadow - Swordsmen

Required Equipment: Silver Swordsmen equipment

Description: The Silver Swordsmen are adept at quickly punishing those that wield the magic of Shadow. A single strike from the Swordsmen is all it takes to cease the magic from flowing

Rules: One (1) time per battle the squire may call "Disrupt Shadow." This Maneuver may not be used in conjunction with any Wounding Blows or any other Maneuvers. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Battle Readiness

Pre-requisites: The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: None

Required Equipment: Armor

Description: Due to the need to be ready at a moment's notice, even after a previous battle has just ended, Swordsmen learn to repair their armor quickly to get it ready for the next fight.

Rules: Silver Swordsmen are able to refit their armor in half the time. Magical abilities that half the time of armor refitting stack with this ability to a minimum time of fifteen (15) seconds.

This ability also grants the Swordsman one (1) point of Toughness. This increases to two (2) points of Toughness at Master. This does not stack with any other source of Toughness.

Knights of the Silver Sword are whispered to be able to bind the feet of those who wish to flee them, strike fear into the hearts of those that oppose them, and to smash through the weapons of those that would battle them.

The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order – Master

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Offensive Maneuvers

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires the Knight to pass tests set before their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Master abilities. Master level powers require Order specific weapons in order to perform the abilities.

Swordbane

Pre-requisites: The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Light Stun - Swordsmen

Required Equipment: Silver Swordsmen equipment

Description: The Silver Swordsmen know how to render their opponents completely helpless.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the Swordsman may call "Light Knockdown." This ability resets as per Wounding Blows.

Rising Dawn

Pre-requisites: The Silver Swordsmen of Tarsikka Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Rising Dawn – Swordsmen, Piercing Blow - Light

Required Equipment: Silver Swordsmen equipment

Description: The Swordsman works himself into a state of fearlessness and lashes out with precision and fury against the forces of Shadow.

Rules: The Swordsman must spend one (1) minute preparing himself for the upcoming battle. Entering the battle must occur within ten (10) minutes of this preparation. The Silver Swordsman may call "Piercing Blow – Light" with every swing until Wounded. Parries, Dodges, Armor, Skins and protectives will allow the master to continue in the Rising Dawn maneuver. If the master loses his weapon, falls unconscious, or becomes otherwise incapacitated, he loses this effect immediately. Rising Dawn may be enhanced by Strength effects, but not by other Wounding Blows or used in conjunction with any other Maneuvers.

This ability is usable one (1) time per battle, and resets as per Wounding Blows.

The Lords of the Silver Sword have been known to strike unerringly toward the creatures of Shadow, shrug off blows that would keep most from continuing, and even defy death itself.

Ultaf

If the Shieldeaters and the Bulwark grew up in physical opposition, Ultaf and Krudrunis arose in mental opposition. While the Krudrunis tout their belief that all homunculi should be free and considered whole beings, the Ultaf Warrior Order has one core belief: the Ritualist always knows best. The homunculus initiates of Ultaf first learn to attack for their master and defend their master. When a homunculus is prepared to advance in the Order, she chooses between the Way of the Marauder and the Way of the Sentinel. Homunculi are often bound to a single ritualist during each rank of the Order.

The Way of the Marauder crafts the homunculus into a magic-fueled juggernaut that cabals use to wage wars on other cabals. The Marauder smashes and rends his foes, even temporarily suppressing the strongest of magical protections. These Marauders are some of the most feared weapons of cabals powerful and patient enough to train homunculi in this path.

The Way of the Sentinel molds the homunculus into the perfect guardian for any ritualist. The Sentinel protects the ritualist at all costs, with no regard to herself. She grows more and more accustomed to the working of magic, and eventually becomes inured to the effects. Sentinels are fearsome guardians, and cabals with one or more homunculi that follow this path are incredibly powerful.

The Ultaf followers are simply called trainees at the lowest levels, and then either Adversaries or Guardians, depending on which path they follow, and then finally either Marauders or Sentinels. The secrets of this Order have been passed from cabal to cabal, with several cabals sharing the responsibilities in a careful alliance so that the secrets do not spread too far and wide, weakening them. Inevitably this doesn't last, and the secrets spread. No cabal is currently the head of the Order, though the Fugue is known to have at least one of each type for every ritualist in their organization. Other cabals friendly with the Fugue have large numbers, as well.

Many of these cabals train homunculi for other masters, in exchange for coin, goods, or services. Homunculi that are members of the Order often teach others to be like them, so they too can embrace the glory of serving their masters.

Players taking this Warrior Order must first consult with the Plot committee, and should be aware that playing this Warrior Order comes with many social pressures. This is a difficult Warrior Order, with many possible conflicts along the way.

Ultaf Warrior Order – Basic

Pre-requisites: Five (5) Ritual Bones, Healing Ways, Acute Sight, Acute Hearing, Wear Medium Armor, any one-handed weapon

Cost: 10

Available to: Homunculi

Rules: Ultaf trainees are required to wear at least Medium Armor, Shield is required by the Way of the Sentinel, the Way of the Marauder requires one weapon to be wielded in each hand

When purchasing this Warrior Order, the trainee may choose between the Harry Foe, Ablative Instrument, and Spellwalker abilities and may learn one (1) of them at no cost.

Harry Foe

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Disarm – Ultaf, Disrupt <Realm> - Ultaf, Mental Pain - Ultaf

Required Equipment: Any One-Handed weapon

Description: One of the first things that Ultaf members are taught is that keeping foes from having the ability to harm their masters, to defend themselves, is of the utmost importance.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the trainee may call "Disarm." This does not count against the limit of three (3) Disarm Maneuvers per battle. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

At Intermediate, the homunculus may choose to swing one (1) swing of "Mental Pain" instead of a Disarm. At Master, the homunculus may chose either of previous abilities, or swing a single swing of "Disrupt <Realm>", where the homunculus may pick the Realm at the time of use. Regardless of which ability is used, only one (1) may be used per battle. This ability resets as per Wounding Blows.

Ablative Instrument

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Spell Parry - Ultaf

Required Equipment: Any One-Handed Weapon

Description: Being able to fend off enemy ritualists is paramount for Ultaf students. While being able to fully stop a spell that targets the student is difficult, Ultaf trainees are taught to deflect spells hurled at others.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the Ultaf trainee may call "Spell Parry" for any spell directed at someone else within five (5) feet of them that is a legal Parry target. Only spells directed at others may be Parried in this fashion. This Spell Parry does not count against the limit of three (3) Defensive Maneuvers per combat. This ability resets as per Wounding Blows.

Spell Walker

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: None

Required Equipment: Any Medium Armor or Heavy Armor

Description: being able to serve their ritualist in all capacities is one of the foremost jobs of all members of the Ultaf order. Ultaf members know the secrets of specially preparing their armor so that it is able to be used as a secondary focus for any ritualist.

Rules: The trainee may spend one (1) minute to prepare a suit of Armor to serve as a secondary focus for any one (1) ritualist at a time. Spells stored in this armor are not lost due to Ritual Backlash, if the ritualist should backlash a ritual and lose the spells in her primary focus. These spells are usable either by the Ultaf

trainee who prepared the armor, or by the ritualist. Should the armor receive a Break or Destruction effect, the rituals are lost. Armor that is breached does not lose the rituals, only armor that is subject to a Break or Destruction effect. These rituals expire as normal rituals in any other focus. Only one (1) suit of armor may be prepared this way at a given time. The trainee may spend one (1) minute to prepare another suit of armor in this fashion , though all rituals stored in a previous suit of armor are lost when this occurs.

Ultaf Warrior Order – Intermediate

Special: Upon advancing to Intermediate, the trainee must select to follow either the Way of the Sentinel or the Way of the Marauder. These Ways are mutually exclusive.

Ultaf Warrior Order – Intermediate, Way of the Sentinel

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, Two (2) Parries, Shield

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the trainee to pass tests set before her by her instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Intermediate abilities. Intermediate Ultaf powers require Order specific weapons and arms in order to perform the abilities.

Special: All powers at Intermediate require one (1) fatigue to activate. This fatigue is temporary fatigue, and is recovered by the follower of the Way of the Sentinel expending any ability in defense of someone else, performing Healing Ways on someone else, or performing Chirurgery on someone else. Any of these actions needs to be performed only one (1) time per battle in order to recover this temporary fatigue. If not regained ten (10) minutes after battle ends, as per normal battle rules, this temporary fatigue becomes permanent fatigue, as if the homunculus had participated in a ritual. Any Ultaf abilities that are expended in defense of another count toward fulfilling this requirement.

In the Line of Duty

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order – Intermediate, Way of the Sentinel

Cost: 15

Tagline: Dodge Block - Ultaf

Required Equipment: Ultaf equipment, Shield

Description: Protecting their ritualist is one of the most sacred teachings to followers of the Way of the Sentinel.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the guardian may call “Dodge Block” for another. The guardian must have a shield equipped. This does not count toward the limit of three (3) Defensive Maneuvers per combat. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

At Master this ability may be used two (2) times per combat.

Prepared Cover

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order – Intermediate, Way of the Sentinel

Cost: 15

Tagline: Resist - Ultaf

Required Equipment: Ultaf equipment, Shield

Description: Ultaf students know they will be facing magical might in any given engagement. They learn how to strengthen their shields to buffer the effects of magic being hurled at them.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the guardian may Resist any spell that strikes his shield. This ability requires ten (10) seconds of concentration to prepare the shield. This Resist fades at the end of combat. This ability resets as per Wounding Blows.

Special: This ability may be used in conjunction with My Life For you, in order to Resist a spell effect. In this case, it does not need to strike the shield, as the Sentinel is preparing for the effect in different ways.

Guardians are heard to be able to withstand mental assaults, sap the strength from those that threaten them or their ritualists, and to leap out of the way of mundane missiles.

Ultaf Warrior Order – Intermediate, Way of the Marauder

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, Blindside, One (1) Break or Pierce Maneuver, Florentine

Cost: 15

Rules: Those following the Way of the Marauder may not use any shields. Advancing to Intermediate requires trainees to pass tests set before them by their instructors. Until these tests are passed, they may not purchase Intermediate abilities. Intermediate Ultaf powers require Order specific weapons and arms in order to perform the abilities.

Special: All powers at Intermediate require one (1) fatigue to activate. This fatigue is temporary fatigue that is recovered by the follower of the Way of the Marauder by delivering a killing a blow, blindsiding an opponent, or successfully absorbing a spell effect. Any of these actions needs to be performed only one (1) time in order to recover the fatigue. If not regained ten (10) minutes after battle ends, as per normal combat rules, this temporary fatigue becomes permanent fatigue.

Concussive Swat

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order – Intermediate, Way of the Marauder

Cost: 15

Tagline: Mental Befuddle - Ultaf

Required Equipment: Utaf equipment

Description: The adversary lashes out at a foe, hitting them so hard it disorients them.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the adversary may call "Mental Befuddle." This may not be used in conjunction with any Wounding Blow or Maneuver. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Bonescraper

Pre-requisites: Utaf Warrior Order – Intermediate, Way of the Marauder

Cost: 15

Tagline: Crippling Blow - Utaf

Required Equipment: Utaf equipment

Description: The adversary has learned to cut through their opponent's defenses, striking directly to the bone.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the adversary may call "Crippling Blow." This may not be used in conjunction with any other Wounding Blow or Maneuver. Should this attack successfully land, not Dodged, Parried, or otherwise stopped, this fulfills the requirement for recovering fatigue at the end of the battle. This resets as per Wounding Blows, and does not count against the limit of three Wounding Blows per combat.

Adversaries are skilled in striking hard and fast at their opponents, taking advantage of their ferocity to catch foes off guard and smash their weapons and their knees.

Utaf Warrior Order – Master, Way of the Sentinel

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Parries, One (1) other Maneuver, Utaf Warrior Order – Intermediate, Way of the Sentinel

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires the guardian to pass tests set before her by her instructors. Until these tests are passed, she may not purchase Master abilities. Master Utaf powers require Order specific weapons and arms in order to perform the abilities.

Special: All powers at Intermediate require one (1) fatigue to activate. This fatigue is temporary fatigue, and is recovered by the follower of the Way of the Sentinel expending any ability in defense of someone else, performing Healing Ways on someone else, or performing Chirurgery on someone else. Any of these actions needs to be performed only one (1) time per battle in order to recover this temporary fatigue. If not regained ten (10) minutes after battle ends, as per normal battle rules, this temporary fatigue becomes permanent fatigue, as if the homunculus had participated in a ritual. Any Utaf abilities that are expended in defense of another count toward fulfilling this requirement.

Protect and Serve

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order – Master, Way of the Sentinel

Cost: 20

Tagline: Shield Parry - Ultaf

Required Equipment: Ultaf equipment, Shield

Description: The shield is more than a friend to an Ultaf sentinel, it's a friend to anyone around them.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the sentinel may call a Shield Parry, either for herself or for any legal Parry target. This prevents attacks normally prevented by a Parry.

Special: For the cost of two (2) fatigue per use, the sentinel may use this ability again. This fatigue is gained as normal fatigue, not temporary fatigue, it is not recovered at the end of the battle, and items or abilities that prevent fatigue gain during a ritual do not apply here. This fatigue recovers when fatigue is normally recovered.

My Life for You

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order – Master, Way of the Sentinel

Cost: 20

Tagline: Redirect <Effect> - Ultaf

Required Equipment: Ultaf equipment

Description: Ultaf members that become sentinels are known for their undying loyalty and dedication.

Rules: The sentinel must spend one (1) minute to attune himself to the nature of a specific ritualist. This is usually done through reciting a pledge or performing a rite prepared by that specific ritualist. This ability is only able to be used in defense of that one (1) attuned ritualist. For the duration of one (1) battle, or until the sentinel is slain, the Ultaf sentinel may call Redirect <Effect> for any spell to strike the attuned ritualist. The Ultaf member takes the effect into himself, suffering from the effect instead of the ritualist. The Ultaf sentinel must remain within five (5) feet of the ritualist in order to Redirect any spells. The sentinel may not Redirect spells while they are unconscious, or if they have an injured torso, though they may resume Redirecting spells if they regain consciousness, or upon healing the torso Wound. Dying is the only thing that ends the effect prior to the battle ending. This ability is usable one (1) time per battle, and resets as per Wounding Blows.

Sentinels possess the skills to provoke their foes beyond rational thought, to swat aside a weapon if it was a mere twig, and sap the very life essence from opponents.

Ultaf Warrior Order – Master, Way of the Marauder

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Break or Pierce Maneuvers, Blindside, Ultaf Warrior Order – Intermediate, Way of the Marauder

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires the adversary to pass tests set before him by his instructor. Until these tests are passed, he may not purchase Master abilities. Master Ultaf powers require Order prepared weapons and arms in order to perform the abilities.

Special: All powers at Intermediate require one (1) fatigue to activate. This fatigue is temporary fatigue that is recovered by the follower of the Way of the Marauder by delivering a killing blow, blindsiding an opponent, or successfully absorbing a spell effect. Any of these actions needs to be performed only one (1) time in order to recover the fatigue. If not regained ten (10) minutes after battle ends, as per normal combat rules, this temporary fatigue becomes permanent fatigue.

Expunging Strike

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order – Master, Way of the Marauder

Cost: 20

Tagline: Suppress Enchantments – Ultaf

Required Equipment: Ultaf equipment

Description: Without enchantments, foes of the Ultaf are ripe for the picking. Enemy ritualists are nigh helpless without their protections. This is one of the most feared abilities of those that follow the Way of the Marauder.

Rules: One (1) time per battle, the marauder may call “Suppress Enchantments.” All enchantments on the opponent receiving the strike are immediately suppressed, and are no longer considered active. These Enchantments are frozen at their current state, and will become active at the same time Maneuvers would refresh after combat. This Maneuver is stopped by Physical Shield Enchantments, Parrying, Dodging, or by physically blocking the blow. Armor and Skins do not stop the effect from occurring. This must land in a legal target location to take effect. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Stance of Absorption

Pre-requisites: Ultaf Warrior Order – Master, Way of the Marauder

Cost: 20

Tagline: Stance of Absorption – Ultaf, Way of the Marauder

Required Equipment: Ultaf equipment

Description: By attuning their thoughts and muscles for one (1) minute prior to the battle, the Ulf marauder becomes empowered by spells that strike them. This preparation should take the form of meditation and lasts for ten (10) minutes, or until the marauder makes a weapon based attack. While in battle, the marauder is able to Absorb spells that strike her, except for Mind-Affecting spells. Mind-Affecting spells may not be Absorbed in any manner. She may then throw a packet immediately with the same effect as "Magic <Effect>." She is able to do this until she is struck in combat, or until she swings a weapon. This stance requires total and complete concentration. This strike may take any form. Parries, Dodges and Magic Protectives will allow the marauder to ignore being hit and will not end the Stance of Absorption. Skins and Armor do not prevent the Stance from ending when the marauder is struck. This stance is usable one (1) time per battle, and resets as per Wounding Blow.

Marauders are able to quickly regain their combat prowess, resist intrusions of the mind, and render a foe helpless.

The Vanguard of Oriset

The Host of Heaven wages a war an unending war against the Shadow. This war in the Celestial Manse is only interrupted for occasional periods of rest and relaxation, followed by the renewed fury of battle. Shades are the most common enemy that the celestials face, a neverending stream of flowing Shadows seeking to infiltrate and corrupt the Celestial Halls. These shades are led by the Fallen, celestial brothers and sisters who have pledged themselves fully to the Shadow and completely turned away from the Light of Heaven, either believing that the Light of Heaven's orders were morally suspect, or as acts of rebellion.

It is the goal of the Vanguard of Oriset to protect the Manse from the creatures of Shadow. As the Second Descent takes place, members of the Vanguard are sent into the world of mortals in order to fight against the Shadow in the coming war. The Vanguard sees this as an opportunity to correct the wrongs of the First Descent, when they were not yet formed, and the task, as they see it, of eradicating the Shadow and its influence in the world went unfinished. In fact, it was following this war that the Vanguard first formed.

Oriset was a celestial of the Host of Heaven sworn to the Sphere of Guardianship. It is after Oriset that the Oriseti Mirei philosophy is named. Oriset believed that guardianship and purity went hand in hand. In order to truly guard against the Shadow, one must eliminate those things that cause temptation. The ideal of the Light must be upheld, against all things, and the elimination of the things that threaten the Light is the worthiest of all goals. To this end, Oriset convinced others in his Sphere to join in him in developing methods to halt the tide of Shadow. His efforts were considered approved when the Primarchs Calithra and Liath bestowed a glaive to him to aid in his endeavors. There were many that followed him after this gift was bestowed, though the Primarchs offered no explanation as to why he was offered this glaive.

After Oriset vanished in the Battle of Marath Suvla, reportedly throwing down his Glaive while weeping at the outcome of the battle, the Sphere of Guardianship vowed to follow in his path and officially established the Warrior Order of the Vanguard of Oriset, to be those that held up his example for others. The Vanguard members who Descend are charged with showing the world what this means, and to seek the Glaive of Oriset, a weapon now legendary among those in the Sphere of Guardianship and the Oriseti Mirei.

The Vanguard has no problems with the Celestials that practice the channeling of other Realms, even the Realm of Shadow, as long as they remain dedicated to the Host of Heaven. The Vanguard only focuses on the Realm of Light, as their only goal is the eradication of the Shadow. Many do not pursue past the basics of their ties, and instead rely on the methods and practices learned in the Order. However, blending the two is very common. Not doing so is not looked down upon in any way. The methods of vanquishing the Shadow are efficient and thorough. Some consider extra channeling of the Realm of Light to be unnecessary.

The Primarch Erialian is seen as the head of the Vanguard due to his position in the Sphere of Guardianship. Several other Primarchs are involved, as well, but it is Erialian that champions the cause and need of the Vanguard, despite not being part of the Vanguard himself for many reasons. Members of the Order have a very strict master-and-pupil relationship. Members are expected to instruct new initiates in the ways of the Order, and the Masters lead through example and discipline. The Vanguard is a highly disciplined Order, as would be expected from the Host of Heaven. Orders are expected to be followed within the Vanguard, and differences are expected to be set aside. This does not mean that Masters of the Order flaunt their power or use it unwisely. Masters are expected to teach and instruct their pupils at all times. Those who are found abusing their power are cast out of the Order if they are judged in the wrong by the other Masters. The Vanguard knows that only in working as a unit is their goal possible.

The Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order – Basic

Pre-requisites: Novice of Celestial Ways (Light), Long Weapon or Hand and a Half Weapon or any Two Handed Weapon

Cost: 10

Available to: Celestials who are only able to access the Realm of Light

Rules: The Vanguard of Oriset may use any shield and may wear up to Heavy Armor. Tradition demands that a buckler and Glaive be used, though many defy this tradition and follow their own path. Most prefer to have the option to keep one hand free in order to fight and wield magic. The Celestial must only have access to the Realm of Light, and no other Realm.

When purchasing the Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order the student may choose between the Breath of the Host, Deflect Shadow, and Silver Skin abilities and learn one (1) of them for no additional cost.

Breath of the Host

Pre-requisites: The Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Light

Required Equipment: Standard Vanguard equipment

Description: Invoking their heritage, the student of the Vanguard of Oriset is able to breathe upon her weapons and coat them in a mist of Light.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the student may call “Light” at her discretion. The Light tagline only damages creatures of Shadow, though it damages them far more. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Deflect Shadow

Pre-requisites: The Vanguard of Oriset - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Spell Parry – Oriset

Required Equipment: Standard Vanguard equipment

Description: The weapons of the Vanguard of Oriset inherit some of the qualities of their wielders, making them into weapons against Shadow.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the student of the Vanguard may call “Spell Parry” against a single Shadow spell. This does not count toward the limit of three (3) Defensive maneuvers per combat. This may be used in any way in which a Parry may be used. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Silver Skin

Pre-requisites: The Vanguard of Oriset - Basic

Cost: 5

Tagline: Light Skin 2

Required Equipment: None

Description: Students in the Vanguard must learn to bend their natural magical powers to martial pursuits. Students learn to bathe their skin in the magic of Light to protect against oncoming attacks.

Rules: One (1) time per battle the student may activate a two (2) point skin after ten (10) seconds of concentration. This skin fades after combat is ended. This Skin does not stack with any other Skins. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

At Intermediate this Skin increases to a three (3) point Skin. At Master this increases to a four (4) point Skin.

The Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order – Intermediate

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Striking Blows, One (1) Parry

Cost: 15

Rules: Advancing to Intermediate requires the student to pass the tests set before her by her instructors. Until these tests are passed, she may not purchase Intermediate abilities.

Intermediate Vanguard powers require Order specific weapons in order to perform the abilities.

Hand of the Host

Pre-requisites: The Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: Wounding Blow - Oriset

Required Equipment: Vanguard equipment

Description: Members of the Vanguard are adept at both defending against the Shadow, and attacking those that use it.

Rules: After expending Deflect Shadow, the member of the Vanguard may use an additional Wounding Blow of the Highest Wounding Blow they possess. This extra Wounding Blow does not count against the limit of three (3) Wounding Blows per combat. This is usable one (1) time per combat, and resets as per Wounding Blows.

Dazzling Blade

Pre-requisites: The Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order - Intermediate

Cost: 15

Tagline: True Strike <Wounding Blow> Light

Required Equipment: Vanguard equipment

Description: Empowering their blade with Light, members of the Vanguard of Oriset are able to strike true against creatures of Shadow.

Rules: One (1) time per battle a member of the Vanguard may call "True Strike <Wounding Blow> - Light" against an opponent. Use of a Wounding Blow for additional damage is optional. Creatures unaffected by Light damage will not be affected by this True Strike. This resets as per Wounding Blows.

Members have been said to be able to create a shield of light around themselves that prevents blows from striking them, to confuse their opponents with blinding light, and to use the grace of their heritage to glide away from projectiles.

The Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order – Master

Pre-requisites: Three (3) Mighty Blows, Three (3) Combat Maneuvers

Cost: 20

Rules: Advancing to Master requires the member to pass the tests set before her by her instructor. Until these tests are passed, she may not purchase Master abilities. Master level Vanguard powers require Order specific weapons to perform the abilities.

Arm of the Host

Pre-requisites: The Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Light, Magic

Required Equipment: Vanguard equipment

Description: Once a pupil has become a master, any weapon in her hand is an instrument against the Shadow.

Rules: Any weapon that the master of the Vanguard possesses may now be treated as a Light weapon, though the weapon itself is unchanged. This allows the master to call "Light" on each swing. The master does not have to call "Light" if she does not wish it. In addition, the Breath of the Host ability now confers the "Magic" tagline for a single swing, instead of "Light."

Radiant Visage

Pre-requisites: The Vanguard of Oriset Warrior Order - Master

Cost: 20

Tagline: Fortification against Shadow Mental - Vanguard, Resist - Vanguard, Reduce - Vanguard

Required Equipment: None

Description: Members of the Vanguard who obtain mastery are suffused with the power of Light.

Rules: After ten seconds of concentration, the Master Vanguard may bring up a Fortification against Shadow Mental upon herself. This grants three Resists against any Shadow Mental effect. For the additional cost of 3 mana, the Master Vanguard may continue to call additional Resists against Shadow Mental as long as this effect is active. In addition to this, the Master Vanguard may choose to Reduce any Shadow Mental effect to a single wound. This wound ignores hand-held shields, but can be taken on Armor, Skins, and Toughness. This Wound is always taken on the left arm, and is otherwise treated like a standard arm wound. The Fortification part of this ability may only be used once per combat, and resets as per Wounding Blows. Any Resists remaining fade upon entering the resting state.

Masters have been known to be able to constantly strike through the armor of mortals, to push aside all magic of Shadow and even protect others, and to be able to channel their Realm of Light in order to fuel

their Warrior Order knowledge, allowing them to continue to perform their feats would others would be exhausted, at the cost of their mana.

The Farenen Disi

There exists another Order, much shrouded in secrecy. Said to exist in the Sunbreak Mountains of the Caliphate and make its home in the warren of thieves and assassins known as the Rat's Castle, the Farenen Disi is considered a legend by most. This Warrior Order is said to wield two blades of equal length and to be fueled by the flesh and blood of their opponents. These Warriors are always spoken of with the utmost awe and respect. Most consider them to be boogeymen, stories made up to keep people in line and to keep them scared. Still, people have been found in the Caliphate, and in other nations, with twisted organs and missing blood. These are but some of the supposed signs of doing battle against the Farenen Disi.