

VARIANT FIGHTER

MOTIVATION

Whilst there is nothing actually wrong with the Fighter class in the Players Handbook, it can often feel to be somewhat over-simplified and lacking the depth of many of the other classes. In particular the options for non-magical/supernatural classes with interesting features is really only the battle master.

This variant class is an attempt to address some of these issues. There are two main parts to the design: the use of action points to give the fighter a resource to manage, similar to monk's Ki; and expanding the fighting styles into full sub-classes. In pure DPR this variant class is deliberately designed to surpass the PHB version. This is for two reasons: to stay more level with other classes (like barbarian and casters); and due to a belief that as a primary combat based class with limited utility options the Fighter should be more than able to pull its weight in combat.

Finally, potential interactions with multi-classing and feats have not really been considered. Whilst the class should be broadly compatible, no doubt some broken combinations can be concocted and care should be taken as with all homebrew.

CLASS FEATURES

As a variant fighter, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d10 per fighter level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 10 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per variant fighter level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Armor: All armor, shields

Weapons: Simple weapons, martial weapons

Tools: None

Saving Throws: Strength, Constitution

Skills: Choose two from Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, History, Insight, Intimidation, Perception, and Survival

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) chain mail or (b) leather armor, longbow, and 20 arrows
- (a) a martial weapon and a shield or (b) two martial weapons
- (a) a light crossbow and 20 bolts or (b) two handaxes
- (a) a dungeoneer's pack or (b) an explorer's pack

THE VARIANT FIGHTER

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Action Points
1st	+2	Martial Archetype	—
2nd	+2	Trained for Battle, Expert Technique	2
3rd	+2	Reliable Damage	3
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	4
5th	+3	Extra Attack	5
6th	+3	Martial Archetype feature	6
7th	+3	Battle Ready, Size Up	7
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	8
9th	+4	Expert Technique	9
10th	+4	Martial Archetype feature	10
11th	+4	Grievous Strike	11
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	12
13th	+5	Expert Technique	13
14th	+5	Martial Archetype feature	14
15th	+5	Indomitable	15
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	16
17th	+6	Expert Technique	17
18th	+6	Martial Archetype feature	18
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	19
20th	+6	Last Stand	20

MARTIAL ARCHETYPE

Choose an archetype that you strive to emulate in your combat styles and techniques: Knight, Duelist, Line Soldier, Scout, Archer, or Brawler, all detailed at the end of the class description. The archetype you choose also grants you features at 6th, 10th, 14th and 18th level.

TRAINED FOR BATTLE

At 2nd level, you have drilled certain techniques allowing you to combine your maneuvers in the midst of battle. This training is represented by action points, which allow you to perform your practiced techniques.

ACTION POINTS

You have 2 action points, and you gain more as you reach higher levels, as shown in the Action Points column of the Variant Fighter table. You can spend these points to make use of an Expert Technique that you have learned. Once you spend an action point, it is unavailable until you finish a short or long rest, at the end of which you regain all your expended action points.

EXPERT TECHNIQUE

At 2nd level you learn two Expert Techniques of your choice. You learn another one at 9th, 13th and 17th level. Additionally, when you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the Expert Techniques that you learned from this feature and replace it with another that you may learn at that level.

If an Expert Technique has prerequisites, you must meet them to learn it. You can learn an Expert technique the same time you meet its prerequisites.

QUICK FOOTED

You may expend one action point to take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on your turn.

BULLDOZE

You may expend one action point to make a single Shove attack as a bonus action on your turn.

PARRY

Whilst holding a melee weapon and another creature hits you with a melee attack, you may use your reaction to spend two action points and force the creature make the attack again, entirely disregarding the first result.

BRACE

When you have to make a Dexterity saving throw from an effect that you can see, you may use your reaction to spend one action point to gain advantage on this save.

SECOND WIND

You may expend action points to spend Hit Dice as a bonus action. You must expend one action point for each Hit Dice you roll. You regain a number of hit points equal to the total number rolled (not adding your constitution modifier). Any Hit Dice used in this way are treated as being spent in exactly the same way as if they had been used in a short rest.

ACTION SURGE

Prerequisite: 9th level

On your turn you may expend seven action points to take an additional action on top of your regular action and possible bonus action. You may only use this Expert Technique once per turn.

DEFENSIVE STANCE

Prerequisite: 9th level

You may expend any number of action points you have remaining to take a defensive stance as a bonus action. Until the start of your next turn you have bonus to AC from melee attacks equal to the number of action points spent.

UNSHAKABLE COMPOSURE

Prerequisite: 9th level

You may use your action to end any effect causing you to be charmed or frightened or remove any of the blinded, deafened, poisoned, or paralyzed conditions affecting you. For each condition you remove or effect you end you must expend 2 action points.

WIDE RANGING EXPERTISE

Prerequisite: 9th level

Whenever you make a skill check, you may expend three action points to add your proficiency bonus to the check. You may still do this even if you would normally add your proficiency bonus to the check.

RELIABLE DAMAGE

From 3rd level, when you roll a 1 on a damage die for an attack you make with a weapon, you instead treat this as having rolled the maximum possible value.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

EXTRA ATTACK

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

BATTLE READY

By 7th level, no combat situation can ever surprise you completely. You have advantage on initiative rolls.

SIZE UP

Starting at 7th level, if you spend at least 1 minute observing or interacting with another creature outside combat, you can learn certain information about its capabilities compared to your own. The DM tells you if the creature is your equal, superior, or inferior in regard to two of the following characteristics of your choice:

- Strength score
- Dexterity score
- Constitution score
- Armor Class
- Current hit points
- Total class levels (if any)
- Fighter class levels (if any)

GRIEVOUS STRIKE

By 11th level, you have mastered where to strike to maximize the damage you inflict on a creature. Whenever you hit a creature with a weapon attack, the creature takes an extra 1d8 damage of the same type as the weapon.

INDOMITABLE

Beginning at 15th level, you can reroll a saving throw that you fail. If you do so, you must use this new roll, and you can't use this feature again until you finish a short rest.

LAST STAND

At 20th level, nothing can take you out without a fight. When you drop to 0HP you may immediately take a turn before you fall unconscious, interrupting the turn of your attacker if necessary. Whilst taking this turn you may make use of any of your Expert Techniques without expending any action points. If you end your turn with a number of hit points higher than 0 then you do not fall unconscious. After using this ability you may not do so again until you have completed a short rest.

MARTIAL ARCHETYPES

Different fighters choose different approaches to perfecting their fighting prowess. The martial archetype you choose to emulate reflects your approach.

KNIGHT

Knights have trained to dispatch their enemies from horseback, making full use of their improved vantage point to maximize the damage they can inflict. Even if dismounted they are still a formidable opponent, making full use of their armor to defend against attacks.

LOYAL STEED

When you choose this archetype at 1st level you acquire a riding horse. This horse has the normal statistics except it has an additional number of hit points equal to 5 times your variant fighter level and you have advantage on animal handling checks against it. If you acquire a new mount during your adventures, you may bond with it over a long rest, granting this mount the additional hit points and granting you advantage on animal handling checks against it. You may only have one mount bonded to you at a time.

FIGHT FROM THE SADDLE

From 1st level whenever you make a melee weapon attack whilst mounted you can choose to add your proficiency modifier to the damage roll. In addition it only takes you 5ft of movement to dismount a creature (rather than half your speed) and if you fall off a mount, and fall less than 10ft, then you can choose to land on your feet if you are not incapacitated. You may add your proficiency bonus to any check or save to avoid being dismounted or for any animal handling check you make with a mount. If you would already be proficient with this save or check you can instead add double your proficiency bonus.

KNIGHTLY EXPERTISE

At 6th level you learn the two Expert Techniques below:

Metal Bulwark: If wearing heavy armor you may use your reaction when you take damage to spend 2 action points and halve the damage that you take.

Skilled Mount: Your mount is now able to use any Expert Techniques that you know, using the same pool of action points as yourself.

SHOCK CAVALRY

Starting at 10th level, you and your mount have a +2 bonus to AC whilst you are mounted. In addition you may use your action to overrun the enemy, allowing you to inflict 1d8 + half your variant fighter level in bludgeoning damage to any creature, smaller than your mount, that you move within 5ft of during your mount's next turn.

CRUSHING BLOW

At 14th level, you learn the following Expert Technique:

Crushing Blow: When you hit with a melee weapon attack you may spend 2 action points to inflict an additional 2d8 damage of the same type as your weapon.

ONLY THE STRONGEST POTIONS

From 18th level, whenever you drink a potion with a duration its effect lasts 8 times as long for you. When rolling for healing from any kind of health potion you must roll twice as many dice.

MAN AND BEAST

Starting at 18th level, you can communicate with your bonded mount through simple instructions and body language. Whilst you are in sight or hearing range you can communicate perfectly any idea or information. Your bonded mount may use your intelligence statistic to understand any concepts you are communicating.

DUELIST

Duelists are masters of one on one combat, able to fell even the mightiest warriors if given the space to operate unhindered.

ADEPT SWORDSMAN

When you choose this archetype at 1st level, you gain a +2 bonus to hit with one handed melee weapons. In addition if there are no enemies other than your target within 30ft you may add your proficiency to the damage role when making a melee weapon attack.

SUPREME CONFIDENCE

From 1st level whenever you roll a 1 for a charisma skill check you may re-roll the check.

DUELING EXPERTISE

At 6th level you learn the two Expert Techniques below:

No Retreat: If a creature moves out of your reach and you would not normally be able to make an attack of opportunity (for instance they performed the disengage action or had been forced to move) you may expend one action point to make the attack of opportunity as normal.

Feint: When you make a melee weapon attack against a creature you may expend two action points. Until the start of your next turn that creature has disadvantage to hit you with an attack.

SOLITARY COMBATANT

From 10th level, if your target is the only creature within 15ft of you you may add your proficiency bonus to the damage roll with a melee weapon attack.

FLURRY OF BLADES

At 14th level you learn the following Expert Technique:

Flurry of Blades: You may expend three action points to make a single extra attack as a bonus action.

GLORY OF THE CHAMPION

From 18th level, if you kill an enemy whilst benefiting from the bonus damage granted by the *Adept Swordsman* or *Solitary Combatant* features you gain temporary hit points equal to your variant fighter level.

FLAIR FOR THE DRAMATIC

Starting at 18th level, you may add your proficiency bonus to any performance skill checks. If you are already proficient in this skill you may instead add double your proficiency bonus.

SCOUT

Scouts work primarily to determine the position and plans of opposition forces. However, if they get in a fight they are no slouch, able to dart across a battlefield.

NIMBLE COMBATANT

When you choose this archetype at 1st level, you may add +1 bonus to damage rolls with light weapons. In addition, whilst wearing light armor you have a +1 bonus to AC.

OUTRIDER

From 1st level, you may add your proficiency bonus to any cartographer tool's, perception, or survival check you make. If you are already proficient in these skills, you may instead add double your proficiency bonus. In addition you may add your proficiency modifier to your initiative rolls.

EXPERT SWIFTNESS

At 6th level you learn the two Expert Techniques below:

Evasive: Whilst not wearing heavy or medium armor you may expend 1 action point to hide or dodge as a bonus action on your turn.

Counter Attack: When a creature misses you with a melee attack you may use your reaction to expend 1 action point and immediately make an attack of opportunity against the creature.

PATHFINDER

From 10th level, your speed increases by 10ft and you are not slowed by difficult terrain. You also gain a swimming and climbing speed equal to your walking speed. In addition, you may add your proficiency bonus to any stealth checks you make whilst not wearing heavy or medium armor. If you would already be able to add your proficiency bonus to this check you may instead add double it.

EYE FOR WEAKNESS

At 14th level, you learn the following Expert Technique:

Eye for Weakness: When you make an attack you can choose to expend 3 action points. If you do so any roll of a 20+ to hit (after modifiers) is a critical hit. If this roll would not normally be sufficient to score a hit, you may instead choose to inflict normal damage.

REACTIVE POSITIONING

Starting at 18th level, you may use your reaction at any point in a turn to immediately take the dash action. When you move in this way you do not trigger opportunity attacks.

LINE SOLDIER

Many line soldiers are veterans of wars, whilst others may have picked up their skills whilst adventuring. Regardless of how they acquired these, all line soldiers are able to provide unwavering assistance to their comrades.

STEADFAST

When you choose this archetype at 1st level, if you did not move in your turn then you have a +2 bonus to AC until the start of your next turn.

UNFALTERING SUPPORT

From 1st level, when you take the Help action to aid another creature's attack or ability check the creature gains a bonus to the check equal to your Constitution modifier. In addition you gain proficiency with a Healer's Kit.

EXPERT ALLY

At 6th level you learn the two Expert Techniques below:

Go to Ground: If you or friendly creature within 5ft has to make a Dexterity saving throw or is the target of a ranged attack, as a reaction you may expend 1 action point. You and up to one friendly creature within 5ft may immediately become prone and gain advantage on any dexterity save that triggered your reaction.

Coordinated Attacks: When you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack, you may expend 2 action points to grant advantage on all melee attacks made against this creature by creatures other than yourself until the start of your next turn.

IMPLACABLE INSPIRATION

From 10th level, whenever you or a friendly creature within 30ft must make a Wisdom or Charisma saving throw, the creature gains a bonus equal to your Constitution modifier and can't be frightened. This feature does not stack with the Paladin's Aura of Protection feature, the creature making the save must choose which feature to benefit from.

CREATE OPPORTUNITY

At 14th level, you learn the following Expert Technique:

Create Opportunity: When you miss with a melee weapon attack you may expend 3 action points to allow an ally to use their reaction to make an attack of opportunity against your target.

DEFENSIVE SYNERGY

From 18th level, when you are flanked by friendly creatures you have a +2 bonus to your AC.

BRAWLER

To an observer Brawlers may seem to fight in a crude manner, however, their techniques require no less skill or training than that of other fighters. They understand that there is much more to fighting than inflicting maximum harm, and that it can often be as useful to take a foe out of fight with other methods.

WRESTLER

When you choose this archetype at 1st level, you may add your proficiency bonus to any checks you make to shove, grapple or escape from a grapple. If you would already be able to add your proficiency bonus to this skill check then you may add double your proficiency bonus instead.

STREET FIGHTER

From 1st level, whenever you succeed to a check to grapple or shove a creature you may inflict damage equal to your proficiency bonus. In addition you may make a special melee weapon attack against creatures you are grappling even if you are holding no weapons. This inflicts 1d6 bludgeoning damage. You are proficient with this attack.

EXPERT BRUISER

At 6th level you learn the two Expert Techniques below:

Opportunist: When a creature moves within your reach, you may use your reaction and expend 1 action point to immediately make a shove attack.

Fight Dirty: As an action you can expend 2 action points to inflict the blindness condition on a creature you are grappling. If the creature is currently concentrating on a spell it must also make a concentration check with disadvantage.

WRANGLER

From 10th level you are immune from the grapple condition and count as one size larger when determining if you are able to grapple a creature. In addition when moving a grappled creature you suffer no penalty to your speed.

CLOSE COMBAT EXPERTISE

At 14th level you learn the two Expert Techniques below:

Counter Punch: When a creature is in the process of casting a spell within your reach you may use your reaction and expend 4 action points to interrupt the casting. The creature must make an ability check using their spellcasting ability with a DC equal to 10 + the spell level. On a success the spell is cast as normal but on a failure the spell fails and has no effect.

Choke Out: You may use your action and expend 1 action point to strangle a creature you are grappling. Until the creature escapes the grapple or the end of your next turn the creature is suffocating and may not cast spells with a verbal component.

TOSS

Starting at 18th level, when you use the shove action on a creature you are grappling you may push them up to 5 times your strength modifier away and knock them prone instead of the normal effect.

CANNY

From 18th level, you may add your proficiency bonus to any Insight check you make. If you are already proficient in this skill you may instead add twice your proficiency bonus.

ARCHER

Archers specialize in the use of ranged weapons against their foes. Able to pick out the weak points of their enemies they are able to deal devastating damage at a distance.

DEVASTATING SHOT

When you choose this archetype at 1st level, you gain a +2 bonus to damage made with ranged weapon attacks. In addition you are able to score critical hits on dice rolls other than a 20 with attacks you make with ranged weapons. The threshold you need to roll (without modifiers) to score a critical hit is equal to 20 minus half your variant fighter level (eg. you will score critical hits with a roll of 19 or 20 once you reach level 2).

KEEN EYES

From 1st level, you may add your proficiency bonus to any to any Perception check you make. If you are already proficient in this skill you may instead add twice your proficiency bonus. In addition you have advantage to any checks you make as part of a search action that make use of sight.

EXPERT MARKSMAN

At 6th level you learn the two Expert Techniques below:

Ignore Cover: When you make an attack against a creature that would benefit from half of three-quarters cover you may expend 1 action point to prevent them from benefiting from this bonus against any attacks you make in your turn.

Head-shot: When you score a critical hit on a creature with a ranged weapon you may expend one action point to roll one additional weapon damage die when determining the extra damage for the critical hit. In addition this attack is considered to have been made with a magic weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage resistances and immunities.

SNIPER

From 10th level, attacking at long range or whilst prone does not impose disadvantage on your ranged weapon attacks.

DEAD-EYE

At 14th level, you learn the following Expert Technique:

Dead-eye: When you make an attack with a ranged weapon you may expend action points to gain a bonus to hit. For each action point you spend you have a +2 bonus to hit.

SKILLED SHOT

Starting at 18th level, you can inflict non-lethal damage with your ranged weapon attacks. In addition each time you hit a creature you may reduce its speed by 10 ft, to a minimum of 10ft. This lasts until the creature receives any form of healing or minor or greater restoration is cast on them.