

# THE MONK

## THIS IS PLAYTEST MATERIAL

The D&D material in this document is presented for playtesting and review purposes. The game mechanics are a draft, usable in your D&D campaign, but subject to design revision and editing.

**Feedback.** The best way to provide feedback is to post on <https://reddit.com/r/TherinCreative> or via one of the social media links from <https://therincreative.com>.

**Power Level.** Material offered by Therin Creative is aimed to be on par with officially published options. I respond to feedback and test results to hone the material until it is in such shape that any D&D campaign can use it just as it could official content, with the confidence that the material is balanced and worthy.

The monk is a storied class that aims to deliver the fantasy of a mystical warrior or one that fights with hand and foot. Monks are a versatile class that can pair weapons and unarmed strikes with a host of unique features that can allow it to achieve themes from a fantasy pugilist to esoteric warriors to shadow dancers, mixing martial ability with a versatile skill package. The core monk from the *Player's Handbook* received a number of new features aimed to adjust the play experience of the class in *Tasha's Cauldron of Everything* by Wizards of the Coast. The material presented in this supplement furthers those efforts to make the monk a more effective class on par with its ranger and paladin peers. Class enhancements are designed to boost monks of any subclass to a healthy level, with certain underperforming subclasses receiving enhancements specifically to bridge remaining gaps.

The monk is the best class because it never needs to rely on anything except itself, but brings a number of tricks any party will find beneficial. Able to use a variety of weapons or go unarmed, the monk has options on how to combat its foes. It backs this selection up with a number of defensive techniques and superior movement. The class can focus on offense, defense, or movement through use of its bonus action.

The monk class receives new features and subclasses in this section. You gain class features in the *Player's Handbook* when you reach certain levels in your class. This section offers additional features you can gain as a monk. Unlike features in the *Player's Handbook*, you don't gain the features here automatically. Consult with your DM on whether you gain a feature in this section if you meet the requirements. These features can be selected separately from one another; you can use some, all, or none of them.

If you take a feature that replaces another feature, you gain no benefit from the replaced feature and don't qualify for anything in the game that requires it.

## EXPANDED MONK WEAPON TRAINING

### 1st-level monk feature

You gain proficiency with light flails, parrying daggers, and scimitars, and these weapons count as monk weapons. The scimitar is in the *Player's Handbook*, and the other weapons are in Appendix A.

## INNER CORE

### 5th-level monk feature

You have a reserve of 5 ki points that you can draw upon in times of need. As an action, you can withdraw 1 or more of these ki points from this reserve and add them to your current ki points. You regain all expended points from this reserve when you finish a long rest.

## STUNNING STRIKE (VARIANT)

### 5th-level monk feature which replaces the Stunning Strike feature

You can interfere with the flow of ki in an opponent's body. Once during your turn when you hit another creature with a melee weapon attack, you can expend one ki point to deal force damage equal to your Wisdom modifier to the target, and the target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of your next turn.

## FOCUSED FORMS

### 11th-level monk feature

At the start of your turn, you can enter a focused state as if concentrating on a spell, choosing one of the following forms:

**Ringling.** The first time on a turn when you hit a target with an attack from an unarmed strike or monk weapon you can deal one extra roll of your martial arts die to a target. You can't deal this damage on the same turn you use another feature that adds extra damage using additional rolls of your martial arts die as a result of an attack unless it expends ki to do so.

**Seamless.** Once during your turn when you expend 1 or more ki points as part of a bonus action that doesn't also make an attack, you can make the bonus attack from your Martial Arts or Ki-fueled Attack feature without requiring a bonus action.

## PERFECT SELF (VARIANT)

### 20th-level monk feature which replaces the Perfect Self feature

When you roll initiative and have fewer than 4 ki points remaining, you regain 4 ki points.

## DESIGNER NOTES

These features are designed to improve the QoL of the class and smooth its damage curve for tier 3 and 4, without making the *Tasha's Cauldron of Everything* monks stronger, since they receive a damage boost for tier 3.

An alternate Stunning Strike is being tested by giving it some bonus damage whether or not the target succeeds on its save.

The Perfect Self (Variant) feature is a patch for Perfect Self since it doesn't work when the monk has 1, 2, or 3 ki points.

## WAY OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS

The Way of the Four Elements monastic tradition receives the following features.

### RASP

*6th-level Way of the Four Elements feature*

On a turn in which you use an elemental discipline, you can use your Patient Defense or Step of the Wind feature without spending a ki point.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus and regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

### ELEMENTAL DISSIPATION

*11th-level Way of the Four Elements feature*

Whenever you take acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder damage, you can take a reaction and expend 1 ki point to gain resistance to the triggering damage type until the end of your next turn.

If you use an elemental discipline before losing this damage resistance, you can reduce its ki point cost by 1.

### FLOWING STRIKE

*17th-level Way of the Four Elements feature*

After spending ki on an elemental discipline, the next time you hit a target with an unarmed strike or a monk weapon before the end of your next turn, you deal bonus damage equal to your Martial Art die plus your Wisdom modifier. If the elemental discipline deals damage, the bonus damage from this feature is the same type, otherwise the bonus damage is the same type as the weapon's damage.

### DESIGNER NOTES

Way of the Four Elements monk has a few issues that have plagued the subclass. This section adds new features to the subclass without completely redesigning it. This also solves one of the issues, which was lack of meaningful features. The *Player's Handbook* version basically gains a new spell for each subclass feature level, which is underwhelming, and one of the drivers for why this tradition feels half-baked.

Another issue was the damage budget for the subclass. While the spells can provide some burst, this burst cost nearly all the subclass's sustained damage potential by consuming a lot of ki. If you can catch 4 or more targets in a spell, the damage starts to sort itself out. A related issue was that the subclass didn't feel monk-like with all the spellcasting. Since the monk class gets a subclass damage boost at 17th level, Flowing Strike was added to reward using elemental disciplines and encourage using the monk kit while providing a standard tier 4 boost.

The last issue was the overall ki inefficiency. This is a harder challenge to tackle as too much can cause the subclass's effectiveness to snowball too far. Rasp and Elemental Dissipation aim to address this while also tackling the monk feel issue. Rasp alleviates a bit of the cost of using the Ki feature's defensive options, and Elemental Dissipation grants a defensive bonus whose cost can be applied to the next elemental discipline.

While the resulting changes don't push the subclass above other monk subclasses in damage budget, it allows for the subclass to surpass the others once it can start hitting larger groups of targets.

## WAY OF THE NINJA

Those of the Way of the Ninja are practitioners of the arts of subtlety. They are masters of disguise and infiltration, often offering their services as informants and spies. However, a ninja is also trained as a capable warrior, often mastering special combat styles. Ninja use ki to perform special supernatural feats.

### NINJA ARTS

*3rd-level Way of the Ninja feature*

You gain access to secret arts, sometimes called ninja magic. An art requires you to spend ki points each time you use it. These are magical effects. When an art casts a spell, you don't require components to use it.

You learn three arts which you choose from the options below. When you gain a new level in this class you may replace one of the arts you know with a different one.

**Cricket's Leap.** You can spend 1 ki point to cast the *jump* spell on yourself.

**Fading Presence.** When you are hit by a weapon attack, you can spend 2 ki points to increase your AC against that attack by 4. You must choose to do this before the result of the attack is known.

**Flash Bomb.** As an action, you can spend 2 ki points to attempt to blind nearby creatures. Each creature within 5 feet of you must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw against your ki save DC or become blinded until the end of its next turn.

**No Face.** When you are within a crowd or in dim light or darkness, you can spend 1 ki point to take the Hide action as a bonus action. You can do this while being observed. If you aren't observed, you have advantage on ability checks to elude detection for 1 minute.

**Phantom Steps.** As an action, you can spend 2 ki points to cast the *water walking* spell on yourself. For the duration, your footsteps are completely silent.

**Serpent's Reed.** As a bonus action, you can spend 1 ki point to breathe water for 1 hour.

**Shadow Clone.** As an action, you can spend 3 ki points to cast the *mirror image* spell.

**Thousand Faces.** As a bonus action, you can spend 2 ki points to change your appearance, including clothing and armor, for 1 hour or until you dismiss the changes as a bonus action. You can appear up to one foot taller or shorter and can appear fatter or thinner. You can't change your creature type and must have the same general shape.

**Vanishing Act.** When you take damage, you can use your reaction to spend 2 ki points to teleport to an unoccupied space within 20 feet of you, and the creature that damaged you can't see you until the end of the turn.

### SHINOBI TRAINING

*3rd-level Way of the Ninja feature*

You gain proficiency in sickle and chains, shuriken, blowguns, the Deception skill, and disguise kits.

In addition, sickle and chains, shuriken, and simple ranged weapons are treated as monk weapons for you. You also draw a weapon that has the thrown property as part of the attack you make with the weapon. Sickle and chain and shuriken are found in Appendix A.

## SHADOW WARRIOR

*6th-level Way of the Ninja feature*

Once each turn, you can add a roll of your martial arts die to your weapon damage in the following instances:

- When you make an opportunity attack.
- The first time you attack a target which hasn't taken its first turn in combat.
- When you have advantage on the attack roll.

When you reach 17th level, you add two rolls your martial arts die instead.

### SHRIKE'S GUILF

*11th-level Way of the Ninja feature*

You can make opportunity attacks with a weapon that has thrown property when a foe within 15 feet of you moves away from you.

In addition, you can replace any of your unarmed strikes with an attack from a one-handed melee or ranged weapon, provided it has the thrown property.

### SHINOBI TEACHINGS

*17th-level Way of the Ninja feature*

You have achieved mastery with your secret arts. After finishing a long rest, you can use each of your Ninja Arts once without expending ki.

You also learn two additional Ninja Arts of your choice.

#### DESIGNER NOTES

The classic fantasy ninja was the theme for this subclass, such as Ryu Hayabusa from *Ninja Gaiden* or fantastic accounts of Hattori Hanzou.

The first feature grants the character access to a host of traditional ninja tricks from disappearing inside a crowd, using reeds to stay underwater for prolonged time, disappearing when attacked to appear somewhere else, and summoning shadow clones.

The subclass gets a second 3rd-level feature to enable some of its core-fantasy skills.

At 6th-level, the subclass gets some damage which only a few monks get. In this, the ninja gets its rogue and assassin-like facets in respect to damage. While not as strong as a rogue's Sneak Attack, the added damage gives the subclass the right feel.

Shrike's Guile enables the character to make more use of thrown weapons. At this point, the class can fully become a dart-tosser, if desired.

Since the damage boost comes from the 6th-level feature, the capstone returns to the 3rd-level feature to not only grant more tricks, but lets you use each once without spending ki.

## WAY OF HERMETICISM

Acting as ascetic priests, monks of the Way of the Hermeticism tend to spiritual matters. They follow religious tenants, and serve as spiritual guides. Many hermetacists are hermits, preferring solitude to hone their supernatural powers, but some congregate in temples neat sacred sites, serving as guards and guides.

### WAY OF HERMETICISM SPELLCASTING

Monk Level	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	— Spell Slots Per Spell Level —			
			1st	2nd	3rd	4th
3rd	2	3	2	—	—	—
4th	2	4	3	—	—	—
5th	2	4	3	—	—	—
6th	2	4	3	—	—	—
7th	2	5	4	2	—	—
8th	2	6	4	2	—	—
9th	2	6	4	2	—	—
10th	3	7	4	3	—	—
11th	3	8	4	3	—	—
12th	3	8	4	3	—	—
13th	3	9	4	3	2	—
14th	3	10	4	3	2	—
15th	3	10	4	3	2	—
16th	3	11	4	3	3	—
17th	3	11	4	3	3	—
18th	3	11	4	3	3	—
19th	3	12	4	3	3	1
20th	3	13	4	3	3	1

### SPELLCASTING

*3rd-level Way of Hermeticism feature*

You can channel your spirit to cast cleric spells.

**Cantrips.** You learn two cantrips of your choice from the cleric spell list. You learn an additional cleric cantrip of your choice at 10th level.

**Spell Slots.** The Way of Hermeticism Spellcasting table shows how many slots you have to cast your cleric spells. To cast one of your cleric spells of 1st level or higher, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.

For example, if you know the 1st-level spell *sanctuary* and have a 1st-level or 2nd-level spell slot available, you can cast *sanctuary* using either slot.

**Spells Known of 1st-Level and Higher.** You know three 1st-level cleric spells of your choice, two of which you must choose from the abjuration and transmutation spells on the cleric spell list.

The Spells Known column of the Way of Hermeticism Spellcasting table shows when you learn more cleric spells of 1st level or higher. Each of these spells must be an abjuration or transmutation spell of your choice, and must be of a level for which you have spell slots. For instance, when you reach 7th level in this class, you can learn one new spell of 1st or 2nd level.

The spells you learn at 8th, 14th, and 20th level can come from any school of magic.

Whenever you gain a level in this class, you can replace one of the cleric spells you know with another spell of your choice from the cleric spell list. The new spell must be of a level for which you have spell slots,

and it must be an abjuration or transmutation spell, unless you're replacing the spell you gained at 3rd, 8th, 14th, or 20th level from any school of magic.

**Spellcasting Ability.** Wisdom is your spellcasting ability, since you learn your spells through discipline and devotion. You use your Wisdom whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Wisdom modifier when setting the saving throw DC for a cleric spell you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

**Spell save DC** = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier

**Spell attack modifier** = your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier

**Multiclassing.** If you have two or more classes with the spellcasting feature, add one third your monk level to determine how many spell slots you have. The spells you know or can prepare follow the rules for each of your classes.

### BONUS PROFICIENCY

*3rd-level Way of Hermeticism feature*

You gain proficiency in the Arcane, Nature, or Religion skill (your choice).

### HERMETIC ARTS

*6th-level Way of Hermeticism feature*

When you cast a cleric spell with a casting time of 1 action, you can make one unarmed strike as a bonus action. If this attacks hits a creature, you can add one roll of your martial arts die to one Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration you make. The save must be made within the next minute.

### RETORT

*11th-level Way of Hermeticism feature*

Through a powerful resolve, you can respond to an attack in an instant. When you are hit by an attack from a creature, you can use your reaction to cast a cleric spell you know from this class with a casting time of 1 action that targets either only you or only the creature that attacked you, provided it is within range of the spell.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

### DIVINE RUMBLE

*17th-level Way of Hermeticism feature*

When you use Flurry of Blows, you can replace one of the unarmed strikes with a casting of one of your cleric cantrips that has a casting time of an action.

### DESIGNER NOTES

This is basically a cleric hybrid built like the Eldritch Knight. Its features are fashioned to integrate the Spellcasting feature into the core monk chassis. It is planned to expand cleric transmutation options at lower level to be sure these monks have some options.

Divine Rumble was redesigned to feel more like the wisened holy monk able to combine spells with martial arts. I drew inspiration from One D&D's Eldritch Knight.

## WAY OF STEEL BREATH

Harrowing, armor-clad warriors that often serve as mercenaries, these practitioners of the arts of war and discipline are at home on the battlefield. Monks of this tradition are known for their penchant to wield staves and spears, but have no such restrictions. While many prefer the layer of protection offered by armor, some opt for more traditional garb.

### ARMOR-CLAD

*3rd-level Way of Steel Breath feature*

You gain proficiency in light and medium armor and in bladespears, glaives, halberds, long spears, pikes, and tridents. Long spear and swordstaff are found in Appendix A.

Wearing light and medium armor no longer prohibits you from benefiting from your Martial Arts or Unarmored Movement features, nor does any weapon you have proficiency in, even if it's not a monk weapon.

### WARDING STRIKES

*3rd-level Way of Steel Breath feature*

When you hit a creature with an unarmed strike or monk weapon, you don't provoke opportunity attacks from that creature for the rest of the turn.

In addition, you can expend 1 ki point to unbalance the creature. The target has disadvantage on the next attack roll it makes before the end of its next turn.

### UNHINDERED MOBILITY

*6th-level Way of Steel Breath feature*

You can enter a creature's space without expending extra movement regardless of its size, but you can't end your turn there.

Whenever you take the Dash action, you can move through difficult terrain created by natural or magical plants or physical obstacles, such as caltrops, without expending extra movement. If you are wearing medium armor, you don't need to take the Dash action to gain this benefit.

### BLADE CATCH

*11th-level Way of Steel Breath feature*

You can use your Strength or Wisdom modifier (your choice) instead of your Dexterity with your Deflect Missiles feature. You can also use your Deflect Missiles feature against melee weapon attacks, reducing damage in the same way you do a ranged weapon attack.

If you reduce the damage to 0, you can attempt to disarm your attacker if it is holding a weapon. It must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or it loses the weapon and you gain hold of it. If the weapon is held with two hands, the creature has advantage on its save.

### STEEL WIND

*17th-level Way of Steel Breath feature*

Once during your turn when you make an unarmed strike, you can replace it with an attack from a melee weapon and this attack can be used to attack your target and each creature you choose within 5 feet of the target and not more than 10 feet from you. Make a separate attack roll for each target.

## WAY OF WEBS

This tradition stems from the Spider Clan of warriors, who emulate many of the techniques of arachnids. These monks seek to control and restrict their opponents, whether it be on the battlefield or in parlance.

### DEVIOUS WEBS

*3rd-level Way of Webs feature*

You can add your Wisdom modifier to Strength (Athletics) and Charisma (Deception) checks you make.

In addition, whenever you hit a single creature with two unarmed strikes on the same turn, you can choose to grapple it without a check (escape DC equals your ki save DC).

Moving a creature your size or smaller during a grapple costs you no extra movement, and whenever you roll a 1 or 2 on a damage roll for an unarmed strike against a grappled target (whether by you or another creature or effect), you can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

### WALL CRAWL

*6th-level Way of Webs feature*

You gain a climbing speed equal to your walking speed. If you spend 1 ki point, you can climb sheer surfaces without impediment and walk along a vertical surface without using your hands for 1 minute.

### SLIPPERY FORM

*11th-level Way of Webs feature*

Able to sway and move in a fluid fashion, you gain immunity to the grappled, prone, and restrained conditions.

### VENOMOUS GRIP

*17th-level Way of Webs feature*

At the start of each of your turns, a creature that you grapple takes poison or acid damage (your choice when you deal the damage) equal to your Wisdom modifier. After dealing this damage, you can't deal it again until the start of your next turn.

In addition, a creature your size or smaller that you grapple is also restrained.

### DESIGNER NOTES

These two subclasses deliver newer monk fantasies.

Way of Steel Breath experiments with an armored monk fantasy. Nominally, the subclass is intended to use spears and similar weapons, but it isn't required. This way the player can use the options of the subclass to capture the desired fantasy. This subclass is a mobile specialist, aiming to dart in and around its foes, hence why it gets a feature similar to an aspect of the Mobility feat.

Way of Webs is a grappler with spider themes. This monk is intended to seize a foe, haul it away, and wither it down. It is intended that a character might raise Strength to 13 to take the Grappler feat, so its features were made to offer some synergy. Venomous Grip deals set damage since it can't crit.

# MAKING YOUR OWN MONK SUBCLASS

**Y**OU MAY DECIDE THAT YOU WANT TO CREATE YOUR own monk subclass that best fits your campaign. Before embarking on this task, you want to be sure that no existing monk subclass can meet your design goals. One of the greatest flexibilities offered in 5e class design is how open it can be to reflavoring the features. If there is a subclass that can meet your mechanical needs and stylistic vision, it is best to simply use that and save yourself a lot of time in designing, writing, and play testing.

If, however, you find that no existing subclass achieves the fantasy or has the mechanics to match your visions, this section will guide you toward making a monk subclass that fits the 5e D&D model. The guidelines will help you create the features for your subclass and detail how you should balance the class to fit within the official options and those offered by Therin Creative and similar content creators.

Please note, that despite the guidance offered herein, your subclass may need further tuning. Be certain to spend the time to playtest your subclass.

## CLASS CHASSIS

The monk is class that favors both Dexterity and Wisdom. It has its own resource, ki points, that it spends to use its core features. Ki points refresh on a short or long rest, so the monk should typically have access to it resource throughout a standard adventuring day. Monks generally don't care about Strength, Intelligence, or Charisma, so you want to avoid requiring these lest you stretch the monk's ability scores too thin.

### HIT DICE

The monk has a d8 Hit Dice. This places the monk as capable of taking a hit or two, but they won't last as long as fighters or barbarians. Monks can expend ki points and their bonus action to increase their survival chances.

### PROFICIENCIES

The monk has access to simple weapons and the shortsword (plus any added via this supplement), but it also has stronger unarmed attacks than normal, and monk weapons scale with unarmed strike damage. The monk has no armor proficiencies and are built to wear no armor or a shield. The monk also has a small selection of skills, making skill proficiencies ripe for subclass features.

### ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

The monk uses standard progression for the Ability Score Improvement (ASI) feature (4th, 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level). Monks shouldn't gain additional ASI features as that is the domain of the fighter and rogue classes and not something a subclass generally grants.

### KI POWERS

The monk uses ki points to fuel many of abilities. Ki management is a core component of the class, and you want to design monk features that interact with this resource. Pricing ki cost is imperative for a monk subclass the cost can't be trivial, but it also can't be

prohibitive. Decide how often a monk should use a ki power you give it and price accordingly.

### RIBBON FEATURES

The monk has few features that enhance pillars other than combat, relying more on skill proficiencies. A monk's subclass provides more noncombat features.

### MONASTIC TRADITION FEATURES

Monk traditions grant features at 3rd, 6th, 11th, and 17th level. Take note that half its features align with the onset of tier 3 and 4 play.

### MONKS AREN'T FIGHTERS OR ROGUES

While the desire may be to create a monk subclass that can operate like the fighter or rogue class, the monk chassis is built on a resource pool. Fighters and rogues work without resources for the core class with explicit features that have uses per rest.

Despite temptation, you will want your monk subclass to at least partially lean into the ki point resource. At least one of your features should spend ki points in a new way.

# BUILDING A MONASTIC TRADITION

Once you understand the class chassis, you're one step closer to building a subclass. You'll also want to review existing subclasses to get a feel for their design and balance. This section will aid you in understanding what your subclass features should accomplish.

Before starting on the formal work to build your subclass, devise its theme and role. What is your subclass's purpose? What roles does it fill in an adventuring party? How are its mechanics interesting and unique? Why would a player choose your subclass?

Let's start by looking at some existing monk subclasses.

**Way of the Open Hand.** The Way of the Open Hand is the eponymous monk, gaining many of the features monks had in earlier editions. They are frontline breachers that have the ability to push and trip targets. They gain features to aid their ability to survive and embed themselves behind the enemy front line, and ultimately bring a power technique that can kill a foe. Players choose this monastic tradition because they want to render foes vulnerable, expose weaker foes, and to experience a classic monk feel.

**Way of Shadow.** The Way of Shadow is the spiritual successor to the Shadow Dancer prestige class. It operates under the cloak of darkness, leveraging a number of shadow arts such as teleporting within darkness and invisibility. Players choose this monastic tradition to play a subtle striker, attacking from the dark and disappearing before discovery.

**Way of the Kensei.** The Way of the Kensei is a weapon-focused monk that adds a couple martial weapons to its list of monk weapons. Its features focus on improving its talent with its chosen weapons. Players choose this monastic tradition because they want to master the use of a weapon while gaining the monk's movement prowess.

**Way of the Astral Self.** The Way of the Astral Self is a fairly unique monk that delves deeper into the spiritual side of the class, summoning phantasmal force to augment its body. Players choose this monastic tradition for the flavor of having a spectral form that enhances their combat ability while inspiring awe.

**Way of the Ninja.** The Way of the Ninja is a monk that mixes weaponry with special arts. The ninja is a rogue-like subclass that can be potent with thrown weapons. Players choose this monastic tradition because they want to make a ninja warrior that can strike suddenly and a character that can serve as a spy.

Each monk subclass does something unique, explores the monk kit in a certain direction, but at its core, each is a monk, tapping the full range of the class features at its disposal.

## BUILDING THE SUBCLASS

This guide covers building a monastic tradition consistent with official published material. Each monastic tradition adds to the core class's components. A subclass may favor certain aspects of the class, but it has the full range of monk features to tap.

Subclass features are granted at 3rd, 6th, 11th, and 17th level. Each Monastic Tradition feature level should generally only grant one subclass feature. Consult the Monk Subclass Features table for when you should grant features.

There are exceptions for the rule of only granting a single subclass feature:

- Ribbon features are frequently weak on their own, so in certain cases you may grant a second, minor feature, which could be another ribbon feature.
- The feature has some complex interactions that are much clearer when separated. Often this is indication that something should be cut, but in rare cases, it makes sense to split a feature for comprehension.
- You are expanding an existing feature in a minor way. Sometimes it's better to include the enhancement in the core feature, and at other times it could be a note in another feature.

### MONK SUBCLASS FEATURES

Monk Level	Feature
3rd	Core Expansion Feature
6th	Augmentation I Feature
11th	Augmentation II Feature
17th	Damage Feature

### CORE EXPANSION FEATURE

*3rd-level [Your Monk Subclass] feature*

This feature adds new options on top of the monk chassis. It should interact with existing monk features, such as Flurry of Blows, or offer a new way to spend ki points. This feature should give the subclass the tools it needs to differentiate its role in adventuring. Future features can build off this one.

In general, this feature shouldn't directly increase the monk's damage. Monks already have the tools for damage at early levels of play. This feature can, however, indirectly affect the monk's damage such as through offering it spells or powers, as well as tools that can make a target vulnerable.

If you need to add proficiencies to the monastic tradition, add an extra 3rd-level feature. Only add what you need to fulfill the fantasy of your concept.

## **AUGMENTATION I FEATURE**

*6th-level [Your Monk Subclass] feature*

An augmentation feature grants the monk some extra layer of tactics above and beyond the normal class. It can do one of the following options:

- Give the monk a new option to spend ki in a way that doesn't expand an existing feature (e.g. Wholeness of Body)
- Grant the monk a new option for its bonus action (e.g. Shadow Step, Searing Arc Strike)
- Expand the monk's damage potential (e.g. One with the Blade)
- A reaction ability (e.g. Topsy Sway)
- Expand the Core Expansion feature (e.g. Physician's Touch)
- Add utility options (e.g. Visage of the Astral Self)

This is a tricky feature to decide, and you'll need to design it alongside the 11th-level feature which does a similar thing. Usually, you want to include a feature that adds something with more breadth that can double as a utility feature, such as the Way of Shadow's Shadow Step feature which enables limited teleporation.

If your Core Expansion feature granted some form of combat or damage enhancement, this feature probably should add to it. If your 3rd-level feature concept includes damage and a rider effect, you should split that feature and offer either the extra damage or the rider effect with this feature.

It is acceptable to offer a boost in damage with this feature, but take note, because this choice will impact your 17th-level feature's design.

In any case, this feature should be something that comes into play frequently.

## **AUGMENTATION II FEATURE**

11th-level [Your Monk Subclass] feature Like the feature at 6th-level, this is another one that augments the monk's or the subclass's kit in some way. The options from the 6th-level feature are all valid for this feature, as well as the following options:

- Grant the monk a defensive option (e.g. Tranquility)
- Expand the monk's combat options, such as adding a new action (e.g. Searing Sunburst, Sharpen the Blade)

Regardless, the features should augment different facets. You don't want to double up on the same kind of augmentation so that your subclass has more breadth in its capacity.

This feature is a great place to double up on defensive and utility effects, such as in the case of Cloak of Shadows. Be cautious of increasing damage with this feature. Don't increase it if the 6th-level feature added damage, and be mindful of any damage granted by the 3rd-level feature.

## **DAMAGE FEATURE**

*17th-level [Your Monk Subclass] feature*

The final feature monks get should offer a substantive boost to its damage capabilities. While it feels constraining to wait this long to boost the monk's damage, this is the way the class is officially built. You are looking for about a 25% boost in the monk's per turn damage while using Flurry of Blows. If you are using the Seamless Form optional feature, the boost is closer to 20%.

The easiest way to add this damage is to attach a damage rider adding two rolls of the Martial Arts die or grant an extra unarmed strike, possibly by enabling use of the reaction to make an attack on a wider array of triggers beyond standard opportunity attacks.

If you boosted the subclass's damage earlier, then you need to constrain the amount this feature adds, or even forgo using this feature to boost the subclass's damage at all. In some cases, you may have built damage scaling into an earlier level feature, removing the need to add more damage. For instance, the Way of Mercy enables its damage boost without expense at 11th level, achieving its damage boost early, freeing the 17th-level feature to grant a recovery option.

If you already hit your subclass's 20% to 25% damage boost, look at adding a utility or efficiency option here.



# APPENDIX A

## WEAPONS

Name	Cost	Damage	Weight Properties
<i>Martial Melee Weapons</i>			
Bladespear	15 gp	1d8 slashing	5 lb. Reach, Two-handed
Light Flail	8 gp	1d6 bludgeoning	1 lb. Finesse
Long Spear	4 gp	1d8 piercing	4 lb. Reach, Two-handed
Parrying Dagger	10 gp	1d6 piercing	1 lb. Finesse, Light, Special
Sickle and Chain	45 gp	1d4 slashing	2 lb. Double (Bludgeoning, Reach), Two-handed
<i>Martial Ranged Weapons</i>			
Shuriken	5 sp	1d4 slashing	1/4 lb. Finesse, Light, Thrown (20/60)

## PROPERTIES

---

A new property is included with the weapons.

**Double.** A weapon with the double property has an alternate method of attack, such as an attached chain or a different head attached to the end of a shaft. When using this alternative option, the weapon gains any property and has its damage type changed as listed in parentheses.

### SPECIAL WEAPONS

Weapons with special rules are described here.

**Parrying Dagger.** When you are missed by a melee weapon, you can take a reaction to attempt to disarm your attacker (as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The parrying dagger counts as a dagger for the purpose of feats and class features.

# UPDATE NOTES

## SEPTEMBER 2023

### MONK OPTIONS

- Corrected Bonus Proficiencies feature to indicate the added weapons are monk weapons. Renamed to Expanded Monk Weapons for clarity of the feature's scope. Triple Staff was removed because after martial weapon damage correction, it become THE weapon to use for monks due to d10 damage die. It's still compatible with the Dedicated Weapon feature if you can get proficiency.
- Added variant for Stunning Strike. It restricts it to once during your turn in exchange for minor force damage on the attempt.
- Seamless Form moved to 13th level and no longer affects Flurry of Blows. It was inflating overall damage and burst damage more than desired. Tier 3 monks still need an overall boost that ideally doesn't impact Way of Mercy and Astral Self.
- Focused Form is a new 11th level feature that allows you to enter a stance to add damage to one attack, but prevents you from using it on the same turn that you add your martial arts die to another attack (to block Mercy and Astral Self from double dipping) or while concentrating (to reign in power manifesters and spellcasters).

### WAY OF THE NINJA

- Shinobi training now allows any simple ranged weapon to count as a monk weapon instead of only darts and shortbows.

### WAY OF THE SHUGENJA

- Renamed to Way of Hermeticism to make it the subclass broader thematically for any magical ascetic, decoupling its flavor from yamabushi. Some feature have been renamed to remove mountain flavor.
- Bonus Proficiency options now include Arcane.
- Mountain's Sigh renamed Hermetic Arts, lost its targeting restriction and now can help maintain concentration.
- Retort reworded to only trigger from attacks by creature and no longer cares if the attack is multitarget.
- Rumbling Rock renamed Divine Rumble and now allows you to replace one of the attacks you make with Flurry of Blade with a cleric cantrip.

### WAY OF THE LONG ROD

- Renamed to Way of Steel Breath.
- Armor-Clad now grants you the thematic pole weapons and lets you treat them as monk weapons.
- Tipping Strikes renamed Warding Strikes.
- Steel Wind function changed to allow a weapon to replace one unarmed strike to attack multiple targets.

### WAY OF WEBS

- Added a reroll 1 or 2 mechanic against grappled targets. Tried advantage, but that clashed with the Grappler feat which this subclass might take.

- Venomous Grip deals less damage, but now also restrains a creature your size or smaller that you grapple.

## APPENDIX

- Added appendix to include other Therin Creative content referenced in Expanded Monk so users aren't compelled to buy a second supplement to access intended content.
- Sickle and Chain special property replaced with a distinct one so that it is compatible with monk features.

## 3, JULY 2023

### WAY OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS

- Rasp moved to 6th level, Flowing Strike moved to 17th level to align the optional features with the core subclass archetype, so most damage bonuses are moving to 17th if not already. Some cases get Way of Mercy/Kensei treatment and see bonus damage earlier, but Four Elements can do a lot better with 3 or more targets per spell.
- Flowing Strike damage boosted as appropriate for the monk tier increase.
- Ki Siphon replaced with Elemental Dissipation, a defensive option that is similar to the *absorb elements* spell.

### WAY OF THE NINJA

- Ninja Arts that duplicate spells are now functionally subtle spells for ease of language. Any language making them act as powers or not spells just got lengthy for the sake of semantics, so I cut that.
- Quickened Dash renamed Vanishing Act to better match the effect.
- Shrike's Guile now allows you to make opportunity attacks with thrown weapons with a limit of 20 feet. It still allows subbing a thrown weapon for an unarmed strike since this is a tactical boon, not a damage boon.

### WAY OF THE SHUGENJA

- Mountain's Sigh no longer allows Flurry of Blows to prevent the subclass from overperforming with the optional Seamless Form feature.

## GENERAL

- Inner Core now simply gives a reserve of 5 ki points.
- Seamless Form now allows you to use your Martial Arts feature's extra attack or Ki-fueled attack as part of the same bonus action when you spend ki on a monk feature that uses ki.
- Perfect Self (Variant) grants 4 ki when less than 4 on initiative. Monk no longer feels diminishing returns for having 1 to 3 points.
- Way of the Long Rod is a new subclass that focuses on weaponry and can wear light and medium armor.
- Way of Webs is a new subclass that focuses on deception, grappling, and mobility.