

## CHARACTER CREATION

Before you can enter the exciting world of **Dragon Fist**, you must first create a persona, known as your “player character” or PC. This is your alter ego in the world of Tianguo, and through him or her you’ll have adventures and explore the world, so be sure to come up with a character who appeals to you and who will be fun to play.

**Dragon Fist** uses a class- and level-based system. Each character belongs to a “class,” such as fighter or wizard, that defines his or her abilities and what he or she is good at. The character is then rated by “level,” a measure of experience. A character of level 1 is a neophyte, while one of level 10 is a master. Traditional AD&D games have characters start at 1st level, but in **Dragon Fist** you begin the game as a skilled and worthy martial artist of 3rd level. You play a member of one of the secret societies that are fighting to overthrow the emperor. Collectively, these secret societies are known as the World of Martial Arts. Your character is already far more dangerous than the average citizen in Tianguo. The road ahead is a hard one, however, and you will need much more powerful kung fu before you can challenge the emperor himself.

## Dragon Fist Characters

Below is a step-by-step guide to character creation. Simply follow along, paying close attention to the examples, and you’ll be fighting the good fight before you know it. To save space, these rules often say “you” to describe a character’s actions—though of course, you aren’t the powerful martial artist!

### Step One: Concept

Give some thought to the kind of character you want to play. You needn’t come up with an entire character history at this point, just some broad strokes to get you started. Start with a basic concept, such as “kung fu killer” or “flashy wizard.” Once you have a general idea, the rest of the process will help you define your character.

*Example: I’ve decided to play in a game of Dragon Fist and sit down to make a character. After giving some thought to what kind of person I want to play, I decide on a hotheaded spellcaster, someone whose parents were killed by an evil eunuch and who was brought up by a mysterious old man in the woods.*

### Step Two: Roll Ability Scores

Each character has six basic ability scores: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. These are numbers that range from 3 to 18 and define your character’s strengths and weaknesses. A score of 3 is pathetically bad, 10 is human average, and 18 is incredibly good.

**Strength** is a measure of raw physical might.

**Dexterity** describes agility, quickness, and coordination.

**Constitution** is a measure of endurance and fortitude.

**Intelligence** represents learned knowledge, education, and general smarts.

**Wisdom** represents intuition and strength of will.

**Charisma** is a composite of appearance, force of personality, and ability to lead others.

To generate ability scores, roll four six-sided dice (4d6), drop the lowest number rolled, and add up the rest. Repeat five more times. Once you have these six totals, assign each of them to one of the abilities.

You should consider the different character classes first (see the “An Overview of Classes” sidebar), since ability scores have a big effect on what your character can do. The classes are described in more detail in the following section. Each character class has a different primary attribute, the most important ability for that class. Each also has two secondary attributes that are useful, but not of crucial importance, and three tertiary attributes that are occasionally

important. You usually want to have your highest score in the primary attribute, your next highest in the secondary attributes, and your lower scores in the tertiary attributes.

**Example:** I roll 4d6 six times, dropping the lowest die each time. I end up with the following totals: 17, 16, 14, 11, 11, 9. I've already decided I want to be a wizard, and after checking out the wizard class, I assign the numbers to ability scores as follows: Strength 11, Intelligence 17, Wisdom 9, Dexterity 14, Constitution 16, and Charisma 11.

## Step Three: Determine Ability Score Bonuses

Characters in Dragon Fist can take extraordinary actions, as befits martial arts heroes. These are discussed further in step eight. Each ability score is linked to a bonus number, which you need to determine now and record on your character sheet. The following table sets out the appropriate bonuses for given ability scores. Note that scores less than 11 provide no bonus.

**TABLE 2-1: ABILITY SCORE BONUSES**

Ability Score	Bonus
11–13	1d3–1*
14–15	1d3
16–17	1d4
18	1d6
19**	1d8
20**	1d10
21**	1d12

\* A “d3” is a 3-sided die roll, generally made by rolling 1d6, dividing the number by two, and rounding up. 1d3–1 means you subtract 1 from the total rolled on 1d3.

\*\* These scores are provided for reference only. Starting characters cannot have scores higher than 18, though opponents and dangerous monsters may well possess them.

**Example:** Consulting the table above, I determine my wizard character's ability score bonuses: 1d3–1 in Strength and Charisma, 1d3 in Dexterity, and 1d4 in Intelligence and Constitution. My character's Wisdom of 9 is too low to gain a bonus.

## Step Four: Select a Class

You must now select a class, which represents your character's occupation, pursuit, or role in society. You probably gave this some thought before assigning ability scores, but if not, now is the time to pick one of the four character classes: fighter, wizard, shaman, or thief.

## Step Five: Select a Kit

“Kits” are specialized roles within the classes that further define your character. In **Dragon Fist**, each kit outlines a member of a secret society in Tianguo trying to overthrow the emperor. There are nine secret societies to choose from, and each favors different types of characters: the Righteous Fists, Red Tigers, and Heavenly Gates all embrace fighters; the Dragon's Breath and Great Immortals are wizardly societies; the White Lotus and Black Lotus are shaman organizations; and thieves belong to the Iron Monkeys or Ghost Eaters.

Descriptions of each kit appear below in the “Kits” section and describe your character's secret society as well as what skills and abilities he or she starts the game with. These includes things like martial arts and weapon or spell use, which you should note on the character sheet. (These are explained more fully in Chapter 3: Martial Arts and Combat.)

**Example:** I look over the two kits for wizards, the Dragon's Breath and the Great Immortals. The Dragon's Breath are concerned with harmony, whereas the Great Immortals are primarily interested in power and immortality. The latter goals seem more in line with my character concept, so I opt for being a Great Immortal. I note my special abilities and record martial arts maneuvers: Iron Palm, Might of the Tiger, and Wuxia.

## An Overview of Classes

There are four basic character classes.

### Fighter

Fighters are experts in combat, especially the martial arts.

**Primary:** Strength

**Secondary:** Constitution, Dexterity

**Tertiary:** Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma

### Wizard

Wizards are masters of magic with many spells at their command.

**Primary:** Intelligence

**Secondary:** Dexterity, Constitution

**Tertiary:** Strength, Wisdom, Charisma

### Shaman

A shaman is a religious figure who gains power from spirits or demons.

**Primary:** Wisdom

**Secondary:** Strength, Charisma

**Tertiary:** Intelligence, Dexterity, Constitution

### Thief

Thieves are expert at stealth, intrigue, and trickery.

**Primary:** Dexterity

**Secondary:** Strength and Charisma

**Tertiary:** Intelligence, Wisdom, and

*Yin and Yang*

Yin and yang are two opposed yet complementary powers that are the fundamental principles of creation in Tianguo. Before Heaven and Earth, there were yin and yang; it was their interaction that created everything that is. Some hold the mistaken view that yin is darkness and evil while yang is light and good. Nothing could be further from the truth. While yin and yang are opposed, neither could exist without the other. The natural state is one of balance between the two forces, and even yin has a small amount of yang in it (and vice versa).

Yin is the female and reactive power, associated with Earth, cold, darkness, and the even numbers. Yang is the male and active power, associated with Heaven, fire, light, and the odd numbers. The agents of Yin and Yang are the Five Elements: earth, fire, water, wood, and metal. The elements are the building blocks of the universe, and thus everything is made up of both yin and yang. While some spurn the Path of Harmony, even they cannot deny the central importance of the yin/yang duality in the Heavenly Kingdom. It informs nearly every aspect of life in Tianguo and offers the key to understanding the universe itself.

*Step Six: Select an Alignment*

The people of Tianguo tend to look at things through the prism of yin and yang and often break things down into opposing pairs. When talking about morality, they look at the dualities of law/chaos and good/evil. Balance between the forces, often associated with chi, is known as neutrality. Alignments represent cornerstones of your character's worldview, and there are nine possible choices: lawful good, neutral good, chaotic good, lawful neutral, true neutral, chaotic neutral, lawful evil, neutral evil, or chaotic evil.

A person's place on the moral compass is determined by a combination of attributes from both dualities (law and chaos, good and evil) and neutrality. Each alignment is unique, sometimes demonstrated in broad, obvious ways, and sometimes subtly.

**Lawful Good:** Characters of this alignment believe that an orderly, strong society with a well-organized government can work to make life better for the majority of the people. To ensure the highest quality of life, laws must be created and obeyed. When people respect the laws and try to help one another, society as a whole prospers. Therefore, lawful good characters strive for those things that will bring the greatest benefit to the most people and cause the least harm. An honest and hard-working peasant, a kindly and wise official, and a stern but fair judge are all examples of lawful good people.

**Lawful Neutral:** Law and organization are of paramount importance to characters of this alignment. They believe in a strong, well-ordered government, whether it be a brutal tyranny or benevolent democracy. The benefits of organization and regimentation outweigh any moral questions. An official determined to ferret out traitors at any cost or a soldier who never questions orders is a good example of a lawful neutral character.

**Lawful Evil:** These characters believe in using society and its laws to benefit themselves. To them, structure and organization elevate those who deserve to rule and provide a clearly defined hierarchy between master and servant. Thus lawful evil characters support systems that protect their own concerns; if someone else suffers because of that, too bad. Such people obey laws out of fear of punishment rather than any higher moral code. Because they may be forced to honor an unfavorable contract or oath, lawful evil characters are usually very careful about giving their word. Once it is given, though, they break their word only if they can find a way to do so legally. An iron-fisted tyrant and a devious, greedy merchant are examples of lawful evil people.

**Neutral Good:** These characters believe that a balance of forces is important, but that the concerns of law and chaos do not moderate the need for good. Since the universe is vast and contains many creatures striving for different goals, a determined pursuit of good will not upset the balance; it may even maintain it. Social structure itself has no innate value. If fostering good means supporting organized society, then that is what must be done. If good can come about only through overthrowing the existing social order, so be it. A soldier who defies a commander's orders, so as to destroy something he or she sees as evil, is an example of a neutral good character.

**True Neutral:** Such characters believe in the ultimate balance of forces, and they refuse to see actions as either good or evil. They do their best to avoid siding with the forces of either good or evil, law or chaos. It is their duty to see that all of these forces remain in balanced contention and thus may find themselves forced into peculiar alliances. They are compelled to support the underdog in any given situation, sometimes even changing sides to maintain the balance as the previous loser becomes ascendant. A true neutral character might join the local militia to put down a gang of bandits, only to drop out or join the former enemy's forces once they brought to the brink of destruction. Since the majority of people in the world make judgments, true neutral characters are extremely rare.

**Neutral Evil:** Neutral evil characters are primarily concerned with themselves and their own advancement. If there is a quick and easy way to gain a profit, whether it be legal, questionable, or obviously illegal, they take advantage of it. Those of a neutral evil alignment have no particular objection to working with others or, for that matter, going it alone. They typically base their allegiance on power and money, which makes them receptive to bribes. Although

they do not have the every-man-for-himself attitude of chaotic characters, they have no qualms about betraying their friends and companions for personal gain. An unscrupulous mercenary, a common thief, and a double-crossing informer who betrays people to the authorities are typical examples of neutral evil characters.

**Chaotic Good:** Chaotic good characters are strong individualists marked by a streak of kindness and benevolence. They believe in all the virtues of goodness and right, but they have little use for laws and regulations. They have no patience with people who “try to push folk around and tell them what to do.” Their actions are guided by their own moral compass, which although good, may not always be in agreement with the rest of society. A wandering monk who helps those in need is an example of a chaotic good character.

**Chaotic Neutral:** Chaotic neutral characters believe that there is no order to anything, including their own actions. With this as a “guiding principle,” they follow whatever whim strikes them at the moment: Good and evil are irrelevant when making a decision. Chaotic neutral characters are extremely difficult to deal with; the only reliable thing about them is that they cannot be relied upon! Such people might cheerfully and for no apparent purpose gamble away everything they have on the roll of a single die. This alignment is perhaps the most difficult to play. Lunatics and crackpots tend toward chaotic neutral behavior.

**Chaotic Evil:** These characters are the bane of all that is good and organized, motivated solely by the desire for personal gain and pleasure. Chaotic evil characters see absolutely nothing wrong with taking whatever they want by whatever means possible. To them, laws and governments are tools of weaklings unable to fend for themselves. The strong should take what they want; the weak are to be exploited. When chaotic evil characters band together, they are not motivated by a desire to cooperate, but rather to oppose powerful enemies who threaten their personal interests. Such a group can be held together only by a strong leader capable of bullying underlings into obedience. Leadership of this sort is based on raw power, so a leader is likely to be replaced at the first sign of weakness by anyone who can grab the position—whatever the method. Bloodthirsty bandits and brutish monsters of low Intelligence are fine examples of chaotic evil personalities.

**Nonaligned Creatures:** Some things, particularly wild animals and unintelligent creatures like killer plants, never bother with moral and ethical concerns. A dog, even a well-trained one, is neither good nor evil, lawful nor chaotic. It is just a dog. For such creatures, alignment is simply not applicable—they follow instinct. Thus they have a default alignment of neutral.

*Example: Having decided on class and kit, I choose the chaotic good alignment. This expresses my character's generally good nature and independence.*

### *Step Seven: Record Saving Throws, Armor Class, and Combat Bonuses*

Now it's time for a bit of bookkeeping. First come saving throws, which represent a character's ability to avoid harm from various game hazards. Your character's class determines his or her starting saving throws, which are set out in Table 3-1 in Chapter 3: Martial Arts and Combat. Armor Class (AC) measures the character's ability to dodge blows in combat and is based on martial arts skills; the higher the AC, the harder you are to hit. You can find this information in the kit descriptions below. Combat bonuses reflect fighting skills and are also based on class. Fighters get +2 to hit (score a successful attack on an opponent), while shamans and thieves get +1. There's a space on the character sheet to record these bonuses.

**Note:** If you're a seasoned AD&D player, be aware that in Dragon Fist Strength bonuses don't automatically add to your hit chance and damage, and Dexterity bonuses don't automatically add to AC. Instead, you achieve those effects by performing stunts. See Chapter 3: Martial Arts and Combat for more information on how stunts work.

*Example: I have a few things to look up. First, I find and record my saving throws from Table 3-1: 14, 11, 13, 15, and 12. Then I see if I any of the martial arts maneuvers from my*

kit give me a better Armor Class. Unfortunately, they do not, so my character's starting AC is 10. As a wizard, I also get no combat bonuses (since my strength is magic, not weaponry).

## Step Eight: Record Stunt Bonuses

In Dragon Fist, most actions you take revolve around stunts, which allow you to perform in especially dramatic ways. There are six kinds of stunts, each based on one ability score; your initial stunt bonuses are equal to the ability score bonuses you recorded in step three. (For example, your starting Acrobatics stunt bonus is equal to your Dexterity bonus.) Thus, the stunt bonus related to your primary attribute is of particular importance. The six types of stunts are set out below.

**TABLE 2-2: STUNTS**

Stunt Type	Ability
Might	Strength
Acrobatics	Dexterity
Fortitude	Constitution
Savvy	Intelligence
Insight	Wisdom
Charm	Charisma

Stunt bonuses increase by “die type” as the character increases in experience: 1d3 becomes 1d4, 1d4 becomes 1d6, and so on. Each time the character gains a level, one stunt bonus improves (Chapter 5: Experience and Magic Items describes this more fully). Since characters in Dragon Fist begin at 3rd level, you get to increase the stunt bonus for one of your character's primary attribute and one of the secondary ones.

**Example:** My wizard's basic stunt bonuses are identical to the character's ability score bonuses, so I have Might and Charm bonuses of 1d3–1, an Acrobatics bonus of 1d3, and Savvy and Fortitude bonuses of 1d4. I can increase two stunt bonuses by one die type each. My character's primary attribute is Intelligence, so I increase my Savvy stunt bonus from 1d4 to the next die type, 1d6. Since my secondary attributes are Dexterity and Constitution, and I'd like to be good at dodging incoming blows, I choose to raise the Acrobatics bonus from 1d3 to 1d4. My final stunt bonuses are: Might 1d3–1, Acrobatics 1d4, Fortitude 1d4, Savvy 1d6, and Charm 1d3–1.

## Step Nine: Roll Hit Points

Hit points represent how much damage your character can sustain before he or she dies. For each level your character has advanced, roll one Hit Die of the appropriate type, depending on his or her class. Since characters in Dragon Fist start at 3rd level, you roll three dice and add the results.

**TABLE 2-3: HIT DICE BY CLASS**

Character Class	Die Type
Fighter	1d12
Wizard	1d6
Shaman	1d10
Thief	1d8

In addition, a high Constitution score provides bonus hit points, representing the character's increased toughness. Make a Fortitude stunt once for each level to receive bonus hit points equal to the result. So if your Constitution were 15, you'd roll an additional 1d3 per level (your Fortitude stunt bonus) and add the results to your hit point total.

**Example:** Since my character is a 3rd-level wizard, I roll 3d6 to determine starting hit points. I roll 1, 2, and 1 for a total of 4—a really lousy result. I curse my fate, but then remember that I get bonus hit points each level by making Fortitude stunts. Luckily, my



Fortitude stunt bonus is 1d4, so I roll an additional 3d4 (one per level) and get 3, 4, and 3. I sigh with relief: That gives me 10 bonus hit points to add to the initial 4, so I end up with a total of 14. This still isn't great, but I'm counting on magic to keep out of harm's way.

### Step Ten: Record Equipment

Your character needs some basic supplies to make his or her way in Tianguo, such as clothing, weapons, and food. It is assumed that all characters have basic clothing and traveling gear (packs, food, and so forth). Each kit includes a starting package of additional equipment that the character gets for free, as well as an amount of funds (recorded in tael, the basic coinage of Tianguo) with which to purchase additional supplies if desired. See Table 2-21 for a list of standard equipment. Note, however, that in Dragon Fist player characters generally do not use armor (which interferes with martial arts).

## Character Classes

### Fighter

Hong Kong movies are full of fighters, especially martial arts heroes such as Wong Fei Hong and Fong Sai Yuk. A fighter focuses primarily on developing martial skills, though he or she may well be skilled in other areas (Wong Fei Hong, for instance, was a doctor and teacher). The primary attribute of the fighter is Strength, to wield weapons and deliver crushing damage. Secondary attributes are Dexterity and Constitution, which provide agility and staying power, respectively.

Other classes may fight, but none do it as well as the fighter. To represent this class's skill and training, a fighter receives a +2 bonus to hit an opponent in combat and can use any weapon. Additionally, fighters are allowed to specialize in one weapon with which they are particularly skilled. With that weapon only, they receive an additional +1 to hit and +2 damage, and can attack more frequently than normal. Alternatively, fighters may specialize in martial arts rather than a particular weapon, for which they receive the same benefits.

Fighters cannot cast magical spells, nor can they wear armor while using martial arts. They can, however, use many magic items, including potions, most rings, and enchanted weaponry. Fighters in Dragon Fist are particularly adept at the martial arts. Starting characters, being 3rd level, begin with five martial arts maneuvers. They gain additional and more effective maneuvers at each level, as summarized in Table 2-4 below.

TABLE 2-4: FIGHTER MARTIAL ARTS MANEUVERS

Fighter Level	Rank				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	1				
2	2	1			
3*	3	2			
4	4	2	1		
5	4	3	2		
6	5	3	2	1	
7	5	3	3	2	
8	5	4	3	2	1
9	6	4	3	2	2
10	7	5	4	3	3

\* Default starting level.

Fighters also gain the skill to make more than one melee attack per combat round (discussed further in Chapter 3: Martial Arts and Combat) as they rise in level, unlike other character classes. Table 2-5 shows the basic number of melee attacks allowed per level; fighters using their specialty weapon use Table 2-6 instead.

### A Note on Character Race

Veteran AD&D players will notice that there are no nonhuman races available to player characters. This is intentional. The elves and dwarves of fantasy literature are based on European mythology and folklore, while **Dragon Fist** takes its cues from China, which has no such tradition. To better reflect both Chinese culture and wuxia films, all PCs in **Dragon Fist** are human.

If you like the idea of kung fu elves, however, adding nonhuman races to **Dragon Fist** is easy. Simply use the rules for dwarves, elves, gnomes, and halflings in the **AD&D Player's Handbook**. All of their abilities are fully compatible with this system.

### Reading Character Progression Tables

The "Character Classes" section contains a number of tables setting out how the character improves with level. Characters earn experience points for successfully completing adventures and achieving goals, and as they do so they advance in level. These are set out in tables for each class. (For more on experience, see Chapter 5: Experience and Magic Items.)

All character classes have access to martial arts maneuvers, summarized in tables, and wizards and shamans use spell progression tables to determine their increasing magical ability. Both types tell you how many maneuvers or spells the character has access to at each level. Note that these are the total available, not the number of new ones at that level. For example, a 3rd-level thief has four martial arts maneuvers of rank 1 and one of rank 2. (Rank measures the difficulty of a maneuver, with 1 being the easiest and 5 being the most demanding.) On reaching 4th level, the character now has four maneuvers of rank 1 and two of rank 2; that is, he or she learns one new rank 2 maneuver, not six entirely new ones.

TABLE 2-5: FIGHTER MELEE ATTACKS PER ROUND

Fighter Level	Attacks/Round
1–6	1
7–11	3/2
12 +	2

TABLE 2-6: SPECIALIST ATTACKS PER ROUND

Fighter Level	Melee Weapon	X-bow	Light X-bow	Heavy Dagger	Thrown Dart	Other Thrown (Nonbow) Missiles
1–6	3/2	1/1	1/2	3/1	4/1	3/2
7–11	2/1	3/2	1/1	4/1	5/1	2/1
12+	5/2	2/1	3/2	5/1	6/1	5/2

All fighters use Table 2-7 to determine their level advancement as they gain experience, adding 1d12 hit points per level up to 10th. At 10th level, a fighter becomes a Master of Martial Arts.

TABLE 2-7: FIGHTER EXPERIENCE LEVELS

Fighter Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice (d12)
1	0	1
2	2,000	2
3*	4,000	3
4	8,000	4
5	16,000	5
6	32,000	6
7	64,000	7
8	125,000	8
9	250,000	9
10	500,000	10

\* Default starting level.



FIGHTER WIELDING A NINE-RING BROADSWORD

## Wizard

Wizards are spellcasting masters of the arcane arts. Characters such as Lo Pan from *Big Trouble in Little China* and Swordsman Yen from *A Chinese Ghost Story* are good examples of Chinese-style wizards. While often cryptic and possessed of strange habits, wizards can attain power undreamed of by most mortals. A wizard's primary attribute is Intelligence, governing the character's ability to learn and cast spells. The secondary attributes are Constitution and Dexterity, which help the wizard survive various hazards and avoid being struck in combat.

A wizard can never wear armor, since it hinders both magic and martial arts. However, he or she can use more magical items than any other class. These include potions, rings, wands, rods, scrolls, some weapons, and most miscellaneous magic.

Wizards in Dragon Fist learn a simple martial arts style, best suited to self-defense. They normally begin play with three martial arts maneuvers and gain more slowly as they rise in level, as set out in Table 2-8 below. They are not skilled in hand-to-hand combat but can use the following simple weapons: light or repeating crossbow, dagger, staff, three-section staff, and war fan.

TABLE 2-8: WIZARD MARTIAL ARTS MANEUVERS

Wizard Level	Rank				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	1				
2	2				
3*	2	1			
4	2	2			
5	2	2	1		
6	3	2	1		
7	3	2	1	1	
8	3	2	2	1	
9	3	2	2	1	1
10	4	3	3	2	2

\* Default starting level.

The true strength of the wizard lies in magic. He or she gains magical spells with increasing level, as set out in Table 2-9. A typical starting character of 3rd level can cast three spells per day. For more information on spells and spellcasting, see Chapter 4: Magic.

TABLE 2-9: WIZARD SPELL PROGRESSION

Wizard Level	Spell Level				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	1				
2	2				
3*	2	1			
4	3	2			
5	4	2	1		
6	4	2	2		
7	4	3	2	1	
8	4	3	3	2	
9	4	3	3	2	1
10	4	4	3	2	2

\* Default starting level.

All wizards use Table 2-10 to determine their level advancement as they gain experience, adding 1d6 hit points per level up to 10th. At 10th level, a wizard becomes a Master of Magic.

TABLE 2-10: WIZARD EXPERIENCE LEVELS

Wizard Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice (d6)
1	0	1
2	2,500	2
3*	5,000	3
4	10,000	4
5	20,000	5
6	40,000	6
7	60,000	7
8	90,000	8
9	135,000	9
10	250,000	10

\* Default starting level.



### Shaman

A shaman is a religious figure who acts as an intermediary between the mortal world and the spirit realm, communicating with ancestor spirits, gods, and sometimes even demons. In return for sacrifices and occasional service, the shaman gains the favor of patron spirits who usually bestow spells and other special abilities as a reward. The “One Eyebrow Priest” from *Mr. Vampire* is a good example of this kind of character. The primary attribute of the shaman is



Wisdom, with which he or she negotiates with spirits and contemplates the ways of magic. The secondary attributes are Strength and Charisma; Strength is important to combat, in which shamans often engage, and Charisma lends force of personality, always important in dealing with the supernatural.

Shamans in *Tianguo* must often fight to protect themselves, their families, and areas important to their patron spirits. They receive a +1 to hit in combat and can use the following weapons: bow, dagger, halberd, sickle, single-edged sword, spear, staff, tiger fork, and war fan.

Like other characters in *Dragon Fist*, shamans cannot wear armor while using martial arts. However, they can use a good selection of magic items, including scrolls, most potions and rings, some wands and rods, staves, and appropriate enchanted weaponry. Shamans normally begin play with four martial arts maneuvers and gain more as they rise in level, as set out in Table 2-11 below.

TABLE 2-11: SHAMAN MARTIAL ARTS MANEUVERS

Shaman Level	Rank				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	1				
2	2	1			
3*	2	2			
4	3	2	1		
5	3	3	1		
6	3	3	2	1	
7	4	3	2	1	
8	4	4	2	1	1
9	4	4	2	2	1
10	5	5	3	3	2

\* Default starting level.

A shaman begins the game with the patronage of an ancestor spirit, a ghostly predecessor who has remained in the mortal world to help his or her descendants. Unlike other spirits, the ancestor is predisposed to help the shaman and will usually do everything in his or her power to protect family members.

Beginning shamans usually start with three spells, plus any bonus spells for Wisdom (see below) and gain more as they advance in level, as detailed in Table 2-12. The ancestor spirit, however, can provide only spells of 1st and 2nd level. Higher-level spells must be gained by winning the patronage of more powerful entities. For more information, see the shaman kits below. A shaman gains bonus spells depending on his or her Wisdom. At the beginning of each day, the shaman makes an Insight stunt; the result of the die roll is the number of bonus spells gained that day. A shaman cannot select bonus spells of a given level above 1st unless he or she has chosen at least two spells from each lower level. For example, a 6th-level shaman with five bonus spells must take at least two spells each of 1st and 2nd level before choosing a 3rd-level spell.

TABLE 2-12: SHAMAN SPELL PROGRESSION

Shaman Level	Spell Level				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	1				
2	2				
3*	2	1			
4	3	2			
5	3	3	1		
6	3	3	2		
7	3	3	2	1	
8	3	3	3	2	
9	4	4	3	2	1
10	4	4	3	3	2

\* Default starting level

All shamans use Table 2-13 to determine their level advancement as they gain experience, adding 1d10 hit points per level up to 10th. At 10th level a shaman becomes a Master of Spirits.

TABLE 2-13: SHAMAN EXPERIENCE LEVELS

Shaman Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice (d10)
1	0	1
2	1,500	2
3*	3,000	3
4	6,000	4
5	13,000	5
6	27,500	6
7	55,000	7
8	110,000	8
9	225,000	9
10	450,000	10

\* Default starting level.

## Thief

Every culture has its rogues, and Tianguo is no exception. Thieves live by flouting the law and going their own way. Some adhere to a code of ethics (only stealing from the corrupt, for instance), while others do anything to enrich themselves. The characters of Jade from *Dragon Gate Inn* and the Notorious Mother and Daughter from *New Legend of Shaolin* are fine examples of thieves appropriate to Tianguo. The primary attribute of the thief is Dexterity, needed for fine manipulation, while the secondary attributes of Charisma and Strength are useful for trickery and such physical feats as climbing or escaping bonds.

Thieves can't wear armor because it interferes with their special skills and prevents the use of martial arts. They can use many magic items, including potions, most rings and miscellaneous items, and enchanted weaponry.

Although thieves prefer skullduggery, they are often forced to fight. A thief receives a +1 to hit in combat and can use the following weapons: butterfly sword, dagger, double-stick, horse bow, light or repeating crossbow, monk's stick, sickle, single- or double-edged sword, staff, throwing spikes, war fan, and whipping chain. A beginning thief character has five martial arts maneuvers and gains more as he or she rises in level, as set out in Table 2-14 below.

TABLE 2-14: THIEF MARTIAL ARTS MANEUVERS

Thief Level	Rank				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	2				
2	3				
3*	4	1			
4	4	2			
5	4	3	1		
6	4	3	2		
7	4	3	3	1	
8	4	3	3	2	
9	4	3	3	3	1
10	5	4	4	4	2

\* Default starting level.

A thief learns a variety of specialized skills, such as picking pockets and moving silently. These are summarized below, although not every ability is necessarily available; see the thief kits in the following section for details. Attempting to use a thieving skill requires a percentile dice roll. If the roll is equal to or less than the listed value, the attempt succeeds. The base score for each ability is listed in Table 2-15. These scores can be improved by adding discretionary skill points, which represent training and practice. The thief kits explain how many discretionary points you gain per level.

Thieves can also use stunts to increase their chance of success at a skill. By making an appropriate stunt die roll in the same round the ability is used, the thief gets a bonus equal to five times the result of the stunt die. The relevant stunts for each ability are listed in the table. For example, a thief with a 25% Bribe chance makes a Charm stunt and rolls a 3. The thief gets a bonus of 15% ( $5 \times 3$ ), increasing the chance of success to a respectable 40%.

TABLE 2-15: THIEVING SKILLS

Skill Name	Beginning Score (%)	Stunt Type
Bribe	15	Charm
Climb Walls	70	Acrobatics
Detect Noise	15	Savvy
Detect Undead	10	Insight
Disguise	20	Charm
Escape Bonds	15	Might or Acrobatics
Find and Remove Traps	5	Savvy (find), Acrobatics (remove)
Hide in Shadows	10	Acrobatics
Move Silently	20	Acrobatics
Open Locks	10	Acrobatics
Pick Pockets	20	Acrobatics
Tracking	25	Savvy

**Bribe:** A thief can bribe an official with gifts of money or merchandise. Only one attempt can be made per target. If it fails, the DM determines how the target reacts.

**Climb Walls:** All characters can climb to some degree, but nimble thieves are able to scale steep surfaces without tools, ropes, or gear of any sort. Even sheer cliffs or smooth walls can be climbed in this way, though the DM may assign negative modifiers for very difficult surfaces.

**Detect Noise:** Good thieves hear sounds others might miss. Using this skill requires that those around the thief keep silent for 1 round (about a minute).

**Detect Undead:** Thieves have an uncanny danger sense and can detect undead creatures up to 60 feet away by concentrating. Each use takes 1 round.

**Disguise:** A skilled disguise artist can impersonate anyone of about the same height, weight, and age, such as a peasant, merchant, or other harmless character. Attempts to pose as a member of the opposite sex are trickier and get half the normal chance of success. This skill can also be used to impersonate a particular individual, but this requires observing the target for a month; otherwise, the chance of success is halved.

**Escape Bonds:** This is the ability to break free from constraints such as ropes, leather thongs, chains, and manacles. The thief must make a separate roll to break each binding. This ability takes 5 rounds to use.

**Find and Remove Traps:** A dexterous thief can both detect and disable mechanical traps of all kinds. Separate rolls are normally required to first find and then remove a device, and each attempt takes 1d10 rounds. Searching for traps is an active process and can be attempted for a given item or area only once per level of experience. Failure causes the trap to be sprung (usually bad news for all concerned!).

**Hide in Shadows:** This skill allows the thief to blend in with the shadows or hide in other types of cover (trees, gullies, and so on). It often goes hand in hand with Move Silently (see below) to creep past guards and other sentinels. The DM, rather than the player, rolls the dice, since the thief always thinks he or she is hidden.

**Move Silently:** The thief can quietly sneak up on or past someone, though at one-third the normal movement rate. The DM, rather than the player, rolls the dice, since the thief always thinks he or she is silent.

**Open Locks:** Many thieves make a living with their skill at picking the locks on doors or chests. Only one attempt to pick a particular lock can be made per experience level. Each attempt takes 1d10 rounds.

**Pick Pockets:** Thieves also rely on being able to quietly take small objects from an unsuspecting victim. This ability can also be used to plant or palm items, and to perform simple sleight-of-hand.

**Tracking:** This is the ability to follow the trail of creatures and humans across most types of terrain. Further checks can be made to learn additional information, such as how old the tracks are and how many individuals are in the group. The base chance can be modified at the DM's discretion to reflect favorable conditions (such as mud or snow, which reveal prints) or unfavorable conditions (such as heavy rain or rocky terrain). In general, such modifiers should not be greater than 20%.

Thieves are also masters of surprise. Whenever they are able to strike from behind and undetected, the attack roll is made at +4. In addition, the damage of the attack is multiplied depending on the thief's level. Both bonuses apply only to a single attack. The damage multiplier of a successful backstab is listed in Table 2-16.

**TABLE 2-16: BACKSTAB DAMAGE MULTIPLIERS**

Thief Level	Damage Multiplier
1–4	× 2
5–8	× 3
9–10	× 4

All thieves use Table 2-17 to determine their level advancement as they gain experience, adding 1d8 hit points per level up to 10th. At 10th level, a thief becomes a Master of Trickery.

TABLE 2-17: THIEF EXPERIENCE LEVELS

Thief Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice (d8)
1	0	1
2	1,250	2
3*	2,500	3
4	5,000	4
5	10,000	5
6	20,000	6
7	40,000	7
8	70,000	8
9	110,000	9
10	160,000	10

\* Default starting level.

## Character Kits

All **Dragon Fist** characters must select a kit; they are not optional. Each represents a secret society in Tianguo to which the character belongs, and membership provides certain benefits and hindrances. There are nine kits that players can choose from. Each kit description has the following entries:

**Description:** This section relates the history and purpose of the secret society. Although every group has its iconoclasts, it's best if the aims of your character are in synch with those of the society.

**Organization:** This briefly outlines how the society is organized, with details such as who's in charge and how things are run.

**Benefits:** Each kit provides some unique benefits, reflecting the strengths and traditions of that society, summarized in this entry.

**Hindrances:** There's always bad with the good. Membership in a secret society carries a price, and the downsides of membership are listed here.

**Starting Equipment:** A starting character receives all listed equipment for free. This represents the character's own resources and those of the society.

## Fighter Kits

### The Righteous Fists

**Description:** The origins of the Righteous Fists stretch back to an order of monks known as the Jade Brotherhood, who flourished during the golden days of the Three Legendary Emperors. During that time of peace, the Brotherhood retreated from the world to contemplate nature. In this investigation of the natural world the monks studied the movement of animals, which in turn lead to the creation of animal styles of martial arts. The Jade Brotherhood became known for their mastery of unarmed fighting, and many students flocked to their monasteries.

During the Seven Kingdoms era, the monks became more involved with politics. Some lent their strength to fight their king's enemies, but by and large the order remained united despite having monasteries in each of the warring kingdoms. When Shangwei reunited Tianguo, the Jade Brotherhood backed him and helped add legitimacy to his reign; once the empire was secure, the monks again retreated to their monasteries.

When Emperor Jianmin began his reign of terror, the Brotherhood became increasingly involved in the affairs of the world. They spoke out when taxes stripped the villages of food and conscription filled the army with peasant levies. Before long Jianmin decided to rid himself



of the meddlesome monks; in a series of devastating surprise assaults, the emperor's army attacked and destroyed all known Jade Brotherhood monasteries. Many of the monks were killed, and priceless stores of knowledge were burned by marauding troops.

What even the emperor didn't know, however, was that the Jade Brotherhood had a hidden mountain monastery. Those of the Brotherhood who survived made their way there and held a great council. The survivors decided to reconstitute themselves as a secret society dedicated to the overthrow of the corrupt ruler. Only when Jianmin was killed and a righteous emperor placed on the throne would Heaven once again smile on the empire. Thus were the Righteous Fists born.

**Organization:** The Righteous Fists are led by Grandmaster Fei Gan [FEE GUN]. Fei and a select group of masters run the society from the safety of the Jade Mountain Monastery, the hidden center of the organization. The monastery and the surrounding countryside are heavily guarded to prevent discovery by the army. Couriers travel only by night, bringing the orders of Fei Gan to other masters dispersed around Tianguo.

**Requirements:** To become a Righteous Fist, a character must have a minimum Strength and Wisdom of 9. A good Dexterity is also a plus, since martial arts prowess is paramount to the society.

**Benefits:** The Righteous Fists are the unarmed fighters par excellence of Tianguo. They receive training in a variety of unarmed combat styles and learn to use a small number of weapons as well. Righteous Fists are automatically specialized in unarmed combat and receive the same benefits as from weapon specialization. In addition, they are particularly adept at acrobatic dodges. Whenever performing an Acrobatics stunt, a Righteous Fist adds double the result of the stunt die roll to his or her Armor Class.

Beginning at 4th level, Righteous Fists can make unarmed attacks as if they were using magic weapons. This allows them to strike creatures that cannot be harmed by normal weapons. At 4th level their attacks count as weapons of +1 enchantment; at 7th level, +2; and at 10th, +3. Their attacks do not gain actual bonuses to hit or to damage, however, only the ability to strike as if they did.

A Righteous Fist starts the game with the following martial arts maneuvers: Flying Dragon Fist, Mantis Stance, Speed of the Leopard, Way of the Snake, and Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

**Hindrances:** Righteous Fists prefer unarmed combat, so they are trained in the use of only a few weapons. Allowable weapons are: butterfly sword, double-stick, monk's spade, monk's stick, spear, staff, and three-section staff.

The Righteous Fists follow a strict moral code and must be of good alignment. They are forbidden to eat meat or drink alcohol, and they must always strive to act "righteously."

**Starting Equipment:** Any two allowable weapons, 3d8 tael.

### *The Red Tigers*

**Description:** The Red Tigers are a society of martial artists who have dedicated themselves to perfecting the art of sword fighting. They eschew the philosophical ideals of the Righteous Fists and Heavenly Gates (see below) and concentrate instead on mastering martial techniques. They are purists by nature, considering any attempt to attach ideology to swordplay a grave mistake.

The legendary swordsman Wang Yu [WONG YOO] founded the society three hundred years ago. As a young man, Wang had joined the Jade Brotherhood, the monks who would later become the Righteous Fists. He learned the martial arts with zeal but constantly spoke out against the rigid morality of the order, until a group of five monks ambushed him and cut off his right arm to teach him a lesson. Convinced that he could no longer use martial arts, the Jade Brothers left him crippled but alive. But Wang did not give up. He found an ancient book on swordplay and taught himself how to fight left-handed. Then he hunted down the five monks who had crippled him and killed them one by one. Wang Yu became known as the Red Tiger.

When all of his foes were dead, Wang Yu took students of his own to pass on what he had learned. He would show up the Jade Brotherhood, he decided, by founding an even greater mar-

tial arts society. So the Red Tigers were born. With the passage of years, the rivalry between the Red Tigers and Righteous Fists has lessened—but neither group has forgotten the past.

Emperor Jianmin grew to fear the martial power of the Red Tigers. He first tried to corrupt them with courtly positions and money, but the society's leadership rebuffed his advances. Unused to being thwarted, the emperor ordered the eradication of the Red Tigers. Many members were killed in the ensuing battles, but the society has continued to thrive in the underground.

**Organization:** At their height the Red Tigers had nine main schools, one in each province. The masters of the nine schools met once a year to discuss matters of interest and pressing issues. Since Emperor Jianmin banned the Red Tigers, all nine of the schools have been destroyed. Now the leaders travel within their own provinces to monitor and direct all Red Tiger activity in each. The nine masters have also elected one of their number, Tong Zhuting [TOONG JOO-TEEN], to be the Master of War. Tong makes decisions affecting the society on a day-to-day basis, although he is ultimately responsible to the other eight masters. Requirements: To become a Red Tiger, a character must have a minimum Strength of 12.

Benefits: The Red Tigers are masters of the blade. They work to make their swords virtual extensions of their bodies and spend hours each day perfecting their technique. Their fighting style is elegant, graceful, and deadly. They are especially adept at defending themselves against other sword fighters and receive a +2 bonus to their Armor Class when fighting sword-armed opponents. Red Tigers must specialize with the war sword.

On reaching 4th level, a Red Tiger becomes immune to disarming attacks such as Claw of the Crab. No one can part such a swordmaster from his or her blade.

A Red Tiger starts the game with the following martial arts maneuvers: Claw of the Crab, Mantis Stance, Speed of the Leopard, Wind in the Reeds, and Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

**Hindrances:** Red Tigers can wield no other weapon but the sword, although they can use unarmed maneuvers and attacks in conjunction with their blades.

**Starting Equipment:** War sword, 3d8 tael.

### *The Heavenly Gates*

**Description:** The Heavenly Gates are an unusual philosophical sect, founded by the revered holy man Song Wei [SOONG WAY] during the Seven Kingdoms period. Song Wei was an archer of great skill who was famous throughout the land. Yet despite his rich estates and powerful patrons, Song was deeply unhappy. He determined that the root of his unhappiness was a lack of understanding of both his own nature and the will of Heaven. He therefore left his lands behind and went into the wilds, carrying only his bow.

Legend relates that Song Wei sat in front of a waterfall for nine years without saying a word. One day he got up, strung his bow, and fired a single arrow through the waterfall. And in a flash he understood everything. At that moment, Song Wei had achieved spiritual enlightenment, breaking out of the cycle of existence. Though he could have ascended directly to Heaven, he chose instead to remain on earth and teach others to find the heavenly gates. His teachings formed the core of a philosophy that continued long after his death.

Members of the Heavenly Gates learn meditative techniques and ritual chants, trying to achieve the absence of thought and free their minds from external influences. Like Song Wei, they have found the art of archery to be particularly helpful. Each must find his or her own path; enlightenment cannot be described in words but is achieved only by direct intuition, outside of conscious thought.

The Heavenly Gates were drawn into the struggle against Emperor Jianmin by Su Ning [SOO NEEN], a master of legendary wisdom. He answered the emperor's call for immortality and endeavored to teach Jianmin the philosophy of Song Wei. The emperor, however, was not concerned with enlightenment, only immortality, and he could not understand the teachings. He decided that Su Ning had failed and ordered him put to death. Su simply smiled, saying, "The heavenly gates open when the lotus blooms," and ascended to Heaven in front of the

emperor's shocked court. The next day the Heavenly Gates were outlawed.

**Organization:** There are three ranks within the Heavenly Gates hierarchy. The lowest is that of the Seekers, new recruits looking for enlightenment. Each is apprenticed to an Initiate, a member of the next rank, who teaches the Seeker the group's philosophy and supervises the recruit's training. Initiates have mastered the teachings of Song Wei and make up the lion's share of the organization. Characters generally become Initiates at 3rd level.

Those who run the society are the Returned. They are former Initiates who became so enlightened that they approached the gates of Heaven but turned back to help others find the way. At the moment, there are only two of the Returned in all of Tianguo. They are Rui Yihua and Shu Anbang. There is no general requirement for becoming Returned. The path to total enlightenment is entirely individual and has little relation to a character's level.

**Requirements:** To join the Heavenly Gates, a character must have a minimum Strength of 9 and Wisdom of 12. Unlike other fighters, the Heavenly Gates use Wisdom as their primary attribute rather than Strength. Secondary attributes are Strength and Constitution, and tertiary are Dexterity, Intelligence, and Charisma.

**Benefits:** The Heavenly Gates are the premier archers of Tianguo. Although they can use any weapon, most restrict themselves to the bow and martial arts. They are specialized in bow (character's choice of foot or horse bow); in addition to the normal bonuses to attack and damage, specialization confers deadly precision in close combat. At point blank range (between 6 and 30 feet), Heavenly Gates receive an additional +1 to hit with their preferred weapon. The Heavenly Gates pursue archery to achieve the absence of thought and try to act by intuition alone. They therefore do not make Acrobatics stunts with the bow, as others do, but instead use Insight.

At 6th level, Heavenly Gates become especially skilled archers, able to pick out opponents engaged in close combat with friends and allies. Normally, firing arrows into a group engaged in combat is risky and carries heavy penalties, but the Heavenly Gate can do so with a penalty of only -2 to hit.

At 8th level, a Heavenly Gates warrior can focus chi energy three times per day, causing arrows to burst into flame in midflight. These blazing arrows count as magical attacks, inflict +2 damage, and set alight flammable creatures and material.

A Heavenly Gates character starts the game with the following martial arts maneuvers: Cobra Strike, Iron Palm, Mantis Stance, One Hundred Eyes, and Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

**Hindrances:** The Heavenly Gates are not concerned with the trappings of wealth and status. They have little use for money and do not go out of their way to acquire it. Heavenly Gates start the game with only 10 tael. Furthermore, any wealth over 25 tael that they acquire must be given away. Similarly, they can never own more than three magic items at a time, though a character is free to alter the mix to best advantage.

**Starting Equipment:** Horse or foot bow, thirty arrows of any type plus quiver, any two other weapons, 10 tael.

## Wizard Kits

### *The Dragon's Breath*

**Description:** The Dragon's Breath are a society of wizards who are concerned with harmony above all. They leave communication with the gods and spirits to the shamans and instead focus on understanding how the universe works. Heaven and Earth, yin and yang—all must be balanced. While there are times when one power is ascendant, nature dictates that another power will take its place, thus continuing the cosmic cycle. By understanding this cycle, and especially the Five Elements, the Dragon's Breath hope to achieve complete harmony.

The Dragon's Breath began as a philosophical sect in Zuyang, the imperial capitol, during the reign of Baoxin. Its leaders were always wizards, for only they could investigate the nature

A DRAGON'S BREATH MAGE



of things on a deeper level. Although controlled by wizards, the sect was open to all and scholars flocked to its school.

Emperor Jianmin at first treated the sect with great respect. He even provided patronage for some of its more prestigious members. In return, wizards provided magical training to a small group of eunuchs in the emperor's service. They have regretted that decision ever since: The eunuchs were the first to support the corrupted emperor and have become powerful agents of his evil regime.

The eunuch sorcerers knew all too well the danger posed by the Dragon's Breath, and they assaulted the school with demons and magic. Their move had been anticipated, however, and they found the school buildings empty. Since then, the Dragon's Breath have operated in secret. Even the emperor fears their power. His reign has caused great chaos, and the Dragon's Breath know he must be deposed before Heaven and Earth will once again achieve harmony. Organization: The Dragon's Breath is run by a triumvirate of wizards. The Master of Chi is the eldest and most experienced. Assisting the Master are the co-rulers, the Master of Yin and the Master of Yang. In general, the Masters of Yin and Yang make all decisions, but both must agree before taking any action. When they cannot come to an agreement, the Master of Chi is consulted to settle the dispute. In this way, the harmony of leadership is assured.

Since the Dragon's Breath abandoned their school, they have relocated to an island off the coast of the province of Tou. This island, now known as the Dragon's Tooth, is protected by strong magic, and so far the wizards have not been detected by minions of the emperor.

Requirements: To become a Dragon's Breath, a character must have a minimum Intelligence and Wisdom of 9.

**Benefits:** Dragon's Breath wizards continually try to purify their chi by meditation and ritual techniques. This purity of chi allows a Dragon's Breath to cast more spells per day than a wizard normally would. At the start of each day, the character makes an Insight (not a Savvy) stunt. The result of the stunt die is the number of bonus spell levels the wizard can cast that day. For instance, a Dragon's Breath who rolls a 2 on the stunt die could memorize an additional two 1st-level spells or one 2nd-level spell.

Dragon's Breath members can also use their chi to counteract the effects of injuries. When the wizard is hit by a weapon or martial arts attack, he or she can reduce the damage to its minimum, including bonuses. For example, a fighter specialized in longbow would inflict only 3 points of damage to the wizard (the minimum amount of 1, plus the fighter's specialization bonus of +2). This ability can be used a number of times a day equal to half the character's level, rounding down. Thus at 5th level, the wizard can reduce injury twice a day.

A Dragon's Breath starts the game with the following martial arts maneuvers: Dance of the Golden Lotus, Speed of the Leopard, and Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

**Hindrances:** A Dragon's Breath must spend at least two consecutive hours per day meditating. These hours must always be at the same time of day. A wizard who fails to meditate at the usual time loses a die type when rolling for bonus spells the following day (dropping from 1d4 to 1d3, for example).

Since a Dragon's Breath is primarily concerned with harmony, the wizard must always try to balance yin and yang. If possible, he or she must choose an equal number of yin and yang spells each day (for more information, see Chapter 4: Magic). If the total number of spells available is odd, the wizard chooses whether yin or yang is ascendant and takes the odd spell from that list.

**Starting Equipment:** Spellbook, any two allowable weapons, ink and paper, assorted material components, 3d8 tael.

### *Great Immortals*

**Description:** As far as the Great Immortals are concerned, the path of harmony has failed. While they do not deny such cornerstones of thought as yin and yang and the Five Elements, the Great Immortals eschew the idea of balance. Their goal is to achieve immortality, and their



means to that end is the study of yang magic. Yang is associated with both Heaven and fire, and these wizards believe that immortality lies in the manipulation of this energy.

The Great Immortals are not the first wizards to pursue this path. In fact, they revere the legendary figure of Cao Sifen [CHOW ZEE-FUN], a yang wizard who became immortal in the distant past. However, they are the first yang wizards to band together in a secret society. The reason is unknown to the other societies, who think the group solely concerned with the quest for immortality.

The society was founded during the reign of Emperor Chaoshi. It was inspired by the prophecies of Cao Sifen, which stated that a new power would rise in the Age of the Lonely Phoenix. Yang is associated with the phoenix, and a male phoenix has long been the symbol of a just emperor. Since the days of Chaoshi, they have waited for the disappearance of the male phoenix; unsurprisingly, none has been seen since Emperor Jianmin ate the tainted lotus.

The Great Immortals see themselves as the harbingers of a new order. Their inevitable immortality will change the very nature of the empire, and their phoenix will rise to depose the emperor. Heaven has made it clear that now is the time to act.

**Organization:** The Great Immortals call their organization the Circle, because of the circle's association with yang. The hierarchy of the group is very simple. In the center is the Master of the Circle, currently a powerful wizard named Diao Xu [DYOH ZHOO]. Surrounding him are the rest of the members, and each is considered an equal. As Diao is fond of saying, "All parts of the circle are equally close to the center." Recruits are taken as apprentices and join the Circle when they attain 3rd level. (Thus beginning characters are members of the Circle.)

Leadership is given to individual members of the Circle for specific missions, but this authority is temporary. Once the mission is complete, the leader returns to being just another member of the Circle. This encourages members to treat one another well, since today's underling may be tomorrow's captain.

**Requirements:** To become a Great Immortal, a character must have a minimum Intelligence and Strength of 9.

**Benefits:** Great Immortals surround themselves with yang-heavy objects, such as gold and jade. They also spend time performing rituals in areas associated with yang magic. Thus a Great Immortal is able to use magic more effectively. At the beginning of each day, the wizard makes a Might (not a Savvy) stunt. The result of the die roll is the number of bonus yang spell levels he or she can memorize that day. For instance, a Great Immortal who rolled a 2 on the stunt die could memorize an additional two 1st-level yang spells or one 2nd-level yang spell.

Great Immortals have a deeper understanding of yang magic than other wizards do, and this gives them several benefits. Yang spells cast by Great Immortals last for an additional round (except those whose effect is instantaneous), and targets of such spells suffer a -1 to any saving throw to resist. Additionally, the Great Immortal gains a +1 bonus to saving throws against yang magic.

A Great Immortal starts the game with the following martial arts maneuvers: Iron Palm, Might of the Tiger, and Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

**Hindrances:** Unsurprisingly, Great Immortals suffer from the overbearing imbalance of yang. The most obvious effect is that they are more susceptible to yin magic, suffering a -1 penalty to saving throws against yin spells. They downplay this affliction, though, calling it an obstacle to be overcome on the road to immortality.

Since yang energy is fiery and active, Great Immortals are in constant danger of literally burning themselves out. Yang wizards have found they can prevent this fate, however, by observing certain taboos. At 3rd level and each level thereafter, the wizard must choose one taboo. (Thus a beginning Great Immortal character starts play with one taboo in effect.) The list below provides some ideas; any taboo that is chosen must be at least as restrictive as one of these. As long as the taboo is observed, all is well. Whenever a taboo is broken, the wizard must make a saving throw vs. spell or suffer an amount of damage equal to his or her level; if the save is successful, only half damage results.



*Sample Taboos*

Cannot bathe.  
 Cannot cut one's hair.  
 Cannot eat meat.  
 Cannot touch a dead body.  
 Cannot drink alcohol.  
 Cannot have sex.  
 Cannot kill an animal.

**Starting Equipment:** Spellbook, any two allowable weapons, ink and paper, assorted material components, 1d4 pieces of jade jewelry, 2d6 tael.

*Shaman Kits**The White Lotus*

**Description:** The White Lotus are not used to operating in secret. For uncounted generations, they were the shamans who served both the court and the people. They healed the sick, dealt with spirits and gods, and ousted evil spirits and demons. The Lord Shaman was the right hand of the emperor and advised the throne on matters both political and spiritual. All that came to end when the emperor turned to evil.



Lord Shaman Ji Dayi tried to prevent Emperor Jianmin from eating the tainted lotus and from satisfying his inhuman hungers. He was killed for his trouble, the first victim of thousands, but this alone would not sate the emperor's thirst for vengeance. He declared all of the shamans to be traitors and sent the army to hunt them down like common criminals. Hundreds of shamans, especially those in the villages, were caught by surprise and murdered. Those that survived were forced into hiding.

Through friendly spirits, the survivors managed to find one another. They decided their only recourse was to form a secret society and work towards the overthrow of the emperor. Having no natural talent for duplicity, they welcomed an alliance with the other secret societies as a stepping stone towards their goal. For the sake of righting what's wrong, they have even agreed to work with the fearsome Black Lotus (see below). These are sure to be interesting times.

**Organization:** Traditionally, each major city had its own chief shaman, and from their numbers the emperor would choose the Lord Shaman of Tianguo. Since the death of Ji Dayi, the White Lotus have been forced to reinvent themselves. The surviving chiefs met in secret and asked the Jade Emperor to shine his light on the new Lord Shaman. Almost immediately Luo Hongbo [LWA TSOONG-PWA], a village shaman attending one of the chiefs, was surrounded by a pure white light. Despite his lowly origins, Luo was accepted—Heaven itself had clearly spoken. He has since proved a wise leader, and the chiefs do his bidding without question.

**Requirements:** To become a White Lotus, a character must have a minimum Wisdom and Charisma of 9.

**Benefits:** Through their connection with the spirit world, the White Lotus have the special ability to immobilize or even destroy undead creatures. This is an Insight stunt, and the result of the die roll is the maximum number of creatures affected. The White Lotus immobilize undead by slapping paper charms on the creature's foreheads, which keep them immobilized as long as the charms remain in place. In combat situations, these bits of paper have a unfortunate tendency to get knocked off; smart villains can also remove them to release their undead servants.

When a shaman tries to immobilize the undead, consult the following table. Each indicated value is the Target Number for the Insight feat, and the Insight stunt result adds to the die roll as normal. A result of I or D indicates that the creatures are automatically immobilized

or destroyed, respectively, and no die roll is necessary. A dash (—) means that the creature can't be affected by a shaman of that level.

(H4) TABLE 2-18: IMMOBILIZE UNDEAD

Hit Dice of Undead	Level of Shaman									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	10	7	4	I	I	D	D	D*	D*	D*
2	16	13	10	7	4	I	I	D	D	D*
3–4	19	16	13	10	7	4	I	I	D	D
5–6	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	I
7–8	—	—	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	7
9–10	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	19	16	13

\* Twice as many creatures are affected.

Dealing with the otherworld as they do, White Lotus members often must reckon with demons and their schemes. Over the years, they have learned special techniques: White Lotus members gain a +1 to hit and damage versus demons and a +1 bonus to their saving throws against demonic powers.

A White Lotus member who has achieved 5th level gains the attention of a powerful entity. This is usually a natural spirit (such as that of a particular mountain or lake), and it is from this patron that the shaman gains spells of 3rd and 4th level. Players can roleplay out the search if they like, or the DM can just assume it happens in “down time.” This patron spirit can be petitioned for other kinds of aid, but in return it may ask the shaman for favors—often at inopportune times.

To gain spells of 5th level, a White Lotus must earn the patronage of a god. The character can do this only on attaining 9th level by undergoing a special quest. The quest must be roleplayed out (ideally as an adventure in its own right)—gods do not give their patronage lightly, and the shaman will need to prove his or her worth.

Of necessity, White Lotus members school themselves in martial arts. They start the game with the following martial arts maneuvers: Blood of the Dragon, Mantis Stance, Mantis Strike, and Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

Hindrances: While the emperor's minions hunt members of all the secret societies, White Lotus are sought in preference to all others. The emperor has not forgotten the “betrayal” of his lord shaman and offers a bounty for the head of each White Lotus brought to him.

Starting Equipment: Any three allowable weapons, incense, ink and paper, sacrificial items, a small gong (for calling spirits), 3d10 tael.

### *Black Lotus*

**Description:** The Black Lotus are the oldest secret society in the empire. The reason is simple: Trafficking with demons has always been proscribed.

Originally, the Black Lotus were much like other shamans, but they came to realize that there was more to gain from dealing with demons than driving them off. The evil spirits knew many secrets and controlled great power, and those with proper knowledge could benefit from both. Although such shamans tried to keep their activities secret, it was inevitable that some of them would be discovered. Those who survived the angry mobs and imperial soldiers fled into the wilderness, where many died in isolation.

Zhongwen [CHUNG-WEN], the King of Hell, had noticed these mortals and was pleased that they showed such respect to his court. He sent minions to gather up the wayward shamans. When all were assembled, the King of Hell himself arrived to address them. He made a simple offer: If the shamans would form a secret society and offer sacrifices and loyalty to Zhongwen and his court, he would gift them with spells and other powers. Those who did not die of shock at meeting the ruler of Hell agreed unanimously to the terms, and the Black Lotus came into being on that day. Binding oaths were sworn, and those who dared to break

them met horrible fates.

For centuries the Black Lotus benefited from this arrangement. With the rise of Emperor Jianmin, however, they began to pay the price. The tainted lotus gave great power to Musheng, the renegade demon lord who crafted it, who was able to oust the King of Hell. But the Black Lotus are bound by oaths to Zhongwen, the original king. This has put them at odds with both the emperor and Musheng, the new ruler of Hell. Hunted by both mortal and supernatural foes, the Black Lotus were forced into an alliance with the other secret societies. This is an unfamiliar situation, but they hope the common aim of overthrowing the emperor will prevent the other groups from betraying them.

**Organization:** While the Black Lotus is the oldest secret society in Tianguo, it is also the smallest. There are not all that many people willing to truck with demons, after all. The group is organized into a cell structure, with each cell having no more than five members. The leader of the Black Lotus, a fearsome shaman named Ai Mude [AYE MOO-DUH], lives in a secret cave complex in the Tibneeg Mountains (safely beyond the emperor's reach). These caves are rumored to lead directly to Hell and have been the home of the Black Lotus since the days of Emperor Xian.

**Requirements:** To become a Black Lotus, a character must have a minimum Wisdom and Strength of 9.

**Benefits:** Black Lotus members seek power in Hell. Like the demons they serve, they are especially adept at causing pain. To reflect this, whenever a Black Lotus casts a cause wounds spell of any level, he or she receives a +2 bonus to hit and damage. These shamans are also resistant to the wiles of others, receiving a +2 bonus to their saving throws against charm attempts.

Once per day, a member of the Black Lotus can summon the power of Hell to cause terror in enemies. This is an Insight stunt, and the result of the die roll is the maximum number of opponents the ability can affect. The Target Number of the feat is equal to the target's Wisdom (use Intelligence for those without a listed Wisdom, such as monsters), and the shaman must make a separate roll against each opponent. Targets must be able to see the Black Lotus and be within 50 feet; those affected run directly away at top speed for a number of rounds equal to the stunt die result.

The Black Lotus also study various forms of breath control. At 3rd level, they can breathe so shallowly that they appear to be dead. Such is their concentration that no stimulus will cause them to react (even attacks, which cause only half damage). A Black Lotus can remain in this state for 1 hour per level. The shaman remains completely aware during this process and can come out of it at any time. This ability can be used once per day.

A Black Lotus member who has achieved 5th level gains the attention of a powerful demon. This is often the spirit of long-dead Black Lotus who has returned from Hell as a demon, and it is from this "ancestor" that the shaman gains spells of 3rd and 4th level. Players can roleplay out the search if they like, or the DM can just assume it happens in "down time." This patron demon can be petitioned for other kinds of aid, but in return it may ask the shaman for favors—often at inopportune times.

To gain spells of 5th level, a Black Lotus member must gain the patronage of a demon lord. The character can do this only on attaining 9th level by undergoing a special quest. The quest must be roleplayed out (ideally as an adventure in its own right)—demon lords do not give their patronage lightly, and the shaman will need to prove his or her worth.

In addition to their shamanic activities, Black Lotus members also practice martial arts and begin the game with the following special maneuvers: Dance of the Golden Lotus, Iron Palm, Mantis Stance, Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

**Hindrances:** Unlike most of the other secret societies, the Black Lotus have always been an outlaw sect. Trafficking with demons is a dangerous business and has been banned since the founding of the empire. Emperor Jianmin continues to hunt down the Black Lotus, whose members foolishly remain loyal to the original ruler of Hell, and most citizens of the empire will react with anger and fear if they discover the shamans' true allegiance.

Starting Equipment: Any three allowable weapons, incense, ink and paper, sacrificial items, a small drum (for calling demons), 3d6 tael.

## *Thief Kits*

### *The Iron Monkeys*

**Description:** There have always been peasant rebellions against the empire; when times get tough, it is usually the peasants who suffer first. The Iron Monkeys trace their lineage to one such uprising, known as the Red Eyebrow Rebellion. This revolt took place during the reign of Chaoshi and was organized by disgruntled peasants who painted their eyebrows red in protest.

The rebellion was successful for a time, but eventually the full weight of the army was brought down upon the rebels, and the Red Eyebrows were crushed. Those who survived went underground and changed their name to the Iron Monkeys. To escape fierce retribution by the army and the gentry, the group's leaders dispersed across the empire. Over the years they recruited peasants in the countryside and trained cadres of rebels and saboteurs.

When Emperor Jianmin ate the tainted lotus, the leadership of the Iron Monkeys were certain their day had come. The emperor had clearly become evil incarnate; surely the broad mass of the peasantry would rise up and support them. Uprisings did occur in a number of provinces, but fear had paralyzed most citizens. The expected recruits never materialized, and the premature rebellions were crushed.

Since then, the Iron Monkeys have been more careful. They believe that the land is due for a just emperor, but that the nobility is corrupt and useless. They are willing to ally with other secret societies in the hopes of overthrowing Jianmin. The emperor himself pays them scant notice—they are nothing but peasants, after all.

**Organization:** While the Iron Monkeys are active throughout the empire, they tend to be more locally based than the other secret societies. For every three villages or so, there is a small active group with an elected leader. In theory, these groups report to a higher leader who directs all activity in a province; in practice, the society's resources are so strapped that the provincial leadership can exert only minimal control.

The provincial leaders elect one of their own to head up the organization. The current leader is Suling [SOO-LEEN], a woman from Tui Province. She has tried to make the Iron Monkeys more effective by improving communication and ordering large-scale operations. Despite opposition from the other provincial leaders, she agreed to work with the other secret societies in the hopes of furthering the group's goals.

Requirements: To become an Iron Monkey, a character must have a minimum Dexterity and Charisma of 9.

**Benefits:** An Iron Monkey learns the following thief skills: Climb Walls, Detect Noise, Disguise, Escape Bonds, Find and Remove Traps, Hide In Shadows, Move Silently, and Tracking. At 1st level, an Iron Monkey receives 60 discretionary skill points to improve his or her thieving skills, and receives another 30 points for each additional level. Thus a starting Iron Monkey character of 3rd level has 120 discretionary points to spend.

Since they are usually outnumbered, Iron Monkeys make frequent use of ambush. Because of their training, they can make a backstab attack with missile weapons such as bows; as always, the target must be unaware of the attack. Being peasants, Iron Monkeys have learned to improvise weapons wherever they can, and are able to use small everyday objects as lethal missiles. In their hands, mundane objects such as coins and acorns have the same effect as throwing spikes.

Iron Monkeys are less concerned with killing than Ghost Eaters (see below) and so learn a special knockout blow. An Iron Monkey in position to backstab can instead attempt to knock out the foe, receiving the same +4 bonus to hit. If a hit is scored, the character has a base chance of 25%, plus 5% per level, to render the opponent unconscious. The target makes

a saving throw vs. paralyzation to resist, but suffers double damage even on a success.

At 5th level an Iron Monkey learns the Trackless Step. Three times a day the character can cross any type of terrain, including snow and mud, and leave neither footprints nor scent. Using this ability is an Acrobatics stunt; the result of the die roll is the duration in turns (periods of 10 minutes).

Due to their great agility, Iron Monkeys make excellent martial artists. They begin the game with the following martial arts maneuvers: Crane Stance, Grace of the Crane, Iron Palm, One Hundred Eyes, and Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

Hindrances: The Iron Monkeys are a product of the countryside, and most of them come from a peasant background. Monkeys don't belong in the city, so they say. To reflect this, Iron Monkeys suffer a –10% penalty when using any thieving skills in an urban environment.

The Iron Monkeys have been a rebellious organization from the start, so members cannot be of lawful alignment.

**Starting Equipment:** Any three allowable weapons, two different disguises (for example, merchant and peasant), assorted picks and tools, 2d6 tael.

### *The Ghost Eaters*

Description: The origin of the Ghost Eaters is shrouded in mystery. They were founded during the era of Seven Kingdoms, when warring armies vied across the land and nothing was certain. People crowded into the cities for protection against marauding soldiers and bandits. City living, however, had its own problems. One unforeseen predicament was the rise of undead.

Overcrowded and unsanitary cities were breeding grounds for disease and murder, and those who did not receive a proper burial often came back as vengeful ghosts to cause further havoc. The kings had their hands full dealing with mortal concerns, and the shamans tended only to the needs of the nobility. The Ghost Eaters began as a local self-defense society whose mission was to protect the urban poor from the depredations of the hungry dead. They were quite successful at this and the society spread from city to city.

By the latter years of the Seven Kingdoms era, the Ghost Eaters had lost much of their original purpose and began expanding their protection to other areas of life. At some point protection became extortion, and by the time Shangwei reunited Tianguo, the Ghost Eaters were firmly in control of the criminal underworld. The new empire served them well, offering better communication between cities and ending the petty wars that had plagued the land for centuries. They expanded their operations to include such activities as spying and assassination and became “problem solvers” for those without legal recourse. Although their activities are largely criminal, the Ghost Eaters often provide rough justice for the urban poor.

Emperor Jianmin naturally grew to fear the Ghost Eaters. They were organized, secretive, and expert at assassination. It was only a matter of time, he reasoned, before someone hired one to kill him. He therefore tried to root out the Ghost Eaters and destroy their base of power, even leveling some cities entirely to neutralize the local chapter. But even the emperor's troops cannot be everywhere, and more than one imperial captain was found slain in bed.

The Ghost Eaters still rule the backstreets and basements of the cities, but now for the first time they have joined with other secret societies to fight the emperor. It is rumored that they retain some of their secret methods for combating evil spirits. If that is true, the Ghost Eaters' struggle against Jianmin may return them to their roots.

**Organization:** The Ghost Eaters have a strict hierarchy, which they deem necessary to protect their interests and secrets. The group is run by the Masters of the Five Directions. The Master of the North controls the provinces of Jing and Tou; the Master of the East, Bi and Qu Ti; the Master of the South, Tui and Bei Ji; the Master of the West, Hou and Shang Shen; and the Master of the Center, the province of Xin. Although the Master of the Center controls only one province directly, it is the heart of the empire; this Master is the head of the entire organization, to whom everyone answers. The current Master of the Center is an enigmatic man named Chang Chen [CHONG CHEN].

Below the Masters of the Five Directions are the Shadow Magistrates. Each of them con-



trols a city and is responsible for all operations within its confines.

**Requirements:** To become a Ghost Eater, a character must have a minimum Dexterity and Strength of 9.

**Benefits:** A Ghost Eater learns the following thief skills: Bribe, Detect Undead, Disguise, Hide In Shadows, Move Silently, Open Locks, and Pick Pockets. At 1st level, a Ghost Eater receives 50 discretionary skill points to improve his or her thieving skills, and receives another 25 points for each additional level. Thus a starting Ghost Eater character of 3rd level has 100 discretionary points to spend.

Ghost Eaters specialize in assassination and know just where to strike for maximum damage. When making a surprise attack, they can attempt a lethal strike. This is resolved as a normal backstab, but if the damage inflicted is over half of the victim's current hit points, he or she must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or die outright.

Most Ghost Eaters have a favorite weapon for use on those delicate jobs. At 3rd level, a Ghost Eater can select any concealable weapon as a "weapon of choice," receiving a +1 bonus to hit and damage while using it.

At 5th level a Ghost Eater learns some of the ancient secrets of the society. By taking part in special rituals, the thief is able to strike undead creatures as though wielding a magic weapon, even when making martial arts attacks. At 7th level, Ghost Eaters receive +1 to hit and +2 damage versus undead creatures of all types.

The Ghost Eaters have always survived by maintaining a fearsome reputation. They back this up with skillful use of martial arts. A Ghost Eater begins the game with the following martial arts maneuvers: Claw of the Crab, Crane Stance, Iron Palm, Mantis Strike, and Wuxia. Subsequent maneuvers are at the character's discretion.

Hindrances: Ghost Eaters are most at home in the city. They have never quite understood the rural mindset, and all attempts to penetrate into the countryside have ended in failure. To reflect their unfamiliarity with the country, Ghost Eaters suffer a -10% penalty when using any thieving skills in a rural environment.

Ghost Eaters are loyal to the society first and themselves second. They do little to help others unless there is money to be made or influence to be garnered. Thus, a Ghost Eater cannot be of good alignment.

**Starting Equipment:** Any three allowable weapons, two different disguises (for example, tax collector and tradesman), assorted picks and tools, 3d8 tael.

## Arms and Equipment

### Money

Money in Tianguo was standardized long ago. Coins are issued each year, noting the year and the reign. Anyone found committing forgery or clipping is put to death immediately. Thus the type and weight of imperial coins has been nearly unchanging over the generations.

All coins have a hole in the middle. This allows them to be carried on cords, called cash strings. There are two basic kinds of coins, tael and fen. Tael are made of silver and are the base currency of the empire; fen are copper, and there are 100 of them per tael.

1 tael = 100 fen

Prices listed in these rules always refer to tael unless the number is followed by an "f," which denotes fen (for example, 10f). This system is also used when evaluating other valuable objects, like gold, gems, and jewelry (for example, "a gem worth 100 tael").

### Armor

Player characters normally do not wear armor in a Dragon Fist campaign because doing so prevents the use of martial arts. This is not to say, however, that armor is unknown in Tianguo

(far from it). Imperial soldiers, bandits, and other nonplayer characters (NPCs) usually wear armor, and there may be unusual circumstances where PCs use it as well. There are three basic types of armor used in Tianguo, and all are normally used with a helmet.

**Leather Lamellar:** This armor is made of leather strips cured in boiling oil to make them tough and resistant. Smaller pieces are sewn together to make a breastplate, while a full suit has suppler leather protecting the arms. Breastplates have an AC of 11 and full suits have AC 12.

**Hide:** The tough hides of certain creatures, especially that of the rhinoceros, are sometimes used to make armor. Hide breastplates have AC 12 and full suits, AC 14.

**Iron Lamellar:** This is similar to leather lamellar, but the strips are made of iron. Breastplates have AC 13 and full suits, AC 15.

**Shield:** Both infantry and cavalry often use shields. These are used to block incoming blows and add +1 to the user's Armor Class (for example, a soldier wearing iron lamellar armor and carrying a shield would have a total AC of 16).

### *Weapons*

A variety of weapons are available to Dragon Fist characters, ranging from the simple improvised tools of the peasantry to the finest swords. Table 2-19 lists typical weapons and their costs.

The size of a weapon is Small (S, under 2 feet long), Medium (M, 2 to 5 feet long), or Large (L, 6 feet or more in length). A weapon's speed is rated as Slow (Sl, +2 to initiative), Average (Av, +4 to initiative), or fast (Fa, +6 to initiative); initiative is explained fully in Chapter 3: Martial Arts and Combat. Weapons in bold type require two hands to use.

Weapons do different amounts of damage depending on the size of the target. The first damage listing in a row is how much the weapon deals to a target of small (S) or human-sized (M) opponents, while the second is the amount dealt to large (L) creatures.

A brief description of each weapon follows the table.

TABLE 2-19: WEAPONS

Weapon	Cost	Size	Speed	S–M Damage	L Damage
Battle-ax	5	M	Av(4)	1d8	1d8
Bow					
Horse	30	M	Av(4)	1d6	1d6
Foot	75	L	Av(4)	1d6	1d6
Crossbow*					
Light	35	M	Av(4)	1d8	1d8
Heavy	50	M	Sl(2)	1d10	1d10
Repeating	75	M	Fa(6)	1d4+1	1d4+1
Siege	100	L	Sl(2)	1d12	1d12
Dagger	2	S	Fa(6)	1d4	1d3
Double-stick	1	M	Fa(6)	1d6	1d6
Halberd	10	L	Sl(2)	1d10	1d10
Hand/throwing ax	1	M	Av(4)	1d6	1d4
Lance	10	L	Av(4)	1d6+1	2d6
Monk's spade	7	L	Sl(2)	2d4	2d6
Monk's stick	1	S	Fa(6)	1d6	1d4
Sickle	1	M	Av(4)	1d6	1d4
Spear	1	M	Av(4)	1d6	1d8
Staff	10f	M	Fa(6)	1d6	1d6
Sword					
Butterfly	10	S	Fa(6)	1d6	1d6+1
Double-edged	15	M	Av(4)	1d8	1d12
Nine-ring	15	M	Av(4)	1d6+1	1d8+1
Single-edged	10	S	Fa(6)	1d6	1d8
War	25	M			
One-handed			Av(4)	2d4	2d4
Two-handed			Sl(2)	1d8+1	2d6
Three-section staff	2	M	Av(4)	1d6	1d6
Throwing spike	20f	S	Fa(6)	1d4	1d3
Tiger fork (trident)	15	L	Av(4)		
One-handed				1d6+1	2d4
Two-handed				1d8+1	3d4
War fan	3	S	Fa(6)	1d4	1d4
Whipping chain	2	M	Av(4)	1d8	1d6

\* Crossbows (except the repeating crossbow) receive a bonus against armored opponents. They are +3 to hit at short range and +1 to hit at medium range. (See Table 2-20 below for missile weapon ranges.)

TABLE 2-20: MISSILE WEAPON RANGES AND RATES OF FIRE

Weapon	ROF	Range (yards)		
		S	M*	L**
Bow				
Horse	2/1	50	100	180
Foot	2/1	60	120	210
Crossbow				
Light	1/1	60	120	180
Heavy	1/2	80	160	240
Repeating	2/1	50	100	150
Siege	1/2	90	175	250
Dagger	2/1	10	20	30
Hand/throwing ax	1/1	10	20	30
Throwing spike	3/1	5	10	15

\* –2 to hit

\*\* –5 to hit

### Weapon Descriptions

**Battle-ax:** The battle-ax features a single broad blade and is popular with common soldiers and certain martial arts schools.

**Bows:** All bows in the empire are of composite design. Horse bows are small and used primarily by mounted troops; the larger foot bows are favored by infantry. The Yi barbarians are particularly adept with the horse bow.

Arrows come in several types. Flight arrows are the standard, and most bows use these exclusively. The frog crotch arrow has a head in the shape of a V, the inner edge of which is sharpened. It's used to cut cords, ropes, and anything else caught between its fork (cutting tricks require a called shot; see Chapter 3 for details). The humming bulb arrow is fitted with a carved wooden head that whistles in flight. It can be heard up a mile away and is used for signaling.

**Crossbows:** Crossbows are popular weapons in the empire, since they are easy to use and are excellent at puncturing armor. Light crossbows are usually used by mounted soldiers and heavy crossbows, by infantry. Siege crossbows are so large they must be mounted on a wall or a

wagon to be used effectively. Repeating crossbows, also known as chu-ko-nu, are clever devices that allow their users to reload with exceptional speed. A box on top of the crossbow holds ten bolts, and a lever drops a fresh bolt into firing position after the weapon is discharged.

**Double-stick:** The double-stick is a common martial arts weapon that is descended from the agricultural flail. It consists of two foot-long sticks connected by a short piece or chain or rope. They are often used in pairs.

**Halberd:** This is a catch-all term for a number of different polearms used in the empire. The most common are the ge [GUH], a spear with two crescent blades beneath its point, and the chai-dao [CHIE-DOH], which looks like a war sword blade mounted on a pole. Both weapons are used for thrusting and chopping attacks.

**Hand/throwing ax:** This weapon is smaller and lighter than the battle-ax. It can also be thrown.

**Lance:** Lances are long spears that are used on horseback. Imperial cavalry usually wield them overhand. Some lances feature a secondary blade, perpendicular to the primary blade, that is used to pull opponents from their horses.

**Monk's Spade:** This is a martial arts weapon descended from the peasant's spade. It looks similar to the agricultural equivalent, but the shaft is much longer, and the head is sharpened.

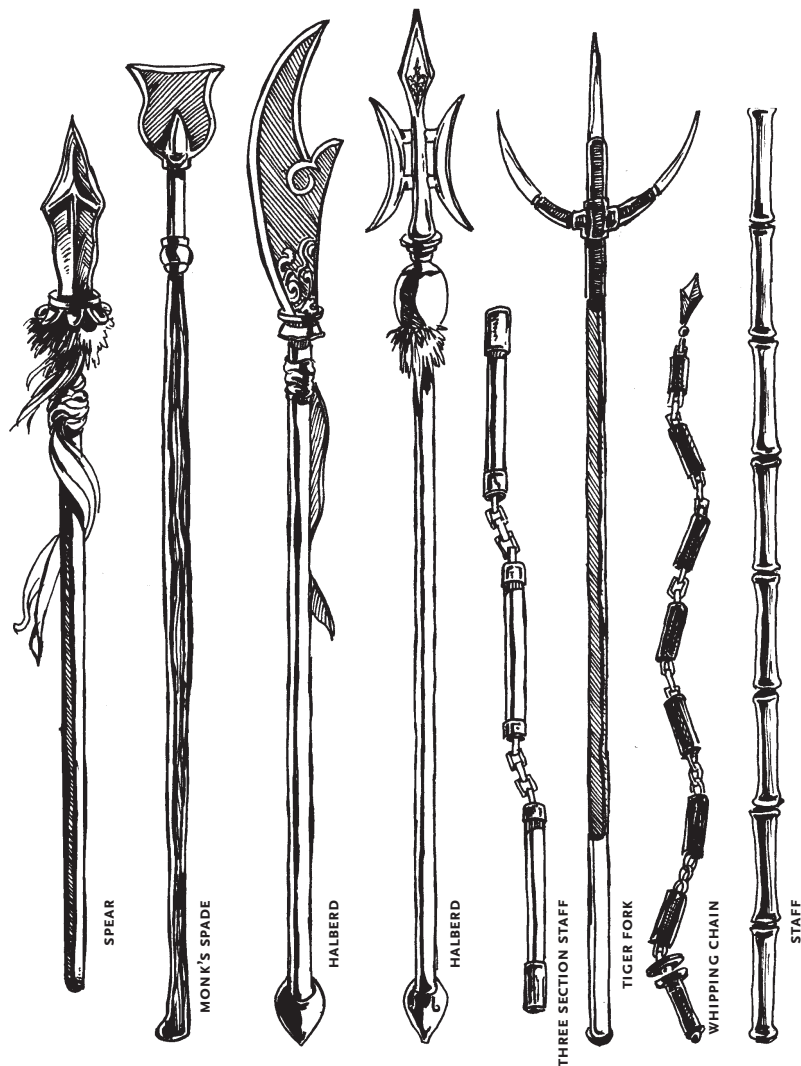
**Monk's Stick:** This weapon was originally the arm of a millstone, consisting of a short staff with a small perpendicular handle. It is popular with martial artists because it is easy to conceal and has great versatility.

**Sickle:** A popular peasant weapon, the sickle or lian [LYEN] is yet another agricultural tool that is used in combat. Martial artists often use these in pairs.

**Spear:** The spear, known in the empire as the qiang



DOUBLE STICK



SPEAR

MONK'S SPADE

HALBERD

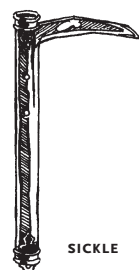
HALBERD

THREE SECTION STAFF

TIGER FORK

WHIPPING CHAIN

STAFF



SICKLE

[CHUNG], is a common and popular weapon with both peasants and martial artists. There are many kinds of spears throughout the empire, but all share the same basic statistics. They frequently have tassels beneath their heads to prevent blood from flowing down the shaft during combat.

**Staff:** This simple weapon is a 5- to 6-foot-long piece of hardwood. Known as the gun [WOON], the staff is deadly weapon in the right hands. It also attracts little attention from imperial soldiers, since it appears to be nothing more than a walking stick.

**Swords:** There are a variety of swords commonly used throughout the empire. The basic weapon of the imperial armies is the single-edged sword, a simple weapon with a 2-foot blade. The double-edged sword is longer and more elegant, and is favored by martial artists. The war sword is a large, chopping weapon that can be used with either one or two hands. It is most associated with the Red Tigers, who are its acknowledged masters. The butterfly sword is a short, heavy weapon that is often used in pairs. The nine-ring sword is a smaller version of the war sword with nine rings attached to its back edge. Skilled swordfighters can use the rings to catch enemy weapons and disarm foes.

**Three-Section Staff:** This weapon is similar to the double-stick but has three shafts instead of two. A flexible weapon, the three-section staff can keep opponents at a distance or deal with them close up.

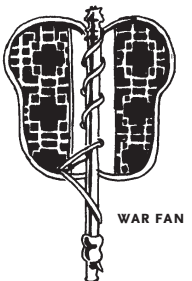
THROWING SPIKE



**Throwing Spike:** This is a sharply pointed metal spike, only a few inches long. These weapons are also known as “sleeve darts,” because they can be easily concealed.

**Tiger Fork:** Known as the hu cha [FOO CHAH], the tiger fork is a large trident with broadly-spread tines. While it can be used to keep animals at bay, as its name suggests, it is more often used to disarm opponents.

**War Fan:** This is a larger version of the personal fan,



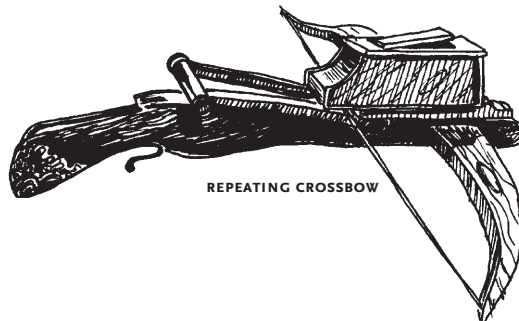
WAR FAN

but made of iron or hardwood. The war fan, or san, can be used as a bludgeon or to block incoming blows. Some also have razor edges.

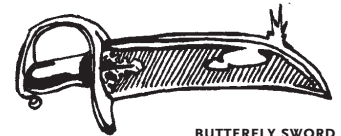
**Whipping Chain:** Known as the bian [BYEN], this weapon consists of three or nine short iron bars connected with links of chain and tipped with a slashing blade. Since it can wrap right around parrying weapons and shields, it is a difficult weapon to defend against.



MONK'S STICK



REPEATING CROSSBOW



BUTTERFLY SWORD



WAR SWORD



SINGLE EDGE SWORD



NINE-RING SWORD



DOUBLE EDGE SWORD



*Other Equipment*

As an active empire, Tianguo offers a wide variety of goods and services. Space does not permit a comprehensive list, but the following gives a rough idea of current prices in the Heavenly Kingdom.

**TABLE 2-21: EQUIPMENT COSTS**

Item	Cost
Armor	
Leather lamellar (breastplate/full)	3/5
Hide (b/f)	4/8
Iron lamellar (b/f)	50/100
Shield	5
Transport	
Chariot (two-horse)	400
Horse	100
Sedan chair	100
Wagon	200
Miscellaneous	
Candle	1f
Clothing (basic)	1
Flint and steel	25f
Lantern	10
Rope (50 ft.)	1
Torch	1f
Wineskin	10f
Services	
Inn lodging (per day)	50f
Meals (per day)	10f

