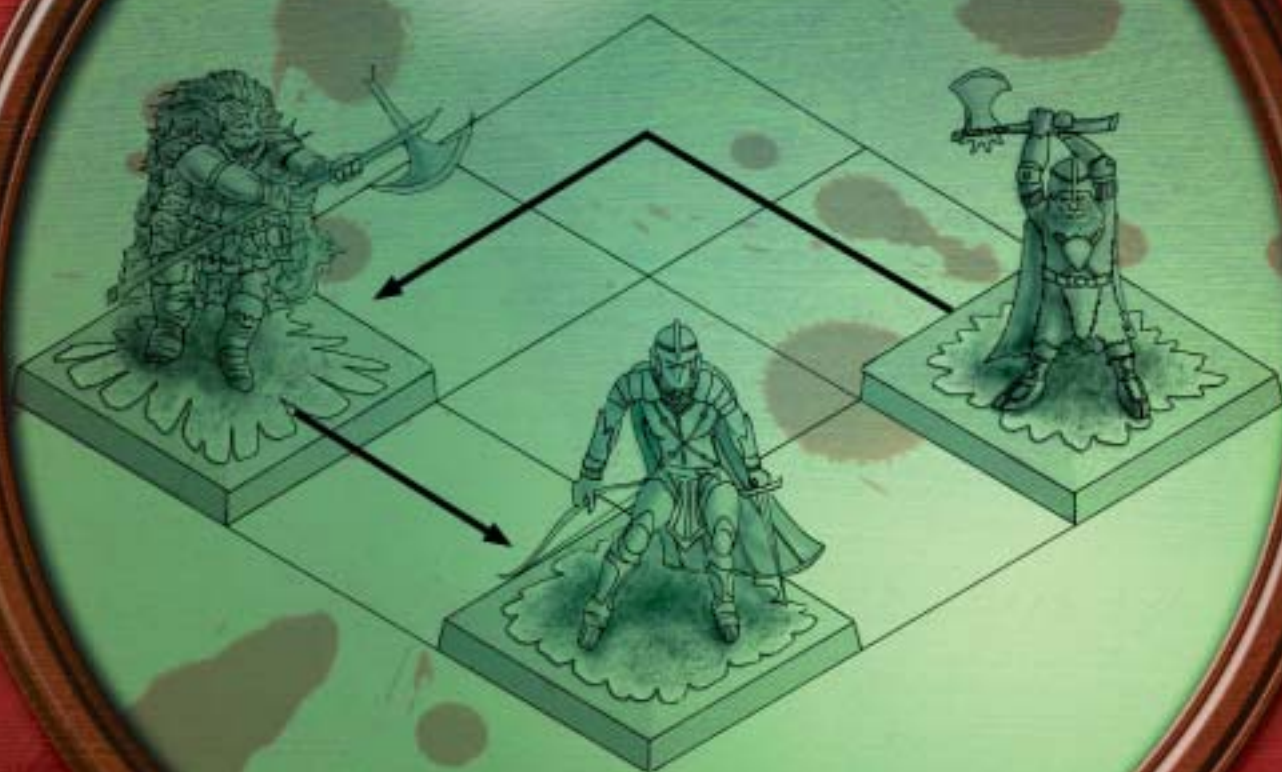


WARRIOR

Strategy Guide



The 100% Official
Guide to Kicking Monster Butt
and Winning the Game

Chapter Five

Feats

Deciding your feat selection is one of the most important parts of character generation. Where a spellslinger has arcane magic, a thief has skills, and holies have granted powers or class features, warriors often have a smaller and weaker assortment of class features. Those warriors overlapping with wizards or druids find their spell capacity is sorely limited and learn quickly not to depend on them. This is where feats come in.

Several things affect a feat's usefulness, such as the campaign world, contextual usefulness, or even a long list of mediocre prerequisites. Worse, you start working for a prestige class only to discover that the class doesn't function as you thought, and now you're stuck with Endurance and Alertness – ugh! Screwing up your feat selection has far greater consequences than any other department in your character. See, a bad spell can be replaced. A handful of poorly thought-out skill point placements is no big deal. But typical characters get seven feats. Period. And unless you're human, or sacrifice other potential cool abilities for levels in fighter, you're pretty much stuck with just a few feats.

So how do you avoid taking the wrong feats? This chapter will give a comprehensive overview to help you plan your warrior's feats throughout his career. We're not going to level a bunch of forests by droning on about the worthless ones, except for maybe a few words here and there about fool's gold. Instead, we'll spend our time talking about the best feats in the game, focusing on the core feats in a given feat tree.

Fool's Gold

Lots of feats look cooler than they actually are. In fact, many are common feats that seem enticing on paper, but in play, they suck. Here's a list of the prime offenders. They're rarely a good choice for warriors

Skill Buff Feats (SBFs)

Any feat that adds a +3 bonus to one skill or +2 bonus to X and Y checks are SBFs. Such feats include Acrobatic, Agile, Deceitful, and the rest. These are common through the d20 system. In fact, for warriors they are like viruses, deluding the player into thinking that a Hide check of +27 is just that much better than +25, like Spot +3 will make that much difference over Spot +1. Maybe these skills are acceptable for other classes, or for role-playing (like that matters), but for characters built to maximize killing potential, count these as wasted feats.

Armor Feats

Another stinker is the Armor Proficiency feats. It seems these were included for completeness, mechanics, and for options, but in fact they have next to no impact on game play. Some warrior classes have a limited selection of armor, true. However, if you want to beef up your armor selection, just take a level in fighter. Then you get all the weapons and armor one could possibly ever want, while gaining a bonus feat to boot.

Metamagic and Item Creation Feats

In almost every case, there are better feats for warriors to invest in than sacking a feat for a quirky metamagic feat,

WHAT'S A FEAT TREE?

Feat trees are the obvious combos in the feats chapter of the PHB. They usually start with a basic feat, then progress into a list of other feats with the basic feat as a prerequisite. For example, Power Attack is the root of its own feat tree. Its branches are Cleave, Improved Sunder, Great Cleave, and so on. The PHB has several species of feat trees and they are as follows:

Armor Proficiency	Combat Expertise
Dodge	Endurance
Improved Unarmed Strike	Mounted Combat
Point Blank Shot	Power Attack
Shield Proficiency	Spell Focus
Spell Penetration	Two-Weapon Fighting
Weapon Focus	

or the experience-point draining item creation variety. However, the paladin would do well to invest in Brew Potion. Lacking the martial punch of the other combat characters, the paladin can fulfill other needed roles in the party through simply manufacturing potions and oils. Just think – an entire party with *blessed* weapons! And with *potions of cure light wounds* for everyone.

Miscellaneous Suckness

Several other feats defy classification. They may look good on paper, but have very limited usefulness.

Endurance: It doesn't matter how you dress this up, this feat still reeks, even as a prerequisite to Diehard. What is sad is that Endurance covers all the rules most DMs gloss over, such as sleeping in armor, extended swimming, extended running, and so on. When compared to Cleave or Spring Attack, there is really no reason to dump one of your seven feats here. However, if you're playing a fighter, and you have a spare feat at around 12th level, like so many do, go ahead, Diehard could be worth it.

Improved Initiative: This is an example of how a feat looks great, but actually sucks. Giving its greatest benefit to the rogue and spellcasting classes, Improved Initiative offers no tactical advantage to warriors whatsoever. Melee warriors often benefit from going after their opponents. Most opponents start separated by more than five feet on the battlefield. This means that if they wish to engage in melee, they need to close the distance. Moving more than five feet means they only get a single attack – whereas if they only step five feet, they can take the full attack action and swing, swing, swing! Given two combatants separated by any significant distance, the first combatant to make an attack almost always winds up making a single attack, followed by the opposition's full attack. The higher the levels of the warriors, the worse the loss – if both characters have three attacks, the first attacker loses two attacks simply to get in the first blow! Since warriors rarely drop significant opponents in a single attack, this actually makes the slower warrior more likely to win the battle.

Improved Overrun: The problem with Improved Overrun is that it actually takes away a potential advantage for your warrior. If we determine that the purpose of an overrun is to move past someone, and that the purpose of a bull rush is to push someone back, Improved Overrun makes it *more difficult* for your character to succeed at an overrun because it disallows the target from stepping out of the way. If all targets are forced to block, your warrior always has to roll a check. Granted, you have a +4 bonus to that check, but having to make a check at all is worse than a forfeit by the defender. The other thing to remember is that overruns do not provoke attacks of opportunity like a bull rush. Ultimately, Improved Bull Rush will help you make bull rushes far more than Improved Overrun helps overruns. If you just want to knock someone over, that's what the trip action is for.

Improved Sunder: Sunder seems like a great tactic, better when used by heavy hitters such as cavalry, heavy infantry, and the occasional beefy skirmisher. The way the rules are set up, hitting and destroying a piece of equipment is easy. The only annoying part is the attack of opportunity the special attack provokes. This takes care of that problem easily. Considering that the only feat prerequisite is Power Attack, itself a useful feat for heavy hitters (not to mention one which potentially augments the results of a successful sunder attempt), Improved Sunder is a good value, right?

This is all true. However, any time you destroy a piece of equipment on the battlefield, you destroy a part of your treasure. Say the big scary ogre fights with a +2 *greatclub* and is making mince meat out of your frontline. Do you sunder? Hell no. Disarm, trip, or anything else achieves a similar result, putting the opponent at a disadvantage, while keeping that tasty 2,000+ gp intact. Say you're fighting a bunch of orcs. Do you sunder their weapons or do you hack them apart? I think the answer is obvious. The only time to use sunder is when your opponent is using an item of no value to you, such as an evil weapon, artifact, poison and so on. Otherwise, sheathe this feat.

Toughness: Toughness is almost unequivocally one of the worst feats for any character. It is even less useful for a warrior. At low levels, the bonus hit points can be marginally useful, occasionally saving a character from going down, but as the levels increase, so do the amounts of damage dealt to your character. High level characters, especially fighters, often don't enter the dying state at all. Instead, they will frequently go from positive hit points to well below -10. As challenges rise, the warrior will feel the significance of that three-point buffer less and less. When a 14th level fighter with 30 hit points left gets roasted by a red dragon's 72-point fire attack, which will be more useful: +3 hit points, or +2 to Reflex saves?

All-Star Feats

What follows is analysis of the feats you ought to take. If it's not mentioned here or as a fool's gold feat, it's probably safe to take, but it's not going to help all that much either. Here, you're going to see all the analysis one could ever want, with tables comparing Power Attack and damage dealt to standard attacks, the effects of Combat Expertise, and great combos for the others. As feats are the bread and butter for most warriors, you'd better pay close attention. Oh, and in case I forget, the feats here are organized by tree, with the bad limbs pruned. Don't look for Weapon Focus in this chapter, as that feat tree gets some discussion under the fighter class in the Classes chapter, and Two-Weapon Fighting is under combat styles in the Combat chapter.

TABLE 5-1 IS SUPER IMPORTANT

Dog-ear this page. All of the following tables compare to the 5-1 to show the most basic chances for a warrior to hit an opponent based on BAB and AC, using a constant damage value.

TABLE 5-1: STANDARD ATTACK PROGRESSION FOR UNMODIFIED WARRIOR BAB WITH UNMODIFIED LONGSWORD

BAB	Average Damage	Typical Chance of Hitting and Damage Per Round Versus Given AC							
		15	Damage	20	Damage	25	Damage	30	Damage
+1	4.5	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+2	4.5	0.4	1.8	0.15	0.675	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+3	4.5	0.45	2.025	0.2	0.9	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+4	4.5	0.5	2.25	0.25	1.125	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+5	4.5	0.55	2.475	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+6/+1	4.5	0.95	4.275	0.45	2.025	0.15	0.675	0.1	0.45
+7/+2	4.5	0.9	4.05	0.55	2.475	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.45
+8/+3	4.5	1	4.5	0.65	2.925	0.25	1.125	0.1	0.45
+9/+4	4.5	1.1	4.95	0.75	3.375	0.3	1.35	0.1	0.45
+10/+5	4.5	1.2	5.4	0.85	3.825	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45
+11/+6/+1	4.5	1.8	8.1	1.05	4.725	0.5	2.25	0.2	0.9
+12/+7/+2	4.5	1.95	8.775	1.2	5.4	0.6	2.7	0.25	1.125
+13/+8/+3	4.5	2.1	9.45	1.35	6.075	0.7	3.15	0.3	1.35
+14/+9/+4	4.5	2.25	10.125	1.5	6.75	0.8	3.6	0.35	1.575
+15/+10/+5	4.5	2.3	10.35	1.65	7.425	0.9	4.05	0.4	1.8
+16/+11/+6/+1	4.5	2.75	12.375	1.9	8.55	1.1	4.95	0.55	2.475
+17/+12/+7/+2	4.5	2.9	13.05	2.1	9.45	1.25	5.625	0.65	2.925
+18/+13/+8/+3	4.5	3.05	13.725	2.3	10.35	1.4	6.3	0.75	3.375
+19/+14/+9/+4	4.5	3.2	14.4	2.5	11.25	1.55	6.975	0.85	3.825
+20/+15/+10/+5	4.5	3.25	14.625	2.6	11.7	1.7	7.65	0.95	4.275

How to read Table 5-1: This table isn't nearly as complicated as it looks. Let's look at the fifth line. This tells you the stats for a warrior with a BAB of +5. He's using a longsword (that's the point of the example), which does 1d8 damage on a hit. The average result for a 1d8 is 4.5, so that's the "Average Damage" column. The mess of numbers that follows is pretty straightforward. Based on the basic math for calculating hit percentages (which is explained on page 16), a fighter with a BAB of +5 has a 55% chance (or 0.55 on the table above) of hitting an AC 15 opponent. So he basically has a 55% chance of doing damage each round. Thus, we multiply the average damage (4.5) by the chance of doing damage each round (in this case 0.55) to get the typical damage per round against that AC (in this case, 2.475 points). If the +5 warrior fought an AC 15 opponent for 10 rounds, he would do, on average, 24.75 points of damage (2.475 x 10).

Right now this table might not seem too amazing, but wait till you see the comparisons that follow. Then you'll see why it's important...

Combat Expertise Tree

Number of Feats in Tree: 5

Additional Trees Required?: Yes, Dodge

Entry: Int 13

Exit: Dex 13

Archetypes: The guerilla is the most apt to take this tree, but usually can only attain the prerequisites by 4th level, if using the stat array in Chapter 1.

Combat Expertise

Many players see Combat Expertise as an awesome and easy way to boost their AC without much in the way of drawbacks, and in a party of just one character, this is true. However, by dropping your attacks to boost your AC, you reduce your chances to hit in a round, allowing the monsters more opportunities to hit you and more importantly, your allies. If your allies fall dead, you're pretty much dead meat too. The best time to use Combat Expertise is against heavy hitters with a low AC. This lets you minimize your chances of being hit, while still giving you a good chance of hitting your foe as well. Check out the comparison below. At 1st level, the warrior's AC increases by +1, +2 at 2nd, +3 at 3rd, +4 at 4th and +5 at 5th and above. His attack bonus ("Adjusted BAB" in the table) decreases by the same amount. The result is that the warrior hits about half as much as a standard warrior and does about half as much damage at the higher levels.

TREE ENTRIES EXPLAINED

Number of Feats in Tree: This is the total number of feats in the tree, including the bad ones.

Additional Trees Required?: Lists what other trees are necessary to take the whole tree, if any.

Entry: The prerequisite stat to take the first feat in the tree

Exit: The prerequisite stat to take the last feat in the tree.

Archetypes: Based on required stats, and referring to Chapter 1: Ability Scores, this lists which archetypes are likely to make use of the tree.

TABLE 5-2: MAX'D COMBAT EXPERTISE

Adjusted BAB (Expertise Mod)	Average Damage	Typical Chance of Hitting and Damage Per Round Versus Given AC							
		15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
+0 (-1)	4.5	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+0 (-2)	4.5	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+0 (-3)	4.5	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+0 (-4)	4.5	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+0 (-5)	4.5	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+1/-4 (-5)	4.5	0.45	2.025	0.15	0.675	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+2/-3 (-5)	4.5	0.4	1.8	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+3/-2 (-5)	4.5	0.5	2.25	0.25	1.125	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+4/-1 (-5)	4.5	0.6	2.7	0.3	1.35	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+5/+0 (-5)	4.5	0.7	3.15	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+6/+1/-4 (-5)	4.5	1.05	4.725	0.5	2.25	0.2	0.9	0.15	0.675
+7/+2/-3 (-5)	4.5	1.2	5.4	0.6	2.7	0.25	1.125	0.15	0.675
+8/+3/-2 (-5)	4.5	1.35	6.075	0.7	3.15	0.3	1.35	0.15	0.675
+9/+4/-1 (-5)	4.5	1.5	6.75	0.8	3.6	0.35	1.575	0.15	0.675
+10/+5/+0 (-5)	4.5	1.65	7.425	0.9	4.05	0.4	1.8	0.15	0.675
+11/+6/+1/-4 (-5)	4.5	1.9	8.55	1.1	4.95	0.55	2.475	0.25	1.125
+12/+7/+2/-3 (-5)	4.5	2.1	9.45	1.25	5.625	0.65	2.925	0.3	1.35
+13/+8/+3/-2 (-5)	4.5	2.3	10.35	1.4	6.3	0.75	3.375	0.35	1.575
+14/+9/+4/-1 (-5)	4.5	2.45	11.025	1.55	6.975	0.85	3.825	0.4	1.8
+15/+10/+5/+0 (-5)	4.5	2.6	11.7	1.7	7.65	0.95	4.275	0.45	2.025

Improved Trip

This feat is extraordinarily powerful for the right characters. Improved Trip, like Cleave, is a “reward for winning” feat. Not only does it make the mechanics of pulling off a trip maneuver more favorable for the warrior, but he also receives a bonus attack whenever he succeeds. On top of those sizeable benefits, there’s the implicit attack of opportunity the warrior will get when the poor sap tries to regain her feet. Combined with an adjacent ally, this sets the opponent up for a brutal series of attacks, with the advantage of targeting a prone opponent. You can make this just that much nastier by using it while mounted. The character gains an addition +1 for higher ground, and with a charge and a lance, let’s just say it’s over for that bad guy.

Touch attacks are a breeze against most foes, removing the opponent’s natural, armor, and shield bonus to his AC. The table below assumes the character makes the trip on the first attempt and shows the effectiveness of the second (normal) attack against the tripped sucker’s penalized AC. (Remember the –4 AC penalty for being prone in melee?) Compare this table to Table 5-1 for an accurate mechanical comparison.

The advantage of Improved Trip is obvious. You make an initial attack at a lower AC (because it’s a touch attack), then if you make the Strength check (which you get a bonus to thanks to the feat), you get a normal attack at a lower AC, plus attacks of opportunity when the guy tries to stand up. And if he doesn’t try to stand, he’s got a –4 AC and attack penalty until he does. If you think you can win that opposed Strength check, you can’t go wrong with this feat.

TABLE 5-3: THE ADVANTAGE OF IMPROVED TRIP: 2ND (NORMAL) ATTACK AGAINST TRIPPED OPPONENT

BAB	Average Damage	Typical Damage Per Round Versus Given AC at -4 Penalty							
		11 (15)	Damage	16 (20)	Damage	21 (25)	Damage	26 (30)	Damage
+1	4.5	0.55	2.475	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+2	4.5	0.6	2.7	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45	0.05	0.225
+3	4.5	0.65	2.925	0.4	1.8	0.15	0.675	0.05	0.225
+4	4.5	0.7	3.15	0.45	2.025	0.2	0.9	0.05	0.225
+5	4.5	0.75	3.375	0.5	2.25	0.25	1.125	0.05	0.225
+6/+1	4.5	1.35	6.075	0.85	3.825	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45
+7/+2	4.5	1.45	6.525	0.95	4.275	0.45	2.025	0.15	0.675
+8/+3	4.5	1.55	6.975	1.05	4.725	0.55	2.475	0.2	0.9
+9/+4	4.5	1.65	7.425	1.15	5.175	0.65	2.925	0.25	1.125
+10/+5	4.5	1.7	7.65	1.25	5.625	0.75	3.375	0.3	1.35
+11/+6/+1	4.5	2.3	10.35	1.65	7.425	0.9	4.05	0.4	1.8
+12/+7/+2	4.5	2.4	10.8	1.8	8.1	1.05	4.725	0.5	2.25
+13/+8/+3	4.5	2.5	11.25	1.95	8.775	1.2	5.4	0.6	2.7
+14/+9/+4	4.5	2.6	11.7	2.1	9.45	1.35	6.075	0.7	3.15
+15/+10/+5	4.5	2.65	11.925	2.2	9.9	1.5	6.75	0.8	3.6
+16/+11/+6/+1	4.5	3.25	14.625	2.6	11.7	1.7	7.65	0.95	4.275
+17/+12/+7/+2	4.5	3.35	15.075	2.75	12.375	1.9	8.55	1.1	4.95
+18/+13/+8/+3	4.5	3.45	15.525	2.9	13.05	2.1	9.45	1.25	5.625
+19/+14/+9/+4	4.5	3.55	15.975	3.05	13.725	2.3	10.35	1.4	6.3
+20/+15/+10/+5	4.5	3.6	16.2	3.15	14.175	2.45	11.025	1.55	6.975

Whirlwind Attack

The big difference between Great Cleave and Whirlwind Attack is where and when you take the extra attacks. Both feats allow you to make attacks at multiple opponents, but Great Cleave requires you to drop a target, whereas Whirlwind attack allows you to take a number of attacks at all foes you threaten. While it's often best to devote your full attention to one foe at a time, dropping it before focusing on another, there is an advantage to Whirlwind Attack that Cleave just cannot give you.

When making a cleave attack, your extra free attack uses the attack modifier of the last attack made. Whirlwind Attack lets you attack all of your opponents at once with your highest attack bonus. The route to choose depends on the types of foes and your positioning in combat. If you're surrounded by a bunch of little guys, whose hit points on average are equal to or less than your maximum damage, use this feat. On the other hand, if your foes are bigger and nastier, stick with the Great Cleave option, dropping one at a time.

To demonstrate the differences, we'll run two scenarios comparing the two feats. Our hero is a 6th level human fighter surrounded by 8 bad guys with 11 hp each. Our fighter has Str 16, Dex 14, and the following feats: 1st-level: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility; 2nd-level: Power Attack; 3rd-level: Cleave; 4th-level: Spring Attack; 6th-level: Great Cleave, Whirlwind Attack. His melee attack is a *+1 greatsword* at +10/+5 melee (2d6+5/19-20), dealing 12 points of damage on average per hit. The bad guys are CR 1 gnolls (EL 6) with AC 15 and 11 hit points each. In this comparison, the gnolls surround the fighter. In the first example, the fighter uses Whirlwind Attack. In the second example, the fighter uses Great Cleave. See what happens.

Note: There's one important thing to remember with this feat: By making a Whirlwind Attack, you forfeit any extra attacks ordinarily gained by Cleave or *haste*.

Whirlwind Attack Option: The fighter makes eight separate attacks against each of the opponents. With any given attack, he should hit 80% of the time, so for eight rolls, he should hit 6.4 times, killing at least six of the gnolls.

Great Cleave Option: The fighter makes a full attack, with the same chances of hitting and killing his target as in the above example. Statistically speaking, he should hit 80% of the time with his first attack (the one at a +10 bonus). If things go well, he'll hit with 80% of his first five attacks; and if things go really well, he'll hit with the first four attack rolls, meaning he drops a gnoll with his normal attack then kills three more with a cleave. But after missing that fifth roll (which, statistically, he will), he has to start using his second attack (the one with a +5 bonus), which only has a 55% chance to hit. He has only slightly more than a 50/50 chance of getting a cleave on this next attack. Over the course of three swings at the

remaining three gnolls, he'll hit 1.65 times, likely killing a fifth gnoll, but not a sixth.

In short, against the gnolls, this fighter did far better with Whirlwind, able to drop at least one more opponent. The same chances are basically there for the Great Cleave option, and for lucky characters, they very well could kill off all the bad guys with great rolls. Nevertheless, statistically, the Whirlwind Attack character hits and kills more foes than the Great Cleave character.

Dodge Tree

Number of Feats in Tree: 3

Additional Trees Required?: No

Entry: Dex 13

Exit: Dex 13

Archetypes: Archers, guerillas and skirmishers all do well with this feat tree, being able to spend feats on this tree at 1st level.

Dodge

Dodge has limited applications for characters fighting in the heart of the conflict. Ultimately, Dodge is less useful than Combat Expertise, though Dodge does not require the character to sacrifice anything for her dodge bonus. The good news, however, is that dodge bonuses stack and this feat can be used in conjunction with Combat Expertise.

The lure of Dodge comes from the fact that it is a prerequisite for both Mobility and Spring Attack. Before moving down that path, be sure to analyze both of those feats for their genuine usefulness for your character. If you don't plan to purchase either of those feats further down the road, it is hard to recommend Dodge.

Table 5-4 (following page) shows how many hits you should take per round, based on your AC and your opponent's attack modifier. To calculate how many hits you'll take over multiple rounds, simply multiply the fraction by the number of rounds of combat. For example, Rex the Barbarian has AC 18. The monster has a melee attack bonus of +4. Looking at the table, that means the monster will hit 0.35 times per round on average. Over five rounds of combat, Rex should take 1.75 hits or, rounding off, 2 hits. If Rex has the Dodge feat, his AC climbs to 19. Over five rounds, Rex would instead take 1.5 hits, rounding off, probably only 1 hit. But the statistical difference is slight – generally only a 5% reduction in the chance of taking a hit each round. You have to go through twenty monster attacks before this feat has statistically really helped you.

Mobility

Ideal for archers and skirmishers, useful for heavy and light infantry, Mobility has only one, mildly useful, prerequisite: Dodge. Archers and skirmishers find they often need Mobility to get away from melee opponents, and the infantry characters will often have to deal with covering large threatened areas to reach a target. Cavalry characters are better off using their Ride skill to take cover when they are attacked while moving into and through threatened spaces. Guerillas typically will not face extraordinarily dangerous melee opponents, though they may find Mobility useful if they are regularly harassed on their way to more important targets.

When using this feat, it is important to specify the most dangerous adjacent melee opponent as your Dodge target for the round. This effectively changes your dodge bonus to armor class to +5 when that opponent takes her attack of opportunity against you.

To see the effects of Mobility, simply refer to Table 5-4 and adjust your AC up by 4 for attacks of opportunity, or 5 for AoOs made by your Dodge target.

Spring Attack

Spring Attack is less of a warrior feat and more of a combat rogue feat, but it does have occasional uses for guerillas, skirmishers, and some light infantry characters. The drawback to Spring Attack is that it sacrifices a full attack action for a move and a standard attack. Though this may be fine for low-level characters, the feat becomes less useful at higher levels, where iterative attacks are important. On the other hand, if you know you have to move through the enemy's front ranks, you can use Spring Attack to move, engage, and then move past the defender to get to the real target. This allows you to make an attack, and keep moving towards your goal.

In perfect circumstances, a heavy infantry character

TABLE 5-4: CHANCES OF A HIT BASED ON YOUR AC AND ENEMY'S ATTACK MODIFIER

Enemy Attack	Your AC															
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
+0	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2	0.15	0.1	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
+1	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2	0.15	0.1	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
+2	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2	0.15	0.1	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
+3	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2	0.15	0.1	0.05	0.05	0.05
+4	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2	0.15	0.1	0.05	0.05
+5	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2	0.15	0.1	0.05
+6	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2	0.15	0.1
+7	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2	0.15
+8	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25	0.2
+9	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3	0.25
+10	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35	0.3
+11	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4	0.35
+12	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45	0.4
+13	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5	0.45
+14	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55	0.5
+15	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6	0.55
+16	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65	0.6
+17	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7	0.65
+18	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75	0.7
+19	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8	0.75
+20	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.85	0.8

would be able to tackle the hard-hitting opponents by herself, but sometimes that isn't possible. Also, the light infantry character may be the only true warrior in the party. In those circumstances, Spring Attack may be useful. Skirmishers and guerillas, who often have to move into, through, and out of threatened areas, also find the feat useful, but still not consistently.

If a player finds the need to be in multiple places at once on the battlefield, constantly harassing a number of opponents, try to think of the Spring Attack's movement like a knight's chess piece. Bounce off the initial target then hop next to another enemy to threaten them. If the warrior needs to move out of that threatened space on the next turn, the player can assign her character's Dodge bonus to the threatening character, leaving the Mobility bonus to help deflect the majority of the potential hazards. However, movement from Spring Attack never provokes AoOs from the defender. If used in this way, the player will have to think ahead of the turn, much like the cavalry players employing Ride-By Attack. Given room to move, the warrior can also cause dread and apprehension in a number of weaker opponents, employing the same tactics as used in the classic chess maneuver known as the knight's fork (see sidebar).

Improved Unarmed Strike Tree

Number of Feats in Tree: 5

Additional Trees Required?: No

Entry: None

Exit: Dex 15, Wis 13

Archetypes: In a perfect world, an archer should never be in a situation where he would use these feats. However, he meets the prerequisites, and Improved Unarmed Strike is useful when the bad guys close on his position, letting the archer drop his bow as a free action and lash out with an unarmed full attack that doesn't provoke an AoO. Light infantry, especially monks who get many of these feats free, do well with this tree, as do skirmishers, though they have to divert some of the ability score improvements to Wisdom to exit the tree.

Improved Unarmed Strike

This feat only ever comes into play if your character is disarmed. Otherwise, you probably won't see much use out of it unless you're a monk. The good news is that you're never, ever disarmed. Having your hands free helps with grab attacks, and is great for grappling, letting you deal lethal damage instead of nonlethal and more. However, unless you have the monk's ever-increasing damage die for these attacks, a weapon is your best bet for fighting.

The Rest of the Tree

The other feats in this tree are self-explanatory. No one complains when they can automatically deflect a ranged weapon, or catch the weapon and hurl it back from whence it came. Improved Grapple is cool as a defensive measure to stave off being swallowed whole and the like. Moreover, even Stunning Fist isn't too bad. The big problem, though, is that if you're attracted to these feats, just go after the monk class and don't waste your time here as one of the other archetype characters. Dabbling in one or two here is okay, but this should not be the first feat tree selected for any non-monk warrior.

THE KNIGHT'S GUERILLA'S FORK

In chess, there is a common maneuver employed with the knight piece called the "knight's fork." Knights are peculiar in chess because they can jump over pieces on their moves. They must always move in an "L" shape: two spaces forward, one space over. Because of this, knights are impossible to contain using other pieces as barriers. They can only be contained strategically. It is dangerous to let an enemy knight hop around in a section of the board densely populated with your pieces. If the knight gets into a sweet spot, it can effectively threaten one, two, or even three pieces without fear of immediate capture or reprisal. This is the danger of the fork: it forces the defender to make difficult decisions. Lose your bishop or lose your rook? No player wants to decide, because either choice results in a painful loss.

Highly mobile guerillas (especially monks) and some light infantry characters can also force the enemy to make difficult decisions. If the guerilla makes effective use of their movement rate in conjunction with the Tumble skill and the Mobility and Spring Attack feats, they can put themselves in positions where they have the option of attacking different opponents from round to round. Normally, the "whittle down" method of attacking opponents is not preferred to simply beating one opponent to death round after round, but showing yourself to be a potent threat to multiple targets at once can quickly put the enemy on the defensive. Instead of assuming that you won't attack or assuming that they'll get in a solid attack of opportunity, enemies will start to ready actions, move to engage, or try to move to a safe distance. You are forcing them to react to what you might do instead of what you will do. When you accomplish that, you are not only wasting their time, but dictating their actions. The warrior who dictates the actions of her opponents gains a significant measure of control over the battle at hand.

Mounted Combat Tree

Number of Feats in Tree: 5

Additional Trees Required?: No

Entry: None

Exit: None

Archetypes: Cavalry, of course, should put every available feat into this tree.

Mounted Combat

A must for any cavalry character, Mounted Combat is both useful and the foundation for all other cavalry-oriented feats. With the exception of archers, it is rare that any other warrior archetype is more annoying than cavalry. Given that after a few levels a cavalry warrior is more difficult to kill than her mount, the mount will eventually be the object of enemy ire. Mounted Combat and a high Ride skill can help keep the cavalry warrior's trusty steed safe from any harm requiring an attack roll.

Mounted Archery

Not only is this feat great for cavalry, it also enhances the usefulness of the archer, for what's worse than a highly mobile archer on the battlefield? Combine this with Shot on the Run, yikes! Few creatures can match pace with a running warhorse, much less actually close to melee. A -4 penalty is still hefty, but when compared to the -8 default penalty, it isn't bad at all. And remember: it's the mount that's taking the move action. A warrior shooting from a moving mount can take full round actions.

To see just how cool this feat is, compare firing from the back of the mount normally to firing from the back of the mount with Mounted Archery, as shown on Table 5-5 (facing page). The tables assume the archer uses a long-bow. As you can see, it makes a difference, adding up to a full point of damage per round on average. The difference is even more dramatic when the mount is running.

Ride-By Attack

Perhaps the most annoying of all cavalry-related feats, Ride-By Attack gives the clever player almost free reign (no pun intended) to harass opponents otherwise occupied on the battlefield. The question for cavalry players should not be, "Should I take Ride-By Attack?" but rather, "How do I effectively use Ride-By Attack?"

The key to successful use of Ride-By Attack lies in moving in the right direction to the right distance. Think of your cavalry warrior's position as you would think of the cue ball in a game of pool. It's not enough to simply hit a ball and knock it off of the table; you need to position your warrior for the next round of attacks. Remember,

Ride-By Attack can only be used in conjunction with a charge. You need a minimum of 10 feet for the charge, but have a maximum of twice your mount's movement. When choosing your target for the round at hand, think about where the enemies may be next round and what spaces you can move to at the end of this round. Ideally, at the end of every Ride-By Attack, you should be in a position that will potentially allow you to do a Ride-By Attack on two enemies. This makes it almost impossible for the enemies to predict whom you are going to attack. As a result, if they choose to ready actions against you, at least one of them will waste their turn.

Another optimal choice for employing Ride-By Attack is attacking on the flanked side of an opponent. Ideally, the cavalry character should make her charges perpendicular to the standard advances of enemies and allies. Once two enemies meet in melee, they will often retain that facing. This gives the cavalry warrior repeated opportunities to ride perpendicular to the enemy's facing and strike from the space opposite their ally. Combined with the bonus from charge, this gives the warrior a respectable +4 attack bonus.

Point Blank Shot Tree

Number of Feats in Tree: 7

Additional Trees Required?: Yes, Dodge

Entry: None

Exit: Dex 19

Archetypes: Archers naturally advance in this feat, but many guerillas benefit from the added options the archery tree represents. Skirmishers and light infantry come next, seeing as they rely on high Dexterity for protection and versatility. Heavy infantry and most cavalry do not derive much benefit from these feats.

Point Blank Shot

This one's a no-brainer. Though Point Blank Shot's benefits only apply within 30 feet, much of your adventuring takes place in areas no larger than this. Further, it is the prerequisite for every other archery-related feat in the PHB. Because the bonus applies to both attack and damage rolls, and can be used with any ranged or thrown weapons, it is far better than the weapon-specific Weapon Focus feat (+1 to attack at any range). Compare Table 5-6 (on page 48) to Table 5-1 to see the benefits of Point Blank Shot in action. Both the attack bonus and average damage are higher at every step of the way.

Rapid Shot and Manyshot

Rapid Shot is a valuable feat for archers and sometimes for skirmishers. Though the character takes a -2 penalty to all attacks, this is really no worse than a monk's flurry of blows ability. The potential for an extra arrow's

TABLE 5-5: MOUNTED ARCHERY COMPARISONS

Double Move with No Feat (-4 penalty)

Attack Bonus	Average Damage	Typical Damage Per Round Versus Given AC							
		15	Damage	20	Damage	25	Damage	30	Damage
-3	4.5	0.15	0.675	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
-2	4.5	0.2	0.9	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
-1	4.5	0.25	1.125	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+0	4.5	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+1	4.5	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+2/-3	4.5	0.55	2.475	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+3/-2	4.5	0.5	2.25	0.25	1.125	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+4/-1	4.5	0.6	2.7	0.25	1.125	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+5/0	4.5	0.7	3.15	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+6/+1	4.5	0.8	3.6	0.45	2.025	0.15	0.675	0.1	0.45
+7/+2/-3	4.5	1.2	5.4	0.6	2.7	0.25	1.125	0.15	0.675
+8/+3/-2	4.5	1.35	6.075	0.7	3.15	0.3	1.35	0.15	0.675
+9/+4/-1	4.5	1.5	6.75	0.8	3.6	0.35	1.575	0.15	0.675
+10/+5/+0	4.5	1.65	7.425	0.9	4.05	0.4	1.8	0.15	0.675
+11/+6/+1	4.5	1.9	8.55	1.05	4.725	0.5	2.25	0.2	0.9
+12/+7/+2/-3	4.5	2.1	9.45	1.25	5.625	0.65	2.925	0.3	1.35
+13/+8/+3/-2	4.5	2.3	10.35	1.4	6.3	0.75	3.375	0.35	1.575
+14/+9/+4/-1	4.5	2.45	11.025	1.55	6.975	0.85	3.825	0.4	1.8
+15/+10/+5/+0	4.5	2.6	11.7	1.7	7.65	0.95	4.275	0.45	2.025
+16/+11/+6/+1	4.5	2.75	12.375	2	9	1.1	4.95	0.55	2.475

Double Move with Mounted Archery Feat (-2 Penalty)

Attack Bonus	Average Damage	Typical Damage Per Round Versus Given AC							
		15	Damage	20	Damage	25	Damage	30	Damage
-1	4.5	0.25	1.125	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+0	4.5	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+1	4.5	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+2	4.5	0.4	1.8	0.15	0.675	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+3	4.5	0.45	2.025	0.2	0.9	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225
+4/-1	4.5	0.75	3.375	0.3	1.35	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+5/+0	4.5	0.7	3.15	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45	0.1	0.45
+6/+1	4.5	0.8	3.6	0.45	2.025	0.15	0.675	0.1	0.45
+7/+2	4.5	0.9	4.05	0.45	2.025	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.45
+8/+3	4.5	1	4.5	0.65	2.925	0.25	1.125	0.1	0.45
+9/+4/-1	4.5	1.5	6.75	0.8	3.6	0.35	1.575	0.15	0.675
+10/+5/+0	4.5	1.65	7.425	0.9	4.05	0.4	1.8	0.15	0.675
+11/+6/+1	4.5	1.8	8.1	1.05	4.725	0.5	2.25	0.15	0.675
+12/+7/+2	4.5	1.95	8.775	1.2	5.4	0.6	2.7	0.15	0.675
+13/+8/+3	4.5	2.1	9.45	1.35	6.075	0.7	3.15	0.3	1.35
+14/+9/+4/-1	4.5	2.45	11.025	1.55	6.975	0.85	3.825	0.4	1.8
+15/+10/+5/+0	4.5	2.6	11.7	1.7	7.65	0.95	4.275	0.45	2.025
+16/+11/+6/+1	4.5	2.75	12.375	1.9	8.55	1.1	4.95	0.5	2.25
+17/+12/+7/+2	4.5	2.9	13.05	2.1	9.45	1.25	5.625	0.55	2.475
+18/+13/+8/+3	4.5	3.05	13.725	2.3	10.35	1.4	6.3	0.75	3.375

damage is high for the dedicated archer, and the archer always has the option of not utilizing the feat against well-armored opponents. Though it may seem that Rapid Shot is eventually rendered obsolete by Manyshot, Rapid Shot will always be able to provide an additional attack and a higher average attack bonus. For example, a 16th level fighter using Rapid Shot can attack at +14/+14/+9/+4/-1 and not move or she can attack with Manyshot at +8/+8/+8/+8 and still retain a move. Use Rapid Shot when you want to take a full round action and use Manyshot when you can only get off a standard attack.

Manyshot is a perfect fit for many archers. But before you jump all over this feat, you should be aware of its inherent costs and limitations. First, it has two feat prerequisites in addition to its Dexterity requirements. Both are useful feats, but neither of them is Precise Shot. You'll need Precise Shot for your archer to make good use of this feat. Because the maximum range at which Manyshot can be effective is 30 feet, it's quite likely that any targets the archer uses Manyshot against are probably closing to melee, if not already in it.

The major benefit of Manyshot is not its multiple attacks, but the fact that its multiple attacks are performed as a standard action. One attack roll, up to four arrows, and the attacker can still take a move action! However, as can

be seen on Table 5-7, Rapid Shot is the superior fighting technique.

Power Attack Tree

Number of Feats in Tree: 6

Additional Trees Required?: No

Entry: Str 13

Exit: None

Archetypes: Cavalry, guerrillas, heavy infantry, and skirmishers all benefit from selecting this feat tree. Of the four, however, only the heavy infantry should focus on Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, and Improved Sunder, as they are the archetype most likely to use these feats.

Power Attack

When players think of the typical power-attacking warrior, they imagine a knight in full plate armor using a greatsword to slice through some poor sap. In practice, heavy infantry are just behind archers in having the fewest opportunities to use the feat. Heavy infantry and, to a lesser extent, light infantry, are the characters most

TABLE 5-6: POINT BLANK SHOT

Adjusted BAB	Average Damage	Typical Damage Per Round Versus Given AC							
		15	Damage	20	Damage	25	Damage	30	Damage
+2	5.5	0.4	2.2	0.15	0.825	0.05	0.275	0.05	0.275
+3	5.5	0.45	2.475	0.2	1.1	0.05	0.275	0.05	0.275
+4	5.5	0.5	2.75	0.25	1.375	0.05	0.275	0.05	0.275
+5	5.5	0.55	3.025	0.3	1.65	0.05	0.275	0.05	0.275
+6	5.5	0.6	3.3	0.35	1.925	0.1	0.55	0.05	0.275
+7/+2	5.5	1.05	5.775	0.55	3.025	0.2	1.1	0.1	0.55
+8/+3	5.5	1	5.5	0.65	3.575	0.25	1.375	0.1	0.55
+9/+4	5.5	1.1	6.05	0.75	4.125	0.3	1.65	0.1	0.55
+10/+5	5.5	1.2	6.6	0.85	4.675	0.35	1.925	0.1	0.55
+11/+6	5.5	1.3	7.15	0.95	5.225	0.45	2.475	0.15	0.825
+12/+7/+2	5.5	1.95	10.725	1.2	6.6	0.6	3.3	0.25	1.375
+13/+8/+3	5.5	2.1	11.55	1.35	7.425	0.7	3.85	0.3	1.65
+14/+9/+4	5.5	2.2	12.1	1.5	8.25	0.8	4.4	0.35	1.925
+15/+10/+5	5.5	2.3	12.65	1.65	9.075	0.9	4.95	0.4	2.2
+16/+11/+6	5.5	2.4	13.2	1.8	9.9	1.05	5.775	0.5	2.75
+17/+12/+7/+2	5.5	2.9	15.95	2.1	11.55	1.25	6.875	0.65	3.575
+18/+13/+8/+3	5.5	3.05	16.775	2.3	12.65	1.4	7.7	0.75	4.125
+19/+14/+9/+4	5.5	3.15	17.325	2.45	13.475	1.55	8.525	0.85	4.675
+20/+15/+10/+5	5.5	3.25	17.875	2.6	14.3	1.7	9.35	0.95	5.225
+21/+16/+11/+6	5.5	3.35	18.425	2.75	15.125	1.9	10.45	1.1	6.05

TABLE 5-7: RAPID SHOT AND MANYSHOT COMPARISON

(INCLUDING MODIFIERS FROM POINT BLANK SHOT)

Rapid Shot

Adjusted BAB	Average Damage	Typical Damage Per Round Versus Given AC							
		15 Damage	20 Damage	25 Damage	30 Damage				
+0/+0	5.5	0.6	3.3	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55
+1/+1	5.5	0.7	3.85	0.2	1.1	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55
+2/+2	5.5	0.8	4.4	0.3	1.65	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55
+3/+3	5.5	0.9	4.95	0.4	2.2	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55
+4/+4	5.5	1	5.5	0.5	2.75	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55
+5/+5/+0	5.5	1.4	7.7	0.65	3.575	0.15	0.825	0.15	0.825
+6/+6/+1	5.5	1.55	8.525	0.8	4.4	0.25	1.375	0.15	0.825
+7/+7/+2	5.5	1.7	9.35	0.95	5.225	0.35	1.925	0.15	0.825
+8/+8/+3	5.5	1.85	10.175	1.1	6.05	0.45	2.475	0.15	0.825
+9/+9/+4	5.5	2	11	1.25	6.875	0.55	3.025	0.15	0.825
+10/+10/+5/+0	5.5	2.45	13.475	1.45	7.975	0.7	3.85	0.2	1.1
+11/+11/+6/+1	5.5	2.65	14.575	1.65	9.075	0.85	4.675	0.3	1.65
+12/+12/+7/+2	5.5	2.85	15.675	1.85	10.175	1	5.5	0.4	2.2
+13/+13/+8/+3	5.5	3.05	16.775	2.05	11.275	1.15	6.325	0.5	2.75
+14/+14/+9/+4	5.5	3.15	17.325	2.25	12.375	1.3	7.15	0.6	3.3
+15/+15/+10/+5/+0	5.5	3.55	19.525	2.5	13.75	1.5	8.25	0.75	4.125
+16/+16/+11/+6/+1	5.5	3.7	20.35	2.75	15.125	1.7	9.35	0.9	4.95
+17/+17/+13/+7/+2	5.5	3.9	21.45	3.05	16.775	1.95	10.725	1.1	6.05
+18/+18/+14/+8/+3	5.5	4	22	3.3	18.15	2.15	11.825	1.25	6.875
+19/+19/+15/+9/+4	5.5	4.1	22.55	3.45	18.975	2.35	12.925	1.4	7.7

Manyslot

Adjusted BAB	Average Damage	Typical Damage Per Round Versus Given AC							
		15 Damage	20 Damage	25 Damage	30 Damage				
+2	5.5	0.4	2.2	0.15	0.825	0.05	0.275	0.05	0.275
+3	5.5	0.45	2.475	0.2	1.1	0.05	0.275	0.05	0.275
+4	5.5	0.5	2.75	0.25	1.375	0.05	0.275	0.05	0.275
+5	5.5	0.55	3.025	0.3	1.65	0.05	0.275	0.05	0.275
+6	5.5	0.6	3.3	0.35	1.925	0.1	0.55	0.05	0.275
+3/+3	5.5	0.9	0	0.4	2.2	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55
+4/+4	5.5	1	5.5	0.5	2.75	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55
+5/+5	5.5	1.1	6.05	0.6	3.3	0.1	0.55	0.1	0.55
+6/+6	5.5	1.2	6.6	0.7	3.85	0.2	1.1	0.1	0.55
+7/+7	5.5	1.3	7.15	0.8	4.4	0.3	1.65	0.1	0.55
+6/+6/+6	5.5	1.8	9.9	1.05	5.775	0.3	1.65	0.15	0.825
+7/+7/+7	5.5	1.95	10.725	1.2	6.6	0.45	2.475	0.15	0.825
+8/+8/+8	5.5	2.1	11.55	1.35	7.425	0.6	3.3	0.15	0.825
+9/+9/+9	5.5	2.25	12.375	1.5	8.25	0.75	4.125	0.15	0.825
+10/+10/+10	5.5	2.4	13.2	1.65	9.075	0.9	4.95	0.15	0.825
+9/+9/+9/+9	5.5	3	16.5	2	11	1	5.5	0.2	1.1
+10/+10/+10/+10	5.5	3.2	17.6	2.2	12.1	1.2	6.6	0.2	1.1
+11/+11/+11/+11	5.5	3.4	18.7	2.4	13.2	1.4	7.7	0.4	2.2
+12/+12/+12/+12	5.5	3.6	19.8	2.6	14.3	1.6	8.8	0.6	3.3
+13/+13/+13/+13	5.5	3.8	20.9	2.8	15.4	1.8	9.9	0.8	4.4

likely to be engaged by opposition heavy infantry and light infantry characters. Typically, the armor classes of those enemies will be too high for the warrior to sacrifice any significant attack bonus for damage. When you consider the inherent penalties of iterative attacks, dropping five points of attack bonus when going up against a blue dragon doesn't seem like a good plan.

Skirmishers and guerillas, on the other hand, often find themselves attacking characters with low armor classes. Whether they're wheezing old sorcerers trying to hide in the corner or a swarm of annoying kobold runts, Power Attack can help make quick work of their easily-struck hides. Cavalry characters may also find use in Power Attack if they have the space and range to choose poorly armored targets on a battlefield. Power Attack combined with a timely Ride-By Attack can take the wind out of anyone's sails.

Unfortunately, though heavy infantry may not find much use for Power Attack at higher levels, it is the prerequisite for a large number of traditional heavy infantry feats.

Players will have to decide if the long-term depreciation of the feat is an acceptable price for the feats her character needs.

The real question when using Power Attack is, "How much attack bonus should I trade off?" It depends on your base attack bonus and the enemy's AC. Don't worry, we've done the math for you! Tables 5-8 and 5-9 show how to max out Power Attack. First, Table 5-8 gives a numerical analysis of using Power Attack to varying degrees against enemies of different ACs. The table assumes the warrior wields the weapon in two hands to get the better damage. Strength modifiers to hit and damage are not included.

From Table 5-8, you can see the relationship between damage and chances of hitting. Look at the first section, which examines a 5th level fighter with a BAB of +5. Against an opponent of AC 15, he normally averages 2.475 points of damage each round. If he power attacks for +1, his chance of hitting drops from 0.55 to 0.5, but his base damage rises to 6.5, resulting in average damage

TABLE 5-8: AVERAGE DAMAGE FROM POWER ATTACK

		Average Damage Per Round Versus Given AC									
BAB		Base	AC	Average	AC	Average	AC	Average	AC	Average	
		Damage	15	Damage	20	Damage	25	Damage	30	Damage	
Ftr 5	+5	4.5	0.55	2.475	0.3	1.35	0.05	0.225	0.05	0.225	
<i>BAB Adjusted with Power Attack:</i>											
	+4 (-1 to attack)	6.5	0.5	3.25	0.25	1.625	0.05	0.325	0.05	0.325	
	+3 (-2 to attack)	8.5	0.45	3.825	0.2	1.7	0.05	0.425	0.05	0.425	
	+2 (-3 to attack)	10.5	0.4	4.2	0.15	1.575	0.05	0.525	0.05	0.525	
	+1 (-4 to attack)	12.5	0.35	4.375	0.1	1.25	0.05	0.625	0.05	0.625	
	+0 (-5 to attack)	14.5	0.3	4.35	0.05	0.725	0.05	0.725	0.05	0.725	
Ftr 10	+10/+5	4.5	1.35	6.075	0.85	3.825	0.35	1.575	0.1	0.45	
<i>BAB Adjusted with Power Attack:</i>											
	+9/+4 (-1 to attack)	6.5	1.25	8.125	0.75	4.875	0.3	1.95	0.1	0.65	
	+8/+3 (-2 to attack)	8.5	1.15	9.775	0.65	5.525	0.25	2.125	0.1	0.85	
	+7/+2 (-3 to attack)	10.5	1.05	11.025	0.55	5.775	0.2	2.1	0.1	1.05	
	+6/+1 (-4 to attack)	12.5	0.95	11.875	0.45	5.625	0.15	1.875	0.1	1.25	
	+5/+0 (-5 to attack)	14.5	0.85	12.325	0.35	5.075	0.1	1.45	0.1	1.45	
Ftr 15	+15/+10/+5	4.5	2.3	10.35	1.65	7.425	0.9	4.05	0.4	1.8	
<i>BAB Adjusted with Power Attack:</i>											
	+14/+9/+4 (-1 to attack)	6.5	2.2	14.3	1.5	9.75	0.8	5.2	0.35	2.275	
	+13/+8/+3 (-2 to attack)	8.5	2.1	17.85	1.35	11.475	0.7	5.95	0.3	2.55	
	+12/+7/+2 (-3 to attack)	10.5	1.95	20.475	1.2	12.6	0.6	6.3	0.25	2.625	
	+11/+6/+1 (-4 to attack)	12.5	1.8	22.5	1.05	13.125	0.5	6.25	0.2	2.5	
	+10/+5/+0 (-5 to attack)	14.5	1.65	23.925	0.9	13.05	0.4	5.8	0.15	2.175	
Ftr 20	+20/+15/+10/+5	4.5	3.25	14.625	2.6	11.7	1.4	6.3	0.95	4.275	
<i>BAB Adjusted with Power Attack:</i>											
	+19/+14/+9/+4 (-1 to attack)	6.5	3.15	20.475	2.45	15.925	1.3	8.45	0.85	5.525	
	+18/+13/+8/+3 (-2 to attack)	8.5	3.05	25.925	2.3	19.55	1.2	10.2	0.75	6.375	
	+17/+12/+7/+2 (-3 to attack)	10.5	2.95	30.975	2.15	22.575	1.1	11.55	0.65	6.825	
	+16/+11/+6/+1 (-4 to attack)	12.5	2.85	35.625	2	25	1	12.5	0.55	6.875	
	+15/+10/+5/+0 (-5 to attack)	14.5	2.75	39.875	1.85	26.825	0.9	13.05	0.45	6.525	

TABLE 5-9: SUGGESTED POWER ATTACKS

One Handed: Take the indicated penalty to attack against the given AC to maximize average damage

AC	BAB																			
	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8	+9	+10	+11	+12	+13	+14	+15	+16	+17	+18	+19	+20
10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13	13
11	1	2	3	4	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13
12	1	2	3	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12
13	1	2	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12
14	1	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11
15	1	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11
16	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10
17	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10
18	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9
19	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9
20	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8
21	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8
22	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7
23	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7
24	1	2	3	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6
25	1	2	3	4	5	6	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6
26	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5
27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5
28	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4
29	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4
30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3

Two Handed: Take the indicated penalty to attack against the given AC to maximize average damage

AC	BAB																			
	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8	+9	+10	+11	+12	+13	+14	+15	+16	+17	+18	+19	+20
10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13	13	14	14
11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13	13	14
12	1	2	3	4	5	5	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13	13
13	1	2	3	4	5	5	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13
14	1	2	3	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12
15	1	2	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	12
16	1	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11
17	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11
18	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10
19	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10
20	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9
21	1	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9
22	1	2	3	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8
23	1	2	3	4	5	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8
24	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7
25	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7
26	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6
27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6
28	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5
29	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	2	2	3	3	4	5	5
30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	2	2	3	3	4

of 3.25 per round. In this example, the optimal combination of attack bonus and base damage is taking a -4 to attack, resulting in a net attack bonus of +1. That gives him a lower chance of hitting (only 0.35) but because his base damage rises to a whopping 12.5, he'll do an average of 4.375 damage each round - 75% higher than an unpowered attack! The result for taking -5 causes even more damage, but the lower chance of hitting results in a slightly lower average damage.

The really interesting part of Table 5-8 is the impact of Power Attack against foes with high ACs. If you're fighting an enemy who you can only hit with a natural 20, then why not go full Power Attack? It won't affect your chances of hitting! Look again at the 5th level fighter. His best option for Power Attacking foes of AC 25 and AC 30 is to go the full +5, since it has no impact on his chances of hitting but causes substantially more damage if he actually hits.

Table 5-8 isn't meant to be a complete analysis of every possible Power Attack. Instead, it shows you a slice of data at several different points. Table 5-9 takes this information and compiles it into a complete reference table for use in your games.

Table 5-9 is everything you'll ever need to Power Attack with confidence. By cross-referencing your BAB with your opponent's AC, Table 5-9 shows you the number you should subtract from your attack roll to get the statistically maximum average damage. For example, a warrior with BAB +10 fighting one-handed against a monster of AC 14 should swap 6 points of attack for damage. (Note that there are two tables, for one-handed and two-handed attacks; make sure you're looking at the right one.) This recommended Power Attack figure is based on the same chance-of-hitting-and-base-damage analysis you see in Table 5-8, but adapted to every possible combination of AC and BAB. You don't get the "guts" of the calculations, but you don't need them; all you really need to know is that you if you use the number on the table, you'll be in line to do the statistically maximum amount of damage that you can possibly do. These tables consider single attacks for one-handed weapons and two-handed weapons. Strength and other enhancements to damage are not included, but since they are uniform across all possible Power Attack options, they don't affect the calculations. You should include bonuses to attack when you look up your BAB - for example, if your BAB is +4 and you have a +1 weapon and a 16 Strength (+3 bonus), use the column for a +8 BAB (+4 +1 +3 = +8).

Dog-ear the page with Table 5-9. Trust me, if you have Power Attack you will use this table - a lot.

Cleave and Great Cleave

Who doesn't love a free attack? This feat is most worthwhile for heavy infantry, light infantry, and skirmishers. Archers won't make use of it, cavalry often take up too much space to threaten multiple opponents, and guerillas usually pursue single targets. Think of Cleave as a reward for winning. The more often you down opponents in the thick of melee, the more often you will be rewarded. Unlike Combat Reflexes, this feat does not require the enemy to *let you* use it. The skirmisher may wind up making the greatest use of the Cleave feat if they work "cleanup," picking off groups of low level punks while a heavy infantry warrior takes on the tough guys. If you play a "head for the boss" type of character, this feat may be underused. For best tactical advantage, use it against the weakest of all threatened opponents first. The quicker they go down, the quicker you can use your free attack against the toughest hombra in the mix.

Great Cleave and Power Attack with a two-handed weapon allow you to mop up the floor with all but the biggest and toughest monsters in the game. For example, assume your 8th-level barbarian (BAB +8) is raging and now has a 21 Strength (+5 bonus). He wields a two-handed greatsword dealing 2d6+7 points of damage. Now, this barbarian faces off against a bunch of ogres, each with AC 16 and 29 hit points. Using Table 5-9, the barbarian should Power Attack for 8, reducing his attack modifier to +5. (See Table 5-9 to understand this calculation: BAB +8 plus +5 for Strength = adjusted BAB of +13, cross-referenced against AC 16 on the two-handed part of Table 5-9.) If he hits, he deals thirty points of damage on average (the normal 2d6+7 (average 14) plus an extra 16 for Power Attack), enough to drop a single ogre with each hit. Furthermore, he has a 50% chance to hit each ogre, good odds. (See Table 5-4: attack bonus of +5 against AC 16 means he hits 50% of the time.) More than likely, he'll cut through the ogres with little effort, and with a 50% shot with every Cleave attack, he'll probably do it on just a standard attack.

In short, Power Attack + Cleave + Great Cleave should be the basis for every high-Strength, Weapon-Focused warrior in the game.

Other Feats

Improved Critical

Another solid feat for the weapon specialists, Improved Critical is best used with weapons that already have a high threat range. However, do not let the lure of frequent critical hits blind you to the fact that often a feat like Weapon Specialization on a higher-damage, lower-threat weapon will produce more damage over time than Improved Critical on a lower-damage, higher-threat weapon.