



The Monk Major

# Monk School

(*Player's Handbook* (2014), *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* (2017))

*"The secret to true insight is to find your Ki..."*

--Ember, senior Human Monk

*"Did you check under the couch cushions? That's where I usually find mine."*

--Gimble, junior Gnome Bard

Welcome to Sigil Prep's Danica Maupoissant School of Monkly Meditation, so named because really, name another Monk with any notoriety. And that's just the point. You could study Monk in some isolated monastery where you only hang out with other monks, who are all stick-in-the-muds whose minds are stuck in their insights and who wouldn't know excitement if it blew up in their faces. Or you could go to a school full of outgoing, friendly people. Where *you* can be the stick-in-the-mud.

All Monk students have to choose a monastic tradition to follow before their second semester. This will set the path of whether you can kill with your bare hands. Or big whips you make out of water. Try doing that, Friar Tuck!

## FRESHMAN YEAR

First year Monk students are required to take Unarmored Defense, numerous Martial Arts Labs, Flurry of Blows, and "Step of the Wind" (which is how we dress up Physical Education- Running to sound appealing to you guys.

You'll also learn to deflect missiles, fall slowly, and be patient while you're defending. Which is why multiclassing from Barbarian to Monk can cause cranial explosion.

## SOPHOMORE YEAR

Second year monk students will continue their training with more martial arts, Stunning Strike (MNK 310), even more running (up walls, even), evasive attacks, and a year-long course in Purity of Body (MONK 550), which includes a monthly lemon juice fast.

## JUNIOR YEAR

As if you hadn't taken enough courses already, in Junior Year, you will, of course not only take still more martial arts and running, but you'll also have to study all the languages. All of them.

You'll also have to take Timeless Body (MNK 811), which... yeah, even a lemon juice fast isn't going to make you immortal. This one's going to be tough.

## SENIOR YEAR

If you survived this long, to graduate, your senior year includes a bit more martial arts, and so very much running. You'll finally conclude your training with Perfect Self (MNK 980) which, yeah that is a lot of lemon juice.

Upon completion, you are awarded the Bachelor of Kung-Fu Fighting degree. You are now officially fast as lightning, and a little bit frightening.

## Ember Emberl

(Human Monk, senior)

Ember is somewhat reserved and stoic, and spends a lot of time espousing various philosophical views related to her spiritual insights and meditations, but down deep, she just really wants people to ask her to go places with them. Parties and shopping. Whatever. Somewhere. It'd be nice.

But she makes such a big deal about how such things aren't important to her, people tend to take her at her word, and let her stay home to meditate. She's lonely. But she's really good at meditating.

*(Ember is based on a portrait character from Player's Handbook (2000; 2003); property of WotC)*

# Monk Career Paths

Monk Traditions are an important part of not just how you operate as an adventurer, but are a fundamental part of your core beliefs. Whether you believe in smacking people with an open hand or turning fire into snake fangs, that's up to you.

## Way of Shadow

*(Player's Handbook (2014))*

In this program, we'll teach you stealth to the point that you actually start to blend with the shadows. Literally. And teleportation. Nothing is more stealthy than not actually being there for a second.

Your courses will include Shadow Arts (MNK 220), Cloak of Shadows (MNK 611), and Opportunism- Theory and Practice (MNK 961).

## Way of the Drunken Master

*(Unearthed Arcana: a Trio of Subclasses (online download, 2017), Xanathar's Guide to Everything (2017))*

The secret here is to act drunk without actually *being* drunk. It's misdirection, you see. It's probably better if you aren't drunk, in fact. If you're really looking for a class where you drink beer, you may be looking for "Way of the Drunkard Master". That's down the hall.

Entering this program lays the foundation for the Drunken Technique, and your later training will include Topsy Swaying (MNK 307) and Intoxicated Frenzy (MNK 933). We swear we don't actually get drunk in this class.

## Way of the Four Elements

*(Player's Handbook (2014))*

Learn to bend the... wait, let's not use the word "bend". Learn to control the elements through use of your Ki, in a bending-like manner. Hone those skills over time. Perhaps with some friends, and maybe an enemy who eventually finds himself conflicted and ends up coming to terms with you, and then flash forward to a few generations later and another Monk of the Four Elements whose adventures are still pretty good, but not as well received as yours.

That could totally happen.

Whatever the case, you'll be required to take four total electives from the Disciple of the Elements course catalog, from which you can learn to control wind, breathe winter, shoot fire from your hands, or a number of other feats based on the elements. Oddly, most of the best ones are Air. Not suspicious at all, that air bent.

## Way of the Kensei

*(Unearthed Arcana: Monk (online download, 2016), Unearthed Arcana: Revised Subclasses (online download, 2017), Xanathar's Guide to Everything (2017))*

When one thinks of monks, one thinks of striking with the open fist. However, it has long been proven that it is better to strike with the open sword. We can help you with that. And. *And!* Your weapon is considered magic at 6<sup>th</sup> level. Although, if you don't have a magic weapon by 6<sup>th</sup> level anyway, you're failing at adventurer.

When you enroll in this program, you will have to take Introduction to the Path of the Kensei (MNK 244), after which you will have to take Achieving Oneness with the Blade, Blade Sharpening (get your whetstone whe... your retstone rea... whetstone whh... \*delete this line in production, Gary\*), and Unerring Accuracy (which is a heck of a promise).

## Way of the Long Death

*(Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide (2015))*

Most people make you die by killing you, but students of the Way of the Long Death kill you by making you die. No blunt trauma or open wounds for them, no sir. It's just raw death, channeled by deathness.

This program includes such courses as Touch of Death (MNK 266), Reaping and the Appropriate Hours for Doing So (MNK 393), and Touch of the Long Death (MNK 945).

## Way of the Open Hand

*(Player's Handbook (2014))*

This is now the only legal way to learn the Quivering Palm technique. You must apply for and receive a license before you can be accepted. There is a thorough background check and a psychological exam required before you can even turn in the application. You won't be turned down for any of that, we just like to have the paperwork in order. We used to teach it to all the monk students, but interplanar law has gotten tighter on these things.

This program will teach you Open Hand Bitch-Slapping, and Inner Peace and Tranquility, which go together better than you think.

## Way of the Sun Soul

*(Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide (2015), Xanathar's Guide to Everything (2017))*

Just as light can convert to heat, so too can your Ki convert to light. Just toss light around everywhere, like a human Roman candle. You may not be the smartest guy in your dorm, but you can be the brightest.

This program begins with Radiant Sun Bolt- Its Production and Uses (MNK 222) and continues through Searing Arc Strikes, and Searing Sunburst Manipulation (MNK 607). Insurance fees will be added to your tuition for this class.

## Way of Tranquility

*(Unearthed Arcana: Monk (online download, 2016))*

Night-time cough syrup. That's the way to tranquility. Or you can study a path of non-violence, peace, and healing. If you want to be *that guy*. Soaking up experience points other people earned. Frickin' pacifists. Why are you even *in* the dungeon?

Your groundwork is in Introduction to Tranquility (MNK 208), the only class you're encouraged to sleep through. You'll also study Healing Hands, Training as an Emissary of Peace, and Anger Management of a Gentle Soul.

# Way of Instant Karma

Karma is a concept stating that all the deeds we do in this life, both good and bad, will be reflected upon us in the next. It has nothing to do with some asshole breaking a carriage axle shortly after he cuts you off in traffic. But you think it does, and that's all that matters.

In fact, you're so sure that's what Karma is, you've learned to harness it this way. Instant Karma. Just add Ki points.

## **KARMIC JUSTIFICATION**

Beginning at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, whenever you roll a natural 20 on any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, you regain 1 spent Ki point. This is for actual rolls, not you just tossing d20s. And none of this sneaky "I'm going to try and climb this wall. And this one. And this one. And... Aha! A 20!" I give your DM permission to take a ki point away from you when you try this crap.

## **KARMIC RETRIBUTION**

Also starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, as a reaction when you take damage, you may spend 1 Ki point per damage die. If you do, the creature who dealt the damage to you suffers 1d6 damage per Ki point spent. You must spend Ki points equal to the dice of the attack; you cannot spend fewer or more. You add your Wisdom bonus to the roll.

This damage is of the same type as the damage done to you (bludgeoning, slashing, fire, etc.), and seems to come from ill luck. A vase may fall off a shelf onto a club-wielding assailant, doing an unusual amount of blunt damage, or a stray lightning bolt from an otherwise clear sky may strike a mage hitting you with a *shocking grasp*.

You can only use this ability if the source of the damage is a creature or person. You can't retaliate against environmental damage or falling, for instance, nor can you retaliate against traps (yet). (However, the DM may decide that you can use retribution on whoever built the damned trap; you just won't be there to see it.)

## **THE TRAP THING WE ELUDED TO EARLIER**

At 6<sup>th</sup> level and beyond, machines that inconvenience you may malfunction. When you are subject to a trap that isn't automatically disabled when set off, you may use your reaction to spend a Ki point and roll a d20. Add double your proficiency bonus (as if you had expertise) and your wisdom bonus to this roll. If it beats the DC to disable the trap, the trap becomes damaged in some manner, rendering it useless.

Note that you must have previously set off the trap to use this ability. You can't disable a trap in this manner if you haven't suffered from it.

## **IMPROVED KARMIC RETRIBUTION**

Starting at 11<sup>th</sup> level, when you use Karmic Retribution, if the damage you are reacting to also caused a condition, the target of your retribution must make a Wisdom saving throw (DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your wisdom bonus). If they fail, they suffer the same condition you did.

In addition, you may use your reaction to get retribution for a non-damaging spell that affects you. You must spend 1 Ki point per level of the spell; the caster must make a wisdom saving throw (DC

as above), or suffer the same effect. The maximum level of spell you can affect is equal to half your level, rounded down.

### **FINAL RETRIBUTION**

Beginning at 17<sup>th</sup> level, when you suffer a blow that reduces you to 0, even if it kills you instantly, you may spend 10 ki to force the attacker who fell you to make a wisdom saving throw (DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your wisdom bonus), or roll on the *reincarnate* table. No, not that one. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition AD&D Druid-version reincarnation table. The one with badgers and stags on it. If they fail the save, they are immediately polymorphed into whatever the result of the roll is.

If you (nor your DM) have the AD&D Player's Handbook, I'm sure you can find the table online somewhere.

# Way of the Tiny Dancer

Everybody has that one friend. You know the one. The guy who's roughly the size of a superhero action figure but can leap hundreds of times his height. The sort of gal who can stretch out and relax on your shoulder and use your neck as a back rest while you're walking, but if it came to it, could outrun you twice over. That buddy who thinks of pixies as "that big dude over there", but can punch an ogre unconscious. You know those guys...

Honestly, I have no idea what's going on here.

## **BONUS EXPERTISE**

When you enter this tradition at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you gain expertise in Acrobatics and Athletics and can add double your proficiency bonus when making Acrobatics and Athletics checks.

## **SIZE PREREQUISITE**

This tradition cannot be entered by characters who are size Large or larger.

## **COMPACT AWESOME I**

When you enter this tradition at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you become size Small. If you are size Medium weight is halved, and you stand between 3 and 4 feet tall. If you are already size Small (such as a Halfling or Gnome), you are noticeably smaller than you had been, but you don't change size categories.

Regardless of this, your movement speed, the distance you can jump, and the damage of your unarmed strikes do not change. None of your scores decrease.

*Difficult to target:* You gain a +1 bonus to your AC and to Dexterity saving throws, due to being hard to draw a bead on, and because you move quickly and suddenly. You *are* a dancer, after all.

## **COMPACT AWESOME II**

At 7<sup>th</sup> level, your size becomes Tiny. If you are size Small, your weight is halved and you stand between 1 and 2 feet tall. If you were already size Tiny, you are noticeably smaller, but you don't change size categories.

Again, your movement speed, jumping distance, and unarmed strike damage are not changed. Your Dexterity maximum is now 2 points higher.

Your bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws increases to +2.

## **DANCER FOR MONEY**

Not only are you a tiny dancer, you're a dancer for money. At 7<sup>th</sup> level, you'll do what they want yo... wait. \*hum, hum, hum...\* Okay, I'm confusing two songs. Never mind.

## **I CAN FIT IN THERE**

Beginning at 7<sup>th</sup> level, you always have advantage to Hide checks, unless the searcher is specifically looking for a person your size.

## **COMPACT AWESOME III**

At 11<sup>th</sup> level, your size decreases to about 6". Your weight is less than 10 lbs. If this was 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, you'd be size Diminutive, but never mind, this isn't 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

Your movement, jumping distance, and unarmed strike damage do not change. You look like you're zooming across the ground because you're so tiny and quick, and you seem to be leaping miles at a stretch.

Your bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws increases to +3.

#### **LIKE LOOKING FOR A CONTACT LENS**

Beginning at 11<sup>th</sup> level, you always have advantage in making Stealth checks to sneak past someone, unless they are specifically looking for an itty bitty person.

#### **ULTIMATE COMPACT AWESOME**

Beginning at 17<sup>th</sup> level, you stand between one and three inches tall. Your weight is less than a pound. If this was 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, you'd be size Fine.

Your movement, jumping distance, and unarmed strike damage do not change. Further, your Dexterity Maximum increases another 2 points.

# Monk Faculty

**Danica Maupoissant** [department head]

(Human Monk, Professor of Advanced Ki Techniques)

Professor Maupoissant (technically “Danica Bonaduce,” but she uses her maiden name for teaching) is a small, slight woman of good humor whom you might not expect to be a deadly hand-to-hand fighter. However, she can be quite formidable, and student would do well to avoid being a jerk to her.

Perhaps more dangerous than her deadly fists of kung-fu, however, is her barbed tongue. She is a sharp-witted insult artist, and has sent more than a few students to the burn ward.

*Text and concept by Patrick Duke*  
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