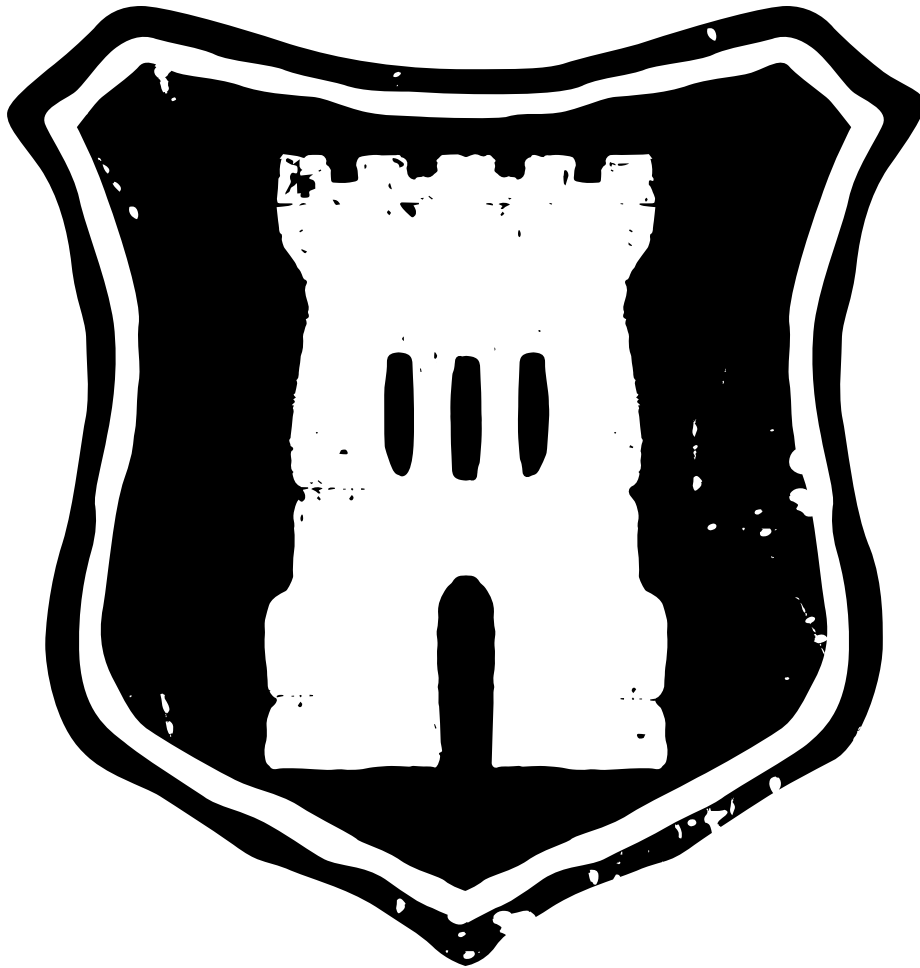


# the Vanguard



by Taron "Indestructoboy" Pounds

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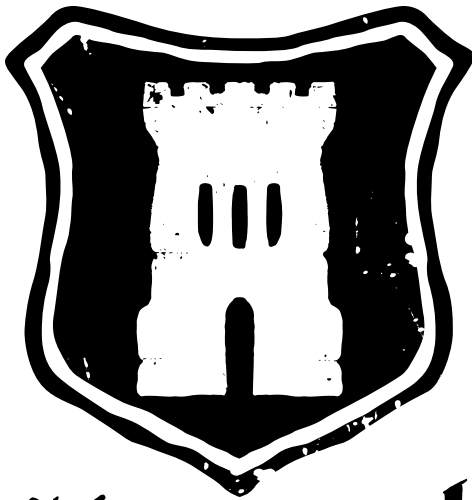
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**INDESTRUCTOBOY  
DESIGNS**



# Vanguard



CREAMS ECHO ACROSS THE CAVERN WALLS, AS A VALIANT knight charges ahead towards the source of the anguish. His armor clatters loudly, alerting a group of firenewts to his front. He welcomes their attention like an old friend and readies his behemoth towershield, placing it between himself and the scouts. As the moving bastion is pelted with a volley of arrows, he feels his shield make contact with something soft. He turns sharply into one of the cavern walls and slams it with full force. The sickening crunch of broken bones and dripping visera from under the shield confirms his kill, and he turns his ire towards the remaining scouts.

Vanguards are terrifying sentinels donned in heavy metal armor and towering shields to devastate their enemies.

## Dutiful Guardians

Similar to a paladin taking an oath, a vanguard is sworn to a duty of protection called their "mandate." These stalwart protectors feel an obligation to defend their allies, wearing their battle scars as badges of honor that mark this courageous duty fulfilled.

## Playing a Vanguard

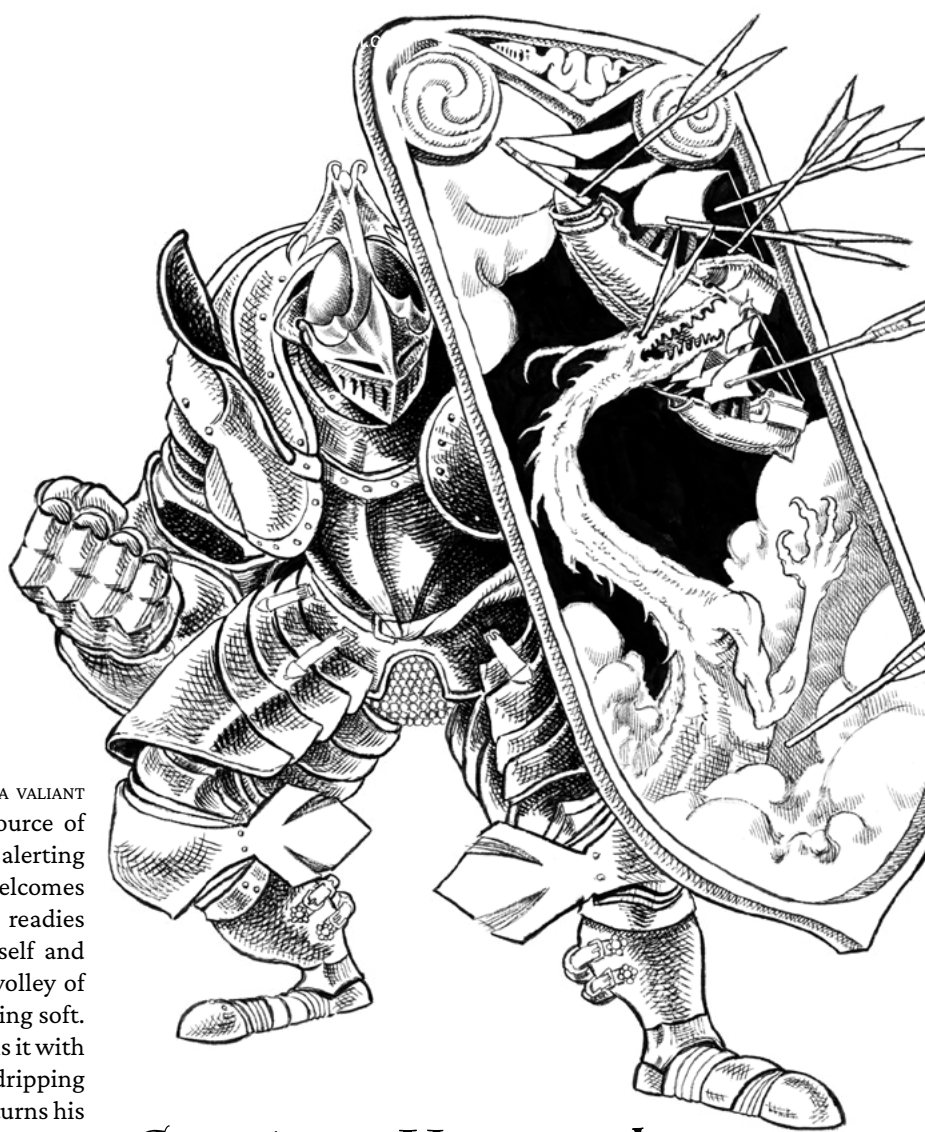
The vanguard is a class for people that prefer a high control and defense character over raw damage output. This class forgoes conventional "damage spikes" for "defense spikes", and grants you the ability to more actively tank by focusing on defending through the Ready action and shoving.

**Action:** Ready or Shove Attacks

**Bonus Action:** Bonus Action Shove

**Movement:** You should prioritize staying in the enemy's face as much as possible. Ready allows you to move and shove as a means of making sure you can intercede when danger is happening, rather than have to predict it.

**Reaction:** Intercede on attacks, opportunity attacks.



## Creating a Vanguard

To create a vanguard, consult the following subsections, which give you hit points, proficiencies, and starting equipment. Then look at the Vanguard table to see which features you get at each level. Your Proficiency Bonus is shown in the PB column. The descriptions of those features appear in the "Class Features" section.

### Quick Build

You can make a Vanguard quickly by following these suggestions. First, Constitution should be your highest ability score, followed by Strength. Second, choose the soldier background.

### Hit Points

**Hit Dice:** 1d12 per vanguard level

**Hit Points at 1st Level:** 12 + your Constitution modifier

**Hit Points at Higher Levels:** 1d12 (or 7) + your Constitution modifier per level above 1st

### Proficiencies

**Armor:** All armor, shields

**Weapons:** Simple melee weapons

**Tools:** None

**Saving Throws:** Strength, Constitution

**Skills:** Athletics and one other skill of your choice from History, Intimidation, Perception, Religion, and Survival

## Starting Equipment

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

- (a) a shield or (b) a towershield
- (a) an explorer's pack or (b) a soldier's pack
- Chain mail and a shield

If you forgo this starting equipment, as well as the items offered by your background, you start with 5d4 × 10 gp to buy your equipment.

### MULTICLASSING AND THE VANGUARD

If your group uses the optional rule on multiclassing in the *Player's Handbook*, here's what you need to know if you choose vanguard as one of your classes.

**Ability Score Minimum.** As a multiclass character, you must have at least a Strength and Constitution score of 13 to take a level in this class, or to take a level in another class if you are already a vanguard.

**Proficiencies Gained.** If vanguard isn't your initial class, here are the proficiencies you gain when you take your first level as a vanguard: light armor, medium armor, heavy armor, shields.

### THE VANGUARD

Level	PB	Feature
1st	+2	Shield-Bearer, Guard
2nd	+2	Fortitude, Rampant Charge
3rd	+2	Vanguardian Mandate, Lock Down
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement, Bolstered Vitality
5th	+3	Ever Ready
6th	+3	Vanguardian Mandate feature
7th	+3	Stalwart Vigilance
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement
9th	+4	Fearless, Tireless
10th	+4	Vanguardian Mandate feature
11th	+4	Muster for Battle
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement
13th	+5	Power Through
14th	+5	Vanguardian Mandate feature
15th	+5	Behemoth Might
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement
17th	+6	Force of Will
18th	+6	Towering Colossus
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement
20th	+6	Indestructible

## Class Features

As a vanguard, you gain the following class features, which are summarized in the Vanguard table.

### Shield-Bearer

#### 1st-level vanguard feature

You prioritize protection above all else, specializing in defensive combat with shields.

**Dual-Shields.** You can benefit from wielding two shields at the same time. If you do, the AC bonus of the second shield

is halved and you can use a bonus action on your turn to try and shove a creature.

**Towershield.** While you are wielding a towershield,<sup>1</sup> you can use a bonus action to take on a wide stance, providing half cover to creatures of your choice within 5 feet of you until the start of your next turn or until you doff the shield.

### Guard

#### 1st-level vanguard feature

In battle, you stand guard over your allies, ready to be their aegis. If you take the Ready action to move up to your speed, you can try to shove a creature during the same reaction.

Additionally, if a creature provokes an opportunity attack from you, you can try to shove it instead.

### Fortitude

#### 2nd-level vanguard feature

While wearing heavy armor,<sup>2</sup> you are a walking bastion of unbreakable poise, granting you the following benefits:

- Any bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage you take is reduced by an amount equal to half your vanguard level.
- You count as being one size larger (minimum Large) when making Strength-based ability checks and Strength saving throws.<sup>3</sup> You also have advantage on Strength checks you make against Medium and smaller targets.
- If you succeed in shoving a target that is your size or smaller, you can push it up to 10 feet away from you, or push the target up to 5 feet away from you and knock it prone.

### Rampant Charge

#### 2nd-level vanguard feature

You are able to throw caution to the wind to break enemy lines. If you move at least 10 feet in a straight line, you can choose to charge in a straight line for the rest of the move. If you move into the space of another creature during the charge, you can try to shove it. If you successfully shove it, you push it ahead of you for the rest of your move.

The charge ends early if you lose a contest to shove a creature or if you push a creature into a structure. Any creatures pushed into a structure take bludgeoning damage equal to 2d6 + your Strength modifier.

When you charge, attack rolls against you have advantage until the start of your next turn.

### Vanguardian Mandate

#### 3rd-level vanguard feature

At 3rd level, you choose a mandate that embodies the tactics you employ in defending others. Your choice grants you features at 3rd, 6th, 10th, and 14th levels.

<sup>1</sup> Towershields are detailed in "Shields" on page 12 of this supplement.

<sup>2</sup> The restriction placed here is not intended to exclude races with traits that restrict them from heavy armor. I recommend allowing the player to choose if the trait counts as heavy armor for the purposes of their class features.

<sup>3</sup> This does not extend your physical size or reach, it just means that if size is a factor in determining how an applicable interaction resolves, you count as this size. Think of this like Powerful Build.

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## Lock Down

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*3rd-level vanguard feature*

If you successfully shove a creature, you can choose to reduce its speed to 0 until the end of the current turn, rather than push it or knock it prone.

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## Ability Score Improvement

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*4th-level vanguard feature*

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

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## Bolstered Vitality

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*4th-level vanguard feature*

When you finish a long rest, you regain all of your Hit Dice rather than half.

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## Ever Ready

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*5th-level vanguard feature*

While you're not incapacitated or surprised, no effect can prevent you from using your reaction and you can take up to two reactions per round, but only one per turn. This second reaction can be used to move up to your speed and potentially try to shove a creature if you took the Ready action during your last turn, in addition to the reactions you can normally take.

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## Stalwart Vigilance

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*7th-level vanguard feature*

You have a heightened awareness for threats that grants you advantage on initiative rolls and a +5 bonus to your passive Perception while you're not blinded, deafened, or incapacitated.

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## Fearless

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*9th-level vanguard feature*

You have advantage on saving throws to avoid or end being frightened, and you can't be frightened by any creature whose Strength score is lower than yours.

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## Gireless

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*9th-level vanguard feature*

As an action, you can give yourself a number of temporary hit points equal to 1d8 + your Constitution modifier (minimum of 1 temporary hit point). You can use this action a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

In addition, whenever you finish a short rest, your exhaustion level, if any, is decreased by 1.

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## Muster for Battle

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*11th-level vanguard feature*

You can take the Ready action when you roll initiative (no action required).

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## Power Through

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*13th-level vanguard feature*

When you are subjected to an effect that you can see that requires you to make a Dexterity saving throw, you can use your Constitution modifier in place of your Dexterity modifier if you aren't incapacitated.

Further, when you succeed on a saving throw against an effect that deals damage, you reduce the damage you take from the effect by half.

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## Behemoth Might

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*15th-level vanguard feature*

You count as being two size larger (minimum Huge) when making Strength-based ability checks and Strength saving throws. You also have advantage on Strength checks you make against Large and smaller targets.

Additionally, you ignore the two-handed property of towershields.<sup>4</sup>

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## Force of Will

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*17th-level vanguard feature*

If you try to shove a creature and lose the contest, you can choose to shove it as if you had won.

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

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## Towering Colossus

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*18th-level vanguard feature*

Your Constitution score increases by 4. Your maximum for that score is now 24.

Additionally, while your feet are firmly planted on the ground, you can't be moved or teleported against your will by any means short of a *wish* spell.

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## Indestructible

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*20th-level vanguard feature*

While wearing heavy armor, you are immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage dealt by other creatures (their attacks, spells, and other effects) that does not kill you outright.

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<sup>4</sup> Two instances of half cover do not stack or provide additional cover.

# Vanguardian Mandates

All vanguards feel a duty to protect, which shapes their tactics and defines their vanguardian mandate.

## Ardent

An ardent's passion for sheltering others from harm manifests in them as a psychic power. This awakening allows them to project stationary barriers of psychic energy and launch enemies with telekinetic force.

### ARDENT FEATURES

Vanguard Level	Feature
3rd	Ardent Psionics, Mental Tower
6th	Focused Beneficence
10th	Sixth Sense
14th	Schistic Mind

### Ardent Psionics

*3rd-level Ardent feature*

Unlike other psionic archetypes, you tap into your inner reserves to manifest the psionic powers you have, which are detailed below.

You can manifest your psionic powers a number of times equal to twice your proficiency bonus, and you regain expended uses when you finish a long rest. Some of your powers expend Hit Dice, specified in the power's description, and you can't use a power if it requires you to use Hit Dice when your Hit Dice are all expended.

**Aegis Projection.** As a bonus action, you can spend your Hit Dice to manifest a 10-foot radius immobile barrier of shimmering force for 1 minute. The barrier has AC 10, hit points equal to  $10 \times$  the number of Hit Dice you spend, and immunity to poison damage. Creatures can move through the barrier and any creature within it gains total cover from the barrier. The barrier disappears immediately if it is reduced to 0 hit points or you use this power again.

**Telekinetic Shove.** When you successfully shove a creature and push it, you can focus your psychic power and push it an additional 10 feet. If a creature is standing on top of a shield you are wielding, you can use this power to safely boost the creature's jump height by 10 feet.

### Mental Tower

*3rd-level Ardent feature*

You and any allies within 10 feet of you gain a bonus to saving throws made to avoid or end the effects of divination spells and the charmed condition equal to half your proficiency bonus.

### Focused Beneficence

*6th-level Ardent feature*

You are awoken to new psionic powers you can manifest with Ardent Psionics:

**Mind Snap.** You can launch a psychic assault against a creature. As an action, you can choose a creature within 60 feet of you that you can see. For the next minute, whenever the creature is in the process of casting a spell, you can use your reaction and

spend one of your Hit Dice to force it to make a Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier). On a failure, the spell fails.

**Psychic Redirection.** When a ranged attack is made against a creature within 30 feet of you, you can use your reaction to psionically intercede on the attack. Roll a d12 and reduce the attack roll by that amount. If the attack roll is reduced to 0, you can redirect the attack to another creature within 30 feet of you, using the original attack roll.

### Sixth Sense

*10th-level Ardent feature*

You gain a measure of telepathy that alerts you to the thoughts of others. You are aware of the location of any creature within 10 feet of you that is not protected from divination magic and is capable of thought (DM's discretion). You see invisible creatures within 10 feet of you that you are aware of as if they were visible.

### Schistic Mind

*14th-level Ardent feature*

You are immune to psychic damage, the charmed condition, and any divination spells or effect that would sense your emotions or read your thoughts.

Further, the distance of your Mental Tower and Sixth Sense features extend to 30 feet, rather than 10 feet.

## Dreadlord

Feeling a duty of pain, dreadlords are typically conscripted warriors, given fel power straight from a fiend's armory. A dreadlord draws upon this power to punish those that dare draw their blades on them, a punishment they delight in coercing their enemies to inflict upon themselves.

### DREADLORD FEATURES

Vanguard Level	Feature
3rd	Sightless Watcher, Wrathchild
6th	Betrayer's Blessing
10th	Grasp of Treachery
14th	Into the Void

### Sightless Watcher

*3rd-level Dreadlord feature*

You learn to read, speak, and write Infernal and Abyssal.

Additionally, you can see in darkness, both magical and nonmagical, out to a range of 30 feet, increasing to 60 feet when you reach 11th level.

### Wrathchild

*3rd-level Dreadlord feature*

If a creature misses you with an attack roll, you can allow the attack to hit (no action required). If you do, the attacker takes psychic damage equal to your Constitution modifier + half your vanguard level, and you can spend one of your vanguard Hit Dice to curse it until you curse another creature or die.

While cursed, the creature's eyes become clouded. At the start of each of the creature's turns, it must make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution mod-

ifier). On a failure, this clouding becomes magical darkness that blinds the creature while trying to perceive any creature other than its allies or you until the start of its next turn.

You can curse a creature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain expended uses when you finish a long rest.

### Betrayer's Blessing

*6th-level Dreadlord feature*

When you curse a target with Wrathchild, you can use your reaction to gain 1d12 temporary hit points and resistance to the next instance of damage you take in the next minute.

### Grasp of Treachery

*10th-level Dreadlord feature*

When you curse a target with Wrathchild, you can choose a different hostile creature that you can see within 30 feet of the attacker, extending a compulsion of betrayal. If the cursed creature fails its Wisdom saving throw at the start of its turn, the chosen hostile creature must use its reaction to make an attack against the cursed creature.

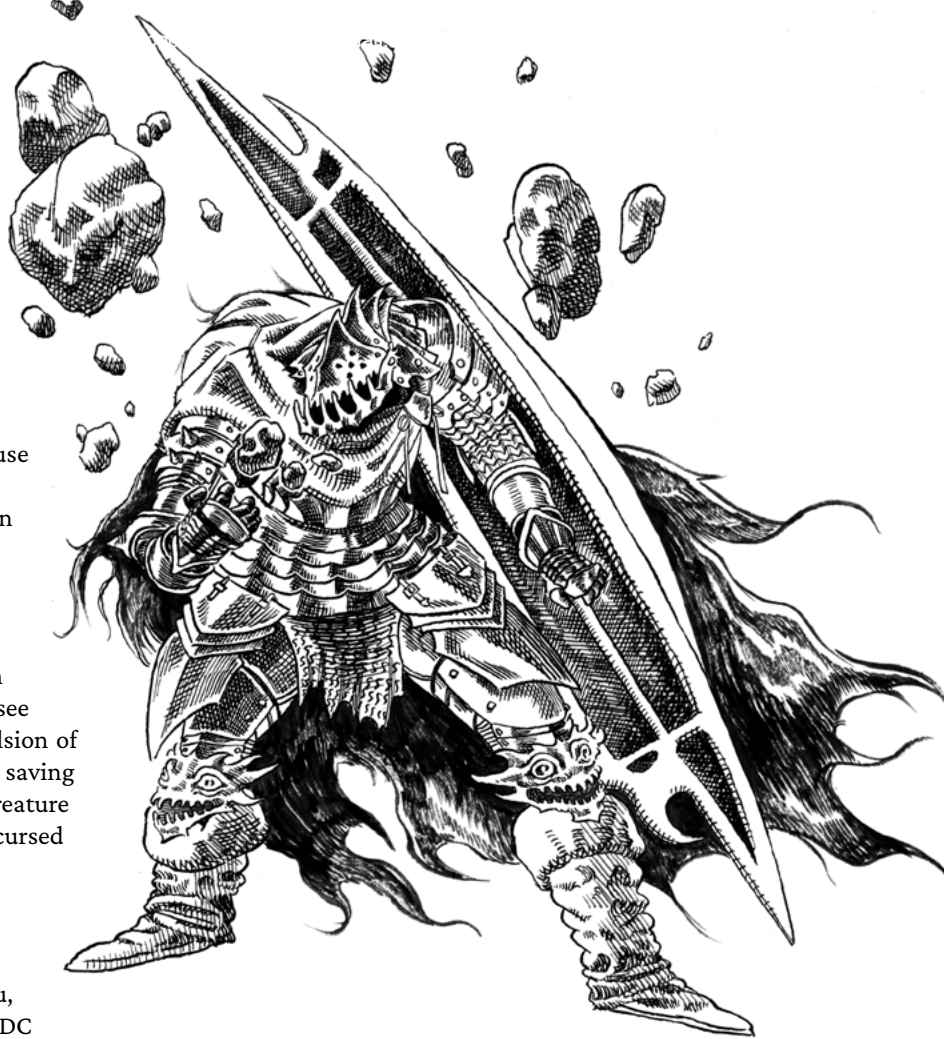
### Into the Void

*14th-level Dreadlord feature*

When a creature attacks you or deals damage to you, you can force it to make a Charisma saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier). On a failure, the creature is presented to you to answer for its transgressions, depending on its distance from you:

- If the creature is within 60 feet of you, it is pulled toward you, arriving in the nearest unoccupied space to you. If the pulled creature impacts any other creatures that are its size or smaller, they must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be pulled as well. If a pulled creature impacts an object, it takes 1d10 bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was pulled and is stunned until the end of your next turn.
- If the creature is further than 60 feet from you, but on the same plane of existence, it takes 3d8 + your Constitution modifier psychic damage and is teleported to the nearest unoccupied space within 5 feet of you. A creature on a different plane of existence takes this damage, but is not teleported.

Once a creature fails its saving throw against this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.



## Juggernaut

While almost more of a compulsion rather than a duty, the juggernaut is a vanguard with a drive for havoc.

### JUGGERNAUT FEATURES

Vanguard Level	Feature
3rd	Hulking Endurance, Unstoppable Force
6th	Disrespect Your Surroundings
10th	Shake it Off
14th	Supernaut

### Hulking Endurance

*3rd-level Juggernaut feature*

When you take damage, you can use a reaction and spend one of your vanguard Hit Dice to reduce the damage taken by an amount equal to 1d12 + your Constitution modifier.

### Unstoppable Force

*3rd-level Juggernaut feature*

When you use Rampant Charge, the bludgeoning damage you deal by pushing a creature into a structure increases to 2d8 + your Strength modifier. Additionally, the first time on a turn that you charge into a nonmagical object or structure with an AC 17 or lower<sup>5</sup> and that is no thicker than 1-foot, you can break through it rather than end the charge.

<sup>5</sup> Essentially any material that is weaker than metal.



## Templar

Knights of a religious order, templars are blessed vanguards that take on a righteous duty of sacrifice and selflessness.

### TEMPLAR FEATURES

Vanguard Level	Feature
3rd	Righteous Cause, Venerated Martyr
6th	Punishment Due
10th	Heart of Benevolence
14th	Divine Intercession

### Righteous Cause

*3rd-level Templar feature*

The gods have deemed your cause worthy, granting you the ability to manifest minor miracles. You learn the *respite*<sup>6</sup> and *thaumaturgy* cantrips. Constitution is your spellcasting ability for them.

### Venerated Martyr

*3rd-level Templar feature*

Your charge of selflessness is blessed by the gods, granting you the ability to bear the pain of others. If a creature within 20 feet of you that you can see is attacked or takes damage, you can spend one of your vanguard Hit Dice to take the damage instead (no action required). You can't use this feature if you are blinded or incapacitated, or surprised.

The damage you take can't be reduced in any way except by the Divine Intercession feature you gain at 14th level.

### Punishment Due

*6th-level Templar feature*

When you use Venerated Martyr, your body becomes basked in divine light, which sheds bright light out to 10 feet and dim light for an additional 10 feet for 1 minute. While basked in this energy, you can use your reaction when you take damage to cause this energy to erupt from you. When you do, roll every Hit Dice you spent in the last minute. Each creature of your choice within 10 feet of you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier) or take radiant damage equal to the result of the Hit Dice rolled and be blinded until the start of your next turn.

Once you use this action, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

### Heart of Benevolence

*10th-level Templar feature*

Creatures you take damage for with Venerated Martyr gain the benefits of the *sanctuary* spell until the end of your next turn.

Further, if a spell, such as *raise dead*, has the sole effect of restoring you to life (but not undeath), the caster doesn't need material components to cast the spell on you.

### Disrespect Your Surroundings

*6th-level Juggernaut feature*

You deal double damage to objects and structures and any creature you force to move by physical means provokes opportunity attacks from creatures other than you. If a creature is hit with an opportunity attack this way that scores a critical hit, the attack deals an additional die of damage.

### Shake it Off

*10th-level Juggernaut feature*

When you use Hulking Endurance, you roll an additional d12 when determining the amount of damage you reduce, for a total of 2d12 + your Constitution modifier.

### Supernaut

*14th-level Juggernaut feature*

While you are charging, you can break through objects and structures with an AC 20 or lower and the damage you deal by pushing a creature into a structure increases to 2d10 + your Strength modifier.

Further, you can reduce damage you take during your turn with your Hulking Endurance feature (no reaction required).

<sup>6</sup> This spell appears in "Spells" on page 11 of this supplement.

## Divine Intercession

*14th-level Templar feature*

You can use your reaction at the end of any creature's turn to reduce all of the damage you took during the turn to 0.

Once you use this feature, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

## Vexator

These vanguards apply braggadocious taunts to draw the ire of their enemies, goading hostilities away from their allies to protect them. Vexators tend to make grand claims of glory and prestige, a signature of the gladiatorial "arena lords," boastful champions of combat sport that strive to become living legends.

### VEXATOR FEATURES

Vanguard Level	Feature
3rd	Braggadocious, Taunt
6th	Center of Attention
10th	Dramatic Entrance
14th	Cult of Personality

## Braggadocious

*3rd-level Vexator feature*

You gain proficiency with a skill of your choice from either Deception, Intimidation, Persuasion, or Performance and, whenever you make a Charisma check related to your fighting prowess or exerting physical dominance, you can replace your Charisma modifier with your Strength modifier.

## Taunt

*3rd-level Vexator feature*

Your boisterous persona allows you to draw your enemies' aggression. As an action, you can make a Charisma check using a skill of the DM's choice (typically determined by the nature of your taunt) and force a creature of your choice within 30 feet of you that can comprehend your taunt to make a Wisdom saving throw against a DC equal to the result of your check. On a failed save, you provoke an opportunity attack from the target and the target has disadvantage on attack rolls against creatures other than you for 1 minute. This effect ends early if you are incapacitated or die or if you move more than 30 feet away from the creature. The creature can attempt the saving throw again at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Once the effect ends or if the creature succeeds on the saving throw, the creature has advantage on Wisdom saving throws it makes against this effect until you finish a long rest.

## Center of Attention

*6th-level Vexator feature*

When you use Taunt, you can target a number of creatures with it equal to your proficiency bonus. Once you use this feature, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

## Dramatic Entrance

*10th-level Vexator feature*

You can use Taunt as a reaction to rolling initiative. If you target a creature with Taunt that hasn't taken a turn yet in the current

combat, it has disadvantage on its Wisdom saving throw.

## Cult of Personality

*14th-level Vexator feature*

While a creature is under the effects of your Taunt, it can't willingly move more than 30 feet away from you.

# Character Options



THIS CHAPTER PRESENTS SEVERAL NEW OPTIONS FOR YOU to take when creating your character in addition to those in the official 5e books, as well as new equipment and spells.

As always, talk with your table to make sure these are fitting for your game. You will find the following sections within:

## Backgrounds

You will find new background options, designed around the more modern design sensibilities from the official books. This means the backgrounds grant the traditional line-up of skill proficiencies, potential tool proficiencies and languages, starting equipment, some suggestions for building your character's personality, and the modern addition of a feat. At tables where other players are not granted a feat through their background, ignore the granted Feature.

## Feats

New feats are introduced here to expand on shield and muscle-based character archetypes.

## Spells

Spells that are used by certain vanguard characters but appear in other materials have been reproduced here for ease of reference.

## Backgrounds

This section presents a new background you can take during character creation: Bodyguard.

### Bodyguard

You have served as hired muscle, keeping watch over anyone with the coin or reputation. Kings and queens always travel with a royal guard, typically one that rose through the ranks of their military, but bodyguards are not all strictly royal guards. You may have served the leader of a thieves' guild, protected a famous musician, or taken up work as the bouncer of a tavern.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Choose two from among Athletics, Insight, Intimidation, or Investigation

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Equipment:** A simple weapon worth no more than 10 gp, a memento from a previous client, a set of manacles, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 10 gp.

### Clientele

It takes special training to protect special clients. Consider what types of clients you specialize in guarding and discuss with your DM if this grants you any other benefit. You can roll on the following table to determine your client specialty, or choose one that best fits your character.

#### d8 Clientele

- 1 Royalty
- 2 Musician or thespian
- 3 Taverns
- 4 Guild leader

#### d8 Clientele

- 5 Politician
- 6 Merchants
- 7 Caravans
- 8 None (you freelance)

### Feature: Got Your Back

You gain a feat of your choice from either Alert, Observant, Sentinel, or Shield Basher (presented later in this supplement). In addition, those that you have previously worked for may help to cover your lifestyle expenses or get you access to certain events or people normally closed off to individuals outside of their circle.

### Building a Bodyguard Character

Putting your life on the line for other people tends to shape your outlook and perspective on the world.

**Suggested Characteristics.** The Bodyguard Personality Traits table suggests a variety of traits you might adopt for your character.

#### BODYGUARD PERSONALITY TRAITS

##### d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I'd take a sword in the gut for any of my allies.
- 2 I'm haunted by memories of a client dying under my watch.
- 3 I don't know when to turn "protector mode" off.
- 4 My worry for others affects my self-care. Most notably my hygiene.
- 5 Alcohol? I never touch the stuff. Have to stay alert.
- 6 I've learned to sleep with one eye open. Gods, I'm tired.
- 7 I spent a lot of time learning not to react to things like other people do, it's my job. It doesn't always work.
- 8 I do this job because I love the life of luxury my clients provide.

# Feats

New feats are presented here in alphabetical order for groups that use them.

## Bully

*Prerequisite: Strength 15 or higher, or Powerful Build feature*

You're fine with picking on someone your own size, little guys are just more convenient. You gain the following benefits:

- You are proficient with improvised attacks you make with corpses and creatures.
- You can use a Medium or Small creature you are grappling as both a shield and as an improvised weapon with the thrown property and a range of 20 feet. Attacks made with a creature this way deal 1d8 + your Strength modifier bludgeoning damage on a hit. If the creature you are using as a weapon isn't a corpse, it takes this damage as well.
- When you are hit by an attack, you can use your reaction to cause a creature you are grappling to take the damage instead. You can't use this reaction if the creature is a corpse.

## Shield Basher

*Prerequisite: Proficiency with Shields*

The best offense is a good defense, especially one that can inflict blunt-force trauma. You specialize in the use of shields as a weapon, granting you the following benefits:

- When you make an attack with a shield, you can treat it as a simple melee weapon rather than an improvised weapon. Melee weapon attacks you make with shields deal 1d6 + your Strength modifier bludgeoning damage on a hit.
- If you take the Attack action on your turn, you can make an attack with a shield as a bonus action.

# Spells

This section contains spells used by some vanguard characters. The *respite* spell was originally written by Benjamin Huffman as *give life* and has been included and retooled with his permission.

## Respite

*Evocation cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You sacrifice your own vitality to heal another creature by spending and rolling one of your Hit Dice, restoring hit points to the creature equal to the result of the roll.

## Ghaumaturgy

*Transmutation cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 30 feet

**Components:** V

**Duration:** Up to 1 minute

You manifest a minor wonder, a sign of supernatural power, within range. You create one of the following magical effects within range:

- Your voice booms up to three times as loud as normal for 1 minute.
- You cause flames to flicker, brighten, dim, or change color for 1 minute.
- You cause harmless tremors in the ground for 1 minute.
- You create an instantaneous sound that originates from a point of your choice within range, such as a rumble of thunder, the cry of a raven, or ominous whispers.
- You instantaneously cause an unlocked door or window to fly open or slam shut.
- You alter the appearance of your eyes for 1 minute.

If you cast this spell multiple times, you can have up to three of its 1-minute effects active at a time, and you can dismiss such an effect as an action.



## Armor & Shields

The Armor table shows the cost, weight, and other properties of the common types of armor worn in the worlds of D&D.

**Armor Proficiency.** Anyone can put on a suit of armor or strap a shield to an arm. Only those proficient in the armor's use know how to wear it effectively, however. Your class gives you proficiency with certain types of armor. If you wear armor that you lack proficiency with, you have disadvantage on any ability check, saving throw, or attack roll that involves Strength or Dexterity, and you can't cast spells.

**Armor Class (AC).** Armor protects its wearer from attacks. The armor (and shield) you wear determines your base Armor Class.

**Strength (STR).** If the Armor table shows a value in the STR column for an armor type, the armor reduces the wearer's speed by 10 feet unless the wearer has a Strength score equal to or higher than the listed score.

**Stealth.** If the Armor table shows "Disadv." in the Stealth column, the wearer has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

## Shields

A shield is made from wood or metal and is carried in one hand. Wielding a shield increases your Armor Class by 2. You can benefit from only one shield at a time.

**Heavy.** A heavy shield's size makes it too large for a Small or Tiny creature to use effectively.

**Light.** A light shield can be equipped on the forearm, allowing a weapon with the light property to be wielded in the same hand.

**Special.** A shield with the special property has unusual rules governing its use, explained in the shield's description (see "Special Shields" below).

**Two-Handed.** This shield requires two hands to wield it. This property is relevant only when you wield the shield, not when you simply hold it.

## ARMOR

Item	Cost	AC	STR	Stealth	Wt.	Properties
<i>Shield</i>						
Shield	10 gp	+2	—	—	6 lb.	
Towershield	70 gp	+2	15	Disadv.	25 lb.	Heavy, two-handed, special

## Special Shields

**Towershield.** The towershield grants you half cover.

### RULES REMINDER: HALF COVER

A target can benefit from cover only when an attack or other effect originates on the opposite side of the cover. A creature that gains the benefits of half cover has a +2 to its AC and Dexterity saving throws.<sup>1</sup>

## Adventuring Gear

This section describes items that have special rules or require further explanation.

### NEW EQUIPMENT PACKS

New packs are available to choose from when you choose your starting equipment. The contents of these packs are listed here. If you are buying your starting equipment, you can purchase a pack for the price shown, which might be cheaper than buying the items individually.

**Soldier's Pack (39 gp).** Includes a backpack, a knife, warm clothes, a map, a bedroll, a tinderbox, a mess kit, a shovel, 10 days of dehydrated rations, and a waterskin.

<sup>1</sup> The +2 to AC from half cover is not your shield's AC bonus.

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