

## Defender

*A defender focuses on both offense and defense, blending weapon and shield in perfect balance to impede his enemies while delivering deadly blows, and even turning the shield itself into a formidable weapon. These fighting school benefits apply when wielding a weapon and a shield simultaneously.*

The defender is an archetype of the fighter class.

**Armor Proficiency:** A defender is proficient with tower shields.

**Deflective Shield (Ex):** At 2nd level, a defender specializes in using his shield to deflect attacks. He gains a +1 bonus to his touch AC, and this bonus increases for every four levels beyond 2nd (to a maximum of +6 at 20th level); however, this bonus cannot exceed the sum of the armor and enhancement bonus to AC provided by the shield that the defender is currently carrying.

This ability replaces determination.

**Stamina Pool (Ex):** At 1st level, the defender gains a reservoir of stamina that he can draw upon to fuel his talents that he gains below. This stamina pool has a number of points equal to 5 x his Constitution modifier (minimum 1) and this pool increases by 5 + his Constitution modifier per level thereafter. The pool refreshes once per day when the defender rests for a full 8 hours. Sustained modes take up a static amount of stamina points from the defender's current and maximum stamina pool and most sustained modes stack. If the character has a stamina pool from another class, he then only increases his stamina pool by 5 + his Constitution modifier per level instead.

By spending 5 stamina points, the defender can do one of the following:

- Increase his speed by 10 feet for 1 round, or
- Delay and suppress his fatigue or exhaustion for 1 round, or
- Increase one saving throw by +1 for 1 round.

Each of these powers is activated as a swift action.

**Defender Talents (Su):** As a defender gains experience, he learns a number of talents that aid him and his allies. Starting at 2nd level, a defender gains one defender talent chosen from the talent trees below. He gains an additional defender talent for every 2 levels of fighter attained after 2nd level. A defender cannot select an individual talent more than once.

Some talents are activated as a sustained mode. When activated, these talents both consume stamina and reduce the user's maximum stamina by the listed amount. While active, they provide their listed bonuses until the defender deactivates them as a free action, falls unconscious, or dies, at which point the reduction to the user's maximum stamina is removed. Multiple sustained mode talents may be used at the same time as long as the defender has enough stamina, though some talents may specify others that they cannot be used with.

### Defender Talent Tree

Defenders specialize in survivability, taking everything the enemy throws at them and walking away unscathed.

**Weapon Requirement:** Any weapon.

- **Stonewall:** At a cost of 10 stamina points, as an immediate action, the defender braces for impact, shrugging off damage for a brief moment. The defender gains a damage reduction of 1/- and an additional 1/- per two fighter levels for the round.

- **Bulwark:** Stonewall now protects the defender further, increasing the starting damage reduction by 1 and making the defender temporarily immune to combat maneuvers or any effect that causes the defender to be moved or knocked down. *Prerequisite:* Stonewall.
- **Elemental Aegis:** As a swift action, the defender may activate this talent as a sustained mode. The secret to warding off the elements is to rely on your armor, keeping it between you and the blast. The defender has learned this lesson well, and can anticipate magical attacks. The defender gains an Elemental Resistance of 5 per four fighter levels. This mode cannot be used at the same time as Turn the Blade. This mode uses up 15 stamina points of the defender's current and maximum stamina pool.
- **Elemental Shroud:** Elemental Aegis's Elemental Resistance is increased by 1 per four fighter levels. *Prerequisite:* Elemental Aegis.
- **Turn the Blade:** As a swift action, the defender may activate this talent as a sustained mode. While many defenders choose to endure their foes' hits, some prefer to deflect the damage instead. The defender gains a +1 deflection bonus to Armor Class and an additional +1 per four fighter levels. This mode cannot be used at the same time as Elemental Aegis. This mode uses up 20 stamina points of the defender's current and maximum stamina pool.
- **Raise the Guard:** Turn the Blade now also grants a damage reduction of 1/- and an additional 1/- per four fighter levels. *Prerequisite:* Turn the Blade.
- **Steady the Foot:** Turn the Blade also grants a +1 bonus and an additional +1 per four fighter levels to resist combat maneuvers, or any effect that causes the defender to be moved or knocked down. *Prerequisite:* Turn the Blade.
- **Resilience:** defenders trained in resilience have learned not to flinch from wounds. As long as the defender has at least 1 stamina point in his stamina pool, he is immune to having to make a Fortitude save from massive damage or coup de grace. *Prerequisites:* Elemental Aegis, Turn the Blade.
- **Adamant:** The defender's deep knowledge of the defensive arts grants a permanent resilience against damage of all type. As long as the defender has at least 1 stamina point in his stamina pool, he gains a damage reduction of 5/- (that stacks with any current DR) as well as an Elemental Resistance of 5 (which also stacks with any current elemental resistance). *Prerequisites:* Stonewall, Turn the Blade, Resilience.
- **Resolute:** The defender has faced more mages in battle than most even see in a lifetime. This experience has built a mental fortitude that anyone would envy. As long as the defender has at least 1 stamina point in his stamina pool, he gains a Spell Resistance of 10 + 1 per defender level. *Prerequisites:* Elemental Aegis, Elemental Shroud, Turn the Blade, Resilience.

### Weapon and Shield Talent Tree

Defenders who specialize in the shields trade damage for protection. Attacks made with one-handed weapons hit a smaller arc than two-handed weapons, although shield users have the perfect tool at hand for knocking foes around the battlefield. **Weapon Requirement:** Any one-handed melee weapon and a shield.

- **Shield Defense:** As a swift action, the defender may activate this talent as a sustained mode. The defender assumes a defensive stance, reducing damage taken. However, the defender inflicts less damage against enemies. The defender gains a damage reduction of 2/- and an additional 2/- per four fighter levels and increases the shield bonus of his shield to Armor Class by 1 plus an additional +1 per four fighter levels, but reduces damage done by his physical attacks by half. This mode uses up 15 stamina points of the defender's current and maximum stamina pool.
- **Shield Wall:** Shield Defense now has a chance to deflect any physical attack except critical hits. All physical attacks that successfully hit the defender has a 20% chance of deflecting and missing while Shield Defense is active. *Prerequisite:* Shield Defense.
- **Shield Bash:** At a cost of 10 stamina points, as a standard action, the defender's shield arcs out, striking foes like a battering ram. The defender makes a standard attack with his shield against each foe within his frontal arc. If it hits, the defender deals normal damage with his shield and creatures struck must

make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + half of the defender's level + his Strength modifier) or be dazed for one round.

- **Pummel:** Shield Bash now stuns instead of dazes opponents that are struck by this talent. *Prerequisite:* Shield Bash.
- **Assault:** At a cost of 20 stamina points, as a standard action, the defender spins into a vicious assault that inflicts significant damage and often throws enemies back. The defender makes a standard attack against every foe within a 5-ft.-radius, dealing normal damage. If it hits, the defender makes a Bull Rush combat maneuver attempt against each foe that was struck by this attack. *Prerequisite:* Shield Bash.
- **Battery:** Assault now has a chance to daze opponents that are struck by this talent. Enemies must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + half of the defender's level + his Strength modifier) or be dazed for one round. *Prerequisites:* Shield Bash, Assault.
- **Perception:** The defender maintains constant awareness of the battlefield. As long as the defender has at least 1 stamina point in his stamina pool and he has a shield equipped, enemies receive no bonus for attacking from flanking. This also prevents anyone from being able to sneak attack from flanking. *Prerequisite:* Shield Defense.
- **Scatter:** At a cost of 15 stamina points, as a standard action, the defender clears a forward arc, throwing enemies back. The defender makes a standard attack against each foe within his frontal arc, dealing normal damage. The defender then makes a Bull Rush combat maneuver attempt against each foe struck with this attack with a +4 circumstance bonus. *Prerequisites:* Shield Defense, Shield Bash.
- **Disperse:** Scatter now has a greater chance to push enemies back. The defender gains a +8 circumstance bonus to Bull Rush combat maneuvers using Scatter. *Prerequisites:* Shield Defense, Shield Bash, Scatter.
- **Safeguard:** As long as the defender has at least 1 stamina point in his stamina pool, while a shield is equipped, he is immune to critical hits of physical attacks. *Prerequisites:* Shield Defense, Shield Bash, Scatter, Perception.

These abilities replace fighter talents and advanced fighter talents.

**Active Defense (Ex):** At 3rd level, a defender gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC when wielding a shield and fighting defensively, using Combat Expertise, or using total defense. This bonus increases by +1 for every four levels beyond 3rd. As a swift action, he may share this bonus with one adjacent ally, or half of the bonus (minimum +0) with all adjacent allies, until the beginning of his next turn.

This ability replaces overhand chop.

**Shield Fighter (Ex):** At 5th level, a defender gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls when making a shield bash. These bonuses increase by +1 every four levels beyond 5th. With a full-attack action, a defender may alternate between using his weapon or his shield for each attack. This action does not grant additional attacks or incur penalties as two-weapon fighting does.

This ability replaces reliable strike.

**Armored Defense (Ex):** At 7th level, a defender gains DR 1/— when wearing light armor, DR 2/— when wearing medium armor, and DR 3/— when wearing heavy armor. At 19th level, this damage reduction increases to DR 4/— when wearing light armor, DR 8/— when wearing medium armor, and DR 12/— when wearing heavy armor. This damage reduction stacks with that provided by adamantine armor, but not with other forms of damage reduction. This damage reduction does not apply if the defender is stunned, unconscious, or helpless.

This ability replaces backswing.

**Shield Buffet (Ex):** At 9th level, as a move action, a defender may make a combat maneuver check to use his shield to impede an adjacent enemy. If successful, the target suffers a –2 penalty on its attack rolls against the defender and a –2 penalty to AC on attacks made by the defender until the beginning of his next turn. At 13th level, a defender may use this ability as a swift action.

This ability replaces rapid attack.

**Fortification (Ex):** At 11th level, a defender can use his armor to shield critical areas from injury. He treats any armor he wears as if it had the light fortification special ability. At 15th level, his armor gains the moderate fortification special ability. This fortification does not stack in any way with armor that has these special abilities. In these cases the defender takes the better of the two fortifications.

This ability replaces retaliation.

**Shield Guard (Ex):** At 17th level, as a swift action, a defender may designate one square adjacent to him. He may designate two squares if using a heavy shield or three squares if using a tower shield, but these squares must be contiguous. Enemies in these squares cannot flank the defender and do not count for flanking with other creatures. This effect lasts until he moves from his position or uses another swift action to change the affected squares.

This ability replaces devastating blow.

**Indestructible (Ex):** At 20th level, a defender gains complete immunity to critical hits and sneak attacks while he is wearing armor. In addition, unless his armor has the fragile armor quality, it cannot be sundered while he is wearing it.

This ability replaces weapon mastery.