

DWARVEN AXE MASTERY

Dwarves have long been known for their use of the axe in combat, but fewer know the incredible level of skill that they can achieve with the weapon. Axe Mastery is normally restricted to fellow Dwarves, but on occasion another race will be raised with the Dwarfkin and if they show sufficient skill, drive, and talent, they may be instructed as well.

AXE MASTERY MARTIAL MANEUVERS					
MANEUVER	COST	OCV	DCV	DAMAGE	NOTES
Dwarven Charge	5	+2	--	+2 DC, V/5	Full Move, take half damage, unbalancing, throw, you fall, full segment
Fallen Tower	5	+2	--	--	Throw, +10 STR
Fists of Stone	5	+1	--	+4D6	Strike unarmed only
Iron Caress	3	+1	+1	+2D6	Strike unarmed only
Steel Wind	4	+2	+2	--	Block, Abort
Stone Cleave	5	-1	--	+4 DC	Strike
Takeaway	4	+1	-1	--	+10 STR Disarm

SUGGESTED SKILLS AND TALENTS

Berserk Talent	KS: Mines and caves
Cleave talent	PS: Miner
Danger Sense	Tactics
Defense Maneuver I-IV	Weaponsmith (hafted weapons)

SUGGESTED WEAPON ELEMENTS

Default: Axes	+1: Bare Hands
+1: Mace	+1: Flying Fist
+1: Hammer	+1: Flails

Certain talents are available the sufficiently trained Axe Master, talents unique to the training that this system grants. Once a student has learned at least 3-4 of the martial maneuvers and at least two of the suggested skills. These talents are only available those with Axe Master training.



Arrow's Bane

Given the Dwarven dislike of archery and their disdain for such long distance combat, one would think them at a disadvantage to archers. But early in the Dwarven Axe Master's training was this technique. How it was achieved is beyond me, but it involved a long preparation ritual of heat and meditation. The result was skin that could ignore the armor penetrating ability arrows are designed for.

Powers: 10 PD, ED Force Field

Modifiers: Hardened (+1/4), Invisible to sight, hearing (+3/4), 1/2 END Cost (+1/4); Ego Roll (-1/2), Extra Time five minutes (-1), Only to harden normal defenses (-1 1/2), Concentrate 1/2 DCV (-1/4) [+1 1/4; -3 1/4]

Cost: 10 points

Avalanche Strike

I'd not have believed this technique had I not seen it several times in practice. The Axe Master faced a towering giant, barely reaching the giant's shin half-way, and with a spin and a shout, and the giant topped on it's back! I know not how this could be accomplished but it was of distinct tactical advantage.

Powers: Does Knockback, Double Knockback on up to 2D6 HKA (30 active points)

Modifiers: OAF Axe (-1/2), Only to knock the target down (-1), Extra Time Delayed Phase (-1/4), Incantation (-1/4) [-2]

Cost: 10 points

Blessing of the Father

I dare not include this last secret in the journal for my Duke. Only by the purest of accidents did I come upon it, for no outsider is to know of the Blessing. The Dwarven Master sat in a circle of his peers, meditating. Flames were passed over his naked skin as he concentrated, and by the end of it, his flesh was grey and dull. He was wrapped in the battle gear, and strode into battle, ignoring the weapons of the Goblins and Ogres as if they were straw. I am convinced he somehow was granted skin of stone, through some mystic ritual, yet none would speak of it with me.

Powers: 12 PD, ED Armor, 25% rPD Damage Reduction

Modifiers: Extra Time one hour (-1 1/4), Concentrate 1/2 DCV blackout (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Requires ritual and assistants (-1/2), Ego Roll (-1/2) [-2 1/2]

Cost: 13 points



Bloodstrike

This technique I never witnessed in use, fortunately. It is said to cause a wound that bleeds for a time, causing constant damage. It is not the most difficult skill to achieve, but it is apparently one rarely taught to novice Axewielders.

Powers: Ranged Killing Attack 1/2D6

Modifiers: Continuous (+1), No Normal Defense (+1), Does Full Damage (+1); OAF Axe (-1), No Range (-1/2), Only vs foes that can bleed (-1/2), Extra Time delayed phase (-1/4), One Turn Duration Maximum (-1/4) [+3; -3 1/2]

Cost: 11 points

Dwarven Passage

I have never seen it, but have the word of a troop that was trapped by a Dvergar stoneshaper. Only through the skill of a Master were they freed, for it is said that the Dwarven Axe Master reaches such a point of kinship with the stone he may literally walk through it as if no barrier existed.

Dwarven Passage: Tunnel 1", close hole behind, +4 DEF

Modifiers: x2 END (-1/2), Extra Time full turn (-1/2), Hole must close (-1/2), Self Only (-1/2), Concentrate 1/2 DCV full time (-1/2) [-2 1/2]

Cost: 7 points

Echoes of the Earth

Several times in the search the Master bade us all be silent, and he placed his ear to the stone, listening for something. Later he told me he could hear the Goblins footsteps, and followed the sounds to their place.

Powers: Clairaudience x4 range
Modifiers: Concentrate ½ DCV full time (-1/2), Only to places with earth/stone (-1/4), Requires quiet area with stone (-1/2), Extra Time full phase (-1/4), Costs END (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4) [-2 1/4]

Cost: 11 points

Eyes of the Father

It is generally accepted by Dwarves that they are born of stone, and their original Father is the land we walk upon. The Master spoke of a way of seeing through the Father's eyes that pierced any darkness, and could see all at once. Whatever the method, he could certainly fight blindfolded as well as with his eyes clear.

Powers: Spatial Awareness 360 degrees
Modifiers: Concentrate ½ DCV (-1/4), Costs END (-1/2), Extra Time full phase (-1/4), Ego Roll (-1/2) [-1 1/2]

Cost: 10 points

Flashing Shield

The Dwarven anger at 'long coward' (the literal translation of the Dwarven word for Archer) is the origin behind several skills learned in Dwarven Axe Mastery. The Flashing Shield is a technique of spinning and swirling the axe in such a pattern that the arrows literally are batted aside. This is learned early, and used while advancing on their foes.

Powers: Missile Deflection, arrows, +2 roll
Modifiers: Costs END (-1/2), Gestures (-1/4), Extra Time half phase (-1/4), OAF Axe (-1) [-2]

Cost: 5 points

Great Cleave

This maneuver had a Dwarven name that I was unable to get a satisfactory translation for. It was a spinning strike that let the Axe Master hit each target around him with greater success.

Powers: Area Effect Megahex on up to 2D6 HKA
Modifiers: OAF Axe (-1), Extra Time delayed phase (-1/4), Concentrate ½ DCV (-1/4), Only to hit targets adjacent to character (-1/2) [-2]

Cost: 7 points



Hamstring

Dwarves, despite their many advantages physically, are slower than most races - especially the hated orc. It is not surprising to find that they developed this skill, an attack that slows the victim's movement by damaging the legs. This is a skill learned early by most Axe Masters.

Powers: Drain 1D6 Running

Modifiers: Recover per Minute (+1/4); OAF Axe (-1), No Range (-1/2), Extra Time delayed phase (-1/4), Linked to HKA (-1/2) [+1/4; -2 1/4]

Cost: 4 points

Kiss of the Forge

...his axe glowed a deep red, as if it was just pulled from the fire. This fiery state ignited the wood it touched, and when he struck the icy creature, it hissed and howled like the damned. At that point the battle turned, and soon the sorcerer's frosty constructs were but puddles on the stone floor.

Powers: Transform 3D6 (cosmetic, does Energy damage)

Modifiers: Cumulative (+1/2); OAF Axe (-1), Transform has upkeep cost of 1 END per phase (-1/4), Requires Ego Roll (-1/2), x2 END Cost (-1/2), Side Effect 2D6 Penetrating HKA to axe (-1/2) [+1/2; -2 3/4]

Cost: 6 points

Mage's Bane

Contrary to the common belief, there are Dwarven spell casters, and Dwarves have no special animus toward mages. They do, however, train in special attack techniques that will interrupt spell casting that our soldiers would do well to learn.

Powers: Hand to Hand Killing Attack +1D6
Modifiers: OAF Axe (-1), x2 END (-1/2), Extra Time delayed phase (-1/4), Concentrate 1/2 DCV (-1/4), Only to interrupt casting (-1) [-3]

Cost: 6 points

Steely Wings

The Steely Wings technique was one of the most astounding things I saw the Masters do with and axe. Of course, most have seen a woodsman hurl an axe with uncanny accuracy, but the Dwarves were actually able to hurl the axe in such a way that they would return to their grasp, even after striking an opponent. Given Dwarven dislike of bows (even their own invention the crossbow), this was a natural, and necessary thing for their defense. It has, I believe, become recognized as the signature attack of the Dwarven Axe Master

Powers: 2D6 HKA
Modifiers: Range by STR (+1/4); OAF Axe (-1), Axe takes phase to return (-1/2), Needs 5" Space (-1/4), Extra Time delayed phase (-1/4), Damage max of axe used (-1/4) [+1/4; -2 1/4]

Cost: 10 points

Strike of Fury

The Master and I left that establishment, I fearing for my life, he scowling like I have never seen. Just as he reached the door, he swung his axe into the stone pillar holding the roof, and cleft completely through it. The building collapsed upon the men within, and we left at a leisurely pace. My guess is that the intimate knowledge he had of stonework and earth enabled him to strike the exact point that would result in complete collapse of the structure.

Powers: Transform 5D6 (major: sturdy to collapsing supports)

Modifiers: No Range (-1/2), OAF Axe (-1), KS: Stoneworks Roll (-1/2), x2 END (-1/2) [-2 1/2]

Cost: 12 points

Stone Soul

Before the battle, I came upon the entire corps of Axe Masters in deep meditation. The warden told me it steeled their will for combat, and protected them from the magics of the Goblin Necromancers. In combat, they were fearless, and seemed unharmed by the soul withering blasts of the Necromancers and their summoned kin.

Powers: 1D6 Aid Power Defense, Presence, and Mental Defense at the same time, all at +4 max
Modifiers: Loss 5 Pts/5 Min (+1/2), Four Powers at the same time (+1); Extra Time full turn (-1), Concentrate 1/2 DCV (-1/4), EGO Roll (-1/2), Presence Aid Def Only (-1) [+1 1/2; -2 3/4]

Cost: 8 points

Sustenance of the Father

I was stunned to hear later that the miner had been trapped in the collapse for 12 days. Neither air nor sustenance was available to him, yet he lived. The Master told me that the power of the earth around him was his sustenance. It is a technique often taught to the Dwarven miner, and is a basic skill of the Dwarven Axe Master, I am told.

Powers: Life Support (sleep, food, air)
Modifiers: Concentrate 1/2 DCV full time (-1/2), Extra Time one minute (-3/4), Cannot move (-1/2) [-1 3/4]

Cost: 7 points

Unforge

It was a duel between masters where I saw this first. The fight was evenly matched and grueling, until my bet concentrated on his axe, taking advantage of a momentary lull in the fight. The blade glowed with white from within, and with a single swing, he cleaved the axe of his opponent in two. Sadly, I later lost my winnings on a game of cards, thanks to allegedly watered-down Dwarven liquor I was generously served.

Powers: Hand to Hand Killing Attack 2D6
Modifiers: Armor Piercing (+1/2); OAF Axe (-1), x2 END (-1/2), Extra Time delayed phase (-1/4), Concentrate 1/2 DCV (-1/4), Only vs weapons (-1) [+1/2; -3]

Cost: 11 points

