

• SPEARDANCER •

Like the bladesingers of other surface elves and the dark dancers of the drow (see *Plot & Poison* for more about this prestige class), the speardancers of the wood elves combine blade and beauty in one deadly martial tradition. With grace and speed, the speardancer moves through the ranks of the enemy, striking and twisting away before a foe can react. In battle, speardancers dive through the ranks of the enemy, bringing chaos and confusion wherever they go, leaping in and out of the fray too quickly to follow.

As with several of the wood elves' most effective martial and magical traditions, characters come to the way of the speardancer through more than one path. Fighters and barbarians often follow the path of the spearbrute, turning the swift movements of the speardance into brutal and bloody death. Rangers and rogues usually follow the path of the spearghost, slipping unnoticed through the boughs of the forest to take the enemy unaware. Monks, fledgling spellcasters, and martial combatants with a flair for the contemplative follow the path of the spearminde, becoming one with the speardance for its own sake.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a speardancer (Spr), a character must fulfill one of the following entry paths.

PATH OF THE SPEARBRUTE

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: Cleave, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (any spear).

PATH OF THE SPEARGHOST

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Skills: Hide 7 ranks, Move Silently 7 ranks.

Feats: Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (any spear).

PATH OF THE SPEARMIND

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Skills: Concentration 3 ranks.

Base Will Save: +5.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (any spear).

CLASS SKILLS

The speardancer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Each completed entry path allows the speardancer to treat additional skills as class skills. If the speardancer has completed the path of the spearbrute, he adds Intimidate (Cha) to his list of class skills. If he has completed the path of the spearghost, he adds Hide (Dex) and Move Silently (Dex) to his list of class skills. If he has completed the path of the spearminde, he adds Listen (Wis) and Spot (Wis) to his list of class skills.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the speardancer prestige class.

WEAPON & ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Speardancers gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

SAVING THROW PROGRESSION

The saving throw progression for a speardancer depends on which entry path the character followed. If he completed the path of the spearbrute, he uses the "good save" progression for base Fortitude save bonuses and the "poor save" progression for the other saves; if he completed the path of the spearghost, he uses the good save progression for base Reflex save bonuses;

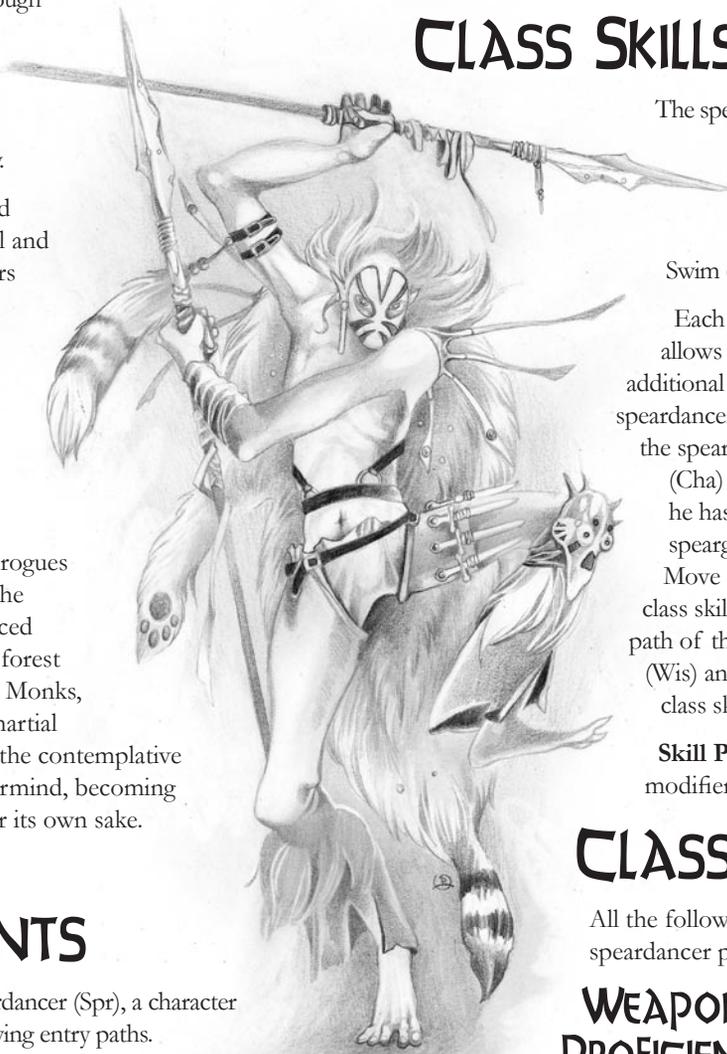


TABLE 3-5: THE SPEARDANCER

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Good Save	Poor Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	Saving throw progression
2nd	+1	+3	+0	Speardance (slashing, bludgeoning)
3rd	+2	+3	+1	Improved critical (19–20)
4th	+3	+4	+1	Speardance (defensive dance)
5th	+3	+4	+1	Chargebreaker
6th	+4	+5	+2	Speardance (close fighting)
7th	+5	+5	+2	Improved critical (18–20)
8th	+6	+6	+2	Speardance (dance of avoidance)
9th	+6	+6	+3	Impale
10th	+7	+7	+3	Speardance (whirlwind), improved critical (17–20)

and if he completed the path of the spearmind, he uses the good save progression for base Will save bonuses. Speardancers who have completed more than one entry path can have multiple good saving throws. Completing a second or third entry path after having taken levels in the speardancer class allows the character to improve other base saves, but only for those levels attained after completing the path in question.

SPEARDANCE (EX)

The tradition of the speardance is the focus of the speardancer's devoted study, in the belief that its twisting movements lead to true physical perfection. As he progresses, he gains access to speardancing abilities. All of these abilities require that the speardancer be wielding a spear in melee. The speardancer chooses one of the following abilities at the beginning of a round, and its effects apply for that entire round.

SLASHING

At 2nd level, the speardancer gains the ability to deal slashing damage with his spear rather than piercing damage. He does not gain the benefits of the Improved Critical (spear) feat if he has it.

BLUDGEONING

At 2nd level, the speardancer gains the ability to deal bludgeoning damage with his spear rather than piercing damage. He does not gain the benefits of the Improved Critical (spear) feat if he has it.

DEFENSIVE DANCE

At 4th level, the speardancer gains the ability to gain a +1 dodge bonus to AC.

CLOSE FIGHTING

At 6th level, the speardancer gains the ability to threaten opponents in adjacent squares when wielding a long spear,

as well as those 10 feet away. Creatures larger than Medium threaten only one additional square with this ability; for example, a Large creature wielding a long spear threatens only opponents who are 10, 15, and 20 feet away.

DANCE OF AVOIDANCE

At 8th level, the speardancer gains the ability to gain an additional +1 dodge bonus to AC when fighting defensively. In addition, if he opts for total defense, his movement for the round does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

WHIRLWIND

At 10th level, the speardancer gains this ability. When making a full attack, he can give up his regular attacks and instead make one melee attack at his full base attack bonus against each opponent within reach. This includes opponents that he threatens with the close fighting ability (see above). He forfeits any bonus or extra attacks granted by other feats or abilities, such as the Cleave feat or the *haste* spell.

IMPROVED CRITICAL (EX)

Beginning at 3rd level, the speardancer improves the threat range of any type of spear he is wielding, including new exotic spears described in **Chapter Six: Equipment**. The spear's threat range is 19–20 (or the spear's normal threat range, whichever is greater). At 7th level, the threat range improves to 18–20, and at 10th level it improves again to 17–20.

This improved threat range does not stack with those granted by the Improved Critical feat and the *keen* special ability.

CHARGEBREAKER (EX)

At 5th level, whenever the speardancer makes an attack of opportunity with his spear against a charging opponent, he deals double damage on a successful attack against that opponent, just as if he had readied an action to set his spear against the charge.