

Dark Knight

The pious Ishgardian clergy guide the flock, and the devout knights protect the weak. Yet even the holiest of men succumb to the darkest of temptations. None dare to administer justice to these sacrosanct elite residing outside the reach of the law. Who, then, defends the feeble from the transgressions of those meant to guide and protect them? A valiant few take up arms to defend the downtrodden, and not even the holy priests and knights can escape their judgment. Pariahs in their own land, they are known by many as “dark knights.” These sentinels bear no shields declaring their allegiance. Instead, their weapons act as beacons to guide the meek through darkness.

Role: In battle, dark knights use magicks to infuse their blades with the powers of darkness to strike down their enemies and defend their allies. Most of their abilities involve draining health from enemies.

Hit Die: d10.

Starting Wealth: 5d6 × 10 gil (average 175 gil.) In addition, each character begins play with an outfit worth 10 gil or less.

Class Skills

The dark knight's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (nobility) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Stealth (Dex).

Skill Ranks Per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special	MP	Spell Level
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Darkside, Grit Stance, Harm Touch, Limit Breaks	—	—
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Dark Grace, First Into Battle, Abyssal Arts	—	—
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Defile, Shared Offense	—	—
4 th	+4	+4	+1	+4	Abyssal Arts	1	1 st
5 th	+5	+4	+1	+4	Soul Eater	2	1 st
6 th	+6/+1	+5	+2	+5	Defile, Abyssal Arts	3	1 st
7 th	+7/+2	+5	+2	+5	Dark Resilience	4	2 nd
8 th	+8/+3	+6	+2	+6	Abyssal Arts	5	2 nd
9 th	+9/+4	+6	+3	+6	Defile, Last Resort	6	2 nd
10 th	+10/+5	+7	+3	+7	Abyssal Arts	7	3 rd
11 th	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+7	Aura of Cowardice	8	3 rd
12 th	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+8	Defile, Abyssal Arts	10	3 rd
13 th	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+8	Aura of Despair	12	4 th
14 th	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+9	Abyssal Arts	14	4 th
15 th	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+9	Defile, Shadow Wall	16	4 th
16 th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+10	Abyssal Arts	19	4 th
17 th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	Aura of Quietus	22	4 th
18 th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+11	Defile, Abyssal Arts (Carve and Spit)	25	4 th
19 th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	Aura of Rage	29	4 th
20 th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	Dark Champion, Abyssal Arts	33	4 th

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the dark knight.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Dark knights are proficient with all simple, martial weapons, and knight swords and with all armor (light, medium, and heavy) and shields (including tower shields).

Limit Breaks (Su): At 1st level, the dark knight receives the Limit Breaks (Dark Force and Living Dead).

Dark Force (Su): This Limit Break allows the dark knight to use his darkness to protect himself and his allies to reduce harm inflicted. The dark knight and all allies within a 30-ft.-radius of the dark knight take half damage from any source for a duration of 1 round + 1 round per four dark knight levels after 1st. This limit break requires only a swift action.

Living Dead (Su): This Limit Break allows the dark knight's darkness to consume him and become one with him, not allowing his death to pass. The dark knight may not be dropped below 0 HP unless subject to a critical hit. Even then the attack may only drop him to -1, at this point the dark knight is treated as having the Diehard feat for as long as Living Dead lasts and cannot be hurt again unless subject to another critical attack, therefore finally killing him if the attack would deal enough damage to do so. If the dark knight is not at 0 HP or above when the effect ends, he falls unconscious immediately and must now try to stabilize. This limit break requires a swift action to activate and has a duration of 1 round + 1 round for every four dark knight levels after 1st. During this Limit Break, only damage by enemies is prevented, not by an ability or spell that would drop him to 0 or below 0 hit points.

Darkside (Su): The dark knight conjures up the darkness from the abyss to fuel his power covering him with red malice. At 1st level, he adds +3 points of damage to all melee attacks, increasing by an additional +1 for every 2 dark knight levels thereafter. Additionally, the dark knight gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls at 1st level, gaining an additional +1 for every 4 dark knight levels thereafter. He also gains spell resistance equal to 10 + his dark knight level. However, while activating Darkside, he sacrifices hit points (actual hit points, not temporary hit points he may have) equal to his dark knight level, at the beginning of his turn he remains in Darkside. While succumbing to Darkside, the dark knight is immune to all healing effects other than from his own abilities or spells. Meaning only abyssal arts, spells, and syphon strike may restore his hit points while in Darkside, as well as any other character abilities from other classes.

He may activate Darkside as a swift action. Darkside lasts until ended, or the dark knight is at -1 or less. This may be ended as a move action.

Grit Stance (Ex): At 1st level, the dark knight adopts an aggressive stance which slows his enemies' ability to advance or retreat and reduces the damage he takes while dealing less damage as well. While the dark knight maintains this stance, he takes a -2 penalty to all damage rolls and halves his total movement speed, but gains DR 2/-. This bonus and penalty increases by 1 per three dark knight levels after 1st. Entering and leaving grit stance is a move action.

At 5th level, any space he threatens is treated by hostile creatures as though it were difficult terrain for enemies. If a creature would not be affected by difficult terrain due to its movement type, the effects still apply. In addition, whenever the dark knight hits an opponent with an attack of opportunity, that opponent becomes flat-footed until the end of his next turn. If mounted or otherwise not on his feet, this stance ends automatically.

Harm Touch (Su): At 1st level, a dark knight surrounds his hand with a dark power, causing terrible wounds to open on those he touches. Each day he can use this ability a number of times equal to half his dark knight level (minimum 1) + his Charisma modifier. As a touch attack, a dark knight can cause 1d6 points of shadow damage. This amount increases by 1d6 for every two dark knight levels beyond the 1st. Using this ability is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Alternatively, a dark knight can use this power to heal undead creatures, restoring 1d6 hit points for every two levels the dark knight possesses.

Dark Blessing (Su): At 2nd level, a dark knight applies his Charisma modifier (if positive) as a bonus on all saving throws. If the character is ever able to add his Charisma modifier to his saves through use of another ability (for example, the holy knight's holy grace) he may only add his Charisma modifier once to his saves.

First Into Battle (Su): At 2nd level, a dark knight can spend 1 use of harm touch to act in the surprise round, even if he is surprised. When the dark knight makes an Initiative check, he gains a bonus to the check equal to his Charisma bonus.

Abysal Arts (Su): At 2nd level, while under the effect of Darkside, the dark knight draws on the power of the abyss to utilize a new form of power. The dark knight gains an abysal art ability at 2nd level and every two dark knight levels thereafter. The dark knight can use abysal art abilities a number of times per day equal to half his dark knight level plus his Charisma modifier.

Abysal Drain (Su): As a standard action, the dark knight causes an area to explode with the power of the Abyss dealing 1d6 points of shadow damage plus an additional 1d6 points of shadow damage per four dark knight levels to those within a 20-ft.-radius. Enemies in the area of effect must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + half of the dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) to reduce the damage by half. The dark knight is healed half the damage dealt of the total to all affected. This ability has a range of 50 feet.

Blood Price (Su): The dark knight can erupt blood from the ground, calling forth the abyss to pierce through, ripping his enemies and protecting the dark knight from harm from his foes. Enemies within 30 feet take 1d6 shadow damage per two dark knight levels, a Reflex save (DC 10 + half of the dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) can half this damage. Those who fail the save, take a -4 penalty on attack rolls against the dark knight and his allies in the radius for 1 round.

Bloodspiller (Su): As a standard action, the dark knight makes a melee touch attack as he leaps in the air bringing his weapon down with the power of the abyss, causing a column of darkness to envelope his enemy. If the attack hits, it deals double weapon damage. If the target dies by this attack, all foes who see the attack within 60 feet must make a Will save (DC 10 + half of dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) or be Panicked for 1 round. The status effect is a mind-affecting effect.

Carve and Spit (Su): As a swift action, the dark knight infuses his melee weapon with the abyss, causing his strikes to bypass his enemy's defenses for a number of rounds equal to his Charisma modifier. While under this effect, the dark knight ignores up to the dark knight's level in damage reduction and hardness on creatures and cannot be disarmed.

Dark Mind (Su): The dark knight can, as a swift or an immediate action, gain a bonus to Spell Resistance granted by Darkside equal to his Charisma modifier. This lasts until the beginning of the dark knight's next turn.

Dark Pressure (Su): While in Darkside, the dark knight gains a +1 profane bonus on attack rolls with attacks of opportunity against a creature casting a spell in his threatened area. This bonus increases by 1 at 5th, 10th, 15th and 20th level. In addition, at 6th level, the dark knight is treated as having the Disruptive feat while Darkside is active.

Darkness Unleash (Su): As a standard action, the dark knight unleashes a pool of darkness from him that covers the ground releasing black swords to impale all creatures who stand within it that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. To use this ability, the dark knight sacrifices hit points equal to 1/4th of his current HP. Those within a 15-ft.-radius from the dark knight takes damage equal to the hit points sacrificed. A successful Reflex save (DC 10 + half of the dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) halves this damage.

Dark Passenger (Su): As a standard action, the dark knight may send a 30-ft.-line of darkness to consume his foes in its wake. Those effected take 1d6 shadow damage per two dark knight levels and enemies affected are *Blinded* for a number of rounds equal to the dark knight's Charisma modifier. A Reflex save (DC 10 + half of the dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) can halve the damage and negate the blind status effect.

Delirium (Su): As a move action, the dark knight surges power from the abyss, granting himself 1d6 temporary hit points plus an additional 1d6 per four dark knight levels. These temporary hit points disappear when Darkside ends.

Hellish Grit (Su): While in Grit stance and after successfully succeeding a saving throw against a magical spell or spell-like ability, the dark knight gains a +1 profane bonus to saves against that spell's particular school or descriptor for 1 round. At 6th level and every four dark knight levels thereafter, this bonus increases by 1.

Plunge (Su): The dark knight may jump at an enemy as part of a charge within his movement speed and plunge his sword into his enemy. This ability ignores the movement penalty while in grit stance. This attack deals an additional 1d6 points of shadow damage plus an additional 1d6 per three dark knight levels to the target. The movement from this ability does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Quietus (Su): The dark knight pools the abyss into his sword and swings it around him, leaving traces of darkness encircled around him that explodes moments after. The dark knight makes a melee attack against all enemies adjacent to him. If successful, he deals normal damage and enemies must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + half of the dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) or be *Silenced* for 1 round.

Salted Earth (Su): As a standard action, the dark knight causes an area to be consumed by a consuming red malice that eats his enemies' life and corrupting the earth within. Enemies within a 30-ft.-radius take 1d6 shadow damage per four dark knight levels each round while in the radius and move at half speed while in it. A Fortitude save (DC 10 + half of the dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) can negate the damage and the movement penalty, but must make the same save each round they are in the effect. This ability has a range of 50 feet and lasts for a number of rounds equal to the dark knight's Charisma modifier.

Sole Survivor (Su): As a swift action, the dark knight marks an enemy at his choosing within 20 feet. If this enemy dies, whether by the dark knight's hands or another, the dark knight heals 1d6 hit points per two dark knight levels and gains MP equal to his Charisma modifier. If the enemy does not die within a number of rounds equal to the dark knight's Charisma modifier, the effect ends.

Spiteful Rebuke (Su): While in Darkside, whenever the dark knight is successfully hit by or fails a saving throw against a spell or spell-like ability, he may force the source of that ability or caster of that spell to pass a Will save (DC 10 + half of the dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) or take shadow damage equal to half of his dark knight level + his Charisma modifier.

Syphon Strike (Su): As a swift action, the dark knight's blade is infused with draining power causing his next first successful attack to restore HP equal to half the damage dealt.

The Blackest Night (Su): As a standard action, the dark knight is surrounded by a barrier of darkness, granting attacks against him 50% concealment and 2 temporary hit points per dark knight level. The concealment ends and the temporary hit points disappear after a number of rounds equal to the dark knight's Charisma modifier or until Darkside ends. This ability cannot be dispelled by light spells or similar effects.

Shared Offense (Su): At 3rd level, a dark knight can spend one use of his harm touch ability as a standard action to grant all adjacent allies (including other dark knights) a bonus. At 3rd level, adjacent allies receive a

+1 profane bonus to their Attack and Damage rolls. These bonuses last for a number of rounds equal to the dark knight's Charisma modifier. At 9th level and 15th level, this bonus increases by +1. At 6th level, these bonuses are granted to all allies within 10 feet, and allies that are reduced to fewer than 0 hit points within this area become disabled instead of dying as in Diehard feat. At 12th level, these bonuses are granted to all allies within 15 feet, and allies within this area deal an extra 1d6 points of damage. At 18th level, these bonuses are granted to all allies within 20 feet. These bonuses are cumulative with each other. Allies only benefit from these bonuses while in the listed area.

Defile (Su): At 3rd level, and every three levels thereafter, a dark knight can select one defile. Each defile adds an effect to the dark knight's harm touch ability. Whenever the dark knight uses harm touch to deal damage to one target, the target also receives the additional effect from one of the defilements possessed by the dark knight. This choice is made when the touch is used. The target receives a Fortitude save to avoid this defile. If the save is successful, the target takes the damage as normal, but not the effects of the defile. The DC of this save is equal to 10 + half of the dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier.

At 3rd level, the dark knight can select from the following initial defilements.

- *Blinded:* The target receives the Blind status effect for 1 round per level of the dark knight.
- *Fatigued:* The target is fatigued.
- *Shaken:* The target is shaken for 1 round per level of the dark knight.
- *Sickened:* The target is sickened for 1 round per level of the dark knight.

At 6th level, a dark knight adds the following defilements to the list of those that can be selected.

- *Dazed:* The target is dazed for 1 round.
- *Diseased:* The target receives the Disease status effect for 1 round per level of the dark knight.
- *Imperiled:* The target receives the Imperil status effect (to shadow damage) for 1 round per level of the dark knight.
- *Silenced:* The target receives the Silence status effect for 1 round per two levels of the dark knight.
- *Staggered:* The target is staggered for 1 round per two levels of the dark knight.

At 9th level, a dark knight adds the following defilements to the list of those that can be selected.

- *Cursed:* The target receives the Curse status effect for 1 round per level of the dark knight.
- *Exhausted:* The target is exhausted. **Prerequisite:** The dark knight must have the fatigued defile before selecting this defile.
- *Frightened:* The target is frightened for 1 round per two levels of the dark knight. **Prerequisite:** The dark knight must have the shaken defile before selecting this defile.
- *Immobilized:* The target receives the Immobilize status effect for 1 round per level of the dark knight.
- *Nauseated:* The target is nauseated for 1 round per three levels of the dark knight. **Prerequisite:** The dark knight must have the sickened defile before selecting this defile.
- *Poisoned:* The target receives the Poison status effect for 1 round per level of the dark knight.
- *Slowed:* The target receives the Slow status effect for 1 round per two levels of the dark knight.

At 12th level, a dark knight adds the following defilements to the list of those that can be selected.

- *Berserk:* The target receives the Berserk status effect for 1 round per two levels of the dark knight.
- *Deafened:* The target is deafened for 1 round per level of the dark knight.
- *Disabled:* The target receives the Disable status effect for 1 round per three levels of the dark knight.
- *Paralyzed:* The target is paralyzed for 1 round.
- *Stunned:* The target is stunned for 1 round.
- *Zombie:* The target receives the Zombie status effect for 1 round per level of the dark knight.

These abilities are not cumulative. Once a defile is chosen, it can't be changed.

Spells: Beginning at 4th level, a dark knight gains the ability to cast dark knight spells, which are drawn from the dark knight spell list. A dark knight begins play with 1 1st level dark knight spell of his choice. Each time a character attains a new dark knight level, he gains one spell of his choice to add to his list of spells. The free spell must be of spell levels he can cast. Like most spellcasters, a dark knight can find or purchase scrolls with spells to add to his repertoire. Unlike other spellcasters, a dark knight wearing armor does not affect his spellcasting ability.

To learn or cast a spell, the dark knight must have a Charisma score equal to at least 10 + the spell level (Cha 11 for 1st-level spells, Cha 12 for 2nd-level spells, and so forth). The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a dark knight's spell is 10 + the spell level + the dark knight's Charisma modifier. In addition, a dark knight gains additional MP for having a high attribute (Charisma).

Through 3rd level, a dark knight has no caster level. At 4th level and higher, his caster level is equal to his dark knight level -3.

Soul Eater (Su): At 5th level, as a swift action, a dark knight can empower his next blow by giving up some of his life force to win the battle. The dark knight's first melee attack each round for the duration of this ability deals an extra 5d6 points of shadow damage if it hits, and he takes 10 points of damage each time he makes such an attack, whether or not the attack is successful. This extra damage is not multiplied upon a critical hit. While this ability is active, the dark knight is immune to all healing effects other than from his own abilities or spells. This ability lasts for 1 minute and can be canceled as a free action. The dark knight can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier.

Dark Resilience (Ex): At 7th level, a dark knight gains immunity to Poison, Sap, and Disease status effects.

Last Resort (Su): At 9th level, a dark knight reaches for the dark power within himself to imbue himself with greater strength at a cost of defense. While under Last Resort, he gains a +6 bonus to Strength and, if he makes a full attack action, gains a single extra attack each round at his highest bonus. (This latter effect is not cumulative with haste or other effects that grant additional attacks.) However, he also takes a -4 penalty to Armor Class. Using this ability requires a swift action and consumes two uses of the dark knight's harm touch ability. The effects last for 3 rounds plus a number of rounds equal to his Charisma bonus (if any).

Aura of Cowardice (Su): At 11th level, a dark knight radiates a palpably daunting aura that causes all enemies within 10 feet to take a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures that are normally immune to fear lose that immunity while within 10 feet of a dark knight with this ability. This ability functions only while the dark knight remains conscious, not if he is unconscious or dead.

Aura of Despair (Su): At 13th level, enemies within 10 feet of a dark knight take a -2 penalty on all saving throws. This penalty does not stack with the penalty from aura of cowardice. This ability functions only while the dark knight is conscious, not if he is unconscious or dead.

Shadow Wall (Su): At 15th level, as a swift action, if under the Grit Stance, the dark knight can double the damage reduction and damage penalties for a number of rounds equal to his Charisma modifier up to 3 times per day.

Aura of Quietus (Su): At 17th level, a dark knight radiates an aura that causes the failure of healing spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities used to restore enemies within 10 feet of him. This is not an antimagic field, however, and ongoing or passive effects are not affected. Casters can overcome this ability with

a successful caster level check versus the dark knight's level + 11. This ability functions only while the dark knight remains conscious, not if he is unconscious or dead.

Aura of Rage (Su): At 19th level, a dark knight radiates an aura of anger and rage, causing all enemies within 10 feet to be inflicted with the Berserk status for 1 minute unless they make a Will save (DC 10 + half of dark knight's level + his Charisma modifier) to negate. Enemies succeeding the saving throw makes them immune to this aura's effects for 24 hours. This ability functions only while the dark knight remains conscious, not if he is unconscious or dead.

Dark Champion (Su): At 20th level, the dark knight becomes a conduit for the abyss. When he uses an abyssal art or harm touch to damage a creature, he deals the maximum amount possible. In addition, his Spell Resistance from Darkside increases to 10 plus his dark knight level.