

Shell Knight

A shell knight forgoes the use of a shield and relies on its shell and makes it a formidable foe and a hard one to flank effectively.

The shell knight is an archetype of the knight class, available only to quadav knights.

Prerequisite: Must have the Full Withdrawal racial trait.

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: A shell knight is proficient with all simple and martial weapons (including knight swords) and with all armor (light, medium, and heavy), but not shields.

This ability modifies the knight's starting weapon and armor proficiencies.

Defensive Training (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, a shell knight counts his total knight level as his fighter level for the purpose of qualifying for any armor-related feats. If he has levels in fighter, these levels stack.

This ability modifies defensive training.

Shell Block (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, the shell knight excels in using his shell to protect him from his enemy's attacks. The shell knight gains a +2 natural armor bonus to AC that stacks with his racial natural armor bonus. This natural armor bonus increases to +4 at 9th level, and +6 at 15th level.

This ability replaces shield block.

Active Defense (Ex): At 4th level, a knight gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC when fighting defensively, using Combat Expertise, or using total defense. This bonus increases by +1 for every four levels beyond 4th. 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 modifies active defense.

Improved Full Withdrawal (Ex): At 4th level, while not using a shield, a shell knight can benefit from the effects of improved full withdrawal, the damage reduction from improved full withdrawal stacks with armored defense, but not any other form of damage reduction. Using full withdrawal to enter and exit their shell is now a standard action each. The DR increases to 10/bludgeoning. In addition a shell knight no longer drops items they are holding.

At 11th level, using full withdrawal to enter and exit their shell is now a move action each. The DR increases to 15/bludgeoning.

At 18th level, using full withdrawal to enter their shell can be done as an immediate action. The DR increases to 20/bludgeoning.

This ability replaces bulwark.

Stronger Shell (Ex): At 5th level, the shell knight's shell gets tougher, gaining a +1 natural armor bonus to AC that stacks with his racial natural armor bonus and the natural armor bonus from shell block. At 10th level, this bonus increases to a +2 bonus.

This ability replaces deft shield.

Shell Buffet (Ex): At 8th level, as a move action, a shell knight may make a combat maneuver check to use his shell to impede an adjacent enemy. If successful, the target suffers a -4 penalty on its attack rolls against the shell knight and a -4 penalty to AC on attacks made by the shell knight until the beginning of his next turn. At 13th level, a shell knight may use this ability as a swift action.

This ability modifies shield buffet.

Shell Defense (Ex): At 15th level, the knight is capable of turning an otherwise lethal blow and continue the fight. A number of times per day equal to the shell knight's Dexterity modifier (minimum 1), when an attack that inflicts hit point damage from a natural attack, melee weapon, or ranged weapon would reduce the shell knight to 0 or fewer hit points, he can make a Fortitude save (DC = the attacker's attack roll) to deflect the attack to his shell, ignoring the damage from that attack.

This ability replaces steel defense.

Shell Ward (Ex): At 19th level, a shell knight gains evasion (as a thief), and adds his natural armor bonus to his AC (not including enhancement bonuses) on Reflex saves and to his touch AC. The shell knight ignores the armor limitation of evasion.

This ability modifies shield ward.