

## Shield Champion

*Stalwart in battle, a shield champion has perfected an entire martial discipline relying on only her hand-to-hand fighting skills and her ever-present shield. What she forgoes in weapon versatility and improved combat maneuvering, she makes up for in her ability to turn her defense into a weapon.*

The shield champion is an archetype of the black belt class.

**Weapon Proficiency:** A shield champion is proficient with all simple weapons and with shields as weapons.

This ability replaces the black belt's weapon proficiencies.

**Champion's Flurry (Ex):** At 2nd level, a shield champion can use shields with master's flurry.

This ability modifies master's flurry.

**Shield Training (Ex):** Starting at 2nd level, a shield champion counts his total black belt level as his fighter level for the purpose of qualifying for any shield-related feats. If he has levels in fighter, these levels stack.

This ability replaces a martial arts talent gained at 2nd level.

**Throw Shield (Ex):** At 3rd level, a shield champion can throw a heavy or light shield as a normal (non-improvised) thrown weapon with a range increment of 10 feet or the shield's range increment, whichever is greater. The thrown shield deals the same damage as a shield bash, and any damage increases from shield spikes apply to this attack. A shield champion is treated as having the Far Shot feat for the purpose of determining range increment penalties for throwing a shield.

At 7th level, a shield champion can use a thrown shield to perform a bull rush, dirty trick, disarm, reposition, or trip combat maneuver as if she were making a melee shield bash attack. At 11th level, a shield champion gains Shield Master as a bonus feat. She does not need to meet all prerequisites before gaining that feat. If the shield champion already has this feat, she may pick another Combat feat for which she meets the prerequisites for.

This ability replaces maneuver training at 3rd, 7th, and 11th levels.

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

This ability replaces weapon mastery.

**Returning Shield (Ex):** At 5th level, a shield champion can throw a shield so it ricochets off her target (and possibly other solid objects) to return to her at the end of her turn. This ability functions whether or not the shield champion hits her opponent or moves on her turn. The shield deals no damage to targets it bounces off other than the original target of the shield champion's attack. Other circumstances can prevent the shield from returning to the shield champion, such as an opponent using a readied action to catch the shield, or the shield sticking to a mimic's adhesive. The shield champion can opt to not have a thrown shield return to her, in which case it falls to the ground as it normally would. If the shield has the returning weapon special ability, she can use either that or this ability.

If a shield champion has additional attacks from a high base attack bonus, these additional attacks can be ricochets off an earlier target. The distance to each additional target adds to the total range of the shield, and range penalties apply, but there are no additional penalties for attacking in this manner. Because ricocheting

attacks are treated as separate attacks, effects and modifiers that only apply to one attack roll (such as true strike) only apply to the first attack and not to the others. A shield champion can throw a shield as part of a brawler's flurry.

At 9th level, a shield champion gains Greater Shield Focus as a bonus feat. She does not need to meet all prerequisites before gaining that feat. If the shield champion already has this feat, she may pick another Combat feat for which she meets the prerequisites for. At 12th level, a shield champion can use her unarmed strike damage when dealing damage with a shield (whether in melee or thrown) or the shield's damage, whichever is greater. At 17th level, by ricocheting her shield off a nearby surface before hitting her intended target, she can treat that surface as the origin square of the attack to determine whether the target is flanked and whether the target gains a cover bonus to its AC. She can use this ability to attack a creature with total concealment from her if she knows what square it occupies, but the attack still has a 50% miss chance.

This ability replaces master's strike.

**Shield Buffet (Ex):** At 13th level, as a move action, a shield champion may make a combat maneuver check to use her shield to impede an adjacent enemy. If successful, the target suffers a –2 penalty on its attack rolls against the shield champion and a –2 penalty to AC on attacks made by the shield champion until the beginning of her next turn. At 17th level, a shield champion may use this ability as a swift action.

This ability replaces awesome blow.

**Champion Defense (Ex):** At 15th level, once per day when she would be reduced to 0 or fewer hit points by damage in combat from a weapon, unarmed, or natural attack, the shield champion can attempt to absorb all the damage with her shield. To use this ability, the shield champion must attempt a Fortitude saving throw, with the DC equal to the damage dealt. If it succeeds, she takes only half damage from the blow; otherwise, she takes full damage. She must be aware of the attack and able to react to it in order to use this ability—if she is denied her Dexterity bonus to AC, she can't use this ability. At 19th level, she can use this ability twice per day.

This ability replaces the maneuver training gained at 15th and 19th levels.

**Shield Mastery (Ex):** At 18th level, a shield champion gains DR 5/— when wielding a shield.

This ability replaces five point palm exploding heart technique.

**Shield Ward (Ex):** At 20th level, a shield champion gains evasion (as a thief) while wielding a shield, and adds her shield bonus to her AC (not including enhancement bonuses) on Reflex saves and to her touch AC. If the shield champion has the Shield Ward feat, she gains an additional +1 to her Reflex saves and to her touch AC. In addition, her shield cannot be disarmed or sundered.

This ability replaces improved awesome blow.