MMA is still a relatively new professional sport, but it has created plenty of historical moments, and the UFC, the sport's most recognizable promotion, has developed countless stars.

Many fighters have built impressive records, highlight reels full of wild knockouts and crazy submissions and a few have entered the fraternity of UFC champions. But even among those who have reached the top of the mountain in their division, there is an even higher level of rare air that only a handful of fighters have ever reached.

"Champ-champ" status -- owning titles in two divisions simultaneously.

According to former UFC double champion Daniel Cormier, winning even one UFC title is "nearly impossible". In just over 30 years of the UFC hosting fight events, only 107 different fighters (not including the champions who have held a title more than once) have held a title in any of the promotion's 12 weight classes. Of those 107 fighters, only seven have even challenged for a second belt. And of those seven fighters, only four (Cormier, Henry Cejudo, Conor McGregor and Amanda Nunes) have ever actually won.

"It takes world-class levels of commitment, skill, athleticism and even some luck," Cormier told ESPN.

Yet, many UFC champs have called for their shot at a title holder in a different division -- some have even been bold enough to do so before their first title defense. How, then, can we separate those who have earned the right to challenge for a second title from those who still have more work to do?

After surveying reigning champions, former champs and other UFC fighters, we've developed a proposal for "The Double Champ Checklist."

Nobody wants to hear about your double champ aspirations if you have yet to earn your first title. It's just that simple. But winning that first belt is no easy task.

"I know everyone wants to be a UFC champion, but there have been so few people to come through the sport and achieve that, so it's not a given," Cormier said. "Being a double champion is so rare that it can't be the focus for a fighter early. It has to happen organically."

To earn a title shot, a fighter must work their way up the division's ranks, progressively taking on more challenging opponents while facing more pressure to win. And, in many cases, just winning isn't even enough -- plenty of fighters have piled up decision wins only to get passed over in favor of someone with fewer wins but more finishes or fights that are considered more entertaining.

Every fighter's entry point in the UFC is different, though. Some fighters had to work their way up from the figurative bottom of the roster -- like welterweight champion Leon Edwards -- who made his first appearance in the Octagon in 2014 and compiled an impressive 11-2, 1 NC record before winning the title in 2022.