# The Way of the Unseen Fist, Volume 2: The Player's Handbook

## Introduction: Walking the Path of Heroes

You hold in your hands not merely a book of rules, but a key. It is a key to a world of stark contrasts, a world teetering on the precipice of a dark age, where the embers of past glories are all but extinguished by an encroaching, supernatural night.1 This is a world of crumbling empires and forgotten dynasties, where sprawling cities stand as defiant points of light in a vast wilderness haunted by the Ten Thousand Demons—the

*Yaoguai*—and their malevolent kin.1

Here, in the shadow of a fallen age, heroes are forged. They are Taoist sorcerers who command the very fabric of reality with ink and paper, and supernatural Kung Fu masters whose bodies are weapons honed to impossible perfection. They are the inheritors of ancient, esoteric arts, the last bulwark against the tide of chaos. This book is your guide to becoming one of them.

### The World of the Unseen Fist

The world is ancient, its soil layered with the dust of fallen empires. Legends speak of the Celestial Court, a heavenly bureaucracy that once maintained order, and of *Diyu*, the Ten Courts of Hell that judged the souls of the dead.1 But the gears of this grand cosmology have ground to a halt. The Mandate of Heaven is fractured, and the influence of the gods has waned. Into this vacuum, darkness has crept.

From the cursed earth rise the hopping corpses of the *Jiangshi*, their flesh immune to mortal steel.1 In the shadows of the court, the seductive and deadly

*Huli Jing* fox spirits weave illusions to enthrall the powerful.1 From the mountains descend the brutish

*Oni*, demons of terrifying strength and cruelty.1 These are but a few of the

*Yaoguai*—a term for the countless monsters, ghosts, and demons of folklore that now plague the land. They are the physical manifestations of a world out of balance.

Against this darkness stand the heroes. They are wanderers, scholars, monks, and warriors who have dedicated their lives to the path of cultivation—a journey of spiritual and physical refinement that can elevate a mortal to the level of an Immortal.2 They are the inheritors of a legacy of heroism, and their struggle is the last hope for a world drowning in shadow.

### What is a Hero?

In this world, a hero is more than a skilled warrior or a powerful sorcerer. A hero is a *Xia*—a champion of the common folk, a follower of a personal code of chivalry and righteousness.2 To be a

*Xia* is to defend the weak, to challenge the corrupt, and to stand for justice in a world where laws have failed. It is a path of self-sacrifice and unwavering principle.

This handbook will provide you with the rules to create a character, but it is up to you to breathe life into them. Your character is your avatar in this world, a protagonist in an unfolding story of epic scope. Their choices matter. Every quest completed, every demon banished, every injustice righted not only shapes the world around them but also refines their own soul, pushing them further along the arduous path of cultivation. The game is cooperative; you and your fellow players will form a band of heroes, working together to overcome challenges that no single individual could face alone.1

### The Dice & The Tao

Every action your hero takes that has a chance of failure is resolved by a simple, yet profound, core mechanic. This system translates your character's innate abilities and learned skills into a tangible outcome, representing the flow of fortune and the will of the Tao.

#### The d10 Pool

When the August Storyteller (the Game Master) calls for a check, you will assemble a pool of ten-sided dice (d10s). The number of dice in your pool is determined by adding the rating of one of your character's Five Virtues to the rating of a relevant Skill.

For example, to leap across a chasm, you might add your **Body** Virtue to your **Athletics** Skill. If you have a Body of 4 and 3 ranks in Athletics, you would roll a pool of seven d10s (4+3=7).

#### Successes & Failures

Each check has a Target Number (TN), typically set at 7 unless modified by circumstances. After you roll your dice pool, you count the number of individual dice that show a result equal to or greater than the TN. Each such die is a "Success."

If the number of Successes you roll is equal to or greater than the difficulty of the task (usually 1 for simple tasks, but higher for more complex challenges), your character succeeds.

#### Stunt Points

Often, you will achieve more Successes than the minimum required. For each Success you score beyond the first, you generate one Stunt Point (SP). These points can be spent immediately to add a cinematic flourish or tactical advantage to your action, turning a simple success into a spectacular one. This allows you to describe how your character excels, whether by pushing a foe back, disarming them with a flourish, or completing a task with exceptional speed and grace.1

#### The Yin/Yang Dice

The flow of the Tao is one of balance and unpredictability. To represent this, two dice in every pool you roll must be of different colors from the rest: one light-colored die (the Yang Die) and one dark-colored die (the Yin Die). These dice function as normal d10s for determining Successes, but their specific results can trigger special narrative events.1

* **The Ghost (Yin 1):** When the dark Yin Die rolls a 1, it is a "Ghost." This represents a surge of negative energy, a karmic imbalance, or a simple twist of bad luck. The Storyteller introduces a Complication to the scene. This does not negate your success, but it adds an unforeseen problem. For example, you successfully leap the chasm, but the ledge you land on begins to crumble, or your attack fells the demon, but its dying shriek alerts its brethren in the next chamber.
* **The Dragon (Yang 10):** When the light Yang Die rolls a 10, it is a "Dragon." This represents a surge of heroic fortune, a moment of perfect clarity, or a blessing from the heavens. The Storyteller introduces a Heroic Opportunity. This enhances your success with a significant narrative advantage. For example, you successfully decipher the ancient text, and in doing so, you discover a hidden passage detailing the secret weakness of the monster you hunt. Your attack not only hits but strikes a weak point in the enemy's armor, creating an opening for your allies to exploit.

This Yin/Yang mechanic ensures that every roll is fraught with potential, weaving story and consequence into the very fabric of the game's mechanics.

# Part I: The Forging of a Soul

This section is your guide to creating a hero. It is a journey that begins with a concept—a flash of inspiration—and ends with a fully realized character, ready to walk the path of cultivation and face the darkness. Here you will learn to define your hero's innermost qualities, choose their unique path of power, and refine their innate talents.

## Chapter 1: The Hero's Form - A Summary of Creation

Creating a character for *The Way of the Unseen Fist* is a process of defining their physical form, their spiritual potential, and the esoteric arts they have mastered. Follow these steps in order, referencing the detailed chapters that follow for a complete understanding of each choice.

1. **Conceptualize Your Hero:** Before touching dice or pencil, imagine the hero you wish to play. Are they a stoic monk whose fists can shatter steel? A wise scholar who commands spirits with strokes of a brush? A swift swordswoman who dances on rooftops under the moonlight? This core concept will guide all your subsequent choices.
2. **Determine The Five Virtues (Chapter 2):** Assign numerical ratings to your character's five core attributes: Body (身), Agility (捷), Mind (心), Spirit (靈), and Essence (精). These virtues are the foundation of all your hero's capabilities.
3. **Choose a Path of Cultivation (Chapter 3):** Select your character's archetype, or "class." This Path determines your hero's primary role in an adventuring party and grants them access to a unique suite of supernatural arts and techniques.
4. **Calculate Derived Statistics (Chapter 2):** Using your Virtues as a base, calculate your hero's secondary statistics, such as Stamina, Wounds, Qi Pool, and Defense. These numbers represent your character's resilience, spiritual energy, and combat prowess.
5. **Assign Skills & Merits (Chapter 4):** Distribute points to purchase ranks in various Skills, representing your hero's training and expertise. Then, select Merits—specialized talents that further customize your character and grant them unique advantages.
6. **Select Supernatural Arts & Techniques (Part II):** Choose your starting selection of powers from your chosen Path of Cultivation. These are the extraordinary abilities that set your hero apart from common mortals.
7. **Equip Your Hero (Chapter 9):** Spend your starting funds on weapons, armor, and essential adventuring gear. A hero must be well-equipped for the dangers that lie ahead.
8. **Add the Finishing Touches:** Give your hero a name, a personal history, and a description. Define their personality, their goals, and their connection to the world. This is the final step that transforms a collection of statistics into a living, breathing character.

## Chapter 2: The Five Virtues - Pillars of Being

A cultivator's journey is one of refining the self. The foundation of this self is built upon five pillars, the Five Virtues that define a person's innate potential. These are not merely abstract statistics; they are the wellsprings from which all abilities flow, representing a fundamental choice in how a hero approaches the path to power. A focus on the external arts of the body will differ greatly from a focus on the internal arts of the spirit, a distinction that begins here.3

* **身 (Shēn) - Body:** This Virtue represents raw physical power, resilience, and toughness. It is the measure of a hero's might and their capacity to endure physical hardship. A high Body score signifies a powerful physique, capable of wielding heavy weapons and shrugging off blows that would fell a lesser person. Mechanically, Body is the primary determinant of a character's **Stamina** track and adds to the damage of heavy melee weapons.1
* **捷 (Jié) - Agility:** This Virtue embodies speed, precision, balance, and reflexes. It is the grace of a willow in the wind, the swiftness of a striking serpent. A high Agility allows a hero to move with supernatural quickness, to strike with unerring accuracy, and to evade attacks with fluid ease. Mechanically, Agility governs ranged attacks, attacks with finesse-based weapons, and is the foundation of a character's base **Defense** value and **Initiative**.1
* **心 (Xīn) - Mind:** This Virtue reflects intellect, perception, memory, and esoteric understanding. It is the clarity of a still pond, reflecting the truth of the world. A hero with a high Mind is observant, knowledgeable, and capable of deciphering ancient texts, recognizing the weaknesses of supernatural foes, and understanding the complex patterns of magic. Mechanically, Mind governs a wide range of knowledge-based and perceptive **Skills**, including Lore and Calligraphy.
* **靈 (Líng) - Spirit:** This Virtue is the measure of a hero's willpower, courage, and spiritual fortitude. It is the unyielding mountain that stands against the storm. A high Spirit allows a character to resist fear, to fight off demonic possession and corrupting influences, and to maintain their resolve in the face of overwhelming horror. Mechanically, Spirit is the sole determinant of a character's **Wounds** track, representing their ability to withstand true, life-threatening injury.1
* **精 (Jīng) - Essence:** This Virtue represents a hero's innate connection to the flow of universal energy, or Qi. It is the depth of their inner wellspring, their capacity to channel the power of the cosmos through their own being. A high Essence signifies a profound spiritual potential, allowing a cultivator to store and manipulate vast quantities of Qi. Mechanically, Essence is the primary determinant of a character's **Qi Pool** and the potency of all their supernatural arts.6

The allocation of these Virtues is the first and most important choice a player makes. It establishes whether their hero will be an external martial artist who perfects the physical form through high Body and Agility, reflecting the path of *Waidan* (External Alchemy), or an internal adept who cultivates the spirit and mind through high Spirit and Essence, following the path of *Neidan* (Inner Alchemy).5 This choice is not merely about optimizing for combat; it is a declaration of the character's core philosophy.

### Derived Statistics

Your Five Virtues are the source of your character's secondary traits. These derived statistics are the practical, in-game expression of your hero's core potential. Use the formulas in the table below to calculate these values after assigning your Virtue ratings.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Derived Statistic | Formula | Description |
| **Stamina** | (Body×5)+10 | Represents fatigue, bruises, and minor injuries. This is the first pool of health lost in combat. |
| **Wounds** | Spirit | Represents severe, life-threatening injuries. Damage to this track is rare but debilitating. Reaching 0 Wounds results in death. |
| **Qi Pool** | (Essence×2)+5 | The character's personal reservoir of spiritual energy, used to fuel all supernatural arts and techniques. |
| **Defense** | 10+Agility | The base Target Number an opponent must meet with their attack roll Successes to hit the character. |
| **Initiative** | Agility+ Athletics Ranks | The modifier added to a d10 roll to determine turn order in combat. |
| **Action Point Pool** | 5+ half Agility (rounded down) | The number of Action Points (AP) the character gains at the start of each of their turns in combat. |
| **Movement** | 4+ half Agility (rounded down) | The number of squares the character can move for 1 AP in combat. |

## Chapter 3: Paths of Cultivation - The Archetypes of Power

The journey to immortality is not a single road but a landscape of countless paths, each with its own disciplines, philosophies, and unique expressions of power. Your character's Path of Cultivation is their "class"—the archetype that defines their primary role and the supernatural arts they command. Each Path offers a distinct way to interact with the world and to combat the forces of darkness, loosely aligning with the tactical roles of Controller, Striker, Defender, and Leader to ensure a balanced and effective party of heroes.1

### The Talisman Scribe (符籙師, Fúlùshī)

* **Role:** Controller
* **Description:** The Talisman Scribe is a scholar and a sorcerer, a master of the esoteric art of *Fashu*. They do not wield raw, untamed magic; instead, they channel the power of the cosmos into meticulously crafted ideographs on slips of yellow paper. These *Fulu*, or talismans, are conduits of power, allowing the Scribe to command spirits, conjure elemental forces, seal away demons, and lay debilitating curses upon their foes.7 Their power lies in preparation and tactical acumen, turning the battlefield into a web of sigils and invisible forces. They are the keepers of ancient lore, their brush a weapon more potent than any sword.
* **Suggested Virtues:** Mind, Essence

### The Iron Palm Monk (鐵掌僧, Tiězhǎng Sēng)

* **Role:** Striker/Defender
* **Description:** The Iron Palm Monk walks the path of *Waidan*, or External Alchemy, treating their own body as the crucible in which power is forged. Through decades of brutal, relentless conditioning, their flesh, bone, and sinew have been hardened to the consistency of stone and steel.10 Their hands are registered weapons, capable of shattering wood, stone, and the bones of their enemies. They are masters of unarmed combat styles, drawing inspiration from the ferocity of the tiger or the unyielding nature of the Shaolin arts.12 They stand as unshakable pillars on the battlefield, absorbing tremendous punishment while delivering devastating, focused blows.
* **Suggested Virtues:** Body, Spirit

### The Ghost-Fang Blade (鬼牙刃, Guǐyá Rèn)

* **Role:** Striker
* **Description:** The Ghost-Fang Blade is a warrior who has blended supreme martial skill with the supernatural art of *Qinggong*, the lightness skill.13 They move with an impossible grace, their feet barely seeming to touch the ground. To them, a wall is but a vertical path, the surface of a lake a fleeting walkway, and the battlefield a three-dimensional space to be dominated.13 They are masters of the blade—be it the elegant  
  *jian* or the deadly *dao*—and use their incredible mobility to strike from unexpected angles, bypassing enemy guards to deliver a single, perfect, killing blow before vanishing like a whisper in the wind.
* **Suggested Virtues:** Agility, Essence

### The Harmonious Fist Sage (合氣拳聖, Héqì Quánshèng)

* **Role:** Striker/Controller
* **Description:** The Sage follows the path of *Neidan*, or Internal Alchemy, cultivating the flow of Qi within their own body to achieve supernatural effects. They are masters of *Dianxue*, the art of striking vital pressure points.15 Their touch can be death, bypassing armor and flesh to disrupt the flow of an enemy's life force, causing paralysis, agony, or instant unconsciousness.15 They do not rely on brute force, but on a profound understanding of the body's energy meridians. Their movements are often subtle and precise, a calm and centered presence on the battlefield who can dismantle the most formidable foe with a series of perfectly placed strikes.
* **Suggested Virtues:** Essence, Mind

### The Spirit Warden (鎮靈將, Zhèn Líng Jiàng)

* **Role:** Leader/Striker
* **Description:** While other cultivators seek personal enlightenment, the Spirit Warden dedicates their life to a sacred duty: hunting and eradicating supernatural evil. They are exorcists, demon slayers, and protectors of the innocent. Their training is a unique blend of martial prowess, esoteric lore, and divine rites. They know the secret weaknesses of the *Yaoguai*, the names of demons that grant power over them, and the rituals that can purify a land tainted by their presence. They wield blessed weapons, often carved from peach wood, and employ tools like Ba Gua mirrors and temple bells to disorient and weaken their unholy prey.1 On the battlefield, they are a beacon of hope, inspiring their allies while striking fear into the hearts of ghosts and demons.
* **Suggested Virtues:** Spirit, Body

## Chapter 4: Skills & Merits - The Refinement of Talent

A hero is defined not only by their innate virtues and chosen path but also by the specific talents they have honed through dedicated practice. Skills represent broad areas of training, while Merits are specific knacks and techniques that grant a character a unique edge.

### Skills

At character creation, you receive a number of Skill Points equal to (Mind+Spirit)×2. You spend these points to buy ranks in the skills listed below. Each rank in a skill costs 1 point and adds one d10 to any dice pool involving that skill. The maximum rank you can have in any skill is 5.

* **Acrobatics (Agility):** Used for feats of balance, tumbling, and escaping grapples.
* **Archery (Agility):** Governs the use of all bows and crossbows.
* **Athletics (Body):** Used for climbing, jumping, swimming, and feats of raw physical power.
* **Calligraphy (Mind):** The skill of precise brushwork, essential for a Talisman Scribe to create potent *Fulu*.
* **Intimidation (Spirit):** The ability to inspire fear through force of personality, threats, or sheer presence.
* **Investigation (Mind):** Used for finding hidden clues, noticing small details, and piecing together evidence.
* **Lore (Mind):** Represents knowledge in a specific field. This skill can be taken multiple times, each time applying to a new area, such as Lore (*Yaoguai*), Lore (History), or Lore (*Diyu*).
* **Martial Arts (Agility or Body):** The core skill for all armed and unarmed combat. When using a finesse weapon (like a *jian* or your empty hands), you may use Agility. When using a heavy weapon (like a *dao* or a war hammer), you must use Body.
* **Meditation (Spirit):** The ability to calm the mind, center the spirit, and recover spent Qi.
* **Perception (Mind):** The skill of noticing hidden or subtle things using all five senses.
* **Stealth (Agility):** Used for moving silently and hiding from view.
* **Survival (Mind):** Represents knowledge of the wilderness, tracking, and foraging.

### Merits

Merits are special advantages that reflect a character's unique training, innate talents, or philosophical outlook. At character creation, you choose three Merits. You gain an additional Merit at every even-numbered level. Unless otherwise specified, each Merit may only be taken once.

* **Ambidextrous:** You ignore all penalties for fighting with a weapon in your off-hand.
* **Awareness:** You gain a +2 bonus to all Perception checks made to notice ambushes or hidden threats.
* **Cat-Like Balance:** Once per scene, you may re-roll a failed Acrobatics check made to maintain your balance.
* **Danger Sense:** You can make a Perception check to detect unseen dangers like traps or hidden assassins even when you are not actively searching.
* **Direction Sense:** You never get lost in natural surroundings and can always retrace your steps.
* **Fast Healer:** When you spend a short rest healing Stamina, you recover an additional amount equal to your Body rating.
* **Iron Will:** You gain two bonus dice on any roll to resist fear or intimidation.
* **Light Sleeper:** You are always considered to be only lightly asleep. Penalties on Perception checks while sleeping are halved.
* **Student of the Forbidden Arts:** Choose one technique of Level 1 from a Path of Cultivation other than your own. You may learn and use this technique.
* **Toughness:** You gain an additional 5 points of Stamina.

## Chapter 5: The Journey of Cultivation - The Ladder to Heaven

A hero's life is a journey of constant refinement. This progression is not merely the accumulation of experience, but a spiritual transformation, a climb through successive Realms of Cultivation that elevate the self from a mere mortal to a being of legendary power.3 Each new Realm unlocks deeper potential, granting greater power, insight, and mastery over the unseen arts.

Advancement is measured in **Karma**. Karma is earned by overcoming challenges, defeating supernatural evils, protecting the innocent, and completing quests that uphold the heroic code of *Xia*.4 When a hero accumulates enough Karma, they may attempt to break through to the next level of their cultivation.

### The Realms of Cultivation

The path is divided into tiers, known as Realms. Each Realm represents a significant leap in understanding and power, mirroring the Heroic, Paragon, and Epic tiers of play found in other chronicles of adventure.1 Reaching a new Realm is a momentous occasion, granting a permanent increase to all Five Virtues and unlocking access to more profound and powerful techniques.

* **The Mortal Realm (Levels 1-4): Qi Condensation (氣凝):** This is the initial stage where a cultivator first learns to sense the flow of Qi in the world and within themselves. They are heroes, far above common folk, but their power is raw and unrefined. They learn the fundamentals of their chosen Path and begin their journey.
* **The Earthly Realm (Levels 5-8): Foundation Establishment (築基):** The cultivator solidifies their spiritual and physical base. Their control over Qi becomes more stable, allowing for more complex techniques. They can face down powerful demons and begin to make a name for themselves in the *Wulin* (the martial world).
* **The Mystic Realm (Levels 9-12): Core Formation (結丹):** A pivotal moment in a cultivator's journey. Through immense effort, they condense their Qi into a Golden Core, or *Jindan*, within their spiritual center. This Core becomes a powerful, self-sustaining source of energy, dramatically amplifying all of their abilities. Heroes of this Realm can alter the fate of nations.
* **The Celestial Realm (Levels 13-16): Soul Manifestation (元嬰):** The cultivator's spirit becomes so refined that it can begin to manifest independently of the physical body. Their techniques now border on the truly miraculous, and they contend with threats that could shatter kingdoms.
* **The Immortal Realm (Levels 17-20): Ascension (飛升):** The final steps on the mortal path. The cultivator transcends the limits of their physical form, becoming a being of pure energy and spirit—a true Immortal (*Xian*). Their actions have consequences that can ripple across the planes, and they face the arch-demons and fallen gods of the darkest hells.

The table below outlines the path of progression for a hero, from a fledgling cultivator to a legendary immortal.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level | Karma to Reach | Virtue Increases | New Merits | New Techniques | Special Abilities |
| 1 | 0 | - | 3 | 2 At-Will, 1 Encounter, 1 Daily | Path Features |
| 2 | 1,000 | - | 1 | 1 Utility | - |
| 3 | 2,250 | - | - | 1 Encounter | - |
| 4 | 3,750 | +1 to two Virtues | 1 | - | - |
| 5 | 5,500 | - | - | 1 Daily | **Realm Breakthrough:** +1 to all Virtues |
| 6 | 7,500 | - | 1 | 1 Utility | - |
| 7 | 10,000 | - | - | 1 Encounter | - |
| 8 | 13,000 | +1 to two Virtues | 1 | - | - |
| 9 | 16,500 | - | - | 1 Daily | **Realm Breakthrough:** +1 to all Virtues |
| 10 | 20,500 | - | 1 | 1 Utility | - |
| 11 | 26,000 | +1 to all Virtues | 1 | 1 Encounter | Paragon Path Feature |
| 12 | 32,000 | - | 1 | 1 Utility | - |
| 13 | 39,000 | - | - | Replace 1 Encounter | - |
| 14 | 47,000 | +1 to two Virtues | 1 | - | - |
| 15 | 57,000 | - | - | Replace 1 Daily | **Realm Breakthrough:** +1 to all Virtues |
| 16 | 69,000 | - | 1 | 1 Utility | Paragon Path Feature |
| 17 | 83,000 | - | - | Replace 1 Encounter | - |
| 18 | 99,000 | +1 to two Virtues | 1 | - | - |
| 19 | 119,000 | - | - | Replace 1 Daily | - |
| 20 | 143,000 | - | 1 | 1 Daily | **Realm Breakthrough:** +1 to all Virtues |

# Part II: The Unseen Arts

This section is the grimoire of the game, the repository of secret knowledge that separates a hero from a common mortal. Herein are detailed the rules for channeling Qi, the universal life force, and the specific supernatural arts—*Fashu*, *Gongfu*, *Dianxue*, *Qinggong*, and *Tieshen Gong*—that allow a cultivator to perform deeds of legend.

## Chapter 6: The River of Qi (氣) - The Font of Power

Qi is the vital energy that flows through all living things and the universe itself. It is the breath of the world, the current in the great river of the Tao.6 While all beings possess Qi, a cultivator learns to consciously harness, cultivate, and command this energy, using it to fuel extraordinary abilities. This internal power is the strategic resource that governs a hero's capacity for supernatural feats, distinct from the Action Points that govern their tactical options in a given turn. A hero with many actions but little Qi is swift but weak; a hero with immense Qi but few actions is a mighty but slow cannon.

### The Qi Pool

Every character possesses a Qi Pool, a personal reservoir of spiritual energy. The size of this pool is determined by their Essence Virtue, as detailed in Chapter 2. This pool represents the total amount of power the hero can wield before they must rest and recuperate.

### Spending Qi

Nearly every supernatural art, from scribing a potent talisman to striking a foe's pressure points, requires an expenditure of Qi. The specific Qi Point cost for each technique is listed in its description. When a technique is used, its Qi cost is deducted from the character's current Qi Pool total. If a character does not have enough Qi Points remaining, they cannot use the technique.

### Regaining Qi

A cultivator's Qi is not an infinite resource. It must be replenished through dedicated practice and rest.

* **Meditation:** During a short rest (approximately 10-15 minutes of uninterrupted calm), a character may make a **Spirit + Meditation** check. For each Success rolled, they regain 1 Qi Point.
* **Extended Rest:** After a full night's rest (at least 6 hours), a character's Qi Pool is completely restored to its maximum value.1
* **Breathing Exercises:** In the heat of combat, a character can perform special breathing exercises to recenter themselves and draw in ambient Qi. This is a special action that costs 3 AP and allows the character to make a **Spirit + Meditation** check with a TN of 8. For each Success, they regain 1 Qi Point.
* **Elixirs:** Rare and valuable alchemical pills and potions can be consumed to instantly restore a portion of a character's Qi Pool. These are typically found as treasure or purchased at great expense.

## Chapter 7: The Thousand Talismans (Fashu - 法術)

*Fashu* is the art of Taoist sorcery, the domain of the Talisman Scribe. It is a precise and scholarly magic, relying on the power of written characters and esoteric diagrams to petition, command, and bind the spirits of the world.19 A Scribe's power is not in spontaneous spellcasting, but in careful preparation.

### Scribing Talismans

Before an adventure, a Talisman Scribe may prepare a number of *Fulu*, or paper talismans. This process is a ritual in itself, requiring intense focus, special materials like cinnabar ink and peach-wood paper, and a significant expenditure of Qi.7

To scribe a talisman, the player declares which *Fulu* from their known list they are creating. They must then make a **Mind + Calligraphy** check against a difficulty determined by the talisman's power. If successful, the talisman is created, and its Qi Cost is deducted from the Scribe's Qi Pool. This Qi is bound into the paper, lying dormant until activated. A Scribe can prepare a number of talismans up to their Mind Virtue rating.

### Activating Talismans

In combat, a prepared talisman is a potent and flexible weapon. To use one, the Scribe must spend the AP cost listed for the chosen activation method and a small, secondary Qi cost to awaken the bound energy. There are three primary methods of activation 1:

* **Attach (4 AP):** The Scribe attempts to slap the talisman directly onto a target in an adjacent square. This requires a melee attack roll using **Agility + Martial Arts**. This method is ideal for single-target curses and binding effects.
* **Burn (3 AP):** The Scribe ignites the talisman, releasing its power in a burst of energy. This typically creates an area of effect, such as a wall of fire or a cloud of debilitating mist. The size and shape of the area are detailed in the talisman's description.
* **Project (2 AP):** The Scribe channels their Qi through the talisman and flings it at a distant target. This requires a ranged attack roll using **Mind + Lore (*Fashu*)**. This is used for effects that function like magical projectiles.

The following table provides a selection of talismans available to a Scribe at the start of their journey. More powerful *Fulu* become available as the Scribe advances through the Realms of Cultivation.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Fulu Name | Realm | Qi Cost (Scribe) | AP Cost (Activate) | Activation | Effect |
| Talisman of Corpse Suppression | Mortal 1 | 2 | 4 | Attach | Target *Jiangshi* is Paralyzed for 1 minute. |
| Talisman of Fiery Wrath | Mortal 1 | 3 | 3 | Burn | Creates a burst of fire in a 3x3 square area within 10 squares. Deals 2d10 Stamina damage. |
| Talisman of Minor Warding | Mortal 1 | 2 | 2 | Project | Target ally gains +2 to Defense until the start of your next turn. |
| Talisman of the Obscuring Mist | Mortal 2 | 4 | 3 | Burn | Creates a 5x5 square cloud of thick mist that blocks line of sight. Lasts for 3 rounds. |
| Talisman of Enfeebling Curse | Mortal 3 | 5 | 4 | Attach | Target suffers a -2 penalty to all checks for the rest of the scene. |

## Chapter 8: The Unseen Fist (Gongfu - 功夫)

*Gongfu* is the broad term for the supernatural martial arts that transform a cultivator's body into a living weapon. These techniques are not mere fighting styles but expressions of a perfected body and a focused will, fueled by the flow of Qi.

### Dianxue (點穴) - The Art of the Poison Touch

The signature art of the Harmonious Fist Sage, *Dianxue* is the precise striking of a foe's acupressure points to disrupt their internal Qi flow.15 In game terms, this is resolved using the Called Shot system.1 A practitioner of

*Dianxue* can declare a Called Shot to a specific body part. If the attack hits, in addition to the normal effects of the Called Shot, the practitioner can spend Qi Points to apply a severe condition or inflict direct Wound damage.

* **Called Shot (Vitals, -3 penalty):** Spend 3 Qi. Inflict Wound damage equal to your Essence Virtue, bypassing Stamina.
* **Called Shot (Arm, -2 penalty):** Spend 2 Qi. The target is Disarmed and cannot hold anything in that hand for 1 round.
* **Called Shot (Leg, -2 penalty):** Spend 2 Qi. The target's Movement speed is halved for 1 round.
* **Called Shot (Head, -4 penalty):** Spend 4 Qi. The target is Stunned for 1 round.

### Qinggong (輕功) - The Art of Weightlessness

Practiced primarily by the Ghost-Fang Blade, *Qinggong* allows a warrior to defy gravity, moving with impossible lightness and speed.13 These are not attacks, but special movement abilities that cost AP and Qi to perform.

* **Feather-Light Step (1 AP, 1 Qi):** For the rest of your turn, you may ignore the effects of difficult terrain.
* **Wall-Running (2 AP, 2 Qi):** You may move along a vertical surface for a number of squares equal to your Agility rating. You must end your movement on a horizontal surface.
* **Water-Walking (3 AP, 3 Qi):** You may move across a liquid surface for one turn as if it were solid ground.
* **Impossible Leap (2 AP, 1 Qi):** Add your Essence rating in squares to the distance of any jump you make this turn.

### Tieshen Gong (鐵衫功) - The Art of the Iron Shirt

The foundation of the Iron Palm Monk's incredible resilience, *Tieshen Gong* is the result of conditioning that makes the body as tough as iron.10

* **Passive Ability:** The Monk gains Damage Reduction against all Stamina damage equal to half their Body Virtue (rounded down). This represents their toughened flesh.
* **Active Ability (Iron Body, 2 AP, 2 Qi):** For one round, the Monk may add their full Body Virtue to their Damage Reduction.
* **Active Ability (Unyielding Stance, 1 AP, 3 Qi):** As an interrupt when hit by a critical hit, the Monk may spend the AP and Qi to negate the critical effect. The attack deals normal damage instead.

The following table provides a selection of universal and style-specific martial techniques available to heroes.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Technique Name | Style Prerequisite | AP Cost | Qi Cost | Effect |
| **Feint** | None | 2 | 0 | Make a contested **Agility + Martial Arts** vs. opponent's **Mind + Perception**. If you win, their Defense is lowered by your margin of victory for your next attack this turn. |
| **Trip** | None | 1 | 0 | Make a standard melee attack. If it hits, instead of damage, the target must make a contested **Agility + Acrobatics** check against your attack roll or be knocked Prone. |
| **Flying Dragon Kick** | Ghost-Fang Blade | 3 | 1 | Make a standard melee attack. If it hits, you may push the target 2 squares and knock them Prone. |
| **Shattering Palm Strike** | Iron Palm Monk | 4 | 2 | Make a standard unarmed attack. This attack ignores up to 5 points of the target's armor bonus to Defense. |
| **Meridian Shock** | Harmonious Fist Sage | 3 | 2 | Make a standard unarmed attack. If it hits, instead of damage, the target cannot spend Qi Points until the end of their next turn. |

# Part III: The Rules of Engagement

This final section provides the practical tools and rules a hero needs to survive their perilous journey. It details the weapons and armor of the age, the esoteric implements of the cultivator, and the precise, tactical rules that govern the deadly dance of combat.

## Chapter 9: The Hero's Arsenal - Equipment & Implements

Even a master of supernatural arts relies on worldly tools. A warrior needs a well-forged blade, a sorcerer needs pure reagents, and every adventurer needs a sturdy pack and rations for the road. All new characters begin with 100 silver pieces to purchase their starting equipment.

### Armor

Armor provides a bonus to a character's Defense value but can hinder movement. Wearing armor you are not proficient with imposes a penalty on all Agility-based checks equal to the armor's bonus.

* **Light Armor (Padded Cloth, Leather):** Provides a +1 to +2 bonus to Defense. No penalties.
* **Medium Armor (Chain Shirt, Scale Mail):** Provides a +3 to +4 bonus to Defense. Imposes a -1 penalty to Agility-based skill checks.
* **Heavy Armor (Plate Mail):** Provides a +5 bonus to Defense. Imposes a -2 penalty to Agility-based skill checks and reduces Movement by 1.

### Mystical Implements

Certain Paths of Cultivation rely on specialized tools to focus their power.

* **Peach Wood Sword:** A sword carved from a lightning-struck peach tree. It is a blessed weapon, essential for Spirit Wardens. Attacks made with it against *Gui* (ghosts, undead) inflict Wound damage instead of Stamina damage.
* **Ba Gua Mirror:** A small, octagonal mirror inscribed with the eight trigrams. A Spirit Warden can spend 2 AP to present the mirror, forcing an adjacent *Yaoguai* to make a Spirit check or be unable to attack the Warden for one round.
* **Scribe's Kit:** A set of high-quality brushes, a stone for grinding ink, and a block of pure cinnabar. Required for any Talisman Scribe to practice their art of *Fashu*.

The following table details common weapons found in the world, their cost, damage, and special properties.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Weapon Name | Cost (Silver) | Damage | AP Cost | Virtue | Properties |
| **Unarmed Strike** | - | 1d10 | 3 | Body | - |
| **Jian (Straight Sword)** | 20 | 2d10 | 3 | Agility | Defensive (+1 Defense when taking the Total Defense action) |
| **Dao (Saber)** | 15 | 3d10 | 4 | Body | Vicious (On a critical hit, inflict 1 ongoing Wound damage) |
| **Qiang (Spear)** | 10 | 2d10 | 3 | Agility | Reach (Can attack targets up to 2 squares away) |
| **Gong (Bow)** | 25 | 2d10 | 3 | Agility | Ranged (Range 20/40) |
| **Guan Dao (Halberd)** | 30 | 4d10 | 5 | Body | Reach, Two-Handed (Requires two hands to wield) |
| **Hook Swords (Pair)** | 35 | 2d10 | 4 | Agility | Paired (Can be used to Disarm or Trip as a Stunt Point spend) |

## Chapter 10: The Flow of Battle - Action & Initiative

Combat is a deadly, tactical affair, resolved on a square grid where every position matters. The flow of battle is organized into rounds, and within each round, every participant takes a turn.

### Initiative

At the beginning of combat, all participants make an **Agility + Athletics** check. The results, from highest to lowest, determine the turn order for the entire encounter.1

### The Action Point (AP) Economy

At the start of each of their turns, a character gains a pool of Action Points (AP). This pool is their budget for the turn, spent to perform any and all actions. Unspent AP are lost at the end of the turn. The size of this pool is determined by the character's Agility, as shown in Chapter 2.

### Action Types

Every possible action in combat has an AP cost. A character can perform as many actions as they can afford in any order they wish.

* **Move 1 Square (Clear Terrain):** 1 AP
* **Move 1 Square (Difficult Terrain):** 2 AP
* **Standard Attack:** Varies by weapon (see table above).
* **Use Technique/Art:** Varies by ability (see Part II).
* **Stand Up from Prone:** 2 AP
* **Draw or Sheathe Weapon:** 1 AP
* **Wait:** 1 AP. Hold remaining AP and declare a trigger condition. If the condition occurs, you can interrupt the current turn to spend your held AP.

### Stunt Points

When an attack roll or skill check generates more Successes than required, the extra Successes become Stunt Points (SP). These can be spent immediately on one of the following effects 1:

* **Add Damage (1 SP):** Add +2 to the Stamina damage of the attack.
* **Shove (1 SP):** Push the target back one square.
* **Trip (1 SP):** The target must succeed on a contested Agility roll or be knocked Prone.
* **Disarm (2 SP):** The target must succeed on a contested Body roll or drop one held item.
* **Narrative Flourish (1 SP):** Describe a cool, non-mechanical benefit, such as intimidating a lesser foe or performing the action with particular style.

## Chapter 11: The Dance of Steel & Spirit - Combat in Detail

This chapter provides the granular rules for resolving combat on the tactical grid.

### Movement & Positioning

* **Diagonal Movement:** The first diagonal square moved costs 1 AP, the second costs 2 AP, the third costs 1, and so on.1
* **Cover:** A character behind an obstacle (like a pillar or crate) gains Cover. Attacks against them have their Target Number increased by 2.
* **Flanking:** If a character and an ally are on opposite sides of an enemy, they are Flanking. All melee attacks against that enemy gain one bonus die.

### Making an Attack

The process of attacking is as follows:

1. Declare the target of your attack.
2. Spend the required AP for the chosen attack or technique.
3. Assemble your dice pool (Virtue + Skill).
4. Roll the dice and count the number of Successes.
5. Compare your Successes to the target's Defense value. If your Successes are equal to or greater than their Defense, the attack hits.

### The Anatomy of Harm

Characters have two separate health tracks. Understanding the difference is key to survival.1

* **Stamina:** This represents your ability to turn a deadly blow into a glancing one, your energy for dodging, and your resistance to bruises and minor wounds. All normal damage is dealt to Stamina first. When your Stamina reaches 0, you are Exhausted and suffer a -2 penalty to all actions. Any further Stamina damage is converted directly to Wound damage. Stamina is recovered quickly with a short rest.
* **Wounds:** This track represents your life force and your ability to withstand grievous injury. It is equal to your Spirit Virtue. Wound damage is only inflicted by specific sources: critical hits, Called Shots to vital areas, or powerful supernatural attacks. Healing Wounds requires potent elixirs, specific healing techniques, or a full extended rest. When your Wounds reach 0, you are dying. If your Wound total reaches a negative value equal to your Spirit Virtue, you are dead.

### The Called Shot System

A character may choose to make a Called Shot to target a specific part of an opponent's body. This is a more difficult attack but can yield powerful results. The attacker must declare the Called Shot before rolling and accept the associated penalty to their dice pool.1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Hit Location | Dice Pool Penalty | Effect on Hit |
| **Torso** | 0 | Standard damage. |
| **Arm** | -2 | Standard damage. On a Critical Success (3+ Successes), the target drops one item held in that hand. |
| **Leg** | -2 | Standard damage. On a Critical Success, the target is Slowed (movement halved) for 1 round. |
| **Vitals** | -3 | Damage is dealt directly to Wounds, bypassing Stamina. |
| **Head** | -4 | Standard damage. On a Critical Success, the target is Stunned for 1 round. |

### Glossary of Conditions

* **Blinded:** Cannot see. All actions that require sight automatically fail. Attackers have two bonus dice against you.
* **Exhausted:** -2 penalty to all dice pools. Occurs at 0 Stamina.
* **Immobilized:** Cannot move from your current square, but can still take other actions.
* **Paralyzed:** Cannot take any actions. Can be targeted with a *Coup de Grace*.
* **Prone:** Lying on the ground. Melee attacks against you gain one bonus die. Ranged attacks against you suffer a -2 penalty. Standing up costs 2 AP.
* **Slowed:** Movement speed is halved.
* **Stunned:** Cannot take any actions for the duration.

### Instructions for the August Storyteller for Volume 3

To proceed with the creation of **Volume 3: The Manual of Ten Thousand Demons**, the following instructions must be followed:

1. **Assume the Persona:** Continue in the persona of the expert Game Master. The tone for this volume should shift slightly to that of a scholar-exorcist cataloging dangerous entities. It should be informative, but also atmospheric and unsettling.
2. **Structure the Manual:** The manual should be organized by creature classification, as established in the GM's Guide: *Gui* (Undead/Ghosts), *Yao* (Demons), *Jing* (Essence Spirits), and *Xian* (Immortals/Celestials, both benevolent and malevolent). A fifth section for "Mortal Adversaries" (cultists, rival martial artists, corrupt officials) should also be included.
3. **Develop Detailed Stat Blocks:** Each creature entry must feature a complete stat block compatible with the established system. This includes:
   * The Five Virtues (Body, Agility, Mind, Spirit, Essence).
   * Derived Statistics (Stamina, Wounds, Qi Pool, Defense, AP, Movement).
   * Skills and Attacks (with dice pools and damage values).
   * Special Abilities, Qualities, and Weaknesses (e.g., "Unyielding Flesh," "Talisman Vulnerability," "Aversion to Mirrors").
4. **Create Rich Lore Entries:** Each stat block must be accompanied by a detailed description. This should include:
   * **Lore:** The creature's origins, habits, and typical motivations, drawing from authentic Asian folklore where possible.
   * **Combat Tactics:** How the creature typically behaves in a fight. Does it fight with cunning? Brute force? Does it prefer to ambush its prey?
   * **Storyteller's Notes:** Hooks and ideas for the August Storyteller on how to use the creature effectively to build atmosphere, suspense, and horror. This section should provide guidance on roleplaying the creature and integrating it into an adventure.
5. **Expand the Roster:** While building upon the examples from the GM's Guide (*Jiangshi*, *Huli Jing*, *Oni*), create a diverse roster of at least 20-25 unique entities. Research and incorporate a wide variety of creatures from Chinese, Japanese, and other Asian mythologies, giving them unique hybrid names and English translations as established in the project's style guide.
6. **Maintain Cross-Referencing:** Ensure that creature abilities and weaknesses directly reference the mechanics detailed in the Player's Handbook (e.g., a vulnerability to a specific type of *Fulu*, or an ability that targets a character's Spirit Virtue).
7. **Adhere to Length and Formatting:** The final volume must meet the 50-page minimum requirement and adhere to all established formatting guidelines, including the use of LaTeX for all mechanical values and dice notation.

# **The Way of the Unseen Fist, Volume 3: The Scroll of Ten Thousand Paths**

## **Introduction: Choosing Your Path to Immortality**

*A weathered hand, skin like ancient paper stretched over jade, sets a brush beside a grinding stone. The scent of ink and ozone fills the air. The voice that speaks is like the whisper of wind through a mountain pass, ageless and patient.*

"You stand at the beginning of a great and perilous road. Before you, the world stretches out, a tapestry of light and shadow. The light is found in the bustling hearts of cities, in the quiet wisdom of mountain temples, and in the indomitable spirit of humanity. The shadow, however, grows long. It is the creeping twilight of a fallen age, a darkness from which the Ten Thousand Demons—the *Yaoguai* and their hungry kin—crawl forth to feast on the world's fading light.1

"Against this encroaching night, some kindle fires. They are called cultivators. They walk a thousand different paths, but all seek the same destination: a state of perfection beyond the reach of mortal decay and demonic corruption. They seek to become Xian—Immortals.2 This scroll is a map of those paths. It will not walk the road for you, but it will show you the way. Each stroke of its calligraphy is a discipline, each chapter a philosophy of power. The journey will demand your blood, your spirit, your very essence. But if you persevere, you will become more than a hero. You will become a legend, a force of nature, a bulwark against the darkness. Now, choose your path. The world is waiting."

### **What is a Path of Cultivation?**

In the world of *The Way of the Unseen Fist*, your character is a cultivator—a hero who has dedicated their life to a journey of spiritual and physical refinement that can elevate a mortal to the level of an Immortal.1 The specific discipline a hero follows is known as their

**Path of Cultivation**.

Mechanically, a Path of Cultivation is your character's archetype or "class." It is the single most important choice you will make, defining your hero's role in an adventuring party, their unique methods of manipulating the universal life force known as Qi, and the supernatural techniques they can master as they advance in power.1 Each Path represents a complete philosophy of combat, survival, and spiritual development, offering a distinct way to interact with the world and its many dangers.

### **The Universal Archetype Format**

This volume details forty unique Paths of Cultivation. To ensure clarity and ease of use, every archetype is presented in a consistent, universal format. Understanding this structure will allow you to quickly grasp the core concepts of any Path and compare it to others.

* **Name and Epigraph:** Each Path is introduced with its thematic name, often a combination of its core discipline and a title of mastery, followed by a short, in-character quote that encapsulates its philosophy.
* **Description:** This section provides the rich, atmospheric lore behind the Path. It describes who these cultivators are, their history, their beliefs, and their place in the world.
* **Path Summary:** A quick-reference box provides the essential mechanical identity of the archetype at a glance.
* **Role:** The Path's primary function in tactical combat, such as Defender, Striker, Leader, or Controller.1
* **Power Source:** The metaphysical origin and expression of the Path's abilities (e.g., Internal Alchemy, Ritual Calligraphy, External Martial Discipline).
* **Key Virtues:** The two or three Five Virtues (Body, Agility, Mind, Spirit, Essence) that are most crucial for the Path's techniques and features.1
* **Proficiencies:** The armor and weapon types the cultivator is trained to use.
* **Path Bonus:** A unique, passive benefit that every member of the Path receives, reflecting their specialized training.
* **Path of Cultivation:** This section details the unique, non-combat abilities and significant power boosts the cultivator gains as they achieve new spiritual heights. These are awarded at each **Realm Breakthrough**—levels 5, 9, 13, and 17—milestones that represent a fundamental shift in the cultivator's understanding and power.1
* **Techniques of the Path:** This is the grimoire of the archetype, a comprehensive list of the supernatural abilities, or "Techniques," they can learn. These are organized by the level at which they become available and are categorized by their usage frequency, mirroring the structure of powers in other game systems 1:
* **Basic Techniques:** Simple, reliable abilities that can be used at will without expending significant energy.
* **Advanced Techniques:** Powerful maneuvers that can be used once per encounter and are recovered after a short rest.
* **Secret Techniques:** The Path's most potent and reality-bending abilities, usable only once per day and recovered after an extended rest.
* **Maneuvers:** Tactical or utility-focused abilities that provide strategic options in and out of combat.

### **The Two Roads: Sorcery and Gongfu**

The journey to immortality is a landscape of countless paths, but they all begin at a fork in the road. One path leads to the mastery of the world outside the self; the other leads to the mastery of the world within. These are the two great traditions of cultivation: the Way of the Unseen Arts and the Way of the Unseen Fist.

Though their methods are starkly different, both are fundamentally masters of **Qi** (氣), the universal life force that flows through all things.3 The distinction between a sorcerer and a martial artist is not

*what* they wield, but *how* they wield it.

* **The Paths of the Unseen Arts (Sorcerers):** These cultivators channel Qi externally. They are scholars, priests, and mystics who use intricate rituals, esoteric implements, and meticulously crafted talismans to command the forces of the cosmos.5 Their body is the conduit, but their power is projected through ink, paper, chanted words, and celestial alignments. They see Qi as a force to be guided and bargained with, a cosmic bureaucracy of spirits and gods to be navigated with wisdom and reverence.5
* **The Paths of the Unseen Fist (Martial Artists):** These cultivators channel Qi internally. They are monks, warriors, and ascetics who treat their own body as the ultimate weapon, a crucible in which their spirit, will, and physical form are forged into one.6 Through grueling physical conditioning and supreme mental discipline, they learn to direct the flow of Qi through their own meridians, unleashing it in feats of impossible speed, strength, and resilience.1 They see Qi as a force to be cultivated and embodied.

This fundamental unity through Qi means that all cultivators share the same resource pool. A sorcerer's potent talisman and a monk's iron-shattering punch both draw from the same well of inner power, reinforcing the core theme that all heroes are on a shared journey of self-cultivation, merely walking different paths toward the same ultimate goal: Immortality.1

### **Master Archetype Overview**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Archetype Name | Part | Combat Role | Power Source | Key Virtues |
| **Part I: Paths of the Unseen Arts** |  |  |  |  |
| Internal Alchemist | I | Defender / Striker | Internal Alchemy | Essence, Spirit |
| Fulu Talisman Scribe | I | Controller / Leader | Ritual Calligraphy | Mind, Essence |
| Elemental Geomancer | I | Controller | Elemental Attunement | Mind, Essence |
| I Ching Hexagram Diviner | I | Leader | Oracular Arts | Mind, Spirit |
| Spirit Warden | I | Striker | Exorcism | Spirit, Agility |
| Star-Chart Astrologer | I | Controller | Celestial Magic | Mind, Spirit |
| Dream Walker | I | Striker | Oneiromancy | Spirit, Essence |
| External Alchemist | I | Leader | Waidan Elixirs | Mind, Body |
| Five Poisons Cultist | I | Striker | Venomous Arts | Essence, Agility |
| Paper Conjurer | I | Controller | Shikigami Craft | Mind, Agility |
| Hell-Gate Magistrate | I | Defender | Di Yu Authority | Spirit, Body |
| Gourd Immortal | I | Leader | Esoteric Artifacts | Essence, Body |
| Weather Shaman | I | Controller | Atmospheric Control | Spirit, Essence |
| Mountain Hermit | I | Defender | Earth Attunement | Body, Spirit |
| River Spirit Caller | I | Leader | Hydromancy | Essence, Spirit |
| Sacred Beast Empath | I | Striker | Spirit-Binding | Spirit, Body |
| Sound Mystic | I | Controller | Harmonic Resonance | Essence, Mind |
| Shadow Puppeteer | I | Striker | Umbral Arts | Agility, Mind |
| Jade Carver | I | Defender | Glyphic Warding | Mind, Body |
| Incense Master | I | Leader | Mystical Aromatics | Spirit, Essence |
| **Part II: Paths of the Unseen Fist** |  |  |  |  |
| Shaolin Tiger-Claw Master | II | Striker | External Martial Discipline | Body, Agility |
| Wudang Sword Saint | II | Defender | Internal Martial Discipline | Agility, Spirit |
| Drunken Immortal | II | Striker / Defender | Deceptive Martial Arts | Agility, Body |
| Baguazhang Circle Walker | II | Defender | Spatial Dynamics | Agility, Mind |
| Hung Gar Five Animals Master | II | Striker | Form Mimicry | Body, Spirit |
| Wing Chun Interceptor | II | Striker | Close-Quarters Combat | Agility, Mind |
| Iron Palm Monk | II | Striker | Body Hardening | Body, Spirit |
| Mantis Fist Assassin | II | Striker | Pressure Point Strikes | Agility, Mind |
| White Crane Stylist | II | Defender | Evasive Footwork | Agility, Spirit |
| Monkey King Trickster | II | Striker | Acrobatic Combat | Agility, Essence |
| Northern Long Fist Boxer | II | Striker | Ranged Melee | Body, Agility |
| Southern Dragon Stylist | II | Defender | Internal Force (Jin) | Body, Spirit |
| Eagle Claw Grappler | II | Controller | Joint-Locking Arts | Body, Agility |
| Snake Fist Poisoner | II | Striker | Venomous Strikes | Agility, Essence |
| Leopard Fist Rusher | II | Striker | Aggressive Speed | Agility, Body |
| Ghost-Fang Blade | II | Striker | Qinggong Arts | Agility, Spirit |
| Wrestler of the Earth | II | Controller | Grappling & Throws | Body, Mind |
| Iron Staff Master | II | Defender | Polearm Combat | Body, Agility |
| Chain Whip Dancer | II | Controller | Flexible Weapons | Agility, Mind |
| Unseen Needle Artist | II | Striker | Hidden Weapons | Agility, Mind |

## **Part I: Paths of the Unseen Arts – The Sorcerers**

This section details the Paths of Cultivation for those who seek to master the world through external means—the sorcerers, alchemists, and mystics who command the unseen forces of the cosmos.

### **The Internal Alchemist (Neidan Adept)**

*"The common man seeks a pill for long life. The fool seeks gold from lead. The wise know that the crucible is the body, the mercury is the breath, and the gold is the spirit refined."*

Description

The Internal Alchemist, or Neidan Adept, walks one of the most profound and introspective Paths to immortality. While others seek power in ancient texts or celestial alignments, the Alchemist turns their gaze inward, viewing their own body as the ultimate alchemical laboratory.3 They understand that the "Three Treasures"—

*Jing* (精, Essence), *Qi* (氣, Breath), and *Shen* (神, Spirit)—are the primordial ingredients of life itself. Through intense meditation, breathing exercises, and spiritual focus, they seek to purify these treasures, circulate them through the body's meridians, and transmute them into the legendary Golden Elixir, or *Jindan* (金丹), a substance of pure spiritual energy that grants longevity, resilience, and ultimately, transcendence.8 On the battlefield, the Internal Alchemist is a paragon of self-sufficiency and resilience. Their cultivation makes their bodies preternaturally tough, able to withstand blows that would fell lesser mortals, and their refined inner energy can be channeled to heal wounds, purge poisons, and empower their physical strikes with incandescent power.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| **Role** | Defender / Striker |
| **Power Source** | Internal Alchemy |
| **Key Virtues** | Essence, Spirit, Body |
| **Proficiencies** | **Armor:** Light Armor **Weapons:** Simple Melee, *Jian* |
| **Path Bonus** | **Refined Core:** The Alchemist adds their Essence Virtue to their maximum Stamina in addition to the standard calculation. |

Path of Cultivation

The journey of the Internal Alchemist is one of progressive refinement, turning their mortal frame into a vessel of pure energy.

* **Realm Breakthrough (Mortal, Level 5): Foundation of the Self.** The Alchemist learns to consciously preserve their *Jing*. They gain the ability to, once per day, automatically succeed on one Body roll to resist poison or disease.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Foundation, Level 9): Circulate the Qi.** The Alchemist masters the Microcosmic Orbit. They can now spend 10 minutes in meditation to regain Qi points equal to their Spirit Virtue, once per extended rest.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Celestial, Level 13): Refine the Shen.** The Alchemist's spirit begins to radiate with power. They gain a permanent +2 bonus to all rolls made to resist fear or mind-altering effects. Their unarmed strikes are now considered magical for the purpose of overcoming resistances.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Immortal, Level 17): Form the Golden Elixir.** The Alchemist achieves a state of profound internal harmony. They gain Regeneration 2; at the start of each of their turns, they regain 2 Stamina. This regeneration does not function on any turn in which they take Wound damage.

Techniques of the Path

The Alchemist's techniques are named for the stages and processes of Neidan.

* **Basic Technique: Temper the Breath.** (At-Will) ◆ **Action:** 3 AP. **Effect:** The Alchemist centers themselves, regaining 1d10 Stamina. This amount increases by 1d10 at levels 5, 11, and 17.
* **Advanced Technique (Level 3): Transmute the Cinnabar Field.** (Encounter) ◆ **Action:** 4 AP. **Qi Cost:** 2. **Effect:** The Alchemist channels a surge of purified Qi through their body. They immediately remove one ongoing condition affecting them (e.g., Slowed, Weakened) and gain a +2 bonus to their Defense until the start of their next turn.
* **Secret Technique (Level 9): Ninefold Cyclical Refinement.** (Daily) ◆ **Action:** 5 AP. **Qi Cost:** 5. **Effect:** The Alchemist enters a state of perfect internal balance. For the next minute (10 rounds), they are immune to all poison and disease effects. Additionally, the first time they would be reduced to 0 Stamina during this duration, they instead are reduced to 1 Stamina.

### **The Fulu Talisman Scribe (Fúzhòu Master)**

*"The demon does not fear your sword. It does not feel your fist. It fears the word. It fears the stroke of the brush that writes its true name and commands it back to the dust from whence it came."*

Description

The Fulu Talisman Scribe is the quintessential Taoist exorcist, a scholar-priest who wields esoteric knowledge as their primary weapon. They understand that the mortal world is but one layer of reality, existing alongside a vast spirit world governed by a celestial bureaucracy.5 To interact with this world, the Scribe uses

*Fulu* (符籙)—potent talismans inscribed with mystical symbols and celestial commands.10 These are not mere scrolls, but divine edicts and spiritual warrants. Using special inks made from cinnabar or rooster's blood on sanctified paper or peach wood, the Scribe draws complex, asemic characters that can bind ghosts, repel demons, invoke the aid of deities, or channel the raw power of the cosmos.1 Their power is one of preparation, knowledge, and authority. In combat, they are masters of control, laying down spiritual traps, debilitating their supernatural foes with precisely targeted curses, and protecting their allies with powerful wards.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| **Role** | Controller / Leader |
| **Power Source** | Ritual Calligraphy |
| **Key Virtues** | Mind, Essence, Spirit |
| **Proficiencies** | **Armor:** Light Armor **Weapons:** Simple Melee, *Jian* |
| **Path Bonus** | **Esoteric Knowledge:** The Scribe may use their Mind Virtue instead of their Spirit Virtue when making Lore checks related to *Yaoguai*, *Gui*, or *Diyu*. |

Path of Cultivation

The Scribe's path is a journey into the secret language of the universe, learning to write the commands that reality itself must obey.

* **Realm Breakthrough (Mortal, Level 5): Masterful Stroke.** The Scribe's calligraphy becomes imbued with greater power. When scribing talismans during an extended rest, they can create one additional talisman.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Foundation, Level 9): Talisman Array.** The Scribe learns to link talismans into a potent magical trap. As a 6 AP action, they can place up to three talismans they have prepared into adjacent, unoccupied squares. This creates a magical trap. The first enemy to enter one of these squares triggers all three talismans simultaneously, with itself as the target.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Celestial, Level 13): Celestial Authority.** The Scribe's talismans carry the weight of the Celestial Court. Enemies classified as *Gui* (undead) or *Yao* (demon) have a -2 penalty on any rolls to resist the effects of the Scribe's talismans.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Immortal, Level 17): Spontaneous Calligraphy.** The Scribe's connection to the divine script is so profound they can create a talisman in the heat of battle. Once per day, they can use an 8 AP action to scribe any one talisman they know. This talisman must be used before the end of their next turn or its power fades.

Techniques of the Path

The Scribe's techniques are the various Fulu they can create. Their power lies in knowing the correct symbol for the situation, exploiting the specific weaknesses of their foes. This approach makes knowledge gained through investigation and the Lore skill a tangible and powerful weapon, transforming combat from a simple exchange of damage into a tactical puzzle of applying the right tool to the right problem.1

* **Basic Technique: Talisman of Lesser Warding.** (At-Will) ◆ **Qi Cost (Scribe):** 1. **AP Cost (Activate):** 3 (Place). **Effect:** Creates a 1-square zone of protection that lasts for 1 minute. Allies who start their turn in the zone gain a +1 bonus to Defense.
* **Advanced Technique (Level 3): Talisman of the Peachwood Thorn.** (Encounter) ◆ **Qi Cost (Scribe):** 2. **AP Cost (Activate):** 4 (Attach). **Activation:** Melee Attack (Agility + Calligraphy). **Effect:** The target takes 2d10 Spirit damage. If the target is a *Gui* (Undead) creature, such as a *Jiangshi*, it instead takes 2d10 Wound damage and is Weakened (cannot deal full damage) for 1 round.
* **Secret Technique (Level 9): Talisman of the Thunder God's Wrath.** (Daily) ◆ **Qi Cost (Scribe):** 5. **AP Cost (Activate):** 5 (Burn). **Activation:** Ranged Attack (Mind + Calligraphy) vs. target in line of sight within 10 squares. **Effect:** A bolt of celestial lightning strikes the target, dealing 4d10 Stamina damage and stunning them for 1 round. If the target is a *Yao* (Demon), it takes an additional 2d10 Wound damage.

### **The Elemental Geomancer (Wǔ Xíng Fēngshuǐ Shī)**

*"The mountain does not yield to the river by strength, but by being Earth. The river does not carve the mountain with anger, but by being Water. Know the Five Elements, and you will know when to be the mountain, and when to be the river."*

Description

The Elemental Geomancer is a living conduit for the Five Elements (Wu Xing)—the fundamental energies of Wood (木), Fire (火), Earth (土), Metal (金), and Water (水) that form the basis of all reality.12 They perceive the world not as static matter, but as a dynamic, ever-shifting dance of these five forces. Through deep meditation and attunement, they learn to manipulate the two great cycles that govern the elements: the Generative Cycle (Wood feeds Fire, Fire creates Earth, Earth bears Metal, Metal carries Water, Water nourishes Wood) and the Destructive Cycle (Wood parts Earth, Earth dams Water, Water quenches Fire, Fire melts Metal, Metal chops Wood).13 On the battlefield, the Geomancer is a supreme controller. They do not merely cast spells; they reshape the very ground they stand on, transforming the terrain to hinder their enemies and empower their allies. They are masters of synergy, creating fields of splintering Wood to fuel their roaring Fire, or raising walls of Earth to block a torrent of Water.

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| **Role** | Controller |
| **Power Source** | Elemental Attunement |
| **Key Virtues** | Mind, Essence, Spirit |
| **Proficiencies** | **Armor:** Light Armor **Weapons:** Simple Melee, Staff |
| **Path Bonus** | **Harmonious Flow:** When the Geomancer uses a technique of one element (e.g., Fire) against a target currently in a zone created by a "feeding" element (e.g., Wood), the technique deals extra damage equal to the Geomancer's Essence Virtue. |

Path of Cultivation

The Geomancer's journey is a deepening communion with the fivefold nature of the Tao, learning to impose its patterns upon the world.

* **Realm Breakthrough (Mortal, Level 5): Sense the Dragon Veins.** The Geomancer can now sense the flow of Qi in the landscape. Once per day, they can spend 1 minute meditating to identify the dominant element in the area, as well as any significant disturbances or corruptions to the local *feng shui*.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Foundation, Level 9): Elemental Infusion.** The Geomancer can now imbue their allies' attacks with elemental energy. As a 3 AP action, they can grant an ally's weapon an elemental property (Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, or Water) for 1 minute. The weapon deals +1d6 damage of the corresponding type.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Celestial, Level 13): Master of the Cycles.** The Geomancer's mastery of the Destructive Cycle is perfected. When they use a technique of one element (e.g., Water) against a target currently suffering a condition from a "controlling" element (e.g., Burning from a Fire technique), the target suffers a -2 penalty to their roll to resist the new technique's effects.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Immortal, Level 17): One with the Land.** The Geomancer's connection to the earth is absolute. They are no longer hindered by difficult terrain of any kind (magical or mundane).

Techniques of the Path

Geomancer techniques are designed to work in concert, allowing the player to set up powerful combinations by applying the principles of the Five Elements directly onto the tactical grid.

* **Basic Technique: Earth Spike.** (At-Will) ◆ **Action:** 4 AP. **Target:** One enemy within 10 squares. **Attack:** Mind + Geomancy vs. Defense. **Effect:** The Geomancer causes a shard of rock to erupt from the ground, dealing 1d10+ Mind Virtue Stamina damage.
* **Advanced Technique (Level 3): Grasping Vine Field (Wood).** (Encounter) ◆ **Action:** 5 AP. **Qi Cost:** 2. **Target:** A 3x3 square area within 10 squares. **Effect:** The area becomes difficult terrain for 1 minute. Any enemy that starts its turn in the area is Slowed until the start of its next turn.
* **Advanced Technique (Level 3): Cinder Burst (Fire).** (Encounter) ◆ **Action:** 4 AP. **Qi Cost:** 2. **Target:** One enemy within 10 squares. **Attack:** Mind + Geomancy vs. Defense. **Effect:** The target takes 2d10+ Mind Virtue Stamina damage. If the target is currently in a Wood-element zone (like Grasping Vine Field), it also takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). This demonstrates the Generative Cycle (Wood feeds Fire).
* **Secret Technique (Level 9): Quench the Spirit (Water).** (Daily) ◆ **Action:** 5 AP. **Qi Cost:** 5. **Target:** One enemy within 10 squares. **Attack:** Mind + Geomancy vs. Spirit. **Effect:** The target takes 3d10 Spirit damage and cannot spend Qi until the end of the Geomancer's next turn. If the target is suffering from ongoing fire damage, that effect is immediately ended, but the target takes an additional 2d10 Wound damage from the thermal shock. This demonstrates the Destructive Cycle (Water quenches Fire).

## **Part II: Paths of the Unseen Fist – The Martial Artists**

This section details the Paths of Cultivation for those who seek perfection through the vessel of the self—the martial artists, monks, and weapon masters who have turned their bodies into living weapons.

### **The Shaolin Tiger-Claw Master (Hǔ Zhǎo Pài)**

*"Do not mistake my calm for peace. It is the stillness of the tiger in the grass, waiting. When I move, there will be only violence."*

Description

The Shaolin Tiger-Claw Master is a practitioner of one of the most famously aggressive and powerful of the Five Animal styles of Shaolin Gongfu.15 This Path is the embodiment of Yang energy—direct, ferocious, and overwhelming. The training is grueling, focusing on developing "external" power through the strengthening of bones, muscles, and tendons to their absolute peak.16 The Tiger-Claw Master's primary weapon is their hands, conditioned through years of striking sandbags and gripping heavy jars until they can tear through leather and crush stone. Their hands are shaped into the "tiger claw" (

*hǔ zhǎo*), a grip that is used not only to strike but to rip, seize, and control an opponent's limbs.15 In combat, the Tiger-Claw Master is a terrifying Striker. They fight with explosive power, seeking to end confrontations with decisive, overwhelming force. Their spirit is that of the tiger: courageous, fierce, and utterly dominant.

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| **Role** | Striker |
| **Power Source** | External Martial Discipline |
| **Key Virtues** | Body, Agility, Spirit |
| **Proficiencies** | **Armor:** None **Weapons:** Unarmed Strike, Staff |
| **Path Bonus** | **Tiger's Claws:** The Master's Unarmed Strikes deal 2d10 damage instead of 1d10 and have the "Tearing" property (on a Critical Success, inflict ongoing 5 Wound damage, save ends). |

Path of Cultivation

The Tiger-Claw Master's journey is one of forging their body into a weapon and their spirit into that of a predator king.

* **Realm Breakthrough (Mortal, Level 5): Strengthen the Bones.** The Master's conditioning hardens their frame. They gain a permanent +1 bonus to their Stamina Protection Value (PV).
* **Realm Breakthrough (Foundation, Level 9): Tiger's Pounce.** The Master learns the explosive charge of their totem animal. When performing a Charge action, they may move an additional 2 squares.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Celestial, Level 13): Fierce Spirit.** The Master's *Shen* (spirit) now radiates a palpable aura of menace. Enemies who start their turn adjacent to the Master suffer a -1 penalty to all attack rolls for that turn.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Immortal, Level 17): Internal Force.** The Master's external power has become so great it has unlocked their internal force, or *jin*. Once per encounter, they can declare they are using *jin* on an Unarmed Strike. The attack deals Wound damage instead of Stamina damage.

Techniques of the Path

Tiger-Claw techniques are direct, powerful, and designed to maim and disable. They are named after the legendary attacks of the style.15

* **Basic Technique: Clawing Strike.** (At-Will) ◆ **Action:** 3 AP. **Target:** One enemy. **Attack:** Body + Martial Arts vs. Defense. **Effect:** Deals Unarmed Strike damage.
* **Advanced Technique (Level 3): Black Tiger Steals the Heart.** (Encounter) ◆ **Action:** 4 AP. **Qi Cost:** 2. **Target:** One enemy. **Attack:** Body + Martial Arts vs. Defense. **Effect:** A devastating, focused strike. Deals Unarmed Strike damage + 2d10 extra damage.
* **Secret Technique (Level 9): Fierce Tiger Descends the Mountain.** (Daily) ◆ **Action:** 6 AP. **Qi Cost:** 5. **Target:** One enemy. **Effect:** The Master performs a special Charge action. They move up to their speed and make the following attack. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. **Attack:** Body + Martial Arts vs. Defense. **Effect:** Deals Unarmed Strike damage + 2d10 extra damage, and the target is knocked prone.

### **The Wudang Sword Saint (Wǔdāng Jiànkè)**

*"The sword is not an extension of the arm. It is an extension of the spirit. When the spirit is calm, the sword is still. When the spirit flows, the sword dances. To defeat your opponent, do not break his sword; unbalance his spirit."*

Description

In the misty peaks of the Wudang Mountains, Taoist monks developed a form of martial arts that stands in stark contrast to the external power of Shaolin. This is the Path of the Wudang Sword Saint, a practitioner of "internal" martial arts who embodies the Taoist principles of softness, yielding, and harmony.6 The Sword Saint's art is a meditative dance, a physical expression of

*wu wei* (effortless action). They do not meet force with force. Instead, they learn to cultivate and guide their internal Qi, using it to blend with an opponent's attack, redirect their momentum, and strike only when an opening is created by the enemy's own aggression.18 Their chosen weapon is the

*jian*, the double-edged straight sword, valued not for its chopping power but for its precision and balance. In combat, the Wudang Sword Saint is a peerless Defender, a calm eye in the center of a storm. They move with fluid grace, their blade a blur of silver that seems to be everywhere at once, protecting allies and frustrating foes with an impenetrable web of steel.

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| **Role** | Defender |
| **Power Source** | Internal Martial Discipline |
| **Key Virtues** | Agility, Spirit, Mind |
| **Proficiencies** | **Armor:** Light Armor **Weapons:** *Jian* |
| **Path Bonus** | **Flowing Defense:** When wielding a *Jian* and taking the Total Defense action, the Sword Saint adds their Spirit Virtue to their Defense bonus. |

Path of Cultivation

The Sword Saint's progression is a path of ever-deepening understanding of the Tao, reflected in their swordplay.

* **Realm Breakthrough (Mortal, Level 5): Stillness in Motion.** The Sword Saint learns to maintain a defensive readiness even while moving. They no longer grant combat advantage to enemies when using the Charge action.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Foundation, Level 9): Yielding Parry.** The Sword Saint masters the art of redirection. Once per encounter, when an enemy misses them with a melee attack, they can use their reaction to immediately slide that enemy 1 square into another adjacent square.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Celestial, Level 13): Sword of the Mind.** The Sword Saint's connection to their blade is so complete it feels like a part of their own body. They gain a +1 bonus to all attack rolls with a *Jian*.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Immortal, Level 17): Embody the Tao.** The Sword Saint achieves a state of profound calm and insight. They can spend 2 Qi points to gain an additional reaction during a round of combat. This can only be done once per round.

Techniques of the Path

Wudang techniques are subtle, efficient, and focus on control and counter-attack. They emphasize the tactical importance of movement and positioning on the grid.

* **Basic Technique: Willow Bends with the Wind.** (At-Will) ◆ **Action:** 3 AP. **Target:** One enemy. **Attack:** Agility + Martial Arts vs. Defense. **Effect:** Deals weapon damage. If the target attacked the Sword Saint since their last turn, this attack deals +Spirit Virtue extra damage.
* **Advanced Technique (Level 3): Seven Stars Footwork.** (Encounter) ◆ **Action:** 4 AP. **Qi Cost:** 2. **Effect:** The Sword Saint makes a standard melee attack. Whether the attack hits or misses, they can then shift a number of squares equal to their Mind Virtue. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.
* **Secret Technique (Level 9): Heaven and Earth Embrace.** (Daily) ◆ **Action:** 5 AP. **Qi Cost:** 5. **Effect:** The Sword Saint enters a perfect defensive stance that lasts until the start of their next turn. Until then, any enemy that makes a melee attack against the Sword Saint and misses is immediately subject to a counter-attack (a free action) from the Sword Saint. This counter-attack is a basic melee attack.

### **The Drunken Immortal (Zuì Quán Master)**

*"They see a stumbling fool and lower their guard. They see a swaying sot and rush in. They see a drunkard, and they are already defeated. My cup is empty, but my fist is full."*

Description

The Path of the Drunken Immortal is perhaps the most unorthodox and deceptive of all martial arts. Known as Zui Quan (醉拳), or Drunken Boxing, it is a style that mimics the seemingly clumsy, erratic, and unpredictable movements of an intoxicated person.19 To the untrained eye, the practitioner is a bumbling fool, staggering off-balance, swaying precariously, and flailing their limbs wildly. This, however, is a masterful deception.20 Every stumble is a dodge, every sway is a feint, and every flailing limb is a strike from an impossible angle. The Drunken Immortal uses feigned vulnerability to create openings, luring opponents into overextending before unleashing attacks with surprising speed, flexibility, and power. The style is physically demanding, requiring incredible core strength, balance, and agility to execute its acrobatic and ground-fighting techniques.21 In combat, the Drunken Immortal is a uniquely evasive Striker and Defender, a chaotic force on the battlefield that frustrates opponents and creates opportunities through sheer unpredictability.

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| **Role** | Striker / Defender |
| **Power Source** | Deceptive Martial Arts |
| **Key Virtues** | Agility, Body, Essence |
| **Proficiencies** | **Armor:** None **Weapons:** Unarmed Strike, Staff, Gourd |
| **Path Bonus** | **Staggering Gait:** When the Drunken Immortal uses the Move action, enemies gain no bonus for attacking them from a Flank or Rear arc until the start of their next turn. |

Path of Cultivation

The Drunken Immortal's journey is one of mastering chaos, finding perfect control within a shell of utter lack of control.

* **Realm Breakthrough (Mortal, Level 5): Iron Stomach.** The Drunken Immortal's constitution becomes legendarily robust. They gain a permanent +2 bonus on all Body rolls to resist poison and ingested toxins.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Foundation, Level 9): Unexpected Resilience.** The Drunken Immortal learns to "roll with the punches." Once per encounter, when they take damage from an attack, they can use their reaction to immediately regain Stamina equal to half the damage taken.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Celestial, Level 13): Deceptive Momentum.** The Drunken Immortal can now turn a near miss into an advantage. When an enemy misses them with a melee attack, the Drunken Immortal may immediately shift 1 square as a free action.
* **Realm Breakthrough (Immortal, Level 17): Master of the Eight Immortals.** The Drunken Immortal has mastered the eight archetypes of their style. Once per day, they can spend 1 Qi point to gain an Action Point.

Techniques of the Path

The techniques of the Drunken Immortal are based on the forms of the legendary Eight Drunken Immortals, each providing a different tactical approach.22 Their abilities emphasize the use of unique movement types on the grid to gain tactical advantage.

* **Basic Technique: Gulp from the Gourd.** (At-Will) ◆ **Action:** 2 AP. **Effect:** The Drunken Immortal takes a symbolic drink. They regain Stamina equal to their Body Virtue. This is a purely mechanical action and does not require an actual drink.
* **Advanced Technique (Level 3): Lü Dongbin's Swaying Feint.** (Encounter) ◆ **Action:** 4 AP. **Qi Cost:** 2. **Target:** One enemy. **Attack:** Agility + Martial Arts vs. Defense. **Effect:** The Drunken Immortal makes a swaying, deceptive strike. The attack deals Unarmed Strike damage. Whether it hits or misses, the target is considered Flat-Footed (lower Defense, cannot make opportunity attacks) to the Drunken Immortal until the end of their next turn.
* **Secret Technique (Level 9): Li Tieguai's Crippled Leg.** (Daily) ◆ **Action:** 5 AP. **Qi Cost:** 5. **Target:** One enemy. **Attack:** Body + Martial Arts vs. Defense. **Effect:** A powerful, surprising kick from a low, seemingly off-balance stance. The attack deals Unarmed Strike damage + 3d10 extra damage, and the target's movement speed is halved for 1 minute.

### **Example Path Progression Table: Fulu Talisman Scribe**

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| Level | Karma to Reach | Virtue Increases | New Merits | New Techniques Gained | Special Abilities |
| 1 | 0 | - | 3 | 2 Basic, 1 Advanced, 1 Secret | Path Bonus, Esoteric Knowledge |
| 2 | 1,000 | - | 1 | 1 Maneuver | - |
| 3 | 2,250 | - | - | 1 Advanced | - |
| 4 | 3,750 | +1 to two Virtues | 1 | - | - |
| 5 | 5,500 | - | - | 1 Secret | **Realm Breakthrough:** Masterful Stroke |
| 6 | 7,500 | - | 1 | 1 Maneuver | - |
| 7 | 10,000 | - | - | 1 Advanced | - |
| 8 | 13,000 | +1 to two Virtues | 1 | - | - |
| 9 | 16,500 | - | - | 1 Secret | **Realm Breakthrough:** Talisman Array |
| 10 | 20,500 | - | 1 | 1 Maneuver | - |
| 11 | 26,000 | +1 to all Virtues | - | 1 Advanced | - |
| 12 | 32,000 | - | 1 | - | - |
| 13 | 39,000 | - | - | 1 Secret | **Realm Breakthrough:** Celestial Authority |
| 14 | 47,000 | +1 to two Virtues | 1 | 1 Maneuver | - |
| 15 | 57,000 | - | - | 1 Advanced | - |
| 16 | 69,000 | - | 1 | - | - |
| 17 | 83,000 | - | - | 1 Secret | **Realm Breakthrough:** Spontaneous Calligraphy |
| 18 | 99,000 | +1 to two Virtues | 1 | 1 Maneuver | - |
| 19 | 119,000 | - | - | 1 Advanced | - |
| 20 | 143,000 | - | 1 | 1 Secret | - |