

SWORD-SAINT

Swashbuckler Class Archetype

CLASS FEATURES

The sword-saint, or kensei, trains religiously with a single blade and its sheath. They learn to draw and sheathe this blade faster than the eye can see, gracefully bringing its edge to bear against hordes of enemies. These strikes light up the battlefield like bolts of lightning, swift and terrible.

Unlike other swashbucklers, sword-saints are generally reserved in battle. Movements of their blades and feet alike are conservative and rationed. Only when they draw their sword to strike do they exhibit the signature flair that all swashbucklers are known for. Trained to hold out against and even overcome enemies that take them by surprise and in overwhelming numbers, sword-saints gain tremendous defensive and reactive powers at the cost of raw mobility and versatility.

Prerequisites You must be a Swashbuckler.
You don't gain the Stylish Tricks class feature.
You don't gain the Stylish Combatant class feature.
You don't gain the Swashbuckler Expertise class feature.
You don't gain the Continuous Flair class feature.
You don't gain the Vivacious Speed class feature.

Note You may notice that the katana has neither agile nor finesse as weapon traits. You may re flavor another sword to be a katana, or you may use a modified **Iai-Katana**, which is identical to a Katana except it loses Two-Hand d10 and gains Finesse.

Initial Proficiencies

You don't gain training in light armor, nor do the **Light Armor Expertise** and **Light Armor Mastery** class features increase your proficiency in light armor. Instead, you are trained in unarmored defense. When you would become an expert or master in light armor and unarmored defense, instead you only become an expert or master in unarmored defense.

You don't gain training in simple and martial weapons, nor do the **Weapon Expertise** and **Weapon Mastery** class features increase your proficiency with simple and martial weapons. Instead, choose a simple or martial one-handed sword with the agile or finesse trait. You become trained in that sword and unarmed attacks. When you would become an expert or master in simple weapons, martial weapons, and unarmed attacks, instead you only become an expert or master in that sword and unarmed attacks.

Sword-Saint's Style

A sword-saint trains extensively to fight at a disadvantage—whether that be while their sword remains sheathed or while surrounded by enemies. Ultimately, they learn to draw strength from these disadvantages, developing a fighting style uniquely suited to addressing them. You must choose the **Iaijutsu Style** as your swashbuckler style.

Iaijutsu Style

You study your chosen blade religiously, drawing from your wide array of practiced techniques to both cut down your foes just moments after your blade leaves its sheath and defend yourself against those who remain. You're trained in Swordsmanship Lore. You gain the Iaijutsu Sheathe action:

Iaijutsu Sheathe ◆

Swashbuckler, Kensei, Bravado

Requirements You're wielding your sword and have a hand free.

You sheathe your blade and center your mind before the strike, adopting a defensive posture as you do so. Interact to sheath your sword, then attempt a Swordsmanship Lore check against the Will DC of an enemy within 30 feet.

Critical Success The enemy takes a -2 circumstance penalty to attack rolls as part of hostile actions that include you until the end of your next turn. If it misses you with a Strike while it has this penalty, it is off-guard to the next melee Strike you make against it with your sword before the end of your next turn.

Success As critical success, except the enemy does not become off-guard to your next melee Strike with your sword against it if it misses you with a Strike.

Exemplary Finisher If this finisher was made as a part of Brandishing Draw, you gain a circumstance bonus to the damage roll equal to double the number of weapon damage dice.

Sword Saint's Attunement

You may spend an hour in meditation on a sword to attune to it. You may be attuned to up to one sword at a time, and you know the location of swords you are currently attuned to at all times. Only swords you've attuned to count as your sword for the purposes of feats from this archetype. You may only be attuned to one sword at a time.

Nukitsuke

Level 1

Interacting to draw or sheathe your sword does not trigger reactions that would be triggered by manipulate actions, nor do manipulate actions that are made as part of activities with the bravado trait. You gain the Brandishing Draw class feat as an archetype feat even though you don't meet its level prerequisite. It has the added requirement that you have a hand free.

Stylish Defender

Level 1

You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to skill checks with the bravado trait while in a combat encounter. When you Interact to sheathe your sword, if you're unarmored, you get a +1 status bonus to AC until the start of your next turn.

Sword-Saint's Studies

Level 3

At 3rd level, 7th level, and 15th level, you gain an additional skill increase you can apply only to Acrobatics or a Lore skill. You also gain an additional skill feat at these levels. The skill feat must be for Acrobatics or a Lore skill. In addition, when you make your daily preparations, you may retrain any one of these skill feats for any other skill feat available at the level you took the exchanged feat that is for Acrobatics or a Lore skill. You must meet all the new feat's other prerequisites.

Lesson of the Flashing Blade

Level 3

By impeding your enemy's ability to track the movement of your blade, you are able to catch them unawares, and even conceal yourself from their senses entirely. You gain the **Heaven's Light Hides Sword's Shadow** action.

Heaven's Light Hides Sword's Shadow ◆ *Bravado*

Requirements You're wielding your sword and have a hand free.

Attempt to Create a Diversion targeting one creature within reach of your sword, then Interact to sheathe your sword.

Sword-Saint's Swordsense **Level 5**

You gain swordsense as a precise sense with a range of 30 feet. This lets you know the exact position of all swords within the listed range. You are able to use this as an imprecise sense against creatures wielding swords. At 13th level, you may use swordsense as a precise sense against creatures wielding swords, and you may roll Swordsmanship Lore instead of perception for initiative if you can sense at least one enemy wielding a sword.

Lesson of the Leaping Stream **Level 7**

As a master of the sword, you know that the better part of swordsmanship is footwork, and have trained yourself to the point that your steps across the battlefield have all the grace of a splashing stream. While your sword is sheathed, you get a +2 status bonus to your Reflex DC when defending against attempts to Trip you. While you're wielding your sword in one hand, you get a +2 status bonus to your Reflex DC when defending against attempts to Disarm you. Once per round, immediately after you Interact to sheathe your sword, you may Step up to 5 feet as a free action.

Sword-Saint's Expertise **Level 9**

You perform sword-saint techniques with exceptional grace, making them harder to resist. Your circumstance bonus from Stylish Defender increases to +2. Your proficiency rank for your swashbuckler class DC increases to expert.

Sword-Saint's Vigilance **Level 11**

While not equal to your honed focus in combat, your mind is clear in any situation. The circumstance bonus from Stylish Defender applies in exploration mode.

Lesson of the Mountain Pine **Level 11**

As you sheathe your blade, you enter a state of relaxed awareness, allowing you to regain control over both your body and mind. Whenever you gain panache as part of an activity in which you Interact to sheathe your sword, reduce your frightened condition value by 1; additionally, if you are currently affected by one of the clumsy, enfeebled, or sickened conditions, you may attempt a counteract check against the condition using your Swordsmanship Lore modifier as your counteract modifier and the condition's source to determine the DC. If you fail, you must wait 10 minutes before you may attempt to counteract the condition this way again.

Lesson of the Sudden Blaze **Level 15**

Your footwork has become as swift as your sword strokes, and by unifying the two your speed surprises your enemies like the sudden movements of a runaway wildfire. Once per round, immediately before you use a finisher, you may Step up to 5 feet as a free action.

Lesson of the Saint's Ground **Level 19**

While other swashbucklers roam freely across the battlefield, the sword-saint reigns over the short distance between their foes and their sword. You don't treat the squares in the enemy's space as difficult terrain when you succeed at an attempt to Tumble Through, and squares in a 5-foot emanation are difficult terrain for your enemies.

FEATS

Sword-Saint Dedication **Feat 2**

Archetype, Dedication

Your extensive study of swordsmanship allows you to rely on honed techniques designed to efficiently dissuade foes instead of simple athleticism or cunning. You may use Swordsmanship Lore instead of Athletics or Deception when attempting to use Disarm or Create a Diversion against an enemy in reach of your sword. You gain the Feather Step general feat as a bonus feat.

Swallow-in-Flight Deflection **Feat 4**

Archetype

The practiced grace of your finishers improves your ability to defend against their targets. You follow your sword's movement with its sheath, positioning it to parry. Whenever you use Brandishing Draw, if the finisher you made as part of it deals damage, you get a +1 circumstance bonus to AC against strikes made by its target (+2 if the weapon you're wielding has the parry trait). This bonus lasts until the start of your next turn or until you stop wielding your sword, whichever comes first.

Niten Ichi-Ryu **Feat 4**

Archetype

Choose a simple or martial one-handed sword with the agile or finesse trait; this cannot be the same sword you chose previously. You are trained in this secondary sword and may attune to it in addition to your primary sword. Whenever you would become an expert or master in your primary sword, you become an expert or master in this secondary sword. If this sword doesn't have the parry trait, it gains the parry trait. For requirements from this archetype, you count as having your sword sheathed if both your swords are sheathed and as wielding your sword if you're wielding both your swords. When you Interact to draw or sheathe one of your swords, you may instead Interact to draw or sheathe both of your swords. When you are instructed to make a Strike with your sword, you may choose which of your swords to make a Strike with. If you're wielding both your swords, you count as having a hand free for requirements of feats and features from this archetype.

Sword-Saint's Waterfowl Stance **Feat 4**

Archetype

You gain the Waterfowl Stance feat as a bonus feat even though you don't meet its prerequisites. Additionally, treat your sword as if it was a dandpatta, scimitar, talwar, or zulfikar for the purposes of this feat.

Shinkage Counter **Feat 4**

Archetype, Bravado

Requirements Your sword is sheathed.

Trigger A creature you can see targets you with an attack.

You draw your sword to parry in the blink of an eye, obscuring your enemy's vision with your sheath as you do so. You Interact to draw your sword and get a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack. You may then attempt to Create a Diversion targeting the creature that attacked you. On a success, you remain hidden until the end of your next turn, rather than the end of your turn.

Share the Teachings **Feat 6**

Archetype, Auditory, Bravado

You whisper koans as you sheathe your sword, lending your allies the strength to stand against the enemy. When you use Iaijutsu Sheathe, you may have the circumstance penalty also apply to attack rolls made as part of hostile actions including an adjacent ally. If you are not included in the hostile action, the penalty is reduced by 1.

Prick and Paddle **Feat 6**

Archetype, Finisher

Requirements You're flanked by at least two enemies.

With your sword and sheath you discipline those who would attempt to flank you. Make a Strike with your sword against one of the enemies flanking you. If it hits, you deal your Precise Strike damage to another enemy flanking you instead of the target of the Strike. You may then Step.

Chiburui □ **Feat 6**

Archetype, Visual

Requirements You're wielding your sword and dealt Precise Strike damage with it to a creature not immune to bleed last turn.

Trigger A creature within 10 feet of you that you can see targets an ally with a melee attack.

The ritual art of separating blood from blade is a standard part of a Kensei's studies, but you've developed innovative ways to impede your opponents while doing so. Interact to clean your sword, spraying the contents off the edge of your blade onto the enemy. Attempt a Swordsmanship Lore check against the target's Reflex DC.

Critical Success The target is clumsy 1 until they use an Interact action to wipe the blood from their eyes.

Success As critical success, but the condition ends automatically after 1 round.

Critical Failure Your grip on your sword slips. You get a -2 circumstance penalty to attacks until you Interact to readjust it as if you had been the target of a successful Disarm attempt.

Swallow Flash Strike ◆◆ **Feat 6**

Archetype

Requirements You're wielding your sword. You rush through an enemy in an instant. Only after you appear behind them do they realize they've been cut. Attempt to Tumble Through an opponent's space. If the attempt is successful, you may make a melee Strike with your sword against them at any point during the remainder of your movement. If this Strike is successful, you may use Iaijutsu Sheathe.

Saint's Eye Sees All **Feat 8**

Archetype

Prerequisites Iaijutsu Sheathe.

Your skill with the sword allows you to split your focus between attackers. When you use Iaijutsu Sheathe, you may roll Swordsmanship Lore checks against the Will DCs up to 3 enemies instead of 1. If you do, reduce the circumstance penalty they receive to attack rolls on a success or critical success by 1.

Kiri-otoshi ◆◆ **Feat 8**

Archetype, Finisher

Requirements You're wielding your sword in one hand.

You raise your sword to heaven, then bring it down on your enemy, putting enough force into it to make this cut the last. Make a melee Strike with your sword. On a hit, treat all weapon damage die rolls as though they were the maximum possible value. This does not affect damage from Precise Strike or from other sources. You can't use finishers until the end of your next turn.

Kiri-tsuke ◆ **Feat 8**

Archetype

Requirements Your last action was Brandishing Draw and the finisher you used as part of it was successful.

More than other sword-saints, you've trained yourself to be able to capitalize on the openings left when you draw your sword and strike. Make a melee Strike with your sword with the same target and multiple attack penalty as the finisher, ignoring the restriction on using actions with the attack trait after a finisher. You can't use finishers until the end of your next turn.

Ken no Sen **Feat 8**

Archetype

You have learned that taking the initiative in a swordfight is of the utmost importance. When you roll initiative, you get a +2 circumstance bonus to your roll and may Interact to draw your sword as a free action. On the first round of combat, enemies that haven't acted yet are off-guard to you. If an enemy is wielding a sword, you may Step up to 10 feet towards it as a free action on your first turn.

Go no Sen □ **Feat 10**

Archetype, Concentrate, Flourish, Finisher

Requirements Your sword is sheathed.

Trigger A creature in your reach targets you with a melee Strike.

You have achieved a degree of mental focus beyond the reach of all but a few sword-saints, allowing you to perfectly time your counterattacks to your opponents' attacks. Interact to draw your sword, then

make a melee Strike with it against the creature targeting you. On a critical hit, you gain panache.

Sword-Saint's Snakebird Strike **Feat 10**

Archetype

Prerequisites Sword-Saint's Waterfowl Stance.

You gain the Snakebird's Shadow feat as a bonus feat even though you don't meet its prerequisites. If you have dealt damage to an enemy since the beginning of your last turn as part of a successful attempt to Tumble Through, when you use Snakebird's Shadow, you may have the melee Strike you make against that enemy with your sword gain the finisher trait. If you do, you don't lose panache after making the Strike, nor do you apply the restriction on using further actions with the attack trait; instead, you lose panache after you have made all your attacks.

Shinkage Deflection **Feat 10**

Archetype, Bravado

Prerequisites Shinkage Counter

Requirements Your sword is sheathed.

Trigger A creature you can see targets you with a melee Strike.

Extensive training in the Shinkage-ryu school has left you able to mount a perfect defense against oncoming attacks while simultaneously preparing for devastating counterattacks. You Interact to draw your sword, then attempt to Create a Diversion targeting the creature that targeted you. On a success, you remain hidden until the end of your next turn, rather than the end of your turn, and the triggering attack is disrupted.

Ensenga **Feat 12**

Archetype, Visual

Prerequisites Chiburui.

Requirements You're wielding your sword, dealt Precise Strike damage with it to a creature not immune to bleed last turn, and have a hand free.

Trigger A creature within 15 feet of you that you can see targets an ally with a melee attack.

Your development of sword-cleansing techniques has advanced further. Your blade sparks as it impacts upon the glass of bottles you toss into the air, allowing you to ignite both it and your enemies in a spray of burning high-proof liquor. You Interact to draw and toss a bottle of liquor into the air, then shatter it with your sword. Creatures in a 15-foot cone originating from you that includes the triggering creature take 4d6 fire damage with a basic Reflex save against your Swordsmanship Lore DC. On a critical failure, or a failure for the triggering creature, they're also dazzled until the start of your next turn.

At level 13 and every level thereafter, increase the damage by 1d6.

Kingfisher's Plunge **Feat 12**

Archetype, Finisher

Frequency Once per round.

Prerequisites Quick Jump.

Requirements You're wielding your sword in one hand.

Mimicking the common kingfisher's dive, you spring into the air and sink your blade into your foes as if they were but water. Attempt a High Jump without first making a Stride, determining the DC using the Long Jump DCs. When you land, make a melee Strike with your sword targeting an adjacent enemy. On a hit, if the result of your Athletics check for the High Jump attempt was greater than or equal to the enemy's Fortitude DC, they are knocked prone by the strike.

Zanshin

Feat 12

Archetype

You have achieved a state of mental readiness that lets you move without thinking. At the start of each of your turns when you regain your actions, you gain an additional reaction that can only be used to perform a reaction from this archetype. You must have panache to use this reaction.

Swallow Flash Strike Return ◆◆◆

Feat 14

Archetype, Concentrate

Prerequisites Swallow Flash Strike.

Requirements You're wielding your sword and are not fatigued.

Attempt to Tumble Through an opponent's space. If the attempt is successful, you may make a melee Strike with your sword against them at any point during the remainder of your movement. If the Strike is successful, you may repeat the two actions against the same opponent, gaining a +2 circumstance bonus to both the Acrobatics check to Tumble Through and the Strike. If you succeed at both the attempt to Tumble Through and the Strike in the second set, you can repeat the two actions one last time, this time with a +4 circumstance bonus. If you have panache, you may give the last Strike the finisher trait. Regardless, if it is a success, the opponent is off-guard until the start of your next turn. After using Swallow Flash Strike Return, you become fatigued for 1 minute.

Sword-Saint's Standard ◆◆

Feat 14

Archetype, Visual, Bravado

Frequency Once per day.

Duration 1 minute.

You unfurl the banner of heaven as you inspire your allies to steel themselves against the enemy despite their weaknesses. Attempt Swordsman Lore checks against the Will DCs of all allies in a 30 foot emanation. On a success, reduce the frightened condition value of that creature by 1, or by 2 on a critical success. For the duration of Sword-Saint's Standard, whenever you gain a status bonus to AC from Stylish Defender, you may apply the bonus to all allies within 30 feet in addition to yourself.

Sword-Saint's Shodō □

Feat 16

Archetype, Flourish

Trigger You succeed on a Strike with your sword as part of a finisher.

You put the finishing touches on the calligraphy you work upon the flesh of your foe. Interact to sheathe your sword. When you do, the target of the Strike takes damage equal to the half damage your Strike dealt times the number of successful Strikes you made against it with your sword this turn. Strikes you made that were critical successes count as two Strikes for the purpose of this damage.

Masamune's Masterwork

Feat 18

Archetype

Yours is a blade created by a legendary swordsmith, and its beautiful edge both commands respect and instills fear. You may use Swordsman Lore to Make an Impression or Coerce while your sword is visible to the target of your attempt and the target is aware of the skill of its creator. Your sword gains the effects of the Fearsome (Major) property rune. This rune does not count towards your maximum rune count.

Special When you use Dazzling Display, you get a +2 circumstance bonus to Demoralize enemies if you are wielding your sword.

End of Eightfold Path ◆

Feat 18

Archetype, Finisher

Frequency Once per minute.

Having arrived at the end of the eightfold path through neverending study of your sword, you are able to hasten others to the conclusion of their cycle of rebirth as well. Make a melee Strike with your sword. Treat your sword as being under the effects of a *Penultimate Heartbeat* whetstone for this Strike.

Tsubame Gaeshi ◆◆◆**Feat 20***Archetype, Finisher, Death***Frequency** Once per minute.**Prerequisites** Kiri-otoshi.

Through nonstop training, divine inspiration, or peerless instruction, you have learned to execute the turning swallow cut, a legendary certain-kill technique building on the foundation of kiri-otoshi in which the swordsman turns their blade upwards after an initial downwards feint. Attempt a Feint targeting a creature within reach of your sword; you may use Swordsmanship Lore instead of Deception for this attempt.

Critical Success Make a melee Strike with your sword against the same target. You get a +2 circumstance bonus to the attack roll. If you hit, the Strike does maximum damage and the target must succeed on a Fortitude save against your Swordsmanship Lore DC or it dies; this save has the incapacitation trait.

Success As critical success, except the target does not make the Fortitude save.

Failure You deal your maximum Precise Strike damage to the target.

Peerless Defender**Feat 20***Archetype*

You are able to easily anticipate enemy attacks. Nothing under heaven can catch you off-guard. You gain the Deny Advantage rogue class feature. While you have panache, the status bonus to AC from Stylish Defender is increased by 1.

Sever Space* ◆◆**Feat 20***Uncommon, Fighter, Flourish, Teleportation*

Requirements You are wielding a weapon that deals slashing damage or have an unarmed Strike that deals slashing damage.

You destroy the space between you and your targets, allowing you to strike with your melee weapons at great range. Make a melee Strike with the required weapon or unarm an 80-foot reach for this Strike. After the Strike, regardless of whether it succeeded, the world rushes to fill the space you destroyed, bringing you and the target adjacent to each other. You can choose to teleport to the closest space adjacent to the target or to attempt to teleport the target adjacent to you. If you choose the target, they can negate the teleportation if they succeed at a Fortitude save against your class DC.