



# WAY OF THE IRON EMBRACE

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**M.T. BLACK**

A new monk subclass for the world's greatest roleplaying game

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## WAY OF THE IRON EMBRACE

Monks of the Way of the Iron Embrace are masters of grapples, throws, and pins. Fighting on the front line, they fearlessly lay hands on the most powerful enemies. Using balance, leverage, and their own internal power, these monks can control foes of almost any shape and size.

### SUPPLE PALMS

Starting when you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you gain the following benefits:

- You may use Dexterity (Acrobatics) instead of Strength (Athletics) to make a grapple check or a shove check.
- While you are grappling a creature, you can use a bonus action to shove that creature.
- When you escape from a grapple, you can use a reaction to grapple the creature that held you.

### CRASHING WAVE

Starting at 6th level, you can use your ki energy to toss your foes about with ease. When you shove a creature, you can increase the distance you push the target by spending ki points. Each point you spend increases the distance you push

the target by 10 feet. The maximum number of ki points that you can spend on a shove equals half your monk level.

The target takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 20 feet it is pushed. The target lands prone unless it avoids taking damage from the shove.

### PYTHON'S COIL

Starting at 11th level, you have learned to exploit certain mystic pressure points on the body. As an action, you can spend 4 ki points and target a creature you are grappling. That creature must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature falls unconscious for 1 minute.

The effect ends early if the target takes damage, or someone uses an action to slap the target awake. A creature is immune to this effect if it is undead or if it cannot be charmed.

### GIANT'S GRASP

Starting at 17th level, you have developed extraordinary power in your hands, and you can grapple or shove a creature up to two sizes larger than you. In addition, when you successfully grapple a creature, you subject that creature to the restrained condition until the grapple ends.



# A GUIDE TO GRAPPLING

The purpose of this guide is to show you how to employ grappling effectively in combat, allowing you to fully exploit the features available in the Way of the Iron Embrace. The full grappling rules are included in the below sidebar, for easy reference.

Grappling is a powerful action since it relies on an opposed skill check. Many monsters have either a high AC or good saving throws, but comparatively few monsters have either the Athletics or Acrobatics skill. Assuming you have the appropriate skill yourself, you have a massive advantage over most of your opponents.

**Controlling Movement.** A grappled creature has a movement of 0. Is controlling a creature's movement all that useful? Yes, it is! For a start, it enables you to restrict who a creature can attack. You no longer need to worry about an exposed flank when the enemy is grappled! Furthermore, you can use grappling to keep a creature exposed to a certain area effect. One classic example is forcing a spellcaster to remain within a *silence* spell.

There are monsters that strongly rely on mobility for combat effectiveness, and grappling can shut these creatures down. Any creature with the Flyby feature, such as the **spined devil** or the **peryton**, becomes substantially more vulnerable when grappled. And creatures that rely on charging while in combat are far less dangerous with no movement.

**Moving a Grappled Foe.** You can drag or carry a grappled creature up to half your speed. This gives you a lot of offensive options. You can move a creature into a tactically advantageous position, or even move them to the edge of a cliff, ready for a good shove!

**Shoving Prone.** The shove action enables you to push a creature prone. A prone creature suffers disadvantage on melee attacks made against it and has disadvantage on its own attack roles.

The creature remains grappled after you knock it prone, which leads to a very powerful effect. Since a creature must spend movement to stand up, and since being grappled gives it 0 movement, the target cannot stand up until it breaks your grapple! This grapple/shove

combination is an excellent way to neutralize a powerful enemy.

Iron Embrace monks have a remarkable advantage in this area. Since you can shove a creature prone as a bonus action, you can achieve in a single round what it usually takes 2 rounds for other creatures to achieve.

**Shoving Away.** You can also simply shove a creature away from you. Very handy if you have moved them in front of a fireplace, a window, or next to a cliff!

## Grappling Rules

When you want to grab a creature or wrestle with it, you can use the Attack action to make a special melee attack, a grapple. If you're able to make multiple attacks with the Attack action, this attack replaces one of them.

The target of your grapple must be no more than one size larger than you and must be within your reach. Using at least one free hand, you try to seize the target by making a grapple check instead of an attack roll: a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (the target chooses the ability to use). You succeed automatically if the target is incapacitated. If you succeed, you subject the target to the grappled condition. The condition specifies the things that end it, and you can release the target whenever you like (no action required).

**Escaping a Grapple.** A grappled creature can use its action to escape. To do so, it must succeed on a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check contested by your Strength (Athletics) check.

**Moving a Grappled Creature.** When you move, you can drag or carry the grappled creature with you, but your speed is halved, unless the creature is two or more sizes smaller than you.

## Shoving a Creature

Using the Attack action, you can make a special melee attack to shove a creature, either to knock it prone or push it away from you. If you're able to make multiple attacks with the Attack action, this attack replaces one of them.

The target must be no more than one size larger than you and must be within your reach. Instead of making an attack roll, you make a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (the target chooses the ability to use). You succeed automatically if the target is incapacitated. If you succeed, you either knock the target prone or push it 5 feet away from you.

## NEW MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items are of great use to grapplers.

### ARMORED GI

*Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)*

This set of clothing comprises a thick cotton jacket and reinforced trousers. It is usually colored white with a heavy black cotton belt. You gain a +1 bonus to AC and all saving throws while you wear this gi.

### BELT OF PANKRATION

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This dark leather belt is decorated with plates of patterned brass. While wearing it, you may use a bonus action to make an unarmed attack against any creature you are grappling, provided you have a free hand.

### GLOVES OF THE GRAPPLER

*Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)*

These fingerless gloves are made of black, hardened leather. While wearing them, you have advantage on your grapple check when you attempt to grapple a creature. In addition, when you move a grappled creature your speed is not halved.



### WRESTLING OIL

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

This brass cannister has a swirling pattern engraved upon it, and contains  $1d4 + 1$  doses of a thick, sticky, translucent mixture. As an action, one dose of the oil can be applied to your skin. You then have advantage on any ability check you make to escape a grapple for 1 hour.