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The Genin

A single-class ninja for Oriental Adventures campaigns



by David Howery

In *Oriental Adventures*, the ninja class is handled differently than other characters. At present, the ninja can only be dual-classed, which leads to a double life as a bushi, sohei, wu jen, or yakuza. This can be a little clumsy at times, particularly when deciding whether or not ninja weapons can be used honorably.

Actually, the dual-classed ninja is only partially based on fact. Ninja were divided into three classes. The highest was the jonin, traditional heads of the ninja families. The middle class was the chunin, the go-betweens and messengers. The chunin

are most like the dual-class ninja. The lowest class was the genin, the operatives. Although the genin sometimes led a double life, more often they existed only as ninjas, living in remote base camps deep in the mountains. The genin carried out most of the ninja assignments.

The variant presented in this article is for the single-classed ninja, who is also called the genin. This character can be justified in two ways: either the character leads a double life as a zero-level non-adventurer (merchant, minor official, etc.) or he leads no double life at all.

Requirements

Genin have the same ability score and alignment requirements as the ninja. The

character must have at least a 14 dexterity and charisma, at least a 15 intelligence, and must be of any non-good alignment. The genin has no prime requisite and cannot gain experience-point bonuses. Only humans can be genin. Genin have the same honor and family requirements as ninja.

Table 1 at the end of this article gives the experience points and hit points figures for the genin (this table should be used instead of Table 22 on p. 19 of *Oriental Adventures*). Genin use the same combat and saving throw tables as thieves.

Abilities

Genin have all the abilities of a ninja of equal level, including the skills in Table 24 (p. 21, *Oriental Adventures*), ki powers (also on p. 21), and multiple attacks as in Table 36 (p. 28). Genin also use the dexterity adjustments in Table 23 (p. 19, *Oriental Adventures*).

Genin have been trained in their ways since childhood. Therefore, the genin has more skills open to him than the dual-class ninja. The genin have the following extra abilities:

Hear noise. This action is performed as a monk of equal level. In addition, the genin can gain information from the noise (i.e., the dimensions of an opened door or gate, how many people are in a room, whether a sleeping person is faking it or not, etc.).

Disguise. In most respects, this is the same as the normal ninja ability. The difference is that the genin is able to quickly change out of his disguise — an action which takes one full round.

Maps. Genin have excellent senses of direction and are able to memorize landmarks. As a result, they are able to use these abilities to read and accurately render maps.

Proficiencies

The genin starts at 1st level with five proficiency slots. The genin must have proficiency with the ninja-to and bo stick. The other three slots can be used for non-weapon proficiencies, martial arts, or other permitted weapons. Genin gain one proficiency slot for every three levels beyond the 1st (i.e., at 4th level, 7th level, and so on).

Genin can learn any artisan, common, or court proficiency. Most genin learn horsemanship, dance, animal handling, and small water craft before any other skill. In addition, there are a set of proficiencies open only to genin. These are listed on Table 2 and are described below:

Binding. The genin can bind people so that they are unable to move or struggle without causing themselves great pain.

Leaping. This is equal to the martial arts special maneuver, Leap (Movement 5), on

pp. 103-4 of *Oriental Adventures* (pp. 103-4).

Poison. The genin can prepare poisons that kill by smell, taste, or touch. The genin also knows how to handle and apply these poisons for optimum effect.

Running. By controlling his breath, the genin can run 50 miles non-stop. If he spends 15 minutes of every hour walking, he can run 100 miles non-stop.

Side-walking. The genin can move his feet in a sideways pattern at one-quarter his normal speed, reducing the chance to track him by 50%.

Signalling. The genin is able to send messages with flags, gestures, or objects left behind him. The message will always be short and simple.

Survival. This is similar to the barbarian proficiency, except that the genin can only provide for himself.

Swimming. The genin is able to swim silently. He is also able to swim in a vertical position, enabling him to hold things out of the water, write, or even use a bow. Otherwise, this skill is the same as the common proficiency of the same name.

Money, clothing, weapons, and tools

The genin begins at 1st level with 1-2 ch'ien and 2-20 tael. The genin character does not wear armor, except as a disguise. His usual adventuring costume is the shinobi shozoku, a lightweight suit with jacket, hood, trousers, and tabi boots. This costume costs 12 yuan. It is reddish black, reversible, and has a dark blue lining. The shinobi shozoku has many pockets — enough to carry all the genin's usual gear.

The following weapons lists have been included to assist the DM. Note that ninja can use any weapon, but genin are restricted to only those weapons listed below.

Ninja weapons: grenade, hankyu, kawanaga, kumade, kusari-gama, kyoketsu-shogi, metsubishi, needle, nekode, ninja-to, shaken, shuriken (all), and tetsu-bishi.

Genin weapons: arrow (all), blowpipe and dart, bo stick, chain, halberd, kama, kiseru, shakujō-yari, shikomi-zue, and spear.

Martial arts weapons: any such weapons is permissible, provided the character has

proficiency in a martial arts weapon skill.

The following items are often carried by ninja and genin. Other items may be added as desired.

Climbing tools

Nekode, te-kagi: clawed devices for gripping smooth stone (+ 5% on climb walls).

Musubinawa: short, strong, horsehair rope.

Shinobi kumade: telescoping bamboo rod with grapnel hook on one end.

Infiltration tools

Lock pick, chisel, wood/metal saw, digging knife, springboard.

Tobi-kunai: a multi-purpose tool for digging, prying, boring, cutting, and wedging.

Tsuba-giri: a heavy fork for springing doors.

Water devices

Folding straw rafts, small portable boats, snorkel, rope and pulley.

Mizugumo: foot pontoons for walking upright on water.

Weapon uses for non-combat effects

Bo stick: This can be used to pole vault up to 8'.

Shuriken, star: The hole in the center can be used to pull nails.

Ninja-to, scabbard: This can be used as a snorkel, club, or lever. Powder or small knives may be stored in the bottom. The long cord attached can serve as a garrote.

Ninja-to, sword: When sheathed, the character can place the sword against a wall and step on the large hand-guard, using the sword as a 2' stepladder.

Miscellaneous notes

The genin character, if not leading a double life, must spend all his non-adventuring time training at his family's base camp.

The ninja of both types are true equal opportunists; that is, men or women may become ninja. Women are more highly respected as ninjas than in most other occupations in the male-dominated Oriental world.

Genin will choose to die before allowing themselves to be captured, since their captors will often resort to torture in an attempt to retrieve information. A genin may carry poison to prevent this, and can even resort to biting his tongue in half to mute his cries.

In addition to the normal penalties, the genin loses 20 points of honor if his family's base camp is discovered. This penalty applies to all genin who belong to the camp, regardless of whether they are actually there at the time or not.

Table 1
Genin Experience

Experience points	Level	6-sided dice for accumulated hp
0-2,500	1	1
2,501-5,000	2	2
5,001-10,000	3	3
10,001-18,000	4	4
18,001-36,000	5	5
36,001-75,000	6	6
75,001-130,000	7	7
130,001-230,000	8	8
230,001-400,000	9	9
400,001-650,000	10	10
650,001-1,000,000	11	10+1
1,000,001-1,300,000	12	10+2

300,000 experience points are required for each level beyond 12th. Genin gain 1 hp per level beyond 10th.

Table 2
Genin Proficiencies

Proficiency	Slots required	Base chance of success
Binding	1	8
Leaping	1	10
Poison	1	8
Running	2	16
Side-walking	1	12
Signaling	1	10
Survival	2	15
Swimming	2	15