

# THESE PAGES ARE KNIVES



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## Hedgehog Style

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This highly-adaptable school was born in the East, but might show up anywhere. The hedgehog is an unassuming creature, and students of this style usually adopt at least a pretense of humility, blending into crowds and playing the ignorant rustic. However, in battle, they fly into a dizzying blur of motion, turning a single knife or spear into the impenetrable wall of spikes that gives the style its name.

The heart of Hedgehog Style is retaliation. The hedgehog warrior ensures that anyone who attempts to lay hands on her bleeds for the privilege; she literally makes offense her best defense. Opponents must approach her with caution or wind up a pincushion.

The most impressive aspect of the Hedgehog school's technique is their ability to achieve the same results with nearly any weapon. Knives, swords, or spears are common enough, but when pressed, a Hedgehog stylist will do nearly as well with a rusty hatchet or a broken board. They are prepared to thrive in almost any exigency, and then wander off into the crowd looking for dumplings.

Hedgehog Style is compatible with all light and medium weapons, including improvised weapons, but not unarmed attacks. It is compatible with light and medium armor.

Mechanically, Hedgehog Style is focused around parries. When the hedgehog warrior successfully parries an attack, she damages her enemy. This enables her to slowly whittle away an enemy who cannot pierce her defenses with Hardness-ignoring chip damage.

While Hedgehog Form is active, she automatically responds to all failed attacks with an attack exactly as strong as the one used against her. These attacks may be weak (since she's mirroring misses instead of incredibly successful rolls), but weaker opponents may be drilled full of holes before they land a strike. Against stronger opponents, her reflexive counterattacks may be more useful for building up her enemy's onslaught penalty.

The Hedgehog stylist can also serve as a bodyguard, applying the style's defensive-offensive benefits to a single ward. This, combined with Charms like Wall-of-Thorns Dilemma that obstruct enemy movement, makes Hedgehog a potent defensive martial art.

Hedgehog Style's primary weakness is a lack of strong ranged options. The style's passive-aggressive defenses only function against enemies the martial artist can reach to counter-attack. Spine-Throwing Retort will compensate for this, but is expensive and risky to rely on.

## HEDGEHOG STYLE CHARMS

### SPINY CARPET DEFENSE

**Cost:** 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

**Type:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Instant

**Keywords:** Uniform, Perilous, Mastery

**Prerequisites:** None

The martial artist hides behind a tapestry of spear-points, determined to make her enemies pay for each attack. She raises her Parry by 1 against a single attack, and, if she is struck, her enemy takes one level of lethal damage unless his attack succeeds with a threshold success.

**Mastery:** This Charm's duration is one turn, and it applies to all incoming attacks.

### HELL-OF-NEEDLES MEDITATION

**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

**Type:** Supplemental

**Duration:** One turn

**Keywords:** None

**Prerequisites:** None

The martial artist retreats into herself, creating a zone of spiky control around her body. This Charm supplements a full defense action, removing the Initiative cost. When the martial artist successfully parries an attack, the attacker must successfully disengage from her or reflexively retreat to short range, using up their movement action for the turn if they have not already.

### FOUND QUILLS TECHNIQUE

**Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

**Type:** Supplemental

**Duration:** Instant

**Keywords:** Dual

**Prerequisites:** None

The hedgehog can always find a weapon to hand. This Charm supplements an attack with an improvised piercing weapon, removing the 1 Initiative surcharge from using an improvised weapon. If her attack is *withering*, she adds an additional die of raw damage. If her attack is *decisive* and fails to

pierce her opponent's Hardness, she inflicts one die of Hardness-ignoring damage.

Each time in a scene that the martial artist invokes this Charm with an improvised weapon which is even *more* improvised than the previous one, such as going from a broken board to a hairpin to a blade of grass, she gains a point of Willpower.

### HEDGEHOG FORM

**Cost:** 8m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

**Type:** Simple

**Duration:** One scene

**Keywords:** Form, Dual

**Prerequisites:** Spiny Carpet Defense, Hell-of-Needles Meditation, Found Quills Technique

The hedgehog warrior makes offense the best defense, armoring herself in a coat of her own attacks. Whenever she successfully parries an attack, she reflexively counterattacks her attacker if possible. Her counterattack is *withering* or *decisive* based on the original attack, and instead of rolling dice, her counterattack is considered to have exactly as many successes as the attack roll she parried.

When making a *withering* counterattack, the martial artist rolls damage normally on a hit. When making a *decisive* counterattack, she rolls 3 dice of damage which ignore Hardness.

**Special activation conditions:** When the martial artist is attacked by more than one enemy in a single turn, she may activate this Form as a reflexive action.

### THOUSAND SPEARS DEVOTION

**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

**Type:** Reflexive

**Duration:** One scene

**Keywords:** None

**Prerequisites:** Hedgehog Form

The martial artist shelters an ally in her spines. She takes a reflexive defend other action to protect an ally in close range. This effect lasts a full scene, but only applies while the martial artist and her ward are in close range of each other. Her ward also shares the benefits of Bloodied Knuckles Anointment with her, and she may damage foes who strike her ward with Spiny Carpet Defense. The martial artist must drop commitment to this Charm to defend a different character.



## **BLOODIED KNUCKLES ANOINTMENT**

**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

**Type:** Reflexive

**Duration:** One scene

**Keywords:** None

**Prerequisites:** Hedgehog Form

Once an enemy has marked her spines with his blood, the hedgehog knows him. The martial artist may invoke this Charm when an enemy takes lethal damage from Spiny Carpet Defense or a counterattack created by Hedgehog Form to *anoint* that enemy. She may only have one anointed foe at a time. Her anointed opponent subtracts one success from all his attack rolls against her and her defend other ward (if any), and from any rush or disengage rolls he makes against either.

## **ALL-POINTS OBSTRUCTION DEFENSE**

**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

**Type:** Permanent

**Duration:** Permanent

**Keywords:** None

**Prerequisites:** Thousand Spears Devotion, Bloodied Knuckles Anointment

Other warriors know many things, but the hedgehog warrior knows one important thing. This Charm upgrades Hell-of-Needles Meditation, so that while the martial artist is using it, her allies in close range (but not her defend other ward) may use her as heavy cover, as her torrent of attacks swats away oncoming missiles.

## **WALL-OF-THORNS DILEMMA**

**Cost:** 6m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

**Type:** Simple

**Duration:** One turn

**Keywords:** None

**Prerequisites:** All-Points Obstruction Defense

The hedgehog warrior's enemies long to get close to her, but know that such intimacy can only bring pain. She keeps them at bay for their own protection. The martial artist reflexively commits to a full defense action (costing 2 Initiative unless Hell-of-Needles Meditation is used). Until her next turn, enemies within medium range of the martial artist must successfully rush her in order to move closer at all. Opponents who lose the rush roll take one level of lethal damage.

## **SPINE-THROWING RETORT**

**Cost:** 7m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

**Type:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Instant

**Keywords:** Counterattack, Uniform, Terrestrial

**Prerequisites:** Wall-of-Thorns Dilemma

The martial artist responds to a ranged attack by mixing a thrown knife or spear into her barrage — suddenly, one of her quills is flying through the air. The martial artist may invoke this Charm to respond to a ranged attack from medium range or greater with a ranged counterattack which does not count as her attack action for the turn. Her counterattack is made with exactly as many successes as the attack she counters rolled.

**Terrestrial:** This Charm also costs one point of Willpower.

## **IMPALING PROBLEMS TECHNIQUE**

**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4

**Type:** Permanent

**Duration:** Permanent

**Keywords:** None

**Prerequisites:** Spine-Throwing Retort

No matter what troubles threaten her, the hedgehog warrior can never be persuaded to care about anything. All problems are, ultimately, stabbable. The martial artist adds an additional success to all counterattack rolls created by Hedgehog Form and Spine-Throwing Retort, so that her counterattacks are always (attack successes + 1).