

Blood Sword

THE
BATTLEPITS
OF KRARTH

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[The Cobwebbed Forest](#) has maps and a wealth of material detailing the lore of the world of Legend.

Sample file

BLOOD SWORD

Your world is the magical land of Legend. In Legend there are many kinds of adventurer, each with unique skills and techniques for dealing with creatures of the supernatural. Those who rely on a good sword and the strength of their right arm are called Warriors. The practitioners of the magical arts are called Enchanters, with many deadly spells always ready at their fingertips. Sages are a class of ascetic monks, wise in ancient lore but also skilful in the use of quarterstaff, bow and the unarmed martial arts. Lastly there are the Tricksters; they are swift and dextrous swordsmen, but their true forte is the use of stealth, guile and cunning.

THE RULES OF THE GAME

Blood Sword can be played solo or in a party of up to four players. Each player takes a character who will be their alter ego in the fantasy world of Legend. Characters have a rank that indicates how experienced and powerful they are. The fewer the number of characters in the party, the higher their starting rank:

<i>number of players</i>	<i>composition of party</i>
one	a single 8th rank character
two	two characters of 4th rank
three	three characters of 3rd rank
four	four characters of 2nd rank

Each character belongs to one of the four character types:

The Warrior believes that strength, courage and nobility of purpose are sufficient to achieve any goal.

The Enchanter is able to alter reality by casting magic spells.

The Sage, a learned ascetic, constantly seeks to hone the powers of the human mind.

The Trickster is a clever and dashing figure with an eye for the main chance.

If there is more than one player in the party, each must choose a different character type. After reading the following rules, each player should look at the special section appropriate to his or her own character type.

TERMINOLOGY

Dice rolls used in the game are expressed in this format:

$$xd6+y$$

meaning that x dice are rolled and y is added to the total.

For example, 3d6+1 means roll three dice and add 1 to the total, giving a number from 4 to 19. Another example: 1d6-2 means roll one die and subtract two. Negative numbers count as zero unless otherwise stated, so this would give a score from 0 to 4.

ATTRIBUTES

Each character is described by four attributes. These are:

Fighting Prowess, which is a measure of how skilled and powerful a fighter the character is.

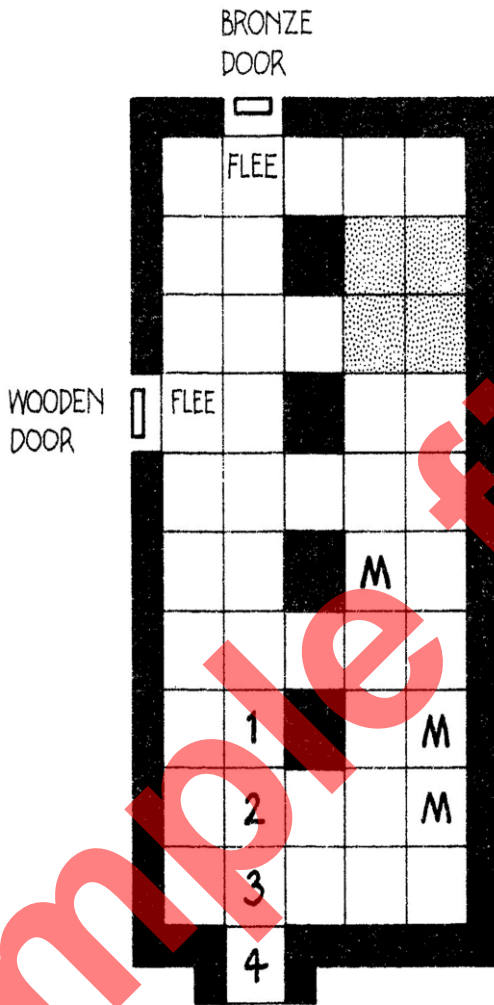
Psychic Ability, an indicator of the character's resistance to hostile spells and, in the case of an Enchanter, his or her aptitude for magic.

Awareness, which encompasses quickness of thought, dexterity and wits.

Endurance, the attribute measuring the character's state of health. Wounds are deducted from Endurance, and if it reaches zero then the character dies. Healing spells and potions can increase Endurance, but never higher than your score at the start of the adventure.

TACTICAL MAPS

Combats are usually played out on a tactical display. An example is shown here. The numbers on this tactical map show where the players are standing when the combat starts. The Ms refer to the opponents' starting locations.

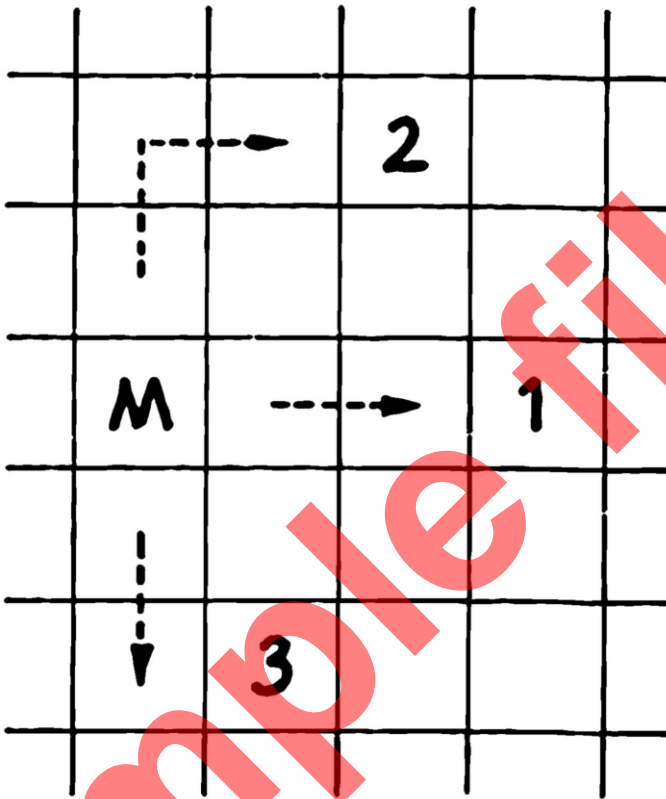


It is only possible to fight an opponent in an orthogonally adjacent square (*not* across a diagonal) and you cannot move on to a square already occupied by another character. You cannot move where there are no squares, nor on to a blacked-out square, which represents an obstacle such as (in the map above) a pillar or a large statue.

Shaded squares can be moved through by opponents but not by players. (For example, in the map above, the shaded squares indicate a bed of coals which the opponents are immune to.)

Unless otherwise stated, an opponent will always move to attack the nearest player. To find out who the nearest player is, count the number of squares the opponent would have to pass through (using straight-line moves, not diagonals) to reach a position from which

they can fight. In the diagram below, player 1 is closer to the opponent than player 2 and the same distance as player 3.



If several adventurers are equidistant from the opponent, roll dice to see which it goes for. Also roll when an opponent is adjacent to more than one player to see which of them it will fight.

Before starting the adventure, prepare a few counters to represent players and opponents. You don't need many, as you will rarely encounter more than three or four opponents at a time.

Always make a note of an opponent's remaining Endurance if you flee. The opponent will sometimes give chase, and if they catch up with you then you'll need to know how many wounds you've already inflicted.

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

Combat takes place in rounds. Each round, every character gets the opportunity to perform one action: to attack, cast a spell, and so on.

Actions are taken in sequence based on each combatant's

Awareness score. The combatant with the highest Awareness acts first, then the combatant with the next highest Awareness, and so on. Combatants with equal Awareness scores act simultaneously. A combatant who is killed (reduced to 0 Endurance) before his turn does not get to act.

A character can choose any *one* option for which he or she is eligible as his or her action for the round:

MOVE: You can move to any square on the tactical map. However, you cannot move through or end your move on a square already occupied by another character. There are no diagonal moves. If you begin a round adjacent to an opponent, you can only move away if you chose the defend option last round.

FIGHT: Strike at any opponent who is in a square adjacent to yours (linearly, not diagonally). To hit your opponent you must roll equal to or less than your Fighting Prowess on two dice.

DEFEND: This makes you harder to hit. For one full round (ie until your turn next round) any opponent trying to hit you must roll three dice instead of the usual two.

SHOOT: You can shoot an arrow at one opponent anywhere on the tactical map *except* in a square directly adjacent to yours. This is an option for Sages and Tricksters only; for more information, see the special rules for those character types.

FLEE: In order to flee, a player must start the round either on an exit square or adjacent to another player who is on or adjacent to the exit square(s). The party only flees successfully if all players agree to flee. The entire party flees on the turn of the slowest player (ie lowest Awareness).

CALL A SPELL TO MIND: (Enchanters only.) The Enchanter prepares a spell for casting in the following or subsequent rounds. Calling a spell to mind can be done at any time (not just in combat) and the spell held in readiness indefinitely. Multiple different spells can be held in mind, but each spell held temporarily reduces the Enchanter's Psychic Ability by 1.

CAST A SPELL IN MIND: (Enchanters only.) The Enchanter must previously have called the spell to mind in order to cast it. The rules for spell casting are in the Enchanter's special section.

When striking at an opponent (ie, when you choose the fight option

for a round), you roll 2d6. A score of equal to or lower than your Fighting Prowess means that your blow has hit. If you hit, you roll damage dice to see how much of an Endurance loss you have inflicted. The amount depends on your character type and rank – see the special rules for your character.

If your opponent has armour, reduce your dice roll for damage by their Armour Rating score, and the result (if greater than zero) is deducted from the opponent's Endurance.

Example: You have a Fighting Prowess of 7 and a damage roll of 1d6+1. You are attacking a troll whose Fighting Prowess is 6 and which rolls 1d6 for damage. You have the higher Awareness, so you get first blow. Rolling two dice, you score a 3; this is under your Fighting Prowess score, so you have succeeded in hitting the troll. Next you roll one die and add 1 for the damage your blow inflicts. You roll a 6, which with +1 gives 7, but the troll has an Armour Rating of 2, so only 5 points are deducted from its Endurance.

If still alive (ie above 0 Endurance) the troll now gets to hack back at you. It rolls a 6 on two dice – exactly equal to its Fighting Prowess, so good enough to hit you, though only just. For its damage die roll it scores a 1; because you have an Armour Rating of 2 this means that you lose no Endurance. The troll's claws hit you, but scrape harmlessly off your studded leather jerkin. The battle rages on for another round.

If you choose the defend option then your opponent must roll equal to or under his Fighting Prowess on *three* dice in order to hit you. You do not get to strike a blow yourself in the round you are defending.

ARMOUR

You will start your adventure with a suit of armour. This gives an Armour Rating of 3 if you're a Warrior, or of 2 if you belong to one of the other character types.

Your armour protects you in combat by absorbing its Armour Rating from any damage you would otherwise take. For instance, if a monster rolls 2d6+1 for damage and gets a total of 13, that is the number of Endurance points you would lose if you were unarmoured. If you are wearing armour with an Armour Rating of 2, you would take only 11 (ie, 13 minus 2) points of damage.

You cannot wear two suits of armour at once in order to combine their Armour Ratings.

If an opponent's Armour Rating is not given, it is 0.

WEAPONS

If you lose your weapon, reduce your Fighting Prowess and damage dice rolls by 2 until you acquire a new one. For example, an 8th rank Sage normally has a Fighting Prowess of 8 and rolls 3d6 for damage. If the Sage were to lose his or her sword and be forced to fight barehanded, he or she would temporarily have a Fighting Prowess of 6 and roll 3d6-2 for damage.

ENCUMBRANCE

You are limited to carrying up to ten items per player. If you are carrying ten items and find another item you want, you must discard one of the items you're already carrying or give it to another player in order to make space for it in your backpack.

Your money pouch counts as one item, regardless of how much money is in it.

A quiver (available to Sages and Tricksters) will hold up to six arrows and counts as one item. That is, if you have a quiver containing six arrows then it still only counts as one item and not as seven.

MAGIC

Magic is the special province of Enchanters and Sages. The way in which magic works for those classes is fully set out in their special sections, but every adventurer needs to be aware that there are two types of magic spell:

Blasting spells simply inflict damage, and if you happen to be the target there is not much you can do about it. You deduct the spell's damage (less your Armour Rating) from your Endurance score. A fireball is an example of a blasting spell.

Psychic spells can be resisted by rolling equal to or less than your Psychic Ability score on two dice. If you make the resistance roll, the spell fails to work against you. A hex is an example of a psychic spell.

You will always be told whether a spell is of the psychic or blasting variety.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Experience points are a measure of a character's skill and power. If you survive the Battlepits, you will be awarded a number of experience points to be divided among all surviving characters. You

also tally in any special bonus awards (or penalties) you were given during the adventure. The total experience points a character accumulates will enable him or her to rise in rank.

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Experience points</i>
1st	0- 249
2nd	250-499
3rd	500-749
4th	750-999
5th	1000-1249
6th	1250-1499
7th	1500-1749
8th	1750-1999
9th	2000-2249
10th	2250-2499
11th	2500-2749
12th	2750-2999
13th	3000-3249

You start the adventure with the base level experience points required for your rank: 250 if you are 2nd rank, 500 if you are 3rd, etc. If you play through the adventure with a single (8th-rank) character and receive an award of 1000 experience points, for example, then you will advance to 12th rank. If you had the same award as a party of four 2nd-rank characters, each would advance to 3rd rank.

After successfully completing the adventure and totalling your experience points, keep the Character Sheet. Characters who emerge alive from the Battlepits are eligible for Blood Sword 2: *The Kingdom of Wyrd*.

MULTI-PLAYER PARTIES

With only one player, Blood Sword works just like a standard gamebook. If you are playing in a multiplayer party, one player must be nominated as the caller. Select who will be caller by majority vote or by rolling dice.

It is the caller's responsibility to read aloud each section from the book as the adventure progresses. Also, he or she gets to cast the deciding vote if the players can't all agree on which section to turn to next.

The party can change caller at any time if the majority requests it.

BATTLE ORDER

It is important for a multiplayer party to agree on a battle order.

This will affect things like who is the first to trigger a trap, for example.

To keep track of battle order, prepare several numbered cards. Each player holds the card referring to his or her position in the battle order. Battle order can be changed any time except when in combat.

If players cannot agree on a battle order then adopt the following standard arrangement: first Warrior, then Sage, then Enchanter, then Trickster.

SPECIAL CHARACTER OPTIONS

Sometimes you will come across options that apply just to one character type. For example: 'If there is a Sage in the party, he or she should turn to **273**.' If you select that option, *only* the player concerned looks at the appropriate section. He or she will usually read out the section to the other players, but sometimes part of the section will be set in [*bracketed italics*]. This means that the player can if he wishes keep that part of the information to himself.

For instance, there might be the option for a Sage to read an ancient piece of parchment. The book passes to the Sage player, who turns to the following text, their 'Sage only' section:

(SAGE) You decipher the faded runes on the parchment. [*It tells you the safe route to the Emblem of Victory lies beyond the gold door.*] Turn to **559**.

The player must tell their companions that they are reading the parchment, but they are not obliged to tell them what it says.

In a situation where two or more players are both given the chance for individual action (say, the Sage could speak to a jinni or the Trickster could shoot it with an arrow), the players can either vote or roll dice to decide who acts.

GETTING KILLED

If you are playing the adventure solo and your character gets killed (reduced to zero Endurance) you do the same thing you would with any other gamebook: get a new character and start again at the beginning. But what if you're playing as a team and one person gets killed?

The other players go on with the adventure, of course. The player whose character was killed does not have to sit on the sidelines, though. They now get to roll the dice for the opponents. They can also change a monster's strategy if they want, though they cannot invent powers that it doesn't have. So getting killed isn't too bad.