

# AGE OF EXPLORATION: PLAYER'S GUIDE

The world of Alterra has entered a bright and flourishing age of new discoveries. Technology, culture, and magic are undergoing a global renaissance. Rather than crawling through dungeons, killing monsters and taking their stuff, in Alterra, explorers are trekking through jungles to find forgotten ruins, fighting off the dragons hoarding silks and priceless artwork, or piloting airships bound for undiscovered new continents.

## PREFACE

This Player's Guide is designed as a condensed version of the rules, and doesn't cover everything. The additional materials required to play are listed in the Storytelling Guide.

## HOW IS AGE OF EXPLORATION DIFFERENT FROM OTHER GAMES?

- **Role Playing Games (RPGs)** are a form of collaborative storytelling organized by a set of rules. One person will be the storyteller, and the other players will each play a character in the story. There aren't any winners or losers; the object is to have fun making up a story together.
- **Unlike most RPGs** This game uses *cards not character sheets* to keep track of what unique actions each player can do. The relationship between player and storyteller is also less adversarial and more collaborative. Their job is to work with you to tell the most exciting tale possible.

## CREATING A CHARACTER

Complete a character in just 3 steps

- **Spell School:** Air, Ice, Water, Nature, Earth, Metal, Fire, Lightning, Shadow and Light. You'll get 2 combat spells and 1 cantrip from the same elemental spell school
- **Primary weapon:** Longsword, Short Sword, Spear, Axe, Hammer, or Quarterstaff
- **Secondary weapon/off hand item:** Longbow Short Bow, or Shield
- Non-human fantasy races and animal familiars will be additional options available at character creation in a future release.

Like many Role playing games, Age of Exploration (AoE) is a game that is a combination of Exploration, Social interaction, and combat. They're often overlapping, and woven together.

Combat uses a specific set of defined rules but Exploration and Social interactions take a very free form tone without dice or strict rules. Instead we have some guidelines and tips for collaborating with your storyteller.

## EXPLORATION

Exploration often begins with the storyteller (ST) reading a passage or describe a scene, but from there, it's up to players to *observe* the situation and asking questions. You can ask for specifics about your surroundings, who is around, and what you can or can't do. If you want to search something more closely just say so. There's no rolling dice in this phase, and you're limited only by your imagination. The ST will answer your questions and tell you what's possible, and will probably *discuss* what the outcomes would be for each of your ideas before you make any rash decisions. There may sometimes be unforeseen consequences, but you'll always know if you can do something or not before you do it.

## NO INVENTORY

This part may come as a shock to RPG veterans, but AoE does not track inventory or currency of any kind, except for consumable magical items. Rather than unrealistically carrying around 100lbs of gear with you everywhere in case you need it, just assume that if you need something for a certain situation, and it's reasonable that your character would bring it along that they have it on them. Your storyteller will let you know if it's reasonable.

## SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

The primary goals of role playing social interactions are to gather information, advance the story, and have fun. There's no dice used during these interactions, it's up to you to figure out what your character will do or say. Some players may be more comfortable speaking in 1st person and some may prefer 3rd person and you can even switch back and forth.



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# COMBAT



Every turn players get to move their speed in spaces and take one action. Actions are typically heroic things like attacking with a weapon, casting a spell, disarming a trap, bandaging a wound, or picking someone's pocket. They require some time and concentration.

Some things can be done in a moment: kick open a door, tell your ally to look behind him, duck behind wall, sheath your weapon and draw a new one, etc. You can do as many of these during your turn as needed.

## INITIATIVE

Each player rolls a d20 to see who will act first in each combat encounter. The highest roll goes first. To determine whether play continues clockwise or counterclockwise, compare the rolls of the players on either side of the starting player. The player next to the starting player with the higher roll goes next. Play continues in that direction. Players may not move their turn or hold actions. After the first round, storytellers typically take all their units' actions at once.

## MOVEMENT

Base move speed is 5 for all characters, but many items and abilities can affect it. Swimming, climbing, and moving through difficult terrain cost 2 movement per space. Standing up from prone costs 3 move points. Drinking a potion costs 2 movement. If a character steps onto a square next to an enemy they must end their movement. Moving away from an enemy does not normally provoke a penalty attack. You may give up your action to double your move speed that round.

## DODGING ENEMY ATTACKS

Rather than the storyteller rolling for enemy attacks, player roll to dodge. Just like before players are successful if they roll a 10 or better. If they roll a 20, they can make an immediate counterattack with a melee weapon.

## SPELL ATTACKS

To cast a spell, make sure you're in range of your target. Spells always hit, but the damage varies. Roll the damage die listed on the spell card. The same damage roll applies to all targets. Spells can be used only once per combat. Players get them back again after each encounter.

## CANTRIPS

Can be used multiple times per combat, provided they are cast on a different target each time. Cantrips are designed to be flexible, and a creative player can find a variety of possible uses for them. Don't feel limited by the listed suggestion.

## WEAPON ATTACKS

To attack with a weapon, you must be within range of your target and roll a d20. If you roll a 10 or higher it hits and deals the damage listed on the weapon card. No damage die is needed. There are no modifiers to attack or damage rolls. A roll of 20 is a critical hit and deals double the damage.

## COMBAT ADVANTAGE

If you have combat advantage roll two d20s and use the higher number. If you have disadvantage use the lower number. There are a number of common ways to get combat advantage

1. When an enemy is prone melee attacks against them have advantage, and you also have advantage to dodge their melee attacks.
2. When an enemy is rooted or unable to move, make ranged attacks against them with advantage.
3. When you hide behind a wall or other type of cover, you gain advantage on dodging ranged attacks
4. Creative use of cantrips can give allies advantage.
5. Several effects such as *blinded* and *staggered* both give advantage to dodge the affected enemy's attack.
6. When an opponent is surrounded, all melee attacks against it are made with advantage. A unit is surrounded when there are at least 2 opponents on opposite sides of it. A third or fourth opponent does not need to have an opposing counterpart; once the first two are opposite each other, any additional are still just "surrounded." A prone, stunned, asleep, or disarmed character cannot count toward a surrounding bonus.

## HP AND MORALE

Before battle each player starts with 10 hp, (plus extra based on their equipment.) After combat, each player recovers hit points according to the party's current morale. Morale starts at 10 and can be lost or recovered in various ways. Taking damage from a trap can deal morale damage. Some monsters can attack morale in addition to standard damage. And taking morale damage is one potential outcome of rolling a 1 when dodging an attack.

## DROPPING TO 0 HP

If a party member falls to 0 hp, they fall prone and the party loses 1 morale. While at 0 hp, the player cannot cast spells, stand up, attack or move. There are 2 exceptions that are allowed while downed: 1. Drinking a potion 2. Casting a cantrip spell. If all party members hit 0 hp, the party fails the combat, and the storyteller will decide the outcome.

## RECOVERY

When you start your turn that you start at 0hp, roll a d20. If you roll a 1, regain 1 hit point, and take your turn as normal. If you roll a 20, your character found a second wind and regains 10 hit points, and may play their turn normally. (remember they are still lying down prone, however) For each turn that passes while you remain at 0 hp, add one d20 when you roll the next turn. Good Luck!