EMPERORS CHOICE GAMES & MINIATURES CORP.

WWW.EMPCHO.COM    WWW.ARDUIN.COM

Emails:  dave@empcho.com
dave@empcho.com

© 2002 by EMPOWER CHE GAMES & MINIATURES CORP.
3908 Harlem Road #127
Amherst, NY 14226
www.empcho.com
George DeRosa and David Bukata; all rights reserved

EMPCHO FIRST PRINTING 2002

Arduin® and Swords & Dragons® are Registered trademarks of
Emperors Choice Games & Miniatures Corp., All rights reserved.

All illustrations and material in this book are a copyright of Emperors Choice
Games & Miniatures Corp. All rights reserved.

Any reproduction or unauthorized use of this work, without the written
permission of Emperors Choice Games & Miniatures Corp. is prohibited.
Printed in the U.S.A.

Please note! Whenever we say “Him” or “He” in the text, we also imply “Her”
and “she” as well! We are not being sexist, just grammatically correct! Also
note that we use abbreviation GS (for Gold Sovereign) instead of GP (Gold
Piece) because this one (1) ounce gold coin (the Sovereign) is the standard in
Arduin. You may adjust prices accordingly for your own world coinage.
THE COMPLEAT

ARB BIN

Book One: Rules

by David A. Hargrave

Revised and edited by Mark Schynert

ISBN 1-881632-00-8
ISBN 1-881632-02-4 (2 Volume Set)
P75.72

Executive Editor & Business Agent: Mark Schynert
Editorial Staff: Karen S. Voorhees, Rod Engdahl, Bill Keyes, Bill Voorhees, Fran Bellows, Carolyn Savoy

Book design and layout: Karen S. Voorhees
Proofreader: Cynthia Hilton
Cover art: Frank Kelly Freas
Cover graphics: Thomas Morris, Morris Creative
Interior artwork: Roland Brown, Chris Hockabout, Michio Okamura
Postscript graphics: Rod Engdahl, Möbius

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electrical or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. The publisher does extend permission to photocopy the forms in Appendix II of Book I for personal use in connection with the game system set forth within the book.
Dedication

These tomes have been an on-again, off-again project for close to six years now. During this time many people have contributed time and effort to aid me in this work, from preliminary editing to game testing and everything in between. Thanks, folks, you have honored me with your friendship. These volumes are therefore dedicated to you all:

The Honor Roll


An extra special thanks to Grimoire Games, GrimCon, Inc. and Dragon Tree Press for continuing to keep Arduin materials, old and new, before the public.

David A. Hargrave
El Sobrante, CA
1987

Testimonial

David A. Hargrave
1946-1988

Dave, you put us through Hell...several in fact, not counting the spirals, decks of life, walls of whimsey, fogs, mists and rolling pools of every hue and aroma, as well as gates, teleports, planes, prismatic barriers and a thousand and one other more or less lethal places.

Because of you, we encountered, confronted, defeated and/or were bested by demons, dragons, giants, lycanthropes, spigas, slimes, Khoi, Uрукks, kraken, undead of every persuasion, and five thousand and one other shag uglies, not the least of which were our own pride and greed.

Because of you, we wielded ten thousand and one weird and wonderful artifacts of power... and sometimes they wielded us.

Because of you, we existed, even those of us who are no longer.
Our existence was no less real for being in your imagination.
May others like you share your vision, that others like us may still exist...somewhere.

Rissk       Talso
Sunshine    Kazamon
Lord Eric    Amber Star
Jothrar Dawnstar Zippy Brightwater
Garros Nine-Finger Stinky the Knoblin
Martirion Harrowgard Bimli the Cockney Dwarf
Marcus Washington Watson
Preface to Book One

David A. Hargrave died on August 29, 1988. He left his revised Arduin project, sometimes referred to as "Arduin, Bloody Arduin," unfinished. Jim Mathis, his primary publisher and long-time friend, decided to bring the project to publication, and asked me to edit the unfinished manuscript. Like any foolish character in an adventure, I rushed in where angels feared to tread. The angels missed a fascinating trip.

Dave's original three books, The Arduin Grimoire, Welcome to Skull Tower and The Runes of Doom, were first published in 1977 and 1978. They have proved immensely popular in the fantasy role-playing (FRP) community. In fact, despite being more than twelve years old in a genre where most games are out of date in five years, the Arduin Grimoire trilogy has continued to sell steadily. But Dave was not satisfied with the trilogy, or the five supplements that followed it. He was a master storyteller, and Arduin was his vehicle for telling the story. For ten years he play-tested and wrote new rules almost continuously, trying to make the FRP experience easier and more accessible for the players, without diluting the rich detail and high energy that were the hallmarks of his games and storylines. His beginning rules set, The Arduin Adventure, published in 1980, introduced the Coordination Factor (CF) action system. A limited-printing pamphlet, Revised Arduin: A Primer, published in 1984, introduced the Battlefactor system, Magik Resistance Scores, encumbrance and a more detailed CF action system. These earlier publications were milestones along the journey to the volumes published here—but it was a journey Dave was not destined to finish himself. He was diagnosed with serious heart disease in 1986, and finally his heart failed him. This opus, The Compleat Arduin, stands as a monument to him, and enunciates his vision of the FRP game.

The Arduin FRP system emphasizes reality in an alternative universe—a gritty, hard-edged reality where foolish actions by the character can quickly result in injury, death or even worse. As the risks are real, so are the triumphs. This is a game where every character has specific abilities and limitations, and where characters can develop in ways that are unique and tremendously entertaining. This is also a system which the gamemaster (GM) will never outgrow, because it gives back to the game everything the GM puts into it. The system is effectively modular; many of the components can be borrowed and employed in other FRP systems with little or no modification.

This work is set in two volumes. Book I includes everything needed to develop a character, laid out in a step-by-step process. This volume also provides the basic mechanisms of the Arduin System in a logical order, with many examples. It speaks both to the player and to the GM. Book II includes a variety of resources, including lists of spells and other magiks, monsters and magikal treasures, as well as tables covering a variety of topics. Together these two volumes contain all the material essential to playing a game rich in role-playing detail and tactical possibilities.

Because the Arduin System has evolved over the last twelve years, much previously-published material is now contradictory or obsolete, and has been omitted from this work. The old combat, saving chance and experience systems are gone, and the CF actions and Random Critical Hit tables have been greatly simplified. On the other hand, a great deal of new material is included, such as the Herbalist and Illusionist classes, several new character races, dozens of never-before-published spells and other magiks, and a host of GM aids. Many detail improvements were made to the material retained from the Arduin trilogy, often involving simplification of the mathematics. And even though the old armor classes have been replaced by armor values, the old Armor Classes are retained in many places for the sake of players of other FRP systems. Perhaps the most obvious change is in the level of organization. A weakness of the original system was its jumbled presentation, but that has now been corrected.

I've tried to preserve Dave's folksy writing style, heavily conversational and tending towards use of the imperial "we." I did clean up the grammar. I think the flavor of Dave's approach will come through to the reader.

The Compleat Arduin could not have happened without the help of many people. Thanks to Carolyn Savoy for blazing the editorial trail with Dave more than five years ago; this project would not have come to fruition without her heretofore unsung efforts. Special thanks to Bill Voorhees for his critical commentary on the first-draft edited manuscript, his revisions to the main critical hit table and to brawl combat, and his encouragement throughout the process. Gordon Monson and Rod Engdahl spent a lot of time on the computer for the sake of this book, which gives me new appreciation of the bounds to which friendship can be stretched. Thanks also to Bill Keyes and Cynthia Hilton for the final proof reading of the manuscript. I only wish we had been able to incorporate all their excellent suggestions. Any remaining errors are my fault alone. Paul Moser must also be thanked for his encouragement and enthusiasm.

Beyond this, four individuals stand out. Jim Mathis has offered timely guidance while allowing almost complete editorial discretion; a rare and much-appreciated commodity from a publisher. Karen Voorhees deserves special credit for undertaking the layout of this project. Few editors are lucky enough to work with someone who has her mix of forgiveness, common sense and professional rigor. Finally, I thank my wife Susan and our daughter Kendra for freely giving the patience and understanding every writer needs from his family.

It's too bad that Dave passed on at so young an age. At least we have his system to remember him by.

Mark A. Schynert
April 1992
Contents of Book One

Glossary of Abbreviated Terms ........................................ inside front cover
Dedication ..................................................................... ii
Testimonial ..................................................................... ii
Preface ......................................................................... iii

Chapter 1: Welcome to Arduin ........................................ 1
Player's Equipment ...................................................... 1
The Adventurers .......................................................... 2
The Gamemaster & His Script ........................................... 3

Chapter 2: Character Creation ......................................... 9
The Races ...................................................................... 10
How to Play Non-Human Characters ............................... 10
Amazonians .................................................................... 11
Centaurians ..................................................................... 11
Deodanthians .................................................................. 12
Dwarves ......................................................................... 12
Elves ............................................................................. 13
Gnomes ......................................................................... 14
Goblins ......................................................................... 14
Half-Elves ....................................................................... 14
Half-Orcs ........................................................................ 15
Hobbits .......................................................................... 15
Other Creatures ............................................................. 15
Khai-Shang ...................................................................... 15
Khaji-Zrin ........................................................................ 17
Knobblins ........................................................................ 17
Kobits ............................................................................ 18
Orcs, Lesser .................................................................... 18
Phraits ........................................................................... 18
Saurigs ........................................................................... 20
Throon ........................................................................... 20
Urulks ............................................................................ 21
The Basics ....................................................................... 22
Characteristics ............................................................... 22
Physique ........................................................................ 27
Alignment ....................................................................... 30
Legacies ......................................................................... 33
Appearance ..................................................................... 35

Chapter 3: Character Classes ......................................... 37
Worlady Classes ............................................................ 38
Warriors ......................................................................... 38
Barbarian ........................................................................ 39
Martial Artist .................................................................. 39
Paladin........................................................................... 45
Witch Hunter .................................................................... 46
Forester .......................................................................... 48
Beast Master .................................................................... 49
Thief .............................................................................. 50
Bard ............................................................................. 56
Trader ............................................................................ 58
Courtisan ........................................................................ 59
Assassin ......................................................................... 61
Techno ............................................................................ 63
Mage Classes ................................................................. 65
Priest ............................................................................. 67
Alchemist ......................................................................... 68
Druid ............................................................................. 69
Medicine Man .................................................................. 70
Herbalist ......................................................................... 71
Star-Powered Mage ....................................................... 73
Rune Weaver .................................................................. 74
Rune Singer ..................................................................... 75
Illusionist ......................................................................... 76
Saint ............................................................................... 77
Sage ............................................................................... 79
Special Class Situations ................................................... 80
Normals .......................................................................... 80
Split-Class Characters .................................................... 80

Chapter 4: Individualizing the Character ......................... 81
Special Abilities ............................................................. 82
Compound Factors ........................................................ 91
Hitpoints (HP) ............................................................... 91
Reasoning Factor (RF) .................................................... 91
Coordination Factor (CF) ............................................... 92
Actions and Action Counts ............................................ 92
Speed ............................................................................. 94
Mana ............................................................................. 95
Senses .......................................................................... 96
Subsidiary Skills .......................................................... 98
Outfitting the Character .................................................. 99
Experience ..................................................................... 103
Aging ............................................................................ 105

Chapter 5: Combat .......................................................... 107
The Battlefactor (BF) and Missile Combat (MA/MD) .......... 107
Encumbrance Value (EV) ............................................... 124
The Mechanics of Combat ............................................. 127
Techno Weapons ........................................................... 135
Aerial Combat ............................................................... 141
Escape & Evasion ......................................................... 141
Brawls, Fisticuffs & Punchouts ..................................... 143

Chapter 6: Magik ............................................................... 147
The Basics of Magik ....................................................... 148
Combat Magik ............................................................... 152
Special Topics ............................................................... 154

Chapter 7: Saving Chances .............................................. 161
Magikal Resistance Score (MRS) ..................................... 161
Other Saving Rolls ......................................................... 165
Special Topics on Saving ............................................... 166

Chapter 8: Character Development in Conclusion ........... 167
Danforth the Kobbit ....................................................... 167
The Last Word on Character Development ....................... 170

Appendix I: Price Lists .................................................... 171
Coinage ........................................................................... 172
Standard Exchange Rates .............................................. 174
Gems and Other Valuables ............................................. 175
Weapon Prices ............................................................... 179
Armor Prices ................................................................. 181
Food and Drink Prices ................................................... 183
Odd Edible Items .......................................................... 187
Exotic Foodstuffs Preparation ........................................ 188
Sandries Prices .............................................................. 189
Containers Prices .......................................................... 193
Water Transport Prices .................................................. 195
Steed & Vehicle Prices .................................................... 196

Appendix II: Forms .......................................................... 197
List of Tables in Book One

Table 1  Human Racial Variation .................................. 16
Table 2  Characteristic Parameters .............................. 23
Table 3  Strength (STR) ........................................... 24
Table 4  Charisma ................................................. 25
Table 5  Height .................................................... 28
Table 6  Weight .................................................... 29
Table 7  Body Type ............................................... 27
Table 8  Alignment ............................................... 31
Table 9  Legacy ................................................... 32
Table 10  Starting Cash ........................................... 33
Table 11  Owned Equipment ...................................... 34
Table 12  Physical Appearance .................................. 36
Table 13  Special Physical Appearance ......................... 35
Table 14  Martial Artist Attributes ............................ 40
Table 15  Paladin Equipment .................................... 45
Table 16  Physical Modifications to Thiefly Abilities ...... 52
Table 17  Locks ..................................................... 54
Table 18  Traps ...................................................... 54
Table 19A  Grapnels: Maximum Supportable Weight ....... 55
Table 19B  Grapnels: Other Attributes ......................... 55
Table 20  Maximum STR Resistance of Crowbar ............ 55
Table 21  CF Check While Forcing Door ....................... 56
Table 22  Bard Performance ..................................... 57
Table 23  Assassin’s Attributes ................................ 62
Table 24  Beginning Magik User’s Artifact ................... 66
Table 25  Priestly Willingness to Heal or Resurrect ........ 67
Table 26  Special Abilities for All Warriors and Barbarians 83
Table 27  Special Abilities for Those of Magikal Natures: 85
Table 28  Special Abilities for All of a Religious Nature .... 86
Table 29  Special Abilities for Those with Clandestine or Wilderland Natures .... 88
Table 30  Special Abilities for All Others: .................... 90
Table 31  Racial HP Base ........................................ 91
Table 32  CF Action Counts ..................................... 93
Table 33  Character Senses ...................................... 97
Table 34  Number of Skills Known .............................. 98
Table 35  Skills & Abilities .................................... 99
Table 36  Special Skills .......................................... 100
Table 37  Nobility Skills & Abilities .......................... 100
Table 38  Weapon Characteristics ............................. 109
Table 39  Armor AV & EV .................................... 114
Table 40  Natural Armor ....................................... 115
Table 41  AC to AV Conversion ................................ 116
Table 42  Missile Ranges ....................................... 117
Table 43  Critical Hits .......................................... 119
Table 44  Critical Hits on Shapeless Creatures .............. 121
Table 45  Weapon Fumbles ..................................... 122
Table 46  Encumbrance-Strength Relationship ............... 124
Table 47  Cultural Weapon Bonuses ......................... 133
Table 48  Small Caliber Gunnery ................................ 136
Table 49  Cannon and Carronades ............................ 137
Table 50  Large Caliber Gunnery .............................. 138
Table 51  Techno Energy Weapons ............................ 139
Table 52  Intervention by Divine Providence ................. 141
Table 53  Overland Evasion .................................... 142
Table 54  Brawl Critical Hits ................................... 144
Table 55  Brawl Fumbles ........................................ 145
Table 56  Magik Fumbles ........................................ 151
Table 57  Magikal Miss .......................................... 152
Table 58  Familiar Acquisition ................................ 157
Table 59  Base Magik Resistance Scores ...................... 163
Table 60  Undead MRS Base Scores ......................... 164
Table 61  Stoning by Glance or Gaze ......................... 164
Table 62  Psychic Defense Bonus ............................. 164
Table 63  Fear Reaction .......................................... 165

List of Rinaldo and Anais Insets

Rinaldo and Anais—Choosing Their Race ......................... 21
Rinaldo and Anais—Stronger, Faster, Prettier ................ 26
Rinaldo and Anais—Building Bodies ............................ 30
Rinaldo and Anais—Looks and Outlook ......................... 36
Rinaldo and Anais—Choosing Their Way of Life ............. 101
Rinaldo and Anais—Getting Militant .......................... 126
Rinaldo and Anais—Anais’ Magikal Way ....................... 159
Rinaldo and Anais—Their Chance of Salvation ............... 166
Chapter One
Welcome to Arduin

This game, Arduin, is part of the genre known as Adventure Games. Role-playing is at the heart of all adventure games, though other elements such as conflict, chance and strategy are also important. If you are willing to try something new, you will discover a game that is exciting and different from any game you have tried before.

Adventure gaming started out in the early 1970s as something called Fantasy Role-Playing, or FRP. This style of game usually required players to become a certain character or characters within an imaginary world created by someone else, much as an actor might assume a role in a movie. The difference, though, is that the player creates the character he is to portray out of whole cloth, rather than simply working from a script. FRP soon caught on, and variants appeared with motifs other than fantasy (science fiction, wild west, superheroes, espionage, etc.). In fact, the only limit to such gaming is that which your imagination supplies! So if you use your imagination, the only limit to your play will be the ends of the universe...

My own fantasy world has been in play since 1973, and is called Arduin. Of course, my game system presented in this book goes by the same name. In the text that follows, a reference to “Arduin” is a reference to this rules system, and is generally the way something should be done. On the other hand, sometimes I will refer to the “Arduin campaign” or speak of a situation “in Arduin.” This simply gives an example of how something has been done in my own fantasy world—another Gamemaster (GM) may choose to do it differently in hers.

The GM has a great deal of discretion on how she runs her world, and in many cases more than one approach will work. Thus, you must always be aware of special rules or conditions set out by the GM, and the GM must make sure you are informed about these distinctions.

In Arduin, each player acts out what his characters will be doing as he proceeds with the game. He does this by speaking as he thinks his characters should, and specifying what the characters are doing as each situation unfolds. Before long, you will find it second nature to act and interact with the GM and the other players.

Player's Equipment

The player needs basically only three things: writing materials, dice and figurines.

Writing Materials: In the simplest sense, this is nothing more than a sheet of lined paper with all the character’s stats written down, and a pencil with eraser. Most players use specialized character sheets; we have included an example at the end of this book designed specifically for Arduin, and you may feel free to photocopy it. Post-it™ notes also have a variety of uses, and scratch paper is useful for keeping track of temporary things like injury, shock, etc. If the GM wants you to map a dungeon or the inside of a building, graph paper and a ruler are invaluable.
Dice: A collection of as many different types of dice as possible. The most critical are twenty-sided dice (D20), as they can be used to duplicate D10 and D100. D100s are rolled by rolling one D10 or D20 for the tens place, and another for the ones place. 00 will be either 100 or zero, depending on the situation. However, while the D20 can be used to get almost any spread of numbers you want, it's much easier to have a few D4, D6 (by far the most common), D8, D10, D12, and even a D30 if you can find one. In many places, I also refer to the use of a D3; a 3-sided die cannot actually exist, but you get the same effect by rolling a D6 and dividing the result by two, rounding fractions up.

These dice are generally used whenever the GM directs, for such diverse things as determining the character's reaction to exotic food, whether the character can kill the charging sabre-toothed tiger, and whether the character can be resurrected after falling to kill the tiger. In this book, the die rolls to be used are frequently defined in one of two formats. If the format is xDy, it means "Roll x dice with y sides," such as 1D6, which would mean you roll a single D6. If the format is xDy+z, it means "Roll x dice with y sides, and add a fixed value z." For instance, 2D8+11 would mean you roll 2 eight-sided dice, total the values from the two dice, and add 11 more.

Figurines: These are generally needed only for tactical battle resolution or other situations where accurate character placement is important. The painted miniature figurines represent the characters; the GM will usually have figurines at the same scale representing whatever or whomever the characters are encountering. The game can be played without figurines but, frankly, it loses something. There are many hundreds of different cast-metal figurines available on the market today, representing many peoples and monsters from the realms of fantasy, science fiction, historical or even contemporary times. So if you are going to be adventurous, go that extra little bit, and get the appropriate figurine to represent your character...she'll thank you for it!

**THE ADVENTURERS**

**Assuming the Character's Point of View**

For someone who has never played a character, the most difficult part of a role-playing game might be in assuming a role completely foreign to your own experience. The result may be a flat or caricatured character, with whom you will become quickly bored. This is because the character doesn't seem real to you. The trick is to recognize that every character has a set of limitations as well as abilities, and the limitations help define and round out the character. These limitations are as often cultural or psychological as they are mental or physical.

Each character in the adventure will be governed not only by the player's desires, but by other factors as well. These factors are:

- What Race your character is. Elf? Dwarf? Human? Amazon?
- What Class your character is. This is your character's occupation, and can be anything from magician to warrior to thief, or even something exotic, like alchemist or beast master.
- What Alignment your character is. This is a description of your character's morality and personality. Are you orderly? Chaotic? Good? Amoral?
- Finally, your character's specific attributes will have a bearing on how you act and react. How strong are you? How intelligent? How fast are you? And so on. In short, the sum total of your character's mental, physical and psychological abilities and disabilities will influence how the character behaves.

In order to get the feel of how a character might react in certain situations, place yourself in a situation foreign to your normal range of experience and see how it affects you. For example, you are playing a barbarian, and he has just entered a huge walled city for the first time, just chock full of thousands of people from many weird and foreign places. There are bright colors, tall buildings, strange smells and much, much more. How would he react? To get an idea, imagine yourself at the White House for dinner with the President, and all around you are ambassadors from strange and far-away nations, all talking in languages you've never heard before. Then imagine that all of a sudden you are at Cape Canaveral and have to make a moon shot. Would you feel embarrassed and ill-mannered at the White House? Bewildered and overwhelmed at the space launching complex? Now you're getting the idea. These little tricks can be used to help think out any situation where you are at a loss for proper reaction. Use your mind, it's your best ally!

**Talking to the Other Characters**

Most worlds have a plethora of languages, and there's no guarantee any two people will have a common tongue. Traditionally, the solution is to rely on certain trade tongues, i.e., languages that many people know a little of so they can get by in a pinch. In the Arduin campaign, Low Elven and Zingaran, the latter similar to Arabic, are the usual languages that fill this role. There is no single common tongue in the Arduin campaign, just as there is none on Earth. The implications for role playing are many. First, will the characters be able to communicate effectively with each other? Second, how well do they communicate with the locals? Third, even where the characters have some understanding of the local lan-
guage, will imperfect command of a particular tongue lead to minor or major problems for the characters? Whatever language your characters use, one rule should be immutable: if your character says something, he lives with the consequences. The player may choose to have the character say something very provocative, but keep in mind what will happen to the character. Or, put another way, would you stride into a bar in the toughest part of town and insult the entire clientele at the top of your lungs?

**What Constitutes a Group of Adventurers?**
The best mix of character types in any given game is always dependent upon the specifics of each individual situation. However, as a general guideline, here are a few suggestions.

1. Have a group of at least six but no more than twelve characters, with each player playing one or two characters. Less is too few, and more is too unwieldy for confined meles and tends to attract large scale attention. Nine seems to be ideal.

2. Include a thief for opening doors, treasure chests, etc. but try to protect him if possible. He should be properly equipped to do his job, and not expected to fight unless it is that or die.

3. Include a mage or other type of magic user, but protect him at all costs. He will be your ace in the hole in practically every situation. He is your best offense and defense, but he probably is fragile so don’t lose him!

4. Include a character of the priestly kind to heal your wounds, to counsel you in all matters of good and evil, and, of course, those areas that pertain to the gods. Always protect him just as you do your mage. He is your insurance and in a pinch could probably do many of the mage’s functions if needed.

5. Have at least three of the fighting breed, of a type to be the most efficient according to your destination. For example, a forester would be great for overland wilderness treks, but of severely limited use inside a dungeon or other subterranean area. Or, if you’re to probe into an unsavory area of a city of bad repute, like the black market, then perhaps a martial artist would really fill the bill. Be creative!

6. If possible, try to have at least one of your group proficient with some form of missile weapon: a bow, crossbow, or even sling. It never hurts to have a little range. Some things you just don’t want to let get close to you at all! But the character should have a good melee weapon as well.

7. Certain racial groups have benefits peculiar to their kind only, so are worth considering for that alone, if not for their fighting or other prowess. For instance, most Dwarves are knowledgeable about underground areas and Elves about forests and so on. Check them out in their respective sections of these rules.

8. A group should always be prepared for their own particular adventure. If going underground they should have ample light sources, such as candles, torches, lanterns, etc.; if cross country, then food and water must be in proper supply. Common sense will be a great help here.

9. If travelling overland with your own mounts and/or pack animals, you should always hire at least two horse guards to care for same while everyone else is away delving in some bloody hole in the ground! Pay them well but don’t expect them to go dungeon snooping with you—it’s not their job! Novice warriors fill this role nicely.

Following these nine helpful hints should make things

**The Gamemaster & His Script**

“Gamemaster” is the term we use to designate who is running the game. The Gamemaster, or GM for short, is the referee; he has the final word on the rules, and all of the other players must abide by his word. GMs must do three things before the game can begin.

1. Know all of the rules you have all agreed upon and have the rule books handy to settle disputes.

2. Have not only the desire, but the time to give the creation of each game’s script the attention it needs. It will take a good GM at least one hour to ready a game for play properly.

3. Have the trust and confidence of all of the players so that they will not argue with his decisions. This confidence can only be earned as the GM demonstrates his integrity and honesty during the games. If the players feel that they are being short-changed by a GM, the play will bog down in arguments and hurt feelings. A GM must always maintain a detached and impartial attitude towards every player and every character no matter what the GM’s personal feelings are. A good GM sees only the game, not those who play within it.
GM Equipment
The GM needs the following equipment to run the game:

- 3x5 or larger ruled index cards for treasure and a card file for storage.
- The GM has the same need for dice of varying values as do the players. There are also specialty dice, usually six-siders with special icons instead of pips, or oddball dice developed for other games, such as the Danish D34 lottery dice; some GMs even use backgammon doubling cubes for highly specialized tasks.
- Two specialized forms included at the back of this volume. The Action Count Sheet is an aid for determining which character moves next in combat situations. The Trip Ticket summarizes all the characters for GM reference. The use of these forms will become clear as you become familiar with the rules.
- Colored pencils to key dungeons and other maps, and add color to treasure cards. A simple set of basic colors will do.
- A simple GM screen. You can make it yourself out of part of a cardboard box. The idea is to block the view of what you are doing from the players so that the element of surprise will not be lost. I make most of my die rolls behind this screen, and keep the monster figures I intend to use there, too. What the players don’t know about they can’t prepare for.
- Miniatures to represent monsters and the like. Share with the other GMs in your group to keep the cost down. In a pinch, extra dice can be used to represent monsters, or even game pieces temporarily borrowed from board games. I prefer to use 25 mm cast metal figures.
- 3-ring binders to hold notes on your dungeons, overlands, etc., and maps.
- A battle board. This is the equivalent of the board you play on in a regular board game, except that you as GM will be marking on it the rooms, corridors, etc., that your players will be encountering. A large 2x3 foot piece of graph paper marked off in two-inch squares covered with a sheet of acetate works fine, and is inexpensive. You can buy both at art supply stores, as well as special markers used for this purpose, or China markers. Your local game store probably has more sophisticated boards.

The Script
Once you have decided among the players just who the GM will be, the GM can start on the creation of his script and the players can ready their characters. We suggest that, for the first dozen games or so, a different GM be used. This will give everyone a chance to participate both as player and GM, and will soon make evident to all just who is the best GM. The best one at GMing usually becomes the permanent GM for everyone else, though this is not necessary if you do not wish it. Also, a GM can play and referee at the same time if he is honest and careful. It is your game, to play as you choose!

A script is nothing more than an idea that the GM has for a game. These games take place in a world of the GM’s own creation. The script might be a quest to find a holy artifact, or an expedition to slay a dragon that has been eating travelers. It is the sole responsibility of the GM to provide such a script for the players to act out. However, the players will not be doing exactly what the GM wants them to do. No! They will be doing whatever it is they themselves, as their characters, would do, given the situation the GM has handed them. A GM should never try to run the players’ game, but operate only as a referee, acting out non-player characters (NPCs), monsters or other things or people the characters meet.

To create your own world for which you may produce scripts, you can copy an existing fictional work like Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings, Edgar Rice Burrough’s John Carter of Mars, or even an established fantasy game world such as my own Arduin campaign. It does not matter if it is a copy (complete or partial) or if it is something thought up entirely by the GM. In fact many people prefer to play in a different world each time. What matters is the playability of the script the GM devises.

Playability means the players’ ability to understand and to act out such a script. For instance, you would not devise a script based on far future technology and hope that a half dozen or so knights from a fantasy world could function and survive! They would not only fail to understand the technology and society they were encountering, but wouldn’t even speak the same language! So keep the scripts within the capabilities of the characters and the players. Just remember how you’d feel if someone decided you had to fight an elephant, using only a frisbee!

A script must have seven things each and every time if it is to be successful:

1. Background: A short legend or story of the area, the artifact in question, the monster or whatever is at the base of that which the characters must confront.

2. Motivation: A reason for the characters to go wherever it is they are supposed to go. Is there a reward for the capture of a band of foul robbers? Is there a lot of gold and treasure hidden away in the dragon’s cave? This will ensure that the characters are acting as real people would in real life, and are not involved in artificial and stupid undertakings.
that real people would never attempt. It will also keep characters from doing easy and non-dangerous things in order to become more experienced and to get rich with no risk. Without risk, the loot and treasure have no meaning!

3. **Location**: Where the characters must go to achieve the goals implied or stated in the script.

4. **Primary Encounter Details**: A written description of all items, monsters, people, treasure or areas the characters will encounter. This will ensure that the GM will not forget anything important to the characters in the excitement of the game.

5. **Pre-Set Encounters**: This will once again ensure that the GM will not forget a vital circumstance and that the characters will be forced to face the consequences of every action they take. If they try to swim the river to escape the forest fire they caused, they must deal with the pre-set crocodiles in the river.

6. **Special Happenstances**: Those things outside the general knowledge of the characters, yet of a nature that may logically bring them into play. Such as: has another group of people already stolen the artifact that the characters are being sent to retrieve? Are there any clues as to who they are and where they went? Is the person sending them to kill the dragon really plotting something else? What? And can the characters find this out? Special Happenstances are not always present in an adventure, but if they are, the GM must have them already written out.

7. **Props**: A GM must have all the physical material needed for the adventure. If you use figures in your games, he must have them for the monsters or persons the characters will meet. If there is a building that must be entered, then he must have a floorplan. If it requires the characters to travel overland, then the geographical area must be mapped. In each case, this will make the game play flow more easily for everyone.

**Dungeons and Treasure: The Rationale**

One theme that frequently occurs in FRP games is the expedition into “the dungeon.” In this context, what is called a dungeon is rarely simply the basement of some castle, but more typically a convoluted multilevel maze full of traps, monsters and other malevolent conditions, as well as containing various valuable artifacts, jewels and/or precious metals. In one place are the treasures that can make the characters rich, the perils that can kill them, and a rich environment for the GM to set tactical problems for the players, as well as minimize the alternatives for which the GM has to be prepared. It’s no wonder that “dungeon runs” are popular. However, unless the GM is careful, the ubiquity of the dungeon can undermine the vitality of the game.

The dungeons should exist for some reason. It could be something as simple as abandoned mines that have been taken over by an evil cult, complete with guard beasts and ill-gotten loot, or as complex as the scenario used in the Arduin campaign, which spans some 600,000 years and takes into account the original builders, as well as several other races which used the dungeons as well. Unless magically suspended in time and place (termed “stasis” in this game), guardians cannot be kept in such places without a large infrastructure to support them. After all, someone has to replace those that get too old or die, feed them and generally see that they stay alert and ready to guard!

Think out the rationale for your places of treasure and monsters before you begin your campaign. Dungeons should be few and far between. An occasional forgotten tomb or dragon’s isolated and distant lair is fine. Nothing ruins a world faster than hundreds of dungeons scattered all over the place, oozing mounds of treasure from every nook and cranny. Treasure in overabundance soon loses its value, both in game worth and in fun as well.

Monsters and treasures should never be distributed in a dungeon by a rigid law or plan laid out by some other person. This is your world and your dungeon; only you can see all sides to everything, so you are the only one who can build and stock your dungeon or world. Take the time and you will find that the game will be much more fun for your friends and yourself. As it happens, in the Arduin campaign, dungeon rooms are about 60% empty of monsters and treasures, though nearly every one has fog, mist, weird sounds or some other feature. The 40% that have inhabitants only have appreciable treasure about half of the time. And no two of my dungeons are alike so my players are always guessing. But this is how my dungeons operate. How will yours work? Take the time and do it your way.

In any event, do not feel you must have one or more dungeons in your campaign. It is not a bad way to start up a game, but overland adventures can include everything that a dungeon run does, without the GM having to think quite as hard about the ecology involved. On the other hand, there are few things that evoke sheer terror like having a party of characters lost seven levels down in a dungeon, some already suffering wounds, their torches about to burn out, with the cold, moist stone walls feeling as if they are pressing ever closer...
Sequence of Play

If the route is off marked primary or secondary roads, the GM usually has the adventurers move for one hour, then roll to see if you encounter random monsters, then move for an hour and repeat the roll for random monsters. During daylight there should only be a 10% chance of meeting monsters, unless you are in woods, marshes or jungle, in which case it is 20%. Double all chances at night. On roads, the encounter frequency may be higher or lower, but the encounters are likely to be other sentient beings. The GM needs to keep in mind the state of civilization near where the party is when determining the quantity and quality of encounters on the road.

If a monster is encountered, first determine the distance between the characters and the monster. It will be from 20-200' in open terrain, from 10-100' in semi-covered or hilly terrain, from 10-50' in thick forest or other vision restricted terrain, and always halved at night. Next, determine who can see it and who can’t. Next, determine the monster’s reaction upon seeing the characters. For unintelligent types, up to and including mammalian predators such as bears, roll a D12 using this scale of reactions: 1-2, the monster is frightened off; 3-4, the monster shies back a bit and appears hesitant and nervous; 5-9, the monster warily approaches the party; 10-12, the monster launches itself in a howling attack upon your party without regard to its own safety. For intelligent foes the scale is: 1-4, they flee; 5-8, they are indecisive; 9-12, an immediate attack upon the party.

If the monster is charging and he is less than 30' away, this constitutes a surprise attack, and your party may not react until the monster has completed his first movement and/or attack. Thereafter it is a very simple matter of the fastest CF attacking first, and the next fastest next, and so on down the line. This is explained completely in the section on combat. Because it is the CF that determines the sequence of combat, it quite frequently happens that a warrior will strike his opponent just before the opponent is struck in turn by a blast of magik, and the warrior’s weapon is caught in the effects, or he himself is. Such is the stuff of which melées are made. This is more fully explained in Chapter 5, Combat.

After the battle is over, and any healing possible is done, then the movement process is repeated until the night camp is made. One point here; it is recommended that you have ten hours each of daylight and night, with two hours each of semi-light at dawn and dusk. This can be maintained year-round unless you decide to do what I did and have a set of seasons and the like (See the section on Time in Arduin that follows).

So there you have it, move an hour, roll for monsters, and move an hour and roll, ad infinitum. The only change the GM may wish to add into your game is a die roll once an hour to see if you are lost (10% chance), though I recommend this rule only be used in difficult or overgrown terrain, and outside of the boundaries of the lands where all of your adventures take place. When fleeing, or at night, this chance should be doubled to 20%.

I also recommend that guards be posted at night, because a good GM will always hit you when you least expect it.

Expeditions inside dungeons are essentially just the same, only it is always dark, so bring your own light. However, the GM may roll for encounters twice as often.

Expeditions at sea require encounter rolls once per day and night.

If you are at a loss as to how you can decide just what type of and how many monsters come up on the random monster roll, we provide you with lists in Book II, but you’re better off compiling a list of your own, using our list as an example. Consider 1-3 characters as a base unit for a dungeon run, and add more monsters for every additional unit of characters on the run.

Time in Arduin

Before beginning any campaign, the GM will need to establish (among other things) how time works in her world. There are two things to consider: first, what is the chronology of the game world, and second, what is the relationship between game world time and our real world time. The following is how time works in my Arduin campaign. The GM may well choose to do it differently in her world, but even so, it is important to note the Arduin chronology now.

The Arduin game system as presented in this book is keyed to the chronology of Arduin the campaign, which differs from real world time. You will need to keep this difference in mind as you use the Arduin game system. And when you decide to create your own world with its own chronology, you’ll need to make the appropriate adjustments.

The 25-Hour Day: The day of Arduin is exactly 25 hours long, consisting at the equinoxes of 10.5 each full hours of daylight and darkness, with 2 hours each of dusk and dawn. At the winter solstice, full daylight is limited to 8 hours, while full dark extends to 13 hours; these numbers are reversed at the summer solstice. The dawn and dusk periods always remain the same.

The Six Days of the Week: The week has six days: Mordag, Taenwal, Wurdigan, Veldoar, Sarmant and Quain, in that order. The folk of Arduin commonly work Mordag through Veldoar and half a day on Sarmant, taking the afternoon of that day and all of Quain off. This can vary regionally, and does not take holidays or the Endyear into account.
The 15 Months: There are fifteen 30-day months in the year, for a total of 450 days in the year. A additional five-day period known as Tai Taowyn or Endyear completes the 455-day orbital period around Syraath, Arduin's sun. The months, in order, are: Tor, Ator, Vaen, Torvaen, Kos, Torkos, Skord, Torskord, Zar, Torzar, Ghast, Torghast, Chund, Torchund, and Khoros, the Endyear month.

About Endyear: The five days of Endyear are not named as for the days of the week, nor do they fall in any month.

The Seasons: There are four distinct seasons in Arduin: summer, fall, winter and spring. Winter is 114 days long, starting with the winter solstice. It is the last 14 days of the old year plus the first 100 days of the new. Spring follows with 114 days, beginning at the vernal equinox and is in turn followed by 113 days of summer, beginning at the summer solstice and 114 days of fall, beginning at the autumnal equinox.

The second issue, how we relate real time to game time, will depend on how often games are held, how rapidly the GM wants characters to advance, and whether the types of character in play have relatively short or long lifespans. I generally recommend that the reckoning of seasons and years run three to six times as fast in the game as it does in real life, so that character evolution can occur at an interesting pace, while not causing the characters to age so fast that they start to lose play value. This may take some experimentation by the GM. Don't be afraid to revise the rate if the results you are getting are unsatisfactory.

A Horrible Example

It seems many people like Power Swords, Force Blades, Energy Sabers, Monomorphic Filament Edged Swords and the like. Well, I guess that I am as guilty as anyone else on this account; several years ago I gave out a sword that had an edge of mi-mesons which cut across the magnetic lines of force that bind atoms together. George, the character who received the damn thing, then went on his nonchalant way, wreaking utter havoc wherever he went, on friends as well as foes. One GM after another saw his most cherished ugly blown away without even a fare-thee-well! And more than one friend was neatly sliced in two as George's sword lopped off the attacking ugly's arm and continued around its arc right through anyone standing near him! It got to be so that virtually no GM or player in the area wanted to see George headed his way.

It was obviously not a good situation, but, as it turned out, one of my fellow GMs had the answer. George was sent on a terrible quest by his patron god: he must fight his way down thirteen levels to the very bottom of a dread and feared dungeon. If he survived, he would be enlisted into the ranks of demi-gods who surround all of the more mighty of the gods, and if he failed, well, that would be that. To everyone's surprise, George succeeded and is now among the ranks of the demi-gods. Subsequently there are now a couple of scrolls extant that summon George of the Sword and the possessors of them are rightly feared by all. George is happy, the GMs are happy, and I think I learned my lesson. Now, where did I put my light saber...?

GMs vs. Angry Players

Or, What to do When a Player Refuses to Follow the Rules

Because this is a role-playing game, players sometimes so thoroughly suspend their disbelief of the fantasy that they set aside their real frame of reference and adopt that of the fantasy world the GM provides. Thus they take things very seriously, and may forget that in the final analysis this is merely a game. This means there comes a time when every GM must handle an angry player. He may feel he has a grievance that is legitimate, or he may just be an egocentric megalomaniac exercising his own brand of stupidity. Whatever the reason, the GM must be prepared to either convince the offending player to cool it, or to evict him from the game, either temporarily or permanently. Once the people who play in your world realize that you mean business, they will be ready to act in a proper manner, and refrain from disruptive and childish temper tantrums.

Harsh language, you say? Not really, because in my many years of play I have seen actions that have really appalled me, perpetrated by supposedly intelligent adults. FRP makes people truly identify with their characters, which is as it should be, but a very few people think that their character being killed or dumped on amounts to a personal attack on themselves.

A GM must clearly state his house rules of personal conduct, as well as his own variation of the rules of the game, as he plays it. The GM should make every player aware of these rules and that only his own rules variants are what count. He should also let every player know, in no uncertain terms, what the penalties are for giving him a hard time. It's okay to air a gripe in a calm and logical manner, but temper tantrums should only earn their doer a quick and very permanent exit from play. Once a GM rules on a gripe or rules question, that is the end of it! If anyone can't handle this prime rule, then he should not play in this kind of game. A GM must be as heartless as one of his monsters if order is to be maintained and fun is to be had for all, for a game with clear house rules is a game where everyone knows the way, so to speak, and the way always leads to fun and adventure!

Remember, this game is for the GM's enjoyment as well as the players. So if it's not fun for you because someone wants to act like a jerk, why not remove the cause? It's your game, after all.