Open Adventure ™

Official Basic Game Rules

By Kyle Mecklem

A FANTASY & SCIENCE-FICTION ADVENTURE
GAME FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

Gallivanter Games ™

Open Adventure™

FANTASY & SCIENCE-FICTION ADVENTURE GAME

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FOREWORD

The rules in this book are as complete as possible within the limits of one book, and maintaining the practicality of being able to memorize the rules. That is to say, this book covers the major aspects of medieval fantasy and science-fiction expeditions but remains flexible and easy to read.

As with any other set of role-playing rules, they are to be considered guidelines to follow in designing your own fantastic medieval or science-fiction expedition. The rules provided to you are a framework in which you can build a game of simplicity or extra-ordinary complexity—your own imagination and free time are your only real limiting factors, and the fact that you're reading these rules suggests you do not lack in imagination. The magic of the game is in that those who play will want to find more and more time for it.

It is advised, however, that an expedition begin slowly, following the steps outlined within this book, to avoid becoming too bogged down with unfamiliar rules and details. Your expedition should build naturally, at the pace best suited to the referee and players, smoothing the learning curve for all involved.

Old rules can be thrown out, and new ones substitute their place as to keep the game fresh with different situations, ideas, and options. Also, the players themselves should contribute to the game experience as well. Players are encouraged to interact with the mechanics and story as to make the campaign unique and ever-changing. Follow this advice, and you'll have a living game.

If you're a player reading the OA rules to learn how to play or improve your play style, you'll find there is much to read and glean from within this book. If your referee has made changes in the rules and/or tables, simply make a note of the changes in pencil (you never know when the rules will change again and you may need to erase something previously written). Keep this rulebook nearby when you play for helpful reference. A quick glance at the rules may reveal an overlooked treasure or tactic that could save your game "life"!

Read through the entire work contain within, in the order presented, before you attempt to play.

Kyle Mecklem

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

OPEN ADVENTURE is a role-playing game for 2 to 8 players ages 10 years or older, playable in 2 to 4 hours.

GAME OVERVIEW

In OPEN ADVENTURE, individuals play characters in a medieval fantasy or science-fiction world where super powers and feral magic are real, and heroes & heroines venture to long-lost frontiers in search of fame, fortune, and conquest. Characters gain experience by overcoming deadly perils, defeating ferocious enemies, and acquiring priceless treasures. As characters gain experience, so too they grow in talent & infamy.

Up to seven players will take on the roles of imaginary avatars–known as **Player-Characters (PCs)**, while one player, known as the **Game Host (GH)**, will reveal an alluring and inscrutable world of their own imagination that the other players must then survive in. The Host assumes the role of all of the world's other strange and voracious inhabitants that reside in their wondrous universe, known as **Non-Player Characters (NPCs)** or simply **Creatures**. A group of characters (PCs and/or NPCs) together are known as a **Party**.

Each game session is called an **Adventure**. Adventures can last as long as players and the Host decide to play. An adventure may run for hours, or last an entire weekend! The length of play time depends on the wishes and schedules of the players and the GH. Several related adventures played over a series of game sessions are known as an **Expedition**.

COMPONENTS LIST

Unlike other games, this game does not require a traditional game-board or playing pieces. All that's needed to play are these rules and a creative imagination. The game is more exciting if a couple of six-sided dice, figurines, and pencil & graph paper, a game-mat, and/or dioramas are used; but the game can be played without such visual aids.

DICE

Two six-sided dice are used to resolve attacks, skill tests, and other similar game elements that rely on a randomly-determined outcome.

CHARACTER RECORD SHEET (CRS)

Each player writes down any relevant information about their player-character that they need in order to play them. This information can include factors such as the character's strengths, weaknesses, special abilities, and personal equipment.

MAP

The map represents the different areas the party will explore during the game. Every adventure offers a new layout. Each square (or hexagon) on a map represents 1 **Space**. Maps display relevant information, such as an area's terrain, obstacles, and floor-plan.

FIGURINES

Player-characters and non-player characters are each represented by small tokens or miniature figurines (also known as figures). Most figures fit within a single space on the map, but some larger creatures may take up multiple spaces.

PROPS

The GH may opt to use small items, cutouts, and toys to create a miniature diorama. Props are used to add an aesthetic and artistic flare to an adventure by representing in-game objects such as walls, doors, boulders, trees, rivers, and so on. Common props can be purchased at your local hobby or game store.

TOKENS & COUNTERS

To better help keep track of different game resources, conditions, and other important information, players may opt to use tokens or counters. Common items to use as counters are dice, beads, coins, and cards.

ADVENTURE BOOK

The Game Host has a special section at the back of this book that contains all of the information relevant to the game's adventure, such as the location of traps, secrets, and treasure. This book should only be read by the Host and not by the players as to keep the surprises fresh and exciting.

GAME SETUP

To prepare for your first game of OPEN ADVENTURE, follow the steps outlined below.

Typically a large table is used for the players to sit and gather around. The Game Host sits on one end of the table with adventure maps, and the soon-to-be-discovered secrets of the adventure. The Game Host may wish to use a book, cardboard, or other vertical partition to form a privacy screen (known as a **Shield**) so the players do not see or read the adventure's secrets.

The players sit around the table where they can easily see any map being drawn, the marching order of the figurines representing the party members (if used) and so on. The table should be kept orderly and free of distracting devices.

Before the players meet up to play **OA**, everyone should remember to bring with them any supplies or equipment they need–such as pencils, dice, paper (both normal and graph), and, if available, **Character Record Sheets** (character record sheets can be found at the back of this book on page XYZ). It's also recommended to bring snacks & refreshments for yourself and others as games of this nature can last for multiple hours.

GAME HOST SETUP

It's the Host's responsibility to prepare the setting and scenario for each adventure before actual game play begins. The Game Host have an comprehensive understanding of the rules of **OA**. For this reason it's recommended the most-experienced player take on the Host role which requires more forethought and work but is also an enriching experience.

Whether the imaginary setting is one of an underground dungeon, space ship, mountain wilderness, or alien planet, the fictitious region should be carefully mapped on paper (typically graph paper), a game mat, or represented by props acting as a diorama. An adventure, including the surrounding area in which the action and fun may take place, can be designed by the Game Host or pre-designed by someone else (such as a trusted friend).

PLAYER SETUP

The Game Host will provide the players a selection of options to choose between when deciding on what type of imaginary player-character they want to play. Each player should:

1. Pick their character's creature type & ancestry.

2. Choose an archetype for their character.

3. Select their character's beginning skills.

4. Purchase starting equipment, weapons, and armor for their character.

5. Name their character & fill in their details.

6. Place their character's figure on the map.

After the GH has created and setup the adventure, and the players have finished their characters, the game may begin.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

OPEN ADVENTURE is played as an interactive story between the players and Game Host over a series of game rounds. A round consists of each player and the Game Host taking a turn. During each round, the players work together to decide—as a group—what actions they will take.

Step I: Find An Adventure
Once the players are ready to begin the game, their party should formulate a plan on what they wish to accomplish before embarking on their adventure. Players should consider the following steps as a guideline:

1. **Who They Are:** Figure out who all the characters are, if they know each other, and if anyone in the party cannot be trusted (or is, perhaps, particularly trustworthy).

2. **What To Do:** Find a job or quest needing to be completed that all the characters can participate in accomplishing together.

3. **Why They're Adventuring:** Consider why the party is about to partake on the quest. Are the adventurers tasked with rescuing someone? Perhaps a special item needs to be retrieved. Consider the goals of each adventure offered and what objectives need to be completed to be successful before setting out.

4. **Where To Go:** Every party should have an understanding of where they need to go in the Host's imaginary world to complete their objectives. Consider any perils that may lay between the characters and their destination.

5. **Supplies Needed:** Determine what weapons, armor, equipment, and transports (if any) will be needed to complete the adventure.

6. **Equip & Outfit:** The characters should choose how to buy, and equip, the party with the gear they need. Characters may wish to share their starting money to help their allies buy necessary items.

7. **Marching Order:** Discuss the physical positions and tactics the party will use in the case of a dangerous situation, such as combat. A marching order is the order the party forms while exploring new frontiers. Party members should determine which character is scouting out front of the group, who's searching in the middle, and who is following at the rear of the party.

Step II: Begin The Adventure

Throughout the game, player-characters will generally find themselves transitioning between three distinct phases:

1. **Role-playing:** The PCs are in a settlement where they engage in various social activities such as carousing in taverns, fraternizing with local NPCs, investigating valuable information about nearby adventures, partaking in local ceremonies & rituals, and negotiating prices for equipment & retainers.

2. **Exploration:** The party travels great expanses of wilderness (or uncharted space) while navigating, surviving, encountering fellow travelers (or natives of the land), and exploring important landmarks–such as ruins, castles, or dungeons.

3. **Confrontation:** The adventurers face various challenges of the quest, such as battling & vanquishing mighty foes, bypassing dangerous traps, and solving confounding puzzles & tricks.

A typical game round ebbs and flows between three general phases: setting, actions, and results.

1. GAME HOST DESCRIBES THE SCENE

At the beginning of the game, the Host describes the opening scene (setting) that the player-characters are experiencing.

> **AS AN EXAMPLE,**
> *A scene could begin in a dungeon on a far away moon or near a small medieval hamlet.*

The Host's descriptions might include a few details about the world or galaxy such as a backstory–or alternatively this knowledge may be reserved for the players to discover bit by bit over time as the adventure unfolds.

Regardless of the amount of information revealed, the GH will describe the characters' immediate surroundings–a tavern, a derelict outpost, an orbiting science station–or whatever other situation the GH has chosen as the starting point for the adventure.

2. PLAYERS DESCRIBE THEIR CHARACTER'S ACTIONS

After the scene is set, the players are free to describe to the Host what their characters are doing, such as saying "Otael climbs the slope, sword in hand, to see what's at the crest," or, "I switch on my thermal imager and head down the stairs."

Exploration: Exploration of the fantasy world is encouraged. Whether searching a catacomb for hidden treasure or traveling the countryside in seek of adventure, the party should be naturally curious and inquisitive. During a typical game session, player-characters may solve puzzles, reveal secrets, discover treasure, avoid dangers (such as pits & traps), and encounter other characters.

Social Interaction: Players are encouraged to play the role of their PC when interacting with the other players and NPCs. This can be accomplished by the player choosing in-game decisions, on behalf of their character, that is most-appropriate for their personality. Talking in the voice of the character is also a fun and creative method of role-playing.

When the figures meet other characters (primarily NPCs) the event is referred to as an **Encounter**. Encounters may lead to new alliances between the two parties, or even result in hostilities.

3. GAME HOST DESCRIBES THE RESULTS

After all the players have decided what their characters will do (and how they will do it), the Host will explain in detail the results of the figure's efforts, and thus the interactive story-telling process restarts to phase 1.

LONG-TERM PLAY

After characters complete the adventure by overcoming its challenges, they earn **Experience Points** (**XP**). Experience points awarded from one adventure are retained throughout the lifetime of the figure. With enough XP, the adventurer will be promoted to a new **Level**. With each level earned, characters grow stronger, smarter, and more resilient. In total, figures can be promoted up to 10

times in OPEN ADVENTURE (starting at 0th level and finishing at 10th level).

Non-player characters (including enemies) also have levels and even promote similarly as PCs do. An enemy's level indicates how ferocious and difficult they are to defeat in combat.

PLAYER TURN SUMMARY

During each player's turn, the active player-character may perform up to two actions, in any order of their choosing.

The player-character may perform any of the actions summarized below—including the same action twice (for further details about player actions see page XYZ):

◆ **Move:** The player moves their figure up to a number of spaces equal to their character's **Speed** score (explained on page XYZ).

◆ **Speak:** The player may have their PC speak words. Be aware that nearby characters may overhear them and react to their noises.

◆ **Interact:** Figures can search, examine, pick up, drop, or otherwise interact with objects within the game-world. The player-character typically must be in the same (or adjacent) space as the object for interaction to be possible.

◆ **Attack:** The player-character can attempt to attack another character (or object). When the player-character declares an attack, they must state who (or what) they're targeting, then roll dice. The dice result is added to the character's **Attack** score which is then compared to the target's **Defense** score. For every point the attack is higher than the target's defense, the target suffers 1 point of **Damage**. See page XYZ for combat details.

◆ **Cast Magic:** Players can cast enigmatic and powerful magical spells and psionics. See page XYZ for magic details.

◆ **Rest:** The player-character will recover **Stamina** for every in-game hour they spend resting.

GAME HOST TURN SUMMARY

During the Game Host's turn, they play the role of any and all NPCs that the party may interact with. Additionally, the Host ensures that all of the game-world's events continue to unfold and evolve as time progresses. The Game Host's actions include (but are not limited to):

◆ **Perpetual Effects:** The Host applies any on-going effects from a previous turn, such as afflictions, poisons, magic spells, and so on.

◆ **Encounters:** Once per round, the GH rolls dice to determine if the party runs into a randomly-generated encounter. If combat ensues, the Host plays the role of the player's opponents (e.g. NPCs). See page XYZ for details.

◆ **Describe The Scene:** The Host describes the surrounding area to the party so that the players can better understand the setting that the player-characters find themselves in. The GH may assist the players further by drawing a map of the area.

◆ **Listen To The Party:** The Host listens as the party describes what their characters are doing inside the game. The Host describes changes or reactions that may occur as a result of their actions.

◆ **Reveal Secrets:** If the player-character's actions trigger any traps or reveal any secrets (such as discovering hidden treasure or a concealed door), the Game Host will interrupt the current player's turn to describe the immediate effects.

PLAYER TURN IN DETAIL

During each player-character's turn, they may perform two **Minor Actions** or one **Major Action**, and any number of **Free Actions** of their choice. Characters may choose not to perform all of their actions. This section explains detailed rules for common actions.

Move
Whenever a figure performs a move action, they receive a number of **Speed Points (SPD)** equal to the character's **Speed** ability. Movement into an adjacent space costs 1 SPD. Moving is a Minor Action, allowing adventurers to move up to two times per round.

Interrupting Movement: A character may choose to move fewer spaces than their Speed ability. At the end of a turn, any unspent speed points are lost. A character performing a movement action may choose to temporarily halt their movement to perform another action (such as an attack)

then continue the rest of their movement after completing their action.

Occupied Spaces: A character can never enter into a space (nor diagonally pass between two spaces) occupied by a hostile NPC or an obstruction (e.g. walls, closed doors, pillars). However, they may pass through (but not end their turn on) spaces occupied by non-hostile characters. Some spaces possess different types of terrain, which increase the number of speed points that must first be spent by a character before entering (explained on page XYZ). Characters can move diagonally into spaces but for double the SPD cost as moving orthogonal.

Speak

Whenever a PC performs a speak action, they may whisper, speak, or shout words aloud. Speaking allows a character to communicate with other adventurers, conjure magic, negotiate, barter for trade goods, and so on. Speaking is a Free Action, permitting a character to speak while simultaneously performing other actions (such as moving).

Different Languages: Most creatures know and speak the same universal language (known as **Common Tongue** or simply "Common"). However, exotic creatures may only understand their own unique language. To read, write, speak, or listen to a particular language, the character must first perform and succeed at a language-based **Skill Test**. Skill tests are explained on page XYZ.

Interact

A player-character may choose to interact with the game's environment, objects, or other characters. Interaction allows adventurers to perform actions that are otherwise beyond what is covered in the core rules of the game (such as running, jumping, or swimming).

Action Duration: The amount of time required to interact, also known as performing an **Ability**, is entirely dependent on the nature of the ability being performed. Actions that are quick to complete (such as dropping an object) are Free Actions. Abilities that take longer (but are still fast, such as standing up from a prone position) are deemed Minor Actions. Slower abilities are considered Major Actions (or perhaps take even longer; requiring multiple turns or even rounds to complete). The Game Host determines the action type of all abilities.

ABILITY TESTS

Anytime an ability is attempted that is inherently difficult or dangerous (such as jumping over a bottomless pit), the character must first succeed at an **Ability Test** to be successful. To perform an ability test, the GH will determine which of the character's innate abilities is most-appropriate for the action being undertaken. The player then rolls dice and adds their figure's ability to the result. If the result is higher than a specific **Difficulty Number** (chosen by the Host), the ability is successful. Any other result is a failure.

Attack

Character's may engage in combat to damage and destroy hostile figures. An attack action is a Minor Action, allowing adventurers to perform up to two attack actions each round. During combat, adventurers rely on their **Attack**, **Defense**, and **Health** abilities to survive battle.

Attack Types: There are four types of attacks an adventurer can perform:

- **Melee Attacks**: Attacks with hand weapons that are swung or thrust such as swords, axes, or flails.

- **Ranged Attacks**: Distance attacks with weapons that fire projectiles or require ammunition such as bows, guns, or slings. Ranged attacks can only target figures that are both within Range and Line Of Sight of the attacker (explained on page XYZ).

- **Unarmed Attacks**: Any martial attacks that involve hand-to-hand combat, such as grappling, striking, or kicking.

- **Magic Attacks**: Any supernatural spell, psionic, or special ability that manifests as a physical attack.

When a PC declares an attack action, they must first choose who (or what) they're targeting. Then the controlling player rolls dice and adds their figure's Attack ability to the result. The target loses a **Health Point** (**HP**) for every point that the attacker's Attack was greater than their Defense (also called "damage").

ATTACK RESTRICTIONS

There are specific restrictions that apply to each attack type, as outlined below.

Line Of Sight: Attacks can only target figures that are within **Line Of Sight** (**LOS**) of the attacker.

To determine LOS, choose a corner of the attacker's space, then draw two straight lines to two different corners of the target's space. These lines cannot overlap, or cross-through spaces occupied by obstructions or cover (such as walls, closed doors, or other characters).

Range: Both Melee and Unarmed attackers can only target adjacent figures (or otherwise within their physical reach). However, Ranged and Magic attacks can target figures from afar. For Ranged and Magic attacks, after rolling dice, the result is added to (or subtracted from) either the weapon's range score (in the case of Ranged attacks) or the magic's range score (in the case of Magic attacks). If the result is less-than the number of spaces the defender is from the attacker, the attack falls short of its target and misses (no damage or effects are inflicted).

Size: Unarmed attacks of grappling, throwing, or shoving cannot target figures who are greater-than one size larger than the attacker. For example, a small player-character cannot choose to grapple with a large character. However, this restriction does not apply when an adventurer targets a figure smaller than themselves.

Encumbrance: Unarmed attacks suffer a -1 penalty for each **Encumbrance** counter assigned to the attacking figure. Encumbrance is explained on page XYZ.

Cast Magic

If the Host permits, characters may tap into and command the enigmatic and feral forces of supernatural magic. However, the GH may instead deem magic inappropriate for the adventure's setting and thus disallow it. Magic is explained in detail on page XYZ.

To properly cast magic, a PC must perform the following steps, as outlined below.

1. **Attuning**: At least 1 point must be assigned to a character's **Magic** ability.

2. **Study Magic**: A character must have previously studied, been taught or trained in, or somehow learned the specific spells or psionics that they wish to cast.

3. **Pay Cast Cost**: As a requirement to cast magic, special points–known as **Mana Points (MP)** or **Psi Points (PSI)**–must be expended before a spell or psionic can trigger. Each spell or psionic has a listed point cost required to cast it.

4. **Cast Magic**: The effects of the spell or psionic resolve. If the caster evokes magic that manifests as a physical attack, it is treated as a Magic Attack. When doing so, the player rolls dice and adds their figure's Magic Attack ability to the result. If the result is higher than the target's Defense score, the Magic Attack successfully takes effects on the target.

Rest

After a long day of traveling, exploring, or battling, characters will undoubtedly grow weary and tired. Resting is an important way for a party to relax and rejuvenate. To be considered resting, a character cannot engage in any strenuous activities (such as combat); nor carry, lift, or otherwise move any large objects (or a number of medium objects equal to their Strength).

LONG REST

A **Long Rest** consists of 8 hours of interlude, somnolence, and re-composure. Long rests are often enjoyed at night when sleeping, in-between a day's travel, or after a harrowing battle.

Sleep: Adventurers must sleep for 8 hours each day. If not, they suffer 1 exhaustion counter (see page XYZ for rules on exhaustion). For every 4 hours of sleep they're further deprived, they'll suffer +1 additional exhaustion counter.

Recovering Lost Sleep: For every 8 hours a character sleeps, they lose -1 exhaustion suffered from deprivation.

Sleeping In Armour: Characters that wear bulky armor when trying to sleep risk having their sleep interrupted due to the discomfort. If a character attempts to sleep while wearing suited armor, they must make a mental save each night. Characters wearing light-suited armor gain advantage to this test, while characters wearing heavy suited armor gain disadvantage. Medium suited armor receives no such penalties or bonuses. If the character fails their save test, their sleep is interrupted by a number of hours equal to the number of points they failed their test by.

SHORT REST

Sometimes adventurers need to stop and rest for a quick intermission before continuing on their adventure–especially after a physically exhausting event or encounter. Characters who stop to catch their breath can do so with a **Short Rest**. Short rests consist of 1 hour of rest & quietude. After complet-

ing a short rest, the character may recover lost stamina points. For every hour a character rests, they recover 1 Stamina Point.

COMPLETING THE GAME

An adventure concludes once the objectives of the adventure are met and the player-character party returns to a safe area and (typically) receives reward for their harrowing deeds.

At the end of an adventure, whether the party was successful or not, the players and Host perform a series of post-game steps. These are outlined below:

1. **Experience Points:** The PCs are awarded special points, called **Experience Points (XP)**, for the heroic and clever deeds they performed while on their adventure. Players can earn XP by discovering secrets, defeating enemies, completing quests, and accomplishing bonus tasks.

2. **Level Promotion:** If players accumulate the required amount of XP for advancement, they are automatically promoted to a higher **Experience Level**. Each time a PC earns a promotion they gain a number of advances including more powerful abilities, new talents, new magic spells, and more. See page XYZ for details.

3. **Rewards:** The party receives a bounty, either in coin or credits, for risking their lives and successfully completing their heroic adventure.

4. **Epilogue:** Though the adventure may be over, the game is not! The party may use their new money to purchase more powerful and robust equipment, engage in some harmless revelry, or train in anticipation for their next (and more difficult) adventure. The players and Host should discuss the next time the play group can meet to continue a new game session so the same player-characters can embark on a new adventure.