

## [An Introduction to Friends at the Table](#)

Transcriber: Ilias (original), Austin (updated)

### **Austin:**

Hey, everyone my name is Austin Walker, I'm the host, GM, and co-creator of Friends at the Table, which is an actual play podcast focused on critical world building, smart characterization, and fun interactions between good friends.

Maybe you know some of our cast from one of the other podcasts that we do like Emojidrome or Waypoint Radio, or you heard us guests on something like the Great Gundam Project or the Giant Bombcast, or you saw the show's name in an article or had a very exuberant friend recommend us to you with a lot of excitement.

However you got here, thanks for giving us a shot! I'm going to do my best to make sure that we don't squander that opportunity by giving you some advice on where you can start the show! Because there is a LOT of show, and honestly there isn't just one good place to hop on--but I do have some thoughts on what might work best.

Broadly, we're an actual play podcast, like I said before. Which means we play tabletop roleplaying games and story games in order to tell stories together. It's sort of like a collaborative writer's room with some dice thrown in. Thankfully in 2020 a lot of people already know what that is, thanks to shows like Critical Role or The Adventure Zone. So I'm going to talk assuming that you have some idea about what it means to be a podcast like ours.

If you want something short and sweet to get to know some of us and the style of stories we tell, then check out the [three part Fall of Magic series](#) which starts at September 14th, 2018 in our main feed. It's a light, but melancholy story about magic leaving a fantastical world and a great mage and her companions who are on a journey to restore it. It was originally a series of live streams which means that things are kind of loose and playful, it all has a sort of Studio Ghibli vibe. And again, 3 episodes, in and out. A great starting place.

If you wanna stick with fantasy but want something a little meatier, then let me recommend jumping on board with [Marielda](#), which starts on July 14th, 2016 in your feed. In Marielda we begin with Avery Alder's The Quiet Year to build a custom, industrial fantasy setting filled with ingenious inventors, curious creatures, and broken hearted gods, and then we play out a campaign in that setting using John Harper's incredible Blades in the Dark. Plus, it's a great jumping on point for our now complete Fantasy series Seasons of Hieron. Marielda is a prequel story, you don't need to know anything about Hieron before listening. And when it ends, the episodes that follow are a clip show of everything that came before Marielda, which means you can jump right into the second season of Hieron after you finish our campaign of Blades in the Dark.

If fantasy isn't your thing, then we've still got a lot of options for you. Our current season, [PARTIZAN](#), is frankly one of the best we've had. It takes place at the heart of a corrupt galactic empire, where the very first dreams of revolution begin to stir in those who live there. We play Austin Ramsay's Beam Saber along with some other games, and it's great. It's about compromised characters, backdoor politicking, and tremendously powerful robotic gods called Divines. If you like Mobile Suit Gundam or

Escaflowne or Crusader Kings II, PARTIZAN is the place for you. Plus, if you catch up, you'll be able to listen week to week along with the audience which is always really fun. I suggest starting at PARTIZAN 00, which is a character creation episode, or 01 if you want to get right into it.

If you want to hear how we first conceived of Divines, then you can go way back to July 15, 2015, when we started [COUNTER/Weight](#), our first sci-fi season. We play a bunch of stuff again: We use Jeremy Keller's TechNoir and Haimsh Cameron's The Sprawl to follow a group of cyberpunks, fixers, and mech pilots, and we zoom out from time to time to use the faction rules in Stars Without Number to follow things from a grander, more faction-scale level. COUNTER/Weight is probably my favorite season all said, but it does get off to a sort of rocky start, so I definitely suggest PARTIZAN first, unless you're someone who HAS to hear everything in release order.

Finally, there's Bluff City, which isn't in this feed, but its first season is free on our Patreon. You can access it by going to [tinyurl.com/freebluff](https://tinyurl.com/freebluff). Bluff City is an anthology series, where we use a bunch of different games, including Masks, World Wide Wrestling RPG, Inspectres, Fiasco, and others to tell the stories of an uncanny version of Atlantic City. It has some of my favorite moments and characters and player performances, and I really recommend that people give it a listen!

There are so many other things I could recommend, but these are best jumping on points. If you give them a shot and like them, then hit us up on Twitter at Friends\_Table to get more recommendations of what to listen to (or ask our incredible fans using the hashtag #friendsatthetable).

Like I said, we also have a Patreon, which you can reach at [friendsatthetable.cash](https://friendsatthetable.cash), which has a BUNCH of other stuff if you feel like supporting us after giving some of our stuff a listen. That includes Live at the Table, a monthly livestream where we do one shots of a bunch of different games, Tips at the Table, a roundtable Q&A show where we answer your questions about RPGs, table manners, storytelling, recording podcasts, basically everything and anything people might ask. And I do a show called Drawing Maps, which is a mix of streamed stuff and podcasts where I pull back the curtain on my game prep and also take some GMing questions from the audience. ALL of those things I said are part of the 5 dollar a month tier. There's more stuff after that, but honestly, even just that stuff is a lot to talk about. OH also, even 1 dollar backers get the clapcast, which is like the cutting room floor, out of character jokey bits from the warm up conversation before we start doing the main show recordings. It's all good, and it honestly is amazing the degree of support y'all have shown us there and honestly everywhere across the internet.

We are a small show--much much smaller than I think people might assume--but our fans have helped us cast a pretty large shadow, which rules. So, I hope if you give us a shot, you'll see what those fans have come to love over the years too. And hey, if you give us a shot and it's not for you, then no worries, you gave it a shot, and that's all I can ask from anyone.

Oh, and I should also shout out Jack de Quidt, another member of the cast who is also an incredible composer who does a ton of great music for the show. You can find all that music at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](https://notquitereal.bandcamp.com), including this song which is the intro to Fall of Magic. Thanks so much. Peace.