

SELL SWORD

Roll your abilities

Roll two dice. Each die adds 1 to its matching ability.

1: Strength | 3: Constitution | 5: Wisdom
2: Dexterity | 4: Intelligence | 6: Charisma

Choose your home

This bonus cannot raise an ability above 2.

Vod Oruk: +1 STR | The Scrawl: +1 INT
Gorgos: +1 DEX | Ishban: +1 WIS
Saryagar: +1 CON | Tarwall: +1 CHA

Choose your class

† **Fighter:** Before you attack, you may declare a deed (disarming, throwing, sundering, grappling, etc.) If your roll exceeds the difficulty, the deed succeeds. The damage you deal increases by +1 after sessions 3, 9, and 18.

† **Thief:** You start the game with 4 skills instead of 2. Increase the bonus of one skill you know from +1 to +2 after sessions 3, 9, and 18.

† **Wizard:** You can read magical writing, detect magical auras, and start with two random spells. You learn a random spell after sessions 3, 9, and 18.

Record your health

† **Fighters** start with 10+CON health.

† **Thieves** start with 7+CON health.

† **Wizards** start with 4+CON health.

Choose your skills

Choose four skills if you are a Thief, two skills if not.

<i>Climb</i>	<i>Hide</i>	<i>Scout</i>
<i>Command</i>	<i>Lore</i>	<i>Search</i>
<i>Contact</i>	<i>Medicine</i>	<i>Sneak</i>
<i>Deceive</i>	<i>Negotiate</i>	<i>Tinker</i>
<i>Decipher</i>	<i>Pocket</i>	<i>Track</i>

Buy your gear

Spend up to 100 silver on gear from the marketplace. Recommended gear includes: a weapon (with a shield if you choose a light weapon), armor, rations, rope and torches. Record your gear and any remaining silver.

Roll your appearance

To roll your appearance, roll two dice: the first die for the tens place, the second die for the ones place. Alternatively, make up your own.

11. Barrel-chested	41. Long Arms
12. Booming Voice	42. Missing Ear
13. Braided Hair	43. Nervous Twitch
14. Broken Nose	44. Nine-fingered
15. Burn Scars	45. One-eyed
16. Craggy Face	46. Perfumed
21. Face Piercings	51. Rake-thin
22. Filthy	52. Shaved Head
23. Flaming Hair	53. Square Jaw
24. Flowing Hair	54. Squint
25. Foul-smelling	55. Stout
26. Gap-toothed	56. Stunted
31. Haunted Eyes	61. Tattooed
32. Hawk Nose	62. Topknot
33. Hoarse Voice	63. Towering
34. Ice-Blue Eyes	64. War Paint
35. Knife Scars	65. Whispery Voice
36. Lazy Eye	66. White Hair

Roll your spells

If you are a Wizard, roll two spells. Roll again if you get a repeat. Ask the Judge for details about the spells if you're not sure what they do.

11. Animal Form	41. Iron Skin
12. Antimagic	42. Lightning Arc
13. Banish	43. Ooze Form
14. Charm	44. Phantasm
15. Clairvoyance	45. Quicken
16. Comprehend	46. Radiance
21. Control Animals	51. Raise Dead
22. Detect Thoughts	52. Shatter
23. Dimension Door	53. Shrink
24. Dreadful Aura	54. Sign of Corrosion
25. Enlarge	55. Slumber
26. Enrage	56. Smoke Form
31. Entangle	61. Spider Climb
32. Fireball	62. Unseen Servant
33. Fog Cloud	63. Wall of Fire
34. Heal Wounds	64. Windstorm
35. Icy Hand	65. Wither
36. Invisibility	66. Wizard Key

Name your character

Keep it short and memorable. No one at the table is going to remember a long, unpronounceable name, but everyone will remember "Johnny Coffin." Nicknames are good, as are strange family names. A well-made name says something about your character's personality or history.



PLAYER'S GUIDE

When you do something risky, roll two dice. Add the related ability and +1 if you know a related skill.

† **Roll +STR** when you attack with a heavy melee weapon, climb, lift, swim, etc.

† **Roll +DEX** when you attack with a light melee weapon, tinker, pocket, dodge, etc.

† **Roll +CON** when you have 0 health, resist poison or disease, hold your breath, etc.

† **Roll +INT** when you cast spells, use medicine, decipher, recall lore, etc.

† **Roll +WIS** when you make a ranged attack, scout, track, search, etc.

† **Roll +CHA** when you negotiate, deceive, command, perform, make contact, etc.

If the total meets or exceeds the difficulty set by the Judge, the action succeeds. If not, the action fails.

† **Difficulty 8:** A task for a novice

† **Difficulty 9:** A task for an adept

† **Difficulty 10:** A task for an expert

† **Difficulty 11:** A task for a master

† **Difficulty 12:** A task for a legend

Players do all of the dice rolling. Opposed rolls have a difficulty of 8 plus the opponent's ability. For example, if an enemy with a WIS of 1 makes a ranged attack against a PC, the PC may make a DEX with a difficulty

of 1 to try and dodge the arrow. Similarly, if the player wants to use their spear to attack a bandit with a DEX of 2, they would make a STR roll with a difficulty of 10.

The abilities of most people in the world of Sellsword are 0. Having an ability of 1 is uncommon, 2 is rare, and 3 is almost unheard of.

The Judge always controls the pace of the game and who gets to act next. In combat, the Judge may opt to use group initiative, where each side takes turns acting.

Damage, Armor, and Health

When a weapon hits and deals minor damage, roll two dice and use the lesser die. For major damage, use the greater die. If you roll double sixes on an attack roll, deal critical damage by adding the damage dice together. Similarly, if you roll double ones on a dodge roll, you receive critical damage.

Damage is reduced by the defender's armor, then subtracted from health. The defender may splinter their shield to absorb all damage from one attack. Foes are killed at zero health, but player characters may make a CON roll to see if they are wounded instead.

Wounded characters die if they are hit again or if they are not bandaged (with a successful WIS roll) within ten minutes. They cannot move, and remain wounded until they rest. Characters can rest once per day after consuming a ration. Resting heals half of any lost health, rounded up.

If your character dies, make a new one and rejoin the party at the nearest opportunity.

Spellcasting

In order to cast a spell, tell the Judge what effect you want it to create. Whether a spell effect is possible is entirely up to the Judge. The difficulty of casting the spell depends on the magnitude of the effect and if the spell is being opposed.

When you fail a spellcasting roll, choose between the spell backfiring (the Judge decides how) or losing health equal to the degree of failure.

Wizards learn spells by advancing, or by discovering them in-game. In-game spells are rare, dangerous, and well-guarded. The Judge should invent these spells; they should *not* be spells from the spell list.

Character Advancement

At the end of sessions 1, 5, and 12, gain 3+CON health. At the end of sessions 2, 7, and 15, choose a new skill (or a random spell if you are a Wizard). At the end of sessions 3, 9, and 18, add 1 to any ability (maximum of 3). You also gain an advancement specific to your class.



JUDGE'S GUIDE

Sellsword is a roleplaying game, or RPG. In an RPG, there are two main roles: the players and the Judge. The players play fictional characters (PCs) living in an imaginary world, while the Judge is in charge of everything else, from the weather, to the wilderness, to the non-player characters (NPCs). The players say what they want to do, and the Judge tells them what happens as a result. When the players want to do something risky, the Judge will ask them to roll dice to find how it goes.

Besides playing the world, the Judge also arbitrates rules disputes, creates rulings for unusual situations, and is a sort of host for the game. Here are some pieces of advice for Judging a game:

- † **Start small.** Give the players something simple and concrete to do right away. Loot a dungeon, rescue a captive, escape a disaster, etc. The key is to hook them and to teach them how to play. Your whole first session should be just about that.
- † **Expand outward.** Don't try to create an entire world all at once. After each session, as the players what they plan on doing next, and develop the world in that direction. This will cut down on the amount of prep you have to do, and make sure that the players find interesting things wherever they go.
- † **Create situations, not plots.** Never compel the players to follow a story you've made. Instead, come

up with a number of dangerous or unstable situations nearby, and make sure the players know about them. You're not there to entertain the players; you're there to let the players entertain themselves. Let them choose their fun.

- † **Keep the game focused on the players.** Don't get caught up explaining irrelevant details about your world. Instead, keep the game moving and focus on the player's choices. For example, instead of narrating a conversation between two NPCs, just summarize what they say.
- † **Use random tables.** It can be hard to come up with interesting events and encounters on the fly. Solve this by being creative ahead of time, and making random tables to roll on. For example, you could make lists of: creatures in the area, treasures to find, city events, NPCs to run into, rumors to hear, etc.
- † **Be impartial and fair.** Your job is not to kill the PCs, or to coddle them. Present the world as it is and let them deal with it. Remember, you are the Judge, so if you need to invent a rule to cover and unusual situation, do it. Just remember to apply that rule consistently in the future.
- † **Don't hide important information from the players.** Only use the Lore skill for obscure knowledge. If the PC could reasonably know something, tell the player can move on.
- † **The more dangerous something is, the more obvious it should be.** No one likes to have their character killed without warning, so if something dangerous is coming up, give the players clues so they can plan a way to defeat it or avoid it altogether.
- † **Make the players weigh risk versus reward.** The deeper players go into the wilderness or dungeon, the more perilous things should become. Whether because their resources are running low (food, health, equipment, light, etc.), or because danger builds the longer they linger, keep the players asking if it is worth pushing just a little bit farther. The greatest treasures are always the hardest to reach.
- † **Make the players afraid.** Risk and reward is at the center of combat too. There's a reason why characters don't have much health. Push combat quickly towards the point where players ask themselves, "Should I retreat to fight another day, or do I risk it all to finish them now?" The thrill of that choice is the essence of combat.
- † **Don't be afraid to let characters die.** If PCs cannot die, then their adventures seem meaningless, and they will not treat danger with the proper respect. A safe adventure is no adventure at all. When death happens, embrace it.

- † **Encourage creative strategies.** The distinctive feature of an RPG is its openness; players can try to do anything they want. Focus on creating situations that can be solved in more than one way, where unorthodox thinking is the most rewarded.
- † **Original monsters.** If you're going to have monsters, take the time to design your own. Each should be unique and present the players with a tantalizing challenge: "How do we kill this thing?"
- † **No linear environments.** A dungeon without choices is not a dungeon. Every dangerous environment should be filled with intersections, secret passages, shortcuts, and loops. This gives players the chance to decipher their surroundings, use it to their advantage, and decide what threats they want to deal with.
- † **Give the players toys.** Fill the world with things that the players can mess around with. Weird artifacts, faction memberships, mounts and ships, strange spells, etc. It's easier to be creative if players have tools to work with.
- † **Treat NPCs like real people.** Think about what NPCs want, especially in combat. NPCs want to stay alive, and will always try gain an unfair advantage whenever possible. Few NPCs are foolish enough to charge straight into combat, and even fewer will fight to the death. Usually, they are smart enough to retreat or surrender if they are losing, or try another tactic, like negotiating. Also, remember that enemies can be converted into allies with the right motivations, and allies can turn their backs if they aren't treated well.
- † **Charisma isn't everything.** Since NPCs should be treated like real people, they should respond realistically to the PCs in social situations. For example, it would be impossible to make a an NPC kill their friend just because the PC succeeded on a charisma roll. Charisma rolls effect NPCs as much as they reasonably could, but no farther.
- † **Give the players a stake in the world.** As the game goes on, players will probably accumulate a lot of money from completing jobs and looting treasures. Encourage them to use this money to buy property, retainers, and land, or create factions, guilds, and temples. Playing at the so-called "domain" level can open up new ways for the players to interact with the world and affect its history.
- † **Make the world push back.** Whenever the players do something, the world reacts. During the game and in between sessions, think about how the other characters and factions would respond to what the players are doing.



MARKETPLACE

Light Weapons (10): Minor damage. One hand. Includes daggers, clubs, maces, hand axes, slings, etc.

Heavy Weapons (30): Major damage. Two hands. Includes swords, hammers, bows, battle axes, spears, polearms, etc.

Shield (10): Armor 0. One hand.

Light Armor (50): Armor 1.

Heavy Armor (100): Armor 2. All of your DEX rolls ignore skill bonuses.

Common Items (10): 50ft Rope, Chalk, Tinderbox, Torches (2), Bag of Marbles, Lockpick, Iron Spikes (5), Rations (2), Steel Mirror, Candles (5), 10ft Chain, 10ft Pole, Steel Wire, Grease, Glue, Net, Sack, Crowbar, Tent, Hatchet, Pickaxe, Saw, Grappling Hook, Shovel, Fire Oil, Bear Trap, Pliers, etc.

Luxury Items (50): Book, Glass Mirror, Lantern, Spyglass, Musical Instrument, Poison, Acid, Antitoxin, Ether, Flashpowder, Smokebomb, etc.

Transport: Mule (20), Horse (100), Cart (30), Wagon (100), Coach (250), Rowboat (50), Fishing boat, (500), Galley (5,000).

Property: House (2,000), Guildhall (5,000), Manor (10,000), Outpost (25,000), Estate (50,000), Keep (100,000), Castle (500,000).

Hirelings: Torcbearer (5/day), Guide (10/day), Mercenary (20/day), Expert (50/day).