

The Living City Campaign

Game Master Guidelines and Information

Being a game master in RPGA events involves making many decisions about character actions, running encounters, portraying NPCs, and adjudicating the effects of traps, spells, and (literally) everything else in the world. Living City events are particularly difficult for the game master, for several reasons.

First, you don't know what characters will come to the table, or what they can do, so your preparation is more involved than with other types of tournaments. Second, Living City players care deeply about the welfare and future of their characters, much more than they would if characters were provided. Every ruling that could kill a character is hotly protested, and every situation is evaluated in terms of fairness towards characters.

However, judging a Living City event is rewarding as well. You have the opportunity to think on your feet and respond to unusual situations ("I use my *wand of wonder* on the wall behind the monsters, then I pull out this gem that gives me +5 to my rope use proficiency, which I use to catch the bad guy.") To help you through this experience, we provide these guidelines. Whether you are a veteran Living City game master or a beginner, they should help simplify your life and explain what you need to know to run an excellent game.

The Role of Game master

A game master's job is to moderate events and make decisions based on fairness and adherence to game rules, and most importantly to make sure the players have a great time without sacrificing fairness. A tournament game master runs one part of the campaign. Players expect to be treated fairly, to have the core AD&D® rules applied in all situations, and to have every chance to survive. It is your responsibility to ensure that. When you make decisions and run encounters, consider the players' and characters' points of view in addition to your own. If a situation develops where the characters will be killed, it should be as much their own doing as the deadliness of the encounter.

The Network has a set of ethics guidelines (called Standards of Content) which it follows in considering whether to sanction tournaments, and you must abide by those guidelines when judging events. A complete set of ethics guidelines is available from Network HQ, but they can be summed up as: treat players with respect, refrain from belittling current establishments in our culture, and make sure that everyone knows it's just a game.

Preparation

Read the scenario thoroughly prior to the event. You owe it to the players to be as prepared as possible, to give them the best experience possible. In addition, lack of knowledge of the adventure can result in not running it correctly. Try to meet with one or two of the other game masters discuss

AD&D® 2nd Edition optional rules used in Living City events.

Player's Handbook:

- Nonweapon Proficiencies (p. 73)
- Basic Encumbrance (p. 102)
- Expensive Spell Components (p. 113)
- Parrying (p. 133)
- Group and/or Individual Initiative (p. 124-126)
- Initiative modifiers from Table 56 (p. 125)
- Weapon speed (p. 127)

Dungeon Master® Guide:

- Polearms and Weapon Frontage (p. 82)
- Shields and Weapon Frontage (p. 82)
- Hovering at Death's Door (p. 104)
- Aerial Combat tournament rules (p. 106-108)
- "Heat" Infravision (p. 160). This means perception of differences in heat emission, so one can see living bodies and campfires, but not undead, terrain features, or tracks left by living creatures. Drow, deep gnomes, and duergar have a special version of infravision that allows them actually to see in the dark as humans see during the daytime, up to their stated range of infravision.
- Terrain Effects on Movement (p. 167, Table 73)

Do not use other optional or home rules unless they are allowed by the character creation guidelines or these guidelines. Sourcebook rules only apply to the material from that sourcebook.

anything you don't completely understand. This promotes greater consistency between tables of the same event. Players will talk about the event with each other later.

Players bring their own characters to Living City events, and are responsible for keeping records of the character's experience, wealth, and possessions. Look over the characters that are brought to your table, both to familiarize yourself with them and to check for unusual magic items or discrepancies. Magic items have certificates, and if the player does not have a valid certificate for the item, his or her character does not have the item.

Purchasing Equipment

PCs can purchase weapons, armor, supplies and other materials at the prices listed in the *Players' Handbook* and *Arms & Equipment Guide* as described in the character creation rules. These purchases can be made outside of tournament time. If players present you with a log entry to sign for normal equipment purchases, verify the information and sign it.

Magic items are acquired only during the course of tournament play and at special convention activities. Trading magic items among PCs is allowed. Players may ask you to witness a trade, to ensure fairness. If you have time, please do. If you find any suspicious-looking certificates, inform the player that you think the certificate is suspicious and disallow its use in the adventure until it is approved by a Living City campaign board member, HQ employee, or Regional Director.

Precast Spells

Druids and clerics can begin play with 1d4 *goodberries*. The player should roll to determine how many berries his character has.

Wizards, clerics, bards, and druids can cast certain enchantments prior to the start of each adventure. These spellcasters can select one appropriate spell from the following list to be in play when the tournament begins. This does not count against their starting spell allotment.

Additional spells must be cast after the start of the adventure and subtracted from the spellcaster's total number of available enchantments for the day. DMs must adjudicate casting of spells.

Enchantments

- 1st:** *Armor, wizard mark*—PHB; *weighty chest*—TOM
2nd: *Magic mouth, fire trap*—PHB
3rd: *Sepia snake sigil, continual light*—PHB; *accelerate healing*—TOM

The high level campaigns have an expanded list of pre-cast spells available, and that list should only be used in high-level campaign adventures.

Purchasing Priest Spells During an Adventure

PCs may buy spells from the temples with gold pieces (from their log sheets) or with magic items. Temple priests will never leave the temple to help adventurers unless otherwise stated in the module, so the PCs must go to the temple in question to get the spells.

Spells in Healing and Necromantic Spheres are available on the same day as a request. Spells in All, Protection, Astral, Divination, Creation, Travelers, and Time Spheres are not available until the next day. Time Sphere spells are only available at the temple of Mystra. Spells in other spheres are not available.

Religion-specific spells (as found in *Faiths & Avatars*, *Powers & Pantheons*, and *Demihuman Deities*) will be ONLY cast on (or for) worshippers of that religion (i.e., priests, paladins, or enrolled worshippers who have a certificate indicating their status) unless an adventure specifically states otherwise.

A priest of the minimum level necessary casts each spell unless the PC pays a 10% per priest level premium (up to

14th level) on top of the base cost (so if you want *cure disease* cast by a 12th level priest, you pay the base cost plus 120% of the base cost). Mystran-cast spells with increased effectiveness have their cost doubled.

Costs

Group 1: Standard Price for any PC

Group 2: Price for enrolled Priest of that temple

Group 3: Price for non-enrolled priests and paladins

<u>Standard Spells</u>	<u>Group 1</u>	<u>Group 2</u>	<u>Group 3</u>
1 st , 2 nd level	500 GP	125 GP	250 GP
3 rd , 4 th level	1000 GP	250 GP	500 GP
5 th level	2000 GP	500 GP	1000 GP
6 th level	8000 GP	2000 GP	4000 GP
7 th level	32,000 GP	8000 GP	16,000 GP

<u>Standard Spells</u>	<u>Group 1</u>	<u>Group 2</u>	<u>Group 3</u>
<i>Raise dead</i>	50,000 GP	35,000 GP	45,000 GP
<i>Regeneration</i>	60,000 GP	42,000 GP	54,000 GP
<i>Reincarnation</i>	60,000 GP	42,000 GP	54,000 GP
<i>Restoration</i>	125,000 GP	87,500 GP	112,500 GP
<i>Resurrection</i>	150,000 GP	105,000 GP	135,000 GP

PCs enrolled at their temple (with an official LC Temples Certificate) get spells at enrollee price. If non-enrolled priests and paladins go to their faith's temple, they can get spells at Non-enrolled Priest/Paladin Price if they make a Fame Check in Temples. Otherwise, they pay standard price.

Obscure faiths may not have a temple in Ravens Bluff. Within the Civic Religion, the other temples will honor the "enrollment" price for the special spells if PC's temple's priest are not high enough level to cast the spell. Other temples in Ravens Bluff generally do not have high priests of 14th level (with the exception of the non-human pantheons). If a PC of that faith needs a 7th level spell, the game master may offer the Non-enrolled priest/paladin price at a Civic Religion temple if they make a Fame Check in Temples.

Temples may refuse service if a PC acts offensively to their faith.

Purchasing Wizard Spells During an Adventure

The following spells are available for purchase from the Wizards Guild during normal adventuring. The game master may rule that no one is available at the guild to honor a given request, if a spell is deemed to somehow ruin the adventure.

These spells will be cast by a caster of the minimum level required unless the PC pays a premium of 10% per caster level above the base price. Generally, casters up to 16th level are available at the Guild. If the PC makes a

successful Fame Check in either General or City Government, a caster of up to 24th level is available.

Dispel magic: 5,000 gp
Remove curse: 5,000 gp
Reincarnation: 50,000 gp
Stone to flesh: 50,000 gp

Wizards Guild members (with an official LC Wizards Guild certificate) may purchase these spells at 80% of the published rate. Be sure to check their certificate because some members may not be “in good standing” as documented on it.

Other spells may be requested of the Wizards Guild using the special request process documented on the Living City website, or at Wizard Guild booths at major conventions. This is a non-adventuring activity, which adventurers may be able to use to reverse an unfortunate occurrence.

During Play

Tiered Adventures

Living City adventures are designed for player characters (PCs) of any level. We accomplish this by a tiering system in which the various foes and obstacles are different for different level groups of PCs. At the beginning of the adventure you’ll find instructions for how to determine the tier that the PCs at your table fall into.

The foes in a tiered grouping are designed to challenge characters whose average level is the center of the range. If the characters at your table are having too easy or too difficult a time, you can mix and match foes from the different groups above and below the one the characters fall into. The goal is to provide a challenge without overkill.

Kits and Specialty Priesthoods

Players whose characters have kits or specialty priesthoods must bring the handbook which describes the kit or priesthood. You are not obliged to honor kits or specialty priest powers if the player cannot produce the proper book. If kits are involved, use the Special Hindrances to offset the Special Benefits and maintain play balance.

Familiars and Followers

Some characters may have followers or henchmen. However, these followers never adventure unless the follower/henchman certificate specifically allows the follower/henchman to adventure. It is assumed that followers stay behind to watch the homestead.

If a wizard has an unusual familiar, you may disallow its use if the player cannot present a certificate for it.

AD&D Rules to Pay Special Attention to

The following rules should be reviewed and used during Living City adventures:

- *Morale and Morale Checks*: each foe is given a morale rating, which indicates when the foe runs away. This is important and balancing information in the combats, as some opponents might be very tough but easy to scare off. Please do not disregard Morale Checks. To make a Morale Check, roll 1d20. If the result is over the foe’s ML (at the end of the stat block), the creature tries to flee, or surrenders, whichever is appropriate. DMG p. 98.
- *Reaction Checks*: At the start of an encounter with NPCs, you should make a reaction check using the PC doing the talking as the primary person. This sets the tone for the roleplaying to follow. Bad reactions can be overcome through good roleplaying, but since you do not see a Charisma of 6 when looking at the player whose character has a Charisma of 6, you need to simulate the negative reaction using Reaction Checks. DMG p. 140.

Recognition and Fame

The Fame Rating system gives the chance on 1d20 that a particular PC is known to an NPC of a given grouping. Fame is given at the end of adventures in categories, and can range from 1 to 19 in a given category. To make a Fame Check, roll 1d20 like a proficiency check; if the result is lower than or equal to the character’s Fame rating in the appropriate category, the check succeeds. A character may always check against the General category rather than a specifically applicable category. Remember that recognition is not always a good thing.

Infamy is the category for tracking PCs who have bad reputations. When you look over the character sheets at the start of the adventure, note infamy and find out the details. Then use the character’s infamy at your discretion during the adventure. Don’t make Infamy checks, and Infamy is not given in categories. Bad news travels fast.

In interactions with NPCs, role-playing is the most important consideration. If a character is acting like a pain in the neck, he should be treated like one. Reaction adjustments for Charisma apply at the beginning of the encounter only, to determine first impressions. Certain extenuating circumstances may modify the reaction roll, such as Fame or close involvement with the NPC (city watchman dealing with the City Watch, wizard guild member dealing with the Ministry of Art).

NPCs who are not written into a module should not provide material assistance during and adventure. They can be used to get the PCs on track, or to provide additional roleplaying if the PCs seek them out.

Alignment Infractions

Alignment infractions are a touchy subject. Ultimately, you are the final authority, but you must warn the player if his character is deviating from his chosen alignment. This warning must be clear, and make sure that the player understands. The PC can then correct the behavior, justify it, or face the consequences. If infractions continue, an alignment change may be in order. If a character changes alignment through play, and it is “voluntary” (i.e. not a magical effect), then the character loses experience to place him at the beginning of the next lowest level. Multi-class characters drop to the beginning of the next lowest level in both classes. Characters who become evil are retired from play.

These measures are a last resort; there is more than one way to play a given alignment.

Dying and Wills

Dead characters (ones who stay that way) may bequeath ONE magical item to ONE PC through a Will (or *speak with dead* spell). The Will had to be prepared before the character died. The receiving character cannot be one of the same player’s other characters. Magical items that are not disposed of via a Will simply vanish. Void (do not destroy) all magic item certificates for that character. Looting dead PCs is considered an evil act, but gathering items necessary to pay for a *raise dead* spell for the dead PC is acceptable.

The magical items of dead characters may not be put into a charity auction, raffle, or other event, through a Will or any other means. The items of dead characters leave the game.

Recovery of Dead PCs

When PCs die, players like to have the bodies recovered so the PCs can be raised from the dead. This is clearly possible if not all the PCs died, and one or more of them recovers the bodies. Recovery of the bodies in this case is entirely up to the surviving PCs, as they have to take the actions to recover the bodies.

If all of the PCs die (this is called a Total Party Kill, or TPK), then recovery of the bodies becomes more difficult, and depends on the circumstances under which everyone died.

- If the deaths occurred in the city or civilized lands, you can assume that someone came by and brought the bodies to the nearest (or most appropriate) temple.
- If the PCs all died on another plane or in hostile conditions (say, in the depths of the Abyss) you can safely assume that the bodies and items were not recovered. You can also assume that the bodies were not recovered if the foes would eat them, or would take steps to make sure no bodies were ever found (as in the case of some evil temples). You should be very clear with the players as to why the bodies could not be

recovered, since they will want to argue with you or do something about it.

- In cases where the chance of recovery is ambiguous, then you have to use your judgment. Unless the foes would destroy the bodies as a matter of course, you can assume that they were left in the wilderness or wherever, and tell the players that the bodies were eventually found and brought to a temple, or that they were not found but certainly could be if anyone went looking for them. Be kind to the players in these ambiguous instances; the goal is to have fun, and losing your PC because his body fell in a cleft and no one found it is not that fun.

In the case of TPKs, you can assume that if the foes are the type of people who would use magical items, then they would steal from the PCs any items they could use (so a group of thug fighters would take magical weapons and armor, but not scrolls or wands, and they might miss magical rings). This takes judgment too. If the foes are not the kind that would bother with or know the value of magical items (low-ranking fiends, stupid humanoids, giants who cannot use human-sized stuff, etc) then you can assume that the dead PCs’ items were not stolen if the bodies are recovered.

Using and Destroying Magical Items

When magical items are used up during an adventure, you should ask the player whether you should tear the certificate or mark it void. Then do whichever the player prefers.

When items are destroyed by magical effects, ALWAYS mark the certificates void. Do not tear them up; let the player do that if he or she chooses.

In the case of a TPK where the bodies are not immediately recovered, you should collect the certs from all the characters and turn them into your Regional Director or to a Living City staff person. If neither of these are available, turn them in to the convention coordinator. That way, if the PC is later recovered and brought back to life, the item certificates are still in existence. By destroying certs when the final fate of the item is unknown, you just make players upset for no reason.

If items are stolen from PCs and not recovered by the end of the adventure time, you should mark them “void-stolen” and include the date.

If it seems that there will be a dispute about your handling of the scenario when PCs died, then do not destroy anything. You will just cause problems down the line. Turn everything in to an appropriate official (as described above) and explain what happened. You may be asked for a written statement, which you can provide later.

Experience Points

During the course of the adventure, the PCs will earn experience points based upon their accomplishments. Some of these points are for overcoming obstacles, finding

information, defeating monsters, and recovering treasure. This is summarized at the end of the adventure. All characters that contributed to the success of an encounter AND SURVIVED THE ADVENTURE (or were raised immediately after) receive the listed experience points. For example, if an encounter lists an experience point value of 100 each -- each PC participating earns 100 points. All experience points are awarded at the end of the tournament only.

Please note that experience points are tiered to the level of the group, as are the combats. Read the instructions included in the adventure for awarding experience points carefully. Experience points are summarized at the end of the tournament.

A character cannot go up more than one level per tournament round, but does not lose excess experience points as in a normal campaign. These points are part of the total; the character will advance to the next level at the end of the next event.

Treasure

In some places the characters can gain treasure. It is up to the players how this is to be divided. The players should record what their individual characters acquire. The Treasure Summary contains a list of specific items and guidelines for other items that the PCs can keep. Follow these guidelines without deviation. The PCs must be told what the nature and powers of all magical items. They are assumed to have them identified on their own time.

Calculating Magical Item Values

Potions of longevity may be sold to the temples for 5000 GP at any time. For other magic items, use the gold piece value on the certificate. If there is no gold piece value, use the following guidelines to determine the value of any item for spell purchase purposes:

- Armor and weapons have a base value of 2,500 gp per plus. If the item has additional powers, add 5,000 per additional power.
- Rings and cloaks of protection are worth 5,000 gp per plus. If they have additional powers, add 5,000 go per power.
- Rings and miscellaneous magical items are worth 5,000 gp for a single minor power (such as infravision or blinking). Add an additional 2,500 gp per additional power.
- Rings and miscellaneous magical items with major powers (*ring of free action*, *bag of tricks*, *bag of holding*, *ring of elemental command*, etc) are worth 10,000 gp for the first power, and 5,000 gp per additional power that the item has.
- Things which seem to be minor artifacts or holy weapons are worth 50,000 gp.

- Rods, wands and staves are worth 12,500 gp if half the charges remain, and only 5,000 gp if fewer than half the charges remain. If there are no charges remaining, the item has no value.
- Scrolls are worth 500 gp per spell level still inscribed on the scroll.
- Potions are worth 2,500 gp per full dose remaining.

Some examples:

- *Cloak of displacement*: 20,000 gp (10,000 gp for +2 protection plus 10,000 gp for the major power of 1st swing miss)
- *Pax* with a single gem embedded: 27,500 gp (10,000 gp ornamental value, plus 7,500 go for +3, plus 5,000 for the light power of the sword, plus 5,000 for the gem power—this does not include the base value of the gem)
- *Ring of mind shielding*: 5,000 gp
- *Ring of fire resistance* (or *totem fire doll*): 7,500 gp (5,000 for +4 fire protection, 2,500 for damage reduction additional power)

Items uniquely of interest to a particular faith in the GM's opinion may be valued as much as 30% higher. These items are generally tied to the faith somehow on the certificate.

These formulas will not always give the same values as found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, but Living City does not have a normal economy. Use your judgment, and err on the side of conservatism, but if an additional amount less than 5,000 gp would get the spell desired (especially for spells that bring one back from the dead), be generous; don't refuse to let someone get a raise dead when they are 1,000 gp off if there was any room in your estimations of item values.

Disputes

The Living City program functions on the "Honor System." That is to say, player honesty regarding dice rolls, stats, magical items, and money will be maintained at all times. If, as a game master, you feel that a player is cheating, you may investigate the matter and warn the player. If cheating persists, take action to remedy the situation as you see fit, short of killing the character. While best dealt with at the gaming table, these remedies may include speaking to the convention director, Living City Campaign Staff, your Regional Director, or Network HQ. If play is disrupted by this player, then politely ask him or her to leave. If necessary, ask the convention staff for assistance.

When disputes over rules occur, handle them as quickly as you can while remaining fair to the players. Listen to the argument, make a decision based on game rules and these guidelines, and move on.

Should a dispute arise over decisions made at the gaming table, there is a review process available for the player to seek redress. Players must submit their grievance

in writing to the ***Living City Communications and Information Board Member*** (email: LCInfo@rpga.net), who shall investigate any claims. Reviews of play conflicts generally support the game master unless there is clear reason not to.

The decisions of game masters in running games can only be overturned by a the Living City board acting in concert, by the Living City Communications and Information Board Member, or by an employee of the RPGA Network. Regional Directors have the authority to review and investigate disputes, but not to overturn game master decisions. Convention coordinators do not have the authority to do more than refer the matter to a Living City campaign staff person, Regional Director, or HQ employee.