



# Play Guide

## WHAT TO EXPECT

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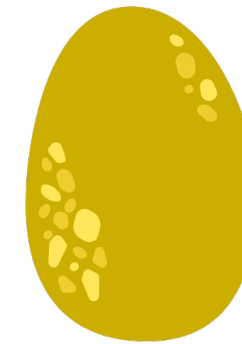
And find out what happens next!

# “What is it?”

DrachenFest is a potluck event where everyone brings their best; showing off their costumes, roleplay, and fighting skills.

During the festival, everyone pretends they're at war, but it's really about making stories and having fun together.

It's also a larp.



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## WHAT IS IT?

# 1 | What's a larp?

'Larp' is an acronym that stands for Live Action RolePlay. 'Larpers' are people who assume an alternate identity or character, including looks and behavior, and play or improvise cool scenarios.

Really though? It's just 'let's pretend.' Something you've almost certainly done before as kids, and if it's been a while, it'll come back to you, we promise.

## WHAT'S THE STORY?

The DrachenFest is a contest between primordial Dragons that send out a call to arms that reaches countless worlds. You play a character that feels this call- and champions whichever Dragon's aspects match their philosophy, religion, or lifestyle. They go on a mundane journey that mysteriously culminates in their arrival in the Dragon World, ready to compete in the DrachenFest.

*Each Dragon has positives and negatives and is a part of the eternal cycle of the Dragon World; A metaphysical concept detailing the beginning and end of both mortal life and the cosmos.*

**The Silver Dragon Aspects:** Creation & the beginning of the Eternal Cycle, chivalry & mercy, and pride & decadence.

**The Green Dragon Aspects:** Keeper of the Eternal Cycle, the hunt, and merciless survival of the fittest.

**The Red Dragon Aspects:** Action & the driver of the Eternal Cycle, valor & honor, and battle & bloodthirst.

**The Shadow Dragon Aspects:** The End Of All Things (death, destruction & the end of the Eternal Cycle), cunning & subterfuge and the thirst for power.

**The Blue Dragon Aspects:** freedom, discovery and self-determination at all costs.

**Members of the Bazaar** are also called by the dragons, but do not champion a specific one.

## IT'S A CONTEST.

It's a Character vs Character (CvC) event with a competition at its core. The only way that works is if everyone plays by the same rules. Visibly and dramatically reacting to hits isn't just good manners - it's good sportsmanship!

Loss shouldn't just be expected, but embraced. If everyone shrugs off hits, fudges their skills, and prioritizes winning over playing, then a fight can get aggressive, never conclude, and result in bad feelings all around.

**Pro Tip:** You can't rise dramatically from the ashes if you never eat dirt. Plus- it's way cooler to die a heroic death than to utterly demolish a weaker opponent.

**Remember...** *It's just a game*, and you win by having fun- something that can happen even when you lose a battle!

## WHAT IS IT?

# Are there rules?

Yes, and while we won't talk much about them in this guide, you should definitely **give them a look** before you attend. They let us play through things that we can't do safely: things like bleeding to death, or having your heart exploded by a magical spell.

You can also ignore them entirely under the right circumstances.

## SOUNDS WEIRD. WHEN?

It's okay to ignore the rules if it lets you reward an opponent or make the scene cooler for others. This is something you'll often see in big, showy fights. For example, after suffering an impressive and dramatic blow, a combatant might decide:

"That was such a good move, it LOOKED like it should kill me... so even though I have two hit points left, I'm gonna fall down."

**This "reward your enemy" attitude is also a big part of magic...**

When someone casts a spell in a really cool way, it's awesome to reward them by letting their spell have a big effect- for example, maybe that Fear spell you took terrified you so badly that it never wears off and you're forevermore afraid of that guy with the robe and wizards hat.

## STILL WANT RULES?

There are two big ones to follow.

- **Always React!** When something happens to you, accept it and show a reaction which you feel is appropriate.
- **Accept Reactions.** When you do something to another player, accept their reaction and keep playing.

Let's say you were 'cut' by a rusty dagger. Yeah, you took a 1 hp damage, but more importantly...

**How does your character react?**

Even after healing, there might be lingering pain. If not cleaned well, a wound from a rusty, filthy weapon could get infected, leading to a fever or other side effects. After portraying a fever for a while, if nobody makes you sit down and take a rest, maybe your character will get dizzy and lose their balance at a key moment. Damn that rusty dagger!

## WHAT IS IT?

# 2 | Who can I be?

You can be just about anything you like that fits into a high fantasy aesthetic. That covers everything from Lord of the Rings and Skyrim to Medieval France. You can even find characters from the Witcher universe, or Xanxia and cultivation stories. The Dragon's call for champions reach many worlds.

## THERE ARE TWO RULES.

First, whether your character is from your D&D game, another larp, or a world featured in popular video games- You must play a unique character you created - no pre-existing characters from novels or movies.

Secondly, they can not be native to the Dragon World. Unless you've been to a DrachenFest event before, this your first time taking part in the contest.

### **I can bring my character from another game?!**

Yep! You just need to adapt your character for DrachenFest mechanics using our [rulebook](#).

Notably, Their potions and magic items stop working once they arrive in this world, and depending on how you costume and characterize yourself, you may also need to make some adaptations to meet our costuming and genre requirements.

## WHEN ITS OVER...

### **What happens to my character from another game when they go home?**

For some characters, being whisked across worlds to do the bidding of Dragons may not be that strange. Or, if your character is more grounded, it will have been an experience of a lifetime - experiences which will change and stay with them forever.

Take away from DrachenFest only what you want and think will improve your experience at home and at other larps!

**IMPORTANT:** Even if your character is forever changed by the contest; the Dragons do not leave the Dragon World or follow you home.

## THE LOOK

# 3 | Costuming and kit...

We want to create the illusion that you've stepped into a medieval fantasy world. The most crucial way that participants contribute to the ambience and illusion of DrachenFest is with their costuming and kit.

You don't have to look like you're from the set of Lord of the Rings, but you do have to meet our minimum requirements:

- No existing characters from media or costume recreations.
- Modern clothing (t-shirts, jeans, zippers, sneakers, etc) should not be visible.
- Avoid stretchy or synthetic modern fabrics wherever possible.
- Be tasteful- We'll explain more in a bit.

## DRESS FOR THE JOB

A basic costume like a tunic, medieval pants, belt, and some boot covers works just fine.

**However, your costuming communicates your character concept and how people will perceive and respond to your character.**

Without armor, your camp is going to be reluctant to put you on the front-lines. Without finery, no one is going to believe you're the scion of a wealthy house of nobles. When someone needs to be stitched up after a battle, the first person they'll approach is the one with bandages, ointments, and a jar of leeches.

## AT WHAT COST?

Spending a ton of money on costuming, or weeks sewing by hand, is not a prerequisite to play. Just be prepared to moderate or adapt your character concept to match what you can plausibly portray.

DrachenFest is a collaborative enterprise. Your fellow players, particularly the other players in your camp, may have tips and tricks, or maybe even costume to share.

**[Check out the forums to make connections!](#)**

Lean on them to bring your concept into alignment with the aesthetic of DrachenFest.

## THE LOOK

# Race Painting...

We don't do that here.

Never paint your face or skin the same color as a real world ethnicity. Yes, that includes jet black for Dark Elves.

Don't dress or act in a way that evokes racist stereotypes and caricatures and don't wear stuff that isn't open source. Be prepared to take it in stride if you're told a costuming element is tacky or in poor taste.

# ...Poor taste?

Let's say you're not super well versed in this stuff- and you're not sure what constitutes appropriation vs **open source**.

A very simple guideline to follow is to double check if the costuming element or clothing item or jewelry belongs to a group of people that you aren't part of **and** is currently discriminated against in the country you're larping in.

Be doubly careful with stuff that has spiritual or religious meanings and isn't openly shared. If you're still not sure, write to us and ask!

## THE LOOK

# Set Dressing...

Our aspirational goal is for 360 degrees of immersion: When we look around, we want to only see the high-fantasy game world.

We know that's impractical, but we do expect everyone to try hiding any personal belongings or camping gear that will break the illusion we're all trying to create.

So... pour your Pepsi bottle into a mug, please.

## SILENCE THY DEVICES

Personal electronics shouldn't be in the play area unless they're appropriately hidden or disguised. Do what you have to do in an emergency, just know that a ref will ask you to stow it if it becomes obvious.

## YOUR HOME, YOUR CASTLE

Only genre-appropriate tents, chairs, tables, and storage containers are permitted in shared play spaces. That doesn't mean you can't come to game unless you have a genre-appropriate sheepskin bedroll with genre-appropriate lice- just try to disguise modern stuff as best you can! Sheets and canvas are your best friends here, and the other players in your camp may also have tips and tricks to share.

## PRIVY PRETTY

Conceal any sanitary or cosmetic items when you are making your way to and from the showers or bathrooms. Bringing your favorite beach towel? Make sure it's stowed or hidden.

## TABLE MANNERS

It's a good idea to have your own genre appropriate plates, drinking vessels, and utensils. We recommend wood, cast iron, or plain steel. There are a lot available on Etsy or Medieval Collectibles. You can't live on smoked turkey legs alone.

You'll also want to be able to carouse with your camp. Aluminum cans, styrofoam cups, and other modern liquid containment solutions might get you shooed out of the play area. You'll need to drink water. Please drink water. A genre-appropriate drinking bladder, wineskin, or flask is ideal, but you can carry a modern plastic water bottle on you. Just make sure it's appropriately hidden.





## THE LOOK

# Coins...

Any DrachenFest coins that come into your possession are yours to keep and take home with you after game. No one (whether they're staff or a player) can ever make you give your coins away. Even if they've 'robbed' you for other game items or are 'looting' your dead body.

If you do give someone a coin, it's theirs now, whether they've swindled your or not!

## THEY EXIST TO SPEND

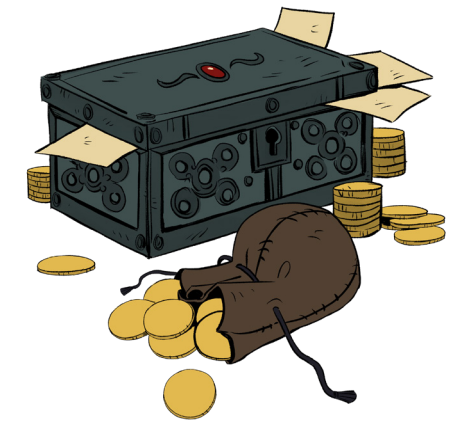
Coins are often used as a 'tipping' mechanism in the game and as a way to express appreciation or gratitude for fun roleplay or added ambience- for example, it's customary to give coins to someone who has found a creative or entertaining way to rob you.

Coins can also be spent at the bazaar at 'Enterprises', player run in-game businesses, services and guilds. These are identified by an odd number on their address plaque.

**IMPORTANT:** Our merchants and vendors need to feed their families and can not do that with DrachenFest coins. You'll need to pay with USD. These have even numbers on their address plaque.

## HOW MUCH?

Everybody gets three complimentary Copper coins. You can also choose to purchase a handful more for a small fee. Silver coins are quite rare, and are worth 10 copper coins. They can be acquired in the Bazaar or by the grace of one of the camp's avatars or guild leaders. Gold coins, worth 10 silver, are incredibly rare.



## HOW TO PLAY

# 4 | The Feel...

Maintaining the illusion isn't just about how we look. It's also about how we act.

- Avoid OOG (Out of Game) conversations that strongly affect the atmosphere of the game.
- Avoid modern jokes and cultural references - including insults. Try calling people stuff like milksop or lout.
- Absolutely no insulting references to a player's physical gender, sexuality, or appearance.

Please remember that voices carry and you could be breaking the illusion for someone even without meaning to.

# ...React & Engage

If you see someone sitting by themselves in the tavern, writing poetry and audibly searching for the right word, don't let that moment die in a vacuum. Consider engaging that person, play along with what they're presenting. Ask to hear their poetry.

### **But Also Read the Room...**

Your ruffian might want to physically corner and intimidate anyone who questions your authority, but always be sensitive to others and take care to ensure everyone is still having out of game fun with your antics.

DrachenFest has the 'Oh Mother' call to help players calibrate their experience and signal that they want to opt-out of play, but we still expect players to be mindful of how their roleplay can affect the fun of others and to be flexible in their choices.

## HOW TO PLAY

# 5 | Safety

Our goal is to mitigate risk and create a safer environment. We do this in collaboration with you as a participant. This requires trust that goes both ways.

You trust us to create policies and procedures to encourage a culture of safety, to investigate and respond to safety concerns, to give you the tools to measure and manage your own risk, to communicate your boundaries to other players and to opt-out of play that feels uncomfortable or unsafe to you.

We trust you to be aware of your own limits, to bring safety issues to your attention, and to use the tools that are available to take ownership of your own safety during game, and to opt-out of play that feels uncomfortable or unsafe to you.

## OPT OUT...

If you want to excuse yourself from a situation that's made you uncomfortable, you are free to go out of game and leave. When someone does this, don't object, don't follow them, just give them space and let them leave.

If you have a tense moment with another player, don't escalate. Opt out. If someone says you're swinging too hard, or if you're upset by someone not taking their hits, it's better to back off and cool down than to call them out or start an argument. Be nice.

## CHECKING IN

Good larp etiquette includes being sensitive. After something intense goes down, it's okay to break character to make sure everyone is still having fun- Just make sure the scene's over first!

## SUBSTANCE USE

Do not under any circumstances bring or use *illegal* substances at DrachenFest and always take care while under the influence to opt out more often than not.

Consent can't be given while under the influence, so if someone is under the influence, never engage in roleplay that requires it.

**IMPORTANT:** Taking part in combat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is strictly prohibited and **will result in your immediate expulsion from the event.**

## HOW TO PLAY

# Fightin'...

While you don't have to participate in the faction vs. faction competition, that conflict is the engine that keeps the game turning. Camp vs camp warfare, and the associated troop movements are key parts of DrachenFest.

### COMBAT SAFETY

Battles occur regularly, and can often be chaotic and crowded. Being in a tightly packed crowd and fighting in close quarters can be intense! With the loss of personal space, it can easily feel that you are no longer in control. This can be uncomfortable and even panic inducing. This is why we have to have safety in mind at all times. Players can always Opt out at any point.

### PULL YOUR BLOWS

The battles of DrachenFest are both sport and theater. Simulated aggression is awesome, actual aggression is a problem.

When striking another player with a weapon, never use more force than is necessary for them to recognize they've been hit.

Remember, you don't have to move slow or sacrifice technique- but you do need to maintain control of your swings while you fight. Repeated instances of unsafe combat will see you barred from participating in battles, or the event entirely.

### IN BATTLE...

Defenders form "shield walls" and two handed weapons often form the second rank, making reach attacks between shields. Skirmishers try to outflank the enemy, and spellcasters are like artillery - powerful but vulnerable. Archers snipe at those without shields and injured characters are taken to the back where healers triage and treat the injured with healing magic, alchemy, and surgery.

### HEALING SCENES...

Add a lot to the atmosphere, both during and after the battle. It can be very exciting to clean and dress a wound while your patient screams and a battle rages around you. A plastic shot glass can be crushed to make a convincing bone-crunch noise. Bloody bandages and other medical props help bring the grim aftermath of a battle to life.

If you're the one being healed? React! Respond with grunts, screams of pain, demands to see their churgeon's license. After the fight is over, the battle roleplay keeps going.

# “What Now?”

After you arrive, you'll wait in line to check-in and receive a wrist band. Then you'll move your gear to your tent or cabin, and park your car in the parking lot. Try meeting other people, and begin getting into character- Start by using your character name, and gradually get into your character's headspace.

If you need help, directions, or have question, camp referees will be there to assist you.

Each camp has its own way of selecting its leaders, but the positions that the Avatars are usually looking to fill are...

**The Council** that makes impactful camp decisions.

**The Commanders** that train and lead the army.

**The Diplomats** that engage and politic with other camps to seal temporary defensive alliances or join forces in battle.

**The Spymasters** that form a network of rogues and spies, forming back-channels for diplomacy.

**The Champions** who will spearhead their warriors, fight duels and honor combats for the glory of their camp.

Later on Wednesday, there will be an Opening Ceremony which kicks off the DrachenFest. After that point, the contest starts: Battles can take place, and banners can be captured. You should come cheer for your team's avatar, and then escort them back to your camp.