

DARKON

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Introduction

Welcome to the world of Darkon, a realm in which brave warriors and skillful spell-casters seek treasure, fight monsters, and strive for fame and glory. As a member of the realm, you should read this rulebook carefully. Try to familiarize yourself with the rules governing character classes other than your own. Be creative when developing your character. Each player should be unique in some way. At all times, be mindful of the safety of other players. Darkon battles are designed to be safe, and we expect all combat rules to be followed. As a Darkon player, you may attend all battles and other events (described in greater detail in the following pages) that the organization sponsors. Remember, your enjoyment of fantasy wargaming is only as limited as your imagination.

Excelsior

Inspection

At the beginning of each battle, all players must pass through the inspection line. Inspection is conducted by the Elders to insure the following:

- 1) Costumes:
All costumes are checked for realism and to make sure they meet class restrictions. Hades passes will be issued to persons with the best costumes.
- 2) Weapons:
Weapons are mainly checked for safety, but we encourage you to give your weapon a realistic appearance. Unsafe weapons will be taken by the Elders and returned at the end of the battle. Shields and armor are also inspected for safety at this point.
- 3) Check-In:
Experienced players check-in by giving their real names to insure battle experience.
- 4) Dues:
Fifty-cent dues are collected to help pay for items such as marking tape, adventure masks, etc. (For events other than battles, dues may increase.) After payment, your hand will be marked to show you've completed inspection.
- 5) Registration:
Here, first-timers fill out a registration card and purchase a rulebook.

Creating a Character

1) Fantasy Characters

In the realm of Darkon, a player must assume the role of another person. You may wish to be an evil thief or a noble paladin, for example. No matter which you choose, you must act out this role and develop its personality. Your costume, weapons and behavior all develop this.

2) Battle Names

All players are required to have a fantasy name. This name must be original; no Ivanhoses, Merlins or Red Sonjas are acceptable. During a battle, try to address other players by their battle names only. Not telling the other players your real name will help insure this. The use of battle names helps to create a fantasy atmosphere.

3) Costumes

All Darkon players are required to wear medieval or fantasy-type garb. Your costume must consist of the following articles:

- A. A tunic no shorter than crotch length, or armor, or a bare chest.
- B. Dull, solid-colored pants with high boots or ankle-to-knee length leggings. Blue jeans are not allowed!
- C. Any brown, black or tan shoes are permitted. White tennis shoes are not allowed!

Hoods and capes make good additions to your costume, as well as fur and leather. Your character class should play a big part in your choice of costumes.

All costumes are inspected before battles. A costume must look like a real medieval costume. No torn bed sheets or Iron Maiden shirts showing through your chainmail will pass. If your costume is too sloppy and doesn't pass, you will not be allowed to play.

Races

Each player character should have a different persona. Therefore, Darkon permits races other than human. Many fantasy wargaming races are permitted, and since Darkon is a fantasy game, imaginative races may be created with council approval. Keep in mind, however, that the requirements for each race must be met. A player who wishes to be an elf need not have blond hair, or wear Vulcan ears, yet should act like an elf. Of course, a 6'3" player could not be considered a halfling. If you choose to be a race other than human, please consider your physical size and shape before selecting the race.

The following races are known to the realm of Darkon:

Race	Alignment	Restrictions
Human	Any	None
Dwarf	Neutral or Good	Under 5'3", Stocky
Elvish		
Dark or Drow	Evil	Slender, dark
High	Neutral or Good	Slender
Half-elvish	Any	None
Half-orcish	Neutral or Evil	Under 6' tall
Halflings	Neutral or Good	Same as dwarves



ELF



DWARF



HALF-ORC

Battles & Events

Darkon is based in the western Baltimore County-Howard County area. Battles and other game events will usually be held in the Woodstock and McKeeldin areas of Patapsco State Park. Complete directions to both parks appear in the back of this volume. Occasionally, battles will be held at other locations, but advance notification will be given.

Battles occur on the average once every two weeks, all year round. So therefore, weather conditions may interfere. However, only steady rain, extreme cold and heavy snowfall will cancel a battle. If a battle is cancelled, the country leaders will be contacted. Below is a list of the different events that will be held in Darkon:

- 1) Normal battle - fought with two teams made up of several countries. One country's banner will represent each team. Relics are used.
- 2) Alliance battle - this is a battle in which every country starts by itself. Countries may ally by mutual agreement, money or druid. Relics used.

- 3) Cardboard shield battle - shields of cardboard and tape are used, but these shields may be no more than one $\frac{1}{4}$ inch layer of cardboard thick.
- 4) Campouts - one or two nights of stories around a campfire and battling by night. Relics are used.
- 5) Adventures - on an adventure, a creator recruits warriors to play the roles of monsters. Traps and treasure are frequently encountered as a party of 10-30 players try to obtain their goal.
- 6) Challenges - when one country declares war on another and the two meet at a prearranged time and place and battle.

Classes and Rank

A player entering the world of Darkon has a choice of seven character classes. Although players are allowed to change classes, you are encouraged to select one class and stick to it. Try to choose a class that you will enjoy and that will develop your character. Here are the classes and their requirements:

1. Fighter - this is the commonmost class in Darkon. For a player of the fighter class, there are no restrictions on costumes, weapons or armor. This class is the most popular of the character types, but requires the person choosing it to engage in heavy combat.
2. Ranger - a character choosing to be a ranger should be a fighter who feels close to nature. Such a player must spend the first rank as a regular fighter, but upon the beginning of his sixth battle, he may declare himself a ranger and gain certain abilities. Rangers have a natural tracking ability which they may use at will (they are told the location of enemy forces by an Elder). When a ranger finishes five battles as a member of that class, he is able to use the spell, feign death. Upon reaching the third rank, the ranger gains a cure light wounds spell. Certain restrictions apply to the ranger class. For example, rangers can only use round shields and cannot wear chain mail, plate mail or banded armor. This is so that rangers can quietly and rapidly move through wooded areas. Rangers must wear costumes of natural colors, such as tan, brown and green, and are required to wear green or tan cloaks. A character of the ranger class may use any weapons except black axes and yellow weapons.
3. Paladin - fighters who wish to serve their God or special cause could consider joining the paladin class. Keep in mind, though, that possessing a noble title is a prerequisite for becoming a paladin. Any fighter class can try for

nobility, but a player wishing to be a paladin must first attain knighthood. A player who attends ten battles as a fighter and gains noble status is eligible for the paladin class. Paladins are holy warriors who have a deep sense of honor and justice and must be of lawful good alignment.

Certain costume requirements pertain to paladins. All paladins must wear a cross, either around their necks or on their surcoats. Players of this class must also wear a white cloak that symbolizes purity of purpose. In combat, paladins are allowed to strike clerics only in self-defense, and are not permitted to kill mortally wounded persons. Kite shields must be used by paladins, and chain, plate or banded armor must be worn. Since paladins are skilled enough in combat to earn knighthood, they are considered to be masters of most weapon types and have no restrictions on the weapons they may use.

At first rank, a paladin has the natural ability to cure disease and is immune to disease (both these abilities during adventures only). When a paladin reaches the second rank, he acquires the clerical spell, cure light wounds.

4. Cleric - characters of this class are the holy members of Darkon. They are the most powerful healers in the game, since they are the only class capable of healing mortal wounds. A few restrictions apply to clerics. Since clerics should not shed blood, they are permitted to use only yellow and blue-yellow weapons. All clerics must wear a cross around their necks and on their surcoats regardless of alignment. Clerics may wear any type of armor and use any kind of shield. The major benefit of the cleric class is the use of spells. See the section on spells for a complete listing of clerical spells.
5. Druid - this character class combines fighter, magic-user and clerical abilities in a woodland setting. Druids are priests of nature who cast spells and engage in combat equally well. (See the spell section for druid spells). As a rule, druids should garb themselves in shades of brown and green and must wear a crescent moon on a necklace. They are restricted to leather armor, round shields and scimitars and daggers. Druids have great respect and love for nature, and they become offended or even hostile if they see another player abusing or destroying any parts of the natural world.
6. Magic-user - Initially, characters of this class are among the weakest in Darkon. Magic-users cannot wear armor or use shields, and they are restricted to swords and daggers for combat. All mages must wear ankle length robes and carry a large sack with the material components of their spells. As a magic-user progresses through the ranking system, he gains more spells and becomes increasingly powerful. However, magic-users normally depend on fighters to protect them while they read their spells. For a complete listing of mage spells, see the spell section.

Rank

All character classes in Darkon are classified and regulated by rank. For every five battles a player attends, his character advances one rank. However, this system of ranking is closely tied to the character classes a player portrays. If a player attends twelve battles as a cleric, and then goes to five battles as a fighter, then he gets credit for seventeen battle experiences. Normally, a player who has seventeen battles would be considered a member of the 4th rank. The player who changes classes, however, would receive credit for three clerical ranks and one fighter rank. Thus, shifting classes only hinders a character who is attempting to get occupational or noble titles. A character who chooses one class and is loyal to it can steadily rise through the rank system. Remember, one rank equals five battles.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Number of Battles</u>
First	1 - 5
Second	6 - 10
Third	11 - 15
Fourth	16 - 20
Fifth	21 - 25
Sixth	26 - 30
Seventh	31 - 35
Eighth	36 - 40
Ninth	41 - 45
Tenth	46 - 50
etc.	etc.

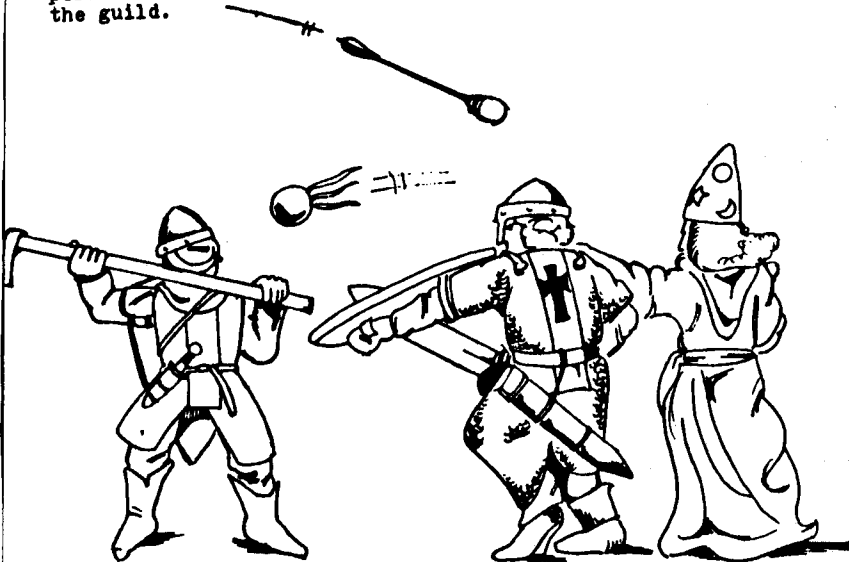
Squires & Apprentices

Fighters, rangers and paladins, upon reaching second rank, are allowed to have a squire. A squire must be at least twelve years of age and have signed parental consent. As a squire, you must serve your master by doing such things as carrying equipment, helping with the master's armor and bringing food and drink when your lord desires. Squires may only fight in certain cases, such as by the master's side, when their lord is wounded or if there is an urgent need for fighters.

In return for his service, a squire is instructed in the skills of combat and war. It is also the master's duty to see that a squire is well-equipped and armored for battle. After

7. Thief - thieves have no advantages during normal battles, except for the use of the Dagger of Venom. Characters of this class gain their abilities on adventures. These abilities include learning monster languages (one per rank), picking locks, and detecting and removing traps. A thief may find and remove any traps by simply telling the Elder his intentions. All thieves must carry a key which represents their power of opening locks on adventures. Thieves must dress in black and have a hood, so that they may conceal their identities. They can wear only leather armor and are not allowed to carry shields. It is very important for a thief to move quickly and freely, therefore he should not be weighed down with heavy armor and shield. Thieves may choose any weapon except those that are black.

The most experienced thief is called the Master Thief. He is the teacher of thieves and no other thief may have the title. Occasionally, other players may pay thieves to perform assassinations. All thieves should be members of the guild.



FIGHTER

PALADIN

MAGIC-USER

a year of training, a squire is nominated for knighthood, whereupon he/she must go through the normal noble process. An apprentice differs from a squire in that his master is a magic-user of at least second rank experience. The mage teaches the apprentice the arts of magic and wizardry, while the apprentice serves as an assistant. Apprentices can only fight as a squire (with respect to magic-user combat restrictions) and can only use first rank spells. Thieves and druids may also have apprentices when they attain 2nd rank. Apprentices of these classes serve as helpers while learning the skills and powers of each particular class.

Titles

Nobility in the realm of Darkon is restricted to certain classes. Only characters of the following classes may achieve noble status: fighter (including ranger and paladin) and cleric. If the character has the necessary number of battles, and the maximum armor allowed by his class to qualify for a noble title, then the character's guild will decide if the player possesses enough persona, noble qualities and fighting ability to justify noble status. In the event that the guild reaches a favorable verdict, the Council of Elders will be asked to schedule an honor battle between the prospective noble and a noble champion selected by the Elders. If the character defeats the established noble in two out of three battles, then he will be awarded the title of knight and be addressed as "Sir" thereafter. After a player reaches this step, he may advance up the nobility scale only by besting another noble on the field of honor. Should a noble character begin to lose his noble qualities and persona, the Council of Elders reserves the right to revoke noble titles. The following titles are found in Darkon:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Rank</u>
	3rd
Knight	5th
Baron	7th
Count	9th
Duke	11th
Prince	13th
King	

Noble titles may, on rare occasions, be obtained by marriage. In addition to acquiring noble titles, a player may also consider getting occupational titles. These titles are voted on by whatever guild governs the character's class. If a character reaches the proper rank, he may try for one of the

following occupational titles:

Fighter (including Ranger and Paladin)

<u>Title</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Corporal	2nd
Sargeant	3rd
Lieutenant	5th
Captain	7th
Colonel	9th
* General	11th

Cleric

<u>Title</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Priest	2nd
Bishop	3rd
Archbishop	5th
Cardinal	7th
* Pope	9th

Druid

<u>Title</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Archdruid	5th
Masterdruid	7th
** Greatdruid	9th

Magic-User

<u>Title</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Warlock	5th
Sorcerer	7th
** Wizard	9th

Thief

<u>Title</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Cutpurse	3rd
Burglar	5th
Robber	7th
** Master Thief	9th

* Only one per country

** Only one in the realm of Darkon

If your character meets the requirements, he or she may hold both occupational and noble titles. For example, a player could be a bishop/baron or a captain who is also a knight. Remember, other players address you by your title only if they know your title, so it doesn't hurt to publicize your status. Try to act according to your position; a colonel does not take orders from a sargeant. Likewise, lower-rank- ing nobles should respect the higher nobility. Titles make the game interesting, and help to enrich the realm.

Guilds

Members of a particular class may wish to join or establish a guild governing that class. Guilds are associations of players from the same class. The functions of any guild vary from class to class, but all guilds should vote on occupational titles, and fighter and clerical guilds must decide if players are worthy of noble titles. Responsibility for organizing the guild rests with the players themselves. Rules for membership and procedure are decided by the characters of each class. Although each class is not required to have a guild, forming a guild is the players' advantage.

Countries

The realm of Darkon consists of a number of countries or
The term country refers to a number of individuals
ed together to fight as a unit. As a new player, you may
to join an already established country or find a few
ads and form your own. A country must have at least four
ers but no more than eight.

Forming a Country

and the appropriate number of people.
select an emblem.

Choose a leader - this leader should be a responsible
person who is respected by his fellow countrymen.

Submit a written origin, including a thousand-year history,
to the Council of Elders.

Country Representation

The Council of Elders will meet periodically to discuss
enforcement, dues and debts, new country submissions, and
cle submissions for the magazine, "Tavern Tales". Council
ers will also schedule and plan events and battles. Rule
ges will only be made for safety reasons. Council meet-
ings will be announced in the magazine, on the hotline, and
try leaders will be called. Each country may have up to
voting representatives at a meeting.

Surcoats and Emblems

Each country has an emblem or symbol that identifies
particular country. A few examples of symbols are
ons, castles, bears, elephants, hawks, hydras, pyramids
crescent moons. This symbol is painted on the shields
surcoats of the country. A symbol is more than just
thing that looks good, however. The emblem should be
representative of the country in some way, be it a facet of
personality, its God, or the way in which it fights. Be
tive when coming up with a symbol.

Banners

Every country must have a banner flag when it comes to
battle. This flag must have the country's emblem printed upon
it and must be mounted on a pole four to six feet in length.
The banner must be carried with the bulk of the country or
placed within the country's fort. A banner should be brought
to every battle, and countries without banners will be split
up for the day.

Country Origins

A typed manuscript of a country's history and culture
should be submitted to the Council of Elders before a country
can actively participate in the game. A country origin should
include the following:

- 1) A 1000-year history telling of wars, adventures, deeds,
happenings, and the rise and fall of rulers.
- 2) A list of country heroes and their deeds.
- 3) A map of the country.
- 4) A list of natural resources, imports, exports and trade
agreements.
- 5) Explanations of any personalized weapons and armor.

Personalizing Your Country

All countries should be different. Countries can use
certain types of weapons, dress a certain way, or adopt a
particular attitude. A country of cavemen would use stone
axes and flint-headed spears. The weapons of this country
would be made in accordance; jagged black foam for spear-
heads and equally crude axes. A country could be all elves
carrying bows or bearded dwarves wielding battle axes. An
attitude is important also. Is your country a nation of
crazed berserkers or honorable knights bound by a code of
chivalry?

Nomads

Nomads are basically wanderers who a) are beginners not set on an established country, or b) are experienced players who are sole members of a country. Players from established countries may bear the country's emblem upon their shields and surcoats. Those nomads not on a country must cover their shields with brown cloth. Most of the time, the nomads will be divided into sides fair; they fight as a leaderless group if not separated. A group of nomads fighting together must provide an Elder. Experienced players from established countries may retain any titles if forced to fight as a nomad.

Armor and Armbands

1) Armor

One of the most important items and investments a warrior may wish to make is armor. Not only will armor extend your lifespan in battle, but if it is crotch-length or longer, it will count as a costume. There are several types of armor that fall under four different classes. All armor must be safe, realistic, and must not have sharp or pointed edges. As with a shield, you should find an armor type which best suits yourself and is permitted by your class. (See Classes) Helmets are also allowed if safe.

Armor Requirements and Ranking

- Armor Class 5: No armor, just costume
- Armor Class 4: Leather or suede at least 1/8 of an inch thick
Leather jacket cannot be used.
also
Leather scale consisting of small leather scraps sewn to a heavy material in alternating rows.
- Armor Class 3: Studded leather with smooth metal studs at least 1/4 inch large, set in evenly-spaced rows.
also
Ring mail made of non-flexible metal rings no larger than 2" in diameter. Should be evenly spaced, 1/2 of their diameter apart in alternating rows.
also
Splint mail built of metal plates 1/16 inch thick with rounded edges. Plates must be evenly spaced.

Armor Class 2: Chain mail with links no larger than 3/4 of an inch in diameter, using wire of 14 gauge or lower. This chain mail must hang in the correct direction.

also

Scale mail made of steel squares with rounded bottoms. These scales must be about 1/32 inch thick and no larger than 2" by 3". As with leather scale, this armor must be fastened to a heavy material in alternating rows.

Armor Class 1: Plate mail covering the torso must be made from 1/8 inch steel. All edges must be carefully filed down, so that no players can be cut by the armor. It is recommended that you cover all plate mail edges with foam and/or duct tape for additional safety. Plate pieces for the shins and forearms are called greaves. These greaves must be 1/8 inch thick and must cover at least 3/4 of the limb. Greaves may be secured with:

- leather belts & buckles
- leather thongs or laces
- chains

Any plate mail made of aluminum is not allowed, because aluminum is too light and holds up poorly in heavy combat.

also

Banded mail made of overlapping layers of 1/16 inch steel. The bands must have round corners, and, if fitted properly, should leave no area exposed. Bands can be tied or riveted to a heavy material.

Quick Reference Chart

AC 5	None	Damaged armor must be mended by a mage or taken to Hades for 4 minutes. Otherwise, hits on armor will accumulate from battle to battle.
AC 4	Leather & leather scale	
AC 3	Studded leather, splint, ring	
AC 2	Chain mail, metal scale	
AC 1	Plate mail, banded	

Remember - armor protects yourself and others. Be sure to make all metal armor edges safe. Unsafe armor will not pass inspection.

2) Armbands

In any type of live wargaming, quick identification of armor class is extremely important. To prevent game-disrupting disputes between players, a system to quickly determine an opponent's armor type has been devised. If any armor is worn on the body (excluding head and limbs), then an armband must be worn. This band should be worn on your weapon arm.

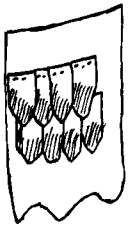
AC 1 - yellow AC 2 - red AC 3 - green AC 4 - blue

Making Armor

1) Leather scale



Cut a 2" by 3" piece of leather. Then sew this leather. Then sew this leather and other leather scrap and other leather material to a heavy material tunic in overlapping rows.



The final step is covering the entire tunic with leather scales. Pieces used should be thick as normal leather armor.

2) Ring mail



Roll steel wire on a dowel. Washers may also be used.



Cut the steel links and washers.



Sew the rings on a heavy material tunic. Use some type of durable binding - fishing wire works well.

3) Chain mail



Roll wire on a steel dowel. Dowel should have diameter no larger than 3/4 inch.

Carefully cut the individual chain links. Try to avoid sharp or jagged edges.



Using pliers, hook the links together. One easy method of making chainmail is building clusters of five links. One link should always be hooked through four others, except on the edges.



ARMOR CLASSES



SPLINT MAIL



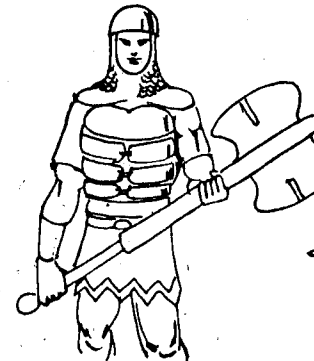
RING MAIL



SCALE MAIL



CHAIN MAIL



BANDED MAIL

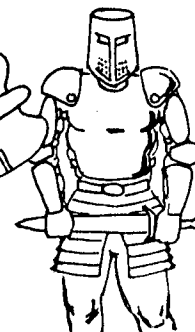


PLATE MAIL

Shields

In the world of Darkon, there are several types of shields allowed. Though a shield may seem cumbersome, it is good protection for a warrior, and adds to the game atmosphere. A shield stops all weapons except: fireball, lightning bolt, Arrow of Piercing, Javelin of Lightning, and siege machine projectiles. Also, if shields receive three solid hits from a polearm (must be over six feet long and wielded with two hands) then they are destroyed. Shields that are destroyed by these weapons must be dropped immediately. They may either be taken to Hades for four minutes to be restored or mended by a magic-user after the battle.

Shields must be well-padded, especially the edges. The wood should not be felt when the shield is hit full-force. (See making weapons and shields.) If you are on a country, your shield must have the country's color and emblem. If you are a nomad, your shield must have a brown cover. All shields must have a cloth cover. A noble may place his symbol in the upper left-hand corner of his shield, but the country emblem must appear on the shield as well.

Hits which glance off shields do not count. All hits should be solid to prevent disputes. Only hits from morning stars or flails that strike you after hitting your shield should be counted, because weapons with chains were designed for this purpose.

The three main types of shields are the kite, large round, and buckler. Each shield serves its purpose, so finding a shield that suits you may be difficult. The only size requirements for shields is that a buckler cannot be smaller than twelve inches and larger than sixteen inches. Shields must be well-padded, covered, and weigh proportionate to their size.

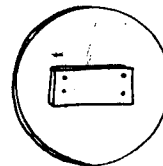
Special Weapons and Armor

Since Darkon is derived mainly from the imagination, this allows special weapons and armor to be produced within the countries. Certain weapons may hold powers which can be used on adventures. These weapons would have special markings; by color of cover, tape, shape, etc. A story describing the weapon's origin, what it does, and how you obtained it must be submitted to the Elders to be voted upon. Some of the relics may be considered special weapons, but anyone may use them. Your creations are restricted to members of your country. Siege weapons are also defined as special weapons. Ballistae, catapults and mantlets are three types of siege weapons. These weapons have advantages and disadvantages. Though a mantlet produces great coverage, and the ballista and catapult do extraordinary damage when fired, all three and catapult are bulky, hard to transport, and take a couple of men to operate properly.

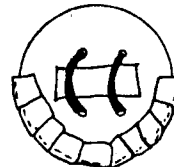
Armor is another original creation that can be explained by a convincing legend. The country of Ramen has produced closely-knit copper chainmail which can take an extra arrow hit. However, this armor is more expensive, heavier than normal chainmail, and takes longer to create.

Making Shields

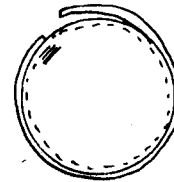
- 1) For arm protection, attach a piece of foam to one side of smoothly-cut wooden board. Duct tape works well for this.



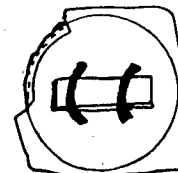
- 2) Next fasten leather or rope straps across the foam pad. Begin padding the edges of the shield with hard foam. Wood cannot be felt on the edge of a properly padded shield.



- 3) Cover the front of the shield with hard foam. Then wrap the entire shield, front and edges, with a few layers of soft foam. Try to use water-resistant foam.



- 4) Now staple a cloth shield cover to the back of the shield. This cover should stretch across the front and edges of the shield. Use sturdy material, because the cover helps keep the foam tight against the wood.



- 5) Finally, paint your country's emblem on the front of the shield. Acrylic paint works best for shield covers.



Weapons

As stated previously, Darkon is a fantasy game based in the Medieval era. Therefore, game weapons are typical medieval weapons: axe, sword, dagger, spear, morning star, etc. During the inspection, weapons will be thoroughly checked for safety and appearance. (A sword should look like a sword, not like a club!) The shaft or core of a striking weapon should not be felt through the striking edge. So use a type of foam that has spring and flexibility to prevent tearing and core exposure.

Each weapon was designed for a reason, so select your weapons carefully. Also, your class may decide what type of weapon you may or may not use. Like armor, weapons must be identified quickly on the battlefield in order to:

- 1) Prevent disputes and game interruptions
- 2) Calculate weapon damage

For easy reference, weapons have been categorized in six colors:

COLOR	STYLE OF ATTACK	EXAMPLES
white	cutting	swords & axes
yellow	smashing	maces & morning stars
black	cleaving	polearms & battleaxes
red	thrusting	spears & daggers
blue	throwing	javelins
green	special	fireballs & ballistae

Important Weapon Rules

- 1) All hand weapons must be padded everywhere except the spot at which they are held.
- 2) All weapons must have a well-padded pommel.
- 3) All swords must have quillons.
- 4) Morning stars and flails must have a chain length of one foot or less, and the chains must have foam links.
- 5) Weapon size should be proportional to weapon weight.
- 6) Only yellow weapons can strike the head, and only in a downward swing. This includes all parts of the head except face and ears.
- 7) Weapons, especially swords should be cloth-covered if possible.
- 8) Arrow hits count to all parts of the body, including the face.
- 9) A quarter-staff has no effect on AC 1, and though a yellow weapon, it should never be used to strike the head.

- 10) Javelins and spears must not be swung.
- 11) Weapons not marked by red tape should not be used in a thrusting manner, even to drive back an opponent.
- 12) Weapons grabbed by the hand cause a light wound and must be released immediately. Only morning star/flail chains and spear shafts can be caught.
- 13) Weapons over six feet long destroy any shield with three two-handed hits.

Throwing Weapons

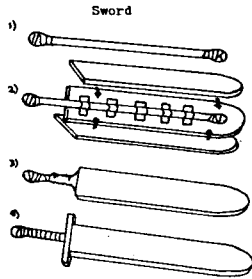
Unlike hand weapons, the shafts of throwing weapons must be extremely well-padded, including the surface on which they are held. Throwing weapons can be used as hand weapons or thrown. Hits to the head and neck with these weapons are illegal. Thrown weapons cannot be caught or blocked in the air with anything other than a shield. If caught or blocked without a shield, these weapons cause a light wound to the arm used in the blocking, regardless of armor. Due to the fact that it is too hard to decide what part of the weapon hit you, a throwing weapon hit counts as long as contact with the body is made. The exception to this rule is the javelin, which must strike point-first to count as a hit. Ricocheting weapons do not count. All missile weapons are illegal at night to prevent injuries. Javelins and ballista bolts must have either: a) open-cell foam on the tip, or b) a cloth head - no tape! These throwing weapons are not allowed: daggers and stars.

Arrows

Like javelins, arrow heads must not be taped on the top and must consist of several layers of soft foam. All wooden arrow shafts must be taped to prevent splintering. Bows may have from 10-40 pounds of pull, and modern composite bows are not permitted. Arrows cannot be shot at night, do not count as ricochets, and can be blocked only by shields. Arrow hits to the head, face and neck are legal.

Remember, common sense should prevail in a full-contact sport, so never purposely aim for the face or pull the bowstring all the way back at close range.

Making Weapons

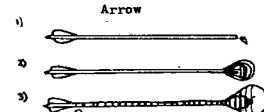


Tape hard foam over both ends of a PVC pipe.

Tape the PVC down to a thin slab of hard foam. Glue other pieces of foam to the top & bottom of the first slab. Wrap entire blade with some tape to add strength.

Next cover the blade with a cloth cover, taping it tightly over the handgrip.

Add quillons to protect the hand, then tape the quillons to handgrip with electrical tape.

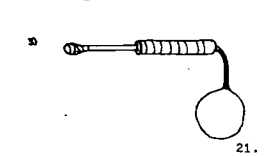


Cut the tip off of an arrow, avoiding splinters.

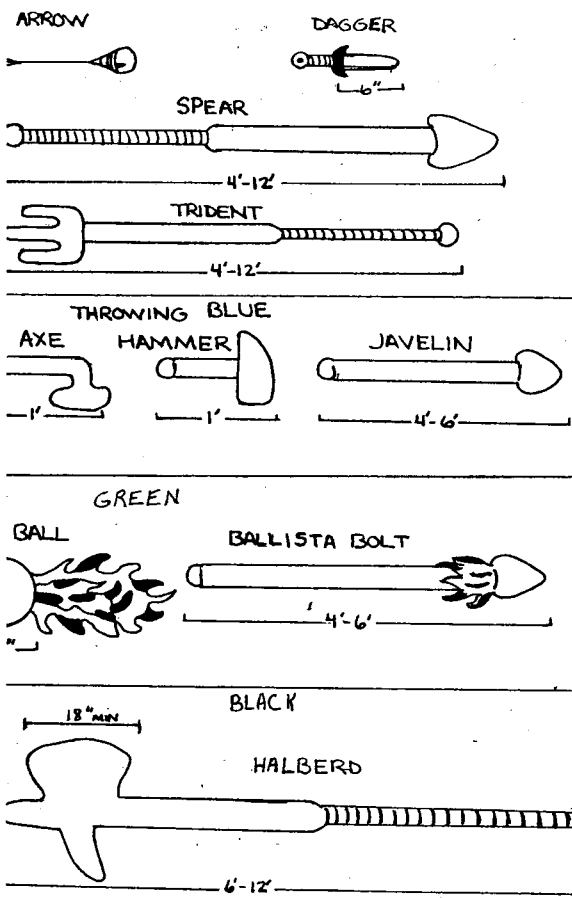
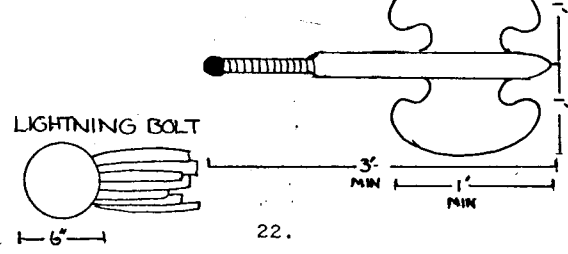
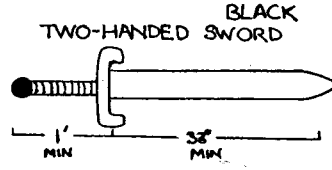
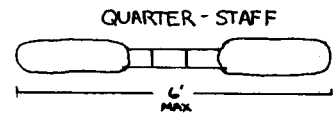
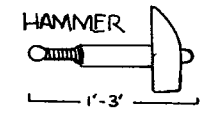
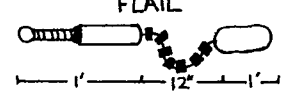
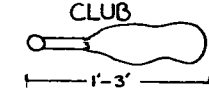
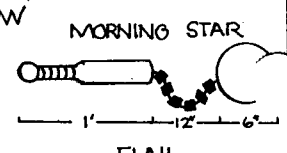
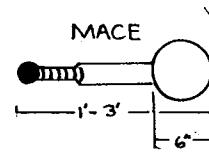
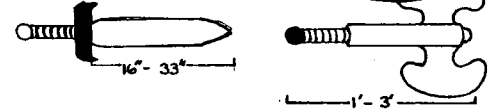
Glue a penny to flat end and wrap it with thin hard foam. Tape some layers of soft foam over the new tip and tape the entire shaft.



Fill a cloth sack with bits of scrap foam, but fill no more than the area of a soccer ball. Take the cloth remaining and tightly tape it to a PVC pipe. Also bind the cloth above the ball.



Finally, tape a pommel to the PVC and pad the upper shaft of the weapon. Climate works well for this type of padding. Be sure that everything is firmly connected.



WEAPON DAMAGE CHART

Armor Class 5 (None)

WEAPON COLOR	TORSO	LIMBS	HEAD
White	1st hit mortal	1st hit light 2nd hit mortal	—
Yellow	1st hit mortal	1st hit light	1st hit death
Black	1st hit death	1st hit mortal	—
Red	1st hit death	1st hit light 2nd hit mortal	1st hit death

Armor Class 4 (Leather)

White	2nd hit mortal	2nd hit light 3rd hit mortal	—
Yellow	2nd hit mortal	2nd hit light	1st hit mortal
Black	1st hit mortal	1st hit light 2nd hit mortal	—
Red	1st hit mortal	1st hit light 2nd hit mortal	1st hit death

Armor Class 3 (Ring, Studded)

White	3rd hit mortal	3rd hit light 4th hit mortal	—
Yellow	3rd hit mortal	3rd hit light	2nd hit mortal
Black	2nd hit mortal	2nd hit light 3rd hit mortal	—
Red	1st hit mortal	1st hit light 2nd hit mortal	1st hit death

Armor Class 2 (Chainmail)

White	3rd hit mortal	3rd hit light 4th hit mortal	—
Yellow	3rd hit mortal	3rd hit light	3rd hit mortal
Black	2nd hit mortal	2nd hit light 3rd hit mortal	—
Red	2nd hit mortal	2nd hit light 3rd hit mortal	2nd hit mortal

Sword of Slaying

This sword was forged by the dwarves of Thorin Rock for their great king, Sulto VI. Sulto needed this blade to combat a fire-breathing dragon that had invaded the dwarven stronghold in search of gold. The sword was thought to be lost when marauding orcs raided the stronghold later that year and killed Sulto. Though it is the size of a white sword, the Sword of Slaying does the same damage as a black weapon. The blade is finely constructed and is very light.

Dagger of Venom

This ebony-bladed dagger was created by the evil drow elves to aid them in controlling the many courts of the realm through assassination. It holds enough poison to kill any mortal being with but one stab. The poison magically replenishes itself overnight. Recently, the Dagger of Venom fell into the hands of the thieves' guild.

Javelin of Lightning

This javelin dates back to the early years of the Sky-dwellers, when Darkon was still a young planet. Once the javelin is used in a battle, it must be given to an Elder, because its energy is depleted until the next siege. The Javelin of Lightning counts as a black weapon, destroys any shield with a single hit, and must be thrown. It cannot be used for stabbing.

Arrow of Piercing

This magical arrow was fashioned by the wood elves of Tangle Forest. It may be used only once per battle, and then given to an Elder. If the arrow misses its target, it is still in play and may be used again. If the arrow hits any part of the body, the target is instantly mortalled, regardless of armor.

Staff of Curing

The goddess Clarrisal imbued this ceremonial staff with magical healing powers. Any cleric holding the staff must read only half the words to cast a healing spell. The staff's power may be used as often as desired.

Enforcement and Penalties

1) Elders

The Elders are the referees of the realm of Darkon. There are two types of Elders, the Wandering Elder and the Hades Elder. Wandering Elders are responsible for counting hits during a battle and making sure all other rules are followed. The Hades Elder will register you in Hades and tell you when you may rejoin the living. Elders have ultimate power, and if they tell you to die for breaking a rule, then you must die. Each country will provide one Elder for every battle. Players who serve as Elders for the entire battle get double experience. Keep in mind, however, that being an Elder means accepting a responsibility and not simply watching the battle.

2) Penalties

Penalties in Darkon will ensue from breaking rules or not acting in character. Such penalties that can be given include wounds and extra time in Hades. For persistent rule-breakers, the penalty will be suspension or expulsion from the game. Be forewarned: actual steal weapons, whether brought to battles or other events, will be confiscated by the Elders. Use of such weapons, including displaying and carrying them, is sufficient grounds for suspension from the game.

Along with penalties there are also rewards. Rewards can be given for good deaths and character playing. Most rewards consist of a shorter stay in Hades.

3) Solid blows

While fighting, weapons should be swung with the entire arm to avoid arguments. Hits using only the wrist motion will not be counted by the Elders and should not be counted by the players. Try to hit players in heavy armor fairly hard, so that they can feel each strike.

Relics

There are a number of items of power in the world of Darkon. These magical artifacts are priceless, and many of them date back to the early years of civilization. All countries fight for the relics due to their various magical powers and their point value. The relics may not be taken into Hades, and if the player carrying the relic dies, then the relic must be left where the character fell. Many of the relics have been missing for centuries, but will undoubtedly surface as time goes on.

Armor Class 1 (Plate)

WEAPON COLOR	TORSO	LIMBS	HEAD
White	4th hit mortal	4th hit light 5th hit mortal	_____
Yellow	4th hit mortal	4th hit light	4th hit mortal
Black	3rd hit mortal	3rd hit light 4th hit mortal	_____
Red	3rd hit mortal	3rd hit light 4th hit mortal	3rd hit mortal

Non-Weapon Tactics

Several non-weapon tactics are legal in Darkon. Some of such tactics are: tackling, grappling, shield-bashing, body-bashing, kicking shields and grabbing the non-edged or spiked surfaces of weapons (such as the shaft of a spear or the chain of a flail).

There are also some tactics which are not allowed. They are: punching or kicking players, slapping, twisting arms and legs, grabbing costumes, headlocks, chokeholds, or any tactic used in a dangerous way or situation. An example of this would be shield-bashing someone into a tree or tackling an opponent in a rocky area.

But most of all, use common sense with your non-weapon tactics. Remember to avoid getting overly rough with someone much smaller than yourself.

Scoring

Points will be tabulated after battles to determine the victor. When you sign in at Hades, your team loses points. Be sure to mention if you are a noble, and state your wound and country. Failure to register at Hades will incur a penalty of an extra three points. Here is the scoring system:

Suffer light wound	-1 point	} Nobles lose an extra po
Mortally wounded	-2 points	
Killed	-3 points	
Capture enemy banner	+7 points	} Must be held at least 10
Capture enemy fort	+5 points	
Capture enemy warrior	+2 points	
Capture enemy noble	+4 points	
Each relic your team possesses at the end of the battle	+3 points	

Forts

Forts are an important part of the game. They require a greater use of strategy and raise the level of competition, because the victorious team gains not only the fort, but also whatever happens to be in the fort (banners, relics, treasure, etc.). Materials one can use to build a fort are as follows: Dead branches, rope, string, dead vines and brush, and dead trees. Anything alive may not be used in a fort, unless it is not moved. So a live tree may be used as a corner, or as a post in a wall. Trenches may be dug around a fort, and ramps built within. The main reason for a fort is to give the team within the fort protection, and leave the other team at a disadvantage. Be sure to make all forts safe, and do not place branches vertically in the fort walls. Clearing the fort of rocks is also a good idea.