



ADVENTURES IN
MIDDLE-EARTH™

PLAYER'S GUIDE

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Chapter One describes the area of Middle-earth where your first adventure will begin. Wilderland in 2946 of the Third Age is a time of new beginnings, as the free peoples rebuild after the death of the dragon Smaug, and hope is rekindled. Yet Mirkwood, the Heart of the Wild, remains a place of darkness and mortal danger, and who can say what the future holds?

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Chapter Eight lays out new rules for Journeys. Travel is a key component of evocative gaming in Wilderland, and this is reflected in the expanded travel rules that bring unique new systems to the game. Using the maps and rules provided, players and their Loremaster can plot their characters' epic journeys through Middle-earth. Travelling through Wilderland becomes a characterful, engaging and dangerous part of your adventure.

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Chapter Ten introduces a set of rules that govern Audiences – a new rules structure that enables your characters to meet and interact with the great and good of Middle-earth. Will the Elf-King Thranduil welcome you into his halls, offering hospitality and aid, or will you have to wait on the dock in his subterranean palace as unwelcome visitors?

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Chapter Eleven features the Fellowship phase, another new evocative addition to the 5th Edition rules. Fellowship phases give characters a chance to rest between adventuring seasons, return home, write a book of their adventures or help the Free Folk reopen the Dwarf road through Mirkwood.

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FOREWORD

Like many gamers, Middle-earth has been a cherished part of my life for almost as long as I can remember. It is a pivotal part of our shared heritage, and has significantly influenced the development of the games we love. Bringing the greatest fantasy setting to the most popular roleplaying game has been a project of huge excitement to our entire team, and an enormous privilege.

When we started planning our approach, we realised that this game should be about *your* adventures in Middle-earth. Everyone has their own interpretation of this incredibly rich world, and that's something that should be celebrated! We needed to take a 'Yes, and' approach – giving you the core Middle-earth experience derived directly from the source, as well as empowering you to customise your game to meet your vision.

Fortunately, the Open Gaming License give us the perfect way to make this approach work. We provide the Middle-earth components, and you can add additional elements from across a huge selection of already-existing resources. If your take on Middle-earth includes a spell-slinging wizard's apprentice, no problem – add in a magic-using class from the core OGL products. If you look hard enough, I'm sure there's even a feat for shield-surfing somewhere!



As with all quests involving a dragon, this project has involved a great bunch of talented people who I'd like to call out for special thanks. Francesco Nepitello and Marco Maggi, our steadfast companions and designers of our first foray into creating Middle-earth games, The One Ring Roleplaying game. Gar, Ken, Paul, TS, Walt and the rest of the Cubicle 7 team for all their great work and support on this fantastic project, and especially Jon Hodgson, our awesome Creative Director who revealed a passion for writing Anglo-Saxon poetry from the Dwarf point of view. Thanks to you all!

So find a good stout stick, pack your second breakfast and get ready to begin the journey. Good luck in your adventures, and remember:

"It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out of your door," he used to say. "You step into the Road, and if you don't keep your feet, there is no knowing where you might be swept off to. Do you realize that this is the very path that goes through Mirkwood, and that if you let it, it might take you to the Lonely Mountain or even further and to worse places?"

Dominic McDowall
CEO, Cubicle 7 Entertainment



wilderland

Friend, I wish I could persuade you to come here and see for yourself that what we accomplished together was not wasted in idleness. We have done much good since the slaying of the Dragon and the liberation of the Lonely Mountain. The splendour of our works far surpasses Thorin's grandest dreams of what we would accomplish, back when we were planning our little adventure.

To think that almost five years have passed! You might say that we didn't think much of you at the time. Now I miss very much our days together, and I would readily forfeit my peaceful life for one of dangerous adventure. Quite astonishing, I know, but I feel that sleeping under the stars with a sword at my side would ease my troubled mind.

I do not know precisely what troubles me, but disquiet weighs heavily upon my heart. The scourge of Smaug has been vanquished, the Necromancer has been driven out of his forest stronghold and, after the Battle of the Five Armies, the Goblins are afraid to leave their mountain holds. We have every reason to look forward to a new age of prosperity!

But something is wrong. I am not the only one to perceive it. A shadow, felt but unseen. The presence of a nameless threat that forbids people to rejoice fully in the hope and confidence that should follow the return of the light.

Nonsense? Possibly. I am an old Dwarf after all, and those who hearken to me are but a few. For every voice that dares to whisper words of warning, far too many answer that our recent victories have earned us a respite. Despite my nagging sense of unease, complacency is rife.

Dearest Bilbo, deep inside of me I feel that we should remain vigilant and warn others against the risks of self-congratulation. Everyone around us seems to look inwards instead, to their own concerns and the goings-on right in front of their noses. Soon I will confer with Gandalf upon these matters, and possibly come to visit you in the kindly West.

A letter from Balin, son of Fundin, to Bilbo Baggins, Esq.



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