

Baldur's Gate: Enhanced Edition

*Sword Coast
Survival Guide*



Welcome to Baldur's Gate!

Now that you've cracked open the box and are ready to slip that first CD into your computer, it seems like a good time to say welcome to Baldur's Gate and the AD&D 2nd Edition electronic game world.

Right now there's probably two questions running through your mind—what's this AD&D 2nd Edition thing, and who's the guy writing this anyway?

Baldur's Gate is a huge and varied computer role-playing game—but the game didn't happen out of thin air. Baldur's Gate uses the AD&D 2nd Edition rules, which isn't just any roleplaying game, this is the granddaddy of them all.

So who am I? Well, somebody had to write the 2nd Edition rules back in '89 and I and some other lucky souls were entrusted with that job. Back then, we were creating strictly for the paper-and-pencil, sit-around-the-table, face-to-face game. There was consideration to the needs of a computer game. Sure, it was something we had all thought about, but there was too much to do to spend time worrying about it—not that we knew how we would accomplish it anyway.

How times change. Now, almost ten years later, I'm sitting on the other side, making computer games—and I'm amazed at what Baldur's Gate has done. Baldur's Gate brings the AD&D game alive on the computer like no other game before it—and that's no small task! It is a testament to the depth and richness of the AD&D system that even today's computers are challenged to capture the entire range of flexibility allowed within the AD&D game, and it is a testament to Baldur's Gate that it contains so much of that richness.

Still, face-to-face games don't have a computer for a Dungeon Master. Computers can't make judgment calls (and would you want one to?). That means there are some changes that couldn't be avoided. Even in these changes though, Baldur's Gate is true to the spirit of AD&D gaming. We wanted both experiences, paper and electronic, to be equally fun.

Really this introduction is to thank you for playing our game. You playing—and having fun—is what this is all about.

And I hope you do.

—David "Zeb" Cook, 1998

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Autography

This guidebook is one of the very finest in my ongoing tour of the Realms. I can guarantee you all that you'll find no more diligent guide than your humble servant, Volothamp Geddarm. I've spent the past six months journeying around the fine port city of Baldur's Gate and subjugating myself to horrors beyond belief. Poor food, small beds, drafty accommodations—no peril is too vast for your friend and compatriot, Volothamp Geddarm. In thy service!

—Volothamp Geddarm

Volo? Aye. Sigh. I've said it before, but he's getting a little better. Maybe that makes his writing more tolerable. Perhaps. Please don't tell anyone I said that.

—Elminster



Part One:
The Sword Coast

Overview of the Realms: The World of Baldur's Gate

Welcome to the Forgotten Realms and the world of Faerûn (Fay-ROON)! A land of magic and adventure, Faerûn is no more than a small territory hugging a larger world, which in turn is only the third world of eight orbiting a central sun, which is entirely encapsulated in a crystal sphere within a swirling chaos, which in turn is only one in myriad alternate dimensions. But for the races of Toril—for the elves and dwarves and gnomes and halflings and humans—Faerûn is a very important place: it is home.

Abeir-Toril (Ah-BEER Tor-RILL), more commonly called Toril, is the name of the orb that Faerûn and the Forgotten Realms are set upon, just as Earth is the orb that Eurasia is set upon. The name is archaic, meaning “cradle of life,” and is rarely used in everyday speech. Abeir-Toril is an Earth-sized planet dominated by a large continent in its northern hemisphere as well as a number of other large landmasses scattered about its surface. This northern continent is called Faerûn in the west, Kara-Tur in the east, and Zakhara in the south. It is the primary purpose of this tome to deal with the western portion of this huge landmass, in particular the region in Faerûn between the Sword Coast and the Inner Sea, and more particularly that area around the western city known as Baldur's Gate.

The Sword Coast

For years, the lands between Waterdeep to the north of Baldur's Gate and bustling Amn in the south, bordered on the west by the Great Ocean and the east by the Wood of Sharp Teeth, have been thought of as the Empty Lands—a vast, inconvenient stretch of wilderness folk venture into only to get from one place to another. Legends abound of grisly fates that befell unfortunate travelers at the hands of orcs, trolls, hobgoblins (and worse!) said to infest the area in veritable armies.

Thanks to both human and bestial predators, the trip has always been dangerous—hence the name Sword Coast. Down through the ages, many folk have dreamed of founding a kingdom in the verdant valley hidden in the moors. In recent times the caravans have begun to see a new menace—raiding parties of subhumans who plunder mainly the mines in the Cloud Peak Mountains north of Amn.

The area is littered with the ruins of failed dreams—small villages, empty towers and dungeons, as well as the occasional town, city, or keep—such as Baldur's Gate, Beregost, Nashkel, the Friendly Arm Inn, and Candlekeep for a start. This guidebook directs the traveler to *the* things to see, as well as the best places to stay in every city. Those not traveling with a caravan in the Sword Coast are warned to hire escorts of armed and trustworthy adventurers!

Zane Hellar of Amn once described the coast between Waterdeep and Amn as thus: “Leagues upon leagues of lawless waste, home to pirates and outlaws who feast on those who must go north or south while depending on the Sea of Swords as their guide, keeping it in sight so as not to lose their way.”

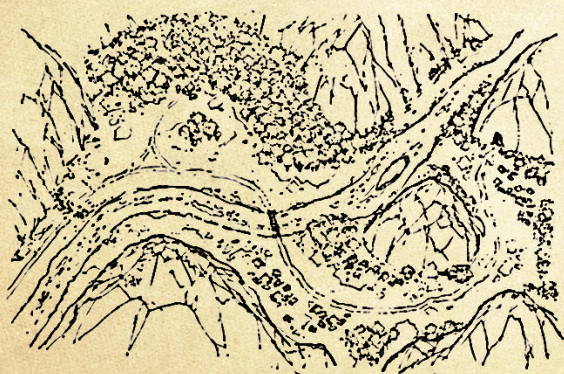
Volo may or may not be paraphrasing.

—*Elminster*

Zane was not far wrong, but the Coast today is also home to one of the two largest and most powerful cities in the region, Baldur’s Gate. (Iriaebor, far inland, is the other.) From its gates south to Amn, the Coast on either side of the Coast Way road is pleasant, verdant farmland. North of the river Chionthar as far as the Way Inn, the land is more sparsely inhabited and more dangerous, but it serves as a hunting range for Waterdhavian nobles, wealthy Amnians, and those who must kill wild game to eat.

Travelers are warned that lawlessness is swiftly dealt with by ready, veteran patrols in the lands held by the nobles from the areas around Baldur’s Gate. Throughout the rest of the Coast, the traveler’s best protection is a ready blade and friendly magic close to hand. Brigands, hobgoblins, and kobolds are an ever-present danger. Many stay in roving encampments, living off stolen livestock, and from such bases raid travelers, warehouses, and weakened settlements at will—particularly at night or in bad weather.

On the other hand, game is plentiful for travelers throughout this region. Grouse, bustards, rock doves, and other seacoast birds can readily be shot, slung, or even brought down with flung nets



by those who can move quickly and quietly. It is not uncommon for a fat Calishite merchant with a hand crossbow to get three or four rabbits for an evening meal while his servants tether, unsaddle, and water the horses. It is also, one must always remember, not uncommon for three orcs with a trip snare and ready clubs to bring down that fat merchant just as quickly... and then dine on him *and* his rabbits! As long as safety is kept uppermost in mind, travelers can also expect to

gather plentiful nuts and wild raspberries and enjoy delicious wild greens (if the greens are gathered while young and tender). The Coast provides well for those who are patient stalkers and know where to look, whether they be traveler or fell beast.

Candlekeep

Candlekeep is your home, I understand, so you probably remember more about it than I do, my friend! All apologies for any errors!

—Volo

This citadel of learning stands on a volcanic crag, overlooking the sea. It is a many-towered fortress, once the home of the famous seer Alaundo, and it preserves his predictions along with all the written records and learning of the Realms that can be assembled. Candlekeep is certainly no tourist resort, but there is a store, a temple, and a fair inn here. The price for most travelers to enter the Keep proper is a book. Those wishing to examine any writing in the Keep's library must gift Candlekeep with a new tome of no less than 10,000 gp in value.

This applies to you as well, even though you called the keep home for many years. The monks make few exceptions, and only their true membership is exempt from the entrance fee. It is apparently Gorion's influence alone that allowed you free access. Such strict enforcement of a rule is simply not to my tastes.

—Volo

The monks of Candlekeep, who claim to be non-denominational and call themselves the Avowed, also purchase certain books brought to them and even commission agents in great secrecy to procure writings they desire. Those who wish to browse in the library must normally be sponsored by a known mage of power, and so many books given to Candlekeep in payment are minor spellbooks.

This community is ruled by the Keeper of the Tomes, assisted by the First Reader (the second in authority and traditionally the most learned sage of the monastery). There are up to eight Great Readers under these two offices, who are assisted by the Chanter, the Guide, and the Gatewarden. The Chanter leads the endless chant of Alaundo's prophecies, spelled in this duty by four assistants, the Voices of the North, South, West, and East. The Guide is in charge of teaching acolytes, while the Gatewarden deals with visitors, the security of and supplies for the community, and with the clergy. The central, highest fortress of the Keep is surrounded by a terraced rock garden of many trees. There are rumors of vast dungeons beneath the keep, dating from ancient times, when they were used as burial chambers for the wisest scribes.

Except in rare cases, no visitor can remain in Candlekeep for more than ten days at a time or enter the monastery less than a month after leaving it. Order in the Keep is kept by the

Gatewarden's five underofficers: four Watchers and the Keeper of the Portal, all five of whom have a force of armed monks as assistants.

The Seekers are the lowest monks. They research and fetch and carry. Above them are the Scribes, who copy out works or compile books to sell from various sources in the library—the chief source of income for the community. Above the Scribes are the Chanter and the Readers. The current Keeper of the Tomes is Ulraunt, a proud and haughty minor mage. The current First Reader, Tethtoril, is often mistaken by visitors for the Keeper because of his intelligent, regal, and sensitive demeanor.

Candlekeep has but one absolute rule: “Those who destroy knowledge, with ink, fire, or sword, are themselves destroyed.” Here, books are more valuable than people.

Baldur's Gate

This port city is shelter and lifeline for the folk of the Coast. It offers the discerning shopper a wide selection of goods—there are a total of six major inns, six main taverns, seven general stores, six primary temples, and a full-service magic store, along with hundreds of lesser buildings. Baldur's Gate is a tolerant but well-policed city of merchants, and quiet trade and business are the general order of each day. The Flaming Fist Mercenary Company, over a thousand strong, is based in the city. Every tenth person or so is a member of the Fist or a watch agent (well, spy), skilled in battle and within a breath or two of numerous armed allies. The visitor can freely stroll and shop. The city has a system of magical lamps that provide light to its inhabitants in the evening and the night hours, which is one reason why the crime rate is so low, keeping the merchants and storekeepers happy.

The city is named for the legendary seafaring explorer Balduran, who long ago sailed past the elven homeland Evermeet in search of the rich, fabled isles of Anchoromè (pronounced “Angkor-OH-may”). Balduran returned with tales of strange, vast lands across the seas. He also brought back great wealth and scattered it about his sparsely-settled home harbor, commanding that some of it be spent on a wall to protect against tribal orc and barbarian raids (still a problem in the area, in those long-ago days). Then he set sail again for the wondrous lands he had found. Balduran never returned.

Whatever Balduran's true fate, his money was spent on a splendid city wall. Within its protection, building went on at a great pace, soon expanding beyond its confines. The wall was built by farmers who put it around their own holdings, excluding the actual harbor from its protection. This allowed them to tax all carts coming up from the docks to the protection of the walled city. The colleagues of Balduran, sea captains to whom the harbor was home, angrily insisted that the gate by which southern trade and the harbor traffic entered the city was “Baldur's Gate,” and

they refused to pay for entering. The strife ended in the overthrow of the enriched farmers and the seizure of the city (which came to be called Baldur's Gate) by the sea captains.

The four oldest captains, their days at sea drawing to a close, turned over their ships to younger sailors, who in turn supported their installation as rulers of the fledgling city. The four called themselves "dukes" as a joke, but the titles proved useful when dealing with other rulers, and they were later glorified by the appellation "grand." Now called the Council of Four, elected by the populace for life (or until resignation), the present grand dukes are Entar Silvershield (a talented warrior), Liia Jannath (a powerful wizard), the adventurer known only as Belt (a strong fighter), and Eltan (the commander of the Flaming Fist Mercenary Company).

Buildings in Baldur's Gate tend to be tall and narrow, with slit windows located high and covered with shutters to block out winter winds and nesting seabirds. Tall among them rises the hall of the four ruling grand dukes, a grandly spired palace known as the High Hall—a place for feasts, court hearings, and administrative business. Not far from the palace stands the High House of Wonders, consecrated to the deity Gond. It is by far the largest of the Gate's three temples. Its spreading eastern wings face the Hall of Wonders, also on Windspell Street, where the more successful of Gond's inventions are displayed to the public. Not far from the Hall of Wonders, near the Black Dragon Gate, is the Wide. This huge open space is the Gate's market. It bustles day and night, and is usually "open space" only in the sense that there are no buildings. Temporary stalls, bins, sale tables, and shoppers thronging to them usually crowd shoulder to shoulder. Outside the Wide, Baldur's Gate lacks colorful landmarks. The ever-present damp discourages the use of banners, open shops, and the like.

Those wishing to overindulge in drink and in the company of attractive strangers are directed to the Undercellar, a little-known, damp, dark warren of linked cellars entered just off the Wide.

These are but a few of the many landmarks of this fine city. For the rest, I refer you to the excellent city map I have prepared for would-be adventurers within Baldur's Gate. I've tried to indicate most of the inns, taverns, stores, and temples there for you, my friends.

—Volo

Hall of Wonders—Museum and Shop

This huge high-pillared stone hall displays the grandest glories of Gond to the faithful and the curious. Its cellars contain replicas of the wonders on display. Folk come from afar to see the marvels here. (Many go away thoughtful, determined to create similar devices of their own and save themselves the awesome prices charged by the clergy.)

The Hall is dimly lit by enchanted glowing globes and is staffed by ever-watchful priests of Gond. It is crowded with gleaming mechanisms that represent the more successful inventions devised for the greater glory of Gond Wonderbringer, god of artifice, craft, and construction. The High House, its parent temple, faces it across Windspell Street. The Hall has held many marvels over the years. Currently on display are many small devices and a few large pieces. Many of the small devices seem to be locks or strongboxes so devised as to look like something else, from goblets to statues to chairs. The larger items include a mechanical scribe, a steam dragon, a pump of Gond, an everlight, a fan chair, and a farseer. Unless one tries to damage, move, or tamper with a device, or states a clear and serious intent to purchase one, the priests are usually far too busy fending off ever-present, awestruck gnomes—who travel to the Hall daily to gawk tirelessly at the wonders there—to speak to visitors. The devices on display in the main Hall are the work of priests, who duplicated original prototypes, and the originals aren't for sale under any circumstances.

Elfsong Tavern

This tavern is the local watering hole, meeting place, and hiring fair for adventurers. A popular destination for pirates and outlaws on the loose in the Coastlands, it is a place to which the watch turns a blind eye, unless rowdiness and battle erupt. Those wishing to fence stolen goods, hire unusual folk for disreputable tasks, and hear tall tales of daring adventure often come here and stay late.

The tavern is named for an unusual haunting: a ghostly female elven voice heard from time to time all over the establishment. It isn't loud but can be heard clearly everywhere and is both beautiful and mournful. No one is sure just who the singer is—although it's clear she's singing a lament for a lover lost at sea—or how the haunting came to be. No other music is permitted in the Elfsong.

The ground floor is devoted to a taproom that serves melted cheese sandwiches (spiced or plain, as you prefer), pickles, and fist-sized twists of dried herring—and drinks of all types, of course. Several dark, twisting stairs lead up to private meeting rooms that can be rented by the candle (the time it takes a short taper to burn down) or for an entire evening. Those with enemies are warned that the dimness on the stairs has concealed many a seeking knife thrust or poisoned hand crossbow bolt.

The bartender has a predilection to spread potentially useful gossip and rumors, but only when his palm is weighted and some drinks are quaffed. Patrons can—and are expected to—go armed when in the Elfsong, and the known rule is that all beings need to protect their own backs.

The Blade and Stars

This inn is named for its enchanted signboard, looted from a ruined village in Amn after a long-ago trade war. It's a large black sign displaying a curved saber held by a delicate, long-fingered female human hand. The sign is enchanted so that stars wink and slowly drift around the blade. The inn itself is less exciting but still a good, safe, clean, pleasant place to stay.

The Blade is a long, tall building with attached stables and kitchens on one side and balconies opening out of upper rooms on the other. Its furnishings are clean and fairly new. There's a small lounge off the front lobby for guests to meet with citizens. Vigilant stair-watchers on staff keep track of guests' comings and goings, discouraging street thieves and even doppelgangers, who are a growing problem.

Rowdy or reckless guests are warned, once, and, if something else happens, firmly asked to leave. On cold nights, the proprietor, Aundegul Shawn, is happy to talk, but only when his palm is liberally greased with gold.

The Blushing Mermaid

The Mermaid is known up and down the Coast lands as a meeting place in which to conduct illicit business for folk who are dangerous or criminal. It is a noisy, brawling establishment. I can recommend it only to those who go well armed, who know how to use their weapons, and who bring lots of loyal friends with similar skills.

The Mermaid is a long, low, ramshackle place with a confusing maze of wings, outbuildings, stockade enclosures, and stables surrounding it on three sides—the better to give cover to those trying to approach or leave unseen, most Baldurians say. It has at least four levels of cellars—many more, some say—and rumors abound of secret passages, or even connections to an underground stream connecting with the harbor.

Maybe Volo means the sewers? Not a stream I would much fancy crossing.
—Elminster

Rooms at the Mermaid are low-ceilinged, dingy, and apt to be furnished with mismatched pieces that have seen better days. In general, they are loot-and-salvage pieces that have seen heavy use since their installation here.

The visitor will find in the Mermaid an astonishing collection of smooth-tongued old sea dogs nursing drinks at all hours. Each one is a contact person for this or that cabal, thieving brotherhood, smuggler, mercenary band, fence, panderer, or other shady professional interest. Negotiations with such contacts usually consist of a nasty grin and a case of temporary deafness until at least a few coins are given—whereupon they recall their voice, hearing, and manners, and inquire as to your own fortune. Once satisfied the coins you've dropped are of good quality,

he'll tell you what you want to know and arrange a meeting, or send you to a contact who can. I report all this secondhand, of course!

A stay at the Mermaid is apt to be safe, so long as one avoids battle and does nothing overly insulting or stupid. Beer at the Mermaid is sea ale (thicker and more bitter than most tongues find enjoyable), stout, and a light, golden-hued lager from Mintarn. No wines are available, but one can get whisky strong and smoky enough to strip paint or tar from wood. It brings tears to the eyes of most that drink it and probably worse things to their insides!

The Helm and Cloak

This grand inn, rooming, and feasting house is favored by those who've lots of coins to spare—both citizens of the Gate, who enjoy the dining room, and travelers. There's even a floor of long-term rental rooms. Most of these are currently occupied by members of the Knights of the Unicorn, romantic adventurers described by a regular patron as elegant buffoons. The Helm is the fashionable place to dine and chat, much favored by those of power. Many an important business deal or alliance has been negotiated in its luxurious alcoves.

The Helm avoids the haughty and gaudy, unerringly choosing the best of informal good taste, traditional furnishings, and thoughtful service. Warmed robe and slippers are brought to your room when you're heard to rise in the morn. There's also mead (very ordinary) and cinnamon-spiced milk available (hot or cold, as you prefer), but not beer of any sort to be had.

"We're not running a tavern here, m'lord," sniffed one of the senior servants to me, when I inquired as to why.

—Volo

Three Old Kegs

This cozy timber-and-stone inn has three old kegs hanging from a roof pole in place of a signboard. Those bold or whimsical enough to enter and stay will find one of the best inns in all Faerûn. Everything is comfortable and a little shabby, but the staff is quite friendly. Where there aren't paintings, there are bookshelves crammed with old diaries, travel books, collections of ballads and legends, and grand and overblown histories of heroes. Regular patrons snooze and read the days away, rousing themselves from time to time for a glass of wine, mug of broth, or a game of dice, cards, or shove-skittles. Both the wine and the broth are excellent, but they, along with iced water and dark and nutty malt bread, are the only fare to be had in the place. The thick beastskin rugs, paneling, books, and tapestries absorb most sound.

The Kegs is a quiet place. Come here for a reasonable and comfortable rest, a haven against the bustle of business or adventure. Patrons are asked to keep their weapons in their rooms, and excessive rowdiness is not permitted. Drunks often awaken in the morning to find themselves sleeping out back in the hay pile by the kitchen door.

The innkeeper is a tall, quiet man with a mane of long, curly black hair and a sword scar that runs from his nose diagonally across one cheek. His name is Nantrin Bellowglyn, and he's a Tethyrian noble's retired guard who fled that land when civil strife erupted and his lord was slain.

Beregost

Tired travelers in the Coast Way between Baldur's Gate and Amn often stop in Beregost. Beregost is located just off the road about a day's travel south of where the Way of the Lion branches off from the Coast Way. This town, while much smaller than Baldur's Gate, boasts three inns, two stores, a magic shop, a temple, and a decent tavern. It's within reach of the northern borders of Amn. Merchants of that land often use it as a rendezvous for caravan assembly before attempting the perilous overland runs north to Waterdeep or east to the Sea of Fallen Stars. As a result, this small town gets very crowded at unpredictable intervals.

Begun as a farming village under the protection of a school of wizardry, Beregost is now dominated by the Song of the Morning, a major temple to Lathander.

The other point of interest near Beregost is the ruin of Ulcaster's school. The mage Ulcaster, a conjurer of note, founded his school over three hundred years ago—but grew too successful, attracting would-be wizards from all over the Sword Coast. Calishite mages came to fear the school's power and destroyed it in spell battle, though Ulcaster himself disappeared during the fray and was never found. The school burned to an empty shell, which still stands on a hill east of the town. Local fear of the ruin, which is said to be haunted by spell-casting phantoms, has caused Beregost to expand to the west of the Coast Way road, leaving the hills east to the sheep. On a related note, Beregost has only one tavern, called the Burning Wizard (of course!).

The governor of Beregost is Kelddath Ormlyr. Although there is a five-person town council, the governor's word is law, and he is a tireless proponent of farming, business, and urban improvement. He is also Most Radiant of Lathander (high priest of the temple), and his temple troops police the town, keeping it safe. In this, he has two powerful allies: the wizard Thalantyr, a conjurer of great repute; and the smith Taerom "Thunderhammer" Fuiruim.

High Hedge

West of the main settlement of Beregost stands High Hedge, Thalantyr's estate. Thalantyr is a courtly man who can sometimes be seen walking about the countryside, his long, black staff in hand. Locals say he's interested in far-off places and things, and is sometimes absent for long periods. Those who've seen his abode say that it's a dark, turreted stone house overgrown with pines and that he has his own fishpond behind it.

Thunderhammer Smithy, Armor Maker and Weaponsmith

Taerom “Thunderhammer” Fuiruim is a burly giant. His chestnut hair and mutton-chop whiskers are now shot through with gray and white, but his huge hands remain strong and deft. He is a master armorer, and his warmongery equals the best in Faerûn. On several occasions he’s made items for Thalantr to enspell, and even dwarven smiths admire his work. Taerom keeps over a dozen apprentices busy with all the orders that come his way (mainly from Amn). He fights with a huge iron staff and has been known to slay gnolls with a single blow, but he is generally a quiet man. He is not given to leadership but is respected in town more than anyone else.

The Burning Wizard

This tavern is a bustling place favored by the locals and visitors alike. Acolytes of Lathander are trained to keep lively conversations and entertainments going here. This is a good little place, with several small rooms adorned with bric-a-brac donated by loyal regulars. It’s a delight to find enough cushions in a room to let one sit up in bed in comfort!

Feldepot’s Inn

Named for its now-deceased founder, this is an old and comfortable place. Service is careful and kind, if a trifle slow, but a room comes with a fire alight (except in hot weather) and a warm bath that is filled by several old men of many smiles but few words. The food is superior. Don’t miss the cheese and cucumber buns, or the onion and mushroom tarts served by the hearth in the evenings. (The tarts are free if you’re ordering drinks.) The inn cellar includes an excellent sherry.

Sometimes I suspect Volo of being a lush.

—Elminster

The Red Sheaf

Folk come to the Sheaf for fast service. This inn prides itself on getting you to your room or to a board in the dining room as quickly as possible. If the weather is cold or wet, you’ll find yourself in a warm house robe before a crackling fire just as quickly, with your wet things taken to the warming room behind the kitchen to dry on warmed stone shelves. This is Beregost’s largest inn and is favored by merchants wanting to hold business meetings or sit in quiet.

The Jovial Juggler

This inn is on the edge of town, on the west side of the road. Its huge sign depicting a laughing carnival juggler in jester-like garb identifies it instantly. It’s an average roadhouse, but young Beregostans love it—it’s their dancing and drinking club. It outpays Feldepot’s for minstrels and other entertainers, and there’s scarcely a night at the Juggler without some sort of loud revelry. In addition there is almost continuous feasting complete with oxen, hogs, and boars roasted whole. Thankfully, all of that’s confined to one wing, so patrons can get some sleep!

The Friendly Arm Inn

This walled hamlet located on the Coast Way several days north of Beregost consists of a stone keep (the inn) with stables, gardens, a horse pond, and caravan wagon sheds. It also shelters a few houses, a large meeting hall with a many-pillared entrance, a small store and magic shop, and a temple to Garl Glittergold, chief god of the gnomes. The Friendly Arm was once the hold of an evil priest of Bhaal who was destroyed in undead form by a band of adventurers led by the gnome thief and illusionist Bentley Mirrorshade. Bentley set his comrades-at-arms to work renovating the keep, and it soon opened as a fortified waystop on the Coast Way in territory often endangered by brigands and raiding bands of orcs, kobolds, bug-bears, and trolls. Though these perils have lessened somewhat since the Arm was founded, the safe, clean inn is still a favorite spot.

Bentley once confided in me that the greatest instrument to his success was a powerful magic ring, which he has since lost. Although methinks he misses it dearly, some precious things are better left unfound. If ye find Bentley's ring, t'would be a kindness to him not to mention it.

—Elminster

The Temple of Wisdom

This low building has interior walls studded with gems and gold nuggets. Guarded by many illusions, it is a temple to Garl Glittergold, primary deity of the gnomes. Human worshipers, some of whom have dubbed the place the Shrine of the Short, are welcomed here.

The Friendly Arm

Inside the walls of the Friendly Arm, peace is maintained by a common agreement among guests that this be one of the rare neutral havens in the Realms. Of course, there is always the magic and adventuring help Bentley can call on, and the rumor that some of the fetching barmaids are really iron golems concealed by powerful illusions! I was unable to confirm this belief beyond learning that one serving wench has a grip like iron—before she threw me back out of the bedroom she was tidying! (Perhaps the inn was named after her. She did help me up afterward.) The energetic and affable hosts of the Arm are Bentley and his wife Gellana, who also presides over the temple. The pair are kind, perceptive, and could probably deal an Amnian merchant out of his last copper piece—no small task! The house they keep has large, airy rooms and good, simple food. Everything is clean, cheerful, and uncrowded—unless there's a meeting going on—and the Arm has become a favorite spot for business gatherings and negotiations alike.

Nashkel

South of Beregost and north of the Cloud Peak Mountains is the village of Nashkel. Rumor is that it's a nice place, but I haven't had time to visit there myself. I have heard that it's a little smaller than Beregost but has a temple, an inn, two stores (one reputed to sell some magical goods), and a fine tavern. I'll try and journey there in my next sojourn through the Sword Coast—if you hear that I stay away because I am frightened of kobolds or some evil presence in the mountains, I am here to say that is not the case!

Gallykín

This small village of halflings is in the eastern part of the Baldur's Gate region. I didn't make it there after I heard about the kobolds around Nash... I mean, because I've never been partial to halfling holes. But the halflings have at least one temple, so it might be worth your while to have a look, if you're out that way, that is.

Power Groups of the Sword Coast

In addition to the various cities and towns, there are a number of other powers within the Realms, all operating to their own ends and often ignoring national boundaries. These are secret societies, cults, and adventuring companies that seek to put forward their own agenda to further their cause.

The Harpers

A semi-secret society based in the Heartlands, the Harpers have seen a number of incarnations through the years, with rising and falling levels of political power. They are primarily allied with a number of good churches and are receiving support from powerful neutral parties, including druidic circles. Their aim is to keep at bay the dangers to civilization, including goblin raids, dragon flights, and the insidious control of other groups such as the Zhentarim, Red Wizards, or the Cult of the Dragon.

They believe in the power of individuals, the balance between the wild and the civilized, and the good of humankind and its allied sentient races. They also believe in preserving the tales of the past, so that one may learn from those tales for the future. The Harpers attract a wide variety of character types, but this society is most attractive to elves, rangers, and bards.

Harpers are spread throughout the North and the Heartlands, often operating in secret. They are by their nature meddlers, and often operate alone or in small groups to achieve their ends. Except when battling long-term foes, it is unimportant to them that their name be connected with their actions (their own tales and songs are another matter). The Harpers are an amorphous organization and as such have no main base of operations. They are a force of good in the Realms, and good-aligned characters may find themselves being aided by unseen allies if their business aids the organization. The only hint as to these allies' identity is the harp and moon symbol of the group.

The Iron Throne

Independent merchants generally tend to be individuals who deal on face value and (at least reputed) honesty. They also tend to stay out of politics, other than currying the favor of whomever or whatever is currently in charge of their favorite watering holes and way stops. Merchants trust to their luck but hire mercenaries as protection, and enough of their goods get through to make them profitable. The rulership of the lands they pass through is up to others, including retired members of their craft, whom they trust to give them a fair shake.

An apparent exception to this custom is the Iron Throne, a mysterious organization that has been operating over the past few decades. Despite its long existence, little is known of its purpose

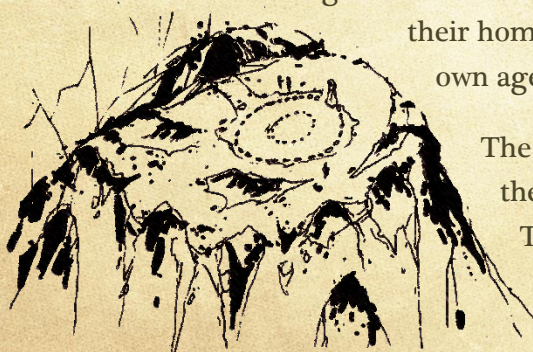
or the identity of its backers. The Iron Throne operates through agents, mostly low-level thugs and brigands who have only recently taken legitimate employment and entered into the service of the merchant roster. The turnover is apparently high, since Iron Throne agents often seem to lapse into their old ways. The Throne denies all complicity in any criminal acts by their agents and replaces them regularly. The Iron Throne wishes to maintain a patina of respectability, however thin.

Recently, the veneer has become thin indeed, for the Iron Throne has been charged with attempted assassination of competition, extortion, thuggery, trading weapons to humanoid tribes, and trafficking in smokepowder, poison, and contraband. There have been frequent reports of conflicts between Iron Throne caravans and agents and those sponsored by the Zhentarim. The Iron Throne has recently been banished for a year from acting within Cormyr, and many suspect them of branching out to new locales.

The masters of the Iron Throne are at present unknown and have to this date resisted all attempts to magically divine their identities or intentions. This indicates some level of magical ability or protection on their parts, and rumors are rampant. Some say that the Iron Throne members are secretly agents of the Zhentarim or of Cormyr, and that previous actions against those groups are only to hide their trail. Some claim that a god is involved, such as Cyric or an even darker power (if such a thing is possible). Other rumors point to undead beholders, expired deities, sentient lizards, or pale-blue sea giants as the true masters of the merchant company and the secret of its power. The truth remains to be seen.

The Red Wizards

The Red Wizards are the rulers of Thay, and the powerful ruling Zulkirs of that land are chosen from among their numbers. The Red Wizards are abroad throughout the Realms as spies and agents of their kingdom. Their actions are supposedly for the good of their home government, but each Red Wizard has his or her own agenda to pursue.



The stated goal of the Red Wizards is to establish Thay as the supreme political and magical force in the Realms. The Red Wizards encountered in the Realms may be working toward this end, advancing their own causes or seeking to discredit others, including other Red Wizards. The byzantine plots of the Red Wizards are so involved that it is often difficult to determine where one ends and another begins. The Red Wizards are many things, but one thing they are *not* is subtle. Swaggering, boastful, loud, insulting, and dangerous, yes, but never subtle. It takes great control for a Red Wizard to affect

personal humility, no matter how slight, or tolerate even the most subtle reproach to the superiority of the Thayvian people. Despite this, there are always (apparently) new Red Wizards to challenge adventurers.

The Shadow Thieves

The Shadow Thieves are a wide-ranging guild of thieves, spies, and assassins who perform particularly dangerous, evil-aligned, and lucrative ventures. Their activities, unlike those of most thieving guilds, are not limited to a single city, and they range the length of the Sword Coast from Luskan to Calimport. A group directly opposed to the Lords of Waterdeep and all their allies, the Shadow Thieves are based in Athkatla, in Amn (south of Baldur's Gate), where they have a massive training complex and a testing ground for the assassins they sponsor. This group was once the thieves' guild of Waterdeep, until they were driven out of that city by the Lords of Waterdeep.

The Shadow Thieves have sponsored an assassins' guild in Athkatla with the eventual aim of slaying all of the Lords of Waterdeep. In the meantime, this secretive organization appears to have reached some sort of agreement with the merchant lords of Amn, who would benefit from turmoil in their trade rival (and perhaps also wish to avoid being on the assassins' list of targets themselves). Under this pact the merchant lords leave the Shadow Thieves alone and are left alone in return.

The Shadow Thieves operate up and down the Sword Coast; their trademark is a black silk mask impaled upon a stiletto blade (usually used in assassinations, or left behind at the scene if a garrote or poison is employed instead). No names, descriptions, or even numbers of Shadow Thieves are known; extremely experienced operators are thought to be few.

The Zhentarim

The Black Network of the Zhentarim is a not-so-secret group of mages, priests, and warriors devoted to the task of dominating trade, and therefore power, throughout the Heartlands region. To that end they work to achieve the downfall of an ever-increasing list of opponents, including the Dalelands, the Harpers, rival Moonsea cities, the Cult of the Dragon, Cormyr, Sembia, and anyone else who gets in their way. That which cannot be infiltrated and controlled must be cowed into obedience or destroyed.

The Black Network is active throughout the Heartlands but currently has three major bases of operations. Darkhold has been established as a base within the Far Hills (a few weeks east of Baldur's Gate), and stands as a terminus in the Western Heartlands for caravans from the northern, southern, and eastern Realms. The Citadel of the Raven, on the borders of Thar, is a major military base as well. The third headquarters and birthplace of the organization, Zhentil

Keep, has been less influential over the years owing to the rise of the church of Cyric. Despite having a major figure in the church in their employ, the Zhentarim have been less than effective in dominating the new faith, in contrast to the degree of control they have had over the church of Bane. As a result, most of the daily devilry of the Black Network comes from the other two locations, which have the added advantage of having no native civilian population to get in the way (or lead a revolt).

Trade is a major component of the Zhentarim's income, and they are not limited morally to the transport of ores and finished goods; they also do business in poisons, contraband, weapons, and slaves. Conquest is also high on the Zhentarim agenda, often using the forces of Zhentil Keep or another catspaw such as Voonlar or Llorkh. They also make extensive use of humanoid tribes and mercenaries, usually promising payment with the spoils of pillage after the battle. The chief intent in battle is to punish enemies or weaken rivals, and it is usually implemented after failure to take over the community from within.

The Mages of Halruaa

A rising presence in Faerûn comes from the South, from the mystical and near-legendary land of Halruaa. This land is reputed to be controlled by powerful wizards, and wizardry there is incorporated into common use. It is a land where castles float on the breeze, water runs uphill, and even the meanest scullery maid knows a few cantrips to make her job go smoother. The true nature of Halruaa is best described by those who have pierced its mountainous borders.

In Faerûn, these mages are best known for their flying ships, which are slung beneath great bags filled with volatile gases. These flying ships are the hallmark of the Halruaan mage, and they often appear off the coasts of many port cities in the Realms, approaching from the water, in the manner of standard craft, but remaining "above it all." The merchant-mages who control these crafts seem above it all as well, dealing in few items, often of little worth to their owners, and paying extravagant prices. It is said that the Mages of Halruaa seek the perfect components for their mighty spells, while others say the act of trading is merely a cover for darker, more sinister acts committed when the ship is in port. What is known is that every sailor on these ships has magical abilities.

It has been increasingly apparent that the Mages have a second set of operatives at their command who work more quietly within the great trading cities of the North and the Heartlands. These are shopkeepers, merchants, and common traders who act as the eyes and ears of the Halruaans, keeping abreast of new developments, particularly the appearance of powerful items of magic. Such artifacts are regularly sought out by the Halruaans, though whether to research them, destroy them, or merely keep them out of the hands of others is

unknown. It is known that often after a powerful relic has been unearthed, the city where it appeared receives a visit from the great floating ships of the Mages of Halruaa.

Caution is advised when dealing with any of these factions. I fear some may be even more influential than Volo indicates.

—Elminster

Major Characters of the Sword Coast

See the above summary for more people—particularly the dukes of Baldur's Gate and other notables in that fair city. These below are a few of note that I also wanted to mention to you, dear reader.

—Volo

Drizzt Do'Urden

(Dritst Doe-URR-den) Drizzt the dark elf (Chaotic Good, Drow Elf Male, Ranger 16th level). A renegade drow ranger who has escaped the oppressive regime of his underground homeland, Drizzt Do'Urden is among the most famous of drow in the Realms owing to his deeds on the surface. He may be found abroad while engaged in acts of daring, particularly in rolling back the tribes of goblins and evil humans in the North. His fame and hatred of his former homeland has made him a target of other drow who hope to earn favor with their evil goddess Lolth by killing the renegade.

Drizzt wears *mithral chain mail +4*, a gift of King Bruenor. He wields two magical scimitars simultaneously. These scimitars are Icingdeath, a *frostbrand +3*, and Twinkle, a *defender +5*, which glows when enemies are near. His most prized possession is a *figurine of wondrous power* of an *onyx panther*. The panther's name is Guenhwyvar. He doesn't use the panther unless severely taxed, as he is limited to using it for a certain period of time each day.

Elminster

(El-MINN-ster) Elminster the Sage (Chaotic Good, Human Male, Wizard 29th level). The exact age of Elminster is unknown and his year of birth unrecorded. From his tales, it is suspected he learned his magical arts at the feet of Arkhon the Old, who died in what is now Waterdeep over five hundred years ago, and he may have been in Myth Drannor near that magical realm's final days. The exact nature of these claims remains unproven, but most Realms natives who know him consider Elminster an eternal force in the world.

The Sage currently makes his abode in the tiny farm community of Shadowdale, living in a two-story house overlooking a fish pond with his aide and scribe, Lhaeo. He is often abroad, both elsewhere in the Realms and in other planes, where he hobnobs with the great and the not-so-great in a relentless pursuit of knowledge.

Elminster may be the most knowledgeable and well-informed individual in the Realms. His areas of specialization are the Realms and its people, ecologies of various creatures, magical

items and their histories, and the known planes of existence. Elminster no longer tutors or works for hire save in the most pressing cases.

He seems to prize his independence and solitude, but on several occasions he has opened his tower to newcomers and visitors. Elminster's former students and allies include some of the most powerful good individuals in the Realms, including some of the Lords of Waterdeep; the Simbul, ruler of Aglarond; and the group known as the Harpers.

Volo **hamp Geddarm**

Volo (Chaotic Good, Human Male, Wizard 5th level). A roguish magician known for his neatly trimmed beard, stylish beret, and acid tongue, Volo is a feature throughout the Realms—a brief feature, since his honesty in reporting often puts him at odds with the local merchants, constabulary, and wizards. He has written a number of works, including a popular series of guides to various cities and “Volo’s Guide to All Things Magical,” a suppressed work dealing with magic “for the common people.” Volo is an eminent sage who concerns himself with wizards and with the geography and lore of the Realms.

Eminent indeed!

—*Elminster*

As a result, he is a fountain of knowledge on subjects and more than willing to share the juiciest portions with whoever will listen. As a result, Volo must move around frequently in order to stay alive, which adds to his storehouse of information on geography. Heroes may find Volo anywhere in the Realms, usually on the run from this irate wizard or that angry innkeeper.

The price of fame, or infamy?

—*Elminster*

Bentley **Mirrorshade, Friendly Arm Inn**

Bentley (Chaotic Good, Gnome Male, Illusionist 10th level / Thief 10th level). This industrious gnome illusionist abandoned life as an adventurer to run the Friendly Arm Inn in a keep he and adventurer comrades seized and cleared of monsters some twenty seasons ago. A clever, alert, curly-haired innkeeper who has a habit of humming when deep in thought and of scratching his large nose when concerned, Bentley's always a step ahead of troublemakers and misfortune. A veteran traveling Coast merchant called him a “master anticipator.” Aided by his wife Gellana, he has made the Arm a safe, friendly, clean, well-defended spot, a “must” stop for overland travelers.

There are persistent rumors that Bentley sponsors adventuring bands and is involved in half a dozen covert schemes or shady merchant cabals. He certainly never seems short of money. On

several occasions he's hired mercenaries to bolster his defenses in the dead of winter or hired wizards to teleport needed items from far-off cities.

Gellana Mirrorshade, Friendly Arm Inn

Gellana (Neutral Good, Gnome Female, Cleric 10th level). This quiet, observant priestess of Garl Glittergold runs the Temple of Wisdom in the walled-in community known as the Friendly Arm and helps her husband Bentley run the inn as a safe, secure place. Where Bentley is an expert at sniffing out the schemes of living folk and seeing what they'll need, try, and want, Gellana takes a longer view and is always looking at the larger picture. She ordered and oversaw the digging of deeper wells for the inn's water supply and the rigging of secondary pumps in case the main ones fail or are wrecked by orcs. She also planned the inn gardens, adding window boxes and rooftop beds to the ground plots, and making all garden locations produce food or herbs for the inn kitchens.

Gellana welcomes humans to her worship services and has made many converts. She has also become something of a folk hero among gnomes in western Faerûn as "the quiet and true power behind a gnome who made it." Gnome mothers often speak of her to their daughters as someone they should emulate if they'd like to share as large a slice of success.

Most Radiant of Lathander, Kelddath Ormlyr, Beregost

Kelddath (Neutral Good, Human Male, Cleric 16th level). Governor of Beregost and high priest of the temple to Lathander there, Kelddath is a patient, energetic supporter of local improvement. He's always advising or lending money to new local businesses and to farmers trying to expand or modernize their holdings. His temple troops police the town attentively and try to prevent adventurers and others from exploring local ruins. Any rowdiness or lawlessness is swiftly and harshly dealt with. Kelddath wants Beregost to have a reputation for being the safest Sword Coast town in order to encourage trade and travel.

Taerom "Thunderhammer" Fuíruím, Beregost

Taerom (Neutral Good, Human Male, Fighter 5th level). This master armorer has his own smithy in Beregost and is a smith whose work is admired even by dwarves. Though he's grown white-haired with the passing of years, he's still an active, burly giant of a man. He keeps to himself, working at his forge, but can slay gnolls with a single blow of his twelve-foot-long iron staff. Taerom has often made items fine enough for wizards to enchant, but these days he's more apt to make small, useful things like hooks, locks, hinges, and coffer. He sports magnificent

mutton-chop whiskers and stands almost seven feet tall, with shoulders almost four feet broad. He has a distinctive rolling stride.

First Reader, Tethtoril, Candlekeep

Tethtoril (Lawful Good, Human Male, Priest of Mystra, 18th level). This tall, impressive, and soft-spoken man is often mistaken for the Keeper of the Tomes of Candlekeep. He is more intelligent, regal, and sensitive than his superior Ulaunt, by far—and Ulaunt knows it. Yet Tethtoril is unfailingly loyal and diligent in his duties, often anticipating troubles and preparing beforehand to spare Candlekeep danger—or Ulaunt any embarrassment. Most Holy Mystra often whispers to Tethtoril in his dreams, bidding him to do this or that—and in this way has led him to unearth spells from forgotten tomes; kept Elminster, Khelben, and the Harpers tolerated in Candlekeep; and prevented Ulaunt from being seduced by darker powers (most recently, Cyric).

Thalantyr the Conjuror, Beregost

Thalantyr (Neutral Good, Human Male, Wizard 17th level). An archmage of note, Thalantyr is a courtly, solitary man who enjoys walks in the countryside while armed with his *Staff of Power*. He dwells in a guarded estate known as High Hedge, west of Beregost. Once an adventurer who eagerly sought the lost magic of Netheril in crumbling ruins, he's now retired. And although he's left the perils of that profession, he'll help other adventurers with advice and spells (for a fee). He'll also warn them that they may find a lot more than they intended to, as he did, but won't be much more specific. One gathers from long conversations with him that he met some sort of horrible monster and was enslaved for a time, escaping only through luck. He is said to have won his freedom with spellbooks and other magical relics of Netheril that make him self-supporting so that he need not travel the planes or go adventuring in Toril any longer.

Keeper of the Tomes, Ulaunt, Candlekeep

Ulaunt (Lawful Neutral, Human Male, Wizard 9th level). The head of fortified Candlekeep, Ulaunt is a proud scholar, one of the most learned—and one of the most haughty—people in all Faerûn. His sharp tongue, large nose, and dark-eyed, hawk-like gaze have earned him the name “the Old Buzzard” among acolytes down the years—a term that has even crept into general use in the Coast lands. Ulaunt has access to more spells than most wizards see in their lives, and he reportedly keeps in practice casting them in his private turret chamber and in caverns deep beneath Candlekeep. A secret passage is said to connect these heights and depths. He bears a magical staff of office rumored to be a *Staff of the Magi* with extra, extremely potent powers. Ulaunt and those among the Great Readers who are wizards have access to spell scrolls all over Candlekeep—scrolls hidden behind wooden panels and within false tomes. Ulaunt's

chief interest is acquiring ever more information. His aims in life are unknown beyond making Candlekeep the seat of a land of scholars and a power on the political stage of Faerûn. Several tales link him with young ladies of various noble houses, Waterdeep, and Tethyr in his earlier years—and there's a newer rumor tying him romantically to some of the icy-cold, haughty elven ladies who come to the Sword Coast from Evermeet.

Some Monsters of the Sword Coast

This is by no means a complete list of the monsters you will encounter, my friends; there are many more in the area around Baldur's Gate. These are a few of the most representative, at least for the safer areas.

You'll probably run into these first, and if you're lucky you won't see any more!

Try not to venture too far away from the taverns, friends!

—Volo

Black Bear

A rather common omnivorous mammal, the bear tends to avoid humans unless provoked. Exceptions to this rule can be a most unfortunate occurrence.

Bears are, in general, large and powerful animals which are found throughout the world's temperate and cooler climates. With dense fur protecting them from the elements and powerful claws protecting them from other animals, bears are the true rulers of the animal kingdom in the areas where they live.

The so-called black bear actually ranges in color from black to light brown. It is smaller than the brown bear and the most widespread species by far.

Brown Bear

The brown bear, of which the infamous grizzly is the most well-known variety, is a bear of very aggressive disposition. Brown bears are more carnivorous than their smaller cousins, the black bears. The grizzly in particular will often bring down large game such as deer and elk.

Other types of bears have been seen upon the Sword Coast, but most species mind their own business unless provoked!

—Volo

Carrion Crawler

The carrion crawler is a scavenger of subterranean areas, feeding primarily upon carrion. However, when such food becomes scarce or when it is threatened, the carrion crawler will attack and kill living creatures.

The crawler looks like a cross between a giant green cutworm and a cephalopod. Like so many other hybrid monsters, the carrion crawler may well be the result of genetic experimentation by a mad, evil wizard.

The monster's head is covered with a tough hide, but the body is not well protected. The monster is accompanied by a rank, fetid odor that often gives warning of its approach.

A drunken adventurer claimed one of these somehow immobilized the party he was traveling with and slowly devoured them... Grisly!

—Volo

Dryad

Dryads are beautiful, intelligent tree sprites. They are as elusive as they are alluring, however, and dryads are rarely seen unless taken by surprise—or when they wish to be spotted.

The dryad's exquisite features, delicate and finely chiseled, are much like an elf maiden's. Dryads have high cheek bones and amber, violet, or dark green eyes.

Dryads often appear clothed in a loose, simple garment. The clothing they wear is the color of the oak grove in the season they appear. They speak their own tongue, as well as the languages of elves, pixies, and sprites. Dryads can also speak with plants.

Ettercap

Ettercaps are ugly bipedal creatures that get along very well with all types of giant spiders. These creatures of low intelligence are exceedingly cruel and cunning, and are skilled in setting traps—very deadly traps—much like the spiders that often live around them.

Ettercaps stand around six feet tall, even with their stooping gait and hunched shoulders. The creatures have short, spindly legs, long arms that reach nearly to their ankles, and large potbellies. The hands of ettercaps have a thumb and three long fingers that end in razor sharp claws. Their bodies are covered by tufts of thick, wiry, black hair, and their skin is dark and thick. Ettercaps' heads are almost equine in shape, but they have large reptilian eyes, usually blood-red in color, and large fangs, one protruding downward from each side of the mouth. The mouth itself is large and lined with very sharp teeth.

Ghast

These creatures are so like ghouls as to be physically indistinguishable from them, and they are usually found only with a pack of ghouls. When a pack of ghouls and ghosts attacks it will quickly become evident that ghosts are present, for they exude a carrion stench.

It has also been said that Ghosts are far more cunning than their lesser counterparts, although it has been some time since I've gotten close enough to find out.

—Volo

Although Volo may be too skittish to go near these beasts, I can confirm both their intelligence and their danger. Keep a weather eye and a careful distance when ghosts are about.

—Elminster

Ghoul

Ghouls are undead creatures, once human, who now feed on the flesh of corpses. Although the change from human to ghoul has deranged and destroyed their minds, ghouls have a terrible cunning which enables them to hunt their prey most effectively.

Ghouls are vaguely recognizable as once having been human, but have become horribly disfigured by their change to ghouls. The tongue becomes long and tough for licking marrow from cracked bones, the teeth become sharp and elongated, and the nails grow strong and sharp like claws.

Giant Spiders

Spiders are aggressive predators, dwelling both above and below ground. Most are poisonous and bite prey before devouring them, because unconscious victims are easier to carry to a lair.

Spiders have eight legs and eight eyes. They usually fit into two categories: web-spinners, which have bulbous abdomens and sleek legs; and hunting spiders, which have smaller bodies, larger heads and fangs, and hairy bodies. Most giant spiders are simply much bigger versions of the web-spinning large spiders. Their poison causes severe injury, and possibly death, if the victim fails a saving throw.

An Amnian trader once shared with me a frightening tale of a spider the size of a horse with swords for arms and a plated hide! Surely there are varieties even fiercer still!

—Volo

Gibberling

They come screaming, jabbering, and howling out of the night. Dozens, maybe hundreds, of hunchbacked, naked humanoids swarming forward. They have no apparent thought of safety, subtlety, or strategy, leaving others with little hope of stopping their mass assault. Then, having come and killed, the gibberlings move on, seemingly randomly, back into the night.

The first impression of gibberlings is of a writhing mass of fur and flesh in the distant moonlit darkness. The pandemonium is actually a mass of pale, hunchbacked humanoids, with pointed canine ears and black manes surrounding their hideous, grinning faces. Their black eyes shine with a maniacal gleam.

Gnoll

Gnolls are large, evil, hyena-like humanoids that roam about in loosely organized bands.

While the body of a gnoll is shaped like that of a large human, the details are those of a hyena. They stand erect on two legs and have hands that can manipulate as well as those of any human. They have greenish gray skin, darker near the muzzle, with a short reddish gray to dull yellow mane.

Hobgoblin

Hobgoblins are fierce humanoids that wage a perpetual war with the other humanoid races. They are intelligent, organized, and aggressive.

The typical hobgoblin is a burly humanoid standing at least six feet tall. Their hairy hides range from dark reddish-brown to dark gray. Their faces show dark red or red-orange skin. Large males have blue or red noses. Hobgoblin eyes are either yellowish or dark brown while their teeth are yellow. Their garments tend to be brightly colored, often bold, blood red. Any leather is always tinted black. Hobgoblin weaponry is kept polished and repaired.

Kobold

Kobolds are a cowardly, sadistic race of short humanoids that vigorously contest the human and humanoid races for living space and food. They especially dislike gnomes and attack them on sight.

Barely clearing three feet in height, kobolds have scaly hides that range from dark, rusty brown to a rusty black. They smell of damp dogs and stagnant water. Their eyes glow like a pair of bright red sparks, and they have two small horns ranging from tan to white. Because of the kobolds' fondness for wearing raggedy garb of red and orange, their non-prehensile rat-like tails, and their language (which sounds like small dogs yapping), these fell creatures are often not taken seriously. This is often a fatal mistake, for what they lack in size and strength they make up in ferocity and tenacity.

Some have also noted small humanoids called "tasloi" and "xvarts." While all are nearly harmless met singly, they always attack in packs. This is a good reason to travel accompanied, dear readers, if not just for the company.

—Volo

Ogre

Ogres are big, ugly, greedy humanoids that live by ambushes, raids, and theft. Ill-tempered and nasty, these monsters are often found serving as mercenaries in the ranks of orc tribes, evil clerics, or gnolls.

They mingle freely with giants and trolls. Adult ogres stand nine to ten feet tall and weigh 300 to 350 pounds. Their skin colors range from a dead yellow to a dull black-brown, and (rarely) a sickly violet. Their warty bumps are often of a different color—or at least darker than their hides. Their eyes are purple with white pupils. Teeth and talons are orange or black. Ogres have long, greasy hair of blackish-blue to dull dark green. Their odor is repellent, reminiscent of curdled milk. Dressing in poorly cured furs and animal hides, they care for their weapons and armor only reasonably well. It is common for ogres to speak orcish, troll, stone giant, and gnoll, as well as their own guttural language. A typical ogre's life span is ninety years.

Some more advanced ogres can even cast spells!

—Volo

A rather melodramatic description of (admittedly formidable) ogre-magi, which are no longer as rare as the casual traveler might wish.

—Elminster

Ogrillon

The ogrillon is a species of half-ogre, being the fruit of an (unnatural) union between ogres and orcs. The ogrillon displays the general tendencies of its larger cousin with some exceptions. It is

even more brutish and violent, and it normally learns to speak only ogrish and a handful of words of common.

The ogrillon is about the size of an orc and closely resembles one. One in ten is born with features and coloration very similar to those of ogres: purple eyes with white pupils, black teeth, yellowish skin with dull, dark green hair. The skin of an ogrillon of either type is covered with small horn plates, giving it a superior armor class and enabling it to fight without weapons. An ogrillon disdains armor and most other material items, retaining only a handful of gold pieces kept as treasured belongings. It is uncertain why they would keep gold, except perhaps for luck. Perhaps we'll never know.

Sirine

Sirines are beautiful, human-like females, at home in any aquatic environment. They have human skin tones ranging to a light yellow-green, and their hair can be almost any color, though silver and dark green are the most common. Sirines have beautiful figures and wear scanty clothing at best.

Most sirines are antisocial, so they try to drive intruders away, with evil sirines taking stronger measures. Other sirines are hungry for social interaction and try to lure male humans or humanoids to join them for a time.

Sirines speak their own language and the languages of the nearest intelligent races. They can breathe water and air, and they have infravision to a range of 120 feet.

Skeleton

All skeletons are magically animated undead monsters, created as guardians or warriors by powerful evil wizards and priests.

Skeletons appear to have no ligaments or musculature which would allow movement. Instead, the bones are “magically joined” together during the casting of an *Animate Dead* spell. Skeletons have no eyes or internal organs.

Be wary of all undead beasts. Aside from the ghouls, ghosts, and skeletons listed here, there are animated corpses, warrior skeletons, and even revived wolves known as dread wolves. Some of the most powerful undead along the Sword Coast, such as the vampiric wolves, are not even affected by normal weaponry and require magics in order to kill!

—Elminster

Wild Dog

Smaller than wolves, the appearance of the wild dog varies from place to place. Most appear very wolf-like, while others combine the looks of wolf and jackal.

Wolf

The wolf is a very active, cunning carnivore, capable of surviving in nearly every climate. Shrouded in mystery and suspicion, they are viewed as vicious killers that slaughter men and animals alike for the lack of better things to do.

Northern wolves exhibit colors from pure white to black. Southern wolves are reddish and brown. Although fur coloration varies with climate, all wolves have various features in common. They are characterized by powerful jaws; wide strong teeth; bushy tails; tall, strong ears; and round pupils. Their eyes, a gold or amber color, seem to have an almost empathic quality.

Worg

Worgs are an offshoot of wolf stock that have attained a degree of intelligence and tendency toward evil. Worgs have a primitive language and often serve as mounts for goblins.

Time in the Realms

Daytime is described by the use of a 24-hour clock, as the day of the world of Toril is 24 hours long. For simplicity the AM (for time before noon) and PM (for time after noon) conventions are used herein.

The following calendar is common enough to apply to all regions within the Realms (especially the Sword Coast). The year consists of 360 days: twelve months of exactly thirty days each. Three ten-day weeks are in each month, but herein we refer to days as they relate to the month (that is, one through thirty, of a specific month, rather than specific days of the week). The months are summarized in the table below. Each month's name is followed by a colloquial description of that month, plus the roughly corresponding month of the Gregorian calendar.

Name	Colloquial Description	Gregorian Month
Hammer	Deepwinter	January
Alturiak	The Claw of Winter or the Claws of the Cold	February
Ches	Of the Sunsets	March
Tarsakh	Of the Storms	April
Mirtul	The Melting	May
Kythorn	The Time of Flowers	June
Flamerule	Summertide	July
Eleasias	Highsun	August
Eleint	The Fading	September
Marpenoth	Leafall	October
Uktar	The Rotting	November
Nightal	The Drawing Down	December

Years are referred to by numbers, using the system known as Dalereckoning (DR):

Dalereckoning is taken from the year that humans were first permitted by the Elven Court to settle in the more open regions of the forests.

The Roll of Years

The wide variety of competing and often conflicting calendars causes no end of pain to the historian and the sage. Most use the Roll of Years, a system by which each year has its own personal name. Names for the years are known collectively as the Roll of Years, as they are drawn from the predictions written down under that title by the famous Lost Sage, Augathra the Mad, with a few additions by the great seer Alaundo. The Roll is a long one; some more important years include the Year of the Worm (1356 DR), the Year of Shadows (1358 DR, the year of the Time of Troubles), the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), and 1373 DR (the current year).

The Time of Troubles, in which the gods of the Forgotten Realms assumed mortal form and walked the Realms, started when the gods Bane and Myrkul stole the Tablets of Fate from the Lord Ao, the overpower god of the Realms. In retribution for this act, Ao banished all of the gods from their outer-planar domains (except for Helm who guarded the Outer Planes). The Gods were forced to assume the forms of mortal Avatars until the end of the Time of Troubles, when the tablets were returned to their rightful owner. During the crisis, Mystra's (goddess of magic) and Myrkul's (god of the dead) avatars were killed, Bane (god of evil and tyranny) was destroyed fighting Torm, and the human Cyric killed Bhaal (god of murder and assassins) in an epic struggle while competing for Bane's portfolio. After the dust settled, Cyric (death, evil, and madness) ascended to new godhood.

Some now-deceased gods had some warning of their impending deaths--or at least the attempts on their lives--and took steps to prevent them. And succeeded, at least in part.

—Elminster

Timekeeping in Baldur's Gate

A **game round** in Baldur's Gate is six seconds long in real time. The round in the AD&D game is sixty seconds, hence time in Baldur's Gate is compressed about ten-fold when compared to the standard AD&D rule set.

A **turn** is ten rounds, that is, sixty seconds. This term is used in some of the spell descriptions in *Volo's Guide to All Things Magical*.

A **game day** (representing 24 hours in the game, dawn to dusk to dawn again) is just over two hours long in real time, again about a ten-fold reduction in time in the game.

Each time the party **rests**, eight hours pass (the equivalent of about 45 minutes of running game time).

So concludes this first section of the Sword Coast Survival Guide. For more specific information on the rules of this world, see the latest edition of Mastering Melee & Magic, also enclosed. It never hurts to know a little extra about the world you inhabit, after all!

—Volo

And while you're at it, keep an eye out for any books you discover in your travels, which might help to fill the gaps and inaccuracies of what you have read herein. Keep reading for information about how to interact with this world.

—Elminster

Part Two: Gameplay

Introduction

If you're reading this guide, it's likely that you have already installed the game. There are no CDs to insert, remove, and insert again. If you are reading this, congratulations! Installation is complete.

Honestly, that made no sense to me. What's a CD?

—Volo

A mysterious artifact that you needn't concern yourself with, Volo. Carry on.

—Elminster

This guide details the ins and outs of how to play *Baldur's Gate: Enhanced Edition*. Note that it presumes that you are entering our Realms through a "Window," not an "Apple" or an "Android" or an "iPad." It therefore explains the default controls for use with a Windows-based game first. Notes on the differences between the PC and iPad versions of the game appear at the end.

Generally, I like to enter places through a door. But I suppose it takes all kinds...

—Volo

In the following pages you will learn how to create your character, how to navigate your way through Faerûn, and how to access the Tutorial, the main game, and the Black Pits adventure.

Why would anyone go to somewhere called the Black Pits? This seems like poor decision-making to me...

—Volo

I suppose you would know something about that.

—Elminster

The Main Menu

When you first open *Baldur's Gate: Enhanced Edition*, you will see a menu with three different choices: *Baldur's Gate*, *Tutorial*, and *The Black Pits*. Select the option you wish to play by clicking the buttons lined in gold. You also can exit the game by clicking Quit Game at the bottom of the screen.

Tutorial

For a quick lesson or refresher course, you can use the *Tutorial* option to play through a short scenario that describes how to play the game. You will then be prompted to create your character, at which point the game will teach you the mechanics and controls. Once the tutorial has been completed, you'll begin the main *Baldur's Gate* story as normal.

Baldur's Gate

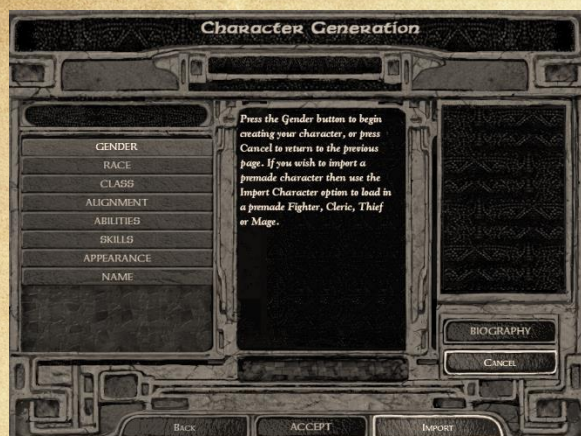
Clicking this option will bring you to the *Baldur's Gate* main menu, where you can start or load a single player or multiplayer game, adjust gameplay or graphics options, or view the in-game cinematics that you have previously seen in the game. This menu will start the main storyline, which is separate from *The Black Pits*. Your adventure begins in Candlekeep, but before you begin, you will be prompted to create a character.

The Black Pits

The Black Pits, a new adventure created for the *Enhanced Edition*, allows you to bring an entire party of up to six characters into the Black Pits, where you must fight for your freedom...and your life.

You can play *The Black Pits* by yourself with a cast of entirely new characters, or you can enlist the help of friends by starting a multiplayer game. *The Black Pits* is an adventure separate from the main story, intended to be played by itself.

Character Generation



When you start a new game, either by yourself or with one or more friends, you must first create your character. You can choose your gender, race, class, appearance, and skills, as well as a portrait that will help identify your character in the game. This section will walk you through the process of creating a new character. When you have completed each section, press "Done" to proceed to the next section.

You can also import a character or use a pre-made character by pressing the "Import" button. You can choose whether to import from a character file or from a saved game.

Gender

This is an aesthetic choice and does not affect your attributes in any fashion. It can, however, affect whether or not an NPC becomes romantically interested in your character. Use the gender symbols to select your gender.

Portrait

Once you have selected your character's gender, you will be prompted to choose a portrait to represent your character visually in the game. You will be given a list of options based on the gender you chose; use the buttons provided to scroll left or right to see the available choices.

You can also create an entirely new portrait and select it by opening the "CUSTOM" menu. To import a custom portrait, create a folder called "portraits" in the directory where your local game files are stored (under Documents\Baldur's Gate: Enhanced Edition), and add any custom portraits to that folder.

The dimensions and naming format required for player portraits are:

- XXXXXXXXS.bmp (54x84, 200 dpi)
- XXXXXXXXM.bmp (169x266, 200 dpi)
- XXXXXXXXL.bmp (210x330, 200 dpi)

For multiplayer, all players must have a copy of the portraits being used; if a portrait is missing on one or more players' computers, they will see a silhouette with a question mark where the player's missing portrait should be.

Race

Select the race of your character. You can choose from any one of the following: human, dwarf, elf, gnome, halfling, half-elf, or half-orc. Descriptions of each race appear in the area to the right of the selection boxes.

For more information on races, consult *Mastering Melee & Magic*.

Class

The classes and class combinations available to the race you have chosen will be highlighted. Choose the class that you want from the list. Descriptions of each class are noted in the area to the right of the selection boxes. (More information on classes is provided in *Manual the Second*.)

Multi-class characters are available only to non-humans and share the traits and restrictions of both classes. Human characters cannot multi-class but may choose to dual-class later in the game. Only human characters can become dual-class characters.

Kits

Certain classes (all except Barbarian, Monk, and Sorcerer) also have several “kits” that may be chosen. When you pick one of these classes, you will be given a subset of kits to choose from. If you don’t wish to use a kit, simply choose the default kit (named after the class).

Kits give special advantages and disadvantages to their parent class. For example, if you choose a “Kensai” kit (a Fighter kit), your character deals more damage with his weapon than any other class in the game. However, your character is unable to use armor or missile weapons. (More information on kits is provided in *Manual the Second*.)

Note: Multi-class characters do not get to choose a kit. Dual-class characters may not choose a kit for their second class, and certain restrictions might apply based on the character’s first class.

Alignment

Once you have selected a race and a class, you will be prompted to select the alignment for your character. Your choices will be limited based on the class you chose; Paladins, for example (with the exception of Blackguards), must be lawful good.

Your alignment determines how your character interacts with his environment. Read over each alignment’s description (listed in *Mastering Melee & Magic*) carefully before choosing. If you stray severely from your alignment during the course of the game, there will be consequences—you may even suffer the loss of some of your abilities!

Ability Scores

You'll see a screen with the abilities the computer has randomly determined for your character, calculated as if you rolled three 6-sided dice for each ability, adjusted based on race. Any roll that yields a score that is below a class or race's minimum will be rerolled. You can subtract points away from an ability to add them to another ability; however, you cannot take points away from an ability if it will lower the ability below racial or class minimums. Each ability has a caption describing it.

You may use the "Reroll" button to generate new numbers for all your ability scores; reroll as many times as you like until you reach a combination you are happy with.

Note: For warrior classes, the exceptional Strength value (for example, 18/45) is generated upon rolling; whether or not you rolled an 18 for Strength.

Skills

Once you have assigned your ability scores, you must choose your skills and proficiencies. Which skills and how many proficiencies you receive is determined by your class; a Mage, for example, must select which spells appear in his spellbook, and a Thief must assign skill points to thieving abilities. Warrior classes only select weapon proficiencies, but receive more of them than any other class.

Thief Abilities

If your character is a Thief or a multi-class character with Thief abilities, you must allocate ability points to Thief skills. The Thief has 40 points to allocate at the beginning of the game and receives 25 points every level thereafter (although certain Thief kits may alter this number). More information on Thief abilities is provided in *Manual the Second*.

Spells

If your character is a Mage or Sorcerer, you will see a screen where you can choose spells for your spellbook (for a Mage) or personal knowledge (for a Sorcerer). There is also a "PICK FOR ME" button that will select your spells for you. If you are a Specialist Mage (such as an Illusionist or Conjurer), you must select at least one spell from your school of specialization.

Once you have selected your spells, you will also be prompted to select which spells your character has memorized at the start of the game. This will allow you to start adventuring without needing to rest first.

Weapon Proficiencies

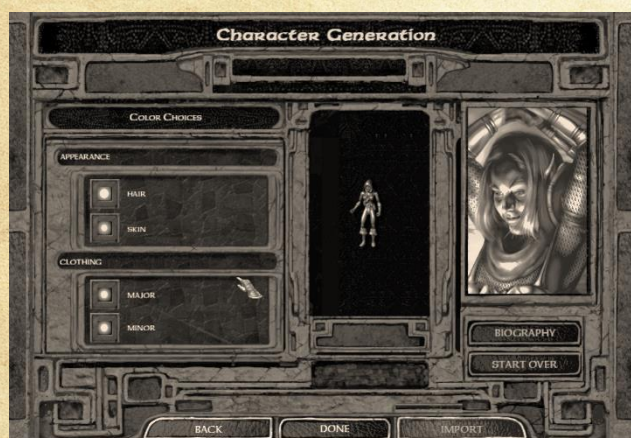
All characters receive weapon proficiencies. The proficiency list appears with a descriptive caption in the bottom right section of the screen. Characters can often wield weapons without

the appropriate proficiency, but they incur penalties on all rolls with that weapon. Fighters, Paladins, and Rangers can become even more skilled with weapons by adding a second slot to any proficiency. Doing so gives them an added bonus to their attack rolls and to the damage they inflict. Only Fighters and certain kits can devote more than two slots to a single weapon. Rangers also begin the game with two free proficiency slots assigned to Two-Weapon Style, which gives them the ability to wield two weapons effectively.

Racial Enemy

Rangers must choose a racial enemy. The Ranger receives a +4 THAC0 bonus when fighting creatures of this type. You can choose your racial enemy from a list of monsters you are likely to face during your adventures on the Sword Coast; choose the one you hate the most.

Appearance



After choosing your skills, you can customize your character's appearance by changing his or her skin, hair, and clothing colors. Click on the box showing the current color to bring up a selection window with other color choices for each category.

Note: You can change your major and minor colors for clothing at any time from the Inventory screen once the adventure has started.

Sound

In addition to your character's appearance, you can also select one of several character voice sets, which will be used for battle cries and other sounds your character makes during play. Choose the voice set you like best from the choices available.

Name

Last of all, you must name your character. NPCs will use this name when addressing your character during dialogue, so be sure to choose a name you like! When you have entered the name you wish to use, press "Done."

Finishing Your Character

After you have entered your name, review your character's information displayed in the middle section. At any point, you may click "Back" to return to an earlier section, but beware that

returning to an earlier section will force you to repeat later sections from scratch—including any ability scores you rolled. If you are satisfied with your character, press “Accept” to start the adventure.

Interface Overview: How to Play Baldur's Gate

The Baldur's Gate interface has many facets designed to make playing the game easier once you have mastered the basic controls. Most of the features are self-evident when you play, so you can read this section before playing or simply consult it after you've begun, whichever you prefer.

Mouse Buttons and Control

Left-Click: Action

- Selects a character or selects a portrait. If a character or group was selected before, that character or group is unselected and the new character is selected instead.
- If the Shift key is held down while L-clicking on various characters on the field or on the portraits, multiple characters are selected.
- If the Ctrl key is held down while L-clicking on unselected characters, the characters are added to the current character selection. L-clicking on already selected characters unselects them instead.
- Double-clicking on a portrait centers the camera view on that character.
- Clicking buttons selects an action for a character: Guard, Talk, Attack (click on weapon), and so on.
- Casts spells and use items once they have been selected.
- On terrain, walks selected character(s) to the selected location.
- L-click and drag on terrain to select multiple characters.
- L-click and drag portraits to change the marching order for your party.
- Pick up items with currently selected character(s). If more than one character is selected, the top-most portrait (the "leader") approaches and picks up the item.
- L-click the clock icon in the lower left corner of the screen to pause or unpause the game.

Right-Click: Information, Cancel Actions, and Formation Movement Control

- R-clicking a character's portrait opens that character's Inventory screen.
- R-clicking an item (on the Inventory screen) or spell (in the Spells screen) opens the item or spell description for the selected item or spell.
- Cancel current actions, such as attacks or spellcasting, by R-clicking anywhere on the terrain.
- R-clicking on a monster or NPC or after clicking on a selected party member plays the selection sound for that character or monster.

- R-click and drag to change the orientation of the party's formation when moving to the selected location.
- R-click on a ranged weapon in a quick slot to configure the ammunition used by that ranged weapon.
- R-click on Quick Spell slots to select the spell from the character's repertoire to be used by that slot.
- R-click on Quick Formation slots to select a different party formation for that slot.

Mouse Movement: Move Viewport

- Move the mouse to the top, bottom, left, or right edge of the screen to scroll the game's view in any direction. You can also use the arrow keys on your keyboard.

The Main Interface: Where the Game is Played

Here is the main screen that you will use when navigating the world of Baldur's Gate. On the left side of the screen are several buttons:



- Game Screen
- Map Screen
- Journal
- Inventory
- Character Record
- Mage Spells
- Priest Spells
- Options
- Rest
- Clock (Pause/Unpause)

On the right side of the screen, below the character portraits, are some additional buttons:

- Select Tool (touchscreens only)
- Help Tool (touchscreens only)
- Select All
- Party AI On/Off

You are also able to configure the main interface to match your play style, minimizing sections of the interface that you do not use often (or to whose hot keys you have mastered). At the top of the right and left side panels are buttons that minimize each side panel. When a panel is minimized, a button appears in the corresponding bottom corner of the screen; this button will bring the panel back up. You can also use the "u" hot key to hide the entire interface or reset the

interface as needed. You can change the hot keys in the Gameplay section of the Options screen, under “Assign Keys.”

Zooming In and Out

You can zoom in with the camera to get a closer look at the action by scrolling your mouse wheel down, or zoom out to get a view of a larger area by scrolling your mouse wheel up.

Look closely at your surroundings; you might be surprised at what you find!

—Volo

Pausing the Game

You can pause the game at any time by either hitting the space bar on your keyboard or pressing the clock button on the bottom left of the screen. This is a very important part of gameplay, as combat will often become unmanageable in real time. When this happens, you can simply pause the game, assign orders to your characters, then unpaue and let the action unfold.

Note: During combat, you will not be able to equip or unequip your character's armor. You can, however, change the weapons and other protective items you have equipped, such as shields, amulets, rings, or cloaks.

Auto-Pausing

You can set the game to pause automatically during gameplay. To access the auto-pause options, open the Options screen, then the Gameplay screen, and choose “Auto-Pause.” By configuring more auto-pause parameters, you can make the game take on a more turn-based feel.

Action Cursors

Note that the cursor changes when moved over objects or characters or NPCs to indicate the default action. The default action mode can be changed by L-clicking on the buttons in the bottom panel of the interface.

A Note on Cursors

The cursor changes when moved over objects or characters or NPCs to indicate the default action. The default action mode can be changed by L-clicking the buttons at the bottom of the screen.

If a given cursor is selected, it may be changed by selecting a different action button, by R-clicking somewhere on the screen, or by L-clicking somewhere on the screen where the cursor has no effect (for example, a non-object or the interface border).

Here are the icons, and their descriptions, for the cursors that will appear during play.



Indicates that you can select the character, button, or icon.



Indicates that you can interact with the selected target if your character is close enough.



Indicates that the selected character(s) will be moved to the selected location.



Indicates that the selected location is not a valid destination for movement.



Indicates that, if you move here, you will leave the current map area.



Indicates that you will open or close the highlighted door or object.



Indicates walking through an entry or hallway, if a door is not highlighted.



Allows you to go up or down staircases to the next level above or below your current location.



Allows you to pick up items from the floor or a container.



Indicates that the currently active character(s) will attack the selected target.



Indicates that the selected Thief will attempt to unlock the selected door or container if that door or container is currently locked.



Indicates that the selected character will attempt to remove the selected trap. You can only disarm a trap that you have first detected.



Indicates that the selected character will attempt to steal an item from the indicated character or creature.



Indicates that the character will cast the selected spell at the indicated location or target.



Indicates that the character, or party leader if multiple characters are selected, will initiate dialogue with the selected NPC.

Fog of War

Characters see a certain distance away using a direct line of sight. This means that they cannot see around a building until they move to the corner and that they cannot see through walls.

Areas that cannot be seen remain obscured in darkness until explored; explored areas that are out of sight will be displayed but covered in a layer of shadows.

Bottom Menu Buttons

Different sets of bottom buttons are displayed depending on whether you select a single character or a group of characters. There are twelve character bottom buttons; these change depending on which single character is selected. Use the F1 through F12 hot keys to quickly select the following options.

Dialogue

This selects the dialogue cursor that initiates dialogue if L-clicked on any creature.

Quick Weapon

These slots correspond to the quick weapon slots on the inventory page. Load a weapon into these slots by equipping it to the corresponding slot on the Inventory screen. R-click on any ranged weapon in a quick slot to select the type of ammunition to use.

The character's class determines how many quick weapon slots will be displayed. The number of slots directly corresponds to how many weapons can be equipped on the Inventory screen (4 for Fighters; 3 for other warriors; 2 for all other characters).

Class-Specific Buttons

The following buttons are displayed only for certain classes.

Find Traps

This is a mode available to Thieves and Monks. If you select an action other than movement for that character, this mode ends. This mode also activates a Thief's Detect Illusions ability.

Thieving

This action includes pick pocketing, opening locks, and removing traps, depending on the target chosen.

Stealth

This is a blend of the Move Silently and Hide in Shadows skills. Thieves can choose this mode and, if successful, they become nigh-invisible. Provided a Thief is behind the target, his or her next attack, if successful, will be a backstab that causes double, triple, or quadruple damage depending on the level of the Thief. Moving into the light or launching an attack can cause Stealth to fail. Rangers can also use the Stealth ability but cannot backstab (with the exception of the Stalker kit).

Turn Undead

This is a mode that Clerics and Paladins can choose; the Cleric (or Paladin) persists in turning undead until an action other than movement is selected. Clerics in this mode will attempt to turn undead creatures; if successful the undead will run away for a time, or they may be destroyed if the Cleric is powerful enough. Evil Clerics using this ability may gain control over some undead creatures.

Cast Spells

This ability is usable by any class with the ability to cast spells, such as Mages, Clerics, Druids, and—at higher levels—Rangers and Paladins. Clicking this button opens up the memorized spell list of the priest or wizard and the priest or wizard can cast a spell from this list.

Quick Spells

These buttons are configured by R-clicking on the quick spell slot, bringing up a list of all currently memorized spells. Once configured, the spell is ready for use at the push of the appropriate button or by L-clicking on that slot.

Bard Song

This ability is usable by Bards; the Bard character begins playing a song that continues until any action other than movement is selected for that Bard. While the song is playing, the party's morale and luck are higher.

Use Item

When L-clicked, this button allows you to use the special abilities of any items you currently have equipped, such as cloaks, rings, or helmets.

Quick Item

Each character has three Quick Item slots (although some characters' slots might be permanently occupied by jewelry or small animals), which allow you to quickly use an item from your inventory such as a wand or potion. You may ready any item in the Quick Item slots by dragging the item on the Inventory screen to the corresponding Quick Item slot.

Special Abilities

This button is used for any characters with special abilities (for example, special abilities for certain classes or any special abilities that are gained by your characters during the course of the game). If you click on this button, a list of special abilities will be displayed for that character.

Multi-Character Buttons

The following buttons are displayed when more than one character is selected.

- Defend
- Dialogue

- Attack
- Stop
- Quick Formation

Defend

Clicking this button directs the currently selected character or characters to defend the selected target or area by attacking any enemies targeting that creature or entering that area.

Dialogue

Clicking this button allows the selected character(s) to initiate dialogue with friendly or neutral NPCs. Some hostile NPCs may also allow you to initiate dialogue, but be aware that to speak to anyone you must be able to get close to them, which may be dangerous for some less hearty adventurers.

Attack

Clicking this button will direct the selected character(s) to attack the selected creature using any weapons currently held in hand.

Stop

Clicking this button halts all current party actions. This button is useful if you suddenly realize that your character is walking into a trap your Thief has discovered.

Quick Formation

Party members form up in the same order as top down on the character portraits bar (top character is first in formation). If fewer than six characters are selected, they will form up to the number of characters selected, filling formation slots in order until there are no more characters. The formation can be rotated by R-clicking and dragging at the desired destination when a group is selected. By default, a number of formations have already been selected.

Quick formations work the same as quick spells; to change the quick formation displayed in a given slot, R-click the slot desired and then select the new formation to use in that slot.

Right Menu Buttons



Select Tool: When playing with a touchscreen, selecting this tool will allow you to select one or more characters with a touch. This tool will also cancel any spell currently selected, or any other action that requires you to select a target.



Help Tool: When playing with a touchscreen, selecting this tool will allow you to view items on the screen with which you can interact. This will display chests, doors, and items on the ground, as well as the current hit points of all NPCs in your party. On PC and Mac platforms, you can achieve this same function by pressing the Tab key on your keyboard.



Select All: Selects or unselects all members of the party. This includes summoned or allied creatures if available.



Party AI: Turning this option on or off will change whether or not members of the party will behave based on their selected scripts.



Character Portraits: L-clicking a portrait selects that character; R-clicking the same portrait brings up the Inventory screen for that character. You can also reorganize your party by clicking and dragging portraits up and down the list.

A Note on Character Portraits: Damage to the character is represented on the character portrait as a rising red bar (that is, the portion of the portrait that is the normal color is the portion of hit points still remaining for that character). If you move your cursor over the portrait of a character, the hit point total and the name of that character will appear along with that character's maximum hit points. Character portraits also display status icons (if your character is charmed, held, and so on) as well as the plus-shaped level-up icon if one of your characters has enough experience points to gain a level.

Left Menu Buttons



Return to Game: Clicking this button will return you to the main screen of the game from whichever screen you were previously viewing. This button does nothing if you are already on the main screen.



Map: This button will bring up the map of the current area. From this screen, you can also view a map of the world, although you cannot travel using your map. (To travel between areas, move your party to the area's exit.)



Journal: Quest logs and reminders are frequently added to your journal to be reviewed later. Clicking this button will open up that screen and allow you to read previous journal entries.



Inventory: This button brings up the Inventory screen for the currently selected character or, if more than one character is selected, the Inventory screen for the top-most selected character. (If no character is selected, the party leader's inventory will be displayed.)



Character Record: This button brings up the Character Record screen, which allows you to view the current character's ability scores, class abilities, THAC0, and other traits. This is also the screen from which you can level-up your character if he or she has earned enough experience points.



Wizard Spells: This button brings up the selected character's spellbook, displaying all of the character's known wizard spells and allowing you to select which ones to memorize (if the character is a Mage). Note that these spells will not be available for casting until after you've rested.



Priest Spells: This button brings up the selected character's priest spells, allowing you to select which ones to memorize. Note that these spells will not be available for

casting until after you've rested.



Options: This button brings up the Options screen, allowing you to save your game, load a previous save, quit the game, or change gameplay, sound, or graphics options.



Rest: When you select Rest, time will pass in the game and your characters will heal and regain their memorized spells. When the party rests, if you have selected "Cast Healing Spells on Rest" in the Gameplay options menu, characters that have healing spells memorized will cast them on the most injured party members automatically. Also in the Gameplay options menu, you will find a setting called "Rest Until Healed." If this option is turned on, then when you rest, time will pass until your party is fully healed. Be careful when you use this; if you have a time-based quest, you might sleep right through it!

Don't forget to decide which spells to memorize before resting!

—Volo

Wizard Tooltips

These are the information windows that pop up whenever you leave your mouse cursor over any button, creature, or character for a period of time. They display a brief description of that object's name, purpose, or general status. To bring up the tooltips instantly, press the Tab key on your keyboard while hovering your cursor over a target.

The Dialogue Window

Dialogue occurs with the selected character only; changing the character who is having the dialogue is not possible until dialogue is exited and restarted with a new character selected. If multiple characters are selected, the top-most selected character initiates the dialogue.

Note: Regardless of who is having the dialogue, reaction adjustments will be based on the "leader" of the group. The "leader" is always the top-most character portrait of all the characters that are present in the area.

The more charismatic the leader, the better.

—Volo

There are three sizes for the dialogue window: a two-line size (small), a medium size—the default size for normal play and used to display system messages and game conditions—and a large size which is used when dialogue is being displayed. At any time, you may change the size

of this window by pressing the “Page Up” or “Page Down” keys on your keyboard or by pressing the up or down buttons beside the dialogue window.

There is also a scroll bar at the right of the dialogue window that may be used to scroll up or down in the dialogue queue. Dialogue uses a menu based system where you L-click on what you want to say from a list. What is available to be said varies according to the reaction adjustment and Charisma of the party’s leader.

You can scroll up using the scroll bar to view previous conversations at any time.

Stores, Inns, Taverns, and Temples

Throughout the course of the game, you will encounter many non-player characters in the world who will offer goods or services. These NPCs all use a similar interface for the buying, selling, and trading of information, goods, and services. When these NPCs are spoken to, a panel will replace the bottom portion of the screen with buttons for the various services offered.



Rent Rooms: Inns usually have four different types of rooms in which the player’s party can rest. The various accommodations vary from Peasant rooms to Deluxe lodgings. The more expensive the room, the more comfortable your stay and the more you will heal while you rest. Some inns are limited in the quality of rooms they can provide.



Buying and Selling: This screen is broken into a Buy window and a Sell window. Items that the store offers are shown in the Buy window, and items from the character’s inventory are shown in the Sell window. To select items to purchase, L-click on them in the Buy window. The item icon will become highlighted, but will not be purchased until you L-click “Buy” at the bottom of the window. You may select multiple items, and the current total for all items is shown next to the “Buy” button. The Sell window works in the same fashion, although the store owner may have no interest in buying certain items in your inventory (in which case the item will be “dimmed”). Items that are unusable by the character currently selected are shaded red. While these items are unusable, they can still be purchased for future use or for other party members.



Drinks and Rumors: Some locations will have a friendly bartender or innkeeper tending bar. The items offered at the bar vary from expensive liquors to cheap ales. Either way, upon ordering a drink, the proprietor may decide to share rumors that he has heard lately. Be careful, however, as your characters can become intoxicated if they drink too much.



Steal: Thieves may have the option of attempting to steal items out of a shop’s inventory. The Steal screen works the same as Buying and Selling except that no gold is exchanged. When an item is selected to be stolen, the Thief’s skills are

checked; if successful, the item is added to the Thief's inventory. If unsuccessful, the guards will be called—or worse!



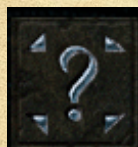
Donate: You can donate money at a temple by selecting this option. When you donate, you may hear a rumor from the priest and the party's reputation may be increased depending on the amount of gold donated. It is very helpful to donate gold if the party's reputation is suffering.

The more your reputation has fallen, the more you must donate... Priests have long memories.

—Volo



Healing: Temples usually offer healing services for a price. A menu will appear showing the services offered and how much they cost. Select the service you wish to receive and the character that is to receive the healing.



Identify: Shops and temples can usually identify a much larger variety of items than your characters will be able to. The cost to have an item identified is 100 gold. If you cannot select the item from the list, then the proprietor does not have the ability to identify the item.

Containers (Chests, Tables, and Boxes)

Certain items and containers can be picked up or opened in the game. When you move your cursor over them, they will be highlighted in blue. L-click to access the item or container. When you access the item or container, the Container panel will come up at the bottom of the screen. The left side of the panel shows the items that are on the ground or in the container and the right side is a small portion of the selected character's inventory. Clicking on items on the left side of the panel moves the items from the ground or container into the character's inventory. If the character's inventory is full, the item will not be transferred. Note that this process can be reversed, and items can also be moved from a character's inventory into a container or onto the ground by L-clicking on them in the right side of this panel.

Certain containers may also contain stacks of gold. Clicking on these stacks will add the gold to the party's total.

Using Buttons and Triggers

When playing the game, you will come across several buttons, levers, and similar instruments. When you place your cursor over these instruments, it will switch to a new cursor type. To use these instruments, you must be standing close to them, otherwise a message will pop up telling you that your character is too far away.

Map



L-clicking the map button in the left panel will bring up the map that the selected character(s) are currently on. Areas that have been visited are lit; areas that haven't are dark. This map may be an interior dungeon or an outdoor terrain. The current position(s) of the character(s) are indicated on the maps by dots.

Note: On your map, there will be location icons marking important places within the area. When you hover your cursor over the flag, the name of

the location will come up at the top of the screen. You can add your own map notes by R-clicking anywhere in the map area.

World Map



While viewing the area map, you can click on the World Map button to see a layout of the Sword Coast. The area you are currently in will be marked by a shield standard. The areas visited thus far on the world map will be shown, locations to which you can travel, and locations to which you have been given directions but cannot yet visit. Areas that you have not visited will be highlighted in blue. Areas to which you cannot travel will be shown in light brown. Note that you cannot travel between areas unless you have

traveled to the edge of the current area and brought up the world map with the "Travel" icon. To move to another area, highlight the area and click on it.

Journal

Quests and major occurrences in the game world are entered in the journal. The journal page has four sections, each of which can be organized by date or alphabetically:

Quests

This journal section records all of your current quests.

Done Quests

When you finish a quest, all related quest entries will be placed in this section, and the old entries will be erased from the Quest section.

Journal

This section lists major events in your character's adventure.

User

This section is for your own journal entries. You can add journal entries here by pressing the "Add" button.

Inventory



The Inventory screen can either be accessed by L-clicking the Inventory button on the left panel or by R-clicking a character portrait. Some of the screen is taken up by the "paper doll" representation of the character. Along the bottom of the screen are the character's personal inventory and the encumbrance of the character. Items can be dragged and dropped on the paper doll to be equipped or dragged and dropped on other characters' portraits to give them the items.

Stackable items can be unstacked by double L-clicking on the item. Unstacked items can be stacked by dragging and dropping them on top of one another. Items placed in the Ground slots on the right will be dropped at the character's feet and can be picked up from the main game area. The group pool of gold is shown on this page as well.

Blue-shaded items are magical and unidentified. Red-shaded items are not usable by that character.

Encumbrance

Each character has a maximum weight they can carry. The weight currently carried by a character is shown to the left of their inventory. Maximum carry weight is determined by the Strength attribute of a character. If this weight is exceeded, the character will slow or completely stop depending on how overloaded they are.

The Paper Doll

There are 12 distinct areas in the equipped items section: Helm, armor, bracers or gauntlets, cloak, amulet, left ring, right ring, boots, weapons (2 slots for non-warriors, 3 slots for warriors, 4 slots for fighters), the quiver (up to 3 slots of ammunition), and the shield slot (left hand).

Note: You can also place weapons in your shield slot to wield two weapons. However, if you are not proficient in Two-Weapon Style, you will incur severe penalties to your main hand and off-hand attack rolls.

In certain circumstances, the best defense is a good offense.

—Elminster

A sharp pen is sometimes better than a sword, I've found.

—Volo

Quick Weapon Slots

The weapons put into the quick weapon slots determine the quick attacks that are available. These slots are like a bandolier of weapons available. For a Mage, this could hold a dagger; for a Fighter, it could be a crushing weapon to use against undead, a bow for distant encounters, and a sharp edged weapon for close combat. When a new weapon is put into the weapon slots on the Inventory screen, it generates a default quick attack in the quick attack button for this character at the bottom of the main interface screen. Only one bow or crossbow may be equipped at a time.

A shield may be equipped only if no two-handed weapons are present in the weapon slots. If a two-handed weapon is in one of these slots, the shield is not equipable and a message to this effect appears in the inventory message line: "Cannot equip (two-handed weapon in use)." A similar message is displayed if a shield is equipped and the player tries to equip a two-handed weapon: "Cannot equip (shield in use)."

Quick Item Slots

These are slots available to each player that represent miscellaneous items that are kept at the ready (potions, for example). These items can be easily accessed during combat, similar to Quick Weapon slots.

Personal Inventory

Considered your "backpack," you can carry only 16 different items or stacks of items, regardless of your encumbrance.

Item Property

If an item is R-clicked, the view changes to the Item Property page. This page contains the item's icon, description and picture. Characters with high Lore scores will automatically be able to identify certain magical items. If the item is currently unidentified, there will be a button to allow you to try to magically identify it. Potions may be consumed from this page (note that the potion's effects will not occur until you have returned to the main game screen). If the item is a

scroll, wizards will have the opportunity to try to “Write Magic” and add the scroll spell to their spellbook. Certain magical items may even have special “Abilities” that can be accessed from this page—including the ability to configure the item’s magical powers.

Many a Mage has wasted their life seeking scrolls with spells to add to their collection.

—Volo

Do not underestimate the advantages of increasing one’s knowledge.

—Elminster

Character Appearance

Clicking on the colored boxes will allow you to pick from a palette of colors for your character’s clothing.

Gem Bags and Scroll Cases

Gem bags and scroll cases can be bought in stores or found while adventuring. These items are used to store multiple gems and scrolls, respectively, and thus free up inventory space. To use these bags and cases, simply R-click on the bag or case. Now press the “Open Container” button to move to the next screen. From this screen, you can move your gems or scrolls from the right hand column to the left hand column. This will move these items into your gem bag or scroll case. You can also drag a gem or scroll to the appropriate container in the Personal Inventory section to deposit it in the bag or case.

Character Record and Associated Screens

The Character Record screen shows all of the vital statistics and abilities of the currently selected character.

Dual-Class

This button is only available for human characters with the required classes and ability scores; after 2nd level, you can use this convert such a character to dual-class. When you do this, a dual-class interface screen will come up from which you can choose the new class for the selected character. Characters not allowed dual-class status include Bards, Paladins, Sorcerers, Monks, and Barbarians. The character must have at least a 15 in the prime requisite for the character’s first class and at least a 17 in the prime requisite for the character’s second class (for instance, a Thief wishing to become a Mage must have at least a 15 in Dexterity and at least a 17 in Intelligence).

The dual-class page is very similar to the character generation page—and in fact, making a character dual-classed can be seen as essentially starting a character over. A new dual-classed character starts with only the 1st-level abilities and restrictions of his new class, though he retains his hit point total from his prior class. After a character becomes dual-classed, he can only use the abilities of his new class until he surpasses the level of his original class, at which point he can freely use the abilities of either class. No further advancement is ever allowed in the first class; all further development is in the new class.

Note: You are only allowed to have one kit in Baldur's Gate. When you first create your character, you choose his or her kit. When you dual-class your character, you do NOT get to choose a new kit.

Level Up

This button is dimmed until the player gains enough experience points to gain a level (this is indicated on the portrait by a “+” symbol). When the player clicks the “Level Up” button, the Level Up screen will be shown. For a Thief or Monk, the player must distribute new thieving points. Sorcerers must select new spells known. A new proficiency slot requires a player to choose a weapon class or style to improve. Changes such as modifiers to your THAC0, saving throws, and so on will also be displayed here upon leveling up.

Information

This page allows you to compare how the various characters in your party are doing. Various stats such as number of kills and favorite weapon are displayed.

Reform Party

This page allows you to remove characters from your party.

Customize

This page allows you to change a character's appearance, voice, clothing colors, or scripts (the computer code that controls behaviors and reactions to environment). Each script also includes a description of the script's effects.

Export

This allows you to save a “snapshot” of the character's file to your computer for use in a multiplayer game or a new game. The character's current status will be saved, including hit points, experience points, level, class, inventory, and so on.

Wizard and Priest Spell Screens

The known spells of the wizard or priest are shown in the top section. If you R-click on a spell icon, a display page will come up with a spell description. To memorize a spell, L-click on it. The

spell appears in the field at the bottom of the screen in the Memorized area, but remains shaded (and unusable) until the character has had a chance to rest. Every time the caster sleeps, he will memorize the spells in this area. If the memorized spell area is full and you want to memorize a different spell, L-click on one of the currently memorized spells and it will vanish.

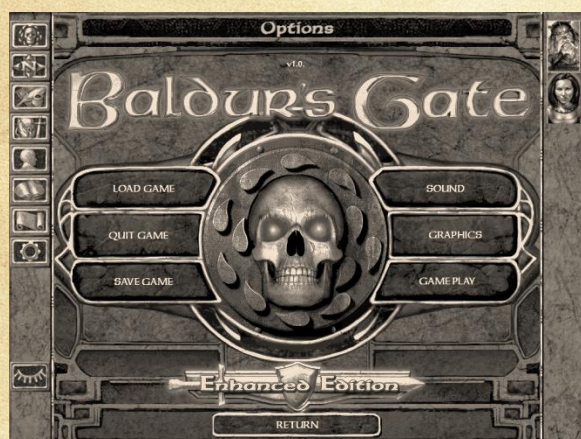
Note: For Sorcerers, only known spells are shown. Sorcerers use a point-based magic system and do not need to memorize spells.

Options

This screen allows you to save, load, or quit your game as well as configure gameplay, sound, or graphics options.

Save, Load, and Quit

These allow you to save games to your hard disk, discard your current game and load a previously saved game, or quit to the main menu.



Graphics

Brightness and Contrast allows you to adjust the brightness and contrast of the display. You can also choose to run the game full screen or in windowed mode.

Sound

This menu allows you to independently adjust the volumes of various sounds in the game. Selecting “Character Sounds” allows you to toggle on or off

some specific sound effects and set the frequency with which your characters verbally respond to your orders.

Gameplay

Assign Keys

Selecting this button allows you to change the hot keys used during gameplay. The default hot keys are listed in the table at the end of this guide. (You can assign additional hot keys for specific spells; the default hot keys do not assign these actions automatically.)

Tooltip Delay

This adjusts how quickly the wizard tooltip appears. The left of the slider is the briefest period of time. Note: you can always make the tooltip appear instantly by hitting the “Tab” key on your keyboard.

Mouse Scroll Speed

This adjusts how quickly the screen scrolls across the game world when the mouse is at the edge of the screen.

Keyboard Scroll Speed

This adjusts how quickly the screen scrolls across the game world when you use the arrow keys.

Difficulty

This allows you to adjust hidden factors within the game to make the game more or less difficult.

Dither Always

Enable this option if a character should always appear dithered when it is obscured by an object. If this setting is disabled, the character is only dithered when the mouse cursor is over it or its portrait. Otherwise, the character is not displayed at all.

Weather

Enable this option to see weather effects like rain and snow.

Gore

This toggles on and off the blood and “excessive” damage and death animations in the game.

Group Infravision

Enable this option if you want infravision to be shown when any of the selected characters have infravision. If this option is off, infravision will strictly be shown when only characters with infravision are selected.

Rest Until Healed

Enable this option to cast healing spells during rest repeatedly until fully healed. Otherwise, currently memorized healing spells are cast once on resting.

Note: Selecting “Rest Until Healed” may cause your party to rest for longer than the normal 8 hours, as healing spells are re-memorized and cast again as needed.

Watch out for surprise attacks where you rest, friend. Bandits and wolves don't care if you're wounded; in fact, I understand that's rather to their liking.

—Volo

Feedback

This screen allows you to modify the frequency with which you see markers and locators, as well as turn on and off the various messages that come up during the game.

Auto-Pause

This screen allows you to set various conditions under which the game will pause automatically. Using these options can help to give the game a more turn-based feel.

Miscellaneous Gameplay Information

In addition to the above controls and screens, the following information may be useful to you.

Fatigue

A character can continue to operate at peak efficiency for 24 hours in game-time (2 hours real-time). After that, the characters will start to complain and their attributes begin to suffer. For every four hours beyond this 24-hour mark, the player will receive a -1 luck penalty (-1 to all rolls). As soon as the character rests, all penalties will disappear.

A Haste spell makes you fatigued. All that running around can't be good for you.

—Volo

Ah, but Improved Haste won't have this effect.

—Elminster

Intoxication

A character becomes intoxicated after drinking enough alcoholic beverages. The average character will be able to drink about five alcoholic beverages before becoming intoxicated, but this amount may vary depending on the character's Constitution. Intoxicated characters gain a morale bonus, but a luck penalty. The greater the level of intoxication, the greater the bonus and penalty. The effects of intoxication diminish over time.

Infravision

Some characters and monsters have the power of infravision. Infravision allows you to see better in the dark by revealing the heat of objects and creatures. A character without innate infravision can gain the ability through spells or magical equipment. In the dark, creatures revealed with infravision will appear to "glow" with a dim red light. Note that apart from the graphical effect of creatures being limned in red, this ability has no effect on gameplay.

Effects of Wearing Armor

Different buttons may be dimmed in the bottom panel depending on what your characters are wearing. Even if a multi-class or dual-class wizard is wearing armor, he can still memorize spells, but he may not cast these spells until the armor is removed.

Multplayer

The multiplayer game is identical to the single player game—at least in terms of the game’s content. The main differences between the single- and multiplayer games relate to who is playing in the game; in the single player game, you create one character and through the course of your adventure up to five NPCs join you. After they join, they are fully under your control. In a multiplayer game, between one and six players adventure together, cooperatively controlling both created characters and NPCs that join the party.

A few definitions are in order. The leader is the player who has control over such things as who can join, what kinds of characters can be brought into the game, and what abilities the players who are in the game actually have (in terms of gameplay; see Permissions, below). The leader can control one or more characters in the game and has the ability to assign characters to the other players. The server is the computer (usually, but not necessarily, the leader’s computer), which coordinates the various game states of the client machines of each player. A player is one of the people who control one or more characters in the game. A character is an alter-ego, analogous to the characters of the single player game, which is controlled by one player in a multiplayer session.

Starting Out

When you start a multiplayer game (also known as a session), you will be presented with the Connection screen. You can modify the protocol you are using by clicking “TCP/IP” after connecting. (Note: Players using other platforms, such as Android or iPad, may use different connection protocols.)



TCP/IP

A connection screen will come up in which you can enter the host address you wish to connect to. Once you do this, you will be connected to this session if it is available.

Joining a Game

Whichever protocol is chosen, if you are not creating a game but rather joining one, you will be prompted to choose a player name by which

you can be identified by the leader and other players in the session. After this you will proceed to the Character Arbitration screen (see below).

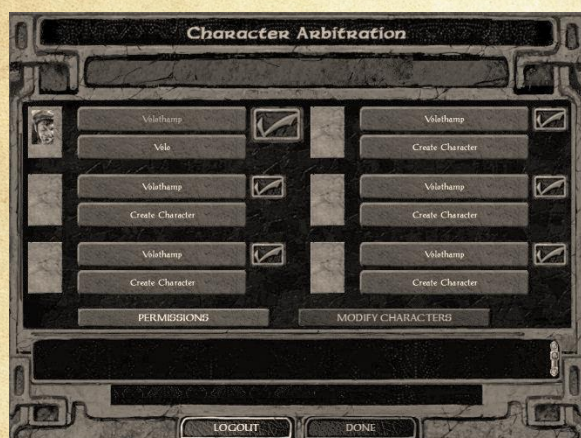
Creating a Game



If you choose to create a game that other players can join, you will see a pop-up window appear, on which are spaces to fill in the session name, the player name, and buttons to create a new game or load a previously saved game. If you choose to create a new game, you must fill out the spaces for the session name and the player name. After you have created your game or loaded a game from the list of available saved games, you will proceed to the Character Arbitration screen.

When characters join your session at any point (whether in the steps outlined below or in the actual game), you, the leader, are notified. The leader has the ability to stop listening to requests to join (this is set in the Player Permissions window, described below).

Character Arbitration



The Character Arbitration screen is where players are assigned control of character slots and create the characters that they will role-play in the game. From this screen, the leader also controls permissions and other options for the game. The player running the server is initially assigned as the leader of the party. As the session's host, he or she has the ability to assign character slots to the players who are in the session. This is achieved by L-clicking on the player name slots, after which a

panel will pop up with the names of all players currently in the session. Control of a slot may be assigned to any player, who can then use the Character Arbitration screen to load a character into that slot. This is done by clicking on the Create Character button. Players may either import an existing character or create an entirely new character, just as if starting a new single player game.

The Protagonist

As in the single player game, there is one character who is the protagonist of the story. If this character dies, the game is over and must be reloaded as in the single player game. The protagonist in the multiplayer session will be the character in the first character slot on the Character Arbitration screen.

Characters

The characters in multiplayer may be created from scratch or imported into the game using the “Import” button. The character is created using the exact same screens as in the single player game, subject to the restrictions set by the leader of the session in the Player Permissions submenu.

Once a character is created, it can be modified by clicking on the player name, which brings up a window allowing the player to create, import, export, or delete it (the active character must be deleted before Create and Import options are available, and the Export and Delete options are available only when there is a character in the slot).

When the player is satisfied with the character, he or she clicks on the large checkmark icon to the right of the character slot to “lock” the character and prevent changes. If a player wishes to change a character, that character must be “unlocked” by clicking on this icon again.

Player Permissions



Although both the leader and the other players in the session can view permissions on the Permissions screen, only players who have been assigned leadership privileges are able to modify permissions. The leader can assign these permissions to any players that he or she chooses. The permissions represent what players are able to do in the game. The available permissions, in order from left to right on the screen, are:

- The ability to modify characters
- The ability to spend party gold/purchase items
- The ability to initiate an area transition (travel from one area to another)
- The ability to initiate dialogue
- The ability to view other characters' records
- The ability to pause the game
- The ability to modify permissions or remove players from the game (leadership permission)

Options

On the Permissions page, the leader is able to set the options for importing by clicking on the “Options” button. This brings up a window with three settings: Stats Only; Stats and XP (that is, experience points and levels); or Stats, XP, and Items. By choosing one of these settings, the leader limits the types of characters that can be brought into the multiplayer session from the

single player game or other multiplayer sessions. You can also select an option to display dialogue on all machines whenever dialogue is initiated by any player.

Listen to Join Requests

Also on the Permissions screen is an option, “Listen to Join Requests,” which allows the leader to listen to requests to join the session or to turn off requests if there are enough players in the game. For example, the leader might only want to have one or two people in the game, so having people requesting to join could get annoying. An interesting facet of multiplayer is that the player creating the session can choose to play solo. The advantage to this is that all characters in the party can then be created from scratch.

Note: While we specifically included this option due to popular request, we actually recommend playing the game with NPCs recruited into the party; they’ll have more personality.

Starting a Multiplayer Game

When all players have “locked” their characters, the “Done” button will become active on the leader’s computer. The game launches when the leader clicks “Done.”

Changing Permissions



Both the Character Arbitration and Player Permissions screens are available on the left side menu in the multiplayer game. These screens are treated identically in the actual game to what is described above.

Playing a Multiplayer Game

Chatting

Players can chat between themselves through the chat window. To enter a comment, merely L-click on the entry area. To address the comment to a specific person (and only that person), type that player’s name followed by a colon (“:”) and then the comment; only that player will see your comment.

Non-Pausing Dialogue and Stores

Certain characters in Baldur’s Gate will not pause the game when spoken to. This means that when you initiate dialogue with them, only you will be able to view their dialogue. Other players will be able to continue playing. The characters that do not pause the game are usually townsfolk, shopkeepers, and other non-critical NPCs. The characters that do pause the game are crucial to the plot.

Note: if you enable the option in Permissions to pause the game and show dialogue for all players, even these characters will pause the game for all players in the game.

General Notes

When you are playing a multiplayer session, keep in mind the following notes:

Asynchronous

Baldur's Gate is an asynchronous game. If you happen to be playing with somebody whose system is very close by, you still might see slightly different things happen on each system. The point to remember is that while things happen somewhat differently, the result of the actions is always the same.

Explorable Area

When playing a multiplayer game of Baldur's Gate, you are limited to exploring one area in the game at a time. That is, the characters in the game can spread out only within the same aboveground area. While they can enter structures and underground areas individually, they cannot travel to other above-ground areas until all characters are ready to do so. These moments are marked by a message: "You must gather your party before venturing forth."

Party Gold

Just as in the single player game, all gold is shared between members of the party.

Shared Experience

Just as in the single player game, all characters in the party share in the awarding of experience points.

The Leader is in Charge

In case you haven't figured it out by now, the leader has control over everything that the player can do in the game, including kicking them out and reassigning their characters to other players. Make sure that the leader is playing the type of multiplayer game that you want to play. That is to say, if you want a hacked game, join that kind of game or start it up; if you want a clean game according to AD&D rules—without interference from hacked or edited characters or players who don't want to play as a team—then you need to find players who want the same.

User Mods

If one player in a session is using a particular user-created mod, all players in the session must use the same mod configuration.

iPad Controls

If you are playing Baldur's Gate on an iPad, many of the specific controls will work differently because you are using a touchscreen instead of a mouse. As a general rule:

- Any action requiring an L-click can be accomplished with a tap
- Any action requiring an L-click and drag can be accomplished by merely dragging.
- Any action requiring an R-click can be accomplished with a held tap
- Zooming in and out is as simple as pinching, just like in any other iPad app.

In addition, there are two buttons in the bottom right panel, Select Tool and Help Tool, which are designed specifically for iPad users:

Select Tool

After selecting this tool, the next touch on the screen will be a selection box; otherwise, touching the screen moves the currently selected characters to the target area.

Help Tool

Selecting this tool briefly highlights all objects on the screen that can be manipulated, such as chests, doors, or items on the ground. The current hit point totals for your party members will also be displayed above their heads. (PC and Mac users can accomplish this by holding down the Tab key.)

Hot Keys

Page Hot Keys

Screen	Default Hot Key
Inventory	I
Character Record	R
Return to Game	G
Journal	J
Map	M
Wizard Spells	W
Priest Spells	P
Options	O
Character Arbitration	C

Action Hot Keys

Action	Default Hot Key
Quick Load (loads most recent Quick Save)	L
Hide/Show Interface	H
Hide/Show Right Interface	U
Hide/Show Left Interface	Y
Chat Window	T
Location	X
Quick Save	Q
Toggle AI	A
Rest	Z
Wizard Tooltips/Help Tool	Tab

The Lord of Murder shall perish,
But in his death he shall spawn a score of mortal
progeny.
Chaos will be sown by their passage.
So sayeth the wise Alaundo.

Hmm... I don't recall writing that...

—Volo

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