

The cover art for 'Dark Souls: The Roleplaying Game' depicts a dark, atmospheric scene. In the center, a large, hunched, and heavily armored figure, likely a boss or a significant enemy, stands with its back to the viewer. To the left, a smaller, armored knight stands ready with a sword. The environment is a dark, cavernous space with stone walls, hanging lanterns, and a large, jagged opening at the top. The overall mood is grim and foreboding.

# DARK SOULS

## THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



YOU DIED

# DARK SOULS

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

## DARK SOULS: THE ROLEPLAYING GAME TEAM



### **Writing & Design**

Richard August & Mat Hart

### **Additional Writing**

Alex Delaney

### **Development Editing**

Alan Bahr

### **Editing**

Emil Andersen

Ead Brown

Gabe Hicks

Sherwin Matthews

Elise Rezendes

### **Graphic Design & Layout**

Elliott Smith

### **Playtesting**

The Thursday Night Gamers

STEAMFORGED GAMES TEAM



### **Co-Founders**

Mat Hart (CCO)

Rich Loxam (CEO)

### **Executive Chairman**

Simon Spalding

### **Non-Executive Officers**

Ron Ashitiani

### **Investment Director**

Rob Jones

### **Design & Development**

Richard August

Jordan Connolly

Alex Hall

Ginny Loveday

Fraser McPetridge

Steve Margetson

Sherwin Matthews

Nick Niotis

Jamie Perkins

### **Sculpting & Art**

Ben Charles

Russ Charles

Holly Woolford

### **Graphic Design & Layout**

Jessica Santoso

Elliott Smith

Abigail Thornton

Joe Thornton

Kelly Vizma

### **Production**

Candy Chan

Matthew Elliott

Carl Matthews

Lu Mingjing

Tom Rochford

### **Finance & IT**

John Higham

Vanessa O'Brien

Amy Rapaport

### **Marketing & Community Management**

Steve Hough

Krystal Kennedy

Ben Taylor

### **Kickstarter Team**

Ben Clapperton

Tom Hart

Chynna-Blue Scott

### **Licensing & Commercial**

Toby Davies

Firoz Rana

Jo Turner

### **Operations & Fulfilment**

Judy Guan

Richard Jennings

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## PROLOGUE

Introduction	7
What is a Roleplaying Game?	9
Using the Dice	10
Playing DARK SOULS	11
So Remember...	12

## CHAPTER I - CHARACTER GENERATION

Introduction	15
Character Generation Process	16
Something's Different Here...	16
The Unkindled	16
Character Concept	17
Backstory, Memory and Drives	17
Backstories	18
Memories	19
Drives	19
Using Your Backstory, Memory, and Drives	19
<b>Origins</b>	<b>20</b>
- The Brute	22
- The Fencer	22
- The Jack of all Trades	23
- The Caster	23
<b>Classes</b>	<b>24</b>
- Knight	26
- Mercenary	30
- Assassin	34
- Warrior	38
- Thief	42
- Herald	46
- Cleric	50
- Sorcerer	54
- Pyromancer	58
- The Deprived	62

## CHAPTER II - CORE RULES

Using Ability Scores	66
Ability Scores and Modifiers	66
Advantage and Disadvantage	67
Proficiency Bonus	67
Ability Checks	68
Contests	68
Skills	69
Variants: Skills with Different Abilities	69
Passive Checks	69
Position	70
Helping A Companion	72
Group Checks	72
<b>Using Each Ability</b>	<b>74</b>
- Strength	75
- Dexterity	76
- Constitution	77
- Intelligence	77
- Wisdom	78
- Charisma	78
Saving Throws	79
Souls, Experience and Levelling Up	80
Adventuring	81
Special Types of Movement	82
Environment	83
Objects	84
Resting, Death and Respawnng	85
Conditions	87
Poison	89
Madness	90
Traps	92
Combat	96
Creature Size	99
Actions in Combat	101
Defensive Cover	107
Bloodied Conditions	107
Damage Type	108
Mounted Combat	109
Underwater Combat	109

## CHAPTER III - MAGIC & MIRACLES

Introduction	111
Acquiring Spells	112
Cost	113
Range	113
Areas of Effect	114
<b>Pyromancer Spells</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Sorceries</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Miracles</b>	<b>125</b>

## CHAPTER IV - EQUIPMENT

Introduction	131
Encumbrance	133
<b>Core Equipment</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>Armour</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>Shields</b>	<b>156</b>
- Small Shields	157
- Standard Shields	160
- Greatshields	164
<b>Weapons</b>	<b>168</b>
- Daggers	170
- Straight Swords	172
- Greatswords	175
- Ultra Greatswords	178
- Curved Swords	180
- Curved Greatswords	183
- Thrusting Swords	184
- Katanas	185
- Axes	186
- Great Axes	188
- Hammers	190
- Great Hammers	191
- Spears and Pikes	194
- Halberds	197
- Scythes	199
- Whips	200
- Fist and Claws	201
- Bows	202
- Great Bows	204
- Crossbows	204
- Staves	206
- Chimes, Flames and Talismans	208
<b>Rings</b>	<b>212</b>
Souls	217

## CHAPTER V - KINDLING THE FLAME

Introduction	219
Running a DARK SOULS Game	220
Difficulty Levels	221
Lore and Canon	222
Plot and Goals	224
Building Adventures	225
Adventure Locations	225
Themes	226
Encounters	227
Bosses	228
NPCs	229
Campaigns	231
Bonfires and Estus Refills	233
Equipment: Finding it, Winning it, and Buying it	234
Optional Rules: Summoning	236

## CHAPTER VI - THE WORLD OF LOTHRIC

Introduction	239
Using this Chapter	240
<b>Cemetery of Ash</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Firelink Shrine</b>	<b>244</b>
<b>Undead Settlement</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>Cathedral of the Deep</b>	<b>248</b>
<b>Road of Sacrifices</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>Catacombs of Carthus</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>Irithyll of the Boreal Valley</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>Irithyll Dungeon</b>	<b>256</b>
<b>Farron Keep</b>	<b>258</b>
<b>Profaned Chapel</b>	<b>260</b>
<b>Anor Londo</b>	<b>262</b>
<b>Lothric Castle</b>	<b>264</b>
<b>Grand Archive</b>	<b>266</b>
<b>Archdragon Peak</b>	<b>268</b>

## CHAPTER VII - MONSTERS & ANTAGONISTS

Introduction	271
<b>Beasts</b>	<b>272</b>
<b>Golems and Constructs</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>Demons</b>	<b>294</b>
<b>Denizens of the Darkness</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Undead</b>	<b>320</b>
<b>Bosses</b>	<b>328</b>
Glossary	370
Character Sheet	375
Index	376

Download a free *DARK SOULS: The Roleplaying Game* character sheet from our website: [www.steamforged.com](http://www.steamforged.com)

For Greg Stafford, and Hidetaka Miyazaki  
- in thanks for giving us whole worlds to play in.

Thanks to all who offered feedback and helped make this game better. Your patience and assistance was invaluable.



# INTRODUCTION

**T**he world is occluded, choked with fog and darkness. The men and women around you, empty husks of what were once breathing, laughing human beings. The gods who gave fire to the world merely demiurges, their hubris bringing down the most terrible of afflictions on those lacking their power. And, with the hideous inevitability that life follows death, uglier and more powerful things lumber out of the shadows, lusting after souls, flesh, warmth... anything to ease their existence.

---

Welcome to *DARK SOULS: The Roleplaying Game!* Based on the best-selling video game franchise, this book contains everything you need to play immersive roleplaying games (RPGs) set in the sinister and crumbling world of DARK SOULS. From innovative combat mechanics, endlessly customisable character design, and a host of unique spells and abilities, this book enables players to experience the strange and ethereal atmosphere of this unique world, while crafting their own story of inevitably doomed heroism.

This chapter offers a brief introduction and overview for those who are familiar with RPGs on their console or computer screen, but have yet to experience them on a tabletop.

If you know your way around a set of polyhedral dice, you can fast travel to the next bonfire—*Chapter One: Character Generation*, but keep an eye out for some new rules. Check page 70 and page 107 for rules on Position, and Bloodied conditions, as well as *Chapter Three: Magic & Miracles* for a brand new magic system.

For those who are new, prepare yourself for a world of infinite adventure, limited only by your imagination and how long your luck might hold...





# WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

As with the original DARK SOULS video games, a tabletop roleplaying game involves a player taking on the part of an individual character, guiding them through a fictional world. As they do so, their character will grow and improve, becoming more skilful as they hone their abilities, learn new talents, and gain new weapons and equipment. Where a tabletop roleplaying game differs from a video game is in the other players around the table; your friends get to play their own characters, with whom you form a band of protagonists, encountering danger and challenges as you attempt to achieve your objectives.

There is another player at the table, but, unlike everyone else, they aren't playing an individual. They are the Game Master, or GM. While other players concentrate on deciding and describing the actions of their individual, the GM describes everything else going on around them, from the reactions of enemies to the weather above.

The GM creates and sets the scenes in which the players have their characters act. Think of the GM as a cross between a film director, a set designer and all the character-actors and extras needed to make a cinematic masterpiece work. Yes, they are the ones nominally running the show, but it's all to make sure their stars look good—and your protagonists are the stars. Except, of course, this is DARK SOULS. While you may be the star, you'll have to be clever, cautious, and skilful to survive.

Below is a short illustration of how play can unfold:

**Game Master (GM):** So, you're approaching a series of gnarled, misshapen trees that cast strange shadows on the ground. Ahead, there is a flickering light. What are you doing?

**Hidetaka:** I ready my sword, holding it in two hands and stowing my shield on my back. Then I slowly creep towards the light.

**Carli:** I follow, my bow at the ready.

**GM:** Excellent. The light, through the trees, merely accentuates the sinister shadows creeping around you. Suddenly you are confronted by a clearing, in which three Hollows stumble around the fire.

**Carli:** I fire my bow!

**GM:** Okay, make me an attack roll.

**Carli (rolling a d20):** 5. Plus 2. For a total of 7. That's not going to hit, is it?

**GM:** I'm afraid not. But the thrum of the bow string and the thunk of the arrow striking a tree nearby has attracted the Hollows' attention. They turn toward you, dead eyes gleaming red.

**Hidetaka:** I heft my sword and charge!

During each gameplay session the players progress through a story or adventure. These can be played individually or as part of a grand, overarching narrative campaign made up of several stories. Think of adventures as events taking place in an individual dungeon or location, and a campaign as your journey across the entire world. This is not to say that playing a single adventure or a campaign is better or worse. They're simply different.

Playing a single adventure can be an exhilarating ride, where you can push your character to their limits, unconcerned about consequences. A campaign offers something different, however, and presents an opportunity to delve deep into the lore and narrative you and the GM have created between you. Your characters can grow, developing new facets to their personalities, and find new perspectives and understanding of the world around them. The story can be straightforward or have multiple twists and head in strange directions, wrong-footing both you and the GM!

# USING THE DICE

In the DARK SOULS video game, mechanics like whether you hit or how much damage you inflict are handled by your console or computer. In the tabletop game, things are decided by rolling dice. *DARK SOULS: The Roleplaying Game* uses polyhedral dice of different sizes. Dice are always described in shorthand, as “d”, and then the number of facings on the die (i.e. d4 is the die with four faces, d6 is the die with six faces, and so on). The only instance where this isn't the case is a d3. When a rule requires a d3, roll a d6 and halve the result, rounding up.



D4



D6



D8



D10



D12



D20

There's one dice which might be a little different to what you've seen before—the d4. After rolling a d4, the result is the number which is upright on all three faces.

The most common die you'll roll when making a check or test is the d20. When you roll a d20 you'll usually roll the die and then add a modifier to the result. These modifiers are usually taken from the Attributes which define each character. These are Strength (STR); Dexterity (DEX), Constitution (CON), Intelligence (INT), Wisdom (WIS), and Charisma (CHA).

Occasionally a rule may also apply other modifiers to the result. You might, for example, have used an ability or cast a spell, or be attempting a particularly difficult challenge.

Once you have a final result, it is compared to a target number, or Difficulty Class (DC). If the result equals or exceeds this number, the roll passes. If it's less than the number, the roll failed the check or test.

Some dice rolls are made with advantage or disadvantage. When doing so, roll two d20 instead of one. When rolling with advantage, discard the die with the lowest result. When rolling with disadvantage, discard the die with the highest result.

There are, of course, many different rules to reflect the strange and deadly events which an adventurer must confront as part of their quest. DARK SOULS is a world beset by fell creatures, saturated in peculiar magics... nothing is simple, nothing is without risk. Other rules, detailed elsewhere in this book, offer a means of simulating the terrifying impact of eldritch sorcery, the secrets of pyromancy and other elements of the DARK SOULS world.

## MAKING AN ATTACK CHECK

Mat's character, a Knight named Sir Windrunner, is attempting to attack a Hollow Soldier. The Hollow Soldier is wearing the armour they bore in their past life, giving them an Armour Class (AC) of 15. Unfortunately, this target number makes the Hollow quite difficult to hit.

Sir Windrunner is a skilled combatant, and certainly no stranger to bloodshed. When making an attack check, Sir Windrunner adds a +4 modifier to the result. Sir Windrunner has also been carefully picking his way through the ruins of Lothric Castle, and managed to sneak up on the Hollow. As a result, the GM determines Sir Windrunner has advantage on his attack.

Mat rolls two d20, and gets a 3 and a 16! He discards the 3, then adds his +4 modifier to the 16 for a total result of 20. Sir Windrunner easily beats the Hollow Soldier's AC of 15. It's a hit!