

Welcome, jumper, to the Age of Wonders.

In the ancient world, when the continents still had a different shape, the world was ruled by the elven Lord Inioch. From the great throne in the Valley of Wonders, his rule brought peace and justice to the entirety of the Blessed Continent.

The world's harmony was brutally shattered with the arrival of the humans. Uncaring for the existing traditions or lands held by the other races, the humans conquered the Valley of Wonders without mercy. Inioch and his court were slain, and from the conflict two new great alliances arose: the Keepers, led by the elves and Inioch's daughter Julia, seek to restore peace and order through coexistence of all races. The Cult Of Storms, led by the dark elves and Inioch's son Meandor, seek to annihilate everything tainted by human hands.

Now, the Keepers and the Cult Of Storms are fighting a bitter war, with the humans and various other races caught in the crossfire. Brief lulls in the fighting exist from time to time, but the world has known nothing but conflict in the centuries since Inioch's death.

Unknown to all, the worst is yet to come. Alliances shift and new factions rise and fall, while a new, devastating conflict is about to erupt as Meandor experiments with necromancy and a bright star appears over the Valley of Wonders. The Cult of Storms is marshaling its forces for a new offensive, and the Keepers are seeking new allies for the conflict to come.

In this realm, factions both local and continent-spanning are led by so-called Heroes: warlords and mages with skills that surpass that of the common folk. You are now one of these beings, and the people of the world will look to you for leadership, be it to protect the innocent or to eliminate all that stand before you. You appear in this world on the day that Queen Elwyn, mother to Julia and current leader of the Keepers, is assassinated on the island of Aldor by one of the Cult's Stormlord leaders.

You may spend **1000 CP** to gain the strength and power you need to see the conflict to it's end. Good luck.

Backgrounds:

Drop-In

You appear in this world with no additional memories, no history or fame and no allies or enemies.

Independent

You are one of the independent warlords that have not aligned themselves with the Keepers or the Cult Of Storms. You have the experience that comes with protecting a number of cities from neighboring factions and roving bands of bandits, but you have relatively few contacts beyond your local area of the world. Whether you pick a side or choose to remain neutral (or are even capable of such) in the coming conflict is up to you.

Keeper



You are one of the leaders of the organization known as the Keepers. Founded after the death of Inioch in order to undo the damage to the land and heal the rampant hatred following the original battles in the Valley Of Wonders, the Keepers advocate a philosophy of harmony and peace between all races. With the rising power of the Cult Of Storms, they see no other options than to take up arms against their former brothers and sisters. They primarily consist of elves, halflings and dwarves, though anyone is welcome if they share their ideals. You have only recently come to understand your potential as a hero, but you are already considered an exceptional leader and many Keepers will look upon your challenges with interest.

Cult Of Storms



You are one of the Stormlords, the mightiest leaders in the Cult Of Storms. Founded by Meandor and the dark elves to wreak bloody vengeance upon the humans for their crimes, the Cult has amassed mighty legions from the nastier beings of the world. The Cult rejects the Keepers' call for forgiveness, and now considers them unfit to remain in the world-to-be. Anyone that refuses to take up arms against the humans is to be exterminated. The Cult is mainly formed of Dark Elves, with additional forces of Goblins and Orcs, though slaves of other races are common as well. You've recently joined the ranks of the Stormlords after showing your gift for leadership and ruthlessness, and your competitors will watch you intently, eager to take advantage of any sign of weakness.

Race:

There are numerous races that exist in the world of Age Of Wonders. Choosing a race is free, but some are restricted based on your chosen background.

Good races:
Good races may not be chosen by anyone in the Cult Of Storms. Good races include the Elves (immortal caretakers of the natural world), Dwarves (proud and dedicated crafters), Halflings (peace-loving and averse to war, preferring to use fey beings to fight for them) and High Men (semi-divine beings who've come to the mortal world to stop the Undead).

Neutral races:
Neutral races may be chosen by anyone. Neutral races include Azrac (desert-dwelling people who prefer to use trained animals for combat), Lizardfolk (aquatic beings that make their home in the swamps at the center of the continent), Frostlings (goblin-like people that inhabit the northern glaciers and often ally with the ice monsters that live there), and Humans (expansionist and ruthless, and the cause of the great war).

Evil races:
Evil races may not be chosen by Keepers. Evil races include Dark Elves (Elves who've given in to hatred and evil), Orcs (powerful but lazy and prone to bullying), Goblins (cowardly and frequently used as slaves), and Undead (evil abominations brought back to un-life using necromantic magics).

Starting Location

When you pick a location, you will begin in a (relatively) safe area in the general region, so a Goblin appearing in Deepmir won't immediately be lynched by the local Dwarves. Roll a random pick or choose your starting location for 50CP.

1. The island of Aldor, home of the new Elven Court and bastion of the Keepers. You may choose this location for free if you are a Keeper. If you are Cult Of Storms, you may choose Shorguth for free instead.

2. Shorguth, the underground capital of the Dark Elves and home to the Cult Of Storms. You may choose this location for free if you are a member of the Cult Of Storms. If you are a Keeper, you may choose Aldor for free instead.

3. The Dwarven capital of Deepmir, not far from the cold glaciers in the North

4. The vast Ashen Steppe in the South, home to Humans, Azracs and Orcs

5. The United Cities, the largest Halfling trading post in the West

6. The dark mountain range at the center of the continent known as 'The Skull'

7. The Serpent River, a large trading route coveted by the Lizardmen

8. You may choose any location for free

Perks

Mobility (100CP, Discount Drop-In)
The world of Age of Wonders is a harsh place, and getting where you need to go is easier said than done. With this perk, you gain all the skills you need to move quickly over mountains and through forests and caves.

Eagle Eyes (200CP, Discount Drop-In)
Your eyesight improves to the point you can see miles further than you could before. In addition, you can now spot creatures that are normally concealed because they blend in with the surrounding terrain.

Flight (400CP, Discount Drop-In)
Be it for the sheer joy of freedom or for taking the fight to a hostile dragon, flight is always useful to have. You can now fly as fast as you would normally be able to move over open terrain. You have perfect mobility and can fight in the air as easily as you could on the ground. If you decide to use mounted combat instead of fighting on foot, you may share this power with whatever steed you're using so long as you stay seated.

False Balance (600CP, Discount Drop-In)
Pursuing Good or Evil, wielding magics of Air or Earth, choosing which forces to ally with and which to shun... frequently, one must choose between mutually exclusive options. For you, this is no longer the case. Any broadly defined requirements someone might need to meet in terms of alignment or magical affinity are removed for you. For example, you could be a champion of both order and chaos at the same time, or magical items that can only be used by those who are pure of heart could be wielded by you even if you were an undead, mass-murdering monstrosity. Finally, this perk allows you to purchase opposing spheres of magic for your spellcasting.

Marksmanship (100CP, Free Independent)
Be it with a bow and arrows, poisoned darts or more exotic forms of attack, you know how to strike from a distance more effectively than others. Any ranged attacks you use are more accurate and deal more damage. This also applies to magical attacks that are aimed at a target, such as magic bolts cast from a wand or a dragon's fire breath.

First Strike (200CP, Discount Independent)
Combat is a dangerous thing, and the sooner you finish a fight the better. Sometimes, a single blow at the right time can be all you need to turn the tide of battle. With this perk, you gain a supernatural sense for incoming attackers. This awareness is useless for defending yourself better, but unless your foe is much faster than you it allows you to reflexively strike anyone *before* their attacks hit you.

Leadership (400CP, Discount Independent)
Being a warlord of the wilderness involves more than personal combat prowess. You know how to inspire courage and discipline in those that fight by your side. During a battle, your allies gain a small, but noticeable, boost to their combat skills. This perk does not apply to you personally and does not stack.

Extra Strike (600CP, Discount Independent)
The battlefield is your home, and if people claim you're a one-man army they are not using hyperbole. Your reflexes in combat are enhanced to the point you'll be able to strike half again as frequently in any melee fight.

Defensive talents (100CP, Free Keeper)
One cannot protect the innocent if one doesn't know how to stay alive. You become skilled in blocking enemy attacks and gain a small bonus to physical defense and magical resistance.

Regeneration (200CP, Discount Keeper)
With this ability, you will continually heal back to full health even when suffering from effects that would otherwise prevent it such as the curses applied by death magics. You are guaranteed to heal to full health in

one day. This ability does not prevent or cure status effects such as poison.

Healing (400CP, Discount Keeper)
When defense fails and people get injured in a fight, it's time to tend to their wounds. With this talent, you gain the ability to heal a decent amount of wounds of a target (or yourself) with a mere touch. Unlike the in-game version, you are not restricted to using this ability once per day, though it becomes weaker the more frequently you use it without taking the time to recover. This ability does not remove status effects such as poison.

Path of Life (600CP, Discount Keeper)
You are a boundless font of life. With each step you take, grass and flowers grow in your wake. While this doesn't affect wounds or combat, an area several miles around you is rejuvenated with healing magic, turning into unspoiled nature. You could undo the damage of a Death Storm, bring spring to the frozen tundras, and even awaken life in the most desolate wastelands. This power can be turned on and off at will.

Offensive talent (100CP, Free Cult Of Storms)
The destiny of the Cult will not be reached with mere words. Warfare is in your blood, and you exemplify the Cult's drive to ascend through conflict. You gain a small bonus to the accuracy and damage of all your melee strikes.

Life Stealing (200CP, Discount Cult Of Storms)
The weak exist to serve the strong, and even your foes will serve in their own way. The spray of blood of each blow serves to strengthen your cause and bolster your might. With each successful melee strike, you drain some of the enemy's life force to heal your own injuries.

Possession (400CP, Discount Cult Of Storms)
In the rare times when mere power is insufficient, subterfuge is an acceptable substitute. You can turn into a semi-ethereal form and begin a battle of wills to possess enemies. If successful, your opponent's spirit is erased and you permanently gain control of their body. Should you decide to leave your host and return to corporeal form, your victim dies instantly as the soul needed to sustain it no longer exists.

Path of Death (600CP, Discount Cult Of Storms)
Your very being drains the life from the world. With each step you take, living beings around you begin to wither and decay. While this has no combat use, an area several miles around you is slowly turned into inhospitable wastelands. Wherever you go, you will leave behind a dead world filled with nothing but smoke, the husks of trees and cracked earth. This power can be turned on and off at will.

Combat skill (50CP per purchase)
Each purchase gives you a small boost to your accuracy, physical defense, magic resistance or overall health. You may also increase the damage you deal in melee, but this takes two purchases for each bonus. Each aspect cannot be improved more than five times with this perk.

Elemental strike (200CP)
This talent infuses your melee strikes with one element per purchase. Holy Strike causes daze, Cold Strike has a chance to freeze enemies, Poison Strike poisons enemies, Death Strike curses enemies such that their wounds don't heal for several days, Fire Strike sets enemies ablaze, and Lightning Strike has a chance to stun enemies.

Spellcasting I-V (First free, 100 CP per purchase)
Every jumper begins with some magical potential in this world. In Age Of Wonders, your particular gifts of magic are counted in so called 'spheres'. Each type of magic (Life, Water, Earth, Death, Fire and Air) has up to four spheres worth of power you can unlock. The more spheres you have, the stronger the spells you can learn from that type of magic. You may choose any combination of spheres, but you cannot choose opposing magic spheres unless you take the False Balance perk. Choosing Life prevents you from ever choosing Death, Water prevents Fire, and so on. Any spheres you choose are shared with your companions; you cannot choose Life

and have a companion choose Death.

The first, free purchase grants you three spheres of magic and some spellcasting talent. Each additional purchase (up to a maximum of five) grants access to an extra sphere of your choosing, and linearly increases your spellcasting ability. Someone with four ranks in this skill could use four times as much mana per day as someone with only a single rank, for example.

Achieving your full potential grants you access to seven spheres, though only four of those may be a single type of magic. Typically, mages specialize in one type of magic and branch out into other types once they've acquired all four spheres of one type and learned all there is to learn from that form of magic, though less specialized dabblers are not unheard of. For example, you could have four Fire spheres, an Earth Sphere and two Death Spheres, or two Fire, two Earth and three Death. A single sphere might grant some basic attack spells, a personal enhancement spell of some sort, and some other minor effects, while four spheres would allow you to achieve feats like summoning mighty elementals or creating devastating magical storms to lay waste to your foes.

In the world of Age Of Wonders, magicians tap into nodes of magical potential scattered throughout the land. While such nodes don't exist outside of this jump, you can easily adapt your spellcasting to draw on the local types of powers available. For example, attuning to volcanoes or hot springs would provide magical energy to a magician with access to Fire spheres, even if there is no actual Fire Node present.



Items

Elemental weapon (100 CP)
Gives minor bonuses to attack and damage, and a single type of elemental attack similar to the Elemental Strike perk.



Elemental armor (100 CP)
Gives minor bonuses to defense and magical resistance, and grants immunity to damage from a single type of magic such as Fire.



Wand (100 CP)
This wand can be used to blast enemies with magical strikes, aligned with one of the types of magic or with pure magical force. You may only choose one type of attack per purchase, such as Holy Bolts or Magic Bolts.



Cloak of Shadows (150 CP)
This cloak allows you to avoid being noticed with even the slightest obscuration. Grasslands, shadowed caverns, even open deserts will hide you from sight at all but the shortest distances.



Companions

Companion import (100 CP each, or 300 CP for 8)
Each imported companion receives 300CP and a background of their choice. Yes, you can import half your companions as Keepers and the other half as Cult Of Storms. No, that's not necessarily a good idea.



Canon character (200 CP)
You may bring one canon character with you on future jumps as a companion.











Syron (200 CP, discount Drop-In)
These magical giants don't usually take sides in conflict, but are excellent at finding and destroying enemy spellcasters. They are incredibly resistant to magical effects, and can easily eliminate all but the strongest warriors with their physical might.



Ice Drake (200 CP, discount Independent)
These icy serpents make their home in the northern reaches, and are occasionally seen fighting alongside the Frostlings. They are fast, agile hunters that can use a chilling breath cold enough to freeze foes solid.

Gold Dragon (200 CP, discount Keepers)
These mighty beings are champions for the forces of good, and are most often found fighting for Life-specialized summoners. Their breath shines with divine radiance, and can daze and blind enemy units.



Black Dragon (200 CP, discount Cult of Storms)
These wicked monstrosities embody all that is evil in the world, and are occasionally brought along in the armies of Death-specialized summoners. Their breath is imbued with fell magics that drain the very life out of their targets, leaving festering, cursed injuries for all victims that survive.



Drawbacks

Quick Fights (+100 CP)
Whenever you enter a fight, you lose control of your body and all your powers. During the battle, you act on auto-pilot and make reasonable but occasionally less-than-perfect decisions on how to fight. You're only aware of your actions on an abstract level, and will only return to full awareness at the end of the battle. Most importantly, you'll never flee from enemies unless you're completely unable to harm them (for example, when fighting dragons without a ranged weapon or Wraiths without magical attacks)

Elite (+100 CP)
The principles of war haven't changed much over the millennia, but with your arrival, your enemies start to

learn just how to beat you. Enemies start gaining experience *much* faster than normal. Expect your enemy to field far more veteran and heroic units, and leaders to be much stronger by the time you face them.

Hordes (+100 CP)
Your opponents have a lot less issues recruiting new fighters for the war effort than they did before. Expect to face significantly higher numbers of cheap units in addition to the forces your enemies would have used. Each soldier might not count for much individually... but they're absolutely everywhere now.

Numerical limits (+200 CP)
Regardless of the powers (if any) you had before coming here, you've hit a snag: no matter what you do, you won't be able to surpass the greatest heroes of this realm. Any powers such as super strength, speed or unnatural accuracy are reduced until you're the equal of whichever being in Age Of Wonders is the greatest at that particular talent.

Revolution (+200 CP)
Any city you control is unhappier than they should be. Cities that should be happy become neutral, neutral cities become angry. Expect a lot of riots and rebellions, especially if you try to keep control of cities with races that oppose your beliefs.

3650 Turns (+200 CP)
Where this world was once a living, breathing reality, that's no longer the case: you're truly living in a strategy game now. All units take turns moving while the rest of the world is rooted to the spot, cities are ghost towns that don't actually seem to have any people living in them, and the days are only as long as they would need to be to let all military forces do what they planned to do at dawn. Nights don't even exist anymore, for that matter. Any two similar units might as well be clones with identical personalities, and if they have names at all they'll probably be the same as well. Expect frustration, loneliness and possibly a bit of madness from the lack of social interaction.

The First Legend (+300 CP)
Any powers and items from outside of this jump are sealed away during your stay here, and you lose access to your Warehouse.

The Risen King (+300 CP)
Lord Inioch, the leader of the undead faction in Age Of Wonders, has won. He now holds the ruined throne in the old court, and the world is rapidly facing extinction at the hands of his endless armies. The undead are everywhere, and no matter who or what you are you'll never be free of them. Pockets of resistance from the greatest Keeper and Cult strongholds still hold out, but this world is all but doomed... unless you can unite the scattered remnants of the living and bring an end to the reign of undeath.

Ending:

End of an Era
You have enough of traveling, and choose to end your jump. You return to Earth as you were, keeping any powers, items, companions or anything else you've collected during your adventures.

A Wondrous Beginning
This world can be a place to call home, and you've decided to make it so. You choose to remain in this world for the rest of your days, making Age Of Wonders the end of your jumpchain.

The Endless Road
You've seen and experienced much, but there is always more to do in the worlds beyond. You continue onward towards your next jump.

Notes:

Any common skill available to heroes in the game can be learned with time and effort, though all but the most basic abilities may take months or even years to learn and master. Furthermore, skills purchased with CP will always be a little stronger than those you learn the old-fashioned way, and will never fade with disuse.

Choosing to be a hero for the Keepers or Cult Of Storms will not make you take the place of the leaders of the campaigns, though you may still join them if you seek them out.

Your personality is not directly affected by the race you choose to be, only your background will have an effect. However, do keep in mind that this is a world where fantastic racism is in full swing and being a neutral Undead just for the heck of it will still make all but the most evil try to kill you on sight. Likewise, being an Orc doesn't immediately make you evil, but having the memories of an Orc living among other (evil) Orcs will still influence you unless you have a lot of virtuous experiences from previous jumps.

All combat stats in Age Of Wonders are expressed in numbers between 1-10, but as a jumper you are not limited to a maximum of 10 unless you choose the 'Numerical Limits' drawback. For example, if previous jumps would have given you super strength sufficient for an equivalent to 17 damage and you purchase one rank here, you would now hit harder and have an equivalent to 18 damage.

You and your companions may form one side or several as you choose.