

Ars Magica

# Lords of Men

## Supplement



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# Arms and Armor

This web supplement contains material that was developed for *Lords of Men*, but did not originally fit within the page count allocated. At the end of the day, we managed to fit it in, and are able to make it available both in the book and on the web.

This supplement includes updated rules for crossbows, statistics for late medieval arms and armor, expanded rules for armor, and a few new optional weapons rules. In addition, it reprints some weapon-related rules from other ArM5 supplements (*City & Guild* and *Ancient Magic*) for ease of reference, and includes consolidated melee and missile weapon tables that list all the weapons from this previous ArM5 books all in one place.

Arms and armor are the tools of the warrior's trade. Even nobles who do not personally fight have an interest in the equipping of their knights, sergeants, and men-at-arms.

## Equipment Availability

It may be useful to troupes to know approximately where and when, in historical Europe, certain weapons and armor were in use, especially if they want to set their saga earlier or later in Mythic Europe's history. As just one more example of how this information may be useful, the storyguide may sometimes want to outfit a ghost, faerie, or other character in equipment from a bygone age.

- The ancient period, for this purpose, includes anything up until the collapse of the Western Roman Empire around 480 AD.
- The early medieval period spans the sixth through tenth centuries.
- The high period begins in the 11th century and lasts until the end of the 13th.

- The late medieval period starts at the beginning of the 14th century.
- A few weapons have regional availability. Historically, they were common only in certain geographic areas; see Notes on Weapons for an explanation of each case.

We give statistics for late-medieval equipment for players who are interested in them. If your saga starts in 1220, magi, with their Longevity Rituals, can easily live into the 14th century. Even if they do, there is no reason why the history of Mythic Europe needs to parallel that of the real world. You may prefer to keep your saga in the high Middle Ages forever.

## Quality of Arms and Armor

*City & Guild* gives rules by which craftsmen can make goods of shoddy, standard, superior, or excellent quality (see *City & Guild*, pages 67–69). For convenience, those rules are summarized here:

Shoddy items break easily; they are destroyed after failing a single stress check (see *The Clash of Weapons*, below, or *City & Guild*, page 77).

Superior armor grants +1 to Protection. (A superior helmet's bonus applies only to attacks against the head.) Superior weapons have a +1 bonus to Attack, and superior shields grant +1 to Defense.

Excellent quality items grant a bonus of +2, +3, or even higher (see *City & Guild*, page 69). For weapons, the bonus applies to both Attack and Defense rolls.

## New Weapon Rules

For clarity, weapons are categorized as crushing, piercing, or slashing, according to the type of injuries they cause (see *Art & Academe*, pages 43–44). This has no effect on their Damage or other statistics, but can be useful in deciding how the weapon interacts with magical effects or other rules. For example, the spell *Edge of the Razor* (ArM5, page 154) only works on “edged or pointed” weapons.

## Primitive and Blunted Weapons

Stone weapons do less damage than metal ones. Subtract 2 from their Damage modifiers, to a minimum Damage modifier of +1. Statistics for several stone weapons are given on page 95 of *Ancient Magic*.

Slashing and piercing weapons may be blunted to reduce injury in tournaments. Subtract 3 from the Damage modifier of a blunted weapon. This can reduce the Damage modifier below zero.

## Option: Try Using the Other End

Several weapons, such as swords, can deal two categories of damage. The wielder may normally choose to deal either sort of damage, as he chooses.

As an optional rule, the order in which damage categories are listed on the Weapon Table becomes significant. The first category is the weapon's normal mode of use. Apply a

## Melee Weapon Table

ITEM	ABILITY	INIT	ATK	DFN	DAM	STR	LOAD	COST	AVAIL	TYPES	DAMAGE LEVELS	NOTES
Unarmed	Brawl	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	All	C	n/a	
Kick	Brawl	-1	0	-1	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	All	C	n/a	
Gauntlet	Brawl	0	0	1	2	-3	0	Inexp.	All	C	2	
Bludgeon	Brawl	0	2	0	2	-2	1	Inexp.	All	C	1	
Dagger	Brawl	0	2	0	3	-3	0	Inexp.	All	P,S	2	
Knife	Brawl	0	1	0	2	-6	0	Inexp.	All	P,S	2	
Axe	Single	1	4	0	6	0	1	Std.	All	S	2	
Club	Single	1	2	1	3	-2	1	Inexp.	All	C	1	
Dueling Stick, Short	Single	2	4	1	2	-2	1	Inexp.	Ancient	C	2	<i>Ancient Magic</i> , page 95
Falchion	Single	1	4	1	4	0	1	Std.	Late	S	2	
Hatchet	Single	0	3	0	4	-2	1	Inexp.	All	S	2	
Lance	Single	2	4	0	5	0	2	Std.	High	P	1	
Mace	Single	1	3	0	8	0	2	Std.	All	C	2	
Mace and Chain	Single	2	3	0	7	0	2	Std.	Early	C	2	
Net*	Single	-1	2	2	0	-1	3	Std.	Ancient	S	2	<i>Guardians of the Forest</i> , page 134
Spear	Single	2	2	0	5	-1	1	Inexp.	All	P	1	
Sword, Short	Single	1	3	1	5	-1	1	Std.	All	P,S	2	
Sword, Long**	Single	2	4	1	6	0	1	Exp.	All	S,P	2	
Shield, Buckler	Single	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	-2	1	Std.	High	n/a	2	
Shield, Round	Single	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	-1	2	Inexp.	All	n/a	1	
Shield, Heater	Single	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	0	2	Std.	High	n/a	2	
Shield, Infantry	Single	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	0	3	Std.	Ancient	n/a	2	New
Trident	Single	3	3	3	5	1	3	Exp.	Ancient	P	2	<i>Guardians of the Forest</i> , page 134
Whip*	Single	2	1	1	-3	-2	2	Inexp.	All	C, S	1	New
Cudgel	Great	1	4	1	7	1	2	Inexp.	All	C		
Farm Implement	Great	1	3	1	5	0	2	Inexp.	All	P,S	1	
Flail	Great	1	3	1	8	0	2	Inexp.	All	C	2	
Halberd***	Great	2	4	1	10	1	2	Std.	Late	S, P	2	
Pole Arm***	Great	3	4	1	8	0	2	Std.	High	S,P	2	
Pole Axe	Great	1	5	0	11	1	2	Std.	All	S	2	
Spear, Long	Great	3	3	1	7	0	3	Inexp.	All	P	1	Includes boar spear, <i>Lion &amp; Lily</i> , page 120
Sword, Great	Great	2	5	2	9	1	2	Exp.	Late	S,P	2	
Staff	Great	2	3	3	2	-1	2	Inexp.	Early	C	2	
Warhammer	Great	0	6	0	12	2	3	Inexp.	All	C	2	

\* A net or whip may be used to trip, grapple, or disarm using wielder's Single Weapon + Weapon Attack Bonus in lieu of Brawl.

\*\* There are several variations on the long sword, including the late Roman spatha (*Houses of Hermes, True Lineages*, page 127) and the Mongol saber (*Ancient Magic*, page 17).

\*\*\* A halberd or pole arm may be used to unseat a rider.

## Missile Weapon Table

ITEM	ABILITY	INIT	ATK	DEF	DAM	RANGE	STR	LOAD	COST	AVAIL	TYPES	DAMAGE LEVELS	NOTES
Axe, Throwing	Thrown	0	0	2	6	5	0	1	Std.	All	S	2	
Javelin	Thrown	0	2	0	5	10	0	1	Std.	All	P	2	
Knife	Thrown	0	1	0	2	5	-2	0	Inexp.	All	P	2	
Sling	Thrown	-3	1	0	4	20	-3	0	Inexp.	All	P	1	
Rock, sharpened	Thrown	0	0	1	3	5	-1	1	Inexp.	Ancient	C, S	1	Ancient Magic, page 17
Stone	Thrown	0	1	0	2	5	-1	1	Inexp.	All	C	n/a	
Bow	Bow	-1	3	0	6	15	-1	1	Std.	All	P	2	
Bow, Composite	Bow	-2	4	0	7	30	2	2	Exp.	All	P	2	Ancient Magic, page 17
Bow, Horse	Bow	-2	5	0	8	15	2	2	Exp.	All	P	2	Ancient Magic, page 17
Bow, Long	Bow	-2	4	0	8	30	2	2	Exp.	Late	P	2	
Crossbow	Crossbow	5	5	0	8*	25	1	2	Exp.	High	P	2	Replaces Covenants page 18
Arbalest	Crossbow	5	5	0	10*	30	-1	3	Exp.	High	P	2	New
Arbalest, heavy	Crossbow	5	5	0	12*	35	1	2	Exp.	Late	P	2	New

-1 Attack penalty if it is used to deal its other damage type, due to awkwardness.

### Option: The Clash of Weapons

In battle, weapons sometimes break. In the standard ArM5 rules, this only happens on a botch. The following optional rules adds more tension and chaos, but also complexity.

Check for weapon breakage whenever the attacker's melee Attack Total exactly equals the defender's Defense Total. (Remember that in ArM5, this counts as a miss.)

To determine whose weapon might break, roll Strength + Weapon Ability + a simple die for each character. Whoever rolls lower must then roll to see if his weapon breaks. If the defender must roll for breakage, he may choose to roll for either his weapon or his

shield. This roll for weapon breakage is similar to a stress check for equipment (see *City & Guild*, page 77), but the Ease Factor is lower because weapons are generally designed to withstand combat use.

**WEAPON BREAKAGE: stress die + Weapon Ability vs. Ease Factor 9**

If the check fails, the item loses a damage level. Most weapons and shields have two damage levels. They break when the last damage level is lost (but function normally until then). Some weapons, notably spears and lances, are particularly fragile, and have only one damage level.

For improvised weapons, such as hand tools or kitchen knives pressed into use as weapons, the Ease Factor of the breakage check is much higher: 15.

*City & Guild* discusses equipment damage in greater detail (see *City & Guild*, page 77).

### Using Crossbows

Crossbows were introduced in *Covenants* (see *Covenants*, page 18). These rules replace the rules in that earlier supplement.

Crossbows are easy to use. The usual three extra botch dice for untrained Ability use do not apply to crossbows.

The user's Strength does not add to Damage for crossbows. Use the Damage value given in the Missile Weapons Table directly, without adding anything.

Spanning a crossbow is an Extended Action. The number of rounds required depends on the type of spanning mechanism (see Notes on Weapons, later in this chapter).

If you are using the Ready Missiles option, shooting a loaded crossbow is a fast action rather than an action. This enables the crossbowman to shoot and then take cover, or to shoot and immediately begin reloading his weapon.



## Missile Weapon Descriptions

**ARBALEST:** An arbalest is crossbow that requires a mechanical device to span. Some arbalests can be spanned in a four-round Extended Action using a windlass. A few are spanned with block-and-tackle, which is usually slower, requiring a (6–Str)-round Extended Action. If the spanning process is interrupted, the character may later resume it at the point where he left off.

**ARBALEST, HEAVY:** A powerful, late-medieval arbalest with a steel bow. A heavy arbalest is spanned with a built-in mechanical device called a cranequin. This is a six-round Extended Action. If the spanning process is interrupted, the character may resume it at the point where he left off.

**CROSSBOW:** To span a crossbow with a belt hook (the usual method) is a three-round Extended Action. A character with Str +3 or greater can span it by hand as a one-round Extended Action. In the late-medieval period, a built-in lever called a goat's foot allows a crossbowman to span his weapon as a two-round Extended Action.

**BOW:** This is a new, concise name for a short bow (see ArM5, page 177)

**BOW, COMPOSITE:** This weapon is used by Saracens, Moors, and Asiatic nomads (Turks and Mongols or, in the early Middle Ages, Huns and Magyars). See also *Ancient Magic*, page 17.

**BOW, HORSE:** A compact composite bow, suitable for use from horseback. See *Mounted Archery*, later; see also *Ancient Magic*, page 17.

**BOW, LONG:** Historically, longbows were confined to Wales for most of the high Middle Ages. They became the signature English weapon after 1283.

**FALCHION:** A heavy, one-handed, machete-like weapon used by common soldiers.

**HALBERD:** Similar to a pole axe with a steel spike on top and, usually, a hook for dragging a rider off his horse.

**NET:** A net may be used to make trip, grapple, or disarm attempts, or unseat a rider. It is otherwise a rather ineffective weapon.

**ROCK, SHARPENED:** A very primitive weapon, sometimes used by faeries and the like. See *Ancient Magic*, page 95.

**SHIELD, INFANTRY:** A large shield that can only be used on foot, usually oval or rectangular in shape. The convex, rectangular scutum of the Roman legionary is an infantry shield.

**SWORD, BASTARD:** A large sword suitable for one-handed or two-handed use. The two-handed grip is both more powerful and more agile, so it has slightly better statistics.

**WHIP:** A whip is not a very good weapon, but it may be used to make trip, grapple, or disarm attempts, or to unseat a rider.

## Expanded Armor Rules

The *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* rulebook provides the statistics for several generic types of armor (see ArM5, page 176). This section expands on those rules to incorporate a wider variety of historical armor types, and gives rules for constructing armor out of layers of different material.

### Armor Materials

The following categories expand and supersede those described on page 176 of ArM5. Note that the statistics for these armor materials are fully compatible with those in ArM5. These new categories simply cover a broader variety of historical armor materials.

#### INEXPENSIVE MATERIALS

- Padded armor is usually made of woolen or linen fabric quilted into dense layers. Other forms include heavy felt, suede, or leather stuffed with horsehair, and thick furs such as bearskin.
- Boiled leather is very tough, but stiff. Also use these statistics for similar, semi-resilient materials like rawhide, or even faerie armor made of tree bark.

#### STANDARD MATERIALS

- Reinforced armor is leather or padded material strengthened by many small, hard plates or rings. These reinforcements are usually metal, but horn, bone, and whalebone are sometimes used.
- Rigid scale includes any sort of non-metallic scale or lamellar armor. Armor of boiled-leather scales is worn throughout

## Weapon Table Key

The melee and missile weapons tables list the following statistics:

**ABILITY** refers to the Ability used to calculate combat scores while using that weapon. Characters with no score in a weapon Ability can use the weapon untrained; treat their relevant Ability as zero, and add three extra botch dice unless the weapon is a crossbow.

**INIT** is the weapon's Weapon Initiative Modifier.

**ATK** is the weapon's Weapon Attack Modifier.

**DEFN** is the weapon's Weapon Defense Modifier.

**DAM** is the weapon's Damage Modifier.

**RANGE** is the range increment for the missile weapon, in paces.

**STR** is the minimum Strength required to use the weapon effectively.

**LOAD** is the Load of the weapon; see *Encumbrance* on ArM5, page 178.

**COST** states how expensive the weapon is. Most characters can afford Standard or Inexpensive equipment, but this can be affected by their Virtues and Flaws.

**AVAIL** gives the time period (or geographic region) in which the weapon first came into widespread use. See *Equipment Availability*, later.

**TYPES** lists the type(s) of damage the weapon inflicts: Crushing, Piercing, or Slashing.

**DAMAGE LEVELS** indicate how many damage levels the weapon can sustain before it breaks. This only pertains when using the optional *Clash of Weapons* rule, earlier.

Mythic Europe, horn and whalebone are sometimes used as well.

- Metal scale includes all kinds of metal lamellar. Brigandine is essentially a late-period type of metal scale.

#### EXPENSIVE MATERIALS

- Mail is the term characters in Mythic Europe would use for chain mail. Mail shirts and hauberks are available in the ancient period; full mail is an invention

## Expanded Armor Table

Add together the Protection and Load of the body armor, helmet, and any surcoat worn. Retain fractions until the end of the calculation and then round up to the next whole number.

### BODY ARMORS

ARMOR	CUIRASS/JERKIN		HAUBERGEON		HAUBERK		FULL*	
	PROT	LOAD	PROT	LOAD	PROT	LOAD	PROT	LOAD
Padded	+1	1.5	+1	1.5	+1	1.5	+1	1.5
Boiled Leather	+2	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+3	4.5
Reinforced	+2	2	+2.5	2.5	+3	3	+3.5	3.5
Rigid Scale	+2	2	+2.5	2.5	+3.5	3.5	+4.5	4.5
Metal Scale	+3	3	+4	4	+5	5	+6	6
Mail	+3	1.5	+4	2	+5	2.5	+7	3.5
Plate	+3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+12	6
Plate and Mail	+4	2	+6	3	+8	4	+10	5

\* Greaves are already included in the full armor listed; don't add them again.

### SURCOATS AND GREAVES

SURCOAT AND GREAVES	PROT	LOAD	COST
Gambeson	+1	1.5	Inexpensive
Coat of Plates	+2	2	Expensive
Boiled-leather greaves*	+1	+1	Inexpensive
Plate jambes*	+1	1	Expensive
Plate-and-mail jambes*	+2	0.5	Expensive

\* Greaves and jambes are already included in the full armor listed; don't add them again.

### HELMETS

HELMET	PROT	LOAD	PERCEPTION PENALTY	COST
Cap, Iron	0	0	0	Inexpensive
Coif/Camail	+0.5	0	0	Expensive
Helmet, Open	+1	1	-1	Standard
Helm	+2	2	-3	Expensive
Bascinet	+2	1	-1	Expensive (late medieval only)

of the early Middle Ages.

- Plate armor is made of solid pieces of metal. The ancient Greeks and Romans had plate cuirasses and greaves, but by the early Middle Ages, all-plate harness fell out of use. The full plate listed on the Expanded Armor Table is late-medieval, Gothic style plate (c. 1400) and has a different Protection-to-Load ratio than its ancient counterpart.
- Plate and mail is a combination of mail strengthened with various metal plates. It gives better overall protection than the ancient, all-plate harness. Historically, a few medieval examples of breastplates (worn over mail) re-appeared by 1200, but they were not common until about 1300. Plate jambes were added around 1320, and full plate appeared around 1360.

## Armor Outfittings

These rules separate armor into three components, each with separate statistics that are added together with the others. These components are the armor itself, any protective surcoat or greaves worn with them, and the helmet.

The Expanded Armor Table lists common pieces of armor worn in Mythic Europe. It is compatible with the ArM5 Armor Table (see ArM5, page 176) in the sense that partial and full armors can be constructed from the components listed here, and the statistics come out the same provided one makes certain assumptions about the helmet and surcoat included with the various armors described in ArM5.

The Expanded Armor Table shows the three most common sorts of armor outfittings used in Mythic Europe in 1220. See the Glossary of Armor Terms, later, for descriptions of the jerkin, cuirass, haubergeon, and hauberk. Full armor protects all four limbs as well as the torso and loins.

Some combinations of material and outfittings have entries of "n/a" in the Expanded Armor Table because it's not possible to make a sleeved garment out of rigid materials (boiled leather or plate). Also, some materials have the same statistics (Protection and Load) for different types of garments. This is because armor's Protection value has more to do with how well the vital areas are protected than with how well the extremities are protected. See Complex Armor Design, later, for further explanation.

## Option: Penalty for Fighting Without a Helmet

As one can see from the Expanded Armor Table, helmets don't add much to the Protection of a warrior's armor. In fact, iron caps and mail coifs don't add appreciably to Protection at all! The reason for this is that a warrior's armor is only as strong as its weakest point, and if the head is well-protected by a stout iron helmet, enemies concentrate their attacks on the less-protected body instead.

The converse also holds true: if a character's body is well-protected but his head is bare, a sensible foe concentrates his attacks there. To reflect this danger, add an extra botch die to melee Defense (and Evasion) rolls for any character so foolish as to fight without head protection.

## Glossary of Armor Terms

**AILETTES:** Flat plates of boiled leather worn to protect the collarbone and shoulder.

**AKETON:** The padded jacket worn under a mail hauberk; see also gambeson.

**BASCINET:** A late medieval helmet that fits the contours of the head and neck. Usually equipped with a movable visor.

**BRIGANDINE:** Late medieval armor made of small, overlapping metal plates riveted to an outer layer of canvas or leather. It is rather like an inside-out version of scale armor.

**CAP-A-PIE:** Literally "head to foot," the term characters would use for full armor.

**CAP, IRON:** A helmet that protects mainly the crown of the head, leaving the face exposed.

**CAMAIL:** A mail hood that covers the head, forehead, and lower face.

**CHAPEL DE FER:** French term for a kettle hat.

**CHAUSSES:** Leggings made of mail.

**COAT OF PLATES:** A lamellar cuirass, historically worn over mail between about 1250 and 1300 AD. Use the statistics for a metal scale cuirass.

**COIF:** An open-faced mail hood.

**CUIRASS:** A breastplate and backplate; the most basic sort of rigid body armor.

**CUIRBOULLI:** A form of boiled leather

made by boiling in oil rather than water.

**FAULD:** Lamellar hip protection, worn with late-medieval plate armor.

**GAMBESON:** A garment made of padded material. It could be a short tunic, a sleeveless surcoat, or a long-sleeved hauberk which could be worn over, under, or instead of another armor. Indeed, it's not uncommon for knights to wear a light gambeson (also called an aketon or arming jacket) under their mail, and a heavier one over it.

**GAUNTLET:** Armor for the hands.

**GORGET:** A stiff collar of boiled leather (or, in the late Middle Ages, iron) that protects the throat and neck.

**GREAVES:** Plate or boiled-leather armor for the lower legs.

**HAUBERK:** A knee-length, long-sleeved coat of flexible armor. It protects the body, arms, and upper legs.

**HAUBERGEON:** A short-sleeved armored tunic, covering the torso and shoulders only.

**HELMET, OPEN:** A helmet protects the sides and rear of the head, but leaves the face at least half exposed.

**HELM:** A high-medieval piece of headgear that completely encases the head and neck in plates of iron.

**JACK:** A brigandine jerkin, common in the late medieval period. Also leather jack.

**JAMBES:** Plate armor covering the legs.

**JERKIN:** A short, sleeveless jacket.

**KETTLE HAT:** A bowl-shaped iron cap with a wide metal brim. Popular with the common soldiers of the high and late Middle Ages.

**LAMELLAR:** Overlapping plates fastened to each other rather than to a piece of backing material. The plates can be small, similar to those in scale armor, or larger, as in a lorica segmentata.

**LORICA HAMATA:** Roman name for a mail haubergeon.

**LORICA SEGMENTATA:** A lamellar cuirass used in Imperial Rome, with horizontal strips of metal encircling the torso, overlapping like the plates of a lobster's tail.

**POLEYNs:** Knee protectors made of iron or boiled leather.

**RING ARMOR:** Early medieval armor of leather reinforced by non-overlapping metal rings.

**SABATON:** Armor for the feet.

**SALLET:** A late medieval, rounded helmet with a visor.

**SCALE ARMOR:** Small plates fastened to a layer of backing material. The plates overlap vertically, like the scales of a fish.

**VAMBRACES:** Armor for the arms.

## Option: Complex Armor Design

These optional rules allow players to create their own armor from any combination of materials, and calculate its Protection and Load. The Expanded Armor Table is sufficient to outfit most grogs, knights, and other characters, but these rules might prove useful for creating exotic armor for faeries and the like, or for reproducing a specific, historical armor.

First, make a list of all the materials that comprise the armor. Decide which parts of the body are covered by each material. Add up the corresponding Protection values for all the areas covered by that material. Some materials on some parts of the body correspond to a Protection of zero. Once you have the Protection total for all pieces of that material, multiply it by the Load Factor for that material and retain any fraction to get the total Load of that material. Continue this process for all the other materials worn. Finally, add up all the Protection and Load values for the different materials and

TYPE	TORSO	HIPS AND THIGHS	SHINS	UPPER ARMS	FORE-ARMS	LOAD FACTOR
Padded	1	0	0	0	0	1.5
Boiled leather	2	0.5	0.5	0	0	1.5
Reinforced	2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	1
Rigid scale	2	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	1
Metal scale	3	1	0.5	1	0.5	1
Mail	3	1	1	1	1	0.5
Plate	3	1	1	0.5	0.5	1
Plate and mail	4	2	1	2	1	0.5

round up to the next whole number.

The reason some entries on the table are zero is that some parts of the body are more vulnerable than others. Covering the torso, for example, makes a relatively big difference to overall Protection, compared to covering the forearms. It's not that wearing padding

on the forearm doesn't help the forearm, it's that wearing padding on the forearm doesn't help very much in comparison to putting padding on the torso. Non-vital areas need a lot of armor to get a point of Protection, while the same armor over a vital spot would correspond to several points of Protection.