

Welcome!



The Princes' Kingdom is a game in which you and your friends act out the adventures of young boys in faraway lands. These lands are all across an ancient ocean, and are all ruled by a wise king. You play the king's children, princes, sent out to explore the kingdom and help out the citizens. The kingdom is very large, made up of hundreds of islands, and so the king sends out his princes to survey it and find out what sort of problems people have across the lands, so that they may one day be wise rulers themselves.

Have you played a role-playing game before?

If not, that's OK. It's simple and you already know how to do most of it. It's like make-believe, but even more fun. If you've played cops and robbers, for example, you've probably had some point in the game where you said to your friend, "I caught you!" and he



said, “No, you didn’t!” and then you argued about it. In a role-playing game, you won’t know if you’ve caught him until you roll some dice. It’s as thrilling as a good book or movie, but you get to decide what the characters try to do.

The first thing you’re going to do when you play is make up a prince. You’ll decide how old he is and what he is good at and not so good at and who his friends and enemies are.

One player will be picked to be the Guide. The Guide doesn’t play a prince. Instead, the Guide is responsible for moving the story along and providing lots of stuff for the princes to do. The Guide will play all the people in the world who aren’t princes.

The Guide’s going to work with the other players and figure out where the princes are going. When they get there, there will be problems, and you will decide how you want to fix them. You’re the princes, after all! It’s your job to make sure your father’s kingdom is running well. Then you and the Guide will decide how well you did at fixing the problem using some dice and playing a little game within the game.

Lastly, you’ll decide whether you did enough and maybe you’ll stick around and solve some more problems or work on that first one some more. Or maybe you’ll go someplace new and start over again.

It’s a game for kids and adults

Both kids and adults can really enjoy this game. One great way to play it is with an adult as the Guide and kids as the other players. That’s not the only way you can play it, though! Once you’ve

played, maybe a kid should be the Guide while the other people, including adults, play the princes. Whatever you decide is alright by me and is going to be a lot of fun!



Dice

This game uses three different sizes of dice. The normal size, the cube you see in many board games, has six sides. We call it a d6. Another size has four sides and looks like a pyramid. It is called a d4. The last size has eight sides and looks like a diamond. We like to call it a d8.

When you have more than one of any die size, you put the number in front of the abbreviation. Five six-sided dice are written as 5d6. Two eight-sided dice are written as 2d8. One four-sided die can be called a d4 or 1d4. All these are pronounced as *number-dee-number*. “2d6” is pronounced “one-dee-six.”

You will need about 20d6 and about 10d4 and 10d8 to play. That’s a lot of dice, and that equals a lot of fun.

Getting started

You need at least two people to play this game. I think it’s a lot of fun with more, but more than six or maybe seven is too many. One of these people will be the Guide. I talked about him in the section above. (Oh, yeah, sometimes I say “him,” and I mean anybody. It could be a man or a woman or a boy or a girl. It could be your mom, a teacher, or a girl from school. English is weird that way and someone should do something about it!)



Anyway, I was telling you about the Guide. It makes a lot of sense for the oldest person in the group to be the Guide, at least the first time you play. You need to choose that person before you play.

Everyone else gets to play a prince! Before, I told you anyone could play this game. That's true. In this kingdom that you're going to play in, both boys and girls are called princes, and you can play a boy or a girl. Boys can play girl princes and girls can play boy princes. That's OK.

The first time you play

The first time you play, you have to make up your princes. This is super easy and fun, and it will not take long.

After that, you will learn how the game works as your prince gets one chance to prove something to his teachers and dad before he leaves on his adventures.

Then, the princes will start traveling in the kingdom. Your princes will need an island to go to. The Guide will create this island based off the type of adventures you want and what he thinks will be fun.

After that

When you play after the first time, the Guide gets to create the island you're going to between times that you play. You'll go to new islands and meet people and help them fix their problems.

Afterwards, you can talk about the game with the Guide and let him know what was fun and what you liked most.

The Island Kingdom



The kingdom – actually it’s the Kingdom of Islandia, but most people call it “the kingdom” or “the Island Kingdom” – spreads out as far as a person can see and farther! The king’s castle is on a large island in the middle of an even larger ocean. The rest of the kingdom is also made of islands – some so big that it would take five days to ride a horse across them and some so small that only five families can live on them. There are people whose entire



job is to run boats through the ocean to move goods and people between islands.

The entire kingdom is run by the king, your father. He is a wonderful ruler and only makes laws that help the people of the kingdom and all good people love him. Even things that seem hard, like taxes, are done for good – the king uses them to make sure people have roads and boats and food in rough times.

There is no telling what all lies out there in the kingdom. It is grand and old, and legends abound. Some people say that magic happens out in the hidden islands, but others say that's hogwash. Maybe you will find out the truth.

The sad part is that the kingdom is so big and spread out that sometimes problems exist that the king doesn't know about. This is where you will do good work! Because the king can't be everywhere, you get to go and solve problems where he cannot. He will not be able to come and save you, because it takes a long time to get places on a boat. The king trusts you a whole lot, and knows you will do well.

Being a prince

You are a prince of the Kingdom of Islandia. You were raised in the royal court and had teachers from a young age. Many days, they took you out and taught you how to read and write and how to do math and read maps and ride horses. They probably taught you how to defend yourself in a fight. Most of all, they tried to

teach you be a good leader, because someday, you will lead the kingdom.



You grew up seeing your father each day. He wore a crown of shining gold, but he took that off when he played with you. He could be soft and caring, and he could wipe away your tears with his big golden beard when you fell and skinned your knee. He could be hard and stern when he caught you lying or doing something that hurt someone else. Most of all, he told you stories about being a boy and about being a king and how to do both.

Now he's told you that you have to go be a leader. You have to travel throughout his kingdom and make sure that the people are doing well. You are his son, the prince, and it is up to you to know what the people need and make sure they get it. When you travel out in the world, you speak for the king! That's a big responsibility.

All princes sent out into the world are between five and twelve years old. When you turn thirteen, you go back to the king's castle and become an adult and help the king rule the land! Maybe you'll even be the new king!

The other princes are your brothers and sisters. Though you grew up with them, they might be much older or younger than you, so maybe you didn't play with them a whole lot. Despite this, you all have a bond. You need to take care of each other as much as you need to take care of the people.



Discovering the Island Kingdom

If you've played another role-playing game before, you might be surprised to know that what I've just told you is all you need to know about the Island Kingdom to get started. This game is about exploration and adventure and discovery, and the best way to achieve this is to organically make up stuff as you play. After all, this is a game about a make-believe world. So make believe! Anything you can imagine can exist in the Kingdom of Islandia.

You'll see that when you make up princes you'll be filling in the Kingdom from the get-go. Don't be afraid to throw in wild stuff, and mix up real-world cultures however you like. Most importantly, add in any elements that you and the rest of the players find interesting. When you make up stories, you put in details from your own unique interests. Do that in this game, and you'll have a blast.

How to play this game



Everybody likes to sit around and make up stories, I think. I sure do. Usually when you tell a story, you simply recount a tale that already exists in your head. You already know what that story's all about! In this game, you tell a story with your friends, and you don't know how it's going to end!

How does that work? Well, in each part of the story, you have stuff you have to do. And it's easy! I'll tell you what that stuff is.



You don't have to read this whole section right now if you want to, although you can. It's a good reference for you during the game. Whenever you're unsure as to what to do next, look here, and it will tell you.

Character creation

If you are a player and not the Guide, you have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Make neat princes to play.
- ♦ Help each other make neat princes.
- ♦ Help the Guide make up the world. You'll do this just by making neat princes.
- ♦ Start learning how to have struggles – that is, solve problems using the dice.

Your princes only have to prove they are ready to into the world.

If you are the Guide, you have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Help the other players make up their princes.
- ♦ Start painting the picture of the world by listening to what the other players want and adding stuff you like.
- ♦ Go ahead and read further in the game, and start learning the rules on how to have struggles.
- ♦ Run the beginning struggle for each prince where he proves himself.

The Guide's characters – meaning everyone who isn't a prince, who we'll call "citizens" – have to be there to make it kind of tough for the princes to prove themselves, but make sure they get the chance to.

The entire journey of a prince



The players have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Play the best prince ever!
- ♦ Talk about each other's princes and help others think about what their princes are doing.
- ♦ Help the Guide make up stuff about the kingdom.

The princes have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Travel from island to island, finding out about people's problems and helping them solve these problems.
- ♦ Learn about the land they will rule some day.
- ♦ Make sure people know they speak for the king.
- ♦ Change the world!

The Guide has to do this stuff:

- ♦ Make up islands for the princes to go to.
- ♦ Make up neat details about the kingdom.
- ♦ Give the other players really hard situations to deal with.

The citizens have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Help out the princes.
- ♦ Make life hard for the princes.
- ♦ Bring all their problems to the princes.

When you go to an island

If you are a player, you have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Play your prince!
- ♦ Listen to other players play their princes and help them out.



- ♦ Tell the Guide what you want to do and how you want your prince to help fix problems.
- ♦ Engage in struggles and then show what happened to your prince because of the struggle.

The princes have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Meet people and let them know the king cares about them.
- ♦ Let people know they're the princes and that they speak for the king.
- ♦ Find out about people's problems.
- ♦ Help people find the root of their problems and help them implement solutions. The most common problem is a person who decides he's better than other people, and it's up to the prince to let that person know he's doing wrong, and even make him do right if you have to.

The Guide has to do this stuff:

- ♦ Play all the citizens on the island.
- ♦ Make sure that the people's problems are brought up quickly and often.
- ♦ Listen to the players and make sure you are driving the game in a direction they find enjoyable.
- ♦ *Do not* already have a plan for how people's problems are going to get solved. Let the players come up with that.
- ♦ Make sure that the troublemakers on the island struggle against the princes.

The citizens have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Try to get the princes on their side.
- ♦ Try to tell the princes what they should do.
- ♦ Tell the princes all their problems.
- ♦ Make things hard for the princes by trying to fix the problems themselves.
- ♦ Offer to help the princes out however they can. After all, they're princes!
- ♦ When the princes aren't looking, cause trouble!

Between islands

The players have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Choose what changed about your prince.

The princes have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Decide what island to go to next. They might even go back to an island or head back to the king's castle.

The Guide has to do this stuff:

- ♦ Write down the problems on the next island the princes are going to.
- ♦ Start to create the citizens for the next island ("making proto-citizens," which you'll see in the chapter "Friends and troublemakers.")

When a prince goes home

The player has to do this stuff:

- ♦ Describe how the prince learned to be a king.
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- ♦ Make a new prince, if you want to keep playing.
(The king has a lot of sons!)

The prince has to do this stuff:

- ♦ Take his place beside the king.

The Guide has to do this stuff:

- ♦ Help the player out with his epilogue.

The citizens have to do this stuff:

- ♦ Welcome the prince home!

This is what you do in this story. If you are ever confused or don't know what to do next, refer back to this section, "How to play this game," and it will tell you.