



# How to Play *Pendragon*™

## Basic Overview of Rules

### Character Statistics

There are five primary physical characteristics, which usually range in value from 3 (very low) to 21 (extremely high):

Strength (**STR**), Dexterity (**DEX**), Size (**SIZ**),  
Constitution (**CON**), and Appearance (**APP**).

Based on these, derive the following statistics (round fractions to nearest whole number; fractions of .5 or more round up):

**Total Hit Points = SIZ + CON**

Fall below 1, and you are Mortally Wounded  
(Must be healed above 1 HP quickly, or death soon follows)

**Unconscious = HP/4**

Fall below Unconscious, and you become incapacitated

**Damage = (STR + SIZ) / 6**

Result is number of six-sided dice (d6) to roll for damage

### Skills

Non-combat skills represent social, courtly, professional or personal abilities. Combat skills represent martial prowess. Most skills begin within a range of 0 (no knowledge) to 1-20 (a range of normal talents), to 21-40 (exceptionally gifted individuals).

### Unopposed Resolutions

When a character applies a Skill, Trait, Passion, or Statistic to resolve an appropriate roleplaying situation, roll a d20 and compare the roll to the value. Rolls less than the value result in Success. Rolls equal to the value are a Critical Success. Rolls above the value are Failures. Rolls of an unmodified 20 are Fumbles (drop your sword, say something embarrassing, betray your lord's trust, fall off your horse, strain your back, etc.).

Characters with values of 20 or more can never Fail or Fumble their rolls (except in rare circumstances). It is only a matter of how well they succeed at what they are attempting to do. If a value (Skill, Passion, etc.) is 20 or greater, all rolls of 20 are no longer Fumbles but are Critical Successes. Add +1 to the d20 die roll for each point the value is above 20. For instance, a Skill value of 25 would roll with a +5, meaning rolls of 15 or above result in Critical Success.

### Opposed Resolutions

If two people are in a challenge, or otherwise comparing or using their values against each other, each must roll and compare results. If only one Succeeds or Critically Succeeds, they win the opposed resolution. If both players Succeed, the one who rolled higher wins. If both Fail, or both Critically Succeed, there is an impasse. There is no immediate result, though players can continue to challenge each other in subsequent actions. If both Fumble, there is also an impasse, though with much more embarrassing or humorous impacts.

### Combat Results

Both players roll their appropriate combat Skill (Sword, Lance, Spear, Axe, etc.) and compare. The character that succeeds and rolls higher, or succeeds while the other fails rolls a number of dice equal to their Damage statistic. If they score a Critical success, they roll twice as many dice as their Damage statistic. From this result, minus the protection value for the armor the target is wearing. If the target character succeeded in their Skill roll, but was defeated by a higher-rolled Success, or any Critical Success, they can also use their shield's protection value to reduce damage if they are holding one. "Chivalrous" knights have a +3 Armor bonus.

### Weapons

Sword, Axe, Spear	Normal Damage	Can use Shield
Great Sword, Axe, Spear	+1d6 Damage	Can't use Shield
Lance (Charging)	Use Horse Damage	Can use Shield

### Armor

Armor	Protection	Shield	Protection
Clothing	0-2* Points	Makeshift*	0-3 Points
Leather (Soft Leather)	4 Points	Buckler	4 Points
Cuirboilli (Hard Leather)	6 Points	Knight's Shield	6 Points
Norman Chain	10 Points	Roman Scutum	9 Points
Reinforced Chain	12 Points		
Partial Plate	14 Points	<b>Warhorse</b>	<b>Damage</b>
Full Plate	16 Points	Rouncy	5d6
Gothic Plate	18 Points	Charger	6d6
Chivalry Bonus	+3 Points	Destrier	8d6

\* Gamemaster's option on protection value

### Passions

Pendragon characters have strong feelings of Love, Hate, Loyalty and Honor. When faced with a challenge affecting this aspect of a character's personality, their Passions may be invoked (roll d20). Success or Critical Success results in Inspiration. Failure causes the character to become Disheartened. Fumbles can drive a character into Madness (the Gamemaster takes control of the character).

### Passion Result

Critical Success	Inspired! Double any one Skill (or +10)
Success	Inspired! +10 to one Skill
Failure	Disheartened. -5 to <i>all</i> Skills
Fumble	Fit of Madness. (Gamemaster takes over)

### Traits

Traits are organized by pairs of opposed aspects of personality, such as Bravery / Cowardly, or Chaste / Lustful. Both opposed traits usually add up to 20, so one could have a Bravery 16 / Cowardly 4, or a Chaste 12 / Lustful 8. If a trait becomes 20 or more, the opposing trait is always zero (0). When a character is faced with a test of personality, roll for the appropriate Trait to see if the character can or must behave accordingly. Failure to act according to one's known Traits is possible, but must be dramatically justified by appropriate roleplaying. Some groups of Traits determine if a character receives a "Chivalry" or "Religious" bonus.

### Glory

*Pendragon* characters live to uphold chivalric ideals by achieving Glory. Glorious deeds include using Skills successfully, defeating foes in personal combat or open battle, or even merely acting according to one's ideals (Traits and Passions). Glory can also be gained by holding lands, offices, titles or through marriage. It is very important *how* those successes came to pass. Deeds accomplished without honor make a character famous, but not popular. Because Glory makes one stand out in a crowd, which is valuable to win friends, but can also make it difficult to hide from one's enemies.

### Sample Glory Awards

Sample Glory Awards	Points
Use Skill with Success	10
Use Skill with Critical Success	20
Use Skill before Royalty	(x2)
Defeat Unruly Peasant	1
Defeat Bandit	10
Defeat Notable Bandit	25
Defeat Saxon Raider	35
Defeat Ordinary Knight	50
Defeat Notable Knight	100
Defeat Famous Knight	250
Defeat Extraordinary Knight	500

### Glory Ranks

Ordinary Knight	1000-1999
Notable Knight	2000-3999
Famous Knight	4000-7999
Extraordinary Knight	8000+

### Glory Modifiers

Each 1000 points adds +1 to character's courtly skills (Orate, Courtesy, Flirting), and adds +1 to other characters' Heraldry and Recognize skills



# How to Play *Pendragon*™ Demonstration Summary

## The Encounter

This is a typical encounter in *Pendragon*: a knight is riding through the forest along the King's Road, when he is challenged by an opposing knight to a potentially deadly duel. This summary is for prospective customers or new players to introduce them to the basic rules and concepts.

Tell the player they are a knight in King Arthur's Britain, and hand them the card for Sir Caradoc. You will be the gamemaster, so review the Blue Knight card. Explain Caradoc was travelling from Eboracum (York) on his way to Camelot for a tournament when he happens upon a bridged stream. Beyond it is a knight's pavilion (a large, ornate tent), with a pair of fine warhorses tied to a tree and a shield hanging from a tree limb. A squire stands on the bridge, holding his hand up for Caradoc to stop. The knight himself is not visible, but may be within the pavilion.

Ask the player to roll Heraldry to recognize the coat of arms from the squire's surcoat or the shield hanging in the tree. (Secretly add +5 to his skill for the knight's 5,000 Glory). If he succeeds (rolls less than 12), tell the him Caradoc has never seen or heard of this knight's arms, but from the fleur-de-lis, it is obvious he is French. If they Critically Succeed (roll 12 exactly), they would know by the flower and the crowns this knight likely serves the French King Claudas himself, and is even perhaps a relative!

## "Hold Sir Knight!"

Ask the player if they will hold, as the squire is asking. If the player wants to flee or force a way across (riding past or riding down the unarmored squire) ask the player to reconsider such unchivalrous behavior. If they persist, have the player roll their Cowardly or Cruel traits. If he fails, tell him Caradoc's ears burn red at the thought of fleeing or dishonorably attacking a mere squire, and he chooses instead to hold. If he succeeds, tell him to check the Trait, for word will get back to court of Caradoc's behavior. The event is over, as the squire shouts slurs of derision at the coward, or leaps from the bridge into the river as the knight rides past.

## The Challenge

If Sir Caradoc holds as asked, the squire calls out in French to the pavilion. Out of the tent comes a finely armored Blue Knight, who reaches for his shield, and mounts a warhorse. The squire tells Caradoc his lord has heard of the prowess of the British knights, and wishes to see if they are indeed worthy of their reputation. He must fight his lord knight to the best of three charges of the lance, and three sword blows given on foot. This is the condition before any knight may pass the bridge.

Point out to the player this does not necessarily mean a fight to the death, though the weapons are not rebated, and it looks unlikely this strange knight will be pulling his blows. It may result in grievous wounds, or even death, or it might be rather bloodless, depending on Caradoc's skill and luck.

The squire assists his lord by leading his warhorse by the bridle across the bridge to a field of grass nearby. The Blue Knight himself is silent. Any attempt at dialogue by Sir Caradoc is answered by the squire. Explain, out of character, knowing another knight's identity was often thought to be a key to defeating him, and so keeping one's name secret was often a tactic to rattle an opponent's nerves. Revealing one's identity was often a condition to accept surrender or show friendship. When both knights are in position, the squire withdraws to a position to signal both to charge.

## Three Jousts with a Lance

Each knight must make three opposed Lance skill rolls. Caradoc has a 15 skill; the Blue Knight has an 18. Each round, determine the skill roll result, roll damage, and subtract the target's armor. Both knights are on Chargers, so both roll 6d6 damage. Both wear Full Plate and both are "Chivalrous"

knights, so both subtract 19 points of damage (Armor 16 + Chivalry Bonus 3), or 25 total if they succeed and get their shield (+6) up.

### Example:

*Caradoc spurs his horse forward, and rolls an 11, but the Blue Knight rolls a 12, barely beating him! The Blue Knight rolls 6d6 for damage and scores a pitiful 18. This does not even scratch Caradoc, and the British knight shakes the glancing blow off easily.*

*In the next charge, Caradoc rolls a 13, succeeding, and the Blue Knight rolls a 20 -- a fumble! Caradoc rolls 24 points of damage, and the Blue Knight's armor does not stop it all (only 19 points), nor does he get to use his shield. He takes a 5 point wound. In addition, the gamemaster rules the Blue Knight's saddle girth bursts with the blow, throwing him to the ground. The gamemaster rolls 1d6, and the Blue Knight takes 6 more points of damage, landing with an loud "Oooff!"*

*The squire runs to his lord. The Blue Knight waves him off, telling him to quickly fetch the saddle from the second warhorse. After a short break, the Blue Knight remounts and faces Caradoc for a last charge. Caradoc rolls 12, but the Blue Knight rolls 14, again landing the best blow. Against 27 damage, Caradoc gets to subtract 25 points for his Armor (14), his Chivalry Bonus (3), and Shield (6), so takes a 2 point wound. Though Caradoc landed the best blow during the joust, he recognizes he was scored against twice by the Blue Knight. So far, no one has proved outright superiority, but by the rules of the contest the Blue Knight is nominally ahead.*

## Three Blows of the Sword

Assuming neither has been incapacitated, both knights then both dismount to fight on foot for three more rounds, this time using Sword skill. Both knights have a skill of 16. For damage, they use their own Damage rating. The burly Caradoc has 6d6. For the smaller Blue Knight, this is only 5d6.

### Example:

*Sir Caradoc is a giant of man. His shadow falls on the Blue Knight like a cloud upon a lake. Both maneuver about each other for a few breaths, then unleash themselves with fury at each other.*

*Caradoc rolls an 11, and the Blue Knight rolls a 3. Caradoc scores only 21 points of damage, so his foe looks unfazed. Indeed, the Blue Knight turns the attack back at Caradoc. Rolling in the next round, Caradoc gets an 18 -- failing! -- while the Blue Knight succeeds with a modest 5. Rolling 20 points of damage, Caradoc feels another slight wound for 1 point.*

*Both knights realize they are facing someone of near equal skill, though Caradoc feels much more comfortable facing this knight on foot rather than on horseback. They now take their time, for this is the last blow, and both wish to make it count. The Blue Knight succeeds again, rolling a 15 against Caradoc's 3. However, the smaller Blue Knight only rolls 5d6, getting an 18. Caradoc barely feels it at all, but hears the clang audibly.*

*At this point, the combat ends. The Blue Knight has won two of the lance charges, and two of three sword blows. The Blue Knight raises his sword in a salute of his worthy opponent. Caradoc, however, silently considers he could have taken him in a fight to the uttermost...*

## Honorable & Glorious Endings

Assuming neither has been incapacitated, regardless of who won or lost, the Blue Knight offers to befriend Caradoc as long as he has fought honorably. His squire uses his First Aid of 14 skill to tend to any wounds. The Blue Knight will say his name is Sir Norman St. Germaine, a knight of the French King Claudas' court. He would be glad to go to Camelot if Caradoc extends an invitation. If Sir Norman was defeated, he will also offer his second warhorse to Caradoc as an honorific gift.

Caradoc is awarded 25 points of Glory if he defeats this famous knight, or 250 points if he kills him.



# Sir Caradoc of Malahaut

## Statistics

SIZ (Knockdown*)	18
DEX	10
STR	15
CON (Major Wound*)	15
APP	9
Damage (STR+SIZ)/6	6d6
Healing Rate* (STR+CON)/10	3
Movement Rate* (STR+DEX)/10	3
Total Hit Points (SIZ+CON)	33
Unconscious	8

## Notable Personality Traits

Chivalry Bonus = Yes (+3 Armor)  
 Religious Bonus (Christian) = No\*

Forgiving	16	/	4	Vengeful
Generous	16	/	4	Selfish
Modest	16	/	4	Proud
Merciful	13	/	7	Cruel
Valorous	16	/	4	Cowardly

(Treat others as 10 / 10)

## Notable Passions

Loyalty Lord (King of 100 Knights)	15
Honor	12

## Notable Skills

Awareness	10
First Aid	10
Heraldry	7
Recognize	3
Horsemanship	14
Sword	16
Lance	15

## Equipment

Weapons:  
 Sword, Dagger  
 3 Heavy Lances, 6 Jousting Lances

Armor:  
 Full Plate Armor (16 Points + 3 Chivalry Bonus)  
 Shield (6 Points)

Warhorse: Charger (6d6 Damage)

Other: Silver Bracelet (£1 Value)

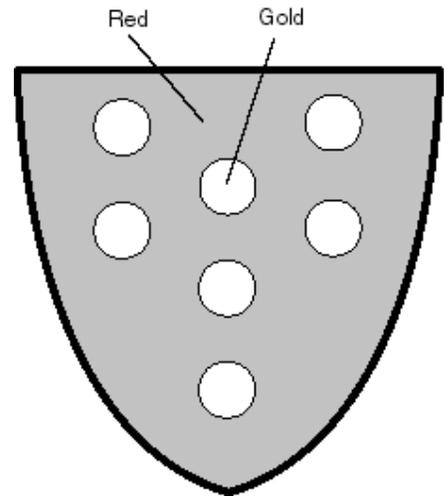
\* These terms are not used in this demonstration.

Glory: 1,703

Total Hit Points: 33

Current Hit Points:

Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_



# Sir Norman St. Germaine ("The Blue Knight")

## Statistics

SIZ (Knockdown*)	15
DEX	13
STR	17
CON (Major Wound*)	17
APP	13
Damage (STR+SIZ)/6	5d6
Healing Rate* (STR+CON)/10	3
Movement Rate* (STR+DEX)/10	3
Total Hit Points (SIZ+CON)	32
Unconscious	8

## Notable Personality Traits

Chivalry Bonus = Yes (+3 Armor)  
 Religious Bonus (Christian) = No\*

Energetic	19	/	1	Lazy
Generous	16	/	4	Selfish
Pious	19	/	1	Worldly
Prudent	4	/	16	Reckless
Valorous	17	/	3	Cowardly

(Treat others as 10 / 10)

## Notable Passions

Loyalty Lord (King Claudus of France)	22
Honor	14

## Notable Skills

Awareness	11
Courtesy	18
First Aid	10
Hunting	15
Heraldry	15
Horsemanship	17
Sword	16
Lance	18

## Equipment

Weapons:  
 Sword, Dagger  
 3 Heavy Lances, 6 Jousting Lances

Armor:  
 Full Plate Armor (16 Points + 3 Chivalry Bonus)  
 Shield (6 Points)

Warhorse: Charger (6d6 Damage)

Other: Silver Bracelet (£1 Value)

\* These terms are not used in this demonstration.

Glory: 5,023

Total Hit Points: 32

Current Hit Points:

Wounds: \_\_\_\_\_

