# SELLSWORDS



In the shadowed corners of a land torn by war and treachery, whispers of gold and glory beckon the brave and the bold. The kingdom lies fractured, its throne contested by rival lords, and in this chaos, only the cunning survive. Mercenaries, known as Sellswords, carve out their destinies with steel and wit, gathering companions of unmatched skill and seizing contracts that could turn the tides of power.

But in a kingdom where gold speaks louder than blood, the most ruthless and cunning Sellswords rise above the rest. As they conquer impossible quests and secure legendary treasures, their names become legend, feared and revered across the realm. In this cutthroat world, only the most resourceful and relentless will climb to the pinnacle of fame, becoming the richest and most infamous Sellswords in all the kingdom.

Their legacy will be written not in ink, but in gold and blood.

# Rules

#### 1. Overview of the Game

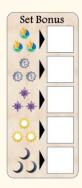
Sellswords is a highly thematic heavy euro game for 2 to 5 players that combines worker placement with closed drafting, featuring high variable cards and engine building. It takes 120 minutes and is recommended for 12 years+. Each player represents the leader of a group (=Party) of mercenaries (=Companions). You put together your own Party of Companions, supply them with Equipment and Skills and send them out to fulfill Contracts and Side Quests to level up and earn Gold and Fame.

The game is played in 3 Rounds. Each round begins with a closed draft of Encounter Cards that you add to your Party. After you prepare your Companions for their adventures, each of them acts as a worker. They can be placed alone or as a group on the board to fulfill Contracts and Side Quests or acquire Rare Items and Legendary Companions to further strengthen your Party. At the end of each round, you have to pay your Companions to keep them in your Party and earn additional Fame.

After 3 Rounds, the Party that gained the most Fame wins the game.

#### 2. Content





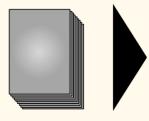


**Board Game** 

Contract board

Set Bonus board

Camp (5x)











218 Encounter Deck

61 Companions

101 Equipment

26 Items

50 Skills







18 Legendary Companions



13 Leaders



5 Thugs



19 Basic Contracts



18 Follow-Up Contracts



3 Common Contract



32 Side Quests



Gold (Unlimited\*)



Salary (Unlimited\*)





Per **Player** Color (5x)

Basic Attributes (Unlimited\*)



Advanced Attributes (Unlimited\*)



Expert Attributes (Unlimited\*)



Experience (Unlimited\*)



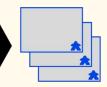
(Unlimited\*)



Set Bonus (3 per Domain)



Start Player



11 Companion Cards



11 Meeple



7 Player Cubes



3 Camp Enhancement Cubes

## 3. Core Concepts

## 1 Draft Cards from the Encounter Deck

Your Party mainly consist of cards from the Encounter Deck, that are drafted in the beginning of each round. There are four types of cards in the Encounter Deck:

#### **Companions**

The fearless Sellswords of your Party. Each Companion gets a meeple and they act as your worker. They can level up over time, but you have to pay them in order to keep them in your Party and to earn Fame.

#### **Equipment**

Companions may use Equipment like weapons and armor to enhance their abilities.

#### Skills

Companions can learn Skills that offer a variety of additional abilities.

#### Items

Items have effects that usually benefit your whole party.



# Equip and train your Companions

You can make your Companions more powerful by giving them Equipment and Skills.

#### Each Companion can:

- hold one Equipment in their main hand (left side) and one in the support hand (right side)
- wear one armor (top side)
- acquire multiple Skills (bottom side)

The cards can be moved under the Companion, until only the summary on the corresponding edge (Side-Bar) is shown.



## 3 Assign a group of Companions to fulfill a Contract

Contracts are the main source to gain Gold and Fame, and they shape the story of the Kingdom.

A group of one or more Companions can be assigned to a Contract in order to fulfill it. For that, their Meeples are placed on the marked sport of the Contract. All their attributes and abilities count together in order to determine how successfull the Contract is fulfilled.



## 4. Game Set-Up



- 1) Place the game board in the center of the table.
- 2) Place the Common Contracts on the 3 spaces on the left-side of the board.
- 3) Shuffle the Side Quest cards. Place one Side Quest face up on every Side Quest field on the board.
- 4) Shuffle the decks for Legendary Companions and Rare Items. Place 4 cards from each deck face up on the corresponding spaces on the top of the board.
- 5) Place the Contract board to the right of the game board. Place the decks for Basic Contracts and Follow-Up Contracts above the matching column of the board.
- 6) Shuffle the Basic Contract deck. Place 4 cards face up on the fields in the corresponding column. When you draw a level 2 Contract (2 stars), place it under the deck and draw a new card instead.
- 7) Place the Set Bonus board next to the Contract board. For each Domain, place one random tile face-up in the corresponding field.

- 8) Place the following tiles and tokens on the side so that everyone can reach them:
  - a. Salary token
  - b. Gold
  - c. Luck token
  - d. Basic Attribute token
  - e. Advanced Attribute token
  - f. Expert Attribute token
  - g. Experience Cubes
  - h. Set Bonus tiles

They are all meant to be unlimited available

9) Shuffle the Encounter Cards and create a face-down deck that is placed to the side of the board.

- 10) Each Player chooses a color and gets:
  - i) A Camp board of the matching color
  - j) 2 Leaders (One of them will be picked in Phase 2 of the first Round)
  - k) 1 Thug
  - 10 Gold
  - m) 11 Companion Cards of the matching color
  - n) 11 Meeples of the matching color
  - o) 7 cubes of the matching color
- 11) Each player places one cube in the matching Attribute color on each of the Camp Enhancements tracks.
- 12) Each player places one of their cubes on the Fame track.

The Player who has read the most fantasy books gets the Starting Player token

## 5. Gameplay

The game is played over 3 rounds with 4 phases (with player agency) and 3 resolving steps (without player agency):

## **M** Encounter Phase

Draft new cards to enhance your Party

## **2** Equipment Phase

Set together your Party

21 La Preparation Step

Assign attributes and resolve card effects

## 

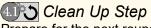
Take actions in the Kingdom

Reward Step

Resolve the Common Contracts

## **4** Eayment Phase

Pay your Companions and earn Fame



Prepare for the next round

# 5.1 Encounter Phase

In the Encounter Phase, a closed draft with 10 cards is **simultaneously** performed, until everyone has 8 cards.

Closed Draft: Each player is dealt 10 cards from the Encounter Deck. They each keep one card of their choice face down, then pass the 9 remaining cards clockwise (in round 2: counter-clockwise) to the next player. Out of these 9 new cards, players each keep one again and pass the remaining cards to the same player. Players proceed this way until each of them has selected 8 cards. The remaining 2 cards are discarded.

The Encounter Deck consists of the following 4 types of cards:

#### Companions

Companions act as your workers and most other cards in the Encounter Deck work around those Companions. Companions have:

- A Class that indicates their main attribute type and is required to equip certain Equipment
- Base Attributes
- A level. Each Companion starts at level 1 and they
  can level up using Experience tokens. Those tokens
  are placed on the gray XP field to indicate their level.
  Note: It is technically possible to have a higher level
  than 3. If this happens, stack the additional Tokens
  on or next to the other Experience tokens.
- An Ability that becomes more powerful with higher levels. Only the row of the current level is active (or level 3 if the level is higher than 3).

- Salary Tokens that these Companions require as Payment.
- Fame that is granted when the Companion gets paid.



#### Skills

A Companion can learn a Skill by placing the Skill under the Companion card.

There are active Skills, that can be used once per round by using Basic Attributes of the Companions and passive skills, that have other requirements to become effective.

A Skill has a level of 1, 2 or 3. A Companion may learn more than one Skill, but the sum of Skill levels may not exceed the level of the Companion.

Once a Skill is learned by a Companion, it cannot be removed.









- 1. Name
- 2. Main Section
- 3. Side Bar
- 4. Attributes
- 5. Abilities
- 6. Effects and Conditions
- 7. Class Restrictions
- 8. Equipment Type
- 9. Domain

#### **Equipment**

Equipment

A Companions can equip an Equipment by placing the card on the left (Main Hand), right (Support Hand), or above (Body) the Companion.

Equipment can have:

- Attributes that are granted to the Companion
- Abilities that can be activated using Base Attributes
- Additional conditions or effects.
- An Equipment type (relevant for the effect of other cards)
- **Domains** (relevant for the effect of other cards)
- Class restrictions, meaning that only Companions with this Class can use this Equipment

All necessary information is described both in the main section of the card as well as the side bar, that indicates on which side the card can be tucked under the Companion.

When the card has a Class restriction, half of the Class symbols are shown at the border of the side bar. When tucked under a Companion, at least one of these Class symbols have to match with one from the Companion.

It is possible to unequip and reequip Equipment to other Companions as long as the equipment is not cursed ( Cursed is an effect that locks the Equipment to a Companion once it is equipped).

#### Item

Items are added to your Party and usually benefit your whole Party.



- 1) Name
- 2) Effect

# 

In the Equipment Phase, the players simultaneously decide how to use the 8 cards drafted in the Encounter Phase. In any order, the cards can either be

added to their Party,

Example Equipment Phase

- kept in your hand for later or
- discarded to receive 2 Gold or 1 Luck. Note: Only cards drafted in the Encounter Phase may be discarded this way

When a card is added to the Party, it has to be done by the following rules:

- Skills and Equipment are trained/equipped to a (new or existing) Companion or it can be added to the Party without being trained/equipped.
- A Companion may have multiple Skills. Skills stay with the Companion; this means no other Companion can learn them and they are discarded if the Companion leaves the Party.
- Companions and unequippable Items are added to the Party without further rules.

Afterwards, players can reequip their entire Party. Each Equipment can be freely equipped and unequipped is an effect that locks the Equipment to a Companion once it is equipped). Each Companion can only use one Equipment for Main Hand (left), Support Hand (right) and Body (top)

#### Leader



In the Equipment Phase of the first Round, you additionally choose one of the two Leaders that you got at the beginning of the game and discard the other.

Leaders are special Companions with Abilities that often impact your whole Party. They require no Salary and do not generate Fame. They represent you as the Leader of your Party and, therefore, they can never be discarded.





Luck is a resource that is stored in the Party Resources field on the Camp and, therefore, can be used by any Companion.

It is required for some Locations and Bonus Rewards, but it can also be used as any Basic. Attribute



In the first round at the beginning of the Preparation Phase, Gordon has 8 drafted cards, 2 Leaders and 1 Thug. He keeps the Leader Ashane and the Thug and discards the other Leader (1). He adds Poacher to his Party, equips him with One-Hand Crossbow and trains him the Skill Rage (2). He adds Elementalist to his Party, too, but without any Equipment or Skills (3). The Demonic Tunic is equipped on the Leader Ashane (4). He adds Lucky Charm to the Party (5). The remaining two cards are discarded, one for a Luck token and the other for 2 Gold (6).

#### **Set Bonus**



When a Companion is equipped with Equipments that give them three Domain Icons of the same type, the Equipment counts as a matching set and the

Companion receives the Set Bonus for this Domain. The bonus is only granted as long as the Companion keeps being equipped with the matching set.

The Set Bonus of a Companion can be marked with the corresponding Set bonus tiles. The Set Bonus of each domain is shown by the Set Bonus board.

## 5.323 Equipment Phase

After everyone has finished the Equipment Phase, the players **simultaneously** perform the following steps:

- 1. Place a Companion Card to every new Companion
- 2. Place a Meeple in the color of the Party on each Companion Card
- 3. Determine the Attributes that each Companion receives and put them on their Companions Card
- Place Salary tokens on the Salary Track of your Camp according to the Salary symbols on your Companions
- 5. Resolve Card effects that are triggered in the Preparation Step



In the first round, during the Preparation Step, Gordon has 4 Companions and a Lucky Charm in his Party.

All Companions get a Companion Card with a Meeple.

The *Poacher* gets 3 Strength (1 from his Base Attribute, 1 from the *One-Hand Crossbow* and 1 from the triggered Ability) that is placed on the Companion Card. (1)

The *Elementalist* gets 3 Magic (all from his Base Attribute). (2)

The Leader Ashane gets 4 Magic (3 from her Base Attribute, 1 from the Demonic Tunic). (3)

The *Thug* does not get any Attributes (4)

The *Lucky Charm* produces one Luck that is added to the Party supply (5).

4 Salary tokens are placed on the Salary Track (1 for the *Poacher* and 3 for the *Elementalist*). (6)

# 5.4 (3) Contract Phase

In the Contract Phase, the Companions of your Party set out to interact with the Kingdom. This is mainly done by placing the Companion meeples on action fields. A Companion without a meeple is exhausted and cannot be used in this Contract Phase anymore.

Beginning with the current Starting Player and then in turn order, each player may perform one of the following actions as their turn:

- · Visit a Location and fulfill Side Quests
- Fulfill Basic and Follow-Up Contracts
- Fulfill Common Contracts
- Actions of Companions and Skills
- Reequip the Party
- Pass

In addition, players may perform any number of free actions.

#### 5.4.1 Visit Location and fulfill Side Quests

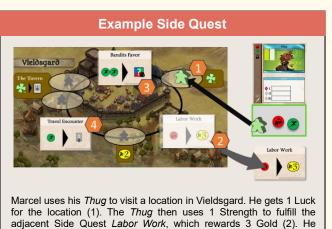
The Kingdom offers several locations that can be visited by your Party. These locations are always visited by a single Companion i.e. their meeple. A location with a meeple on it cannot be visited by another Companion.

Locations usually provide simple rewards like gold, cards or Luck (with the exception of some Special Locations like the Tavern and The Smith).

#### Side Quest

In addition to visiting Locations, the Companions can fulfill the Side Quests that are adjacent to the Location. Side Quests usually require only a small number of basic Attributes and offer various types of Rewards. Side Quests are always optional, a Companion can fulfill none, one or both of them.

Fulfilled Side Quests are removed from the board and are not refilled until the Clean Up Step at the end of each round.



cannot fulfill the Side Quest Bandits Favor, because he does not have enough Dexterity (3), and he cannot fulfill Travel Encounter, because

the Side Quest is not adjacent to the visited location (4).

#### **Special Location: The Tavern**



Visiting the Tavern costs one Luck token and allows one of your Companions to recruit a Legendary Companion. Those Companions are stronger than Companions from

the Encounter Deck, but you have to pay an additional recruiting fee (A). Besides that, they work the same way.



The Legendary Companion is immediately added to your Party and can be used in this Contract Phase. In this turn, you are allowed to

equip the Companion with unequipped Equipment as a free action. The same goes for untrained Skills.

The Tavern has two spots, but each one is only adjacent to one Side Quest

#### Special Location: The Smith



Visiting the Smith costs one Luck token and allows one of your Companions to buy a Rare Item. Those Rare Items are more powerful than Items from the Encounter Deck, but you have to

pay a price for them (B). Besides that, they work the same way.



The Rare Items are immediately added to your Party and can be used in this Contract Phase. In this turn, you are allowed to equip

them to an unexhausted Companion as a free action.

The Smith has two spots, but each one is only adjacent to one Side Quest





#### 5.4.2 Fulfill Basic and Follow-Up Contracts

Contracts can be fulfilled by one or more Companions of your Party.

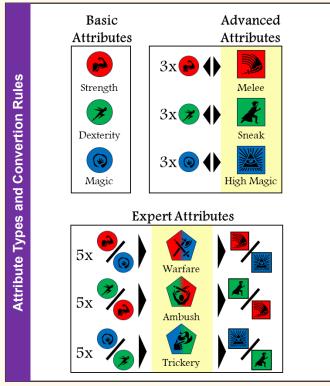
The assigned Companions fulfill the Contract as a group, which means you place their meeples simultaneously as one action on any single Contract. Every Companion that is assigned to a Contract gains experience and will level up in the Clean Up Step.

Basic and Follow-Up Contracts have a level (from 1 to 4) that represents how difficult and rewarding they are. Follow-Up Contracts emerge from Basic Contracts and are more difficult than Basic Contracts. Each of those Contracts belongs to an Arc that tells a connected Story.

Contracts require Advanced and Expert Attributes. Some Items, Skills and Abilities generate those Attributes, but they can be generated by Basic Attributes as well.

- Advanced Attributes require 3 Basic Attributes of one type
- Advanced Attributes can be converted back to their 3 Basic Attributes (even the ones that are directly received as Advanced Attributes)
- Expert Attributes require 5 Basic Attributes of two types in any Combination.
- Expert Attributes may be converted to one of the Advanced Attributes of their two attribute types, but only if those Advanced Attributes are directly used to fulfill a Contract.
- Basic Attributes to create Advanced or Expert Attributes have to come from a single Companion

Each Contract of level 1 to 3 has a bonus Reward. Those are optional and require additional Attributes. Besides additional Rewards, the bonus Reward always unlock a new Follow-Up Contract. The Follow-Up Contract is of the same Arc and one level Higher. In case there is more than one Follow-Up Contract available that matches those characteristics, one of the Contracts is chosen at random.



#### **Basic Contracts**

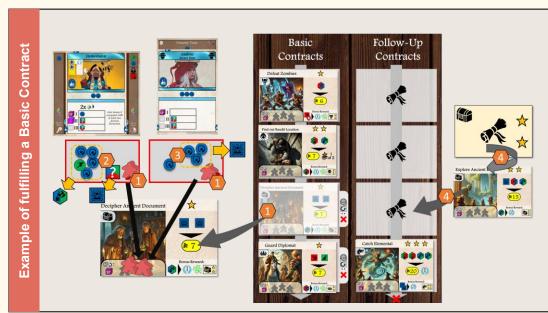
Basic Contracts are either level 1 or 2. There are always 4 Basic Contracts available at any time. When a Basic Contract is fulfilled or reserved by a player, all other contracts are moved to the bottom and the top spot is refilled with a new Basic Contract.

#### **Follow-Up Contracts**

Follow-Up Contracts are of level 2 to 4. There are four slots for Follow-Up Contracts, that are empty at the beginning of the game.

When a Follow-Up Contract is fulfilled or reserved by a player, all other contracts are moved to the right. New Follow-Up Contracts are always placed to the top-most free spot.

When a fifth Follow-Up Contract would be added, the Follow-Up Contract on the bottom spot is discarded.



Gordon assigns Elementalist and his Leader Azahne to the Basic Contract Decipher Ancient Document (1).

Elementalist converts 4 Magic and 1 Dexterity to the Elite Attribute Trickery and uses his Advanced Wild Attribute as Higher Magic (2).

Azahne converts 3 Magic to the Advanced Attribute Higher Magic while the fourth Magic remains unused (3).

Together, they fulfill the Contract including the Bonus Reward. Gordon gets 7 Gold, 1 Fame and 1 Luck and both Companions get Experience Tokens.

In addition, a level 2 Follow-Up Contract of the Treasure Arc is added to the available Contracts (4). The Basic Contracts are refilled to 4 Contracts.

#### **Reserve Contracts**

With the Reward "Reserve a Contract", it is possible to take one of the available Contracts and put it to the left of the player's Camp. It can be fulfilled by this player at a later turn the same way as other available Contracts.

A player may only have one reserved Contract. When a payer reserves a second Contract, the other reserved Contract is discarded.

#### **5.4.3 Common Contracts**

Common Contracts are a special type of Contracts. Like the other Contracts, they can be fulfilled by one or more Companions of your Party and every Companion that is assigned to a Common Contract gains experience and will level up in the Clean Up Step.

Besides that. Common Contracts have no level, are independent of the Arcs, and have the following Rules:

- 1. Common Contracts always stay in the game and are never discarded.
- 2. Every Party can fulfill a Common Contract with multiple groups.
- 3. Only Companions with the Classes shown on the Common Contract are allowed to be assigned.
- 4. Only Basic Attributes can be used on Common Contracts. Advanced Attributes can be converted to Basic Attributes beforehand, but Expert Attributes cannot be used.
- 5. When a group fulfills a Common Contract, they immediately gain 1 Gold for each of the Attribute shown on the Common Contract that the group can contribute. The player then marks the contributed Attributes on the Contribution Track of the Common Contract, adding it to the Attributes that they already contributed in this round.
- 6. A assigned group may pay Luck to gain the Bonus Reward written on the board next to the Contract card
- 7. Common Contracts offer a bonus reward based on the Party's contribution rank. This is resolved in the Reward Step.

#### 5.4.4 Actions of Companions and Skills



A few Companion Abilities and Skills have to be activated "As an Action:", which means the Player may not perform another action this turn.



"As an exhausting Action" means, that the Companion exhausted by this action and cannot be used for any other action. Lay

their Meeple on their Companion Card to indicate that it is has been used.

#### 5.4.5 Reequip Party

Once per Contract Phase, you can choose to reequip your Party as an action. This is done by the same rules as in the Equipment Phase, with the exception that exhausted Companions (which meeple has already been used) cannot be changed. That means they can neither equip nor unequip Equipment.

#### Note:

- When you gain a Companion during the Contract Phase, you are allowed to equip the Companion with unequipped Equipment as a free action in this turn. The same goes for untrained Skills.
- When you gain an Equipment or a Skill during the Contract Phase, you are allowed to equip it to an unexhausted Companion as a free action in this turn.

#### 5.4.6 Pass

If a player has passed, they end their Contract Phase. Once all players have passed, the Contract Phase ends

**Example of a Common Contract** 



Gordon assigns Buckler and Brawler to the Common Contract Soldier Work, receives 3 Gold for 3 Strength and places his token on position 3 of the Contribution Track (1). In his turn, Marcel assigns Paladin to the same Common Contract and receives 2 Gold for 2 Strength. He then places his token on position 2 of the Contribution Track (2).

#### 5.4.7 Free Actions

Free Actions can be performed during your turn at any time and in addition to your normal action.



Most Free Actions are abilities of Companions, Skills or Items and often require Basic Attributes of the Companion

to be activated. Those Free Actions may be activated only once per round. You put the used Attributes tokens on the requirement field to indicate that the Ability has been used.



Furthermore, some Free Actions may only be activated, when the Companions is fulfilling a Contract.

#### **Camp Enhancement**

As a Free Action, Companions may spend any amount of Basic Attributes to enlarge the Camp (Strength) go hunting (Dexterity) or perform rituals (Magic). For every 5 of the same Attribute, the specific area reaches the next level and grants a bonus for the Party.



# 5.5 3124 Reward Step

In the Reward Step, the highest contributors of each Common Contract are rewarded. Note that all attending Companions of a Party count as one group, even if they were placed as separate groups.

- a. If only one Party attended the Common Contract, they receive a bonus of 3 Gold and 2 Fame.
- b. If more than one Party attended the Common Contract, each Party receives bonus Gold based on their ranked contribution to the Common Contract in this round. In case of a tie, the lower reward is granted to both Parties.

# 5.6 4 Payment Phase

In the Payment Phase, the players simultaneously pay their Companions. You pay the amount shown on the left-most field of the Salary Track on your Camp that is not covered by a Salary token.

You gain fame for each paid Companion and they stay in your Party for the next round.

You must pay your Companions, as long as you have enough gold to do so. If you don't have enough gold, you can decide which Companion will not get paid.

Unpaid Companion will immediately leave your Party and their Salary tokens are removed from the Salary track. Skills and cursed Equipment will be discarded together with the Companion. Other equipped Items return unequipped to the Party. They can be equipped again in the next Equipment Phase.



At the beginning of the Payment Phase, Gordon has 18 Gold, but he has to pay 20 Gold. Therefore he decides not to pay Lumberjack. This removes one Salary token, but Lumberjack leaves the Party including the Cursed Hide, because it is a cursed Equipment (1a). The War Axe stays with the Party (1b). Gordon now has to pay 16 Gold and keeps 2 Gold. He gains 2 Fame for the paid Companions Poacher and Elementalist (3).

# 5.7413 Clean Up Step

In the first and second round, the players perform the following steps:

- Level up your Companions by putting the Experience Cubes from their Companion Cards (if they have any) on the Companion.
- 2. Return any unused Attribute token on the Companion Cards to the supply
- Discard the two oldest Basic Contracts, shift the other Basic Contracts to the bottom and add two new Basic Contracts.
- Discard remaining cards at the Smith and Tavern and refill both with new cards from the corresponding Deck
- 5. Shuffle the remaining Side Quests into the Side Quest Deck and refill all Side Quest spaces.
- 6. Return all meeples to the supply
- 7. Return all tokens placed on the Common Contracts back to the supply
- 8. Pass the Starting Player to the next player clockwise.

In the third round, the Clean Up Step can be skipped.

### 6. End Game Scoring

The game ends after the third round has been played. For the final scoring, add together

- 1) Fame collected during the game
- Fame that is gained from cards at the end of the game.
- 3) 1 Fame for every 10 remaining Gold
- 4) 1 Fame for every 3 remaining Luck

In case of a tie the following tie breakers take place in this order:

- I. Most fulfilled Contracts
- II. Most Companions in the Party
- III. Most Gold

# **ICONOGRAPHY**



Trickery





CGIGHTIT	
Other	
	Companion
	Companion with a certain Class
	Party
<b>2</b>	Gained Gold
<b>№-2</b>	Lost Gold
, Ţ	Cost
<b>&amp;</b>	Salary
	Salary Token
	Gained Fame
R	Luck
(A)	Can be used as any Basic Attribute
?	Can be used as any Advanced Attribute
?	Can be used as any Advanced Attribute by the whole Party
	Can be used as any Expert Attribute
	Can be used as any Expert Attribute by the whole Party
5x	Required Basic Attributes for a Skill
1 <b>=</b> r	Leader (Companion)
*	Legendary Companions
196	Rare Items

