

## Combat Practice

Here are three “games” we play when we are practicing our “boffer” swordplay. A “boffer” or live-combat game simulates combat by hitting your opponent with a padded weapon.

The purpose of these games is to help with your swordplay and team play. They are simple and fun, and light on plot. Remember, you will only get better if you practice with people better than yourself, and practice with a variety of people to learn different styles.

### The Red Stone

Place a red painted stone and a blue painted stone in a bag. Each player grabs a stone randomly, looks at it without showing it to anyone else, and replaces it. The players all stand in a circle facing center far enough apart from each other that they cannot easily attack each other.

Every 5 seconds or so, each player must take a step toward the center of the circle. People who drew red stones only can win if they are the only one who reached the center of the circle. People who drew blue stones can win if they reach the center of the circle, regardless of who else reached it.

If the circle is disrupted – say, due to combat – then it is reformed when the combat is over. Dead characters are removed from the circle. Wounded characters can stay in the circle, if they can move. This can be a very tense game as you wonder who is going to “go red stone” first and if you will be their victim.

### Zombie Attack

A straightforward game which is useful if your characters regularly go after foul undead horrors. Divide the players into two groups: 2/3 of the players should be Zombies and 1/3 should be Humans. The Zombies move slowly and do the same damage as humans. Zombies can take three times as much damage (however your system deals with damage) as normal humans.

Place each group at the opposite ends of the field (or yard, or whatever) and have at it. Try to focus on teamwork on the Humans side. Each side should take note of its strengths and weaknesses and try to come up with a plan before the combat starts.

### Capture The Flag

You probably know the rules for capture the flag. The field, backyard, what have you, is divided into two areas, and the players are divided into two teams. Each team has a base, the location of which is known by the other team. Each team also has a flag in their base.

The object of the game is to capture the opponents’ flag and return it to your base while keeping your opponent from doing the same.

Take all injuries, as decided by your system. At any time, a player may hold both hands above his or her head and walk (not run) to his or her base and wait one minute. During this time, the player may neither attack nor be attacked by other players, nor can he call out to teammates or enemies. After the minute is up, the player is fully healed and ready to go back into play.

An interesting twist is to make the flags combat legal (or shields) and allow the people who have them to use them to fight.

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