

A LONG-EXPECTED GATHERING



A Hobbit-Inspired LARP
By Lost & Found Studios, LLC

2025 Player Handbook

Game Description

A Long-Expected Gathering is a one-shot, freeform-style LARP inspired by the hobbits of Tolkein's *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, as well as the halfling race of *Dungeons & Dragons* and other fantasy role playing games. The story of this LARP takes place in a high fantasy world within a familial halfling community during a family reunion. Players will be assigned roles within the halfling Knothill family after RSVPing for the event and filling out the Family Ties survey. Players will design their own character to fill that role and will attend the gathering in-character. Players are encouraged to bring whatever they feel will make the gathering a success, such as food, games, crafts, and/or music. This game will explore the motivations of individual characters, the relationships between these characters, and will encourage characters to work towards a common goal as a family unit. This game touches upon themes of cooperation, teamwork, community building, and coming together to throw a good party. This is a good LARP for players who want a game that focuses on these themes and that prioritizes cooperative storytelling, roleplay, and a relaxed/friendly atmosphere. For a more in-depth description of the game goals and policies, feel free to check out the Design Document for this LARP, available on the Lost and Found Studios website (www.lostandfoundstudiosllc.com).

Game Calls and Safety Mechanics

The goal of LARP is to provide a safe, immersive, and fun game that everyone can enjoy.

Waivers and Safety

Players must be 18 years or older and sign a waiver to play. There are no exceptions. You must sign a waiver before the start of your first Lost & Found Studios game. These waivers outline the risks involved in participation and provide emergency contact information should anything happen. The waiver will be kept on file and may need to be renewed periodically. If you have completed a safety waiver for another Lost & Found Studios event, this waiver may be sufficient if still on file.

The first rule in all things is safety. If you believe a situation is or could become unsafe, or makes you uncomfortable, let a Game Manager (GM) know immediately. All players must follow the rules of the game they are playing, any posted site rules at the game space, the Lost & Found Community Guidelines, posted Discord server rules, and GM direction. By playing our games, you agree to these terms.

Game Managers (GMs)

GMs are the game managers of Lost and Found Studios events. They are in charge of running, watching, and acting as referees for the game. GMs will answer player questions and enforce the rules of the game. The GMs can act as a Player-Character (PC) or a Non-Player Character (NPC). GMs will be identified before calling Game-On. The purpose of the GMs is to ensure the fun and safety of the players and to help maintain a smooth gaming experience. Decisions made by GMs about rules or any situation are final. If you have any questions or concerns about things happening during a game, let a GM know immediately so they can help resolve the issue.

GMs can take disciplinary action against players who consistently do not follow the rules and guidelines or create an unsafe environment. Disciplinary actions will include verbal warnings, removal from a game, or a complete ban from all future events. Disciplinary actions will generally go in the listed escalating order, unless in the case of a serious safety concern.

Immersion

Immersion refers to the agreement by all players to act as if they are actually in the game's setting. Higher levels of immersion, such as quality costuming and props, make it easier for everyone to pretend that they are in the game world. Players should try to only discuss and interact with things that exist within the game world. You can help keep up immersion by not acting out of character by talking about real-life events or other non-game things. Most games will have a designated "Out-of-Play" area. In this area, players can catch up, handle real-life things (like disagreements), or leave out-of-play items (such as car keys or prepackaged snacks). We strive for a medium level of immersion at our games.

Cheating

Although your character may be sneaky or mean, you as the player should follow all rules and your character should take all potential effects that happen during the course of the game. Characters are separate from their players, but all players must follow all game rules and community guidelines to continue to be welcome to play at Lost & Found Studios events.

Permission to Touch

During gameplay it is normal for someone to touch another player when performing certain role-playing scenarios, like demonstrating a dance or helping with a craft. These types of actions are common, however no player should touch another without permission from the person being touched. If you are not sure if a player wants to be touched, ask "permission to touch?" and wait for a response before starting any action. If a player does not grant you permission to touch them, find an alternative to completing the action, showing both parts of a partnered dance. If someone tries to touch you without permission, say "No touch" to remind the player that they have not been granted permission to touch you.

Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated in any form. Any intentional touching of another player when you do not have permission may get you banned from the system. Additionally, for severe instances, the authorities will be called and you may face legal prosecution. **If you have concerns about a player committing inappropriate conduct against another, immediately let a GM know.**

Have Fun

LARP is meant to be fun. When going to a game, become your character and allow yourself to fall into the game world. React as your character would in any of the situations you find yourself in. Say "yes" once or twice and see where that takes you. Join an adventuring group going on an extremely dangerous quest for no good reason. Ask about the mysterious artifact someone is wearing. Play to win. Play to lose. Above all, tell a story. Remember: follow the rules, use common sense, and remind yourself that it is a game played for fun.

Game Calls

Game calls are used to signal the beginning, end, and pauses in gameplay. Before the beginning of each game, the GMs will gather the players to remind them of the story leading up to the current event, set the scene, and make any other reminders or announcements. The following are common calls you will hear during an event:

Game-On: This call signals the beginning of the game. At this point, each player should fall into character. Any immersion breaking objects, such as cell phones or other modern items should be put away at this time. After game-on, please limit any out-of-play conversations to the designated out-of-play area, or ensure that you are out of earshot of other players.

Check: A check is a very brief pause in the game that is used to resolve non-safety issues or relay information about the game. For example, a check may be called to inform players that

there is a magical effect that affects multiple people on the field. Players who hear the call should pause their roleplay, listen to the information given, and wait until “**3-2-1, play on**” is called to resume the game.

Hold: This call is made if the game needs to come to a stop for any reason. If a player were to be injured or have the potential for an injury, a Hold would be called by a GM or player to deal with the situation. During a Hold, players will freeze in place. Once the reason for the Hold has been addressed, “**3-2-1, play on**” will be called to resume the game.

Medic: This call may be used whenever necessary. It signals that there is a real-life medical issue with one or more of the players, and the GMs should be notified to assist in first aid. Please note that if you need healing for your character, you should call for a “Healer” not a “Medic”.

That's Game: This call signals the end of the game and that the storyline is over for the time being. Debrief will follow, during which players can discuss the events of the game in third person to shift from an in-play to an out-of-play mindset.

In-Play and Out-of-Play

Generally speaking, In-Play refers to items, characters, and events that exist/occur within the game world and can thus be interacted with by the players as their characters. Out-of-Play refers to things that exist outside of the game world, such as cars, cell phones, and other real-world items and events. Some parts of the game area will be designated as Out-of-Play areas, where real-world items can be kept and roleplay does not take place. The following is a list of event spaces that are always considered to be Out-of-Play:

- The parking area and player vehicles
- Any GM-noted "Out of Play" areas on the playing field
- Neighboring areas or areas in use by people that are not participating in game

Game items, such as loot and story items should remain in play at all times. You may have a loot chest left in an in-play area to store these items if you would prefer not to carry them on your person.

Players themselves may also switch back and forth from being In-Play and Out-of-Play. If a player wants to go Out-of-Play for any reason, they will show this by placing their fist or a weapon on top of their head, or by wearing a white headband. Any player signifying that they are Out-of-Play may not be interacted with by anyone who is In-Play.

Check-In

When you arrive at the game site, you must promptly check-in with a GM. All players will need to sign-in and provide the GM with a valid form of ID, updated vaccine information, payment for the event, and a character card for the character they wish to play (for more information, see the Character Creation section). If it is your first event, a signed safety waiver is

also required. Please arrive early and be prepared for check-in before the game so that a prolonged check-in does not delay the game for others.

Roleplaying

A big part of LARP is roleplaying - interacting with plotlines, events, and people from your character's perspective. Some players do not wish to spend a lot of energy acting as someone else and thus create characters who are much like themselves in real life, while other players enjoy pretending to be someone unlike their real selves, gaining experiences from a different perspective. How in-depth you go with your character's personality and actions is up to you. An important thing to remember, however, is that you are playing a game, and the things that happen in-game occur in a controlled gaming environment. Make sure that you deal with things that happen in-game during gameplay and do not let them bleed over to your real life interactions with other players. While LARPing, do your best to create scenarios and conflict that will create a fun and interesting story for the other people around you. Do not engage in heavy or negative play with others without first making sure they are okay to engage in that kind of roleplay. By respecting each other's boundaries and working together to tell a story, LARPing can be a very fun experience. If you have engaged in roleplay that has left you with negative feelings, talk to the other players involved, bring it up during debriefing, or talk to a GM about ways to resolve these feelings.

A Long-Expected Gathering is intended for an 18+ audience and this may lead to mature and occasionally tense scenarios. If you are roleplaying and a situation arises in which you feel upset or unsafe, you always have the option to remove yourself from gameplay without your character suffering in-game consequences. You can use the meta-techniques described below to communicate your comfort level and check on the comfort level of others whenever you react or you observe another player reacting strongly to something in-play.

You OK? - If you see another player get uncomfortable, or you are uncomfortable during a scene, call "You OK?" with a hand over your head, to alert other players that you notice not all players are comfortable with what's happening in the sequence. This gives all players a chance to adjust the scene to allow all players to remain interactive in the scene.

Bow Out - A player may bow out of a scene by putting their hand in front of their face and bowing their head forward. This leaves the character physically present in the scene, but non-interactive. Players may not be retaliated against, or their characters interacted with during a scene in which they have bowed out.

X-Out - If a scene has gotten to be too much, or you are simply not comfortable with yourself or your character being present, you may X-Out of a scene by making an X with your arms in front of your face and immediately leaving the area. Your character is considered to never have been present in the scene at all, and other characters do not remember them being there. You may return to play when you are ready in the Tavern area.

Fade to Black - If two or more players X-Out of a scene, the scene immediately ends, and the remaining present players agree on a resolution to the situation without further roleplay. Players may rejoin the game from their current location after the agreement has been made.

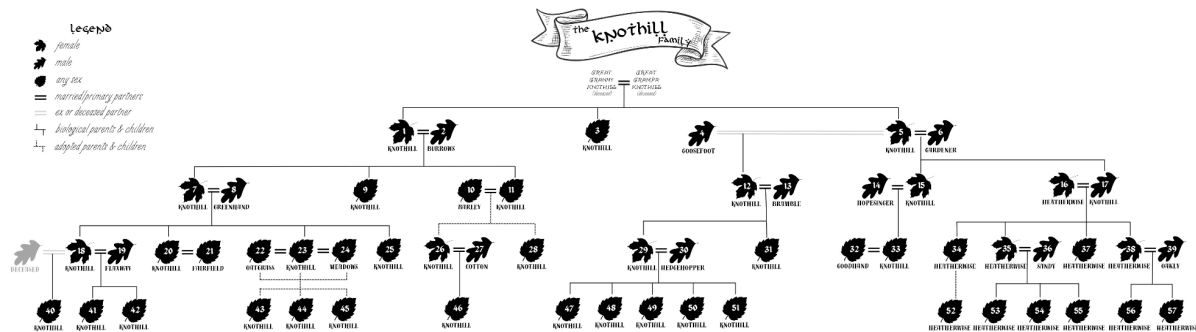
Registration Process

In order to play this game, players **must** complete our registration process.

First, RSVP on the [events page](#) of the Lost & Found Studios website. Once you complete the RSVP form, you will receive an email to the email address you provided. Within this email, you will find a link to the Family Ties survey. This survey is the first step of character creation and must be completed to finalize your RSVP. This survey will ask you a series of questions about what kind of character you would like to play and about your preferred gaming experience. Upon completing this survey, you will receive another email assigning you a Family Role Number corresponding to the Knothill Family tree, as well as a link to the Discord Server for this event. Upon Family Role assignment, your registration is complete!

Family Roles

The *Long-Expected Gathering* for 2025 is the Knothill Family Reunion. Thus, all players will be portraying a member of the Knothill family, which has been mapped within the provided family tree below:



The Knothill family has been designed to offer many different familial dynamics, ranging from biological parents and children, adopted children, polyamorous family units, blended families, and single person family units. Roles intended for a character of a particular biological sex have been marked, but roles may be portrayed as any gender, and a player of any gender may play a character of any gender. The Family Ties survey will ask about gender preferences in regards to your own character and certain character relationships to help GMs assign Family

Roles. Since this will be a family reunion, players are encouraged to coordinate with others to determine characteristics of existing relationships between characters, using the family tree as a guide. On the Lost & Found website and in the documents tab on our Discord server, you can find a document listing the familial relationships between characters in a text format as opposed to a visual one if needed. If you have questions about any of the Family Roles, please do not hesitate to reach out to a GM on the discord server or email us at LostAndFoundStudiosLLC@gmail.com.

Building a Character

Once you have been assigned a Family Role Number, character creation can formally begin! As a freeform LARP, we encourage you to be as creative as you would like in designing your character. Aside from your character’s relationships, consider your character’s likes and dislikes, their goals and secrets, personal motivations, and personality. Your halfling may be much like you or entirely different in all respects. They may have hopes, dreams, and as many quirks as you’d like. However, we do ask that you please ensure all character choices will not ruin the game for someone else and still abide by our Community Guidelines in regards to banned RP topics.

Once you have a general idea of what your character is like, please fill out a Character Card, which can be found in the #documents channel of our Discord server. Plan to bring your completed Character Card with you to the game. Example Character Cards can be referenced below. You do not have to fill out every aspect of your character, but a character name, your (player) name, and a friend are required.



CHARACTER CARD





PLAYER NAME

NAME **ROLE No.**

LIKES **DISLIKES**

GOAL

SECRET

CLOSE/FRIENDLY WITH

RIVALRY WITH






CHARACTER CARD



PLAYER NAME Sahil



NAME Lorn Bramble **ROLE No.** 13

LIKES Napping in the sun Berries Puzzles	DISLIKES Board games Long lines Baking
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

GOAL Bring something new to this year's reunion

SECRET I can make a better stew than my father in law

CLOSE/FRIENDLY WITH Mary Hopesinger (role no. 14)

RIVALRY WITH Arthur Knothill (role no. 5)




Once your character has been fleshed out a bit, please introduce your character in the #bios channel of the Discord server. Art of your character or photos of your costume are highly encouraged!

Costuming Guidelines

At a Live Action event, players will act as their character for the duration of the game, which means that players are also asked to dress the part. We recommend taking inspiration from the *Lord of the Rings* and *Hobbit* movies, from general fantasy garb, or from cottagecore wear. Prosthetic ears, curled hair, and colored contacts can also add to your look. Please refrain from wearing t-shirts with modern imagery or logos or jeans, and please keep the weather and terrain in mind when designing your look. An in-depth online costuming guide can be found [here](#), courtesy of GM Kate Farley. Feel free to share costume progress or inspiration in the #media channel of our Discord server! Creating together is oftentimes more fun than creating alone.

Discord Server Rules

Once you have an invite to the Discord server, please be sure to abide by our discord server rules, which are the following:

- 1) Every player's nickname for this server must be in this format: "Character Name (Player Name)". Eg: "Ragnar the Red (Joe)"
- 2) No inappropriate avatars or nicknames, ie. nothing referring to sexual violence, R-rated content, graphic content (sexual organs, gore, etc), self-harm, etc.
- 3) All server members and content must follow the Lost & Found Studios Community Guidelines (see attached). In short: Be respectful and considerate. No aggressive, harassing, or hateful behavior is allowed.
- 4) There is never a need to @"everyone." Please refrain from doing so. In some smaller channels, @"here" may be appropriate.
- 5) Please be considerate and use content warnings and spoiler bars for potentially triggering or sensitive content. Eg. "CW: Sensitive Content Topic Information about or reference to previously mentioned sensitive content." If a GM reaches out to you to ask you to add a content warning and spoiler bars, please don't argue.
- 6) The media channel is to share media (pictures, memes, videos, etc.) in. Please keep conversation to a minimum or move it to general chat when discussion is appropriate.
- 7) Breaking of any of these rules will result in a verbal warning from a GM. Further or consistent behavioral issues on the server may result in disciplinary action taken by the GMs. These may be: temporary kick from the server, banning from the server, a temporary suspension from events, or a complete ban from Lost & Found Studios events, generally in listed order, unless a serious safety issue has been identified.

Please note that the Lost & Found Community Guidelines still apply in online community spaces, such as in relevant Discord servers.

Other Information

Since this game is a freeform LARP, there are no specific gameplay mechanics to keep in mind for the event outside of our usual safety/meta mechanics listed towards the beginning of this guidebook. Any NPCs that may arrive over the course of the game will be portrayed by GMs.

The aim of the game is to create a fun and successful family event while exploring the various interpersonal dynamics of the characters. Thus, plan to bring whatever you or your character thinks would make a fun event! Yard games, decorations, crafts, musical instruments, and food are encouraged. In fact, this event will also have an optional in-character potluck aspect for all your second breakfast, elevensies, lunch, tea, and supper needs!

The Knothill Family Cook-Off will be divided into three categories: Entree, Side, Dessert. Each character will be able to enter into each category once. Sign up for the potluck using [this link](#). Please include the ingredients for your dish so we can label potential allergens for other players. You are also welcome to bring food for yourself or others without having to enter the potluck. If you plan to share food, please be mindful that other players may have allergies

and dietary restrictions! If you have an allergy or dietary restriction, you may wish to bring your own provisions for the event. There will be campfire cooking and running, potable water available onsite.

Lastly, please keep the weather and season in mind as you prepare for this event. Sunscreen, bug spray, water, and medications are personal items not to be overlooked as this is an outdoor event. Indoor bathrooms will be available onsite for use by our players.

If you have any questions about this game, the guide, or about Lost & Found Studios events, please do not hesitate to contact a GM or email us at LostAndFoundStudiosLLC@gmail.com. Happy LARPing!