

# Games of Legend

([Andrew Wright](#))

The games Finger of Fate, Jacks, and Mix-Up are all taken from the Golden Dragon gamebook *The Eye of the Dragon* (1985, reprinted 2016). The inspiration for this version of Chess comes from the Golden Dragon gamebook *Crypt of the Vampire*. *Spiral of Gold* comes from the Blood Sword gamebook *The Battlepits of Krarth*, while *Krarthian Chequers* comes from its sequel, *The Kingdom of Wyrd*.

## Finger of Fate

Only a spellcaster can play this game. This is played on a hexagonal board inscribed with six symbols – a wand, an hourglass, a dagger, a broken alembic, a hooked staff, and a knapsack. A severed finger is placed in the middle of the board. To play the game, the participant prods the finger, which will then writhe around in a circle until it comes to rest pointing at one of the symbols. An appropriate effect will then result, depending on the symbol. Roll a die to determine where the finger comes to rest:

1. The Wand (regain 1–6 Magic Points, or a Mystic is no longer psionically fatigued)
2. The Hourglass (participant and their colleagues are flung 1-6 hours back into the past)
3. The Dagger (lose 1–6 Health Points)
4. The Alembic (lose 1–6 Magic Points, or a Mystic is psionically fatigued)
5. The Staff (regain 1–6 Health Points)
6. The Knapsack (one item carried by the participant vanishes; they get to choose which).

## Jacks

This game is played with a bag of caltrops; small metal items consisting of four poisoned metal spikes radiating from a central hub. The [Gloomvile](#) will drop a ball and their opponent must snatch up as many caltrops as they can between the first and second bounce. Then the [Gloomvile](#) will do the same, and the winner is the one who gets the most caltrops. The participant rolls a die to represent the maximum number of caltrops they could grab if they wished while the ball is bouncing. However, each caltrop picked up will cost them 2 Health Points because of the poison spikes, so they may not wish to grab all they have time to. Then roll a die to see how many caltrops are scooped up by the [Gloomvile](#); they are unaffected by the poison. If the result is a draw, the [Gloomvile](#) will present their opponent with a consolation prize of lesser value as recompense for their injuries; see below for details on winners or losers.

## Krarthian Chequers

This is a complex game of elegant strategy that the [Gloomviles](#) will play on an ebony and whitewood board, with pieces crafted from obsidian (for the [Gloomvile](#)) and crystal (for their opponent). You could play a real game of chequers at this point, or you could abstractly depict the game by matching the [Gloomvile's](#) MAGICAL ATTACK versus their opponent's MAGICAL DEFENCE. See below for details

on winners or losers.

## Chess

The [Gloomviles'](#) chessboard is a thin slab of black and white marble, with pieces crafted from onyx (for the [Gloomvile](#)) and ivory (for their opponent). You could play a real game of chess at this point, or you could abstractly depict the game by matching the [Gloomvile's](#) MAGICAL ATTACK versus their opponent's MAGICAL DEFENCE. Lastly, you could rule that the opponent is magically transported onto the board (now a barren, stony windswept plain) and, after a lengthy battle, must fight the Black Queen (equivalent to a Rank 5 Knight wearing plate armour and armed with a mace and shield). If they defeat the Black Queen, they return victorious, if not they have lost the game. See below for details on winners or losers.

## Spiral of Gold

This game is played with fourteen gold coins – seven in a line in front of each participant. Beside each player is a six-sided die. All the coins are showing heads. The game is played in rounds called Spirals. In the first Spiral, each player secretly selects a number on their die, placing it under their hand with the number they have chosen uppermost. Then the players reveal and compare chosen numbers. The player with the lower number loses coins equal to the difference between the chosen numbers. The player with the higher number flips coins equal to that number from heads to tails. Both players start the next Spiral by recovering – if either of them has any coins showing tails they can flip one of them to heads again. Play proceeds until one player has no heads showing at the end of a Spiral. There are three other rules to remember:

1. A player cannot choose a number on their die that is equal to or greater than the number of heads showing.
2. If the players both chose the same number then that Spiral is a draw and neither player loses anything.
3. Lastly, when a player loses coins, they are taken from the heads they have left, not the tails.

(The best player of this game was the renowned Grandmaster Klef.)

See below for details on winners or losers.

## Mix-Up

(Leafing through the rulebook, the [Gloomviles](#) will explain they have not played this game for centuries.) In Mix-Up, the participant has to stake points of one of their five characteristics (Strength, Reflexes, Intelligence, Psychic Talent, and Looks) against another. Suppose they stake 2 points of Psychic Talent against their Reflexes. If they won, these points would be transferred from their Psychic Talent score to their Reflexes score. If they lost, however, they would forfeit the 2 points of Psychic Talent. A participant is not allowed to make a wager that would put their characteristics below 3 or above 18. After deciding the stake, the participant guesses any number between 2 and 12. They then roll two dice. If the total is the number they guessed, they can transfer the points from one characteristic to the other. If the guess was only 1 out (e.g., guessed a 7 and rolled an 8), nothing is

gained or lost. If the guess is any other number, they lose the points they staked.

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