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Note: This guide will assume you have little to no previous experience with AoD and Muds in general.

Introduction

Welcome to Aeon of Darkness! This guide will help you get started on your journey into the lands of AoD. It will lead you through the process of creating your character, and help you get through the opening tutorial areas of the game, which should set you well on your way to fame and fortune in the realms. But first, a little primer on what exactly a MUD is.

What is a MUD? Or, "OMG WTF are MUDs?!"

MUD stands for Multi User Dimension, Multi User Dungeon, or Multi-User Domain. A MUD is a type of game that is played online with many other people who can easily interact and socialize with each other. (Multi User) MUDs are quite often set in fantastic or otherworldly realities, realities in which you can be any manner of person...or creature...you desire. For the most part, MUDs are text based and command oriented; this means that rather than using your mouse to move a character around in a graphical world, you use commands to move the character around in a text based world. To know what is going on, you read the text that is displayed as a result of events in the game or a command you entered. It takes a little time to learn the commands, and some imagination to turn the words into a wonderful adventure. However, once you play for a little while, you become addicted to the endless possibilities and the multitude of friends you make.

Getting Connected, or "The last great Hook Up!"

Now that you have some idea of what a MUD is, you might be saying "But Tetsui, we already knew that you knob, tell us how to play THIS MUD! If you don't I will kill you until you're dead!" Whoa there, I'm getting to that, keep your pants on. The first thing you are going to want to do is connect to the MUD itself. Now, there are several ways of doing this. First, you can click on the "Play Now" icon in the upper right, and this will take to a page specifically devoted to jacking you in to the game.

The most basic way for you to connect to the game is through Telnet, if you are using a machine running Windows, or Linux. This is usually the roughest, nastiest way to do so, however. There is also a special Java application that we have set up on that page which is quite a bit nicer than your average Telnet, and is a very worthy way to play. Now, if you want to get the max out of the system, you're going to want a standalone MUD client. For Windows computers, I'd recommend zMUD or GOSClient, and for Linux there is KMuddy, or MCL. "But Tetsui!" you scream, "I HATE Windows and Linux sucks, and I have a Macintosh! Can't I play AoD too!?" First off, stop screaming. Secondly, yes you can! There is a Mud Client called Tiny Fugue that works with all operating systems, including Macintosh. So there. ^_^

Creating a Character

The first thing you need to do when you connect to AoD is create a character, who will be your avatar in the realms. Type NEW when you are prompted and you will begin the first step of creating your character; coming up with a good name.

Choosing a name and password, or "Why can't I name my warrior Sephiroth!?"

When you are prompted you will be asked to give the name that your character will wear during his life in the realms. Please do NOT name your character something that is very common, such as Jane, John, or Mike. Also, don't name your character something that is recognizable from the real world, like Sephiroth or Merlin. If your name is deemed unacceptable, you will be asked to change it, so please just try and come up with something original. If you are having trouble coming up with one, just follow the link provided in the text, and it will take you to a page that will convert your name into a "Middle-Earth" style. Additionally, you can check out <http://www.seventhsanctum.com/gens/> and you will find an enormous variety of generators that will create just about any name that you can imagine, using parameters you specify.

After you decide upon a name, you will be asked to choose a password for your character. This password will prevent other people from messing around with your character while you aren't around, so choose it well. Make it something that you can easily remember and that other people won't easily guess. After that, it's time to see the Rainbow.

Choosing a color code, or "Ooh, pretty colors!!"

You will now be prompted to choose a color code for your system. This code will enhance your gameplay by adding colors to the text, allowing you to more easily distinguish between various types of information whilst playing. For example, monsters will show up in vivid indigo, letting you pick them out with ease when you enter a room. At the moment, it is recommended that you choose Ansi as your color code.

Choosing a gender, or "Is it a man?! A woman!?"

Now you will be prompted to choose the sex of your character. This has really no effect on the game other than to add more distinctiveness to your character, and truly make it your own. It's just a cosmetic feature, and a roleplaying device. Now on to the meat and potatoes.

Choosing a class, or "It's a dirty job, but someone's gotta do it!"

Now this is the stuff. Your class will determine almost everything about your character in terms of how they will interact with the MUD. Will you be a buffed out Warrior? Or a spell slinging Wizard? It's all up to you, and your class choice. There are 4 base class choices; Warrior, Rogue, Wizard, and Priest. These base classes are pretty standard fare, but really just represent the basic path that your character will follow. Once you become experienced in your base class, you will be able to further hone your skills by selecting a subclass, and even later, you can multiclass with a whole new base. But I'm getting ahead of myself.^_^ For right now, the four base classes are all you have to worry about.

I'm not going to sit here and presume to tell you what class is the best: each class has the potential to become extremely powerful in the world of AoD, and they are all necessary members of a successful hunting party.

Choosing a race, or "Are you a man, or a mouse? Or maybe a Troll..."

Your race choice will determine the type of character you are just as your class does, though the effect is somewhat more subtle. Race dictates your stat range, some special abilities - such as regeneration rate, what your character looks like, the classes you can be, the clans you can join, and how people interact with you. Some races may seem to be inherently more adept at certain classes, but that doesn't mean that everyone has to be a Dwarven Warrior or an Elven Wizard to be successful. Indeed, consider the case of the Half-Elven Warrior, dexterous by nature and skilled at precise strikes rather than brute force. Some classes are restricted by race, but that is more a matter of roleplaying than anything else. Honestly, can you imagine a Pixie trying to heft the enormous battle axe of a Barbarian? There is a sad epidemic of people concerning themselves with the "right" Race/class combination to allow them to level as fast as possible, and this is unfortunate. Choose the class/race combination that YOU want to play, not what people say is the "best". Remember that first and foremost, this is a ROLEPLAYING game. Roleplaying is the buzzword here, folks, and AoD takes that to heart.

Choosing your statistics, or "Tipping the scales."

After choosing your Race you will be asked to roll your statistics. You can reroll as many times as you wish until you get the stats you desire. Note that your choice of race does affect the stats that you will be able to roll, but this impact is lessened once you get to the next section, stat balancing!

This unique little feature will allow you to take up to 10 points from any or all of your stats and rearrange them back into said stats. For example, say you have 10 strength and 20 wisdom. What you could do if you wanted more strength would be to type TAKE WIS 5. This will take 5 points from your wisdom and put it in the point pool. then, you can ADD STR 5. This will put those 5 points into strength. Note that you can redistribute the points in the point pool however you wish. If you want to take 3 of those 5 points and put them into Dexterity, and the other 2 into constitution, you are free to do so. Remember though, that the max amount of points you can take out is 10, and once you put points into a stat, it will cost more from your max amount to get them out again. So, be VERY careful when distributing the points.

Selecting your options, or "A man can only come up with so many quips!"

Hang in there, you're almost done! Now, you just need to select a few options that will further enhance and define your experience in AoD. First up is the option to have the graphical Automap function activated upon startup. I'd personally recommend leaving it on, as it can sometimes become confusing to walk around at first. The map will prevent you from becoming lost while you are becoming accustomed to the area.

Next is the option to be a roleplaying character. There isn't really info about this yet, more to come.

And then is the option to be an outlaw. Now, outlaws are a special feature of AoD. Outlaws are the robbers, gangsters, people that love to fight. Basically, they are the classification of PKers or (P)layer (K)illers. Outlaws are not bound by the normal laws of clans, but they are however,

bound by the laws of outlaws. (Sounds funny doesn't it?) If an outlaw breaks one of these laws he/she is marked with a flag and will be hunted by any soldiers of the realm. For more information about the laws of outlaws type 'laws outlaw'.

Outlaws can be divided into two sub-categories: brigands, and bandits. Brigands are the outlaws that like to make it on their own, and don't care for any others; doing raids by themselves - this is often very dangerous, especially if you get many others mad at your. Bandits call on the unity

of a group (known as a band) to do their robbing and fighting. This is much more safe because if they run into trouble, they can call upon the members of their band to assist. After a battle with another outlaw, the winner can loot your corpse and take whatever they please. Outlaws do not join clans, but can join a band to assist them in their gangish ways. Outlaws can kill other outlaws and loot from the corpses of their foes. Be warned, the same can happen to you.

After you select that option, the last step is to name your referrer, the person or site that led you to our wonderful realm. This is simply to help us figure out where our players are coming from.^_^

Well, after you hit enter, you will be deposited into the tutorial area of the game. This short area will get you accustomed to the mechanics of basic Mudding, and help you get a feel for the kind of experience that AoD will provide you. Next up, a walkthrough for the Tutorial area and Newbie Academy, and your first steps into the Aeon of Darkness!