

# Live-Action Roleplaying Games (LARPs)

In a live-action roleplaying game (LARP), the players physically play their characters. Whatever the player actually does is what the character is doing. In many LARPs, combat involves attempting to touch another player **gently** with a padded prop that represents a weapon such as a sword. Spellcasting involves speaking the correct “magic words” and throwing a small object (such as a ping-pong ball) at the person that the spell is directed toward. If the object contacts a player, the spell takes effect on that player. Healing involves binding wounds (placing a cloth representing a bandage on the “wounded” area) or speaking the correct “magic words” while touching the “wounded” area with a magical object (such as a special “magical” object or one of the ping-pong balls that spellcasters use). Situations where a character has more stealth than the player are dealt with using props like headbands that indicate to players that they should pretend that they don't see the player and are unaware of what the player is doing. Outcomes rely on the honor system, and are adjudicated by one or more gamesmasters (GMs).

Many LARPs are based on medieval societies, and restrict combat to representations of technology, weapons and fighting styles that were known in Europe during or before the fifteenth century (plus magic).

LARPs became popular starting in the 1980s. Some national/international LARP organizations include:

- [NERO](#) (formerly the New England Roleplaying Organization)
- [Amtgard](#)
- [Dagorhir](#)
- [Belegarth](#)

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