

MMORPGs

By Jakob Endrestad Kielland

The roots

Physical RPGs

- Character sheets
- Game master
- Manual rule enforcement

Multi User Dungeons (MUDs)

- Text-only
- Computer handles GM role
- Automatic rule enforcement



Chainmail (1971)

```
Telnet british-legends.com
Initialised.

Multi-User Dungeon - MUD1 Version 3E(19)

You are invited to check out Section 9,
our discussion forum for MUD players.

Please direct your browser to:
http://www.british-legends.com/Forums/S9.htm

*****
*****
* MUD2.COM is where you'll find the next generation *
* version of MUD1/British Legends. Another creation *
* of Richard Bartle, MUD2 offers many extras, *
* including smart mobiles, new areas, and more. *
* Best of all, it's free. Why not try it today? *
*****

Origin of version: Fri Jan 19 22:26:12 2018

Welcome! By what name shall I call you?
#
```

MUD1 (1978)

THE GAME ARCHAEOLOGIST

DikuMUD I (GAMMA 0.0)

Created by
Hans Henrik Staerfeldt, Katja Nyboe,
Tom Madsen, Michael Seifert, and Sebastian Hammer

By what name do you wish to be known? Trajan
Did I get that right, Trajan (Y/N)? Y
New character.
Give me a password for Trajan: Helloworld
Please retype password: Helloworld
What is your sex (M/F) ? m

Select a class:
Cleric
Thief
Warrior
Magic-user
Class :wa

```
*****  
* W E L C O M E TO DikuMUD RUNNING ON ALFA *  
*****
```



DikuMUD (1990)

Ultima Online (1997)
(Still online!)

World of Warcraft (2004)

[1: General] HairyCrack: I mean where, sorry

Clattering Scorpionid misses ZincBar.
Clattering Scorpionid hits ZincBar for 6.
Pygmy Surf Crawler hits ZincBar for 7.
Pygmy Surf Crawler attacks. ZincBar blocks.
Bluegreenorc hits Pygmy Surf Crawler for 15.
Bluegreenorc hits Pygmy Surf Crawler for 14.
ZincBar hits Pygmy Surf Crawler for 13.
Bluegreenorc hits Pygmy Surf Crawler for 12.

Sen'jin Watcher
Level 14



<i>Albion Online</i>	Active	3D	Medieval fantasy	Free-to-play with optional subscription model	2017
<i>Shroud of the Avatar: Forsaken Virtues</i>		3D	Fantasy	Buy-to-play	2018
<i>Camelot Unchained</i>	Development	3D	Fantasy, Mythology (Arthurian)(Celtic) (Norse)	Pay-to-play	2020
<i>New World</i>	Development	3D	Fantasy	Buy-To-Play	2021

MMORPG traits:

- Long play sessions
- Fantasy or sci-fi setting
most common
- An abundance of NPCs



How do MMORPGs operate?

- Huge, multi-layered worlds
- Players are distributed across many servers
- Often subscription-based



What do you do in an MMORPG?

- Theme-parks
- Player vs Environment (PvE)
- Player vs Player (PvP)



PvE activities



Quests



Puzzles



Raids

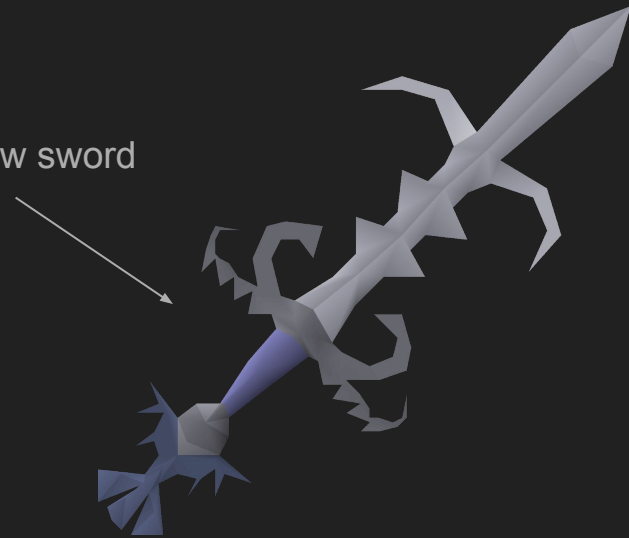
PvP activities



What's the point of all this?

- Activities usually reward players with loot
- Loot is sold or used to progress
- Routine, parallels to real life

Sick new sword



The social factor

- MMORPGs create a sense of community
- Cooperative challenges
- Customizable characters
- Guilds/Clans
- Area of study
- Social norms differ



Life outside the MMORPG

- Gaming culture
- Players create content
- MMORPGs: a cultural product



The black markets

Welcome to the new gold mines

Being paid to play games all day long sounds like a dream job - but for thousands of Chinese 'gold farmers', the virtual reality is sheer hard graft



FEATURE

How RuneScape is helping Venezuelans survive

For years, Venezuelan players have been making a living by playing RuneScape

By **Mat Ombler** | May 27, 2020, 12:00pm EDT

Illustrations by **Sonny Ross** for Polygon

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