Weapons, Movement, & Tactics

Things to know before going into battle against monsters of this realm.

- Weapon Proficiency
- Combat Movement
- Basic Battle Tactics & Strategy

Weapon Proficiency

Weapon Proficiency, or '**skills**,' determine a player's ability to use each of the six types of weapons in the realms - sharp, thrusting, pole, blunt, missile, and, for monks only, Hand-to-hand. Each character in Aalynor's Nexus begins with a certain amount of skill in one type of weapon, of his/her choosing (not very much, however). This skill, and the others, which don't receive that head-start, are improved with time, by using each type of weapon, and earning experience with it. One may see his proficiency with the '**skills**' command. For instance, if a completely new character were to type, '**skills**,' he/she would see:

Skill	Level of Mastery

Sharp Weapons	Unskilled
Thrust Weapons	Unskilled
Blunt Weapons	Unskilled
Pole Weapons	Unskilled
Missile Weapons	Unskilled

Now, to the beginner, this can look pretty disconcerting. It is important to note, however, that one can still use the weapons, with an unskilled proficiency rating. The level of skill determines how often one will miss, hit for double, etc. NOT whether or not one can use a weapon at all. After all, how can one improve, if he/she can't practice?

There are several levels of proficiency in each skill:

- **Unskilled**
- **Basic**
- **Skilled**
- **Experienced**
- **Refined**
- **Ace**
- **Adept**
- **Expert**
- **Specialist**
- **Master**
- **Grandmaster (fighters only)**

One advances through these ranks, as stated above, by earning experience while using the weapon in question. The rate at which one improves his/her skill depends largely on killing foes with them. Fighters improve their skills at a faster rate than others.

Though perhaps daunting at first, Weapon Proficiency add to the rich and complex environment of the realms of Aalynor's Nexus.

Combat Movement

Combat in the realms of Aalynor's Nexus is unique for its realism, complexity, and excitement. The skill of the enemies, the variety of tactics available, allow for battles that appeal to the player on an almost visceral level: the heart pounds, the blood sings - this is the thrill of battle. The overall whole is extremely enjoyable, and - don't say we didn't warn you - extremely addictive.

Among the most integral and distinctive aspects of combat in the realms is known as 'zone movement.' Simply put, this permits the player to move around in combat, whether it's to escape one's foes, or pursue them. Most importantly, though, it promotes great possibility for group strategy (grouping is not only profitable, but encouraged, as it aids in finding a place in our role-playing environment... after all, what's the point of playing on the Internet if you're going to do it alone?).

Each 'room' in Aalynor's Nexus is split into five zones, or areas of occupation. Upon entering a room, one is almost always situated in the middle zone.

Monsters usually appear in the front of the room, but can, at times, appear anywhere. The commands, '**move forward**' (or '**mv f**') and '**move back**' (or '**mv b**'), will move the player one zone in the prescribed direction. One may also '**sprint forward**' or '**sprint back**' ('**spr f**' or '**spr b** ') to move two zones at once. Keep in mind, however, that there's a slightly longer delay after sprinting. This 'turn' delay is in some small part determined by one's dexterity. It is also important to realize that some - many, in fact - of the monsters in the realms move faster than any player. Rangers, however, may use their 'haste' skill, which allows them to move, and attack, much faster than others.

One can easily determine one's foes, or friends, position in the room with the '**victim**' and '**people**' commands. For example, if one is attacking a criminal, typing '**victim**' (or '**v**') would show something like this:

> The criminal, a dozen steps in front of you, looks healthy.

The phrase, 'a dozen steps in front of you,' tells the player that the criminal is standing two zones in front of him/her.

If the screen were to say...

> The criminal, a couple steps behind you, looks healthy.

The player would know that the criminal is one zone behind him/her. As you can probably guess, 'beside you' would mean that the criminal is in the same zone, and therefore within striking

distance, of the player. Be careful, however, for some of the creatures in our dangerous realms can strike from a distance.

The '**people**' command is much the same, except that it tells the player the location and healthiness of the other players in the room. For example, typing '**people**' (or '**peo**') would show:

> Banzai is standing a dozen steps in front of you, and looks tired.
> Renton is standing a couple steps in front of you, and looks healthy.
> Wicked is standing a dozen steps in front of you, and looks a bit tired.
> Scorpio is standing a couple steps behind you, and looks poisoned.
> Dreamweaver is standing a dozen steps behind you, and looks near death.

This is especially useful for healing the other members of the group, as it tells the player not only which players are in need, and of what, but also whether or not they're in range of certain spells or devices.

Another added feature is the 'position' (or 'pos') command. With this, your position in relation to the center of the room is shown like this:

> You are standing at the center of the room - (center).
> You are standing toward the front of the room - (one move forward from center).
> You are standing at the front of the room - (two moves, or a sprint forward from center).
> You are standing toward the back of the room - (one move back from center).
> You are standing at the back of the room - (two moves, or a sprint back from center).

Often if you become disorientated from moving about the zones frequently this can help out quite a bit.

Basic Battle Tactics & Strategy

Tactics Overview

This is just an outline, and should be treated as such. There are, of course, many other techniques, and these should be explored, as well. This is here more as a reference for those who are new, so that there is less confusion, and so that we may, in future, enjoy even better cooperation among party members. Indeed, there are also solo combat strategies, though these are hardly as complex, and more suited to personal taste. We hope that you enjoy combat in the realms, and that you learn to relish the experience of well-coordinated group combat as we do. It really is the best way to go. "United we stand, divided we all die horrible deaths"...

Tactics are the heart and soul of combat in the realms, and the key to survival. Aalynor's Nexus is based more or less on a success through cooperation philosophy, and prizes the group concept every bit as much as it does its rich role-playing environment. It is definitely possible, and sometimes necessary, to fight alone, but it's much more difficult, and a lot less enjoyable, than forming a party.

The most effective groups are comprised of representatives from all or most of the classes. Diversity is almost as important as number; a group of mages is better than one, sure, but it won't do nearly as well as a fighter, a ranger, a cleric, and a mage will. Strictly speaking, a well prepared party has a cleric, a mage, a scout (rangers and thieves are best, monks will do, too) and at least one 'tanker' - a term often used in the realms, it means, basically, the one who takes the hits... in other words, fighters, barbarians, and paladins are best suited for this honorable, if dangerous, role.

Battle Tactics

The great majority of monsters in the realms appear in the front of the room, as such, in typical group strategy, the 'tankers' stand their ground in the middle of the room upon entering, so that they might:

1. All be in range for melee combat as soon as the enemy walks into range
2. More importantly, be able to divert attacks from the healers and mages who are, usually, behind them.

The mages, who, as a class, have the least amount of health and stamina in the realms, tend to stay in the back, relying on missile weapons and raw magical energy to cause damage. The clerics, who not only have only slightly less health than the mages, but also have to heal, and therefore can't afford to be distracted by getting hit, usually situate themselves somewhere in between the tankers and the mages, so that they may stay in range for their healing spells. This is the typical room layout for group fighting, with all tankers (fighters, barbs, paladins, and thieves, rangers, monks, and bards as they tend to melee) in the front, and all magi and clerics in the back. However, group strategy does not end there.

As mentioned above, the tankers stay in the front to grab the attention of the enemy. It doesn't always work out that way, though. In general, the first character to attack is the one targeted by the enemy (therefore, if you're a cleric or mage, wait a couple of seconds), but, if no one attacks it fast enough, it will choose a target of its own, based on its intelligence, by which threat it deems to be better to deal with first. Some monsters are more intelligent than others, while typically the greater threat is the barbarian wielding the Flaming Maul standing a few paces before it, then the little mage standing a dozen feet beyond him -- intelligent monsters will try and take out the parties backing in order to prevail.

Now, there are many methods for the tanker of getting the attention of a creature that is already attacking another. The spells, 'stun' and 'pacify' will both, after running their course, cause the monster to take the caster as a target. The various skills of many classes will also achieve this - circle and bash for fighters and barbarians, turn for clerics and paladins, and touch of death for monks (tip: touch of death will not work on undead, however, trying it on them WILL get them to attack the monk who uses it). Many of these skills, however, have a delay - a sometimes significant one - between usages, and therefore, the tankers should try to save their mana for the aforementioned spells, and rely on the clerics for healing, unless one isn't present. Also of note: clerics, though second only to mages in the ability to cast offensively, should not waste mana doing so at the expense of their party... they need all of their concentration to continually check on the group with the 'people' command, and to heal the those who need it.

Battle Strategy

As the old saying goes, "Know thy enemy." For many creatures in the realms, it is important to be prepared. On many occasions (on a quest, usually), a group is concerned not just with one room, but with an entire area; room by room, they must explore... Often as not in these situations, the characters' lives depend on good intelligence. This is provided by the scout of the group. The best scouts, as you might guess, are rangers, as they can not only sneak from room to room undetected, but track enemies as well. Thieves are also very skilled in the art of sneaking, and, with their 'backstab' ability, make a welcome addition to any group. Monks will serve as scouts too, but they're not quite as good at sneaking, and put themselves at serious risk if they take on the post of scout. Anyway, the scout's job is to sneak into adjoining rooms, and evaluate the situation - to look at and estimate the difficulty of monsters that come into the room, or, in most cases, those that are already there, and, very important, to determine where in the room each enemy is situated (Obviously, the strategies outlined above must adjust if the enemy is in the back of the

room, for example, or in the middle).

This job of scouting ties in very closely to the concept of magical defenses (commonly known in the realms as 'resists'). These shields, for lack of a better word, are each crafted specifically for one kind of attack; mages spend a great deal of money obtaining these spells, which are very helpful. It is the scout's job to determine which attacks the enemy in question will use, so that the mage (or cleric, or, lacking that, paladin or ranger) may craft the party's defenses accordingly. Those who are casting these spells have a finite amount of mana, so it is essential to know what is needed, and what isn't (Note: It is best if magi keep at least a bit of mana in reserve for emergencies... so that they can cast defenses around other party members when and if they run out in battle).