DRAGON WARS

QUICK START · EARLY TEST BUILD

This is a first-person 3D re-imagining of Interplay's 1989 *Dragon Wars*. It follows the original manual's rules for characters, skills, combat and magic, and uses the original game's map layouts, with new graphics, sound and music. It is a work in progress: read what is and isn't in yet before you dive in.

1. INSTALL

1. Download **DragonWars-Setup.exe** from the download page and run it. No admin rights are needed; it installs for your user.
2. The installer is code-signed, but Windows may still show a **SmartScreen** notice the first time (a new download has no history yet): click **More info → Run anyway**.
3. Launch **Dragon Wars** from the Start menu (or tick the desktop shortcut option during setup).
4. The game checks for updates on start. If a newer version is out, choose **Update now**: it downloads, installs and restarts itself.

2. CONTROLS

Key	What it does
`W` / `S` or arrows	Step forward / back
`A` / `D` or left / right arrows	Turn 90 degrees
`Q` / `E`	Sidestep left / right
`C` or `Tab`	Character sheet (attributes, skills, items, spells, bandage)
`Space` or `F`, or a click on a person, shop or door	Walk to the nearest person, shop or door and talk to it, buy, or enter. A hint just above the party cards says what is in reach.
`Esc`	Menu: resume, save game, load game, options (music, effects and ambience volume, fullscreen, lightning flashes, the anonymous

	usage switch, rename your heroes), quit game (asks first)
`P`	Places on this map: doors, shops and people, nearest first, with which way to walk. Click one to walk there.
`M`	Mute or unmute the music
`Enter`	Start from the title screen (or click Begin; Load game and Options are there too)
`PgUp` / `PgDn`	Jump to the previous / next map (a testing aid)

The party cards along the bottom show each hero's Health (red), Stun (yellow) and Power (blue). The minimap, top right, fills in as you walk; the yellow triangle is your party and points the way you are facing.

3. YOUR PARTY

Four heroes start with **nothing**: Namtar's men took it all, so everyone fights with fists. Heroes have no classes. Each has:

- **STR, DEX, INT, SPR** - Strength adds damage (beyond what a weapon needs), Dexterity sets **AV** and **DV** (Dex ÷ 4) and acting order, Intelligence helps spells hit, Spirit sets Power.
- **Health and Stun** - damage comes off both. Stun is smaller, so characters usually fall **unconscious** (0 Stun) before they die (0 Health). Stun refills after every fight; Health does not.
- **Power** - twice your Spirit, spent on spells. It does **not** regenerate on its own; a **Dragonstone** restores it.
- **Skills** - Bandage, Lockpick, Club, Blade, Fistfighting, Low Magic and so on. Each level of a weapon skill adds 1 AV with that kind of weapon.

Press `C` for the character sheet. Leveling follows the original game: experience from fights fills a bar (100, then 300, 600, 1000 and so on for each level) and every level gives **2 character points** and nothing else. Health, stun and power never grow on their own, so points are how a hero improves. Costs: Strength and Intelligence 1 point, Dexterity, Spirit and Health 2 points (Health buys +1 maximum). There are 27 skills; most lore skills cost 1, Bandage, Hiding, Lockpick and the eight weapon skills cost 2 per level, Low Magic 5 for the first level and 2 after, and High, Sun and Druid Magic 10 for the first level (they need Low Magic first).

Companions

Up to three people can join your four heroes. Look for the barkeeps and the camps' recruiters (press `P` to find them): choose **Ask for volunteers** and someone may step forward. Companions appear as smaller cards down the right side of the screen and fight with you.

4. EXPLORING AND FINDING THINGS

Walk the streets and rooms. Doorways (shown in orange on the minimap) can be walked through. Doors into towns, ruins and dungeons ask "Enter...?"; step off the edge of a town to leave it and return to the overworld. Some cells hold events. Event text from the original game appears in the log. When it names attackers, they show up. Otherwise you may find scrap (a stick, a knife, a bottle, rags): items go to the hero best suited to use them and are equipped automatically if they are better than what that hero has.

Wounded? A hero with **Bandage** can patch up the most hurt ally from the character sheet (ready again after a few steps).

Purgatory and the weather. You start in the slums of Purgatory, and they are meant to be somewhere you want to leave: a ruined prison of a city, with houses fallen or burnt out, sewage running down the unpaved streets, curses at Namtar scrawled on the walls and a sky that smoulders red. Every outdoor place has its own sky, and it changes as you play (day into golden hour, dusk into night); storms over Purgatory and the Necropolis bring lightning and thunder. If flashes bother you, switch them off in `Esc` → Options ("Lightning flashes in storms").

5. COMBAT

- Heroes act in order of **Dexterity**, then the enemies act one at a time. Slow characters (often casters) go last.
- How many enemies you face depends on the room: a one-wide corridor holds one, a corridor open on one side two, an open area up to three.
- **Attack** - a normal blow. **Mighty** - -2 AV for +50% damage. **Defend** - +2 DV until your next turn. **Flee** - may fail.
- **Hit chance** depends on the attacker's AV against the target's DV (about 55% when equal, 7% per point of difference). Armor soaks damage first.
- **Spell** opens your spell list. Some spells cost a fixed amount of Power; others (like Sun Stroke) let you choose how much to invest, up to twice your school's skill level. Healing

spells are aimed by clicking a hero's card.
- Win to earn experience and gold. If the whole party falls, the guards drag you back to the start and take half your gold (a placeholder; the real game has permanent death).

6. WHAT IS AND ISN'T IN YET

> **Working:** the original game's own scripts (people to talk to, the manual's story paragraphs, shops with the original prices, healers, inns and loot), recruiting companions, the original leveling rules, saving and loading (three slots plus an autosave), travel between the original maps (walk through a door to enter a town, ruin or dungeon; step off its edge to leave), exploring the original maps in 3D, party and skills, character sheet, turn-based combat with spells, loot, encounters matched to the original text, music, sound and particle effects, skies that change and storm, the Escape menu, self-updating installer.

> **Not yet:** ships between islands; permanent death and the Well of Souls; opening secret and locked doors; using items and spells out in the world; most spells; the original game's monster and portrait art (the 3D monsters and townsfolk are stand-ins).

7. TROUBLESHOOTING

- **No sound?** Press `Esc` → Options and check the volumes and the mute box. Make sure Windows isn't muting the app in the Volume Mixer.
- **Game won't start or crashes?** Send the log: `%USERPROFILE%\AppData\LocalLow\DefaultCompany\Dragon Wars\Player.log`.
- **Update failed?** Download the latest installer from the download page and run it over your existing install; your settings are kept.
- **Uninstall:** Windows Settings → Apps → Dragon Wars.
- **Privacy:** when the game starts, and every few minutes while it runs, its update check also tells the download server a random install id, the game version, how long it has been running, your highest hero level and the map you are on. No name, no save file, nothing personal. It is only used to count how many people play. Switch it off in `Esc` → Options (“Share anonymous usage stats”); the game still checks for updates.

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