

CONAN THE BARBARIAN

An adventure wargame of the Hyborian Age

Player's Manual · Version 1.8.0

Tronsoft Games · Calvin Robert Glomb

For 2 to 4 houses · 1 to 4 players · 30 to 120 minutes

1. The game in brief

Four realms ring the free city of Shadizar. Each house — Aquilonia, Turan, Vendhya, Stygia — sends five named agents across the map to sway provinces, steal relics, murder and beguile rivals, foil their secret schemes and, above all, win the service of **Conan of Cimmeria**, a barbarian hero who belongs to no one for long. The first house to reach the victory total (default 35 VP) at the end of a round wins; otherwise the leader after the last round (default 12).

2. Setting up

On the opening screen choose who commands each house: Human, Computer (Novice, Veteran — the default — or Master), or Absent. At least two houses must take part. Choose the length and the victory total and press **Begin the Age**. With more than one human the screen is curtained between turns. Each house starts at its capital with five agents of skill 2 and 4 gold, two secret schemes, and Conan stands in Shadizar.

In a three-house game the house with rivals on both borders begins with 9 renown (VP) to make up for its position. Absent houses leave their capitals to the local lords, and those cities pay no tribute.

3. The map

The map is a ring of four identical realms around Shadizar. Every realm has a capital, two home provinces, a monster's lair toward the centre and a great border city it shares with its neighbour.

House	Capital	Home provinces	Lair	Border city (shared)
Aquilonia — The Lion Throne	Tarantia	Bossonian Marches, Greyfen	Tower of Ul-Zhar (Horned Shade, strength 14)	Belverus
Turan — The Horse Khans	Aghrapur	Hyrkanian Steppe, Cimmeria	The Iron Crag (Frost Wurm, strength 14)	Khorshemish
Vendhya — The Spice Princes	Ayodhya	Spice Coast, The Jade Road	Jungles of Zemb (Grey Ape-God, strength 14)	Messantia
Stygia — The Serpent Priesthood	Khemi	The Red Waste, Delta of the Styx	Serpent Temple (Great Serpent, strength 14)	Zamboula

Control and influence

Each province holds influence from the houses and its local lords, at most 5 per house. A house controls a province when its influence is strictly the greatest. Influence beyond the limit is taken from the strongest rival instead.

4. The round

1. An **event card** is drawn and Conan's **desire** is redrawn. 2. If he serves no one, Conan wanders: in a lair he may fight its monster on his own (2d6+7 against its strength), leaving the relic where it lies. 3. From round 3, Xul the Undying strides and holds his rite (section 8). 4. Each house takes its turn; the first house changes every round. 5. At the end of the round every house collects gold (1 + provinces held), Conan's bond shortens by one, and the victory total is checked.

Your turn

Each agent may move once (along a road) and then take one action. An agent that has acted cannot move. You may also recruit one replacement for a slain agent (4 gold; it arrives at your capital at skill 1-3) and, if Conan serves you, move him up to two provinces and give him one order. At the end of your turn you collect **tribute**: +1 VP for each great city you hold other than your own capital (at most 2) and +2 VP while Conan serves you.

5. The agents

Agent	Wins Conan by	Movement and sway	What it does
Wizard	Bind	Moves 1; sway +1	Curses a rival agent here or one province away, scribes a rival's secret scheme and foils it (the rival must draw another), and translocates to any great city. Binds the hero by sorcery: an easy roll, but a failed binding gets the wizard slain, and when the binding lapses Conan will not deal with that house for two rounds.
Warrior	Spar	Moves 1; sway +1	Duels rival agents, seizes provinces by force and, with comrades beside him, can storm a monster's lair. Wins the hero's respect with steel.
Courtesan	Charm	Moves 1; sway +2	The strongest hand at swaying a province (+2 influence). Beguiles a rival agent so it loses its next turn and bleeds a gold to your purse. Conan will never raise his sword against her.
Assassin	Discord	Moves 1; sway +0 (cannot sway)	Strikes down rival agents. Cannot win the hero, but can poison his bond with a rival so he rides away from them. Escapes the hero's blade more often than any other.
Thief	Heist	Moves 2; sway +1	Moves up to two provinces. Steals loose relics, lifts them from rival carriers, and robs rival treasuries. Tempts the hero with a share of a heist (costs 2 gold).

Rolls

Every roll is two six-sided dice. An agent adds its skill (1-3 stars), its trait, and the event of the round. Opposed rolls compare both sides; the game shows the chance before you act and the dice after.

Duel (warrior, +2; a defending warrior +2): win by 3 or more and the loser dies; win narrowly and the loser limps home. **Strike** (assassin, +3): a win kills; failing by 4 or more gets the assassin caught. **Curse** (wizard, +1; a wizard target +2; a target here or one province away): win by 2 or more to kill, narrowly to send it home; double ones is a fatal backlash. **Beguile** (courtesan, +2): the target loses its next turn and pays her a gold. **Steal**: 7+ (9+ in a great city). **Lift** a relic from a carrier: opposed, +1. **Rob** a rival treasury: 8+, up to 3 gold. **Storm a lair** (warrior): 2d6 + twice skill + 2 per friendly agent present against the monster's strength; failure is death. **Bribe** any province: 3 gold for +2 influence (+3 for a courtesan).

Blood feuds

When one of your agents dies at a rival house's hands (a duel, a murder, a curse or its backlash, its guards catching your thief, or Conan in its service), your house swears a **blood feud** against that house for 3 rounds, shown under your house's name. While it stands, your agents duel, strike and curse that house's agents at **+1**, marked "feud +1" on the action. The first life you take back pays **+1 VP** and settles the feud; the house you avenged yourself on swears its own. A new death at another house's hands turns your feud on that house instead. Deaths to monsters, to Xul or to a hangman swear no feud.

Hardened by deeds

Every second success at a hard deed (duel, storm, strike, curse, scry, beguile, steal, lift, rob, winning or turning Conan, a jailbreak) raises the agent's skill by one star, to three at most.

6. Character traits

Each named agent carries one trait. A house's opening five are dealt from the three characters of each kind, so rosters vary from game to game; recruits bring their own.

Trait	Agent	Effect
Iron Arm	Warrior	+1 in duels and when storming a lair.
Old Soldier	Warrior	+2 when sparring with Conan.
Shield-Bearer	Warrior	+2 to stand against duels, strikes and curses.
Silver Tongue	Courtesan	+2 when charming Conan.
Spymistress	Courtesan	+1 to beguile, and a beguiled rival pays her two gold.
Beloved of the City	Courtesan	+1 influence whenever she sways or bribes in a great city.
Venom	Assassin	+1 to strike.
Ghost	Assassin	Never caught after a failed strike; slips Conan's blade on 8+ instead of 10+.
Whisperer	Assassin	+2 to sow discord.
Nimble Fingers	Thief	+1 to steal, lift, rob and break Conan out of a dungeon.
The Fence	Thief	Heists cost 1 gold and roll +1.
Roofrunner	Thief	Moves up to three provinces.
Stormcaller	Wizard	+1 to curse.
Seer	Wizard	+2 to scry and foil.
Binder	Wizard	+2 to bind Conan.

7. Conan of Cimmeria

Only one attempt to win or turn Conan may be made by a house each turn. A rival's hold on him makes winning him harder by its remaining bond. The event cards Carouse (+2) and Black Mood (−2) change every attempt, and Eclipse forbids them.

Agent	Way	Roll	Bond
Warrior	Spar	2d6 + skill $\geq$ 9	3 rounds
Courtesan	Charm	2d6 + skill $\geq$ 9 (8 in a great city)	3 rounds
Thief	Heist (2 gold)	2d6 + skill $\geq$ 8	2 rounds
Wizard	Bind	2d6 + skill $\geq$ 7; failure: the wizard is slain	2 rounds; then he refuses that house for 2 rounds
Assassin	Discord (rival's hero only)	2d6 + skill $\geq$ 8	breaks the rival's bond

Desire

Desire	Effect
Gold	He wants coin. Thieves roll +2 to tempt him.
Glory	He wants a worthy fight. Warriors roll +2 to spar with him.
Love	He wants company. Courtesans roll +2 to charm him.
Wrath	He hates sorcery today. Wizards roll -2 to bind him; assassins +2 to sow discord.

Orders

While he serves you, Conan moves up to two provinces and then takes one order: **slay** the monster in a lair (2d6+8 against its strength; the relic is yours at once and it counts as a deed), **cut down** a rival agent (never a courtesan; an assassin slips away on 10+, a Ghost on 8+), **sack** a province (all rival influence swept away, or 3 from each in a capital, and +2 of yours), or undertake his **saga**.

Sagas

When a house wins him, Conan swears a deed in a province two or three marches away, marked on the map with a banner in that house's colour. At that province order the saga: on 5+ he fulfils it for +3 VP and his bond grows by a round (to three at most). A failed saga is lost; the bond stands.

Saga	Oath	Where it may lie
The Captive in the Dungeon	Conan swears to free a captive from the dungeons of ...	Shadizar, Tarantia, Belverus, Aghrapur, Khorshemish, Ayodhya, Messantia, Khemi, Zamboula
Gold of the Barrow-Kings	Conan swears to rob the barrow-kings buried beneath ...	Bossonian Marches, Cimmeria, Hyrkanian Steppe, The Jade Road, The Red Waste
A Blood Debt	Conan swears to settle an old blood debt in ...	Shadizar, Tarantia, Bossonian Marches, Greyfen, Belverus, Aghrapur, Cimmeria, Hyrkanian Steppe, Khorshemish, Ayodhya, The Jade Road, Spice Coast, Messantia, Khemi, The Red Waste, Delta of the Styx, Zamboula
The Corsair's Hoard	Conan swears to dig up a corsair's hoard on the shore of ...	Greyfen, Spice Coast, Messantia, Delta of the Styx
The Witch of the Fens	Conan swears to hunt the witch who haunts ...	Bossonian Marches, Greyfen, Jungles of Zemb, Delta of the Styx
A Vow at the Old Shrine	Conan swears to keep a vow at the old shrine of ...	Tower of Ul-Zhar, The Iron Crag, Jungles of Zemb, Serpent Temple

Career

Conan grows older as the age wears on. His current stage is shown on his card and announced when it changes.

Career	From round	Effect
Thief of Shadizar	1	Young and hungry: thieves roll +1 to tempt him.
Corsair of the Black Coast	4	A pirate with a pirate queen's memory: courtesans roll +1 to charm him, and when he sacks a province his master also takes 2 gold.
Captain of Mercenaries	7	A soldier among soldiers: warriors roll +1 to spar with him, and he fights monsters at +1.
Warlord	10	Kings court him now: the house he serves takes 1 more VP of tribute each turn.

In chains

The event Conan in Chains throws him into the dungeon of a great city and breaks any bond. No one may win him there, but a thief in that city may break him out (8+); the rescuer wins him for three rounds. Otherwise he escapes after two rounds.

8. Xul the Undying

An ancient sorcerer sleeps beneath one of the four lairs. At the start of round 3 he wakes there and walks abroad. At the start of every later round he strides one province toward the great city where the houses together hold the most influence, then holds a **dark rite** where he stands: every agent there rolls 2d6 + skill (a Shield-Bearer +2) and on less than 8 flees to its capital, dropping anything it carries, and every house loses 1 influence in that province. If Conan stands there serving no one, he fights Xul first (2d6 + 7 against strength 15); a victory destroys Xul for no one.

Destroying him. Conan in your service may destroy him as his order (2d6 + 8 ≥ 15; +1 as Captain of Mercenaries). A warrior may challenge him (2d6 + twice skill + 2 per friendly agent present ≥ 15); a failed challenge is death. Whoever destroys him scores **+5 VP**, and a Conan victory counts as a monster slain for deed schemes. Xul can be switched off on the opening screen.

9. Scoring

Source	Points
Control a province	+4 VP
Take a rival capital	+6 VP
Claim a named relic	+4 VP
Slay an agent of a named house	+3 VP
Conan slays a monster in your service	+4 VP
Relic carried to your capital	+3 VP
Tribute per great city held (not your capital), each of your turns	+1 VP, at most 2
Conan in your service, each of your turns	+2 VP

Source	Points
Saga fulfilled	+3 VP
Xul the Undying destroyed	+5 VP
Vengeance in a blood feud	+1 VP
Monument raised in your capital	+1 VP
Renown, three-house middle seat only	+9 VP at the start

Each house holds two secret schemes, replaced as soon as one is done. A rival who claims the relic you were after thwarts that scheme, and a rival wizard who scries it may foil it; either way you draw a new one.

Monuments

On your turn you may spend gold to raise one monument in your own capital, as long as you hold it. Each kind can be raised once; the first costs 5 gold and each later one 2 gold more (5, 7, 9, 11). Every monument scores +1 VP at once and lends a lasting benefit.

Monument	Benefit
City Walls	Rival agents cannot sway or bribe in your capital (they may still seize it by force).
Hall of Heroes	Your agents win or turn Conan at +1 (spar, charm, heist, binding, discord).
Grand Bazaar	Caravans bring 1 extra gold to your treasury each round.
Barracks	Your recruits arrive with at least two stars of skill.

Relics

A relic carried to your capital scores +3 VP and lends your house a lasting power for the rest of the age.

Relic	Power once carried home	Where
Crown of the Frost Kings	Your warriors fight at +1 (duels, storming lairs, challenging Xul).	Guarded by the Frost Wyrms in The Iron Crag
Heart of Ul-Zhar	Your wizards curse and scry at +1.	Guarded by the Horned Shade in Tower of Ul-Zhar
Eye of the Serpent	Your assassins strike at +1.	Guarded by the Great Serpent in Serpent Temple
Jade Idol of Zemb	Pilgrims bring 1 extra gold to your treasury each round.	Guarded by the Grey Ape-God in Jungles of Zemb
Star-Sapphire of Shadizar	Your thieves steal, lift, rob and break locks at +1.	Loose in Shadizar at the start
Tiara of Queen Ysolde	Your courtesans charm and beguile at +1.	Surfaces with the event Rumour of a Hoard
Cup of the Nine Kings	When you win Conan, his bond to you lasts one round longer.	Surfaces with the event Rumour of a Hoard

Relic	Power once carried home	Where
Silver Mask of Thal	Your agents stand at +1 against strikes, duels, curses and Xul's rites.	Surfaces with the event Rumour of a Hoard
Black Lotus Casket	Your wizards bind Conan at +1.	Surfaces with the event Rumour of a Hoard

10. Events

Event	Effect
Blood Moon	Sorcery runs hot. Wizards roll +2 this round.
Festival of Lanterns	The cities make merry. Courtesans roll +2 this round.
The Hero Carouses	Conan is deep in his cups and in good humour. All attempts to enlist him roll +2.
The Hero's Black Mood	Conan broods on old wrongs. All attempts to enlist him roll -2.
Sandstorm	No agent may enter Zamboula this round.
Plague in the Cities	Every great city loses one influence of every house.
Rumour of a Hoard	A lost treasure surfaces in a distant province.
Rebellion	A province held by the leading house rises; its influence is swept away.
Tax Windfall	Every house gains 3 gold.
The Mercenary Wars	Conan breaks any bond and rides for the wars in a great city.
Night of Knives	Assassins roll +2 this round.
Market of Thieves	Thieves roll +2 this round.
Tourney of Champions	Warriors roll +2 this round.
Eclipse	An evil omen. No house may enlist the hero this round.
Caravan Season	Each house gains 1 gold per great city it controls.
Wanderlust	Conan wanders two provinces, whoever he serves.
Conan in Chains	Drunk and brawling, Conan is thrown into a city dungeon. Any bond breaks. A thief in that city may break him out and win him for three rounds; otherwise he escapes in two.
Witch-Hunt	Mobs rise against sorcery: every wizard in a great city is driven home.
Pilgrims' Gold	Pilgrims crowd Shadizar. Whoever holds it gains 4 gold.
The Beasts Grow Bold	Every living monster gains +1 strength (to 16 at most).

Event	Effect
Royal Amnesty	Old grudges are forgiven: Conan forgets his anger at every house, and every beguiled agent comes to its senses.
The Oracle Speaks	Each house learns one secret scheme of a rival.
Famine	Granaries stand empty. No house collects income at the end of this round.

11. Provinces and roads

Province	Terrain	Role	Roads to
Shadizar	city	great city	Tower of Ul-Zhar, Belverus, The Iron Crag, Khorshemish, Jungles of Zemb, Messantia, Serpent Temple, Zamboula
Tarantia	city	capital of Aquilonia	Bossonian Marches, Greyfen
Bossonian Marches	forest	—	Tarantia, Belverus, Tower of Ul-Zhar
Greyfen	marsh	—	Tarantia, Zamboula, Tower of Ul-Zhar
Tower of Ul-Zhar	waste	lair: Horned Shade	Bossonian Marches, Greyfen, Shadizar
Belverus	city	great city	Bossonian Marches, Shadizar, Cimmeria
Aghrapur	city	capital of Turan	Hyrkanian Steppe, Cimmeria
Cimmeria	tundra	—	Aghrapur, Belverus, The Iron Crag
Hyrkanian Steppe	plains	—	Aghrapur, Khorshemish, The Iron Crag
The Iron Crag	mountain	lair: Frost Wyrms	Hyrkanian Steppe, Cimmeria, Shadizar
Khorshemish	city	great city	Hyrkanian Steppe, Shadizar, The Jade Road
Ayodhya	city	capital of Vendhya	Spice Coast, The Jade Road
The Jade Road	plains	—	Ayodhya, Khorshemish, Jungles of Zemb
Spice Coast	coast	—	Ayodhya, Messantia, Jungles of Zemb
Jungles of Zemb	jungle	lair: Grey Ape-God	Spice Coast, The Jade Road, Shadizar
Messantia	coast	great city	Spice Coast, Shadizar, Delta of the Styx
Khemi	city	capital of Stygia	The Red Waste, Delta of the Styx
The Red Waste	desert	—	Khemi, Zamboula, Serpent Temple
Delta of the Styx	marsh	—	Khemi, Messantia, Serpent Temple
Serpent Temple	ruin	lair: Great Serpent	The Red Waste, Delta of the Styx, Shadizar
Zamboula	desert	great city	Greyfen, The Red Waste, Shadizar

12. Controls

Select an agent from the roster on the right or click its token; click a glowing province to move it; press an action button to act. Drag to pan, wheel or pinch to zoom, hover for details. The overview minimap in the corner of the map shows the whole realm, with the part in view framed in gold; click or drag on it to look elsewhere. Dashed **trails** in each house's colour (gold for Conan) show where rival agents and the hero went since your last turn. **The Ledger**, folded under the houses on the left, counts each house's kills, Conans won, relics, sagas, monsters, avenged feuds, monuments and agents lost. Conan is directed with Direct Conan and a click on a gold-ringed province.

Key	Does
1-5	Select an agent
C	Counsel for the selected agent (or for Conan)
Tab	Next agent that has not acted
H	Direct Conan
U	Undo the last move
E	End turn
L	Chronicle
+ / - / 0	Zoom in, out, fit
Arrow keys	Pan
M	Show or hide the overview minimap
T	Show or hide movement trails
?	List every key
Esc	Clear selection, close window

13. Saving, opponents and settings

Deeds of Legend. Twelve achievements are kept across games in this browser, shown on the opening screen and announced on the final screen of the age in which a human house wins them.

Deed	To earn it
Victor of the Age	Win an age.
Lord of the Four Realms	Win an age against three rival houses.
Bane of Masters	Win an age against a Master computer house.
The Swift Age	Win by the end of round 5.
Without a Scratch	Win without losing a single agent.
Kingmaker	Win Conan's service three times in one age.
Keeper of Relics	Carry three relics home in one age.

Deed	To earn it
Teller of Sagas	See two of Conan's sagas fulfilled in one age.
Monster-Bane	Have two monsters slain in your name in one age.
Bane of Xul	Destroy Xul the Undying.
Blood for Blood	Avenge three blood feuds in one age.
Builder of Wonders	Raise all four monuments in one age.

End-turn guard. Pressing End turn while agents are still ready asks for a second press, so no agent is forgotten. **Tips.** New players see one short tip at a time; each is remembered once dismissed, and Hide tips (or the opening-screen option) turns them off.

Counsel. Select an agent and press ⊙ Counsel (or C) to see what a Master computer house would do in your place: the advised province is ringed in gold on the map and the advised action is outlined. With Conan in your service, Counsel also advises his march and order. Counsel is worked out on a copy of the game and changes nothing.

The game saves itself after every change and offers **Resume saved game** on the opening screen; **Save** saves at once. Saves from every earlier version are converted when resumed. A move can be taken back until the agent acts, unless it delivered a relic. Computer houses come in three tempers: Novice misjudges often, Veteran plays a fair game, Master weighs every option. Sound can be switched off; all sound is synthesised in the browser. On the final screen, **Save the chronicle** saves the story of the age (standing, honours and the chronicle round by round) as a text file.

14. Honours and the Hall of Ages

When the age ends, titles go to the house that clearly leads each tally (a shared lead earns nothing):

Title	Earned by
Kingmaker	the house that won Conan's service most often
The Bloodied Hand	the house that slew the most rival agents
Keeper of Relics	the house that brought home the most relics
Teller of Sagas	the house that saw the most of Conan's sagas fulfilled
Monster-Bane	the house that had the most monsters slain in its name
Bane of Xul	the house that destroyed Xul the Undying
The Golden Purse	the house that ended the age with the fullest treasury

The opening screen keeps a Hall of Ages: the last ten ages played in this browser, with the victor, score and round.

15. Credits

Design direction: Calvin Robert Glomb. Developed for Tronsoft Games with the assistance of Claude (Anthropic). Original setting, characters, map and text; no third-party code, fonts, images or audio. Copyright © 2026 Calvin Robert Glomb / Tronsoft Games.