

# 33 ways to have fun at a Latvian larp

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SCENE

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PLAY

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We have compiled just for you a list of tried and tested methods of role-playing fun to be had at a Latvian larp.

If you follow just a few of them you will learn to rev up your game play, create a unique character, spice up your equipment and slaughter your enemy while bringing a smile to their face.

Each and every one of the 33 points have been gathered by Latvian larpers through trial and error out of more than 10 games encompassing historic, fantasy and post nuclear genres. Do not just take our word for it, but listen to the experiences of all the numerous satisfied Latvian larpers that have been there and done it first hand.

Go on, give it a shot. What do you stand to lose, apart from your money and time?

1. First of all, if you have no clue what Latvia even is – stop right here! Go into [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and type in “LATVIA”. I think you know what needs to be done next...
2. This is the most important piece of advice you will receive – Get your butt off the couch and get down here!

It's easy, just go online – book a flight on [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com) or a bus ride on [www.eurolines.com](http://www.eurolines.com). Once you step off your plane or bus the real fun will begin.

## I. Game play

3. Arrive at the game, put on your costume and go exploring. Don't stop wandering through woods, fields, swamps and ravines until your feet fall off or you pass out from exhaustion.
4. Take a shot of Red Bull or any other highly caffeinated drink, then start picking up quests anywhere you go. Don't stop until you've reached the maximum level for your character and can wipe out anyone you lay eyes on.
5. Ask the game masters for an epic quest and get really cryptic instructions to go find heck knows what, heck knows where and heck knows how. Spend the rest of the day trying to figure out the riddle and getting lost.
6. Enjoy the pleasure of a treasure hunt for an historic artifact which the game masters simply forgot to bury or happened to misplace.
7. Don't be afraid to get wet – a little dip might pay off if there happens to be a sunken treasure at the bottom of the lake.



KSH

8. Put on your gas mask and step into a radioactive building to scavenge through apartments filled with abandoned furniture, clothing and other forgotten commodities. Any electronic or rare items will fetch you a nice price in the black market. Just make sure no mutants or druggies are hiding behind closed doors.
9. To gain fame, women and free drinks – learn to play a musical instrument well and make sure to take it along with you to the game.
10. Want to make a scandal in a public place? It's easy! Just grab anyone that's walking by and start massaging their shoulders and back. People might stare and point, the guards might grab you and throw you in jail, but at least you got a good shag out of it.<sup>1</sup>
11. Do the game masters seem to be ignoring you? Does all the action seem to be somewhere else? There is an easy solution – lie down on the ground and simply watch the grass grow. This is the key to any larp based on Latvian historic re-enactment, and is a proven method to get a team's morale up.
12. Does it seem like the game is boring and nothing much is happening with your character? Don't fret! Just commit suicide and spend the next couple of hours doing some very satisfying community work<sup>2</sup> – chopping wood, stirring pots and carrying water. Not only will you get the appreciation of run-down game masters, but you will also trim your waistline and burn some extra calories.

## II. Character play

13. Come to the game incognito – wear a bag over your head and pretend to be deaf, dumb and blind.

<sup>1</sup> Sexual intercourse in Latvian larps is enacted by the act of massage.

<sup>2</sup> In Latvian larps it is a standard that once a Player Character dies in the game world, they have a chance to be reborn or enter the game once again with a new character, but have to spend some *time-out*. The *time-out* action can be specified by Game Masters making players act as Non-Player Characters for a while, helping out around the Game Master camp or in the community kitchen.



- Players working out in the kitchen, "Dusk of Uvaisa" 2006
- (opposite page) A scavenger, filming of "SUX2" trailer 2009

*Photo*  
courtesy of the author



- A virgin sacrifice waiting to be eaten by the Devil, “Ancient Latvian game: Blood feud” 2005
- A peasant hard at work on a rice field, “The Shogun’s Way” 2006
- An old man with no ambitions but to travel the world, “Wolfsong 2” 2007

Photo  
courtesy of the author

14. Be the only virgin character all through the game in order to enjoy multiple deaths by being sacrificed to appease the Devil’s wishes.
15. Start the game as a lowly peasant, but end it as the Emperor’s personal advisor by working hard, hoarding your harvest and bribing the whole court.
16. Happiness can be found in any pointless character. Try spending a game as an old man with 1 hit point, with no ambitions in life, just wandering around enjoying the scenery and you will see how ‘Zen’ life will be.
17. Come to the game with your friend and become inseparable joining yourselves at the hip with leather straps to play Siamese twins – twice as many arms and heads will get you ahead a lot faster!
18. If you’re a young man who finds himself low on cash and enjoys meeting new people, why not have a friendly nurse at the local hospital make you some C cup implants? Your friends will suddenly find you more appealing and start buying you drinks.
19. Here is a tip for those of you that are devoted masochists, trying role-playing a vampire and willingly go to visit the dwarfs. These lovely bearded people are true sadists when it comes to vampires – they will pull out your teeth and make you drink milk.
20. Can’t decide what character to play? Too many appealing choices? Do you happen to have a multiple personality disorder? No problem! There is a place just right for you; the non-player character team led by the game masters is exactly where you need to be. Be as many characters as you can be, see as much as there is to see, meet everyone who is anyone – that is the beauty of the NPC.

### III. Equipment

21. If you happen to arrive at the game without any weapons or armor, don't panic! You can always turn around and flee as soon as you see another player and spend the rest of the game running.
22. Making a fun and practical outfit for your Latvian larp is simple. All you have to do is steal your grandma's old worn out curtains; hopefully they're not still hanging on the windows. Cut out a hole in one of them to slip over your head and use the other one to wrap around your waist – voila! Now you have yourself a smashing costume that is both appealing and practical. Similar results can be achieved with well-used potato sacks, though not likely to turn any heads.
23. Invent a new line of fashion for all the Undead – sew a dead crow's head and wings to the back of your kimono and you'll be the talk of the town.
24. Gain the respect of your brethren and scare the pants off your enemy by wearing a very appealing pelvic guard in the form of a bovine skull.
25. To become the scariest villain of all times there is only one piece of equipment you **MUST HAVE** – a basket over your head.
26. Any ordinary household item can become a deadly weapon in the right hands. Just boffer a showerhead that's still attached to the pipe and you have a strike area of 2 meters in diameter.
27. Practice target throwing tennis balls, because you never know when they might become deadly shuriken in your hands.



- An undead sorceress inventing a new fashion, "Wolfsong 2" 2007
- A bovine skull used as a groin guard, "Wolfsong" 2006

*Photo*  
courtesy of the author

## IV Antagonism

28. When facing an enemy army twice the size of yours, just pull down your pants to reveal your lovely butt cheeks and make lewd gestures with your boffer sword in the face of danger.
29. An easy way to take down your opponent is to be an early bird – get up with the sun just creeping over the horizon and go to the enemy’s camp and collect any weapons left unattended. Once they wake up they will be left helpless as babes.
30. While the game masters are asleep, meet up with your rival clan for a small drink and in your mutual moment of stupor propose genocide on a third clan. Put your plan into action before the sun comes up and enjoy the shocked expressions of the game masters when they find a whole village left to die in their own pool of blood for no apparent reason or plotline.
31. Create a real bio-chemical weapon made of rotten meat and eggs and go around using it on unsuspecting victims that pass out from one sniff of its fumes.
32. If you happen to see a girl wading through a stream wearing a leather mini skirt and bra while holding a sword in each hand – run! An encounter with such an opponent, while fun, will certainly inflict you with -10 moral damage and serve you a very serious ass whooping.
33. Make sure to triple cross anyone you play with. Why not use this tried and tested gimmick for unlimited fun and confusion – pretend to be a peasant who is a ninja spying for a rival samurai clan, but who in reality is a rogue warrior sworn to protect geishas and the innocent.

## In a nutshell

Making a larp is hard work and you can never satisfy everybody, but in the end what really matters is that the people who took part in it had FUN!

There will always be things that can go wrong – the plot might be too complex or too shallow; the location physically taxing; the weather horrible; the props cheap; and the players out of control. But that is just something any game master has to live with, and they'll go with the flow once players take over their vision.

It really doesn't matter how the game is played or organized, what matters is that players find their own bit of heaven in the simulated reality – whether it be in exploring a fantasy world, looking for treasure, sitting around a campfire talking to friends, or even burning, pillaging and raping.

Nobody really cares if you are an outstanding actor or an incredible fighter. Don't expect anything and do the unexpected – that is something that will guarantee you and all the other players immeasurable joy and innumerable memories.

Anything is possible in a Latvian larp – so go on and choose your own poison. The only thing that you must do to have fun is forget about the outside world; forget what you *have* to be and be exactly what you *want* to be.