

Savage Worlds

Mailing Lists General FAQ

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Great White Games / Pinnacle Entertainment Group website

<http://www.greatwhitegames.com> and <http://www.peginc.com>

Savage Worlds Yahoo Group (primary mailing list)

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Savage_Worlds/

Savage Worlds Showdown Yahoo Group (SW skirmishes)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/savageworldsshowdown/>

The Backup Mailing List's website

<http://savage.lythia.com/>

Savage Worlds Wiki FAQ

<http://rorschach.net/SWFAQ>

Savage Worlds

Savage Worlds is the new game system and line of books from Shane Lacy Hensley, the creator of Deadlands. All you need to play is the Savage Worlds rulebook and one of the setting books, if you want to play in one of the Savage Settings. (actually you'll also need polyhedral dice, pencils and character sheets, but they're cheap). "Fast! Furious! Fun!" is the motto of the game, meaning that it was designed for speed, simplicity and getting the rules out of the way of actually playing the game.

Shane and his friends wanted a game that has all the detailed rules concerning character development and interaction found in today's best role-playing games, but with a streamlined system that allows you to handle a massive skirmish as well as a swashbuckling duel of honor between two mortal enemies. They wanted a game that is easy for the GM. One that made it easy to create non-player-characters and monsters, and keep track of them all during combat. They wanted a game where followers, hirelings and allies weren't forgotten or overlooked by an overworked GM. Where the PCs could actually use the alliances they forge, and the troops they lead. They wanted a game built from the ground up to handle vehicles, from an M1 tank to a hover bike. A game that a new group could use to play through a one-shot scenario in an evening, including the time it took to make characters, or to play an epic campaign that lasts for months.

Savage Worlds can also be used for miniatures skirmish battles instead of RPG campaigns. Each of the skirmish books includes the Savage Worlds Showdown rules, a slightly modified version of the rules presented in the Savage Worlds Rulebook, as well as statistics for units and special rules for each setting.

The Test Drive (free preview of the RPG) and Showdown are available on the Great White Games website, but the full rulebook is now available in stores. The Great White Games' website is at <http://www.greatwhitegames.com> and <http://www.peginc.com> is a mirror for it.

The Savage Worlds mailing lists

There are currently four Savage Worlds mailing lists, not counting ones in other languages: The Yahoo Group (for the RPG rules), the Backup List and the Showdown Group. The original and "primary" mailing list is the Savage Worlds Yahoo Group, which usually discusses the RPG aspect of the rules. A second non-Yahoo list was originally created as a replacement for the Group, but is now a "backup" list in case anything happens to the Group. The backup mailing list also contains an archive of files that were posted to the Group but were deleted to make space. The Savage Worlds Showdown Yahoo Group is exclusively for skirmish games. There is also a "secret" group for authors of SW stuff, and if you get invited you'll have the link then. See above for links to the rest of the groups.

The official Pinnacle/Great White Games forums, which nearly everyone on the three lists visit, are at <http://www.peginc.com/forum> and <http://www.greatwhitegames.com/forum> points to them.

The difference between Savage Worlds RPG and Savage Worlds Showdown

The Savage Worlds rules were originally developed from a miniatures skirmish war-game called Great Rail Wars, a spin-off of Pinnacle's Deadlands RPG. Great Rail Wars shared the setting of Deadlands but had a different set of rules since Deadlands used a "dice pool" system and dice pools are impractical in a miniatures war-game. Savage Worlds was conceived as a sort of hybrid set of rules that could be used for Roleplaying or for miniatures war-gaming equally easily.

The Savage Worlds rulebook is primarily for role-playing campaigns, but Shane has recently released Savage Worlds Showdown, a complete and free set of rules for miniatures battles using the Savage worlds rules. The Showdown rules are functionally the same as the regular Savage Worlds RPG rules with only a few differences. There is no RPG style character creation in Showdown, though Shane has provided some guidelines for creating units with point values for unofficial "home-brew" skirmish scenarios. The first book released for Showdown is the Showdown version of Rippers. The RPG version of Rippers will be released in a few months.

Savage Settings

Generally, Savage Settings are action packed and exciting. You can get a feel for the game by playing through one of the free adventures available. Currently, there are four free adventures you can download from the Pinnacle website: a Pulp heroes adventure (like Indiana Jones) called Eye of Kilquato, a Sword & Sorcery adventure called Jared's Folly (a.k.a. The Red Swamp), a creepy mystery called Shades of Terror and a horror yarn called Dungeon Crawl. Also, people from the Yahoo group have created Steampunk games, Marine games, hard science fiction games, operatic science fiction games, high fantasy games, low fantasy games, and even had a stab at tackling some of Pinnacle's own settings!

Most of the RPG books will be Plot Point books. The Evernight scripted campaign follows a set plot from beginning to end, though the PCs do have some influence in the outcome. Plot Point books are more open: between the middle and the end the PCs can go anywhere and do anything. Open World books that have adventure ideas but no specific plot might exist in the future, but all of the ones currently planned are Plot Point books.

The skirmish books will all contain the Showdown rules and will not need the Savage Worlds (RPG) rulebook. The skirmish books do not use plot points and are more "open" allowing for various battle scenarios.

Deadlands and Savage Worlds

The original Deadlands: The Weird West game had a different system than Savage Worlds (because SW hadn't been developed yet). The system Weird West and subsequent Pinnacle games used has come to be known as the "Classic" system or "Deadlands Classic". Great Rail Wars, a miniatures skirmish game set in the Weird West but using different rules, was released when the original Deadlands games were doing very well in the late 90s. Shane originally had the idea of developing a set of RPG rules based on Great Rail Wars when GRW was being developed, but didn't get the chance until a few years ago.

A Deadlands: The Weird West conversion document is currently available on the Pinnacle website. The conversion contains everything you need to know to run a Weird West campaign using the Savage Worlds rules, if you have the original books.

Shane is writing a new Deadlands Weird West book which uses the Savage Worlds RPG rules. The current working title for it is "Deadlands Reloaded" and it will contain a complete plot point style campaign for the GM as well as information on creating any kind of character you could using the classic Deadlands rules. Although it hasn't been officially announced, a new version of Great Rail Wars based on Showdown is also in the works. Shane has said that he will also release the Savage Worlds versions of Deadlands: Hell On Earth and Deadlands: Lost Colony as two more books or possibly combined into a single book.

Weird Wars

The original Weird Wars: Blood on the Rhine and it's supplements was an alternate World War II setting loosely based on the real WW2, and used the d20 system. Other Weird Wars books based on different wars are in the works, and Tour of Darkness, a Vietnam setting, is in print now. ALL Weird Wars books in print and in future production will use the Savage Worlds rules. This includes the already available Tour of Darkness and the remake of the WW2 Weird Wars book (title unknown at this point).



Smiling Jack

We better let him introduce himself:

THE NAME'S SMILING JACK, PAL! PLEASD TA MEET YA! I'M THE OFFICIAL MASCOT FOR SAVAGE WORLDS, SO WHEREVER YOU SEE ME, IT'S LIKE AN OFFICIAL SEAL OF QUALITY. OF COURSE, THAT'S ONLY FOR SAVAGE WORLDS BOOKS. HERE, I'M JUST ANSWERING A QUESTION FOR THE LAZY JOKERS WHO CAN'T BE BOTHERED TO TYPE AN ANSWER TO EVERY QUESTION IN THE FAQ.

[Matt & John] Hey!

SO WHEN YOU SEE ME, YOU CAN BE SURE THAT IT'S A SAVAGE WORLDS BOOK FILLED WITH YUMMY GOODNESS! ACTUALLY, I FIB: SAVAGE WORLDS BOOKS ARE FILLED WITH THE NASTIEST CRITTERS, THE MOST DEVIIOUS VILLAINS AND THE MOST "INTERESTING TIMES" YOU CAN IMAGINE! YEAH, THOSE GOODY-

GOODY HEROES ARE GOING TO HAVE THEIR HANDS FULL! IT'S NOT CALLED SAVAGE WORLDS FOR NOTHING!

MY IMAGE IS ALSO USED TO POINT OUT WILD CARDS, THE IMPORTANT CHARACTERS IN SAVAGE

WORLDS. WHEN YOU SEE A LITTLE SMILING JACK NEXT TO A NAME (LIKE:  Bruce Campbell) THAT MEANS THE CHARACTER IS A WILD CARD. I'M NOT JUST A PRETTY FACE!

BY THE WAY, THERE'S ALSO A BUNCH OF NEAT SMILING JACK STUFF ON THE PINNACLE / GREAT WHITE GAMES WEBSITE. THERE'S A T SHIRT WITH A FULL BODY PICTURE OF ME AND TELLS ANYONE WHO READS IT ABOUT SAVAGE WORLDS WITHOUT YOU HAVING TO FLAP YER GUMS, THERE'S A BAG OF BENNIES WITH MY HANDSOME FACE ON 'EM, THERE'S A LITTLE REPLICA OF MY HEAD (IT'S SOOO CUTE!) AND I'M ON BOTH JOKERS IN THE SAVAGE WORLDS OVERSIZED CARD DECK!

What's available now

The huge list of Savage Worlds products, both available and up-coming has been split into a separate document. See the "Products FAQ" for more info.

Savage Tales

Basically, Savage Tales are adventures. The Savage Tales sold on RPGNow include

Each Savage Tale is published individually as a pay-for PDF download. (PDF stands for Portable Document Format, a document format that any computer with the Acrobat Reader can view) Savage Tales vary from individual adventures that only take a few sessions of play to miniatures wargame skirmishes and mini-campaign settings.

Individual adventures within a Plot Point book are also called Savage Tales, but the term is usually used for PDF format adventures. Certain battle scenarios in the skirmish books are also called Savage Tales as well.

The Price of Savage Worlds Books

Savage Worlds, Evernight and 50 Fathoms are all priced at \$29.95 for 144 page hardback copies. That's £20 in the UK. The page count might seem skimpy compared to D&D or White Wolf books, but there's a LOT of stuff crammed into those pages, especially in the case of 50 Fathoms. Rippers: The Horror War (miniatures skirmish) is \$25 for 80 pages, but 8 of those pages are full color and it's stand-alone with no need for the rulebook.

Great White Games and Pinnacle Entertainment Group

Both companies are run by Shane Hensley, the creator of Deadlands and Savage Worlds. All Deadlands products, Classic, d20 and Great Rail Wars are Pinnacle products and all Savage Worlds products are Great White Games products. Pinnacle books have numbers like "1110" on the cover and GWG books have numbers like "GWG100000" on the cover.

The Savage Worlds Deadlands books will be Great White Games books.

However, most of the time Pinnacle and Great White Games is synonymous. On RPGNow, all the Savage Worlds stuff is in the Pinnacle section. Savage Worlds books are often referred to as Pinnacle books on the mailing lists and forums, even though they're technically not.

However, when ordering books the distinction can be very important as "PEG100004" doesn't exist. GWG100004, the 50 Fathoms book, does.

Ordering the Books

In addition to buying the books in your Friendly Local Gaming Store, you can order the Savage Worlds rulebook and various other goodies from the website now. A few non-print things are exclusive to the website, but all the important stuff can be ordered from your FLGS. See the Products FAQ for a list of what's currently available, and the Pinnacle / GWG website for up-to-the-minute info.

The Test Drive rules

The Test Drive Rules contain everything you need to know to play Savage Worlds, but the rulebook is much nicer. It also has a lot more stuff in it. More races, weapons, vehicles, Powers, combat moves (essential to long-term campaigns), critters, art and more. It's a really nice book. You know you want it.

A Few Savage Fansites

Savage Heroes, pulls together a lot of the creations from the main SW Group, and play testers, to provide a variety of rules, conversions and adventures. <http://www.savageheroes.com/>

The Savage Worlds Web Ring: <http://c.webring.com/hub?ring=savageworlds&id=3&hub>

Brent Wolke's website is at <http://www.geocities.com/gameworlds>

Jason Young's website is at <http://jnryoung.home.attbi.com/j/sw/>

Randy Mosiondz's website is at <http://members.shaw.ca/mosiondz/>

The Dragonsfoot website, which is primarily devoted to "classic" D&D (OD&D, AD&D1, AD&D2) also has a Savage Worlds section and forum. The SW files section is at <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/sw/> and the forum is at <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/>

Many more Savage Worlds links are available in the Links FAQ and the links section on the Savage Worlds Yahoo Group.

Savage Support

Shane is constantly working on the Pinnacle Website in addition to his other duties. Shane's sorta-monthly column Shooting Blind is updated approximately every blue moon. <http://www.peginc.com/ShootingBlind/index.htm>

There is plenty of free stuff for Savage Worlds on the downloads page. <http://www.peginc.com/Downloads/index.htm>

New Savage Tales, adventures and skirmish scenarios, are coming out on a semi-monthly basis (i.e. sometimes more than once a month, sometimes less). Errata is constantly updated on the website. New conversions by fans are periodically uploaded to the main Yahoo Group and Savage Heroes.

Breaking news: A new Savage Worlds fanzine is in the works called Shark Bytes. Issue 1 should be available August 31st.

The Savaged! license

Savage Worlds does not use the Open Gaming License. The Savaged License is a simple license that companies can use *only with Shane's explicit approval*. See the Great White Games website for more info on the Savaged license.

Who is using the Savaged License

Currently there are three companies that we know of.

Legion Publishing has the rights to make official supplements and adventures for Deadlands Classic, Weird Wars and Savage Worlds. <http://www.legionpublishing.co.uk/>

12 to Midnight publishes horror adventures for the d20 system and Savage Worlds. <http://www.12tomidnight.com/>

Alter Ego Software, the makers of Metacreator, are working on a version of Metacreator that supports Savage Worlds. <http://www.alteregosoftware.com/>

Character / Troop Building software

Jeff Yates has made good progress on a Java version of the Army Builder with updated Point Values! Not everything is functional at time of writing, but it's almost as functional as the official program that hasn't been updated in quite a while, and probably will be more functional soon. <http://primaryfunction.dnsalias.net:8010/swab.html>

As mentioned above, Alter Ego software is also working on a version of Metacreator that supports Savage Worlds. It will include the ability to make characters, troops and armies.

Submitting cool conversion / module / setting ideas

If you just want to write something to publish for free on the Web, Shane asks that you include a short legal statement somewhere in the document, preferably on the title page. For Savage Worlds, the statement should say "Savage Worlds is Copyright 2003 Great White Games, Inc.", without the quotes, of course. You should also add any other copyrights or trademarks in the statement that you mention, like we did on the first page of this FAQ.

If you want to try and submit something to Pinnacle for professional publication (generally, Shane and Simon are only accepting proposals for Savage Tales), download the Submission Kit from the official website, sign the waiver and send it via email, Fax or snail mail to Pinnacle. See the Submissions Kit on the Downloads page of the PEG/GWG website for more details.

If you really want to try to publish something under the Savaged license, you should either have several good products out, like a few really good d20 adventures (12 to Midnight), or know Shane personally (Legion Publishing) or simply be established as a maker of quality stuff (Alter Ego Software). If none of the above fits you, you can still ask Shane, but you should have *some* good reason for asking.

Playtesters

Unless you know Shane personally, or you're writing a Savage Setting book, you probably won't get to playtest any SW books before they come out. That said, you can always help one of us Savages out with a homebrew conversion. Or just playtest your own homebrew stuff.

Quelques liens vers des sites français consacrés à Savage Worlds

Two Gun Bill nous a envoyé quelques liens à plusieurs pages web Savage Worlds en français.

Une version française des Règles d'Essai est disponible dans la section téléchargements du site de Pinnacle. <http://www.peginc.com/Downloads/index.htm>

Le Groupe Savage Worlds Yahoo France: http://fr.groups.yahoo.com/group/Savage_Worlds_fr/

Forum de discussion Savage Worlds du Sden: <http://www.sden.org/forums/>

Roliste.com (critiques de la gamme Savage Worlds): <http://www.roliste.com>

Torgan.net: <http://www.torgan.net>

Rubrique Savage Worlds du Sden: <http://www.sden.org/jdr/savage/spip/>

L'Orbe de la Flamme Noire: <http://membres.lycos.fr/caerberus/SPIP/>

Le site de wild'gazz: savage Star Wars, Savage Bullets etc <http://mondes.sauvages.9online.fr/>

Where the name "Savage Worlds" came from

We asked Shane on the main Savage Worlds Group, and this is his reply:

"Actually, it's a long story. Way back in September of 2001, on September 11th, actually, I was asked by United States Playing Card Company to pitch them some games. (These are the guys who make Bicycle playing cards, are really huge, and owned Journeyman Press--who makes Zombies--before they shut that division down.) It's a long story about why I wasn't going to do these through PEG, but suffice it to say there was some serious money involved.

(Quick aside. I had to make the pitch for these games while the TV was showing the events of Sept. 11th. You can imagine how tough that was. Despite that though, I was told by the VP there that they were sold. Unfortunately, their whole division got closed down a few weeks later and he went to Microsoft. Sigh. ;)

Both games were very cool. One was high-end (think WizKids type stuff) and the other was more "get your feet wet with some licenses." The first was Blood Moon, which will eventually be a Savage Setting now, but not with the painted minis, poster maps, etc. I had pitched to USPC (too much capital for a little guy like me).

The second was a series of licensed D20 products like Conan, Solmon Kane, Flash Gordon, etc (pulp properties). They'd come in "coffee table" type leather-bound books that would sell to collectors as well as gamers. The series title was "Savage Worlds."

The game I later started working on was originally called Wild Cards, because I'd actually started on it about 4 years ago [editor's note: sometime in 1999], but had left it laying when I was voted down by certain members of the company who are no longer around. I didn't want to call it Wild Cards, both because of the obvious confusion with George RR Martin's superhero property, and because it didn't really sound like a game line--just a game system.

So very early on in the actual playtest cycle, it became--officially--Savage Worlds.

Why I chose it is because that's the kind of worlds I like. I like tough campaign scenarios where survival itself is the ultimate goal. I like 'em dark, so that your heroes truly shine. I like 'em tough, so that those who survive do so because they used their wits as well as their stats. I like 'em savage. ;)"

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms & Abbreviations

50F : 50 Fathoms, a Savage Setting book

Backup List : The one at <http://savage.lythia.com>

Classic : In this case, the proprietary set of rules used in Pinnacle games other than d20 and Savage Worlds. "Deadlands Classic" is the rules developed for and first used in the original version of Deadlands: The Weird West and later used in the original versions of Deadlands: Hell on Earth, Deadlands: Lost Colony and Brave New World (a short-lived Super-hero game). New adventures for Deadlands Classic are being written by Legion publishing.

Conversion : An outline of guidelines on how to translate things from one game system to another. Example: the Deadlands Conversion allows translation of characters and critters from Deadlands Classic to Savage Worlds.

d20 System : A set of rules developed by Wizards of the Coast. Originally derived from the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons Second Edition rules, the d20 rules are used in all WotC RPGs as well as the d20 editions of Deadlands: The Weird West and Deadlands: Hell on Earth. Deadlands: Lost Colony is "dual statted" for both Classic and d20 rules.

DL : Deadlands. Generally refers to Deadlands: The Weird West setting using the Classic rules.

DLd20 : Deadlands d20. The d20 version of the Deadlands: The Weird West setting.

HoE : Deadlands: Hell on Earth (Classic). HoEd20 refers to the d20 version.

LC : Deadlands: Lost Colony (Classic). LCd20 refers to the d20 version (in the same book).

DL:R : Deadlands: Reloaded, the working title of the upcoming Savage Worlds versions of the Deadlands settings.

Dual Statted : Refers to books or documents that have statistics for more than one set of RPG rules.

EN : Evernight, the Savage Worlds setting.

Fanzine : A free (or cheap) periodical maintained by fans and written for fans of a particular thing.

FAQ : Frequently Asked Questions.

FFF : "Fast! Furious! Fun!" the motto of Savage Worlds.

FLGS : Friendly Local Gaming Shop, sometimes just LGS.

Forums, The : "The Forums" usually means the official Great White Games / Pinnacle forums.

GM : Game Master

Group, The : Generally, the Savage Worlds Yahoo Group.

GRW : Great Rail Wars, a set of miniatures wargame rules that Savage Worlds was developed from.

GWG : Great White Games. Although Pinnacle still exists and is unofficially considered to be the publisher of Savage Worlds by fans, Great White Games is the official publisher of all Savage Worlds books. Both are owned by Shane.

Homebrew : Slang for something a fan has written based on an official published work.

LL : Low Life, an upcoming Savage Setting.

NE : Necessary Evil, an upcoming Savage Setting.

NPC : Non-Player Character, a character controlled by the GM.

Pay-for download : Pay for it, and you can download it.

PC : Player Character, not Personal Computer.

Pinnacle/PEG : Short for Pinnacle Entertainment Group, the publisher of Classic Deadlands.

Polyhedron/Polyhedral : Polyhedral dice have various number of sides. "Regular" dice found in monopoly sets and casinos have six sides. Polyhedral dice generally come with 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 or 20 sides and have numbers instead of dots printed on them ranging from 1 to the total number of sides on the die.. Most hobby, gaming and even some comic book stores can order polyhedral dice if you can't find any.

RPG : Role-playing Game, a type of game where players each take the role of one character and the Game Master (or Marshal if you're playing Deadlands Classic) takes the role of everything else. (You probably already knew that.)

Sandbox : An "official" compilation of fan-created rules for Savage Worlds.

Savage Setting : A setting for Savage Worlds. Generally a 144 page hardbound black & white book format, though there are exceptions such as Rippers: The Horror Wars and the new Deadlands SW book.

Savage Tales : Savage Tales are either separate adventures for various settings (usually found for download) or individual encounters and adventures within the setting of a Plot Point book.

Shane : Usually Shane Hensley, creator of Deadlands and one of the best Customer Service and Public Relations guys in the gaming business. Note that other folks whose first names are Shane or last names are Hensley are on the Pinnacle message boards and the mailing lists. Just "Shane" usually means Shane Hensley, though.

Stats : Statistics

SW : Savage Worlds, a set of RPG and miniatures wargaming rules (of course)

The "other" SW : Star Wars. (You know what Star Wars is and who owns the copyright. Admit it.)

Tuesday Update : Shane updates the Pinnacle / GWG website every Tuesday.

ToD: Tour of Darkness

URL : Uniform Resource Link. The address of anything on the Internet.

Wargaming : a type of game where each player controls an army (or faction on the side of a fight). Miniatures Wargaming involves miniatures or figures representing the troops, and usually takes place on a "skirmish" scale with each figure representing what it looks like instead of one or a few figures (or tokens) representing a larger force.

Weird Wars : a series of settings based on actual historic wars, generally with a supernatural twist.

White Wolf : publishers of the World of Darkness games.

WotC : Wizards of the Coast, the publishers of Dungeons & Dragons.

YMMV : Your Mileage May Vary. You may have a different point of view.