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# The Black Company Campaign Setting



## Synopsis

Since 1984, readers the world over have followed the exploits of Glen Cook's black Company. Croaker, Lady, Murgan, One-Eye, Goblin, and a cast of thousands have lived and died as the fierce mercenaries of the Black Company have fought, tricked, and - when necessary, fled from - vast armies, powerful wizards, and twisted creatures from other worlds. The Black Company have toppled nations and dynasties, battled the horrific Dominator and his Ten Who Were Taken, faced the insidious Shadowmasters, and more. all this as they traversed the world, searching inexorably for their point of origin: Khatovar, the mysterious birthplace of all the Free Companies. Now, for the first time, the world of the Black Company is yours to explore. The Black Company Campaign Setting provides everything you need to walk in the Black Company's footsteps, detailing the world, characters, threats, and all the d20 game mechanics needed to bring it to life! Inside this massive tome you'll find: A complete overview of the novels, detailing the Black Company's history under the leadership of the Captain, Lieutenant, Croaker, Lady, Murgan, Sleepy and Suvrin. A geographical overview, highlighting and detailing vital setting information. All new rules for defining character backgrounds from priests to harlots. New classes like the Academician, Scout, and Zealot, with adapted classes from the d20 system like the berserker, thief, and wizard, modified to take advantage of the special rules presented in this book and fully supporting the epic level rules. Brand new Skills like Command, Magic Use, and Research. Dozens of new Feats, such as Bushwhack, Vicious, and the Ritual of Taking. Complete combat systems for fights at the characters scale, mass combat between units, and quick resolution army-scale combat. An all-new freeform magic system to recreate the world-shaking spells used by the Ten Who Were Taken or the more modest arcane efforts of the Black Company wizards. New Prestige Classes, like the Oracle, Topkick and Great General. Variant rules for building and maintaining your own mercenary companies, sanity, and magic. Tons of campaign models and campaign sparks to build your own Black Company stories. a complete bestiary of the monsters from the books, including the awe-inspiring windwhales, the horrific shadows from the Plain of Glittering Stone, and the guardian dragon sleeping before the Barrowlands. Game stats for all of you favorite characters, covering everyone from Wheezer and Pawnbroker to Soulcatcher and the Dominator! A complete index of the Black Company members mentioned in the books. Whether you're a fan of the novels or a gamer hungry for a real taste of blood and guts in your d20 games, The Black Company Campaign Setting gives you everything you need to kick start a unique and exciting saga - one unlike anything you've experienced before. You better get ready, 'cause the Black Company's recruiting - and they're looking for YOU! Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons Player's Handbook, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This

product utilizes updated material from the v. 3.5 revision.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Like the novels, the game world is gritty, rich in history and well developed. It offers great character creation rules, mass scale combat and a well developed and versatile magic system which fills me with sadness that D&D did not always have this magic system in place. Before I share various details .... Let me start with the downsides of this because it's a shorter list. Typos in the book and inconsistencies, you'll find them, the book needs an updated printing after a regular editor and a copy editor goes through it. Some sections are too short and therefore lack a well developed explanation, such as the Magical Talent of Shadow Mastery... no where does it explain how a caster can actually get a hold of the shadow like terrors from the books of the south if they aren't playing in that area/period of the world. An additional race other than giants are mentioned in the actual novels (dwarves are mentioned in 'Water Sleeps' by the character Willow Swan). Undead do obviously exist/have existed, and not just ghosts or spirits of the barrowlands, but there is an actual area of the world called the "Canyons of Undead". NPC spell casters should have well developed reasons in a game to have their various spells prepped. The open ended mechanics with guidelines are great, but does a commander in charge of an army who is also a wizard really need to prep one of their spells to put everyone around them in a 500' area asleep? A GM had this happen in a game I played. I pointed out that this affected that NPCs forces more so than the players. And even though the magic system is versatile, and award winning, spell casters shouldn't be common. And now onto the positive elements: Character backgrounds, offer game mechanic effects and help define characters. No alignments, instead this game uses well thought out allegiances. Speak language is

now a skill with implications on literacy, if a character speaks the language at a poor or a master level and all the levels in between. The command skill is also well thought out and developed and helps combat outside of the personal scale (such as company scale and army scale). Command Feats. Massive damage and critical rules, so a powerful character can be killed by a lucky hit from a 1st level character. New core character classes and prestige classes. Rules and guidelines for incorporating other classes and other monsters from other D20 gaming supplements. A magic system where characters get a spell talent which has some basic presets to it, and a low DC. To add things such as duration, range, damage, area of effect, etc. etc. one would take the appropriate modifiers from the charts/tables and apply them. Spell use is draining and applies hit point damage in the form of drain. Drain is resisted by spell energy points, with a minimum of 1 drain per spell. The base drain is  $1D8 + (1 \text{ pt per every } 5 \text{ points of the spell's DC})$ , so the more powerful a spell, the more drain it does. An actual map of the Black Company world that makes sense. Trying to map it from the novels was maddening. Green Ronin did an awesome job. New siege equipment, and prestige classes which support larger scale combat.

love all the details on the characters

The Black Company Series is my favorite series of all time and this book is like the Black Company Bible. If it wasn't enough that it is one of the best systems I have ever played (the magic system alone is worth the price and should be used in every RPG), but it has a huge amount of information about the world that isn't very clear in the books, or isn't in them at all. A must have for any Black Company fan.

This is a great RPG, and very true to the books, especially in terms of the difficulty of magic (my group chose not to use magic, rather than deal with the complex system). It's a lot of fun to play. The book does have some odd layout issues, but they are fairly minor. In addition, it includes summaries of the major events from the books, for players who haven't read them.

I would have bought this book even if I weren't a D&D geek, because I am a rabid fan of the Black Company books. I read it cover to cover with the compulsive, sweaty-palmed fervor of a devotee, but I can see some problems for most normal people: The rules make some radical departures from standard 3.5 games, totally eliminating some staples of D&D (clerics, for instance). This has an effect of many other aspects of the game (no clerics? no quick healing...no quick healing, much

higher body count). I would not recommend this for the average Greyhawk or Forgotten Realms player. Personally, that's what attracted me to the books in the first place: no elves, no unpronounceable names, and a sword in the guts will kill even the most beloved characters. The editing is ugly in places but that's a quibble. Recommended for Black Company fans and / or very open-minded d20 players in search of some gritty and grim action.

Great setting. Love the magic system. Definitely got me looking at Green Ronin stuff

Dark fantasy and gritty realism merge to form a world where you can almost smell the battle fields and siege engines. The classes are unique and the magic system is flexible but deep beyond first blush. I spent hours just figuring out the basic spells and was amazed at the effects possible and prices the mage would pay to create them. Fans of the Conan novels or Grey Mouser will find this a good fit where magic is terrible and great but not slick and quick like classic D&D. Glen Cook's novels are well studied and the detail is amazing.

The Black Company... the last of the Free Companies of Khatovar. Overall this is an excellent (and obviously essential) sourcebook for someone looking to run a campaign set in this world. The sourcebook does a very good job of outlining the overall world, as well as laying out changes to the core D&D rules that are necessary to maintain the feel and flavour of The Black Company books. That said, while thick and full of good information, in my opinion the authors would have benefited by giving the reader a few more examples on how the new systems/rules work, where there is a significant deviation from standard D&D norms. Spell use and magic in general come to mind, as does rules for simulating group combat. The rules for critical hits are interesting, and, while in keeping with the D&D approach, my opinion is that they are inferior to those rules used in the RoleMaster system. DMs and players looking for a high magic game will want to avoid this campaign setting... magic truly is something rare in TBC, and while what there is of it can be potent, for the most part there are only minor effects. All things considered, this is a worthy addition to your D&D library, especially if you're a fan of Glen Cook's The Black Company series of novels. A solid 4/5.

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