

# ***The Last Days of the Third Age***

**a module for Mount and Blade**

Check our forums at <http://mbx.streetofeyes.com/index.php/board,20.0.html>

# 0. Installation guide

You need Mount&Blade 1.011 to play TLD. Install Mount&Blade 1.011, then the module over it.

**Note: This mod is NOT for Mount&Blade Warband (yet) or Mount&Blade WFaS (ever)**

## 0.1. Installing Mount&Blade 1.011.

You may want to have **clean installation** of Mount&Blade 1.011 to use with TLD exclusively, else you will have to juggle M&B core files if you would want to play both TLD and other mods.

Preferably, use the **enhanced version of M&B 1.011** (more stable, with many fixes). You can get enhanced version from Taleworlds official site using this link:

<http://forums.taleworlds.com/index.php/topic,199418.0.html>

**Use the link above, not the official download page.** The latter has old inferior version for god knows what reason. If you have mount&blade.exe file 2Mb in size, you already have enhanced version, congratulations. If your mount&blade.exe file is 3+ Mb in size, you have an older inferior version, and we strongly advise to reinstall M&B using enhanced version - it will be more stable in all the mods. You can safely reinstall atop your current normal M&B copy you bought from Taleworlds, or in a box.

**If you have M&B on Steam, you cannot do this - either install the enhanced version into another location, (you can do that, yes) or follow our Steam guide from here:**

<http://mbx.streetofeyes.com/index.php/topic,2465.0.html>

## 0.2. Installing TLD mod over Mount&Blade 1.011.

If you downloaded the **auto installer**, just follow the install wizard through the installation and make sure you **select the proper install folder**. (E.g., if your game is installed in `M&B/`, that folder is: `M&B/Modules/TLD/`)

If you downloaded the **manual installer**, un7zip TLD.7z into its module folder. E.g., if your game is installed in `M&B/`, unzip the content into: `M&B/Modules/TLD/`.

**Note: TLD is a mod that heavily modifies the original game, so it requires to change a few files of Mount&Blade itself -- otherwise, TLD will not run! There are 2 ways to do so. These are:**

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**Way 1: use IronLaucher.**

(this should be your preferred choice. It's much cleaner and easier to maintain. Also it doesn't produce any issues you report as bugs, even though you just did the manual installation wrong)

To run the game, execute `IronLauncher.exe`, which is located in mod folder. IronLauncher is a small program (by Swyter) which will swap all the necessary M&B files with versions suitable for TLD, play TLD intro, then launch the game itself. On exit it will swap all the files back, so that you can play other mods.

Doesn't work? Try running it "**as administrator**" (in windows, right click on the exe).

Still doesn't work? Then you have to resort the other way (below).

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**Way 2: manually copy the files.** Go to `M&B/Modules/TLD/data/` folder. Here are all the TLD files which must replace original M&B files, so that TLD can run. Specifically:

- copy all five `core_*.brf` files to: `M&B/CommonRes/` (overwriting);
- copy all three `*.txt` and both `*.xml` files to: `M&B/Data/` (overwriting);
- copy `mb.fxo`, all five `*.pp`, the `*.exe` and the `*.bik` files to: `M&B/` (overwriting).

Be sure to follow the above instructions carefully!

Now you have all critical files in place to run TLD.

**Be warned** that M&B, after this, will work only with TLD. **Native and other mods will not run.**

Now launch M&B normally, choose TLD from module menu and enjoy.

# 1. Introduction to TLD

TLD - *The Last Days of the Third Age*, is a total conversion modification for Mount and Blade 1.011. The mod is set in Middle Earth - a fantasy world created by J.R.R.Tolkien in his novel "*Lord of the Rings*" and others. TLD is inspired by the books and is not a movie-based mod.

Our goal is to allow the player to participate in the War of the Ring, in which forces of light and darkness battle over the fate of Middle Earth (for practical reasons of war intensity, only the part east of the Misty Mountains is covered by the map).

Version 3.0 has been created in roughly the past two years, after much progress and code was lost with the disappearing of the mod's leader Ancientwanker.

Many people contributed to this version and a (hopefully) full list of their names/nicks should be present on our forums.

(if you feel someone is missing, let us know!)

## 2. What is there to do?

### 2.1 Starting tips

You choose your faction at the start and you can't change it later. You can also choose from different races: men, elves, dwarves, uruks, uruk-hais or orcs. Remember that both the faction and the race you choose will limit you in certain ways. Some factions provide excellent soldiers, but in small numbers. Some have weak troops, but you can hire many. Smaller orcs can't wear

armors designed for big guys, but can ride some beasts instead. Dwarves have exceptional gear, but can't ride mounts.

This is not designed to be fully balanced. Playing weaker races or factions can be more challenging (as a first game, you might want to prefer options, in the starting menus, which are placed on top of the list of alternatives).

You choose a faction and you fight for it until your side wins the great war, or until your faction gets wiped out. In that case you can still keep fighting for your allies.

## 2.2 The war

At the beginning of the game the War between good and evil hasn't started yet. You'll be notified when it does. While Middle Earth might look like a pretty empty and quiet place at start, it gets filled with hostile parties very quickly once the War starts. Be prepared and use your few days of peace wisely! You can perform quests for the lords and leaders of all allied factions, raise troops and train yourself in the barracks.

The war itself can be won or lost, unlike in the original M&B. Every faction has a strength rating - which changes according to faction successes or failures in battles. With strength dropping low enough, it becomes possible for enemies to siege faction cities/camps. When a faction drops to the lowest status, it is possible to defeat it completely by storming its capital.

Note that player himself cannot initiate sieges in TLD. He can only help his faction and allies in siege battles if their leaders decide that it is time to go storm the enemy settlement.

There are several theatres of war in TLD, defined by geography. When one side eliminates all the enemies in its current theatre, it will send an expeditionary force to help allies on other theatres. Expeditionary force will build an advance camp in the other theatre and operate from there. If the good forces are completely defeated, but Mordor and Isengard still stand strong, the two towers will battle each other over total dominance.

## 2.3 “Economics”

There is no money in TLD. Instead you develop relationships with factions - represented by Resources, Influence and Rank.

**Resources** are what's needed to sustain the faction in war - you can redeem looted scraps and items for it and you're also given a certain number of resource allowance each week depending on your rank within a faction. You can use this allowance to get soldiers, gear, horses for you to command and companions to follow you, but only if you accumulated enough. You have a separate resource/influence/rank pool for each Faction, remember that!

**Influence points** are awarded for finishing quests and winning tough battles. They can later be spent on special items as a reward from the rulers of factions you got the influence with.

**Rank** points allow you to rise up in the ranks of your faction - this will determine your max party size, weekly resource income and unlock other stuff.

Due to being true to lore, we have also disabled by default the option of the so called “cross-

“dressing”: a Gondorian wouldn't likely ever wear looted orc armour, and vice-versa. After most battles, you will find little or no items in the look which can be used directly. Instead, "metal scraps" are dropped, which represent salvageable equipment and can then be given to with your smiths who require them, for Resource Points.

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What's there for you to do in TLD, in a nutshell: raise your troops, develop your character, help your allied factions with battles and quests. Rise up in ranks, get special items, explore locations, talk to different people (and other creatures), maybe you can learn something quite useful ;)

And of course, have fun!

## 3. Factions

(Note that we're not posting troop trees and detailed descriptions on purpose. You can generate them easily using the community-developed tools, if you feel you need to know all this.)

### *In the North*

#### **The Good:**

**Woodmen** were those Northmen who dwelt in the forests of Middle-earth, and especially Mirkwood in the Third and Fourth ages.

**Beornings** were a people of the upper Vales of Anduin, between Mirkwood and the Misty Mountains. It is possible that the Beornings became known as a people through being descendants of Beorn. During the War of the Ring, Grimbeorn the Old, son of Beorn, was the leader of the Beornings.

These northmen only fight on foot and their infantry is decent, if not very well equipped. Various scout troops provide ranged support and the rest are mostly lightly armoured axemen.

**Dale** is a city rebuilt by northmen who share the ancestry with the Rohirrim joined by the survivors from the lake city of Esgaroth. (after it was burnt down by Smaug).

Men of Dale provide tough infantry focused on polearm, famous archer troops topped by the legendary Barding bowmen and a merchant guard line acting as reasonably good cavalry.

**Dwarves** are short and tough, very strong and very well equipped. They come from the Lonely Mountain and the Iron Hills.

Their army consists of an infantry line, a scout/archer line and an Iron Hills line (the heaviest hard hitting infantry).

**Elves of Lothlórien** are a powerful group of Nandor and Sindar living in the Lórien woods, led by lord Celeborn and lady Galadriel.

Their forces consist of an infantry line and a scout line. All their troops are very skilled, well equipped and overall deadly. A rain of arrows from under the forests cover, followed by a devastating infantry attack, is their main tactic.

**The Woodelves** are Sindar living in Mirkwood, led by king Thranduil.

They too have an infantry and a scout line, but focused more on the archers than the elves of Lórien. Their infantry specializes on spears.

**Elves of Imladris (Rivendell)** are Sindar and Noldor led by lord Elrond and his two sons. Much of the West of old remains in their household, powerful elven lords and ancient artifacts. Under their banner the Dúnedain of the North march as well - tall dark haired rangers and nobles of mixed Dúnedain blood clad in ancient maille.

Very well equipped and highly skilled infantry, archers and also cavalry.

## **The Bad:**

**Men of Rhûn** are tribal easterlings from around the sea of Rhûn.

The bulk of their army is cavalry - horse archers and lancers, both very lightly equipped, the top tier cavalry is much heavier or larger mounts. Their infantrymen are also quite lightly armoured and wield large axes and swords.

**Dol Guldur** is an old fortress of Sauron in Mirkwood - orcs now launch attacks at the forest elves from there.

The Dol Guldur troops are just orcs, quite similar to the Mordor types. Overall typical orc infantry, archers and also the warg riders.

**Gundabad** used to be a dwarven holy place, later it became a massive orc city in the mountain. It was abandoned for a while, but now the orcs returned in large numbers.

The Gundabad orcs are very similar to all other orcs, but their nature is more savage. Their equipment is primitive and their fighting style barbaric.

**Orcs of Moria** occupy the halls of Khazad Dúm.

Orcs like all others, but their equipment is better, because they use metal scraps and bits of looted dwarven armour.

## **In the South**

### **The Good:**

**Gondor**, the "land of stone", is inhabited by descendants of the ancient Númenoreans. Proud men standing as the last line of defence against the darkness of the Enemy, ruled over by steward Denethor.

Gondor's military is composed of forces coming from all the different fiefdoms. You get the standard army with solid and well armoured troops overall (infantry, archers and cavalry), Dol Amroth famous for their heavy cavalry, green archers and spearmen from Pinnath Gelin, bowmen from the Blackroot Vale, axemen of Lossarnach, heavy marines from Pelargir or hardened clansmen of Lamedon.

**Rohirrim** are the horse lords of the Mark of Rohan led by king Théoden.

Rohirrim have very good cavalry - from heavy lancers to agile horse archers. They have an infantry line as well, branching into shieldwall forming troops and heavy swordsmen bearing

longswords.

## The Bad:

**Mordor** represents Sauron's own forces bred in the darkness of the Black Land.

Armies of Mordor consist of orcs, uruks and evil men (Black Númenoreans). Uruks of Mordor are the better equipped and stronger breed of orcs, but have no archery line. Most regular orcs are infantry, skirmishers or archers, but there are also orc warg-riders. Black Númenoreans are a rare, but very dangerous infantry and cavalry. Sauron has also bred some fierce battle trolls, but they're extremely rare.

**Isengard** is ruled by Saruman, the betrayer wizard. He created his own version of orcs: the *uruk-hai*.

The forces of Isengard are quite well (if crudely) equipped. The orcs are comparable to any other orcs, but the uruk-hai are truly deadly killing machines - wielding pikes, halberds, heavy axes and nasty cleavers. They also have largest bows among any orcs.

**Dunlanders** are wild men, enemies of the Rohirrim who drove them from their homeland.

They're very poorly equipped, almost no real armour and sharpened wooden pikes and antler axes. Their chieftains wear old maille, crudel helmets and rare swords. They also have a cavalry line, but it's also quite weak.

**Variags of Khand** are fierce easterling raiders wearing terrifying battlemasks.

They rely on fast light infantry (skirmishers and blademasters) and heavy axemen, while their cavalry line contains both lightly armoured agile skirmishers and heavy cataphracts.

**Haradrim** come from the deserts and rain forests of the far South - dark skinned with an affection for gold.

Haradrim have average infantry (skirmishers/archers and spearmen/swordsmen) from Great Harad, a cavalry line (both heavy cavalry and horse archers) from Harondor and a Far Harad line of tribal warriors.

**Corsairs of Umbar** are southern enemies of Gondor, descendants of the Black Númenoreans.

Corsairs employ both lightly armoured skirmishers and heavier swordmasters as well as iron longbowmen.

## 4. Controls/Features

**TLD options:** You can tweak the behaviour of the game in a number of ways through the "TLD Options" camp menu. You can access the menu when you camp on the map. All options are a simple ON/OFF switch for the sake of simplicity.

**Traits:** You can get traits in quite a few ways. They describe how you play your character and reward or punish you for these decisions and actions.

You can view the list and descriptions of your character's traits in the "Reports" menu.

**Others:** There are other features which only apply to certain situations or factions - like orcs' ability to eat prisoners, or NPCs being killed in battle. We'd like to keep those a surprise, you

should find them yourselves. In the worst case, some good soul will make a gameplay guide, no doubt.

## 4.1 Formations and battle AI

Your troops will position themselves and hold at the beginning of each battle, instead of blindly charging.

Only major factions (all 18 of them) use formations (+deserters), bandits will simply charge. There is a slight difference between good and evil factions, good infantry will form shield walls (usually defensive - shielded troops first, but it can form a phalanx if you have pikemen), while evil infantry will form ranks (best troops first).

Formations only work in field battles (meaning not in custom battles and sieges).

Any time in-game that you have a formation form or "Hold," it will set up near the position that the player had when the command was issued: infantry to the left, cavalry to the right, and archers up front. Additionally, the formations may maintain the same FACING that the player had (depending on mod design).

Whenever a unit first forms a particular formation, troops may spread out for ease of forming up (depending on mod design).

Player troops start every battle in formation.

Unless changed by mod design, formation key bindings are:

"J" for ranks

"K" for weapon-based ranks (shieldwall, phalanx)

"L" for wedge (the player ought to reassign the "L" for "Log" mapping)

";" for square

"U" for no formation (undo formation)

The "ranks" command for archers puts them in a staggered line.

Cavalry will not make any formation other than the wedge.

Charge (and Dismount for cavalry) will undo a formation. The player may Advance multiple times to have a formation move toward the average position of the enemy. Or use the order panel or hold-F1 to place them (or sweep them across the enemy for the cavalry wedge).

## 5. FAQ

### 5.1 General Questions

Do you have a question not answered in the FAQ? Ask away on our forums:

<http://mbx.streetofeyes.com/index.php/topic,2479.0.html>

If it's a good question, we'll add it right here!

**Q: Your intro is annoying! Can I disable it?!**

**A:** Why yes. In the TLD folder there is a file called "IronLauncher.lua".

Back up the file in case you screw it up somehow.

Open it in Notepad or a code editor of your choice, find these two lines and delete them:

```
Shell.Execute(current_folder.."\\Data\\binkplay.exe", "open", "TLDintro.bik /P /I2 /J /Z1 /R /U1 /W-1 /H-1 /C /B2", "Data", SW_SHOWNORMAL, true)
```

## 5.2 Optimization/Performance Tweaking

**[For the most up-to-date tips on optimization and performance, read this thread:](#)**

**<http://mbx.streetofeyes.com/index.php/topic,2503.0.html>**

TLD specific tips that seem to help:

1. **If getting crashes in battles (either RGL errors, or just no message crashes)**
  - a. Turn off ragdolls. (explanation: the ragdoll engine in MaB is really old and doesn't like our custom skeletons. Experience says this prevents many crashes mid battle.)
  - b. Lower corpses in Options. Try lowering it slowly and see what amount of troops your computer manages to handle. (turn them off completely to be sure)
  - c. Lower your battlesize. Try lowering it slowly and see what amount of troops your computer manages to handle.
  - d. Try setting 'IronLauncher.exe' and 'mount&blade.exe' compatibility to WinXP (some users say WinXP SP3 doesn't work, try SP2 in that case)
  - e. **(warning: This option is only for skilled computer users! DO NOT TRY THIS UNLESS YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!)** Try increasing your page file to 1.5x - 2x your amount of RAM.
2. **If getting crashes in sieges, but not battles**
  - a. Lower your battlesize to about half of your normal BS, or lower. (explanation: sieges handle the troop amounts in a different way, experience says this helps avoid crashes during sieges.)
3. **If getting bad performance (stuttering, low fps)**
  - a. Lower texture detail slowly until you see improvement. Some people say even 90% helps, some need to go lower.
  - b. In the most extreme cases, try playing in DX7 mode. It's not pretty, but it'll allow you to play.

More general tips:

1. Optimize Mount and Blade itself - many useful tips can be found here: <http://forums.taleworlds.com/index.php/board,6.0.html>
2. We've already converted sounds to .wav, to increase performance and avoid the vertex

buffer crashes. Still, if you're getting these crashes, try buying and installing a sound card.

3. Save often. The game will crash, for some more than for others. Be especially careful with large battles, sieges and going into complex scenes (large settlements and so on).
4. Flora is optimized as well as we can make it, but once in a while the generation of trees and grass will go crazy and you'll end up in a jungle scene which may crash the game. Unfortunate, but we haven't found a way to fix this yet.
5. Get more RAM. A better GPU will result in smoother play and nicer graphics, but lack of RAM seems to cause frequent crashes. Especially if you're running Windows7, you definitely need at least 4GB of RAM.

## 5.3 TLD, Y U NO...

This section contains the common complaints we used to get and which we expect to get again.

**So, TLD, why...**

**Q: ...you don't look like the movies?**

**A:** Because TLD is a mod based on the books.

**Q: ...does some of your stuff look like in the movies then?!**

**A:** Because it doesn't contradict the books and because we like it.

**Q: ...don't you change the elves/wargs/gondorian armour/orcs to look like the movies?**

**A:** Because we like them this way.

**Q: ...are there no mumakil/oliphants as battle troops?**

**A:** Because it'd be very difficult to make them work properly and look good.

**Q: ...can't I meet/kill the Fellowship, have them and Gandalf and Legolas in my party?**

**A:** They have their own journey, their own task to do. You're fighting the War of the Ring.

**Q: ...isn't there an Eriador faction?**

**A:** Because the Eriador area is not in the mod.

**Q: ...isn't Eriador in the mod?**

**A:** Because by the time of the War of the Ring it was mostly deserted and nothing

important for the war happened there.

**Q: ...aren't there any hobbits and men of Bree? Anywhere?**

**A:** Because the previous two answers.

**Q: ...aren't there any spider riding orcs?**

**A:** Because punch yourself.

**Q: ...isn't this mod for Warband?**

**A:** Because it started being developed for MnB and porting it in its current state would require much more additional time. Also several features of TLD wouldn't be possible with the Warband modding system.

## 5.4 For the Purists

**Q: Why aren't elves taller than men?**

**A:** Because we'd have to make another skeleton for them and scale all armours and overall it'd be too much work for little gain.

**Q: Why does the star of Arnor have only 4 beams and not 6? (like the star of Eärendil)**

**A:** A small invention of ours - the missing beams mean there is no king(dom) of Arnor.

**Q: Why are there orcs out in the daylight? Shouldn't they be afraid of the sun?**

**A:** It's for convenience's sake. We are aware of this trait of the orc breed and deal with

it

using penalties to skills and stats during the day..

**Q: Why don't the trolls turn to stone in daylight?**

**A:** Similar reasons - it'd be a huge pain. The shadow of Mordor is spreading, the trolls can bear the sun for now.

**Q: Why isn't the outer ring of Minas Tirith made of black stone?**

**A:** It just looks a damned lot better this way. May Tolkien forgive us our sin...