

The complete KublaCon Guide to helping create the best game convention West of the Mississippi

Required reading for current and potential KublaCon Volunteers: Hosts, GMs, and Judges. Learn how to make the best of your experience while helping others have the experience of a lifetime.

# KUBLACON'S VOLUNTEER GUIDE

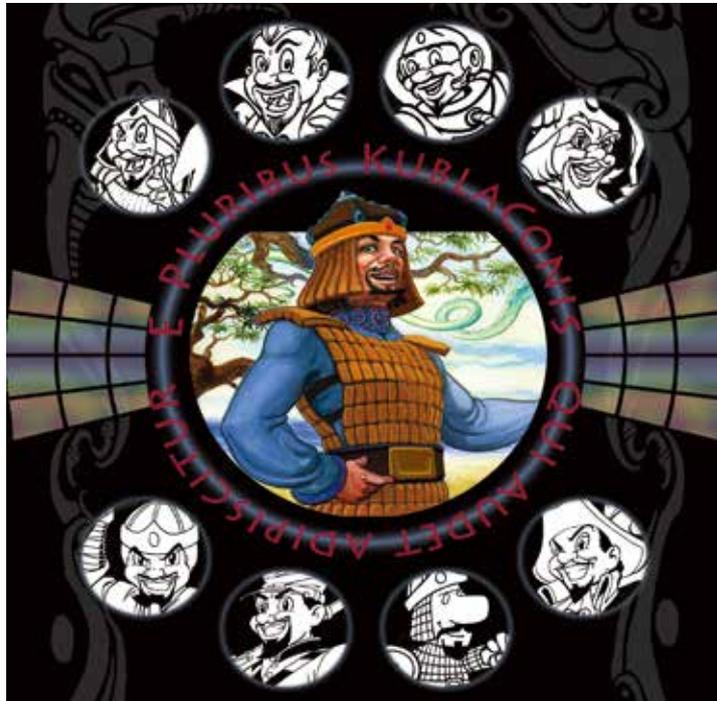


## **Our Guide**

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# Fun is Job One

## Getting Started



You'll read many notes, do's/don'ts, and tips in the pages that follow.

But, of all that's written,  
the one single most important thing to keep in mind is:

***Our goal is have fun, and to help our guests have fun.***

# So you want to be a GM/Judge/Host for KublaCon...

Giving back to the gaming community as a volunteer, whether as a host or as a GM, provides not only great personal satisfaction, but gives back to the hobby that we all love.

The staff of over 60 people, over 250 GameMasters, and 40 plus weekend hosts all contribute to the creation of our event in their own ways.

## Hosts

We categorize 'hosts' separately from GM's (GameMasters) as their roles - and what we expect from them -are quite different.

Hosts are the nuts and bolts of making the convention run. They're the greeters in line, the crowd control for Mighty Kubla, and anything else that doesn't require much pre-convention preparation.

Signing up as a host is a great way of earning convention perks when you might not feel comfortable being a Gamemaster and the responsibility that entails.

Hosts don't need any experience at all! You'll meet people, be a part of things, and – if you complete the requirements – get your badge for free. We think it's one of the best ways to hit the ground running and get to know the Con.

Here are some examples of Host tasks:

- Wristband monitor
- Event Registration
- Signage setup
- Signage teardown
- Kid's room assistant
- Gofer

These tasks are typically offered in 2 and 4 hour increments.

The PERKS YOU RECEIVE AS A HOST ARE:

- A minimum EIGHT hour commitment will earn you free admission to KublaCon, a Green Kubla Pin, and a weight adjustment in our Game Shuffler. (Weight adjustments are not available for onsite 'walk-in' hosts)
- A minimum of FOUR hours will earn you a cool Green Kubla Volunteer pin.
- You can even volunteer for TWO hours -- and we'll give you a great big thank you for helping put on the best game con on the West Coast!
- Hosts are NO LONGER REQUIRED TO PRE-REGISTER. However, we still ask you to complete your time-card so that we know you've finished your committed hours.
- If you DO pre-register, or if you pay onsite and opt to work 8 hours, after you've worked your shift you'll be refunded your payment amount at KublaCon. BRING A COPY of your payment receipt to help with the process of re-imbusement.

## GameMasters· GM's· Judges

While Hosts are the nuts and bolts, GM's are the lifeblood of any convention. GM's prep, bring, and run the games for which they've volunteered.

For GMs and judges, we recommend that you have enough experience to feel comfortable GM/judging for a group of strangers. You should be confident in your knowledge of the rules of the game and the spirit of the game, and in your ability to keep your players in line while still showing them a good time.

Typically, GM's will run their games under one or more of the following categories:

- Collectable Games
- Miniatures
- LARPs
- Tabletop Games
- Roleplaying Games

Most Scheduled Games will be run in 4, 6 or 8 hour increments. (Though some are 1, 2 or even 3hrs)

We welcome GMs and judges who have great games to bring to our players – no matter their level of experience. If you feel experienced enough to bring a game to the Con, you probably are!

The PERKS YOU RECEIVE AS A GAMEMASTER ARE:

- A minimum SIX hour commitment will earn you free admission to KublaCon, a Green Kubla Pin, and a weight adjustment in our Game Shuffler. . (Weight adjustments are not available for onsite 'walk-in' GM's/Judges)
- A minimum of FOUR hours will earn you a cool Green Kubla Volunteer pin.
- You do NOT have to pre-pay for your registration, though we take GM no-shows very seriously. Actions we may take can include expulsion from KublaCon and being barred permanently from being a GM for us.

Note that because you need 6 hours of GM'ing for a free pass, if you only volunteer for a single 4 hour game, you'll need to sign up for at least another 2 hr GM session, or a 4 hr Host shift to reach the minimum.



## Staff Opportunities

KublaCon Staff members are the folks that put in all the work for months before the convention to bring it all together. The hours spent are innumerable and the rewards are primarily the satisfaction of seeing so many people having fun.

Some staff postions include:

- Prince of Registration
- Volunteer Grand Vizier
- Hospitality Coordinator
- RPG/TBL/CCG, etc Coordinator

These opportunities to become a Staff Member usually occur around the first of the year and are often very limited... as we have a dedicated staff that help KublaCon year after year. We often post these staff openings in our Khannconnections Newsletter or as a news item on our home page. Almost all Staff Members come from our Host and GM pool, so working as a consistent and valued volunteer can possibly land you a staff position.

STAFF PERKS include:

- Working with a team of passionate gamers
- All or partial hotel accomodations while working the convention.
- Participation in our profit sharing plan after meeting vested qualifications.

## Cool! Sign me up! Here's how:

Our 'systems' require you to register online at our Event Schedule website at:

***www.kublacon.info***

If you don't have an online account already, follow the prompts from the home page to "Create an Online Account". We call these GM ACCOUNTS... but they are the SAME account whether you're volunteering as a GM or a Host.

After you've logged into your account, you'll see links to:

- Add Event to GM (Use if you plan to GM games. This is sometimes 'closed' when event submissions are not open)
- Task Search/Signup (Use this one for Hosting onsite)
- My Task Requests (This is a search that finds any tasks you've requested to be assigned to.)
- And other links that help you track favorite games, etc.

Likewise, if you're a GM that's run games for us before, a search of 'your' games will allow you to update prior year events to "Event Proposals" with a few clicks of your mouse. Again, this is disabled when the submission period is closed.

### **Host Sign up - detail**

Here are more detailed instructions if you intend to sign up as a host:

After arriving at [www.kublacon.info](http://www.kublacon.info), sign in to your account (or create one for free).

Once you are signed in, click on the "Task Search/Signup" link on the lower right side of the page.

From there you'll be able to search by time of day, type of volunteer task, etc.

Request the tasks you are interested in, and the Volunteer Coordinator will confirm your assignments as he/she is able. Note that this usually occurs about the time of the event submission deadline which is April 1st.

Take responsibility for your requests... and check back on them by logging in and following the "My Task Requests" link. This will tell you which tasks you've selected have been confirmed.

### **GM/GameMaster Sign up - detail**

Here are more detailed instructions if you intend to sign up as a GM:

After arriving at [www.kublacon.info](http://www.kublacon.info), sign in to your account (or create one for free).

Once you are signed in, click on the "Add Event to GM" on the right side. This will give you a form to complete - requesting a lot of detail about your event. Be prepared to give it a title, a short description, a longer description and to fill in other details as to when you'd like to run it.

If you're a previous year GM, you may also have the option of converting a "Prior Year Event" into an Event Proposal. You'll find these options beneath the title of your events in a list of found events.

Once you've submitted, or updated a prior year event... it becomes an EVENT PROPOSAL. The deadline for event proposals is April 1st. Some of our coordinators will turn your events into CONFIRMED EVENTS as the deadline approaches, but they might not get confirmed until after April 1st.

Take responsibility for your submissions... and check back on them by logging in and searching for your events. This will tell you which events have been converted to Confirmed Events.

# Guidelines and expectations of Hosts



Read this section if you are one of our onsite hosts.  
This will explain many of the details of who, what, when, where, and how  
to help serve our guests.

# Top 10 Ways to Be an Outstanding KublaCon Host

1. Have fun!
2. Arrive at least 5 minutes before your scheduled shift.
3. Be responsible and proactive – if something needs to be done, do it.
4. If something comes that you can't handle, find a staff member in a Red Vest or with a radio.
5. Be courteous, but firm when necessary.
6. Don't forget to smile.
7. Be flexible and willing to help out where we need you.
8. Lend a hand – pick up trash.
9. Remember to get your timecard signed so you get credit.
10. Don't be afraid to ask if you don't know!

## What do I do when I arrive at KublaCon?

Go to Registration and collect your badge/wristband from the GM/Volunteer Section. The schedule is printed on the back of your badge to help you remember your shifts, AND, to serve as your time card that gets signed off by your shift managers! Then you're free to go play until your first host shift.

## Where and when do I report for my host shifts?

Report to Registration in the Grand Foyer for your shift at least 5 minutes prior to your assigned start time. Check in with the Volunteer Coordinator. He/She will send you where you need to go. Please be flexible; things are always in motion during the Con, and the Volunteer Coordinator may ask you to do an assignment different from what you originally signed up for. Unless you have a physical limitation that would keep you from doing so, please be flexible and go where you are needed.

## What if something comes up I don't know how to handle?

No worries. That's what your KublaCon staff is here for. We know that difficult situations sometimes arise, especially when folks haven't slept or eaten right in a couple of days. If an attendee gets confrontational, or a hotel guest gets in your face when you tell them they can't enter the Dealer Room without a wristband, or anything else comes up that could get ugly or makes you uncomfortable, GET HELP. Find a staff member or someone with a radio, and get a staff member to back you up.

## What do I do when my shift is over?

Find the Con Staff member in charge of your area and get your timecard signed. If you don't have a "local" staff member, go back to the Volunteer Coordinator at Registration or the Prince of Registration, and get your timecard/back of badge signed. You'll need the signed card to get reimbursed any registration fees!

## What if no one shows up to take my place?

If your shift is over and no one has come to take your place, go to Registration and tell the Volunteer Coordinator, that you've finished your shift and are taking off. Don't forget to get your timecard signed!

## Do I have to pre-register to volunteer? And how do I get reimbursed?

We no longer require you to pre-register if you plan to volunteer enough hours to qualify for free admission. However, you might choose to volunteer onsite, after you've paid your entrance fee. In such cases, bring your signed time card to Registration. He/She will reimburse you for the price of your Con registration. Please bring, if possible, a copy of the receipt you received when paying for your registration to the convention.

## What if I don't want to miss out on a single second of gaming?

Never fear, we need you, too! There are lots of opportunities to volunteer with the setup and teardown of the Con, the Thursday evening and Friday morning before and the Monday afternoon after the Con. Sign up at <http://www.kublacon.info> or contact the Volunteer Coordinator, at [volunteers20xx@kublacon.com](mailto:volunteers20xx@kublacon.com), for more details. (xx is the number of the year)

# Guidelines and expectations of Gamemasters (GMs) and Judges



The guidelines for what we expect from our GM's are slightly more complex and demanding than what we expect from Hosts.  
Please READ these!

# Top 10 Rules for GMs and Judges

## 1. Fun is priority #1

It is our reason for being here, and it is the players' reason for being here. It is your job as the GM to do all you can to ensure your players (and you) have fun! This rule leads to ALL of the other guidelines listed here.

## 2. Know your limits and respect the players.

We all want to be as accommodating as possible, but if you let more folks into your game than you can handle, no one will have a good time. Likewise, players who have successfully gotten into your game have done so based on their expectations of game length and player count. Last minute additions/drop-ins over the scheduled number of players are discouraged. See page 11 for our Code of Conduct regarding this. Players who got into the game by the Shuffler should get preference for choosing characters, etc. as you start the game. It is your choice whether they also get preference for prize distribution.

## 3. Respect your start time.

We ask that you show up at your game location 15 minutes before start time. This is so that you are set up and ready to go at your start time, AND so that players who have questions and want to get on a wait-list can find you!

## 4. Respect your end time.

All official KublaCon events have assigned time durations. Your players probably have plans when your game ends, and your space will be needed by the next scheduled game. Make sure you have a watch or clock, and remember to pace yourself.

## 5. Respect your and other people's property, and the space you're in.

We all know that many of us gamers invest hundreds of dollars in our gear, whether it be that \$100 European board game or the meticulously painted pewter dragon, or just a collection of hardback gaming books that could rival a local library. Make sure that you encourage your players to be appropriately cautious. (We all know accidents happen, but if someone deliberately damages gaming materials or other property, report them to Con staff immediately.) Also, please have your players take a moment at the end of your session to gather their belongings and their trash. If we all do a little, the rooms will stay nicer all day long.

## 6. Take care of yourself and encourage your players to do the same.

This means staying hydrated, nourishing yourself, getting rest, and so on. The Con only comes once a year and it's easy to get carried away, but don't forget to take care of your basic needs. If a player is falling asleep at your game, you may – and should – suggest he or she find somewhere to take a nap.

## 7. Offer a bathroom break every 2 hours or so.

Self-explanatory, we hope. If you're doing the things in #5, you'll need it!

## 8. Keep it clean.

KublaCon is a family-friendly event, and we expect you to help us keep it that way. Please keep profanity, vulgarity, and graphic violence out of your game, particularly in public areas and during hours when children and those with sensitive ears are likely to be up and around.

We expect you to keep yourself clean and presentable to your players so everyone at the table will enjoy themselves. If another player's hygiene is poor enough to make other players uncomfortable, notify a KublaCon Staff member for help.

## 9. Distribute prizes fairly.

Often, you'll have several prizes (Kubla Bucks, winner's pin, game-specific prizes, etc.) to distribute. Feel free to split them up, so that more people get to win. Many GMs allow the players to vote on the winners (Best Roleplayer, Best Newbie, Best Combat, etc.). This is encouraged – but do remember that you, the GM or judge, are the ultimate arbiter of prizes if things get sticky.

## 10. And finally, don't be afraid to ask for help!

If you run into anything at all that makes you uncomfortable, causes trouble, or in any way makes you less able to provide a fun game for your players, find a KublaCon staff member (or send the volunteer in your room for a staff member) and ask for help.

# Preparing, arriving, and organizing your event

## Prepare your event

For some games, you'll be preparing long before the convention begins and that is great! We encourage you to not wait until the last minute to prepare your materials and make sure you are well versed on all of the rules for the games that you are running! You'll have so much more fun running your game if you come prepared and practiced.

When onsite, prepare/gather any materials you'll need for your event (blank or pre-generated character sheets, your scenario/story, games, dice, paper/pens/pencils, etc.). Don't forget a watch or timer to help you keep track of the end time for your event. Also, be sure to check that your event listing on the website is correct, and if it is not, email the appropriate Coordinator immediately! If your event is listed at the wrong time or in the wrong category, people won't find it and you might not get any players.

## When you arrive at KublaCon

Pick up your badge and wristband at Registration in the Grand Foyer. (You don't have to wait in the paid pre-registration line – proceed along the table and you'll find GM/Judge check-in – in the middle of the tables, between Registration and the Event Shuffler.) Your badge will have the events that you're running listed on the back.

## An hour before your event

Make any last-minute preparations: review your plans/story/scenario, gather your gaming materials, and be sure to grab snacks, water and/or drinks to help keep your energy up while running your event. Also, it's a good idea to double-check your room assignment and check in with the staff for any last-minute changes.

## Fifteen minutes before your event

Be in your assigned room! Ideally, you'll be setting up during this time. But if another game is running right up to your start time, your presence will remind them to wrap up. Also, it's disconcerting as a player to show up in a room and see no GM. Other things to think about: Start a list for alternates (folks who want to play but didn't get in via the Shuffler) to sign in so you can take them in the order they arrived. If this is an RPG where you're providing characters, have them out for players to choose from – usually a good idea if first arrival gets first pick, and so on. If players are bringing their own characters, this is a good time to familiarize yourself with them, approve them, and so on.

## Let the games begin!

Have players sign in, if they haven't already. You are responsible for making sure that EVERY PLAYER AT THE TABLE HAS A WRISTBAND. If you are found to be running a game where players have no wristbands, we may choose to take disciplinary action which can include revoking your GM rights for future conventions.

## Things to keep in mind during the event

First and foremost, all of the guidelines in the Top 10, above. Don't forget to have fun! If you are having fun, it's very likely your players will, too.

## What if you need help?

If anything comes up that you can't handle, ask for help! Your area should have at least one volunteer. They can help with a wide variety of issues. If they can't help, they'll know who can. Your staff is here for you, and we're only a radio call away.

### Thirty minutes before your scheduled END time

Be aware of the time, and warn the players that there are only 15 minutes of play left. Yes, we said 15, even though you are 30 minutes away from ending. You will need time to assign prizes, put the game/accessories away, and tidy up.

If you possibly can, steer things toward some sort of ending point. You'll all go away happier if you've wrapped things up somehow. If you are nowhere near a good ending point, it is especially important to let players know you won't be finishing, so they can get used to the idea. (Depending on the complexity of your game, you may need to start this wrapping up process WELL BEFORE this close to the end. Know your game and do what is best for you and your players.)

### Fifteen minutes before your scheduled END time

Stop play, even if players are begging for more time. There is almost certainly a game scheduled in this location right after you finish, and you need to let them start on time. The last 15 minutes are for handing out prizes, tying up loose ends with narration, putting away the game, and picking up your trash. Note: it is NOT your job as the GM to clean up after your players. If you leave enough time, and instruct them to do so, players will take their trash away with them!

### If you're not finished

You have a few options. 1) End anyway. This is the best option if players have somewhere else to be and/or you're at a point that's "close enough." 2) Keep playing. This is only an option if you are POSITIVE that there is not a game that is scheduled at your location at your end time. If you're not sure – or even if you think you are – ask the volunteer assigned to your area to check for you. 3) Move to an open gaming area and continue. 4) Reschedule for a time that works for all players and continue in an open gaming area at a later time. NOTE: Remember that for options 2, 3, and 4, participation is VOLUNTARY. If only half the party wants to continue and it's impossible without everyone, you'll have to take option 1 and just call it a day.

### After running your event

Again, please make sure to gather all your belongings and tidy up your gaming area. After that, enjoy the Con – with our thanks for hosting a great game!

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The hotel is 100% accessible, with ramp and elevator access to all games and events, and we have plenty of seated volunteer positions that we need filled. If you need any other accommodations to run your event or volunteer with us, just let us know and we'll do all we can.

## Terms and Conditions for GM's and Hosts

*As a volunteer or game master we expect you to live up to your committed times and events. This means arriving prepared and on time to your event or task, and to complete your task or game. If your committed hours has earned you free admission to KublaCon, then failure to complete your minimum hours will require you to pay for your KublaCon admission at the 'weekend' rate currently in place. Failure to notify us, and to purchase your pass, may be grounds for expulsion from the show, with possible permanent banning from KublaCon either as a GM or as a paid registrant.*

*As a GM, you may have ONE online game master account that you use to submit your games to run. The account you make MUST be in your actual name, and we reserve the right to confirm that your GM account matches your name by requesting appropriate ID at KublaCon check-in. Intentional and willful attempts to subvert your game master responsibilities by creating multiple or falsified GM accounts will result in your being permanently banned from KublaCon.*

# Code of Conduct to ensure our guest's enjoy their games:

## Do NOT allow extra players into your RPG

Many players will choose their games based on how many players are listed in the program book. A game that's optimized for a certain number of players gives a good opportunity for each player to participate. Likewise, some players may feel that a game slows down with extra players.

- Certain organized play RPG's are designed to expand and accommodate extra players. This is OK.
- It's not usually OK to ask the other players if they don't mind if someone else joins in. Not everyone has the confidence to speak up and 'be that guy' that says 'no'. We'd rather not put our guests on the spot.
- If you typically PLAN your events to accommodate a couple of drop-ins, then you must NOTE this in your event description when submitting the event online. Include something like: "This event runs best with 6 players, but I'm prepared to run for up to 2 more and I may take drop-ins."

## You MAY allow extra players into non RPG events

Boardgames, card games, and other similar games are usually only limited by the number of available sets of the games.

- If you have available sets and the space, feel free to accommodate extra players if you feel comfortable running a larger event.

## As a Judge, always give seating preference to guests

If you're running a scheduled boardgame, cardgame or similar event, fill open seats with guests who arrive on time.

- It's OK to play in your scheduled event IF there is space available after all seats have been filled with guests.
- As noted above, it's also OK to expand the game to allow other players, including yourself.



## As a Judge you may NOT advance to the next round

If you have seated yourself at a game you're running, your goal is NOT to win the game, but to help the other players have fun.

- If your event is designed in 'rounds' where winning players advance to the next round, you must recuse yourself from advancing.
- Depending on tournament style, the next qualifying player advances instead.
- For example: if you are the winner of play in which the winner at the 'table' advances, then the 2nd place winner at your table will advance instead.

## As a judge, do NOT keep prizes or KublaBucks

KublaBucks or prizes provided for your event are meant for our guests, the players.

- In some instances, such as an RPG, the players may want to divvy up prizes such that the GM gets something as a 'thank you' for running a good game. This is OK.
- If you have extra KublaBucks or prizes, return them to your department supervisor.

## Your gaming space is YOUR responsibility!

Be proactive in assuring that you not only play in a mess-free environment, but that you leave the space clean for our next guests who will be playing in that environment.

- If you're in an RPG room, be PRO-active in keeping the space clean.
- If garbage cans are overflowing or there are issues with plumbing or other room issues, use the house phone to call hotel housekeeping, or contact a Kubla-Con Staff member.
- If you're not in an RPG room, LEAVE YOUR AREA CLEAN before you wind up your game or tournament. Ask the attending players politely to help with any trash that may be left on or near the tables.

## Send us your feedback

We always strive to improve the experience for our guests and our volunteers. If you have comments or suggestions, please send us an email with your thoughts:

- [feedback@kublacon.com](mailto:feedback@kublacon.com)

**KublaCon Game Convention**  
Memorial Day Weekends • Burlingame Hyatt Regency  
[www.kublacon.com](http://www.kublacon.com)