An adventuring company venturing into the wilds of western Immoren in search of ancient treasures must make the proper preparations beforehand in order to have the best hope of success. First, the group needs to ensure it is appropriately equipped and knows everything it can about its destination. Most of the necessary equipment should be purchased before the expedition begins, and the group should thoroughly research the destination in preparation for the venture. Although the company may well have the opportunity to gather information at the destination or along the way, it is unwise to rely on such luck.
GENERAL EQUIPMENT AND TRAVEL

Many items required for surviving in the wilderness, such as bedrolls, compasses and dry rations, are detailed in *Iron Kingdoms Full Metal Fantasy Roleplaying Game: Core Rules* (p. 249). To purchase a piece of gear designed to withstand extreme environmental conditions, such as a winterized bedroll, double the price of the item given there. This section lists a few other helpful items a party might want before striking out on an expedition.

**ITEMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canoe, three-person</td>
<td>20 gc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map, local terrain</td>
<td>3 gc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulley hoist</td>
<td>5 gc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sack, waterproof, sixteen-gallon capacity</td>
<td>2 gc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent, six-person</td>
<td>30 gc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent, personal</td>
<td>15 gc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagon, heavy</td>
<td>85 gc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagon, small</td>
<td>50 gc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An adventuring company must also take adequate provisions for the feeding and care of all the expedition members, including any animals. Foraging for food is possible in some areas, but it is time consuming and should not be relied on as the only source of food. Transporting all the supplies for a large expedition will likely require multiple wagons as well as draft animals to haul them.

The group may travel some portion of the distance to a site by rail or steamship, but it is likely that there are no available consumer travel solutions for the final leg of a journey.

It is logistically easiest to hire additional expedition members, buy provisions for the expedition, and make arrangements for transport as close to the site as possible. Unfortunately this is not always possible, and the company must allow for the extra transportation costs of transporting supplies by train or river barge.

RESEARCH AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

If an expedition is searching for a site from the ancient kingdom of Morrdh or the burial chambers of a king from the Thousand Cities Era, there are few sources of information. Intact Orgoth sites are even rarer, as the invaders sought to destroy any relics of their own civilization their enemies could use against them. Written records, whether documents or inscriptions carved in stone, were a main target for destruction, whether those covered aspects of Immoren’s past or the Orgoth’s own activities in western Immoren.

Fortunately for modern scholars in the Iron Kingdoms, the Orgoth were not completely successful, and some ancient documents survive that an explorer can look to for information. An exceptional few are from the Orgoth themselves, while others are from the ancient civilizations of western Immoren or scholars who lived during the Occupation. Works written in the 400 years since the Rebellion are more common, though even those are closely guarded.

Gaining access to a document detailing Immoren’s ancient past is seldom a simple task. The scarcity of original texts from the time of the Occupation or before makes such items invaluable, and the owners of such documents are always worried about theft. Even copies are rare and highly prized. Documents of an occult nature, especially those of Morrdh or Orgoth origin, present even further complications. Many people living in western Immoren still harbor a superstitious fear that the possession of such a relic can draw the attention of the dark gods worshiped by its former owners. Others suspect anyone who exhibits undue interest in such baleful artifacts of harboring dark secrets. This sentiment makes many private collectors hesitant to allow word to spread about the contents of their collections.

**UNIVERSITIES**

The most readily accessible collections of historical documents are held at large universities, although this access is not universal. Characters with a connection to the university or who have a wealthy patron they can call upon for influence can gain access to a collection without complex negotiations or bribes. Explorers and Aristocrats find this easier than most. Arcanists and Priests with the University Education ability may have spent time at a place of higher learning or at least understand the intricacies of dealing with such systems.

All other characters need to find alternate ways of accessing the information, be it through bribery, coercion, or breaking and entering.

A character who gains admittance to a university collection still has to deal with heavy restrictions while accessing the texts. Typically they are only allowed to review the material in a reading room staffed by university personnel. This access is limited to a certain amount of material at a time and only for a limited amount of time per visit.

**ARCANE ORGANIZATIONS**

The arcane organizations of western Immoren, such as the Fraternal Order of Wizardry, keep libraries that can offer more insight than those available to the universities. Access to these collections is extremely restricted. Characters without a connection to the organization are almost never granted access except in the most extreme circumstances.

An order member in good standing can access its library but is still treated as an outsider by its staff. These libraries are managed much like the universities described above, with closely monitored reading rooms and limited access. One added restriction for an arcane organization’s collection is the consideration of rank; different ranks have different privileges. New initiates are not granted access to a collection in the same way a high-ranking member is, and members from distant chapter houses may be viewed with a degree of suspicion and distrust. The information contained in the requested documents can affect who has access, as can the rarity of the document within the particular collection and the
organization as a whole. Lastly, there is always the question of internal politics. If the curator of a collection has a problem with a character’s goal, background, associates, or patrons, access may be denied with no appeals.

PRIVATE COLLECTORS
Private collectors offer a Game Master a broad spectrum of options. One private collector may have only a single record of potential interest, while another might be an aristocrat with an extensive collection of relics from the Rebellion. Access to these collections can vary widely. The owner of a diary might not even admit its existence, but the aristocrat with an extensive library may be commissioning the party to explore a location he has heavily researched in hopes of adding to his collection.

LOCAL CONDITIONS
A party can choose to rely solely on their own abilities and previous research to find the goal of their expedition, but they may find it useful to seek out local assistance. This generally takes one of three forms: local legends, eyewitness accounts, and local guides.

LOCAL LEGENDS
Time, and events such as the Scourge, has destroyed many of the obvious indications of where locations like tombs or ancient castles can be found. Often in such cases important clues to the past have been preserved in local legends, stories, and regional songs. The oral traditions of a region can vary greatly from one culture to another, however. In some areas embellishment to make a story “better” may be the norm, while in others passing down accurate information is highly regarded.

There are broadly two kinds of stories: those covering the known and those speculating on the unknown.

KNOWN FACTS
Many legends and stories are based on known facts: things like historical rulers, regional battles, or other details or events that were witnessed by large numbers of people. The significant facts of many of these stories are verifiable through written accounts and other research, but smaller details may not be as widely known. For example, the story of a battle that resulted in an army being completely routed could be learned in a number of ways. The specifics that the losing general fled east into a forest and was never heard from again might only be known by a few witnesses who passed the story down to their children.

UNKNOWN SPECULATION
These kinds of stories cover unlimited amounts of topics, from strange sounds echoing through the mountains at night to the sighting of strange creatures in the sewers of a major city. Many of these stories are not documented and rely entirely on the region’s storytellers for their propagation. These stories can often contain the most important clues that lead an expedition to its goal.

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS
In addition to the folklore of an area, it is also probable people currently living in the region have firsthand information about the exact location of the ancient site the party seeks. There are, however, several problems with this method of information gathering that give the Game Master tools to work with.

The first issue a party may find is that no one who has ever been to the site has returned alive to speak of it. This is slightly better than absolutely no information simply because the locals are aware of which part of the region is dangerous, allowing the expedition to narrow the scope of its search.

If members of a community have knowledge of a site, there are a few ways to handle the situation. If the site is related to something from a dark time in Immoren’s history, such as the time of the kingdom of Morgrh, there could be a superstitious fear among the locals that speaking of the site could somehow invite the evil residing there. It is also possible the party will arouse the anger of a population with their intentions to disturb a place regarded with such fear.

Another issue with gathering information from a local community is that not every story told in a local pub is true, and many are highly embellished. With this the Game Master can give the players plenty of chances to make rolls using Lore and Deception. He should also keep in mind that in some cases such deception is benign, while other times the liar could be trying to lure the party into an ambush or impede their search in other ways.

LOCAL GUIDES
There are many options available when the Game Master is determining what kind of guide is available in an area. Two parts of this are the capability of the party and the hesitancy of a previous visitor to revisit a site. This decision, like many others, should be weighed against its value to the story and the capability of the party.

If the party is made up primarily of characters who are at home in the wilderness, they may not need a guide to lead them to a site, but they will be helped by a well-drawn map provided by someone who has been there. If the party is full of university professors and students who have naively blundered into the wilderness, they need a guide who will stay with them all the way to the destination to ensure they don’t fall victim to the hazards of the wilderness.

Then there is the personality of an available guide. A guide who is terrified of returning to the site in question may be willing only to draw a map and give ominous warnings. Another guide may be willing to return to the general area but will take the party only as far as the entrance of the site, refusing to set foot beyond that point.

The quality of a guide is also something the Game Master can vary. Some guides are just local miners willing to take the party as far as a base camp. These guides rarely ask for much payment, unless they are experiencing a prolonged dry spell in their mining efforts. Other guides are professional hunters or retired military scouts that will be a major NPC addition to the party and expect to be paid a significant amount of money for their talents and time. There is always the danger a guide is actually a bandit. He could be leading the party into a trap set by the rest of his band. This is another place where the skills of the characters come into play, as they begin to piece together inconsistencies and errors in a would-be bandit’s story.