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Roleplayers

Population	Thousands, across the internet
Demonym	Roleplayers, LARPer
Notable Characters	Inugami Korone
Notable Roleplayers	SEXHAVVER41

Roleplayers also known as **LARPs**¹⁾ are people who **roleplay**, or pretend to be self-made characters or characters from an already-existing intellectual property. Roleplayers distinguish themselves from offline personas or real life acts as they typically do not need hefty financial investments to achieve convincing incarnations through costumes, makeup, wigs, etc. and can instead download free assets from the internet to achieve a desired look for no or less money than practical effects. There are two distinct kinds of roleplayers, the regular roleplayers who don't roleplay seriously and frequently break character, typically demonstrating a clear lack of dedication to their craft, and Live Action Roleplayers or LARPer who dedicate an entire account to their character, are consistent, uniform, and seldom break character, and act the same across different communities or platforms. The characters these roleplayers create originally or interpret from source material are known by their given names, and are generally known as roleplays/acts, unless the character is played by a LARPer, in which it is called a LARP or serious roleplay. Roleplayers are known to add unique dynamics and interactions to the settings and people they interact with, making them highly desirable among certain groups of people, like the Discord server [Cumball](#), whose owner is very fond of them.

Roleplayers can be overloaded by multiple people requesting for responses at the same time, mostly resulting in delayed responses or choking, where roleplayers stop interacting for a moment. Choking can result in roleplayers giving up the act, breaking character, or flat-out leaving their current conversation(s) until they return, although some do not return from exhaustion or other reasons. Roleplayers can be varied in the way they interact, with most being text-only to preserve their privacy. Some very dedicated roleplayers can interact in voice calls with one or multiple people and do not break character consistently. Vocal roleplayers are typically seen in Discord calls or VRChat instances with the former being more common as it requires much less work compared to the latter as the latter can also require the roleplayer to display certain physical mannerisms, facial expressions, and react to many more different kinds of interaction (For example, many different physical interactions can happen in VRChat compared to Discord where functionally none happen.)

Origin

Actors and acting have existed for thousands of years throughout human history, and online roleplayers have similarly existed since the inception of the internet, but they mostly have not been highly-dedicated or break character easily. Modern roleplayers, however, usually do not break character and can be very immersive and convincing, and have been showing up since the early 2000s on imageboards, IRC chats, and in multiplayer video games.

Motivations

Roleplayers can roleplay for many different reasons. Commonly, they do it for the love of the game,

but some can do it as a coping mechanism for loss or for mental trauma, which is not uncommon. Some roleplayers derive sexual gratification or pleasure from playing a character and/or having their character abused or used in some way by someone else. Despite being uncommon, many people consider this the motivation behind many different roleplayers' work.

Immersion

Roleplayers can employ many different methods to increase immersion and make their act convincing to fans of roleplayers or not by being very dedicated, using real information to their advantage or through other methods. Usually the more dedicated a roleplayer is, the more immersive they are to interact with, but sometimes this is not the case, especially with beginners who do not have the writing skills necessary to make their character genuine or convincing to others.

Platforms

Roleplayers and LARPers exist on nearly every popular social media platform, with some being created and managed by brands especially when it concerns popular characters that already exist. Typical platforms they use are Discord and VRChat, where they can interact live with one or multiple people at once.

Social media

Social media that roleplayers and LARPs alike typically use are Discord, Reddit, X, and Instagram. Some other social media like Twitch and Kick may also be used where roleplayers do their work as a chat member, being the inverse to a VTuber.

VRChat

VRChat is a popular choice for dedicated roleplayers that on the lowest-end balance on the border between dedicated roleplayer and LARP. They are known to not only have many different methods of interacting with them, but also, when it comes to roleplayers who roleplay as an existing character, ways to be ludicrously accurate to the source material of the character they are roleplaying.

VRChat is favored among roleplayers at large for its wealth of free assets and models for the creation of new characters, and a healthy wealth of fan creations of already existing characters. Uploading an avatar to VRChat is free, and for uploading existing characters or uploading NSFW avatars, as long as the avatar is used privately by the uploader, it is seldom taken down. (Although NSFW avatars should mainly be used in private instances to keep both the user and other users safe from user moderation and VRChat moderation respectively.)

This platform gives roleplayers many different options to interact, and a high degree of immersion for those who interact with them. Enhancements like full-body tracking (FBT), finger/hand tracking, and eye and face tracking can allow roleplayers to give a much higher degree of immersion than other platforms allow, with some LARPs who employ these enhancements being as much or more immersive than VTubers who use the same or different software.

Some roleplayers can enhance their experience further with other upgrades like haptic vests or haptic body suits that allow them to feel touch from other users without the need of guessing or employing other methods of touch detection, allowing for an even higher degree of immersion when paired or not with other enhancements. Sometimes enhancements can be used in software other than VRChat as well, allowing roleplayers to share the same equipment across VRChat and other programs like 3D VTuber software as is the case with the FBT solution SlimeVR.

Video games

Multiplayer video games with a high degree of freedom when it comes to customizing one's character are preferred among dedicated roleplayers, with games such as Garry's Mod, Second Life, and Roblox being preferred over others as they allow for the creation of new characters or recreation of existing characters much more easily than other multiplayer video games like Fall Guys, CS2, Helldivers 2, or even party-like games like Peak or Lethal Company. Fortnite is considered a popular choice among roleplayers who roleplay as existing characters, as there are a wealth of them present in Fortnite. Although Fornite skins cost money compared to other options from other games, Fortnite skins/characters are, on average, more accurate to the source material than fan or personal creations and can provide financial support towards the proper copyright owners, a win-win for both the roleplayer and the copyright holders (which are typically the original creators of the characters).

Identifying roleplayers

Roleplayers and LARPers (people behind the character(s)) can be identified by writing style, personality, mannerisms, or other signs that carry between their different characters either deliberately or accidentally. Some roleplayers out-right state who they are before they start roleplaying a character or on their profile, but others obscure, obfuscate, or make it very difficult to figure out who they are behind the character, with LARPers who were considered very dedicated and good at their work being the hardest people to identify between characters.

Character lifespan

LARPers and roleplayers' characters can be performed from a span of a few days to indefinitely depending on how popular, in-demand, entertaining (for both the roleplayer and the audience), but characters that last indefinitely are typically rare, as roleplayers can grow tired of a specific character or they become stale, hated, or the character gets banned from social media, usually causing immediate character death.

Character lifecycle

Characters are born to replace a character that already exists/existed or as the first character of a roleplayer. First characters are typically not well-written, witty, or entertaining compared to characters done by an established roleplayer. First characters are typically born and practiced with a small group of people (among friends or fellow roleplayers) to reduce the backlash one can get from roleplaying a terrible character, and allow the roleplayer to get valuable criticism with a reduced risk of being banned (from Discord servers or social media) or shunned. Characters made to replace previous characters, however usually don't need to be soft-launched with a small group of friends or

other roleplayers and can make their debut in an existing active Discord server. Usually when characters are born, they are born at a not-newborn age, although some roleplayers have experimented with characters that are mentally and physically lore-wise a newborn when their account is created, but this has been shown to have been done on accounts that are very old or characters that do not follow human biology and/or aging.

Differences between RP, LARP, and VTuber

Roleplayers are people who roleplay as a character, which encompasses LARPs, VTubers and anyone who pretends to be a character. When someone is referred to as just a “roleplayer”, it's usually because they loosely roleplay as a character with less consistency, dedication, effort, and time as a LARPer or a VTuber.

LARPers are serious roleplayers who almost never break character and stay consistent when required. They usually create their own character or adopt one and stay true to the character, but do not seek a wide audience or reach like those of VTubers, seeking not to create content for many reasons, but they typically stray away from content creation because it is much more work than just being a character, and doing it would be a waste of time and effort because most LARPers as well as loose roleplayers change out their characters often when they get bored of them or for other reasons.

VTubers are YouTubers and streamers (although some can use other forms of social media) who adopt a self-made persona or character (or one created by their associated corporation as is the case with corporate VTubers), and seek mental validation, financial gain, a parasocial audience, a dedicated fanbase, a mix between these, or just one. VTubers are content creators with a wide audience, community, and fanbase/fandom, while most roleplayers and LARPers do it for the love of the game or for any number of different motivations, hidden or not, which are typically unlike those of VTubers. VTuber characters can be abandoned or *graduate* when their performer dies, is replaced, quits on their own accord or is terminated by their associated company, or for health reasons, but, unlike LARPers, they cannot leave hints towards their new character with their old one and do not cycle through characters often, definitely due to the financial burden required to start a new VTuber character which can start in the thousands of dollars.

Account repurposing/reuse

When it comes to any social media-based roleplayer, many choose to reuse an existing years-old account from another roleplayer or purchase one from account sellers, although the latter practice is usually against the terms of service of many social media platforms. Existing accounts are chosen because they garner trust from most audiences due to being older, which usually gives off the illusion that the character is older than it actually is. The choice of an older account usually helps when it comes to platforms such as Discord, where alt detectors are prevalent and can prevent a character from launching properly in popular servers.

Account creation

When roleplayers either cannot afford, do not want, or do not know anyone with an existing account to lend, they will choose to make a new account specifically to roleplay. They can either reuse this account for later which is more friendly on server resources or abandon the account when the

character dies and create a new one if a new character is desired.

Character death

Character death is a natural process that happens with all roleplays/LARPs, it is when a character is no longer played by its creator/actor for an extended period of time (death by absentia), deliberately killed lore-wise either by the creator through their means or by another character they allow to do so (lore death), or deliberately killed by the creator and/or roleplayer of the character (Discontinued). Character death can be accidental, for example, social media platforms like Discord can ban a character's account for bot-like behavior (see: [Fritter](#)), or for other reasons which can be the death of many roleplayers who are not dedicated enough to create another account to circumvent this ban (or are unable to do so). Most cases of character death are deliberate and can hint at the return of the character, or their *replacement* of sorts. In some cases, however, a LARPer can literally die making them unable to do a deliberate death. This is rare, however, as most LARPers rarely die, and rarely confirm their death or health status in general.

AI

Generative AI like LLMs for roleplaying has become increasingly popular in the 2020s. Despite coming out after roleplayers and LARPers, who started their work in the 2000s or 2010s, online platforms like [character.ai](#) and [janitor.ai](#), and even local, self-hosted software like [SillyTavern](#) have become quite popular as a means of connecting with fictional characters.

The use of generative AI, like in many other spaces on the internet (or not) has caused controversy within human roleplayer and LARP communities, with the general consensus towards the use of it, especially when it pertains to replacing roleplayers, being negative, although some see it as “positive competition” that encourages even the most experienced and fast-acting of dedicated roleplayers to do better.

AI LLM-based characters are difficult competition for human roleplayers, as they, on average, think and type faster than a human and can do much more than just type out thoughts or dialog in a short amount of time, with some being able to generate graphs or prompt another AI to generate images related to what they are saying and/or thinking. Despite their speed, however, most roleplayers write AI off as a glass cannon, as LLMs tend to hallucinate often and break character in other ways, prompt images that have little or no correlation to what ideas they are trying to convey, and they are quite costly either in currency or processing power. Although there are roleplayers who require payment for their services, nearly all do it for the love of the game, or for other collateral outside of monetary compensation such as mental stimulation, or for some, even sexual gratification.

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Live Action Roleplays

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Last update: **2026/08/24 01:59**



