

Darkest Dungeon

THE BOARD GAME



RULES

Ruin has come to our family.

You remember our venerable house, opulent and imperial, gazing proudly from its stoic perch above the moor.

I lived all my years in that ancient rumor-shadowed manor, fattened by decadence and luxury. And yet, I began to tire of... conventional extravagance. Singular unsettling tales suggested the mansion itself was a gateway to some fabulous and unnameable power.

With relic and ritual, I bent every effort towards the excavation and recovery of those long buried secrets, exhausting what remained of our family fortune on... swarthy workmen and... sturdy shovels. At last, in the salt-soaked crags beneath the lowest foundations, we unearthed that damnable portal of antediluvian evil. Our every step unsettled the ancient earth, but we were in a realm of death and madness! In the end, I alone fled, laughing and wailing, through those blackened arcades of antiquity, until consciousness failed me.

You remember our venerable house, opulent and imperial. It is a festering abomination! I beg you, return home, claim your birthright, and deliver our family from the ravenous clutching shadows...

...of the Darkest Dungeon.



Darkest Dungeon the Board Game is an adaptation of the critically acclaimed video game created by Red Hook Studios.

The Heir has returned to the Estate, and must reclaim it.

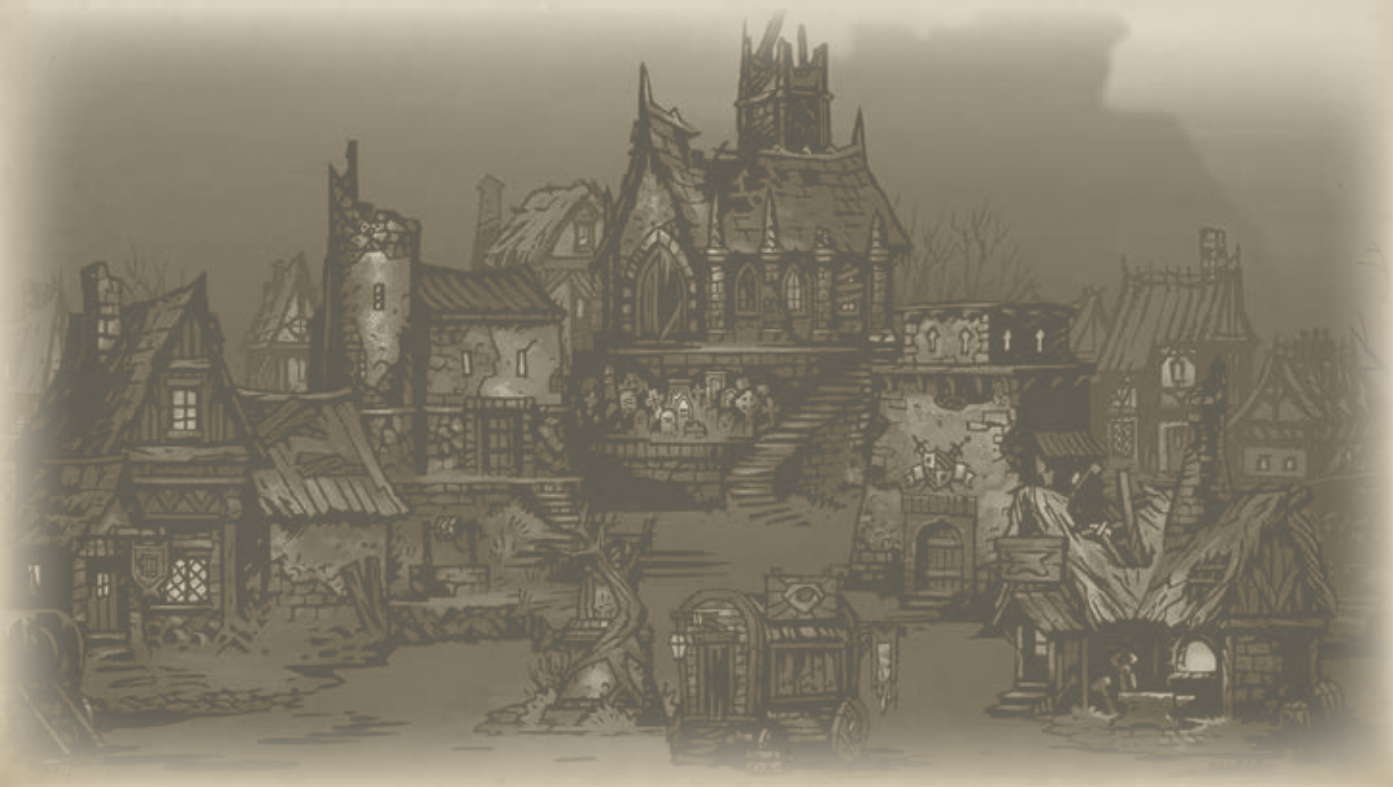
Adventurer, you have been hired to clear out the infested land and restore the Hamlet to its former glory. With the voice of the Ancestor echoing in your mind, you will delve deep into cursed dungeons, and face unimaginable eldritch horrors. When these areas are purified and you are prepared both physically and mentally, then you will assault the Darkest Dungeon itself and seal off the source of madness once and for all.



Contents

Heroes are Human!	4	Place Loot Chests	17
Game Components.....	4	Set the Round Tracker	17
Game Overview	9	Battle	17
Campaign Overview and Goal of the Game	9	Hero Turns	18
Death of a Hero & Failing the Campaign	9	1) Start of Turn Effects.....	18
Locations.....	9	2) Actions	18
Set up the Game and Get Ready		- Move.....	18
for the First Quest	10	- Interact with the Environment	18
Determine the First Imminent Threat	11	- Change Stance	19
Choose Heroes	11	- Use a Skill	19
Pick a Quest.....	11	Critical.....	19
Place your Heroes on the Hero Stance Tracker	12	Self Effects.....	20
Setting up the Dungeon Layout	12	Target Effects.....	20
Light Up.....	12	Conditions.....	20
Roll for Provisions.....	12	Stacking and Using Tokens	20
Navigating through Dungeons	14	Resistances and Immunities	21
1) Scout (optional)	14	Monster Turns	21
2) Exploration.....	14	Step 1 - Start of Turn Effects.....	21
Long Corridors	14	Step 2 – Act.....	21
3) Backtracking.....	14	1) Check what Skill the Monster is about to use..	21
4) Leaving the Dungeon	14	2) Check Target.	24
Entering a Room	15	3) Check Range.....	24
Resting.....	15	4) Take the Action.....	24
Gold	15	Large and Small Monsters	24
Battle and Skills	15	Casualties.....	24
Setting up the Battlefield.....	15	High and Low Ground	25
Reveal Room.....	15	Battle Rounds.....	25
Deploy Heroes, Spawn Monsters and		Battle End	25
Ready the Initiative Deck.....	16	Trinkets	26
		Quirks	26
		Negative Quirks	26

Positive Quirks	27	Excavation Site Rooms	36
Diseases	27	The Final Encounter – Heart of Darkness.....	36
Stress, Afflictions and Virtues.....	28	Game Modes	36
The Light	29	Radiant and Stygian Modes	36
At Death’s Door and Deathblows.....	29	The Butcher’s Circus (PvP Mode)	37
Gaining XP (Experience Points).....	29	Deathblows and Heart Attacks in PvP mode.....	37
Leveling Up	29	Optional Rules	37
Bosses.....	30	The Abomination: A Special Kind of Hero	38
Fighting a Boss	30	Boss Fights.....	38
Boss Turns.....	30	The Ruins.....	38
Monster Summoning	31	Necromancer.....	38
Hero Death	31	Prophet.....	38
Returning to the Hamlet.....	32	Collector.....	39
The Hamlet	32	Fanatic.....	39
1) Draw a Hamlet Event.....	32	Darkest Dungeon	39
2) Roll for the Caretaker	33	The Templars.....	39
3) Spend your Days	33	Mammoth Cyst.....	39
Hamlet Buildings and Upgrades.....	33	Shuffling Horror.....	40
The Campaign.....	35	Final Encounter	40
Saving the Game	35	Ancestor 1 st Form	40
The Darkest Dungeon.....	35	Ancestor 2 nd Form.....	40
		Gestating Heart	41
		Heart of Darkness.....	41
		Suggested Party Compositions	42



Heroes are Human!

Although brave and determined, adventurers are fragile and flawed. The horrors they will face will test their brains and bodies to the breaking point and beyond. Your characters may be slain or even driven mad beyond measure. Unlike many role-playing games, Darkest Dungeon Campaigns are not guaranteed to succeed. Failure is likely, and good heroes will fall. Keep this in mind in your Quest. Don't be discouraged should your favorite Hero meet an untimely end - sacrifice is essential for success.

Game Components

Tokens

- ◆ 28 Blight
- ◆ 28 Bleed
- ◆ 30 Buff
- ◆ 12 Debuff
- ◆ 9 Stun
- ◆ 11 Hero Stance
- ◆ 9 Mark
- ◆ 9 Riposte
- ◆ 9 Guard
- ◆ 6 Protection
- ◆ 25 Gold
- ◆ 20 Experience Points
- ◆ 21 Room
- ◆ 10 Loot
- ◆ 1 Firewood
- ◆ 4 Waiting Hero
- ◆ 56 Wounds

Dice

- ◆ 8 Exploration Dice
- ◆ 16 Provision Dice
- ◆ 4 Death's Door Dice
- ◆ 4 Ten-sided Dice

Tiles & Boards

- ◆ 4 Hero Dashboards
- ◆ 14 Hamlet Buildings
- ◆ 1 Light and 2 Stance Boards
- ◆ 13 Room Tiles & 1 PvP Arena

◆ 1 Hamlet Board



◆ 19 Quest Cards



◆ 16 Hamlet Events



◆ 12 Dungeon Tiles & 2 Darkest Dungeon Tiles



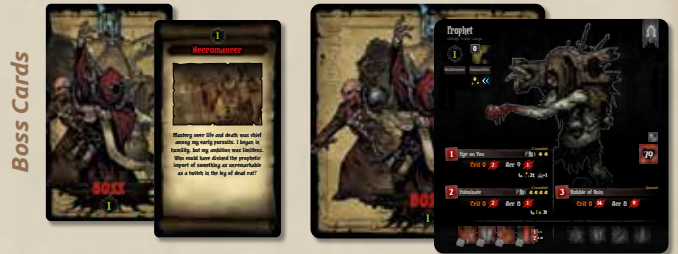
◆ 231 Hero Skill Cards



◆ 8 Initiative Cards



◆ 169 Monster & Boss Cards



Boss Cards

Monster Cards

Cards

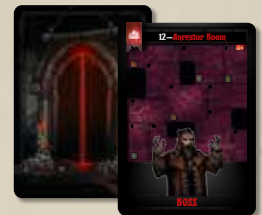
◆ 23 Hero Cards



◆ 22 Hero PvP Cards



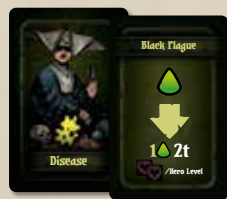
◆ 8 Boss Room Cards



◆ 38 Trinkets



◆ 11 Diseases



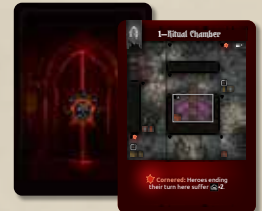
◆ 17 Positive & 18 Negative Quirks



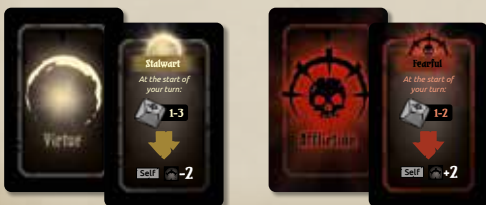
◆ 17 Room Cards



◆ 17 Stygian Room Cards



◆ 5 Afflictions & 5 Virtues



◆ 8 Player Aid Cards



◆ 24 Curio Cards



Miniatures

• Heroes



Crusader



Hellion



Highwayman



Occultist



Abomination



Bounty Hunter



Jester



Vestal



Arbalist



Plague Doctor



Grave Robber

• Ruins Monsters



Bone Captain



3x Bone Soldier



2x Bone Defender



2x Bone Bearer

3x Bone Spearman



3x Bone Courtier



3x Bone Arbalist

• Ruins Bosses



The Collector



Collected Highwayman



Prophet



Collected Man at Arms



Collected Vestal



4x Wooden Pews



Necromancer



The Fanatic



Pyre

● Common Monsters



3x Cultist Brawler



3x Cultist Acolyte



3x Brigand Fusilier



Brigand Bloodletter



3x Madman



3x Gargoyle



3x Brigand Hunter



3x Brigand Cutthroat



3x Brigand Raider



3x Bone Rabble



Ghoul



3x Webber



3x Spitter



3x Maggot



3x Pliskin



3x Rattler



Adder

● Darkest Dungeon Monsters



3x Rapturous Cultist



2x Flesh Hound



3x Polyp



3x Ascended Witch



3x Ascended Brawler



3x Cultist Priest



3x Defensive Growth



3x Antibody

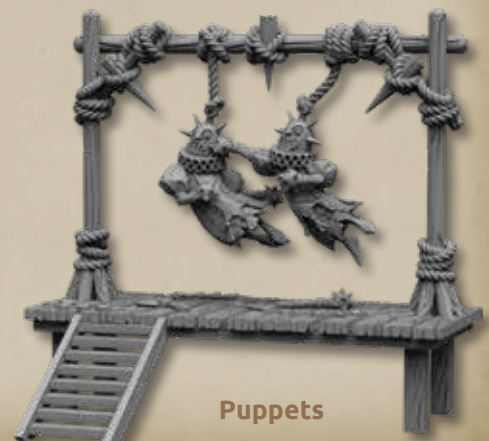


3x Malignant Growth

● PvP Mode



Butcher



Puppets

• Darkest Dungeon Bosses



Shuffling Horror



Heart of Darkness



Gestating Heart



Mammoth Cyst



2x Templar Warlord



2x Templar Impaler



White Cell Stalk



Ancestor
1st Form



3x Perfect
Reflection



3x Imperfect
Reflection



Ancestor
2nd Form



3x Absolute
Nothingness

Other

- ♦ Round, Light, Days, and Party Counters



Round



Light Days



Party

- ♦ Caretaker



and



- ♦ 1 Save Sheet Notepad
- ♦ 1 Save Box



- ♦ 12 Monster Tokens (3 colors, 4 each)



- ♦ 4 Stress Counters



Rules

- ♦ 1 Old Road Introductory Tutorial Booklet
- ♦ 1 Rulebook





Game Overview

In Darkest Dungeon, players assume the role of adventurers, each with their own unique abilities and characteristics. They will take part in an eleven-Quest, four-act Campaign, clearing the various Locations from Monsters and fighting their Bosses. In between adventures, they will spend their accumulated riches upgrading the Hamlet and themselves until they are ready to face the Darkest Dungeon itself. Some of them might perish in this perilous mission but there will be more to replace them. When this happens, the player can choose one of the available adventurers waiting patiently back at the Stagecoach for their time to shine. Beware though...

If there are not enough Heroes to form a party of four, the Campaign is over and you have failed on your mission.

But, worry not - you can always start over. The game expects you to start again and learn from your failed Campaigns. Step up to the challenge and begin a new Campaign that will not be the same as the last!



Campaign Overview and Goal of the Game


Before the Heroes storm the Darkest Dungeon, they must first deal with the Imminent Threats to the Hamlet and gain strength. The Campaign consists of four Acts. The first three acts consist of two general Quests and a Boss Quest each. By defeating a Boss, the Heroes end their Imminent Threat and advance the Campaign to the next act (and difficulty Level). When the first three acts are completed, the gate to Darkest Dungeon will open and the 4th and final act will take place. If they defeat the final Boss, the Heroes are victorious and the players have won the game!

After each Quest, players will be able to spend some time in the Hamlet and upgrade its buildings, as well as improve their fighting capabilities.



Death of a Hero & Failing the Campaign

Heroes can die permanently (and thus be removed from the game) in any of the following ways:

- ♦ **Deathblow:** When the Hero is at **Death's Door** (has suffered Wounds equal to their Life) and rolls a Deathblow .
- ♦ **Heart Attack:** Their Stress Level reaches 10, and the Hero already has an **Affliction** or **Virtue**.
- ♦ **Gives in to Madness:** The Hero receives a 4th **Negative Quirk**.

When a Hero dies in one of these ways, the controlling player must choose a new one from the Stagecoach and continue playing.



If no Hero is available at the Stagecoach, the players have failed the Campaign and it is over!

The Campaign is also failed if the Heroes are defeated during a Boss Quest.

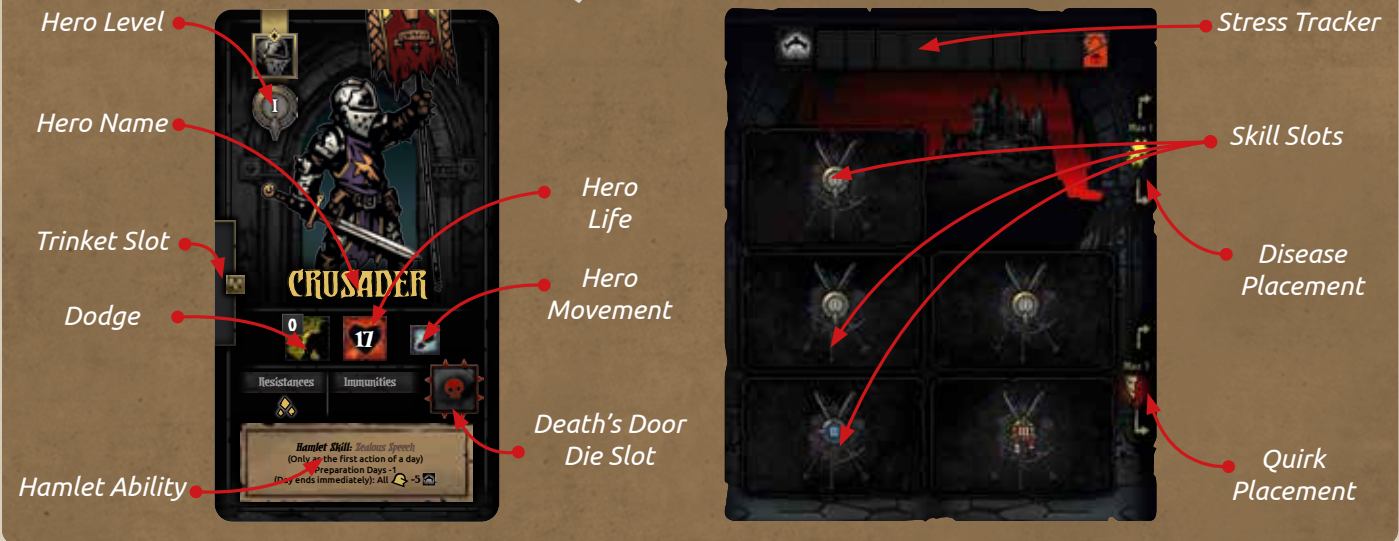
All of these are explained in detail later in this rulebook.



Locations

Around the Hamlet there are various Locations where the Heroes can venture to defeat the Imminent Threats. Each Location is accompanied by its own set of Monsters, Rooms, Quests and Curios and are identified with a unique icon. This core box contains two Locations: the Ruins  and the Darkest Dungeon . Along with the unique cards there are some common ones that are mixed in along with the Location specific cards **except the Darkest Dungeon** which plays with its own set of cards. These common cards do not have a Location icon.

Anatomy of the Hero Boards



Setting up the Game and Get Ready for the First Quest

Steps 1-9 are general set up steps that are common in each playthrough.

- 1 Ready Stance Trackers & Initiative Deck:** Place the Heroes and Monsters Stance Trackers in the middle of the table opposing each other. Leave space near them to place Days Room Tiles as required. Choose whichever orientation suits you best (vertical or horizontal). Take the 8 Initiative Cards and shuffle them into a single deck; place it close to one of the Stance Trackers.
- 2 Ready the Room Tiles:** Find all Ruins Room tiles and place them in a pile to the side within reach.
- 3 Separate the Decks:** Separate the Positive Quirks, Negative Quirks, Diseases, Virtues, Afflictions, Ruins' Curios, and Level 1 Trinkets Cards and shuffle them into their respective decks. Place them by each other and close to the Hero Stance Tracker.
- 4 Construct the Monsters Deck:** The game comes with three groups of Monsters: Common, Ruins and Darkest Dungeon. Leave all Darkest Dungeon Monsters out of the game until you reach the 10th Quest.
Find all Level 1 Common and Ruins Monsters and shuffle them together in a single deck. This is the Monsters Deck. The rest won't be needed before you defeat the first Boss, unless a Quest specifies differently. Place the Monsters Deck close to the Monsters Stance Tracker.
- 5 Construct the Rooms Deck:** Find all Ruins Room Cards and shuffle them together to form a single deck. Place it close to the Rooms pile.
- 6 Construct Loot Pile:** Find the 10 Loot Chest Tokens and shuffle them together in a single pile. Place them close to the Rooms Deck and Rooms pile.
- 7 Ready the Tokens:** Separate all Wounds and Condition Counts (Bleed, Blight, etc) by type and place them within reach.
- 8 Ready the Provisions:** Take the 16 Provisions Dice and place them within reach. Place the Firewood Token next to the Provisions Dice. Gain 10 Gold and place them in a common pool beside your Provisions.
- 9 Ready Hero Areas:** Give each player two Exploration Dice, a standard ten-sided die and an At Death's Door die (the red one with the skulls). Give each player a Hero Dashboard and a Stress Counter. Place the Stress Counter on the Stress Tracker white-side up at 0 .
- 10 Ready the Hamlet:** Place the Hamlet Board on the side of the table. Find the Hamlet Event Cards and shuffle them in a single deck; place

When you start the game and get ready for your first Quest, you won't do anything in the Hamlet beforehand. You can skip the next set up step for now, unless you want to have it ready for when you finish the Quest.

them next to the Hamlet Board. Find the Caretaker Token/Miniature and place it next to the Hamlet Board too. Place two Waiting Hero Tokens on the Stagecoach building on the Hamlet Board. The game comes with upgrade Tokens for the Hamlet buildings. You won't need them before your first Hamlet phase (and maybe not even then) so you can leave them in the box for the time being.

Great. The basic set up is ready. Now let's prepare for your first Quest!

Determine the First Imminent Threat:

Find the four Level 1 Ruins Boss Cards and shuffle them together (there are also Darkest Dungeon Boss Cards but leave them out of the game for now), then draw one at random and read its flavor text aloud; this is the first Imminent Threat. Find its Level 1 Threat Card and place it somewhere in the middle of the table, Dungeon-side up, for easy access to its rules.



Bosses are an Imminent Threat to the Hamlet and also affect the Dungeon itself. Each Boss has 3 Levels of Threats. At the beginning of the game, the Boss you draw will be at Level 1. Until you complete your first couple of Quests and are able to face the Boss itself, its passive abilities will affect your time in the Dungeon and the Hamlet.

Each Boss also has a Battle Card per Level, but you won't be needing it until the third Quest of each Act.

Choose Heroes

Each player chooses a Hero and takes their miniature. Take your Level 1 Hero Card and place it next to your dashboard. Find your roster of seven Level 1 Skills and pick three of those to equip on your Hero Dashboard Skill Slots. Leave the rest on the side. Your Level 2 and 3 Hero and Skill Cards won't be used until you train to Level them up, so leave them in the box for now.

If you find it difficult to choose which Skills you want, feel free to use one of our pre-set builds found in page 42 of this rulebook.



Keep in mind that the seven Skills for each Hero are always available to them throughout the Campaign and they can swap them freely between Quests (more on page 32 "The Hamlet").

Pick a Quest

Shuffle the Level 1 Quest Cards and form the Quest Deck. Draw two and choose one to play. The other is permanently discarded from the Campaign. Quests grant Experience Points (Xp) when their objectives are completed (thus allowing Heroes to Level Up) and also define the Rooms you'll be exploring in the Dungeon. The Quest also indicates if you're taking any Firewood supplies with you to rest and how many Resting Points it provides (on the top left corner of the card). If it does, take the Firewood Token and place it along with the rest of your Provisions (see page 12: **Roll for Provisions**).



Place your Heroes on the Stance Tracker

Each player should now place their Hero Stance Token on the Hero Stance Tracker. Stances can change throughout play but this will be their starting positions. This positioning usually has to do with what Skills the players have chosen for their Heroes.

Aggressive Stances



Heroes



Monsters

Defensive Stances



Heroes



Monsters

Ranged Stances



Heroes



Monsters

Support Stances



Heroes



Monsters



Setting up the Dungeon Layout

Find the Dungeon Tiles, shuffle them up and draw one at random; place it beside the Hero Stance Tracker or any other convenient place. At the bottom of your Quest Card you can see which Rooms and how many of each you'll encounter in your Quest. Take the Room Tokens indicated on the Quest Card, shuffle them and place them face-down randomly on the Room Slots. Find the Party Miniature and place it on the start location of the Dungeon Map.

Boss Quests have a twist on how you place Rooms on the Board. See page 30 in the Bosses section of the rulebook.



Light Up

Place the Light Counter at 5 on the Light Tracker.



Roll for Provisions



Roll two Provision Dice for each Hero. After rolling, each player that has rolled a wild (DD) turns the die to any side they like. Place all Provisions Dice on the side in a common pool. **This pool can never exceed a maximum of 16 dice.** When not used to counter Exploration Hazards (see the Exploration section on p14), Provisions have several beneficial uses. They can be used any time by any Hero, by discarding the appropriate dice during Exploration or as a free action during Battle. These uses are:



Food – Heal 1. Also counters Hunger during Exploration.



Bandage – Remove all Bleed or Heal 1.



Potion – Remove all Blight or Stress -1.



Torch – Light +1 (move your Light Counter 1 space up on the Light Tracker). Alternatively, it removes all the negative effects of Curios.



Tool – This Provision is only used to counter Exploration Hazards (Traps and Rubble).

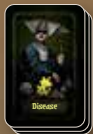
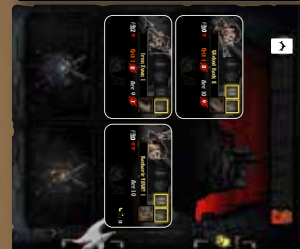
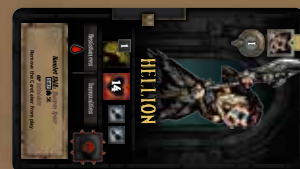
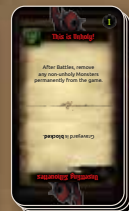
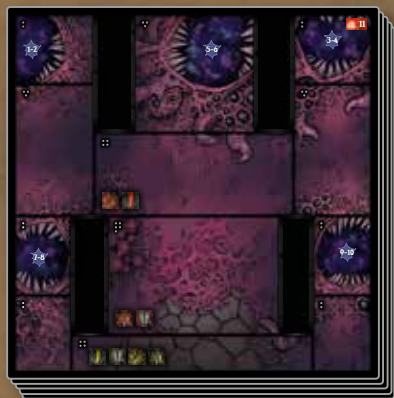


Wild – Flip it to a side of your choice.



You are now ready to start!

Example of Setup





Navigating through Dungeons

You are now in the Dungeon. You will navigate through its Corridors and explore Rooms so you can complete the objectives of your chosen Quest. When in the Dungeon, the Heroes can choose to Scout and then they **must** Explore, Backtrack or leave the Dungeon.

Scout (Optional)

By Scouting, the players can reveal the Rooms adjacent to the one they're in. In order to Scout, Heroes must suffer 1 Stress each. Then reveal all adjacent Rooms. In addition, during their next Exploration and only then, the Heroes will roll only one Exploration Die instead of two (see **Exploration** below for more details). Keep in mind that this is a group decision, so the Heroes will Scout only if every player agrees to it.


Exploration

During the Exploration Phase, players can take their time to discuss tactics and strategies, plan their path, change their Heroes' Stances and consume any Provisions they like.


When moving from one Room to another, Heroes must explore the Corridor. The Heroes move together as a party and cannot split up. Heroes roll two Exploration Dice each and then they must take turns resolving them. The turn order is decided by Stance priority: the Hero in the Aggressive Stance goes first, then the Hero in the Defensive Stance and so on. Players choose which die their Hero resolves first.

Keep in mind that if the Heroes have previously Scouted, each will roll only one Exploration Die during this Exploration instead of two.




Rubble – Rubble blocks your path forward and must be cleared out with either your hands or a tool. Spend 1  or suffer 1 Wound per Dungeon Level and suffer +1 Stress.




Hunger – Hunger overwhelms you and you must eat. Spend 1  or suffer 2 Wounds per Hero Level.




Stressful Darkness – This Corridor is so dark you can hardly see what's around you. The Hero who resolves Stressful Darkness must spend 1  or reduce Light by 1 or suffer +2 Stress.

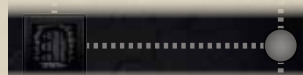


Curio – An object of interest lies before you, beckoning you to search it. Draw a Curio Card and see what you've found. Curios can have positive and negative effects. Usually both at the same time. You may spend 1  before you draw the card to ignore all negative effects of the Curio.



Trap – An old protective mechanism is set off when you trip it! Spend a  or roll an attack of **Acc 8** / ~~2~~ / Dungeon Level, **Crit 2** / ~~4~~ / Dungeon Level against you (Attacks are explained in detail on page 19).

• Long Corridors



Some Corridors run further than others. They are indicated by a gray dot. When moving down a Long Corridor you must stop on the dot before exploring further. If you previously Scouted before entering a Long Corridor, the dot will prevent you Scouting past that point (it acts like an adjacent Room).

Backtracking

When you move from a Room back to one you have already passed through, you're considered to be Backtracking. When the party Backtracks, each Hero suffers 1 Stress for each Corridor the party Backtracks through. No Exploration Dice are rolled.

Leaving the Dungeon

The Heroes can leave the Dungeon and return to the Hamlet at any point during the Exploration Phase but before they roll any Exploration Dice. This is a group decision and all players must agree to it. Once out of the Dungeon, the Heroes will gain Experience Points **Xp** according to the Quest objectives they've completed up to that point (more about **Xp** on page 29). There is no failing the Quest. All Quests usually give between 0 and 3 **Xp**. It

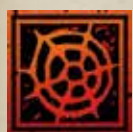
is up to the players how far they wish to push their Heroes into the Dungeon to gain **Xp**.

● Entering a Room

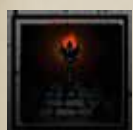
After the Exploration is over, the party moves to the desired Room. Depending on the type of the Room, different effects occur.



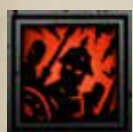
Empty: This Room is empty and nothing happens. Remove its Token from the map; it is now cleared.



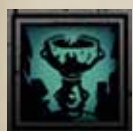
Trap: Each Hero suffers a total of Wounds and/or Stress equal to the Dungeon Level, dividing the amount between the two as they wish. Do not remove the Room Token after it is resolved; a Trap Room is never cleared and Heroes must face the Trap again the next time they pass through here.



Dark Room: Reduce the Light by 1 point. Do not remove this token after it is resolved. Like the Trap Room, Dark Rooms never clear and Heroes must face them every time they cross them.

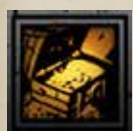


Lair: This Room is a Lair of Monsters. Heroes must initiate Battle immediately. If the Heroes win the Battle, remove the Token from the Board; the Room is cleared.

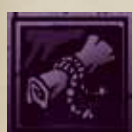


Curio: A Curio lies in the center of the Room. Curio Rooms can be guarded by Monsters. Roll a ten-sided die; if you rolled 1-5, initiate Battle. If the Battle is won, the Room is cleared. Remove the Token from the Board.

If you roll 6-10 the Room is cleared; remove the Token from the Board. When the Room is cleared, draw a Curio Card and choose which Hero will interact with it (Torches can still be used to ignore negative effects as normal).




Treasure: This Room contains a Treasure that is guarded by Monsters and you must face them. Initiate Battle immediately. If the Battle is won, the Room is cleared. Remove the Token from the Board and gain 20 Gold.



Objective: Some Quests have Objective Rooms. Quest Cards indicate what happens in these Rooms. Usually the Objective Rooms are specific Dungeon Rooms. Set these Rooms aside as you begin your Quest so you won't encounter them in random Battles. Quest Rooms are always guarded by Monsters.

● Resting

Some Quests will provide you with Firewood supplies, giving you a chance to Rest when in the Dungeon. You can only Rest in Rooms you have cleared and only if the entire party agrees. The Quest Card specifies how many Resting Points the party receives. You collectively choose how to distribute this amount among your party members to recover 1 Life or 1 Stress per point spent. You can discuss how many Resting Points each Hero gets but if you can't agree, you can split the amount equally and let each Hero spend their Rest Points as they see fit. After you've Rested, discard the Firewood Token  from your Provisions Pool.

● Gold

While questing, Heroes will accumulate Gold. Gold is a shared resource, so whenever you gain an amount, place it in a shared pool beside the rest of your Provisions. You'll spend Gold when in the Hamlet.



Battle and Skills

Setting up the Battlefield

Once Battle begins, you need to set up the Room in which the Battle takes place. Do it with the following steps.

● Reveal Room



Draw the topmost card of the Room Deck, search for the appropriate Room Tile and place it on the center of the table. Read out any special effects that occur in the Room and leave the card nearby for easy access to everyone.

● Deploy Heroes, Spawn Monsters and Ready the Initiative Deck

On each Room Tile you can find the starting location for both Heroes and Monsters. Place each Hero's miniature on the Area indicated, according to the Hero's Stance. Take the four Hero Initiative Cards and form the Initiative Deck.



Example: 2 Starting Locations of Heroes



Example: 2 Starting Locations of Monsters

Set up a Battle



1. Draw a Room Card



2. Reveal the Room

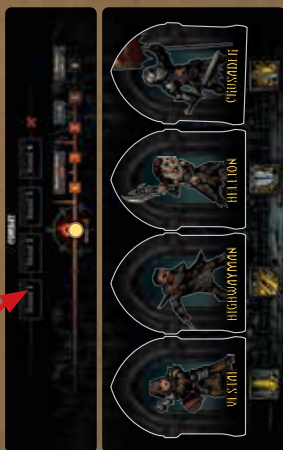


3. Setup the tile corresponding to the the card in the center of the table

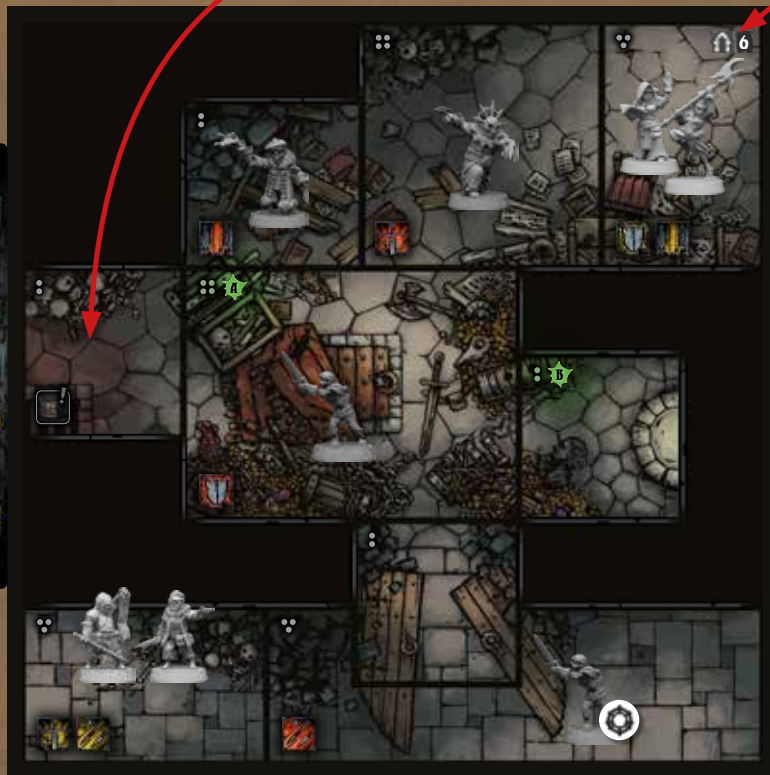
4. Place Loot Token(s)



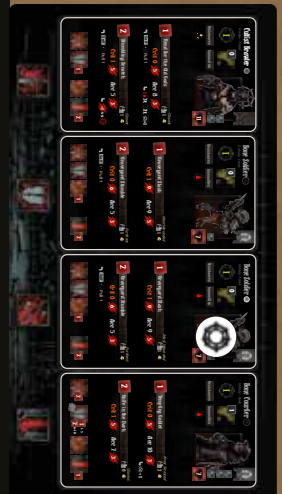
5. Place Hero Miniatures according to their Stances



7. Place the Round Token on Round 1



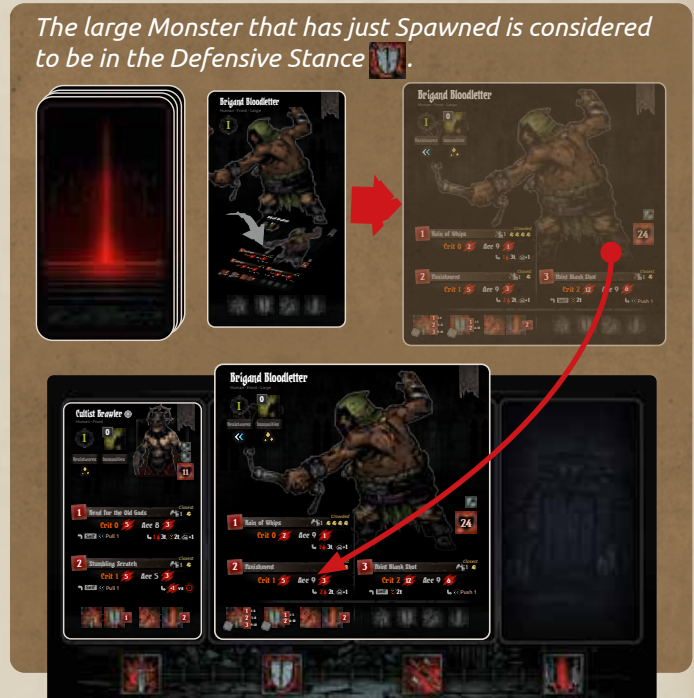
6. Place Monster Miniatures according to their Stances



8. Place Monster Tokens on the Miniatures to identify duplicates

To spawn Monsters, start drawing cards from the Monsters Deck. If you draw a front Monster, place the card on the first empty slot on the Monster Stance Tracker starting from the front (Aggressive to Support). If you draw a back Monster, place the card on the first empty slot on the Stance Tracker starting from the back (Support to Aggressive). Once you've placed the card, find the Monster Miniature and place it on the Room Tile on the Area that corresponds to its Stance. Then take a Monster Initiative Card and shuffle it into the Initiative Deck.

corresponding card and place it on the Tracker. If you draw two or more of the same Monster, note the color of the Monster Token displayed on each Monster Card and place it on the corresponding miniature so you can distinguish between them. Continue to do this until all Monster Stance Slots on the Tracker are filled.

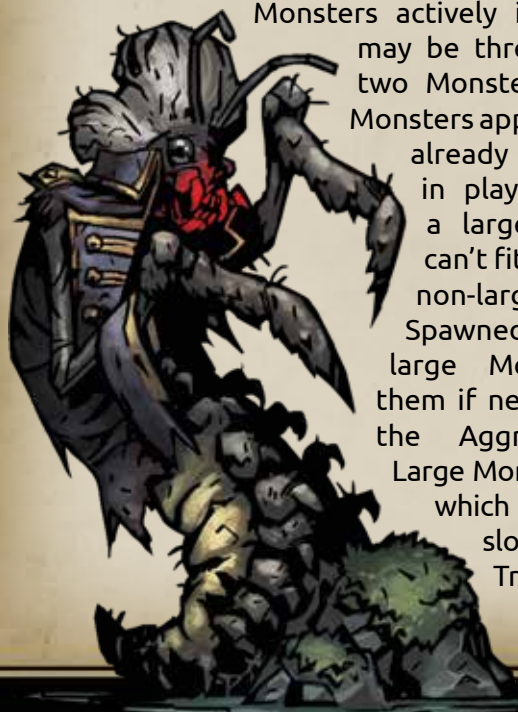


Large Monsters occupy two slots on the Stance Tracker as well as on the Room Tile, so if you draw one it will occupy the next slot too. For the purpose of Spawning and Skill use, large Monsters are considered to occupy the higher priority Stance of the two. Large Monsters thus reduce the number of

Monsters actively in Battle (there may be three or even only two Monsters if two large Monsters appear). If there are already three Monsters in play and you draw a large Monster that can't fit, discard the last non-large Monster you Spawned and place the large Monster, shifting them if necessary towards the Aggressive Stance.

Large Monsters have cards which fit over two slots on the Stance Tracker. Locate the

- **Place Loot Chests**
In Areas that have a place a random Loot Chest Token, face-down.
- **Set the Round Tracker**
Place the Battle Round Counter on round 1. Heroes have four rounds to defeat the Monsters or they'll need to flee (more on that on page 25).



Battle

The order in which characters (Heroes or Monsters) play during Battle is determined by Initiative Cards. To figure out who plays next, draw an Initiative Card from the Initiative Deck. The character drawn next in line by Stance priority order plays. So, if you draw a Hero Initiative Card on the first round of Battle, the Hero in the Aggressive Stance plays their turn.

Nobody knows whether a Hero or a Monster plays next, but players always know which Hero or Monster it will be.

If a character dies before their turn comes, keep playing the round as normal until you draw the excess Initiative Card and remove it from the deck at that point.



The Next Hero is Activated



The Next Monster is Activated



Hero Turns

Hero Turns have two steps: 1) Start of Turn effects, and 2) Actions.

1) Start of Turn Effects

Roll for any Affliction/Virtue the Hero might have. After this, remove one Token of each Condition Stack on your Hero and apply their effects, if any (See Stacking and Removing Tokens on page 20).

2) Actions

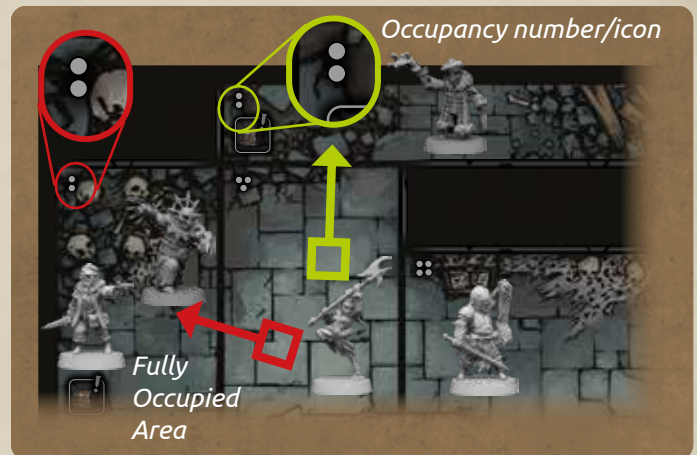
Heroes can perform two actions during their turn from the following list:

- a** Move
- b** Interact with the Environment
- c** Change Stance
- d** Use a Skill

A Hero can perform the same action twice if they like. A Hero can also consume any amount of Provisions as a free action.

a **Move:** A Hero can move as many Areas as their Speed allows. A Hero cannot end their turn in a fully occupied Area or an Area with no space. If they use a move as their first action and end in

one of these Areas, they must use their next action to move out.



b **Interact with the Environment:** Some Rooms might contain a Loot Chest or other items a Hero can interact with. If a Loot Chest is in their Area, a Hero can spend an action to pick it up. This is the most common interaction. Other special interactions are indicated by special Room effects or Quest Cards.

To loot a Chest, a Hero must be in the same Area as it and spend an action to interact with the Loot Chest. Flip the Token to see what you've found, then remove it from the Board.

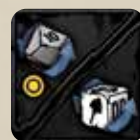
Special lootable items and interaction with them are usually indicated on the Room Card.



Roll for Provisions: Grab an unused Provision Die, roll it and add it to your Provision pool.



Choose a Provision: Grab an unused Provision Die, choose its side and add it to your Provision pool.



Roll for Either Gold or Provision: Choose whether you want to roll the ten-sided die and gain an equal amount of Gold or roll an unused Provision Die and add it to your pool.



Roll for Double Gold or Choose a Provision: Choose whether you want to roll the ten-sided die and gain double the amount of Gold or add an unused Provision Die with the side of your choice to the Provisions pool.

Heroes can only interact during a Battle. The moment the Battle ends (when the last Monster is slain), any chance to interact is lost.

c Change Stance: A Hero can spend an action to move one place forwards or backwards on the Hero Stance Tracker. This, however, will move around the other Heroes occupying the Stance.

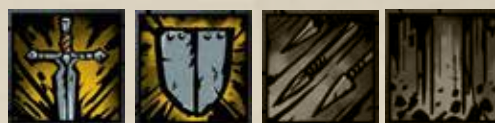
Example: Highwayman changes from Defensive to Aggressive Stance, forcing the Hellion to move one Stance position down.



d Use a Skill: A Hero can use any Skill eligible with their Stance. However, if the Skill is used successfully (it didn't miss its target) then the Hero cannot use that Skill again during the same turn.

1 Eligible Stances

The Stance icons indicate which Stance the character needs to be in to use this Skill.



Example: Vestal can only use Hand of Light I if she's in the Aggressive or Defense Stances.

2 Range

When a Hero uses a Skill, they target an Area on the Board. Range indicates how far they can target. They must be at the exact distance indicated by the Skill's . So, if a Skill has 0, you can only target the Area you are in. If it has 2, you must target an Area 2 spaces away. If its range varies (for example 1-2) you can target an Area in that bracket (in this case, an Area 1 or 2 spaces away).

3 Targets (Heroes or Monsters)

This indicates how many Targets a Skill can affect in the Area it targets. The indicates that the Skill targets Monster(s) while the indicates that it targets Hero(es). The number of icons show how many of these the Skill can target in an Area. When multiple Targets are eligible, Heroes can choose which ones they affect, while Monsters will follow the Stance order.

4 Accuracy

The number after **Acc** indicates the maximum value you need to roll on the ten-sided dice to cause a Hit when you use the Skill. This number is **modified by the Target's Dodge** (ally or not). If a Skill targets more than one character, you roll just once and compare the roll individually.

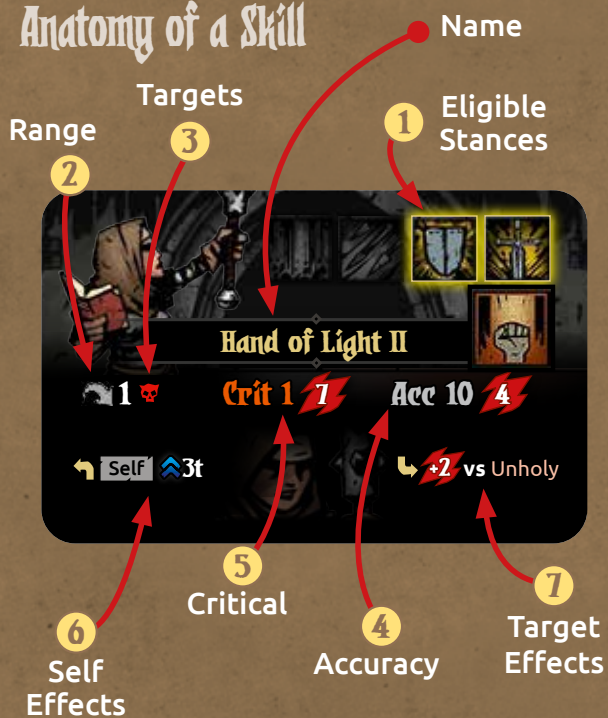
When a character hits its target, apply Wound Tokens on the Target equal to the Damage the Skill dealt, or remove Wound Tokens from the Target if the Skill heals instead.

Note: If a Skill has no **Acc** value, then no roll is required and the Skill takes effect immediately.

5 Critical

The number after **Crit** indicates the maximum value you need to roll on the ten-sided dice to cause a Critical Hit when you use the Skill. This number is **not** modified by the Target's Dodge . In short, when you roll to Hit with a Skill, if you roll up to the **Crit** value, the Skill will cause a Critical Success instead of a

Anatomy of a Skill



standard one, with more powerful effects. A Critical Hit will deal the Critical Damage ⚡ or Heal + instead of the standard one. In addition:

Whenever a Hero causes a Critical Hit, that Hero and all other Heroes in the same Area recover 1 Stress ☹️.

Whenever a Hero suffers a Critical Hit, that Hero and all other Heroes in the same Area that were not targeted by the Skill suffer +1 Stress ☹️.

6 Self Effects

Some Skills impose effects on the character that used them. These are indicated on the card with a ↶ and, after you roll (if a roll is needed), take place **before** any other effects of that Skill. These effects take place regardless of if the Skill hits or misses. Self Effects ignore Resistances and Immunities.

7 Target Effects

Some Skills impose effects on the Target of the Skill. These are indicated on the card with a ↷ and take place **after any** other effects of that Skill. These effects take place **only if the Skill hits its Target**.



Example 1: The Hellion uses her Iron Swan Skill against a Bone Arbalist. Her Skill has Accuracy 9 and the Arbalist has Dodge 1. She needs to roll up to 8 (Accuracy 9 - 1 from the Arbalist Dodge). She rolls a 2. This is a Hit! Arbalist suffers 7 Damage from the Iron Swan I.



Example 2: The Vestal uses her Divine Comfort II on her three allies. She rolls a 2. This is a Critical Hit! She heals herself for 3 (Self Effect) and her allies for 4 each.

• Conditions

In addition to inflicting Damage or Healing, Skills can apply a plethora of different effects to the Target. From causing or recovering Stress to Buffing, Debuffing, Protecting, dealing Damage over time, shuffling characters around, Stun etc. Some take

instant effect while others are more persistent. To track those persistent Conditions, the game uses a stacking tokens mechanism.

• Stacking and Using Tokens

Each time a Condition is applied to a Hero or Monster, take as many tokens as its turn duration (t) indicates and make a stack on the character card or next to it. If you need to apply a Condition that already exists, just make a new stack – don't put the tokens all together. At the start of the character's turn, remove the top token of each stack and apply its effects, if any. This way multiple Buffs, Debuffs, Bleed, Blight etc can be applied to a Target. Keep in mind that Conditions that apply Wounds ♡, like Bleed 🩸 and Blight 🌿, do so at the same time. This is important for Heroes who are at Death's Door (see page 29).

Example: The Highwayman suffered a 2🩸2t Bleed Condition, so he takes 2 Double-Bleed tokens and makes a stack of them on his card. He already has a stack of 2 Buff tokens and a stack of a Single Bleed tokens.



On his next turn, he removes one token from each stack. He takes 3 Wounds because of the Bleeds and his Buff will last one more turn. One of the Bleed Condition stacks is gone so next turn he will only suffer 2 Damage from the remaining Double-Bleed stack.





Suffer or Recover Stress: Simply increase or decrease your Stress as indicated.



Shuffle (push X or pull X): Move the Target closer to (pull) or away from (push) the Skill user by X Areas. In addition, move the Target forwards (pull) or backwards (push) in the Stance Tracker an equal number of spaces. This will move all other characters accordingly. Note that you cannot place a Shuffled character in a fully occupied Area and the shuffle will be cut short. This will not prevent moving on the Stance Tracker unless, there is no room to move further forwards or backwards. When applied to the user of the Skill, move the user closer to (pull) or away from (push) the Skill Target's Area by X Areas. In addition, move the user forwards (pull) or backwards (push) on the Stance Tracker an equal number of spaces.



Bleed (x /xt): This shows how many Wounds per round this character will take from Bleed (x Wounds / x Rounds). Take a number of tokens equal to the rounds the character Bleeds and form a stack on its character card. So, if a character suffers **1 3t**, take three **1** tokens and form a single stack. When a token is removed from a stack, the character suffers Wounds equal to the number indicated on the token.



Blight (x /xt): Similar to Bleed, but you use the Blight tokens instead.



Stun xt: Make a stack of x Stun tokens. At the start of their turn, remove one Stun token per stack from the Stunned character. If you remove 1 or more Stun tokens: Heroes lose one action for that turn / Monsters lose their whole turn.



Buff xt: Make a stack of x Buff tokens. Buffed characters have +1 per stack.



Debuff xt: Make a stack of x Debuff tokens. Characters targeting a debuffed enemy gain +1 against them per stack.



Riposte xt: Make a stack of x Riposte tokens. When a character with one or more Riposte stacks takes Damage from an enemy, they deal half of it (rounded up) back to the attacker.



Guard xt: Make a stack of X Guard tokens. Characters must always target Guard enemies when using Skills that don't target allies.

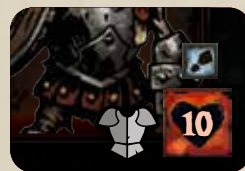


Mark xt: Make a stack of X Mark tokens. Enemies attacking the marked character gain +1 per stack.



Protection xt: Make a stack of X Protection tokens. As long as the character has one or more Protection stacks, they take only half Damage (rounded up) from attacks.

Some Skills can remove Conditions from the Target. When this happens, remove **ALL stacks** of the relevant Condition.



Important: Some Monsters have built-in Protection printed on their card. This Protection applies at all times and cannot be removed.

● Resistances and Immunities

Heroes and Monsters are resistant and/or immune to various Conditions. Resistance reduces the duration of the Condition by 1 turn (or one Area and Stance space for) while immunity negates the effect altogether. Heroes can choose to ignore resistance/immunity when they shuffle themselves.

— Monster Turns —

Monsters act in a more straightforward way than Heroes and their behaviour depends on the Stance they are in. They usually move towards their Target and use a Skill. Monster Skills read and play similarly to Hero Skills, and the icons are the same. The Monster turn and the Monsters' respective rolls are made by the players. To play a Monster follow the steps below:



● **Step 1 - Start of Turn Effects:** As with Heroes, remove one Token from each Condition stack on the Monsters and apply the effects, if any.

● **Step 2 - Act:**

1 Check what Skill the Monster is about to use. This is determined by its Stance and it is shown on the Monster Card (by stating the ability **1**, **2** or **3** next to it). Some Monsters may choose between multiple Skills; in that case roll a ten-sided die to determine which one they'll use.

A Monster's Turn



1 Players flip the next Initiative Card in the Initiative Deck which reveals it's the Bone Defender's time to act!

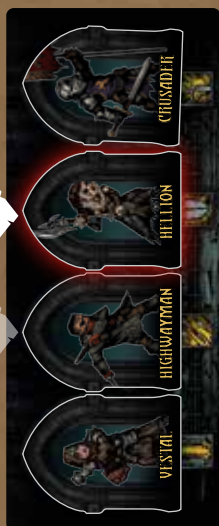
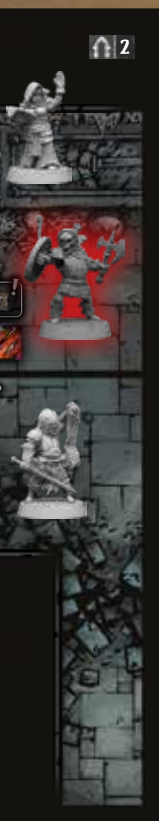
2 The Monster is in the Ranged Stance, so it will use its **3** Skill, Clumsy Axeblade as indicated on its card.

3 Clumsy Axeblade requires that the Monster targets the furthest opponent. In this case the Highwayman and the Hellion are the same distance away from the Bone Defender.

6 The Skill has a pull 1 Self Effect, so the Bone Defender pulls itself 1 Area towards its Target AND in addition, moves its card up one Stance on the Stance Tracker, thereby pushing the Bone Arbalist back one Stance space. A player must now make an attack roll for the Bone Defender against the Hellion.

Clumsy Axeblade has an accuracy of 5 against the Hellion's 1 Dodge, so any roll up to 4 (5 Acc - 1 Dodge = 4) is a success and will inflict a Damage of 3. Not a particularly threatening attack but it has placed Bone Defender AND Bone Arbalist both in a better position for their next turns.

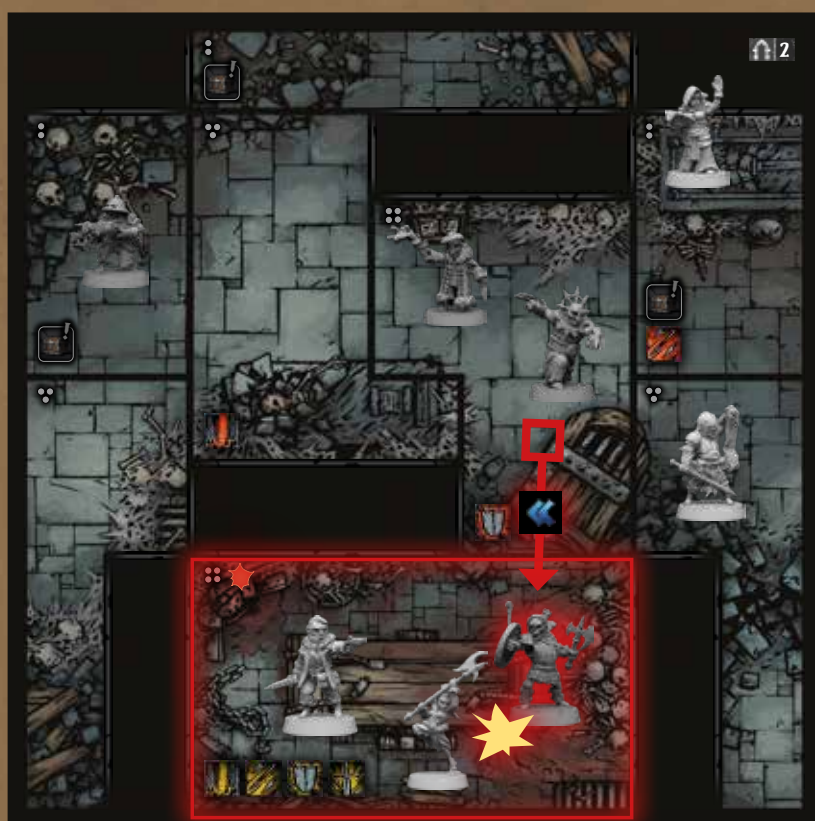






4 Because the Hellion is higher in Stance order, she must be chosen as the Bone Defender's Target.



5 Clumsy Axeblade has a range of 1, so the Bone Defender uses its 1 Speed to move within range of its Target, the Hellion.



2 Check Target. Pick the Target as indicated on the Monster Card. As always, if more than one character qualifies as a Target, prioritize by Stance (Aggressive  to Support .

Closest: Targets the Hero that is in the closest Area.


Furthest: Targets the Hero that is in the farthest Area.



Crowded: Targets the Area with the most Heroes in it.

These are the most common targeting choices. In a similar fashion:

Most Wounded: Targets the Hero that has suffered the most Wounds.

Most Stressed: Targets the Hero that has suffered the most Stress.

There are other target priorities unique to some Monsters. Also, some Monster Skills will have multiple priorities. This will be shown, for example, in the format Marked -> Closest. In this instance, the Monster will target a Marked  Hero first. If there is none, then it'll target the closest one.

3 Check Range. The Monster will move up to a maximum number of Areas indicated by its Speed , positioning itself in order to take its action according to the Skill's Range . If it is not within Range of its Target after moving, it will skip the rest of its turn. When there is more than one eligible Area the Monster can move into, the targeted player(s) decide where it goes.

4 Take the Action. Roll for the attack as you would do for your Hero or perform any other action the Skill indicates. As usual, if the Skill targets multiple Heroes in the Target Area, roll once and apply the result separately to each.

● Large and Small Monsters

Some Monsters are of a different size than most characters. They can be large or small and this is indicated on their card. A large Monster can end its turn in a fully occupied Area. When it does, the players should move one of the other characters into an adjacent Area. This character cannot be the Monster's Target. Characters that are not small can end their turn in a fully occupied Area that contains at least one small Monster. Players, then, will have to move one small Monster to an adjacent Area. In short, larger characters can move smaller ones around, when they need to end their turn in a previously fully occupied Area.

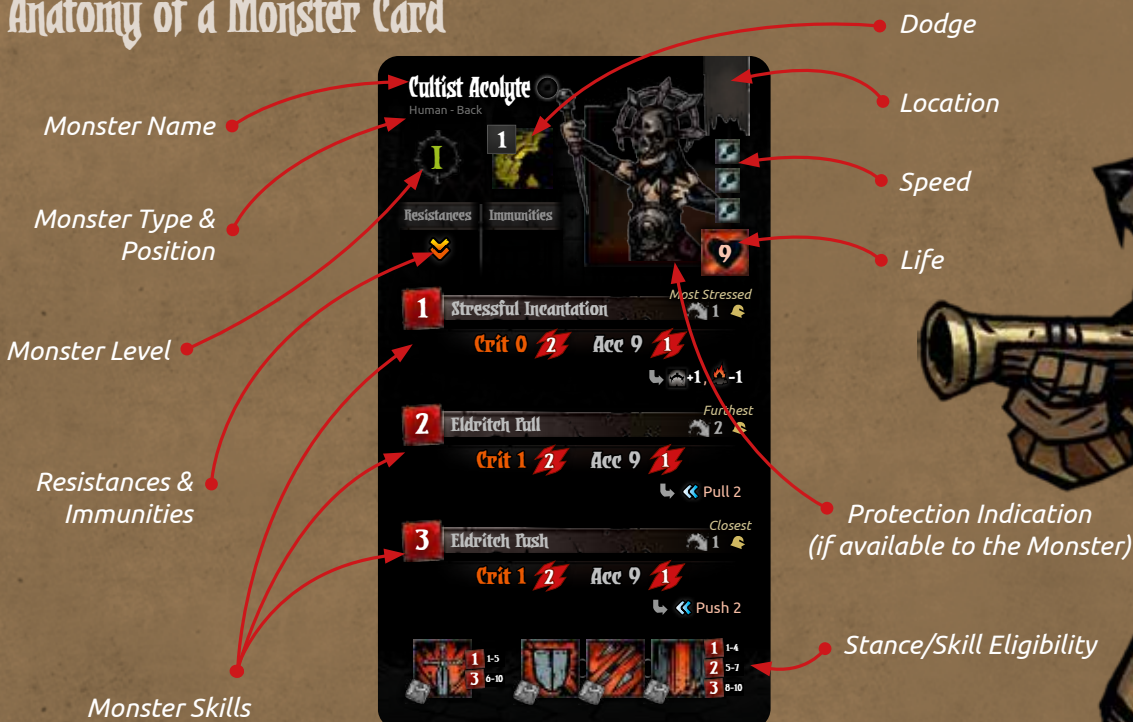
● Casualties

When a Hero or a Monster dies during Battle, remove their miniature from the Board and their card from the Stance Tracker. Characters behind them in the Stance Tracker will slide to fill the position, leaving the last Stance empty.

A Monster dies when it has suffered Wounds equal to or greater than its Life.

For more about Hero death, see pages 29 and 31.

Anatomy of a Monster Card



Monster Name: Cultist Acolyte

Monster Type & Position: Human - Back

Monster Level: 1

Resistances & Immunities: Resistances: 1, Immunities: 1

Monster Skills:

- 1 Stressful Incantation: Crit 0, 2, Acc 9, 1. Most Stressed. Range: 1. Protection: 1.
- 2 Eldritch Pull: Crit 1, 2, Acc 9, 1. Furthest. Range: 2. Protection: 2. Pull 2.
- 3 Eldritch Push: Crit 1, 2, Acc 9, 1. Closest. Range: 1. Protection: 1. Push 2.

Stance/Skill Eligibility:

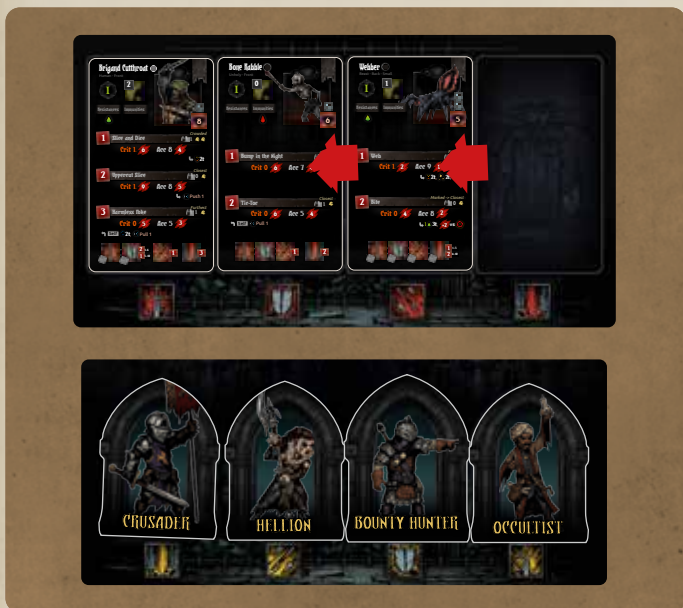
- 1: 1-5, 3: 6-10
- 1: 1-4, 2: 5-7, 3: 8-10

Other Callouts: Dodge, Location, Speed, Life, Protection Indication (if available to the Monster).

Example: The Heroes attack and manage to kill the Gargoyle.



Its miniature and card are immediately removed from play. The Monsters that stood behind it in the Stance Tracker will move forward to fill up the space.



● High and Low Ground

Some Areas provide elevation while others have a height disadvantage. High Ground Areas are indicated with a ▲ while Low Ground ones with a ▼. When a Monster or Hero stands on a High Ground Area, they gain +1 optional Range and +1 Acc to all their Skills targeting Non-High Ground Areas. Characters targeting others in a Low Ground Area (while not in Low Ground themselves), gain +1 Acc and +1 optional range against them.

● Battle Rounds

When the Initiative Deck is empty and all Heroes and Monsters have taken their turns, the round ends. Reform the Initiative Deck by shuffling an Initiative Card for each Hero and Monster still alive; then advance the Battle Round Tracker one turn.

● Battle End

A Battle can end in three ways: when all Monsters are defeated, when the fourth round ends and Heroes are forced to flee or when all Heroes are defeated.

- ◆ **All Monsters Defeated:** When the last Monster is dead, the Battle ends immediately with the Heroes being victorious. Remove the Room Token from the Dungeon Tile and gain any bonuses the Room might provide (Treasure Room, Curio Room, etc). The Room is now considered cleared and the party can rest when they are here.
- ◆ **Heroes Flee:** If the fourth round of Battle ends and there are Monsters still alive, the Heroes are forced to flee since their enemies gained enough time for reinforcements to arrive – the Battle now looks unwinnable! Follow all the steps of a Battle End but do not remove the Room Token from the Dungeon Tile since it is not cleared. The party is now forced to continue with Exploration and move away from the Room. If they come back at some point, they have to treat it as a new Room they've never encountered.
- ◆ **All Heroes are Defeated:** In the rare occasion where all Heroes die in Battle but there are still four more waiting at the Stagecoach in the Hamlet, the Battle ends as if the Heroes have fled.

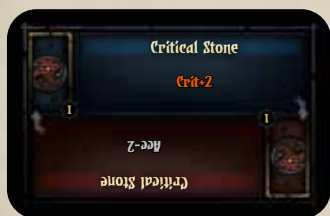
When the Battle ends take your miniatures back, shuffle all Monster Cards used in Battle back into the Monsters Deck and place the Room Tile back on its stack. Leave all Looted Chests and the Room Card discarded for the rest of the Dungeon run. You won't encounter them again, unless a Quest specifies otherwise. The party can now continue with their Exploration. **Any chests or other features that were not interacted with, are lost – Heroes have the chance to do so only as long as the Battle is taking place.**

Trinkets



During their trek, the Heroes will acquire special items that give them additional abilities. These items are called Trinkets. Heroes are limited as to how many Trinkets they can carry at once - this limit is equal to their Level. When a Hero acquires a Trinket, they decide whether they're going to keep it, give it to a companion or discard it. A Hero can discard or pass over a Trinket they already use to make space for a new one if they wish to do so. Heroes cannot hold or store excess Trinkets.

All Trinkets have a positive and a negative side. When a Hero equips themselves with a Trinket, they turn it positive side up. Trinkets have active abilities and can be used when the situation applies. When a Hero wants to use a Trinket, they declare the use, resolve the effect and they turn it negative side up. The next time it'll be used, the Hero will have to resolve the negative effect to turn it positive side up again. **In battle, a Trinket can be used only once per turn.**



Active Positive side



Active Negative side

*Example: Hellion has equipped the Critical Stone. She is about to attack a Monster and she has a **Crit 2**. She rolls a 4. She decided to use the Trinket and gain the +2 **Crit** successfully scoring a Critical Hit! The Trinket is now turned to its negative side. In order to gain the +2 **Crit** again she first needs to use it to give herself a -2 **Acc** at some point.*

Trinkets can be sold at the Nomad Wagon in the Hamlet.

Quirks

Delving in the darkness of dungeons and facing unspeakable horrors of the abyss will certainly leave its mark upon the Heroes' psychology. While sometimes these dangers will strengthen their



resolve, often they'll leave them with phobias and other bad psychological effects.



Positive Quirk



Negative Quirk



There are two kinds of Quirks: Positive  and Negative  and they are kept in separate decks. As implied, the former produce positive effects while the latter negative. Quirks have passive effects that are triggered whenever something specific happens to the Hero.


A Hero cannot have more than three Quirks at a time. If a Hero already has three Quirks and acquires a fourth positive one, they must either discard it or swap it with a positive one that they already have. If the fourth Quirk is negative, the player discards a Positive Quirk and replaces it with the negative one. If a Hero already has three Negative Quirks and the fourth is positive, the positive one is discarded and has no effect.



If a fourth Negative Quirk is acquired, the Hero succumbs to madness and is treated as permanently dead.



Quirks can be treated at the Abbey in the Hamlet.



Negative Quirks


Anemic: Whenever a Bleed  Condition is applied to the Hero, apply an additional **1**  **3t**.



Bad Gambler: Whenever the Hero rolls a 10 while in the Dungeon, take 1 Wound  per Hero Level.


Clumsy: Whenever the Hero takes Damage , apply Debuff  to them for 1 turn.

Fear of the Unknown: Whenever the Hero is about to interact with a Curio  during Exploration, they suffer +1 Stress .

Fragile: Whenever the Hero takes Damage , they take 1 additional .

Infirm: When the Hero is healed , they are healed for 1 less point.

Light Sensitive: Whenever the Light  goes up, the Hero suffers 2 Wounds  per Hero Level.

Nervous: Whenever the Hero suffers Stress , they suffer 1 more.

Night Blindness: Whenever the Light 🔥 goes down, the Hero suffers +1 Stress 🏠.

Nocturnal: Whenever the Light 🔥 goes up, the Hero suffers +1 Stress 🏠.

Mercurial: Whenever the Hero's Resolve is Tested, they have -1 Virtue Chance (see p.28 for more).

Off Guard: When the Hero takes Damage ⚡, they suffer +1 Stress 🏠.

Shocker: Whenever the Hero suffers Critical Damage ⚡, apply Stun ⚡ to them for 1 turn.

Slow Reflexes: Whenever the Hero Resolves a Trap 🕸 during Exploration, they have a -2 Dodge 🏠 penalty.

Soft: Whenever the Hero suffers Stress 🏠, they suffer 1 Wound 🩸 per Hero Level.

Stress Eater: Whenever the Hero consumes a Food Provision 🍖, they suffer +1 Stress 🏠.

Thin Blooded: Whenever a Blight Condition is applied to the Hero, apply an additional Blight 1🟢 3t Condition.

Weak Grip: Whenever the Hero suffers Critical Damage ⚡, they suffer +1 Stress 🏠.

Positive Quirks

Balanced: Whenever the Hero is to be Shuffled ⚡ (pushed or pulled), they can choose to be Shuffled for 1 less.

Clotter: Whenever Bleed 🩸 is to be applied to the Hero, reduce it by 1 turn.

Early Riser: Whenever the Light 🔥 goes up, the Hero gains Buff for 2 turns ⚡ 2t.

Evasive: Whenever the Hero successfully Dodges, they recover 1 Stress 🏠.

Fast Healer: Whenever the Hero is healed 🩹, they Heal 1 additional point per Hero Level.

Hard Noggin: Whenever Stun ⚡ is to be applied to the Hero, reduce it by 1 turn.

Hard Skinned: Whenever the Hero suffers Critical Damage ⚡, reduce it by half (rounded up).

Hoarder: When you roll a Curio 🏺 during Exploration, you recover 1 Stress 🏠.

Night Owl: When the Light 🔥 goes down, recover 1 Stress 🏠.

On Guard: When the Hero takes Damage ⚡, reduce it by 1.

Photomania: When the Light 🔥 goes up, recover 1 Stress 🏠.

Quick Reflexes: Whenever the Hero Resolves a Trap 🕸 during Exploration, they gain a +2 Dodge 🏠 bonus.

Resilient: Whenever the Hero recovers Stress 🏠, they recover 1 additional point.

Skilled Gambler: Whenever the Hero rolls a 1 in the Dungeon, the Hero recovers 1 Stress 🏠.

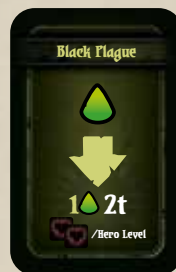
Stress Faster: Whenever the Hero consumes a Food Provision 🍖, they recover 1 Stress 🏠.

Thick Blooded: Whenever Blight 🟢 is to be applied to the Hero, reduce it by 1 turn.

Warrior of Light: When Light 🔥 goes up, the Hero heals 🩹 2 points per Hero Level.



Diseases



Long abandoned Curios left unattended through time might infect curious and reckless Heroes with Diseases. When a Disease 🧨 is applied to a Hero, draw one

from the deck and place it in the appropriate Hero Board Slot. The Hero is now affected by it. Diseases work like Quirks – applying negative effects when something specific happens. Heroes can have only one Disease at a time.




If a Hero must suffer a Disease while they already have one, replace it with the new one and gain a Negative Quirk.

Diseases can be treated for a fee by visiting the Sanitarium in the Hamlet.





Diseases


Black Plague: When Blight 🟢 is applied to the Hero, apply an additional Blight Condition 1🟢 2t and take 2 Wounds 🩸 per Hero Level.




Bulimic: When the Hero consumes a Food Provision 🍖, they discard another Food Provision (if any) and suffer +1 Stress 🏠.



Creeping Cough: When the Hero resolves Rubble  during Exploration, apply a Bleed Condition  1  to them.




Ennui: When the Hero's Resolve is Tested, they have -1 Virtue chance (See **Stress, Afflictions and Virtues**).




Hemophilia: Whenever Bleed  is applied to the Hero, apply an additional Bleed Condition  1  and take 2 Wounds  per Hero Level.



Lethargy: When the Hero uses a Move action, they take 1 Wound  per Hero Level.

Spotted Fever: Whenever the Hero takes Damage , apply a Blight Condition  1  to them.

Syphilis: When the Hero takes Damage , they take 1 Wound  per Hero Level.

Tapeworm: When the Hero resolves Hunger  during Exploration, apply a Bleed Condition  1  to them.

The Worries: Whenever the Hero suffers Stress , they suffer 1 additional Stress  and 2 Wounds .

Vertigo: Whenever the Hero is Shuffled  (pushed or pulled), they suffer +2 Stress .

boost their willpower further. When their Resolve is Tested, roll a ten-sided die: On a roll of 1 or 2 they gain a **Virtue**. On a roll of 3 or more they gain an **Affliction**. A Hero can have their Resolve Tested only once during a Quest and can never have more than 1 Affliction and/or Virtue at a time. Affliction and Virtues' effects have a chance to trigger at the start of the Hero's turn only during Battle. Each has a different chance to trigger and it's determined by the roll of a ten-sided die as indicated on the card.

After a Hero acquires a Virtue or an Affliction, reset their Stress Tracker to 0!

At the end of the Quest, when the party returns to the Hamlet, if a Hero is Afflicted, they discard the Affliction and gain a Negative Quirk.

If the Hero is Virtuous, they discard the Virtue and gain a Positive Quirk.



Back

Front

Back

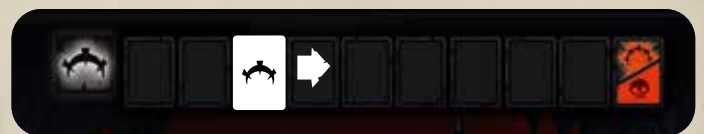
Front

Virtue Card

Affliction Card

When a Hero reaches 10 Stress and has an Affliction or a Virtue already, they die of a Heart Attack!

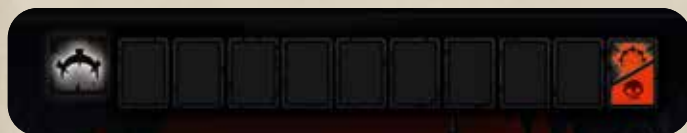
To keep track of your Stress, take a Stress Counter and place it white side up on your Hero Dashboard's Stress Tracker – moving it up until it reaches 10.




Use white side until your Resolve has been Tested.

Stress, Afflictions and Virtues

Facing the horrors of the abyss is a stressful deal, even for the bravest of adventurers.

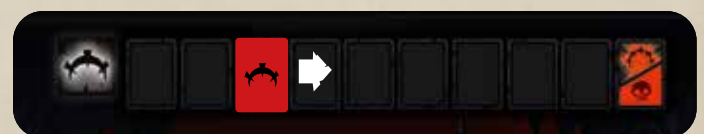


Stress Tracker on the Hero Dashboard.

All Heroes start the adventure at 0 Stress and it can go up to 10. Stress is represented by the  icon. It can be gained or recovered in a variety of ways; Monster abilities, letting the Light go down, or even suffering Critical Hits will stress the Heroes.

When a Hero's **Stress reaches 10**, the Hero's **Resolve is Tested** as it can either drive them to despair or

When it reaches 10 and the Hero has undergone a Test of their Resolve, return the Stress Counter to 0 and flip it on its red side. If the counter is on its red side when you return to the Hamlet, flip it onto its white side again. White/red sides are a reminder of whether the Hero is heading towards a Test of their Resolve or a Heart Attack.



Use red side when you already have an Affliction or a Virtue.

The Light

The Light is very important throughout the Quest for it illuminates dark corners and drives back Monsters. Light can increase or decrease in various ways (for example: from Exploration hazards or entering Dark Rooms) and it can produce different Effect depending on its Level.



- Heroes have +1 Dodge .
- Heroes and Monsters gain +1 **Crit**.
- when Heroes suffers Stress, they gain +1 .
- Monsters gain +1 Dodge and +1 **Acc**.

Effects from 4 to 0 are cumulative.
 For example, when Light is down to 1, ALL previous effects take place; Monster and Heroes gain +1 **Crit** in addition to the +1 effect. However, the bonus of +1 is lost if the Light is not on 5.

At Death's Door and Deathblows

Heroes don't die immediately when they suffer Wounds equal to their Life. Instead, they enter a state called **At Death's Door**. When at this stage, they don't take any more Wounds but every blow they suffer has a chance to finish them off.

Keep in mind that a Hero can never have more Wounds than their Life total.
 Take the special **Deathblow Die** and place it in the corresponding space on your Hero Board. Any time the Hero suffers any amount of Wounds , roll the die instead – if you roll a skull, the Hero receives a Deathblow and is dead! If not, you have cheated death – for now...

Keep in mind that if multiple wounding Conditions, such as Bleed and Blight happen while a Hero is At Death's Door, you'll roll only once, as these Conditions apply their Wounds simultaneously.

When a Hero who is At Death's Door is healed (removing at least 1 Wound), they are no longer considered to be At Death's Door (remove the Deathblow Die from its spot) and they can't be killed by a Deathblow unless they find themselves At Death's Door again.

Gaining XP (Experience Points)

XP are important in order to make your Heroes stronger and more able to survive when you enter the Darkest Dungeon. In order for your Heroes to gain **XP**, they need to complete Quest objectives first. All Quests grant between 0 to 3 **XP** depending on how many of its objectives the party completes. **XP** are awarded when the Heroes return to the Hamlet and they all gain the same amount of **XP**.

In addition, after your party returns to the Hamlet and gains **XP**, add the amount gained per Hero to the Stagecoach. So, if the party fully completed a Quest and each Hero gained 3 **XP**, also add 3 **XP** to the Stagecoach. You'll need it later if a Hero is dead and a new one must take their place.

Leveling Up

Heroes can Level Up their stats independently from their Skills. Each Hero has three Hero Levels and each of their Skills also has three Levels. In order to Level Up any of them, the Hero must visit the Guild in the Hamlet and pay the appropriate Gold and **XP** cost.

When you Level Up a particular Skill, remove its previous version and add the new Level Card into your roster of seven.

When you Level Up a Hero, replace the Hero Card with the next level Hero Card. Your Hero now has increased stats, added Resistances and/or Immunities and an additional slot for Skills and Trinkets. Keep in mind that you can now equip an additional Skill from your roster of seven.

Bosses



Bosses are your Imminent Threat. Powerful entities that are a constant threat to the Hamlet and must be dealt with before you can enter the Darkest Dungeon.

Each Boss has three versions according to the Campaign Level. Bosses have two passive threat abilities; one for the Hamlet and the other for inside the Dungeons. They vary from Level to Level.

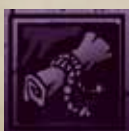
In order to face a Boss, the Heroes must complete two Quests beforehand. When they do so, the Boss location is revealed and they can venture off to slay it. There is a general Quest Card for every Boss, named **Face the Threat**; when you must face one, consult that card for the Dungeon layout and Firewood supplies.



Bosses always hide at the far end of the Dungeon. When you are about to set up a Boss Quest Dungeon, note how many Rooms the Dungeon Tile has on the edge. An Edge Room is a Room that has only one Corridor leading to and from it. Take the Objective Room along with as many random Room Tokens as you need, shuffle them together and place them on these Edge Rooms. Then fill up the rest of the Room slots as usual. The Boss always waits at the edge of the Dungeon. Which edge is for you to find out!

Fighting a Boss

There is no turning back once you've started a Face the Threat Quest. You don't have the option to leave the Dungeon and if you fail to defeat the Boss, the Campaign is over!



When you enter the Objective Room, use the Room Tile that is unique to the Boss you are fighting. Each Boss has its own Room Tile.

Flip the Boss Card from the Threats side to the Battle abilities side. The Threats cease to function at that moment. As Bosses have special Battle rules, take a moment to read them both on their card and, for a more extensive explanation, in the Boss' special rules section of this book (page 38).

Do not count Battle Rounds while fighting the Boss. When you defeat it, the Battle ends immediately. Remove any other Monsters from play – you don't need to fight them.

To form the Initiative Deck, check how many actions/round the Boss has and add that many Monster Initiative Cards for it in the deck. Do the same for any other special Monsters that might start the battle along with the Boss.

When you kill a Boss, the Campaign advances a Level and you enter the next Act.

Boss Turns

Since most Bosses have more than one action/round, they get to act more frequently than other Monsters. **When Monsters with multiple actions/round are in Battle, they'll use the Initiative Cards to act before Monsters that are behind them in Stance order.**

Example: The Shuffling Horror has two actions/round. The players draw an Initiative Card showing it's the Monsters' turn to go. The Shuffling Horror acts and finishes its action.



Next, the players draw the next Initiative Card and the Monsters go one more time. Since the Shuffling Horror has one more action remaining and has priority (Aggressive Stance) it gets

its second action now. The next two Monster Initiative Cards will go to the Cultist Priest and the Malignant Growth respectively, as the Shuffling Horror is out of actions this round.




Should something happen to move the Shuffling Horror to the Defensive Stance before it has the opportunity to take its second action (for example, being pushed back by a Hero), then the Cultist Priest will act when the next Monster Initiative Card is drawn because he now has the priority. The Shuffling Horror must wait for the following Monster Initiative in order to take its second action.




Monster Summoning

A common practice of Bosses is to summon other Monsters to their aid. Some are special Monsters

unique to the Boss, others might be common Monsters found in the Dungeons. Which ones they are and how they're summoned is described in each Boss' special rules and is indicated with the  icon on their Battle Card. When a Monster is summoned during battle, it is placed in the first empty Stance Slot; its miniature goes to the corresponding Area on the Room Tile (unless the Boss specifies otherwise). If there is no space there, a Hero must move to the nearest available Area. If the Area the summoned Monster spawns into is fully occupied by Monsters, players choose which one to move to the nearest available Area to make space. Once done, shuffle an Initiative Card for the Monster into the Initiative Deck. Unless the Heroes take it out, the Monster gets its chance to act during the round it's summoned!



When a Hero dies, the player removes all cards from the Hero Board along with its miniature. This Hero is no longer available for the rest of the Campaign. Trinkets can be taken by fellow players and equipped to their Heroes immediately, positive side up. If no one wants them, they are discarded. The player who lost their Hero must now choose one of the available Heroes waiting at the Stagecoach. A player can choose any Hero that is available and has not already died during the Campaign. The new Hero gains **Xp** equal to those the party has accumulated during the Campaign up to now (recorded at the Stagecoach – do NOT remove any **Xp** from there) and immediately spends any **Xp** they want to make up to two upgrades to their Hero and/or Skills as if they have visited the Guild in the Hamlet, but without spending any Gold (see Hamlet Buildings on page 33). If the Hero died during Battle, the new Hero waits until it is finished in order to join the party. Once the Hero is chosen, remove a Waiting Hero  Token from the Stagecoach and continue with Exploration as normal.



Returning to the Hamlet

The Hamlet

However successful it was, after the Quest is over, Heroes return to the Hamlet to lick their Wounds before they face the horrors again. When returning to the Hamlet, Heroes take the following steps:

- a** Shuffle back in their respective decks all discarded Trinkets, Curios, Quirks, Diseases, Room Cards and Loot Chests.
- b** All Conditions are removed and Light goes up to 5.
- c** All equipped Trinkets are turned to their positive side.
- d** Afflictions and Virtues are reshuffled into their decks and are replaced by Negative and Positive Quirks respectively. **No Life or Stress is recovered. No Quirks or Diseases are removed. Heroes need to heal themselves by visiting the buildings of the Hamlet.**

Remaining Provisions may immediately be consumed to gain their benefits. Unused Provisions must be returned to the supply and they each provide 1 Gold.

If you want, you can save the game at this point (see page 35 for more about saving the game).


The Hamlet is your hub where you rest, shop, train and help the Heir to slowly restore it back to its former glory. Heroes return to the Hamlet after each Dungeon delve and they must take the following steps:

- 1** Draw a Hamlet Event Card and mark your preparation days.
- Then each day:
- 2** Roll for the Caretaker.
 - 3** Spend your day.

Heroes can swap Skills from their roster of seven, change Stances and upgrade buildings freely at any time.

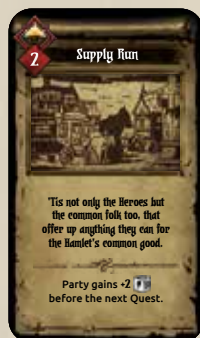
Always pay attention to the current Boss's Hamlet Threat ability!

1 Draw a Hamlet Event Card

Draw a Hamlet Event Card, follow its instructions and then shuffle it back into its deck. Each Hamlet Event Card also indicates how many days you have to prepare for your next Quest. Place the Days Counter  on the Days Tracker.



Note that some events will be permanently discarded from the Campaign after they are resolved.



The icon in the upper left corner of the Hamlet Event Card (Front) shows how many preparation days you've got before you must venture out on your next Quest.

• Hamlet Buildings and Upgrades

Any time during their stay in the Hamlet, players can spend money to upgrade any buildings of their choice. This will make the locations more effective. This is a group choice, however, so everyone should agree on which building should be upgraded. The cost to upgrade a building one Level is **20** Gold except for the Blacksmith and the Nomad Wagon which are **10** Gold. Also note that the Guild and the Graveyard cannot be upgraded.



Stagecoach

The Stagecoach is not a building Heroes can visit. Instead, the first time you set up the Hamlet, place two Waiting Hero Tokens here. When a Hero dies and a player picks a new one, remove a Token from here. If there are no Tokens to be removed, you've failed the Campaign. Additionally, when Heroes return to Hamlet and gain **Xp**, add the same amount here.

When a player must choose a new Hero, this Hero will start with the **Xp** the party has accumulated here. **Do not remove any Xp from the Stagecoach! They'll keep piling up until the end of the Campaign.**

Level 1

Place two Waiting Hero Tokens.

Level 2

Add a Waiting Hero Token.

Level 3

Add a Waiting Hero Token.



Nomad Wagon

Level 1

The first day a Hero visits the Nomad Wagon, draw and reveal three Level 1 Trinkets. Leave them here until the Hamlet phase ends, then reshuffle them back into the deck when the Heroes leave for the next Quest. A Hero visiting the Nomad Wagon can sell one of their equipped Trinkets and buy one from the available Trinkets at the following prices: Buy a Level 1 Trinket for **4** Gold; sell a Level 1 Trinket for **2** Gold, a Level 2 Trinket for **3** Gold and a Level 3 Trinket for **4** Gold. **Selling prices are the same for all Nomad Wagon Levels.**

2 Roll for the Caretaker



This suspicious-looking person took care of the Hamlet before the Heir arrived and continues to do so during his temporary absence. **At the start of each day**, roll a ten-sided die and place him on top of the appropriate building. He occupies that space and blocks Heroes from visiting. If you need to roll for something else that blocks a location as well (such as a Boss's threat ability) and you roll the same location as the Caretaker, roll again until you roll a free building.

3 Spend your Days

By Stance order (Aggressive to Support), Heroes visit the various buildings of the Hamlet spending money and time to Heal both physically and mentally, train their Skills, cure their Diseases, etc. Each Hero occupies the building during their visit, blocking other Heroes from visiting the same building the same day. Heroes can take **only one** of the available choices each day they visit a building. Instead of visiting a building, a Hero can spend their day to use one of their Hamlet Skills.

After all Heroes have spent their day, move the Day Counter one day down and repeat steps **2** and **3** until all your days are spent and you must set out on your next Quest. As usual, draw two Quest Cards and decide which one you'll follow. If it is time to fight a Boss, don't draw any Quests but instead follow the Face the Threat Quest Card (see p.30).



Level 2

Place two Level 1 and one Level 2 Trinkets. Level 2 Trinkets cost 6 to buy.

Level 3

Place one Trinket of each Level. Level 3 Trinkets cost 8 to buy.



Abbey

Level 1

Remove 1 Quirk for 2 OR remove 2 Quirks for 5.

Level 2

Remove 1 Quirk for 2 OR remove 2 Quirks for 5 OR

gain a Positive Quirk for 3.

Level 3

Remove 1 Quirk for 1 OR remove 2 Quirks for 4 OR gain a Positive Quirk for 3 OR recover 3 for 1 OR recover 6 for 3.



Sanitarium

Level 1

Heal 5 for 1 OR Heal 10 for 3 OR remove a for 2.

Level 2

Heal 7 for 1 OR Heal 14 for 3 OR remove a for 2.

Level 3

Heal 9 for 1 OR Heal 18 for 3 OR remove a for 2.



Tavern

Level 1

Recover 3 for 1 OR recover 6 for 3.

Level 2

Recover 3 for 1 OR recover 6 for 3 OR recover 9 for 9.

Level 3

Recover 3 for 1 OR recover 6 for 3 OR recover 9 for 9 OR Heal 5 for 1 OR Heal 10 for 3 OR remove a for 2.



Survivalist

Level 1

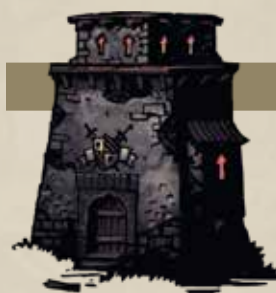
Gain a Provision Die for 1.

Level 2

Gain a for 1 OR gain 2 for 3.

Level 3

Gain a OR for 2 gain 2 OR for 4 gain 3.



The Guild

The Guild cannot be upgraded. During your visit you can make up to two of the following upgrades to your Hero.

- Spend 4 **Xp** and 2 to Level Up the Hero by 1.
- Spend 2 **Xp** and 1 to Level Up one of the Hero's Skills by 1. Remove the old version permanently from the game.



Blacksmith

Level 1

Pay 1 and use one of the Hero's Skills as its Level 2 form for the next Quest only.

Level 2

Pay 1 and use one of the Hero's Skills as its Level 3 form for the next Quest only.

Level 3

Pay 1 to gain 1 and use one the Hero's Skills as its Level 3 form for the next Quest only.

When you use the Blacksmith's services, keep the old card to the side as it will replace the temporarily upgraded one once the next Quest is over.



The Graveyard

The Graveyard cannot be upgraded. Pray for the

losses of your fallen comrades and swear vengeance to bolster the Hero's will and gain a Virtue. Be careful, though, for this means the next time the Hero's Stress reaches 10 they're dead!



The Campaign

Each time the Heroes defeat a Boss, the Campaign advances a Level. When Heroes have beaten all three Imminent Threats, they must enter and clear the Darkest Dungeon itself to secure complete victory.

Starting the game at Campaign Level 1, shuffle all Level 1 Boss Cards and draw one at random. Read the flavor text aloud and set it aside. Find its Threat Card and place it next to the play Area for quick reference, as its Threats affect both the Hamlet and the Dungeons and won't cease until you kill it. Always follow its Threat rules when you are in these places.

Before you are able to face the Boss, you must take on some general tasks first. Draw two Level 1 Quest Cards and decide which one you'll do. Discard the other permanently from the game. When you return, take time off to recover in the Hamlet.

After two Level 1 Quests are complete you must take on the Boss Quest. These are the same in all first three Acts; use the "Face the Threat" Quest Card as a reference. At this point it's either you or the Boss. If you fail to eliminate it, your Campaign is over. If you succeed, the Campaign advances to Level 2:

- ♦ Shuffle the Level 2 cards of the remaining Bosses and draw a new card at random as your next Imminent Threat.
- ♦ Add the Level 2 Monsters into the Monster deck – you'll face some stronger Monsters from now on!
- ♦ Leave the Level 1 Trinkets aside to use them only when visiting the Nomad Wagon at the Hamlet. Bring in the Level 2 Trinkets deck as now you'll only draw from this deck when in the Dungeons.
- ♦ Remove all Level 1 Quests and swap in the Level 2 ones; form a new Quest deck with those. You only draw from the Level 2 Quest deck from now on.

When you finish Campaign Level 2 (Act 2) and you enter Level 3 (Act 3), do the same thing for the Level 3 cards.

When you defeat the 3rd Imminent Threat, the denizens of the Hamlet (those who are left, at least) can enjoy some calm. There is no rest for the Heroes, though, for now the path is open and the gates of the Darkest Dungeon (Act 4) are ready to be stormed!

The last act is about to begin and it consists of two parts: the Darkest Dungeon itself – a place

of unspeakable horrors and powerful foes (all Monsters are Level 3), and its Guardian and the final fight with the root of all Evil.

Remember: Dungeons have Levels too. The Level of a Dungeon is the same as the Level of the Campaign (1 to 3). Since you reach Campaign Level 3 when you start the third Act, Darkest Dungeon is considered a Level 3 Dungeon. This is important because the severity of many of the Dungeon hazards scale with their Level.

In short: Act I = Campaign Level I, Act II = Campaign Level II, Act III = Campaign Level III, Act IV = Campaign Level III.



Saving the Game

The game comes with a set of save game sheets. When you return from the Dungeon to the Hamlet, take one and note down all the information required. When you continue your Campaign at a later time, this sheet will help you pick up where you left off.

In addition to save game sheets, you are provided with a save box, where you can store all the necessary components so you don't need to search for them when you resume your game.



The Darkest Dungeon

This is the fourth and final Act of the game. As the next two Quests are both to fight a Boss, failing them means the Campaign is over.

After you play the Hamlet phase following the defeat of the final Imminent Threat, get ready for delving into the Darkest Dungeon itself. Remove all previous Monster cards and bring in the Darkest Dungeon ones, then shuffle them into a deck. This is the Monster deck from now on. Be wary: Darkest Dungeon Monsters are all Level 3 Monsters!

There are three Darkest Dungeon Quest Cards. Shuffle them and draw one at random. This is the one you're up against in this Campaign. You'll notice that the reward, in addition to the 3 **Xp**, is that you cancel a form of the final Boss (further details will be explained later). You'll also notice the Quest has 16 Rooms. The Darkest Dungeon is twice as big as a normal Dungeon. But worry not – you can find old excavation sites that you can scavenge to help you pull through.

Now remove all standard Dungeon Tiles and find the two Darkest Dungeon ones (they have a red bordered back). Shuffle them and draw one at random. This is the Dungeon layout for this Quest. Form the Dungeon as usual, shuffling the Room Tokens and placing them randomly on the Board. Only this time, to place the Boss you won't count the typical Edge Rooms, but the ones indicated on the tile with the . There are three possible places to find the Boss. Take the Objective Room Token and shuffle it with two random non-Objective ones. Place them first on the indicated Boss Slots and then fill the Dungeon with the rest of the Room Tokens.

Remove all Room Tiles and Room Cards you used up until now and bring out the Darkest Dungeon ones . Shuffle the Room Cards to form a Room Deck as usual.

The Trinkets you find in the Darkest Dungeon are still Level 3 Trinkets.

Another difference is that there are no Empty Rooms this time around. Instead, there are three Excavation Site Rooms. These work differently than Empty Rooms, though they will only benefit your party. More about this later on.

Quirks, Diseases, Virtues and Affliction decks remain the same. For Curios, use the Ruins Curios deck.

The Darkest Dungeon is set up and you are now ready to explore it. Roll for Provisions and good luck!

NOTE: Darkest Dungeon is considered a Level 3 Dungeon.

Excavation Site Rooms

The Darkest Dungeon has no typical Empty Rooms. Instead, treat Empty Rooms as Excavation Site Rooms. These were chambers where the Ancestor practiced his eldritch magic as he was excavating towards the Gates of Oblivion. Luckily, stuff from the long-gone workers can still be found there. When the Heroes enter an Excavation Site Room, they immediately roll one Provision die each and add it to the pool. In addition, they immediately take a free Rest Action as if they had 8 Resting Points (this won't use up your standard Firewood provided by the Quest). Once these actions are taken, the Room is cleared.



The Final Encounter – Heart of Darkness

After your final session in the Hamlet, you are ready to face the final Boss. This final Hamlet phase is 4 days of preparation without a Hamlet Event (do not draw one this time). There is no Dungeon Exploration prior, just a long Boss fight. You still roll for Provisions before you start the fight.

The final Boss has four forms in total but you'll only face three of them. One form will be ignored and it has to do with the Quest previously undertaken. There is a specific order in which to fight these forms. Once a form is defeated, the Battle ends momentarily. Initiative Cards are reshuffled and a new Battle Round starts when the new form emerges. The new form follows the standard Spawning rules. There is no pause to rest, change Stances, etc when changing Boss forms.

The order in which forms succeed one another is:

- ♦ I- Ancestor 1st Form
- ♦ II- Ancestor 2nd Form
- ♦ III- Gestating Heart
- ♦ IV- Heart of Darkness

Depending on which Quest you undertook prior to the final Boss, one of the three first forms will be ignored.

The battle takes place in the same Room; keep its card close, as always, as a reminder of its special rules. For more details about the Boss fight, see page 38.



There are a couple more ways to play the Darkest Dungeon Board Game.

Radiant and Stygian Modes

Did you find the game too difficult for your gaming group? Or is it too forgiving for you? We've got you covered for both situations!

When you start a Campaign, you may choose to play the game in one of the two following difficulty modes instead.

Radiant mode is the easier way to play. When you play in this mode, follow these rules:

- ♦ Start the Campaign with 20 Gold in the common pool instead of 10.
- ♦ When you roll for Provisions before entering a

Dungeon, Heroes roll only one die and choose the side for the other one (for bonus dice provided by other effects, follow their rules as normal).

- ◆ When exploring, Heroes roll one Exploration Die instead of two (when Scouting reduce this to zero dice).

Stygian mode is a harder way to play. When you play in this mode, follow these rules:

- ◆ Start the Campaign without any Gold at all.
- ◆ Find the Stygian Room Cards and replace the standard Room Cards. Room hazards are now tougher.
- ◆ All Bosses have +1 **Crit** to their Skills.

The Butcher's Circus (PvP Mode)

The Hamlet may have fallen on hard times, but the creak of wagons and blare of abused trumpets signals a change in fortune for the bold and meek alike: the Circus is in town!

A weathered and bloodstained pavilion tent beckons, the Twins flank the flap, and a rheumy-eyed Barker announces:

"The Butcher demands a show!"

In this mode players will form teams and fight against each other in a friendly, yet brutal bout.

This mode is a stand-alone one. It doesn't link to the Campaign and it is mostly for 1 versus 1, though you can play it as a 2 versus 2 if you want, having two players controlling one team.

To play the Butcher's Circus find the Arena Tile and the special PvP Hero cards (you won't be using the standard Hero Dashboards and Skill/Hero Cards). Keep in mind that this version of the cards has **Crit** to indicate opponent Heroes and **Hand** to indicate the Heroes of your team.

Each Hero has four different profiles (except the Abomination that has two) consisting of a group of three Skills each. Each team has four Heroes.

Choose one of the two arenas and place it in the middle of the table, then take the two Stance Trackers, giving one to each player. Light is irrelevant in this mode.

Choose sides, determine randomly which team goes first, and give them the Party Counter (torch miniature).

You will now draft Heroes in turn. The first team picks one Hero; then the second team picks two Heroes. The first team now picks two Heroes, then the second team picks two as well. Finally, the first

team picks their final Hero.

Decide which profile you want to use for each of your Heroes.

Now, starting from the first team, place your Heroes one by one in turns, inside the Areas of your side's color. When all Heroes are placed, the Battle can begin!

Each team will take turns activating one Hero at a time. Players can choose to activate any of their Heroes that hasn't been activated in the current round. There is no random Initiative draw in the Circus. Once a Hero has finished their turn, place an Initiative Card on them to indicate they're done for this round. After all the Heroes have been activated, remove the Initiative Cards from the Hero Cards and start a new round. Pass the Party Counter to the other team; now they play first.

When all Heroes of one team are eliminated, the Battle ends and the team with Heroes still standing in the arena is the winner.

● Deathblows and Heart Attacks in PvP mode

Heroes can die by Deathblow when At Death's Door and by Heart Attack when they accumulate Stress as normal, though in PvP there are a few differences.

When you roll the Deathblow Die, skulls count as safe and blanks count as Deathblows. This means the Deathblow chance in PvP is 7 out 10!

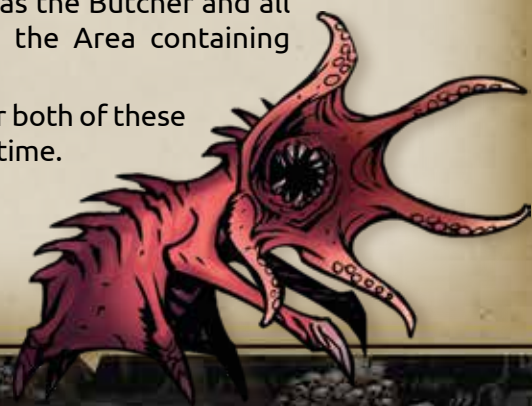
There are no Afflictions and Virtues in PvP, that means your Resolve will not be Tested. When a Hero's Stress reaches 10, they instantly die of a Heart Attack!

- **Optional Rules:** There are a couple of optional rules that you can use in your PvP games if you so choose.

The Puppets – If you want to use the Puppets, place the miniatures in one of the Areas with capacity 1. This Area is now always fully occupied.

The Butcher – If you want to use the Butcher, start the Battle with her in Area **1**. At the start of every round, roll a ten-sided die and move her one Area towards the corresponding Area of the dice roll. The Butcher has the *Out for Blood* special ability: Heroes in the same Area as the Butcher and all Heroes targeting the Area containing her, have +1 **Crit**.

You can use one or both of these rules at the same time.



The Abomination: A Special Kind of Hero

The Abomination is a Hero that plays quite differently from the rest. This Hero has two forms: a human one and a beast one, and can switch between those two at will.

Three of the Abomination's Skills can only be used when he is in human form and three can only be used in beast form. The seventh Skill, Transform, is a unique one that allows him to change from one form to the other. You'll notice it's a double sided one. You are not obliged to equip it at all times, though if you don't have it, you can't have the Hero transform into his Beast form.

The Abomination is always in its human form when in the Hamlet. It'll switch to this form automatically if you leave the Dungeon while in beast form, though, since the Skill is not used at that time, there are no transformation effects.

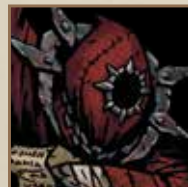
When you switch from one form to another, using the Transform Skill, flip the Skill Card, the Hero Card and the Stance Token to its other side (using an action and resolving all effects as normal) and replace the miniature with the one of the current form. All these are reminders of which form you are currently using (remember, not all Skills can be used by both forms).



Boss Fights

This section covers setting up Boss fights and the use of Boss Fight special rules.

The Ruins



Necromancer: When you face the Necromancer, follow these steps:

1 Find the Necromancer Room Card and its corresponding Room Tile and put it in play.

2 Place the Necromancer's Battle Card and miniature in the Aggressive Stance on the Monster Stance Tracker and on the Room Tile respectively. Shuffle one Initiative Card for the Necromancer into the Initiative Deck.

3 Find the Bone Rubble (or Bone Soldier or Bone Spearman, depending on the Boss's Level) cards and miniatures and have them on hand on to the side. When the Necromancer summons one of them by using a Skill, place their respective card on the first empty Stance Slot and their miniature on the Target Area on the Room Tile, then shuffle an Initiative Card for this Monster in the Initiative Deck.

When the Necromancer is defeated, remove all other Monsters from play.



Prophet: When you face the Prophet, follow these steps:

1 Find the Prophet Room Card and its corresponding Room Tile and put it in play.

2 Place the Prophet's Battle Card and miniature in the Aggressive Stance on the Stance Tracker and Room Tile respectively.

3 Shuffle three Initiative Cards for the Prophet into the Initiative Deck.

4 Find the four Wooden Pews and keep them on hand on the side.

Each round, during his first turn, instead of using one of his Skills, roll four ten-sided dice and place the Wooden Pews on the respective Areas on the Room Tile.

Each round, during his third turn, the Prophet will always use his Rubble of Ruin Skill, attacking each Area with a Pew; roll for each Pew separately. This means an

Area with two Pews can be attacked twice. Pews don't occupy space in Areas and cannot be targeted. When the Prophet is defeated, remove the Pews from play.



Collector: When you face the Collector, follow these steps:

- 1** Find the Collector's Room Card and its corresponding Room Tile and put it in play.
- 2** Place three Loot Chests on the indicated Area.
- 3** Find the Battle Cards and miniatures for the Collector, the Collected Man at Arms, Collected Highwayman and Collected Vestal.
- 4** Place the Collector's Battle Card and miniature in the Aggressive Stance on the Stance Tracker and on the Room Tile respectively. Keep the Collector's Collected Cards and miniatures on hand on the side.
- 5** Shuffle one Initiative Card for the Collector into the Initiative Deck.

During the Collector's turn if there are no Collected in play, instead of using one of his Skills, the Collector will summon a Collected Man at Arms in the Defensive Stance and Area, a Collected Highwayman in the Ranged Stance and Area and a Collected Vestal in the Support Stance and Area. Immediately place their cards and miniatures accordingly and shuffle three Initiative Cards into the Initiative Deck.

When the Collector is dead, remove any remaining Collected from play.



Fanatic: When you face the Fanatic, follow these steps:

- 1** Find the Fanatic Room Card and its corresponding Room Tile and put it in play.
- 2** Find the Fanatic's Battle Card and miniature and place them in the Aggressive Stance on the Stance Tracker and Room Tile Area respectively.
- 3** Find the Pyre's card and miniature and place them in the Ranged Stance on the Stance Tracker and Tile Area respectively.
- 4** Shuffle four Initiative Cards (three for the Fanatic and one for the Pyre) into the Initiative Deck.

During every Fanatic's turn, if the Pyre is still in play and there is space in its Area, the Fanatic will move

towards the closest Hero. If he reaches them, he will throw them in the Pyre. Place the Hero Miniature in the Area with the Pyre.

When the Fanatic is defeated, if the Pyre is still in play, remove it.

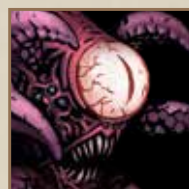
Darkest Dungeon



The Templars: When you face the Templars, follow these steps:

- 1** Find the Templars' Room Card and its corresponding Room Tile and put them into play.
- 2** Find the Battle Cards and miniatures for the Templars. Place the Templar Impaler in the Aggressive Stance on both the Stance Tracker and on the Tile Area. Place the Templar Warlord on the Ranged Stance on both the Stance Tracker and on the Room Tile Area.
- 3** Shuffle four Initiative Cards (two for each Templar) into the Initiative Deck.

When the Templar Impaler uses his Body Slam Skill and hits a Hero, the Pit Toss effect activates: Roll a ten-sided die and place the target Hero in the corresponding Spiked Pit, suffering the effect referred to on the Room Card.



Mammoth Cyst: When you face the Mammoth Cyst, follow these steps:

- 1** Find the Mammoth Cyst Room Card and its corresponding Room Tile and put it in play.
- 2** Find the Battle Cards and miniatures for the Mammoth Cyst and the White Cell Stalk. Place the Mammoth Cyst card and miniature in the Aggressive Stance both on the Stance Tracker and on the Room Tile Area. Keep the White Cell Stalk card and miniature on hand on the side.
- 3** Shuffle two Initiative Cards for the Mammoth Cyst in the Initiative Deck.

During the Mammoth Cyst's turn, if there is no White Cell Stalk in play, it will summon one instead of using a Skill. Place the White Cell Stalk card and miniature in both the Stance Tracker and on the Room Tile Area respectively. Immediately shuffle two Initiative Cards for the White cell Stalk in the Initiative Deck.

When the White Cell Stalk uses its Teleportation Skill on a Hero, roll a ten-sided die and place the affected Hero on the corresponding Area.



Shuffling Horror: When you face the Shuffling Horror, follow these steps:

- 1** Find the Shuffling Horror Room Card and its corresponding Room Tile and put it in play.
- 2** Find the Shuffling Horror, Cultist Priest and Malignant Growth Battle Cards and miniatures. Place the Shuffling Horror card and miniature in the Aggressive Stance on the Stance Tracker and on the Room Tile Area respectively. Keep the Cultist Priest and Malignant Growth cards and miniatures on hand on the side.
- 3** Shuffle two Initiative Cards for the Shuffling Horror into the Initiative Deck.

During the Shuffling Horror's turn, if the Monster Stance Tracker is not full, it will use its Echoing Disassembly Skill. Its special effect will summon a Cultist Priest and/or a Malignant Growth if one of those is not already in play. Place their cards and miniatures in that order on the Stance Tracker and on the Room Tile Area respectively. Immediately shuffle one Initiative Card for each into the Initiative Deck.

When the Shuffling Horror uses its Undulations Skill, take all Hero Stance Tokens from the Hero Stance Tracker, shuffle them and put them back randomly from Aggressive to Support.

Once again, the stars are right, and the Manor sits at the very epicenter of cosmic unrest.

Cultists rally to their twisted idols, and great gongs sound in anticipation of the coming sacrifices. Far below, life-laden shadows pulse to the unrelenting rhythm of a beating heart...

Final Encounter

This Boss has four different forms and its battle follows three phases. Depending on the Quest you completed prior to this encounter, one of its forms will not be used. When you defeat one of the forms, the next phase begins. Heroes are unable to recover Life or Stress. A new Initiative Deck is created and the battle phase starts anew.

The forms and their respective order that you fight them is as follows:

- ♦ **I-** Ancestor 1st Form
- ♦ **II-** Ancestor 2nd Form
- ♦ **III-** Gestating Heart
- ♦ **IV-** Heart of Darkness

Check your previous Quest Card to see which of these forms won't be used. All Battles take place on the same Room Tile, so:

- 1** Find the Ancestor Room card and its corresponding Tile and put it in play.



Ancestor 1st Form: When you face the Ancestor 1st form, follow these steps:

- 2** Find the Ancestor's 1st form, Perfect Reflections and Imperfect Reflections Battle Cards and miniatures.
- 3** Place the Ancestor (1st form) Battle Card and miniature on the Aggressive Stance on the Stance Tracker and on the Tile Area respectively.
- 4** Place two Perfect Reflections Cards and one Imperfect Reflections Card randomly in the unoccupied Stances on the Monster Stance Tracker then place their miniatures respectively on the Room Tile.
- 5** Shuffle four Initiative Cards into the Initiative Deck.

During the Ancestor 1st form's turn, if all Monster Stance slots are occupied, he will use the Time Heals All Skill. Otherwise, he will take actions until all the Stance slots are filled. If the Reflections have all taken turns, all remaining Initiative Cards will activate the Ancestor.

Reflections have **Guard** at all times, meaning they must be targeted before the Ancestor.

When an Imperfect Reflection is eliminated, the Ancestor suffers 10 Wounds. Do not remove Initiative Cards when Reflections are eliminated. There should always be four Monster Initiative Cards in the deck.

When the Ancestor is defeated, remove all Reflections and Monster Initiative Cards in play and get ready for the next phase.



Ancestor 2nd Form: When you face the Ancestor 2nd form, follow these steps:

- 2** Find the Ancestor's 2nd form Battle Card and miniature and place them in the Aggressive Stance on the Monster Stance Tracker and on the Room Tile Area respectively. Find the Absolute Nothingness miniatures and place them in the Areas with the Monster's Defense, Ranged and Support Stance, one in each.

3 Shuffle two Initiative Cards for the Ancestor into the Initiative Deck.

The Absolute Nothingness' are untargetable but, since they are miniatures, they still occupy one space in the Area they are in.

After the Ancestor finishes an action, roll a ten-sided die and teleport him to the corresponding Area on the Tile:

(1-3) Monster Defense Area, **(4-6)** Monster Ranged Area, **(7-9)** Monster Support Area, **(10)** No Teleportation.

When the Ancestor's 2nd form is defeated, remove all Monster Initiative Cards from the deck and all Absolute Nothingness miniatures from the Room Tile and ready for the next phase.



Gestating Heart: When you face the Gestating Heart, follow these steps:

2 Find the Gestating Heart Battle Card and miniature and place them in the Aggressive Stance on the Monster Stance Tracker and the Room Tile Area respectively.

When the Gestating Heart uses its Sispersion Skill, summon a random Darkest Dungeon Monster in the next available Stance and immediately shuffle one Initiative Card for it into the active Initiative Deck.

3 Gather the Darkest Dungeon Monster deck and the miniatures and keep them on hand to the side.

4 Shuffle one Initiative Card for the Gestating Heart into the Initiative Deck.

When the Gestating Heart uses its Sispersion Skill, summon a random Darkest Dungeon Monster in the next available Stance and immediately shuffle one Initiative Card for it into the active Initiative Deck.

When a Hero attacks and Wounds the Gestating Heart, they suffer **2** **3** and they are **Healed** **for 2**.

When the Gestating Heart is defeated, remove all other Monsters and Monster Initiative Cards from play and get ready for the next phase.



Heart of Darkness: This is the last form of the final encounter and, as you have seen, it cannot be skipped. When you face the Heart of Darkness, follow these steps:

2 Find the Heart of Darkness Battle Card and miniature and place them in the Aggressive Stance on the Stance Tracker and the Room Tile Area respectively.

3 Shuffle two Initiative Cards for the Heart of Darkness into the Initiative Deck.

At the start of Battle and after the Heart of Darkness finishes an action, it will use its Impending Doom ability. Roll a ten-sided die and place it near its card. This is the roll you'll use to pick which Skill the Heart of Darkness will use during its next turn. This way the Heroes are forewarned of its actions. Use this knowledge wisely.

When the Heart of Darkness is defeated, the Heroes have won the game. Read the outcome below aloud and bask in your success.

Victory... a hollow and ridiculous notion.

We are born of this thing, made from it. And we will be returned to it, in time.

The great family of man -- a profusion of errant flesh. Multiplying. Swarming. Living. Dying.

Until the stars align in their inexorable formation, and what sleeps is roused once more, to hatch from this fragile shell of earth and rock, and bring our inescapable end...

You are trapped here forever by that sickening prose, echoing through the infinite blackness of space and time: Ruin has come to our family.



Suggested Party Compositions

If you don't want to look through all the Heroes and their Skills to form your first party, you can use one of the following pre-made party compositions. There are four, each with a focus on different strategies and each with a different Level of complexity. Note that the Abomination is not in any of these groups as, we believe, it's a bit too complex a Hero for new players.

● Group 1 – Adventuring Party (low complexity)

Hero	Stance	Skill 1	Skill 2	Skill 3
Crusader		Smite	Zealous Accusation	Holy Lance
Hellion		Wicked Hack	Iron Swan	If It Bleeds
Highwayman		Pistol Shot	Tracking Shot	Point Blank Shot
Vestal		Divine Grace	Dazzling Light	Mace Bash

● Group 2 – Battlefield Experts (medium complexity)

Hero	Stance	Skill 1	Skill 2	Skill 3
Crusader		Stunning Blow	Battle Heal	Smite
Bounty Hunter		Come Hither	Uppercut	Collect Bounty
Occultist		Wyrd Reconstruction	Sacrificial Stab	Daemon's Pull
Vestal		Dazzling Light	Judgement	Divine Grace

● Group 3 – Damage Over Time (medium complexity)

Hero	Stance	Skill 1	Skill 2	Skill 3
Hellion		If It Bleeds	Bleed Out	Adrenaline Rush
Grave Robber		Pick to the Face	Throw Dagger	Poison Dart
Plague Doctor		Incision	Noxious Blast	Plague Grenade
Occultist		Wyrd Reconstruction	Abyssal Artillery	Weakening Curse

● Group 4 – The Dancers (high complexity)

Hero	Stance	Skill 1	Skill 2	Skill 3
Crusader		Holy Lance	Battle Heal	Zealous Accusation
Grave Robber		Lunge	Shadow Fade	Flashing Daggers
Jester		Solo	Finale	Dirk Stab
Arbalest		Sniper's Mark	Blindfire	Sniper Shot



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Special thanks to our ambassadors for demoing the game during conventions!





Darkest Dungeon

THE BOARD GAME