Slay the Spire

The Board Game



Rulebook

Slay the Spire
The Board Game

Rules Overview Video

Game Overview

Slay the Spire is a cooperative rogue-like deckbuilding adventure. Craft a unique deck, encounter bizarre creatures, discover relics of immense power, and finally become strong enough to defeat the boss at the end of the Act!

Slay the Spire is a **Deckbuilder**. That means each player starts with a simple deck of cards that they can improve by adding and removing cards during the game.

Slay the Spire is also a **rogue-like**. That means that when you die (and you will die!), start over from the beginning. Take the lessons you learned and try again!

Get the Free Companion App!

With searchable rulebook, soundtrack, card library, achievement tracking, and more!

(Not required to play the game.)



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Playtime

The game is divided into Acts. Each Act takes about 60-90 minutes. Plan for some extra time your first game. At the end of an Act you can continue, stop and end the adventure there, or save and continue another time!

Your First Game

Ironclad and Silent are easier characters to learn, with Defect being harder and Watcher hardest. Keep this in mind when choosing a character!

Winning & Losing

- **Victory** - If players defeat the final Boss, they win the game! Which Boss you consider to be final depends on how many Acts you want to play. You can stop playing at the end of any Act!
- **Death** - When a player's HP is reduced to 0, they are dead and the party loses the game.

Rules v2.27

Components



4 1st Encounters



43 Encounters
Act 1/2/3: 12/12/10
(Ascension Act 1/2/3): (3/3/3)

89 Summons
35/31/20
(0/2/1)

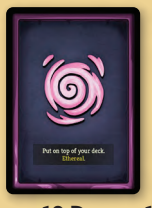
27 Elites
3/3/3
(6/6/6)

51 Events
12/14/11
(6/5/2)
(1 in unlock deck)

Ascension cards start locked. Don't use them until instructed to do so.



36 Status



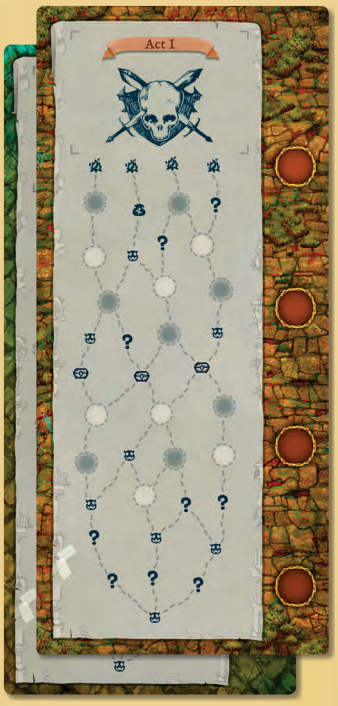
10 Daze



14 Neow's Blessing
(20 including unlocks)



113 Tokens



2 Main Boards

381 Player Cards
(including unlocks)

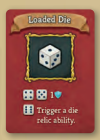


85 Ironclad (red)
87 Silent (green)
85 Defect (blue)
85 Watcher (purple)
17 Curses
22 Colorless

112 Small Cards



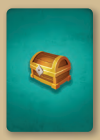
4 Prismatic Shard



1 Solo Relic



20 Boss Relics



58 Relics



29 Potions



450 Sleeves



1 Ascension Reference



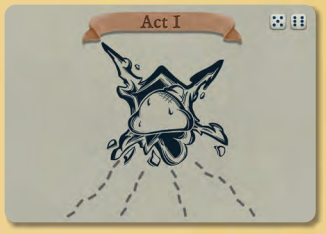
31 Dividers
8 Small Dividers



Merchant Board/Player Aid



HP Board



11 Boss Cards
(26 including unlocks)



4 Minis



1 Die



1 Boot Meeple



50 Plastic Cubes



4 Player Boards

Setup

1. **Pick a Character** - Each player chooses a character and takes the corresponding player board, mini, starter deck, card rewards deck, and rare rewards deck. Shuffle the decks.
2. **Token Tray** - Take out the token tray.
3. **Player Board** - Put a cube on your character's Energy track at 3, on their Block track at 0, and on their HP track at the highest printed number.
4. **Get Decks Ready** - Take out the following decks. Shuffle each deck except Summons, Daze, and Status / , then place them in separate piles. Shuffle and keep the "1st Encounter!" cards separate from the Encounter deck.
   - **Encounter** Act I "1st Encounter!"
   - **Encounter** Act I
   - **Elite** Act I
   - **Summon** Act I **Don't shuffle!**
   - **? Event Act I**
   - **Relic**
   - **Potion**
   - **Boss Relic**
   - **Daze Deck**
   - **/ Status Deck**
   - **Curse Deck**
5. **The Board** - Take out the Act I board. Randomly choose an Act I map.
6. **Map Tokens** - Shuffle the map tokens face down. Randomly place dark map tokens on dark spaces, and light map tokens on light spaces. Then flip the tokens face up.
7. **Character Figure** - Place your character figure on the board in the lowest open space.
8. **Reveal the Boss** - Randomly choose an Act I Boss. You can roll the die and use the Boss with the matching die result on the back of the card. Place that Boss face down on the map on top of the icon.
9. **The Boot** - Place the boot meeple at the bottom of the map next to the bottom encounter .
10. **Player Aid / Merchant Board** - Keep the Player Aid board handy as a quick rules reference. When you encounter a Merchant , flip the board over and set up the Merchant side.
11. **Neow's Blessing** - Shuffle the Neow's Blessing deck (three-eyed whale). Each player draws one Neow's Blessing card. Gain the reward in red, then choose one of the 3 rewards in blue (see Rewards, page 8). When players are done, put all Neow's Blessing cards away.
12. **Solo** - If you're playing solo, also gain (2) and the "Loaded Die" solo relic.
13. **1st Encounter** - Setup the 1st Encounter (see page 10, Combat Setup). Then start combat.

Setup for Acts II & III

A. **Act Decks** - Replace the , , ?, and decks with decks for the next Act. Shuffle all of those decks except Summons . Note: Only Act I has a "1st Encounter" deck.

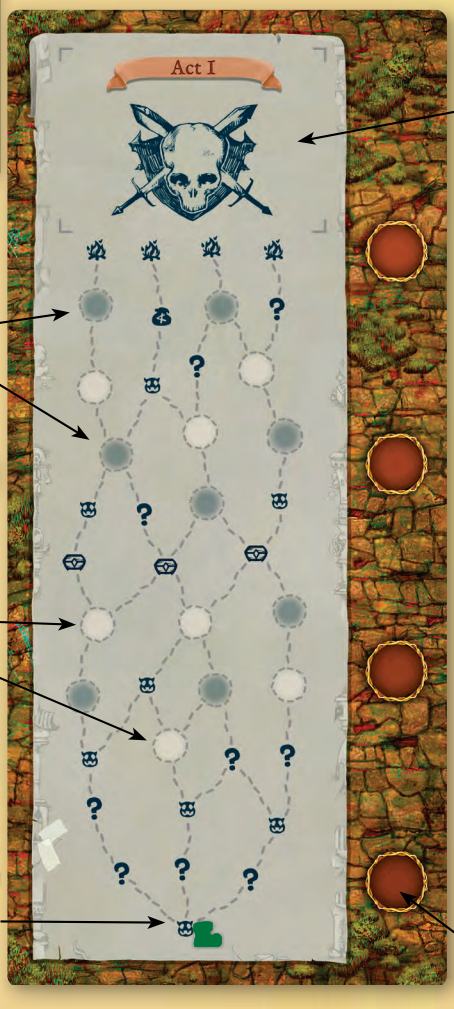
B. **Board Setup** - Repeat steps 5 through 9 with the board and Boss from the next Act.

C. **Heal** - All players heal to their maximum HP at the start of Act II and later Acts.

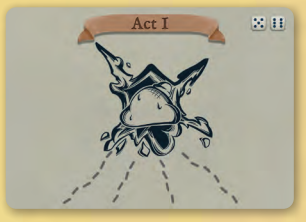
D. **Shuffle** - Shuffle your card rewards deck. Include any cards you skipped. (Don't shuffle rares.)

Don't use this token until instructed to do so.

5



8



11



12



10



6

2



13





4

9 Start here

7



Rare Rewards
(yellow border)

Card Rewards
(black border)

Starter Deck
(gray border)







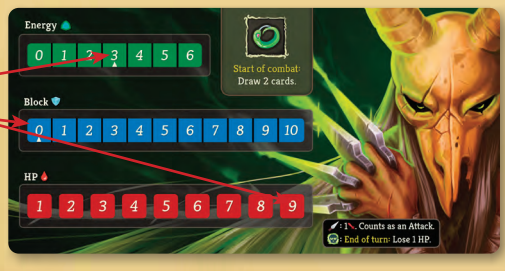
1





Place cubes here

3





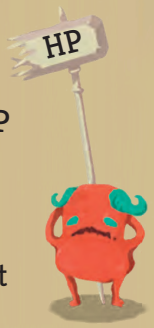
Your Play Area

Below is a suggestion for how to organize your play area. Do whatever works for you!

- **Draw Pile** - Shuffle your deck before combat begins to create your draw pile.
- **Discard Pile** - After you play a card, it goes to your discard pile.
- **Exhaust Pile** - When you Exhaust a card, place it in the exhaust pile. You can't use it again this combat.
- **Item Area** - Items are small cards. Keep items you gain in front of you.
- **Power Area** - When you play a Power, it stays in play until the end of combat. Keep Powers in front of you. At the end of combat, they return to your deck.

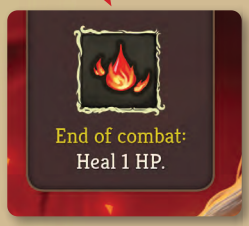


Hit Points (HP)



When your character takes damage or loses HP, your HP goes down. When you heal, your HP goes up. Keep a red cube on your HP to track it. Your HP starts at the highest number on your player board.

Damage can be prevented with Block (see back of rulebook).



Starting Ability

Each character has a unique starting ability on their player board.

Tokens

Keep tokens for your character on your player board. Keep track of your gold and any buffs/debuffs this way. You may prefer to keep tokens near your character mini.

Your Deck



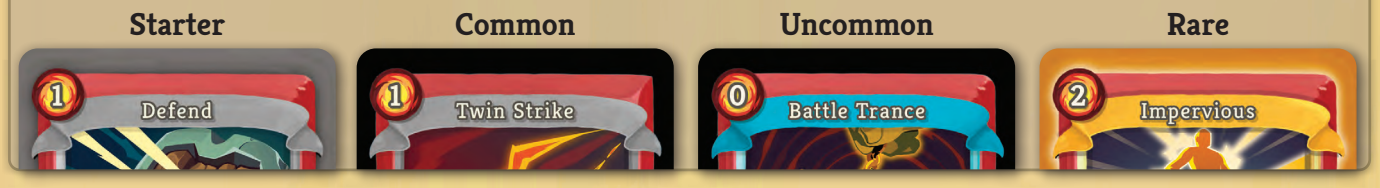
Card Types

- **Attack** - Attacks deal damage to enemies.
- **Skill** - Skills block damage and have other useful abilities.
- **Power** - Powers give you abilities that last the entire combat. Powers stay on the table in front of the player.
- **Curse** - Curses are bad cards that can get added to your deck. Curses can't be Transformed. When you gain a Curse, add the top Curse card to your deck.
- **Status & Daze** - Powerful enemies can weaken your deck by adding Status / , and Daze cards to it. Remove these from your deck at the end of each combat.

Energy - Energy is used to play cards. You can have a maximum of 6 Energy at once. Each character has their own Energy icon, although they all mean the same thing. You can gain Energy from sources with icons that don't match your character. You'll usually see "" used to mean Energy on items and in the rules.

X Cost Cards - You can spend any amount of Energy when playing an X cost card, including 0. It has an effect based on how much Energy you spend. The text will tell you the effect for spending X Energy.

Banner & Rarity - Cards have different rarities, which you can tell by the color of the banner behind their name. Gray banners are common, blue banners are uncommon, and yellow banners are rare. There are 2 copies of all commons. Starter deck cards have gray banners and gray borders. Each character's starter deck has 4 or 5 starter Strikes and starter Defends.



Items



Items are small cards that you'll collect on your adventure. There are Relics , Boss Relics , and Potions . There's also the Loaded Die solo relic (see below). Keep items in front of you.

Gold Cost - This is the cost to purchase the item from the Merchant . Not all items have a gold cost.



Loaded Die - When playing solo, start with the Loaded Die.

On a , it can trigger its own ability, or a die relic ability on another relic.

Rewards

There are several types of rewards below... but first, some general rules about rewards!

- **Pick Order** – Gain rewards in any order you want!
- **Skip** - You may skip gaining any reward below. You may also skip revealing or drawing from any rewards deck.
- **Full Knowledge** - After revealing cards or items, you can look at what the other rewards are from that combat before making any final decisions on what to choose or skip. You can check upgrades. If you're ever unsure if you'll get to see another combat reward from your current room before finalizing a choice, the answer is yes.
- **Trading** - Potions can be given to other players outside of combat. Nothing else can be traded.



Card Reward – Reveal the top 3 cards of your card rewards deck and lay them out in front of you. You may add one revealed card to your deck or skip adding a card. Return any unselected cards to the bottom of your card rewards deck.

Golden Ticket – Whenever you reveal a Golden Ticket, reveal the top card of your rare rewards deck and add that to your choices. Unpicked rare cards return to the bottom of your rare rewards deck. Put the Golden Ticket on the bottom of your card rewards deck.



Upgraded Card Reward – This is just like a "card reward" above, but the card you pick is immediately upgraded (see Upgrade below). You can always look at what an upgrade does before choosing.



Rare Reward – Reveal 3 cards from your rare rewards deck and lay them out in front of you. You may add one to your deck or skip. Return any unselected cards to the bottom of your rare rewards deck.



Potion – Draw a card from the potion deck. You may gain that potion or skip it. Keep it face up in front of you until used. You can't have more than 3 potions. Potions are all single-use items. When a potion is used, discarded, or skipped, put it on the bottom of the potion deck. If you gain a potion but you're at the limit, you must either: skip the potion, pass the potion to a player who is below their potion limit, or discard or use a potion then gain the new potion. Gambler's Brew, Entropic Brew, Blood Potion, and Fairy in a Bottle can be used outside of combat if applicable.



Relic – Draw a card from the relic deck. You may gain that relic or skip it. Keep your relics face up in front of you. When relics are discarded or skipped, put them on the bottom of the relic deck.



Boss Relic – Reveal 1 Boss relic per player + 1. Reveal 3 instead if playing solo. Each player may gain a relic or skip. Keep your Boss relics face up in front of you. When Boss relics are discarded or skipped, return them to the bottom of the Boss relic deck.



Gold – Gain gold tokens equal to the value. Gold can be spent at the Merchant or certain Events. You can use your gold to pay for any amount of another player's purchase at a Merchant or Event.

Remove, Upgrade, Transform

Below are 3 types of rewards that can change your deck.

- **Remove** - Remove a card from your deck. Keep it in a removed pile away from your deck.
- **Upgrade** - Unsleeve a card in your deck and flip it to the upgraded side (has green text). You can check what a card's upgrade is at any time by unsleeving it or checking the Upgrade Reference.
- **Transform** - Remove a card from your deck that isn't a Curse. Keep it in a removed pile away from your deck. Add the top card of your card rewards to your deck (it should be random). If it's a Golden Ticket, add the top card of your rare rewards to your deck instead, then put the Golden Ticket on the bottom of your card rewards.

The Map

You start at the encounter on the bottom of the map. When you're done with a room, move the meeple up the map along one of the paths to the next room. See rules for each type of room below:

Encounter

1st Encounter! - If this is the first encounter, place a "1st Encounter!" card in each player's row (see Combat Setup, page 10). After combat, set aside the 1st Encounter cards (they're no longer needed).

Other Encounters - Draw one encounter card per player (see Combat Setup, page 10).

Elite

Draw a card from the Elite deck (see Combat Setup, page 10).

Event

Draw a card from the Event deck. If there is text in [yellow brackets], each player must choose one of those options. Each player makes their own choice and acts once in any order. Some Events work differently, as described in their text. To choose a "Pay" or "Give" option, you must first have what it is asking you to pay or give. When all players are done, put the Event on the bottom of the Event deck.

Event Card



Campfire

Each player chooses one of two actions, Rest or Smith:

- **Rest** - Heal 3 HP.
- **Smith** - Upgrade a card.

Treasure

Each player gains a relic.

Merchant

Place 3 relics and 3 potions on the merchant board in the indicated slots. Each player reveals the top 3 cards of their card rewards deck. **You can use your gold to pay for any amount of another player's purchase at a Merchant or Event.** Players can...

- **Buy Items** - Buy or for the gold cost on the bottom right of the item. The relic in the top left is on sale for 1 less gold.
- **Buy Cards** - Buy cards you revealed for (2), (3), or (6) based on their rarity (see merchant board). Gray banner cards are common (2), blue banners are uncommon (3), yellow banners are rare (6).
- **Card Remove** - Pay (3) to remove a card from your deck. Each player can only do this once per Merchant.

When you're done, return any unpurchased cards to the bottom of the deck they came from in any order.

Boss

When you reach the Boss, start combat against the Boss card at the top of the map (see Combat Setup, page 10). If the Boss is defeated, you beat the Act! After gaining rewards, you can save and continue later, proceed to the next Act (see page 4, Setup), or end the game here.

Combat Setup

Rows - Each player has a row. Enemies are placed in rows, except for Bosses.

Summons - Some enemies will summon more enemies. If you see a green bar and this icon, then search for that enemy in the Summons deck and put them into play at the start of combat. Some enemy actions or special abilities can also summon.



Random Summons - When multiple Summons have the same name, select them randomly. You can do this by picking one without reading its abilities or shuffling Summons with the same name in a small face down pile and drawing one. "Gremlins" have a Gremlin icon on the back to help you select them randomly.

Encounter Setup

Encounters - Place one enemy in each player's row. If there are Summons, they are placed in the row of the enemy that summoned them to the right.



Enemy Cards



11+ HP
Some monsters have more than 10 HP. Use 2 cubes.



Special Abilities

Special abilities appear in Yellow. Usually they're always active, but some have triggers or don't have an effect until later in the fight.

For example, the **Fungi Beast**'s Spore Cloud ability triggers when it dies.

The **Gremlin Nob**'s Enraged ability doesn't start until turn 2 of combat.

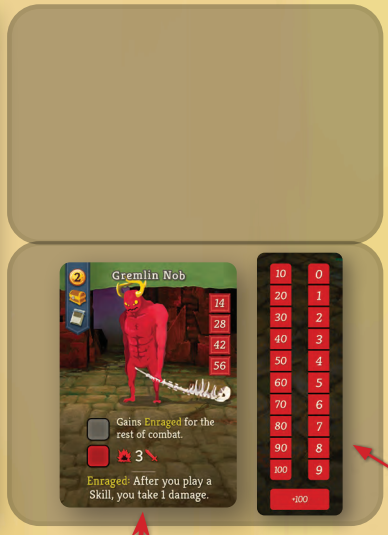


Elite Setup

Elites - Place one Elite in the bottom row. If there are Summons, place them in each player's row with the Elite to their right.

Elite





Elite

Elite with Summons





Elite

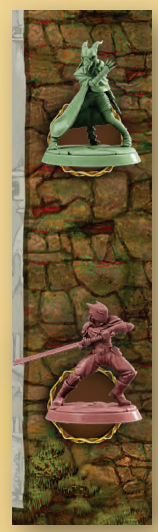
HP Board

Some enemies use the HP board. Their HP is formatted like this. The top number is their starting HP for 1 player, the next number down is for 2 players, etc. Set their HP using cubes.



Boss Setup

Bosses are treated as being in all rows. Keep them to the right of the board with any Summons in rows and closer to the board.





Rewards

Name

Starting HP



Enemy actions

Combat Round - Player Turn

Combat rounds consist of a Player Turn followed by an Enemy Turn. Rounds repeat until combat ends.

Player Turn

Shuffle your deck before combat starts. There's one shared **Player Turn** that's broken into the phases below: Start of Turn, Play, End of Turn. All players take these steps simultaneously.

- ### Start of Turn

  1. **Reset** - Set Energy to 3 and Block to 0.
  2. **Draw** - Draw 5 cards. There is no maximum hand size.

     Empty Draw Pile - When your draw pile is empty and you need to draw, your discard pile becomes the new draw pile. Shuffle it. If a card was just played that drew you cards, that card is set aside while you shuffle, then added to the new discard pile.
  3. **Roll** - Roll the die. If any abilities can change the die result, they must be used now before resolving other abilities. The die result tells you what action some monsters will take later during the Enemy Turn and which relic abilities are about to trigger (see next step). One die result determines all die effects for the round! Don't roll it again until next round!
  4. **Start of turn abilities** - The following abilities trigger in any order players choose:
     - **Start of turn** - Abilities that have "Start of turn" or "Start of round" text.
     - **Start of combat** - These abilities only trigger on the first turn of combat.
     - **Die relic abilities** - Abilities that trigger on the indicated die result.



- ### Play

  Players can play cards, use potions, and activate abilities in any order they choose.
  - **Discuss** - Players can discuss strategy, such as which enemies to attack and which players need help. It is encouraged to announce if you have Weak or Vulnerable effects early in the turn, as well as to ask questions like, "How much damage do you have?" or "Do you have enough Block?" rather than look at a player's hand.

  To play a card:
  - **Pay** - Pay the Energy cost on the upper left of the card. Track Energy on your board.
  - **Choose** - Make any decisions and choose targets for the card. You can target any enemy with your effects. Effects with a symbol affect all enemies in one row and always affect the Boss.
  - **Being Played** - While the card is being played, it isn't in your hand or in your discard pile.
  - **Resolve** - Execute the card's printed effects from top to bottom. Any abilities triggered by the card don't take effect until after the card is finished resolving all of its text.
  - **Cleanup** - The card goes to your discard pile. If it's a Power, instead place it face up in front of you. If it Exhausts, it goes to your exhaust pile. (Note: Exhaust to the deck they came from.)

- ### End of Turn

  When players are done playing cards, the following effects occur:
  1. **End of turn abilities** - Abilities that have an "End of turn" effect trigger in any order players choose. The phrase "End of turn" is only used to refer to the end of the Player Turn (never the Enemy Turn).
  2. **Discard** - Discard all cards in your hand in any order.

Combat Round - Enemy Turn

Enemy Turn

The **Enemy Turn** is broken into the phases: Remove Enemy Block, Enemy Actions, Move Cube Actions.

1. **Remove Enemy Block** - Enemies lose all of their leftover Block tokens.
2. **Enemy Actions** - Starting with the highest row, enemies act left to right taking one action each. Then enemies in the next row down act left to right. This continues until all enemies in all rows have acted once. Bosses always act last. Enemies that say "acts last" act after other enemies. See types of enemy actions below.
3. **Move Cube Actions** - If an enemy uses **Cube Actions** (see below), slide their cube down the track. Then the combat round repeats.

Enemy Action Types

Enemies target the player in their row. Actions with a symbol target all players. There are 3 types of enemy behavior patterns:

- **Single Action** - The enemy takes the listed action every turn.
- **Die Action** - The enemy takes the action to the right of the die result.
- **Cube Action** - At the start of combat, put a cube in the top cube slot. The enemy takes the action to the right of the cube during the "Enemy Actions" phase. During the "Move Cube Actions" phase, slide the cube down the track. When it reaches the bottom of the track, move the cube to the topmost red cube slot. Gray cube actions are not repeated.



The Dead

When enemies are reduced to 0 HP, they are dead and lose their tokens. Flip them over until the end of combat. When a player dies, the game immediately ends in defeat.

End of Combat

Combat ends immediately when all monsters are dead or have left combat, unless an enemy had an "on death" ability that is going to summon an enemy. At the end of combat:

1. **End of Combat Abilities** - Abilities that say "End of combat" trigger now.
2. **Rewards** - Players gain the rewards on the upper left of the enemy's card (see page 8). In encounters, gain rewards from the enemy in the row you ended combat in. In Boss and Elite fights, all players gain the rewards.
3. **Reset Your Deck** - Return your Powers, discard pile, and exhaust pile to your deck. Remove any / and cards from your deck and return them to their respective decks.
4. **Reset Player Board** - Reset the Block and Energy tracks. Lose all tokens ( ) except for gold. The Defect removes all Orbs. The Watcher enters Neutral Stance.
5. **Clear Enemies** - Put and on the bottom of their respective decks. Summons return to the Summons deck.
6. **Switch Rows** - Players may switch rows anytime between now and before the next combat room.

Actions & Effects

Most icons are explained on the back of the rulebook or the player aid. Below are examples of what these symbols mean when used on player cards or enemy actions.

Player Effect Examples

- 1 - Deal 1 damage to any enemy.
- 1 1 - Deal 1 damage to any enemy. Deal 1 damage to the same enemy.
- 2 - Deal 2 damage to an enemy. Give that enemy a token.
- 3 - Deal 3 damage to all enemies in a row (and the Boss, if present).
- - Put a token on all enemies in a row (and the Boss, if present).

Icons on the Back

Most icons are explained on the back of the rulebook. These icons are explained on page 17.

Enemy Action Examples

Note: When an enemy gains **Strength** or **Block**, it always goes on the enemy, never on you.

- 2 1 - Deal 2 damage to the player in this row. This enemy gains 1 Block token.
- 1 - Deal 1 damage to the player in this row. This enemy gains a token.
- 2 - Deal 2 damage to the player in this row. Give that player a token.
- 2 2 - Deal 2 damage to all players twice. Give all players a token.
- - The player in this row puts a card on top of their deck.
- - All players put 2 / cards in their discard pile. All Status cards are this combat.
- - The player in this row puts a / card in their discard pile. All Status cards are this combat.

Multi-hits

Some Attacks have multiple hits on the same card, like Twin Strike. Some cards say "deal X for each...", like Finisher or Barrage. Some enemy actions have multiple hits in one action. All of these are examples of a **multi-hit**.

- All on a multi-hit have the same target (unless stated otherwise).
- All on a multi-hit are affected equally by any damage bonuses, such as from .
- All on a multi-hit are affected equally by or . Remove one / token when the entire multi-hit is complete. With Weak , each has its damage reduced.

Multi-hit Example



vs

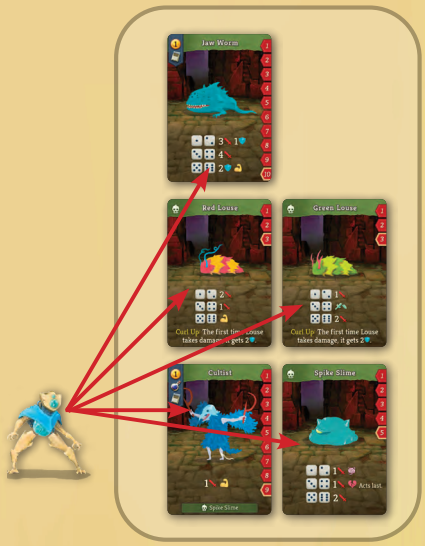


The Ironclad plays **Twin Strike** against a Cultist with a Vulnerable token. The Twin Strike deals double damage, 2 2, for a total of 4 damage. Then the Vulnerable token is removed.

Vulnerable token.

Targeting for Players

Players can target any enemy.



Effects with the icon or that say "any row" target all enemies in a single row. They also always affect the Boss.

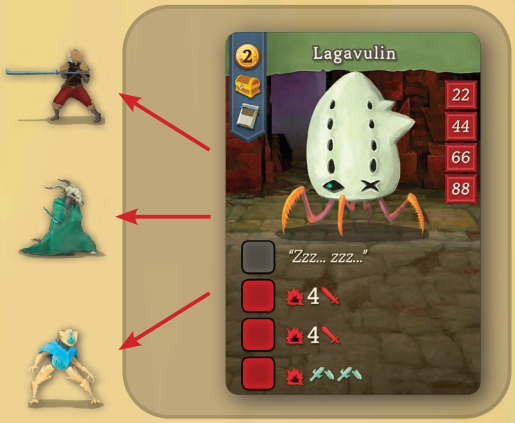


Targeting for Enemies

Enemies target the player in their row.



Enemy actions target all players.



Modes

Some Bosses have different "Modes", like **The Guardian**. The enemy can only use actions and abilities from the mode it is currently in. The Guardian starts in **Attack Mode**.

When The Guardian enters **Defensive Mode**, move the cube to the first action of the new mode.



The Ironclad

The remaining soldier of the Ironclads. Sold his soul to harness demonic energies.



Strength (max 8)

The Ironclad has many ways to gain Strength 💪. A player can have a maximum of 8 💪. You deal +1 damage on each hit 🗡 for each 💪 token you have.

Exhaust

The Ironclad has many ways to Exhaust cards and synergies with Exhaust. See the back of the rulebook for more on Exhaust.

Extra HP

The Ironclad starts with more HP than any other character.

The Defect

Combat automaton which became self-aware. Ancient technology allows manipulation of Orbs.

Channel

When the Defect Channels an Orb, place an Orb of that type in an open Orb slot on the player board. Use yellow cubes for Lightning, blue cubes for Frost, and purple cubes for Dark. If a card Channels multiple Orbs, Channel them one at a time. If you Channel an Orb and don't have any more cubes, ignore the effect.

End of Turn

At end of turn, gain the "End of turn" effect for each Lightning and Frost Orb as shown on the Defect player board. Choose targets for Lightning Orbs. They can each have a different target.



Evoke

When an effect Evokes an Orb, remove an Orb of your choice from its slot and apply the Evoke effect for that type of Orb as written on the Defect player board. If you play Dual Cast, Evoke an Orb twice. Each Lightning and Dark Orb Evoke effect can have a different target.

Orb slots are full - If you Channel an Orb and all Orb slots are full, Evoke any Orb, then place the Channeled Orb in its slot. When multiple Orbs are Channeled at once, resolve this effect one Orb at a time.

How are Orbs different from the video game?

Do I have to Evoke the front Orb, like in the video game? Do Orbs rotate like in the video game? Do I have to Channel Orbs into a particular slot?

No, no, and no. You can Channel an Orb into *any* empty Orb slot, and you can Evoke *any* Orb you have. All Orb slots are treated the same.

The Silent

A deadly huntress from the foglands. Eradicates foes with daggers and poisons.



Poison (max 30)

Place a Poison token on a target for each icon on the effect. At the end of turn, enemies with lose 1 HP per token they have. Losing HP ignores Block (Poison doesn't deal damage). Don't remove Poison tokens from an enemy until they are dead. There can't be more than 30 Poison combined on all enemies.

Shivs (max 5)

Shivs are tokens that may be used to deal 1 whenever you could play a card. Each is treated as a separate Attack and is affected separately by Strength, Vulnerable, and Weak. You start combat with 0 Shiv tokens, and gain Shiv tokens from cards with the Shiv icon. They don't go away until used or the end of combat. You can use them immediately or save them up for a combo!

Note: If you're out of Shiv tokens and you gain a Shiv, you can deal Shiv damage immediately or skip gaining the Shiv. Shivs don't count as cards.

The Watcher

A blind ascetic who has come to "Evaluate" the Spire. Master of the divine Stances.

Miracles (max 5)

Miracle tokens can be used any time to gain 1 Energy. You can't have more than 5 at once. Gain Miracle tokens from cards and abilities with the icon. Your starting ability gives you a. You can use Miracles to go over the Energy limit (max 6) if they are immediately used to pay for a card.

Scry & Retain - See the back of the rulebook for Scry and Retain descriptions.

Stances

Start each combat in Neutral Stance. The Watcher can enter or leave Stances to gain different abilities. When you enter a Stance, move the cube to the new Stance. You cannot enter a Stance you are already in (the effect is ignored).



Neutral - Start each combat in Neutral Stance. Neutral doesn't grant any abilities.

Calm - When you leave Calm, gain 2 Energy.

Wrath - While you are in Wrath, you deal +1 damage on all hits. This is effectively the same as having 1 Strength. This bonus only lasts until you leave Wrath.

If you end your turn in Wrath, take 1 damage.
(**Reminder:** Damage can be blocked.)

FAQs & Random Rules

- ***Is there a maximum hand size?*** No, there is no maximum hand size.
- ***Can Block prevent an effect that says "Lose X HP"?*** No. You can only block damage. Damage comes from hits and "damage" effects.
- ***What if we run out of tokens?*** If you run out of tokens, you can't gain or apply more tokens. The effect is ignored. This is true whether it's gaining gold, Strength, or applying Poison. But keep in mind with Shivs, you can use them immediately to deal damage (see Shivs on previous page). So a Shiv should never go to waste unless you want it to.
- ***Do cards remember?*** Cards have no memory once they leave your hand. Once they leave your hand, cards don't know if they were Retained last turn, their cost changed, etc. However, cards with an ability that changes their own cost still have an effect while in the discard pile. So for example: While Streamline is in the discard pile with 2 Powers in play, it's treated as costing 0.
- ***Starter Strike vs "containing Strike": what does this mean?*** A "starter Strike" is one of the Strikes in a starter deck. A card that "contains Strike" has the word "Strike" somewhere in its name.
- ***What happens if I Transform a colorless card?*** The added card comes from your card rewards deck.
- ***Do I remove any Weak, Vulnerable, and Poison tokens at end of round?*** Nope. See back of rulebook for details.
- ***Do Summons leave combat when all other enemies are killed?*** No. Unlike the video game, Summons don't "flee" combat when the enemy that summoned them is killed.

Specific Card Interactions

- ***Does Buffer prevent all HP loss from a multi-hit?*** HP loss from each hit in a multi-attack can trigger Buffer separately.
- ***How do "play" effects like Distilled Chaos and Mayhem work with cards when they can't be played like Clash, Signature Move, and Tactician?*** If an effect tries to play a card that can't be played, ignore the effect and discard that card instead.
- ***I played Corpse Explosion twice. What happens?*** The on death effect will only happen once.
- ***How does Dark Embrace work with Ethereal cards?*** When an Ethereal card Exhausts at end of turn, it triggers Dark Embrace and you draw a card. For cards you draw this way, ignore their "End of turn" and Ethereal abilities this turn. Don't discard any cards you draw this way during the discard step.
- ***How do Dark Orbs work with cards like Consume?*** Consume boosts a Dark Orb's damage by 2 (1 because that's the card's effect, and 1 because it's a Power). A Dark Orb's "+1 damage for each Power you have in play" effect isn't affected by abilities on cards like Consume or Amplify.
- ***Can I use Gambling Chip, The Abacus, or Toolbox at Events?*** Yes. "Once per room" abilities can be used at Events if applicable.
- ***What happens if you play with a Havoc, Mayhem, or Distilled Chaos?*** The is Exhausted.
- ***What happens if Snecko changes the Energy cost of a card, and that conflicts with other cost changes?*** Your next card is played for the Snecko cost, regardless of other cost change effects.
- ***How does Tantrum work with Rushdown?*** Any abilities triggered by a card don't take effect until after the card has finished resolving all of its text (see "To play a card", page 12). So Tantrum goes on top of your deck, then Rushdown triggers and you draw Tantrum again.
- ***Does Wrist Blade work with cards that temporarily cost 0 Energy?*** Yes, except it only works with copies if the original card was also played for 0 Energy (see Playing Copies on next page).
- ***During the Act IV Elite combat, can you switch into an empty row?*** Yes.

Cards from Other Characters

- **Tokens** - You can use tokens from other characters the same way they do. The token limit remains the same, but it is shared between all players.
- **Transform** - When you Transform a card from another character or a colorless card, add the new card from the top of your character's card rewards deck.
- **Golden Tickets** - When you reveal a Golden Ticket from another character's card rewards, the rare comes from that character's rare deck.
- **Stances and Orbs** - If you gain the ability to enter Stances or use Orbs from another character, gain the Prismatic Shard special relic. Start each combat in Neutral Stance. The Defect doesn't gain more Orb slots this way. The Watcher can't enter Stances on the Prismatic Shard.



Playing Copies

When a card is played multiple times, each copy is treated as a separate card. Copies do not cost Energy to play. If the card has X in the Energy cost, the copies use the same value of X as the original. Each copy can have different targets and is affected separately by Vulnerable, Weak, and single-use bonuses. Copies cannot also be copied.

A card can only be affected by one effect that plays cards multiple times. Any additional effects that would play a card multiple times wait for the next valid card. For example: If you use two Skill Potions, then play a Skill, it is played twice. The 2nd Skill Potion has no effect until you play another Skill.

The copies are played first. While the copies are being played, the original isn't in your hand or in your discard pile. When the original resolves, it then goes to your discard pile.

Triggered Abilities

Some abilities don't have an effect until the conditions of their trigger are met. Examples are:

On death - When an enemy with this ability dies, the ability triggers.

Start of turn - Relics and Powers with this phrase trigger at the start of the Player Turn (see Combat Round, page 12). Note that the Enemy Turn doesn't have a "Start of Turn" phase.

Start of combat - These abilities are like "Start of turn" abilities, but only trigger turn 1 of combat.

Start of next round - This refers to the "Start of Turn" phase during the next Player Turn. (See Combat Round page 12.) This trigger is found on some Bosses.

End of turn - Relics and Powers with this phrase trigger at the end of the Player Turn (see Combat Round, page 12). Note that the Enemy Turn doesn't have an "End of Turn" phase.

End of combat - These abilities trigger at "End of combat" (see Combat Round, page 13).

Once per combat - These abilities can only be used once per combat. Use them anytime during the Player Turn. Once used, flip the item face down. Flip it face up after combat.

Once per room - This ability is found on items that can only be used once per combat or Event. They typically alter the die result, and so can affect Events that use the die. Once used, flip the item over. Flip it face up after combat or when the party is done with the Event.

Die relic abilities - These abilities trigger on a die result at the "Start of turn" (see page 12). These abilities are only found on relics and Boss relics.



Unlocks

Whenever you finish a game, each player checks 1 box per Boss defeated, plus 1 extra box each. You must check boxes for your character until they are all checked, after which you may check Colorless or Act IV boxes. When you check all of the boxes next to a lock, add the locked cards with a matching number to the appropriate decks.

Ironclad

☐ 1
☐☐☐ 2
☐☐☐☐ 3

Silent

☐ 1
☐☐☐ 2
☐☐☐☐ 3

Defect

☐ 1
☐☐☐ 2
☐☐☐☐ 3

Watcher

☐ 1
☐☐☐ 2
☐☐☐☐ 3

Colorless Cards

☐☐☐ C

When unlocked, take out the colorless rewards deck during setup and shuffle it. Don't shuffle it between Acts. The party reveals 3 colorless cards at the merchant. Their cost is based on rarity. Add the C Events and Neow's Blessing cards to the appropriate decks.

Act IV

☐☐☐☐☐

When unlocked, after you beat Act III, you may continue to Act IV if you collect all 3 keys. See page 22 for rules on Act IV and the keys.

Ascension

After you defeat an Act II Boss (Act III if you're playing solo), unlock Ascension 1. To unlock higher Ascensions, you must be playing with the modifiers of all previous Ascension levels and defeat an Act II Boss (Act III if you're playing solo). You don't have to play on the highest Ascension you've achieved, although you may need to revert changes to some decks to play on a lower Ascension.

- ☐ **1. Harder Elites** - Open the Ascension pack. Replace Elites in each Act with the 1 Elites.
- ☐ **2. Lose 1 Max HP** - Your maximum HP is 1 lower. Put a black cube in your highest HP slot.
- ☐ **3. Harder Events** - Open the Ascension pack. Add the 3 cards to the appropriate decks.
- ☐ **4. Potion Limit is 2** - You're limited to 2 potions (instead of 3).
- ☐ **5. Start Cursed** - During setup, add Ascender's Bane to your starter deck.
- ☐ **6. Heal 4 HP after Boss** - You heal 4 HP instead of to full HP at the start of Acts II & later.
- ☐ **7. Harder Encounters** - Replace Encounters with corresponding 7 cards. Add the 7 Summons.
- ☐ **8. Card Removes Cost 4** - Card Removes cost 4 gold at the Merchant.
- ☐ **9. Start Damaged** - Lose 1 HP at the start of the game (after losing 1 Max HP from 2).
- ☐ **10. Harder Bosses** - Only use the 10 Boss deck.
- ☐ **11. Harder Act IV** - Use the 11 Corrupt Heart. Fight the 11 Elites in Act IV.
- ☐ **12. Harder Elites** - Replace Elites in Acts I through III with the 12 Elites.
- ☐ **13. Double Act 3 Boss** - After defeating the Act III Boss, fight a different random Act III Boss.

Achievements

- ☐ **Jaxxed** - Hit the Strength limit (8).
- ☐ **Catalyst** - Hit the Poison limit (30).
- ☐ **Ninja** - Play 7 Shivs in one turn.
- ☐ **Powerful** - Have 7 Powers in play at once.
- ☐ **Barricaded** - Hit the Block limit (20).
- ☐ **You are Nothing** - Defeat a Boss on turn 1.
- ☐ **All for One** - Beat Act III with 4 players.
- ☐ **Perfect** - Beat a Boss with all players at full HP.
- ☐ **Minimalist** - Beat Act III with a 5 card deck or smaller.
- ☐ **The Transient** - Kill The Transient before it kills itself.
- ☐ **Common Sense** - Beat Act III with a deck containing no uncommons or rares.
- ☐ **Collector** - Beat Act III with 12 relics and Boss relics combined per player.
- ☐ **Ruby** - Beat Act III with the Ironclad.
- ☐ **Emerald** - Beat Act III with the Silent.
- ☐ **Sapphire** - Beat Act III with the Defect.
- ☐ **Amethyst** - Beat Act III with the Watcher.
- ☐ **My Lucky Day** - Beat Act III with a Daily Climb.
- ☐ **Infinity** - Create an infinite card combo.
- ☐ **Who Needs Relics?** - Beat Act III with no relics or Boss relics (you can skip items).

Daily Climb

As an optional game mode, you can play a Daily Climb. Roll the die twice and gain one random game modifier from each section below. All players are affected.

- ⚀ **All Star** - Start with 5 random colorless cards.
- ⚁ **Shiny** - Start with 5 random rare cards.
- ⚂ **Heirloom** - Start with a random Boss relic.
- ⚃ **Transformed** - All  become Transform a card.
- ⚄ **Vintage** -  from encounters  become .
- ⚅ **Prismatic Shard** - Start with the Prismatic Shard special relic (see page 19). Also, when you gain , each revealed card must come from a different card rewards deck of your choice. This can include colorless rewards. When you gain , each revealed card must come from a different character's rare deck of your choice. (You still reveal 3 cards total).

Custom Run

To play a custom run, instead of rolling for game modifiers, pick whichever modifiers you want from this list.

- ⚀ **Terminal** - Lose 1 HP at the end of combat.
- ⚁ **Insanity** - Anytime during the end of combat, you must Transform a random card in your deck.
- ⚂ **Uncertain Future** - Don't flip over map tokens during setup. Flip them when you land on that room.
- ⚃ **Cursed** - Start with 2 random Curses.
- ⚄ **Deadly Events** - Lose 2 HP after each Event.
- ⚅ **Night Terrors** - You can't Rest.

Act IV

Players heal at the start of Act IV, just like they do at the start of Acts II and III.

Act IV must be unlocked (see page 20). To enter Act IV you must obtain all 3 keys by the end of Act III. The Act IV map is on the back of the Act IV Boss card. To obtain a key...

- **Ruby Key** - All players must simultaneously take no action at a **room** (can't Rest or Smith).
- **Sapphire Key** - All players must simultaneously skip gaining a relic at a or room. Players may reveal the before deciding. Discard revealed if you gain the key.
- **Emerald Key** - Players must defeat a Burning Elite (see below). When you fight the Burning Elite, before combat begins, each player shuffles into their deck.

- Burning Elite - Before map setup, replace an Encounter token with a dark back with the Burning Elite token. When you gain the Emerald Key, replace the token back with the token for future Acts.



Quick Start Rules

To start the game in Act II or later, use the table below. Gain all rewards in the top row for the starting Act, then proceed down to the next row, repeating this process until you reach the bottom. Gain rewards one at a time, without seeing the next reward.

The Gold is in addition to gold from Neow. "Roll the Die" once per die icon and gain rewards that match the result in the table on the right. Each player rolls separately. Boss relics are gained as a party, just like when you defeat a Boss. The entire party goes to one Merchant together as the last step.

Catch Up - These rules can be used to bring in new players at the start of an Act. Only players catching up use the table and visit the Merchant. Reveal Boss relics based on the number of players catching up.

	Act II	Act III	Act IV
Neow Bonus	1	1	1
Gold	6	7	10
Card Rewards			
Transform	1	1	1
Roll the Die			
Potion			
Relic			
Rare Rewards			
Boss Relics			
Card Rewards	-		
Card Removes	-	1	2
Upgrades	2	4	6
Merchant			

Roll the Die

	Transform
	1
	2
	Upgrade
	Card Remove

Golden Rule

Whenever a card's text contradicts the rules, the card text takes precedence.

Optional Rules

The Last Stand

When a player dies in a Boss fight, other players can continue fighting. Enemies in a row with a dead player target the nearest row with a player below them. If there are no players below them, they target the nearest row with a player above them.

If at least one player survives, treat this as beating that Act (or the game, if it's your final Act). If a player died, you cannot continue to the next Act.

Sequential Turns

If simultaneous turns don't work for your group, players can take Player Turns sequentially.

Turn Order - The player that starts the round in the bottom lane (Lane 1) takes their Player Turn, followed by the player to their left. This continues until all players have taken a Player Turn. When all players have taken a Player Turn, the Enemy Turn begins. Rounds repeat like this until the end of combat.

The Die - The die is only rolled during the first Player Turn in a round.

Your Effects on Your Turn - Your abilities, die triggers, start of turn, and end of turn effects, etc. only happen on your Player Turn. This includes when you draw cards at the start of the turn, reset your Energy, and discard your hand.

Choose Your Relic

In multiplayer games, when the party gains a relic  from an Elite  or Treasure  room, reveal relics equal to the number of players. Each player chooses a revealed relic.

Credits

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Abilities & Keywords

Area of Effect - For players, everything that follows this symbol affects all enemies in any single row and always includes the Boss. For enemies, everything that follows this symbol affects every player, unless the enemy is gaining Strength or Block. (See "Targeting," page 15.)

ALL Enemies - The effect targets ALL enemies in EVERY row and always includes the Boss.

Block (Max 20 for players) – Prevent the next 1 damage to a player or enemy for each point of Block they have. After the damage is prevented, removed that much Block. Players use their player board to track Block, while enemies use tokens. Block does not prevent "Lose X HP" effects. A player's Block is removed at the start of the Player Turn. An enemy's Block is removed at the start of the Enemy Turn.

Daze – Put a card on top of your draw pile. They return to the Daze deck when Exhausted.

Energy (Max 6) – Energy is used to play cards. Each character has their own Energy symbol, although all are equivalent and usable by any character. The symbol is used on items and in the rules to mean "Energy".

Ethereal - At end of turn, if this card is in your hand, Exhaust it. (See FAQ for Dark Embrace interaction.)

Exhaust – An Exhausted card is removed from your deck. Keep Exhausted cards in a separate pile and return them to your deck at the end of combat. Daze and Status / cards return to their respective piles when Exhausted.

Hit - Hits deal damage equal to the number in front of them. Hits are affected by Vulnerable, Weak, and Strength. See "Multi-hit Attacks", page 14. (Note: "damage" effects aren't hits.)

Retain - Retained cards are not discarded at the end of the Player Turn. Some cards have a bonus if you Retained them. After such cards leave your hand, they "forget" that they were ever Retained.

Scry X - Look at the top X cards of your deck. You may discard any number of them. Then put any remaining cards back on top of your deck in the same order. You can't Scry more cards than are in your draw pile. Scrying has no effect if your draw pile is empty.

Status / - Status cards use the top or bottom effect, whichever icon is on the enemy that gave it to you. The other effect is ignored that combat. Put the Status card on top of your discard pile. has an Energy cost of 1. They return to the Status deck when Exhausted.

Strength (Max 8) – You deal +1 damage on each hit for each token you have. Enemies can also gain .

Unplayable – Cards with "Unplayable" cannot be played and do not have an Energy cost. If an effect attempts to play an Unplayable card (like Distilled Chaos), that card has no effect and is discarded.

Vulnerable (Max 3) – Add a token to the target, up to a limit of 3 per player or enemy. When a player or enemy with tokens is attacked, damage from each hit in the Attack or enemy action is doubled, then the target loses one token. Add damage bonuses like Strength before doubling.

Weak (Max 3) – Add a token to the target, up to a limit of 3 per player or enemy. When a player or enemy with one or more tokens attacks, each in the Attack or enemy action deals -1 damage, then one token is removed. For attacks (ex. "2") or multi-hit attacks (ex. "1 1"), they still only lose a single .

Weak vs Vulnerable - If a Weak target attacks a Vulnerable target, the attack is unaffected by both Weak and Vulnerable. After the attack, remove a token from the attacker, and remove a token from all affected targets.