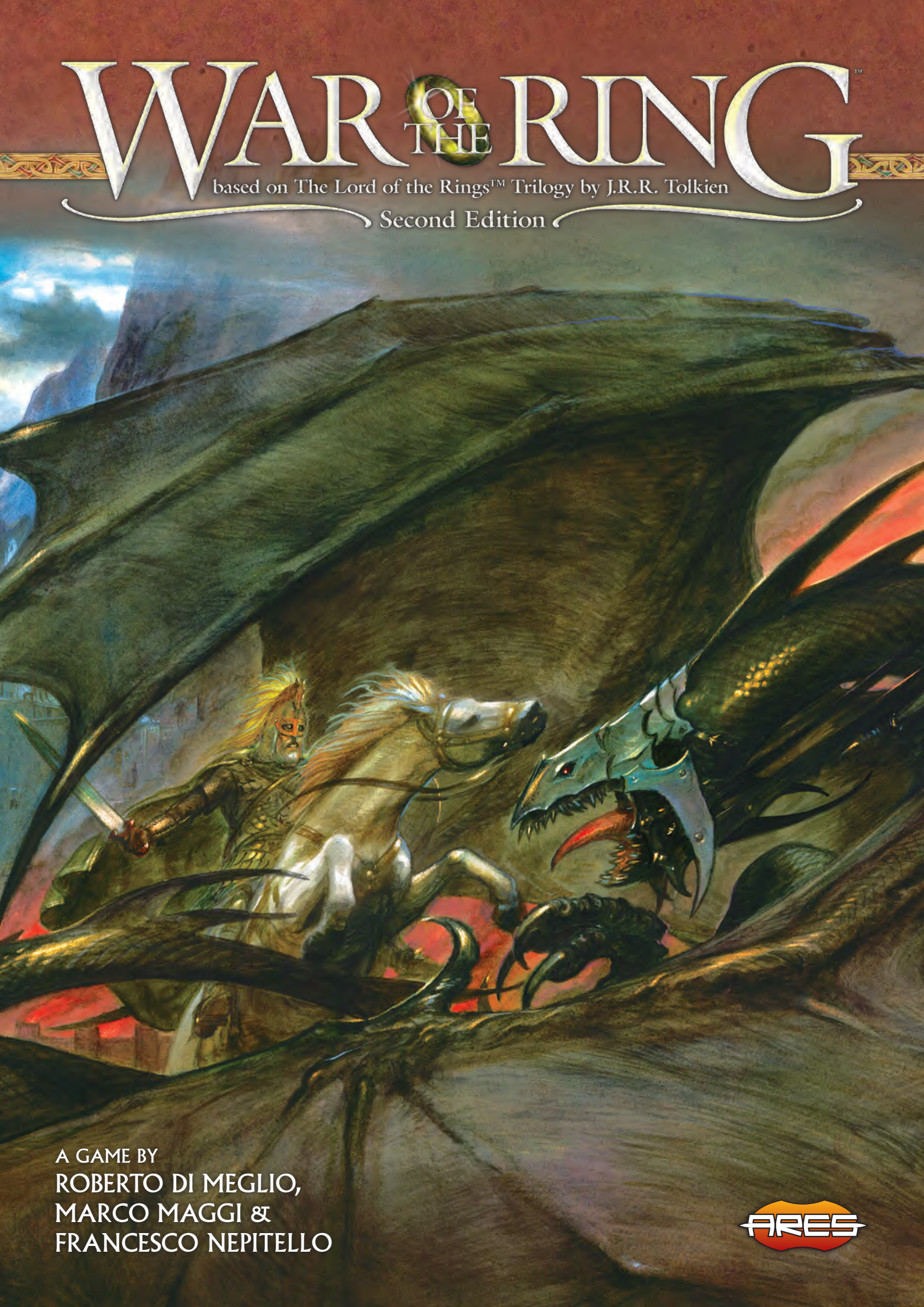
WAR OF THE RING

based on The Lord of the Rings™ Trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkien

Second Edition



A GAME BY

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MARCO MAGGI &
FRANCESCO NEPITELLO

ARES



Everywhere he looked he saw the signs of war. The Misty Mountains were crawling like anthills: Orcs were issuing out of a thousand holes. Under the boughs of Mirkwood there was deadly strife of Elves and Men and fell beasts. The land of the Beornings was aflame; a cloud was over Moria; smoke rose on the borders of Lórien. Horsemen were galloping on the grass of Rohan; wolves poured from Isengard. From the havens of Harad ships of war put out to sea; and out of the East Men were moving endlessly: swordsmen, spearmen, bowmen upon horses, chariots of chieftains and laden wains. All the power of the Dark Lord was in motion.

The Fellowship
of the Ring
by J.R.R. Tolkien,
Book II, Chapter 10.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *War of the Ring* strategy board game.

War of the Ring is a game for two to four players, based on J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings™ .

The players take part in the struggle of the armies of the Free Peoples and the heroic Companions of the Fellowship of the Ring against the dark host of the Shadow and the powerful Minions of the Dark Lord.

In a two-player game, each opponent will lead either the Free Peoples or the armies of the Shadow, while in a three- or four-player game, the players will be organized in two teams, each team controlling either faction.

In each game of *War of the Ring*, the player controlling the Shadow attempts to use his superior military power to conquer Middle-earth.

At his command gather Sauron's legions of Orcs and Trolls, the forces of the wizard Saruman, and the hosts of the Southrons and Easterlings, set to bring darkness over the West.

Against this onslaught, the Free Peoples player leads an allegiance of Elves, Dwarves, the riders of Rohan, men of Gondor, and men from the North—a fragile union trying to defend the last free realms of Middle-earth, and to gain precious time to allow the success of the Quest of the Ring-bearers.

While armies clash, the nine Companions of the Fellowship of the Ring travel towards the very heart of the domains of the Dark Lord—Mount Doom—to destroy the One Ring in the Mountain of Fire.

Controlled by the Free Peoples player, the Fellowship is his true chance of winning, as the military forces of the Shadow will be vanquished together with their master if the Ring is undone. But the Quest is fraught with ever greater perils, as the Darkness falls over Middle-earth...

In the end, one side will emerge victorious.

If the Shadow conquers enough of its enemies' cities and strongholds, or if the Ring-bearers fail and are corrupted, Darkness will triumph.

If the Fellowship succeeds in destroying the Ring before this happens, or the armies of the Free Peoples succeed in turning the tide and conquering the enemy's strongholds themselves, the fall of the Dark Lord is at hand...

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

War of the Ring is a game for 2 to 4 players. The forces involved in the conflict are divided into two sides: the Free Peoples and the Shadow. When playing with three players, one player controls the Free Peoples and the remaining two control the Shadow, sharing tasks. When playing with four players, all participants evenly share the forces of the two sides.

Please note that these rules refer to games played with only two players. To play games with more than two players, see Chapter 11, *Multiplayer Rules* (page 45).

NOTES ON THE SECOND EDITION

This new edition of the game introduces a few subtle but important changes from the First Edition. They are summarized here for the benefit of players already familiar with the First Edition:

— **Character Abilities:** Gandalf the Grey, Gollum, Meriadoc Brandybuck, Peregrin Took and the Witch-king now have modified special abilities (see their Character cards). The changes to Gandalf the Grey (Guide ability) and the Witch-king (mustering pre-requisites, "Sorcerer" ability) are especially important to take notice of.

— **Event Cards:** Many Event cards have been revised to improve their effectiveness, or simplify their use. The "Ents Awake," "Paths of the Woses" and "The Last Battle" cards have modified effects.

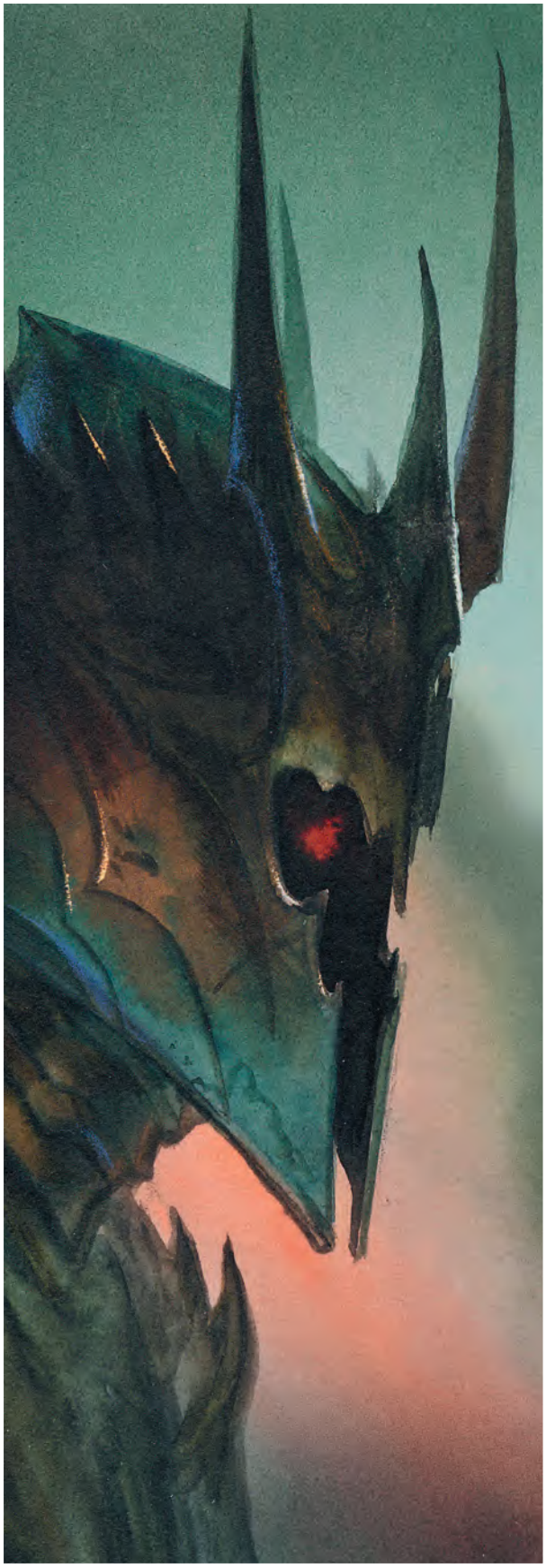
— **Army Setup:** The setup for the Dwarves has been modified (see page 16).

— **Action Dice:** The Shadow player must allocate a minimum of 1 Action die to the Hunt if the Free Peoples player placed at least one Action die in the Hunt Box in the previous turn (see pages 18-19).

— **Use of Combat Cards:** Combat cards are now chosen and played using a modified sequence (see page 29).

— **The Hunt:** There is a new sequence for the Hunt resolution, to streamline the application of Event cards and Special Abilities (see pages 41-42).

— **Entering Mordor:** To enter Mordor, it is now sufficient that the Ring-bearers are located in Minas Morgul or Morannon, without the requirement of declaring the Fellowship. As a consequence, the Fellowship can enter Mordor even if it is not Hidden (see page 43).



CHAPTER II: GAME COMPONENTS

COMPONENT LIST

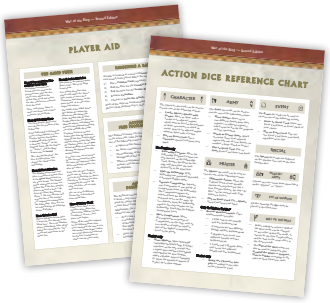
Inside your *War of the Ring* box you will find an extensive set of components, listed here.

- This Rulebook
- 2 Player Aids
- 1 Game Board, composed of two fold-out sections
- 6 Free Peoples Action Dice
- 10 Shadow Action Dice
- 5 six-sided Combat Dice
- 10 Companion Cards (Free Peoples Characters)
- 1 Gollum Card
- 3 Minion Cards (Shadow Characters)
- 96 Event Cards (divided into 4 decks of 24 cards each)
- 205 plastic figures representing the Armies and Characters of the War of the Ring, including:
  - 90 red figures representing Shadow Army units
  - 75 blue figures representing Free Peoples Army units
  - 20 gray figures representing Free Peoples Leaders and 8 figures representing the Nazgûl
  - 8 silver figures representing the Ring-bearers (Frodo and Sam) and their Companions
  - 3 silver figures representing the Minions of the Shadow
  - 1 silver figure representing Gollum
- 76 cardboard counters and markers, including:
  - 24 Hunt tiles (16 Standard Hunt tiles and 8 Special Hunt tiles)
  - 6 Army counters
  - 3 Elven Rings counters
  - 1 Corruption counter
  - 7 Companion counters
  - 1 Aragorn – Heir to Isildur marker
  - 1 Gandalf the White marker
  - 1 Fellowship Progress counter
  - 8 Nation Political counters
  - 20 Settlement Control markers
  - 2 Victory Point markers
  - 2 Leading Player tokens (used in the three- and four-player games)

COMPONENT OVERVIEW



This Rulebook



2 Player Aids



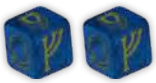
1 Game Board, composed of two fold-out sections



76 Cardboard counters



205 plastic figures representing the Armies and Characters of the *War of the Ring*



6 Free Peoples Action Dice



10 Shadow Action Dice



5 six-sided Combat Dice



10 Companion Cards
(Free Peoples Characters)



1 Gollum Card



3 Minion Cards
(Shadow Characters)



96 Event Cards
(divided into 4 decks of 24 cards)

COUNTER SUMMARY

Hunt Tiles (24)


Standard


Special (Fellowship)


Special (Shadow)


Back

Army Counters (6)


Free Peoples (front)


Free Peoples (back)


Shadow (front)


Shadow (back)

Elven Rings Counters (3)


Front


Back

Corruption Counter (1)


Front/Back

Companion & Character Counters (9)


Front


Back

Fellowship Progress Counter (1)


Front


Back

Nation Political Counters (8)


Free Peoples (front)


Free Peoples (back)


Shadow (front)


Shadow (back)

Settlement Control Markers (20)


Free Peoples


Shadow

Victory Point Markers (2)


Free Peoples


Shadow

Leading Player Tokens (2)


Free Peoples


Shadow

PLASTIC FIGURES

Minions


Saruman


The Witch-king


The Mouth of Sauron

Ringwraiths (8)


Nazgûl

Isengard (18)


Regular (12)


Elite (6)

Sauron (42)


Regular (36)


Elite (6)

Southrons & Esterlings (30)


Regular (24)


Elite (6)

The Fellowship of the Ring


The Ring-bearers


Gollum

Companions


Boromir


Gandalf


Gimli


Legolas

Companions


Meriadoc


Peregrin


Strider/Aragorn

Dwarves (14)


Regular (5)


Elite (5)


Leader (4)

Elves (19)


Regular (5)


Elite (10)


Leader (4)

Gondor (24)


Regular (15)


Elite (5)


Leader (4)

The North (19)


Regular (10)


Elite (5)


Leader (4)

Rohan (19)


Regular (10)


Elite (5)


Leader (4)

GAME PIECES

PLASTIC FIGURES

The Armies fighting for Middle-earth and the heroes and monsters that lead them are represented in the game by plastic figures.

Armies

The bulk of the armed forces of a Nation are represented by **Army units**.

The Army units of a Nation are further divided into either **Regular** or **Elite units**, where the first category represents a fighting force of average warriors and the second a host of chosen fighters or powerful monsters.

A single Army unit corresponds to a variable number of warriors, from a few hundred expert fighters to thousands of Orcs. In game terms, all units of a kind (Regular or Elite) have the same fighting capabilities as any other of the same kind, regardless of the Nation they belong to.

All Army units inside a single region and controlled by the same player are considered a single group and are collectively called an **Army**.

An Army can be composed of a maximum of **ten units**, or **five units** if the Army is inside a Stronghold under siege.

Free Peoples Leaders

The captains and chieftains leading the Armies of the Free Peoples are represented by **Leader** figures.

Leaders are unable to move on their own and must always be part of a friendly Army. If at any time a Leader is on the map without an Army, he is immediately removed.

The presence of a Leader in an Army provides an advantage in combat and a superior movement capability. There is no limit to the number of Leaders who can be in the same Army. Free Peoples Leaders, regardless of nationality, can lead Armies composed of units from any Free Peoples Nation.

A Leader is not considered an Army unit and cannot be taken as a casualty, nor does the presence of a Leader add to the Combat Strength of an Army (see page 28).

Nazgûl

The **Nazgûl**, also called *Ringwraiths*, act as Leaders for the Shadow Armies and each is represented by the distinctive Ringwraith figure mounted on a winged beast.

The rules pertaining to the Free Peoples Leaders also apply to the Nazgûl, with the following exceptions:

— The Nazgûl are not obliged to be part of a friendly Army and can move on their own, flying to any region (even regions containing Free Peoples units) on the game board with a single movement.

Exception: a Nazgûl moving without an Army cannot be placed alone in an enemy-controlled Stronghold.

— The Nazgûl are unaffected by the presence of an enemy Army in the same region.

Characters

The main heroes of the story and their main antagonists are represented by the **Character** figures.

Characters are personalities with abilities superior to those of simple Leaders. Characters belonging to the Free Peoples are called **Companions**, while the Characters of the Shadow are called **Minions**.

Each Character is represented by a unique figure and a Character card detailing his special skills. Players should carefully read all of the Character cards before playing the game.

In game terms, Characters act much the same as Leaders, but they do not suffer the same restrictions and can move on the game board on their own, ignoring the presence of enemy Armies.

Companions: Legolas, Gimli, Boromir, Aragorn (as Strider), Meriadoc, Peregrin, and Gandalf the Grey start the game as the Companions of Frodo and Sam (the **Ring-bearers**) and members of the Fellowship of the Ring. As the game progresses, they can leave the Fellowship to help rouse the Free Peoples Nations to war and to act as Leaders for the Free Peoples Armies.

Under certain conditions (as described on their Character cards), Strider and Gandalf the Grey can be replaced by their more powerful incarnations: **Aragorn – Heir to Isildur** and **Gandalf the White**.



Aragorn – Heir to Isildur Marker



Gandalf the White Marker

When this happens, put the appropriate marker under the plastic figure of the Character to remember his new status.

Minions: The more prominent servants of the Dark Lord—Saruman, the Witch-king, and the Mouth of Sauron—do not start in play at the beginning of the game. They will enter play later, under the conditions specified on their Character cards.

Gollum: Gollum is a very unusual Character. Gollum is always assumed to be following the Fellowship of the Ring, and he becomes the Guide of the Fellowship if the Ring-bearers are alone. When this happens, you may place the Gollum figure together with the Ring-bearers figure as a reminder of his presence. The effects of Gollum's actions are represented in the game by the Gollum Character card and certain Event cards.

THE GAME BOARD

The game board is a view of western Middle-earth at the end of the Third Age. In addition to the playing area proper, the game board also includes several spaces and tracks used to help the players keep track of various elements and components of the game.

The diagram of the game board (see pages 12-13) identifies its various parts and shows the spaces where many of the components needed at the start of the game are placed during setup.

NATIONS



Dwarves (brown)

Elves (light green)

Gondor (dark blue)

The North (light blue)

Rohan (dark green)

Isengard (yellow)

Sauron (red)

Southrons & Easterlings (orange)

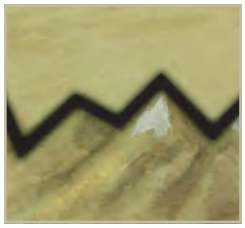
MAP EXAMPLES



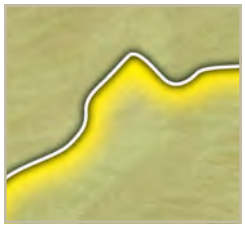
A white line is the normal border between two regions.



A river between two white lines is also a common style of border between two regions, which acts as a normal border.



A thick black line represents a mountain border, which can never be crossed.



A colored line running along a border shows the border of a Nation.



When two Nations are neighbors, two colored lines run along each other, separated by the white border.



Sea areas are not regions and can never be crossed. Regions bordering the large sea area on the left side of the board are called **coastal regions**.



Larger letters in the name of a region show that the region includes a City or Stronghold.

REGIONS

The main portion of the game board shows a view of western Middle-earth at the end of the Third Age. The map is divided into territories called **regions**. Each region is identified by a name, which usually refers to a site of note or to an entire geographical area (such as Minas Tirith or Cardolan). Regions are used to regulate movement, combat, and the placement of all plastic figures.

Regions are normally separated by a white line or by a river between two white lines.

A thick black border denotes impassable terrain which cannot be crossed, usually a high mountain range. If the border between two regions is completely divided by such a line, those regions are not considered adjacent for any purpose.

Some areas of the board are completely blue, either surrounded by a black line or bordered by a white line. These areas are seas or lakes. A sea or lake area is not a region and can never be crossed or moved into.

Free Regions

The rules and Event cards often refer to a **free region**. A region is free for a player when it doesn't contain an enemy Army and/or an enemy-controlled Settlement. A region containing a Stronghold controlled by the enemy is also free for a player when the Stronghold is besieged by an Army of that player.

NATIONS

Several regions are grouped and identified as **Nations** by their colored borders (see diagram on page 9). Some Nations consist of several separate groups of regions, divided and distant from one another.

FORTIFICATIONS AND SETTLEMENTS

A region can be empty, or contain either a **Fortification** or one of three types of **Settlements** (Town, City, or Stronghold).

Fortifications

A Fortification in a region offers easily defendable positions, such as a ruin, a fort, or a ford crossing a river. There are two Fortifications on the map: in the regions of Osgiliath and the Fords of Isen.



Fortification

Settlements

Settlements represent locations that are vital to the economy and defense of a Nation. A region containing a Settlement gives several advantages to the player controlling it.

Towns represent populated areas that allow the recruitment of troops of a specific Nation. The presence of a Town is shown on the board by the symbol of the appropriate Nation.



Free Peoples Town



Shadow Town

Cities represent major urban centers and can also be used to recruit troops. They also provide an advantage in combat to defending troops.



Free Peoples City



Shadow City

Strongholds represent fortresses, Elven homes, and the greatest capitals of Middle-earth. Troops may be recruited in Strongholds, and defenders receive a very strong advantage in battle.

Note: Each Stronghold on the board is matched by a Stronghold Box with the same drawing (or with a generic drawing in the case of Shadow Strongholds).



Free Peoples Stronghold



Shadow Stronghold

The Cities and Strongholds of Middle-earth give Victory points to a player who captures them from the enemy (see page 32).

In both Cities and Strongholds, the color of the frame shows which player initially controls it (red for the Shadow, blue for the Free Peoples). The icon in the upper corner shows which Nation the City or Stronghold belongs to.

The † symbol appearing on a City is a reminder that control of this region is worth 1 Victory point to the opponent. The †† symbol appearing on a Stronghold is a reminder that control of this Stronghold is worth 2 Victory points to the opponent.

Unconquered

Event cards may refer to an **unconquered** Settlement. A Settlement is unconquered if it is controlled by the same player who controlled it at the beginning of the game. A Settlement which was captured by the opponent, and then recaptured by its original owner, is "unconquered" once again. A Stronghold under siege is considered unconquered if the besieged Army belongs to the original owner.

TRACKS AND BOXES

In addition to the regions of Middle-earth, the game board also contains various boxes and tracks used during the game to keep track of different activities. These areas include:

— The **Fellowship Track**, to keep track of the progress of the Fellowship and the Corruption of the Ring-bearers.

— The **Hunt for the Ring Box** (also called the "Hunt Box"), to display the dice that the Shadow player allocates to hunt the Fellowship and to keep track of the number of times that the Fellowship moves during a turn.

— The **Political Track**, to keep track of which Nations of Middle-earth are "at War."

— The **Guide of the Fellowship Box**, to display the Character card of the Character who is guiding the Fellowship.

— The **Fellowship of the Ring Box** (also called the "Fellowship Box"), to display the figures and counters of the Companions composing the Fellowship.

— The **Elven Rings Boxes**, to display the Elven Rings counters.

— The **Event Deck Boxes**, to hold the four Event card decks.

— The **Stronghold Boxes**, to display those Army units involved in a siege battle.

— The **Army Boxes**, to hold figures when there is not enough space in a region.

— The **Victory Point Track**, to keep count of the conquests of each player.

— The **Mordor Track**, superimposed on the **Gorgoroth** region on the map, to keep track of the progress of the Fellowship when traveling in Mordor.

THE GAME BOARD

1
Free Peoples
Character
Event Cards Box

2
Free Peoples
Strategy
Event Cards Box

3
Elven Rings Box
(controlled by the
Free Peoples player)

4
Army
Boxes

5 **5**
Stronghold
Boxes

6
Hunt
Box

7
Victory Points
Track

8
Elven Rings Box
(controlled by the
Shadow player)





9 Fellowship Track

10 Fellowship of the Ring Box

11 Guide of the Fellowship Box

12 Political Track

13 Mordor Track

14 Shadow Character Event Cards Box

15 Shadow Strategy Event Cards Box

CHAPTER III: SETTING UP THE GAME

Before you start playing, you should decide who will play the Free Peoples and who will play the Shadow.

Then, get the game ready to play by following these steps.

STEP 1
Place the game board on a suitable surface, possibly large enough to leave some room along the sides of the board (to place discarded cards and eliminated pieces and to roll dice).

STEP 2
Place the Ring-bearers figure on Rivendell, its starting point.

STEP 3
Place the Fellowship Progress counter on Step 0 of the Fellowship Track, with the "Hidden" side up. The Corruption counter is also placed on Step 0 of the same track.

STEP 4
Place all Companion cards in the Guide of the Fellowship Box, with the **Gandalf the Grey** Character card on top, as he is the starting Guide of the Fellowship. Set aside the cards for **Aragorn – Heir to Isildur**, **Gandalf the White**, and **Gollum** for later use.

STEP 5
Place all the Companion figures and their counters in the The Fellowship of the Ring Box. Set aside the **Gollum** figure for later use.

STEP 6
Place the three Elven Ring counters in the Free Peoples' Elven Rings Box of the game board with the "Ring" side up.

STEP 7
Set aside all Shadow Minion cards (the Witch-king, Saruman, and the Mouth of Sauron) and the corresponding figures for later use.

STEP 8
Separate the Free Peoples and Shadow Event cards into **Character** and **Strategy decks** according to the back of each card, shuffle them separately, and place them on the corresponding areas of the game board.

STEP 9
Put the standard Hunt tiles (beige) in a cup or other opaque container: this is the **Hunt Pool**. Set aside the special Hunt tiles (blue and red) for later use.

STEP 10
Give seven red Shadow Action dice to the Shadow player and four blue Free Peoples Action dice to the Free Peoples player. Set aside the remaining Action dice for later use. Set aside the five Combat dice.

STEP 11
Place the Political counter for each Free Peoples Nation on its starting point on the Political Track. All of the Free Peoples Nations' Political counters **except for that of the Elves** are placed with the "Passive" side up. The Political counters of the Elves and all the Shadow Army Nations are placed with the "Active" side up. As indicated by the symbols on the track, place the Rohan, the North, the Elven, and the Dwarven Nations' Political counters in the top box, place the Gondor and Southron/Easterling Political counters in the second box from the top, and finally place the Sauron and Isengard Political counters in the third box from the top—immediately above the "At War" box.

STEP 12
Sort all the plastic figures by their color and their type and follow the *Army Setup* diagram on pages 16-17 to place each Nation's initial Army units and Leaders. Set aside any remaining figures to use as reinforcements, paying attention not to mix them with pieces eliminated from play as the game progresses. Set aside the Army counters for use later in the game.

Keep all the remaining components in the box; they will be used later in the game.



ARMY SETUP

Dwarves

1 **Erebor:**
1 Regular, 2 Elite, 1 Leader.

2 **Ered Luin:**
1 Regular.

3 **Iron Hills:**
1 Regular.

Reinforcements:
2 Regular, 3 Elite, 3 Leader.

Elves

4 **Grey Havens:**
1 Regular, 1 Elite, 1 Leader.

5 **Rivendell:**
2 Elite, 1 Leader.

6 **Woodland Realm:**
1 Regular, 1 Elite, 1 Leader.

7 **Lórien:**
1 Regular, 2 Elite, 1 Leader.

Reinforcements:
2 Regular, 4 Elite.

Gondor

8 **Minas Tirith:**
3 Regular, 1 Elite, 1 Leader.

9 **Dol Amroth:**
3 Regular.

10 **Osgiliath:**
2 Regular.

11 **Pelargir:**
1 Regular.

Reinforcements:
6 Regular, 4 Elite, 3 Leader.

The North

12 **Bree:**
1 Regular.

13 **Carrock:**
1 Regular.

14 **Dale:**
1 Regular, 1 Leader.

15 **North Downs:**
1 Elite.

16 **The Shire:**
1 Regular.

Reinforcements:
6 Regular, 4 Elite, 3 Leader.

Rohan

17 **Edoras:**
1 Regular, 1 Elite.

18 **Fords of Isen:**
2 Regular, 1 Leader.

19 **Helm's Deep:**
1 Regular.

Reinforcements:
6 Regular, 4 Elite, 3 Leader.





Isengard

Orthanc: 1
4 Regular, 1 Elite.

North Dunland: 2
1 Regular.

South Dunland: 3
1 Regular.

Reinforcements:
6 Regular, 5 Elite.

Sauron

Barad-dûr: 4
4 Regular, 1 Elite, 1 Nazgûl.

Dol Guldur: 5
5 Regular, 1 Elite, 1 Nazgûl.

Gorgoroth: 6
3 Regular.

Minas Morgul: 7
5 Regular, 1 Nazgûl.

Moria: 8
2 Regular.

Mount Gundabad: 9
2 Regular.

Nurn: 10
2 Regular.

Morannon: 11
5 Regular, 1 Nazgûl.

Reinforcements:
8 Regular, 4 Elite, 4 Nazgûl.

Southrons & Easterlings

Far Harad: 12
3 Regular, 1 Elite.

Near Harad: 13
3 Regular, 1 Elite.

North Rhûn: 14
2 Regular.

South Rhûn: 15
3 Regular, 1 Elite.

Umbar: 16
3 Regular.

Reinforcements:
10 Regular, 3 Elite.

CHAPTER IV: THE GAME TURN

War of the Ring is played over a series of **turns**, until either player wins the game. Each turn is divided into six **phases**.

SUMMARY OF THE TURN

The phases of the turn are:

Phase 1) Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards

Each player recovers the Action dice he used in the previous turn, plus any dice which were added to the Action Dice Pool and minus any dice which were removed from the pool.

Then, each player draws 2 cards, one from each of their respective Event decks.

Phase 2) Fellowship Phase

The Free Peoples player may now *declare* the position of the Fellowship.

If the Fellowship is declared in a City or Stronghold of a Free Peoples Nation, that Nation is **activated** (if the Nation is showing "Passive" on the Political Track, flip the Nation to "Active") and the Ring-bearers may be **healed**.

Also, during this phase, the Free Peoples player may change the Guide of the Fellowship.

Phase 3) Hunt Allocation

The Shadow player may now place a number of Action dice in the **Hunt Box** located on the game board. The Shadow player must place at least one Action die if the Free Peoples player retrieved at least 1 die from the Hunt Box during Phase 1. He may allocate only as many dice as the number of Companions remaining in the Fellowship. *These dice are not rolled during the following Action Roll phase.*

Phase 4) Action Roll

Players roll their Action dice (except the dice already in the Hunt Box). Then, the Shadow player immediately takes all the rolled dice showing the "Eye" result and adds them to the Hunt Box.

Phase 5) Action Resolution

This phase is the primary game phase of the *War of the Ring* board game.

It is during this phase that players will utilize the Action dice results to move their Characters and Armies on the game board, or to take other important actions.

The results of the rolled Action dice dictate the actions the players can take during this phase. Starting with the Free Peoples player, the two players alternate actions, each taking one action by selecting and removing one of his available die results. (See also *Using Action Dice*, page 19.)

Each time the Free Peoples player uses an Action die to move the Fellowship, he places that die in the Hunt Box after completing the action. All other used dice are set aside until next turn.

The use of each different Action die is described in more detail later.

Phase 6) Victory Check

Players now check to see whether either player has achieved the Military Victory conditions. If not, a new game turn begins.

> **Note:** If a Ring-based Victory condition (see page 44) occurs at any time during a turn, the game ends immediately, without waiting for the Victory Check phase.

THE ACTION DICE

The **Action dice** play a fundamental role in the game, as they dictate the options available to each player during a turn.

These dice have special icons on their faces, each icon representing a different group of action from which the players may choose. The different numbers and types of icons appearing on the Free Peoples Action dice and Shadow Action dice reflect the different attitudes of the two sides fighting the *War of the Ring*.

The *Action Dice Icons table*, on the facing page, shows the meaning of these icons.

> **Note:** The Free Peoples Action dice have two faces which show the "Character" action, and that on these dice the "Army" action only appears on a face combined with the "Muster" action.

ACTION DICE POOL

The total number of Action dice rolled by a player in a turn is called his **dice pool**.

The Shadow player starts the game with seven dice in his pool, but may gain additional dice later in the game, up to a maximum of ten. These additional Action dice enter play when the Shadow player brings his Minions into the game (one die for **Saruman**, one for the **Witch-king**, one for **the Mouth of Sauron**).

ACTION DICE ICONS

Free Peoples


Character Action*


Army Action*


Muster Action


Event Action


Muster/Army Action



Special Actions

Shadow


Character Action


Army Action


Muster Action


Event Action


Muster/Army Action



Special Actions

*** Note:** the Free Peoples Action dice have two faces which show the Character action. On these dice, the "Army" action only appears on a face combined with the Muster action.

The Free Peoples player starts with four dice in his pool. Like the Shadow, he can also gain additional dice later in the game. The Free Peoples player adds one die to his dice pool when **Aragorn – Heir to Isildur** enters play and another one when **Gandalf the White** appears.

Both the Shadow and the Free Peoples player lose the additional die if the corresponding Character is eliminated.

When a player gains or loses an Action die, the gain or loss becomes effective in the next turn: the die is added to, or removed from, the dice pool during the Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards phase of the following turn.

HUNT ALLOCATION AND ACTION ROLL

The Shadow player, during the Hunt Allocation phase, places the number of Action dice into the Hunt Box that he wants to devote to the Hunt for the Ring.

If one or more Fellowship Action dice were in the Hunt Box at the end of the previous turn, he must place a *minimum* of 1 die in the Hunt Box.

The *maximum* number of dice he can place in the Hunt Box is equal to the number of Companions currently in the Fellowship (note that the Ring-bearers are not considered to be a Companion and do not add to this maximum).

However, the Shadow player may always place *at least one die* in the Hunt Box, even if all the Companions have left the Fellowship.

The dice placed in the Hunt Box are not rolled, but the Shadow player rolls the remaining dice in his dice pool, and all dice showing an "Eye" result are immediately added to the Hunt Box as well.

The Free Peoples player simply rolls his entire Action dice pool.

USING ACTION DICE

Starting with the Free Peoples, players alternate actions selecting one of their Action dice and immediately taking the action made available by the specific die result.

Each Action die is printed with a set of distinctive icons, corresponding to different game actions. Each action is detailed later in the rules and summarized in the *Action Dice Reference Chart* (see page 20; the chart is also included in the *Player Aids*).

When an action has been completed, the corresponding die is considered "used" and is set aside until needed again for the next turn.

The only exception to this rule is that each time the Free Peoples player uses an Action die to *move the Fellowship*, he places that die in the **Hunt Box** after completing the action rather than setting it aside (note that the die is returned to the Free Peoples player during the Recover Action Dice and Draw Event Cards phase of the next turn).

If a player has fewer unused Action dice than his opponent (typically the Free Peoples player will have fewer Action dice than the Shadow player), he can *pass* instead of taking an action, thus allowing the opponent to take another action.

ACTION DICE REFERENCE CHART

This section provides a quick summary of the actions that each player can take using Action dice.

CHARACTER

This die result can be used to execute one of the following actions:

— **Leader Moves/Attacks with Armies.** Move an Army with a Leader to an adjacent region, which must be free for the purposes of Army movement; or attack an enemy Army in an adjacent region (or conduct a seige battle or sortie) using an Army with a Leader.

— **Play an Event card.** Play a **Character** Event card from your hand.

Free Peoples only

— **Fellowship Progress.** Move the Fellowship Progress counter one step forward on the Fellowship Track. Resolve the Hunt for the Ring, and then place the used Action die in the Hunt Box.

— **Hide the Fellowship.** If the Fellowship was previously revealed, it becomes hidden again.

— **Separate Companions**. Separate one Companion or one group of Companions from the Fellowship. The Companion figures are removed from the Fellowship Box and must move on the map, up to a distance from the Fellowship equal to the step number on the Fellowship Track plus the highest Companion Level.

— **Move Companions.** Move all Companions or groups of Companions on the map, each up to a number of regions equal to that of the highest Companion Level in the group.

Shadow only

— **Move Minions.** Move all Nazgûl (including the Witch–king) anywhere on the map (except into a region that contains a Stronghold controlled by the Free Peoples, unless a Shadow Army is besieging it). Move other Minions according to their Level.

ARMY

This die result can be used to execute one of the following actions:

— **Move Armies.** Move up to two different Armies from their region(s) to adjacent region(s), which must be free for the purposes of Army movement.

— **Attack an Enemy Army.** Attack an enemy Army in an adjacent region with one of your Armies (or conduct a siege battle or sortie).

— **Play an Event card.** Play an **Army** Event card from your hand.

MUSTER

This die result can be used to execute one of the following actions:

— **Diplomatic Action.** Move the Political Track of one friendly Nation one step forward (for a Free Peoples Nation, the step "At War" can be reached only if the Nation is active).

— **Play an Event card.** Play a **Muster** Event card from your hand.

Only for Nations "At War"

— **Recruit Reinforcements.** Place reinforcements into play:

  — 1 Elite unit in any friendly and free Settlement **or**

  — 2 Leaders in any two different friendly and free Settlements **or**

  — 2 Regular units in any two different friendly and free Settlements **or**

  — 1 Leader and 1 Regular Army unit in any two different friendly and free Settlements.

Shadow only

— **Bring one Character into play** according to the rules on his Character card.

EVENT

This die result can be used to execute one of the following actions:

— **Draw an Event card.** Draw one Event card from an Event deck of your choice.

— **Play an Event card.** Play any one Event card from your hand, regardless of its type.

MUSTER / ARMY

Choose any one action from those listed under **Muster** or **Army**.

SPECIAL

These die results are different on the Shadow dice and on the Free Peoples dice:

EYE OF SAURON

All dice showing the **Eye** must be placed in the Hunt Box.

WILL OF THE WEST

— Before taking an action, the Free Peoples player may change a **Will of the West** result into any other Action die result, and use it to the same effect as the chosen result.

— The **Will of the West** result can also be used to bring into play **Gandalf the White** or **Aragorn – Heir to Isildur** according to the rules on their Character cards.

A player may also choose to *skip* an action and discard one of his Action dice without effect, instead of using that die to take an action.

If a player runs out of actions before his opponent has done the same, the opponent executes his remaining actions one after the other.

THE ELVEN RINGS

At the beginning of the game, the Free Peoples player receives three counters, representing the Elven Rings of Power. He keeps each counter in the Elven Rings Box on the game board, with the Ring side face up, until he decides to use it.

When the Free Peoples player uses an Elven Ring, he flips over the counter to show its "Flaming Eye" side and gives it to the Shadow player. After the Shadow player uses the counter, it is discarded from play.

Each Elven Ring/Eye counter can thus be used once by its owner in the following way:

When a player is eligible to take an action during the Action Resolution phase, he may use an Elven Ring to change the result shown on one of his unused Action dice to another Action die result of his choice.

A player that just used an Elven Ring to change a die result then proceeds to take a regular action, choosing any one Action die result (not necessarily the one he has just changed with the Elven Ring). He can also skip or pass the action, if eligible to do so.

The use of an Elven Ring is subject to the following limitations:

— Only one Elven Ring may be used by the same player during the course of a single turn.

— The Free Peoples player may not use an Elven Ring to change an Action die to a "Will of the West" result.

— The Shadow player can use an Elven Ring to change a die result into an "Eye" result (that die is immediately moved to the Hunt Box). This does not count as an action, so he may then take an action normally. However, he cannot do the opposite and use an Elven Ring to change the result of an Action die already showing an "Eye" result.

Elven Ring Counters



Front: controlled by the Free Peoples player



Back: controlled by the Shadow player

CHAPTER V: THE EVENT CARDS

The Event cards represent many of the fortunate (or unfortunate) episodes in *The Lord of the Rings*, as well as special items, unexpected occurrences, and "what if"s. Moreover, each Event card can alternatively be used for a special combat effect to be employed in battle. When an Event card is used for its combat ability, we refer to the card as a **Combat card**.

EVENT DECKS

Each player receives two decks of Event cards: his **Strategy deck** (represented graphically by an army banner) and his **Character deck** (represented graphically by a sword).

Cards in the Strategy deck usually offer military and political options to the player. Cards in the Character deck are often related to the Fellowship and to the actions of Companions and Minions on the map.

DRAWING EVENT CARDS

During the first phase of each game turn (including the first turn) both players must draw one card from each of their decks.

It is also possible for players to draw cards from either deck by using an Action die result during the Action Resolution phase (see page 21).

Players may hold a **maximum of six cards** in their hand at any time and must immediately discard those in excess as soon as the maximum number is exceeded. Cards are discarded face down.

If a deck is depleted during the game, the discarded cards are **not reshuffled**. It is now no longer possible for the player to draw cards out of that deck (and thus he may only draw one card from the other deck during the Recover Action dice and Draw Event Cards phase).

PLAYING EVENT CARDS

Event cards can be played during the Action Resolution phase in two ways:

1) by using an Event Action die result (the Palantir symbol), or

2) by using an Action die result whose icon matches the symbol on the upper right corner of the card.

> ***Example:*** *For the Free Peoples player to play the Strategy Card "Paths of the Woses" he must either use an Action dice that shows the Palantir symbol (the Event result), or an Action dice that shows the Banner symbol (the Army result).*

Generally, Event cards are discarded as soon as their effects are resolved.

The effects of an Event card are explained in its text.

Often, some kind of requirement must be met for the effects of the card to apply; if a requirement is not fully satisfied, the card cannot be played.

Usually, a card allows a player to take an action that violates the standard rules; this is intentional, but any rule that is not expressly replaced by the card text still applies normally.

Some exceptions to the general rules use the following terminology:

— If a card reads "Play on the table," it means that the card is not discarded after it is played, and its effects last until a particular condition or requirement is met after which the card is discarded. If discarding a card requires the use of an Action die, discarding the card counts as an action. Note that if the condition required to play such a card ceases to be met, the card is immediately discarded.

> ***Example:*** *"Denethor's Folly" is discarded if Minas Tirith is no longer under siege.*

— If a card text directs you to "recruit" units or Leaders, these units or Leaders are taken from your available reinforcements. See also *Using an Event Card to Recruit Troops*, on page 27, for the specific workings of Event cards who allow recruitments.

The actions indicated by an Event card are mandatory. However, it can happen that the effects of an Event card cannot be fully applied. In this case, the card can still be played, and its effects are applied to the maximum extent possible.

> ***Example:*** *The "Imrahil of Dol Amroth" card allows the Free Peoples player to recruit one Leader and one Elite (or Regular) unit in Dol Amroth. If no Leader is available in the Free Peoples reinforcements, only the Elite or Regular unit is recruited.*

Event Cards Provoking Casualties

Several cards describe effects that may cause a player to remove some figures from play. If all the Army units in an Army are eliminated by the effect of such a card, all Free Peoples Leaders with the Army are immediately removed, while any Nazgûl, Companions, or Minions are left in the region, unless specified differently in the card text.

COMBAT CARDS

In addition to their standard Event text, all Event cards contain additional text (located at the bottom of the cards) representing their use as **Combat cards**.

Unlike playing an Event card for its main use, playing it as a Combat card **does not require taking an action**. Combat cards are played during a battle, See *Resolving a Battle*, on page 29, for further details.

Just like with Event card effects, Combat card effects modify the normal rules of the game, and the text of the card always has precedence over the normal rules. Event cards used as Combat cards are always discarded immediately after use.

THE EVENT CARDS

Free Peoples Event Card

Shadow Event Card

Event Title 1

Card Type 2

Event Pre-condition (if present) 3

Event Text 4

Event Discard Condition (if present) 5





6 Multiplayer Game Information (if present)

7 Combat Title

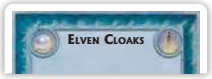
8 Combat Pre-condition (if present)

9 Combat Text

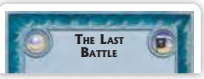
10 Initiative Number

11 Card Number

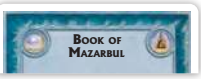
Free Peoples Event Card Type



Character

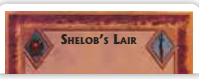


Army

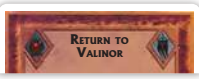


Muster

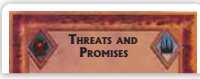
Shadow Event Card Type



Character



Army



Muster

Free Peoples Event Card Back



Character



Strategy

Shadow Event Card Back



Character



Strategy

CHAPTER VI: ARMIES AND BATTLES

The vast hordes of the Dark Lord and the stout defenders of the West play a central role in *War of the Ring*, and their mustering and employment is crucial. From their initial starting positions (as described in *Setting up the Game*), the Armies of both players will swell with reinforcements and move to battle according to the following rules.

CHARACTERS

PLAYING FREE PEOPLES CHARACTERS

Free Peoples Characters (Companions) are brought into play in two ways:

— Companions enter play when they are separated from the Fellowship (see *Separating Companions from the Fellowship*, page 39);

— **Gandalf the White** and **Aragorn – Heir to Isildur**, are brought into play using a Will of the West die. Use the rules specified by their Character card.

PLAYING SHADOW CHARACTERS

Shadow Characters (Minions) are brought into play using a Muster die. This use of a Muster die does not follow the normal rules for recruitment — use the rules specified by the Character card.

MOVING CHARACTERS

Characters are moved on the game board during the Action Resolution phase by using a Character **Action die result (the Sword icon), or by playing an Event card that allows the movement of Characters.**

A Character Action die result can be used:

— To move **all** Companions who are not in the Fellowship (Free Peoples player only).

— To move **all** Nazgûl and Minions (Shadow player only).

Note: If a Character's Level is 0, he cannot move, even when attached to an Army.

Moving Companions

When the Free Peoples player uses a Character Action die result to move his Characters, **all** Companions on the map may be moved a number of regions equal to or less than their **Level** (see later).

However, a group of Companions in the same region can be moved to a *common* destination at a distance equal to or less than the *highest* Level in the group.

The Free Peoples player can create more than one group from the Companions in the same region, which may then move independently to different destinations.

When Companions move, they are subject to the following rules:

— They are unaffected by any enemy Army. When moving alone or with other Companions, they can enter or leave a region that contains Shadow units, but must stop upon entering a region containing a Stronghold controlled by the Shadow player.

— They can never leave or enter a region containing a friendly Stronghold besieged by an enemy Army (except as a result of certain Event card effects).

— They cannot cross impassable terrain (black borders).

Moving Nazgûl and Minions

When the Shadow player uses a Character Action die result to move his Characters, each Nazgûl (including the Witch-king) can be moved to any region on the game board with a single move. One, some, or all Nazgûl can be moved this way using a single Character Action die result.

The only restriction is that the Nazgûl can never move this way into a region that contains a Stronghold controlled by the Free Peoples player, unless that Stronghold is besieged by a Shadow Army.

Note that in *War of the Ring*, for the purposes of rules clarity, the Witch-king is considered to be a Nazgûl (including with respect to all references to "Nazgûl" on Event cards, unless differentiated in the card text by the use of his name or the "Minion" title).

The Mouth of Sauron and Saruman do not possess the unlimited movement ability of the Nazgûl; they are subject to the following rules:

— Saruman can never leave the Orthanc region.

— The Mouth of Sauron can move up to three regions if moving alone. Like Companions, he cannot cross impassable terrain, he ignores any enemy Army when moving alone and cannot leave or enter a region that contains a friendly Stronghold besieged by an enemy Army.

Like the Nazgûl, any Minion moving without an Army cannot be moved into a region containing a Stronghold controlled by the Free Peoples unless it is besieged by a Shadow Army.

THE CHARACTER CARDS

Companion Cards





1. Portrait
2. Name
3. Special Abilities when guiding the Fellowship (if present)
4. Level
5. Leadership
6. Special Abilities when outside of the Fellowship (if present)
7. Nation which the Companion may activate (if the Free Peoples symbol appears here, the Companion may activate any Free Peoples Nation).
8. Condition to play the Companion (if present)
9. Special Abilities
10. Action Dice Bonus: If this symbol is present, add one die to the Action Dice Pool when the Companion is in play

Minion Cards



1. Portrait
2. Name
3. Condition to play the Minion
4. Level (the symbol ∞ represents the unlimited movement of the Nazgûl)
5. Leadership
6. Special Abilities
7. Action Dice Bonus: If this symbol is present, add one die to the Action Dice Pool when the Minion is in play
8. Nation the Minion belongs to

ARMIES AND STACKING

ARMY COMPOSITION

All friendly Army units, Leaders and Characters inside a single region form an **Army**.

An Army can be composed of units belonging to different Nations fighting on the same side.

If a moving Army enters a region occupied by another friendly Army, the two Armies are *merged* into a single Army at the end of the action.

Likewise, an Army can be *splitted* by simply moving part of its units into an adjacent region and leaving the rest behind.

STACKING LIMIT

A single region can contain a maximum of **10 Army units**.

If, at the end of any action (for example, after moving or mustering troops), more than 10 units are in the same region, the excess units must be removed from the game by the controlling player.

Units removed in this way can re-enter the game later as reinforcements.

ARMY BOXES

Along the left side of the board can be found three numbered **Army Boxes**.

If the size and number of plastic figures happen to be troublesome to physically fit in a single region, the controlling player may move some or all his figures from a region to a free Army Box, placing the corresponding numbered Army counter in the region for identification purposes. Figures can be moved back to the board from the Army Box at any time.

Players must be careful not to exceed the stacking limit when making use of an Army Box. For all game purposes, the figures in the box are considered to be in the region containing the Army counter.

> ***Example:*** *The Free Peoples player moves an Army composed of 10 Gondor regular units in Lossarnach, and finds out that they take up too much space. Army Box number 3 is free, so the player removes 8 of the Gondor regular figures and places them in the Army Box. He then places the Army counter number 3 in Lossarnach with the remaining two figures. Whenever it becomes necessary, the counter may be replaced by the figures in the box.*

RECRUITING TROOPS

RECRUITING NEW UNITS AND LEADERS

Additional Army units and Leaders are brought into the game during the Action Resolution phase by using a Muster **Action die result (a Helmet icon) as an action, or by playing an Event card that recruits new units.**

To bring reinforcements onto the board when using a Muster Action die result, the new figures must belong to a Nation "At War" (see later).

Using a single Muster Action die result, a player can bring the following figures into play:

— two Regular units, *or*

— two Leaders/Nazgûl, *or*

— one Regular unit and one Leader/Nazgûl, *or*

— one Elite unit.

All newly recruited figures are taken from the player's available reinforcements and can only be placed in a free **City**, **Town**, or **Stronghold** of the Nation to which they belong.

When two regular units or Leaders, or a combination of the two, are brought into play using a Muster Action die result, they can belong to different Nations, as long as both Nations concerned are "At War" (see page 35) and each figure is placed in a City, Town, or Stronghold of the Nation to which the unit belongs.

Nazgûl are always recruited in the Strongholds of the Sauron Nation.

RECRUITING RESTRICTIONS

— When mustering two figures (units and/or Leaders) using a Muster Action die result, the two figures must always be placed in **separate** Settlements.

— You cannot muster or recruit troops in a Settlement controlled by the enemy.

— You cannot muster troops in a Stronghold **besieged** (see pages 31-32) by the enemy.

— Reinforcements are limited to the available figures. Thus, if all figures of a type are in play, no additional figures of that type can be recruited. Shadow units and Nazgûl removed as casualties are placed back among the available reinforcements (thus allowing for an almost limitless mustering). All Characters (including Shadow Minions), Free Peoples units and Free Peoples Leaders, are **permanently** out of the game if eliminated; they should be placed in an area designated for **casualties** (such as back in the box) and are no longer eligible for recruitment.

USING AN EVENT CARD TO RECRUIT TROOPS

When a player uses Event cards whose effects is to recruit troops in a certain region (or regions), he is allowed to recruit in that region even if:

— the troops belong to a Nation which hasn't reached the "At War" step yet;

— the region includes a Stronghold under siege.

Other restrictions still apply, including:

— the figures must be available to be recruited;
— the recruitment cannot be made if the region is not free (with the notable exception of a Stronghold under siege previously indicated).

Example: *The "Riders of Théoden" Event card lets a player recruit troops in a Rohan region containing a Companion. If there is a Companion in Eastemnet, but that region also contains enemy troops, it is not possible to recruit there. However, if the Companion is with a Free Peoples Army besieged in Helm's Deep, recruitment is possible.*

ARMY MOVEMENT

MOVING AN ARMY

Armies are moved on the game board during the Action Resolution phase by using either an Army **Action die result or a** Character **Action die result (if the moving Army contains a Leader or Character), or an Event card that allows the movement of Armies.**

A player using an Army Action die result can move two *different* Armies, but can not move the same Army twice.

A player using a Character Action die result can move a single Army ***containing at least one Leader or Character***.

An Army is moved by simply moving its units to an adjacent region.

Splitting an Army

It is not mandatory that you move all units in an Army. An Army can split itself into two different Armies by moving only a portion of its units to an adjacent region.

Free Peoples Leaders can never be in a region without combat units, so if a moving Army completely vacates a region, all such Leaders must follow the Army. If the Army splits, Leaders may choose to either move or stay behind. When a player uses a Character Action die result to move an Army and the Army splits, at least one Leader or Character must join the moving units.

Note that, unless used as the subject to move an Army with a Character Action die result, Characters (Companions and Minions) and Nazgûl are not obliged to move with an Army, as they can remain in a region on their own.

Movement Restrictions

— The moving units, as well as Leaders and Characters, can be chosen freely, as long as no figure is moved twice using the same action (this includes movement effectuated by Event cards, unless the card explicitly has different instructions). Thus, during the same action, it is never possible to move an Army into a region containing another friendly Army (joining the two Armies into one), and then move the new combined Army with the second movement allowance, as this would move the units in the first Army twice. For purposes of moving under one action, these Armies should be kept separate until both movements have been taken.
Note: An Army *can* move multiple times in a single turn, as long as it uses a different Action die for each movement.

— Any region entered by a moving Army must be either a free region (see *Free Regions*, on page 10) or an enemy-controlled Settlement that is free of enemy Army units. These are known as "regions that are free for the purposes of Army movement."

— If a region is occupied by enemy units, it cannot be entered but must be attacked (see page 28).

— After moving an Army into a region, you can not exceed the stacking limit of 10 units.

— If a moving Army includes any units from a Nation which is not yet "At War" on the Political Track (see page 35), it cannot enter a region that is inside the borders of another Nation (even if friendly).

— An Army can never move into a region that is completely separated from the region the Army is currently in by a black line (which denotes impassable terrain). The same restriction applies to Characters (see page 24) and to the Fellowship (see page 38).

USING AN EVENT CARD TO MOVE ARMIES

When using Event cards whose effects allow a player to move Armies, all regular movement restrictions must be respected. Some Event cards allow a player to move one or more Armies through more than one region, and the following additional rules apply:

— Each Army to be moved is defined at the beginning of its movement (it is possible to split the Army before moving). The Army cannot pick up or drop figures along the way.



— If an Army moves through an enemy-controlled Settlement, it captures that Settlement.

— If an Army moves through regions containing other friendly Armies, stacking limits are checked only after all the multiple movements have been completed.

BATTLE RESOLUTION

ATTACKING WITH ARMIES

An Army is allowed to attack an enemy Army during the Action Resolution phase by using an Army **or a** Character **Action die result, or by playing an Event card that allows an Army to attack.**

Only Armies belonging to a Nation "At War" on the Political Track can **start a battle**.

A player can use an Army Action die result, or a Character Action die result (if the Army contains at least one Leader or Character), for the following purposes:

— To attack an enemy Army in an adjacent region.

— To initiate a **siege** or a **sortie** against an enemy Army in the same region (see page 32).

Note that, unlike when used merely for movement, an Army Action die result can only activate a *single* Army for the purpose of attacking.

An Army using a Character Action die result to make an attack must contain at least one Leader or Character.

> **Note:** When a battle is initiated, attacking units do not actually move into the region they are attacking, but instead stay in their present region for the duration of the attack. Only if the battle is over and won, the attacker may move his attacking units into the embattled region (see *End of Battle*, page 31).

Splitting an Attacking Army

It is not mandatory for all figures composing an Army chosen to attack to participate in the battle.

When a player is about to attack, he can split the Army into two, dividing the figures contained in the region into an attacking Army and into a second Army, called the **rearguard**, that will not take part in the upcoming battle.

Each of the two newly-created Armies must contain at least one Army unit, while Leaders, Companions, or Minions can be distributed among the two Armies as the player sees fit.

> **Note**: If the player is using a Character Action die result to attack, the newly-created attacking Army must contain at least one Leader or one Character.

The Army chosen as the rearguard does not affect the battle in any way, it cannot be targeted by Combat card effects, its figures cannot be chosen as casualties, and it cannot advance into the contested region if the battle is won.

If the attacking Army includes one or more figures belonging to Nations not "At War," then it is mandatory to split the Army (leaving with the rearguard any figure which is not "At War").

Note that *all* defending figures (units, Leaders and Characters) are always considered to be part of the battle.

Combat Strength and Leadership

Attacking and defending Army units, Leaders, and Characters all participate in determining the Combat Strength and Leadership of the Armies involved in battle.

— The **Combat Strength** of an Army is equal to the total number of its Army units (Regular and Elite units). Combat Strength determines the number of dice rolled in the **Combat roll**, up to a maximum of five dice. This means that units in excess of five do not add to the number of dice rolled by an Army, but an Army with more than five units is usually able to retain its full Combat Strength for a longer period—see *Remove Casualties*, on page 30.

Example: An Army containing three Regular units and one Elite unit has a Combat Strength of 4. Alternately, an Army of six Regular units and two Elite units has a Combat Strength of 8, but will still only roll the maximum of five dice.

— The **Leadership** of an Army is equal to the number of Leaders (or Nazgûl), plus the Leadership ratings of all participating Characters (as shown on each Character card). Leadership determines the maximum number of dice that may be rolled in the **Leader re-roll**, up to a maximum of five dice.

Often, Combat cards and Character special abilities modify the Combat Strength and Leadership rating of an Army involved in battle. In either case, the maximum of five dice can never be exceeded, regardless of modifiers.

RESOLVING A BATTLE

A battle is resolved in a series of **Combat rounds**. During each round, both players follow the steps below:

1) Play a **Combat card** (optional).

2) Roll the dice for the **Combat roll**.

3) Roll the dice for the **Leader re-roll**.

4) Remove **casualties**.

5) Choose to **Cease the attack** or **Retreat**.

Each step is resolved simultaneously by the players (both perform step 1, both perform step 2, etc.).

Play a Combat Card

At the beginning of each Combat round, each player may play one Event card from his hand as a Combat card.

First, the attacker declares whether he wants to use a Combat card and chooses the card.

Then, the defender declares if he wants to use a Combat card and chooses the card. The defender may play a Combat card even if the attacker chooses not to.

Cards are chosen secretly, then revealed simultaneously. However, the back of the chosen card is always visible to the opponent.

It is important that each player carefully reads the text on his Combat card before choosing it, especially with respect to its requirements, modifiers, and application.

Unless otherwise specified, the effects of a card only apply for the current Combat round.

Combat cards are always discarded as soon as the Combat round is over.

Timing of Combat Cards

The text of a Combat card should establish with reasonable clarity when the effects of a card should be applied during the battle.

In the case of any uncertainty as to timing, the initiative number in the bottom left corner of the card indicates which card must be applied first: the card with the lower number is applied first.

Example: The Shadow player is the attacker and plays "Durin's Bane," which allows him to roll a special attack before the normal combat begins (Initiative: 2). The Free Peoples player has played "Scouts," however, which allows him to retreat his Army before normal Combat begins (Initiative: 1). Since "Scouts" has a smaller number, it is resolved first and the Free Peoples Army retreats before the special attack of "Durin's Bane" is possible. Both cards are then discarded.

If the two cards have the same initiative, the effects of the **defender's** card are always applied first.

Note that if a Combat card has more than one effect (for example, the "Mûmakil" card), it has one initiative number for each effect with a different timing.

Requirements of Combat Cards

— Some Combat cards have specific requirements (indicated in **boldface** under the Combat title) that must be met for the card to be played. For example, some cards can be played only if friendly Elite units are involved in the battle.

— Many cards require a player to **forfeit** Leadership, which means that the selected figure (or figures) whose Leadership is forfeited does not count as a Leader (for the purpose of determining the Leadership rating) for that Combat round. You may not forfeit the Leadership of a figure, if that Leadership has been canceled for any reason.

Attack Rolls of Combat Cards

Some Combat cards allow an additional attack to be made, either before the Combat roll (step 2) or after the removal of casualties (step 4). Unless otherwise specified, these attacks use the same base hit number as the Combat roll. They are carried out in the same manner as the Combat roll (see below), with three exceptions:

— A Leader re-roll is never applicable.

— Any modifier to the Combat roll granted by the opposing player's Combat card does not apply.

— Any casualties are removed immediately, and they are not influenced by any effect of the opponent's Combat card.

Roll the Dice for the Combat Roll

During this step, each player rolls a number of Combat dice equal to the Combat Strength of their respective Armies (up to a maximum of five dice).

Each die rolled scores a **hit** on a result of '5' or '6.' The effects of Combat cards, Strongholds, Cities, and Fortifications, however, may raise or lower the target number required to hit.

Roll the Dice for the Leader Re–roll

After the Combat roll, both players can re–roll a number of *failed* die rolls equal to their Leadership (up to a maximum of five dice).

The result required to score a hit on the Leader re–roll remains the same as the result required for the Combat roll (unless modified by a specific Combat card effect).

> ***Example:*** *A player has five Army units and three Leaders in a battle. His Combat Strength is thus 5 and his Leadership is 3. He rolls five dice as a Combat roll, getting '1,' '3,' '5,' '5,' '6' (three hits). His Leadership is 3, but only two dice failed to hit, so he picks them up and rolls those two dice again. This time one die hits, for a grand total of four hits.*

Modifiers to Rolls

Combat rolls and Leader re–rolls can be modified by cards or special abilities. Modifiers to rolls are indicated by "add one," "add two," and so on. The modifier is added to the result of each rolled die, and then the modified result is compared to the number needed to hit. Multiple modifiers are cumulative, so they must be added together to get the total modifier.

> ***Example:*** *If you add one to the dice in the Combat roll, the roll will score a hit on the result of a '4,' '5,' or '6' rather than only '5' or '6.'*

Usually, Combat card effects will instruct a player to modify only the Combat roll, or the Leader re–roll, or both.

> **Note:** A roll of a '1' is always a miss, and a roll of a '6' is always a hit, regardless of any modifiers.

Remove Casualties

After both players have completed their Combat roll and Leader re–roll, they remove their losses.

The number of **hits** the opponent scored determines the number of casualties that a player's Army must take. The attacker decides first how to remove his units, and casualties are determined as follows:

For each hit scored by the opponent:

— remove one Regular unit, *or*

— replace one Elite unit with one Regular unit of the same Nation.

For every two hits, the player can remove casualties as above, twice, or can simply remove one Elite unit.

> ***Example:*** *A player has taken two hits. He can either remove two Regular units, or can replace two Elite units with two Regular ones, or can remove one Elite unit.*

When replacing one Elite unit with a Regular one, the Regular unit can be taken from the previous casualties (if any). Otherwise, the player takes the replacement from the available reinforcements, if able. Any Elite units thus replaced by the Free Peoples player are placed among the casualties. If no Regular units are available in either the casualties or the reinforcements, the Elite unit cannot be replaced and is eliminated without further effect.

Free Peoples and Shadow Casualties

As described earlier, casualties taken among the Free Peoples units are placed aside and are considered out of the game. It is therefore important that casualties not be placed in the same area as the available Free Peoples reinforcements.

The Shadow player, on the other hand, does not have this problem, and his units are never out of the game. Shadow casualties may therefore be placed back with the available reinforcements.

Elimination of Leaders and Characters

If all the Army units involved in a battle are eliminated, then all Leaders (including Characters) that were part of that Army are also immediately removed from play.

Just like with Army casualties, Free Peoples Leaders are permanently out of the game. Nazgûl can still re–enter as reinforcements.

Characters (including all Shadow Minions — Saruman, the Mouth of Sauron and the Witch–king) that are eliminated are always permanently removed from the game unless their Character card specifies otherwise.

Note that Characters in a region without friendly Army units are never drawn into battle, as they can exist in a region that contains enemy Army units. Except as a result of certain Event card effects, Characters (Minions and Companions) are only vulnerable when accompanying a friendly Army in battle, and can therefore be deviously difficult to eliminate.

Choose to Cease the Attack, or Retreat

At the end of each Combat round, the attacking player has the option to **cease the attack**.

If the attacker chooses to continue the battle, however, then the defender has the option to **retreat**. If the defender declines to retreat, another Combat round is initiated.

If the attacking Army ceases its attack, then its surviving units simply remain where they were at the start of the battle.

If the defending player chooses to retreat, however, his entire Army must immediately retreat to an adjacent free region. If no such region is available, the defender cannot choose to retreat.

Special Exceptions:

— An Army defending a region that contains a friendly Stronghold may retreat into the Stronghold itself at the beginning of any Combat round by Retreating into a siege (see later).

— A besieged Army cannot retreat.

— If the retreating Army contains a Character of Level 0, that Character is left behind in the region.

End of Battle

A battle ends when the attacker ceases to fight, the defender retreats, or when one or both Armies are completely eliminated.

If the defending Army is eliminated or retreats, the attacker may immediately move all or part of the attacking Army into the embattled region.

If an embattled region invaded by a successful attacker contains an enemy Stronghold, **and that Stronghold contains enemy units**, the Stronghold becomes **besieged** (see *Attacking a Stronghold*, below).

FORTIFICATIONS, CITIES, STRONGHOLDS, AND SIEGES

Many battles in *The Lord of the Rings* were fought as armies sought to either defend or conquer a fortress, ford, city, or the like. Fortifications, Cities, and Strongholds are therefore a central element in *War of the Ring*, as detailed in the following rules.

ATTACKING A CITY OR FORTIFICATION

During an attack against an enemy defending a region containing a City or Fortification, during **the first round of combat only** the attacker hits on a result of '6' or higher (instead of '5' or higher).

After the first Combat round is resolved, normal rules apply.

ATTACKING A STRONGHOLD

When attacking an enemy defending a region containing a Stronghold, **before every combat round**, the defender must choose to either **fight a field battle** or **retreat into a siege**.

Fighting a Field Battle

A field battle is resolved normally as described before.

Retreating into a Siege

As soon as the defender **retreats into a siege**, the region around the Stronghold is left open to the enemy, who may immediately advance into the region.

If the attacking Army chooses to advance, the Stronghold is now considered **under siege and the battle is over**.

The defending figures are now considered to be inside the Stronghold itself and are placed in the appropriate Stronghold Box found on the game board (if needed for space considerations).

A Stronghold under siege can contain a maximum of five Army units (and any number of Leaders). Any unit in excess of five is removed immediately when a Stronghold comes under siege. Units removed in this way can re–enter the game later as reinforcements.

A siege ends if the attacking Army leaves the region, or if at any time the attacking or defending Army is completely eliminated.

During the siege, the region surrounding the Stronghold is considered free for the besieging player, while the Stronghold itself remain controlled by the player under siege.

When a siege ends, move any surviving defenders from the Stronghold Box to its region on the map again.



CONDUCTING A SIEGE

When a Stronghold is under siege, the troops within can only be attacked by an Army **in the same region** using an Action die for battle during the Action Resolution phase.

Any battle starting against a besieged Army is considered a **siege battle**.

During a siege battle, the attacker hits only on a result of '6' or higher, while the defender hits on a result of '5' or higher as normal.

Also, unlike a normal combat, a siege battle **only lasts for one Combat round**, unless the attacker decides to voluntarily reduce one of his participating Elite units to a Regular unit. If the attacker decides to do so, the siege battle lasts for an additional round.

It is possible to extend a siege battle repeatedly, as long as the attacker has available Elite units to reduce at the end of a round.

If a siege battle ends and there are still defending and besieging units left, the defenders are still considered under siege.

Restrictions

— A defending Army under siege may never choose to retreat to an adjacent region.

— An Army besieging a Stronghold is free to move away from the region. If no Army units are left behind, the Stronghold is no longer under siege.

SORTIE

An Army inside a Stronghold under siege may attack the besieging Army by using an Action die for battle during the Action Resolution phase.

A battle in which the attacker is under siege is called a **sortie**.

In a sortie, the besieged Army fights a field battle for at least one round, forfeiting the advantages of defending the Stronghold.

A rearguard (see *Splitting an Attacking Army*, on page 28) may be formed and left behind in the Stronghold.

Combat is resolved normally (with both Armies scoring hits on a '5' or higher) but, if the attacker wants to cease the battle, the attacking Army moves back into the Stronghold.

The besieging defending Army may retreat to a free adjacent region as usual.

If the attacking Army wins the sortie, it cannot advance outside of the region.

RELIEVING A SIEGE

An Army in an adjacent region can attack an enemy Army besieging a friendly Stronghold using the normal rules.

The Army inside the Stronghold does not participate in the battle.

The attacking Army cannot advance into the region containing the Stronghold unless the besieging Army is destroyed or retreats.

REINFORCING A SIEGE

While a Stronghold is under siege, the besieging player can move new troops into the region (because it is a free region). This is considered a movement, not an attack.

CAPTURING A SETTLEMENT

At the start of the game, all Settlements belong to the Nation in which their region is located.

A settlement is considered captured when:

— An enemy Army enters a region containing a City, or Town, or unoccupied Stronghold, *or*

— All the units defending a Stronghold are eliminated and the besieging Army still has at least one unit remaining in the region.

The capturing player places a **Settlement Control marker** on the region to indicate his control.

A captured City, Town or Stronghold cannot be used for mustering troops or advancing the Political Track.

Captured Cities and Strongholds award the capturing player Victory points for the purpose of determining a Military Victory (see page 44). Advance the Victory Point marker of the capturing player on the Victory Point Track by one step for a captured City, or two steps for a captured Stronghold.

If the original owner of the region is able to recapture it, the Settlement Control marker is removed and any Victory points earned from the conquest are lost.

Settlement Control Markers



Free Peoples Settlement Control Marker



Shadow Settlement Control Marker



CHAPTER VII: THE POLITICS OF MIDDLE-EARTH

The end of the Third Age was a dark time for Middle-earth. While the basic allegiances of the Free Peoples were clearly defined, their individual opinions towards the threat of Sauron differed widely. The diplomatic stance of the various Nations is represented in *War of the Ring* by a Nation's position on the **Political Track** found on the game board.

THE POLITICAL TRACK

The initial starting position of a Nation on the Political Track (marked by the individual Nation's icon on the track itself) represents its diplomatic attitude at the beginning of the war. The farther its Political counter is from the "At War" step of the track, the less inclined that Nation is to take part in the conflict.

For a Nation to be considered completely mobilized and ready to fight, its Political counter must be in the last step in the track, marked "At War."

To further reflect their reluctance in entering the war, all the Free Peoples Nations except the Elves start the game in a **passive** state (represented by the gray side of a Nation's Political counter facing up).

As long as a Nation remains passive, it can never be moved to the last step of the track ("At War") and thus be fully mobilized.

ACTIVATING FREE PEOPLES NATIONS

The Political counter of a Free Peoples Nation is turned to the active side (with the light blue side face up) when any of the following events occur:

— A region of that Nation is entered by an enemy Army.

— An Army containing units of that Nation is attacked.

— The Fellowship of the Ring is declared in a City or Stronghold of that Nation.

— When a Companion (capable of activating that Nation) ends his movement or enters play in one of its Cities or Strongholds, unless it is controlled by the enemy.

Each Companion card has a symbol, in its lower right-hand corner, that indicates which Free Peoples Nation the Companion is capable of activating upon ending his movement (or entering play) in one of that Nation's Cities or Strongholds.



Note that Gandalf, Aragorn, Meriadoc Brandybuck, and Peregrin Took all show the "Free Peoples" symbol rather than one specific Nation's symbol. These Characters are capable of activating **any** Free Peoples Nation upon ending their movement in one of its Cities or Strongholds.

ADVANCING A POLITICAL POSITION

The Political counter of a Nation is advanced (by moving it down a step toward the "At War" step) on the Political Track by using a Muster Action die result or by playing certain Event cards.

Additionally, the counter of a Nation is *automatically* advanced one step if any of the following events occur:

— Every time an Army containing units of that Nation is attacked (each battle counts as one attack regardless of the number of rounds fought). Also, remember that when a Nation's Army is attacked, that Nation becomes active.

— Every time a Nation's Settlement (Town, City, or Stronghold) is captured by the opponent.

Example: *The Shadow player is attacking an Army of the North in the City of Dale. After the first round of combat, the Free Peoples player decides to retreat the only surviving North Regular unit. The Shadow Army advances into the now captured City and places a Control marker on it. As a result, the North nation is activated and its Political counter is moved two steps on the Political Track since a North Army was attacked and a North City captured by the Shadow.*

EVENT CARDS AFFECTING THE POLITICAL TRACK

All cards that initiate an attack by an Army can trigger a political reaction (activation and/or advancement on the Political Track). The three "Ents Awake" Event cards and the "Dead Men of Dunharrow" Event card can also trigger a political reaction. The effects of these cards are considered to be battles in which the enemy Army cannot fight back. All other cards that trigger a political reaction have the political effect explicitly stated in the text.

ENTERING WAR

A Nation that is not "At War" is considered to be **non-belligerent**.

A non-belligerent Nation suffers various limits to the capabilities of its troops.

In detail, Army units and Leaders of a non-belligerent Nation must adhere to the following restrictions:

— They can move outside their National borders but can never move across the borders of other Nations (including friendly ones).

— They cannot attack enemy Armies (but can defend if attacked).

— They can never be recruited by using Muster Action die results.

All the restrictions listed above apply even if figures of a non-belligerent Nation are stacked with figures of a Nation "At War."

Exception: Non-belligerent figures are allowed to cross another Nation's border when retreating from a battle. If they do so, the next time they move, they must move out of that Nation, unless they became "At War" in the meantime.

Example: *Two North units in Dale retreat from a battle. Even if the North is not "At War," the units may retreat to Erebor (which belongs to the Dwarf Nation). They could not do this as a normal move, but this move is possible as a retreat from combat.*

When a Nation's Political counter moves into the last step of the Political Track, that Nation is now "At War."

A Nation "At War" is free from the constraints binding a non-belligerent Nation. Its Armies may freely move across all National borders and attack enemy Armies, and its troops can be recruited using Muster Action die results.

As noted before, a passive Free Peoples Nation can never enter the "At War" step, but must be activated first.

CHARACTERS AT WAR

Companions, Minions, and Nazgûl can freely move and be involved in battles regardless of the political position of the Nation they belong to. In essence, they should be considered already "At War."

Example: *The Nazgûl can participate in an attack even if Sauron is not yet "At War."*

THE POLITICAL COUNTERS

Dwarves



Front: active



Back: passive

Gondor



Front: active



Back: passive

The North



Front: active



Back: passive

Rohan



Front: active



Back: passive

Elves	Isengard
	
Sauron	Southrons & Easterlings
	

CHAPTER VIII: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

In *War of the Ring*, Frodo and Sam are inseparable and are represented collectively as the **Ring-bearers**. As told in *The Lord of the Rings*, the two Hobbits are accompanied by a number of **Companions**, chosen from among the Free Peoples of Middle-earth.

These Characters together form the **Fellowship of the Ring**. While Frodo and Sam are bent on reaching Mount Doom to complete their quest, the other Companions have a choice: they can stay and protect the Fellowship, or, in time, leave the Fellowship in order to help the Free Peoples of the West in their struggle against the Shadow.

FELLOWSHIP FIGURES AND COUNTERS

The Fellowship of the Ring is represented in the game by a number of figures and counters.

— The **Ring-bearers** figure (Frodo & Sam) indicates the *last known position* of the Fellowship. It is placed in the region where the Fellowship was last declared or revealed (see page 38). At the start of the game, it is placed in Rivendell. Whenever rules or Event cards refer to the current location of the Fellowship, it is determined by the position of this figure, regardless of the position of the Fellowship Progress counter (see below).

— The **Fellowship Progress counter** shows how far the Fellowship has traveled from its last known position and indicates whether the Fellowship is **Hidden** or **Revealed**. This counter is placed on the **Fellowship Track** on the game board and is moved a step forward each time the Fellowship advances.

— The **Companion** figures and counters (seven individual Characters) represent the heroes of the Free Peoples. Initially their figures and counters are placed in the **Fellowship of the Ring** Box on the game board to indicate that they are all part of the Fellowship. When a Companion leaves the Fellowship, his figure is moved from the box to the map and his counter is removed from the Fellowship Box.

The Fellowship of the Ring



The Ring-bearers figure

Fellowship Progress Counter



Front: Hidden



Back: Revealed

Companion Counters



Meriadoc



Peregrin



Gimli



Legolas



Boromir



Gandalf the Grey



Strider

THE RING-BEARERS

The Ring-bearers figure depicts Frodo and Sam together, since in *War of the Ring* these two Hobbits can never be separated from one another or leave the Fellowship. Hence, the position of the Ring-bearers is always the one indicated by this figure.

CORRUPTION

The growing burden of carrying the One Ring to its destruction is represented by the **Corruption** of the Ring-bearers, a numerical score that starts at zero points but can increase to 12.

Upon reaching 12 Corruption points, the Ring-bearers are immediately assumed to have failed in their mission, succumbing to the power of the One Ring, and the game is won by the Shadow.

The Free Peoples player keeps track of the Corruption of the Ring-bearers by moving the **Corruption counter** along the Fellowship Track on the game board (which also contains the Fellowship Progress counter), placing it upon the corresponding numbered space.

COMPANION CHARACTER CARDS

Each Companion and his abilities are described on his **Character card** (see page 25).

At the beginning of the game, all Companions are in the Fellowship and their cards are stacked together to form the **Fellowship deck** (set aside the cards of Gollum, Aragorn – Heir to Isildur and Gandalf the White).

The deck is placed in the Guide of the Fellowship Box on the game board. As long as a Companion is in the Fellowship, his corresponding card is left in the Fellowship deck.

When a Companion leaves the Fellowship, his card is removed from the deck and placed on the table in front of the Free Peoples player.

Each Character card contains the following information about the depicted Companion:

— His **Level**, a number that is used during the Hunt for the Ring (see *Effects of the Hunt*, page 41) and when moving the Companion.

— His **Nation** icon, indicating which Nations the Companion is able to activate.

— His **Special Ability** that is only in effect when he is the Guide of the Fellowship (see later).

— His **Special Ability** that is in effect after he has left the Fellowship.

— His **Leadership Rating** used in battle.

THE GUIDE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

One of the Companions in the Fellowship is considered to be the **Guide** of the group during its quest.

At the beginning of each game of *War of the Ring* that Companion is **Gandalf the Grey**.

The Guide must always be the remaining Companion who has the highest Level. In case of a tie in Levels, the Free Peoples player can choose the Guide between the tying Companions.

> ***Example:*** *During the first turn of the game, the Fellowship player may replace Gandalf as guide with Strider, since both are Level 3 Companions.*

The Free Peoples player may nominate a new Guide at the end of each Fellowship phase, or when, during the course of a turn, the composition of the Fellowship changes (due to a Character being separated or eliminated from the Fellowship).

Even when changing guides during the Fellowship phase, however, only a Character that has or shares the highest Level may be designated as the Guide.

The Character card of the Companion acting as the Guide is always kept as the topmost card of the Fellowship deck, so that his special abilities are readily accessible.

When a Companion is acting as the Guide, only his special ability that is marked **"Guide:"** (if present) can be employed. Any other special abilities listed on the card are not available, as they apply only after that Companion leaves the Fellowship.

Gollum as a Guide

If all Companions have left the Fellowship, the Ring-bearers are alone and Gollum becomes the Guide of the Fellowship. When this happens, the Gollum Character card is placed in the Guide of the Fellowship Box.

THE FELLOWSHIP TRACK

To keep track of the secret movements of the Ring-bearers, players employ the **Fellowship Track**.

The Ring-bearers figure is used on the game board to mark the last known position of the Fellowship, but only the **Fellowship Progress counter** is advanced on the Fellowship Track every time the Fellowship moves.

The higher the number reached on the Fellowship Track, the farther from its last known position the Fellowship is at that moment.

MOVING THE FELLOWSHIP

During the Action Resolution phase, the Free Peoples player may advance the Fellowship Progress counter by using a Character **result on an Action die, or by using certain Event cards.**

Every time the Fellowship moves, the Fellowship Progress counter is advanced **one step** on the Fellowship Track (keeping the Progress counter on the *Hidden* side).

After each time the Fellowship Progress counter moves, the Shadow player has a chance to Hunt for the moving Fellowship (see later). The Dark Lord of Mordor hopes to regain his precious Ring by corrupting the Ring-bearers, killing the Companions, or, at the very least, locating the whereabouts of the Fellowship.

If the Fellowship moves more than once in a turn, the Hunt becomes increasingly dangerous: **every time** that an Action die is used to move the Fellowship, that die is added to the Hunt Box after the Hunt has been completed (each added die will provide a bonus to the Hunt roll, as explained on page 41).

Exception: When the Free Peoples player moves the Fellowship using an Event card, the Action die used to play the card is not added to the Hunt Box.

Any Action dice that the Free Peoples player places in the Hunt Box are returned to him at the beginning of the next turn.

LOCATING THE FELLOWSHIP

The numbered steps on the Fellowship Track represent the distance (measured in regions) traveled by the Fellowship from its last known position (the region where the Ring-bearers figure is located).

The actual position of the Fellowship is determined only if one of two things happen:

1) The Free Peoples player decides to **declare** the position of the Fellowship, *or*

2) A Hunt for the Ring is successful and **reveals** the Fellowship.

Both circumstances cause the Ring-bearers figure to move to a new position on the game board and the Fellowship Progress counter to be reset to '0.'

When the Ring-bearers figure is moved on the game board, it cannot cross a black border (which denotes impassable terrain).

Note that if the Fellowship Progress counter is on step '0' of the Fellowship Track when declared or revealed, the Fellowship must remain in the same region as before (as, in fact, it has not moved).

There are important differences between "declaring" and "revealing" the Fellowship that need further explaining (see below).

Fellowship Declares Its Own Position

If the Fellowship is Hidden (the Progress counter shows the Hidden **side up), its position can be** declared **by the Free Peoples player during the Fellowship phase.**

This declaration usually happens because the Free Peoples player wants to have the Ring-bearers heal from Corruption in a City or Stronghold, wants to activate a Nation, or wants to use an Event card that requires the Ring-bearers to be in a specific place.

When the Fellowship is declared, the Free Peoples player may immediately move the Ring-bearers figure a number of regions (from its last known position), equal to or less than the number on the Fellowship Track indicated by the position of the Fellowship Progress counter. (The Free Peoples player may choose to leave the Ring-bearers figure in its current position, if he wants.)

Then, the Free Peoples player resets the Fellowship Progress counter, moving it back to the '0' step of the Fellowship Track. The Fellowship Progress counter remains Hidden side up.

> ***Example:*** *The Free Peoples player, during the Fellowship phase of the fourth game turn, decides to declare the position of the Fellowship. The last known position of the Fellowship, and thus the location of the Ring-bearers figure, is in Rivendell and the Fellowship Progress counter is at '5.'*
>
> *The player moves the Ring-bearers through Fords of Bruinen, Hollin, Moria, and Dimrill Dale and into Lórien. The Fellowship Progress counter is returned to the '0' step of the Fellowship Track. The Fellowship is still Hidden, in the safety of the golden wood of Lórien. If the Ring-bearers suffered Corruption, one Corruption point could now be healed as the Fellowship is in a Free Peoples Stronghold.*
>
> **Note:** The Fellowship may enter or leave a besieged Stronghold freely.

Fellowship is Revealed by a Hunt for the Ring

If the Fellowship is Hidden, its position can be revealed **by the Shadow player as a result of a successful Hunt, or if the Shadow Player plays certain Event cards.**

When the Fellowship is revealed, turn the Fellowship Progress counter to its **Revealed** side, after which the Free Peoples player must move the Ring-bearers figure (as described in the previous section), except that this movement **can never** end in a region containing a Free Peoples Stronghold or City controlled by the Free Peoples.

> **IMPORTANT: Once the Fellowship has been revealed, it cannot be moved by the Free Peoples player using a Character Action die until it is Hidden again.**

Moreover, a Revealed Fellowship is more vulnerable to certain Shadow Event cards aimed at hurting the Ring-bearers or hindering the Fellowship's progress.

> ***Example:*** *During the second game turn, a successful Hunt reveals the position of the Fellowship. The last known position of the Fellowship was in Rivendell and the Fellowship Progress counter is at '3' on the Fellowship Track.*
>
> *The Free Peoples player could move the Ring-bearers through Fords of Bruinen and Hollin and into Moria, but moving into the Moria region (with its Shadow Stronghold) would mean drawing an additional Hunt tile (see below). So, the Free Peoples player decides instead to move the Ring-bearers through Fords of Bruinen and High Pass and into Goblin's Gate. The Fellowship Progress counter is put on the '0' step of the Fellowship Track, and flipped to the Revealed side. The Fellowship must be Hidden before it may move again.*

The Fellowship in Shadow Strongholds

When the Fellowship is revealed, and its path traced from its last known position, if the Fellowship *moves through*, *moves from*, *moves into*, *or remains stationary in* a Shadow Stronghold still controlled by the Shadow player, then a **Hunt tile** is immediately drawn as if a Hunt has been successful.

If the path is traced through more than one Shadow Stronghold, one Hunt tile is drawn for *each* Stronghold involved.

This drawing of a Hunt tile is done only if the Fellowship is revealed by the Shadow player. Moreover, it is in addition to any other effects of a successful Hunt. Hunt tiles are explained in more detail on page 40.

HIDING THE FELLOWSHIP

The Free Peoples player can use a Character result on an Action die during the Action Resolution phase (or can play an appropriate Event card), to hide a Revealed Fellowship, turning the Fellowship Progress counter to its Hidden side.

Note that using a Character Action die to hide the Fellowship does not allow it to also move during that action (and the used die is not added to the Hunt Box). The Free Peoples player must later use another Character die to move the Hidden Fellowship once again.

Remember that it is necessary for the Fellowship to be Hidden in order for it to move.

HEALING THE RING-BEARER

The Ring-bearers can receive some relief from the burden of the Ring by resting in an appropriate sanctuary.

Thus, if during the Fellowship phase the Fellowship is *declared* in a region that contains a Free Peoples City or Stronghold not under enemy control, one point of Corruption is immediately removed (to a minimum of zero Corruption). The Free Peoples player adjusts the position of the Corruption counter on the Fellowship Track accordingly.

If the Fellowship remains in a City or Stronghold for several turns, during the Fellowship phase of each turn it is possible to declare them in that region and heal one Corruption each time.

ENTERING MORDOR

Mordor is the realm of the Dark Lord. Its mountains are almost impossible to climb and its passes are well guarded. Therefore, some of the normal Fellowship rules do not apply there.

Sooner or later during most games, the Fellowship should eventually reach either the region of **Morannon** or **Minas Morgul**. It is mandatory that the Fellowship is in either of these locations during a Fellowship phase to begin the last part of the journey to Mount Doom (see *The Fellowship in Mordor*, page 43).

SEPARATING COMPANIONS FROM THE FELLOWSHIP

While a Companion remains in the Fellowship, he may not have any influence on the game except for his "Guide" ability (if he is the Guide) and for his influence on the Hunt for the Ring (see pages 40-43).

To participate in battles and in the politics of Middle-earth, he must be separated from the Fellowship.

During the Action Resolution phase, the Free Peoples player can separate one Companion (or a group of Companions) from the Fellowship by using a Character Action die result (unless the Fellowship is on the Mordor Track, where this is prohibited, see page 43).

When a Companion separates from the Fellowship, the figure of the separated Companion is moved from the Fellowship Box to the region on the map where the Ring-bearers are located.

The Companion may then move a number of regions up to the number of the step of the Fellowship Track the Fellowship Progress counter is on, *plus* his Companion Level.

If the Free Peoples player separates a **group** of Companions, he moves their figures together to one region that can be reached by the Companion with the *highest* Level in the group.

The movement of separated Companions follows the same rules as that of Character movement, as outlined on page 24. Note that if the Ring-bearers figure is currently located in a region containing a Stronghold under siege that is controlled by the Free Peoples, the Companion(s) will separate into the Stronghold and may not leave.

When separating Companions, the Free Peoples player removes their Character cards from the Fellowship deck and removes the Companion counters from the Fellowship Box as well.

> ***Example:*** *The Fellowship's last known position is in Rivendell, and the Fellowship Progress counter is currently on the fifth step of the Fellowship Track. The Free Peoples player decides to separate Legolas (Level 2) and Meriadoc (Level 1) as a group. Legolas and Meriadoc can be moved up to 7 regions (5+2) from Rivendell. The player decides to move them together to the Woodland Realm.*

If the Guide of the Fellowship is separated from the Fellowship, one of the highest Level Companions remaining in the Fellowship becomes the new Guide (or Gollum becomes the Guide, if all the Companions have left).

Once a Companion separates from the Fellowship, he can never rejoin.

CHAPTER IX: THE HUNT FOR THE RING

While the Fellowship covertly seeks to reach Mount Doom, Sauron is searching tirelessly for the Ring-bearers and their Companions. The Dark Lord gathers rumors and sends out spies, hoping to finally reclaim his long-lost treasure. These efforts are represented in *War of the Ring* by the **Hunt for the Ring**.

THE HUNT POOL

The **Hunt Pool** is a set of cardboard tiles representing the effects of a successful Hunt. These tiles should be placed in an opaque container at the beginning of the game (such as a cup or similar container), as one tile must be drawn ***randomly*** each time the Hunt is successful.

If, at any time, **all** the tiles in the Hunt Pool have been used, return all Standard tiles (beige) to the pool, but do not return to the pool any special tiles (blue/red), or any tile who has been "permanently removed" from the game due to an Event card effect.

STANDARD HUNT TILES

Most of the **standard Hunt tiles** (which have a beige background) show a numerical value, ranging from 0 to 3. This value represents the effectiveness of the successful Hunt and is called **Hunt damage**.

HUNT TILES



The background color indicates the type of tile: beige=standard, blue=Fellowship, red=Shadow

1 Reveal Icon (if present)

2 Hunt Damage

3 Stop Icon (if present)

Some Hunt tiles have the special icons described below:

— The **Eye** icon, which represents a variable numerical value (see *Determining Hunt Damage*, page 41).

— The **Reveal** icon, which represents the Fellowship being revealed to Sauron.

SPECIAL HUNT TILES

The special Hunt tiles (which have either a blue background, for the Fellowship special Hunt tiles, or a red background, for the Shadow special Hunt tiles) are **set aside at the beginning of the game** and enter play only by the use of Event cards.

When these Event cards are played, the special Hunt tile in question is set aside until the Fellowship enters Mordor (see page 43). When the Fellowship enters Mordor, any such special Hunt tiles are added to the Hunt Pool.

If the Fellowship is already on the Mordor Track when a special tile enters play, simply add the tile immediately to the Hunt Pool.

Some of the special Hunt tiles show a negative value or a random value, described as follows:

— A **negative** value (–2 or –1) means that there is no Hunt damage and instead the indicated number is actually **subtracted** from the current Corruption of the Ring-bearers on the Fellowship Track (to a minimum of zero).

— A **Die** icon means that the Hunt damage is equal to the subsequent roll of a die (roll after the tile has been revealed). Such a Hunt tile is considered to be a numbered tile for all Event card effects.

— All Shadow special tiles show a small **Stop** icon in the lower right corner (see later).

HUNTING THE FELLOWSHIP

THE HUNT ROLL

Every time the Free Peoples player moves the Fellowship, the Shadow player rolls dice to determine the effect of the Hunt.

The effect of the Hunt is determined as follows.

First, the Shadow player determines the **Hunt Level**. The Hunt Level is equal to the total number of Shadow Action dice in the Hunt Box.

> **Note:** These dice were placed in the Hunt Box by the Shadow player during the Hunt Allocation phase, **plus** any Eye dice that he rolled during the Action roll phase.

Then, the Shadow player makes a **Hunt roll** by rolling a number of Combat dice equal to the Hunt Level. Each result of '6' is a **success**.

The maximum number of dice that can be rolled for a Hunt roll is five. A Hunt Level in excess of five does not add further dice to the roll.

Modifiers to the Hunt Roll

If the Fellowship has moved more than once per turn, the Hunt becomes easier.

For every Action die that the Free Peoples player has placed in the Hunt Box (a Free Peoples Action die is placed here after every movement of the Fellowship, see *Moving the Fellowship*, page 37), the Shadow player adds +1 to each Hunt roll die result.

If a die result is '6' or higher after this addition, it is a **success**.

> ***Example:*** *When the Fellowship moves for the first time during a turn, the Shadow player needs to roll '6' results on his Hunt dice to achieve a successful Hunt. If the Fellowship, however, is moving for the second time (after the Free Peoples player has used an Action die for the first movement and placed it in the Hunt Box), the Shadow player needs only to roll a '5' or '6' for a successful Hunt.*
>
> **Note:** A roll of '1' is always a failure, regardless of any modifier.

Hunt Re-rolls

The presence of Sauron's servants or Strongholds makes movement of the Fellowship more dangerous.

If, during the Hunt, the Ring-bearers are in a region that contains one or more of the following:

— A Stronghold controlled by the Shadow player

— One or more Shadow Army units

— One or more Nazgûl

then, the Shadow player can, after the Hunt roll, re-roll one failed Hunt roll die for each of these conditions that apply.

> ***Example 1:*** *Three Army units and two Nazgûl are in the region that contains the Fellowship figure, so the Shadow player may re-roll two dice (one for the presence of Army units, and another for the presence of the Nazgûl).*
>
> ***Example 2:*** *One Nazgûl, four Army units, and a Shadow Stronghold are in the region containing the Fellowship figure, so the Shadow player may re-roll three dice (because all the listed conditions apply).*

Re-rolls also receive the +1 bonus for each Free Peoples die in the Hunt Box.

HUNT EFFECTS WHEN DECLARING OR REVEALING THE FELLOWSHIP

When the Free Peoples player **declares** the Fellowship, certain abilities and events may force him to draw a Hunt tile. When this happens, ignore any Reveal icon on the drawn tile if the Fellowship has been declared in a Free Peoples Stronghold or City controlled by the Free Peoples.

When the Fellowship is **revealed**, if the Free Peoples player is forced to draw multiple Hunt tiles because of a Shadow Stronghold presence, events, and abilities, each tile effect is resolved completely before applying the following tile effect. First the player resolves the effect of the tile that caused the Fellowship to be revealed. Then he resolves all tiles related to events and abilities. Lastly, he resolves the tile drawn due to the Shadow Stronghold.

> ***Example:*** *A Hunt tile reveals the Fellowship in Moria, and the "Balrog of Moria" card is in play. Three Hunt tiles are drawn (one for the Hunt, one for the Balrog, and one for the Shadow Stronghold). First the player applies all effects due to the first Hunt tile (the one which caused the Fellowship to be revealed), then the effect of the tile drawn for the Balrog card is resolved, and finally the effect of the tile drawn for the Stronghold is resolved.*

DETERMINING HUNT DAMAGE

If the Shadow player rolls **at least one success** on his Hunt roll (including re-rolls), the Hunt is *successful* and the Shadow player draws one tile from the Hunt Pool.

— If the tile is **numbered**, its value represents the **Hunt damage** inflicted to the Fellowship.

— If the tile shows an **Eye**, the Hunt damage is equal to the number of successes rolled in the Hunt roll (if such a tile was drawn because of the Fellowship's leaving or entering a Shadow Stronghold, or due to an Event card, the Eye is considered to have a value of 0).

— If the tile has a **Reveal** icon on it, the Fellowship is **revealed** after resolving any other effect.

EFFECTS OF THE HUNT

To deal with the effects of a successful Hunt, follow these steps in order:

1) The Free Peoples player may use *one* relevant "Play on the Table" Event card to cancel or reduce the damage of the Hunt.

2) Then, the Free Peoples player may use the Guide's special ability. If, after these steps, the Hunt damage is one or more, the Free Peoples player may decide to

reduce the Hunt damage by **taking a casualty** (see below) — losing one Companion due to the hazards encountered by the Fellowship, or a fight between the Fellowship and servants of the Shadow.

3) Any remaining Hunt damage must be dealt with by **using the Ring** (see below), increasing the Corruption of the Ring-bearers.

4) If the Hunt reveals the Fellowship, the Fellowship is now revealed (sometimes, revealing the Fellowship may cause the draw of a new tile, see *Hunt Effects When Declaring or Revealing the Fellowship*).

Note: If, at any time during the Hunt resolution, a new Guide is appointed (this happens, for example, when you use Meriadoc's and Peregrin's Guide ability, or because the Guide has been eliminated), the ability of the new Guide may be used immediately, if applicable.

Taking a Casualty

If the Free Peoples player **takes a casualty**, he must eliminate one Companion.

The Free Peoples player can decide between either taking the Guide as a casualty or randomly picking one Companion (excluding the Ring-bearers, but including the Guide) from the Fellowship. If the Free Peoples player decides to suffer a random casualty, the Shadow player randomly selects a face-down Companion counter from the Fellowship Box. The drawn Companion is eliminated from the game.

If the Hunt damage is **higher** than the Level of the eliminated Companion (including an eliminated Guide), any excess damage must still be taken as Corruption by the Ring-bearers (see below).

If the Hunt damage is **lower** than the Level of the Companion, he is eliminated nonetheless (i.e., it is not possible to "wound" Companions).

Using the Ring

When the Free Peoples player uses the Ring, he advances the Corruption counter on the Fellowship Track by a number of steps equal to the Hunt damage.

> ***Example:*** *During the fourth game turn, the Ring-bearers are in the Goblin's Gate region and the Free Peoples player is moving the Fellowship Progress counter from step '1' to step '2' of the Fellowship Track.*
>
> *There are three Shadow dice in the Hunt Box and one Free Peoples die, as this is the second time the Fellowship has moved this turn.*
>
> *The Shadow player rolls three Combat dice: he must roll at least one '5' or '6' for the Hunt to be successful. He rolls '2,' '5,' and '6': a total of two successes (the Shadow player needed only one success for the Hunt to succeed). He then draws a random tile from the Hunt Pool: a tile with a '3' and no Reveal icon. The Hunt damage must be resolved.*
>
> *There are no cards or Character's abilities to be used, and the Free Peoples player decides to take a casualty. Strider is guiding the Fellowship, and the player does not want him to die, so he decides to draw a random Character instead. All the Companion counters are shuffled and one is chosen randomly: Gimli is drawn. The valiant dwarf dies confronting the servants of the Shadow. As Gimli's Level is 2, and the Hunt damage is 3, 1 point of Hunt damage remains to be taken as Corruption, and the Corruption of the Ring-bearers increases.*
>
> *Because the tile does not have a Reveal icon, the Fellowship Progress counter's Hidden side remains face up.*

THE ONE RING AND THE QUEST FOR MOUNT DOOM

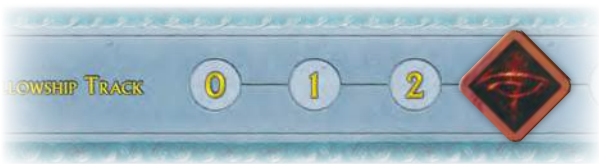
Even as the Dark Lord desperately searches for the One Ring, he cannot imagine that someone would bring it to Mordor. Consequently, he does not look for the Ring within the borders of his own land.

In *War of the Ring*, from the moment the One Ring reaches the borders of Mordor, events are set in motion that are mostly beyond the control of the players themselves. The real struggle now lies between the will of the Ring to return to its Master and the determination of the Ring-bearers to pursue their mission to its bitter end.

TRACKING CORRUPTION



Corruption Counter



The Position of the Corruption counter on the Fellowship Track is used to record the Corruption of the Ring-bearers.

THE BURDEN OF THE RING

The physical, mental, and moral struggle of the Ring-bearers is represented by **Corruption**.

Corruption is added to the Ring-bearers each time that the Ring is used to counter the effects of a successful Hunt, or as a result of various Event cards.

Corruption is removed from the Ring-bearers by resting in a friendly City or Stronghold or by the use of certain special abilities and Event cards.

Each time Corruption is added or removed, the Free Peoples player adjusts the Corruption counter on the Fellowship Track accordingly.

As soon as the Corruption counter reaches 12 Corruption points on the Fellowship Track, the Free Peoples player immediately loses the game.

THE FELLOWSHIP IN MORDOR

In Mordor, the power of the Dark Lord is everywhere, and the burden of the Ring becomes heavier with every step. The **Mordor Track** is the final part of the quest to destroy the One Ring.

The track is represented by the circles superimposed on the **Gorgoroth** region on the map. Note that the circles are not actually considered to be part of that region, and the Fellowship is not considered to be in the Gorgoroth region, or any other region, when on the Mordor Track.

If the Fellowship is in **Minas Morgul** or **Morannon** during a Fellowship phase, the Free Peoples player *may* decide to enter Mordor. In this case, immediately proceed to the following steps (after fully resolving the declaration of the Fellowship's position, if necessary):

1) Place the Ring-bearers figure on the first step of the Mordor Track (labeled with the Elven numeral '0'). From this moment on, the Fellowship is considered to be "**On the Mordor Track**." The Fellowship Progress counter is no longer advanced on the Fellowship Track, but it is still used to show whether the Fellowship is Hidden or Revealed.

2) Create a new Hunt Pool by placing all Eye tiles previously drawn back with the remaining tiles of the Hunt Pool, and also add any special tiles put in play by Event cards. Do not place back in the pool any Eye tile which was permanently removed from the game.

Special Rules

The following special rules apply when the Fellowship is on the Mordor Track:

— Companions in the Fellowship can never be separated, either as a result of using Action dice or as the effect of special abilities or Event cards. Anything that would normally separate a Companion removes him from the game instead.

— When the Free Peoples player tries to move the Fellowship during the Action Resolution phase, do not roll the Hunt dice. Instead, automatically draw one tile from the Hunt Pool. The effects of this tile are applied normally as for a successful Hunt, except for the following:

  — If the tile drawn shows an **Eye**, the Hunt damage is equal to the number of dice in the Hunt Box (including Free Peoples dice previously used for moving the Fellowship during the same turn).

  — Normally the Fellowship advances one step on the Mordor Track when moving. However, if the tile shows a **Stop** icon, the Fellowship remains on the same step and does not move forward.

— The Fellowship is still required to be Hidden in order to advance on the Mordor Track. If the Fellowship is Revealed, the Free Peoples player must, as normal, use a Character Action die result to hide the Fellowship once again.

— If, at the end of the Action Resolution phase, the Free Peoples player has not attempted to move or hide the Fellowship on the Mordor Track during that turn, one Corruption is automatically added to the Ring-bearers.

— When the Fellowship has completed all five steps on the Mordor Track, the Crack of Doom has been reached and the Free Peoples player wins the game (unless the Ring-bearers have reached 12 Corruption points, see page 44).

MORDOR TRACK



— The Mordor Track is not considered a part of the Gorgoroth region.

— When the Fellowship enters Mordor, the Ring-bearers figure is put on the first circle of the track.

— If the Fellowship enters the Crack of Doom and the Ring-bearers are not at 12 Corruption, the Free Peoples player wins the game.

CHAPTER X: WINNING THE GAME

There are four ways to win the game. Two Victory conditions may be triggered at any moment during a turn (see *Ring-based Victory Conditions*, below), while the other two Victory conditions apply only during phase 6 of the turn, the **Victory Check** (see *Military Victory Conditions*, below).

If any of these conditions apply, the game ends with a Victory for one of the players.

Note that lower-numbered Victory conditions take precedence over higher-numbered Victory conditions, if two or more are achieved on the same turn.

RING-BASED VICTORY CONDITIONS

The most important goal for Sauron is to reclaim the One Ring, while the most important goal for the Free Peoples is to destroy the Ring.

For this reason, if either of those two events occur at **any time during a turn**, the game ends immediately **without waiting for the Victory Check phase**.

1) **Corruption of the Ring-bearers:** If the Ring-bearers have 12 or more Corruption points, they failed their quest. Sauron regains the Ring for himself and the Shadow player wins the game.

2) **Destroying the Ring:** If the Ring-bearers figure is on the "Crack of Doom" step on the Mordor Track and the Ring-bearers have fewer than 12 Corruption points, the Ring is destroyed. Sauron is utterly vanquished and the Free Peoples player wins the game.

MILITARY VICTORY CONDITIONS

In *The Lord of the Rings*, if Sauron had succeeded in destroying the Nations of the Free Peoples, even the destruction of the Ring could not have resulted in a proper victory for the Free Peoples.

At the same time, if the Free Peoples had successfully challenged Sauron militarily, the Dark Lord would have needed to greatly focus on the struggle against the Armies of the Free Peoples, and it would have been much easier for the Ring-bearers to reach Mount Doom.

Thus, if at the end of a game turn any of the following two conditions apply, the game ends with a military victory.

VICTORY POINTS



The ᚠ symbol appearing on a City is a reminder that control of this region is worth 1 Victory point to the opponent.



The ᚠᚠ symbol appearing on a Stronghold is a reminder that control of this Stronghold is worth 2 Victory points to the opponent.

3) **The Shadow Conquers Middle-earth:** If the Shadow player controls Free Peoples Settlements worth 10 or more Victory points, he wins.

4) **Sauron is Banished from Middle-earth:** If the Free Peoples player controls Shadow Settlements worth 4 or more Victory points, he wins.

Military Victory conditions are based on the **control** of a Settlement.

For the purposes of a Military Victory, a player controls an enemy Settlement if it has that player's Settlement Control marker on it.

Each enemy City a player controls is worth 1 Victory point, while each enemy Stronghold a player controls is worth 2 Victory points.

Players use their their Victory Point markers and the Victory Point track to keep count of the Victory point value of their conquests.

Victory Point Marker



Free Peoples Victory Point Marker



Shadow Victory Point Marker

CHAPTER XI: MULTIPLAYER RULES

In a three- or four-player game, each player represents one of the major powers in *The Lord of the Rings* and controls some of the Nations and certain Characters.

FOUR-PLAYER GAME

In a four-player game, the player responsibilities are broken down as follows:

Free Peoples:
— Player 1: **Gondor** (also controls the Elves)

— Player 2: **Rohan** (also controls the North and Dwarves)

Shadow:
— Player 1: **The Witch-king** (the Sauron Nation)

— Player 2: **Saruman and Sauron Allies** (Isengard and Southron & Easterling Nations)

All the rules in the standard game apply, with the following exceptions.

At the beginning of the game, the Gondor player and the Witch-king player take the "Leading Player" tokens.

At the beginning of each turn (excluding Turn 1), the Leading Player in a team passes the "Leading Player" token to his teammate.

EVENT DRAW

On Turn 1, each player draws one card from each of their respective Event decks.

On the following turns, each player draws one card from one Event deck of his choice.

After drawing cards, and discarding excess cards, players in the same team may agree to swap one of their cards with their teammate.

The players cannot show or discuss the cards. They can only tell each other if they want to swap one card or not. A card is swapped only if both players agree.

In a four-player game, each player's hand limit is **four cards** instead of six.

FELLOWSHIP PHASE

The Leading Player on the Free Peoples team decides whether to declare the Fellowship or not and who the Guide of the Fellowship is.

HUNT ALLOCATION AND ACTION ROLL

The Leading Player on the Shadow team decides how many Action dice to place in the Hunt Box.

The Leading Player of each team rolls the Action dice.

ACTION RESOLUTION

The Free Peoples team goes first.

The non-Leading Player on the Free Peoples team chooses an Action die and uses it for any of the Nations he controls or for any action relating to the Fellowship or any individual Companions, such as moving or hiding the Fellowship or moving Companions on the map.

Then the non-Leading Player in the Shadow team uses an Action die, followed by the Leading Player on the Free Peoples team, and then the Leading Player on the Shadow team.

The actions are all taken in that order until both teams have used all of their Action dice.

If a player decides to pass an action, he is still entitled to take his next action after the opposing team has taken their action.

LIMITS ON ACTIONS

Each player only controls certain Nations and can only use his Action dice and Event cards to recruit, move, or fight with Armies of these Nations. Only the player who controls a Nation may move the Political counter of that nation, unless the special ability of a Character is used.

For rules concerning regions containing units of Nations controlled by both players on a team, see *Mixed Armies*, below.

SUMMARY

Free Peoples

— The Gondor player controls the Gondor and Elven Nations.

— The Rohan player controls the Rohan, North, and Dwarven Nations.

— Any player may move or hide the Fellowship.

— Any player may move or separate Companions.

— The effects of the Hunt on the Fellowship are decided and applied by the Leading Player.

Shadow Armies

— The Witch-king player controls the Sauron Nation, the Witch-king, and the Mouth of Sauron.

— The Saruman and Sauron Allies player controls the Isengard and Southron & Easterling Nations, as well as Saruman.

— Any player may hunt the Fellowship.

— Any player may move the Nazgûl, but only the Witch-king player may recruit new Nazgûl.

— The number of Action dice allocated to the Hunt Box before the Action die roll is decided by the Leading Player.

MIXED ARMIES

If, after an action, units and Leaders controlled by different players are in the same region, they may remain as separate Armies or a **mixed Army** can result.

If the Armies remain separate, each player keeps the control of his own units and Leaders. If the total number of units of the two Armies exceeds the stacking limit, the players must remove one unit each, starting with the non-Leading player, until the limit is respected.

The troops of the two players may become a mixed Army if both players agree to this; they *must* become a mixed Army if the region is attacked.

The controlling player of a mixed Army is the player who controls the highest number of Army units in the region. In the case of a tie, the player with the highest number of Elite units is the controlling player. If there is still a tie, the current Leading Player is the controlling player.

Only the controlling player may use actions to move or attack with the mixed Army, and play Combat cards for that Army.

If the number of units changes, the control of the mixed Army may be transferred to the other player. Note, however, that the controlling player may not deliberately split an Army (during either movement or attack) so that he loses the control of the acting Army.

A player may regain control of his units in a mixed Army by simply using an action to move these units out of the region with the mixed Army.

A mixed Army is still subject to the political restrictions (such as not being able to move across another border) of any non-belligerent Nation that is part of a mixed Army.

EVENTS

Normally, Event cards can only be used by a player if they apply to a Nation or Characters they control.

The icon in the lower right corner of the Event portion of a card indicates which player may use that card.

Cards that do not have an icon may be used by any player as appropriate.

Player Icons



SOUTHRON & EASTERLING ELITE UNITS

In a multiplayer game, when Saruman is in play, each Southron & Easterling Elite unit, as well as each Isengard Elite unit, is considered a Leader as well as an Army unit for all movement and combat purposes.

THREE-PLAYER GAME

The three-player game uses the same rules as the four-player game, but there is only one Free Peoples player, who plays normally as in a standard two-player game, with the following exception:

— The Free Peoples player cannot use two consecutive actions on the same Nation (e.g., he cannot use two consecutive actions to recruit and move Gondor troops). He can use two consecutive actions on mixed Armies but not on the same individual Army (e.g., he can move a Gondor Army once and then a Gondor/Rohan Army, but cannot act twice with the same Gondor/Rohan Army).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Each team wins as in the two-player game. To assess individual victory within a team:

— If the Shadow team wins, count the Victory point value of Strongholds and Cities captured by the Nations of each Shadow player and subtract the Victory points of Strongholds and Cities they lost. The player with the highest total wins.

— If the Free Peoples team wins, the player who lost fewer Victory points for Strongholds and Cities conquered by the Shadow wins.

SUMMARY

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION 3
NUMBER OF PLAYERS 3
NOTES ON THE SECOND EDITION . . 3

CHAPTER II: GAME COMPONENTS. . . . 4
COMPONENT LIST 4
GAME PIECES 8
PLASTIC FIGURES 8
Armies 8
Free Peoples Leaders 8
Nazgûl 8
Characters 8
THE GAME BOARD 9
REGIONS 10
Free Regions 10
NATIONS 10
FORTIFICATIONS AND SETTLEMENTS 10
Fortifications 10
Settlements 11
TRACKS AND BOXES 11

CHAPTER III: SETTING UP THE GAME . . 14

CHAPTER IV: THE GAME TURN 18
SUMMARY OF THE TURN 18
THE ACTION DICE. 18
ACTION DICE POOL 18
HUNT ALLOCATION AND ACTION ROLL. . . 19
USING ACTION DICE 19
THE ELVEN RINGS 21

CHAPTER V: THE EVENT CARDS 22
EVENT DECKS 22
DRAWING EVENT CARDS. 22
PLAYING EVENT CARDS 22
Event Cards Provoking Casualties 22
COMBAT CARDS 23

CHAPTER VI: ARMIES AND BATTLES. . . 24
CHARACTERS 24
PLAYING FREE PEOPLES CHARACTERS . . . 24
PLAYING SHADOW CHARACTERS 24
MOVING CHARACTERS 24
Moving Companions. 24
Moving Nazgûl and Minions 24
ARMIES AND STACKING. 26
ARMY COMPOSITION 26
STACKING LIMIT 26
ARMY BOXES. 26
RECRUITING TROOPS 26
RECRUITING NEW UNITS AND LEADERS . . 26
RECRUITING RESTRICTIONS 26
USING AN EVENT CARD TO RECRUIT TROOPS 27
ARMY MOVEMENT 27
MOVING AN ARMY 27
Splitting an Army 27
Movement Restrictions. 27
USING AN EVENT CARD TO MOVE ARMIES . 27
BATTLE RESOLUTION 28
ATTACKING WITH ARMIES 28
Splitting an Attacking Army 28
Combat Strength and Leadership 28
RESOLVING A BATTLE 29
Play a Combat Card 29
Roll the Dice for the Combat Roll 30
Roll the Dice for the Leader Re-roll 30
Modifiers to Rolls 30
Remove Casualties. 30
Choose to Cease the Attack, or Retreat . . . 30
End of Battle 31
FORTIFICATIONS, CITIES, STRONGHOLDS, AND SIEGES 31
ATTACKING A CITY OR FORTIFICATION . . . 31
ATTACKING A STRONGHOLD 31
Fighting a Field Battle 31
Retreating into a Siege. 31
CONDUCTING A SIEGE 32
Restrictions 32
SORTIE 32
RELIEVING A SIEGE 32
REINFORCING A SIEGE 32
CAPTURING A SETTLEMENT 32

CHAPTER VII: THE POLITICS OF MIDDLE-EARTH 34
THE POLITICAL TRACK 34
ACTIVATING FREE PEOPLES NATIONS . . . 34
ADVANCING A POLITICAL POSITION 34
EVENT CARDS AFFECTING THE POLITICAL TRACK 35
ENTERING WAR 35
CHARACTERS AT WAR 35

CHAPTER VIII: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING 36
FELLOWSHIP FIGURES AND COUNTERS 36
THE RING-BEARERS 36
CORRUPTION 36
COMPANION CHARACTER CARDS . 37
THE GUIDE OF THE FELLOWSHIP . . 37
Gollum as a Guide 37
THE FELLOWSHIP TRACK 37
MOVING THE FELLOWSHIP 37
LOCATING THE FELLOWSHIP 38
Fellowship Declares Its Own Position 38
Fellowship is Revealed by a Hunt for the Ring. 38
HIDING THE FELLOWSHIP 39
HEALING THE RING-BEARER 39
ENTERING MORDOR 39
SEPARATING COMPANIONS FROM THE FELLOWSHIP 39

CHAPTER IX: THE HUNT FOR THE RING 40
THE HUNT POOL 40
STANDARD HUNT TILES 40
SPECIAL HUNT TILES 40
HUNTING THE FELLOWSHIP 40
THE HUNT ROLL 40
Modifiers to the Hunt Roll 41
Hunt Re-rolls 41
DETERMINING HUNT DAMAGE. 41
HUNT EFFECTS WHEN DECLARING OR REVEALING THE FELLOWSHIP. 41
EFFECTS OF THE HUNT 41
Taking a Casualty 42
Using the Ring 42
THE ONE RING AND THE QUEST FOR MOUNT DOOM 42
THE BURDEN OF THE RING. 43
THE FELLOWSHIP IN MORDOR 43
Special Rules 43

CHAPTER X: WINNING THE GAME . . . 44
RING-BASED VICTORY CONDITIONS 44
MILITARY VICTORY CONDITIONS. 44

CHAPTER XI: MULTIPLAYER RULES . . . 45
FOUR-PLAYER GAME 45
EVENT DRAW 45
FELLOWSHIP PHASE. 45
HUNT ALLOCATION AND ACTION ROLL. . . 45
ACTION RESOLUTION 45
LIMITS ON ACTIONS 45
SUMMARY 45
Free Peoples. 45
Shadow Armies 46
MIXED ARMIES 46
EVENTS. 46
SOUTHRON & EASTERLING ELITE UNITS. . . 46
THREE-PLAYER GAME 46
VICTORY CONDITIONS 46
SUMMARY 47

A game by ROBERTO DI MEGLIO, MARCO MAGGI and FRANCESCO NEPITELLO

WAR OF THE RING

based on The Lord of the Rings™ Trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkien

Second Edition

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