Studio Midhall

Studio Midhall presents

Beast

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Rulebook

Beast

Welcome to the Northern Expanse...

...a place where nature is still unexplored, mystical and dangerous. When the humans first arrived, they thought they had found an unspoiled paradise, filled with bountiful forests, lakes swimming with fish and cold, fresh water flowing from the mountains. But as settlements expanded and the surrounding forests grew thinner, nature itself pushed back. Great creatures known as Beasts emerged, and with their fangs, claws and mystical powers, they proved an incredible threat to the humans. In order to protect the settlements, humans have enlisted specialized hunters, tasked with tracking and killing the Beasts before too many of their kin perish.

One vs Many

One player takes the role of the Beast, facing the others, who form a team of hunters. The Beast wins when a certain number of settlers are dead, while the hunters win either when the Beast is dead, or enough days (rounds) have passed and reinforcement arrives.

If this is your first time playing Beast, we recommend that the person who has the most knowledge about the rules plays as the Beast.



Beast

The Beast wins when enough settlers are dead



Hunters

The hunters win when the Beast is dead or when enough days have passed

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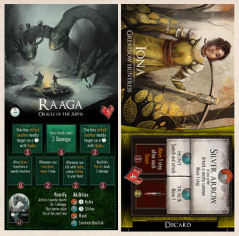
Components



Character mats
6 Beast & 6 Hunter



16 action cards



18 Grudges
Six 3s & twelve 1s



7 Settlers
(Farmers)



Character markers
6 Beast & 6 Hunter



18 Hunter ability cards



20 Habitat tokens



4 Settlers
(Nobles)



18 Summons



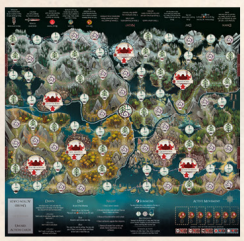
24 Beast ability cards



14 Upgrade markers



28 Sheep



1 Map



48 Beast movement cards



15 Trail tokens



19 Boars



2 Contracts



26 Item cards



4 Ancient power tokens



4 Bears



1 Rulebook



25 Beastly talent cards



4 Watchtower tokens



15 Wound tokens
Five 3s & ten 1s

Setup

Global components

1. Supply. Place all habitat, wound tokens, grudges, upgrade markers, watchtowers, and ancient powers in an easy to reach location for all players.

2. Contract & map. Choose a contract and the corresponding side of the map.

3. Animals & Settlers. Place animals and settlers on all locations on the map that are part of your contract.

4. Beastly Talents. Shuffle the Beastly talents deck and place 3 cards face up next to the deck.

5. Items. Shuffle the Item deck and place 3 cards face up next to the deck.

6. Action Cards. Shuffle the Action card deck.

Player setup

A. Beast. One player chooses a Beast.

B. Hunter. Each remaining player pick a hunter and place that hunter in front of them.

In a 2 player game, the hunter player pick two different hunter mats.

C. Abilities. All players receive the ability cards belonging to their hunter or Beast. The Beast also receives its summons.

D. Grudges and Trails. Take grudges according to the setup in the contract. Place the trail tokens in front of the Beast player.

E. Movement Cards. Place the movement cards next to the Beast player.



Global components

2. Contract & Map

The map section of the contract indicates which map to play on. The name is found on the bottom of the map.



3. Animals & Settlers

Place animals and settlers on all locations on the map unless stated otherwise in the setup section of the contract.





Player setup

A. Beast

The Beast should be seated in such a way that (N)orth is up and (S)outh is down. Place the Beast marker at the Beast starting location, (see page 10). Hunters should be seated in such a way that each hunter can easily check their teammates' cards.

C. Ability

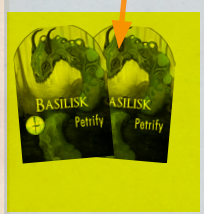
All players receive the ability cards belonging to their hunter or Beast. You'll find these abilities on your character mat or on the bottom of the ability card. The Beast also takes its summons.

Beast character mat





Starting health



Summons



Ability cards

Hunter character mat





Ability cards



Starting health

Types of cards

The game features several kinds of cards. On your turn, you can play up to two cards. You play and resolve each card individually then discard it before playing your next card. Action cards are discarded in a discard pile accessible for both Beast and hunters.



Ability cards

Beasts start with different abilities bound to their character.



Ability cards

Hunters start with different abilities bound to their character.



Action cards

Acquired during the draft at the dawn phase. Both hunters and the Beast can play action cards. Hunters utilize the top effect of the cards, while the Beast uses the bottom.



Beast movement cards

These cards aren't dealt, drawn, or part of any player's hand. Instead, the Beast uses these cards to indicate movement. The Beast (and only the Beast) may look at the deck of movement cards at any time.



Beastly talents

Special cards acquired during the game that only the Beast can play.



Hunter Items

Special cards acquired during the game that only the hunters can play.

Game Mechanics

Before you're ready to play your first game of Beast, let's explain the main mechanics of the game.

Actions

Every action, from moving to attacking to searching and placing summons is done by playing a card. On your turn, you may play up to one card with this symbol , and up to one card with this symbol . You may play them in any order.



You may play one of each on your turn and in any order

Beast movement

When the Beast moves, you do not move the Beast marker. Instead, for each step the Beast moves, the Beast player selects a movement card and places it face down on the Active movement section. The Beast marker is considered the "Beast's last known location", while the Beast's actual location is the place that the face down movement cards lead to.

Example Beast movement

By playing the action card "Rush", the Beast may move up to three steps. The Beast player does so by freely choosing three movement cards from the Beast movement deck, and then placing them face down in the active movement section of the game board.



Action card "Rush"
The Beast utilises the bottom effect



Beast movement cards
The first is No Movement, then South and lastly East



Active movement section.

The Beast's actual location is now two steps away.
The first movement card causes the Beast to remain in its current location.
The second moves the Beast one step South, and the third moves the Beast one step East, but the Beast marker doesn't move.

The X marks where the Beast's actual location is.
The beast marker is where the Beast's last known location is.



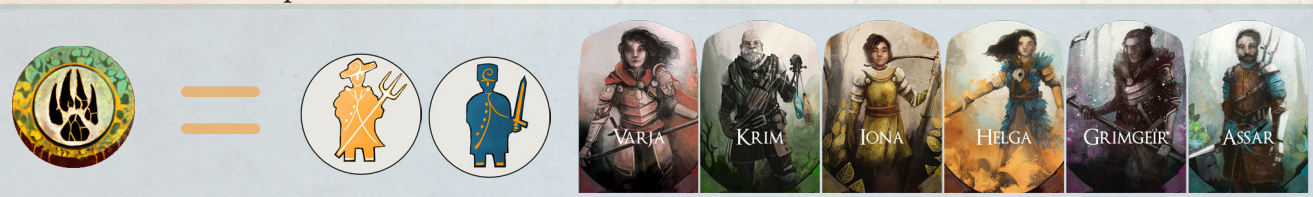
Hunter movement & trails

When hunters move, they simply move their character marker that many steps in any direction, one step at a time. Whenever a hunter moves over a location where the Beast has been or currently is (i.e. the hunter's location matches one of the Beasts active movement cards), the Beast must place a trail token over that location. If there are several active movement cards that match the same location, place a trail for each match.
The Beast marker counts as part of the Beast's trail. This is especially important for cards like the hunters ability called "Track".



Trail token

The only exception is the "No Movement" card (see example above). These cards do not generate trails.
Note that "No Movement" isn't an option if the Beast shares a location with a hunter or settler.



If the Beast moves over any location with a settler or hunter on it, the Beast places a trail token on the location with the settler or hunter after all movement has been made.

Example hunter movement

By playing the action card "Rush", the hunter may move up to two steps. The hunter moves their character one step to the right (East). The Beast places a trail token on that location since it matches one of the cards in the active movement section. The hunter chooses to move one more step to the right. The Beast places a trail token on that location because it also matches a movement card.



The hunter utilizes the top effect





You cannot move 1 step, play another card, then continue your movement

Revealing

The Beast is revealed whenever it attacks or when a hunter successfully searches its location (see example below).
When the Beast is revealed, it shows all of its active movement cards to the other players, then discards the movement cards and trail tokens. The Beast moves its marker to that location.

The Beast is considered revealed as long as there are no cards in the active movement section. Discarded movement cards are returned to the movement deck.

Searching

When a hunter plays a card with a search effect, the Beast must reveal itself if the searched location matches the Beast's actual location. If the hunter searches the wrong location, the Beast remains hidden. It is only when the Beast is revealed that it can be attacked and damaged.

Example Search and Reveal

It is the hunter Iona's turn, and she played the action card "Rush" ,which has a  *symbol. She can still choose to play a card with a*  *symbol if she wants to before her turn ends. She chooses to do so and plays "Hunt". Because she played the card while she is on the Beast's actual location and successfully searched, the Beast must reveal itself. The card also has an attack effect, so the revealed Beast receives one wound token.*



Ability card "Hunt"





Trails and active movement cards are removed

Attacking

To attack, you'll need to play a card on your turn that has the word "Attack" on it.
Every attack deals 1 damage. When a player is damaged, that player takes a wound token and places it on their character mat. Whenever an animal, settler or summon is attacked, place a wound beneath it. As soon as a Beast, hunter, settler or animal has a number of wounds equal to their starting health, that character is dead and removed from the map.



Wound token

Hunters can only attack summons and a revealed Beast. Summons can attack animals, settlers, hunters and watchtowers. However, in order to gain grudges for the kill, it has to be the Beast that strikes the final attack. The Beast can attack anything. Remember that the Beast will be revealed whenever attacking, see page 7.

Ancient Powers

Ancient powers are gained by contract rewards, Items, Beastly talents and certain upgrades. The Ancient power gives one attack of your choice 1 more damage. If you gain an Ancient power, place it next to your character mat. Before you use an attack, state that you will be using one (or more) Ancient power to increase that attack's damage. Summons cannot use Ancient powers. They are discarded after they have been used.



Ancient power

Grudges

Grudges are resources in the game. These represent the scars of ancient conflicts in the northern forests, swamps and caverns, the memory of which now awaken ancient hatred within the characters.



Grudge

Grudges are used to upgrade your character as well as being able to play some Items and Beastly talent cards. Hunters gain grudges by completing contract rewards and by playing certain Action or Item cards. The Beast can also gain grudges by completing contract rewards, but primarly through killing animals, settlers or hunters.

The health of animals and settlers and the amount of grudges the Beast will be rewarded for the killing.



Sheep *Boar* *Bear* *Settler (Farmer)* *Settler (Noble)*

Killed player

When a hunter has lost all of their health, they are so badly injured that all Item cards and grudges are discarded. That hunter then removes their marker from the map. If it was an attack from the Beast that killed the hunter, the Beast gains 1 grudge and randomly picks one of that hunter's action cards to add to the Beast's hand. If the Beast dies, the game immediately ends and the hunters win unless otherwise specified in the Contract.

As the third step of the night, the killed hunter is resurrected by the village shaman and returns their marker to any settlement on the map and continues to play.

Nearby

Whenever the word "nearby" is used, it means that this effect applies to both your actual location and each adjacent location connected by a road. Many cards use this keyword so keep in mind that it includes you actual location.

Iona plays Silver Arrow and chooses to first move 1 step to the left, then attack the nearby basilisk.



Watchtowers

When a hunter is allowed to place a watchtower, place it on your location unless stated otherwise. As long as a hunter is standing in the same location as a watchtower, any trails from nearby locations are placed on the map. A watchtower doesn't reveal the Beast, it merely puts trails on nearby locations.

Watchtowers can be attacked and when damage is dealt, remove that watchtower from the map. If all watchtowers are currently on the map and a player is allowed to place another, he or she may move an existing watchtower to its new location. A destroyed watchtower can be placed again.

Example Watchtower

Iona plays the item card "Outpost" and places a watchtower on her location. The Beast places two trails on the map since two of its three active movement cards are nearby the watchtower.



Item card "Outpost"



Active movement cards



Watchtower

Playing the game

The game is played over a series of rounds determined by the Contract chosen during setup. Each round consists of three phases: "dawn", "day", and "night". Dawn starts the round as a preparation phase. Day is the core of the game and night is the end of the round.

Player starting positions

The Beast starts by placing its marker at the "Beast starting position", which is at the center of the map. The Beast then plays two movement cards. After the Beast has moved, each hunter places their character marker in any of the settlements on the map. Two or more hunters may choose the same settlement.



Beast starting position



Settlement

Phase 1: Dawn

During dawn, all players participate in a draft in which they gain Action cards for the upcoming day phase.

Drafting

Shuffle the Action card deck, then deal the number of cards indicated below to each player. Players then select one card to keep and pass the rest of the cards clockwise. This continues until all cards have been chosen. Players cannot pass cards they previously kept. This process will be referred to as "drafting".

2 player draft

Deal 6 Action cards to each player. During the draft the hunter player selects *two* Action cards instead of one.

After the draft, the hunter assigns all the Action cards evenly between the two hunter characters. For the rest of the game the hunter player controls two hunters at once, with two seperate hands. Play the hunters as if played by two different players.

3 player draft

Deal 4 Action cards to each player.

4 player draft

Deal 3 Action cards to each player.

At the start of a 4 player draft, randomly set aside one card for the Beast. Once the draft is complete, add it to the Beasts hand. The Beast may look at that Action card during the draft.

Phase 2: Day

Each day, the Beast player starts, followed by the other players in clockwise order. Players take turns playing Action cards, Abilities, Beastly talents or Items from their hands. During your turn, you may do one of the following:

- Play cards: Play up to one card of any type with a  symbol, and up to one card of any type with a .
  - *The symbols can be played in any order and you can also choose to play only one card.*
  - *Action cards are discarded in a discard pile accessible for both Beast and hunters.*
  - *You have the option to ignore one or more effects on the card you played.*

- Pass: You can only pass if there are no other player with fewer *Action cards* in hand than you.
  - *If you pass your turn but at least one other player doesn't, you play your next turn as normal.*

- Flee: Discard 1 card of any type to move 1 step. You cannot combine this with playing a card.



Items, Beastly talents and Abilities do not count if you are allowed to pass or not

All players have multiple turns in a day as the steps above are repeated until players no longer play any cards and all have passed in a consecutively order.

In any order, Choose one effect, if, then

In any order - Resolve in any order

Effects that have "*in any order*" above them mean you choose in which order these effects will occur.

Choose one effect - Choose which effect to resolve

Cards that have "*Choose on effect*" mean you choose ONE of the effects and disregard the others.

if - A requirement needs to be fulfilled

In order to be able to play cards with an "if", you need to fulfill the requirement that comes after the "if".

then - Resolve in a specific order

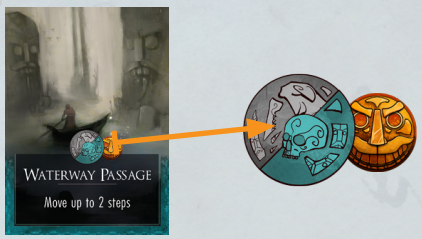
Some cards need to be resolved in a specific order. These cards have their effects divided by a "then".

Prerequisites

Grudge prerequisites

Some of the beastly talents and item cards cost grudges to play. In order to play a card with a cost, you have to pay the specified amount of grudges, which is found next to the symbol.

You must be able to pay the card's cost before you play it.



If the card doesn't have a grudge symbol, its free.

Habitat prerequisites

Some Ability cards require that your character is on a certain habitat when you play the card. Habitats are the different location types on the map. There is one location on the map that separates itself from the others, the starting position for the Beast. This location counts as all habitats except the settlement.



Settlement



Forest



Swamp



Cave



Beast starting position

For example, in order to play Raaga's ability "Hydra", the Beast's actual location must be a location with a swamp habitat.

Because the card must match the Beast's current location, hunters will gain information about the Beast's whereabouts.

Remember that the Beast marker is only its last known location and not its actual location.

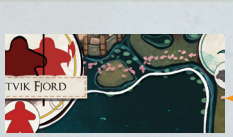


Habitat prerequisite

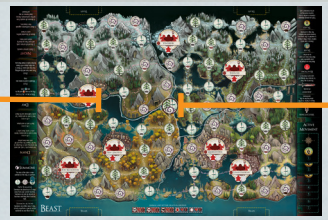
Zone prerequisites

The map "Northstar Expanse" is divided into four zones and the map "Drenched Lands" is divided into two zones. Borders between zones are marked with a white line. Zones are as a prerequiste for some cards. One of these cards are the Item cards called "traps" (see page 15). Whenever you play a card that has the word zone on it, the effects on that card are bound within the zone you are in at the time the card is played.

An example of a zone prerequisite is the Beast action on the action card "Rush," which allows the Beast to move 3 steps within its current zone.



Zone border




The center location is included in the three adjacent zones

Phase 3: Night

After all players have consecutively passed, the day is over and the night begins. The night consists of the following steps, resolved in order:

1. Check Contract rewards

Each contract has a separate column for the Beast and the hunters. The Beast is to the left side and the hunters to the right. Each side consists of requirements and rewards. In order to gain your reward, you must fulfill the requirements. If both sides have fulfilled their requirements, start with the Beast to resolve the rewards.

During the first night, all players check the requirements and rewards for the first night. During your second night, you check to see if you have, at any time during the game, fulfilled your requirement for the second night and so on as the game continues.

Beast requirements

Beast reward

Hunter rewards

Hunter requirements



If a requirement has a white line dividing its demands, one of them is enough to complete the requirement and gain the reward

If a reward doesn't mention how many players in your team will gain the reward, all of them receive it.

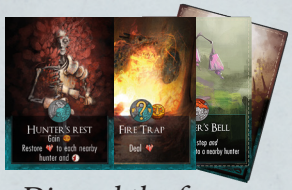
2. Discard and reset

Action cards



Discard from hand if any left

Items



Discard the face up and add three new

Beastly talents



Discard the face up and add three new

Abilities



Return all to hand

See page 15 for more information about Items and Beastly talents.

3. Restore health

Remove wounds from all non-player characters. If a hunter has died during the day restore that hunter to full health in any settlement of their choice. See page 8 for more information on the death of a hunter.

4. Upgrade

Each night, the Beast and hunters may unlock upgrades. Each Beast has a damage upgrade and six unique upgrades. The hunters each have four unique upgrades.

Most upgrades are passive effects that last the rest of the game. Yellow upgrades, however, are one time effects that resolve only once and immediately after they are unlocked. Both red and yellow upgrades are paid for with grudges.
If an upgrade has a cost of 0, it still needs to be unlocked.

Damage upgrade



All attacks deal 1 damage until upgraded. When upgraded, they deal 2 damage



Upgrades



"Red" lasts for the rest of the game



"Yellow" happens immediately



Upgrade tokens

You can unlock as many upgrades as you wish, as long as you can afford them. Whenever you upgrade, discard grudges equal to that upgrade's cost, and place an "Upgrade" token on it. Once you've unlocked an upgrade, it cannot be unlocked again.
The Beast is always the first one to upgrade.

The night is now complete and dawn begins yet again.

Summons, Traps & Reactions

Summons

All Beasts have summons to aid them. Summons are placed and controlled by the summon symbol .
When played, you may choose to either place a new summon or have each of your summons take one action.



Place a summon — *All summons may take action*

Choose one

Place a summon

Place the summon up to two steps away from your *actual* location. However, all summons have to be placed on a specific habitat, unless stated otherwise. If all summons are currently on the map and the Beast is allowed to place another, move an existing summon to its new location. A killed summon can be placed again.

Example place a summon

Raaga's actual location is up to one step away from its last known location. Raaga plays its ability card "Summon basilisk". Raaga can be on any type of habitat and summon the basilisk up to two steps away from its actual location. Raaga summons the basilisk and places the basilisk on its preferred habitat.





Summon actions

The different actions summons can take are:

- Move 1 step
- Attack for 1 damage
- Use their unique ability

All summons have 1 starting health



You'll find the "Summons unique ability" on the Beast mat

If you have more than 1 summon on the map when you play an effect that lets you take an action with all your summons, you choose in which order the summons will take their action. They do not have to take the same action.

Remember that if a summon does the killing blow, the Beast doesn't gain any grudges for that kill.

Gain Item

Whenever a hunter plays an effect that says gain an Item, that hunter chooses either one of the face up Items or takes the top card of the deck. Items are one-time use and Items in hand at night are not discarded.



Played items and beastly talents are discarded

Gain Beastly Talent

Whenever the Beast plays an effect that says gain Beastly talents, the Beast chooses one of the face up Beastly talents or takes the top card of the deck. Beastly talents are one-time use and Talents in hand at night are not discarded.



Remember that there will be no new face up cards until the night

Traps

Moving, searching and attacking are not the only tools in the hunters' arsenal. In the hunters' item deck, there is a special type of card called traps. Although traps count as a , they behave slightly differently from the other cards in the game.



Trap symbol

After you pay the cost of the card, you choose any zone on the map, and then you pick a habitat token and show that token to the other hunters. Place the trap card face down at the trap section of that zone, with the habitat token placed under the trap card. Note that the Beast should never know the chosen habitat.

When the Beast is revealed in a zone with a trap, and the Beast's location matches the habitat token beneath the trap card, that trap is triggered. Show the trap and the habitat token to the Beast, resolve the trap immediately then discard it. If the Beast is revealed because it played an attack, the trap is triggered even before the attack is actually performed.

Example Trap

Earlier in the game, hunters placed a "Fire Trap" in a zone with a swamp habitat beneath it.



Pay the cost as the trap is being played

Place a habitat token beneath the face down trap

Choose any zone and put the trap face down

On Beast's turn, the Beast plays the ability card "Hydra" and attacks, which reveals the Beast on a swamp. Because the Beast reveals on a swamp in the trapped zone, the trap activates (flip the trap face up) and Beast receives a wound token.

Traps do not trigger if played when a Beast is already revealed

Traps will remain in play until they are triggered

Transforming locations

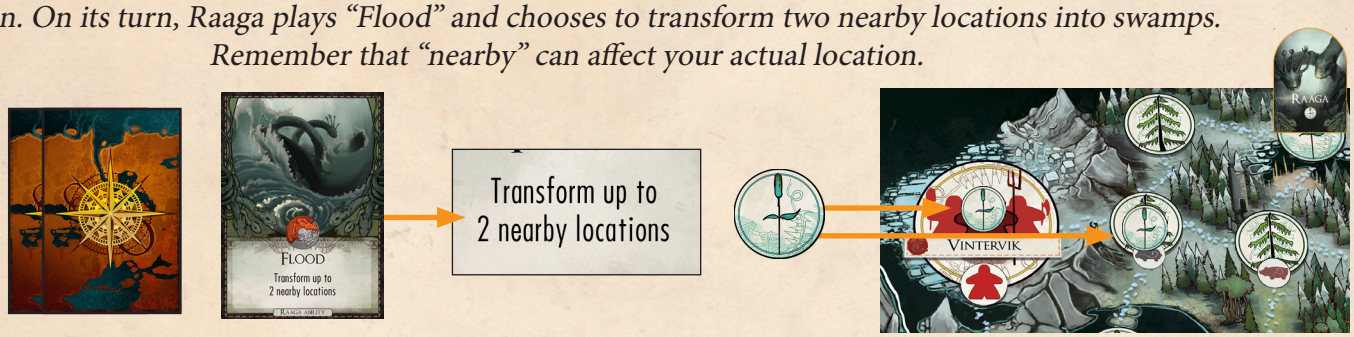
You can alter the map to be more beneficial for you by transforming habitats on the map's locations. When the Beast transforms a location, place a habitat token of your Beast's type on that location. If a hunter plays an effect that transforms a location, place a settlement habitat token on that location.



Raaga always transforms to swamps

Example Transform

There are 2 movement cards in the active movement section, meaning Raaga is up to two steps away from its last known location. On its turn, Raaga plays "Flood" and chooses to transform two nearby locations into swamps.
Remember that "nearby" can affect your actual location.



Reactions

Reactions are cards that you play on your opponents' turn. They are ways to counter specific plays. Each reaction has a prerequisite specifying when you are allowed to play it.



Reaction symbol

Reaction prerequisite

Reactions happen before the card that triggered them

Remember to pay the grudge when the reaction is being played

Example Reaction

There is one active movement card. It is the hunter Iona's turn, and she is on a location with a trail token. She plays her ability card "Hunt", and as a reaction the Beast plays the Beastly talent "Intuition" on Iona's turn. As reactions happen before the card that triggered them, the Beast moves 1 step first, and Iona will no longer discover the Beast when she searches.



Ionas ability card "Hunt"



Beastly talent "Intuition"





Raaga will move 1 step before "Hunt" is played

Beginner's Advice

Shared advice

Action cards

Even though you can only use your half of a card, you still want to pay attention to the other effect! Passing a card that's not very useful to you but extremely useful for the opponent could be a devastating mistake.

Sculpt your hand

A card is the same as an action. More cards means that you have more ways to ensure your win. Cards from the Beastly talents or the Item deck could provide you with useful opprtunitites, while Action cards "Animate" and "Dark dealings" could be just the effect you need.

Hunter

Start planning before the game even begins! Who should sit where? Perhaps Helga should be the first hunter with her "Seer" ability?

Try to corner the Beast to restrict its movement.

Unsure if the trail you're on is the right one? Frequently count the active movement deck.

Teamwork starts at dawn. If you already have a good movement card, why not send the next one to your companion?

Communication is the key to a successful hunt.

Beast

Try to avoid ending your turn revealed, but keep in mind that hunters can never move more than 2 steps and search in the same turn (without the help of the Commander).

As the Beast, it's dangerous to be the first one out of actions.

Make your kill before you run out of movement so that you have a sure escape.

Be cautious about passing your very first action. Hunters will then often play action cards like "Ensnare" or team-benefiting action cards, giving them a headstart over you.

Summons are a great way to put pressure on different settlements! Even if the summon doesn't manage to snatch a settler, it separates the hunters and draws out attack cards that could hit you instead.

First Time Playing?

We designed Beast to be a game for you to slowly master over time, learning new interactions, synergies and strategies each time you play. This, however, means that the first time you play can be a bit challenging. To make things easier, we recommend that you skip the drafting part of the first dawn phase, and instead play with the action cards and characters listed below.

2 - 3 Players

Player 1 (Beast)
Recommended Beast: Fangrir
Starting action cards:
Charge Dash Pursuit Dark Dealings

Player 2 (hunter)
Recommended hunter: Helga
Starting Action Cards:
Incite Rush Prowl Hidden Passage

Player 3 (hunter)
Recommended hunter: Assar
Starting action cards:
Adapt Bolster Haste Avarice

4 Players

Player 1 (Beast)
Recommended Beast: Fangrir
Starting action cards:
Charge Dash Pursuit Dark Dealings

Player 2 (hunter)
Recommended hunter: Helga
Starting Action Cards:
Incite Rush Hidden Passage

Player 3 (hunter)
Recommended hunter: Varja
Starting action cards:
Adapt Haste Avarice

Player 4 (hunter)
Recommended hunter: Iona
Starting action cards:
Bolster Prowl Dark Rituals

Credits

Elon Midhall
Game Design

Aron Midhall
Game Design,
Illustration & Graphic Design

Special Thanks

As the list is of people who in any way has been important to the project constantly grows, this section is currently under development.

As of right now, we want to give a special thanks to...

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Digital Design, & development
Our most beloved playtester, and now a part of the studio midhall team

Our most important
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