



For 2-4 players

© 2012 by Dave Dobson and Plankton Games LLC

COMPONENTS

- 11 Battle Cards representing six factions and five regular monster types (see box below)
- 11 Score Tokens, labeled with point values (-3, -1, 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 5, 5, 6, 8)
- Deck of 78 monster cards, including two of each monster in each faction (60 cards) plus special monsters:
 - 5 Flayers
 - 4 Vampires
 - 2 Demons
 - 2 Steam beasts
 - 2 Phantasms
 - 1 Elvenking
 - 1 Betrayer
 - 1 Trickster
- Explanation card
- This rule book (duh)

Regular Monster Card



Background and symbol indicate faction (Royal)
Picture and title indicate monster type (Dragon)

Regular Monster Types:

- Ooze
- Troll
- Dragon
- Golem
- Skeleton

Factions:

- Water
- Fire
- Sun
- Moon
- Forest
- Royal

Battle Cards



Score Tokens



OBJECT

Build up your horde of monsters, then battle for the highest score!

During the game, you collect various kinds of monsters to add to your horde. These monsters come in various types (e.g. ooze, troll, skeleton), and each belongs to a faction (e.g. water, fire, forest). If it helps, you can think of the factions like suits in regular cards.

As the game progresses, each type of monster and each faction will be assigned a score value. At the end of the game, the hordes do battle! The player who has the most monsters of each type and the most in each faction collects the score value for that type or faction. The player who collects the most total points wins!

CHOOSE YOUR LEVEL OF PLAY

Horde includes some special monster cards that change how the game works. You may wish to play a simpler version first to learn how the game works before adding in some of these special monsters. Here's a guide for how to play a simpler, learning version of the game:

Level of Play	Cards Used	Concepts Included
Basic	Remove Vampires, Flayers, Elvenking, Demons, Betrayer, Trickster	Score Tokens Card Selection Final Battles
Full	Use all cards	Double and Triple Cost Cards Increasing the Number of Picks Bonus Scoring Trickster Demon Sacrifice Betrayer

SETUP

Shuffle the Battle Cards and place them in a pile at one side of the play area.



Place the Score Tokens next to the Battle Cards. It can help to arrange them in a line sorted by value (plus it allows those of us obsessed with orderliness to feed their passion and feel in control of something).

Shuffle the monster cards and lay out a set of them face up between the players. These cards are collectively called the **Pool**. The size of the Pool depends on the number of players:

Players	2	3	4
Cards in Pool	12	16	20

I. Battle Card Phase – the starting player draws a Battle Card and assigns it a Score Token

II. Monster Phase – the starting player picks one or two monsters* from the Pool. Other players then pick monsters. Picking continues until all players have picked the same number of monsters or until no legal draws are possible. Cards picked are kept **face up** in front of each player.

III. End Phase – all players add their selected monsters to their horde piles face down. Refresh the Pool to its original size by adding cards from the draw pile.

**In four-player games, the starting player may only choose one monster at first.*

Phase I: Battle Card Phase

To begin the round, the starting player draws the top Battle Card from the face down Battle Card pile and places it on the table face up.

The Battle Cards each show one of the factions or one of the monster types. The starting player for this round gets to decide the value of the faction or monster type that was drawn. To do this, he or she picks one of the unassigned Score Tokens (with values ranging from -3 to 8 points) and places it on the card he or she drew. This sets the score value for that monster type or faction for the rest of the game.

At the end of the game, the Battle Cards are scored in the same order as they were drawn. Therefore, it is a good idea to place the Battle Cards in a row as they are drawn, so you end up with all 11 of them in order.

As the game progresses, each monster type and faction will be assigned a score value in this way (until the eleventh score token is placed on the eleventh Battle Card on the eleventh round). Following that round, the players use the monsters they've collected to battle for the score tokens.

Phase 2: Monster Phase

After the starting player decides what the faction or monster type on the Battle Card is worth, he or she picks monsters from the Pool in the center of the play area. He or she may choose to take one or two cards from the Pool, except in a four-player game, where only one pick is allowed. If he or she

PLAY

The first part of the game is broken down into eleven rounds. The player judged most monstrous starts the first round, and play then rotates clockwise around the table. In the second round (and in subsequent rounds) the starting player status shifts clockwise around the table.

The starting player for each round gets to assign a score value to a Battle Card. Then, he or she gets first pick from the Monster Cards available in the pool, and then the other players get a chance to pick monsters. Thus, each Round can be broken down into three phases, which are explained below:

picks two cards, the cards may not match in any way (same monster or same faction). For example, if the first choice is a Forest Skeleton, the next could not be a Water Skeleton or a Forest Troll. The starting player lays the chosen cards face up on the table in front of him or her so everybody can see.

Once the starting player has chosen a monster or monsters, the other players then each take the same number of monsters from the Pool, going around the table clockwise. These monsters may be the same faction or monster type as other players' picks but cannot match the player's own picks from this round. No player can pick any set of cards that contains matching cards during any given round.

Most monster cards have one faction and one monster type and are picked in the normal way as described above. However, some monster cards are special and are handled differently. See the sections on [Special Cards](#) and [Double and Triple Cards](#) below for detailed explanations.

Phase 3: End Phase

When all players have made their picks and all players have a chance to see them all laid out, players take their cards and add them to their horde piles, which are kept face down in front of each player. These cards are now hidden from other players until the scoring battles at the end. Players may look at their own horde piles at any time.

Before the next round, refresh the Pool by adding cards from the monster deck up to the starting number (12 for two players, 16 for three, 20 for four).

The Matching Rules, Simplified:

Two cards match if they have the same faction **or** the same monster type.

If you collect more than one card in a round, **none** of the cards may match each other.

Your picks **may** match other players' picks.

Your picks **may** match cards you took in previous rounds.

Special cards also **must not** match

If there are not enough cards to refill the Pool completely (which happens rarely), continue play with the cards that remain.

The round is now complete. The starting player role passes to the next player moving clockwise around the table. Continue until eleven rounds are complete and all Battle Cards and Score Tokens have been assigned, and then move on to the **Final Battles** (see below).

FINAL BATTLES

After eleven rounds of play, all factions and monster types will have Score Tokens assigned. At this point, players' hordes battle it out to collect the Score Tokens. This is pretty simple; it follows some easy guidelines:

- **Do Them in the Same Order** - Resolve each Battle Card one at a time in the same order they were drawn during the earlier part of the game.
- **Lay 'Em Out** – Players **must** lay out **all** of their monsters of the faction or monster type indicated on the Battle Card. Players **must** show all of their monsters that match the Battle Card even if they do not win the battle.
- **Most Monsters Wins, Ties Go To Nobody** – The player with the most monsters of the faction or type wins the Score Token. If two players are tied for a particular Score Token, that token is not awarded – nobody collects it.
- **Keep Your Cards** – The monster cards are returned to players' hordes and are re-used for scoring later. For example, a Water Troll card counts toward both Water and Trolls for scoring.
- **Negatives** - Two of the Score Tokens are worth negative points. Players include these negative tokens as penalties when calculating final scores. For example, if Jenna gets two tokens marked 5 and -3, her score is 2.

Score Tokens are worth the point values indicated on them. After all eleven Score Tokens have been awarded, count up your points from all tokens; the player who has collected the most points wins!



You have read enough to play the Basic version of the game. The following rules apply to the Full version of the game.

DOUBLE AND TRIPLE CARDS

THE BASIC IDEA:

(READ THIS FIRST!)

Some special cards cost extra when picking

Double cards count as two cards picked, while triple cards count as three cards picked

If you pick these double or triple cards, other players get to pick more cards to match the total value of cards you picked

Picking continues in turn around the table until all players' total value of cards picked is equal, or until no legal picks remain

Some players may pick cards at two or more points during the round.

← Really, read the box over there first. OK, good, you're back. Here are some more details.

Some of the special cards count as two or three cards when picking as noted by symbols on the cards and as described below. When you choose one of them, other players will get to pick more cards to balance them out. This can get a little confusing. Here's how it works.

Many of the special cards are double cards: Vampires, Flyers, and Elvenking. Some special cards are triple cards: Demons and Trickster.

Remember that when you are the starting player you begin the picking by choosing one or two cards (or one card only in a four-player game). With your choice (which may include a double or triple card), you'll set the starting number of cards picked. Other players can either **match** that number of picks, or they can **raise** the number by picking double or triple cards. If they do raise it, you'll get to pick more cards to match (or raise) their total number of picks when it comes around to you again. The system is kind of like betting in poker— when it's your turn to pick, you match or raise the number of monsters picked, but you can only raise by picking a double or triple card.

The following rules apply when you're picking:

- **Take Turns Picking** - The starting player picks first. The chance to pick then rotates around the table clockwise until all players have an equal total number of cards. It can go around more than once.
- **Only One Double or Triple Card to Start** - The starting player can't pick more than one double or triple card in his or her starting pick. If he or she picks two cards, at least one must be a regular card. This applies only to the initial pick by the starting player; later picks in the same round may include more than one double or triple card
- **Pick One at a Time** - You must choose one card at a time when picking.
- **Stop at the Limit** - Once you have equaled or exceeded the current highest number of picks, you cannot pick any more cards.
- **No Matches Ever** - No matter how many picks you are allowed to make, you must obey the rule against matching for your whole set of chosen cards. This is true even if you pick them at different times during the round. None of your picks for a round may match, ever.
- **Locked Out** - As the round progresses, you may find yourself unable to pick your full number of cards, either because the Pool runs out of cards, or because the cards that are left in the Pool match cards you've already taken this round. In this case, you're out of luck - you don't get to pick the full amount. You never add cards to replenish the Pool until the round (and all picking) is completed.
- **Unwanted Picks** - You might get into a situation where you do not want to take more cards, either because you would have to take a card that counts toward a negative score value, or because your pick would raise the pick number for other players and let them take more cards. You cannot skip picking cards. If there is a card you could legally take in the Pool, you must take it. However, because you choose cards one at a time, you can sometimes pick cards that match unwanted cards to avoid having to choose unwanted cards (see *Locked Out* above).
- **Stop When Even** - Picking ends as soon as all players have the same total value of cards or are locked out of picking. This may be as little as one pick each.

Strategy Note: Because picking is mandatory whenever there are legal picks, it is sometimes possible to force opponents to take monsters that will count towards a negative score token.

SPECIAL CARDS

Most of the monsters in the game are normal monsters and work as described above. However, some monsters have special capabilities or powers, and these are handled differently. Details on these special cards follow, organized by the level of play you've chosen.

Basic Game

Steam Beast and Phantasm – Steam Beasts have two factions, **Water** and **Fire**. Phantasms have two factions, **Sun** and **Moon**. They count toward both of their factions during scoring. However, because these monsters aren't one of the five monster types that are scored, they do not count toward any monster type. When picking these monsters, remember that they match two factions, so you cannot pick any other Water or Fire cards on the same round you pick a Steam Beast, and you cannot pick any other Sun or Moon cards on the same round you pick a Phantasm.

Full Game

Vampires (double card) – Vampires are not part of any faction, and they aren't one of the five monster types that are scored, so they don't contribute in any of the final battles. However, they are worth increasing bonus points depending on how many of them you collect, as shown in the table above. Add these extra points to your total at the end of the Final Battles.

Vampires	1	2	3	4
Points	1	3	6	10

Elvenking (double card) – The Elvenking also grants bonus scoring. For every pair of **Forest** and **Royal** monsters that you have, the Elvenking grants you one extra point. For example, if you have the Elvenking plus three Forest monsters and five Royal monsters, you get three bonus points for the three pairs. The extra Royal cards don't count – you have to have one of each faction to make a pair. Flayers and Demons (see below) cannot be used to create additional pairs for the Elvenking – he only accepts true Royal and Forest monsters. Add these points to your score after the Final Battles are over.

Flayers (double card) – Flayers are powerful monsters that can be added to any battle. In the final scoring battles, a Flayer is like a wild card – it can be counted toward any monster type or toward any faction. Flayers can be played to win a battle, or they can be used to force a tie and prevent a Score Token from being collected. Flayers can only be used once, though – they must be discarded once they are used in a battle and cannot be used again.

Flayers (and Demons, explained later) can be played by their owners at any time, but it's sometimes good to wait to see what other players are going to do before playing yours. See the note on Playing Flayers and Demons below.

Trickster (triple card) – The Trickster is played at the end of the eleven regular rounds before any of the final battles. He allows you to switch two Score Tokens as long as they do not differ by more than two points. For example, you could switch the -3 token with the -1 token, or the -1 with a 1, or a 3 with a 5, but you could not switch an 8 with a 5. You do not need to play the Trickster if you do not wish to. The Trickster remains in your horde after he is used and may be sacrificed to a Demon if desired.

The Betrayer – This monster allows you to steal other players' picks. Once you own the Betrayer, you may play him whenever other players are choosing monsters to steal a card they pick. At this point, you must give the other player the Betrayer card plus two additional cards from your horde, and you may then steal the card that player was going to collect.

When the Betrayer is used, he and the two cards that are given with him are laid face up in front of the player whose pick was stolen. The stolen card is kept face up in front of the player who stole him. These cards are added to the player's horde as usual at the end of the round. The stolen card counts differently for the two players involved — see **Betrayer Card Values** below.

Betrayer Example: Suppose Beth has the Betrayer, and Stuart is picking. Stuart chooses a Vampire, and Beth already has two Vampires. So, Beth uses the Betrayer. She steals the Vampire card Stuart just picked, and she gives Stuart the Betrayer card plus two more monsters from her horde. Because the Forest faction has already been assigned the -3 Score Token, she gives

Stuart a Forest Skeleton and a Forest Golem to increase his chances of getting the Forest token and scoring -3.

Further Betrayer notes:

- The Betrayer may not be used on the round it is collected from the Pool.
- The player who receives the Betrayer card may play it to steal picks from others on future rounds, but not on the current round.
- The Betrayer may not be used more than once in any given round.
- The Betrayer must be used immediately when the card to be stolen is picked – it may not be used to steal any picks made prior to the current one. Of course, good manners dictate that players allow some time for the owner of the Betrayer to decide whether to play it rather than rushing ahead with their picks to avoid betrayal.
- Cards that are exchanged because of the Betrayer do not count towards the matching restriction for the current round. For example, you could use the Betrayer to steal a Skeleton from another player's pick and then go on to pick a second Skeleton when you pick. Likewise, if you give a Skeleton as one of the cards that go with the Betrayer, the other player can still go on to pick a Skeleton as part of his or her remaining picks.

Betrayer Card Values:

Betrayed player - Regardless of the value of the card stolen or the value of the two cards that come with the Betrayer, ***the Betrayer and the accompanying cards only count as one card*** toward the betrayed player's picks. In the example above, if Stuart were entitled to two picks, chose the Vampire, and was betrayed by Beth as described, he would still get another pick after being betrayed, because the Betrayer and the two Forest cards count as one pick, leaving him one remaining.

Betraying player - The stolen card ***does not count towards the picks*** for the player who used the Betrayer and stole the card, even though it is displayed

face up with the player's other picks. In the above example, Beth would still be allowed her full picks for the round even though she acquires the Vampire as well through using the Betrayer.

Demons (triple cards) – Demons are very powerful monsters that can help you – for a price. Like Flayers, Demons will join any of the final battles and can serve with any monster type or faction. Unlike Flayers, Demons can be re-used, participating in multiple scoring battles, which makes them more powerful and more versatile than flayers. However, every time you want a Demon to join in a battle, you need to sacrifice a monster to use it. Take one of your monster cards from your horde and discard it – it cannot be used again. Demons can only be used once each per scoring battle – you cannot make more than one sacrifice to add more to your total unless you have more than one Demon to accept the sacrifice. Any card (including special cards) may be sacrificed to a Demon.

Strategic Sacrifices - You may sacrifice a monster that counts toward the current battle if you wish, but it will not change your total – for example, if you are currently battling with Trolls, and you have three of them, you could sacrifice one to a Demon, but you'd still have three – the two remaining Trolls plus your Demon, who counts towards the total whenever he is given a sacrifice.

Playing Flayers and Demons: When you wish to use one of these “wild” cards – Flayers and Demons – you must first wait until all players have laid out their regular monster cards for each battle. Once all these cards are revealed, any player may add a Flayer or Demon (or multiple Flayers or Demons) to his or her monsters. Other players may then respond with Flayers or Demons of their own, and the original player can also add more Flayers and Demons. This proceeds until all players agree they are finished adding Flayers and Demons for the current battle.

IMPORTANT: Once you play a Flayer, it is used up and gone forever, even if you eventually lose the battle. Likewise, once you play a Demon, you must discard the sacrifice immediately, even if you eventually lose the battle.

Strategy Notes: Demons require sacrifices, but the sacrifices can be made strategically. After a few rounds of scoring, there will be factions and monster types that are no longer needed, so you can sacrifice them without penalty. Also, if you have monsters that count toward negative scoring, you may sacrifice them to reduce your chances of getting a negative Score Token. This only helps if you sacrifice them *before* the negative token comes up for scoring, of course. You may play Demons and sacrifice cards even if you do not eventually win the battle.

VICTORY

Once all of the final battles are complete, players add up all the Score Tokens they have collected and then add bonus points due them from Vampires and the Elvenking. The winner is the player with the highest total score. If there is a tie, the player who collected the most Score Tokens (including negative ones) wins.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

In the Basic version of the game, the picking is very straightforward; the first player (the active player) picks one or two cards, and the other players each pick the same number of cards, and then the round is over after everyone has one chance to pick. However, in the full version, the picking can sometimes get more complicated when the double and triple cards are available and the number of picks can be raised as the picking proceeds.

The following sample round illustrates how that can work. In this example, there are three players who end up with a total of eight chances to pick (numbered 1 through 8). This example ends after the eighth chance to pick because that is the point when all players *either* have an equal value of cards picked (including double cards as two picks and triple cards as three picks) *or* they have no legal picks to make.

SAMPLE ROUND

Three players are playing, Andy, Becca, and Chuck. Andy is the active player.

SCORE CARD PHASE

Andy draws the Water card from the score deck. He has no Water, so he plays the -3 score token on the Water card.



MONSTER PHASE (IN 8 STEPS, GOING ANDY→BECCA→CHUCK)

Andy is the Main Player, so he picks first. He chooses the Sun Skeleton, because Skeletons are worth 8 points.

1



Becca has one card, but the total is up to three. She would have taken the Water Skeleton, but she can't, because she already took a Skeleton. She'd like to take the Phantasm, but she can't because she already drew a Sun card. She takes the Forest Ooze and a Moon Troll.



Becca chooses the other Sun Skeleton.

2



Chuck has his Player, worth two, and can pick another card. He takes the Trickster. Now his cards have a total value of five.



Chuck doesn't want the Water Skeleton, because Water is worth -3 now. He chooses the Player. Players are worth two cards. Andy and Becca only have one card each, so they get to draw more.

3



Andy had a total value of three and can take two more. He takes the Fire Golem and the Moon Ooze. His total is five.



Andy has another Vampire in his hand, so he chooses the Vampire card. Now his cards are worth three (Vampire plus Sun Skeleton).

4



Becca has three regular cards, so she should get to pick two more. However, all the cards left to pick match what she already has. She has a Sun and a Forest card already. The only remaining cards are Water, but she has matches for each of the water monsters shown, so none are legal picks. She cannot pick any cards, so the turn ends.

8

END PHASE

Nine new cards are drawn to replace the picked cards. All players take their picked cards into their hands. Becca starts the next turn.