

DEAD MAN'S CURSE



Table of Contents

Game Overview _____	Page 1
Game Objective _____	Page 1
Base Game Components _____	Page 1
Unpacking _____	Page 1
Game Layout _____	Page 2
Game Board _____	Page 2
Player Mat _____	Page 3
Faction Pieces _____	Page 3
Card Layouts _____	Page 4
Additional Factions _____	Page 5
Game Setup _____	Page 5
Player Faction Setup _____	Page 5
Number of Players _____	Page 5
Complete Layout _____	Page 6
How to Play _____	Page 7
Card Effects and Faction Powers _____	Page 7
Turn Order _____	Page 7
Team Play _____	Page 7
Movement _____	Page 7
Phase Descriptions _____	Page 11
Boost Phase _____	Page 11
Example Boost Phase _____	Page 12
Battlefield Phase _____	Page 13
Example Battlefield Phase _____	Page 15
Promotion Phase _____	Page 17
Example Promotion Phase _____	Page 17
Winning the Game _____	Page 17
Glossary of Terms _____	Page 18

Dead Man's Curse

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Game Overview

Dead Man's Curse is a competitive free-for-all or 2 vs. 2 team game for 2-4 players. In this battlefield strategy game, players bring the full might of their unique faction to bear against the opposing factions, using familiar movement to crush their enemies. Victory goes to the greatest force remaining when the battle draws to a close. Each faction wields their own boost upgrades, epic acts, and special powers to offer them a unique playstyle and edge in the coming battle. Destroy your opponents, bolster your forces, and declare victory for your glory when the melee draws to a close.

Strategy is not enough!
Luck is not enough!
You will need both to win!

Game Objective

Come out on top, declaring the highest VP value from your remaining pieces over your enemies after 9 rounds.

Base Game Components

- This Instruction Manual
- 1 Game Board
- 36 Battlefield Cards
- 2 Dice
- 4 Card Bases
- **Base Faction: The Crew**
 - 8 Pirate Pieces ()
 - 2 Gunner Pieces ()
 - 2 Quartermaster Pieces ()
 - 2 Crow's Nest Pieces ()
 - 1 First Mate Piece ()
 - 1 Captain Piece ()
 - 5 The Holds Cards (Epic Act Deck)
 - 10 Shipmates Cards (Boost Deck)
 - 1 The Crew Player Mat
- **Base Faction: The Undead**
 - 8 Skeleton Pieces ()
 - 2 Mummy Pieces ()
 - 2 Ghoul Pieces ()
 - 2 Ghost Pieces ()
 - 1 Lich Piece ()
 - 1 Count Piece ()
 - 5 Necromancy Cards (Epic Act Deck)
 - 10 Crypt Cards (Boost Deck)
 - 1 The Undead Player Mat

Unpacking:

Unpack and separate the Dead Man's Curse cards into the following decks:

- Battlefield Deck
- The Holds Deck (Epic Act)
- Necromancy Deck (Epic Act)
- Ship Mates Deck (Boost Deck)
- Crypt Deck (Boost Deck)

Game Layout

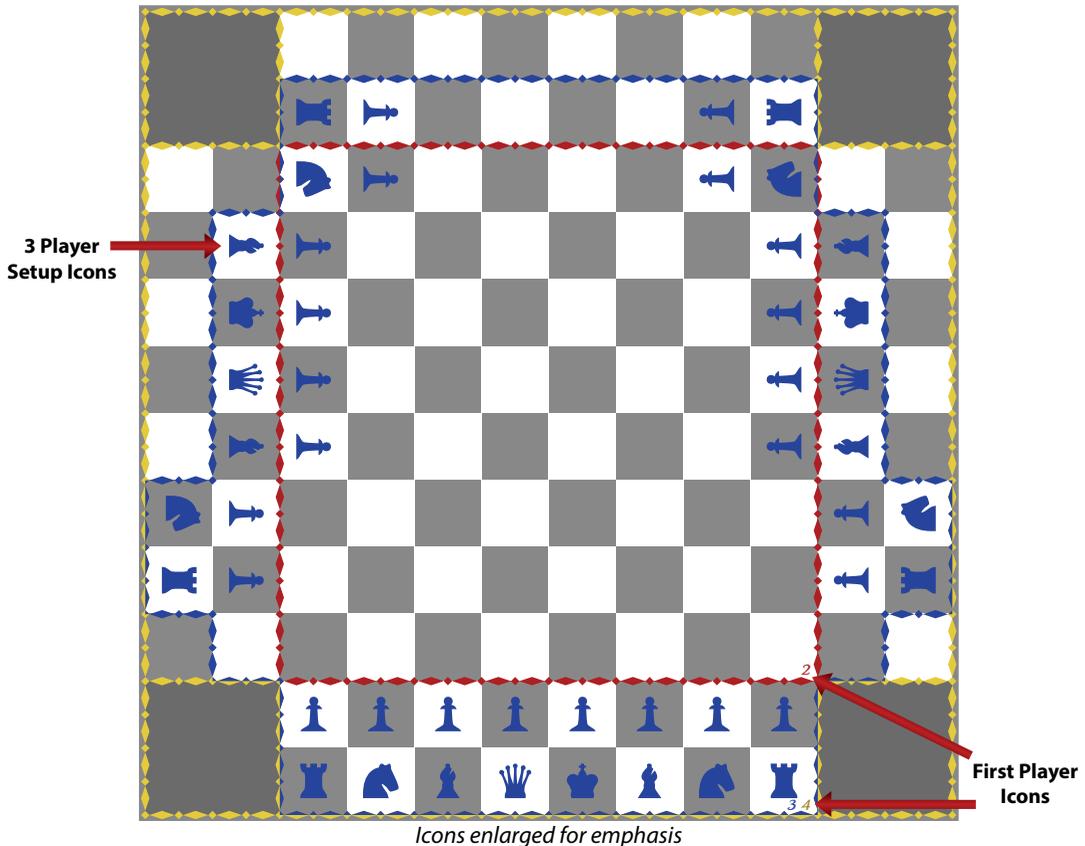
Game Board:

The game Board depicts quick references for 2, 3, and 4 Player games.

- 2 Player: The edge of the Board for 2 Player games will be marked by a red line:  The first Player will be marked with a '2' in the lower right hand corner of their starting area.
- 3 Player: The edge of the Board for 3 Player games will be marked by a blue line: 

This section of the Board has a unique layout to accomodate 3 Player games, and the starting positions for all of the Players' Pieces are labeled by icons in a corner of the spaces. The first Player will be marked with a '3' in the lower right hand corner of their starting area.

- 4 Player: 4 Player games will utilize the full game Board, with edges marked by a yellow line:  The first Player will be marked with a '4' in the lower right hand corner of their starting area.



Player Mat:

Each Faction comes with their own Faction-specific Player Mat, which offers a quick reference to Turn sequence, the Faction Ability,

a reference chart to Attack, Defense, and VP Values for each Piece, and a place to put your Epic Act, Boost, and Battlefield Decks.

THE UNDEAD
FACTION ABILITY: REANIMATE

Turn Sequence

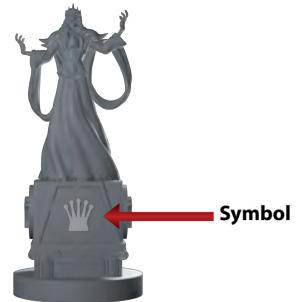
- Boost Phase** - Roll one Die and choose one of the following:
 - Reanimate** - Roll a second Die. If either roll is a 6, Restore one of your Captured Pieces, except the ♠ Count. Each type of Piece may only Reanimate once per game. (Add +1 to your roll for every 2 of your Captured Pieces for the options below)
 - 6+**: **Crypt** - Draw a Crypt Card, and play or Discard it.
 - 8+**: **Necromancy** - Draw a Necromancy Card, and play or Hold it.
- Battlefield Phase**: Draw a Battlefield Card:
 - Movement**: Players must make one Standard Move, and can choose to move as instructed by the Battlefield Card.
 - Standard Moves may be before or after the use of the Battlefield Card.
 - Standard Moves cannot split the effects of the Battlefield Card.
 - Standard Moves and Battlefield Cards cannot affect the same Piece in a Turn.
 - If a Battlefield Card's Effects are unavailable, you may move a ♠ Skeleton instead.
 - Attack**: An Attack occurs immediately, before any additional movement.
 - Roll two Dice, adding your Piece's Attack Value.
 - The Defender then rolls two Dice, adding their Piece's Defense Value.
 - The final Attack and Defense Values are compared, with victory going to the highest value. Ties go to the Defender.
 - If you win, the Defender rolls one Die, and may Block on a 6+.
 - Promotion Phase**: Any ♠ Skeleton in an Opponent's Rear Rank may Promote.

Name	Attack	Defense	VP
♠ Skeleton	4	2	2
♣ Mummy	6	3	3
♠ Ghoul	6	3	3
♠ Ghost	6	3	3
♠ Lich	8	4	4
♠ Count	10	5	5

DECKS: NECROMANCY (Epic Act), CRYPT (Boost), BATTLEFIELD DECK

Faction Pieces:

Each Faction has 16 unique Faction-specific Pieces that make up their set: 8 ♠, 2 ♣, 2 ♠, 2 ♠, 1 ♠, and 1 ♠. While the names of these pieces will vary depending on the Faction you've chosen to play, their base will depict the generic symbol so that all Players will know which Piece corresponds to which piece type.



King



Queen



Bishop



Knight



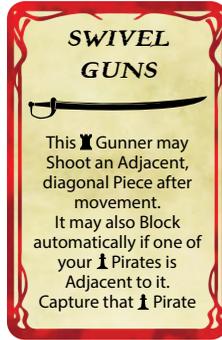
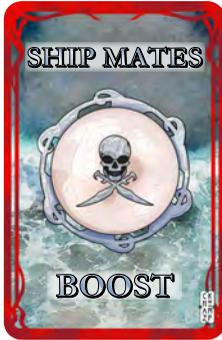
Rook



Pawn

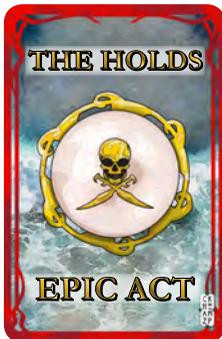


Card Layouts



Boost Card:

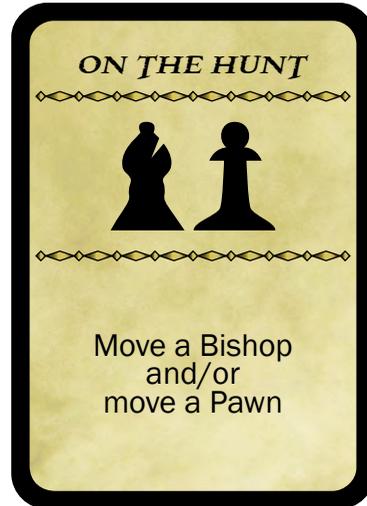
Each Faction has 10 unique Boost Cards with Effects that enhance that Faction's Pieces. Boost Cards may sometimes be acquired in the Boost Phase, if the roll equals or exceeds 6 (+1 to the roll for every 2 of your Captured Pieces). Choosing a Boost Card means that you cannot draw an Epic Act or use your Faction Ability for that Turn. Once drawn, a Boost Card must be used or Discarded immediately. Boost Cards usually remain in Play, affecting the Piece until the Boost Card is Discarded or the Piece is Captured. Once Discarded, a Boost Card may be set aside, or placed in the box.



Epic Act Card:

Each Faction has 5 unique Epic Act Cards with Effects that can greatly affect gameplay. Epic Act Cards may sometimes be acquired in the

Boost Phase, if the roll equals or exceeds 8 (+1 to the roll for every 2 of your Captured Pieces). Choosing an Epic Act Card means that you cannot draw a Boost Card or use your Faction Ability for that Turn. Epic Acts can be Held and played at any point, even on another Player's Turn. Epic Act cards usually do not remain in Play once used. Once Discarded, an Epic Act Card may be set aside, or placed in the box.



Battlefield Card:

Each game lasts 9 Rounds, with the Battlefield Deck providing 9 cards to each Player. In the Battlefield Phase, the Player draws 1 Battlefield Card from their Player Mat, which will give them extra movement or Effects.

Unless a Battlefield Card states "and/or" in its text, either all of the Effect must be used, or none of it. If the Effect on the Battlefield Card cannot take place at all because the pieces it would affect have been Captured, then the Player is allowed a ♠ movement instead. Battlefield Cards list an Effect, and depict the potentially affected Pieces' Symbols.

Additional Factions

Each Faction from Dead Man's Curse will have a different strategy and playstyle that works best for them, and should also be approached differently as you face off against them. Unique Boost and Epic Act Cards, as well as a powerful Faction Ability will make every game different!

In addition to the base game's Factions, The Undead and The Crew, other Factions exist as well. There is no difference to the basic rules of gameplay, so no special setup will be needed to integrate these Factions into your copy of Dead Man's Curse.

Game Setup

Player Faction Setup:

Each Player chooses a Faction that comes with 1 Player Mat, 10 Boost Cards, 5 Epic Act Cards, and 16 Pieces.

- Place your Faction's Player Mat in front of yourself.
- Shuffle your Boost Deck and Epic Act Deck and place them in their corresponding sections on your Player Mat.
- Shuffle the Battlefield Deck and deal 9 Battlefield cards to each Player. Depending

on the number of Players, there may be extra Battlefield cards you can return to the box, as they will not be used.

Number of Players:

The number of Players in the game will determine the remainder of the setup, as follows.

4 Players:

- Each Player places their Pieces on one of the edges of the Board (see Page 6). Each Player should place their 🖐️ to the left of their 👑.
- In 4 Player Team Play, Allied Players should sit across from each other.
- The first Player is the Player set up on the edge with the '4' in the lower-right of their starting area.

3 Players:

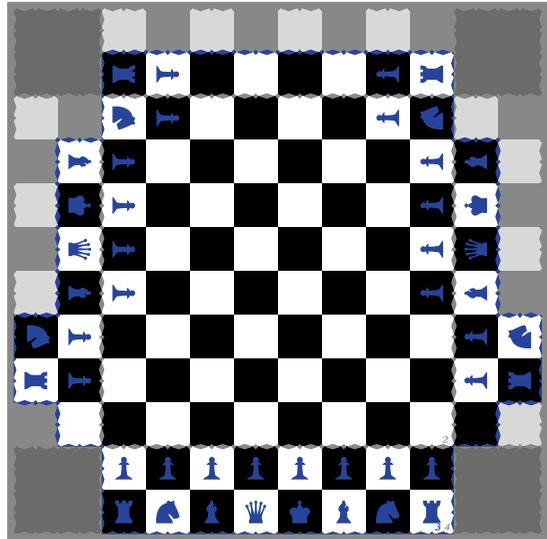
- Each Player places their Pieces on one of the 3 starting areas, indicated by the Blue Icons on the Board.
- The first Player is the Player set up on the edge with the '3' in the lower-right of their starting area.



2 Players:

- Each Player places their Pieces on opposite edges of the Board within the red line:
◆◆◆◆. Placement follows a standard Chess layout (see below). The first Player should place their ♚ to the left of their ♜, and the second Player should place their ♛ to the right of their ♞.
- The first Player is the Player set up on the edge with the '2' in the lower-right of their starting area.

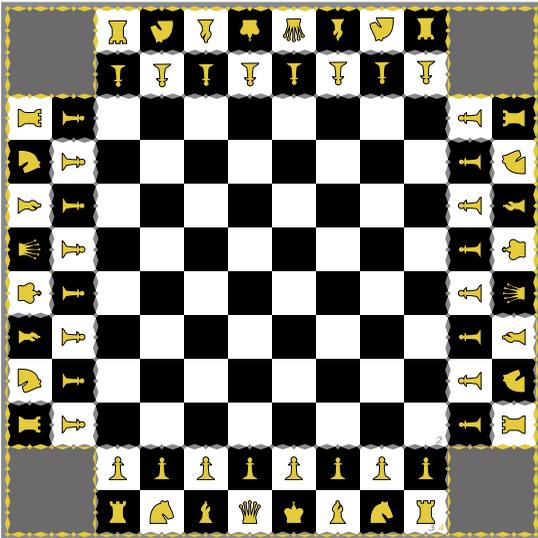
3 Players



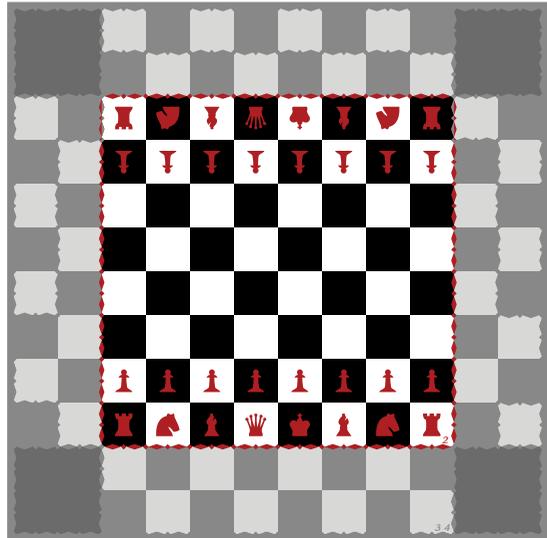
Complete Layout



4 Players



2 Players



How to Play

Card and Faction Effects:

- Most Effects will alter the basic rules as stated in the instruction manual. When an Effect states something that clashes with the rules, the Effect's text will take precedence.
- If multiple Effects conflict, the current Player's Effect will happen first, followed by the Effects from other Players.
- Card Effects may Capture your own Pieces if they do not specify otherwise, so be careful how some Effects can be aimed!

Turn Order:

Every Player's Turn is divided into phases, which occur in the following order:

- Boost Phase
- Battlefield Phase
- Promotion Phase

Team Play:

In a 4-Player team game, two teams of two may work cooperatively in order to best their Opponents. During setup, Allied Players should sit opposite each other. Any card Effect that states it can be used on an Ally Piece may be used on either your own Pieces, or your Allied Player's Pieces. Finally, at the end of the game, VP tallies will total across the teams to determine which team did the best. However, keep in mind that there is no rule preventing Capturing of an Allied Player's Pieces, either normally or through Effects, so be careful!

Movement:

In Dead Man's Curse, movement is similar to classic Chess. However, many changes do exist between Chess and Dead Man's Curse, as follows:

- Castling and En Passant are not used in Dead Man's Curse.
- Check and Checkmate are not used in Dead Man's Curse. While the ♔ is a high VP Piece, the end of the game does not rely on this Piece, and there is no obligation to protect it.
- The Touch Move Rule is not used in Dead Man's Curse. Any move may be taken back, until another Piece is moved or an Attack is rolled, and touching a Piece does not obligate movement.
- You may not move into or through a space occupied by one of your Pieces, unless otherwise stated.
- Any Effect that offers a Piece a new form of movement gains it as an additional option. Special aspects of movement, such as the ♞ ability to Ignore Pieces in movement affect the Piece when it moves in that way only.
- Any non-passive Effect may only be used if that Piece is moved in that Turn, and takes place before movement, unless otherwise stated.

Phase Descriptions

Boost Phase:

In the first phase of a Player's Turn, you will determine if you wish to gain a special Faction-specific card from either the Boost or Epic Act Decks, or if you wish to use the Faction Ability. The Boost Deck adds additional Effects to your Pieces, and the Epic Act Deck usually offers large, one-time-use Effects that can change the course of the game. Faction Abilities can vary widely in their effects, and can be used strategically to great effect.

To Begin, the Player will roll a Die. Then, choose to use your Faction Ability, or draw a Boost Card or an Epic Act Card. Only one may be chosen per Turn:

- **Faction Ability:** This may require a specific rolled value to use, consult your Player Mat.
- **Boost Card:** A Boost Card may be drawn if the total of your Die roll, +1 for every two Pieces you have in your Captured Pieces, equals or exceeds 6.
- **Epic Act Card:** An Epic Act Card may be drawn if the total of your Die roll, +1 for every two Pieces you have in your Captured Pieces, equals or exceeds 8.

Faction Ability:

- If your Faction Ability allows you to roll another Die, then once you roll that Die, you can no longer choose to opt for a Boost Card or Epic Act Card, and must proceed with using your Faction Ability only.
- Faction Abilities are wide and varied, and may even take effect in a different Phase of the Turn. If you choose the Faction Ability, follow along with the Player Mat and what it states.

Boost Card:

- Boost Cards must be played on a Piece when drawn, otherwise they are Discarded.
- Boost Cards are public knowledge once drawn.
- When a Boost Card is played, put a Card Base under the Piece, and put the card in the slot of the Card Base. This helps track the card and Piece as they move. These cards are removed when the Piece is Captured, or if an Effect Discards it.
- Card Bases may only hold one card at a time, and you may replace the old card, Discarding it.

Epic Act Card:

- Epic Act Cards may be played or Held when drawn, and there is no limit to how many you may hold.
- Epic Act Cards are not considered Held until the player determines that they are not playing it immediately after the draw.
- Drawn Epic Act Cards are hidden, and do not need to be read or announced, and Held Epic Act remain hidden until played.
- Held Epic Act Cards may be played at any time, even during other Players' Turns. They may even interrupt play, which may affect a move, roll, or other Effects. If this happens, the Player that was interrupted is allowed to change the action, unless that action was cancelled by the Effect.

Once you have chosen your Boost Phase Effect, progress to the Battlefield Phase.

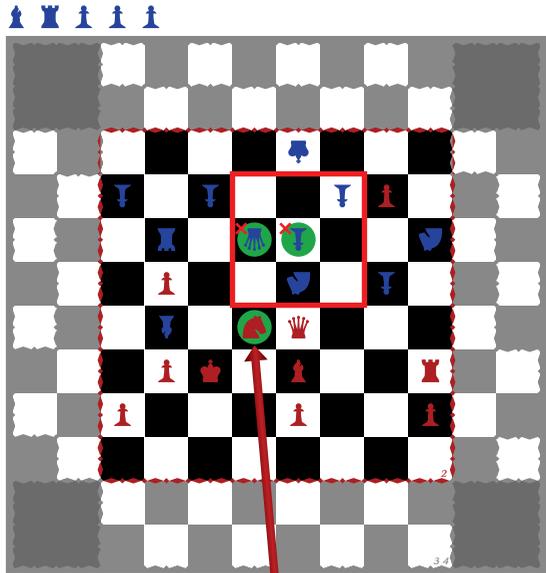
Example Boost Phase:

After 4 Rounds in a 2 Player game, the Board is set up as shown, and the red Player has just begun their Turn. As you can see, the red Player is playing The Undead Faction, and has a Necromancy (Epic Act) Card Held over from a previous Turn; "Miasma". The red Player's Opponent, the blue Player, just moved their ♔ last turn, which has a Boost Card on it, next to a Boost Card-holding ♗.

To Begin the Boost Phase, the red Player rolls 1 Die, rolling a 5.

- Based on The Undead's Faction Ability, it did not meet the roll, but can still be chosen for a second attempt at a roll, however the red Player does not want to use Reanimate this time, opting instead to draw a card.
- Adding their Captured Pieces into the roll, which offers +2 for 5 Pieces Captured, the roll is now at 7, which is not enough for a Necromancy (Epic Act) Card.
- The red Player then chooses to draw a Crypt (Boost) Card, as the augmented roll of 7 is over the 6 needed for such a draw. They draw "Death Grip". Crypt (Boost) Cards must be played immediately or Discarded, so they choose to apply it to their remaining ♗.
- This would normally conclude a basic Boost Phase, but the red Player is hoping to use "Miasma" in the Boost Phase to remove unwanted Effects from both of the blue Player's Pieces with Boost Cards, and their Necromancy (Epic Act) Cards can be played at any time. Using this card, the red Player targets a 3x3 area as shown, marked in red, and Discards all Boost Cards within the area, as per the card's Effect.
- Finally, the red Player's Boost Phase ends.

Captured Pieces



Captured Pieces



- - Boost Card Bases
- - 3x3 Area affected by "Miasma"



THE UNDEAD
FACTION ABILITY: REANIMATE

Turn Sequence

- Boost Phase:** Roll one Die and choose one of the following:
 - Reanimate:** Roll a second Die. If either roll is a 6, Reanimate one of your Captured Pieces, except the ♔ Count. Each type of Piece may only Reanimate once per game. (Add +1 to your roll for every 2 of your Captured Pieces for the options below)
 - 6s-Crypt:** Draw a Crypt Card and play or Discard it.
 - 6s-Necromancy:** Draw a Necromancy Card and play or Hold it.
- Battlefield Phase:** Draw a Battlefield Card.
- Movement:** Pieces must make one Standard Move, and can choose to move as instructed by the Battlefield Card.
 - Standard Moves may be before or after the use of the Battlefield Card.
 - Standard Moves cannot split the effects of the Battlefield Card.
 - Standard Moves and Battlefield Cards cannot affect the same Piece in a Turn.
 - If a Battlefield Card Effect is unavoidable, you may move a ♗ Skeleton instead.
- Attack:** An Attack occurs immediately.
 - Roll two Dice, adding your Piece's Attack Value.
 - The Defender then rolls two Dice, adding their Piece's Defense Value.
 - The final Attack and Defense Values are compared, with victory going to the highest value. Tie goes to the Defender.
 - If you win, the Defender rolls one Die, and may Block on a 6.
- Promote Phase:** If a Skeleton or an Opponent's Piece Rank may Promote.

Name	Attack	Defense	VP
Skeleton	4	2	2
Skeleton	6	3	3
Ghoul	6	3	3
Ghoul	8	4	4
Lich	8	4	4
Count	10	5	5

Attack:

At any point during the Turn, if an Attack is initiated, either by moving into the space of another Faction's Piece or through an Effect, the Attack should be resolved before any further movement or Effects take place.

There are 3 types of Attacks:

- Attack - This involves moving into the same space as the Defender, and follows the process as normal.
- Extended Attack - This is an Attack where your Piece does not Move into the same space as the Defender, but initiates an Attack from your Piece's space. This follows the process as normal.
- Shot/Shooting - This is an Attack where your Piece does not Move into the same space as the Defender, but initiates an Attack from your Piece's space. Shots cannot result in the attacking Piece being Captured on the result of the Defender winning the value comparison, but otherwise follows the process as normal.

When an Attack is initiated, the following steps take place, in order:

1. The attacker rolls: Roll two Dice, and add your Piece's Attack Value for a total Attack Value.
2. The Defender rolls: The Defender rolls two Dice, and adds their Piece's Defense Value for a total Defense Value.
3. Compare the totals:
 - If the total Defense Value is greater than or equal to the total Attack Value, the Defender wins, Capturing the attacking Piece. The Attack ends and play resumes.
 - If the total Attack Value is greater than the total Defense Value, the attacker wins, allowing the Defender a Block attempt.
4. The Block attempt: If the attacker won, above, the Defender is allowed one last attempt to Block the Attack. The Defender rolls one Die, and if they roll a value of 6+ (Effects may add to this roll), the Attack is Blocked. A Blocked Attack means that no Piece is Captured, and if the attacker was moving into the space of the Defender, their movement instead stops at the last Open Space Along It's Path towards the Attack that took place. If the Defender's Block fails, that Piece is Captured.



Glossary of Terms

- (#) VP Piece - Any Piece that fits the listed criteria as per the Effect. Pieces' VP Values can be located on your Faction-specific Player Mat.
- Adjacent – The eight spaces on the Board around the Piece/square, orthogonally and diagonally.
- Ally – Ally Pieces are all Pieces in your Faction, and if you are playing a Team game, all of your partner's Pieces as well.
- Along Its Path - This refers to the current path of movement a Piece has already begun. Any Piece with an Effect that takes place Along Its Path is not offered the ability to change its path by this Effect, though other Effects may change the Piece's path, and this would still count as Along Its Path.
- Attack - An Attack is declared when a Piece moves into the same space as any other Piece that is not your Faction's, or an Effect initiates an Extended Attack or Shot. During an Attack, the current Player rolls 2 Dice and adds their Piece's Attack Value. Then, the Defender rolls 2 Dice and adds their Piece's Defense Value. After any Effects are applied, victory goes to the higher total, with the Defender winning on a tie. Finally, if the current Player wins, the Defender is allowed to attempt to Block.
- Attack Value - Each Piece has an assigned Attack Value, used when Attacking another Piece. These values, listed on the Player Mat, are a base value that can be added to by Effects, and are combined with a roll of 2 Dice for an Attack's total Attack Value.
- Battlefield Deck/Cards - The Battlefield Deck is distributed during the game's setup, dealing 9 cards to each Player. Any additional Battlefield Cards due to games with less than 4 Players are placed back in the box, and not used this game. The game ends when the last Player completes their Turn in which the final Battlefield Card is drawn, keeping the game at 9 Rounds. Battlefield Cards usually have a movement Effect, and are drawn at the beginning of the Battlefield Phase, offering the Player movement in addition to their Standard Move. If a Battlefield Card cannot be used, a **♠** movement may be substituted (See page 13). Battlefield Cards are not Held by the Player, and are Discarded after the Battlefield Phase.
- Battlefield Phase - The second phase of a Player's Turn. In the Battlefield Phase, the Player begins by drawing a Battlefield Card from their Player Mat. The Player may then choose to use the Battlefield Card's Effect, either before or after a Standard Move, and must at least take a Standard Move. Any Attacks that result from movement are completed before any additional movement within this phase.
- Block - If a Defender loses an Attack, they may still attempt a Block roll. Roll 1 Die, and on a 6+, the Block is successful, and the defending Piece is not Captured. If the Attacking Piece was attempting to move into the same space as the defending Piece, it must stop in the last Open Space Along Its Path up to the Attack.

- Extended Attack - An Extended Attack is a form of Attack that may target Pieces outside of the Attacking Piece's space, with limitations set forth by the Effect. Extended Attacks work like a normal Attack, rolling Attack Dice and having the Defender roll Defense Dice, and even allows a normal Block, as usual.
- Faction - A Faction is the theme of the Pieces the Player is playing, each with their own unique Pieces, Faction Ability, Boost Deck, Epic Act Deck, and Player Mat.
- Faction Ability - This Faction-specific Effect is an option in the Boost Phase for every Faction, offering a unique Effect that can give that Faction the upper hand.
- Hold - An Epic Act Card that is drawn may be played immediately, or Held for later use. Initially upon being drawn, the Player must decide to play the card, or Hold it, and there is no limit to how many Epic Act Cards may be Held.
- Ignore - This Piece's movement does not have to stop at or initiate an Attack with Pieces Along Its Path, and may continue moving through occupied spaces unhindered.
- Open Space – Any square on the Board that is unoccupied.
- Opponent - Opponent Pieces are all Pieces not in your Faction, and if you are playing a team game, not your partner's Pieces either.
- Piece - A Piece is a faction's , , , , , , and/or .
- Place – Relocate the specified Piece to any square on the Board, within the context of the Effect, Ignoring normal movement or Pieces.
- Player - This refers to any individual, Ally, or Opponent.
- Player Mat - This Faction-specific mat holds the Faction's Boost Deck and Epic Act Deck, as well as the Player's Battlefield Cards. It also has the Faction Ability listed, Piece names and values, and an overview of a Turn, for quick reference.
- Promote - This refers to when a  is replaced with any of your Captured Pieces. Promotion can be done in any of your Opponent's Rear Rank spaces, or sometimes through Effects. A  that Promotes should be swapped with the Captured Piece it is Promoting to.
- Promotion Phase - The third phase of a Player's Turn. In the Promotion Phase, the Player may Promote any of their  in an Opponent's Rear Rank.
- Rear Rank - The Starting Space for any Player's , , , , or .
- Re-Roll – An Effect that allows a Re-Roll gives the Player the option to roll all of their Dice again. You must Re-Roll all Dice, and you must take the second result.
- Restore - Take a Piece from your Faction's Captured Pieces and put it back onto the Board in one of your Faction's Starting Spaces for that Piece. You may only Restore a Piece if one of its Starting Spaces is an Open Space.

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