



A game of clever warmongering

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2-4 players

COMPONENTS

- 11 score cards representing six factions and five monsters (see box below)
- 11 scoring tokens, labeled with point values (-3, -1, 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 5, 5, 6, 8)
- Deck of 88 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
- 1 explanation card
- This rule book (duh)

Factions:

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

Monsters:

- Ooze
- Troll
- Dragon
- Golem
- Skeleton

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 COMPLEXITY

Some of the rules of the game are significantly more complex than others. You may wish to learn the game without using these harder rules. Here's a guide to how to play less complicated version of the game:

Complexity	Remove These Cards	Concepts Covered
Basic	Vampires, Flayers, Elvenking Demons, Betrayer, Trickster	Score Tokens Card Selection Final Battles
Intermediate	Demons, Betrayer, Trickster	Double-Value Cards Increasing Pick Number Resolving Special Cards
Full	(Use all cards)	Triple-Value Cards Demon Sacrifice Betrayer Rules

SETUP

Shuffle the score cards and place them in a pile in the center of the play area.

Place the scoring tokens next to the score cards. It can help to arrange them in a line sorted by value, (plus it allows those obsessed with orderliness us 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 called the **Pool**. The size of the pool depends on the number of players as follows:

- 2 players – 12 cards
- 3 players – 16 cards
- 4 players – 20 cards

The most monstrous player takes the first turn; play then rotates clockwise around the table.



Possible layout for 2 players

More details are given below:

Phase I: Score Card Phase

To start the turn, the main player draws the top score card from the face down pile and places it on the table face up.

The score cards show either factions of monsters or types of monsters. The main player for this turn gets to decide the value of the faction or monster that was drawn. To do this, he or she picks one of the unused scoring 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.

The order the score cards are scored is the same as the order that they are drawn. Therefore, it is a good idea to place the score cards in a row as they are drawn, so you end up with all 11 of them in a row.

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 score card on the eleventh turn). After the eleventh and final turn, the players use the monsters they've collected to battle for the score tokens.

Phase 2: Monster Phase

After the main player decides what the faction or monster type on the score card is worth, he or she gets to collect some monsters from the set displayed in the center. 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 picks two cards, the cards may not match in any way (same monster, same faction). For example, if he first chooses a Forest Skeleton, he could not take a Water Skeleton or a Forest Troll as a second pick. He lays his choice of cards on the table in front of him so everybody can see.

Once the main player has chosen a monster or monsters, the other players then each get to take the same number of monsters from the pool, going around the table clockwise. These monsters may be the same faction or

PLAY

There are eleven turns in the game. One player is the main player each turn, but all players will take part in every turn. Turns go like this:

I. Score Card Phase – draw a score card and assign a score token to it

II. Monster Phase – collect one or two monsters from the pool (except in four-player games, where only one monster may be chosen). Other players then collect monsters as well. Collection continues until all players have the same number of monsters or until no legal draws are possible.

III. End Phase – all players add the selected monsters to their hands. Refresh the pool to its original size.

monster type as other players' picks, but they cannot match the player's own picks for this turn. No player can collect any set of cards that contains matching cards on any given turn.

Most monster cards have a faction and a monster type and are chosen in the normal way as described above. However, some monster cards are special and are handled differently. See the sections on [*Special Cards*](#) and [*Picking-High Value Cards*](#) below for explanations as to how this works.

Phase 3: End Phase

When all players have made their picks and everybody has a chance to see them all laid out, players take the cards they picked 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.

Before the next turn, 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). If there are not enough cards to refill the pool completely (which happens rarely), it's ok – continue play with the cards that remain.

The turn is now complete. The main player role passes to the next player moving clockwise around the table. If eleven turns are complete and all score cards and scoring tokens have been assigned, move on to the Final Battles (see below).

The Matching Rules, Simplified:

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

If a player collects more than one card on a turn, none of the cards may match each other.

If your cards match other players' choices, that's OK.

If your cards match cards you took on previous turns, that's OK too.

Special cards also must not match

FINAL BATTLES

After eleven turns of play, all factions and monster types have score values assigned. At this point, players' hordes battle it out to collect the scoring tokens. This is pretty simple; it follows some easy guidelines:

- **Do Em' in the Same Order** - Take each scoring card one at a time in the same order they were drawn during the earlier part of the game.
- **Lay 'Em Out** – For each scoring card, players lay out all of their monsters of the indicated faction or monster type.
- **Most Monsters Wins** – The player with the most monsters of the faction or type wins the scoring token.
- **Keep Your Cards** – The monster cards are returned to players' hordes and can be re-used for scoring later as needed. For example, a Water Troll card counts toward both Water and Trolls for scoring.

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

Some further explanations and notes are as follows:

- **Show 'Em Anyway** - Players must show all of their monsters that match the scoring card even if they do not win the token.
- **Those Negatives** - Two of the scoring tokens are worth negative points. Players include these negative tokens as penalties when calculating their final scores. For example, if Jenna gets two tokens marked 5 and -3, her total score is 2.
- **Ties Go To Nobody** - If two players are tied with the most monsters for a particular scoring token, that token is not awarded – nobody collects it.

PICKING HIGH-VALUE CARDS

(This section is not applicable to the Basic Game—only to Intermediate and Advanced play)

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, but it's not too tricky. Here's how it works.

Many of the special cards count as two cards. These are the Vampires, the Flayers, and the Elvenking. Some special cards count as three cards – these are the Demons and the Trickster.

Remember that when you are the main player you can start the picking by choosing one or two cards (or one card only in a four-player game). With your choice, you'll set the starting value of cards picked. Other players can either match that value, or they can raise it by picking high-value cards. If they do, you'll get to draw more to match their total value of cards when the picking comes around to you again.

Raising the Stakes

It is possible for subsequent players to increase the pick number by picking special cards that are more valuable than the original picks.

Here are some rules to follow when you're picking.

THE BASIC IDEA:

Some special cards are worth two or three regular cards

If you pick these high-value cards, other players get to pick additional 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

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

- **Take Turns Picking** - The main player picks first. The chance to pick then rotates around the table clockwise until all players have an equal total value of cards. It can go around more than once.
- **Can't Start With Two High-Value Cards** - The main player can't pick two high-value cards as his or her starting pick. At least one must be a regular card.
- **Pick One at a Time** - You must choose one card at a time when picking.
- **Stop at the Limit** - Once you have met or exceeded the current highest value of cards, you cannot draw 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 on the turn. None of your picks for a turn may match, ever.
- **Locked Out** – As the turn 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 match cards you've already taken. 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 turn (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 create matches that help you avoid choosing 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 one pick each.

Strategy Note: Because of the mandatory picking, it is possible sometimes 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 complexity level you're playing at.

Basic Game

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

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

Intermediate Game

Vampires (count as two cards) – 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

Vampires	1	2	3	4
Points	1	3	6	10

them you have collected, as shown in the table above. Add these extra points to your total at the end of the Final Battles.

Elvenking (counts as two cards) – 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 after the final battles.

Flayers (count as two cards) – 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 scoring 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.

Full Game

Trickster (counts as three cards) – The Trickster is played at the end of the eleven regular turns before any of the final battles. He allows you to switch two scoring 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 choos-

ing 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 played face up in front of the player who stole him. These cards are added to the player's horde as normal at the end of the turn.

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 scoring 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 turn he is collected from the Pool.
- The player who receives the Betrayer card may play him to steal picks from others on future turns, but not on the current turn.
- The Betrayer may not be played more than once in any given turn.
- The Betrayer must be used immediately when the card to be stolen is picked – he 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 rules for the current turn. For example, you could use the Betrayer to steal a Skeleton from another player's pick and then go on 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 for the turn, 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 turn even though she acquires the Vampire as well through using the Betrayer.

Demons (count as three 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.

Weird Neutral 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 remain-

ing Trolls plus your Demon, who counts towards the total whenever he is given a sacrifice.

Playing Players 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 scoring 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 scoring 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 scoring tokens (including negative ones) wins.

A SAMPLE TURN

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 Flayer, 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 Flayer. Flayers 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.