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Work-in-Progress Rulebook

These rules are currently in active development and are subject to change during testing and balancing. Card wording, terminology, section placement, layouts, examples, and gameplay rules may change between versions. If something seems unclear, use your best judgment and prioritize card text when resolving interactions. Please reach out if you have any feedback or questions

Thank you for helping test Boss Battle!

Welcome to Boss Battle!

After centuries of boss monsters reigning over the realm of Galdor, a band of heroes think they can take it back! Assemble your party of Heroes to defeat the different bosses that reign over the realm of Galdor! Or embody the Boss and use your unique abilities to crush the Heroes who dare oppose you.

Boss Battle is a lane based combat strategy card game that delivers the experience of boss fights from popular tabletop RPGs without all the roleplay beforehand. Becoming the mastermind responsible for torturing your friends is not limited to the GM anymore!

Crush friends and frenemies alike in this all-out brawl to come out on top!

Each Boss comes with its own set of strengths, challenges to overcome, and weaknesses to exploit. Every battle is a test of teamwork, timing, and survival. Bosses come with unique abilities and powers, forcing heroes to think on their feet, coordinate, and even sacrifice themselves. Your party is as strong as its weakest link, and the Boss can't wait to break you!

Core Idea

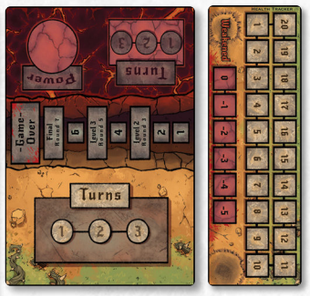
Boss Battle is a lane-based combat strategy card game where timing is everything. Build your plan by placing cards into the Queue, then watch as each action moves closer to resolution. Every move matters... will your strategy outpace your opponent's, or unravel before it strikes?

Components

Base Game (Boss Battle: Ash & Bone)

1 six-fold game board





(Coming soon)

4 Hero character boards

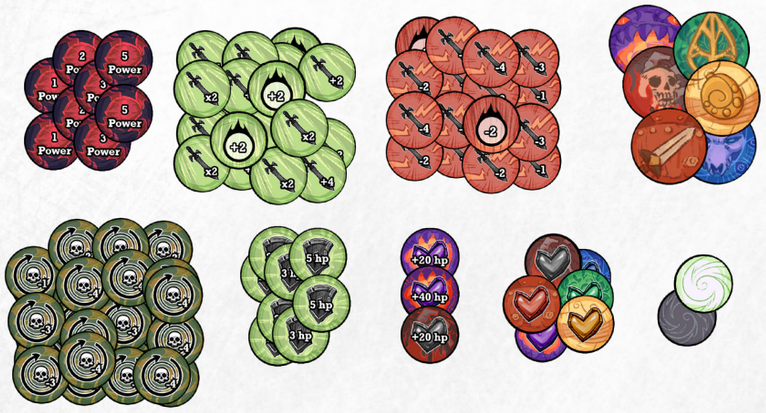


2 Boss character boards



92 tokens

8 Boss Power Tokens
32 Buff/Debuff Tokens
30 Damage Tokens
8 Shield HP Tokens
6 Health Tokens
2 Boss Turn Tokens
4 Hero Turn Tokens
2 Round Tokens



238 cards



31 Priestess cards



28 Warrior cards



28 Mage cards



28 Thief cards



61 Dragon cards



62 Necromancer cards

24 deck dividers
6 character pamphlets
1 Rules Walkthrough
1 Rules Resource

Automated Bosses & Heroes

- 136 cards
- 6 deck dividers

The Board

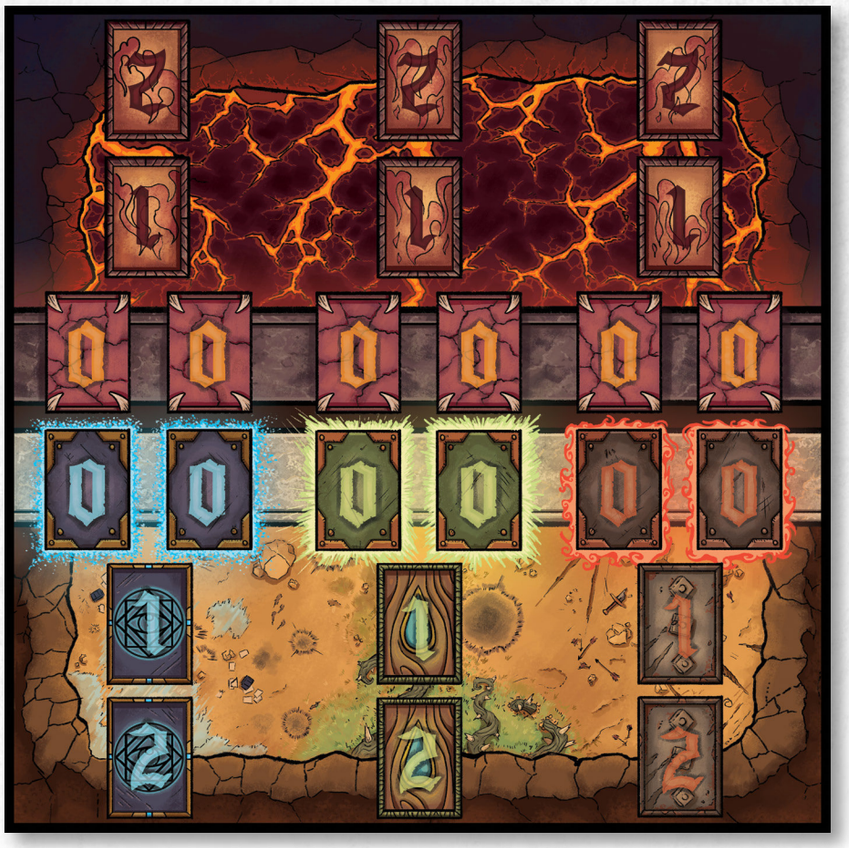
The Queue Board is a battlefield split between the Boss and Heroes. Each side fights across 3 lanes, which are divided into slots 2, 1, and 0. With every round, cards march forward by 1 slot each round.

BOSS

HEROES

QUEUE

The half the board that the Boss or Heroes place cards.



LANE

Lane: The column a character or card controls.

How to Win

BOSS:

- When all heroes are at or below 0 HP at the end of the Countdown Phase.

Or

- The Boss round token reaches Game Over.

HEROES:

- The Boss's HP is at or below 0 at the end of the Countdown Phase.

DRAW:

- If all heroes and the Boss are at or below 0 HP at the end of Countdown Phase.

Game Setup

Place the Queue Board (1), Health Board (2) and Round Board (3)

Place Round Tokens on Round 1 (4)

Boss Decks



Boss Board

Boss

1 Queue Board



2 Health Board





4

3 Round Board



Deck



Deck



Deck

Heroes

Hero Boards

Choose Your Role

Boss or Hero

If you like being in control - and think there is an "I" in team - then play one of the bosses.
It's like being a dungeon master, but the goal is to torment and crush the party so don't hold back.

If you like working together, living out a specific class fantasy, or being Big Dang Heroes, playing a hero is for you.



Heroes

Claim a lane on your side of the Queue. This will be the lane you will take damage in.

Place your Health token on the HP board at your starting HP, as indicated on your character pamphlet.

Note: If playing with fewer than 3 Heroes, unused Hero lanes become **Mercenary Heroes**. See page 24.

Boss

The Boss takes damage in all 3 lanes on their side of the board.

1. Place your Health token on the HP board at your starting HP, as indicated on your character pamphlet.
2. Place the amount of power tokens - indicated on your character pamphlet - in the power pool on the Round board.

Note: All Bosses begin above 20 HP. Place the Health token on the matching Health Board value using the appropriate modifier side (+20, +40, etc.).

Example: A Boss with 50 HP uses the +40 side on the 10 space. When reduced below 41 HP, flip the token to the +20 side.

Starting Level - All Heroes and the Boss begin the game at Level 1.

For Heroes, this means they start with their **Level 0 base deck plus the Level 1 cards chosen during Deck Setup**. The Boss starts with access to their **Level 1 deck.**



Deck Setup

Build your Deck - First Time Playing?

For your first game, follow the guided setup in the Tutorial Book or your character pamphlet. Instead of shuffling, you'll build a pre-arranged deck in a specific order to learn the flow of the game.

Boss Decks

Build Your Deck - Standard

1. Choose your Boss.
2. Separate level 1, 2, and 3 decks. Shuffle each level deck separately.
3. Place each deck face down in the draw pile in numerical order on the Boss Board.



LEVEL



Hero Decks

Build your Deck - Standard

1. Separate level 0, 1, 2, and 3 cards.
2. Place level 0 cards onto your chosen lanes draw pile.
3. Shuffle level 1 deck and draw 3 cards.
4. Choose 2 to keep, and shuffle them into your Level 0 deck.
5. This is your base deck.
6. Place your “Special” card (The card will have “Special” in the name) next to your deck.
7. Place the remaining cards back into the box.

When you level up, repeat the process for each respective level (E.g. at Level 2 you will shuffle and draw from the Level 2 Deck, from the Level 3 deck at level 3.)

Tip: Heroes are recommended to work together. You may discuss the level up cards you drew with your party and strategize the best ones that fit your party dynamic best.



LEVEL







PICK 1 LANE

Gameplay Phases

Each round follows these phases in order:

1. **Draw Phase** – Players draw cards
2. **Placement Phase** – Boss and Heroes take **turns** placing cards
3. **Resolution Phase** – Cards in the 0-slot resolve
4. **Countdown Phase** – All cards and tokens move forward one round slot.

Repeat this cycle for 7 rounds or until someone wins.





Draw Phase

Heroes

- Heroes, draw up to their base hand size listed on your character pamphlet.
- If you already have cards equal to or greater than your hand size during the Draw Phase, do not draw.
- Heroes can show each other their hand.
- Base hand size increases every time Heroes level up.



Boss

- The Boss's **hand size is equal to their current Power** within the power pool on the Round board.
- During Draw Phase, draw until you have cards equal to your current Power.
- If you already have cards equal to or greater than your Power, do not draw.
- The Boss's Power increases when they Level Up.

Note: Card effects may still cause players to draw beyond their hand size.

Note: During Draw Phase of round 1, you may put up to 2 undesired cards on the bottom of the deck and draw that many cards. If the Boss has no cards to place into the Queue on round 1, Boss reshuffles and draws again.

Boss: Drawing Power

During the Draw Phase, the Boss may draw cards with a total Power cost up to their current **Power**.

Decks by Level

- Level 1: Draw from Level 1 deck
- Level 2: Draw from Level 1 or Level 2 decks
- Level 3: Draw from Level 1, 2, or 3 decks

Card Draw Cost

Each card costs Power equal to its Level when drawn:

- Level 1 card = 1 Power
- Level 2 card = 2 Power
- Level 3 card = 3 Power

Choose any combination of available cards up to your current Power.

Example: At Level 2 with 8 Power, the Boss may draw two Level 2 cards and four Level 1 cards.

Power Changes

Bosses have many ways to permanently increase their power outside of leveling up. As their power increases, this will affect how many cards can be drawn in the next round's Draw Phase.

Bosses may gain unlimited Power, but their maximum drawing Power during Draw Phase is capped at 12.



Placement Phase

Turn Sequence

During the Placement Phase, players take turns placing cards into the Queue in alternating order:

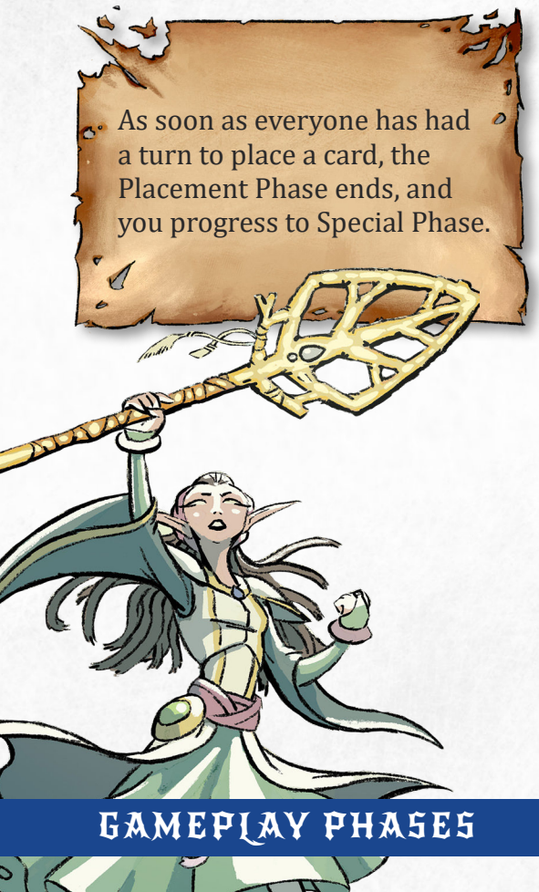
- The **Boss always goes first**
- After each Boss placement, **one Hero places a card**
- Heroes choose among themselves which Hero places each time
- Each Hero may place **only 1 card per round**

This continues until all Heroes have placed a card.

Example:

1. Boss places a card
2. Mage places a card
3. Boss places a card
4. Priestess places a card
5. Boss places a card
6. Warrior places a card





Core Placement Rules

- Players can only place **1 card per turn**
- Pay the cost **before placing a card**
- A slot may contain only 1 card, and slots with Damage Tokens are unavailable for placement
- **The Card is King!** Card effects take priority over standard rules
- After taking your turn, place your turn token on the space on the round board. Bosses will move their turn token over.

On Your Turn

On your turn, choose one:

- Place a card
- Rest

How to Place a Card

When you place a card, you choose where it goes in the Queue and pay the cost to get it there.

1. **Choose a lane**
   Decide which lane the card will affect.
   Heroes may place cards in any lane on their side of the Queue, not just their own.
2. **Choose a valid slot**
   The card must be placed in a slot that matches its Round Slot number.
3. **Pay the cost**
   Pay all costs shown on the card.
   If you cannot pay the cost, the card cannot be played.
   You cannot use the card you are trying to play as the cost.
4. **Check the slot**
   - If the slot is empty, continue
   - If the slot is occupied, you must **discard the card in that slot** if you wish to place your card. This includes activated cards
5. **Place the card**
   Put the card into the chosen slot on your side of the Queue.
6. **Resolve "When placed" effects**
   If the card has a "When placed" effect, resolve it immediately.

If you cannot place a card, you must **Rest**.

Costs

Cards may require one or more costs:

Discard: Discard cards from your hand

- Heroes cannot discard cards for another Hero

Bump Back: Move a card or token on your side of the Queue back 1 slot

- Heroes may volunteer their own cards
- If a card is bumped out of the Queue, discard it
- Damage Tokens cannot be bumped out of the Queue
- A card or token must successfully move back in order to pay a bump back cost.

Some cards:

- Have multiple cost options (choose one)
- Have no cost
- Have x2 (double) cost. If card has multiple card cost option, choose one to pay x2

See Bump Back Chain Rules (pg. 20) for advanced interactions.

Rest

Instead of placing a card, choose **2 different actions**:

- **Heal:** Gain 3 HP
- **Discard:** Discard any number of cards
- **Draw:** Draw 1 card. Boss draws power equal to current level
- **Remove:** Remove a Damage Token from your side of the Queue

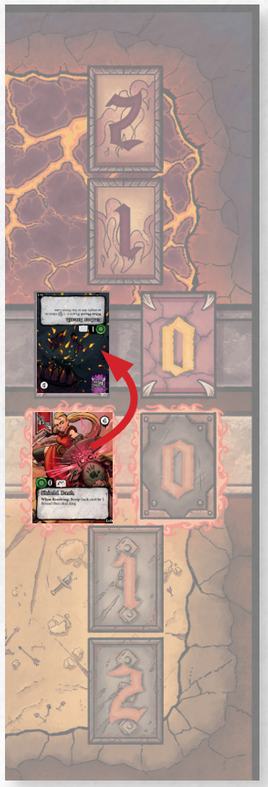
Notes for Placement Phase

- Skill and Counter cards can be played anytime if conditions are met
- Some cards allow players to act outside normal turn rules
- In all cases, **card text overrides standard rules**

Targeting

Choose a card, character or lane that will receive a card's effect and/or damage.

- Place a card in a lane to affect that lane
- You may place cards in ally lanes to help them
- Some cards target groups of cards such as card types, ability types or a whole lane of cards.
- Some cards affect the **entire Queue**



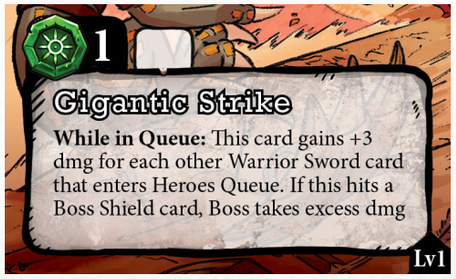
Example: Shield bash targeting Ember Breath

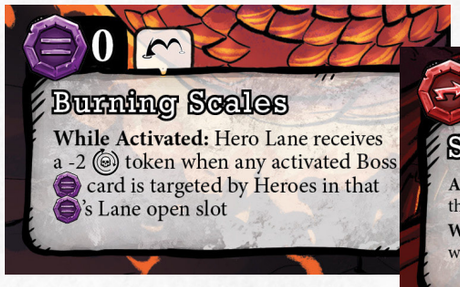


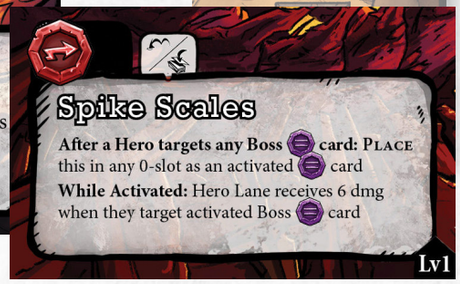
Targeting a card, character or lane may trigger a different card's effect (more on Effect Timing on pg. 20). When targeting groups of cards, multiple different card effects may trigger.

Example: Gigantic Strike targeting Spike Scales and Burning Scales in the same lane









Resolution Phase

All cards in the **0-slot** resolve in **descending Speed order** (6 → 1) found in the top right corner of the card.

If multiple cards share the same Speed:

- **Boss cards resolve first**.
- If tied between Heroes, the players choose the order.

Tip: Speed determines initiative in combat and timing-based effects. Strategic placement of faster cards can interrupt or eliminate slower threats before they activate.

Resolving a Card

Resolve one card at a time:

1. Apply its effects and conditions.
2. Apply damage or healing.
3. Update Health and the Queue as needed.
4. Discard the card.

Rules During Resolution

- A card that is currently resolving cannot be used to pay the cost of a card it places.
  - **Example:** If the Thief is resolving **Quick Stab** and its effect places another **Quick Stab**, the resolving **Quick Stab** cannot be used to pay the new card's bump back cost.
- If damage is halved and results in a fraction, **round up**.
- Resolve as much of a card as possible; **skip any part that cannot resolve**.



Tip: If multiple cards are resolving and it gets overwhelming, resolve one card at a time for clarity and fairness.



Countdown Phase



1. During the Countdown Phase, cards and tokens move forward by 1 round.
2. Example: Slot 1 card goes to slot 0, Slot 2 card goes to slot 1.
3. Damage Tokens then deal damage in the lane they are in.
4. Any activated Minion cards are deactivated by turning them upright again.
5. Move the round counters ahead by one and return all turn tokens.

If both 0-Slots are full, no cards or tokens move forward in that Lane. However, tokens will still do damage.

Heroes and Boss take their Turn tokens back and move their round token up by 1 round. If either side's round token has advanced to **round 3 or 5** check the Level Up rules on page 22.

End Game

The game ends at the end of Countdown Phase when one of the following conditions is met:

Boss wins when all heroes are at or below 0 HP or the Boss's round token reaches Game Over on the round tracker.

Heroes win when the Boss's HP is at or below 0 at the end of the Countdown Phase.

The game is a draw if all players are at or below 0 HP at the end of the Countdown Phase.



Note: Always finish the round before determining the winner. Players do not win during the Resolution Phase, even if HP reaches 0.

Core Rules Reference

Card Anatomy

Each card contains key information that determines how it is played, what it costs, and what it does.



1 Round Slot Number

This number indicates which round slot the player may place a card into their side of the Queue.

Example: A Round 1 card is placed in the Round 1 slot.

2 Speed

Each card has a **Speed** value (1–6), shown at the top of the card.

During the **Resolution Phase**, cards in the **0-Slot** resolve in **descending Speed order** (6 → 1).

If multiple cards have the same Speed:

- **Boss cards resolve first**.
- If tied between Heroes, the players choose the order.

Note: Speed determines initiative and timing—faster cards resolve before slower ones.

3 Cost

What is needed to play this card. For more information see page 13 in Placement Phase.

DESCRIPTION EXAMPLE: STRIKE

WHEN: While in Queue

WHO: Warrior Sword cards

WHAT: This card gains +2 damage when the target enters the Hero's Queue

4 Ability Types

The icon or icons in the top-left corner indicates the card's Ability Type, such as Damage, Healing, Draw, or Queue effects. A card may have multiple ability types listed in their banner. Cards with more than one ability type are counted as each type of ability. ***[Example: Minion Card].*** The default target for Ability types will be the current Hero/Boss Lane the card is placed in.



Sword — Deals damage to the opponent's Lane by lowering their HP.

- **Note: Forced damage** can't be blocked, redirected, or reduced.



Heart — Recovers damage by increasing the HP of the Hero or Boss in the Lane.

- **Note:** Heroes or Boss **cannot exceed their Max HP**.



Damage ALL / Heal ALL — Affects all lanes on the targeted side.

- Damage All: Deal damage to all opponents' lanes. Each lane receives the damage indicated
- Heal All: Restore HP to all allies' lanes.Each lane receives the healing indicated



Shield — Blocks incoming damage in its lane. Each Shield has its own HP and is destroyed when reduced to 0 HP.
Damage assigned to a lane with a Shield must be assigned to one Shield in that lane first. Excess damage does not carry over to the Hero or Boss.



Queue — Affects cards in the Queue, such as speeding up, slowing down, or **stunning** cards.



Damage Tokens — Places or removes **Damage Tokens** in the Queue.



Draw — Allows drawing of cards as described by the effect.



Discard — Removes cards from the hand or board as specified.



Buff / Debuff — Modifies value/s on a card banner (such as damage or healing). Use the appropriate tokens on the card to track these modifiers. Cards with both damage and healing in their banner receive buffs or debuffs for both ability types when any modifiers are applied.



Utility - Abilities that do not deal damage, heal, or fall under another ability type. These effects are defined entirely by the card's description.

Description

The description text defines:

- When the card activates
- What it targets
- What it does

The default target for Description effects will be the current Hero/Boss Lane the card is placed in and thus will not be stated.

Effect Timing
Cards indicate when their effects occur: This indicator is called a 'trigger'

- **"When placed" / "When resolving"**: Resolve once.
- **"While Active" / "While Activated"**: Continuous until the card is removed.
- **"If" / "When"**: Trigger each time the condition is met.

If a card has multiple effects, resolve them in the order listed.
If part of an effect cannot resolve, skip that part.

Description effects always resolve before or during Ability Types effects (pg. xx).

Refer to the Glossary (pg. xx) for definitions of card terms.

Some cards have 'instead' effects: These effects replacement the first effect

5 Level

The number at the bottom of the card is its **Level**, indicating its power.

As players **Level Up** (pg. xx), they gain access to higher-level cards.

- **Hero Levels:** 0–3
- **Boss Levels:** 1–3

For the Boss, a card's Level also determines its **Power cost to draw**.
Example: A Level 1 card costs 1 Power to draw.

Card Types



Resolution Cards

- Resolve in the 0-Slot during the Resolution Phase.
- Resolve their Ability Type effects at their current speed.
- Once resolved, place it in the discard.



Active Cards

- Effects begin as soon as they are placed in the Queue.Turn these cards sideways when placed in the Queue
- Turn the card sideways to show it's active.
- Remain active until they reach the 0-Slot and resolve during the Resolution Phase at current speed.
- Active card effects stack.
- Once resolved, active card effects end.then goes to Discard



Field Cards

- Activate by turning the card sideways in the round 0-slot during the Resolution Phase. Card remains in the 0-slot until destroyed. (HP reduced to 0).
- Absorbs all incoming damage in the lane (excess damage is not carried over). This includes damage from dmg tokens
- Cannot be bumped back once activated.
- Retains HP across rounds. (does not recover health)
- Turn sideways to show activation.

Minion Cards

- A special type of Field card
- Activate by turning the card sideways in the round 0-slot during the Resolution Phase.
- The Ability Type effect resolves in its lane when the card activates (see pg xx for more info on ability types)
- After resolving, the Minion card remains in the Queue until destroyed. (HP reduced to 0) or deactivated during the Countdown Phase by turning it upright.
- This card will activate the following round at the current speed again.
- While deactivated, Minion cards can be bumped back but cannot take HP damage.



Counter Cards

Counter cards can be played at any time if the conditions are met.

- Does not count as a turn.
- Played off to the side and does not enter the Queue.
- Resolve based on condition timing:
  - ‘Before’ - Resolve immediately before the current resolving card or effect.
  - ‘After’ - Resolve immediately after the current card or effect finishes
  - ‘If’ - Resolve Immediately when the condition is present
    - May modify or nullify the resolving card’s effects.
    - After the Counter card resolves, resolve the next fastest card in the Queue.
    - Discard immediately after resolving.
    - Counter card damage targets from the card owner’s lane unless otherwise stated.
    - Some cards have multiple conditions. Only 1 of these can be resolved

Passive, Special and Ultimate Cards

Some characters have unique Ability cards: Passives, Specials, and Ultimates. These abilities follow their own rules and are not part of a player’s hand. You can identify these cards at they have “Special/Passive/Ultimate - “ in the name

Passive - An ability that is always active while its condition is met.

Special - Special cards are kept next to their Draw pile. Specials can be used whenever the condition is met like normal Skill cards and does not count as a turn.

After use, they do not go to discard, instead flip the Special card over. Specials must be refreshed before they can be used again.

Hero Specials refresh when leveling up or becoming Weakened. Boss Specials refresh at the start of each round.

At the beginning of each Resolution Phase, Boss Specials automatically activate if their listed condition is met. Boss Specials refresh at the beginning of every round.

Ultimate - A powerful Boss ability that can only be used once per game when its condition is met.

Queue and Timing Advanced Mechanics

Bump Back Rules

When a card or token is bumped back, move it back 1 slot in the Queue.

If that slot is occupied, the card or token in that slot is bumped back as well. This is called a bump back chain. Continue this chain until an empty slot is reached or something is pushed out of the Queue.

Similarly, if 2 cards are bumped into the 1-slot at the same time, the player doing the bump back chooses which card to bump back first. The second card bumped back will start a bump back chain.

Cards pushed out of the Queue are discarded and any ongoing effects from that card immediately end.

Example:

- A card or token in the 0-slot moves to the 1-slot.
- A card or token in the 1-slot moves to the 2-slot.
- A card in the 2-slot that is bumped back is pushed out of the Queue and discarded.



Bumping Back Tokens

Tokens may be bumped back just like cards and may be used to pay a Bump Back cost.

Tokens **cannot** be bumped out of the Queue.If a token in the 2-slot would be bumped back, it remains in place and the bump back chain immediately ends.

Tokens leave the Queue only if:

- They resolve naturally when in 0-slot at the end of Resolution Phase
- They are removed by Rest
- A card effect removes them

Response Window for Skills & Counters

A Response Window opens whenever a condition for a Skill or Counter card is met. For the basics on Skill or Counter cards see pg xx.

The opposing side has the first opportunity to respond. Players then alternate playing Skill or Counter cards.

If a player passes, the opposing side may still respond. The window closes only when both sides pass in succession.

Each Skill or Counter card played creates a new Response Window. The previous condition is no longer valid.

Example

- A Hero Rests, opening a Response Window.
- The Boss chooses not to respond.
- The Warrior plays Over Extend.
- This creates a new Response Window.
- The original “Hero Rested” condition is no longer valid, so a second Over Extend cannot be played.

Status and Conditions

Weakened State Overview

There are times when a hero's health falls at or below 0. If at least 1 hero's health is above 0 after the Countdown Phase, all heroes remain alive and in the game.

When a hero's health falls to or below 0, they are considered weakened and can still participate in battle.

Note: All heroes' health needs to be 0 or below after the Countdown Phase for every hero to be considered dead.

Weakened Rules

Once a Hero's Health reaches 0 or below, that Hero becomes Weakened. If a hero is reduced to 0 or below during a card's resolution, complete that card's effects first. Afterwards the weakened cost must be paid For every card in the Queue that belongs to the weakened Hero, that Hero may choose any combination of the following:

- Discard from their hand.
- Bump back any one card in the Queue.

If the cost cannot be paid, remove one card from the heroes queue for each cost not paid

Example:

If there are 2 cards in the Queue that belong to that hero, that hero must either bump back 2 cards, discard 2 cards from their hand, or a combination of both.

Fighting While Weakened

While weakened, the hero draws 1 fewer card during the Draw Phase.

Once a hero's HP is above 0, they are no longer considered weakened and may resume drawing their full base hand size at the next Draw Phase.

Boss Empowerment (Hero Weakened)

Every time a hero is weakened, the Boss:

1. The Boss advances 1 round on the Round Tracker.
2. Gains 1 power into their power pool.
3. Boss can gain this bonus once per Hero per Round

The Boss is never weakened. If the Boss's health falls and remains at 0 or below after the Countdown Phase, the heroes win.

Note: Boss can gain rounds faster than Heroes and therefore Level up and reach Game Over faster.

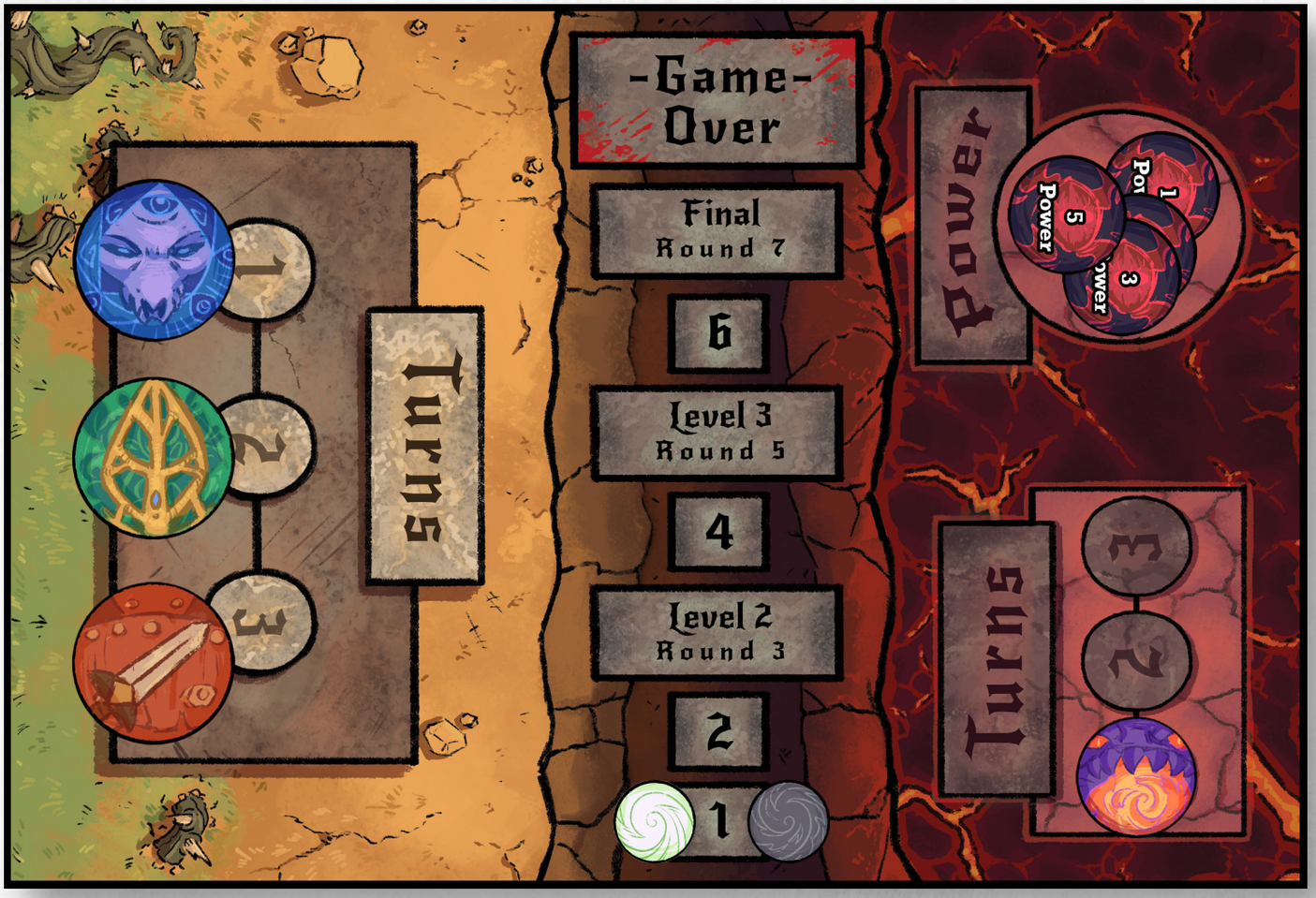


Level Up

Leveling up allows players to unlock stronger cards and gain new advantages as the battle progresses.

When Leveling Happens

- Heroes and Bosses begin the game at Level 1.
- Heroes: Level up before the Draw Phase on Rounds 3 and 5.
- Boss: Level up immediately when the counter hits Rounds 3 and 5.
- Each Level Up bonus can only be gained once per game, even if the Round Tracker moves backward and reaches that Level Up space again.



Boss Level Up

- When leveling up, the Boss heals HP equal to their current Power before increasing their Power from the level up.
- Gain Power:
- +3 Power at Level 2
- +2 Power at Level 3
- At Level 2, the Boss may draw from the **Level 2 deck** (cards cost 2 Power each)
- At Level 3, the Boss may draw from the **Level 3 deck** (cards cost 3 Power each)

Hero Level Up

- Gain +1 to base hand size each time you level up
- Heal 3 HP
- Level 2 (Round 3)
- Shuffle Level 2 cards. Draw the top 3 cards of the level 2 deck.
- Choose 2 to keep
- Shuffle them into your Level 0 deck

Level 3 (Round 5)

Repeat the same process as Level 2, using **Level 3 cards**.

Deck Handling Rules

- Shuffle Level Up cards into your **draw pile only**
- Return any unused Level Up cards to the box
- Do not shuffle Level Up cards into your discard pile



Tokens

Damage Tokens (Dmg Tokens)



Occupy **Round Slots** like cards.

Deal damage during the **Countdown Phase**
(see pg.15 for Countdown Phase)

Removed at the end of the **Resolution Phase** if in the 0-Slot.

They can be bumped back but **cannot be bumped out of the Queue**

Shield effects can block this damage.

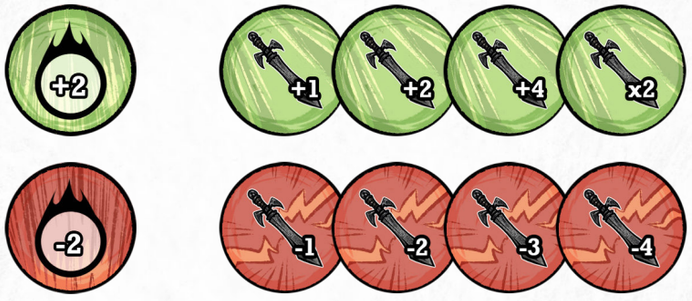
Cannot be placed if there is no open round slot to place them.

Shield Tokens



Placed on a Field/Minion card to keep track of how much HP it has left. When reduced to 0 HP, the card is **destroyed**. Excess damage to Shields **does not ordinarily carry over** to the Hero or Boss.

Buff/Debuff Tokens



Used to keep track of increases or decreases of numbers on cards. Place directly on affected cards in the Queue. **Multipliers are applied to Base Damage first**, then add/subtract/multiply buffs or debuffs.

Power Tokens



Used to keep track of the number of cards the Boss can draw.



Automated Modes

These modes are intended for games with less than 4 players and require either the automated Boss Deck or the Automated Heroes/Mercenary Hero deck. The Automated Heroes and Mercenary Heroes share the same deck. Automated Heroes play themselves while Mercenaries allow for player control and more strategic play.

Mercenary Heroes

Use this mode if there are less than 3 Hero players and they want more control over the party placement.Mercenaries are hybrid players and thus require some decision making. The top line of each mercenary card will have a suggested placement for the card. This suggestion is great for players new to the mercenary class and helps speed up early play. As the game progresses and class knowledge increases, it is encouraged to move away from the suggested placement if needed in favor of a more strategic placement. Use the following rules for this setup.

Setup

Any unused Hero Lanes become Mercenary Heroes. Select any of the unchosen Heroes to help round out your party (choose wisely).

Once chosen, put the health token for the mercenary hero on the health board at their starting HP.

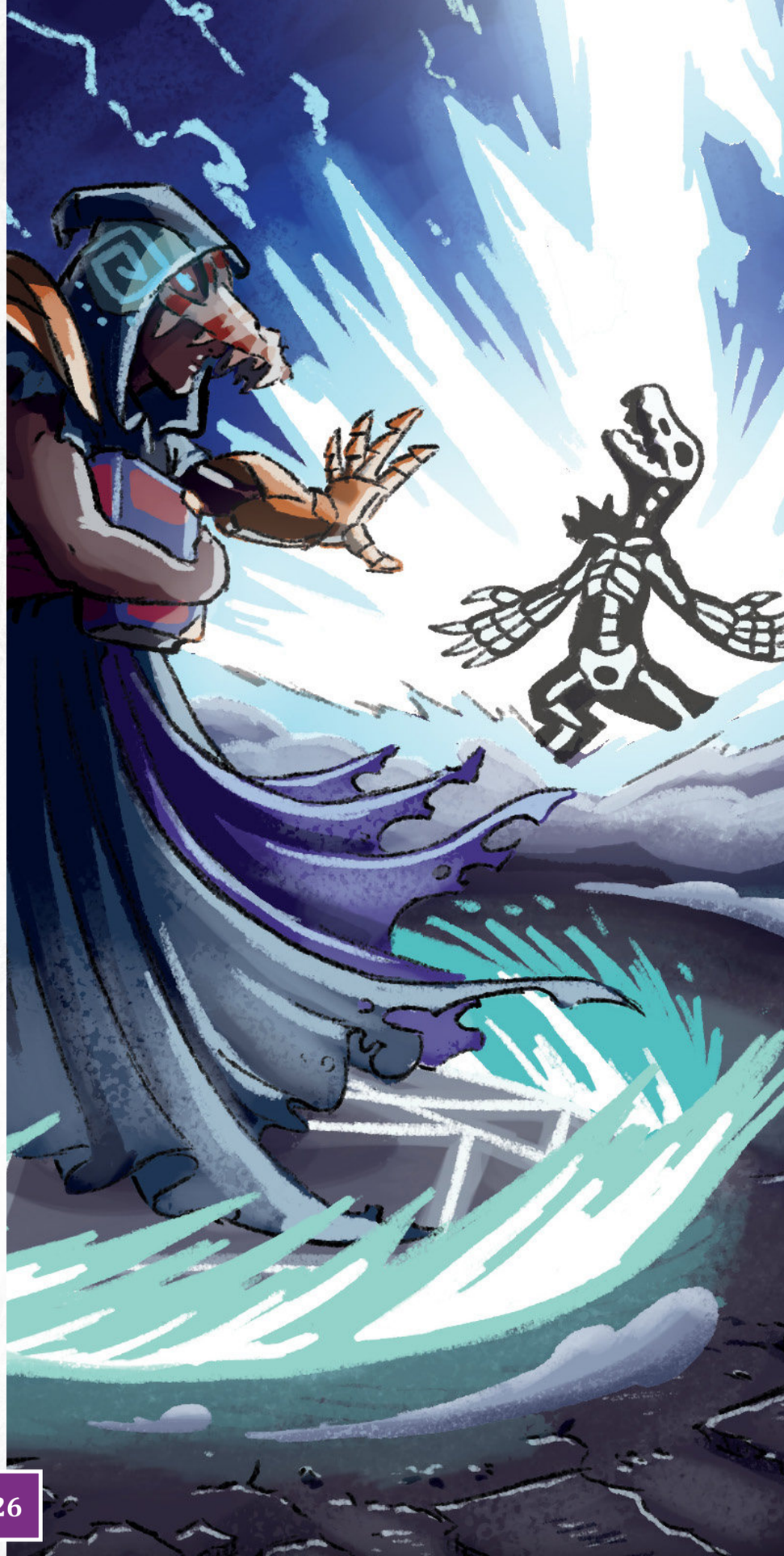
Deck Setup

Set up Mercenary decks using the standard deck setup rules (pg. xx), but draw only two cards from the Level 1 deck before shuffling them into the Level 0 deck.

Placement Phase

At the beginning of this phase, flip the top card of the mercenary's deck. The Mercenary's hand size is 0. During the Heroes' turn, players may choose a Hero or a **Mercenary** to place a card.

Note: *Mercenaries do not have a hand. Their deck is used instead when resolving card effects and costs.*



Placing a Mercenary Card

- Attempt to place the flipped card as normal for their turn. Afterward turn token is placed, flip the next card in the deck
- If Heroes don't want to place this card, they may do 1 additional card flip by putting it on the bottom of the deck then flip the next card.
- You may discard the card currently in the required slot to place it.
- If Heroes don't want to place the second card, the Mercenary rests.
  (see pg. xx for Resting rules)

Using Counter Cards

- These cards have 'When Flipped' effects that resolve immediately as soon as this card is flipped from the deck.
- Some of these cards have 'On (Hero's) Turn' effect that resolves when the Hero chooses it the Mercenary's turn. The Mercenary cannot place a card if this type of card is on top of the deck and a card effect has the Mercenary place a card.

Costs:

- Discard costs → discard from the top of the Mercenary deck
- If a Bump Back cost cannot be paid, place the card **at no cost**

Resolving the Card:

- Resolve the card exactly as if a Hero played it.
- "When placed" effects happen immediately.
- The card uses the Mercenary's lane for targeting and effects.

Using Special Ability

- Once the Special ability condition is met, use the special ability (see pg.19 for Passives, Specials, and Ultimates)

If the Card Cannot be Placed

- You are not required to discard the card in the required slot and may place the card on the bottom of the deck and draw again

If the second card is not placed:

- Place it on the top or bottom of the deck
- The Mercenary **Rests instead**

Mercenary Rest

When a Mercenary Rests, perform the first available option:

1. Remove Token (remove token in slot that couldn't be placed first)
2. Heal HP
3. Discard the flipped card
4. Place the flipped card to the bottom of the deck then flip the next card

Using Mercenary Cards

Mercenaries are hybrid players and thus require some decision making. The top line of each mercenary card will have a suggested placement for the card. This suggestion is great for players new to the mercenary class and helps speed up early play. As the game progresses and class knowledge increases, it is encouraged to move away from the suggested placement if needed in favor of a more strategic placement.

Mercenary Card Effects

When a Mercenary card or a card targeting a Mercenary refers to drawing, discarding, or selecting cards, use the following rules:

- **Draw:** Draw the requested number of cards. You may place any number on the top or bottom of the deck in any order.
  - Skill and Counter cards drawn this way can be placed as a trap or go back on the top or bottom of the deck
- **Place:** Take the top card of the deck and place it into the Queue. If the cost cannot be paid, place it for free
- **Draw and Place:** Draw the requested number of cards. Choose requested number of cards to place in the queue then place any number on the top or bottom of the deck in any order
  - This rule also applies to 'select from Discard and Place'.
  - If a skill card is drawn and the condition has been met, you may choose to resolve it instead of placing a card. If 2 cards are to be placed, you may resolve a skill card and place 1 card in the Queue.
- **Discard:** Place the top card of the deck into the discard pile
- **Select from Discard:** Choose a card from the discard pile and place it on the top or bottom of the deck

Skill / Counter Cards

If a Skill or Counter Card is drawn:

- Place it in the Trap Area
- Follow Trap rules (pg. xx)

Mercenary Level Up

- Shuffle the Mercenary's level 2 cards and draw the top 2 cards
- Shuffle those cards into the Mercenary deck
- Like Player Heroes, this repeats when reaching level 3

After Mercenaries reach Level 2 they gain the following during Placement Phase:

- Mercenary gains 1 additional card flip per level. [Example: putting the 1st and 2nd card on the bottom and placing the 3rd]



Solo: Automated Heroes

One player controls the Boss. The 3 Heroes are controlled using automated rules.

Deck Setup & Difficulty Settings

Choose a difficulty level before starting.

Casual

- Heroes use only their **Level 0** cards for the entire game.
- When Heroes level up, they **heal HP only** and do not gain new cards.

Standard

- Shuffle **2 random level 1** cards into each Hero's respective deck at the start of the game.
- When Heroes Level Up, shuffle 2 random cards of the next level's cards into that Hero's deck.

Hard

- Use all **Standard** rules.
- The Hero with the **lowest HP** takes **2 turns each round.** This can change from round to round.

Elite

- Use all **Hard** rules.
- All Heroes take **2 turns each round.**

Co-op: Automated Boss

This mode is for 1–3 Hero players versus an automated Boss. Use the following rules for this setup.

Deck Setup & Difficulty Settings

Choose a difficulty level before starting.

Casual

- Automated Boss starts with **10 less HP**.
- No Trap deck

Standard

- The Boss has a Trap deck consisting of Counter cards, Rest cards and blank cards. At the beginning of each Draw Phase, draw the top card of the Trap deck and place it in the Trap area
- When the Automated Boss Levels Up, shuffle new level deck into level 1 deck. Continue shuffling until the new level card is on top of the deck.

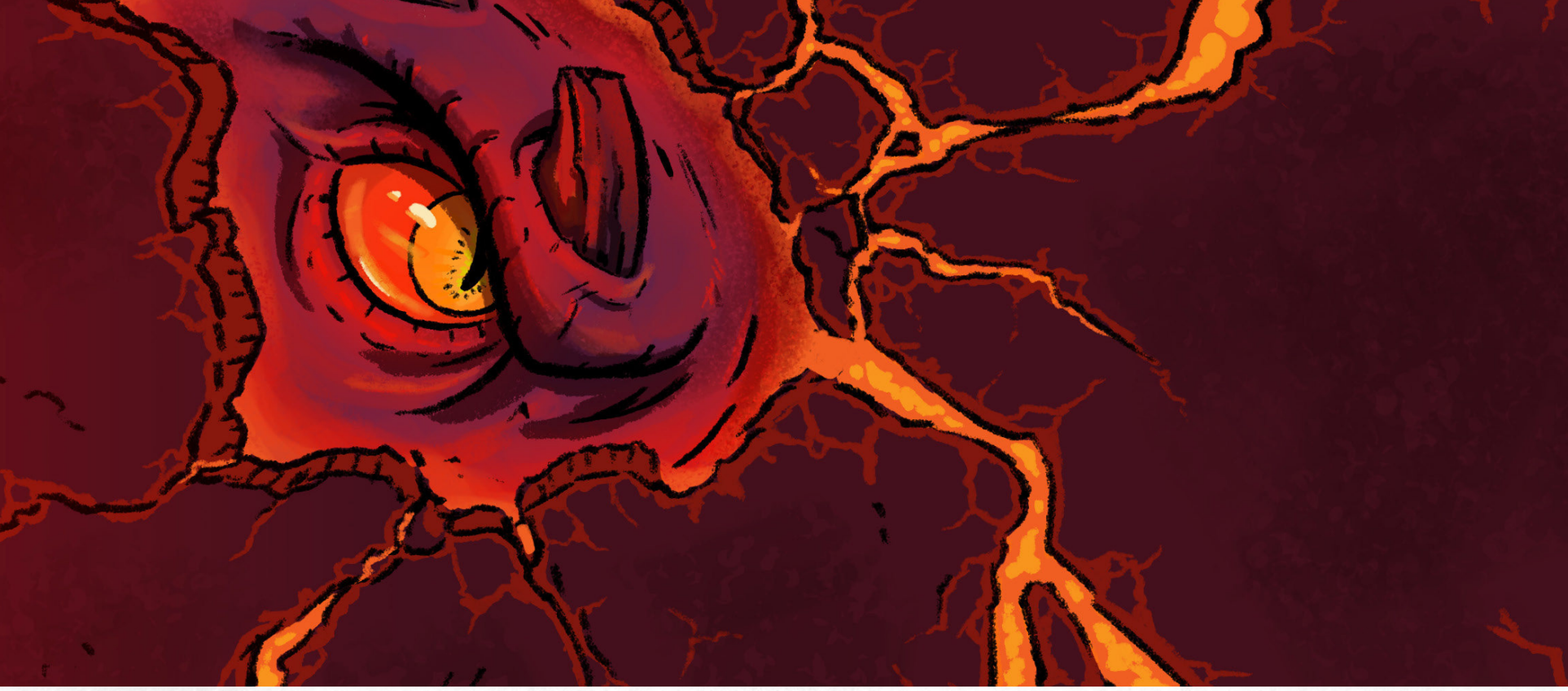
Hard

- Use all **Standard** rules.
- Before the game begins, place the top **2 Level 1 Boss cards** into the Queue at no cost. Resolve all **When Placed** effects normally in the order they were placed.
- Automated Boss may have **2 Traps total** in play. If a new Trap is placed beyond the limit, replace the oldest Trap.
- Whenever the Automated Boss Levels Up, place the top **2 cards** of the newly unlocked level deck into the Queue then shuffle the rest into the remaining deck
    - Example: If the Boss levels from 1 to 2, place the top 2 Level 2 cards into the Queue then shuffle the rest into the level 1 deck.

Elite

- Use all **Standard** rules.
- Automated Boss starts with **+10 HP**.
- Before the game begins, place the top **2 Level 2 Boss cards** into the Queue at no cost.
- Automated Boss draws **2 new Traps per Round**. If a new Trap is placed beyond the limit, replace the oldest Trap.
- At the start of **Rounds 3 and 5**, place the top **2 Level 3 Boss cards** into the Queue..





Automation Rules Reference

Placement Phase

Use these rules whenever controlling an **Automated Boss** or **Automated Heroes.** Both Automated Boss and Automated Heroes hand sizes are 0.

During each Placement turn:

1. Draw the top card of that Player's deck.
2. Ignore all card costs for automated players
3. Use the first line of each card for the placement rule.
4. If the card cannot be placed, use the Fallback Rules below.
5. If no legal action can be taken, Rest instead.

Additional Automated Boss Only Rules:

- Boss heals for 4hp when Resting
- Activate special the beginning of each Resolution phase
- Boss has no power pool. When Hero is weakened, Boss rounds up only.
- At round 3, Boss heals 8 hp
- At round 5, Boss heals 10 hp

Tie Breakers

If multiple legal targets are equal:

1. Choose the lane with the **fewest cards.**
2. If still tied, choose **left to right.**

Fallback Rules

If the drawn card cannot be placed:

1. Place in the next most/least lane stated.

All Valid Slots Are Full

1. Discard the lowest dmg card with the newly drawn card.
2. Rest instead

Rest Priority

When an automated player Rests, perform the first available option:

1. Remove Token (remove token in slot that couldn't be placed first)
2. Heal HP

Resolution Priorities

Automated Bosses and Automated Heroes follow all normal **Resolution Phase** rules.

Use the standard Speed order:

6 → 1

Use standard tie rules first:

- Boss cards resolve before Hero cards
- Human players choose the order of tied human Hero cards

When **2 or more automated cards** would resolve at the same time and player choice is needed, resolve them in the following priority order:

1. [Shield image] Shield Cards
2. [Healing image] Healing Cards (targeting damaged allies)
3. [Draw image] Draw Cards
4. [Discard image] Discard Cards
5. [Queue image] Queue Cards
6. [Minion image] Minion Cards
7. [Damage image] Damage Cards
8. Other [Healing image] Healing Cards

If multiple tied cards are still equal, resolve from **left to right.**

Automated Card Effects

- **Place:** Take the top card of the deck and place it into the Queue.
- **Discard (or Select from hand to Discard):** Place the top card of the deck into the discard pile

Weakened Automated Heroes or Mercenaries

If an automated Hero or a Mercenary become weakened, discard the top of the deck for each card they have in the Queue.

When the Automated Boss weakens a Hero, they will gain +1 round and heal 5 hp per Hero per Round.

Trap Rules

Used by Mercenaries and Automated Heroes.

Skill and Counter cards are placed face up as Traps instead of being played normally.

- Boss Traps: Boss places a Skill Card into the Boss Trap Area at the beginning of each Draw Phase. *(This is to the side of the Queue board for now)*
- Hero Traps: Hero places a Skill Card into the Hero Trap Area when this card is drawn from the Hero's deck. *(This is to the side of the Queue board for now)*

There is a limit of 1 trap per side.

Note: Trap Cards cannot be placed if their condition is already met. Instead they are resolved immediately. When the condition is later met, resolve the Trap following skill or counter rules.

NOTE: If used by a Mercenary, remember to pay its cost, or discard it if the cost can't be paid



FAQ

What is the difference between a “Round ”and a “Turn”?

A Round is the combination of all the Phases (Draw, Placement, Resolution and Countdown). A Turn is taken during the Placement Phase. Each Hero gets 1 turn and the Boss gets 3 turns.

If a card would have me draw past my Max Draw Handsize, do I still draw?

Yes. Maximum hand size only applies during the **Draw Phase** when drawing normally. Cards drawn from effects may increase your hand above your maximum hand size.

Can a weakened Hero still act?

Yes. A Weakened Hero remains in the game and may still draw cards, place cards, Rest, and use effects as normal.

While Weakened, that Hero draws 1 fewer cards during the Draw Phase until their HP is above 0.

When a Hero becomes Weakened, they must immediately pay the Weakened Cost.

What happens if the deck is empty?

Heroes - If a Hero needs to draw and their deck is empty, shuffle that Hero’s discard pile to create a new deck and continue drawing cards as normal.

Boss - The Boss does not reshuffle their discard pile. If the Boss cannot draw, they draw as many cards as possible.

Can Damage Tokens be bumped?

Yes. Damage Token may be bumped back just like cards.

- Damage Tokens may be used to pay a **Bump Back** cost.
- Damage Tokens cannot be bumped out of the Queue.
- Damage Tokens may also move naturally through the Queue as normal. When they reach 0-slot they are removed from the queue at the end of Resolution Phase.

Can I place in another Hero lane?

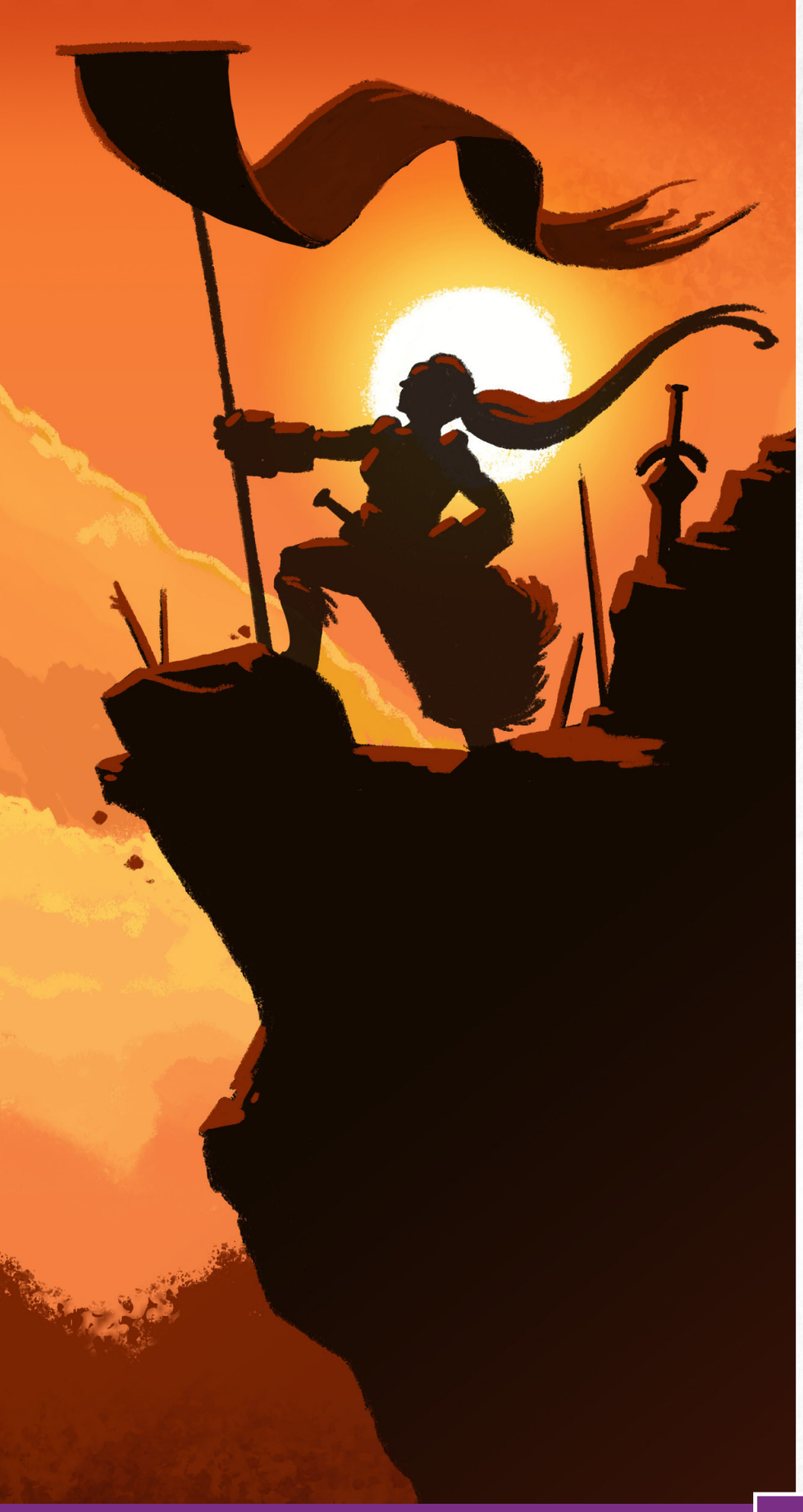
Yes. Heroes may place cards in **any Hero lane** on their side of the Queue unless a card says otherwise. This allows Heroes to support allies, protect weaker lanes, and coordinate combos.

What if no legal slot exists?

If no legal slot is available for a card, you may discard the card currently in the required slot to place your card there, unless that slot contains a Damage Token or another rule prevents it.

If you choose not to discard a card in the queue or those slots are taken up by Damage Tokens, you must **Rest** instead.





Glossary

Activate — Turn a **Field card sideways**. It becomes Active and remains in the Queue until its HP is reduced to 0. Activates at current speed during the Resolution Phase.

Active Card — A card type that exerts effects while in the Queue. **Turn sideways when placed in the Queue** to show it is Active. Active cards resolve at the cards listed speed during the resolution phase if it is in the 0-slot.

Additional Lane - A different lane from the card's original lane.

After Resolved - Occurs immediately after a card finishes resolving its effects and is discarded.

Base Damage — The original damage value printed on a card (before buffs, debuffs, or multipliers).

Blocks — Prevents damage in a Lane using **Shield effects**. Shields absorb damage until their HP is reduced to 0.

Bump Back — Move a card or token back by one slot in the Queue.

Bump Back Chain — A sequence where bumping one card or token pushes others behind it back as well.

Counter Card — A type of card played in response to a resolving card or effect. Counter cards resolve either 'Before', 'After', or 'If' a condition is present. Resolve immediately before or after the original effect depending on what the counter card states. The counter card may modify or interrupt the original card.

Cost x2 — Pay double of the same cost. If card has multiple card cost option, choose one to pay two times

Dmg — Shorthand on cards that deal damage

Damage multipliers (e.g., 2x dmg) — Apply **multipliers to base damage first**, then apply buffs or debuffs.

Deck — Each character's draw pile. If empty, Hero's reshuffle the discard pile into a new deck. Bosses do not reshuffle.

Destroy/Destroyed - Remove a card from the Queue and place it in the discard pile.

Discard: Any card put into the discard pile from either your hand, deck or from the Queue

Discard Pile — Where all resolved or discarded cards are placed. These stay in **order** and are placed face-up in the pile. If a Hero's deck runs out of cards, they reshuffle. Bosses do not reshuffle their discard pile.

Draw (X) – Take X number of cards from the top of the deck

Excess damage - If a shield card is destroyed and damage remains, the remaining damage continues to the Boss.

Field Card — A type of card that remains in the Queue after activation until it is destroyed. **This card cannot be bumped back once activated** and retains **HP across rounds**.

Forced Damage — Damage that can't be blocked, redirected, or reduced.

Hero's/Boss's Lane — The column a character or card controls.

Heroes/Bosses Queue — The half the board that the Boss or Heroes place cards.

Hero Lane Owner — The Hero assigned to a specific lane.

Minion Card - A special type of Field card that repeatedly activates each round.

Move — Relocate a card to a different **open slot** or remove it entirely.

Negative Effects — Includes damage tokens, stunned cards, debuff tokens and opponent's cards in your Queue

Nullify — Negates the specified effect stated on the card that has Nullify

Open Slot - A Queue slot that does not currently contain a card or token.

Passive Card - An ability that is always active while its condition is met

Place - Put card into the Queue

Place (X) - Play X number of cards from hand into the Queue

Power — Used to dictate how many power of cards the Boss draws as well as the amount the Boss heals at level up

Power of cards — The Boss decks are assigned Power values and dictates how many cards the Boss can draw up to in the Draw Phase. Ex: Drawing 2 Power of cards could be: Two Level 1 cards or One Level 2 card.

Queue Card – Card that is in the Queue

Redirect - Move dmg from 1 target to redirected target. Redirect is a single instance of damage not the total amount that the card COULD do. Redirected dmg nullifies description effects.

Resolution Card — A type of card that triggers its effects during the **Resolution Phase** at **0-slot**, then goes to discard.

Response — When an opponent is resolving a skill, counter or Queue card, that meets a condition that you can respond to

Rest — Take up to 2 non-placement actions instead of placing a card (Heal, Draw, Discard, Move). Cannot repeat the same action twice.

Revealed Hand — A player's hand that is visible to all players.

Round — A full cycle of all the Phases. Draw Phase through End of Countdown Phase

Select — Choose a specific card from a defined location (such as discard, hand, or deck) and put the selected card into your hand.

Skill Card - A card that can be played outside of a player's turn when its condition is met. Skill cards resolve immediately after the current card or effect finishes resolving, do not enter the Queue, and are discarded after resolving.

Stun — Flip the target card facedown. It is no longer Active, can't move forward. The stunned card can be bumped back as a cost but can't be bumped out or discarded.The card(s) Flip back **after the Countdown Phase**. No longer counts as a card for effects or Specials.

Store — Place a buff token next to your discard pile or character area. Stored tokens are not in the Queue.

Special Card — A powerful ability card that can be used when its condition is met. Specials do not enter the Queue and must be refreshed before they can be used again

Spend — Remove a stored token to gain its effect.

Target — A card, character or lane that receives a card's effect and/or damage.

Token Card — A special off-board card that never enters your deck, hand, or discard. Can only enter the **Queue** via effects.

Trigger — An ability that **automatically activates** when a specific event or condition occurs.

Turn — One placement or Rest action taken by a Hero or the Boss.

Turn into Token — Flip a card and place a token on it. The card follows token rules instead of card rules.

Weakened — When a Hero's health is **0 or less**. The Hero must pay a **Weakened Cost** and has **–1 draw** in the Draw Phase until healed above 0.

Weakened Cost — A one-time penalty when becoming Weakened. The weakened Hero must **bump back or discard** one card for **each** card they currently have in the Queue.

When Resolving — The effect occurs during the Resolution Phase when the card activates.

Ultimate Card — A powerful ability that can only be used once per game.



Credits

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