

# Dragon Keepers

By Catarina Lacerda and Vital Lacerda

## Introduction

Dragon Keepers is a game representing a battle between two forces. The first is a group of evil hunters who want to destroy dragons for trophies and fame. The other group is the heroic dragon keepers who protect the dragons. Each player represents the chief of a specific tribe of dragon keepers who will defend the dragons from attacks by the evil hunters.

In Dragon Keepers there are 2 different modes of game play. Both modes are played over several rounds until players have reached a game ending condition. The game modes are the following:

### Keeper Game (suitable for ages 6+)

A light competitive game using "push your luck" mechanisms, which takes 10-15 minutes and plays from 3 to 6 players. This mode is a lighter version of the game intended for younger children. The goal for each player is to heroically defend 3 different dragons from the evil hunter.

### Dragon Game (suitable for ages 9+)

A cooperative game which takes 30-40 minutes and plays from 2 to 4 players. This mode requires a bit more strategic thinking and is more suited for adults and older children. The goal for the players is to train a predetermined number of dragons and have them successfully attack the Hunter.

## Components

- 18 Magic cards
- 36 Keeper cards (6 Keeper decks with 6 cards each)
- 18 Shield tokens (Red, Yellow, Green, Blue, Purple, and White)
- 6 Dragon tiles
- 15 Arrow tokens
- 5 Flame tokens
- 36 Action tokens (12 Defense, 8 Heal, 10 Training, and 8 Attack)
- 1 double-sided Hunter card and 4 Hunter cards
- 8 D6 Black Hunter dice
- 12 D6 Battle dice (6 White and 6 Red)
- 4 Player aid cards



## Game Fundamentals

This section is an overview of everything that is common between both game modes.

### Friendly vs Trained

The dragons in the game are powerful untamed magical creatures that always start the game with the Friendly side of their Dragon tile face up. In the Keeper game the dragons are younger and will never be flipped to their Trained side. In the Dragon game, the dragons are older and keepers can train them which flips the tile to the trained side.

Both Friendly and Trained sides of a Dragon tile will have a number of Heart symbols in the upper left corner. The hearts represent the Life of the dragon and also the number of attacks the dragon can receive before they are defeated.

### Friendly Dragons

The Friendly side of most Dragon tiles only show Life in the upper left corner and a faded icon for the Attack power. However, the Friendly side of the Blue Dragon tile has a special behavior when it is attacked in both game modes. This behavior is represented by 2 Arrow symbols (with 1 Arrow having an X on it) in the lower left corner. This Special ability is explained in more detail in Dragon Powers on page 11.

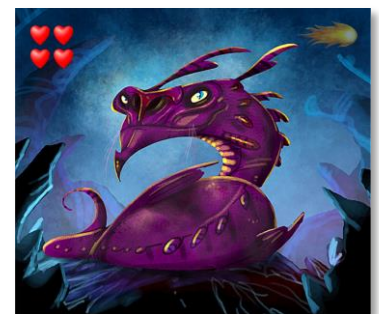


Figure 1 – Friendly Side



Figure 2 – Trained Side

## Keepers

The Keepers have vowed to protect the dragons. In both game modes, players will choose a Keeper deck to play the game with. Keeper decks have a unique colored tribe symbol on the back of the card. The front of the card represents a Keeper from each different tribe. For example, the Red Keeper deck will have a Keeper from each color (Red, Yellow, Green, Blue, Purple, and White).

Each card in a player's Keeper deck represents an individual dragon keeper which will protect one type of dragon from attacks made by the hunter. For example, a purple dragon keeper can only protect a purple dragon. The symbol of the dragon that a keeper can protect is in the upper right corner of each card. Refer to the example.



## Keeper Game Mode

Competitive game (10-15 mins, ages 6+, 3 to 6 players)

### Objective

The goal of the game is to place all 3 of your Shield tokens on 3 different Dragon tiles.

### Game Setup

1. Randomly place 6 Dragon tiles in a circle with their Friendly side face up, as shown in Figure 3.  
**Note:** The Trained side is not used in this mode.
2. Place a Hunter card in the center of playing area.
3. Place all Arrow tokens below the Hunter card.
4. Choose a random player and give that player the Hunter token. Place a number of Hunter dice equal to the number of players on the Hunter card. These dice will represent the Hunter dice pool.
5. Give each player a Keeper deck (6 cards) and their 3 Shield tokens.
6. Place all the other components in the game box as they will not be used in this game mode.

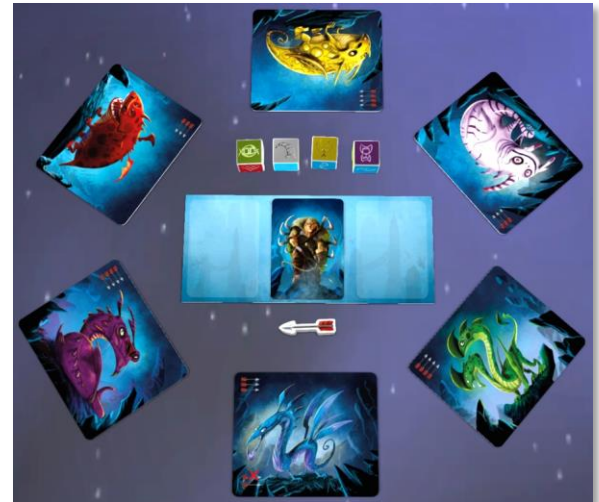


Figure 3 – Game Setup

### Gameplay

Each round consists of the Hunter, Keeper & Dragon phases.

#### I. Hunter phase:

1. At the beginning of this phase, the player with the Hunter token rolls all Hunter dice on the Hunter card. Each die represents an attack by the Hunter against the dragons.
2. If all dice have the same symbols then re-roll all dice.
3. Place the Hunter dice on the Dragon tiles that correspond to the symbol rolled. A dragon with a Hunter die on it has been targeted by the Hunter. In this mode, a dragon cannot be targeted more than once. Return any dice, which have a duplicate symbol, to the Hunter's card.

#### II. Keeper phase:

During this phase, all players (including the player with the Hunter token), simultaneously choose a Keeper card from their Keeper deck that matches a targeted dragon (a dragon with a Hunter die on it) and places it face-down on the table in front of him/her. Once all players have placed a Keeper card, all cards are revealed at the same time and placed on their large player board face-up.

#### III. Dragon phase:

In this phase, players will:

1. Resolve Hunter attacks
2. Declare Heroic Protection
3. Check game ending conditions

#### Resolve Hunter attacks:

For each targeted Dragon not protected by any Keeper, the Dragon suffers 1 hit. This is tracked by placing 1 Arrow token on the Dragon hit. The Hunter die is then returned to the Hunter's card.

#### Declare Heroic Protection:

- If a dragon was protected by only one keeper, the Tribe of that keeper is the winner for



Figure 4 – Shield Tokens

- o Heroic Protection and places one of his/her Shield tokens on the dragon tile, if there isn't any there yet.
- o If the protected dragon was a Tribes favorite dragon (matching the Tribe symbol color) then the player may heal 1 hit from any dragon, by returning an Arrow token from a Dragon tile to the general supply.
- o **Note:** Even though each tribe has a favorite dragon, the player can protect any 3 different dragons to win.
- If a dragon was protected by more than one keeper nothing happens. The Hunter die is returned to the Hunter's card.

**Check game ending conditions:**

- At the end of the round, if a dragon has 3 arrows on it (in this game mode ignore dragons with 4 Life), it is defeated, and removed from the game, along with any Shield tokens placed on it. Then perform the **Game End** step.
- If one or more players has all 3 of their Shield tokens on Dragon tiles then go to **Game End** below.

If a game ending condition has not been achieved:

1. All players reclaim their Keeper card and place it back in their hand.
2. A new round begins.

**Game End**

The game ends immediately if any dragon is defeated or if at the end of the turn in which one or more players achieved their goal. If no dragons have been defeated then refer to following to determine the winner:

- If only one player has achieved the goal he wins.
- If players are tied for Shield tokens placed on dragons, then the player with the fewest Arrow tokens on his favorite dragon wins. **Note:** In this game mode, any dragon with 3 Arrow tokens on it has been defeated.
- If a tie still remains then all tied players share the win.

**Dragon Game Mode**

Cooperative game (30-40 mins, ages 9+, 2 to 4 players)

**Objective**

The goal of the game is to successfully attack the hunters with the 6 trained dragons.

**Choose Difficulty**

Players choose their difficulty level for game play:

**Easy:** Have 6 different dragons successfully attack, playing with one less Hunter die.

**Medium:** Have 6 different dragons successfully attack.

**Hard:** Have 6 different dragons successfully attack. The Weak Flame result on the white Battle dice is treated as a Miss.

**Extreme:** Have 6 different dragons successfully attack. The Weak Flame result on the white Battle dice is treated as a Miss. During the Magic deck setup (in step 2) split the cards into 4 decks of 3 cards versus 4 decks of 4 cards.

**Game Setup**

- Randomly place the 6 Dragon tiles in a circle with their Friendly side face-up, as shown in the example to the right.
- Place Arrow, Flame, and Action tokens outside the circle.
- Place the double-sided Hunter card in the center of the playing area as seen in Figure 5.
- Select a player at random and give that player the Hunter token.
- Place a number of Hunter dice equal to the number of players on the Hunter card. Set the remaining Hunter dice to the side and place all 12 Battle dice in the Training bag.
- Give each player a Keeper deck (6 Keeper cards), a player aid card (placed in front of the player with the token side face-up), and the following Action tokens: 2 Defense, 1 Heal, and 1 Training token.
- Place the remaining components near the playing area.
- Prepare the Magic deck. See Magic Deck setup.

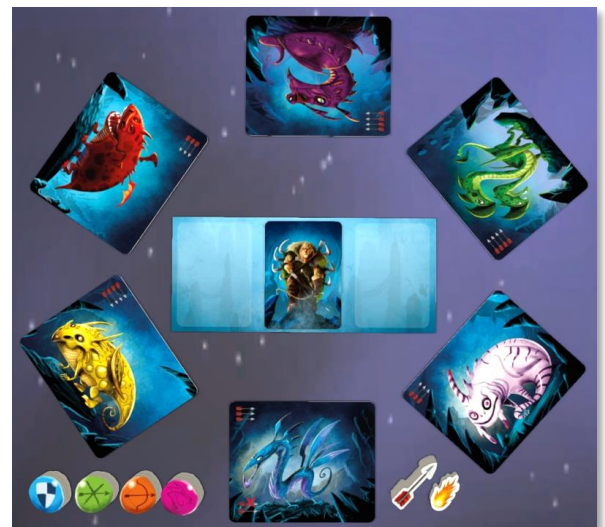


Figure 5 – Dragon Game Setup



## Magic Deck Setup

1. Remove all Hunter cards from the Magic deck and shuffle the remaining Magic cards. Set aside the top 2 cards without looking at them.
2. Split the Magic cards into 4 decks of 4 cards or 3 decks of 5 cards if you are playing with Easy difficulty.
3. Place a Hunter card (face down) in each deck and shuffle the decks separately.
4. Place all decks on top of each other to form a single deck and place horizontal on top of the Hunter card in the center of the table.
5. Place 1 of the cards, you set aside earlier (in Step 1), face-up at the left and place the remaining card on top of the Discard pile (face up) as shown in Figure 6.

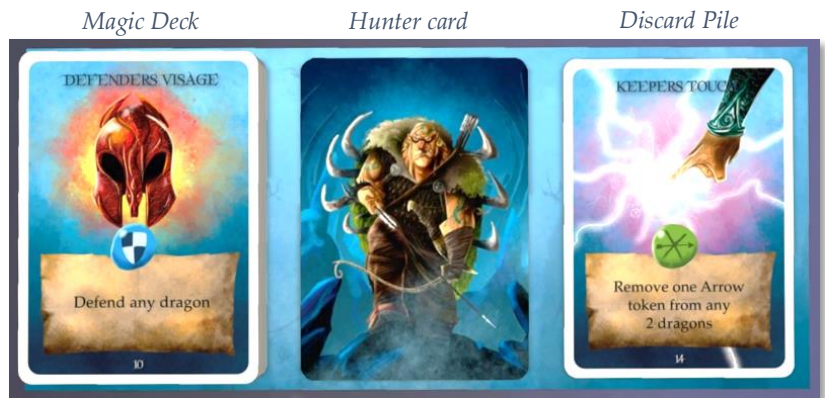


Figure 6 – Magic Deck Setup

## Actions Tokens

There are 4 different actions a player can use in the game. When an action is successfully performed the player receives a reward.



### Defend

**Success:** All dice at the top of the defended dragon are returned to the Hunter's dice pool.

**Failure:** This action fails if there are no Hunter dice targeting the Dragon during the player's turn.

**Reward** – If a player successfully defends against 1 or more Hunter dice, the player **must** take 1 face-up Magic card from either the top of the deck or the top of the discard pile and place it face-up to the left of their player aid card. If a card is taken from the left of the Hunter's card, a new card is immediately revealed. If a new Hunter card is revealed, immediately add 1 Hunter die to the dice pool, place the Hunter card in the box and draw another card and place it face-up on the Magic card deck.



### Heal

**Success:** All of the Arrow tokens on the Dragon tile are removed and returned to the pool.

**Failure:** This action fails if there are no Arrow tokens on the Dragon tile during the player's turn.

**Reward** – Same as the **Defend** action **Reward** above.



### Train

**Success:** If the dragon tile being trained is still on the Friendly side, flip the dragon tile to the Trained side. Take a random Battle die from the Training bag and place it on a Training space on the Dragon tile that was trained.

The Trained side of all Dragon tiles (depending on the dragon) will have 1-4 Training spaces in the lower right corner. A symbol associated with that specific dragon will also be in the lower right corner. If this is not the first time the dragon is trained, (the tile is already flipped to the Trained side) take a Battle die at random from the Training bag and place it on one of the Training spaces.

**Note:** Each dragon can only be trained a specific number of times. Check **Dragon Powers** on page 11.

**Failure:** This action fails if any of these conditions are present: 1) the Dragon tile has one or more Arrow tokens on it, 2) there are no open Train spaces to train the Dragon, or 3) the dragon is being targeted by the Hunter (has 1 or more Hunter dice on it).

**Reward:** If training is successful the player takes a new Action token of their choosing from the game supply.



### Attack

**Success:** Roll all Battle dice on a Dragon tile for the attacking dragon.

**Important:** Dragons cannot attack until they have been trained.

In the *Easy* and *Medium* difficulty levels, each Weak Flame and Flame the player rolls is a hit and considered a successful attack against the Hunter. In the *Hard* and *Extreme* difficulty levels, the Weak Flame is considered a miss. See figure to the right.

Each Dragon has a different attack power with a specific result. Refer to **Attack Power** in the **Dragon Powers** section on page 11.

**Failure:** If all Battle dice rolled are a miss then the action fails.



Miss

Weak  
Flame

Flame

**Reward:** If at least one Flame result is rolled on the Battle dice, the attack is successful and a Shield token (any color) is placed on the Dragon (if there is none there yet) to track the game objective.

**Important:** A Weak Flame result in a *Hard* or *Extreme* game is always considered a miss!

### Magic Cards

The world of Dragon Keepers is a mystical place. The keepers have harnessed magical powers by using special items and spells. Players will receive Magic cards as a reward for defending or healing the dragons. Magic cards allow a player to take a powerful independent second action during their turn.

A player can only have at most 3 Magic cards and may only play 1 Magic card during their active Keeper round. Players will perform the special power written on the card then place it back in the game box. These cards can be played before or after a player plays their Keeper card.

**Important:** Magic cards can only be used once per game and must always be removed from the game after a player uses them. The Discard Pile is only used for Battle Event cards that are discarded in the Hunter phase. Magic cards are totally independent from the Keeper's Action. For example, the player can have a Keeper performing a Defense action and a Magic card can be used for an Attack action.

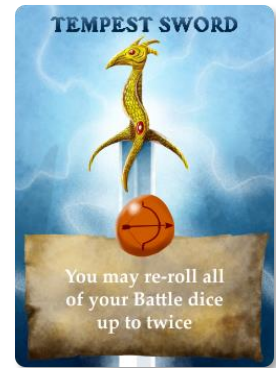


Figure 7 – Magic card

### Gameplay

This game mode is played in rounds starting with the player who controls the Hunter token. Players can discuss strategy and plan moves before and during the game. The only thing players cannot directly state (or hint) to others is which Keeper they will play or the color of the dragon associated with it. Sometimes it is obvious, while other times it is not.

Each round consists of the following phases: Hunter, Keeper, and Dragon.

#### I. Hunter phase:

1. At the very beginning of the game, the starting player has already been decided and this step is skipped. Otherwise, at the beginning of each round the token is passed to the player on the left. The player with the Hunter token is first in turn order.
2. The left card is placed on the Discard pile to the right of the Hunter's card face up, and the top card of the deck is revealed and moved to the left of the Hunter card. If a new Hunter card is revealed, a Hunter die is added to the Hunter dice pool. The recently revealed Hunter card is removed from the game and this step is repeated.
3. For every 3 Flame tokens on the Hunter card, a Hunter die is taken from the card and returned to the dice pool. 3 Flame tokens on the Hunter card are then removed from the card and placed back in the general supply.
4. The player first in turn order rolls all dice in the Hunter dice pool. These dice represent attacks by the Hunter against the dragons. Place each die on the dragon that has a corresponding symbol to the die result. Dragons with Hunter dice on them have been targeted by the Hunter.

#### II. Keeper phase:

Each card in a player's Keeper deck represents a dragon keeper which can only interact with one specific dragon. The dragon each keeper protects is shown by the color of the Keeper and the symbol in the upper right of the Keeper card and on the Dragon tile.

All players starting from the player first in turn order, and proceeding in clockwise order, do the following:

1. **(Optional)** Players may choose to skip their entire turn by Passing. Refer to **Passing** below.
2. Choose a Keeper card from their hand, and place it face-down on the table at the right of their Player Aid card right after the last card played (if any).
3. Place one of their remaining Action tokens on the card. Refer to Action Tokens on page 5.
4. **(Optional)** Players may select a single Magic card which is placed face up in front of the Player Aid card. Refer to Magic cards on page 5.

Once all players have finished the steps above, do the following in turn order:

1. Reveal their Keeper card.
2. Move the selected Action token to the players Discard area on top of the recently played Keeper card in such a way that other players can still see the Keeper that was played.
3. Take the corresponding action for the token played.  
**Note:** In the event a selected Action token cannot be performed; the player passes his/her turn and does nothing and does not receive any reward.
4. At any time, during these 4 steps, the active player may play the Battle Event card that they previously selected.

## Passing

In this mode of play the Keeper cards played, and the Action tokens used do not return to a player's hand at the end of the turn. Keeper cards remain to the right of the player aid until a player wants to recover them.

To return the Keeper cards and Action tokens back to their hand a player must skip their entire turn by Passing.

**IMPORTANT:** *When a player passes they cannot play any Magic cards.*

## III. Dragon phase:

In this phase, players will resolve Hunter attacks and check the life of each dragon.

For each targeted Dragon that was not protected by a Keeper:

- Place 1 Arrow token for each Hunter die on a Dragon tile.
- If the number of Arrow tokens on a Dragon tile is equal to (or higher) than the number of Life indicated on the Dragon tile, the Dragon is defeated and the game is lost.

## Game End

At the end of the round, if any Dragon has been defeated or the last card from the Battle Event deck is drawn then the game ends at the end of a round with the victory to the Hunters and loss to the players.

The game ends immediately, in a victory to the players, if all dragons have made at least one successful attack. This means that all 6 dragons must have a Shield token on their Dragon tile. **Note:** *Players do not complete the Dragon phase.*

## Dragon Powers



### Red Dragon

**Life:** Defeated after receiving 3 Arrow tokens.

**Training:** Can only be trained once.

**Attack:** On a successful attack place 2 Flame tokens on the Hunter.



### Purple Dragon

**Life:** Defeated after receiving 4 Arrow tokens.

**Training:** Can only be trained twice. (Refer to **Special Ability**)

**Attack:** For each successful attack, place 1 Flame token on the Hunter.

**Special Ability:** Each time this Dragon is trained it receives 2 Battle dice instead of 1.



### Blue Dragon

**Life:** Defeated after receiving 3 Arrow tokens.

**Training:** Can only be trained twice.

**Attack:** For each successful attack, place 1 Flame token on the Hunter. When the Blue Dragon attacks, it may reroll 1 Battle die.

**Special Ability:** When targeted by more than one Hunter die, remove one die and place it back on the Hunter card.



### White Dragon

**Life:** Defeated after receiving 3 Arrow tokens.

**Training:** Can only be trained twice.

**Attack:** On a successful attack places 1 flame token on the hunter and heal 1 arrow from any dragon. (Even from himself).



### Green Dragon

**Life:** Defeated after receiving 4 Arrow tokens.

**Training:** Can only be trained twice.

**Attack:** On a successful attack choose between placing 1 Flame token on the hunter (**or**) removing 1 Arrow token from any Dragon. The Arrow token removed may be from this dragon.



### Yellow Dragon

**Life:** Defeated after receiving 4 Arrow tokens.

**Training:** Can only be trained twice.

**Attack:** For each successful attack, remove a total of 2 Arrow tokens from either 1 or 2 Dragon tiles. The Arrow token(s) removed may be from this dragon.

**Note:** Successful hits only remove Arrow tokens but they count as a successful attack.



## Credits

### Game design

Catarina Lacerda and Vital Lacerda

### Storyline and Dragon's Powers

Catarina Lacerda

### Illustrations

Mihajlo "The Mico" Dimitrievski

### Graphic layout and design

Vital Lacerda

Many years ago, on a small island unknown to anyone, there was a land that had never been visited. In a land where men were not kings, a being ruled with claws, scales and most importantly, big strong wings. You still don't know who the king is? The beings that reigned over this great land were the biggest reptiles of all time, the dragons!

Why did men not reign in this land? Because it was inhabited only by dragons and the small animals that they lived on. One day, a small group of Vikings shipwrecked on the coast. They accidentally reached this peculiar island and met, to their surprise, one of these enormous and dangerous reptiles. This dragon was not just any dragon; he was Saeran the Savage King, better known as the reaper of souls.

Why was it Saeran, the great, relentless king, and not any other dragon who met our Vikings? Because he is king, he watches over his territory to ensure all dragons are safe. In his eyes, the Vikings were a threat and nothing more than evil hunters.

The great reptile stared at the men. At that moment silence reigned rather than the king until finally, out of anxiety or fear, one of the men fired an arrow. The arrow hit Saeran, and an epic battle began. The other dragons joined in to protect the king, and Man for once was weaker and gave way dropping to their knees. The dragons had won.

In the silence of defeat, a small cry was heard in the distance, and the dragon king's glance was drawn to where it came from. It was a tiny human. The reptile advanced on the child but then stopped. He looked at it, and then gently picked it up in his mouth, before returning to his den. More children turned up in the middle of the battlefield, now alone and orphaned.

The years went by and more "dragon hunters" came back to the island in search of vengeance. The King already had other priorities, with the children having been raised by the dragons. In all, there were six children, and they grew up and were loved by the dragons. So to them, the dragons were gentle creatures, hostile only when necessary.

These children had been chosen, and Catarina had been taken in by the king of the dragons, Saeran. Marie was raised by the most 'indecisive' dragon of all... Luciel and Luci, a dragon with two heads and opposing personalities. Diane had become the ward of Killua, the fastest of the dragons. Jonas had been chosen by the strongest, Kuru. Hythe was a healer and took care of Thomas while Jack, the most boisterous child, had become a great friend of Modor.

Now it is time to protect those who took care of them when they needed it most.