



BATTLE OF THE ANCIENTS™



SHORT RULES - DEMO

Version 0.19, October 26th 2020

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THESE RULES are a WORK IN PROGRESS.

INTRODUCTION

DARK VENTURE: BATTLE OF THE ANCIENTS is a tactical strategy game set in the DARK VENTURE universe where players control asymmetric factions engaging in brutal conflict. In this DEMO 2 players (or a solo player and an AUTO-ENEMY opponent) will compete against one another to be the first to complete their faction's objective, outlined in a chosen SCENARIO.

To play a game round, ACTION DICE are rolled then spent to either MOVE units or activate their unique ABILITIES. Depending on the faction, players can split units to create new ones, grow their units in size and strength, collect valuable resources to replicate their units or open portals to transport new units into battle. If the right conditions are met, players can summon powerful PRIME ANCIENT warrior-deities to aid in their conquest!

DEMO GAME SETUP

This SCENARIOS in this demo (see the SCENARIOS document) can be played by either 2 PLAYERS or by a single SOLO player with an AUTO-ENEMY opponent.

In a 2-Player game, unless noted in the scenario, players roll 4 six-sided dice (4d6), the highest roller is the first player, the next highest is the second player. Re-roll on a tie. In a solo game, the solo player starts first.

The first player (or solo player) chooses 1 of the 4 FACTIONS to play as (ORPAL, VARPEN, DHARGON or BOHMERK), then the second player chooses their faction. Review the FACTION section of this rule document for more information on each faction.

Place the MAP in the center of the play area. The HORIZONTAL map spaces are marked from left to right with the letters A through H, VERTICAL spaces are marked from top to bottom with the numbers 1 through 8. When instructed, tokens are placed at the spaces intersecting a number and letter, for example 'B4' is two spaces to the right from the upper left corner of the map and four spaces down.

Players take their faction DASHBOARDS, 4 cubes in a color representative of their faction and all of their faction's TOKENS (and DRAW BAG if playing the ORPAL faction) then set up their faction dashboards around the edges of the map. Players place 3 of their cubes near their dashboards to track their complete ANCIENT FAVOR OBJECTIVES.

Place the 6 ACTION DICE, 8 six-sided dice (8d6), the ACTION and ITEM card decks (face down) within reach of all players. Also, organize and place all tokens nearby.





Players review the SCENARIOS document, selecting one to play, or players choose to play a BASIC SETUP, also found in the SCENARIOS document (and on the final page of these rules).

ORDER OF ACTIONS

1. ROLL the ACTION DICE.
2. Move units and perform faction or unit ABILITIES by spending MOVE and SKULL action dice. Costs vary depending on the faction or unit ability:
 - (a) MOVE units by spending MOVE dice (variable cost)
 - (b) Activate faction or unit ABILITIES by spending MOVE and/or SKULL dice (see individual faction dashboards for costs)
 - (c) Engage enemy units in COMBAT (1 MOVE die per combat to engage up to 2 enemy units with up to 2 of your units)
 - (d) Draw 1 card per unit on a CARD DRAW TOKEN (1 MOVE die)

3. Check ANCIENT REQUIREMENTS to determine if an ANCIENT can be summoned.
4. Use the DIVINE POWER of an Ancient, if possible.
5. END the turn. The next player begins their turn.

ACTION DICE KEY

-  MOVE DIE - 2 ORTHOGONAL: MOVE 1 UNIT UP TO 2 SPACES N, S, E, or W
-  MOVE DIE - 1 DIAGONAL: MOVE 1 UNIT 1 SPACE DIAGONALLY
-  MOVE DIE - 1 ORTHOGONAL: MOVE 1 UNIT 1 SPACE N, S, E, or W
-  SKULL DIE: NO MOVES IN ANY DIRECTION

MAP TERRAIN

TRAVERSING WATER SPACES: For all units other than BOHMERSK faction units, moving a unit INTO a space with WATER in it (a RIVER or a POND), even a space with a small amount of WATER, **costs 1 ADDITIONAL MOVE**.

TRAVERSING ROAD SPACES: If a unit is moved from a space depicting a ROADWAY into another space depicting a ROADWAY, even a space with a small amount of roadway, **movement is increased by 1 MOVE**. If moving diagonally, the unit can move in a 'zig-zag'.

WATER SPACES: F8, G3, G4, G5* G7, G8, H3, H4, H5, H6 (if not on bridge), H7 (if not on bridge), H8. ROAD SPACES: E6, F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, G1, G2, G4*, G5*, G6, H6 (if on bridge), H7 (if on bridge).*

** If travelling to these spaces from a road space, they do not count as water spaces, there is no water terrain penalty.*

WALLS of BUILDINGS: Unless specified, units cannot pass through the light-grey interior or exterior walls of buildings.

BRIDGES: Units may 'jump' the guard rails of bridges and travel under bridges, but then WATER SPACE rules apply.

GENETIC MEMORY

On their turn, players can trade their ACTION DICE for DICE TOKENS, placing up to 3 DICE TOKENS onto the GENETIC MEMORY card to 'bank' them for use on subsequent turns.

COMBAT

When ATTACKING, the STRENGTH (S) of a character, noted on their token, represents the number of six-sided dice that are rolled to determine their ATTACK SCORE. When defending against an attack, the DEFENSE (D) of a character represents the number of six-sided dice that are rolled to determine their DEFENSE SCORE.

If the ATTACKER has the higher score (roll total), the DEFENDER is defeated. The defeated defender is either KILLED, taken PRISONER or utilized in a faction SPECIAL ABILITY. If the DEFENDER has the higher score (roll total), the unit has successfully defended. The defender might make a DEFENSE COUNTER ATTACK. If both scores are tied, the attack and defense dice are rerolled.

DEFENSE COUNTER ATTACK: After ALL defense rolls, if half (or more) of the dice rolled to SUCCESSFULLY defend roll a 6 (naturally, without bonuses), the defender can make a DEFENSE COUNTER ATTACK, rolling to ATTACK, against their attacker.

PRISONERS

After defeating enemies in combat, a player may choose to have each of their attacking units take 1 defeated defending unit prisoner (1 prisoner per combatant).

Upon moving a captor with a prisoner to an open map edge (not an edge blocked by the wall of a building, a built wall, or a fence), spend 1 MOVE DIE (not a SKULL DIE) to replace the prisoner (the prisoner is returned to their faction's supply) with an available unit of their faction with the lowest STRENGTH + DEFENSE total (use RULE OF CHOICE if tied).

Prisoner Escape: The player controlling a captive prisoner may choose to spend 1 MOVE DIE (not a SKULL DIE) on their turn to roll 1d6. If a 6 is rolled the prisoner escapes capture. Upon a successful escape, the former prisoner may move up to 2 spaces in any direction at no cost.

CARDS

DRAWING AN ACTION CARD: Each player-controlled unit on a RED CARD DRAW TOKEN may be used to draw 1 ACTION CARD on their controlling player's turn at a cost of 1 MOVE DIE per drawn card. An UNLIMITED number of cards can be drawn this way, the token is not removed when cards are drawn. The CARD DRAW TOKEN is left on the map.

DRAWING AN ITEM CARD: When a player-controlled unit moves onto (or through) a space with a BLUE ITEM TOKEN the token is removed from the map and the controlling player draws 1 ITEM CARD at no cost. The ITEM TOKEN is removed from the map.

SAVING CARDS: Each player can hold up to 5 CARDS of ANY TYPE (Action and Item) at which time, they may discard 1 before drawing another.

REWARD CARDS: The bag of secret ACTION and ITEM cards is not to be opened until a SCENARIO has been completed. Upon successfully completing a SCENARIO, add 3 secret,

randomly selected, ITEM CARDS to the ITEM CARD DECK and 3 secret, randomly selected, ACTION CARDS to the ACTION CARD DECK, shuffling both decks after.

THE ANCIENTS

Each faction has a PRIME ANCIENT that can be summoned to the map after a player completes three OBJECTIVES, different for each faction, to WIN THEIR FAVOR. While an ancient is alive it grants a DIVINE POWER to the player who is controlling them (see your FACTION DASHBOARD).

FENCES AND WALLS

A FENCE COSTS 1 WOOD and 1 MOVE DIE
A WALL COSTS 1 ORE and 2 MOVE DICE

Units of any faction cannot easily pass over a wall or fence. A unit must spend +1 MOVE to cross over a fence and +2 MOVES to cross over a wall. Spend 1 MOVE DIE and 1 SKULL DIE to dismantle a fence. Spend 2 MOVE DICE and 1 SKULL DIE to dismantle a wall.

RULE OF CHOICE

If a situation must be resolved by making a choice, roll 1d6 for each option. Prioritize, resolve or select the choice with the highest roll, then the next highest, and so on (reroll on a tie).

AUTO-ENEMIES

When playing a SOLO game, the units belonging to the enemy faction(s) are automatically controlled by a set of rules instead of following the standard ORDER of ACTIONS on their turn. These 'Auto-Enemies' follow the sequential series of 8 rules on the AUTO-ENEMIES instruction board. NOTE: In a game played for VICTORY POINTS, Auto-Enemies gain Victory Points for faction 'Bonus Victory Point Objectives' and standard 'Victory Point Objectives for all Factions' (for killing other units, upgrading units, adding new units to the map, etc).

Additional Auto-Enemy Rules:

- BUILT FENCES: When an Auto-Enemy unit comes into contact with a fence, roll 2d6: If 7 or higher, the fence is removed and the unit stops moving (they do not move through the fence). If the roll is lower than the target number, the fence remains.
- BUILT WALLS: When an Auto-Enemy unit comes into contact with a wall (each unit), roll 2d6: If 8 or higher, the wall is removed and the unit stops moving (they do not move through the wall). If the roll is lower than the target number, the wall remains.
- ITEM CARDS: Auto-Enemy units do not collect item cards when landing on or traveling over blue ITEM TOKENS.

WHAT'S IN THE FULL VERSION?

A LOT more. So much more that it'll barely fit into a 8.5" x 8.5" x 4" box!

- 16' x 16" Map Board (the demo map is ¼ the size of the full board)
- Core Rule Book: 20 pages of illustrated rules
- Faction Guide: 24 pages with full descriptions and rules for each faction
- Scenario Book: 24 pages of narrative scenarios for 1 - 4 players
- 8 Card AUTO-ENEMY decks for each faction (for SOLO, CO-OP and COMPETITIVE play)
- More Tokens (almost 200 total), boards, reference cards, and a printed draw bag!
- The ALDERKANG Faction (A dashboard, tokens, cubes and rule reference cards)
- More ACTION and ITEM cards, a deck of AUTO-ENEMY ACTION cards for each faction
- 6 Custom molded six-sided ACTION DICE
- More secret REWARD CARDS!
- Kickstarter Stretch Goals: ??! (More cards, characters, books...surprises!)

VICTORY GAME: BASIC SETUP (DEMO)

(1- 4 Players)

This BASIC SETUP is used when playing a VICTORY GAME. Units are placed and the map is set up as noted below. Games are played to a set number of VICTORY POINTS (VP): 10, 20, or 30. Players track their VP using a cube of their faction's color on the VICTORY POINT TRACK. The first faction to earn the set number of Victory Points (at the end of a round*) or the last faction with units on the map wins the game.

MAP SETUP: ACTION CARD tokens (red, multi-use) are placed on A7 and E4. ITEM CARD DRAW tokens (blue, one-use) are placed on A5, D2, D7 and E5. Players roll 4d6, rerolling on a tie, the player with the highest roll total is the first player. Play moves clockwise.

VARPEN: 1 S1/D1 unit on A8, 2 S1/D1 units on B8.

BOHMERK: 1 S2/D2 unit on H8.

DHARGON: 1 S0/D2 unit and 1 S2/D3 unit on A1, 1 S0/D2 unit on A2.

ORPAL: 1 S1/D2 unit on G1, 1 S2/D3 unit with a RIFT CRYSTAL on H1. Transport Portal Bag: 3 RIFT CRYSTALS, 1 S2/D3, 2 S3/D1, 2 S2/D1, 2 S1/D3, 2 S1/D2, and 1 S3/D4.

* If there is a tie, add up the total STRENGTH and DEFENSE of the surviving units of the tying factions, the highest total wins. On a tie, the tied player holding the most cards wins. If there is still a tie, players earn a shared victory, the creatures of their factions live to fight another day.