

MONSTER WASTELAND

COOPERATIVE SURVIVAL ADVENTURE IN A POST-APOCALYPTIC HELLSCAPE

by James Blake
featuring art by ROLLINKUNZ! and design by Umut Çomak

1-4 players

120-180m

15+

ENTER THE WASTELAND

The world we live in is no more. Gone are the days of technology and industry. 'Society' is a word only spoken in tall tales passed down generations. And mankind's place at the top of the food chain has long been compromised.

As far back as anyone can remember, Earth has been overrun by horrific Monsters - massive, dynamic beasts for whom we are favored prey. They take many terrifying forms but have two things in common: their ferocity knows no bounds, and they're always hungry.

Due to their size and powers, slaying these Monsters is no small feat, and your access to supplies is limited to what you can scavenge from the Wasteland. The only sure way to survive the Monsters is to remain unseen… or pray you're faster than them.

You're charged with leading one of four small Factions who have discovered a large valley that's been spared from the Wasteland's savagery. From what your scouts tell you, its untouched lands hold greater access to supplies and technology, as well as a large military installation formerly lost to time. Inside may lie safety, fortification, or perhaps even weapons.

Up until now, your quick thinking and smart decisions have kept the group alive. Unfortunately, the days grow shorter, the air grows colder, and there have been disturbing reports suggesting your new home may not be safe for much longer. Difficult choices are to come, and it's up to you to keep your people alive and able to last what's sure to be a cruel winter. You have the power to explore, study, build, and maybe even slay the terrible Monsters who rule this world.

What path will you take?

Monster Wasteland is a cooperative survival adventure in a post-apocalyptic world overrun by eldritch beasts. You and your comrades play as Faction leaders who've found a hidden, seemingly untouched, valley: your goal is to make this a safe place for your people to live and possibly rebuild society. Your strategy will develop as you play the game, but it will always involve unit placement, resource management, and crafting, all while dealing with not only dangerous Monsters, but the hazards of the Wasteland itself. **It's not a 4X game, it's a 4S game: Sneak, Salvage, Settle, and Slay!**

You control two Heroes and their Followers as they navigate a modular hex map consisting of unique sections and terrain. Establish a presence in the Wasteland by foraging for Raw Materials with which to craft items and build Settlements. As you progress, you'll begin making higher-quality items and upgrading Settlements, giving you access to more powerful tools to help you claim a place in the Wasteland.

Rounds are separated into a Morning phase where you'll resolve an open-ended narrative Tale, a Noon phase where you and the Monsters perform actions, and a Night phase where you'll spawn Monsters. To secure victory, you'll need to earn points by upgrading Settlements, defeating Monsters, completing Research Objectives, and reducing Bane by making smart decisions when resolving Tales.

After scoring 20 points, you'll have the option to either win the game immediately or begin one of four challenging Endgame scenarios specific to the victory path you favored. Beat this unique Endgame to win an Epic Victory over the Wasteland!

But the Wasteland winter is unforgiving. It will cut to the bone just as quick as a Monster, and it's coming fast. If you don't score 20 points by the end of Round 8, you won't be prepared to survive the harsh conditions and murderous Monsters, and your Factions will be too weak to hold out until the spring...

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A QUICK THANKS

This is where I'm going to thank some folks who helped make this a reality. I'm sure I'll miss a ton - sorry.

Ben, who asked me one day a full decade ago what a stealth crafting board game would look like. Blake, Ivy, and Rollin, who've encouraged and challenged Monster Wasteland since playtesting began. Deep Dive Pod 9, alphabetically: Dante, Frank, Jamie, Jay, Jordan, PRaL, Rex, and Terrence. The slew of playtesters in the Monster Wasteland Discord server. Unpub, Break My Game, and Protospiel: the holy trinity of game designer communities. Everyone I've talked to at conventions and the friends I made along the way there. The Wacky Funtime Kids for always being there. My folks, for always looking out for me. Most importantly, Candace, for taking this weird, stressful, beautiful journey with me every step of the way.

And you, dear reader. Thanks for joining me in the Wasteland.



GAME CONTENTS



8 Map Sections



1 Fearless L eader token



1d6, 1d8, 1 six-sided Terrain die



2 tracker tokens



1 Epilogues booklet



8 Hero cards and matching figurines



4 Faction cards



12 Research cards



8 Encounter cards



Black & White cube markers



14 Settlement triangles



12 Monster cards and matching figurines



13 Settlement cards

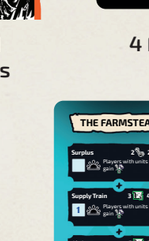


21 Tale cards



4 "Player/Monster" reference cards

56 Basic Item cards



40 Premium Item cards

4 Endgame cards

1 Scoring pad



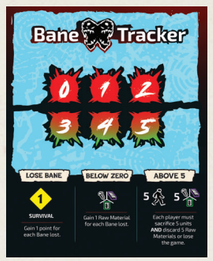
Monster tokens (*Alert, Distraction, Bloodthirsty Felled, Damage*)



Map tokens (*Facility, Military Transport, Nuke, Ruin*)



1 Round Tracker



1 Bane Tracker



2 Raw Material reference cards



Raw Material tokens (*Metals, Organics, Tech*)



50 Followers (*10/Faction, 10 neutral*)

BEGINNING THE GAME

For a game with fewer than four players, first see the additional instructions on the next page.

1. **Set up the map** by placing the eight map sections in a way where at least one space of each section touches at least one space of another. For a first game, consider using the "Neighborly" layout (*see page 26 for example map setups*).

2. Place the **scoring pad, round, and Bane trackers** next to the map. Set the Bane tracker to 0 and the round tracker to 1.

3. Make sure the **Raw Material tokens and dice** are easily accessible.

4. Each player chooses a Faction and takes their **Faction card**, **Hero cards,** and **Followers**. Place cubes in the spaces under the Heroes' abilities to mark them as unused and place Followers on the Heroes' "Joined" spaces on the right side of their cards.

5. **Place the Hero figurines on the map** in their 'Base Camp' spaces (*shown on the right*). You choose which Hero goes on which space.

6. **Shuffle the Settlement cards** into a deck, then **draw two** and place them face up near the deck. These settlements are available to build.

7. **Shuffle the Basic and Premium Item cards** into two decks, then **draw three Basic Items and two Premium Items**. Place them face up near their decks. These items are available to craft.

8. **Shuffle the Research cards** into a deck, then **draw the top two cards**. **Choose one** and place it face up near the deck. This is the active Research objective. Put the other on the bottom of the deck.

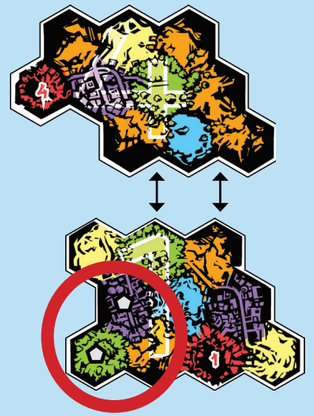
9. **Shuffle the Huge, Gigantic, and Colossal Monster cards into three decks**. Place the decks near the map.

10. **Choose a first player** by arguing about who could survive the longest in a post-apocalyptic wasteland. **That player takes the Fearless Leader token**.

11. The player to the right of the Fearless Leader **spawns a Huge Monster** by drawing the top card of the Huge Monster deck, putting it in their play area, and rolling the d8 to determine which red Lair space to place its figurine in (*see page 19 for more on Monster spawning*).

12. **Find the "A Fresh Start?" Tale and resolve it** by reading the story on the front 'Story' side, then choosing an outcome on the back 'Resolution' side. **Shuffle the remaining Tales into a deck** and place it near the map with the Story side facing up (*see page 14 for Tales*).

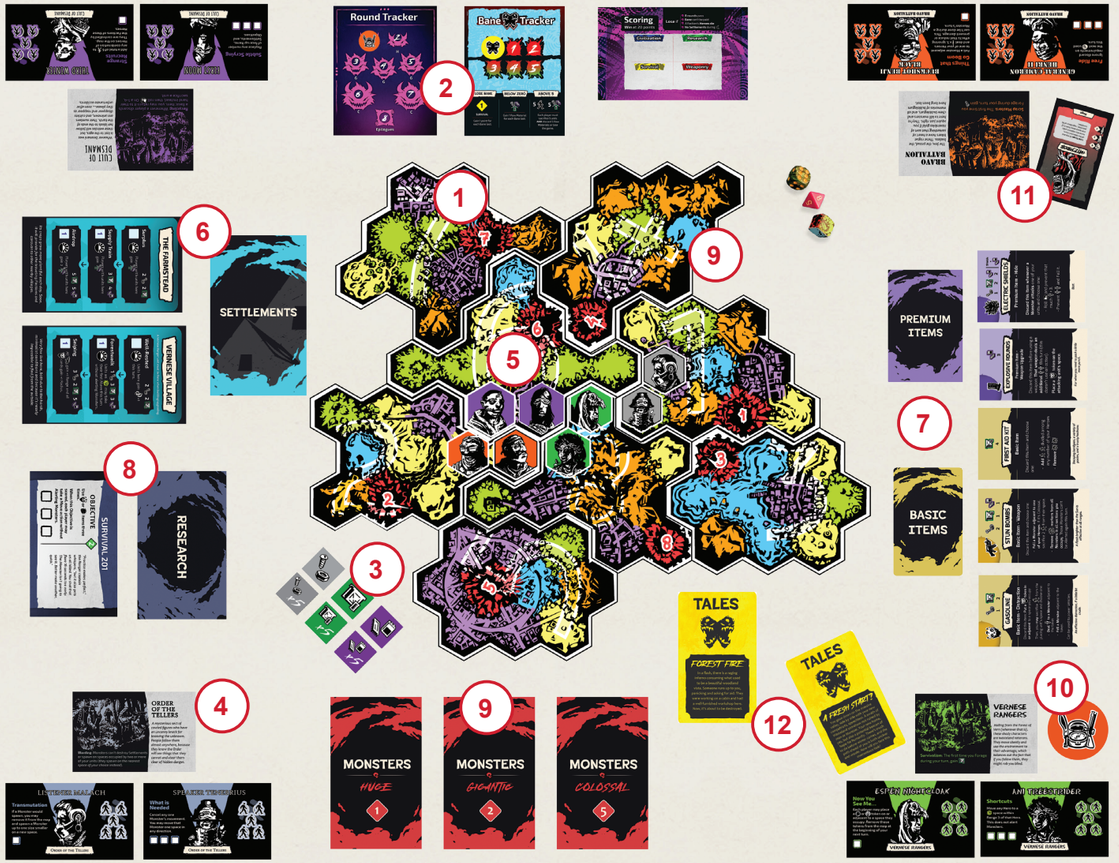
These two map sections can be placed like this, as multiple spaces will intersect.



The Base Camp spaces for the Order of the Tellers are indicated by the white pentagons (matching the Faction's color) in the circled spaces above.

On the next page is the setup for a four-player game. For an alternate setup, if your playing area allows for it, consider putting the map on one end of the table and the player areas side-by-side on the other end. This will allow you to easily arrange the decks where everyone can see them and better share information.

GAME SETUP



1-3 PLAYER GAMES

WİTH FEWER THAN 4 PLAYERS, THE SETUP AND RULES ARE A LİTTLE DİFFERENT:

3 PLAYERS

Remove the unused Faction's Faction-specific Settlement and Tale cards from their decks.

When taking player actions, **each player takes 4 actions** instead of 3.

2 PLAYERS

Remove the unused Factions' Settlement and Tale cards.

Only place map sections 1-6. When rolling for a section, use the d6 instead of the d8.

When taking player actions, **each player takes 5 actions**.

SOLO PLAY

A one-player game uses the same rules as for two players, except **you control two Factions**. For turn order and Monster spawning, treat each Faction as though it were controlled by a different player.

The **Faction-specific Settlements** are "Battalion HQ," "Teller's Circle," "Temple of Desmani," and "Vernese Village,"

The **Faction-specific Tales** are "A Bravo Blunder," "An Oracle of the Order." "A Vernese Violation," and "Occult Procurement."

WINNING & LOSING

In Monster Wasteland, your goal is to **score 20 points between four Objective categories**: Civilization, Research, Survival, and Weaponry. Each category is a different path to reclaiming the Wasteland and scores in different ways:

CIVILIZATION

Civilization points are earned by upgrading your Settlements. When you upgrade a Settlement, you'll gain points according to its card.

RESEARCH

Research points are earned by completing and scoring objectives on Research cards. Each Research card scores between 1 and 4 points.

SURVIVAL

Survival points are earned by losing Bane. Whenever you lose Bane from resolving a Tale, gain that many points in Survival.

WEAPONRY

Weaponry points are earned by defeating Monsters. These points are dependent on Monster size as seen on the back of their cards.

Whenever you upgrade a Settlement, score a Research objective, lose Bane, or kill a Monster, add the appropriate number of points to your scorecard. You'll check for victory at the end of each round, AKA the Night phase ☾. If you have 20 points at this time, you can either claim Victory on the spot or begin a challenging Endgame scenario based on the category you scored the highest in (*see page 25 for more on Endgames*). Beat the Endgame to score an Epic Victory!

If you claim victory after 20 points, open the Epilogues booklet and find the "Victory" entry of the Objective category you scored highest in (*if tied, choose one of the tied categories based on which was most appropriate to your playstyle*). Congratulations! You've made the Wasteland a safe place to live... for now.

But sometimes the challenge is too great to bear. Maybe the Monsters are too overwhelming, maybe the points are out of reach, or perhaps your past decisions came back to haunt you...

YOU LOSE IF:

- Both Heroes from **any one player** are killed (**DEATH**)
- You don't score 20 points by the end of Round 8 (**ROUNDS**)
- You can't pay a Bane cost (**BANE**)
- There are no Settlements on the map **at the start of the Night phase** ☾ (**SETTLEMENTS**)

EPILOGUES | Whether you win or lose, there's an Epilogue that details the fate of your Factions and the future you've created for the Wasteland – if any. Don't forget to read it!

KEY CONCEPTS

THE MAP & TERRAIN

The modular hex map is a rendition of the valley you hope to make your new home. It's where units and Monsters exist, Settlements are built, and tokens are placed. All the action happens on the map!



Section 1 of the map

The map consists of **eight numbered sections** which can be placed in modular configurations (*see page 26 for example setups*). Each section has its number printed on its red Lair space. Sections are comprised of **ten spaces**, or individual hexes. Spaces and units on spaces are considered to be "**next to**" each adjacent space, regardless of section.

Monster Wasteland has six types of **terrain**:



The first five types provide **Raw Materials**, which are used for items, Settlements, and completing Research cards. Lairs, however, are barren spaces where Monsters spawn and are devoid of Raw Materials.

Occasionally, you'll be required to **select a random space**. When this happens, roll d8 and the **Terrain Die**, a six-sided die with a different type of terrain indicated on each side. Assign the action to a space of the rolled terrain type in the map section matching the number rolled.



The Terrain Die

Similarly, you may be asked to select a random space of a specific type of terrain. To do so, roll d8 and select a space of that terrain type in the rolled section.

If you roll a result with more than one option (*for instance, if you roll an Urban space in Section 8, which has two Urban spaces*), you choose which of those spaces to assign the action to.

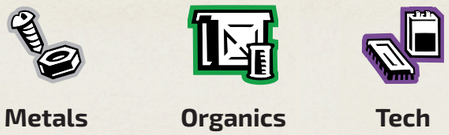
If a space doesn't qualify for the action being rolled (*for instance, if a Monster would spawn on a space with a Monster already on it*), reroll **all dice used** until a qualifying space is rolled.

CORNER CASE!

If it's impossible to roll a valid space for an action, the action is ignored. This applies to things like spawning Monsters and Tale outcomes, though it's extremely rare.

RAW MATERIALS

Raw Materials are literally the building blocks for everything you need to survive the Wasteland. There are three types:



Raw Materials are used to craft items, build and upgrade Settlements, pay for Tale outcomes, and more. During your turn, you'll gain Raw Materials by taking the Forage action or trading with other players.

When you gain Raw Materials, take the appropriate number of tokens of each type of material and place them in your play area - they're yours to spend.

There is no limit to the number of Raw Materials a player can have, but resource management is crucial to surviving the Wasteland, so collaborate to make sure your comrades have what they need too!

PLAYER'S CHOICE!

Slashes between Raw Material types indicate you pick one from multiple options. For example,  means **one of any type** of Raw Material.

THE FEARLESS LEADER

The player with the Fearless Leader token is the Fearless Leader for the round. They take actions first and are in charge of resolving Tales, spawning Monsters, and scoring points. They also decide any random outcomes not chosen by a specific player and are the final say in any contentious decisions.



The Fearless Leader token also has the round structure printed on the back.

At the end of each round, the Fearless Leader passes the token to the player on their left, who becomes the new Fearless Leader next round.

FACTIONS & UNITS

Players lead one of four **Factions**, controlling two **Heroes** of that Faction as well as the Heroes' **Followers**. Heroes and Followers are collectively referred to as **units**, and Followers are referred to with the symbol. **Monsters are not units.**

Each Faction has an innate **ability**, seen on their card, which will influence your playstyle and can be used throughout the game. Heroes also have abilities, but theirs can only be used a limited number of times, as indicated on their cards. At the beginning of the game you put markers on Heroes' ability spaces to show them as unused - you'll remove one whenever you use the ability.

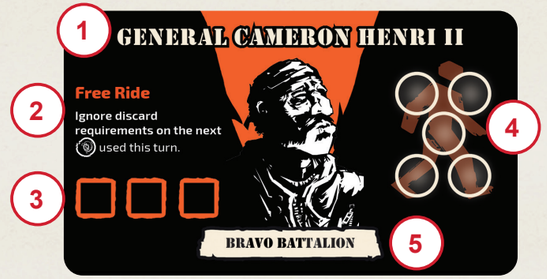
Using a Faction or Hero ability doesn't count as an action and can be used at any relevant time, including on other players' and Monsters' turns! However, you can't regain Hero ability uses, so activate them strategically!



The Bravo Battalion's Faction ability allows them to gain an extra Metal the first time they take the Forage action each turn.

Heroes are represented both by their cards in your play area and their corresponding figurines on the map. Heroes begin with Followers **joined** to them - joined Followers are put in the spaces on the right side of a Hero's card. **Joined Followers occupy the same space as their Hero**, even though they're on the Hero's card.

Joined Followers can **separate** from their Hero to go it alone or join a Hero from another Faction. Players may separate Followers for various reasons (*completing Objectives, distracting a Monster, or having a continued presence on a space*), but with certain restrictions explained in the Separate/Join section (*page 18*). A Hero can't have more joined Followers than spaces on their card, and a Faction can't have more Followers than they started the game with.



1) Name
2) Special Ability
3) Ability Uses
4) Joined Follower Spaces
5) Faction

Occasionally you'll join or place **Neutral Followers**. These Followers don't belong to a Faction, but they can be joined to and sacrificed from Heroes. If separated, they can't move, use items, be sacrificed to pay costs, or receive Settlement bonuses (*but they can be targeted and attacked by Monsters*).

SACRIFICING UNITS

There's safety in numbers, and a Hero with many Followers is hardier than a Hero with none. When a Monster attacks a Hero, **sacrifice** the appropriate number of joined Followers first - **when you sacrifice a unit, remove them from play**. When a Hero doesn't have enough Followers to sacrifice, then that Hero is sacrificed (*they can survive with no joined Followers*).

Some cards ask you to sacrifice . This works the same way - if you don't have enough Followers to pay the cost, you must sacrifice Heroes (*remember, you lose when both of your Heroes are sacrificed!*). There's one exception: when a card says you "**may**" sacrifice , you can **only** sacrifice Followers to pay that cost.

MONSTERS

Large, deadly, and unrelenting, the Monsters of the Wasteland are probably responsible for the downfall of civilization. They come in all shapes and sizes, but for convenience's sake they're sorted into three classes of increasing difficulty: **Huge, Gigantic, and Colossal**. Each Monster has a unique card and a figurine that's placed on the map when it spawns. When a Monster spawns, it begins hunting for prey until killed and removed from the map.

The horrors of the Wasteland act in specific ways ranging from how they spawn to how they see, move, and attack. Some Monsters lurk while others hunt; some fly or teleport; and some are resistant to damage. A Monster that attacks for three damage isn't necessarily more dangerous than a Monster that attacks for one.

A Monster takes its turn after the player who spawned it, and that player will perform its actions. This means that the longer a Monster is on the map, the earlier it goes in turn order! Pay attention to what they can see, where they'll be moving, and if they'll do anything tricky when they get there.

Monsters are also worth points in Weaponry when you manage to kill them. Their point values are marked on the back of their cards, but Huge Monsters are worth 1 point, Gigantic Monsters are worth 2 points, and Colossal Monsters are worth a whopping 5 points... if you can manage to take one down.



A Monster's card contains its stats and abilities. It also serves as a placeholder to mark a Monster's **condition**, a status that determines what the Monster does during its turn (*outlined beginning on page 21*).

Each Monster has three stats:

Health: How much damage it can take before dying

Movement: The base number of spaces it moves

Damage: How many units are sacrificed when it attacks

Monsters also have unique special abilities, which are detailed on their cards to the right of their stats.

Monster rules are discussed in detail beginning on page 20.



The Hatethrob is a Huge Monster with 4 Health that has a movement of 3 spaces and deals 2 damage when attacking. It also has the special ability "Limb Surge," which occurs at the end of its turn.

TALES

At the beginning of each round (*called the Morning phase*), the Fearless Leader draws a Tale: a short, open-ended story that presents the Factions with a crisis they must resolve. Tales have a variety of outcomes, both good and bad: one Tale could give extra movement or items, but another might spawn a Monster or destroy a space.

Tales cards have two sides: the **Story** side and the **Resolution** side. Because of this, **Tales are drawn from the bottom of the deck** to prevent you from planning ahead.



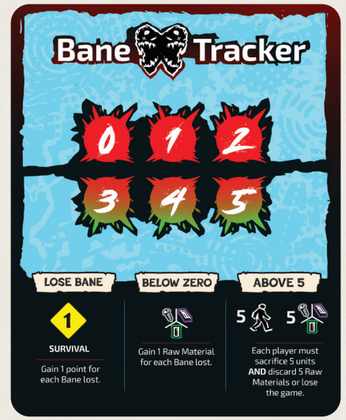
The Story (left) and Resolution (right) sides of a Tale.

1) Story
2) Requirement
3) Title
4) Outcome
5) Flavor Text

BANE

Sometimes things don't go your way and you have to make a hard choice - one that costs people, materials, or respect. This earns Bane which is marked on the Bane Tracker. Tales will see you gain and lose Bane as they resolve, and a higher Bane can mean harsher consequences if something goes wrong in the future. You can tempt fate by taking on Bane for a better Tale outcome, but choices may come back to haunt you...

If you would ever exceed 5 Bane, each player must sacrifice 5 units AND discard 5 Raw Materials. If any player can't, the game is lost.



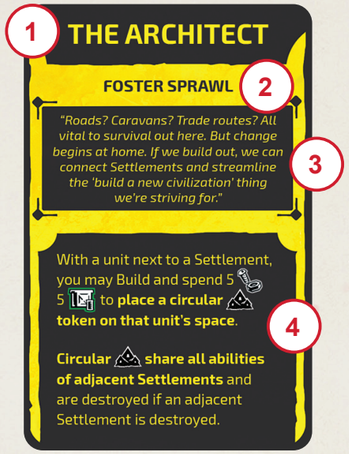
Conversely, **if you would ever have negative Bane, instead the Bane Tracker stays at 0 and each player collects 1 Raw Material**. You still gain points in Survival for losing Bane at 0.

ENCOUNTERS

Some Tale outcomes will result in having a chance encounter with a unique individual, item, or location. Whenever a Tale has you **encounter** something or someone, find their Encounter card and place it face-up near the map. This card's ability is now available for **any player** to use (*in accordance with any restrictions on the card*).

Encounter cards can't be removed from the game and may be used as many times as players wish. You may also have any number of Encounters in play at a time.

Let's say you've encountered the Architect (*below*) and placed their card near the board. Their 'Foster Sprawl' ability requires a player to have a unit adjacent to a Settlement, and the player must take the "Build/Upgrade" action to activate the ability. "Build/Upgrade" can only be done during a player's turn, so Foster Sprawl can only be activated during a player's turn.



1) Name
2) Ability name
3) Flavor text
4) Ability description

SETTLEMENTS

A key part of Monster Wasteland is building, upgrading, and maintaining Settlements. Settlements are built on intersections on the map - they're places where Wasteland dwellers have set up shop, and it's your job to help Settlements grow and protect them.

Each Settlement has three abilities - one is gained when it's built, and two additional abilities can be gained by upgrading it. **Settlements retain previous abilities when upgraded**. Some abilities provide bonuses at the beginning of the round, some require a unit to be on them, and others require an action to use.

When built, **a Settlement's triangular token is placed on an intersection of three spaces on the map.** The tokens are numbered pairs between 1 and 7 - the matching token is put on the Settlement's card to indicate which Settlement is which.

Settlements count as occupying all three spaces their token intersects - units in one of these spaces are considered to be on the Settlement. Settlement spaces retain their terrain types, and players with units on a Settlement may take actions as normal.

This Settlement has been built on the intersection of the highlighted Aquatic, Desert, and Forest spaces. Its token goes in the middle of them, and it's considered to be occupying all three spaces.

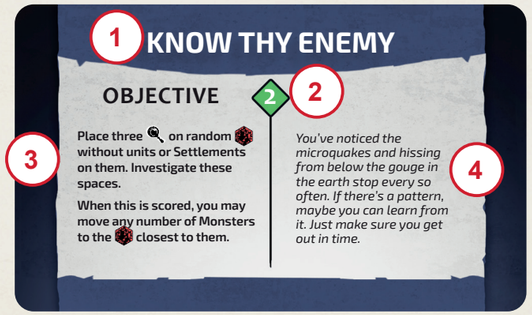
Settlements can't move, use items, or take actions - it's up to you to defend them!

If a Monster spawns on a Settlement, attacks a unit on a Settlement, or attacks an empty Settlement space, that Settlement is destroyed. Remove its token from the map and discard its card. You immediately lose all benefits from its abilities (*you don't lose points in Civilization if it was upgraded*).

More Settlement information, including upgrades, scoring, and card anatomy, can be found in the "Build/Upgrade" section on page 17.

THE RESEARCH DECK

The Research deck is comprised of cards with objectives to complete that earn points as a result of better understanding the Wasteland. Completing them often gives a material reward in addition to points!



1) Name
2) Point value
3) Objective
4) Flavor Text

You'll generally complete the requirements for a Research objective in the Noon phase (*when players take actions each round*) but **Research cards are not scored until the end of the round, in the Night phase**.

When a Research card is scored, first gain its points. Then the Fearless Leader receives any rewards given by the card, and a new Research card is chosen by drawing **two cards from the deck, choosing one, and putting the other on the bottom** of the deck. Only one Research card can be active at a time.

PRACTICE SAFE SCRYING!

First Moon (*a Cult of Desmani Hero*) has the ability to replace the active Research card. When you do this, replace it with the top card of the deck - **don't draw two and choose one**!

INVESTIGATE

Sometimes you'll need to **investigate** spaces to complete a Research objective. Investigating is a special action that's taken on your turn: **spend one action to investigate any one space a unit you control is on**.

GAMEPLAY

ROUND STRUCTURE

MONSTER WASTELAND IS PLAYED OVER THE COURSE OF 8 ROUNDS, EACH OF WHICH HAS THREE PHASES:

MORNING

- The Fearless Leader draws and resolves a Tale
- Resolve any Settlement abilities with a symbol

NOON

- Take turns. The Fearless Leader goes first; play proceeds to the left
- Players each take three actions on their turn
- Players who have spawned a Monster **take its turn after theirs**

NIGHT

- Score the Research objective if completed
- Check your score. If you have 20+ points, immediately win or begin an Endgame.
- The Fearless Leader spawns a Monster
- Advance the Round Tracker and pass the Fearless Leader token clockwise

MONSTER TURNS

You will take turns for the Monsters you spawn! immediately after performing your actions in the Noon phase, you'll perform the actions of any Monsters you've spawned according to their rules (*described starting on page 21*), beginning with the monster spawned first if you control more than one. This means Monsters are integrated into turn order - plan accordingly!



The Vernese Rangers player (left) has the Fearless Leader token and will go first in the Noon phase. The Order of the Tellers player (right) has spawned a Monster - they'll take its turn after theirs.

THE MORNING PHASE

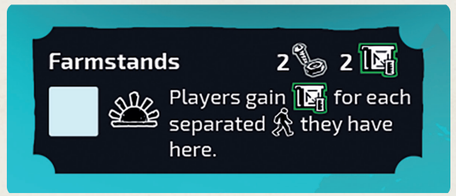
At the start of each Morning phase, the Fearless Leader will draw a Tale card (*from the bottom of the Tales deck*) and read its Story side to set the scene. Then, they'll flip the card to its Resolution side and read each option's requirements, title, and outcome. It's up to you to decide which option to choose - most of the time.

For instance, the Resolution side of the Tale to the right has three options. The first has the requirement **"Spend 5 per Settlement"** - any number of players can help pay this cost. The second has no requirement. The final option has a Bane-related requirement - **it will automatically trigger if you have 3-5 Bane**!



After you choose an option, resolve its outcome and read its flavor text. Whereas any number of players may help pay for an option's requirements, **only the Fearless Leader will gain rewards and pay penalties from the outcome**. Unless it says otherwise, a Tale's outcome is immediate and its card is discarded after resolving it.

RESOLVING SETTLEMENT ABILITIES

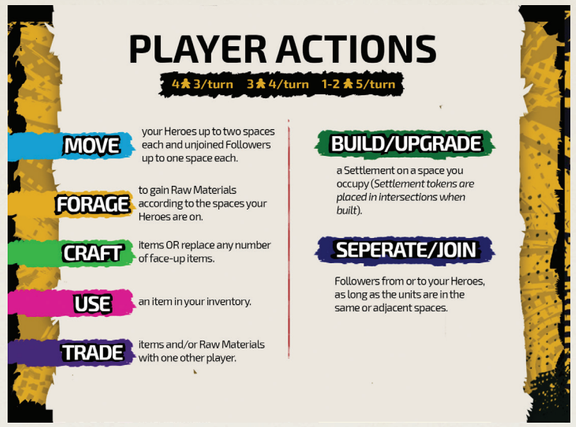


The "Farmstands" ability activates in the morning and requires you have separated Followers on the Settlement.

Some Settlements have abilities that activate in the Morning phase, as indicated by a symbol next to the ability. Some of these abilities have requirements, such as having a unit on the Settlement. Plan ahead so you don't miss out on the benefits!

THE NOON PHASE

During the Noon phase players will take turns with three actions each, beginning with the Fearless Leader and moving to the left. These actions are **Move, Forage, Craft, Use Item, Trade, Build/Upgrade,** and **Separate/Join**. You may take the same action any number of times per turn.



This summary of player actions is also available on the player reference cards

MOVE

When you take the Move action, move **any number** of your units in whatever order you choose. Heroes move up to two spaces when taking the Move action, but Separated Followers only move one space each.

Units can't move through or end on gaps in the map or spaces occupied by Monsters. They also can't stop mid-move; they must complete the entire move when the action is taken. They can move through other units, but when ending movement, **only one Hero and up to four separated Followers may occupy the same space on the map.**

MOVING EXAMPLE

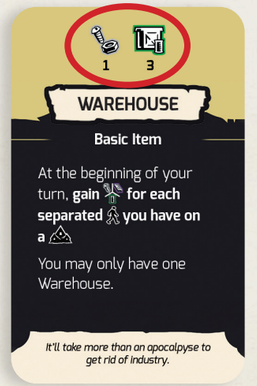


In this image, the Hero Third Winter can't cross the gap in the map, nor can they move through the monster adjacent to them, as indicated by the red arrows. They can, however, move to any other unobstructed hexes within two spaces of them, as indicated by the green arrows.

CRAFT

There are plenty of items to be found in the Wasteland, and it's up to you to scrounge them up. When you take the Craft action, you have may take one of two options. First, you can select **any number** of face-up items available to craft, discard the raw materials shown in the cost on the top of the item's card, and craft those items.

The Warehouse requires 3 Organics and 3 Metals to Craft.



Crafted items go in your player area along with your Raw Materials, and as with Raw Materials **there is no limit to the number of items a player may have.**

When items are crafted, they are replaced by the next card in the deck **after the player has completely finished their Craft action**. If you would draw an item and there are no more cards in that item deck, shuffle that deck's discard pile and form a new deck from it.

Your second option when taking the Craft action is to replace any number of face-up items with the top cards of their respective decks. Replaced items are put in the item discard pile (*this is not discarding them*).

FORAGE

Foraging is the main way to gather the Raw Materials you'll need to survive the Wasteland. When you Forage, gain a combination of Raw Materials **according to the spaces both of your Faction's Heroes are on**. Raw Material reference cards (*seen on the right*) are available so you know where you need to be Foraging to get the materials you need. **There is no limit to the number of Raw Materials you may have.**



CITY SLICKERS!

Eagle-eyed observers will note that Urban spaces are the only place you can Forage for Tech Parts. Keep this in mind when positioning to Forage!

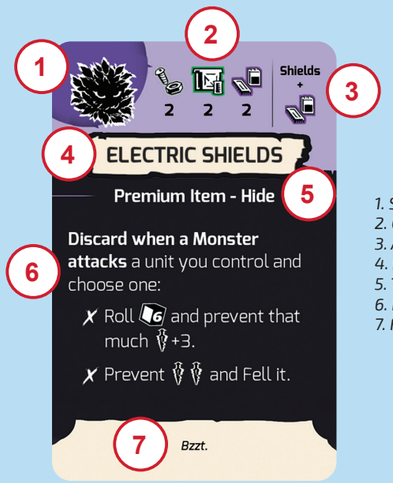
ITEM TYPES & SUBTYPES

There's a wide variety of items essential to Wasteland survival. They're divided into two categories – **Basic** (*tan*) and **Premium** (*purple*). Some also have subcategories, marked with an icon on the top left of their cards. These subcategories are:



Using items of specific subcategories is necessary to complete some Research objectives, and some cards or abilities may have you gain items of a specific subcategory.

Some Premium Items also have an **alternate build cost**, listed to the right of their regular build cost. These costs allow you to build the items for fewer total materials, but they tend to require other items in their cost, instead of simply costing Raw Materials.



1. *Subtype Icon*
2. *Cost*
3. *Alternate Cost*
4. *Item Name*
5. *Type/Subtype*
6. *Description*
7. *Flavor Text*

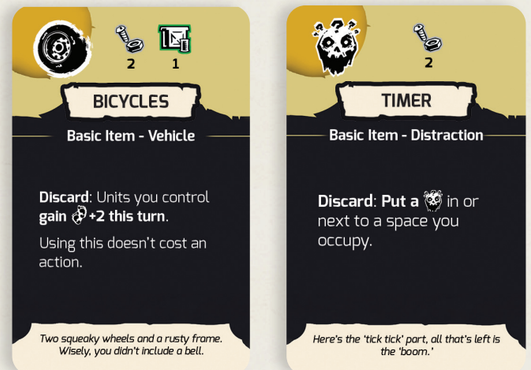
If a card or ability would have you gain an item without Crafting it - for example, a Tale outcome may say "Gain Shields" - take that item from the discard pile first if possible. If not, take it from the face-up items and replace it. Failing that, search its deck for the item, take it, then shuffle the deck.

USE ITEM

Whether you're fighting, distracting, or hiding, you'll usually need to take an action to use an item card.

By default, **items are used by a player and not tied to a specific unit or space on the board until they're used**. However, some items have placement requirements, some have timing restrictions, and most are discarded.

Some items will say in their description that they don't require an action to use - for example, Shields can be discarded in response to a Monster attacking you.

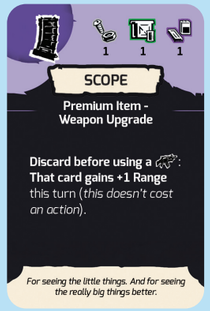


Both the Bicycles and Timer are discarded after use, but using the Bicycles doesn't cost an action!

WEAPON UPGRADES

As Monsters get bigger, they get beefier, and larger ones have abilities that reduce the damage they're dealt. One solution to this problem is to use **Weapon Upgrades** which are exclusively found in the Premium Items, to either deal more damage or deal damage more efficiently.

When you use a Weapon Upgrade, discard it before performing the Use Item action with a Weapon – **it doesn't require its own Use Item action**. You may discard any number of Weapon Upgrade cards this way **as long as they are unique**. For example, you can discard a Scope and a Makeshift Drum in one attack, but not two Makeshift Drums.



TRADE

When trading, exchange any number of Raw Materials or items with another player. You can give and receive when trading, but **you can only trade with one player per action** (*you don't need to be on the same space*).

BUILD

To build a Settlement, choose one of the two available Settlement cards and pay its build cost, shown in the top right of its first ability box. Put the card near the map, then place a numbered Settlement token on it and a matching numbered token at the intersection of three spaces**, including a space one of your units is on.** These spaces can't have Monsters on them, and you must follow any Build requirements at the top of the card. For example, The Oasis *(seen below)* must be built on an intersection that includes a Desert space (*the unit building it doesn't need to be on the space - just the Settlement*). After placing the Settlement token on the map, cover its topmost ability marker to show that ability is active.

When a Settlement is built, the other available Settlement is discarded, and two new available Settlements are drawn. **When the Settlement deck is empty, no more Settlements may be built!**



1) *Name*
2) *Requirement*
3) *Ability marker*
4) *Build cost*
5) *Ability description*
6) *Upgrade cost*
7) *Point value*

ODD ONE OUT!

If there's only one card in the Settlement deck when you redraw at the end of the Build action, that's the only Settlement available to build!

UPGRADE

Settlements can be upgraded to improve their effects and score points as the game progresses. **To upgrade a Settlement, you must have a unit on it**. Pay the Upgrade cost in the top right of the Settlement's next ability box and cover that box's ability marker. The new ability becomes active immediately. Then, gain Civilization points from upgrading the Settlement as indicated by the point value in its ability marker.

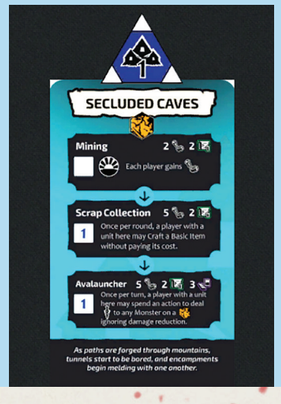
You can only Upgrade one Settlement one level per action, and you can't skip levels when upgrading.

BUILDING EXAMPLE

The Bravo Battalion player sees the Secluded Caves in the available Settlements. They take the Build action and place the "1" Settlement token on an intersection where they have a unit and there's a Mountain space (*left*), as per the Caves' build requirement. They then put the Caves' card near the map, placing the matching "1" Settlement token on the card and a marker on the first ability to mark it as active (*right*).

The unit itself doesn't have to be on a Mountain space - a Mountain just has to be part of the intersection where the Settlement is built.





SEPARATE/JOIN

Sending Followers out on their own is key to Wasteland survival – they become scouts, missionaries, and unfortunately, sometimes decoys. When you **Separate**, remove any number of Followers joined to any number of your Heroes and place them on the map in the same or adjacent space to the Heroes they were separated from. Followers may be separated onto the same space, adjacent spaces, or a combination of the two.



The Bravo Battalion player separates three Followers from Buckshot Benji Black. Two are placed in adjacent spaces, while the third stays on Benji's space.

Joining Followers is the opposite of this process. With a Hero on the same or an adjacent space to any number of Separated Followers, Join those Followers to the Hero by placing them on the Hero's card. Remember - a Hero can't have more Joined Followers than spaces on their Hero card!

When you take the "Separate/Join" action, **you can do both, as long as you Separate and Join in that order**. For instance, you can separate two Followers from a Hero, then Join them to your other Hero, as long as those Followers are in the same or adjacent spaces.

You can also Join Followers from other Factions (*with permission from the other players*), but they still belong to their original Faction. If you Separate those Followers from

DON'T MOVE!

When you take the Separate/Join action, you're **placing** units, not **moving** them. This means the action doesn't do things like trigger a Monster's Line of Sight!

WHAT ABOUT MONSTERS?

MONSTERS TAKE TURNS AFTER THE PLAYER WHO SPAWNED THEM!

After a player takes their actions in the Noon phase, if they've spawned a Monster in a previous round, the Monster will then take its actions. Players assume responsibility for taking the actions of the Monsters they've spawned, and a Monster's turn is outlined beginning on page 21. **If a player has spawned multiple Monsters, the Monster that's been on the map the longest goes first**.

THE NIGHT PHASE

As each round ends, you'll score any completed Research cards, check to see if the game ends, spawn a Monster, and do some cleanup before moving on to the next round. The order of operations is:

- Score the Research objective if completed and select a new one
- Check your win and loss conditions
- The Fearless Leader spawns a Monster
- Advance the Round Tracker by one
- The Fearless Leader passes their token to the left

CHECKING FOR WIN/LOSS

When you check for win or loss, check to see if you've won first. If you have 20 or more points, either find the appropriate 'Victory' entry in the 'Epilogues' booklet or begin an Endgame (*page 25*).

Then, check for loss. **If there are no Settlements on the map, or it's the end of round eight, you lose**. Find the appropriate 'Loss' entry in the 'Epilogues' booklet and read it - better luck next time!

SCOOOORE!

Victory only happens during the Night phase. Even if you get your 20th point by losing Bane in the Morning, **you have to survive until Night to win**!

MONSTER SPAWNING

Monsters are spawned throughout the game, beginning with a Huge Monster spawning during the game's setup and continuing with one spawning during every Night phase. The Round Tracker indicates Monster spawning size for each round: the first two rounds spawn Huge Monsters, the next three spawn Gigantic ones, and rounds 6 and 7 spawn Colossal ones.

To spawn a Monster, the Fearless Leader draws the top card from the Monster deck of the appropriate size and finds the matching Monster figurine. Roll d8 to determine the section the Monster spawns in. By default, a Monster will spawn on the Lair d6 in that section - place its figurine on the corresponding space and its card in its controller's play area to denote the Monster will take its turn after theirs.



The Round Tracker has Monster Spawning size marked underneath each round.



A player spawns the Hatethrob in Section 3 (left). The Monster is placed on the corresponding Lair space (right).

SCATTERING

Sometimes spawning will go horribly wrong and a Monster will spawn on a space occupied by one or more units and/or a Settlement. When that happens, destroy those Settlements and **scatter** those units.

When units are scattered, **sacrifice all separated Followers on that space**. Any Heroes on the space are moved to an available adjacent space, then roll 1D6 and separate Followers from that Hero as such:

- **1-2:** Separate one Follower and place them on an adjacent space
- **3-4:** Separate two Followers and place them **on different adjacent spaces**
- **5-6:** Separate three Followers and place them **on different adjacent spaces**

If there aren't enough available spaces to fulfill these requirements, sacrifice any Followers who can't be placed. **If there aren't enough joined Followers to scatter, sacrifice that Hero.**

MONSTERS

When it's a Monster's turn they take actions in the following order:

Beginning of Turn Abilities
↳ **Movement**
↳ **Attack**
↳ **End of Turn Abilities**

A Monster's actions depend on whether or not it has one of four conditions: **Bloodthirsty**, **Alerted**, **Distracted**, or **Felled**. Conditions affect how a Monster moves and attacks, and they may change over the course of a Monster's turn, as well as between its turns.

MAXIMUM CARNAGE | Sometimes you'll have multiple options for where a Monster will spawn, how it will move, or what it will attack. When this happens, follow the "Rule of Maximum Carnage:" **ALWAYS select the option that is WORST for everyone**!

MONSTER ABILITIES

All Monsters have one or more different abilities, which are printed on the bottom of their cards. These abilities fall into one of four categories:

1. One-time abilities that occur upon spawning or death
2. Abilities that are always active
3. Abilities that occur at the beginning or end of its turn
4. Abilities that occur when moving or attacking



The Writhing Mass has three abilities: one is always active, one occurs when attacking, and one occurs at the end of its turn.

You take turns for the Monsters you spawn, so pay attention to their abilities - they're your responsibility!

TERRITORY & LINE OF SIGHT

When a Monster spawns, the map section it spawns in becomes its **territory**, which serves as its initial **line of sight** – the range at which it can be Alerted to a unit or Distracted.

Monsters become Alerted to units when they move through the Monster's territory or if they are in the Monster's line of sight at the beginning of its turn.



*The Hatethrob is currently in Section 7 - that section is its **territory**. Its **line of sight** extends to all spaces in that territory... for now.*

MONSTER CONDITIONS

A Monster spawns without any conditions, but it will eventually gain one or more of these four:

ALERTED	DISTRACTED	FELLED	BLOODTHIRSTY
Sees a unit and is on the hunt, moving to attack.	*Is single-mindedly pursuing a player-made diversion*	*Is knocked down and will not move or attack*	*Is searching for prey, with larger line of sight.*

Monsters will also change or remove conditions when they do things like attack, reach a Distraction, or get Felled. When a Monster's condition changes or is removed, it's referred to as **clearing** its former condition.

If a Monster begins its turn without a condition other than Bloodthirsty (*for instance, if it recently spawned*), **it checks its line of sight**. If there's a unit in its line of sight, it becomes Alerted to that unit and proceeds to move according to the "Alerted" condition. Otherwise, it gains a Bloodthirsty marker and continues its hunt with more ferocity.

BLOODTHIRSTY + HUNTING MOVEMENT

When a Monster becomes **Bloodthirsty**, put a marker on its card to indicate its condition. **For each Bloodthirsty marker, a Monster's line of sight increases by one section in every direction** - its territory remains the same. A Monster can be Distracted or Alerted to movement in spaces outside of its territory as long as they are within its line of sight.

If units continue to avoid triggering a Bloodthirsty Monster's line of sight, it gains additional Bloodthirsty markers, increasing its line of sight by another section.



The Hatethrob from the previous page is now Bloodthirsty. Its line of sight extends to all adjacent sections.

After a Monster gets a Bloodthirsty marker, it takes **Hunting Movement**: it moves a number of spaces according to its speed **towards the nearest Settlement**. If there are no Settlements, it moves towards the nearest Hero instead. Hunting Movement can move a Monster into a new section, changing its territory and line of sight. If it becomes adjacent to a unit or Settlement **at any point**, it will stop and attack (*see page 31*)!

A Bloodthirsty Monster clears its Bloodthirsty condition when it attacks or is Felled. This means a Monster may be Alerted or Distracted **and** Bloodthirsty at the same time. In this case, it will act according to its Alerted or Distracted condition.

ALERTED

If a unit moves in a Monster's line of sight or is in its territory at the beginning of its turn, the Monster becomes **Alerted** to that unit's space. On its turn, the Monster will move towards that space and try to attack whatever's there (*or whatever's on the way*).

When a Monster becomes Alerted, place a colored Alert marker on the Monster's card and a marker of the matching color on the space it's Alerted to. When that Monster moves, it will move towards the space it's Alerted to. When it reaches the space or becomes adjacent to **any unit or Settlement** (*not just what it's Alerted to*), end its movement and remove the Alert markers - it's about to attack!

If a Monster is Alerted and a unit moves in its line of sight, its Alert marker moves to that unit's space. **A Monster is always Alerted to the most recent movement it's seen.** If a Monster could become Alerted to multiple units (*for example, if there are two units in a Monster's territory when it's checked*), it's Alerted to the closest unit to it. If the units are equidistant, see the "multiple target" rules on page 24.

If a unit leaves a Monster's line of sight, that Monster remains Alerted to the last space it saw the unit in. It will continue moving until it reaches that space, becomes adjacent to something it can attack, or its condition changes.

ALERTING EXAMPLE

Buckshot Benji Black moves into the Hatethrob's territory, alerting it.





An Alert marker is put on Benji's space (*left*) and a matching one is put on the Hatethrob's card (*right*).



Benji moves out of the Hatethrob's territory. The Alert marker stays on the last space it saw Benji in.

DISTRACTED & DISTRACTIONS

Items and effects can Distract a Monster, making it focus on one space and ignore everything else. When a Distraction occurs, place a colored Distraction marker on the space it affects. **Each non-Felled Monster with the marker in its line of sight immediately becomes Distracted** - they gain matching-colored Distraction markers and clear Alert conditions if they had them (*remove the Alert markers from the Monster cards and the map*). On a Distracted Monster's turn, it will **only** move towards its destination.

If a Monster began its turn Distracted it can't attack, become Alerted, or gain Bloodthirsty markers. It can, however, become Felled or Distracted by a new marker. The Monster will continue moving until it reaches its marker **or until it can't move closer** (*eg., if something is blocking that space or a path to that space*). When this happens, its Distraction marker is removed from its card. **Distraction markers are not removed from the map until there are no Monsters with matching markers on their card.**

DISTRACTION EXAMPLE

Third Winter places a Distraction in the Hatethrob and Willful Wisp's lines of sight (*top*). Matching markers are put on their cards (*bottom*).





FELLED

You need to fight back against the Monsters to survive, and the first step to doing that is knocking them down. When a Monster becomes Felled (*usually from an item or ability*), it loses all other markers and conditions and gains two Felled markers on its card. **A Felled Monster can't move, attack, or gain other conditions**.

When a Felled Monster would take actions, its controller removes a Felled marker from its card. If it still has a Felled marker on it, the Monster skips its turn. Otherwise, it **checks its line of sight and takes its turn as normal**.

FELLED EXAMPLE

Third Winter Fells the Willful Wisp (*top*). Two Felled markers are placed on the Wisp's card to mark its status (*bottom*). These markers will get removed over the course of its next two turns.





A Monster may never have more than two Felled markers. However, players can use items and abilities that would Fell an already-Felled Monster that only has one marker on it. This adds a marker to the already-Felled Monster, bringing it back up to two Felled markers.

WHAT IF THERE ARE MULTIPLE TARGETS?

If a Monster is equidistant to multiple units when checking line of sight, or if it could attack multiple targets, it always goes for the weakest link. Prioritize a Monster's targets in the following order:

1. **Separated Followers** → 2. **Heroes (*by lowest Follower count*)** → 3. **Settlements (*by lowest upgrade level*)**

If there are still multiple options, **follow the rule of Maximum Carnage** (*page 20*)!

COMBAT

MONSTER ATTACKS

If a Monster is adjacent to a unit or Settlement before, during, or after movement and it didn't begin the turn Distracted or with two Felled markers, it attacks that space, dealing its damage and applying any relevant special abilities. When a Monster attacks, a number of units equal to its damage must be sacrificed from the attacked space.

Monster attacks automatically destroy Settlements, even if they're occupied. The attack **also** deals damage to units on that space as normal. A Monster may only attack one space per turn, and as per the targeting rules at the top of this page, **it will always attack units over unoccupied Settlements if in range of both**.

PERSONAL SPACE!

Don't forget - Monsters can **never** occupy the same space as a unit, Settlement, or other Monster. If a Monster would end its movement on an occupied space, stop its movement and attack if possible.

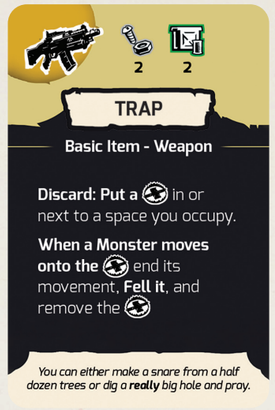
PLAYER COMBAT

It's difficult to take down a Monster and only a little easier to evade one. You'll have to be clever and use your abilities, Distractions, and Weapons, as well as some special tricks, to bring them down and finish them off!

As a Monster is damaged, put damage markers on its card equal to the amount of damage you've dealt. When a Monster has taken damage equal to or higher than its Health, the Monster has been slain! Remove its figurine and any associated markers from the map immediately, discard its card, and score according to its size!

FELL, THEN KILL!

It's tricky to damage a Monster without Felling it (*and safer to attack one that can't fight back*), so it's wise to Fell Monsters before going in for the kill. Items like the Trap on the right exist solely to Fell Monsters. Some Distractions and other Weapons will let also let you Fell them, but at an additional cost. Check your items and abilities to see the most efficient way to keep the bastards down.

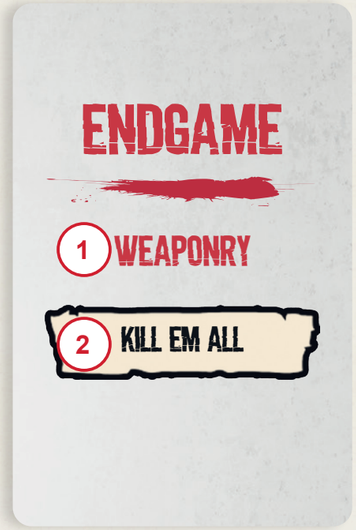


ENDGAMES

If you have 20 or more points at the beginning of the Night phase, you have the option to either end the game on the spot or take it further and complete an Endgame scenario to score an Epic Victory. Endgames don't have any points or scoring - instead, they have a unique victory condition that is thematic to their category.

To begin an Endgame, tally up your points and see which objective category you scored the highest in. Find the Endgame card of that category, put it near the board, and **immediately** perform its setup. If your high scores are tied across multiple objective categories, choose one of those Endgames either randomly or according to the category you feel your game was most faithful to.

After the Endgame's setup is completed, remove the Research deck and Round Tracker from the game - you no longer have numbered rounds and Monsters will spawn in patterns specific to your Endgame. Then, pass the Fearless Leader token to the left and begin the next Morning Phase!



1) Category
2) Name
3) Flavor text
4) Setup
5) Gameplay
6) Victory condition

Each Endgame has a specific set of challenges, such as multiple Monsters spawning at a time or players slowly getting infected by an unknown disease. As such, they each come with their own gameplay rules and victory conditions. **When you've completed your Endgame's victory condition, the game ends immediately** - don't wait for the Night phase to score anything! Open the Epilogues booklet, find the entry for your objective category in the "Epic Victories" section, read it, and bask in your success.

UP FOR A CHALLENGE?

IF YOU'VE BECOME A WASTELAND VETERAN, TRY PULLING ON THESE ADDITIONAL DIFFICULTY LEVERS!

- **PACIFIST RUN:** Only gain points in Research. Victory is scored at 13 points.
- **BAD LUCK:** You can't lose Bane from Tales. When you exceed 5 Bane, pay the cost and reset the Bane tracker.
- **BUFF BOYS:** When a Monster is Felled, it only gains one Felled marker
- **OUTTA TIME:** Begin the Round tracker on Round 3

OFF YOU GO!

With that, you now have all the knowledge you need to defend yourself and survive this unforgiving post-apocalyptic hellscape!

Will you help rebuild civilization? Learn more about these beasts? Go on a killing spree? Or simply survive? The choice is yours – go out, explore the Wasteland, and try not to die!

OH, JUST ONE MORE THING...

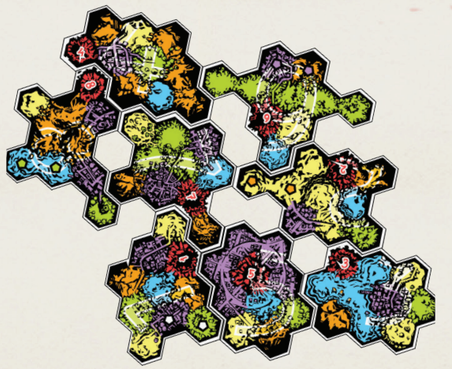
If you encounter a combination of cards and/or abilities that create a discrepancy with this rulebook, **follow them to what you deem is their most logical interpretation.** Then tell me what the hell you did.



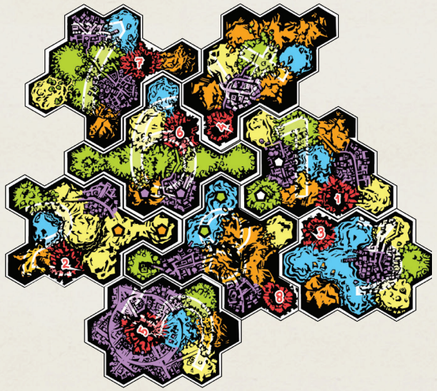
APPENDIX: EXAMPLE MAPS



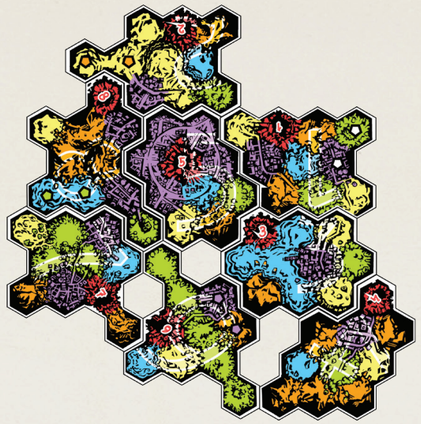
COMPACT



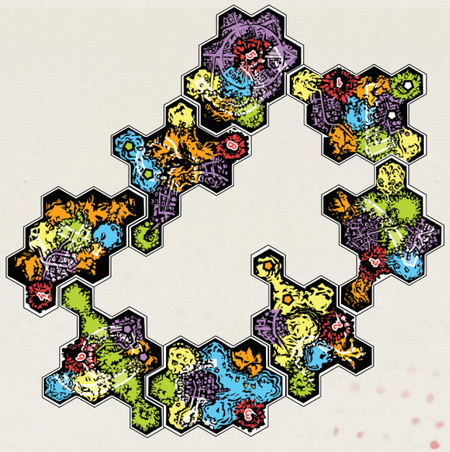
SCATTERED



NEIGHBORLY



BIG CITY



ARCHI-HELLAGO

APPENDIX: TERMINOLOGY & CLARIFICATION

Here's clarifications of some terms you may run into, discussed in greater depth than in the reference cards or token glossary. Check this section when playing before scouring the rulebook!

Ability: A power belonging to a Faction, Hero, Settlement, or Monster. Faction and Hero abilities can be used any time they're relevant and don't cost an action. Settlement abilities happen at a predetermined time and may sometimes cost one or more actions.

Clear [Condition]: When a Monster with a condition changes or removes that condition, the former condition is cleared. An Alerted Monster becoming Alerted to a new space doesn't clear its Alerted condition, as the condition hasn't changed - just the target.

Damage Reduction: Effects/abilities that lessen damage such as the "Shields" item or the "Tough" Monster ability.

Encounter: A special card type gained from certain Tale outcomes. You may look at Encounter cards before you decide whether or not to encounter them.

Gain [Item]: When you gain an item, take it from the discard pile if possible. If not, take it from the craftable items and replace it. If neither are possible, search the appropriate item deck for it, then shuffle that deck. If you have a choice of items to gain, you may look at them before deciding.

Investigate: A special action only taken when completing Research objectives or the Research endgame. Usually represented by the symbol. Investigating a space you occupy uses one action.

The Military Transport : A special vehicle found via Encounter. Once placed, the Military Transport can't be removed from the map. Monsters may occupy the same space as the Military Transport, but nothing happens (*other than you not being able to use it until they move*).

Multiple options: If you would have multiple options when selecting anything (*a space, unit, etc.*) , the Fearless Leader decides which option to take. If a Monster would have multiple options, they either go for the weakest link (*Followers, then Heroes, then Settlements*) or follow the Rule of Maximum Carnage (*take the option that's worst for the players*).

Neutral Follower: Followers that aren't controlled by any player, represented by the black . They can be joined to and sacrificed from Heroes but give no benefits when separated (*Monsters can be Alerted to and attack them*).

The Nuke : A special item gained from the Encounter "The Engineer." The Nuke is represented by a token on the map that may move with units, but may also be left on a space. While any player can build the Nuke, only the Fearless Leader may activate it.0

Objective completion/scoring: Research objectives are considered completed as soon as their goal is met, but are not scored until the Night phase.

Prevent damage: When you prevent damage from a Monster, it is still considered to have attacked you.

Radius: The number of sections something (*usually a Distraction*) affects. Unless a card says otherwise, the default radius is 1.

Random space: Determined by rolling the and the Terrain die.

Range: The number of hexes away from a unit or Monster. Unless a card says otherwise, the default item use and Monster attack range is 1.

Sacrifice: Remove a unit from the game. Followers are sacrificed before Heroes. If an ability says you "**may** sacrifice " and you don't have enough Followers to sacrifice, you can't sacrifice a Hero to use that ability.

Settlement tokens (triangular/circular): Triangular tokens are placed **on intersections** from Settlement building. Circular tokens are placed **in spaces** using the Encounter card "The Architect." Units can occupy these spaces.

Section: One piece of the map, numbered 1-8.

Space: An individual hex in a section.

Unit: A Hero or a Follower. Monsters and Settlements are not units.