



THE  
**HAND OF  
DESTINY**

A REALM OF SHADOWS GAME



**RULEBOOK**

# COMPONENTS



2 Hero Cards



11 Monster Cards



2 Merchant Cards



3 Boss Cards

## GAME OVERVIEW

*The rest of your adventuring party has gotten lost (or worse) and you find yourself alone in the wilderness preparing for the fight of your life. As waves of monsters close in on you, you think of the great heroes of ages past who made a similar stand—sometimes for good, sometimes for ill, but always for honor. Perhaps your story will be added to the legends. Perhaps, if you are so favored, Destiny's hand will be upon you tonight.*

The Hand of Destiny is played in waves. In each wave, you'll face a number of monsters in succession and the wave boss at the end. At the end of the fourth wave, you'll face the final version of the boss. Each hero has 6 health points (HP). Your HP also functions as your hero's abilities, so your hero will have 6 unique abilities. So be careful! When you exhaust abilities, you are also reducing your hero's HP. If your hero's HP ever reaches zero, you lose the game.

You'll use a combination of strength attacks and hero abilities to defeat the monsters in each wave. Your primary way to defeat monsters is strength attacks, but your abilities will come in handy.

## HOW TO WIN

You win if you survive four waves of monsters and defeat the boss at the end of wave four.

## HOW TO LOSE

You lose if your HP is reduced to zero.

## SELECT A HERO

Before the game begins, select a hero card that will take on the waves of monsters. There are two types of heroes: melee and ranged. And each hero comes with its own special abilities.

Melee heroes may only use strength attacks against the front monster. Ranged heroes may use strength attacks against the front and second monsters.

Ranged heroes give you a bit more flexibility but have less powerful special abilities. Melee heroes are more likely to get into tight spots but give you more opportunities to be creative in how you defeat monsters. Hero abilities have no range requirement; abilities may be used against monsters in any position. Unless otherwise stated by the ability itself or another effect, abilities may only be used on visible monsters.



**CROSSFIRE**  
Steak. Up attack to front monster by 20% or WARMS to 2\*

**DUAL WIELD**  
Steak. +1 to STR effects using 2 or more coats.

**WISDOMFUL**  
Keep other half of STR card after use in an attack.

**AVENGER**  
Defeat a monster whose last/next or Front ability has triggered.

**SHIELD BURN**  
Defeat a MARRION or DRG a monster equal to half its HP (round down).

**THROW SWORD**  
9 DRG to 2\* monster.

**RHYS, THE WARDEN**



**ILLUSIONIST**  
Bonds front and second monsters.

**BATTLE MAGIC**  
Steak. +1 to STR attacks against MABICS.

**PERI BALL**  
Take 1 DRG. Defeat 1\* and 2\* monsters.

**SUMMONS**  
Attack a monster or boss equal to 2x total DRG values on STR cards.

**GAIN WISDOM**  
Bonds your highest STR card.

**EMERY BURGE**  
Push front monster to 2\* position.

**IFARIS, THE RED MAGE**



**EXPERIENCE**  
Steak (x1). Deal DRG equal to current wave number.

**GRUDGE**  
Steak. +2 STR to last attack after you take DRG.

**ARMOR PIERCING**  
Reduce HP of 10+ HP monsters by 3 this wave.

**LONG RANGE**  
Defeat the last monster in line, whether visible or not.

**SHOOT THROUGH**  
Half of DRG (round up) per equal to 1\* monster less 2\* monster.

**RAKEEVER**  
Send 1\* to 2\* monster to back of line.

**ELORA, THE RANGER**



**BUILD RAGE**  
Steak. When you take DRG, deal 9 DRG to front monster.

**DRAGON MASTER**  
(x1) Attack equal to half HP of a visible DRAGON (not attack cards, rounded up).

**RETRIBUTION**  
Attack a monster equal to 2x current DRG on Goldfish.

**INTIMIDATE**  
Swap 1\* and 2\* monsters.

**SHADOW SPEAR**  
Defeat a DRAGON or do 7 DRG to a visible monster.

**STUN SPELL**  
Prevent a FRONT position power from triggering.

**GALATHAR, THE SHADOW KNIGHT**

## PHASES

1. SETUP

2. COMBAT

3. BOSS

4. MERCHANT

You will go through these four phases during each of the game's four waves. At the end of waves one through three, you'll start back over at setup. At the end of the fourth wave, the game is over.

# SETUP PHASE

1. Place your hero card in front of you.
2. Set up the first wave by shuffling the monster cards (exclude the Boss and Merchant cards). Be sure to flip and rotate cards as you shuffle. This forms the monster deck, held in your left hand.  
***When setting up for the next 3 waves, you do not need to shuffle the monster deck.*** After wave 1, simply rotate the entire monster deck for wave 2. After wave 2, flip the monster deck. After wave 3, rotate the deck to set up for wave 4.
3. Draw your starting strength cards from the back of the monster deck by rotating them 90 degrees. Cards in this position are considered to be slotted.

## Difficulty Settings:

**Casual:** 4 starting strength cards each wave, and -1 to healing potion costs

**Easy:** 4 starting strength cards each wave

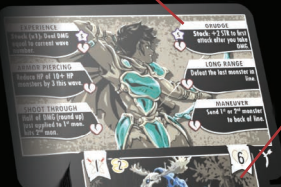
**Normal:** 3 starting strength cards each wave

**Heroic:** 3 starting strength cards each wave, and +2 to healing potion costs

**Legendary:** 2 starting strength cards each wave

4. Select one of the boss cards, orient it so that the boss's name is at the top, and place it behind the last monster in the deck but in front of your top strength card. Place unused boss cards back in the box.
5. Place the merchant card that matches your hero's type (melee or ranged) behind the boss card.
6. Place an unused hero card behind the merchant card but leave it protruding slightly above the rest of the deck. This will help when placing your hero card, ensuring it doesn't slide around during play. *This card serves no other purpose during the game.*
7. Slide your hero card between the merchant card and unused hero card. Cover up the hero's name at the bottom but leave abilities uncovered.
8. The wave is ready to begin.

## HERO CARD



## VISIBLE MONSTER

## STRENGTH CARDS





## SLOTING A CARD

The phrase “slotting a card” shows up often in this rulebook. All it means is to take a monster card, rotate it clockwise 90 degrees, and slide it into the deck of cards in your left hand so that it’s sticking out and its top left/right numbers are visible to you.

## COMBAT PHASE

### ON A TURN

The combat phase is played in turns. Every turn should follow these steps:

1. **Resolve visible monster abilities**
2. **Fight**
3. **Cleanup**

### RESOLVE VISIBLE MONSTER ABILITIES

Take the top monster off the deck and hold it in your right hand. It is now considered to be the **front** monster, and the monster now on top of the deck is the **second** monster. Until there is only one monster left in the deck, you will always have the front monster in your right hand.

In this way, there are always two visible monsters, front and second (unless there is only one monster left). The third monster can sometimes become visible through peeking and other game effects, such as the Specter's ability.

The two face-up monsters on the top halves of the cards in your hands are considered to be visible. These are the active monsters that you're currently dealing with. The monsters on the bottom halves of the cards (the upside-down monsters) are not considered to be visible.

## Damage Value

This is still referred to as the card's damage value, even if slotted.



**Monster Health (HP)**  
When slotted as Strength, this is the card's Strength value.

**Monster Name**

**Monster Type**  
This monster is Magic Type.

**Ability Text**  
This monster has an Instant ability type, indicated by the bold text.

## MONSTER ABILITY TYPES

Most monsters have a special ability. There are a few types of monster abilities.

**Normal:** If there is no bolded text followed by a colon before the ability text, it's a "normal" ability. (Most monster abilities are Normal). Normal abilities have dependent or ongoing effects for as long as the monster is visible.

*For example, Forest Dragon's ability, "Discard visible CREATURES and add their HP to Forest Dragon", must be resolved any time a CREATURE becomes visible while Forest Dragon is visible.*

**Instant:** These monster abilities happen only once, and happen as soon as the monster becomes visible. Instant abilities trigger before other ability types.

**Front:** The ability only applies if the monster is in front position.

**Second:** The ability only applies if the monster is in second position.

## **TRIGGERING MONSTER ABILITIES**

Instant abilities only ever trigger (are resolved) once per wave. Front or Second abilities, however, can trigger multiple times if the monster gets out of position, and then through some other game effect gets back into the position that triggered its Front or Second ability. However, some monsters have x1 by their ability which means the ability only triggers once in a given wave.

## **ORDER OF RESOLVING ABILITIES**

Some monster abilities are ongoing effects that modify things like the monster's own HP or another monster's DMG value. These ongoing abilities are not "resolved" in the sense that an action must be taken because of them; their effects are simply immediately in effect when the monster becomes visible. Therefore, you do not need to worry about when or in what order to resolve these ongoing abilities since they are always in effect when their conditions are met.

*For example, the Chieftain's ability, "+2 HP when not in front", is in effect as soon as it is revealed, and*

*remains in place as long as its condition is met (the monster is not in front position). Its ability does not need to be resolved, and is considered in effect even before the player takes any necessary actions to resolve other abilities, such as an instant ability.*

*Other monster abilities, such as the Watcher's "Rotate visible cards behind Watcher to the higher HP monster" require taking some kind of action to resolve. If there is more than one visible monster ability that must be resolved, the player must know the order in which to resolve them. The general rule is to resolve the ability of the monster in front first, then moving on to the monster in second, and third if necessary.*

With few exceptions, always resolve monster abilities before hero abilities. The exception is if a hero has an ability that prevents or ignores a monster ability. These hero abilities may be used before the monster ability is resolved. Completely resolve a monster or hero ability before resolving the next one.

*For example, you defeat the front monster, causing the Assassin to move to front position and revealing the Phase Worm in second position. The Assassin's ability reads, "Front (x1): Take 1 DMG and move Assassin*

to 2nd position". The Phase Worm's ability reads, "Instant: Flip all other visible monsters". Since both abilities must be resolved, you resolve the Assassin's ability first because it is in front, taking 1 DMG to your hero and moving the Assassin to second position (which moves the Phase Worm to front position).

Next, you resolve the Phase Worm's ability, flipping the Assassin, which is the only other visible monster. This reveals the Scout, the monster on the opposite side of the card as the Assassin. The Scout has a Front ability, which will only be resolved if it gets to front position. You have now resolved all necessary monster abilities, so you proceed with the rest of the turn.

## **MONSTER BASE HEALTH**

A monster's base health is the value written on the card. Monster health (sometimes called HP) can change based on game effects. For example, a monster's ability might say "+2 HP when not in front". If you defeat and slot the monster, though, it goes back to its base value as a strength card.

If a game effect, such as another monster's ability, refers to the HP of a monster, use the monster's base health for the calculation or effect.

## FLIPPING VS. ROTATING

To “Flip” a card means turn the card to its opposite side, like the page in a book. To “Rotate” a card means rotate it 180 degrees so the lower half of the card is now on top.

## PEEKING AT THIRD

Some game effects refer to *peeking* or *peeking at 3rd*. This means the player moves the second monster to the side to see which monster is in third position. At this point, the third monster is considered visible. For ease of holding the cards, the player may move the second monster back into its original position, but for all gameplay purposes the third monster is still visible.

Remember to resolve the abilities of monsters revealed through peeking as necessary.

## FIGHT

A fight is when you'll use your strength cards and abilities to defeat the monsters in the wave. There are two ways to deal with a monster. You can either defeat it or take its damage. Defeated monsters are sent to the Underworld, the bottom of the stack of cards in your left hand. **Taking monster damage means exhausting abilities equal to the monster's damage value, and then placing the monster in the Underworld.**

## DEFEATING MONSTERS

There are two ways to defeat monsters: 1. Strength attacks and 2. Hero abilities (or a combination of the two).

## RANGE

Melee heroes may only use strength attacks against the front monster. Ranged heroes may use strength attacks against the front and second monsters.

Hero abilities have no range requirement; abilities may be used against monsters in any position.



Unless otherwise stated by the ability itself or another effect, abilities may only be used on visible monsters.

## 1. STRENGTH ATTACKS

Monsters have a health (HP) value in their top right corner. Defeat them by discarding a strength card that is equal to or greater than the monster's HP. You may combine strength cards against a monster. Strength cards used for strength attacks are discarded to the very back of the deck of cards in your left hand, called the Underworld.

Monsters defeated using only strength cards are **slotted**; turning 90 degrees clockwise and becoming a new strength card.

### **Strength Cards vs. Strength Attacks**

Some abilities in the game will refer to strength cards and others will refer to strength attacks. These mean slightly different things.

A strength attack refers to an attack on a monster made up of one or more strength cards. A strength attack includes the total value of all the strength cards applied to a monster, no matter how many.

A strength card, on the other hand, **always refers to a single card.** (Note that sometimes an ability text may use the word “strength” or “STR” as shorthand for a strength card to save space. If an ability states to “Discard a strength,” it means discard one strength card to the Underworld.)

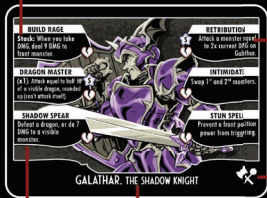
*For example, if a monster’s ability says to reduce strength attacks against it by 4, you would reduce the total value of strength applied to the monster by 4. So if you attack the monster with two strength cards of values 5 and 6, the total strength attack is 11. Reducing that by 4 would mean your total attack is down to 7.*

*But if the monster’s ability says to reduce all strength cards used against it by 4, you need to reduce each individual card by 4, not the total sum of the cards. Let’s say once again you want to attack a monster with two strength cards of values 5 and 6. Reducing each of these cards by 4 would turn your strength cards into having values of 1 and 2, making your total attack 3.*

## 2. HERO ABILITIES

### Stock ability

(Noted in ability text)



Slot Ability

GALATHAR, THE SHADOW KNIGHT

Hero Name

Ranged  or  
Melee  Class

Normal Ability


### Hero Ability Types

Some hero abilities allow you to do damage to monsters. Others allow special effects such as ignoring monster abilities or changing the order of the monsters in the wave.

### Ability Types

There are 2 types of abilities: Normal and Slot.

A **Normal** ability (no "S" star icon present)

A **Slot** ability. 

## Normal Abilities

If you defeat a monster without using an ability—only strength cards—that defeated monster is slotted. If, however, you use a Normal ability that deals damage to the monster in any way, you **cannot** slot the monster when defeated, even if the ability only dealt part of the damage needed to defeat the monster.

If a Normal ability does something other than deal damage to a monster, using the ability does not prevent you from slotting it when defeated.

Examples of when you **cannot** slot a defeated monster after using a normal ability on it. If the ability says:

- *“Do attack equal to X or Y...”*
- *“Defeat a Warrior...”*
- *“Deal 9 damage...”*

Examples of when you **can** slot a defeated monster after using a normal ability on it. If the ability says:

- *“Move front monster to second position...”*
- *“Cut a monster’s HP in half...”*
- *“Double one of your strength cards...”*
- *“Boost a Strength attack by 3...”*

(Note that damage from weapons does not disqualify a defeated monster from being slotted. More about weapons in the Merchant section on page 31.)

## Slot Abilities

Monsters defeated with slot abilities can be slotted once defeated, even if the ability dealt the monster damage or defeated it on its own. If a normal ability assists in the defeat by dealing damage to the monster, however, the monster cannot be slotted when defeated. If a slot ability is combined with a strength attack to defeat a monster, the monster can be slotted.

## Activating abilities

There are two ways to use (activate) your hero's combat abilities. You can activate them with a strength card or exhaust them.

Activating with a strength card means you discard any slotted strength card to use the ability. You can only do this once per ability per wave.

Activating an ability by exhausting it means covering it up with the cards in front of your hero card by sliding your hero card down. Exhausting an ability means it is no longer able to be used until the next round, and only if it is healed during the Merchant phase.

Note that there are three rows of abilities. If you want to use a second or third row ability by exhausting it, but there are one or more abilities below it that are not yet exhausted, you would have to exhaust those lower-row abilities to be able to exhaust an upper row ability.

Also note that there are two columns of abilities. You may never exhaust all three abilities in one column with no abilities exhausted in the other column. The other column must have at least one ability exhausted. You can voluntarily exhaust the bottom-row ability of one column to be able to exhaust the top-row ability in the other.

An ability that has been activated with strength can be activated again in the same wave by exhausting it. If an ability is exhausted, it is not available to activate in any way until it is healed.

## **Stock Abilities**

Some abilities are stock abilities that do not have a cost to activate—no need to exhaust them or discard a strength card to use them. They are essentially free. These are indicated by the word **Stock** in bold font in the ability text. Stock abilities can be used as many times as desired, but are often just an ongoing effect.

Some Stock abilities have the text **Stock(x1)**. These abilities are still free to use, but you can only use them once per wave.

## **Accumulated Damage on Monsters**

If you deal damage to a monster but it is not enough to defeat it, the damage remains on the monster. This is called accumulated damage.

*For example, say a hero ability allows you to deal 4 damage to both the front and the second monster. This 4 damage is enough to defeat the 4-HP monster in front, but not enough to defeat the 9-HP monster in second. The front monster is defeated from the attack and moved to the Underworld.*

*The second monster moves to front, and has 9 – 4 HP remaining, so it will only require an additional attack of 5 to defeat it.*

Note that slotting rules still apply with accumulated damage. In other words, if a normal hero ability puts accumulated damage on the monster, that monster cannot be slotted when defeated, even if it is finished off with a Strength attack.

## **Taking Monster Damage to Your Hero**

If you cannot (or do not want to) defeat a monster by depleting its HP, you can choose to take its damage and send it to the Underworld. **You may only ever do this with the front monster.** Reduce your hero's HP by exhausting a number of abilities equal to the monster's damage value, which is shown on the swords icon in its top left corner.



This icon is a reminder to lose an ability when you take damage.



**FAQ:** Regarding Galathar's Build Rage ability that reads, Stock: When you take DMG, deal 9 DMG to front monster:

- This only applies when taking a monster's damage to send it to the Underworld. It does not apply to damage from other game effects.
- The 9 damage is dealt to the monster directly behind the monster you took the damage of (the new front monster)
- Since abilities are always completely resolved before moving to the next, this ability is resolved before a FRONT ability of the new front monster.
- Since this is not a Slot ability, monsters dealt damage with this effect cannot be slotted.

## **CLEANUP PHASE**

After combat has been resolved, the cleanup phase triggers. During this phase, eligible cards are slotted, monsters and/or strength cards move to the Underworld, and a new monster becomes visible in either your left or right hand depending on how combat played out.

Then, start back over at resolving visible monster abilities. You'll continue these steps until there is only one card left, the boss.

## **BOSS PHASE**

At the end of each wave, once all monsters have been defeated, you must face the boss. Bosses have four levels. Face the boss level of the same number as the wave you are on. You can use strength attacks and applicable abilities to attack bosses, just like normal monsters. To use an ability to attack a boss, the ability must explicitly refer to using it against a boss (as opposed to a monster). You may use any abilities in the boss phase that do not attack the boss, such as abilities that manipulate your strength cards.

Bosses have abilities that are active during the boss phase, but not before. As long as there is at least one monster remaining in front of the boss, the boss's ability is not active. Likewise, you may not attack the boss if there is still a monster remaining.

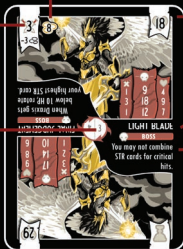
## Reward for defeating wave boss

### Fail Penalty

Penalty for losing to the wave boss. In this case, take 3 damage and lose 3 gold.

### The Boss Level

This example is the boss level you face at the end of wave number 3.



Boss Health (HP)

Boss Phase Name

Boss Ability

## RESOLVING ATTACKS AGAINST BOSSES

Unlike attacks against monsters, you must resolve attacks against bosses one at a time. For example, if you wanted to combine two strength cards for a strength attack against a monster during the wave, you play both cards at the same time for one strength attack. Against a boss, however, the two cards must be two separate attacks. Resolve the first strength card before moving on to the next card.

This is important because boss abilities often have effects that depend on the strength cards currently slotted, creating a dynamic boss fight and

sometimes forcing you to think about the order in which you resolve your attacks.

The exception to this rule is boss critical hits. If combining more than one strength card to activate a critical hit, this is considered one attack. You do not resolve each of those strength cards individually, since it took all of them combined to activate the critical hit.

## CRITICAL HITS

Many times, you will not be able to defeat a boss with your strength and abilities alone (or may want to save as many strength cards as you can for their coin values in the Merchant Phase). So, you can use critical hits to help you against bosses.

Each boss has 3 critical hits you can use against them. Critical hits magnify your strength attacks, but you must take some damage to take advantage of them. You may only activate each critical hit once.

Critical hits have three values associated with them:

### 1. **Damage Cost**

Your hero must take this amount of damage to activate the critical hit.

## 2. Strength Cost

You must apply a strength attack (one or more strength cards) equal to or exceeding the strength cost to activate the critical hit. Strength cards used to pay strength costs of a critical hit may not also be used as a direct strength attack, and may not be used on more than one critical hit. Some critical hits do not require you to apply a strength card to it, only pay the damage cost. The strength cost for these critical hits are denoted with an asterisk (\*).

## 3. Attack Value

This is how much attack you do to the boss after paying the strength and damage costs.

If you defeat the boss, collect its gold reward before moving on to the merchant phase.

## BOSS PENALTIES

If you fail to defeat the wave boss, you must face the fail penalty before moving on to the merchant phase. There are four types of fail penalties. Some wave bosses make you pay a combination of penalties. Below are the different penalty icons and what they mean.



- Take this much damage.



- Lose this much gold from your remaining strength cards.



- At the start of the next wave, rotate your highest strength card.



- Skip the merchant phase.



- Lose your weapon, if you have one.

# MERCHANT PHASE

After you finish with the wave boss, find the merchant card. You only have access to the Ranged (🎯) or Melee (🔪) merchant card, depending on which class of hero you are playing. From the merchant you may buy a basic weapon, upgrade an existing weapon, or buy one or more potions.

To buy these items, you must have enough gold available from the wave boss reward and your remaining strength cards. You can divvy up your total gold however you like.

**Basic Weapon** with associated cost and effect.

**Upgraded Weapon**

**Potion Shop** with 3 potions, each with an associated cost and effect.



## WEAPONS

When you buy a weapon, slot the merchant card with your strength cards at the start of the next wave, with your weapon revealed.

You may use the weapon's written effect at any time by discarding the weapon to the underworld. Doing attack or dealing damage with weapons **does not** disqualify a monster from being slotted.

Unlike potions, which are consumed for a one-time boost, you get your weapon back at the start of the next wave, whether you used it or not.

To buy an upgraded weapon, you must currently own the basic version of that weapon. If you have enough gold, you may buy the basic version and then the upgraded version of a weapon in the same merchant phase. You can buy the upgraded version of your weapon even if you used and discarded the basic version of the weapon in the preceding wave. You do not get any gold back for trading in your current weapon.

**You are not locked in to any basic or upgraded weapon you buy. You can always choose to purchase a different weapon in future merchant phases.**



If you have an upgraded version of a weapon, discard it when you use it, just like a basic weapon.

## **POTIONS**

Potions typically have one-shot effects and are resolved either immediately or when the potion effect dictates. Unlike weapons, you do not slot potions when you buy them. They are one-time use, and must be used before the start of the next wave. Whether you use your potion or not, you do not get it back at the start of the next wave.

You may only buy 1 of each type of potion per merchant phase, with the exception of Healing potions. You can buy and consume as many healing potions as you want.

If you buy a healing potion, uncover (unexhaust) a number of abilities equal to the number of HP that's healed.

## ENDING IN A DRAW

It is possible for the game to end in a situation where you kill the boss but also die yourself. This is the case if you activate a critical hit that defeats the final boss, but the damage cost of the critical hit reduces your HP to zero. You may consider it a win, but ending in a draw is not desirable. History will forget you, your children, and your ancestors. Instead of being remembered as a great hero, you will fade unceremoniously into obscurity.

## **Design Inspirations:**

### ***Palm Island***

Designer: Jon Mietling

Publisher: Portal Dragon

### ***Set a Watch***

Designers: Mike Gnade and Todd Walsh

Publisher: Rock Manor Games





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