

Setup

Before playing the game for the first time, carefully unpack the cards and separate the cardboard counters.

One player controls the nine companions of the Fellowship and is the Good Player. The other player controls the nine Dark characters and is the Dark Player. Before the game begins, players should familiarize themselves with both their own and their opponent's cards and characters.

- The Good Player slides the 9 Good character counters into the Good wall counters so that the picture and text is facing him (and not his opponent). The Dark Player slides the 9 Dark character counters into the Dark wall counters. Now both players have 9 game counters. (Note: Your opponent should not see which of your characters goes into which wall counter).

- Each player takes his 9 cards into his hand. The Good Player takes the Good cards and the Dark Player takes the Dark cards. (The 4 variant cards "Gandalf The White," "Shadowfax," "Recall to Mordor," and "Palantir" are only used in the variant game.)

- The Board is placed between the two players so that the corner with the Shire is pointing at the Good Player, and the corner with Mordor is pointing towards the Dark Player. The mountain range runs in the middle of the board between the two players.

- The Good Player chooses four of his characters and places them on the Shire. The remaining five characters are placed in the five regions lying in front of the Shire (before the mountains), so that each region has one character in it.

- The Dark Player proceeds likewise: He places four of his characters on Mordor. The remaining five characters are placed in the five regions lying in front of Mordor (before the mountains), so that each region has one character in it.

- No characters may be placed on the Mountain Range at the beginning of the game.

Note: The characters must be placed so that the covered part of the wall counter is facing the opponent, ensuring that each player sees the identities of only his own characters.

Playing the Game

The Dark Player takes the first turn. Play then alternates between the two players for the rest of the game.



Movement:

During a player's turn, he must move one of his characters using the following rules:

- A character can only move forward. Characters can never move sideways or backwards unless otherwise stated on their character text or allowed by card play. (Example: Frodo's text allows him to retreat sideways if he is attacked.)

- Characters can never move sideways while in the mountains (not even through the use of cards or character text).
- Each player can have a maximum of four characters in the Shire and in Mordor.
- Each player can only have one character in each mountain region.

- In all other regions each player can only have two characters.
- A player can never move a character into a region that already holds the maximum number of his own characters

When it is a player's turn, he **must** move one of his characters forward into an adjacent region. If there is an enemy character in that region, then a **battle** occurs. (Moving into a region occupied by an enemy character is also called **attacking**.)

(not even through the use of cards or character text).

- A player can, at any time, mix his characters in the same region in order to confuse his opponent. (By mixing, a player picks up his characters in a region, shuffles them behind his back and places them back into the same region.) This is always helpful when your opponent knows the identity of one of your characters in a specific region. (Note: Characters from different regions can never be mixed together in this way.)

- The River Anduin: The Good Player can use the river to move his characters sideways (downstream) from Mirkwood to Fangorn, or from Fangorn to Rohan, but not in the opposite direction (from Rohan to Fangorn, or Fangorn to Mirkwood). The Dark Player cannot use the river.

- The Tunnel of Moria: The Good Player can move his characters through the Tunnel of Moria from Hollin directly into Fangorn, but never in the opposite direction (from Fangorn to Hollin), even if a character is retreating. If the Dark Player reveals the Balrog in Moria, the Good character traveling through the Tunnel is defeated without battle. The Dark Player cannot use the Tunnel.

Battle:

If a character is moved into a region occupied by one or more enemy characters, a battle occurs.

If a character is moved into a region occupied by more than one enemy character, then the attacking player randomly decides which opposing piece will be his opponent in the battle, and reveals only that enemy

character. (Exception: In the variant game, if the Dark Player has used the "Palantir" on the contested region, his decision is no longer random.)

Battle is resolved in three steps:

1. Reveal Characters

Both players now reveal their characters to their opponents and read their characters' text aloud. (Exception: If the Warg is participating in the battle, then the text of the Good character is ignored.)

The Good characters Frodo and Pippin have the opportunity to flee at the start of the battle before the Dark Player's text takes effect (with the exception of the Warg). After they have been revealed and their text has been read aloud, they have the opportunity to retreat sideways or backwards into an adjacent region.

A character cannot retreat into a region occupied by an enemy character or a region with the maximum number of characters in it. A character cannot retreat sideways in the mountains.



If neither character in the battle retreats, one or both of the characters may be defeated based on the characters' text. If a character is defeated, that character is removed from the board and set aside.

2. Play Cards

If neither of the characters have retreated or been defeated after reading the texts, then each player must secretly select one of the cards from his hand. After both players have selected a card, they reveal their card choice simultaneously face-up on the table. Some are **Text Cards** and have text on them, while others are **Strength Cards** represented by a single number.



Text cards always take effect before Strength cards. If both players reveal text cards, the Dark Player's card takes effect first.

3. Compare Strengths

If the battle isn't over after the text cards have been implemented, then the Strength number of each player's Strength card (if he played a Strength card) is added to the Strength value of his character. The character with the lowest total Strength is defeated. If the total Strength of the two characters is equal, then both characters are defeated and removed from the game.

After a battle, the used cards are discarded and placed face-up beside the game board. When all nine of a player's cards have been used, that player takes all his used cards back into his hand.

After a battle, if there are still additional enemy characters in the contested region, another battle begins. The



Battle Summary

1. Both battling characters are revealed. The character text is read aloud and takes effect. Based on this text, some characters may retreat, and others may be defeated.

2. If the battle is still not decided, both players simultaneously choose and play one card apiece from their hands. Cards with text are read aloud and take effect. The Dark Player's text card takes effect first.

3. If the battle is still not decided, add the Strength of the characters to the numbers of their Strength cards and compare the characters' total Strength values. The character with the lowest total Strength is defeated. If the total is equal, then both are defeated.

attacker randomly decides which enemy character will be attacked, and the battle is resolved as described above. (Note that there may be up to four characters in the Shire, up to four characters in Mordor, one character in the mountains, and up to two characters in all other regions.)

A player's turn doesn't end until all battles are resolved and only Good or Dark characters (or none at all) occupy each region.

At the end of a battle – also after a retreat – the revealed non-defeated characters are concealed and thus hidden from the opponent again.

Game End

- The Good Player wins immediately if Frodo enters Mordor (regardless of whether or not there are any enemy characters in the region).
- The Dark Player wins immediately if he has three characters in the Shire, or if Frodo is defeated.
- If a player is unable to move a character during his turn, he loses immediately.

We recommend that you play two games. Each player should play the Good Player once and play the Dark Player once. The winner of each game receives one point for each of his remaining characters, and the loser receives no points. After two games, the player who has the highest number of points wins.



The Characters

The number in parentheses after each character's name indicates that character's Strength value.

Good Characters:



Frodo (1):

Frodo can retreat sideways when attacked, but not if he himself is the attacker. Frodo cannot use his ability in battle against the Warg. Frodo can only use his ability to retreat at the beginning of a battle, and not when cards have already been played. The retreat doesn't count as a normal move. Frodo can never retreat sideways in the mountains.



Sam (2):

If Sam is in the same region as Frodo, then he has a Strength value of 5, and may fight in Frodo's place if Frodo is attacked first – even in battle against the Orcs. The Good Player must reveal both Frodo and Sam at the beginning of a battle in order to prove Sam's strength. In battle against the Warg, the text on the good characters (and therefore also Sam's special ability) is ignored. Since the character limit in mountain regions is one, Sam can never accompany Frodo in the mountains.



Pippin (1):

When Pippin attacks, after he and the enemy character are revealed, he can retreat backwards to an adjacent region – but not if the enemy character is the Warg. If Pippin is attacked, he cannot retreat. Pippin can only use his ability to retreat at the beginning of battle, and not when cards have already been played. The retreat doesn't count as a normal move.



Merry (2):

Merry defeats the Witch King immediately, before any cards are played. In battles against all other enemies, the usual rules apply.



Gandalf (5):

In a battle against Gandalf, should the battle come to playing cards, the Dark Player must choose and play his card first (though not if the battle is against the Warg). If the Dark Player plays the "Magic" card (see below), this is



Aragorn (4):

Aragorn can move into any adjacent region – forward, sideways or backwards – if he attacks at least one enemy character by doing so. Otherwise, Aragorn can only move forward into an adjacent region like the other characters. Aragorn can attack the Warg using his special ability, since he uses his ability before he enters the region with the Warg. Aragorn cannot attack sideways in mountains.



Legolas (3):

Legolas defeats the Flying Nazgûl immediately, before any cards are played. In battles against all other enemies, the usual rules apply.



Gimli (3):

Gimli defeats the Orcs immediately, before any cards are played. In battles against all other enemies, the usual rules apply.



Boromir (0):

If Boromir is attacked, or attacks an enemy character, both characters are defeated immediately. The only exceptions are the Warg (in any region) and when Boromir uses the Tunnel of Moria while the Balrog occupies Moria.

Dark Characters:



Balrog (5):

If the Balrog is in Moria when a Good character uses the Tunnel of Moria shortcut (from Hollin directly to Fangorn), the Dark Player may reveal the Balrog to instantly defeat the Good character without a battle. Frodo cannot, when using the Tunnel through the mines, make use of his ability to retreat. The Balrog itself remains unharmed. Even Boromir cannot harm the Balrog in this situation.



Shelob (5):

When Shelob defeats an enemy character, she is immediately returned to Gondor. If there are already two other Dark characters in Gondor, Shelob is defeated and removed from the game.



Witch King (5):

The Witch King can move sideways into an adjacent region if he attacks at least one enemy character by doing so. Otherwise he can only move forward into an adjacent region like the other characters. He can never attack sideways in the mountains.



Flying Nazgûl (3):

The Flying Nazgûl can move to any region on the board, as long as that region is occupied by a single Good character. If moving into an unoccupied region, or a region with multiple enemy characters, the Flying Nazgûl can only move forward into an adjacent region like the other characters.



Black Rider (3):

The Black Rider can move forward any number of regions if he attacks at least one enemy character by doing so. If the Black Rider does not want to attack, then he can only move forward into an adjacent region like the other characters. The Black Rider may never move into or through a region already containing the maximum number of Dark characters, nor may he move through a region occupied by one or more enemy characters.



Saruman (4):

Saruman can decide that no cards shall be used in battle. If no characters are defeated (or retreat) before cards are played, then the Dark Player may choose that the battle will be decided by the characters' Strength values only. All other normal rules for battle apply.



Orcs (2):

When the Orcs attack, they immediately defeat the first attacked Good character. Frodo may retreat sideways before the Orcs defeat him in this fashion. If further battles follow, the Orcs do not have their special ability for the remainder of the turn. Gimli immediately defeats the Orcs and is therefore unharmed. If the Orcs battle against Boromir, both characters are defeated. The Orcs have no special ability when attacked by a Good character.



Warg (2):

In battle against the Warg, the Good character's text has no effect. Only Aragorn can use his ability since he uses his ability in the adjacent region, before the battle against the Warg.



Troll (9):

When it comes to playing cards in battle with the Troll, the Dark Player's card has no effect. The Dark Player must still play and discard a card, even though that card has no effect in the battle.

The Cards

The Good Cards:

Five of the Good cards have Strength values ranging from 1 to 5. The other four cards are text cards, which are explained below.



Magic:

Both players have one "Magic" card apiece, which they can play during battle. A player who plays this card may immediately replace it with any one of his discarded (previously played) cards. If both players play their "Magic" cards simultaneously, the Dark Player chooses first.



Noble Sacrifice:

If this card is played, both characters involved in the battle are defeated – unless the Dark Player played his "Retreat" card, in which case neither character is defeated (but both cards are still discarded).



Elven Cloak:

When the Good Player plays this card and the Dark Player plays a number card, the Strength value of the number card is ignored. If the Dark Player plays a text card, however, then the Good Player's "Elven Cloak" card has no effect.





Retreat Backwards:

The Good Player moves his character backwards into an adjacent region, as long as this region contains no enemy characters and isn't occupied by the maximum number of characters.



The Dark Cards:

Six of the Dark cards have Strength values ranging from 1 to 6. The other three cards are text cards, which are explained below.

Magic:

See the explanation under the Good cards.



The Eye of Sauron:

When the Dark Player plays this card and the Good Player plays a text card, the text on the Good card is ignored. If the Good Player plays a number card, then the Dark Player's "The Eye of Sauron" card has no effect.



Retreat Sideways:

The Dark Player, if able, moves his character sideways into an adjacent region, as long as this region contains no enemy characters and isn't occupied by the maximum number of characters. In the mountains, characters can never move sideways. When the Dark Player uses this card to retreat from a battle, the Good Player's "Noble Sacrifice" card has no effect.



Game Variant

The variant game includes four additional cards, which are used differently than the cards of the basic game.

The Good Player displays the cards Gandalf the White and Shadowfax in front of him. The Dark Player displays the Palantir and Recall to Mordor in front of him. These cards can only be used once and are then removed from the game.



Shadowfax:

During the Good Player's turn, but before he moves a character, he can use the Shadowfax card to move a character forward to an adjacent region as long as there are no Dark characters in that region or that region does not contain the maximum number of good characters. (The character can move through the Tunnel of Moria, and is defeated normally if the Dark Player reveals the Balrog in Moria.) The Good Player may move this character normally during his turn if he wishes.



Gandalf the White:

This card must be played after the Dark Player has finished his turn. In order to use Gandalf the White, the Good Player must skip his entire turn. Use this card to bring a defeated Gandalf back into play, by placing the Gandalf character in Fangorn. The Good Player may not do this if Fangorn is occupied by any enemy characters, or two other Good characters. This card may not be used unless Gandalf has already been defeated once.



**Palantir:**

The Dark Player may play this card during his turn to reveal all the Good characters in one region, except in the Shire. The Good Player may not mix the characters in this region until after the Dark Player's turn is over.

**Recall to Mordor:**

This card must be played after the Good Player has finished his turn. In order to use Recall to Mordor, the Dark Player must skip his entire turn. Use Recall to Mordor to take one of the Dark characters on the board and place it back in Mordor. The Dark Player may not do this if Mordor is occupied by any enemy characters, or four Dark characters.

To balance a game between two players of different abilities (that is, if one player is much better than the other), the weaker player should use his two variant cards, while the superior player should not.

The Illustrator:

The native Canadian John Howe lives with his family in Switzerland. He is regarded as one of the most brilliant Tolkien illustrators in the world. In Peter Jackson's great "The Lord of the Rings" movie trilogy, John Howe worked on concept art and illustration with his acclaimed colleague Mr. Alan Lee.

The Author:

Reiner Knizia was born in 1957 in Illertissen, Germany. Today the doctor of mathematics lives in England and dedicates himself entirely to game design. Reiner Knizia is regarded as one of the best and most prolific game designers in the world and has received numerous honors worldwide for his games.

Thanks to:

Reiner Knizia thanks David Farquhar for his contributions to the development of the game and also thanks all the game

testers, especially Matthew Dodkins, Kevin Jacklin, Chris Lawson and Les Murrell.

Graphics: Bluguy Grafik-Design, Munich

Translation: Anders Petersen

Editing: Christian T. Petersen, Darrell Hardy, and Greg Benage

© 2002 Tolkien Enterprises

© 2002 Sophisticated Games Ltd.

© 2002 Fantasy Flight Games, 1975 West County Road B2

Suite 1, Roseville, MN 55113, USA,

Phone: 651-639-1905, Fax: 651-639-1764

Web: www.fantasyflightgames.com

E-mail: ffg@fantasyflightgames.com

All Rights Reserved. Made in Germany

The Lord of the Rings and characters and places therein are trademarks of Tolkien Enterprises, Berkeley CA and are used, under license, by Sophisticated Games Ltd.

Distributed in the U.K. by Esdevium Games, Unit 2, Riverwey Industrial Estate, Newman Lane, Alton, Hampshire GU34 2QL, United Kingdom.

