



THE LORD OF THE RINGS

THE CARD GAME

THERE AND BACK AGAIN...AGAIN AND AGAIN

WHAT IS THIS?

The core goal is to provide an effectively infinite number of campaigns using the cards/quests you already own and infuse these campaigns with an RPG-style, roguelike progression.

Over the course of an 11-scenario randomized campaign, you as the player(s) will start with deck(s) constructed via a limited card pool and slowly gain access to more cards and Boons, similar to FFG's campaign structure. To balance this power growth, you will take on Burdens and other penalties based on how well you do in each scenario. Unlike FFG's campaigns, you will face each scenario (except possibly the last) exactly once. It is designed in a way that you are expected to lose some scenarios (which will incur Burdens, etc. faster). However, losing too many will make beating the campaign a challenge. Thus, the roguelike nature of this mode.

Italicized notes generally refer to the accompanying helper spreadsheet.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Preparation

There are several random elements in this. You can randomize them however, but I've made a spreadsheet to take care of that. You can download the Excel file on BGG or use Google Docs linked from BGG.

Detriments

These can be temporary (when heroes are defeated/-discarded in a scenario) or permanent (will gradually accrue over the course of a campaign). Gaining these is explained in Section 4. Non-Burden Detriments or Burden Detriments that add cards to Player Decks apply to each player. Burden Detriments are 1 per party.

When taking a Detriment, apply one of the following 4 penalties:

- Add a random burden to the campaign pool. This cannot be selected as a penalty for Injured Heroes. If using the spreadsheet, mark your available burdens on the green-tabbed "Burden List" tab in the appropriate column with an x.
- Permanently increase your starting threat by 1.
- During your first resource phase, collect 1 less resource. (Can only be taken 3 times, as you might imagine)
- During your initial draw, draw 1 less card. (Can only be taken 6 times, as you might imagine)

Finally, permanent Detriments must be balanced between Burden Detriment and non-Burden Detriments. If you have 2 more of one than the other, you must take the one you have less of. (For example, if your party has 3 Burdens and a permanent +1 starting threat, you must take 1 of the 3 non-Burden options.

2. Campaign and Deck Building

Build your campaign with a structure of 4 easy scenarios, followed by 4 medium, and ending with 3 hard. Difficulties are based on community rankings at Hall of Beorn. Easy is under 6. Medium is 6-7.2. Hard is over 7.2. Nightmare versions of scenarios add +2 to these difficulties. Scenarios are chosen randomly, sorted by ascending difficulty. If using the spreadsheet, mark your available scenarios on the green-tabbed "Scenario List" tab in the appropriate column with an x.

Then, randomly select 4 card sets (5 if 3+ players) in order. Potential sets are: the core set, each major cycle, the full LotR saga, Hobbit + 9 wild cards (note: "wild card" means each individual card, not 3 copies per "card"), ALep Oath of the Rohirrim, and each of the 4 starter decks (though only 2 of the starter decks can be selected; the helper spreadsheet accounts for this). If you have partial cycles, you can combine them in a way that makes roughly a full cycle.

The first 2 sets (3 if 3+ players) are what you have access to at the start of the campaign. You will gain access to the other 2 as rewards for the 4th and 8th scenarios. Players may build their decks freely from these initial 2 (or 3) sets after choosing heroes via the method below. Players also receive 3 wild cards in addition to their randomly selected sets (intended to be 3 copies of A Test of Will if Core Set not selected, but you do you). If using the spreadsheet, mark your available sets on the blue-tabbed "Random Sets" tab in the appropriate column with an x.



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Each player then randomly selects 5 heroes and chooses 3 of them. This is from your entire pool, not just the Random Card Sets above. If using the spreadsheet, mark your available scenarios on the green-tabbed "Heroes List" tab in the appropriate column with an x.

From the first 2 (3 if 3+ players), randomly selected sets, each player builds a deck of 50 player cards (following normal rules otherwise) and 0 side board cards. The cards you select are locked in and your deck cannot be changed without gaining rewards outlined below. Once you have side board cards, they can be swapped out with the primary deck freely between each scenario.

You are allowed to choose 1 warmup scenario before solidifying your deck. You can play this 1 scenario as much as you want before starting your campaign. Choose wisely!

3. Playing

Play the scenario as a standalone scenario, with one change: you must keep track of the number of completed rounds. If playing something like a LotR Saga quest, play with Fellowship Frodo/Aragorn as normal.

If Frodo/Aragorn is in your deck, then, for just this scenario replace with any hero/ally that matches the card type from your currently available sets. This hero is not random and is selected by you. This does not count as an Injured Hero replacement and you may select this replacement hero again for a Saga quest or an Injured Hero (more on that below). Then, win or lose, you earn rewards and potentially take on Detriments and move onto the next scenario. Each scenario, except the final one, may only be attempted once.

4. Results

After a scenario is completed (win or lose), mark any out-of-play heroes as Injured. These work a bit differently than FFG's "fallen heroes".

Injured Heroes are unavailable for only the next scenario. A player incurs 2 non-Burden Detriments for each Injured hero. This penalty only affects the Hero's player/-deck, not all players. For the 1 scenario an Injured Hero is unavailable, choose 1 Replacement Hero (from any set) to replace them. However, each Replacement Hero may only be used once per campaign. However, if you run out of Replacement Hero options from the same sphere as the Injured Hero, then refresh the entire hero pool.

You're almost to the good stuff, but first, you must take on Detriment Points based on your performance. For each 12 Detriment Points you accrue in a campaign, you gain a Detriment as outlined in Section 1. Leftover points are recorded and carried over to the next scenario. Detriment Points are calculated based on whether you won or lost the scenario.

If you win the scenario...

Gain 1 Detriment Point for each completed round minus the number of Quest Phases (not the number of Quest cards or Quest cards completed). Then, gain 1 Detriment Points equal to the the players' average ending threat, rounded down and then divided by 10. For example, if you finish Voyage Across Belegaer, which has 3 Quest Phases and 4 different Quest 2 cards) in 8 rounds, then your party earns 5 Detriment Points. Further, an average ending threat of 37 would earn you 3.7 more, for a total of 8.7. However, you cannot exceed 10 Detriment Points if you win a scenario.

If you lose the scenario...

Gain 14 Detriment Points.

Regardless of winning or losing...

Gain a reward depending on which number scenario defeated. For most rewards, players will have a choice of [Player Count + 1] options. Any reward(s) not chosen by the player(s) are permanently removed, and cannot be a random selection for the rest of the campaign. Cards available are boons from FFG, as well as PW Cooper's Campaign Project and my own personal Ring-maker campaign.



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Boons don't count towards minimum deck sizes. Rewards are split into 4 tiers, which can be found under the appropriate tab in the Excel spreadsheet or Google Docs.

Rewards are specific to the scenario defeated:

- After winning scenarios 1, 3, or 6, each player earns a Permanent reward.
- After winning scenarios 2 or 5, each player earns a Tier 1 Deck reward.
- After winning scenarios 7 or 9, each player earns a Tier 2 Deck reward.
- After winning scenarios 10, each player earns a Tier 3 Deck reward.
- After winning scenario 4 or 8, players gain access to a 3rd or 4th card set (4th or 5th if 3+ players). When you do this, permanently swap up to 10 cards from the newly unlocked set with your deck/sideboard. Then, add 5 cards from this set to your sideboard (which again, can be freely swapped out with your main deck between scenarios).

In place of a reward for a scenarios 1-3, 5-7, or 9-10, a player may opt (after the seeing the reward choices) to instead increase their Sideboard by 5 cards from any available set (Remember: each copy of a card counts once.)

Other rules for Boons/Burdens

- If a Boon/Burden ever refers to only a proper name(s) or the Ring-bearer (i.e., there is no "or [x trait]"), treat that card as saying Any Hero.
- All "Ring" costs on Boons/Burdens only are considered neutral costs, payable by any sphere, unless that text is on a Ring-bearer Hero.
- Cards that reference The One Ring during a non-saga quest should treat the ring as ready, but as players do not actually possess it, they cannot exhaust it to prevent negative Burden effects.
- Some rewards are linked, denoted by a -> between them on the Rewards and Rewards List tabs (ex: Sky Burglar -> Roguish Nature). To take the 2nd reward in the pair, you must have taken the first previously.

5. The Final Showdown

While you will always advance, win or lose after a scenario, this is no longer the case for scenario 11. If you win, you win the campaign. However, if you lose, you can try again, until you win or surrender. Losing Scenario 11 will incur the normal loss penalties of 14 Detriment Points and regular penalties for Injured Heroes.

Rules by Dhaeman/DonkeyWorld on boardgamegeek.com/Discord.

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