

MIDDLE-EARTH: CCG UNIVERSAL RULES

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INTRODUCTION

This document condenses the Starter, Standard, Tournament, and Optional Rules for *Middle-earth: CCG*. As such, it encompasses information to be found in:

- the rules (both Starter and Standard) inserts for:
 1. *Middle-earth: The Wizards (METW)*,
 2. *Middle-earth: The Dragons (METD)*,
 3. *Middle-earth: Dark Minions (MEDM)*,
 4. *Middle-earth: The Lidless Eye (MELE)*,
 5. *Middle-earth: Against the Shadow (MEAS)*,
 6. *Middle-earth: The White Hand (MEWH)*, and
 7. *Middle-earth: The Balrog (MEBA)*;
- as well as:
 8. Council of Lórien Tournament Policy,
 9. Turn Sequence Rulings, and
 10. Tournament Rulings.

When this Universal Rules document is complete, it will obviate any need to reference any of documents just mentioned.

Do not use this document if you want Starter-only rules.

· PART I ·
THE STARTER & STANDARD RULES

1 · THE VICTORY CONDITIONS

The game ends when one of the following occurs during play:

- 1) If your avatar¹ is “eliminated” (i.e., through combat or corruption) – your opponent wins.
- 2) If you complete your quest relative to *The One Ring*:
 - If you are a hero player, you win through method 2) if you move *The One Ring* to Mount Doom and play certain cards – The One Ring is destroyed and you win.
 - If you are a (non-Balrog) minion player, you win through method 2) if you move *The One Ring* to Barad-dûr – Sauron is reunited with the One Ring and you win.
 - If you are a fallen-Wizard player, you win through method 2) if you play at least one *New Ringlord* card and meet the conditions outlined on that card.
 - If you are a Balrog player, you win through method 2) if you play at least one *Challenge the Power* card and meet the conditions required on that card.
- 3) Otherwise, the winner is decided at the *End of Game*.² The end of game is called when one of the following occurs:
 - When each play deck has been exhausted once, the end of game starts following the current turn.³
 - If your play deck has been exhausted, you may choose to call the end of game at the end of any of your turns (*minion player only*: you must play a *Sudden Call* card as a **resource** during one of your turns to invoke this rule). The end of game starts following your opponent’s next turn (i.e., your opponent gets one last turn).
 - If you have at least 20 marshalling points, you may choose to call the end of game at the end of your turn (*minion player only*: you must play a *Sudden Call* card as a **resource** during one of your turns to invoke this rule). The end of game starts following your opponent’s next turn (i.e., your opponent gets one last turn).
 - *Versus minion opponent only*: If your opponent’s play deck has been exhausted and you play a *Sudden Call* card as a **hazard** during one of his turns, the end of game starts following your next turn (i.e., you get one last turn).
 - *Versus minion opponent only*: If your opponent has at least 20 marshalling points and you play a *Sudden Call* card as a **hazard** during one of his turns, the end of game starts following your next turn (i.e., you get one last turn).

Note: Unless you are a Balrog player, you may not consider marshalling points associated with your companies at Under-deeps sites for the purposes of calling the end of game.

THE END OF GAME

Just before the end of game, each non-Ringwraith character must make a corruption check. The player who took the last turn makes corruption checks for his characters first.

At the end of game, each player’s progress towards his goal is measured. This is based upon a comparison of the resources each of the players has marshaled

Clarification: Characters do not automatically untap when the end of game is called. A character may only untap during his own untap phase.

Clarification: If a character leaves active play due to failing a corruption check prior to the end of game,

¹ Your avatar is the card that represents you in the game. Most avatars are characters, but two (*The Lidless Eye*, *Sauron*) are resource permanent events. For a hero player, the avatar will be his Wizard; for a minion player, the avatar will be his Ringwraith, *The Lidless Eye*, *Sauron*, or *The Balrog* (not any of his Ringwraith followers); and for a Fallen-wizard, the avatar will be his Fallen-wizard. If a player uses *The Lidless Eye* or *Sauron*, his avatar cannot be eliminated, and hence he cannot lose in way 1).

² The *End of Game* is called different things for different alignments: heroes call it the *Free Council*, minions (non-balrog) the *Audience with Sauron*, Fallen-wizards the *Day of Reckoning*, and minion balrogs the *Day of Decision*. Rules for the End of Game are identical for all players, except as noted.

³ See below (page #) for rules for longer games, including modifications of number of deck-exhaustions and marshalling points required to call the end of game

he and any non-follower cards he controls are not available at the end of game – thus, they do not count towards the marshalling point totals.

A player may play resource cards that can affect his characters’ corruption checks made prior to the end of game. Hazard cards may *not* be played at this point in the game.

After all characters have made their corruption checks, the game ends if one Wizard or Fallen-wizard has failed his corruption check (the other player wins). If both Wizards and/or Fallen-wizards fail their corruption checks, no one wins – both players lose (if you have to, roll dice and the high roller is the winner).

The winner of the game is the player that has gathered the most modified marshalling points from:

- Control of resources: characters, allies, items, and factions.
- Defeating certain creatures.
- Carrying out the instructions on resource cards.
- Avoiding negative points which accrue when certain characters that you control are eliminated (e.g., *Aragorn II*, *Galadriel*, *Elrond*, *Cirdan*, *Frodo*, and *Bilbo*).
- Marshalling points are printed on the top left corner of the cards that award them.

Marshalling points are printed on the top left corner of the cards.

MARSHALLING POINT MODIFICATIONS

There are six different types of marshalling points; each is associated with a specific shape:

- Character Points [octagon]
- Item Points (Major, Greater, & Rings only) □
- Faction Points ♯
- Ally Points ⚔
- Kill Points O

Clarification: Creatures *without* an “*” are worth points to heroes and Fallen-wizards; creatures *with* an “*” are worth points to minions. Defeated dragon factions are worth points to heroes and Fallen-wizards, but not to minions.

- Miscellaneous Points ≡

At the end of game, these types of marshalling points can affect your marshalling point total in two ways (apply them in the order listed):

- If your opponent has zero (or negative) points for any one type of marshalling point, your points for that same type of marshalling point are doubled. This doesn’t apply to kill points or miscellaneous points.
- No more than half (round up) of your final marshalling points can come from any one type of marshalling point. If one type of marshalling point is over half of your total, reduce the points for that type until they are only half (or less) of your total.

Finally, you may reveal any unique marshalling point cards in your hand that match unique cards that your opponent has in play. You may also reveal any marshalling point cards in your hand that are manifestations of cards that your opponent has in play. Each such revealed card reduces your opponent’s marshalling point total by one.

Clarification: These marshalling point modifications do not apply until the end of game actually takes place. Specifically, the modifications do not affect your MP total when it is used to determine if you can

call the end of game (i.e., you need 20 MPs to call the end of game before any of these modification).

Note: You may find it useful to use pencil and paper or extra dice to keep a running total of marshalling points.

Clarification: If both players have the same number of marshalling points at the end of game, the game ends in a tie.

THE LONGER GAMES

The Starter Game is also called the “1-deck game.” For experienced players with tuned decks, this game usually lasts 20-60 minutes. If you want longer, more detailed play, there are 3 other games.

The 2-deck Game⁴

In a “2-deck game” (the “short game”), the end of game is called when each play deck has been exhausted twice. You may call the game as described above when your play deck has been exhausted twice, or when it has been exhausted once and you have at least 25 marshalling points (MPs). Restrictions in the use of *Sudden Call* still apply.

The 3-deck Game

In a “3-deck game” (the “long game”), the end of game is called when each play deck has been exhausted three times. You may call the game as described above when your play deck has been exhausted three times, or when it has been exhausted twice and you have at least 30 marshalling points (MPs). Increase the sideboard size to 30 cards. Restrictions in the use of *Sudden Call* still apply.

The 4-deck Game

In a “4-deck game” (i.e., the “campaign game”), the end of game is called when each play deck has been exhausted four times. You may call the game as described above when your play deck has been exhausted four times, or when it has been exhausted three times and you have at least 40 marshalling points (MPs). Increase the sideboard size to 35 cards. Restrictions in the use of *Sudden Call* still apply.

⁴ **NOTE:** The 2-deck “short game” is now the typical game for most *MECCG* players and at most *MECCG* tournaments.

2 · THE CARDS AND DECKS

There are five types of cards: site cards, character cards (including avatar character cards), resource cards, hazard cards, and region cards.

Note: The card types can be distinguished as follows:

Site cards have a grey parchment background on the front.

Character cards (non-avatar) have either a copper metal background or a rusted-purplish iron background (if minion) on the front. Each Ringwraith and Balrog card has a blood-red stone background. Each Wizard and Fallen-wizard card has a differently colored stone background.

Resource cards have either a copper metal background (if hero), a grey-blue steel background (if minion) or a tarnished copper background (if stage) on the front.

Hazard cards have a steel gray metal background on the front.

Site and Region cards (i.e., location cards) have a map of Middle-earth on the back.

Character, resource, and hazard cards have the burning eye on the back.

Clarification: For emphasis, a value used during play is often provided both in a card's text and in another place on the same card. For example, a character's corruption check modifier is stated both in the text and the lower right corner of the character's card.

DECK COMPONENTS

During play, your cards are organized into 2 decks and 3 piles and 1 sideboard:

Location Deck – This deck consists of your site cards. You may examine and select cards from your location deck as required by play (i.e., do not randomly draw them). After being played, your non-*-Haven⁵ site cards are sometimes discarded and placed in the discard pile (i.e., when one of your companies leaves a tapped site, it is discarded).

Note: Site cards and region cards represent the geography of Middle-earth. They are used to control the acquisition of resources. Each turn, examine the resources in your hand and select a nearby site to travel to. Do not worry too much about which site to use, just pick one that has the resource type you want to play. It also helps if you preselect the location cards you are most likely to use. See the color insert for a map of Middle-earth.

Play Deck – This deck consists of your resource cards, hazard cards, and character cards. You randomly draw cards from this deck during play. Your play deck starts with an equal number of resource cards and hazard cards.

You can use resources at certain sites and under certain conditions. Resources include: items, factions, allies, events, etc. *You may only play resource cards during your own turn.* You use hazards to hinder and attack your opponent's characters in order to prevent them from marshalling resources. *You may only play hazard cards during your opponent's movement/hazard phase.*

Clarification: The card, *Twilight*, is an exception to this rule – it can be played at anytime, either as a resource or as a hazard (it does not count against the hazard limit). Certain other cards specifically state

⁵ **NOTE:** We will use ‘*-Haven’ to refer ambiguously to hero Havens (for hero players), minion Darkhavens (for minion players), and Fallen-wizard Wizardhavens (for Fallen-wizard players). Although Fallen-wizard players may visit hero Havens and minion Darkhavens, none of the special haven effects apply to their characters at such sites. If the need arises, we shall disambiguate by using only the particular term intended.

when they may be played as exceptions.

Discard Pile – Your discarded cards are placed face down in your discard pile. When your play deck is *exhausted*, the location cards in your discard pile are returned to your location deck. You shuffle the other cards in your discard pile and they become your new play deck.

Clarification: Your play deck is “exhausted” when you draw its last card. Some cards require that your play deck be manipulated and then reshuffled – this does **not** “exhaust” your play deck.

Out-of-play Pile – Your cards that are removed from play after being used and that do not award marshalling points are placed in your out-of-play pile.

Marshalling Point Pile (MP pile) – In addition to marshalling points from cards in play, you gain marshalling points when certain cards become inactive. When you store certain resource cards (e.g., items, information cards, etc.), they are placed in your MP pile. When you defeat all of the strikes from a creature, the creature’s card is placed in your MP pile.

Clarification: Creatures *without* an “*” are worth points to heroes and Fallen-wizards; creatures *with* an “*” are worth points to minions. Defeated dragon factions are worth points to heroes and Fallen-wizards, but not to minions.

Clarification: If a defeated creature or faction *is* worth MPs to you, put it in your MP pile. Otherwise, place it in its owner’s out-of-play pile.

Sideboard – In addition to the normal location deck and play deck, you can have a 25 card “sideboard”. Your sideboard can contain resource, hazard, and character cards (including any avatars of the same alignment as you). However, your combined play deck, starting company, and sideboard can only contain one of each unique card and a maximum of three of any non-unique card. As an exception, you may choose one avatar and include up to three copies of his card in your combined play deck and sideboard. If your opponent is a Fallen-wizard player, you may add 10 preselected cards to your sideboard. You may access your sideboard with certain cards (e.g., *Smoke Rings*, *An Unexpected Outpost*, *Weigh All Things to a Nicety*) and by invoking certain rules:

Using Your Sideboard When You Exhaust Your Deck

Whenever you exhaust your play deck, you may exchange (before reshuffling) up to 5 cards between your sideboard and discard pile. Each such card taken from your sideboard must be replaced by a card from your discard pile.

Using Your Sideboard When You Tap Your Avatar

During your organization phase, you may tap your avatar to bring up to 5 resource and/or character cards from your sideboard into your discard pile.

Alternatively, if your play deck has at least 5 cards, you may tap your avatar to bring one resource or character card directly from your sideboard into your play deck (reshuffle).

Using Your Sideboard When You Tap a Nazgûl Hazard

During your opponent’s movement/hazard phase, you may tap and discard one of your Nazgûl hazard permanent-events in play to bring up to 5 hazard cards from your sideboard into your discard pile. The normal result of tapping a Nazgûl hazard does not apply. The Nazgûl hazard is discarded. Tapping a Nazgûl hazard in this fashion *does* count against the hazard limit.

Alternatively, if your play deck has at least 5 cards, you may tap a Nazgûl hazard permanent-event to bring one hazard card directly from your sideboard into your play deck (reshuffle).

Using Your Sideboard When Your Opponent’s Avatar is in Play

At the end of your opponent’s untap phase, if your opponent’s avatar is in play, you may at this point bring up to five hazard cards from your sideboard to your discard pile; **or**, if your play deck has

at least 5 cards, you may bring one hazard card directly from your sideboard into your play deck (reshuffle).

If you move cards from your sideboard in this fashion, the hazard limit for each of your opponent's companies is reduced to half of normal for the rest of the turn (round up, e.g., a hazard limit of 2 becomes 1, a hazard limit of 3 becomes 2, etc.).

Clarification: Your opponent may verify the type (if relevant) and number of cards moved to and from your sideboard, but you do not have to reveal what those cards are.

Clarification: Your combined play deck and sideboard cannot violate the 1 unique card and 3 non-unique card limit. However, there is no restriction on the mix of hazards, resources, and characters in your sideboard. That is, for the purposes of your sideboard, you can ignore the play deck restrictions: the limit of 10 characters and the equal mix of resources and hazards.

Note: Because hazard cards are distinct from resource cards, you may not play your hazards on your side of the playing surface. *At the end of a game, it will be obvious whose cards are whose, i.e., hazards in your area must belong to your opponent.* We suggest adopting a neutral zone between each player's side of the playing surface. Non-targeting long-events and permanent-events can be played in this neutral zone.

Note: You may freely examine the contents of your discard pile; your opponent may not. The contents of your out-of-play and marshalling point piles may be freely examined by you and your opponent.

Clarification: If a character is eliminated due to combat or due to failing a corruption check by 2 or more, his card is placed in the out-of-play pile – that character may not be brought back into play by either player.

When a card is removed from play in all other cases, the card is discarded unless the card specifically states otherwise.

Clarification: In general, cards in your out-of-play pile and your marshalling point pile are considered to be actively in play for the purposes of being unique (if the card states it is unique).

KEYWORDS

Several types of cards are referred to by the keyword included in the first few words of a card's text. For example, the text of a "spirit-magic" card starts with '*Magic. Spirit-magic*'; the text of a "wolf" card starts with '*Wolves*'; the text of a "Nazgûl" card starts with '*Unique. Nazgûl*'; the text of a "Palantír" starts with '*Unique. Palantír*'.

Keywords do not necessarily carry any rules (though some do, like '*Unique*', '*Corruption*', '*Hoard item*', '*Agent*', and '*Spawn*'). Keywords are used to determine if an effect in the game affects a card.

Note: *Shelob, Spider of Morlat, and Balrog of Moria* are Spawn.

Clarification: The key words, 'Dragon' and 'Drake', are mechanically independent.

Clarification: Although the card *Cave-drake* has the word 'Drake' in its title, it has the **keyword** 'Dragon'. Hence, it is treated as a dragon for all keyword-relevant purposes.

CARD COMBINATIONS

Often combinations of several cards and other actions are required to achieve a desired result. For example, to bring *The One Ring* into play requires: traveling to a site to play one of the Gold Ring cards, some sort of "Test" card or ability, *The One Ring* card, and a high die roll. In addition, the *Scroll of Isildur* card will dramatically improve the chances of successfully getting *The One Ring* into play.

TAPPING AND CARD POSITIONS

Normally, during play, each of your cards is placed on the playing surface so that its top is towards your opponent and its bottom is towards you. During play certain cards must be "tapped" when they are

used – this is a record keeping mechanism to keep track of card usage. To tap a card, rotate it 90° so that it is turned sideways – to untap a card, rotate it back 90° to its normal position.

When one of your characters is wounded, his card is placed with its top towards you (i.e., rotated 180° from an untapped position). All restrictions to tapped characters also apply to wounded characters.

Note: At any given time during play, each character in play must be in one of the three “states”: he must be either untapped, tapped, or wounded.

Clarification: A tapped (or wounded) character can perform any action that does not require the character to tap. For example, a tapped (or wounded) character can move normally, he can fight with a penalty (if the attacker chooses him as the target of a strike), he can transfer items, etc. A tapped (or wounded) character may **not** tap to acquire an item, to influence a faction, to play a card requiring that he tap, etc.

Items and characters tap independently.

UNIQUE & “MAY NOT BE DUPLICATED” CARDS

If a card states that it is “unique” or that it “may not be duplicated,” only one such card (or its effects) may be in play at a time. The first card played takes precedence (influence checks may change this). This restriction applies to all cards in play, i.e., both yours and your opponent’s.

Only one of each “unique” card may be included in your play deck and starting cards combined. As an exception, two of the same Wizard, Ringwraith, Fallen-wizard, or Balrog may be included in your play deck (to give you a better chance of drawing one early).

Note: If a unique card is eliminated, neither that card nor any manifestation of it may be brought back into play by either player.

MANIFESTATIONS

Certain entities (e.g., *Gollum*, Ringwraiths, etc.) have several different manifestations, each represented by a different card.

- If one manifestation of such an entity is already in play, you may *not* play another manifestation of the same entity.
- If an attack from a manifestation is defeated, the manifestation is removed from active play and you may not play any further manifestations of the same entity.

Manifestations of Dragons

Each of the nine unique Dragons (see above) has four different *manifestations*:

Basic — In this manifestation a Dragon is in his standard active mode. Each of these manifestations is represented by a standard creature card (e.g. the cards for Smaug, Agburanar, Daelomin, and Leucaruth from *METW*).

Ahunt — In this manifestation a Dragon is considered to be hunting in a wide range of regions. Each of these manifestations is represented by a hazard long-event that will attack any company moving in a given set of regions (e.g. *Smaug Ahunt* normally causes an attack against any company moving in Withered Heath, Northern Rhovanion, Iron Hills, and/or Grey Mountain Narrows).

At Home — In this manifestation a Dragon is considered to be resident in his lair. Each of these manifestations is represented by a hazard permanent-event that gives its lair an additional automatic-attack and causes certain other global effects (e.g. *Scorba At Home* gives Zarak Dûm an additional automatic-attack and each major item gives an additional corruption point).

Roused — In this manifestation a dragon has sworn his allegiance to a given player. Each of these manifestations is represented by a minion resource faction card that gives its player marshalling points and will attack any company moving in a given set of regions.

Different manifestations of the same Dragon may be in play at the same time. The fact that each manifestation is unique unto itself does not preclude the other manifestations.

Only your opponent can receive marshalling points from defeating a manifestation of a Dragon that you played, and only if he is a hero or Fallen-wizard player. If you defeat a Dragon manifestation that you played, it is removed from the game and no one receives its marshalling points.

If at any time an attack from a manifestation of a unique Dragon is defeated or if the manifestation is otherwise removed from the game:

- All existing manifestations of the same Dragon in play are removed from the game.
- No further manifestations of the same Dragon may be played.
- The Dragon's lair no longer has an automatic-attack.

Exception: If you reveal your Ringwraith, any manifestations of that Ringwraith are immediately discarded (e.g., a corresponding Nazgûl hazard or an identical Ringwraith card that has been played as a "Ringwraith follower"). You cannot reveal a Ringwraith if your opponent has already revealed that same Ringwraith as his own (non-follower) Ringwraith.

Note: If one card says that it is the manifestation of another card, these restrictions apply to both cards.

Note: There are nine unique Dragons associated with the following lairs:

Dragon	Lair (site)	Lair's Region
Agburanar	Caves of Úlund	Withered Heath
Bairanax	Ovir Hollow	Grey Mountain Narrows
Daelomin	Dancing Spire	Withered Heath
Eärcaraxë	Isle of the Ulund	Andrast Coast
Itangast	Gold Hill	Withered Heath
Leucaruth	Irerock	Withered Heath
Scatha	Gondmaeglom	Grey Mountain Narrows
Scorba	Zarak Dûm	Angmar
Smaug	The Lonely Mountain	Northern Rhovanion

DECK CONSTRUCTION

Deck construction is similar for all players, but there are many exceptions, depending on whether you are a hero player, a (non-Balrog) minion player, a Fallen-wizard player, or a Balrog player.

General Guidelines

You must include between 25 and 50 resource cards and an equal number of hazard cards in your play deck. You may include up to 25 cards in your sideboard. You may include certain cards in your pool (see below for details). You may include certain sites in your site deck (see below). You may include all regions in your site deck.

Hero Players Only:

You may include only hero resources amongst your resources. As an exception, you may also include minion items. All agents count as hazards for you. You may include up to 5 characters and 2 non-ward, non-unique minor items in your pool. You may include all hero sites in your site deck. In addition, for the purpose of playing certain hazards you may include the following sites from *MEBA: Ancient Deep-hold, The Wind-deeps, The Drowning Deeps, The Rusted-deeps, and Remains of Thangorodrim* (i.e., the Balrog sites for which there is no corresponding hero or minion site).

(Non-Balrog) Minion Players Only:

You may include only minion resources amongst your resources. As an exception, you may also include hero items. All agents count as hazards for you. You may include up to 6 characters and 2 non-ward, non-unique minor items in your pool. You may include all minion sites in your site deck. In addition, for the purpose of playing certain hazards you may include the following sites from *MEBA: Ancient Deep-hold, The Wind-deeps, The Drowning Deeps, The Rusted-deeps, and Remains of Thangorodrim* (i.e., the Balrog sites for which there is no corresponding hero or minion site).

Fallen-wizard Players Only:

The resource half of your play deck (and your sideboard) may include hero, minion, and stage resources. But, you are limited to:

- One of each unique card (including cards with the same name),
- Three of each non-unique stage resource card,
- Two of each non-unique character card,
- Two of each non-unique hero resource card,
- Two of each non-unique minion resource card,
- You may not include stage resource cards that are “specific” to another Fallen-wizard (e.g. if you declare that you are Alatar, you may not include “Gandalf specific” cards).
- You may not include any of the following cards:

The Balrog	Glamour of Surpassing Excellence
Cracks of Doom	Messenger of Mordor
Favor of the Valar	News Must Get Through
Gollum’s Fate	News of the Shire
Hour of Need	Old Road
Kill All But NOT the Halflings	The Windlord Found Me
The Lidless Eye	Wizard Uncloaked
The Sun Unveiled	Use Your Legs

Clarification: Certain cards give your Fallen-wizard “stage points.” Stage points reflect how far your Fallen-wizard has deviated from his original mission. You must keep track of your accumulated stage points. The number of stage points that a card gives is indicated by one of the following symbols:



You may include all hero, minion, and Fallen-wizard sites in your site deck. In addition, for the purpose of playing certain hazards you may include the following sites from *MEBA: Ancient Deep-hold, The Wind-deeps, The Drowning Deeps, The Rusted-deeps,* and *Remains of Thangorodrim* (i.e., the Balrog sites for which there is no corresponding hero or minion site).

Balrog Players Only:

- As a Balrog player you build your deck like a normal minion player, with the following exceptions:
- You may include all normal minion sites except the following, for which you must use Balrog-specific sites: Moria, Carn Dûm, Dol Guldur, Minas Morgul; All Under-deeps site cards; All Dark-holds (e.g., Barad-dûr, Cirith Ungol, Cirith Gorgor).
 - Only Orc, Troll, Dragon, Wolf, and Animal factions may be included.
 - Unless they are “Balrog specific” characters, only Orc and Troll characters with a mind less than 9 may be included.
 - “Balrog specific” cards may be included. Such cards may only be included in a Balrog player’s deck. “Balrog specific” cards do not require that The Balrog be in play, only that you are a Balrog player.
 - Agents count as hazards (and ½ creatures) for you, not as characters.
 - A Balrog player may not include any of the following cards in any portion of his deck: *Above the Abyss, Kill All But NOT the Halflings, The Lidless Eye, Bade to Rule, Morgul-blade, The Balrog (Ally), News of the Shire, The Black Council, Open to the Summons, Black Horse, Orders From Lugburz, Black Rider, Padding Feet, By the Ringwraith’s Word, The Ring Leaves its Mark, Creature of an Older World, Ringwraith cards, Ringwraith Unleashed Cards, Fell Rider, Sauron, The Fiery Blade, They Ride Together, Helm of Fear, Use Your Legs, Heralded Lord, While the Yellow Face Sleeps, Durin’s Bane, Balrog of Moria.*

Note: A minion player may use any hero item resource card as if it were a minion item resource card. Similarly, a Wizard player may use any minion item resource card as if it were a hero item resource card. The following apply:

- All normal requirements must be met to play the item.
- All restrictions to movement still apply.

- All bonuses and special abilities are ignored.
- The item is only worth half (round up) of its normal marshalling points (unless you are a Balrog player and have played the item at one of your havens).
- The hero version of a unique item is a manifestation of the same minion version of the item and vice versa.

Note: Agents played as hazards require the use of sites for movement, and your agent hazards may still use sites from your site deck.

CARD EFFECT LIMITATIONS

Certain cards are inappropriate for play against minion decks. The following cards will have no effect on a minion player. This is because the mechanism of the cards does not work with the mechanics of Ringwraith companies, or their effects are too powerful against a Ringwraith company.

From *ME: The Wizards*

Bane of the Ithil-stone
Foul Fumes
Mûmak
The Nazgûl are Abroad⁶

From *ME: The Dragons*

Winds of Wrath⁷
Worn and Famished

From *ME: Dark Minions*

all events that require an agent
The Black Enemy's Wrath
Chance of Being Lost⁸
Great Secrets Buried There⁹
In the Heart of His Realm
Mordor in Arms

Furthermore, if you are a Balrog player, **your opponent** may not play any of the following cards: *The Balrog (Ally)*, *The Black Council*, *Durin's Bane*, *Balrog of Moria*, *Reluctant Final Parting*.

However, if at any time your opponent has one of these cards in his hand, he may remove it from play and bring a card from his sideboard into his play deck.

If The Balrog is in play or has been defeated, ignore all Balrog automatic-attacks (i.e., at The Undergates).

⁶ This card may be played against a minion player. The only restriction is that the first two paragraphs are ignored when you play Nazgûl creatures against a minion opponent. Any player can recycle Nazgûl hazards as stated on the card.

⁷ You may play this card against any opponent who is using the same type of location deck (hero sites or minion sites) as yourself.

⁸ You may play this card against any opponent who is using the same type of location deck (hero sites or minion sites) as yourself.

⁹ If you are playing with the *Middle Earth: Against the Shadow* sites, then this card can be played against any opponent.

3 · GETTING READY TO PLAY

Follow these steps to get ready to play:

- 1) If you are playing a Fallen-wizard, you must tell your opponent which Fallen-wizard you are playing before choosing starting companies. If your opponent has normal hero Wizard character cards in his play deck and/or sideboard that correspond to the Fallen-wizard you have declared, he may replace those Wizard cards with an equal number of other Wizard character cards that he has available. Your opponent may also add 10 cards to his sideboard (these cards should be preselected for a Fallen-wizard opponent). If you include The Balrog card (the character card with the special reddish background) in your deck or sideboard, you are a “Balrog player”. In this case, you *must* tell your opponent before choosing starting companies.

Note: This rule means that when you declare that you are playing a specific Fallen-wizard, your opponent may not play the corresponding hero Wizard (i.e. that Wizard has already fallen). You and your opponent may still both declare and attempt to play the same Fallen-wizard, but the game will probably be won by the first player to get his Fallen-wizard into play.

- 2) Place your site and region cards in your location deck. This deck should contain all of your *-Haven cards. You may include any number of *-Haven cards, but only one of each non-*-Haven site card.
- 3) Place between 30 and 50 Resource cards **and** an equal number of Hazard cards in your play deck. Also, place 25 cards non-site cards in your sideboard. No more than one of each “unique” and three copies of any one non-unique card may be included in your play deck, pool, and sideboard combined.

Note: You must have at least 12 hazard creatures in your play deck. Several types of cards only count as half a creature for this purpose:

- A creature that is also playable as an event (e.g., Nazgûl, *Mouth of Sauron*, *Shelob*, etc.)
- A Dragon “Ahunt” or “At Home” manifestation
- An agent (hero and Balrog players only)

- 4) Place a number of starting characters (no avatars, no agents) face down in front of you. This number is 5 if you are a hero or Fallen-wizard player, but 6 if you are a minion player. The combined mind attributes (see above) of these characters must be 20 or less. You and your opponent reveal your characters simultaneously, placing any duplicated characters into your play decks. Then organize your starting characters into followers and companies and place them at your starting site(s).
 - If you are a hero player, this site is *Rivendell*.
 - If you are a non-Balrog minion player, you may use **Dol Guldur and/or** *Minas Morgul*.
 - If you are a Fallen-wizard player, you may use *The White Towers* or any Ruins & Lairs site in Rhudaur or Arthedain. If you start at a Ruins & Lairs site, one of your starting stage resource cards may be a *Hidden Haven* played on your starting site.
 - If you are a Balrog player, you may use *Moria* and/or *The Under-Gates*.

Note: *Fallen-wizard player only:* You must attempt to start with one, two, or three (your choice) stage resource permanent-event cards in play. These cards must have a combined total of 3 stage points. At least one of these cards must be non-unique. You may not start such a card if the conditions required to play the card do not exist. These cards should be revealed as if they were starting characters with duplicate unique cards being discarded.

Note: *Fallen-wizard player only:* Your starting characters may include hero characters and minion characters, but you may not start a character with a mind greater than 5. Furthermore, you may not start Orc and Troll characters unless you start with an appropriate stage resource card (e.g., *Bad Company*, *Thrall of the Voice*).

- 5) You *may* assign up to 2 non-unique, non-hoard minor items to your starting characters (i.e., 2 items, **not** 2 to each character). These items must come from cards that you have not already committed to your play deck.

- 6) Place up to 10 non-avatar character cards in your play deck. Only one of each character card may be included. In addition, place up to three avatar character cards in your play deck (you may place 3 copies of the same avatar character, **or** 1 copy one and 2 copies of another, but **not** 1 each of three different avatar characters). Shuffle your play deck.
- 7) Draw a hand of eight cards from your play deck.
- 8) Each player makes a roll, and the player with the highest result goes first (reroll if tied).

Clarification: None of your starting characters may be considered to be followers for the purposes of determining their combined mind attributes – your initial characters have to have combined mind attributes of 20 or below.

Clarification: The initial 1-5 or 1-6 characters and two minor items **do** count toward the “one-unique” and “three-others” limits on the play deck. However, they do **not** count towards the number of resource and character cards in your starting play deck.

Clarification: Minion agents included in a non-Balrog minion or a Fallen-wizard deck count as characters for the purposes of meeting deck requirements. Minion agents included in a hero or Balrog deck count as hazards for the purposes of meeting deck requirements. However, during play, each minion agent may be played either as a character (i.e., as a minion character) if allowed, or as a hazard (i.e., as an agent).

4 · THE PLAYER TURN

Full Player Turn Summary [HERE](#).

FW only:

- You may discard one of your stage resource cards already in play during your organization phase. You may **not** discard such a card if it would reduce your stage points below 3.
- You may only play stage resource permanent-events during your organization phase (unless a specific card states otherwise).

Clarification: The actions that may be taken during your organization phase may be taken in any order (e.g., you can store an item, then bring a character into play, and then store a second item).

Clarification: If one of your companies doesn't move, neither player draws cards based on that company's movement. However, your opponent can still play allowable hazards on that company (hazard limit still applies).

Clarification: Each player draws cards when each company moves and then discards or draws to 8 cards after the company has completed movement. Additionally, at the end of each turn, each player can discard one card and then discard or draw to 8 cards.

Clarification: You may play a site (i.e., move to a site) that your opponent previously used or is currently using.

Clarification: During the site phase, a company may decide not to enter and explore its current site. In this case, the company does not face the automatic-attack, but it may not take any other actions or play any cards during the site phase. The company remains at the site and it may decide to enter and explore the site on a later turn.

Clarification: Before a company can attempt to play an item, ally, faction, or other card that is "playable" at its current site, it must face the site's automatic-attacks. The company need not defeat the attacks, it merely needs to resolve the attacks normally (such attacks can be canceled).

A company can face a site's automatic-attacks and still not play a card (e.g., all of its characters are tapped after facing the automatic-attacks). If such a company wants to play a card at the site on a later turn, it must face the automatic-attacks again.

Clarification: A site is tapped when one item, ally, faction, or card is played at that site. The play of certain resource cards may tap sites – such a card will specifically state that playing it taps the site. Non-*-Haven sites only normally untap after being discarded and after your play deck is exhausted. So, each time through your play deck, only one such card may normally be played at a given non-*-Haven site. *-Haven cards, whether tapped or not, always return to your location deck untapped.

Note: Havens **do** tap when you play cards at them that normally tap the site (e.g., *Wizard's Ring*, a faction through *Hour of Need*, *Orcs of Dol Guldur*).

5 · CHARACTERS & COMPANIES

As a player, you influence and control a number of characters that move and act in the world of Middle-earth. If you are a hero player, all your characters are heroes. If you are a minion player, all your characters are minions. If you are a Fallen-wizard player, all your non-Orc, non-Troll, non-Fallen-wizard characters are considered heroes; your Orc and Troll characters are considered minions, and your Fallen-wizard character is just that – a Fallen-wizard (treated as a minion for the purpose of corruption checks). Each character’s abilities are defined by these attributes: race, skills, direct influence, prowess (offense), body (defense), mind, marshalling points, special abilities (e.g., corruption check modifiers), and sometimes general influence. A character can be *eliminated* and removed from play as a result of combat (failing a body check) or corruption (failing a corruption check). A character is the bearer of a specific card if he is the character that bears or controls that card (e.g., an item, a corruption card, etc.).

Characters are primarily controlled by your pool of 20 general influence points. For each controlled character, you must commit a number of general influence points equal to his mind attribute. In addition, you may control a character by using another character’s direct influence – a character controlled in this fashion is called a *‘follower’* and does not use general influence points.

During play, you may organize your characters into groups called ‘companies’. A company’s size is equal to the number of characters in it, with each Hobbit character and each Orc character with the scout skill only counting half (round up). A company is limited to a size of seven. A company’s *hazard limit* is equal to two or the size of the company, whichever is greater. The maximum number of hazards that can be played on a company during a given movement/hazard phase is equal to its hazard limit.

During your organization phase, each of your companies may do three things related to their movement: combine (*-Haven only), move, split. Refer to section 6 (Movement) for a complete discussion.

Note: The number of characters you have in play limits the number of actions you may take during a given turn. You use your other characters’ direct influence on a character to bring that character into play and to keep him in play. A character in play can move and take actions (e.g., defending against attacks, influencing, etc.). Items, allies, and other cards representing things a character acquires and controls are placed under his card.

Note: Sometimes two or more companies combine and the resulting company has two or more of the same cards that say: “cannot be duplicated on a given company.” When this happens, immediately discard all but one of those cards (your choice).

Clarification: During the organization phase, one *-Haven card may be used to represent the location of two or more companies, so long as the distinction between companies is clearly presented spatially. However, with the advent of the Wizardhaven site *Rhosgobel*, each copy of which gives its player one stage point, this shorthand technique has become difficult to use. We recommend that you *always* use *exactly one* site card for each company at a given haven.

Clarification: Even if you have no characters in play, the game is not over. You may continue to draw and discard cards – eventually you will draw your avatar or a character.

CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES

Each character’s abilities are defined by the following attributes (the notation for certain attributes is given in brackets).

Race: This is one criterion for using certain resources and for bringing certain items, characters, and factions into play (e.g., only a Dwarf can fully utilize a Dwarven Ring). The races are: Elf, Hobbit, Dwarf, Dúndan, Man, Orc, Troll, Wizard, Fallen-wizard, Ringwraith, and Balrog.

Skills: This is one of the criteria for using certain cards (e.g., warrior skill is required to use certain weapons). The skills are: warrior, scout, ranger, sage, and diplomat. Some characters have more than one skill.

Direct Influence []: A character’s direct influence determines which of your characters he may control (i.e., have as followers). In addition, a character’s unused direct influence affects his chances of influencing factions and your opponent’s resources.

Prowess [lower left, to left of “/”]: A character’s prowess is a measure of a character’s offensive capabilities in combat.

Body [lower left, to right of “/”]: A character’s body is a measure of how difficult it is to physically eliminate the character. This is a mixture of the ability to avoid an attack and the ability to absorb or deflect an attack (e.g., armor, shield, blocking).

Mind [👁️]: A character’s mind determines how many influence points (an avatar’s general influence points or a character’s direct influence points) are required to keep this character in play. Your avatar has no mind and requires no influence to control.

Marshalling Points [upper left]: This is the number of marshalling points you receive when you have the character in play. This value represents the character’s importance.

Special Abilities: Some characters have special abilities that are detailed on their cards. Common special abilities include corruption check modifiers, influence bonuses, prowess bonuses.

General Influence (Fallen-wizard only) [👁️]: A Fallen-wizard’s general influence is not always the standard 20. The number in the white hand symbol on the left side of the Fallen-wizard’s card represents his general influence.

INFLUENCING (CONTROLLING) A CHARACTER

You have a pool of 20 general influence points. At the end of your organization phase, the total mind attributes of your characters in play (not counting followers) must be less than or equal to 20; this total is equal to your *used general influence points*. Your *unused general influence points* help your characters resist the effects of certain cards (e.g., *Call of Home*, *Call of the Sea*, *Muster Disperses*, *Will Not Come Down*, etc.), as well as influence attempts by your opponent during his site phase.

Direct Influence

Some characters have a direct influence attribute of one or more. If such a character’s direct influence is greater than or equal to another one of your characters’ mind attribute, he may take control of that other character, who then becomes a *follower* of the controlling character. These conditions must be met:

- The total mind attributes of all of a character’s followers may not exceed his direct influence.
- A character may be in control of another character that is in play only if both characters are at the same site.

A follower does not require influence points from your general pool and he must remain stacked under the character exerting the direct influence at all times. A follower may not use his direct influence to control characters (i.e., a follower may not have his own followers).

A follower is handled in all other ways as a normal character (e.g., counts for company size, takes actions normally, etc.).

If you have enough unused general influence points, you may move a follower from direct influence to general influence (or vice versa) during your organization phase.

If a character directly influencing a follower is removed from play, the follower remains in play and does not immediately count against general influence. However, during your next organization phase, you must discard the follower, place the follower under the control of another character in his company with enough available direct influence, or place the follower under the control of general influence (if enough is available).

BRINGING CHARACTERS INTO AND OUT OF PLAY

During your organization phase, you may perform **one and only one** of the following activities:

- You may play a non-avatar character card. If your avatar is in play, your avatar (or a character with enough direct influence to control the character to be played) must be at the site at which the character is to be played. You must place him at his home site *or* at any *-Haven site. If the character is an agent, you may only play him at his home site. If you do not have enough general influence or direct influence to control the character by the end of your organization phase, then the character is returned to your hand.

Note: If you are a Balrog player, you may not play agents as characters.

- You may play your avatar character card if you do not have one in play (*minion player only*: see rules on page 8 concerning “Ringwraith Followers”). This is called “Revealing your avatar.” You may **not** reveal an avatar if your opponent has already revealed that avatar. You need not control your avatar with influence – he represents you, the player. While revealing your avatar is an advantage, it also carries with it the danger of losing the game by having your avatar eliminated. You must place your avatar at:
 - His home site or Rivendell, if he is a Wizard.
 - His home site, **Dol Guldur**, or Minas Morgul, if he is a Ringwraith.
 - His home site, if he is a Fallen-wizard or Balrog
- You may discard a character that is at a *-Haven or at his home site. Your avatar may not be discarded. You must take this action when you are forced to discard a character due to a lack of available influence. In this case, the character(s) need not be at a Darkhaven.

Exception: If you are a Fallen-wizard player, you may not bring into play any character with a mind greater than 5.

Exception: If you are a Fallen-wizard player, you may not bring into play Orc or Troll characters unless you have an appropriate card (e.g., *A Strident Spawn*, *Thrall of the Voice*, *Bad Company*, *We Have Come to Kill*).

Exception: If you are a Balrog player, each of your characters with a home site of “Any Dark-hold” has a home site of “Any non-Dark-hold Under-deeps site” instead.

Exception: During his organization phase, a Balrog player may bring into play (and/or remove from play) *up to two* characters - one of these characters must be non-unique. The normal requirements for bringing into play (or removing from play) a character must still be met.

Exception: When a Balrog player brings into play a non-unique character with a mind of 3 or less, that character may come from his hand, his discard pile, or his sideboard.

Note: When you reveal your Ringwraith or play a Ringwraith follower, any corresponding manifestation Nazgûl hazard of that Ringwraith in play is discarded. Similarly, when you reveal your Wizard or your Fallen-wizard, any corresponding manifestation Maia hazard of that Wizard or Fallen-wizard is discarded.

Clarification: If a character’s mind changes at any point, the influence required to control him also changes.

Clarification: If, outside the organization phase, you do not have enough influence to control all of your characters in play, they remain in play. However, you must discard any excess characters at the end of your next organization phase. If you bring a character into play during your organization phase and then do not have enough influence to control him, the character just brought into play must be returned to your hand at the end of your organization phase.

When you play a character, you may place him into a company already at his arrival site **or** he may become a new company (consisting of one character). In the second case, you must place the arrival site card next to the character played. If the appropriate site is not available, you may not play the character.

Clarification: Playing a character does **not** tap a site.

Clarification: You may only invoke these rules to bring characters into or out of play at *your* *-Havens. That is, characters of a hero player may be brought into or out of play at Havens; characters of a minion player may be brought into or out of play at Darkhavens; characters of a Fallen-wizard player may be brought into or out of play at Wizardhavens; and characters of a Balrog player may be brought into or out of play at Balrog Havens.

Most characters are unique. So if you already have a character in play, your opponent may not play the same character. Similarly, if a unique character has been eliminated, neither he nor any manifestation of him may be brought into play again by either player.

Clarification: During the organization phase, you can move characters from control by general influence to control by direct influence and vice versa so long as your total of mind attributes does not exceed your available influence at the end of the organization phase.

COMPANIES

A company is a group of characters that move and act together. This allows characters to move, act, and defend as a unit, allowing stronger characters to protect the weaker characters. This mechanism can be used to allow a variety of tactics during play.

For example, if you have 3 characters in play, the 3 characters can move separately and perhaps do more in terms of acquiring marshalling points (items, other characters, etc.); but each individual character is more vulnerable. However, the same 3 characters operating as a company might acquire marshalling points more slowly, but they would be safer (i.e., you risk less).

Normally, a company is limited to a size of seven, but a company at a Haven site may be of any size. For these purposes, an ally does not count as a character. The size of a company is determined for each company at the beginning of the movement/hazard phase (e.g., it remains fixed even if a character leaves the company).

Clarification: A company is **not** an “attack,” and a character is **not** an “attack.” So hazards that modify attacks have no effect on characters and companies.

Limitations on Company Composition

- *Minion player only:* unless at a *-Haven, an Orc or a Troll cannot be in a company that contains an Elf, a Dwarf, or a Dúnadan – and vice versa. *Fallen-wizard player only:* Unless at a Wizardhaven, an Orc or a Troll cannot be in a company that contains an Elf, a Dwarf, a Dúnadan, **or** a Hobbit.
- Unless at a Darkhaven, your Ringwraith’s company may only contain your Ringwraith and Ringwraith followers.
- Unless at a *-Haven, a company may only contain one leader. A leader is a character with the keyword “leader,” in its text box.

Note: If two companies end up at a non-*-Haven site and combining those companies would violate the limitations on company composition, one of the companies that just moved must return to its site of origin. Similarly, an effect that causes such a violation is cancelled (e.g., *We Have Come to Kill*). This means that your Ringwraith’s company may not move to the same non-Darkhaven site as one of your other companies, since this would result in your Ringwraith joining with other characters.

Overt and Covert Companies

The text for certain cards distinguishes between overt companies and covert companies. Any company that contains a Ringwraith in *Fell Rider* mode, an Orc, or a Troll is an overt company. Any other company is a covert company.¹⁰

Companies can be:

- 1) for a hero player
 - hero
- 2) for a minion player

¹⁰ **NOTE:** This rule is superseded by the list of overt-making characters, allies, and events in the CRF. The list includes all and only:

- **Characters:** *The Balrog*, all trolls, all orcs (some exceptions apply for half-orcs – see *MEWH* rules insert)
- **Allies:** *Great Bats*, *Great Lord of Goblin-gate*, *Last Child of Ungoliant*, *Regiment of Black Crows*, *“Two-headed” Troll*, *Creature of an Older World*
- **Events:** *Fell Rider*, *Freeze the Flesh*, *Cast from the Order*.

- covert minion
- overt minion
- 3) for a Fallen-wizard player
 - covert hero (companies with nothing making them overt)
 - overt
 - non-minion (due to overt-making non-orc non-troll ally, Freeze the Flesh, or Cast from the Order)
 - minion (due to presence of an orc, a troll, or a half-orc with other characters than only half-orcs and men)

Note: An overt company is readily identifiable as an evil force (i.e., it has Orcs, Trolls, etc.) and thus is subject to direct conflict with most Free Peoples. A covert company is not readily identifiable as an evil force, and thus can operate relatively freely in the domains of the Free Peoples.

HEALING

Each of your characters at your *-Haven may heal during your untap phase. Such a character moves from a wounded position to a tapped position. In addition, certain cards can heal characters (e.g., *Foul Smelling Paste*, *Athelas*, *Halfling Strength*, etc.).

Clarification: Your characters may only heal at *your* *-Havens. That is, characters of a hero player may only heal at Havens; characters of a minion player may only heal at Darkhavens; characters of a Fallen-wizard player may only heal at Wizardhavens; and characters of a Balrog player may only heal at Balrog Havens.

RINGWRAITH EFFECTS

After being revealed, a Ringwraith operates like any other character except for several special effects:

- A Ringwraith may only be in a company with non-Ringwraith characters if he is at a Darkhaven.
- Any gold ring in the Ringwraith's company at the beginning of the end-of-turn phase is automatically tested. Any ring test in a Ringwraith's company has a modification of -2.
- A Ringwraith may carry items (including rings) but may not use them (i.e., an item has no effect on a Ringwraith's company or on his attributes and abilities).
- Ringwraiths never make corruption checks and corruption cards may not be played on Ringwraiths.
- Unless at a Darkhaven, a Ringwraith may not be in a company with non-Ringwraith characters.
- A Ringwraith may not use a site path that contains Coastal Seas regions.
- A Ringwraith's company may not use region movement.
- A Ringwraith follower is only discarded as described on the mode cards (i.e., *Heralded Lord*, *Black Rider*, and *Fell Rider*).
- A Ringwraith follower (see the previous page) may not use any of its special abilities. Úvatha's ability to automatically join another Ringwraith's company is an exception to this.
- If a body check against a Ringwraith is exactly equal to 7 or 8, the Ringwraith is returned to your hand. You do not lose the game if your Ringwraith is removed in this fashion – you may bring such a Ringwraith back into play in the same fashion as you revealed him in the first place. If this happens to our Ringwraith, you may *not* reveal a different Ringwraith **and** your opponent may not reveal the Ringwraith that you returned to your hand.

Note: This represents the Ringwraith's mount being eliminated.

A BALROG PLAYER

A Balrog player uses the following special rules:

- Any ring in The Balrog's company at the beginning of the end-of-turn phase is automatically tested. Any ring test in The Balrog's company has a modification of -2.
- The Balrog may carry items (including rings) but may not use them (i.e., an item has no effect on The Balrog's company or on his attributes and abilities).
- The Balrog never makes corruption checks and corruption cards may not be played on The Balrog.

- Normally, The Balrog may not use starter and region movement (as stated on his card). However, the play of certain resources can expand his movement capabilities.
- The Balrog's company is always overt.

RINGWRAITH FOLLOWERS (Jambo right?? In any case, we need to figure out how to incorporate this into the “bringing chars into and out of play” section!)

If the following conditions are met, you may bring another (different) Ringwraith character into play at your Ringwraith's site – such a character is called a “Ringwraith follower.”

- Your Ringwraith is already in play.
- Your Ringwraith is at a Darkhaven **or** he is at the Ringwraith follower's home site.
- You have the card of the additional Ringwraith in your hand.
- Your opponent does *not* have the Ringwraith already in play **and** the Ringwraith has *not* been eliminated.
- You have the card or ability allowing a Ringwraith follower to be played (e.g., *They Ride Together*, *The Witch-king's* ability).

A Ringwraith follower must always be under the control of your Ringwraith and may move to non-Darkhaven sites with your Ringwraith. Your Ringwraith must use 1 point of direct influence to control each Ringwraith follower. Your Ringwraith follower may not be influenced away by your opponent.

A Ringwraith follower may not use any of its special abilities. Úvatha's ability to automatically join another Ringwraith's company is an exception to this.

When you reveal your Ringwraith, your opponent must discard any identical Ringwraith card that has been played as a Ringwraith follower.

6 · MOVEMENT

In *MECCG* the lands of northwest Middle-earth are represented by regions. The site cards represent places that companies can visit within those regions. Except for a moving company during its movement/hazard phase each company always has a *current site card* associated with it – the company is located at that site.

Note: By using the site cards and site cards only, a company can move from any site to any other site. First, if necessary, the company moves to an intermediate site or sites. Then it moves to the destination site.

During your organization phase, each of your companies may:

- Combine with another of your companies at the same *-Haven site. To this, simply return to your location deck one of the companies' site cards.
- Split into two or more companies. In this case, at most one of the resultant companies may stay at its current site.
- Decide whether to move or not.

Moving Companies to the Same Non-*-Haven Site

During the organization phase, two or more companies may decide to move to the same site, but one of the following cases must apply:

- One company may already be at the site. In this case the other company moving to the site must state that its new site card is already in play (the current site card for the non-moving company). This site card remains in play until at least the end of the turn.
- Two or more companies moving to the site must state that the same site face down is their new site card.

In both cases, the two companies must face hazards separately and are then combined at the end of the movement/hazard phase. If two companies end up at a site and combining those companies would violate the limitations on company composition, one of these companies must return to its site of origin. Similarly, an effect that causes such a violation is cancelled.

Clarification: These restrictions mean that two companies may not start at the same site and then move to the same site separately (i.e., in such a situation the two companies would have to move as one company).

Clarification: When a company splits, any of the resulting companies can move with region movement. Region movement is not limited to one company of a split.

A company commits to moving by playing a *new site card* (face down) during its organization phase. A company does not have to move during a given turn (i.e., it does not play a new site card).

At the beginning of its movement/hazard phase, a moving company's current site card becomes its *site of origin* – the company is considered to be en route to its new site card (i.e., the company is moving).

At the end of a moving company's movement/hazard phase (before players return to their hand sizes), its site of origin is removed (discard if tapped; otherwise, return it to your location deck) and the new site card becomes the company's current site card.

Clarification: Some cards can interrupt this process by forcing a company to return to its site of origin.

There are three ways to move from one site to another: starter movement, region movement, and under-deeps movement. Below are the guidelines for using each type of movement:

STARTER MOVEMENT

Only hero and (non-Balrog) minion players may use starter movement.

To use starter movement, your company must move either to or from a non-Under-deeps *-Haven site.

Moving From a Non-*-Haven Site

If the company's site of origin is a non-Under-deeps, non-*-Haven site, the new site card *must* be the *-Haven listed as the nearest *-Haven on the site of origin card (i.e., the company can move back to its nearest *-Haven).

Moving From a Darkhaven Site

If the company's site of origin is a *-Haven, the new site card must meet one of the following requirements:

- If the new site card is not another *-Haven, it must list the site of origin as its nearest *-Haven (i.e., the company can move to any site that has the *-Haven the company is currently at as the site's nearest *-Haven).
- If the new site card is another *-Haven, it must give a site path to the *-Haven the company is at currently (i.e., the company can move to one of its adjacent *-Havens; each *-Haven is adjacent to one or two other *-Havens).

REGION MOVEMENT

A Ringwraith's company may not use region movement.

Note: Ringwraiths **must use starter movement** because of their difficulties with crossing water. It is assumed that the site paths used in starter movement represent known and well traveled routes so that the Ringwraiths can use them to avoid water barriers that do not have fords, bridges, or ferries.

To use region movement, play a new site card and a series of up to four regions (all face down) that connect the company's current site with the new site (i.e., the company moves). A series of regions "connects" two sites if:

- The current (i.e., site of origin) site is located in the first region, **and**
- That region card is adjacent to the next region card played, **and**
- That region card is adjacent to the next region card played, ... , **and**
- Finally, the last region card played is the region that the new site card is located in.

A region is adjacent to another region if and only if each region lists the other region on its card. The only exception to this is that Údun is adjacent to Dagorlad for Ringwraith players.

Clarification: To use region movement for a company, the region cards played must include the region containing the company's current site and the region containing the new site.

If both the current site and the new site are in the same region, only that region card need be played.

Clarification: If two sites are separated by more than four regions, a company may not travel directly between them in one turn (unless some special resource card is used). The company must first travel to interim sites (one per turn) until it reaches a site that is within four regions of the destination site. If a company moving with region movement is using effects that allows additional region cards to be laid down, no more than six regions may be used.

Clarification: Certain regions may appear to be adjacent on the maps, but turn out not to be adjacent upon examination of the lists on their cards. For example, Dagorlad and Rohan appear to be adjacent on the maps, but they are really separated by the Anduin River.

Playing Hazards

For the purposes of playing hazards, the site path for a company using region movement is defined by the region types of the region cards played. You can use a creature hazard to directly attack one of your opponent's companies if at least one of the region types on the creature's card matches that region type of a region card played by the company (two are required for creatures that require two symbols of the same type).

Clarification: Region movement can be more dangerous to use than normal movement – certain creatures can be played keyed to specific region cards.

UNDER-DEEPS MOVEMENT

Each of your companies that begins its turn at the surface site of an Under-deeps site can move normally *or* it can move to its adjacent Under-deeps site (i.e., the company moves to an Under-deeps site from its surface site). Each of your companies that begins its turn at an Under-deeps site may only move to one of the adjacent sites listed on the Under-deeps site card.

Each adjacent site is followed by a number in parentheses – this number indicates how difficult it is to move from the Under-deeps site to the adjacent site. When an adjacent site is revealed by one of your companies whose site of origin is an Under-deeps site, you must make a roll (2D6). If the result is greater than or equal to the number in parentheses following the adjacent site as listed on its site of origin, the movement/hazard phase proceeds normally. Otherwise, the company returns to its site of origin and the movement/hazard phase proceeds as if the company had not moved.

Note: A company moving from a surface site to its Under-deeps site does not need to make a roll.

MOVING YOUR RINGWRAITH’S COMPANY

The company containing your Ringwraith may freely move from Darkhaven to Darkhaven and from a non-Darkhaven site to a Darkhaven. However, in order to move from a Darkhaven to a non-Darkhaven site, a Ringwraith must have a special resource card: a *Black Rider* card, a *Fell Rider* card, or a *Heralded Lord* card (i.e., the Ringwraith must be in Black Rider mode, in Fell Rider mode, or in Heralded Lord mode).

Note: If a company is not moving, no cards are drawn. If a company is moving to a non-Darkhaven site, you *may* draw up to the # of cards indicated by the site that it is *moving to* (at least one card must be drawn); your opponent does the same. If a hero player’s or non-Balrog minion player’s company is moving to a *-Haven site, you *may* draw up to the # of cards indicated by the site that it is *moving from* (at least one card must be drawn); your opponent does the same. If a Fallen-wizard player’s or Balrog player’s company is moving to a *-Haven site, you *may* draw up to the # of cards indicated by the site that is being *moved to* (at least one card must be drawn).

Exception: *Fallen-wizard player only:* The following exceptions for using sites can be modified by the play of certain hazards and stage resources.

- A Fallen-wizard’s non-overt companies must use hero sites for sites that are *not* Ruins & Lairs.
- A Fallen-wizard’s companies may freely use either minion or hero Ruins & Lairs sites on a site per site basis (subject to the restriction below).
- If your hero (or minion) version of a site is in play or in your discard pile, you may not use your minion (or hero) version of the same site.
- The play of certain cards can change the type of sites that your companies may use (e.g., *Plotting Ruin*, *Heart Grown Cold*, etc.). When this happens, immediately exchange any affected site cards already in play with the corresponding site cards of the proper type.

SITE PATHS

There are six types of regions and six types of sites:

Region Type	Symbol	Site Type	Symbol
Coastal Seas		*-Havens	[* , ✨]
Free-domains		Free-holds	
Border-lands		Border-holds	
Wilderness		Ruins & Lairs	
Shadow-lands		Shadow-holds	
Dark-domains		Dark-holds	

A site’s *site path* is the sequence of regions between a site and its nearest *-Haven. However, each region in the sequence is only indicated by its type, not by its name. Each non-*-Haven site card has a site

path on it. Each Haven and Darkhaven site card has one or two site paths, but each of those two paths gives the sequence of regions between the Haven/Darkhaven and one of its nearest Havens/Darkhaven(s).

Note: Site paths do not direct the movement process. The site path is used to determine which hazard creatures your opponent may play against your moving company.

Clarification: A “company’s site path” during its movement/hazard phase is the site path between its site of origin and its new site. On non-*-Haven site cards, the site path is provided on the top left border. On Haven and Darkhaven cards, the site path to each of the adjacent Havens/Darkhaven(s) is provided in the card text.

Region Types

Coastal Seas []: Regions consisting primarily of open water.

Free-domains []: Civilized regions (e.g., Lindon, Anórien, etc.).

Border-lands []: Less civilized regions on the border of the wilderness or shadow territory (e.g., Rohan, Lamedon, etc.).

Wilderness []: Sparsely populated, uncivilized regions that cover most of NW Middle-earth (e.g., High Pass, Eenedhwaith, Rhudaur, etc.).

Shadow-lands []: Regions with some active Shadow-forces and settlements (Imlad Morgul, Dagorlad, etc.).

Dark-domains []: Regions with a heavy concentration of Shadow-forces (Southern Mirkwood, Gorgoroth, etc.).

Site Types

**-Havens* [, ]: Sites of rest and healing (e.g., Rivendell, Grey Havens, Edhellond, Lórien, Minas Morgul, Dol Guldur, Carn Dûm, Geann a-Lisch, The White Towers, Isengard, Rhosegobel, Moria, and The Under-gates).

Free-holds []: Sites of safety for heroes, but dangerous sites for minions. (e.g., Minas Tirith, Edoras, etc.).

Border-holds []: Relatively safe sites for heroes, but relatively dangerous sites for minions (e.g., Bree, Lake-town, etc.).

Ruins & Lairs []: Deserted sites often inhabited by dangerous creatures (e.g., the Lonely Mountain, Barrow-downs, etc.).

Shadow-holds []: Relatively deserted sites often inhabited by dangerous creatures and Shadow-forces (e.g., Goblin-gate, Mount Gram, etc.).

Dark-holds []: Sites with heavy concentrations of Shadow-forces (Dol Guldur, Barad-dûr, etc.).

7 · COMBAT

Combat normally occurs when one of three things happens:

- A creature hazard is played on a company.
- A company at a site with an *automatic-attack* decides to attempt to play a resource card at that site (i.e., decides to attempt to enter the site).
- Any other card indicates that a company must face an attack.

ATTACKS & STRIKES

Combat consists of one or more *attacks* that must be resolved one at a time. An attack consists of one or more *strikes*:

- Each strike can target one and only one character in the attacked company.
- Each character can be the target of only one strike from a given attack.
- If an attack has more strikes than the company has characters, the attacker may allocate the excess strikes as -1 modifications (i.e., a -1 modification for each unallocated strike) to the prowess(es) of whichever target(s) he chooses. See the Strike Sequence below.
- You and your opponent must play any cards that modify the number of strikes before you assign strikes.

Unless the attack states otherwise, the defender chooses which *untapped* characters will be the targets of given strikes. Then, the attacker chooses which other defending characters not yet assigned a strike will be the target of any remaining unassigned strikes.

Clarification: Against a given attack, a given character may normally only defend against one strike. However, when certain cards are played or used (e.g., *Many Foes He Fought*, *Usriev of Treachery*), a character may be assigned to receive more than one strike from a given attack. Such a character must face a strike sequence for each strike he is assigned to face. If a character is tapped or wounded following one of these strike sequences, he must then accordingly modify his prowess for any following strike sequences. If a character is eliminated or otherwise removed from play before he has faced all of his assigned strikes, those strikes he has yet to face are then considered to be successful (i.e. they have no further effect).¹¹

Clarification: If the text on a creature card states that the “attacker chooses defending characters,” any characters in the defending company may be chosen (by the attacker) as the targets of the attack’s strikes.

Clarification: The defender may choose not to assign strikes that he is allowed to assign. These strikes are then assigned by the attacker to any characters that have not yet been assigned strikes.

Clarification: All of an attack’s strikes must be assigned to the characters in the defending company or as modifications to the strikes assigned. The attacker may **not** choose to not apply strikes. Any strike in excess of the number of characters in the company becomes a -1 modification to prowess of one character taking a strike (the attacker chooses). Only those strikes that are assigned need be defeated for the creature’s marshalling points to be received by the defender.

Strike Modifications

There are a number of standard modifications to the prowess of each target character facing a strike:

- Each unwounded, tapped character must modify his prowess by -1.
- Each wounded character must modify his prowess by -2.
- Normally a character that is the target of a strike is tapped after the strike is resolved. However, a character that is the target of a strike may choose to take a -3 modification to his prowess to avoid being tapped. If so, the character is not tapped after the strike is resolved (he may still be wounded).

¹¹ **NOTE: This rule does not appear as listed here in the rules insert with the booster packs. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.**

- If an attack has more strikes than the company has characters, the attacker may allocate the excess strikes as -1 modifications to the prowesses of whichever target(s) he chooses. See the Strike Sequence below.
- The target’s prowess may also be modified due to the play of certain resource and hazard cards. Only one resource card requiring skill may be played against a given strike.

Condition	Modification to Target’s Prowess
Unwounded, tapped character *	-1
Wounded character *	-2
Untapped character decides not to tap *	-3
For each unused strike allocated (i.e., each extra strike) *	-1
For each character tapping in support	+1
Up to one resource card that requires skill	varies
Other resource cards	varies
Hazard cards	varies

Clarification: The prowess modifications marked with an * above are applied for a given strike and then are removed immediately after the attack is resolved. That is they do not carry over from strike to strike.

Note: Ignore effects that modify the number of strikes for an attack that states that “every character in the target company faces one strike” (unless an effect reduces the number of strikes to a specific number, e.g., *Veils of Shadow*).

Resolving Strikes

Strikes are resolved one at a time as decided by the defending player. When you choose a strike to resolve, determine all of the factors affecting the strike before the roll is made (see “The Strike Sequence” below). To resolve a strike, the defender makes a roll (2D6) and adds his modified prowess:

- If this result is greater than the strike’s prowess, the strike *fails*. Such a strike is defeated if its body attribute is “-” **or** if it has a body attribute and fails a body check.
- If this result is equal to the strike’s prowess, the strike was *ineffectual* (i.e., the strike is avoided but not defeated).
- Otherwise, the strike was *successful* (i.e., the character was defeated). If the attack was a “detainment” attack, an untapped target is tapped. Otherwise, the target character is wounded and must make a body check.

BODY CHECKS

If a strike against a character is successful and the attack was not a detainment attack, the character is wounded and must make a body check. To make a body check, the attacker makes a roll (2D6). If the character was already wounded before this strike, the roll is modified by +1.

- The text on certain characters’ cards states: “Discard on a body check result of #.” In this case, you must discard the character if the modified body check roll is equal to any of the numbers listed.
- If the modified body check roll is greater than the character’s body attribute, the character is eliminated.
- Otherwise, nothing happens (i.e., the character is just wounded).

Note: As a result of certain rolls, certain characters may be discarded rather than being wounded. These characters are usually Orcs and Trolls. This effect represents the target running or slinking away from the attack.

Clarification: If a character was already wounded before a strike wounds him again, the resulting body check modification is always +1 (regardless of how many times a character is wounded).

Clarification: If a strike against a character is successful, a body check must be resolved for the character before anything else happens. For example, *Foul Smelling Paste* may not be used to heal such a character until after the body check is resolved (of course, if the character is eliminated, the *Foul Smelling Paste* may

not be used on him at all).

As presented above, a strike that fails is defeated if its body attribute is “-” **or** if it has a body attribute and fails a body check. To make such a body check, the **defender** makes a roll (2D6); if this value is greater than the strike’s *body attribute*, the strike is defeated.

“Detainment” Attacks

Certain attacks detain targets rather than wound them. When a strike from a detainment attack is successful, an untapped target is tapped instead of being wounded. This represents the target being stopped and questioned. Against minion players, the following types of attacks are detainment attacks:

- Any Nazgûl attack against a minion company is a detainment attack.
- Any attack keyed to Dark-domains, Shadow-hold, or Dark-hold is a detainment attack.
- Any Orc, Troll, Undead, or Man attack keyed to Shadow-land is a detainment attack.

The parameters apply if the attack is keyed to the region symbol or site symbol (by type) **or** if keyed to a region or site by name which happens to be of appropriate type (i.e., has the appropriate symbol).

In addition a card’s text will sometimes state that an attack is a detainment attack. Such text applies to all players, not just minion players.

DEFEATING AN ATTACK

An attack by a hazard creature is defeated if it is *not* a detainment attack **and** all of its strikes directed against (i.e., assigned to) a company are defeated.

If even one of the strikes was canceled or ineffectual, the attack is **not** defeated. If the attack is canceled, the attack is **not** defeated. A canceled attack has no effect on the defending company (though the company is considered in its history to have faced it). A detainment attack from a creature is never defeated and the creature’s card is always discarded after the attack is resolved.

If a hazard creature has multiple attacks, each **must** be defeated in order for the creature to be defeated.

MARSHALLING POINTS

You receive kill marshalling points when you defeat certain creatures, when you defeat certain events (viz. “At Home” or “Ahunt” Dragons & Spawn), and when you defeat your opponent’s characters in company vs. company combat. If you are a hero or Fallen-wizard player, you receive MPs from creatures if they do *not* have an “*” in the upper-left corner of the card. Additionally, you receive kill MPs if you defeat your opponent’s dragon factions. If you are a minion player, you receive MPs from creatures if they *do* have an “*” in the upper-left corner of the card. Additionally, you may use the creature’s card as a trophy card (see below) **or** you may place the card in your marshalling point pile.

Note: You do not receive marshalling points if the creature you defeat is one of your own cards.

Fallen-wizard Player only: Marshalling points for stage resource cards are handled normally (i.e. as printed on the card). However, all other marshalling point cards are only worth 1 marshalling point each to a Fallen-wizard (regardless of their printed value). These MPs can **not** be modified by a hero or minion resource event (e.g. *Rumor of the One*, *Tribute Garnered*, *Sentinels of Númenor*, etc.). However, Fallen-wizard abilities and stage resource cards **can** modify the number of marshalling points certain cards give. You do not receive marshalling points for cards stored at non-Wizardhaven sites.

THE STRIKE SEQUENCE

The “strike sequence” is the time from when a player declares that one of his characters will resolve a strike until the strike die roll is made and any associated body checks are made.

Strikes are resolved one at a time as decided by the defending player (i.e., he chooses a strike to resolve, the strike is resolved, he chooses the next strike to resolve, the strike is resolved, etc.).

All of the factors affecting the strike must be decided before making the roll (2D6). Cards that do not affect the strike may not be played during the strike sequence. Address these factors in the following order:

- 1) The attacker may play hazard cards that affect the strike (these count toward the hazard limit against this company).
- 2) The attacker may decide to use any or all of his remaining (if any) -1 modifiers due to unallocated strikes (i.e., strikes in excess of the company's size).
- 3) A target untapped character may take a -3 modification so that he will not automatically tap following the strike sequence.
- 4) The defending player may play resource cards that affect the strike (up to one card that requires a skill).

Clarification: Certain attacks state that each character in the company “faces one strike” or “is attacked” (e.g., *Crebain*, *Watcher in the Water*, etc.) unless an effect reduces the number of strikes to a specific number, (e.g., *Veils of Shadow*). Such an attack is never affected by a card or effect that modifies the number of strikes of an attack.

Clarification: The prowess modification and maximum for a weapon is applied to a character before any other modifiers are applied. Similarly, the body modification and maximum for a shield, armor, or helmet is applied before any other modifiers are applied.

An *untapped* character that is not the target of a strike may tap to support a character in the same company that is the target of a strike. The target's prowess is modified by +1 for each supporting character.

Clarification: If a character is assigned a strike from an attack, he may **not** tap to support a character that is facing a strike from the same attack.

Clarification: An ally may tap to give a +1 prowess modification in this manner.

CANCELING AN AUTOMATIC-ATTACK

A character at one of his home sites may tap to cancel one automatic-attack at that home site. This does not apply if a character's home site is not a specific site (e.g., an Orc with an “Any Dark-hold” home site may not cancel an attack in this fashion).

CREATURES AS AUTOMATIC-ATTACKS

Any hazard creature you play as an automatic-attack is discarded if defeated – it is not placed in your opponent's marshalling point pile or your out-of-play pile.

TROPHIES

If one of your companies defeats a creature, you may place the creature's card under the control of any Orc or Troll character that faced a strike from the creature's attack. This card is called a “*trophy*” and is treated as a minor item with zero corruption points. A trophy may not be transferred or stored. If a trophy that is *not* worth kill marshalling points to you is discarded, it is placed in your out-of-play pile. If a trophy that *is* worth kill marshalling points to you is discarded, it is placed in your marshalling point pile.

Trophies give a character bonuses based upon the total number of marshalling points indicated by the trophies (i.e., on the creature cards). One and only one of the following sets of bonuses applies to a character with trophies.

- If a character's trophies have 1 marshalling point, the character receives +1 to direct influence.
- If a character's trophies have 2 marshalling points, the character receives +1 to direct influence and +1 to prowess (to a maximum of 9).
- If a character's trophies have 3 marshalling points, the character receives +2 to direct influence and +1 to prowess (to a maximum of 9).
- If a character's trophies have 4 or more marshalling points, the character receives +2 to direct influence and +2 to prowess (to a maximum of 9).

Note: You may not use one of your own cards as a trophy.

TAKING PRISONERS

Certain hazard permanent-events cause a character to be taken prisoner – these are called ‘hazard hosts’. A character taken prisoner immediately leaves his original company and is placed under its hazard host “off to the side.”

Clarification: Certain cards and effects require other cards be placed “off to the side” (for example, *Sacrifice of Form* from *METW* and *Sack over the Head* from *MEAS*). Cards placed off to the side are placed on the playing surface off to the side of the normal area of play. Such cards are kept with their host permanent-event that caused this effect. Any card placed off to the side absolutely cannot be targeted or otherwise affected by the game except by cards that specifically affect cards placed “off to the side.”

Cards placed off to the side are in play for the purposes of uniqueness. Unless stated otherwise, when a host permanent-event is removed from the playing surface, any cards placed off to the side under it are discarded.

Usually the host card will state some mechanic that affects the cards placed off to the side with it. Unless stated otherwise on its host card, a card placed off to the side will give its marshalling points to its owner.

Additionally, the player playing the hazard host must take a site card from his location deck and place it with the hazard host – this is called the ‘rescue site’. Playing a rescue site is governed by the following rules.

- 1) Any restrictions listed on the hazard host must be observed (e.g., it must be a Ruins & Lairs, must have an Orc automatic-attack, etc.).
- 2) If the hazard host is played on a character moving with region movement, the rescue site must be a site located in a region in which the character was moving **or** in a region adjacent to a region in which the character was moving.
- 3) If the hazard host is played on a character moving with starter movement, the rescue site must be located in the region containing the site of origin or the new site.
- 4) If the hazard host is played on a character not moving, the rescue site must be located in the same region as the character’s site.
- 5) If the hazard host is played on a character moving to a new site that is an adjacent site of an Under-deeps site, the rescue site can be that Under-deeps site.
- 6) If a rescue site is not available within these rules, the hazard host cannot be played!
- 7) When removed from the play surface, rescue sites always return to the location deck.

When taken prisoner, a character cannot take any actions (including healing or untapping) and cannot be affected by any cards except for those that specifically affect characters taken prisoner. A character taken prisoner is not controlled (i.e., does not use any influence), and all of his followers revert to general influence (which must be legally reconciled during his player’s next organization phase). Any items, allies, or events controlled by a character are discarded when the character is taken prisoner unless the hazard host states otherwise. As an exception, a ring born by an imprisoned character stays with the character.

While a prisoner, a character yields negative character marshalling points equal to the marshalling points he normally would give. If eliminated while imprisoned, the character yields these negative character marshalling points permanently (place the character’s card in your marshalling point pile).

Rescue and the Rescue-attack

Hazard hosts that cause a character to be taken prisoner require a company controlled by the player of the imprisoned character to rescue the character in order to return him to a normal status of play. Alternatively, if the hazard host is discarded by a non-rescue mechanism (e.g., by *Marvels Told*), the character forms his own company at the rescue site. At any point outside of the initial attack or conditions by which a hazard host is played, the hazard host is discarded if there are no imprisoned characters under it. Whenever the hazard host is discarded, the rescue site always returns to the location deck.

To rescue a character, the company must be at the rescue site during the site phase and must face any automatic-attacks at the site as normal. The site can be tapped or untapped. The company must next face

any rescue-attacks at the site. Rescue-attacks are not considered automatic-attacks. Following the rescue-attack, an untapped character in the rescuing company can tap, and all characters taken prisoner under the hazard host immediately join the company under general influence (which must be legally reconciled during the player's next organization phase) — the rescue attempt is successful. The company's site then taps (if untapped), and one minor item may be played with an untapped member of the rescuing company.

Note: If he has one available, a player must use a site from his own location deck to rescue imprisoned characters. If he does not have the site or if the site is in his discard pile, the copy with the hazard host can be used to show the rescuing company's movement (if the rescue attempt is successful, the site would remain in play until the company leaves the site). In this case the site is not available for the rescuing player to use for any purpose (other than to rescue prisoners and play one minor item) until the company leaves the site and his play deck is exhausted.

COMPANY VS. COMPANY COMBAT

During your site phase, one of your companies may attack one of your opponent's companies if the following conditions are met:

- You meet one of the following alignment restrictions:
 - You are a hero player and **either** your opponent is a minion player **or** your opponent is a Fallen-wizard player and the company to be attacked is overt.
 - You are a minion player and **either** your opponent is a hero player **or** your opponent is a Fallen-wizard player **or** your opponent is a minion player and *Prone to Violence* is in play.
 - You are a Fallen-wizard player whose attacking company is covert **and** your opponent is a minion player.
 - You are a Fallen-wizard player whose attacking company is overt.
- Both companies are at the same site.
- Your company has faced the automatic-attack (if any).
- You have not already made an influence attempt against your opponent this turn.

This attack is declared and enacted at the end of the site phase following all other actions your company takes during the site phase.

Note: Hazards may not be played during company vs. company combat.

Note: Cards that affect the number of strikes of an attack have no effect on company vs. company combat.

Note: Hazards have no effect in company vs. company combat.

Resolving Combat With Another Company

When one of your companies is attacked by another company during your opponent's site phase, you are considered to be the defending company. Your opponent's company (the attacking company) is considered to be making a single attack with one strike corresponding to each character in his company.

- Each strike can target one and only one character in the defending company.
- Each character can be the target of one and only one strike from a given attack.
- If an attack has more strikes than the defending company has characters, the attacker may allocate the excess strikes as -1 modifications (i.e., a -1 mod. For each unallocated strike) to the prowess(es) of whichever target(s) he chooses. See page 17.

This combat is handled like any other combat with the exceptions noted in this section.

Canceling an Attack From a Company

You can cancel an attack from a company just like you would cancel any other attack. Certain cards and abilities only cancel attacks with specific race types (e.g., *Not Slay Needlessly* only cancels attacks by Elves, Dwarves, Dúnedain, and Men). Such a card can be used to cancel an attack from a company only if each character in the company has one of the race types that the card can cancel.

Note: If this attack is canceled, the site phase is over for the attacking company and play proceeds normally.

Assigning Strikes

For company vs. company combat, the process for assigning strikes differs slightly from normal combat:

- First, the defender chooses which *untapped* characters will be the targets of given strikes.
- Then, the attacker chooses which other defending characters not yet assigned a strike will be the target of any remaining unassigned strikes corresponding to his *untapped* characters.
- Finally, the defender assigns any remaining strikes to his characters that have not been assigned strikes.

A Strike's Prowess

Each strike's prowess is based upon the attacking character corresponding to the strike.

- The base prowess for each of the attack's strike is equal to the corresponding character's prowess.
- A *wounded* attacking character's prowess is modified by -2.
- A *tapped* attacking character's prowess is modified by -1.
- An *untapped* attacking character's prowess that does not tap has his prowess modified by -3.
- If an attack has more strikes than the company has characters, the attacker may allocate the excess strikes as -1 modifications to the prowesses of whichever defending character(s) he chooses. See the Strike Sequence below.
- A strike's prowess may also be modified due to the play of certain resource cards. Each player may only play one resource card requiring skill on a given strike.

Resolving Strikes

Strikes are resolved one at a time as decided by the defending player. When you choose a strike to resolve, determine all of the factors affecting the strike before the roll is made (see "The Strike Sequence" below).

To resolve a strike, the attacker rolls (2D6) and adds his modified prowess – this is the strike's *final prowess*.

Then, the defender makes a roll (2D6) and adds his modified prowess:

- If this result is greater than the strike's final prowess, the strike *fails*. The character corresponding to the strike is wounded and must make a body check.
- If this result is equal to the strike's prowess, the strike was *ineffectual* (i.e., a "tie" means that the strike is avoided but not defeated).
- Otherwise, the strike was *successful* (i.e., the character was defeated). The target character is wounded and must make a body check.

Body Checks

Body checks for both defending and attacking characters are resolved normally.

If a defending character is eliminated, the attacking player receives "kill" marshalling points as indicated on the character's card. If an attacking character is eliminated, the defending player receives "kill" marshalling points as indicated on the character's card.

The Strike Sequence

Strikes are resolved one at a time as decided by the defending player (i.e., he chooses a strike to resolve, the strike is resolved, he chooses the next strike to resolve, the strike is resolved, etc.).

All of the factors affecting the strike must be decided before making any rolls (2D6). Address these factors in the following order:

- 1) The attacker may play resource cards that affect the strike (up to one card that requires skill).
- 2) The attacker may decide to use any or all of his remaining (if any) -1 modifiers due to unallocated strikes (i.e., strikes in excess of the company's size).
- 3) An attacking, untapped character's may take a -3 modification so that he will not automatically tap.
- 4) A defending untapped character may take a -3 modification so that he will not automatically tap.

- 5) An untapped defending character that is not (and has not been) himself the target of a strike from the same attack may tap to support a defending character. The defending character's prowess is modified by +1 for each supporting character.
- 6) The defending player may play resource cards that affect the strike (up to one card that requires skill).

Note: Even though it is not his turn, the defending player may play resource cards that affect the resolution of strikes.

8 · CORRUPTION

Each character has a corruption point total. This starts at zero, but certain cards and activities will change this total during play. Most cards that affect a character's corruption are kept under the character's card until they are discarded. Only one corruption card (a hazard that gives corruption points) may be played on a given character each turn.

CORRUPTION CARDS

For these purposes, a "corruption card" is a hazard card that gives a character corruption points. A corruption card's text includes the keyword "*Corruption.*" in italics. Cards that force a corruption check but do not give corruption points (e.g., *Weariness of the Heart*) are not "corruption cards." A corruption card is limited as follows:

- A character may have more than one corruption card, but only one may be played on him each turn.
- Certain corruption cards state: "Cannot be duplicated on a given character." So, a given character may only have one of each such corruption card.
- Corruption cards that may not be played on Dwarves may also not be played on Orcs.
- Corruption cards may not be played on Ringwraiths.
- Corruption cards must always start a chain of effects.¹²

CORRUPTION POINTS

A character's corruption point total can be determined by summing the corruption point values of: the corruption cards under his card **and** any other cards he controls (e.g., usually items).

CORRUPTION CHECKS

When a card or other effect indicates that one of your characters must make a corruption check, you must make a roll (2D6) and add any appropriate modifications. One of the following results:

Nothing Happens – If the modified result is greater than the character's corruption point total, nothing happens.

The Character is Discarded – If the character is a hero for the purpose of corruption checks (i.e., all characters in a hero player's deck; all non-Orc, non-Troll, non-Fallen-wizard characters in a Fallen-wizard player's deck), and **either** the modified result is equal to the character's corruption point total **or** one less than the character's corruption point total, the character *fails* the corruption check and you must discard the character along with any non-follower cards he controls. In this case, if the character is a Wizard, you immediately lose the game.

The Character Taps – If the character is a minion for the purpose of corruption checks (i.e., all non-Ringwraith characters in a minion player's deck; all Orc, Troll, and Fallen-wizard characters in a Fallen-wizard player's deck), and **either** the modified result is equal to the character's corruption point total **or** one less than the character's corruption point total, the character is very tempted but does *not* fail the corruption check. If the character is untapped, tap the character.

The Character is Eliminated – If the modified result is less than character's corruption point total by two or more, the character *fails* the corruption check and is eliminated (i.e., remove him from active play) and you must discard any non-follower cards he controls.

Ringwraiths never make corruption checks.

Clarification: A character discarded due to a corruption check is **not** removed from play. He may be played again either by you (e.g., if you exhaust your play deck and draw that character) or by your opponent (e.g., if he has that character in his hand). In this case, the character stops working for the cause of the Free Peoples or his Fallen-wizard (at least for a while).

Clarification: A unique character eliminated due to a corruption check is removed from active play.

¹² **NOTE:** This rule does not appear in the rules insert with the starter decks. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.

Neither he nor any manifestation of him may be not played again either by you or by your opponent (e.g., if he has that character in his hand). In this case, the character is permanently lost.

CORRUPTION CHECK MODIFIERS

Certain characters receive modifiers to corruption checks, and certain cards may give modifiers to a corruption check. Modifiers to corruption checks are printed in the lower right of the appropriate card. A plus or a minus sign indicates a **modifier** to any corruption checks a character makes (rather than corruption points).

Before the roll is made for a corruption check, you may tap other characters in the same company as the character making the check. The corruption check is modified by +1 for each such character tapped.

A corruption check for any character in a Ringwraith's company is modified by +2.

Clarification: If more than one character in a company is forced to make corruption checks, the corruption checks are resolved one at a time in an order chosen by the player controlling the characters. Each character tapped may only give a +1 modification to one corruption check, **not** to all of the corruption checks.

Clarification: When the end of game is called, a character may only tap to give a +1 corruption check modification to another character in the same company.

Clarification: There are two different values that affect corruption checks:

- *Corruption check modifiers* always have either a plus (+) sign or a minus (-) sign (e.g., as noted on many character cards). The sum of all such applicable modifiers are added to the corruption check roll.
- *Corruption point values* never have a plus or minus sign. The sum of all such values is the character's corruption point total for the purposes of a corruption check.

Both values appear in the lower right of certain cards.

REMOVING CORRUPTION CARDS

A character may choose to ignore the restriction that he tap to remove a corruption card (as printed on a corruption card), and suffer a -3 penalty to the dice roll to remove it. This means a character can remain untapped and still attempt to remove a corruption card (the roll is modified by -3), or that he can attempt to remove a corruption card even if he is already tapped or wounded (the roll is modified by -3).

Each turn, a character may only make one removal attempt for each corruption card if he uses the -3 modifier.

9 · INFLUENCE

You have a pool of general influence. Your characters have direct influence. These two forms of influence can control and affect characters and factions.

Your *unused general influence* is equal to 20 minus the sum of the mind attributes of your non-follower characters in play (i.e., do not count your followers).

A character's *unused direct influence* is equal to his direct influence attribute minus the sum of the mind attributes of his followers. All characters have a direct influence attribute of at least zero, so any character has unused direct influence of at least zero.

BRINGING A FACTION INTO PLAY

In order to play a faction card, you must tap one of your characters that is at the “site” indicated on the faction's card. Then you must make an influence check. Make a roll (2D6), add your character's unused direct influence, and add any appropriate modifications (any applicable *standard modifications* from the faction card and from any other cards played). All influence check modifier cards must be played before making the roll (2D6).

If the modified result is greater than the value required on the faction card, you place the faction in your marshalling point pile (it now counts towards your marshalling point total). Otherwise, you discard the faction card. Once a faction is brought into play, it is not controlled by any specific character and it does not count against general or direct influence.

Standard Modifications

Most faction cards list some “standard modifications” to the influence check based only upon the race of the character making the influence check or what other factions are already in play for both players.

Clarification: Certain characters have special modifications to influence checks. Such a modification only applies if it belongs to the character that was tapped to make the influence check.

INFLUENCING YOUR OPPONENT'S RESOURCES

Influence is one of the few ways that your characters can directly affect your opponent's resources. During your site phase, one and only one of your characters may tap to attempt to influence away one of your opponent's characters, followers, allies, factions, or items. This may only take place if the influencing character and the target of the influence are at the same site. If you successfully influence the target, it is discarded. In some cases, you may reveal an identical card and attempt to play it (i.e., he convinces the target to join his side).

Such an influence attempt may not be made on the first turn, and your Ringwraith may not make such an attempt on the turn he is revealed.

Note: An influence check can never be made against your avatar, a Ringwraith follower (not just any follower of your Ringwraith, but a Ringwraith follower of your Ringwraith), an ally controlled by your avatar, or an item controlled by your avatar.

Note: All influence attempts made by a minion player against a hero player's or Fallen-wizard player's resources (and vice-versa) are modified by -5.

Influencing an Opponent's Non-follower Character

To attempt to influence one of your opponent's non-follower characters you must make an influence check. You make a roll (2D6) and:

- Add the influencing character's unused direct influence.
- Subtract your opponent's unused general influence points.
- Subtract the result of a roll (2D6) made by your opponent.
- Add any other modifications (from cards and special abilities). All modification cards must be played before making the roll.

If the modified result is greater than the target's mind attribute, the target character card and all of the non-follower cards he controls are discarded. Otherwise, nothing happens.

If you reveal an identical character card from your hand before making the roll for the influence check, the target character's mind attribute is treated as if it were zero. If the attempt is unsuccessful, you must discard the character card you revealed. If such an influence check is successful, the target character and his non-follower cards are discarded **and** the revealed character card may be immediately played (appearing at the same site). In order to play this character, you must have enough unused general influence to control him **or** an influencing character at the same site must have enough direct influence.

Clarification: If you reveal an identical character in order to nullify the target character's mind attribute for an influence check, you must discard that character if you do not play him.

Influencing an Opponent's Follower

To influence an opponent's follower, you must make an influence check as outlined above. However, the result is also modified by subtracting the "unused direct influence" of the follower's controlling character.

Influencing an Opponent's Faction

To influence an opponent's faction, you must make an influence check as outlined above. However, the following exceptions apply:

- Instead of a mind attribute, the influence check uses the value usually required to bring the faction into play (as given on the faction's card).
- The influence check is modified by any of the faction's applicable Standard Modifications (as given on the faction's card).
- Revealing an identical faction card, a manifestation of the same faction, or the same resource of the opposing alignment reduces the value usually required to bring the faction into play to zero and allows you to play that card if the influence check is successful.

You may only influence an opponent's factions if the influencing character is at the site where the faction was played.

Influencing an Opponent's Ally

To influence an opponent's ally, you must make an influence check as outlined above. However, the following exceptions apply:

- Instead of the controlling character's mind attribute, the influence check uses the ally's mind attribute.
- The result is also modified by the unused direct influence of the character controlling the ally.
- Revealing an identical ally card, a manifestation of the same ally, or the same resource of the opposing alignment reduces the ally's mind attribute to zero and allows you to play the card if the influence check is successful.

Influencing an Opponent's Item

To influence an opponent's item, you must make an influence check as outlined above. However, the following exceptions apply:

- The mind attribute of the character controlling the item is used.
- The result is also modified by subtracting the unused direct influence of the item's controlling character.
- You *must* reveal an identical item card, a manifestation of the same item, or the same resource of the opposing alignment in order to make an influence attempt on an item (i.e., you are attempting to convince the controlling character that the item would be more useful in your hands). If the influence check is successful, you may play your card with the character that made the influence check – if you choose not to play the item, discard it.

Clarification: The unused direct influence for an influence check against an item is affected by any direct influence modification that the target item gives its bearer.

10 · PLAYING AND DRAWING CARDS

You may only play hazard cards during your opponent's movement/hazard phase. Except for resource long-events, you may play resource cards anytime during your own turn unless specifically prohibited by the rules or the cards themselves.

Unless stated otherwise, a card is playable only if its effect applies to an existing situation, hazard, attack, etc. (i.e., you may not play a card just to discard it). A card cannot be played for no effect. A card may be played if it has potential effect.

Clarification: An automatic-attack at a company's new site may be targeted by a hazard during the company's movement/hazard phase. Such a hazard may be played even if the attack ultimately will not be faced (i.e., if the company decides not to face the automatic-attack during the site phase).

During your movement/hazard phase, both players draw cards when each company moves. If a company moves to a non-Haven/-Darkhaven site, you *may* draw up to the number of cards indicated by the site that it *moved to* (at least one card must be drawn); your opponent does the same. If a hero player's or minion player's company moves to a Haven/Darkhaven site, you *may* draw up to the number of cards indicated by the site that you *moved from* (at least one card must be drawn); your opponent does the same. If a Fallen-wizard player's or Balrog player's company moves to a *-Haven site, you *may* draw up to the number of cards indicated by the site that it *moved to* (at least one card must be drawn).

EVENTS

There are both resource events and hazard events. Each event falls into one of three classifications based upon how long it stays in play.

Short-event – A short-event's effects are implemented; then, it is discarded. The effects of some short-events last for a specific period as stated on its card (e.g., some say: "until the end of the turn").

Permanent-event – The effects of a resource permanent-event are immediately implemented. Its effects last until the card is discarded. Certain effects can cause a permanent-event to be discarded; these effects are given in the text of specific cards.

If one of your companies splits into 2 or more companies, you may place any resource permanent-events that were on the original company (as a whole) with any of the resulting companies. Some events of this type must be discarded (as specified) when a company splits (e.g., *Fellowship*).

Clarification: Hazard short-events and permanent-events can be played only during an opponent's movement/hazard phase. Resource short-events and permanent-events can be played at any time during your turn - as limited by specific card text.

Long-event – The effects of a long-event are immediately implemented when it is played. Long-events last approximately two turns, one of yours and one of your opponent's.

You may only play a resource long-event during your long-event phase. Its card and effects remain in play until your next long-event phase or until otherwise discarded.

You may only play a hazard long-event during your opponent's movement/hazard phase. Its card and effects remain in play until your opponent's next long-event phase or until otherwise discarded.

Clarification: The effects of many long-events and permanent-events affect both players because they can remain in effect during both players' turns. Remember, when you play a long-event hazard, it will remain in effect during your next turn. For example, *Awaken Denizens* increases the number of automatic-attack strikes at Ruins & Lairs for one turn for each player.

RESOURCE CARDS, NON-EVENT

Certain resource cards may only be played if specific required conditions exist. A faction card, ally card, or item card must be played during your site phase and requires an untapped character and an untapped site. In addition, the company must face any automatic-attacks located at the same site before such a card can be played. Resource events do not generally require an untapped site nor that the automatic-attack be faced. This may vary based upon specific card text.

Normally, when a character leaves play, all cards controlled or on him are discarded. There are two major exceptions to this:

- Sometimes, the card that causes the character to leave play allows him to transfer an item(s) (e.g., *Call of Home*).
- If a character is eliminated due to failing a body check, one item can be immediately transferred to each unwounded character in his company; but the rest of his items are discarded.

Factions

If one of your characters is at the site specified on a faction card, he may tap during the site phase to attempt an influence check in order to play the faction card. If the character successfully influences the faction as indicated on the faction's card (see p. 38-39), the faction card is placed in your play area. After a faction is successfully played at a site, the site card is tapped.

Clarification: If an attack from a Dragon faction is defeated, remove the Dragon from play. If the player who defeated it is a hero or Fallen-wizard, he receives its MPs as Kill points. Otherwise he receives its marshalling points.

Clarification: Once a faction is brought into play, it is not associated with any character or company. A faction plays no active role after it is brought into play.

Allies

A character may tap during the site phase to play an ally card if he is at the site specified on the ally card **and** the character meets the requirements indicated on the ally card. The ally card is placed under the character's card and that character controls the ally. After an ally is played at a site, the site card is tapped. An ally does **not** count as a character for any purposes other than combat and the use of certain skills. Allies can **not** bear items.

An ally with a skill may take actions and play cards that require that skill. For example, *Last Child of Ungoliant* has the sage skill, so she can tap to play a *Secrets of Their Forging* card. Similarly, *Stinker* has the scout skill so he can tap to play a *Sneakin'* card.

Clarification: Allies that are eliminated are placed in the out-of-play pile (i.e., neither player may bring that ally or any manifestation of that ally back into play). Allies are not affected by corruption.

Items

If a character is at an untapped site that indicates that a specific type of item card (gold ring, minor, major, or greater) is "playable," he may tap during the site phase to bring an item of that type into play. The item card is placed under the character's card. After an item is played at a site, the site card is tapped.

A special item states at what sites and under which conditions it is "playable."

A character may only use the effects of one *weapon* at a time **and** one *shield* at a time **and** one *armor* **and** one *helmet* at a time.

You may **not** make an influence attempt on an item with a permanent event on it.

Exception: Certain items are *hoard items*. Such an item may only be played at a site that contains a hoard. Each site which had a Dragon automatic-attack at the beginning of the turn contains a hoard.¹³ A hoard minor item may not be included with a starting company, and may not be played at a site that does not contain a hoard.

Clarification: A special item with the keyword, 'Ring', at the beginning of its text does not tap the character or the site when played.

Clarification: An item only taps when used if its text states so. Thus, weapons and armor do not normally tap when used.

¹³ **NOTE:** This rule does not appear as listed here in the rules insert with the booster packs. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.

Clarification: A character may control (i.e., bear) any item, even if he cannot use its abilities.

Clarification: A character may control (i.e., bear) more than one weapon and/or more than one shield and/or more than one armor. However, only one of each type may be used at any given time.

Minor Items

If a resource card that taps a site (e.g., ally, faction, item, etc.) is successfully played at a site, one additional character may tap to play a minor item. Such a minor item may be played even if the site does not specifically state that a minor item is playable at the site. For example, a minor item played when bringing an ally into play would simulate a gift from the ally.

Rings

One type of item that your character can bring into play are rings. There are 7 types of rings: mind rings, gold rings, lesser rings, magic rings, Dwarven rings, spirit rings and *The One Ring*.

Gold Rings – After your company faces the automatic-attack at such a site which specifies that a gold ring can be played, you just tap a character and the site to play a gold ring from your hand.

Clarification: A gold ring is a ring with unknown properties – it might be a lesser ring, a magic ring, a Dwarven Ring, or even *The One Ring*. You will not know until you “test” it. There are 9 different gold rings in MECCG: *Beautiful Gold Ring*, *Fair Gold Ring*, *Precious Gold Ring*, *A Little Gold Ring*, *The Least of Gold Rings*, *Gold Ring that Sauron Fancies*, *Bright Gold Ring*, *Gleaming Gold Ring*, and *Perfect Gold Ring*. Each has a different probability of being a specific type of special ring.

Testing a Gold Ring – Once you have a gold ring, you can “test” it to determine what kind of special ring it is. When you test a gold ring, you must make a roll and add any applicable modification (due to the test card and other cards). The gold ring card will indicate what special rings may be played based upon the modified roll.

If the roll indicates a special ring that you have in your hand, you may replace the gold ring with that ring and discard the gold ring. Otherwise, you just discard the gold ring (i.e., it was not that special). If the roll indicates more than one special ring in your hand, you choose which to play.

Fallen-wizard player only: Whenever a Fallen-wizard player tests a hero gold ring item, the roll is modified by -1.

There are seven ways to test a gold ring:

- If you tap *Gandalf* to test a gold ring in his company.
- If you have a sage character in the same company as the gold ring, you can play a *Test of Fire*, *Test of Lore*, or *Test of Form* card.
- If you have a sage character in the same company as the gold ring and the company is at a site where “Information” is playable, you can play a *Ringlore* or *Secret of Their Forging* card (you do not have to roll, you can just play any special item ring except *The One Ring*).
- If you tap a sage at the minion version of *Mount Doom* during the site phase, he may test a gold ring in his company, modifying the roll by -3.
- Any gold ring in your Ringwraith’s or Balrog’s own company at the start of the end-of-turn phase is automatically tested. Any ring test in a Ringwraith’s or Balrog’s own company has a modification of -2.
- *Non-Balrog minion player only:* Any gold ring in one of your companies at Barad-dûr at the start of the end-of-turn phase is automatically tested. Any ring test at Barad-dûr has a -3 modification.
- *Minion Player only:* If you store a gold ring, it is automatically tested with a modification of -2.

Note: Due to the -2 and -3 modification, the last four ring test methods given above have little chance of resulting in *The One Ring*. This reflects the influence of “fate” on Sauron’s efforts to find *The One Ring*.

Note: A Ringwraith may carry a ring but may not use it (i.e., all items have no effect on a Ringwraith’s company or on his attributes and abilities).

Clarification: Mind rings are minor items and are played as such. They are **not** special items.

THE HAZARD LIMIT

During your opponent's movement/hazard phase, the number of hazard cards that you may play on one of your opponent's companies is that company's *hazard limit*. The hazard limit is equal to two **or** the company's size, whichever is greater. A company's size is equal to the number of characters in it, with each Hobbit character and Orc character with the scout skill counting half (round up). For this purpose, allies do **not** count as characters.

A hazard limit can be modified by the play of certain cards. Tapping a Nazgûl permanent-event *does* count against the hazard limit.

Clarification: For the purposes of calculating hazard limits, each company's size is determined for each company at the beginning of the movement/hazard phase (e.g., it remains fixed). So, if a character is eliminated during his company's portion of the movement/hazard phase, his company's hazard limit does not change.

Clarification: The base hazard limit is determined (i.e. set) simultaneously at the moment a company reveals its new site or otherwise announces it is beginning its movement/hazard phase. Any cards which modify a company's hazard limit played prior to this point are then immediately applied to the company's base hazard limit in the order chosen by the player controlling the company. With such modifications established, any cards played after this point are interpreted in the order they are resolved. Any effects which modify the hazard limit against a company during its site phase are ignored. Any reduction in the hazard limit during a movement/hazard phase does not affect cards already announced and played.

HAZARD CARDS, NON-EVENT

Hazard cards represent evil forces and natural dangers in Middle-earth.

Note: Hazards that give bonuses to attacks do **not** give bonuses to characters and companies.

Creature Cards

You may use a creature card to *directly attack* one of your opponent's companies. Such an attack can occur only if one of the following criteria is met:

- The company is at a specific site at which the creature's card text says it can be played.
- *Starter movement only:* The company's site of origin or new site is in a region where the creature's card text says it can be played.
- *Region movement only:* The creature's card text says it can be played at one of the regions through which the company moved.
- One of the site symbols on the creature's card matches the site that the company moved to (i.e., the new site) or stayed at (i.e., if the company did not move).
- At least one of the region symbols on the creature's card matches one of the region types the company moved through this turn. If the creature's card has two region symbols of the same type (e.g., a deep Wilderness creature), then the company must have moved through at least two regions of that same type.

Note: The minion version of Geann a-Lisch site is a Darkhaven. However, as stated on its card, creatures keyed to Ruins & Lairs may be played against a company that has Geann a-Lisch as its new site or as its current site if did not move.

Clarification: Two wilderness symbols are required in a site path to play a deep Wilderness creature. However, the two symbols need not be adjacent in the site path. For example, a deep Wilderness creature may be played keyed to the site path:   . If a company travels with two Wilderness on its site path, the chance of encountering very dangerous Wilderness monsters has doubled, even if the two Wildernesses are not adjacent.

If a creature satisfies more than one of these conditions, you must choose (when you play the creature) one of these conditions that the attack is “keyed to.” The effects of certain cards are based upon the region or site type that a creature is *keyed to*.

The region types that a company moves through during a given turn are determined by the following criteria:

- If a company did not play a new site card or if it used under-deeps movement, it did not move through any regions – so, no creature may be played based solely on region conditions.
- If the company used starter movement to move to or from a *-Haven site, the region types are indicated by either the new site’s or the old site’s site path.
- If the company used region movement, the region types of the site path are indicated by the region cards or an appropriate map (i.e., each region card has a region type).

Clarification: Region movement can be more dangerous to use than normal movement – certain creatures can be played keyed to specific region cards.

Clarification: The player playing a hazard creature must specifically state the type of region or site that a creature is keyed to – it can affect the use of other cards.

Note: A creature played keyed to a specific region by name is **not** keyed to the specific region’s type.

Agent Cards (as Hazards)

An agent has the same attributes as a character: race, skills, direct influence, prowess, body, mind, marshalling points, and special abilities.

Clarification: Minion and Fallen-wizard players may play agents either as characters (treat them as normal characters, except that they may only come into play at their home site(s)) or as hazards; hero and Balrog players must treat agents as hazards. In this section (pages ###), we will discuss only the play of agents as hazards. That is, every use of ‘agent’ in these pages should be construed as referring to agents played as hazards.

During play, each agent must be in one of the following states: face-down and untapped, face-down and tapped, face-up and untapped, face-up and tapped, or face-up and wounded.

An agent can be thought of as a *hazard* that acts as a creature with the following special effects:

- It normally remains in play until it is eliminated.
- If using the minimum number of creatures requirement (i.e., in the Council of Lórien tournament rules) for a starting play deck, each agent only counts as half a creature.
- The total of the mind attributes of all of your agents in your play deck and sideboard may not exceed 36.

An agent is always located at a site. Once an agent has been revealed *or* has moved to a site that is not one of its home sites, one of your site cards must be used for this purpose. A face-up agent’s site card must always be face-up. Agents move and operate alone (i.e., they do not move and operate in “companies”).

Each agent is unique — all normal rules apply. If a specific agent is in play face-up and a second, identical agent is turned face-up (i.e., it is revealed), the second agent is immediately discarded.

Untapping an Agent

Each of your agents untaps during your untap phase.

Playing an Agent

To play an agent, place it face-down (and untapped). The agent is assumed to be at any one of its home sites (no site card is required).

Agent Actions

Each of your agents who was already in play at the beginning of your opponent’s turn may take one and only one of the following actions each turn.

- A tapped or untapped agent may *move* to a non-Haven, non-Under-deeps site in the same region or in an adjacent region (see below). The agent taps if not already tapped.
- An agent may *return to its home site* (i.e., remove all of the site cards on the agent).
- An agent may tap to *make certain creatures playable* at its current site (see below).
- A wounded agent may *heal* (i.e., move from wounded status to tapped status).
- A tapped agent may *untap* (i.e., move from tapped status to untapped status).¹⁴
- An untapped, face-up agent may be *turned face-down* along with its site card.

Performing any one of these actions with an agent counts as one against the hazard limit. These actions may only be taken during your opponent's movement/hazard phase.

Note: Certain cards allow an agent to take more than one action during a given turn.

Moving an Agent (Agent Action)

When one of your agents moves, tap it and place its new site card on top of the agent and any other site cards already on the agent (face-up if the agent is face-up, face-down if the agent is face-down). If the agent is face-up, return to your location deck all site cards other than the new site card. Thus, the top site card on an agent indicates its current site.

Alternatively, you may remove the top site card on a face-down agent (i.e., it moves back to its previous site).

Revealing an Agent

You may turn any of your face-down agents face-up (i.e., reveal them) at any time during your opponent's movement/hazard phase. This doesn't count as an agent action as outlined above **and** it doesn't count against the hazard limit. Alternatively, you must reveal an agent when it attacks, when it makes an influence attempt, or when certain cards are played.

Note: Certain hazard cards specify that an agent must tap for the card to take effect. A face-down agent that taps in this fashion must be revealed (i.e., turned face-up).

If one of your agents is revealed before it has moved, you must immediately choose which home site it is at – place the appropriate site card with the agent. If you do not have such a site card in your location deck, discard the agent at the end of the current turn.

If one of your agents is revealed after it has moved, the first site card that was played must be one of its home sites **or** it must be in the same region as one of the agent's home sites **or** it must be in a region adjacent to a region that contains one of the agent's home sites. Any site card other than the first site card must be in the same region as the previous site placed on the agent **or** it must be in a region adjacent to the region that contains the previous site placed on the agent.

If one of your agent's series of sites indicating its travel is illegal, the agent has no effect. In addition, it is immediately discarded and any site cards associated with the agent are returned to your location deck.

When one of your agents and its site cards are revealed, all site cards other than the agent's current site card are returned to your location deck (after verifying that the path of movement was legal).

Playing Creatures at an Agent's Site (Agent Action)

If one of your agents and one of your opponent's companies are both at the same Ruins & Lairs (🏰), Shadow-hold (🏰), or Dark-hold (🏰), you may tap the agent and then attack that company with any non-unique hazard creatures (regardless of what they are keyed to) of the same creature type as the site's automatic-attack.

If one of your agents and one of your opponent's companies are both at the agent's home site, you may tap the agent and then attack that company with certain hazard creatures (regardless of what they are keyed to) based upon the site type:

¹⁴ **NOTE:** This rule does not appear in the rules insert with the booster packs. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.

- You may play Men, Dwarves, Elves, Dúnedain, and Hobbits at Free-Holds (🏠).
- You may play Orcs, Nazgûl, Men, Dwarves, Elves, Dúnedain, and Hobbits at Border-Holds (🏰).
- You may play Orcs, Nazgûl, and Trolls at Ruins & Lairs (🏰).
- You may play Orcs, Nazgûl, Undead, and Trolls at Shadow-Holds (🏰).
- You may play Orcs, Nazgûl, and Trolls at Dark-Holds (🏰).

In either case, if a creature is played in this manner, the agent is revealed (if it was not already revealed). An agent may also tap to play creatures at a site if the company is moving to the site.¹⁵

Attacking With an Agent

During your opponent's site phase, each of your agents may attack a company if the following conditions are met:

- The agent is at the same site as the company.
- The company decides to enter the site.

This attack is declared and enacted at the start of the site phase immediately following any automatic-attack. If face-down, turn the agent face-up.

Note: Certain cards (e.g., *Cunning Foes*, *To Get You Away*, etc.) allow an agent at a company's new site to attack a company during the movement/hazard phase.

Note: Agent attacks against minions are always detainment.¹⁶

Resolving Combat With an Agent

When one of your agents attacks it is considered to be the *attacker* and it has one strike unless modified. Combat with an agent is handled like any other combat with the following exceptions:

- The prowess for each of the agent's strikes is modified by a roll (2D6)-a separate roll is made for each strike.
- A *wounded* agent's prowess is modified by -2.
- If the agent is *face-down* when the attack is declared, one of the following applies:
 - If at his home site, his prowess is modified by +5 for that attack **and** his body is modified by +1 **and** the attacker chooses defending characters.
 - If *not* at his home site, his prowess is modified by +2 for that attack. If a face-down agent attacks as the result of the play of a card, the agent is considered to be face-down when the attack is declared.
- If the agent is *face-up at his home site* when the attack is declared, his prowess is modified by +2 for that attack **and** his body is modified by +1.
- After the combat, the agent remains in play **and** it must be face-up and tapped *or* face-up and wounded.

Note: Agents are **not** characters – you may not play resource cards to modify an agent's prowess (e.g., a Risky Blow will not affect an agent's prowess). Hazard cards affect an agent attack normally (e.g. *Chill Them With Fear*).

Marshalling Points from Agents

Only your opponent can receive marshalling points by defeating an agent that you played. If you defeat an agent that you played, it is removed from the game and no one receives its marshalling points.

Marshalling points from defeating an agent count as kill points **not** as character points.

Influencing With an Agent

¹⁵ **NOTE:** This rule does not appear in the rules insert with the booster packs. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.

¹⁶ **NOTE:** This rule does not appear in the rules insert with the booster packs. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.

During your opponent's movement/hazard phase, certain cards and special abilities allow your agents to attempt to influence allies, factions, followers, and characters. After an influence attempt, the agent remains face-up and in play.

To influence an ally, follower, or character, the agent must be at the new site for the target *or* at the target's current site if the company did not move. To influence a faction, the agent must be at the site at which the faction is playable.

To attempt to influence in this manner, your agent must make an influence check as outlined in section 9. However, the following exceptions apply:

- Your agent's unused direct influence and any other modifications are used (i.e., the agent is doing the influencing, not a character).
- If your agent is *at his home site* his direct influence is modified by +2.
- You can't use resources cards to help the attempt (e.g., you may **not** reveal an identical resource card, you may not use a *Muster*, etc.).
- If the target *character* (or *follower*) has the same home site as the agent, treat the character's (or follower's) mind attribute as zero *and* your agent's roll is modified by +2.
- If the target *ally* is playable at the agent's home site, treat the ally's mind attribute as zero *and* your agent's roll is modified by +2.
- If the target *faction* is playable at the agent's home site, treat the number required to bring the faction into play as zero *and* your agent's roll is modified by +2.

STORING CARDS

During your organization phase, you may *store* any of your items that are at a *-Haven site. The controlling character must make a corruption check before an item can be stored.

A stored item is placed in your *marshalling point pile* and counts for marshalling points. Once an item is stored it may not be unstored and brought back into play. *The One Ring* may never be stored.

Some items and resource cards state that they can be stored when at a specific site (e.g., the *Book of Mazarbul* card can be stored at a Dwarf-hold) – other cards may not be stored. Such an item or resource card is still placed in the marshalling point pile and cannot be brought back into play.

Note: A Balrog player may not store anything at Barad-dûr.

Note: *Minion player only:* If you store a gold ring, it is automatically tested.

Clarification: A character bearing a certain type of card cannot untap until the card is stored. After storing such a card, the character does not untap until the untap phase of his player's next turn.

Clarification: Unless stated otherwise on the card, the marshalling points for a card that can be stored apply regardless of whether or not the card is stored.

TRANSFERRING ITEMS

During your organization phase, you may transfer items between characters at the same site. The controlling character must make a corruption check before an item can be transferred.

Clarification: A corruption check is required before an item can be stored or transferred. A character that fails such a corruption check has decided not to follow his avatar's commands concerning the item's use (i.e., the item is discarded and the character is either discarded or eliminated).

Normally, when a character leaves active play (e.g., discarded or eliminated), all cards controlled by him are discarded. There are two major exceptions to this:

- Sometimes, the card that causes the character to leave play allows him to transfer an item or items (e.g., *Call of Home*).
- If a character is eliminated due to failing a body check, one item can be immediately transferred to each unwounded character in his company; but the rest of his items are discarded.

ACTIONS AND CARD PLAY

The various activities that you and your opponent can perform during play are called ‘actions’. Typical actions include playing a card, tapping a card, making a corruption check, revealing a card, etc. You and your opponent may both want to perform actions at the same time or actions that are sequenced with respect to other actions. This can happen during your movement/hazard phase (or during your site phase if your opponent has a card on-guard). The following general guidelines apply to resolving actions:

Your opponent may always declare an action in response before your action is resolved. Then, you may respond to his action, and he can respond to your second action, and so on until neither player can (or wants to) perform an action.

- You must give your opponent a chance to respond to every action, and vice versa. If you perform an action and move on to another action without giving your opponent a chance to respond, you must “backup” if he indicates that he wants to respond.
- Such a series of declared actions is called a ‘chain of effects’. You always have the option of declaring the first action in a chain of effects during your turn. The actions in a chain of effects are resolved one at a time from last declared to first declared (i.e., the last declared action is resolved first, then the second to the last, etc.).
- You may follow one of your declared actions with another of your declared actions in the same chain of effects, so long as you give your opponent a chance to respond to first action.
- An action in a chain of effects is negated if the conditions required to perform it are negated by another action that is resolved before it in the chain of effects.
- Creature hazards may not be played in response to other actions. They must always start a chain of effects.
- Corruption cards may not be played in response to other actions. They must always start a chain of effects.¹⁷
- If the play of a card requires other actions (e.g., corruption checks), the actions are resolved in the order in which they appear on the card.
- A required or declared dice roll is an action and can be the target of another action or effect declared later in the same chain of effects. A card cannot be targeted until it resolves.
- Before a roll is made for combat or a check, cards may be played that will modify the result of the roll. However, once the roll is actually made, no further cards may be played that modify the dice roll result. This modified result is used to determine *effects* of the combat or check before any other actions are taken.
- When the effects of a dice roll require other actions (e.g., a successful strike requires a body check) those actions become the initial actions (any further rolls come first) in the next chain of effects after the roll.
- If a card specifies that more than one action occurs when the card is itself resolved in a chain of effects, all of these actions are to be resolved in the card’s chain of effects uninterrupted and in the order listed on the card. No actions may be declared to occur between these multiple actions. The actions listed on the card are considered to have been declared in the reverse order as they are printed. As an exception, in one of the effects of a card is an attack, cards may be played that cancel the attack, cancel one of the strikes, or that otherwise are playable during the strike sequence.

PLACING A CARD ON-GUARD

During the movement/hazard phase of your opponent’s turn, you may place one card *on-guard* for each of your opponent’s companies. This card is played face down next to the company’s new site or next to its current site if it did not move. Any card can be placed on-guard (i.e., it does not have to be a hazard, you can bluff). Such a card does count against the hazard limit for the company it is placed on.

The card will remain on that site until one of the following occurs:

- *The company decides to face the site’s automatic-attack.* If the on-guard card is a hazard creature keyed to the company’s site **or** a hazard that can modify the automatic-attack, it may be revealed

¹⁷ **NOTE: This rule does not appear in the rules insert with the starter decks. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.**

before the automatic-attack is resolved. If it is a hazard creature, it will attack after the automatic-attack is resolved.

Clarification: This rule may only be invoked if there *already exists* an automatic-attack at the site.

- *The company plays a card that potentially taps the site.* If the on-guard card is a non-creature hazard, it may be revealed if it is a hazard that directly affects the company or a character in the company (e.g., *Greed*, a hazard that forces all characters to make a corruption check, but not *Traitor*, since it only sets up a passive condition).

Clarification: Since the play of a special ring item after a gold ring is tested does not normally tap the site (unless you use *Ringlore* or *Secrets of Their Forging*), this rule may not be invoked in response to a ring test (except, of course, for *Ringlore* or *Secrets of Their Forging*).

- Otherwise, return the card to your hand at the end of the site phase.

In the first two cases, the card is handled as if it had been played during the movement-hazard phase (i.e., short-events are discarded, long-events last until your opponent's next long-event phase, etc.).

Clarification: This means all targets of the card must have existed during the movement/hazard phase in order for the card to be revealed.

Note: A card may not be revealed in the second case above if it: returns the company to its site of origin, taps the site or a character in the company, forces the company to do nothing during the site phase, or potentially removes a character or ally from the company (outside of combat or forcing a corruption check).

LIMITS ON DRAWING CARDS

During your turn, you may draw cards based on one of your moving companies only if the company contains an avatar or at least one character with a mind attribute of three or more.

SPECIAL RULES FOR FALLEN-WIZARD PLAYERS

Note: All restrictions listed in this section apply to a *Fallen-wizard player only*.

Note: All restrictions in this section do *not* apply to Spells and Magic.

Targeting Site and Resource Cards¹⁸

A hero resource event card may not target/affect a minion site card or a minion resource card.

A minion resource event card may not target/affect a hero site card or a hero resource card.

Playing Resources at a Site

In order to play a non-Fallen-wizard resource that would normally tap a site, either the site and the resource to be played must both be hero cards **or** they must both be minion cards. For these purposes, a Fallen-wizard site card (or any Wizardhaven) is both a hero site *and* minion site.

This applies to all factions, allies, and items; as well as other cards played during the site phase that tap the site.

Note: When the test of a gold ring indicates that a specific type of ring may be played, you may play either a hero or a minion ring of the appropriate type.

Using Items

¹⁸ **NOTE:** This rule does not appear as listed here in the rules insert with the booster packs. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.

All your non-Orc, non-Troll characters may freely use both hero and minion items.

When Your Fallen-wizard Leaves Play

If your Fallen-wizard leaves play, discard all of your stage resource permanent-events in play that are specific for your wizard (e.g., if you are Alatar and play *Sacrifice of Form*, you must discard all of your stage resource permanent-events that say “Alatar specific.”) As is normally the case, all hazard permanent events on such a wizard are discarded.

Using Sites for Agents

When moving an Agent hazard, a Fallen-wizard player must use hero site cards. If the minion version of a site card is in play or in your discard pile, your agents may not use or reveal the hero version of that site.

Special Orc & Troll Rules

Special rules apply to Orc and Troll characters controlled by a Fallen-wizard player:

- Orcs that are “Half-orcs” are special — if a Half-orc is in a company with only Half-orcs and Men, the company is **not** overt (i.e., the Half-orcs appear to be ugly men to the casual observer). Half-orcs cannot take trophies. However, for all other purposes a Half-orc is considered an Orc.
- You may not play Orc and Troll characters until you have played the appropriate card (e.g., *Bad Company*).
- Unless at a Wizardhaven, and Orc or Troll cannot be in the same company as an Elf, Dwarf, Dúnadan, or Hobbit.
- A Fallen-wizard overt company may attack any company controlled by another player and vice versa.
- A Fallen-wizard’s overt companies must use hero sites for Shadow-holds, Dark-holds, and minion Darkhavens. They must use minion sites for Border-holds, Free-holds, and hero Havens.
- Overt companies are **not** minion companies for the purposes of the detainment attack guidelines in the *MELE* rules (p. 31). Overt companies are minion companies for hazards that can only attack/affect minion companies (e.g., *Sons of Kings*).
- Corruption checks for an Orc or Troll character are handled as if he were a minion character. That is, if the roll for a corruption check for an Orc or Troll character is equal to his corruption point total or one less, he is tapped instead of being discarded. He is not considered to fail the corruption check in this case.
- You may *not* play a hero resource permanent-event on a company with an Orc or Troll in it.
- A hero resource may not target an Orc or Troll character (e.g., Orc and Troll characters may not use *Block*, *Escape*, etc.).
- A hero resource that requires a character with a specific skill may not use an Orc or Troll character to fulfill that requirement (e.g., *Concealment*, *Many Turns and Doublings*, etc.).
- An Orc or Troll character may not tap to initiate an effect from a hero resource (e.g. *Praise to Elbereth*, *Great Ship*, etc.).
- An Orc or Troll character may be the bearer of a hero item, but all bonuses and special abilities are ignored (all restrictions to movement and playability still apply).

· PART II ·

THE TOURNAMENT RULES

MELE

Character Draft: Starting characters are determined by **Character Draft**. Each Player selects up to 10 characters to put into his or her pool of potential starting characters. This happens before characters are selected for the play deck. Certain cards may be revealed as though they were starting characters. These cards are included in the pool of starting characters, but do not count against the 10 character maximum. Each player reveals his or her first choice for a starting character simultaneously with opponent. If a unique character is duplicated by opponent's selection, both characters are set aside (this character may not appear in either player's starting company). Each player then selects a second character to reveal (but not a unique character revealed earlier). Each unduplicated revealed character goes into its player's starting company. Each player continues this process until one of the following occurs: the player has 5 characters in his or her company (6 for a minion player), the total Mind of that player's starting characters is 20, the player has exhausted his or her pool of 10 potential starting characters, or the player decides to stop revealing characters (i.e., he or she is satisfied with the starting company). Note that when one player stops, the other player continues revealing characters until one of the four conditions is met. A player may not reveal a character that would bring the total Mind of all of his or her starting characters above 20.

In his or her play deck, each player may now assign up to 10 characters, and this may include any unrevealed or duplicated (set aside) characters from his or her pool of starting characters. Note that the Character Draft differs from the Rulesbook in that a duplicated starting character does not automatically go into the play deck, and that its inclusion in the play deck does count against the deck's 10 character maximum.

The Weakest Link Method: If both players have an equal number of marshalling points (MPs) after the end of game has resolved (i.e., there is a tie), add one corruption point to each non-Ringwraith character in play. Each character (except Ringwraiths) must make another corruption check. MPs are recounted, and victory is awarded to the player with the most MPs. If there is still a tie, add one more corruption point to each non-Ringwraith character and each makes another corruption check. Again, assess MPs to see if a winner emerges. If not, continue adding one corruption point, making corruption checks, and reassessing MPs until a winner emerges. If all non-Ringwraith characters in play are corrupted by the weakest link method (unlikely) and there is still a tie, roll dice to determine a victor.¹⁹

Creature Minimum: A 12 creature minimum is required in each play deck's hazard mix. Creatures that are also events count as only half a creature towards this limit (rounding down). Such creatures include the Nazgûl, *Mouth of Sauron*, and *Shelob*. Sideboards have no such creature restrictions. Dragon "Ahunt" and "At Home" manifestations count as half a creature for these purposes. Agents also count as half a creature for these purposes.

Construction Minimums: The minimum number of hazards and resources in a play deck is increased from 25 hazards and 25 resources to 30 hazards and 30 resources.

Number of Ringwraiths: Up to 3 of the same Ringwraith **or** up to 2 of the same Ringwraith and 1 of a different Ringwraith may be included in a play deck.

Dual Purpose Cards: A card that can be played as either a resource or as a hazard can be counted in either the resource mix or hazard mix of a deck for the purposes of including an equal number of resources and hazards.

Using Maps: If region movement is being used, an appropriate map of the regions of *MECCG* can be used

¹⁹ **NOTE: The Weakest Link Method is no longer recommended for breaking ties. If players have the same MP total at the end of the Council/Audience, the game ends in a tie and both players receive 3 Tournament Points.**

to depict region movement (instead of using actual region cards). The text of region cards takes precedence over maps, however. Certain regions, which may appear to be adjacent on a map, in fact, are not listed as adjacent on the appropriate region cards (e.g., Rohan and Dagorlad, Cardolan and Lindon). Such regions are not considered adjacent, even when a map is used for region movement. Maps from the *Middle-earth CCG Maps* were designed to minimize any discrepancies.

Legal Play of Cards: A player may not play a card just to discard it (i.e., just to get it out of his or her hand). Specifically, a card may only be declared if it meets at least one of the following criteria.

- 1) The card must have an immediate effect on the game.
- 2) The card is a long-event. Long-events can always be played, even if ultimately they will not affect play.
- 3) The card has a potential effect on play that could be triggered later. Most permanent-events fall into this category. Only those that are playable on or with a certain entity are restrictive. E.g., you cannot play a corruption card if no character exists that would be affected by it.

In all cases, if a card “cannot be duplicated,” a second copy of that card cannot be declared - unless the first copy of the card is targeted for removal earlier in the same chain of effects when the second copy is played.

MEWH

Starting Stage Cards

When the Character Draft is used, treat the starting stage cards as if they were characters.

Sideboard Size

The sideboard size is increased to:

- 30 cards for the 1-deck game and the 2-deck game.
- 35 cards for the 3-deck game
- 40 cards for the 4-deck game

Revealing Your Wizard

In the general opponent format, you must reveal the identity of your Fallen-wizard before the game begins.

MEBA

- Spawn hazard permanent-events count as half a creature for the Council of Lórien 12-creature minimum.
- A Balrog player has an extra +5 general influence that cannot be used to control characters.

· PART III ·

THE OPTIONAL RULES

MELE

Each of these optional rules may be used if all players agree before the game begins. Refer to the appendices (page 52) for conventions of tournament play – these are widely used for casual play.

Company vs. Company Combat – When one player is a Ringwraith and his opponent is a Wizard (see Part IV), combat can occur between companies (see pages 48-51). After such a combat, if your opponent’s company has only wounded characters you may attempt to “steal an item.” To steal an item, you must tap a character in your company that was involved in the combat. Then, you can force your opponent to discard an item of your choice in his company that was involved in the combat. Finally, if you have a manifestation of the discarded item in your hand, you may play it with the character you just tapped.

MULTI-PLAYER RULES

Except for the guidelines presented in this section, a multi-player game (3-5 players) uses the normal rules.

Victory Conditions: The normal rules are used for victory conditions and to determine when the game ends. However, when a player calls the end of game, each of the other players gets to take one final turn. If a player’s Ringwraith is eliminated, that player is out of the game; however, the game only ends in this manner if only one player is left in the game. The doubling of your marshalling points based on a MP type only applies if none of your opponents has a card in play of that type.

Getting Ready to Play: Before the players set up their decks for play, each player makes a roll (reroll all ties). When play starts, the players will sit clockwise around the table in the order of their rolls, from highest to lowest. The highest roller chooses the Ringwraith he will play, the second highest roller chooses his Ringwraith from the remaining Ringwraiths, etc. Each player may place up to two of his Ringwraith cards in his play deck.

At this point each player should have his play deck constructed. For multi-player games, half (round up) of the hazards in your play deck must be hazard creatures.

Each player should select a character pool of up to 25 characters. The low roller reveals a character from his pool; this character starts in play. Then, the player to the right of the low roller reveals a starting character that has not already been revealed. This process continues in a counter-clockwise direction until all players have revealed their starting characters as outlined in the normal rules. Then, each player may place up to 10 characters from their character pool into their play decks.

After the characters are all revealed, each player may exchange up to three cards between his play deck and his cards not being used (all normal play deck restrictions must be met). The highest roller takes his turn first. Then, the player to his left takes his turn, and so on.

The Player Turn: Your “hazard-opponent” for the purposes of hazards is the player to your left. During your long-event Phase, you remove your own resource long-events and the hazard long-events belonging to your hazard-opponent. Only your hazard-opponent may draw cards (based on the site being moved to) and play hazards during your movement/hazard phase. A player only has the option of discarding a card during the End-of-Turn Phase if it is his own turn or if it is his hazard-opponent’s turn.

Twilight cards can be played at any time by any player. Permanent-events, long-events, and other “global” events (e.g., tapping Ren the Unclean) affect all players.

Middle-earth: The Wizards Companion provides some expanded, variant multi-player rules.

SOLITAIRE RULES

Getting Started: Place all of your hazard cards in one shuffled deck. (*Variant #1:* Have someone construct a hazard deck for you. *Variant #2:* Construct several “well-tuned” hazard decks of approximately 25 cards each, then play against each one.) Your play deck has no hazards and must have at least 30 cards. Your hand size is only five cards.

During Play: Proceed normally, except for the following exceptions. There is no opponent's player turn. Whenever you would draw or discard to get a hand of 8 cards, you now draw or discard to get a hand of 5 cards. During the movement/hazard phase, you draw and discard normally for each company.

Playing Hazards: During the movement/hazard phase, for each company, you draw hazards equal to 2 plus twice the number of hazard cards normally drawn for that site. Then you must play as many of those cards as you can within the hazard limit for the company. You should play the hazards in the fashion that is most disadvantageous for your companies. Any cards requiring *Doors of Night* are saved and played when a *Doors of Night* is drawn.

Object of the Game: The object of the solitaire game is to accumulate as many marshalling points (MPs) as you can by the time you exhaust your play deck for the second time.

Middle-earth: the Wizards Companion provides some expanded, variant multi-player rules.