

Ichabod Rewrites the Rules

This is not intended as a substitute for the rulebook, especially not for experienced players. This is intended for people who do not understand the rulebook as written. Using these simplified rules, you should be able to play a game and figure out the basics. From there you will hopefully be able to make sense of the rulebook.

None of this is official from ICE. This is my own rewording of the rules, and has not been cleared by ICE as official. I based this on the demos I gave at Origins'96 and GenCon'96. Bob Mohney deserves credit as he was the one who taught me to do demos this way.

Note: I have an editor standing behind me who beats me severely whenever I use a singular pronoun of indeterminate gender. Therefore masculine pronouns are used in these rules when the gender of the referent is not known. My apologies and condolences to anyone too uptight to deal with this.

1 Before You Play

In order to play, you will need two people, two starter decks, and two dice. Use normal six-sided dice. Roll them both and add them together whenever you are asked to make a die roll. The dice are helpful, but not necessary.

Open up the packs of cards that come in the starter deck. First, go through your cards and sort out all of the character cards. These cards have a light blue, stone pattern background. Next sort out all of the site cards. These cards all have a white parchment background. The site cards are easy to sort out because they have a different card back than the rest of the cards. Site cards have a map design on the back, instead of the Burning Eye design.

If you do not have dice, then look at the right side of each card (except sites). Just below the middle of the card, in the border design, is a small black number. These numbers can be used for random numbers instead of dice. Whenever you are told to roll dice below, instead draw a card from the top of your deck and use the number in the middle right of the card.

Character Cards

Character cards are the cards with the light blue, stone patterned background. Characters are how you do everything in Middle-earth, and move about in companies. Across the top of each character card is the character's name. You will get to start the game with some characters in play, and may play others as the game progresses.

Marshalling Points

In the top right corner of each character card is an octagon. Most characters have a number inside the octagon. This is the number of marshalling points (MPs) the character is worth.

These are very important. Marshalling points are how you win the game. Whoever has the most marshalling points at the end of the game wins. If a character has no number in the octagon, they give you no marshalling points.

If you have a character card that has a rune symbol in the MP octagon, set it aside for now. It is a Wizard card, which will be dealt with later.

Mind

Each character has a mind number. To find a character's mind, look on the left of the card near the top. There should be a small white head with a black number there.

The mind of a character represents how willful that character is, and how hard he is to control. Controlling a character requires influence. To start out with, you will have 20 points of general influence. For each point of general influence you can control one point worth of mind. So a four mind character would require four points of general influence to control. At the beginning of the game you will only be able to start with 20 mind points worth of characters, since you will only have your general influence to control them with.

Direct Influence

Underneath the white head showing the mind of each character is a black hand with a white number in it. The number in the black hand is the characters direct influence. Direct influence is a measure of how well a character can control other characters. Characters controlled by other characters are called followers.

For each point of direct influence, a character can have a follower with one point of mind. So a character with a direct influence of three can control a follower with a mind of up to three.

There are some restrictions on followers. Characters can have more than one follower, but a follower can only follow one character. That is, you cannot use the direct influence of two different characters to control one follower. All of the influence controlling a character must come from the same place, either general influence or one character's direct influence. Also, followers may not have followers.

Skills and Race

Each card has two prominent sections. One is the character's picture on the top half of the card, and the other is a boxed off section of text on the bottom half of the card. Between these two boxes, on the right side of the card, is a short piece of text. This describes the skills the character has, and what race the character is from. On other cards, text in this same space will usually identify what type of card it is.

The first word(s) are the skills the character has. Some cards played in the game will refer to these skills. Some can only be played on characters with a certain skill, and some just require a character of that skill to be present. The five skills are Diplomat, Ranger, Sage, Scout, and Warrior. A character may have more than one skill, in which case they will be separated by slashes.

The last word will be the character's race. Some cards modify all characters of a particular race, and others are easier to play if you are using a character with the right race. The races are Dúnadan, Dwarf, Elf, Man, and Wizard.

Prowess and Body

At the bottom left of each character card is a small shield. In the shield are two numbers separated with a slash. The first number is the character's prowess, the second is the character's body.

Prowess and body are explained in detail under combat in the section on the movement/hazard phase (see p. XX if you cannot wait to find out). Prowess represents how skilled a character is in combat. The higher a character's prowess is, the less likely he is to get wounded. Body represents how tough and resilient the character is. The higher a character's body is, the less likely he is to die when wounded in combat.

Corruption

In the bottom right corner of each character card is an octagon, smaller than the marshalling point octagon in the upper left. Most characters have a small burning eye in the smaller octagon, but some have a corruption modifier (like +2 or -1).

Power corrupts, especially in Middle-earth. As your characters acquire more powerful items, they

will become more susceptible to corruption. At certain points in the game your characters will have to make dice rolls called corruption checks. Whenever a character makes a corruption check, modify the roll by his corruption modifier. In general, characters with a positive corruption modifier are harder to corrupt, and characters with a negative one are easier to corrupt. Corruption and corruption checks are explained in more detail on p. XX.

Text Box

The last thing to note about each character card is the text box, which takes up most of the lower half of the character cards. This explains any special abilities that character has.

There are two important things in the text box. The first word in the text box will be the word "Unique." Characters are unique cards. There can only be one of each unique character in play at any time. If your opponent has the character out, you cannot play him.

Each character also has a Home Site. This is quite simply where the character comes from. You can start with any characters you want to, except Wizards. But once play begins, you can only bring in a character at his Home Site or at a Haven site. This is explained in more detail under Playing a Character in the section on the organization phase (see p. XX).

Each character also has flavor text. This is the text in quotations and italics, and shows you how the character is connected to Middle-earth and the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. This text has no effect on the play of the game.

Some characters may have other text. This is to describe certain special abilities that characters have, above and beyond the norm. Some restate things that are represented elsewhere on the card, like the corruption modifier. These are simply clarifications, and are not cumulative with the other parts of the card. A more detailed explanation of the common special abilities starts on page XX.

Wizards

Wizards are a special type of character. They represent you in the game. You are playing the part of one of the five Wizards sent to Middle-earth to organize the free peoples against Sauron.

There are five Wizards in the game: Alatar, Gandalf, Pallando, Radagast, and Saruman. They each have a different color background, rather than the light blue other characters have. Some have a blue background similar to other characters.

Wizards have some different rules than other characters. You may not start the game with your Wizard in play. You must draw him from your deck and bring him in to play during the game. You may also only bring him into play at Rivendell or his Home Site, rather than any Haven like a normal character. Finally, you can only have one Wizard in play.

Playing your Wizard is called revealing yourself, and can be risky. If your Wizard is killed or fails a corruption check, then you lose the game. It does not matter how many marshalling points you have, you still lose the game.

This is balanced by the power of the Wizard characters. Each has four skills, more than any other character. Each Wizard also has ten direct influence, allowing you to control extra characters. Also, Wizards have no mind stat. You will not have to use any of your influence to control your Wizard.

Site Cards

Everything in the game is centered around the characters. But the characters must move from site to site to do things in the game.

Each site card represents a different place in Middle-earth. They are organized geographically into four groups, one for each of the four Havens in Middle-earth. Across the top of each site

card is the name of the site.

Unlike other cards in the game, you do not have to randomly draw site cards. Site cards are kept in a separate deck called the location deck. When you want to go to a site, you can look through your location deck and pick out the one you want.

Site Type

In the top left corner of each site card is a symbol for the site type. The site type represents how dangerous or beneficial a site is to your characters. The site types are, from safest to most dangerous: Havens, Free-holds, Border-holds, Ruins & Lairs, Shadow-holds, and Dark-holds. Some creatures can only be played at certain sites.

Site Path

Each card has a site path. This is a series of symbols representing the different terrain you will travel through to get to the site.

Most sites have the site path listed vertically along the left side of the card. The exception is Haven cards. Each Haven lists two site paths, one for each of the other Havens you can reach from there. These site paths are listed in the text box below the site's picture.

The site path does not direct movement, it is used to determine which creatures can be played on a moving company of characters. Playing creatures is described in more detail on p. XX.

Region

Between the picture of the site and the text box, on the right side of the card, is the region the site is in. Middle-earth is divided up into regions, much like the U.S.A. is divided up into states. Some creatures can only be played in certain regions.

Cards Drawn

In the bottom left corner of the site card are two numbers. One is black on white, the other is white on gray and is upside down.

When you move to a site, you and your opponent will draw cards. You may draw cards up to the black number on white, but you must draw at least one. Your opponent may draw cards up to the white number on gray that is upside down, but he must draw at least one.

Text Box

You will notice that sites have a box of text under the picture. Some of the text is italicized flavor text, which has no effect on game play. There is also important information in the text box. One is the nearest Haven for a site, which is talked about in the movement section below.

The next most important piece of information is what is playable at that site. Things typically listed as playable at a site are information, gold ring items, minor items, major items, and greater items. Information cards are event cards that say "Information" as the first word in their text box. The various types of items typically playable at a site are identified by text just below the picture, on the right side of the card. This is right where sites list the region they are in, and characters list their skills and race.

You may have some sites that do not list anything that is playable at them. There are still cards to play at these sites, like factions, allies, certain events, and special items. For more on these types of card you can see the section on the site phase on page XX.

Some more dangerous sites will also list an automatic-attack. This represents the people or creatures that live at the site. Attacks are dealt with in more detail on p. XX, and automatic-attacks are explained more on p. XX in the site phase section. For now all you need to know is that to play anything at the site, you must face the automatic-attack.

Movement

During the game your characters will move from site to site. To show that a company of characters is at a site, you place that site card face up with the company.

During the movement/hazard phase (p. XX), your characters can move to another site. However, there are some limits on what site a company can move to. The limits depend on the site where your company starts the turn. Each company can only move once each turn.

If your company starts the turn at a site that is not a Haven, they can only move one place. They can only go back to the Haven listed as the nearest Haven on the site where they currently are.

If your company is at a Haven they have two options. First, they can go to any site that lists the Haven they are at now as its current Haven. So if a company is at Rivendell (a Haven), they can move to any site that says "Nearest Haven: Rivendell." in the text box.

Second, a company at a Haven can move to another Haven. Each Haven lists two other Havens in the text box. Either of these two Havens may be moved to.

So how do you get from one non-Haven site to another one? Say you want to get from Bag End (nearest Haven Rivendell) to the Lonely Mountain (nearest Haven Lórien). First you would move from Bag End to Rivendell (non-Haven site to its nearest Haven). The next turn you would move from Rivendell to Lórien (Haven to Haven). Finally, on the third turn you would move from Lórien to the Lonely Mountain (Haven to a site listing that Haven as the nearest Haven).

Other Cards

There are two main types of other cards: resources and hazards. Resources have a copper colored background. They are played during your own turn only. Hazards have a black background. They represent the evil forces of the world, and are only played when your opponent is moving his companies. The different types of hazards and resources will be explained as you start playing your first game.

2 Playing the Game

Setting Up

The first thing both players should do is make sure they have separated out all of your site cards. Set them aside in their own pile, this is the location deck.

Next pick out up to five characters to start play with, but do not show them to your opponent yet. The total mind of these characters cannot exceed twenty points. You may start with less than twenty mind points if you want, or less than five characters. You may not start with more than that. You may not start with any Wizard characters. Characters may not use direct influence at this time. That is, one character cannot follow another right now to free up influence to control more than twenty mind points.

Which characters to start with is hard to choose when you have not played the game at all. You should have at least one high mind character (eight or nine points). Start with him. Besides him you will want at least one scout, at least one ranger, and at least one more fighter with a prowess of 5 or 6. If you can fit a diplomat and a sage in also that is good.

Once you have picked your starting characters, both players reveal their starting character simultaneously. If any are duplicated they are set aside for the moment.

If you both have most of the same characters, then after revealing them have one or no characters left. This happens because most of your starting characters will come from the smaller pack of cards in the starter, called the fixed pack. There are only five fixed packs, and sometimes two

players get the same one. If you have this problem you can go back and try to split the characters up evenly between the two players.

Once you have your starting characters ready, find a Rivendell card in your location deck (every starter comes with two). Place this card with the starting company. This shows that they are at Rivendell at the start of the game.

Take any characters not in your starting company, either by choice or from duplication, and put them with your other non-site cards. These cards make up your play deck. Shuffle the play deck thoroughly, and allow your opponent to cut your play deck. Once your deck is shuffled and cut draw the top eight cards off the deck for your opening hand.

Each player now rolls the dice. Whoever gets the higher roll gets to go first. Reroll any ties. The first player follows the turn sequence as outlined below, then their opponent does. Players take alternating turns until the game is over.

The Player Turn

The Untap Phase

The untap phase is the first phase of the game. During the course of play your cards will become tapped. Turn them sideways 90° to indicate this. Tapping a card shows that it has been used for now. Some things require you to tap a card for them to happen. The card must be untapped in order to do this.

During the untap phase, all of your non-site cards in play untap. If any of your cards in play are tapped, turn them back to right way up (sites do not untap). Your first turn, nothing will be tapped, so you will not do anything in this phase.

Some characters may become wounded in combat (see p. XX). If a character is at a Haven during the untap phase, they may go from wounded (turned upside down) to tapped (turned 90°). Otherwise they stay wounded.

The Organization Phase

The organization phase is when you organize your characters and prepare them for movement.

Companies

Characters are organized into companies. At the start of the game you have one company of characters, and they are at Rivendell. For the start of the game keep this company as one company, until you get the hang of how the game plays.

When a company is at a Haven, it can split into two or more companies. This could allow you to go to two sites on the same turn and play two items. This is quicker but more risky, as four characters can defend themselves better than two. To split two companies, simply split the two sets of characters apart visibly on the play surface. If you have two copies of the Haven they are at, play one on each company. Note that a follower must be in the same company as the character he follows.

Also, if you have two companies at the same Haven during the organization phase you may join them into one company.

Characters and Followers

During the organization phase you may also change who follows who. If a character has enough direct influence to control a second character, you make the second character a follower. This frees up the general influence you were using to control that character. This is good for two reasons. One, some hazards are worse if you have less unused general influence. Two, if you have unused influence you can play more characters.

Each turn you may play one character, either a Wizard (if you have not played one already) or another character. You must be able to control the character with either your general influence or a character's direct influence. Wizards do not require influence to control.

You must play the character at either their home site, or at a Haven. If the character is your Wizard he must be played at his home site or Rivendell. If the character is controlled by general influence, he can be played alone at a site (bring the site out to show where he is), or he may be played with an existing company. If he is played alone he is a company of one. If the character is controlled with direct influence, then the site he is played at must have the character whose direct influence is being used.

Transferring and Storing Cards

If one of your characters has an item that you want another character to have, you can transfer the item between characters during the organization phase.

Both characters must be in the same company. Only items may be transferred, not allies and events. The character with the item must make a corruption check (see p. XX). If the character passes the corruption check you may move the item to any other character in the same company.

You may also store items and events during the organization phase. Any item may be stored, but events can only be stored if they say they can. To store an event make sure you are at the right site, and then put the event in your marshalling point pile. To store an item you must be at a Haven. The character with the item makes a corruption check. If he passes the check you may place the item in your marshalling point pile.

Preparing Movement

Next, you must decide where your companies are moving this turn. Remember, a company does not have to move. If they are moving pick a new site card for them. If they are at a non-Haven site, the new site must be the site's nearest haven. If they are at a Haven, the new site must either list that Haven as its nearest Haven, or be another Haven listed on the Haven they are at now. For more on this see p. XX. Once you have picked the new site for a company, place that site face down with the company. The site card must come from your location deck, not the discard pile. The actual movement is done during the movement/hazard phase.

Picking a site to move to can be confusing at first. If you have no idea what to do, look at the cards in your hand. Look for resource cards (the copper colored ones) with numbers in the top left corner of the card. If it is information or a non-special item, look for a site that lists that type of card as playable. If the card is a faction or an ally, the card will tell you at which site it can be played. If it is a special item there are two possibilities. One, it will tell you the site where it can be played. Two, it is a ring of some sort. If it is a ring you must first draw and play a gold ring item, and then somehow test the gold ring (see p. XX).

Check the site before you place it with the company. Make sure the nearest Haven listed on the site is the Haven your company is at. If not, you will have to move to that site's nearest Haven first. Do not worry, each starter has every Haven in it.

Playing Resources

Finally you may have a resource event to play. If you have a resource that says "Playable during the organization phase." now is the only time you can play it.

Read the event to see what it does. You may not want to play it. Ford, for example, keeps your opponent from playing creatures keyed to wilderness (W). If you have no wilderness (W) in your site path, there is no point in playing the card. Save it until you do have wilderness (W) in your site path.

If you do want to play the event simply say that you are doing so. It may require you to tap characters or do other actions (Ford requires you to tap a ranger). If it is a short-event, it will last for a duration specified on the card. If it is a permanent-event it will stay in play until discarded.

by an effect.

Long-event Phase

Certain hazards and resources are listed as long-events (under the picture to the right). These cards are meant to stay in play for two turns, one for the player it is played by or on, and one for their opponent. The long-event phase deals with these cards. During your first turn, and most of your other turns, you will do nothing in this phase.

If you have any resource long-events in play, then discard them.

If there are any hazard long-events in play that your opponent played on you on your last turn, then discard them also.

After long-events have been discarded, you may play any resource long-events in your hand if you wish. Do not play hazard long-events at this time. Your hazard long-events are played during your opponents movement/hazard phase.

Movement/Hazard Phase

There are several steps to the movement/hazard phase. Follow them through, one step at a time. If you have more than one company, follow the steps once for each company (it is your choice which company moves first). Even if the company is not moving to a new site this turn, they still follow the steps.

Step 1. If the company has a face down site card, flip that card over. The new card is the company's new site, and the company's current site becomes the site of origin. Do not discard the site of origin just yet. You may need it to determine the site path for the company.

Step 2. If the company is not moving, then no cards are drawn by either player. If the company is moving, then you may draw cards up to the number in black on white on the site the company is moving to. You must draw at least one card. Your opponent may draw cards up to the number in white on gray, and upside down on the site the company is moving to. He must draw one card. The exception is if you are moving to a Haven. Then both players draw cards based on the site the company is moving from.

Step 3. Your opponent plays hazards on the moving company. Hazards are played and resolved one at a time. In some cases they may not directly affect a company. Hazards may not be played that target a different company or a character in a different company. Once your opponent is done playing hazards, go on to Step 4 of the movement/hazard phase.

Playing Hazard Events

You may only play a certain number of hazards on a company when they move. To determine how many hazards can be played, count up the number of characters in the company (count Hobbits as one half of a character). The number you get, rounded up, is the company's size. It is also their hazard limit. You may not play more hazards on a company than the company's hazard limit. A company's hazard limit will not change during the course of a turn, even if they lose a character while moving.

To determine which hazards can be played, look between the text box and the picture. That is where it says the type of hazard the card is. There are four types of hazards: short-events, long-events, permanent-events, and creatures.

Short-events and permanent-events generally start with "Playable on" and a description of what cards they can be played on. If a card fitting that description is not in play, then you may not play the event. Otherwise, you may play the event on that card. Cards that are playable on a character facing an attack or strike are only usable during combat (see below).

If the event does not describe what it is playable on, you can just play it on the table. Read it carefully before playing it. If it is a long-event or permanent-event it will affect you also, on your

turn. Long-events will stick around for two turns, and permanent-events will stay in play until discarded by some effect.

In general, when an event is played, your opponent can respond to that event with other effects (like tapping a character for a special ability or playing an event of their own). The event that was played, or declared, last is the one that will take effect, or resolve, first. This is called last in first out (LIFO) order. A series of events played in response to each other is called a chain of effects, and the whole chain is resolved in LIFO order once both players are finished responding.

If a hazard is resolved that forces the company to return to its site of origin, then stop playing hazards. Any hazards declared but not yet resolved will still resolve. If the new site is tapped and a non-Haven site, then discard it. If the site is untapped or a Haven site, then return it to the location deck. The site of origin becomes the company's current site. Proceed to Step 5 of the movement/hazard phase.

Playing Creatures

Playing creatures is one of the most complicated parts of the game, so read this section very carefully. What creatures can be played on a company depends on what the company's site path is. The site path is listed on the non-Haven site card they are moving to or from, along the left side. If the company is moving from Haven to Haven it will be in the text box of both Havens.

Creatures have symbols along their left side just like sites do. However, these are not site paths. The region symbols on a creature show what sort of terrain that creature lives in. If a company moves through the appropriate terrain, the creature can be played on them.

To determine if you can play a creature on a company, compare the region symbols on the creature to the ones in the site path. If one of them matches you may play the creature. You only have to match one of the symbols from the creature to the site path. The one exception is if one symbol appears twice on the creature, Re double wilderness (WW). Then there must be two of that one symbol in the site path (they do not have to be right next to each other). Matching symbols Re this is called keying a creature to that region type.

Make sure the symbol matches exactly. All region symbols have a circle around them. Symbols without a circle represent the site. You cannot match a border-hold (b) to a border-land (B), for example. But if you can match a site symbol on a creature to the symbol on the site the company is moving to, then you can play the creature. If the symbols get confusing, look on the back of the rule book. It has a chart explaining what each one is.

Some creatures have no symbols to key the creature with. These creatures will tell you where they can be keyed or played at in their text box. Sometimes they will be playable at certain sites, in which case the company must be moving to that site for the creature to be played. Other times they will be playable in certain regions. Check the regions of the site of origin and the new site (its between the text box and the picture). If the creature is playable at either region, you may play it.

Combat

Once a creature has been played on a company, there is combat between the characters and the creature. Combat is divided up into attacks, usually one attack per creature. Each attack is divided up into strikes. For each attack, following these steps:

Step A. Either player may play events that affect the attack. If the attack is cancelled at this time, discard the creature card. Note that after Step A of Combat, no events may be played that change the number of strikes the attack has, or that cancel the attack. Any hazards played count toward the hazard limit. Once both players are done playing events go to Step B of Combat.

If the creature says "Attacker chooses defending characters," then skip Step B of Combat.

If the creature says "Each character faces a strike," then skip Steps B and C of Combat. Each character is considered to be assigned one strike. Also, no cards played in Step A of Combat will

affect the number of strikes for the attack.

Step B. The defender (the player moving) may assign strikes to untapped characters. Assign one strike to each untapped character, in whatever order you choose. You may not assign two strikes to one character, you may not assign strikes to a tapped character, and you do not have to assign strikes to an untapped character if you do not want to. Continue assigning strikes until either all strikes are assigned, you run out of untapped characters, or you want to. Any strikes you do not assign your opponent will get to assign.

Step C. The attacker (the player who played the creature) may assign any strikes that are not yet assigned to a character. You may assign strikes to any character that does not yet have a strike, even if that character is untapped. You may not assign two strikes to one character. If all characters in the company have been assigned a strike, and there are still strikes unassigned, remember how many strikes are left. The extra strikes may be used as -I modifiers to the prowess of characters in combat (see Step 3 of the Strike Sequence, Step ? of Combat).

Step D. Each character who has been assigned a strike must resolve that strike. The defender chooses the order in which strikes are resolved. To resolve a strike, follow the Strike Sequence.

Strike Sequence

Step 1. The attacker may play hazard cards that affect the strike. These count against the hazard limit.

Step 2. The attack may decide to use any or all of his remaining (if any) -I prowess modifications due to unallocated strikes. These are the extra strikes in excess of the company size left over from Step C of Combat.

Step 3. If the character is untapped, the defender decides whether or not to tap the character. If an untapped character does not tap, they get a -3 modification to their prowess for this strike.

Step 4. The defending player may play resource cards that affect the strike. Only one card may be played that requires the use of a skill.

Step S. The defending player rolls the dice and adds the prowess of the character. If the character was tapped before Step 3 of the Strike Sequence, then the character get a -I modification to their prowess. If the character is wounded before Step 3 of the Strike Sequence, then the character gets a -2 modification to their prowess.

Compare the result to the strike's prowess. This will be listed on the creature card in the same place a character's prowess would be.

If the result is greater than the strike's prowess, then the strike fails. If the body of the strike is "-BO" then strike is defeated. If the body of the strike is a number, the defender rolls the dice for a body check. If the body check is greater than the strike's body, then the strike is defeated.

If the result is equal to the strike's prowess, then the strike was ineffectual. That means the strike was avoided, but not defeated.

If the result is lower than the strike's prowess, then the strike was successful. immediately turn the character card upside down. The character is wounded. The attacker rolls the dice for a body check. If the character was wounded before Step 5 of the strike sequence, add one to the roll. If the body check is greater than the characters body, that character is eliminated.

When a character is eliminated, they are removed from play. That character may not be played again by either player. Since they were eliminated in combat, they may automatically transfer any items they bear to unwounded characters in the same company. Each character may only receive one item in this fashion. Any allies controlled by the character are discarded.

Step E. Once each character assigned a strike has faced one, see if all of the strikes were defeated. If they were, then the creature is place in the defender's marshalling point pile. The

defender receives the marshalling points listed in the top left corner of the creature card. If that creature was unique, neither player may play it again.

If any of the strikes were cancelled, ineffectual, or successful then the creature is discarded.

The attack is now over. Continue with Step 4 of the movement/hazard phase (forgot about that, didn't you?)

Step 4. If the company moved to a new site this turn, then remove the company's site of origin. If the site was tapped and a non-Haven site, then discard the site. If the site was untapped or a Haven site, then return the site to the location deck. At this point the company is considered to have arrived at the new site. The new site becomes its current site.

Step 5. Both players must discard any cards in excess of eight in their hand. If either player has fewer than eight cards, then they must draw cards until they have eight cards in their hand.

Remember to repeat the movement/hazard phase for each company you have, even if they are not moving to a new site.

Site Phase

Once each of your companies has a movement/hazard phase, then each company has a site phase. If you have more than one company you decide the order in which they resolve their site phases. If a company has nothing to do during the site phase, skip it. Otherwise, the company must enter the site.

To enter a site, simply declare that your company is entering and exploring the site. If the site has an automatic-attack listed on the site card, then your company must face the attack. Treat this just like an attack from a creature (p. XX), except there is no creature card and you receive no marshalling points.

Once the automatic-attack has been faced you may play cards at that site. You do not have to defeat the automatic-attack, just face it. You must face the automatic-attack on the turn you want to play a card, even if you faced in on a previous turn.

To play an item at the site, first make sure the item is playable there. The site will tell you which types of items can be played there (an item's type is listed between the text box and picture). If the item is a special item, it will either tell you what site it can be played at or be a ring item (see p. XX). If the item is playable, you may tap an untapped character and place the item with that character. Then tap the site. One other untapped character in the party may tap to play a minor item.

To play a faction at the site, check the faction card to make sure it is playable at the site. If it is, tap an untapped character to make an influence attempt. To make an influence attempt roll the dice. Add any direct influence the character is not using to control followers, including any special bonuses in the text box. Also add any modifications from the faction card based on the character's race. If the final result is greater than the number given on the faction card (in the text box), then place the faction in your marshalling point pile, gain a number of marshalling points equal to the number in the top left corner of the card, and tap the site. If the final result is less than or equal to the number given on the faction card, discard the faction.

To play an ally at the site, check the ally to make sure it is playable at the site. If it is, tap an untapped character and place the ally with that character. The ally must remain in the character's company for the rest of the game. If the character is discarded or eliminated, discard the ally. Allies are considered characters only for combat and playing cards that require a skill. Ignore the mind of an ally. Allies do not need to be controlled with influence.

End of Turn Phase

First, you may discard one card. This is useful if you have eight or less cards in your hand and

have a card you do not want. You can discard it and then draw another one in the second part of the end of turn phase.

Second, if you have less than eight cards in your hand, you must draw up to eight cards in your hand. If you have more than eight cards in your hand you must discard until you only have eight cards in your hand.

Now the turn is over. Your opponent takes his turn, following the same procedure. Continue alternating turns until the game ends.

If You Run Out of Cards

if at some point in the game you draw the last card in your deck, that deck is considered exhausted. When this happens, take all of the site cards out of your discard pile. Return these sites to the location deck. Take all of the other cards in your discard pile and shuffle them. These cards are now your play deck.

Finishing the Game

The game continues until the Free Council is called. At the Free Council whoever has the most marshalling points wins the game. Usually the Free Council is called by a player, and his opponent gets one more turn to play cards.

Calling the Free Council

The first way to call the Free Council is to score 18 marshalling points. (In a normal game you must score 20, but if you are only playing with starters this is lowered to 15). At the end of any turn in which a player has 18 or more marshalling point he may call the Free Council. At the end of his opponent's next turn the Free Council begins.

The second way to call the Free Council is to exhaust your play deck. At the end of any turn after a player's play deck has been exhausted they may call the Free Council. At the end of his opponent's next turn the Free Council begins.

The third way for the Free Council to be called is by the game. At the end of any turn when both player's play decks have been exhausted, the Free Council is called. The Free Council begins at the end of that turn.

The Free Council

Before the Free Council begins, each character in play must make a corruption check (see p. XX). Both players may play resources to help their character's make the corruption checks. Any cards discarded or eliminated due to failed corruption checks do not count for marshalling points at the Free Council.

After the corruption checks are done, recount each player's marshalling point total. Total all points from character, allies, events and items in play; and all points from creatures, events, factions, and items in the marshalling point pile. The player with the most marshalling points wins the game. If both players have the same number of marshalling points, then the game is a draw.

3 Other Things that may Happen

Corruption Checks

At many points during the game your characters will be required to make corruption checks. To do so you must first total all of the corruption a character has. Corruption points can come from events and items played on the character, and are listed in the bottom right corner of each card.

Once you total the corruption points you then roll the dice. The dice roll may be modified, check the lower right corner of the character card for any modifications. If the result is greater than the number of corruption points on the character, then the character has passed the check. If the result is equal to or one less than the corruption point total, then the character and all items he bears are discarded. If the result is two or more less than the corruption point total, then the character is eliminated and all items he bears are discarded.

Playing Ring Special Items

Rings are an important part of Middle-earth. When Bilbo found the One True Ring in *The Hobbit*, he did not know what it was until it was tested in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Likewise, in METW you must first play a gold ring item and then test it before playing any of the special ring items.

To play a gold ring item from your hand, go to a site that says "Playable: Items (gold ring)." After facing the automatic-attack you may play a gold ring item (see p. XX).

To play a special ring item, Re a Dwarven Ring, Lesser Ring, Magic Ring, or the One Ring, you must test a gold ring item you have already played. Testing a gold ring requires a resource event or Gandalf To test the ring play the resource test event, or tap Gandalf Then roll the dice. The gold ring item will list on it which special ring items may be played depending on what the result of the die roll is. If you roll the right number you may play the special ring item with the character who had the gold ring item. Whether or not you were able to play a special ring item, the gold ring item is discarded after the test.

Unique & Cannot be Duplicated

if a card is unique, each player may only have one copy of that card in their deck. If a character is unique, only one player may have him in play. If he is eliminated then neither player may play him the rest of the game. If a creature is unique and is defeated, neither player may play that creature the rest of the game.

If a short-event says it cannot be duplicated, then only one copy of that card may have an effect on play at any time. If a long-event or permanent-event says it cannot be duplicated, then only one copy of that card may be in play at my time.

4 Typical Special Abilities

May keep one more card than normal in your hand

If you control a character with this special ability your hand size is increased by one. Whenever you would discard down to eight cards, discard down to nine instead. Whenever you would draw up to eight cards, draw up to nine instead. Two characters with this special ability are cumulative, so you may keep ten cards in your hand. Note that some characters must be at a particular site in order for this special ability to work.

-1 to all influence checks against factions

Whenever a character with this special ability taps to influence any faction, they must subtract one from the die roll.

-X marshalling points when eliminated

Whenever a character with this special ability is eliminated through corruption or combat, he is placed in the marshalling point pile instead of the out of play pile. While in the marshalling point pile the character gives negative marshalling points equal to the number in the top left corner of

the character card. That is, the marshalling points from the character are subtracted from your total instead of added to it.

This may seem odd, but it represents that these characters are vital to the cause of the Free Peoples. Having them die in your care speaks poorly of your ability to lead the Free People against Sauron.

+X prowess against ...

Whenever a character with this special ability is facing a strike of the specified race, he adds X points to his prowess.

+X direct influence against the ... faction

Whenever a character with this special ability taps to influence the specified faction, they add X to the die roll. Some characters specify a group of factions, like "elf factions." These characters get the bonus against all factions of the specified race. The race of a faction is listed between the text box and the picture.

+X direct influence against [race]

Characters with this special ability have extra direct influence that is only useable to control followers of the specified race.