

BOSS MONSTER

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET





INTRODUCTION

Boss Monster™ is the fast-paced card game of strategic dungeon building! As a Boss Monster, your goal is to lure hapless adventurers into your dungeon and consume their Souls. But beware! Your dungeon must be as deadly as it is enticing, or the puny heroes can actually survive long enough to wound you. More importantly, you have competition. Adventurers are a hot commodity, and other Boss Monsters are all trying to outdo you with more precious treasures and more nefarious traps. Are you a bad enough dude to become the ultimate Boss Monster?

Boss Monster: Master of the Dungeon – 10th Anniversary Ed., 2nd Printing
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- Boss Deck with 12 cards
- Room Deck with 75 cards
- Spell Deck with 30 cards
- Hero Deck with 25 cards
- Epic Hero Deck with 16 cards
- Rulebook
- Quick Start Guide

Published in 2023 in the United States of America by Brotherwise Games, LLC; Torrance, CA. Find us on the World Wide Web at brotherwisegames.com.

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WELCOME TO THE DUNGEON

Boss Monster, the Dungeon-Building card game, has been in stores since 2013. In the decade since, the game has seen seven boxed expansions, been translated into over 10 languages, been featured in countless Top Seller lists, and sold over a million copies. It's been an exciting ride for King Croak and his nefarious rivals, and we're thrilled to offer this updated 10th Anniversary edition to celebrate their longevity.

This edition includes some all new bosses and some updated Rooms and Spells. More importantly, we've tweaked the rules slightly to include some lessons learned in the later Boss Monster expansions, and some revised mechanics that we've used to make gameplay a little bit smoother. Experienced Boss Monster players won't find these changes too different; the biggest change is to effect resolution. We've removed the notion of an "Active Player" who gets effect primacy during their turn. Now, all Spells and Room effects are resolved in a "Last in, First out" mode similar to many other card-based games. That change in effect resolution is described in detail on page 9.

Thanks to all the gamers who've been willing to play the bad guy for the past 10 years; you'll always be the good guys in our book.

*Johnny and Chris O'Neal
Brotherwise Games*





HOW TO PLAY

GETTING READY

To play *Boss Monster™*, you just need 2-4 players, the cards included with this game, and enough space to spread out your cards.

The first time you play, allow yourself at least 45 minutes. Once players are familiar with the cards, a two-player game will typically take 20-30 minutes.



OBJECT OF THE GAME

The goal of *Boss Monster* is to lure Heroes into your dungeon and kill them. Heroes who die in your dungeon are turned face down and count as “Souls” (👤). Heroes who survive give you “Wounds” (🩸). The game ends whenever any player ends a turn with...



x10 Souls

OR



x5 Wounds

The winner is the player with the most Souls *minus* Wounds (👤-🩸). It is therefore possible to be the player who ends the game with 10 Souls, but still loses because you took too many Wounds. See page 19 for tiebreaker rules.

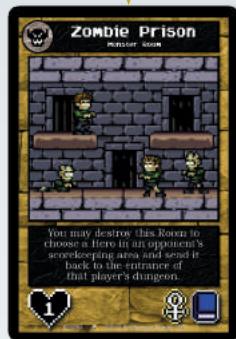
GAMEPLAY AT A GLANCE

The heart of *Boss Monster* is dungeon building! Your Boss card (1) sits at the right end of a side-scrolling dungeon, and each turn you can strengthen and refine your dungeon with Rooms (2).

A Room's treasure value determines what type of Heroes it attracts, while its damage determines its ability to destroy Heroes (by depleting their Health).

1 Your dungeon builds out to the left from your BOSS card.

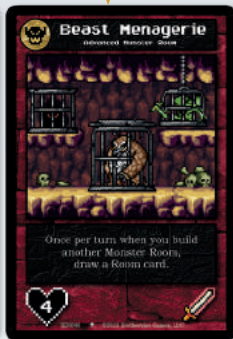
2 Each turn you can expand your dungeon by building a MONSTER ROOM or TRAP ROOM.



Each Room has a **TREASURE** value that lures Heroes...



...and a **DAMAGE** value that kills Heroes.



An **ADVANCED ROOM** can upgrade an existing Room.



3

HEROES enter your dungeon each turn.

Defeated Heroes are turned face-down and are worth Souls (S)

Heroes who survive deal Wounds (W)

Your scorekeeping area (**3**) sits off to the side of your dungeon, where face-down Heroes add to your Souls (S) and face-up Heroes add to your Wounds (W). Players often store their Wounds under their Boss. You may only have a maximum of five visible Rooms in your dungeon. The first time you hit five Rooms, apply your Boss card's "Level Up" effect!



CARD TYPES - BOSSES

Your Boss card represents the ultimate villain waiting at the end of your dungeon... you! While it has a treasure value, it does not count as a Room. It cannot deal damage, be deactivated, or be destroyed (more on these terms later).

- A. Boss Icon:** This icon indicates that this is a Boss card.
- B. Boss Ability:** Each Boss card has a powerful “Level Up” ability, which triggers at the end of the Build Phase when your dungeon first reaches five visible Rooms.
- C. XP:** XP determines player order during the Build and Adventure phases. The Boss with the highest XP is the first player. That player goes first during the Build and Adventure phases, then play proceeds in XP order, highest to lowest.
- D. Treasure:** A Boss card’s treasure icon adds to its dungeon’s total.

Your “Level Up” ability triggers only once per game, when your dungeon hits its maximum length of five Rooms (not counting your Boss). Use a coin or token to indicate that this ability has been used.





CARD TYPES - ROOMS

Your dungeon's Rooms attract and damage Heroes. Each turn, you can build a new Room in your dungeon, up to a maximum of five visible Rooms. Ordinary Rooms can be built at the end of your dungeon, or over any other Room. Advanced Rooms are "upgrades" that can only be built on existing Rooms with at least one matching treasure icon.

- E. Room Icon:** A silver icon is an ordinary Room, while Advanced Rooms have gold icons. This icon also shows a Room's subtype: whether it's a Monster Room or a Trap Room.



Monster



Advanced
Monster



Trap



Advanced
Trap


- F. Ability:** The rules text of the card is active as long as it is visible and in play.
- G. Damage:** Each time a Hero enters a Room, it takes the listed damage. When the damage meets or exceeds its Health, that Hero dies.
- H. Treasure:** The treasure icons indicate what type of Heroes this Room attracts.





CARD TYPES - HEROES

Heroes appear “in town” every turn, waiting for adventures. Ordinary Heroes are silver; Epic Heroes are gold. Epic Heroes don’t show up in town until all the ordinary heroes have been claimed.

- A. Treasure Icon:** The type of treasure that lures this Hero.
 - B. Health:** The amount of damage this Hero can resist before dying. Note that Epic Heroes have more health than ordinary Heroes.
 - C. Wound:** If an ordinary Hero survives your dungeon, it remains face-up and counts as one Wound. Epic Heroes count as two Wounds.
 - D. Player Icon:** This indicates whether the card should be used in a two-, three- or four-player game.
-  **Soul** (On the back side of Hero and Epic Hero cards): When a Hero dies in your dungeon, turn it face-down. Ordinary Heroes count as one Soul, while Epic Heroes count as two!








CARD TYPES - SPELLS

Spells reflect the power of your Boss Monster to affect what happens in your dungeon... and beyond! After the beginning of the game, you may only draw new Spell cards when a card specifically tells you to do so.

You may play any number of Spells per turn, but may only play Spells during the Build and Adventure phases.

Once you've played a Spell, place it in the discard pile.

- E. Text:** The rules text of the card describes its effects.
- F. Phase Icon:** This icon indicates the phase when the card can be played. ( = Build,  = Adventure,  = Either)

PRIORITY: Spells and Room abilities resolve in the reverse order in which they were played (“last in, first out”). This simply means that when a Spell or Room ability is played, there is always a moment for another player (or the same player) to interrupt with another effect. If they do so, their Spell or ability is resolved before the first one played. There’s no limit to how many effects can be played this way, with each new Spell or ability resolving before the others.





SET UP

STEP 1: PREPARE THE HERO DECKS

The number of players determines the number of Hero cards that should be used in a game:



Two Players: 13 Heroes, 8 Epic Heroes



Three Players: 17 Heroes, 12 Epic Heroes



Four Players: 25 Heroes, 16 Epic Heroes

The Hero Deck is made by placing the shuffled Hero cards (A) on top and the shuffled Epic Hero Cards (B) on the bottom of the deck. If you are playing a two-player game, remove all cards with the “Three Player” or “Four Player” icons. If you are playing a three-player game, just remove the “Four Player” Heroes.

STEP 2: INITIAL SET UP

Shuffle the Boss deck and randomly deal 2 Boss cards to each player. Players select one Boss to play and set aside the other. Players reveal their Boss cards and place them to the right of their play area (C). All Room cards will be “built” to the left of the Boss card (D), while acquired Souls will be placed to the right (E) and wounds will be tucked under

the player’s boss card (F). Set up the Hero, Epic Hero, Dungeon and Spell decks as shown on Page 11.

STEP 3: STARTING HAND

Each player draws 5 Room cards (G) and 2 Spell cards (H).

Mulligan: If you draw four Advanced Rooms or four of one treasure type, you may shuffle your entire hand back into the decks and draw a new hand.

STEP 4: BUILD YOUR FIRST ROOM

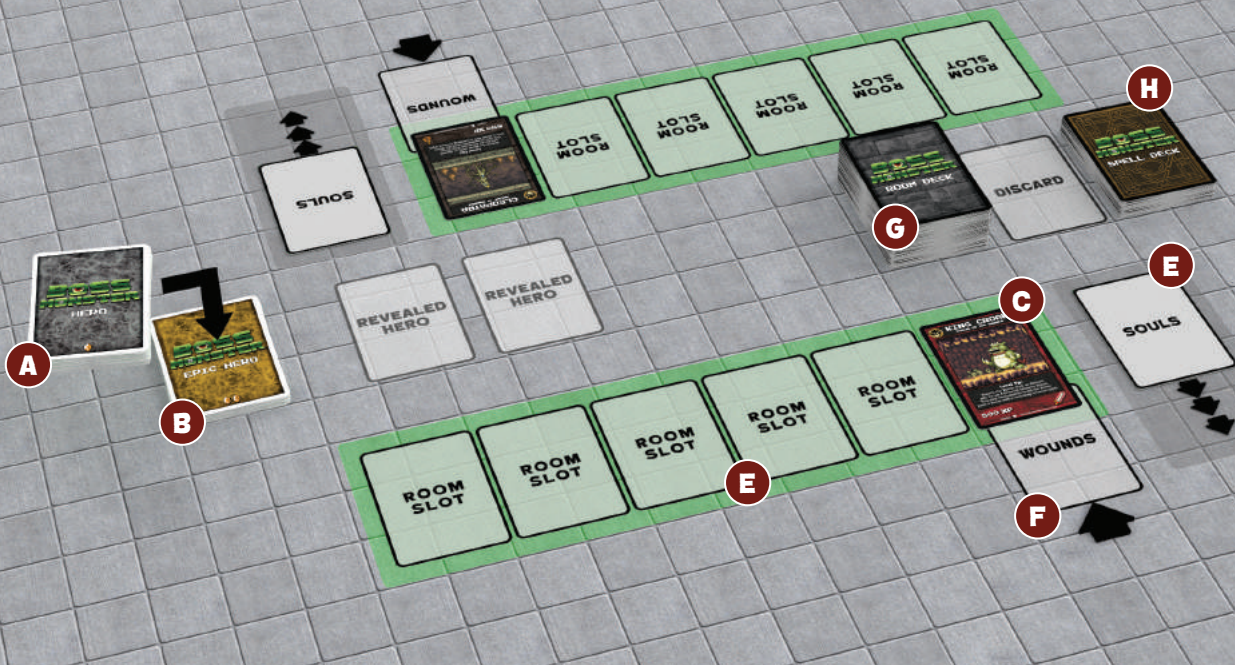
Before the first turn begins, each player can build one Room. To “build” a Room card, place it face-down on the table to the left of your Boss card. The highest-XP player goes first, then each other player places a face-down Room. Once all players have placed their cards, simultaneously reveal the newly built Rooms. In XP order, resolve any “when you build this” effects.

At this point, Set Up is complete and the first turn begins.

For a more challenging game, try the “Classic Mode” Play Variant (see Page 20).



GAME SET UP EXAMPLE





SEQUENCE OF PLAY

After the initial Set Up, each turn in Boss Monster consists of five phases (each discussed in detail on the following pages):

1. **Beginning of Turn:** Reveal Heroes in town (one Hero per player in the game), then each player draws a card from the Room Deck.
2. **Build Phase:** Each player may build one Room. Players take turns in XP order, highest to lowest, placing their Room cards face down. At the end of the Build phase, newly built Rooms are revealed simultaneously and any “When you build this Room” abilities are resolved in XP order. (No Spells or other abilities may be played during the reveal, nor in the following Bait Phase.)
3. **Bait Phase:** Heroes move to the entrance of the dungeon with the highest corresponding treasure value (or stay in town, if treasure values are tied).
4. **Adventure Phase:** Heroes travel through dungeons. In XP order, each player takes a turn as the active player, “processing” all Heroes at their dungeon entrance and acquiring Souls or Wounds.
5. **End of Turn:** The turn ends and a new turn begins.

There are two key concepts that influence the Sequence of Play:

XP Value: Each Boss has an XP value that determines turn order during the Build and Adventure phases. During each phase, the Boss with the highest XP will go first, followed by each other Boss in descending XP order. During the Build phase, this means the boss with the highest XP value will place their face down Room card first, followed by the other Bosses in order. During the Adventure phase, this means the Boss with the highest XP will be the first to process the Heroes at their dungeon entrance through their dungeon.

Active Player: The Active Player is the one currently building a room or “processing” heroes during the Adventure phase.





BEGIN TURN & BUILD PHASE

During the Beginning of Turn phase, the following occurs:

- **Heroes appear in town:** Flip over one Hero card for each player in the game. In general, all ordinary Heroes must be revealed before an Epic Hero is revealed.
- **Each player draws a card:** Each player draws one Room card.

Spell cards, Room cards, and activated abilities cannot be used during the Beginning of Turn phase.

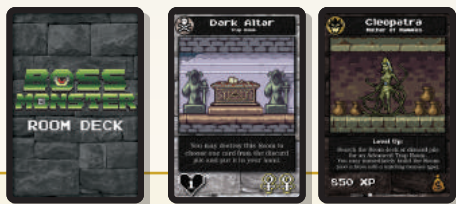
Once each player has drawn a card, the Build phase begins.

During the Build phase, players take turns in descending XP order placing Rooms face-down in their dungeon. You must specify where the Room is to be placed. A Room can be placed in one of two locations:

- To the left of your leftmost card. During Set Up, place your first Room to the left of your Boss card. Afterwards, build additional new Rooms to the left of any already built Rooms. Note your dungeon has slots for five Rooms.
- On top of an existing Room card. Ordinary Rooms can be built on top of any Room. Advanced Rooms can only be built on top of a Room with at least one matching treasure icon.




You may choose not to play a Room, but you cannot change your choice once you are no longer the “active player.”



Cards being built are always played face-down during the Build phase. This keeps your opponents guessing what treasure type you might be adding to your treasure count.



BUILD PHASE, CONT'D

During the Build phase, you may use card abilities and play Spells marked with the Build ( and ) icon.

Once each player has had the chance to place a Room, during the “end of the Build phase,” players simultaneously flip over and reveal their Room cards. These Rooms are now considered “built.” Any “Level Up” and “when you build this Room” abilities take effect for the highest XP player, followed by lower-XP players. (No Spells or other abilities may be played during the reveal, nor in the following Bait Phase.)

PRO TIP: BUILDING OVER

Keep an eye on your treasure types as you’re building Rooms, because they will limit the Advanced Rooms you’re allowed to play. Multi-treasure Rooms (with gold borders) tend to be low-damage, but they give your dungeon versatility.

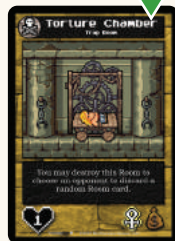
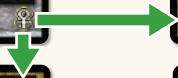
Also keep in mind that ordinary Rooms can always be built over any Room, regardless of treasure type!

 **HERE!**

Where can we build *Dracolich Lair*?



It matches the Cleric treasure in Dark Altar.



 **HERE!**

It matches one of the treasures in Torture Chamber.



 **NOT HERE!**

Golem Factory contains no Cleric treasure.



BAIT PHASE

During the Bait phase, players have the chance to lure Heroes to their dungeons. Take the following steps:

- 1. Compare Treasure Values:** Count the amount of treasure icons in each dungeon corresponding to each Hero in town. Add any modifiers from Room abilities or Spells.
- 2. Lure:** For each Hero, the dungeon with the highest relevant treasure value lures in that Hero. The Hero moves to that dungeon's entrance. (Place the Hero beside the leftmost Room in that dungeon.)
- 3. Tie:** If no player has treasure of that Hero's type, or if all players are tied, the Hero stays in town until the next turn.

PRO TIP: BOTTLENECKED HEROES

If no player has the highest treasure value for a given Hero, either because all players have zero or all players are tied, that Hero stays in town. On the next turn, new Heroes arrive as normal. If a tie is not broken, Heroes can really start to stack up in town! When the tie is broken, all relevant Heroes go to the “winning” dungeon, which means the stakes just keep getting higher.

Spell cards and Room abilities **cannot** be played during the Bait phase.

If multiple Heroes move to a player's dungeon, they arrive in the order that they were revealed from the Hero deck. Once all Heroes are accounted for, the Adventure phase begins.

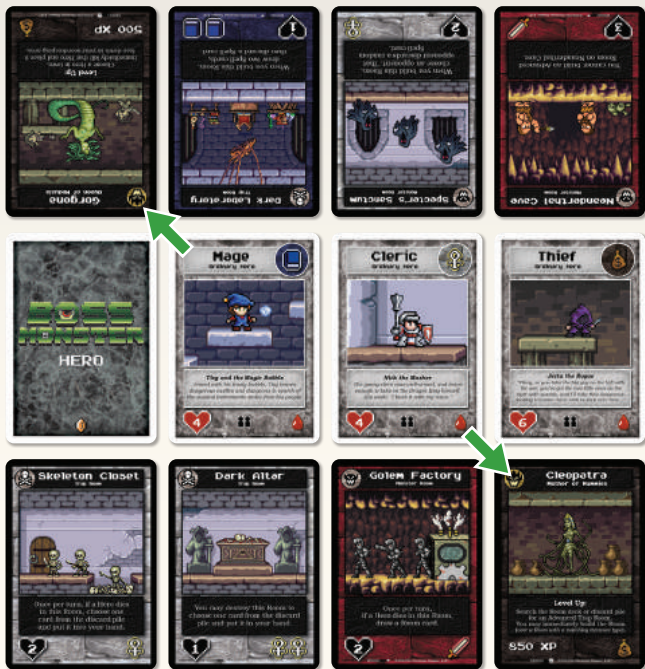
THESE TYPES OF TREASURE...

			
Holy Symbol	Tome	Sword	Money Bag
↓	↓	↓	↓
Clerics	Mages	Fighters	Thieves
			

...ATTRACT THESE TYPES OF HEROES



BAIT PHASE, CONT'D



Here we see a snapshot of the play area for a two-player game, focused on the ordinary Hero deck and the players' dungeons (for a full game layout, see page 11). As this turn's Bait phase begins, there are three Heroes in town.

Player 1's dungeon (above) contains these treasures:



x1 Cleric x2 Mage x1 Fighter x1 Thief

Player 2's dungeon (below) contains these treasures:



x3 Cleric x0 Mage x1 Fighter x1 Thief

The Mage is lured to Player 1, the Cleric is lured to Player 2, and the Thief stays in town. Next turn, two new Heroes will arrive in town, and the situation may change as new Rooms are built.



ADVENTURE PHASE

During the Adventure phase, Heroes “attack” dungeons, and players take turns contending with them. Players with Heroes at their dungeon entrances take turns as the active player (highest XP going first), following these steps:

- **Heroes Enter:** One at a time, starting with the first Hero to arrive at an entrance to a player’s dungeon, each Hero moves through that player’s dungeon.
- **Rooms Deal Damage:** As the Hero enters each Room, any Room ability takes effect, then the Room deals its damage.
- **Spells and Abilities:** In each Room, after damage is dealt, players may activate the Room’s special abilities and/or play Spells marked with the Adventure (🗡️) icon or Both (🗡️🔮) icon.
- **Death:** If a Hero exits a Room with damage equal to or exceeding its Health, it dies. Move that Hero to your scorekeeping area and place it face-down, adding its Soul value to your total.
- **Survival:** If you are not able to sufficiently damage the Hero (or kill it by other means) before it reaches your Boss, place it face-up under your Boss card with the Wound icon showing,

All killed or surviving Heroes are placed in the player’s scorekeeping area. Once all Heroes are processed, the player with the next highest XP resolves their Adventure phase.

PRO TIP: TRACKING HEROES


Sometimes, Hero sequence can be important. Heroes obey a “first in, first out” rule. To keep track of this, place each newly revealed Hero to the side of the deck. The closest to the deck should always be the one that has been in play longest. Once that Hero heads to a dungeon, slide the newer cards toward the deck to take its place. Remember, new Heroes continue to arrive in town at the beginning of each turn!



ADVENTURE PHASE, CONT'D



It's Draculord's first Adventure phase, and he's processing Heroes through his dungeon. He's only got two Rooms built at this point in the game, so it could be challenging.

1: Draculord (**A**) is the only Boss with  icons, so he draws the 6 health Cleric (**B**) who's come into town. The Cleric takes 3 damage from his Neanderthal Cave (**C**), and then enters his Bottomless Pit (**D**). If he does nothing, the Hero will survive the Pit with 2 health remaining and deliver a Wound to Draculord.

2: Draculord decides to play the Annihilator spell (**E**) on the Bottomless Pit, raising the Room's damage to 4, more than enough to kill the Cleric.

3: But his opponent reacts by casting an Assassin spell (**F**) on the Cleric, raising its total health to 9. Now even with the Annihilator, Draculord's dungeon isn't doing enough damage to kill the Cleric.

4: Faced with a certain Wound coming his way, Draculord takes the drastic step of using the Bottomless Pit's ability. He destroys the Room (removing it from play and sliding his Neanderthal Cave to the right to fill in the open space) and instantly kills the Cleric, getting its Soul.



END OF TURN & END OF GAME

Once all players have had a chance to be the active player during the Adventure phase, the turn ends. At the end of the turn, any “until end of turn” effects are resolved. Any deactivated Rooms are turned upright.

In the event that a Hero takes damage during the Adventure Phase but is returned to town or the entrance of a dungeon by a card ability, damage to that Hero does not carry over to subsequent turns.

Spell cards and activated abilities cannot be used during the End of Turn phase.

PRO TIP: GAME DIFFICULTY

Want to adjust the difficulty of the game? Try **Hard Mode**: Remove all ordinary Heroes with a Health value of four. This makes it difficult to avoid a Wound in early turns, and brings Epic Heroes into play a turn earlier. Or take it down a notch with **Machinations**: At the end of turn, if a player did not gain a Soul this turn, that player may draw one card from the Room or Spell Deck.

The game does not end until a full turn is complete and every eligible player has had a chance to resolve an Adventure phase. Once every player has had a chance to act, determine the following.

- If any player ends the turn with 10 or more Souls, the game is over.
- If any player ends the turn with 5 or more Wounds, the game is over.
- Each player calculates their total Souls minus their total Wounds. The player with the highest result wins the game.
- In the event of a tie, the player with the highest XP wins.

Now shuffle the decks, deal out some new Boss cards, and play again!



PLAY VARIANT

Classic Mode: During Setup, each player draws five Room cards and two Spell cards, then discards two cards of their choice.

NEED MORE INFO?

For a full FAQ and Advanced Rules, visit brotherwisegames.com/bossmonster



GLOSSARY

Activated Ability: An activated ability is any effect that requires the player to declare its use or pay a cost (for example, “destroy this Room” abilities are activated abilities). They can be used whenever you could play a Spell. Ongoing abilities and “When you build this Room” abilities are not considered activated abilities.

Build: Abilities that say “When you build this Room” trigger when a Room is built, not if it is revealed for other reasons. You may build one Room per turn, you may not rearrange Rooms in your dungeon when building (unless a card states otherwise), you may not build over face-down Rooms, and you may only build a maximum of five visible Rooms in your dungeon.

Cancel: Any Spell or ability that allows you to “cancel” a Spell allows you to interrupt a declared spell. A canceled spell is not cast and must be placed in the discard pile. A Spell may also be canceled if its target is destroyed (or otherwise rendered moot) by a higher-priority effect. Once the target for a Spell has been declared, it cannot be changed.



Damage: Rooms deal damage (marked in the lower left-hand corner of each room as a number in an empty heart ♥). Damage equal to a Hero's Health kills that Hero.

Deactivate: Other Boss Monster sets include effects that “deactivate” a room, turning it sideways until the end of the turn. This does not reveal any Room cards beneath it. Ignore any damage, treasure, and abilities usually associated with the Room while it is turned sideways. Effects that trigger off the number of Rooms in your dungeon do not count it as a Room while it is deactivated. Rooms cannot be built over deactivated cards, and a deactivated Room cannot be destroyed. Treat it as a “blank” space in the dungeon, so cards on either side are not adjacent to one another. At the end of the turn, it is reactivated.

Dead: Heroes can be killed by damage, Spells, or Room effects. Any Hero that does not survive a dungeon is considered “dead” and is placed in that player's scorekeeping area face-down. The Room in which a Hero is reduced to zero Health is the Room in which it “dies.”

Destroy: A Room that is “destroyed” is sent to the discard pile from play. If there is a Room under that Room, it is uncovered. If this creates a “hole” in the dungeon, all the cards slide to the right (toward your Boss) to close any gaps. You may only destroy a Room if a card specifically allows you to do so.

Discard: A card is “discarded” if a player must remove it from his hand and place it in the discard pile. By default, an effect that forces a player to discard a card allows the player to choose which card is discarded. When a card says “discard a card at random,” an opponent randomly chooses.

Entrance: The “entrance” to your dungeon is the area to the left of your leftmost Room. At the beginning of the Adventure phase, Heroes enter dungeons in the order that they arrived.

Face-Down: Cards are played face-down in order to conceal information. Rooms are played face-down during the Build phase before being revealed at the end of the Build phase. Additional Rooms cannot be built over face-down cards, and they cannot be destroyed.



GLOSSARY, CONT'D

Hand: The cards in your hand cannot be viewed by other players unless a card effect specifically allows them to do so. There is no minimum or maximum number of cards that can be in your hand.

Heal: If an effect allows you to “heal” a Wound (🔴), you may flip over one face-up Hero (ordinary or Epic) in your scorekeeping area. Instead of counting its Wound (🔴) value, you now count its Soul (👤) value.

Health: A Hero’s Health (❤️) is its ability to sustain damage. As soon as its Health is reduced to zero, it dies (see “Dead” above).

Hero: When a card refers to an “ordinary Hero,” it means a non-epic Hero. When it specifies “Epic Hero,” it only refers to an Epic Hero. A card that just says “Hero” can refer to either type.

Level Up: The first time your dungeon reaches five Rooms in length (not counting the Boss card itself), your Boss card’s “Level Up” ability is triggered. This ability takes effect during the end of the Build phase when you reveal your fifth room, followed by any other “when you build this Room” effects from that Room.

Monster: A Monster Room (👹) is a Room with a silver or gold Monster icon (👹/👹) in the upper left-hand corner. These trigger certain card effects that specifically refer to “Monster Rooms.”

Ordinary: An “ordinary Hero” is a non-Epic Hero, and an “ordinary Room” is a non-Advanced Room. When card ability text references a “Hero,” it means “ordinary or Epic Hero” unless it specifies one or the other. Similarly, “Room” means “ordinary or Advanced Room” unless it has a specific descriptor.

Room Stack: Your dungeon holds five Rooms. As you build over existing Rooms, the Rooms in each slot become a Room stack. Any effect that moves a Room moves all Rooms in that stack. Effects that destroy a Room, destroy the top Room in the stack, uncovering the next Room below. Only the top Room in a stack is visible and counts towards treasure and damage values for your dungeon.

Search: Whenever an effect allows a player to search the Spell or Room deck, the player must shuffle the deck afterward.

Trap: A Trap Room (👹) is a Room with a silver or gold Trap icon (👹/👹) in the upper left-hand corner. These trigger certain card effects that specifically refer to “Trap Rooms.”

Uncover: A Room is uncovered when the Room above in its stack is destroyed.

XP: A Boss card’s XP value determines which player gets to go first during each phase of the game. See page 12 for details.



CREDITS

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Boss Monster was made possible by a generous group of Kickstarter backers; find them all here on our Wall of Honor.



SEQUENCE OF PLAY

1

BEGINNING OF TURN

Reveal Heroes (one per player), then each player draws a card from the Room Deck.

2

BUILD PHASE

Each player may build one Room. Players take turns, in XP order, placing a Room card face down in their dungeon. At the end of the Build phase, Rooms are revealed.



3

BAIT PHASE

Heroes move to the entrance of the dungeon with the highest corresponding treasure value (or stay in town, if treasure values are tied). No Spells or abilities may be played.

4

ADVENTURE PHASE

Heroes travel through dungeons. In XP order, each player takes a turn as the active player, “processing” all Heroes at their dungeon and acquiring Souls or Wounds.



5

END OF TURN

If a player has 10 or more Souls (👤), or 5 or more Wounds (🩸) the game ends! The winner is the player with the most Souls minus Wounds.



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