

Karak

Shadows of evil spread forth from the goblin caverns, darkening the land.
Once again, the call rings out for heroes. Brave defenders don their armour,
strap on their weapons, and march to defeat the monsters once and for all.
But only one hero will become the Champion of the Realm.

OVERVIEW

In the card game **Karak: Goblin**, players take the roles of heroes fighting their way through the goblin caverns to defeat the evil overlord.

On your turn, you can confront one of the caverns' monsters. Your action cards enable you to hit your enemy, block attacks, heal your wounds, or even draw new cards. However, your options are limited by the ebb and flow of battle – cards come in four colors, and each card specifies which colors will be played after it. If you find an effective chain of actions, you overcome your foe.

Each victory grants you a new advantage – an action card, a weapon, armor, or even a key unlocking new passages deep within the caverns. Your third key will unlock the chamber of the Lord of All Monsters. Whoever can defeat this foul being becomes the Champion of the Realm.

GAMEPLAY

The youngest player starts the game. Players take turns, in order, clockwise around the table. On your turn, you choose one of these three options:

1. **Fight a monster.**
2. **Visit the merchant.**
3. **Revive your hero.**

All three of these options will be explained below.

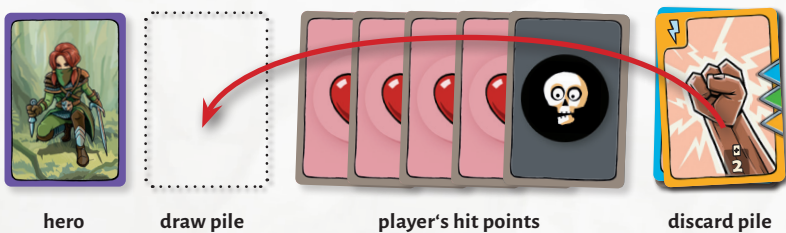
Note: If you start your turn with no hit points, you cannot fight a monster or visit the merchant – you must spend your turn reviving your hero.

YOUR ACTION CARDS

You start the game with 6 action cards – 4 in your hand and 2 left in your deck. When you play an action card, it goes face up in front of you. At the end of your turn, all the action cards you played go into your discard pile, which you can keep face up beside your deck.

During play, there will be ways to draw cards from your deck. If there are no cards in your deck when you have to draw one, shuffle your discard pile to make a new deck. (Note that you do not reshuffle as soon as you run out of cards – you wait until you need to draw from an empty deck. There is a difference.)

If a player has no card in their deck, nor their discard pile, they simply skip their "draw" action.



1) FIGHTING A MONSTER

If you choose to fight a monster on your turn, you decide which one you will fight. Initially, you can only fight monsters in level I. Choose any of the six monsters to the right of the setup row card. This includes the top card of the gatekeeper deck (but not the top card of the monster deck). Use your hero card to mark the monster you choose to fight.

In the battle, you will play action cards one at a time in an attempt to score a certain number of hits on the monster while protecting yourself from the monster's attacks.

The first action card you play in the battle can have any color (except a color forbidden by the monster's curse). The triangles on the right edge of the card specify which colors can be played next. You can play as many cards as you want – even your entire hand – as long as each card matches one of the colors specified by the card that was played immediately before it.

Note: It is even possible to play more than 4 cards, because some cards allow you draw a new one. In fact, this is the only way to defeat some of your more formidable foes.

Some card effects must be resolved as soon as you play them. Other effects are resolved only at the end of the battle. Once you have finished playing cards – by choice, or because you have no other card you can legally play – evaluate the end-of-battle effects in this order:

1. **TAKE HITS FROM THE MONSTER** – The monster's attack value specifies how many hit points you lose; however, this damage is reduced by the sum of your defence (which you could get from your equipment and from cards you play). If you reduce the attack to zero or less, nothing happens. On the other hand, if you lose hit points, flip that many hit point cards to the skull side. If you lose your last hit point, your turn ends immediately. (Skip steps 2 and 3, and continue with step 4.)
2. **HIT THE MONSTER** – Add up all your attack effects on cards you played, plus any attack values you have on your equipment. If this number is equal to or greater than the monster's hit points, you win the battle. (Continue with step 3.) If you did not hit the monster hard enough to win, leave the monster there, take back your hero card, and end your turn. (Continue with step 4.)

COMPONENTS



SETUP

THE CAVERNS – The goblin caverns will be represented by cards laid out in rows in the middle of the table. **1** Begin by placing setup cards I, II, and III in a column. These mark three levels of the caverns. Below them, place setup card X to represent the chamber of the Lord of All Monsters.

2 All monster cards should have the monster side up. Divide them into 3 decks, according to their levels (I, II, III). In each deck, 5 monsters are marked with a key symbol (key icon) on the left edge. (They also have a big key on the back side.) These monsters are gatekeepers. Remove the gatekeepers from each deck and set them aside. Shuffle the remaining cards in each deck and then place each deck beside the card that marks its row. **3** Extend each of these three rows by dealing out 5 cards from each deck – these are the monsters you will be confronting. **4** Shuffle the decks of gatekeeper cards and place the gatekeeper decks at the right end of their respective rows.

5 Three cards are marked as level X. Randomly choose one to be the Lord of All Monsters for this game. Place it face up in the row below the caverns' three levels. (The other two monster lord cards can be returned to the box – they will not be used in this game.)

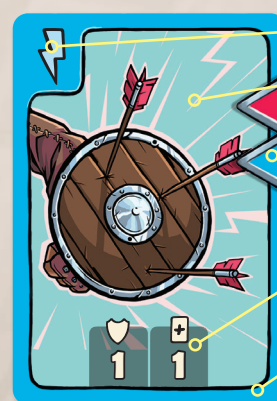
THE MERCHANT – Your heroes may also need to do some shopping in town. **6** Place the merchant card above the level I card to mark a row above the caverns. (Yes, the merchant is a genie.) **7** Sort the potion cards by color (potion of strength, healing potion, countercurse potion) and place them in three piles beside the merchant. **8** Place the pawnshop card to the right of them to mark the place where the merchant's pawnshop will be during play.

PLAYER SETUP – Each player should choose a hero and take the **9** hero card and **10** six action cards belonging to that character. Shuffle your 6 action cards to make your deck. Place them face down beside you, and draw 4 cards to form your opening hand.

11 Each player also gets 5 hit point cards. Lay these in front of you with the heart side up to show you have 5 hit points.



ACTION CARD



Card type icon

Illustration

Next Colors – shows which colors can be played next

Effects – shows what the card does

Color – determines when the card can be played

MONSTER CARD



Attack – number of hit points you could lose at the end of the battle.

Hit Points – number of hits you need to win

Level – which row the monster belongs in

Reward – shows what you could gain if you win.

Curse – specifies cards you can't play or effects you can't use

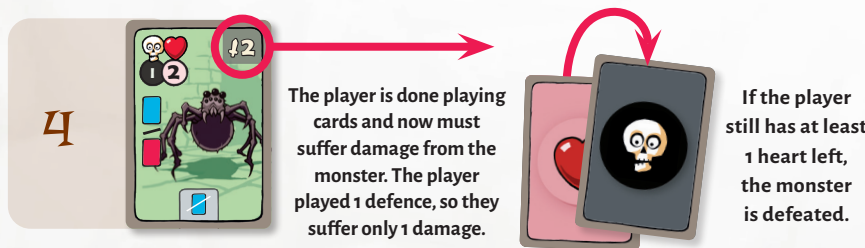
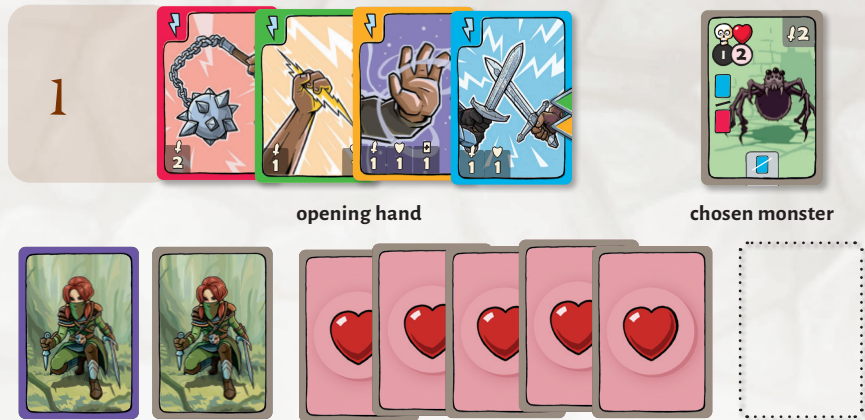
3. **GET YOUR REWARD** – If you defeated the monster in step 2, take back your hero card and take the monster card. Flip the monster over. You have just gained equipment or an action card.

- If you gain an action card, place it in your discard pile.
- If you gain equipment, you may add it to your equipment or send it to the pawnshop. (Equipment and the pawnshop are explained later.)

Unless you took the top card from deck the gatekeeper deck, there is now an empty space in the row. Fill the space with the top card of the monster deck.

4. **END YOUR TURN** – Win, lose, or draw, at the end of your turn all the cards you played go into your discard pile. Then you draw cards from your deck until you once again have a full hand. A full hand is usually 4 cards, but some equipment can increase this number.

Note on shuffling: You already know that when you have to draw and your deck is out of cards, you must shuffle your discard pile to remake your deck. And you've probably noticed that the action cards you get from monsters have a monster on their "backs", which makes them easy to distinguish from the 6 action cards you started with. You are allowed to stack these distinguishable cards in your deck in any order you wish. You can also stack your starting action cards however you wish, but only after you have randomized them so that you don't know which is which.



2) VISITING THE MERCHANT

Instead of fighting a monster in the caverns, you can spend your turn visiting the merchant. He has three types of potions, and he can also sell you any card that a player has put in the pawnshop.

For each card you buy, you must place one of your cards in the pawnshop as payment. You can pay only with your weapon card, your armour card, or an action card in your hand that has a monster on the back. (You cannot pay with a key, with a potion, nor with one of your starting cards.)

If you do not have a full hand once you are done shopping, draw until your hand is full. (Normally, a full hand is 4 cards, but you may have just purchased equipment that increases this limit.)

POTION SHOP – You can buy multiple potions on one turn, but you can own no more than one of each type. You can buy potions even if you also buy something from the pawnshop on this turn.

PAWNSHOP – The pawnshop starts empty, but over the course of the game it will accumulate weapons and armour that players give up when they get new weapons and armour, and it will also accumulate cards that players spend as payment. When you spend your turn visiting the merchant, you can buy at most one card from the pawnshop.

3) REVIVING YOUR HERO

If your hero has no hit points left (0 hearts, 5 skulls), you must spend your entire turn recovering your strength. Instead of fighting a monster or visiting the merchant, flip all your hit point cards so that the heart is face up. You will start your next turn at full health.

THE CHAMPION OF THE REALM

Once you have defeated one gatekeeper from each level, you have the keys you need to face the Lord of All Monsters. The first player to defeat the Lord of All Monsters in battle wins the game and becomes the Champion of the Realm.

GAME DESIGN AND PRODUCTION: David Rozsival • **ENGLISH TRANSLATION:** Jason Holt
ILLUSTRATIONS: Zdeněk Vomáčka and Roman Hladík
AUTHORS OF THE ORIGINAL KARAK BOARD GAME: Petr Mikša and Roman Hladík
LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN: Michal Peichl



ACTION CARD EFFECTS

Action cards can have one or more effect(s). If a card has multiple effects, all of them apply.



ATTACK – Add this number to your attack value at the end of the battle.



DRAW – Immediately draw the specified number of action cards from your deck. (If you have to draw from an empty deck, shuffle your discard pile to make a new deck, but do not shuffle in any of the cards you have played this turn.)



DEFENCE – Subtract this number from the monster's attack value at the end of the battle.

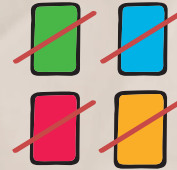


HEALING – Immediately regain the indicated number of hit points. (Flip skulls over to hearts.) Once you are back at full hit points, any extra healing is wasted – it can't be saved for the end of the battle.

MONSTER CURSES



ACTION CARD EFFECT CURSES – If the monster has one of these symbols, the indicated effect is nullified on all action cards you play during the battle. For example, if you fight a monster with a curse against action cards' defence effects, you can still play cards with those effects, but when you count up your defence at the end of the battle, you ignore your action cards and consider only defence you get from equipment.



COLOR CURSES – If the monster has one of these symbols, you cannot play any card of the forbidden color during the battle.



EQUIPMENT CURSES – If you attack a monster that has one of these symbols, you cannot use equipment of the indicated type during the battle.

EQUIPMENT

There are four types of equipment: **weapons**, **armour**, **keys**, and **potions**. Equipment cards are not action cards – instead of going to your deck or your hand, they remain always face up on the table in front of you.



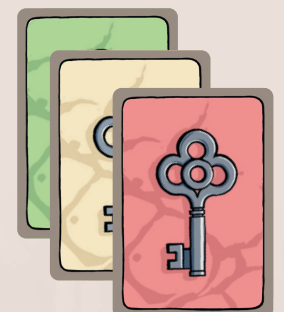
WEAPONS AND ARMOR – You are allowed to possess at most one weapon. If you gain another weapon, you must choose one to keep and give up the other to the pawnshop. (Put it in the pile at the end of the merchant row.) Similarly, you are allowed to possess at most one armour card. Thus the pawnshop will start empty, but will gradually accumulate weapons and armour over the course of the game. Most weapons will add to your attack value and most armour will add to your defence value, but they can have other effects as well.



If equipment has the heart symbol, regain the indicated number of hit points at the end of each battle, after you take hits from the monster. If the monster took your last hit point, this effect won't trigger and you will need to revive on your next turn.



This symbol indicates that the equipment increases your hand size. When you would normally draw up to a full hand of 4, now it's 5. (Or 6, if you have this bonus twice.) However, if a curse cancels this bonus, you must discard down to 4 before starting the battle. If you enter the battle with an armor curse, you must discard your cards until you have 4 in hand. After the battle you draw up to your modified maximal hand of cards.



KEYS – You gain keys by defeating gatekeepers. Each key allows you to access the next level of the goblin caverns. Once you have defeated a gatekeeper, you are not allowed to fight another gatekeeper on that level for the rest of the game, although you may continue to attack the other monsters on that level if you wish.

For example, you cannot attack monsters on the second level of the caverns until you have defeated a level I gatekeeper. And once you defeat a level II gatekeeper, you will have 2 keys, which allows you to fight any monster on any of the three levels (except you can't fight the level I and II gatekeepers). You cannot fight the Lord of All Monsters until you have defeated a level III gatekeeper.

During the game, you will gain only one key from each level and you will never lose or give up a key.

POTIONS – The merchant has three types of potions for sale. You can have at most one of each color. Unlike other equipment, these are single-use items – return the card to the appropriate pile when you use it.



COUNTERCURSE POTION – For the duration of your battle, the monster's curse does not apply. If the monster has multiple curses, you choose one to counter with this potion. Even though the potion's effect lasts until the end of your turn, discard it immediately so you don't forget that you have used up its magic.



POTION OF STRENGTH – When you drink this potion, double the attack or defence effect of the action card you just played. Place the potion beside the card to remind you it has been doubled. Discard the potion when you evaluate that effect at the end of the battle. This potion cannot be used to double an equipment effect.



HEALING POTION – When you drink this potion, you immediately regain all your hit points. (Flip all skulls back to hearts.) You can use this at any time during a battle before you take hits from the monster. Alternatively, you can use it after you take hits, but only if you did not lose your last hit point.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

If all players agree, you can differentiate the 6 heroes by giving each one a special ability. (Please note that this will make the game faster and easier.)



ARGENTUS – the Wizard: Once per battle, Argentus can play a blue card when the previous card does not allow it. (But he can't play a blue card if a curse forbids it.)



HORAN – the Warrior: Once per battle, if Horan plays two attack-effect action cards in a row, he adds a +1 bonus to his total attack value.



LORD XANROS – the Warlock: Once per battle, Xanros can play one card with a color that is forbidden by a curse or evaluate one action-card effect that is forbidden by a curse. (This ability cannot be used against equipment curses.)



ADERYN – the Thief: Even if Aderyn loses her last hit point in a battle, she still gets a chance to hit the monster and possibly gain its reward. However, she cannot use this ability to defeat the Lord of All Monsters.



VICTORIUS – the Swordsman: The second action card Victorious plays in a battle can have a color other than those allowed by the first card.



TAIA – the Oracle: When Taia plays an action card with the "draw a card" effect, she draws 2, keeps one, and puts the other on the bottom of her deck. (If her deck has only one card, she shuffles her discard pile so she can draw 2.)