

# ABBREVIATED STARTER RULES



## HOW TO LEARN TO PLAY

To get a general idea of how to play, you should:

- 1) Play through the sample game described in the *Initial Adventure Guide* booklet.
- 2) Then, read through this *Abbreviated Starter Rules* booklet. These guidelines cover everything that happens in the sample game.

**Note:** If you are an experienced gamer or if you have played collectible card games before, you may want to start with step 2 and then just shuffle the two decks and start to play.

- 3) Place the sample decks back into their original order. Then, play through the sample game a second time. The Gandalf cards are ordered face-down from G01 (the top card) to G60 (the bottom card). The Saruman cards are ordered face-down from S01 (the top card) to S60 (the bottom card).
- 4) Shuffle the sample decks and play a real game, rolling the dice when needed. Refer to the *Abbreviated Starter Rules* as needed during play.

Later, you may want to read the full *Starter Rules* in *Middle-earth: The Wizards: The Complete Rules* and play a game using all of the *Starter Rules* for *Middle-earth: The Wizards (METW)*. The *Complete Rules* also contain the *METW* Standard Rules, but you should not read those until after you have mastered the *Starter Rules*.

## Making a Roll

When you need to make a roll, roll two six-sided dice (2D6) and add the two results together.

## Examples

The *Initial Adventure Guide* provides numerous detailed examples of all of the elements of play. You may want to refer to it as you read these rules.

## The Components

The *Middle-earth the Wizards: Starter Set* contains:

- A 60-card ready-to-play "Gandalf" deck
- A 60-card ready-to-play "Saruman" deck
- Two "burning eye" six-sided dice
- Two "Hobbit" company markers
- Two marshalling point markers
- A full-color *Middle-earth* play map
- Two full-color player sheets
- An *Initial Adventure Guide* booklet
- An *Abbreviated Starter Rules* booklet
- A *Complete Rules* booklet

## GETTING READY TO PLAY

Follow these steps to get ready to play:

- 1) Each player makes a roll (reroll if tied). The player with the highest result is Saruman and takes the play deck for Saruman. The other player is Gandalf and takes the other play deck.
- 2) Place the play map between you and your opponent. If you are the Gandalf player, place the Gandalf play sheet between you and the play map. If you are the Saruman player, place the Saruman play sheet between you and the play map.
- 3) Place the two company markers at the Rivendell space on the play map. The white Hobbit represents Saruman's company, while the grey Hobbit represents Gandalf's company.
- 4) Place a marker on the "6" space on your marshalling point track. Use white for Saruman, grey for Gandalf.
- 5) Place your four starting characters and two starting items on your play sheet in the marked spaces.
- 6) Shuffle the rest of your cards and place them on the play deck space on your play sheet.
- 7) Draw a hand of eight cards from your play deck.
- 8) The Saruman player has the first turn.

## THE PLAYER TURN

Play consists of a series of "Player Turns." During your turn, you take various actions during the following phases. Then, your opponent does the same during his turn.

### Player Turn Summary

- 1) **Untap Phase:** Each of your characters may do one of the following: Heal (if at a Haven site) **or** Untap.
- 2) **Organization Phase:** Reorganize your company **and/or** (if at a Haven) play one character or your Wizard from your hand. Remove your opponent's hazard long-events.
- 3) **Movement/Hazard Phase:** You may move your company to a new site. Each player draws cards as indicated by the new site. Then, your opponent plays hazards against you based on the new site and the path taken. Finally, each player must discard or draw until he has a hand of exactly 8 cards.
- 4) **Site Phase:** If your new site has an automatic-attack, you must face it. Then, you may tap a character to play one item or ally **or** you may tap a character to attempt to play a faction.
- 5) **End-of-Turn Phase:** Each player may discard one card. Then, each player must discard or draw until he has a hand of exactly 8 cards.



## THE CARDS

There are three types of cards in your deck: character cards (the blue background cards and the Wizard cards), resource cards (the copper-metal background cards), and hazard cards (steel grey metal background cards). The color insert in the Initial Adventure has a key for each of these types of cards.

Before starting play, shuffle your cards and place them face-down in front of you—this is your *play deck*. During the game, you draw cards from the top of this deck and place them in your *hand*. When you play a card, it either remains in play or it is placed into your *discard pile* or your *out-of-play pile*:

**Discard Pile** — Your discarded cards are placed face down in your discard pile. When your play deck is *exhausted*, you shuffle the cards in your discard pile and they become your new play deck.

**Out-of-play Pile** — If one of your characters is eliminated, place him in your out-of-play pile. When you defeat all of the strikes from a creature, place the creature's card in your out-of-play pile. When you successfully play a faction, place it in your out-of-play pile.

### Tapping and Card Positions

Normally, during play, each of your cards is placed on the playing surface so that its top is towards your opponent and its bottom is towards you. During play characters and certain items must be "tapped" when they are used—this is a record keeping mechanism to keep track of card usage. To tap a card, rotate it 90° so that it is turned sideways—to untap a card, rotate it back 90° to its normal position. A tapped character or item has already done something during the turn and cannot perform certain actions.

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



Untapped



Wounded



Tapped

## CHARACTERS & COMPANIES

As a player, you influence and control a number of characters that move and act in the world of Middle-earth. Each character's abilities are defined by these attributes: race, skills, direct influence, prowess (offense), body (defense), mind, marshalling points, and special abilities. A character can be *eliminated* and removed from play as a result of failing a body check during combat.

During play, all of your characters operate together in your *company*.

### Controlling Characters

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

If such a character's direct influence is greater than or equal to another one of your characters' mind attribute, he may take control of that other character, who then becomes a *follower* of the controlling character. A follower may not have his own followers, but a follower is handled in all other ways as a normal character.

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

If a character controlling a follower is removed from play, the follower remains in play as a normal character.

### Bringing Characters Into Play

If your company is at a Haven (i.e., Rivendell or Lórien) and you have enough general influence or direct influence, you may bring one character or your Wizard into play.

### Healing

Each of your wounded characters at a Haven may heal during the untap phase of your turn. Such a character moves from a wounded position to a tapped position (i.e., the character is still tapped).

## MOVEMENT

During the movement/hazard phase of each of your turns, you may move your company from its *current site* to its *new site*. The new site must be connected to the current site by a bold, black line on the play map.

### Drawing Cards When Moving

- If your company does not move, no cards are drawn.
- If your company moves, you draw the number of cards indicated in the white box in the lower-left corner of the new site. Your opponent draws the number of cards indicated in the grey box in the lower-left corner of the new site.

## Site Type

Each site has one of the following six *site type* symbols in its upper-left corner:

Site Type	Symbol
Havens .....	[ ☼ ]
Free-holds .....	[ ☐ ]
Border-holds .....	[ ⚔ ]
Ruins & Lairs .....	[ ⚡ ]
Shadow-holds .....	[ ⚡ ]
Dark-holds .....	[ ⚡ ]

## Site Paths

There is a *site path* printed next to the bold, black line that connect each pair of adjacent sites. A site path represents the regions that your company travels through in order to move from one site to another. Each site path consists of a series of region symbols:

Region Type	Symbol
Coastal Seas .....	[ ☪ ]
Free-domains .....	[ ☐ ]
Border-lands .....	[ ⚔ ]
Wilderness .....	[ ⚡ ]
Shadow-lands .....	[ ⚡ ]
Dark-domains .....	[ ⚡ ]

## Playing Hazards on a Moving Company

After you and your opponent have drawn cards, your opponent has the opportunity to play hazards that he has in his hand. In order to play a hazard creature on a moving company, one of the symbols in the bar on the left hand side of the creature's card must match one of the following:

- The site type symbol of the company's new site.
- One of the symbols in the site path between the company's current site and its new site.

## COMBAT

Combat occurs when a creature hazard is played on your company or when your company faces an *automatic-attack* at a site. Each of these cases involves resolving one *attack* that consists of one or more *strikes*.

- Each strike can target one and only one character in the attacked company.
- Each character can be the target of only one strike from a given attack.
- If an attack has more strikes than the company has characters, ignore the excess strikes.

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

### A Strike's Prowess

Each attack has a prowess that reflects how hard it is to defeat the attack. Certain cards may increase the number of strikes and/or prowess of an attack: *Arouse Minions*, *Wake of War*, and *Minions Stir*.

## A Character's Prowess

Each of your characters has a prowess that reflects the character's abilities in combat. There are a number of standard modifications to a character's prowess:

- An *tapped* character modifies his prowess by -1.
- A *wounded* character modifies his prowess by -2.
- Normally a character that is the target of a strike must tap when the strike is resolved. However, a character may choose to not tap—if so, his prowess is modified by -3. The character does not take this penalty if a *Block* or *Dodge* card is used.
- The target's prowess is modified by +3 if a *Risky Blow* card is used.

Condition	Mod. to Target's Prowess
Untapped character decides to tap .....	0
Untapped character decides not to tap .....	-3
Tapped character .....	-1
Wounded character .....	-2
Risky Blow .....	+3

## Resolving a Strike

Strikes are resolved one at a time as decided by the defending player. When you choose a strike to resolve, determine all of the factors affecting the strike before the roll is made.

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

- If this result is greater than the strike's prowess, the strike is *defeated*.
- If this result is equal to the strike's prowess, the strike is *ineffectual*.
- Otherwise, the strike is *successful* and the character is wounded and must make a body check.

## Body Checks

To make a body check, the *attacker* makes a roll (2D6); if this value is greater than the character's *body attribute*, the character is eliminated and his card is placed in your out-of-play pile. If the character was already wounded before this strike, the roll is modified by +1.

If a character is eliminated, the items he controls are transferred to other characters in his company.

## Defeating an Attack

An attack by a hazard creature is defeated if each of its strikes that targeted a character is defeated. A defeated hazard creature's card is placed in the defender's out-of-play pile. The defender receives marshalling points for eliminating it.

## Canceled Attacks and Strikes

If one of the strikes was canceled or ineffectual, the attack is *not* defeated. If the attack is canceled, the attack is *not* defeated. A canceled attack has no effect on the defending company. A canceled hazard creature is immediately discarded.





## PLAYING CARDS

You may only play hazard cards during your opponent's movement/hazard phase. You may only play items, allies, and factions during your site phase as outlined in this section. You may play other resource cards anytime during your own turn as outlined below:

Card	Playable
Risky Blow .....	on a character facing a strike
Lucky Strike .....	on a character facing a strike
Block .....	on a character facing a strike
Dodge .....	on a character facing a strike
Concealment .....	on an attack
Escape .....	on an attack
Dark Quarrels .....	on an attack
Halfling Stealth .....	on a Hobbit facing a strike
Halfling Strength ..	on a tapped or wounded Hobbit
Ford .....	on a moving company
Bridge ....	on a company that just moved to a Haven
Muster .....	on a character influencing a faction
Tempering	
Friendship ....	on a character influencing a faction

### Transferring Items

During your organization phase, you may transfer items between your characters.

### Playing a Faction

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

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

### Playing an Ally

You can automatically bring an ally into play by tapping one of your characters. The character must be at the site indicated on the ally's card. Every ally is controlled by the character that tapped to bring it into play. It must be placed under and remain with that character's card. An ally does not count against its controlling character's direct influence or your general influence.

## Playing an Item

If a character is at a site that indicates that a major item is "playable," he may tap to bring a major item into play. If a character is at a site that indicates that a greater item is "playable," he may tap to bring a greater item into play. The item card is placed under the character's card.

During a given game, each player may play only one item at each site.

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

### Short-events

A short-event's effects are immediately implemented when it is played. Then the event card is discarded.

### Long-events

You may only play a hazard long-event during your opponent's movement/hazard phase. Its card and effects remain in play until your opponent's next long-event phase or until otherwise discarded. Hazard long-events last approximately two turns, one of your opponent's and one of yours.

## THE VICTORY CONDITIONS

You win the game if your opponent's Wizard is eliminated. Otherwise, the winner of the game is the player that has gathered the most *marshalling points* from:

- Control of: characters, allies, items, and factions.
- Destruction of creatures played by your opponent.

Marshalling points are printed on the top left corner of the cards that award them. If both players end up with the same number of marshalling points, the game is a tie.

### Ending the Game

The game ends when one of the following occurs:

- 1) If your Wizard is "eliminated," the game ends immediately and your opponent wins.
- 2) If each play deck has been exhausted once, the game ends at the end of the current turn.
- 3) If you have at least 20 marshalling points, the game ends at the end of your opponent's next turn (i.e., your opponent gets one last turn).

### Keeping Track of Your Marshalling Points

You should place a marker on the Marshalling Point Track to keep a running total of your marshalling points as you acquire them. Use a grey marker for Gandalf and a white marker for Saruman.