

# Card-Based Battle System for Tabletop RPG

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## Overview

### Concept

Card-based battle system for a D&D-based homebrew roleplaying campaign. Each player's chosen classes get access to 3 different specializations to unlock cards from throughout the campaign.

### Genre

Digital Tabletop card-based RPG

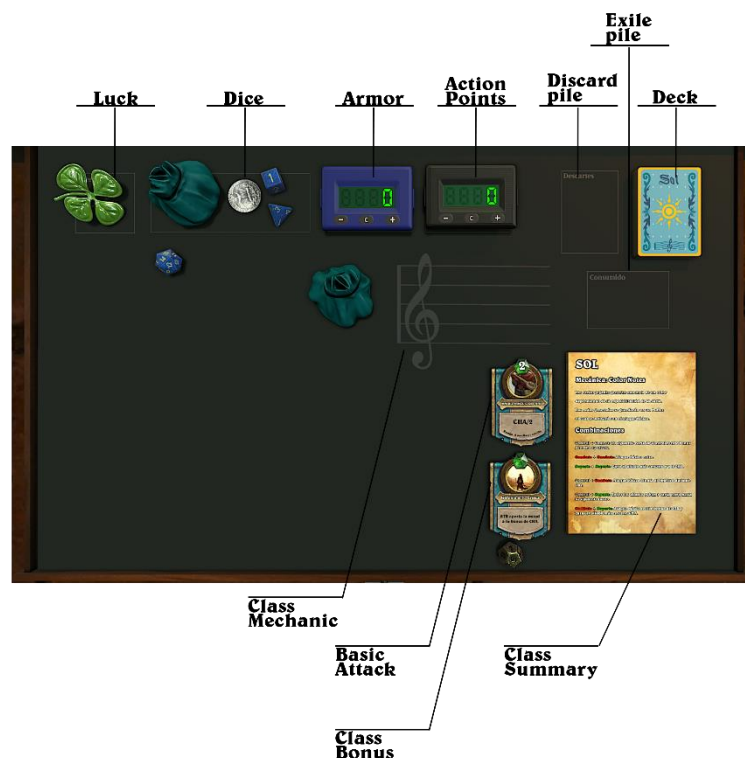
### Target Audience

Anyone who likes card games and roleplaying games.

# Gameplay & Mechanics

## Player Board

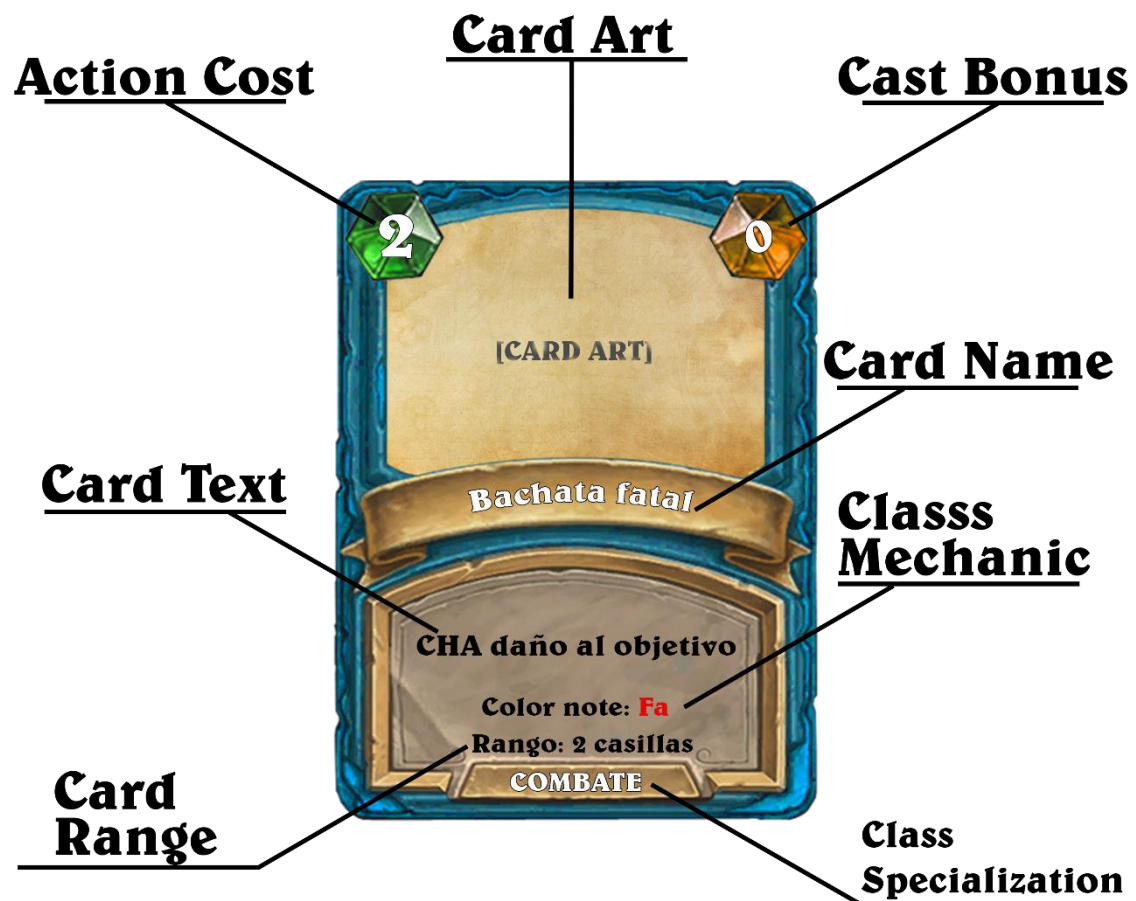
Each player has their own board. This isn't where the action takes place, rather where important information is.



- **Luck:** Each player has a free dice reroll each game session.
- **Dice:** Player's preferred dice set.
- **Armor:** How much damage will player's character soak before is dealt to their health.
- **Action Points:** Number of Action Points the player has available.
- **Discard pile:** Once cards are played they go there.
- **Exile pile:** Some cards are explicitly sent to the exile pile when used. This means they can't be shuffled back until the players come back to a safe spot.
- **Deck:** Player's deck full of awesome cards.
- **Class Mechanic:** Some class mechanics need their space on the board to better guide the player.
- **Basic Attack:** Basic attack available to every class and its damage value.
- **Class Bonus:** When the campaign advances players will receive class bonuses to enhance their characters.
- **Class Summary:** In case something is forgotten, basic knowledge of their classes is displayed in their board.

# Card Anatomy

Using Hearthstone's template, the idea is to pack every bit of information in a cohesive structure. Important elements such as the cost are highlighted so they are easily spotted.



- **Card Art:** Each card has their unique and distinctive art.
- **Action Cost:** The number of Action Points needed for the card to be played.
- **Cast Bonus:** Value that adds on the dice roll when played.
- **Card Name:** Each card has their unique name that evokes what the card does.
- **Card Text:** Description of what the card does.
- **Class Mechanic:** If needed, explanation on how the class mechanic affects the card.
- **Card Range:** Max tile range at which this card can be cast.
- **Class Specialization:** Specify from which specialization is this card.

# How turns work

When a player's turn starts there's an order to be followed before deciding what to do.

Each player's turns consist of 6 actions:

- 1) When a player's turn starts, they draw until they have 5 cards in hand.
- 2) They can discard 1 card to draw another at the start of their turn.
- 3) Sum a set value of Action Points based on a specific character stat. The minimum amount is 4.
- 4) Depending on your class, they can move a different number of tiles in the battle map. If they wish to move more, they can use 1 Action Point to roll a 1d4 dice and move accordingly.
- 5) Use your Action Points to cast cards from your hand.
- 6) If not spent, you can save up Action Points for your next round.

After the 3) step, players are free to order the rest of the points as they like.

## Actions

Whatever players do has an action cost, aside from each turn's free movement. Actions spend Action Points and the cost varies between each one.

Basic attack costs 2 Action Points and players can do it as many times as they want per turn if they can pay the cost. The damage scales by their main stat divided by 2.

Extra movement costs 1 Action Point and lets players roll a d4 for additional movement during their turn.

Players can do custom actions if they want, the cost will be decided by the Game Master.

# Player Classes

Each class has been designed with each player's ideas in mind. The core features of each class idea are represented by one or multiple class specializations and designed exchanging ideas with each player.

## BARD

### Input from the player

The bard must wear a lute and party a lot. Their focus will be supporting the party.

### Design Decisions

Supporting the party is a very important role, and so I've decided to split it into 2 specializations: Healing and Crowd Control. The healing specialization will adopt the "Support" name for lack of a better term and will focus on cards that heal in one way or the other. Control is the other half and as the second specialization will focus on making their targets cry, sleep or pushed away by soundwaves. The last specialization will help the bard in situations where they must defend themselves bringing in damage.

### Final Result

As a good bard should, their focus is the Charisma stat and is a fundamental pillar in the party packing healing, crowd control and a bit of damage all in one class. The class mechanic will always help the team whatever the card the bard decides to play.

### Class Mechanic: Color Notes

Each specialization is given a color and a musical note name (Fa, Re and Sol). The last 2 notes will be buffered to use in any combination when a basic attack is done. Depending on the combination it will focus only on damage, healing, crowd control or a little bit of all.

### Card Sample



# Dark Mage

## Input from the player

A traditional spellcasting Wizard but with a dark twist and access to necromancy.

## Design Decisions

As a wizard their job will be staying at a safe position and deal massive amounts of damage. Their ideas reinforce it by all being capabilities which enforce that role, especially the dark magic. Necromancy can bring some differentiation by being able to discard more cards or profit from the discard pile. The last specialization will follow the same dark twist route by bringing debuffs to their targets.

## Final Result

Being Intelligence their main stat, the Dark Mage will fling every spell at his arsenal to evaporate whatever cross their path. Being a specialist in destruction as well as in affliction, both are reflected in their specialization options. Necromancy comes in as the 3<sup>rd</sup> specialization and brings to the class hand and discard pile manipulation to better align their spells for the battle.

## Class Mechanic: DOOM

Cards with DOOM will have an additional effect if there's 15 or less cards in their player's deck. The longer the battle the bigger the payoff.

## Card Sample





# SAMURAI

## Input from the player

A samurai with 2 possessed katanas, each by a good alignment (Izanagi) or bad alignment (Izanami) Japanese deity.

## Design Decisions

Separate both deities in different specializations. The evil one focuses on dealing extra damage whilst the good one focuses more on defense and self-healing.

## Final Result

The Samurai is a Strength focused class which excels at melee damage by reposting enemy attacks via the Izanagi cards or by having extra damage and range via the Izanami cards. The final specialization are battle stances in which the Samurai gets passive bonuses from being in one of them.

## Class Mechanic: Kami's Influence

Whenever you play one card from Izanami or Izanagi, you'll gain 1 point of influence for that kami and subtract one from the other. When you have 3 or more influence points you become exalted, and cards from that specialization will have an additional effect.

## Card Sample



# VAMPIRE KNIGHT

## Input from the player

They wanted a Vampire Knight with an emphasis on taking a glimpse into the future.

## Design Decisions

3 different characteristics makes fitting them into 3 specializations a lot easier. For the Knight part, their cards will focus on gaining armor and charging into battle. Vampire themed cards will focus on using health as a resource as well as draining health from the enemies. Foresight as the third specialization is an interesting addition and will be used for hand and dice manipulation.

## Final Result

The Vampire Knight will be the frontline of the party, hence their focus on the Constitution stat. Every specialization adds something to the class so they are always doing something in the fray of the battle. From bashing enemies to changing the future by rerolling any dice being thrown , the Vampire Knight is a very flexible class.

## Class Mechanic: Quick Action

Cards with this keyword can be cast anytime if the cost can be paid.

## Card Sample





# ELEMENTAL RANGER

## Input from the player

A classical forest ranger capable of commanding the basic elements of nature as well as being able to transform into a werewolf.

## Design Decisions

The original idea already had 3 distinct features to perfectly match the 3 specializations template. One for area control and status effects (Elements of nature), one for ranged damage (Ranger skills) and finally one for melee situations (Werewolf).

## Final Result

Ranger is a ranged DPS focused on the Dexterity stat. His main role is to deal damage away from the enemy but access to crowd control via nature elements and melee capabilities being a werewolf spice up the traditional stay-away gameplay of the Ranger.

## Class Mechanic: Elemental Tuning

When playing cards from the Elemental specialization, you'll have the option to tune into one of the 4 basic elements of nature (Fire, Water, Earth and Wind). Cards from this specialization will have different outcomes depending on the element you are tuned in.

## Card Sample



# References

Card design is straight up from Hearthstone. The most important reason why is its element disposition, which makes it easy to distinguish everything and not feel overwhelmed.

Magic: The Gathering has influenced heavily this project as well, for example using the “Instant” spell mechanic in Vampire Knight’s foresight cards.

This system has been designed to play in a Dungeons & Dragons/Pathfinder style of tabletop RPG, taking in account tiles and distances between them, as well as movement.