



Design Doc - Necromancer

HERO IDENTITY

Class Fantasy: Diablo-inspired necromancer commanding an army of undead. Master of death who turns mortality into power.

Core Mechanics:

1. **Raise** - Bring minions back from your graveyard to the battlefield, entering play tapped
2. **Sacrifice** - Pay health OR kill your own minions to activate powerful effects

Playstyle: Recursive Midrange deck that creates persistent board pressure through minion swarm. Death isn't failure—it's fuel. Minions become resources to spend or resurrect.

The Loop:

- Play cheap minions to flood the board
- Trade aggressively or Sacrifice for powerful effects (deny bounties)
- Raise minions back from graveyard (persistent pressure)
- Scale damage/effects with minion count
- Opponent can't exhaust your resources (graveyard refills constantly)
- Level up (Raised minions attack immediately)
- Finish with wide board burst or Bone Colossus absorption

RAISE MECHANIC (GRAVEYARD RECURSION KEYWORD)

Definition: Bring minions back from your graveyard to the battlefield.

Rules:

- Choose which minion to Raise from your graveyard
- Raised minions enter play **tapped** (can block immediately, attack next turn)
- **After leveling up:** Raised minions enter **untapped** (can attack immediately)
- If graveyard is empty, the effect fizzles
- Unless specified, Raise only works on your own graveyard
- Cost restrictions prevent infinite recursion (e.g., "Raise 1 minion 3-cost or less")

Strategic Depth:

- **Graveyard as second hand** - Dead minions are still resources
- **Death = advantage** - Trading minions fills graveyard with Raise targets
- **Persistent pressure** - Board constantly refills even after wipes
- **Denial strategy** - Sacrifice your own minions to deny opponent bounties

Example Cards:

- *"Meathead General - 4 mana 2/3, When played: Raise 1 minion (2-cost or less)"*
- *"Mass Resurrection - 7 mana, Raise up to 3 minions from your graveyard"*
- *"Attack: Deathtouch - If target dies, Raise 1 minion (2-cost or less)"*

The Beautiful Loop:

1. Minion trades in combat → goes to graveyard
2. Raise it back with card/ability
3. Sacrifice it for powerful effect (deny bounty)
4. Raise it again with another card
5. Opponent exhausted, you still have board

SACRIFICE MECHANIC (DUAL-PAYMENT KEYWORD)

Definition: Pay health OR kill your own minions to activate powerful effects.

Rules:

- **Option A: Pay HP** - Lose health equal to Sacrifice cost (direct payment)
- **Option B: Sacrifice Minion** - Kill one of your minions with health \geq Sacrifice cost
 - Minion dies regardless of total health (even if it has more)
 - Dead minion goes to graveyard (can be Raised later)
 - Opponent does NOT gain bounty (you killed it, not them)
- If you don't have a minion with enough health, you **MUST** pay HP
- Cannot partially pay (can't split cost between HP and minions)
- Sacrifice is a cost, not an effect (happens before spell resolves)

Syntax: "Sacrifice X: [Effect]"

The Tension:

Early game (Rounds 1-5):

- Pay HP freely (you have 25 to spend)
- Build board presence
- Establish graveyard with bodies

Mid game (Rounds 6-10):

- Sacrifice expendable minions instead of HP
- Deny opponent bounties
- Raise sacrificed minions back for value
- Convert weak minions into powerful effects

Late game (Rounds 10+):

- HP becomes precious (closer to lethal range)
- Sacrifice minions almost exclusively
- Graveyard is full of high-quality Raise targets

- Every Sacrifice = future board presence

Example Cards:

- *"Bloodlance - 1 mana, Sacrifice X: Deal X damage to target enemy minion (X = 3, 5, or 7)"*
- *"Dark Pact - 2 mana, Sacrifice 5: Draw 3 cards"*
- *"Ghoul Berserker - 4 mana 4/3, Sacrifice 3: This costs 0 this turn"*
- *"Death Knight - 5 mana 4/4, When played: Sacrifice 4: All your minions gain +1/+1"*

Strategic Implications:

- **Resource conversion** - Turn weak minions into card draw, damage, or buffs
 - **Bounty denial** - Kill your own 3g minion rather than let opponent gain it
 - **Setup for Raise** - Intentionally put valuable minions in graveyard
 - **HP as currency** - Early aggression enabled by spending health pool
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LEVEL-UP SYSTEM

Condition: *"Raise 5 minions from your graveyard"*

Tracking: Use d12 as quest tracker

- Increment each time you Raise a minion
- Meathead General Raises 1 → +1 on die
- Mass Resurrection Raises 3 → +3 on die
- When total reaches 5+, immediately level up

Timing: Turns 6-7 (encourages aggressive trading and early recursion)

Passive Bonus: *"Raised minions enter play untapped"*

Why This Works:

- **Removes summoning sickness** - Raised minions can attack immediately
- **Huge tempo swing** - Mass Resurrection becomes instant army

- **Enables combo turns** - Raise + attack + Sacrifice + repeat
- **Scales with recursion** - Rewards your core gameplan
- **Creates pressure** - Opponent must answer immediately or die

Calculation Example Post-Level-Up:

- Play Mass Resurrection (7 mana)
- Raise 3 minions: 3/3, 4/4, 2/3 (total 9/10 stats)
- All enter **untapped** (can attack immediately)
- **That's 9 damage + persistent board in one spell**

Ultimate Access: Bone Colossus becomes playable (combine army into mega-threat)

HERO ABILITIES

HERO POWER - "Soul Harvest"

Base: *"Cost 1 mana: Sacrifice 2: Draw a card"*

Flexible resource conversion. Early: pay 2 HP to refill hand. Late: convert weak 2+ health minions into cards.

Strategic Uses:

- Turn 2 with no play: Soul Harvest (pay 2 HP), draw into action
- Late game: 1/3 minion survived combat → Soul Harvest (sacrifice it), draw card
- With Raise cards in deck: fills graveyard AND refills hand

Upgrade: "Unholy Empowerment" (3 mana to play, permanent replacement)

"Cost 1 mana: Sacrifice 2: Draw a card. If you sacrificed a minion, gain 1 Health"

Upgrade Benefits:

- Rewards minion sacrifice over HP payment
- Helps stabilize after spending health early

- 1 HP gain doesn't seem like much, but over 10+ turns = 10+ HP recovered
 - Enables longer grinds against aggressive decks
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ATTACK - "Deathtouch"

Base: *"Cost 2 mana: Deal weapon damage to target enemy minion or hero. Take damage back equal to their Attack/weapon. If target dies, Raise 1 minion (2-cost or less)"*

Every kill with your weapon generates board presence. Unique among all heroes—your Attack ability builds your army.

Strategic Uses:

- Turn 4: Attack 2/2 minion (weapon 2) → kill it, Raise Skeleton Warrior → gain 2/1 body
- Turn 6: Attack 3/3 (weapon 3) → kill it, Raise Plague Rat → gain 2/2 with Deathrattle
- Combine with equipment: Weapon damage 4+ consistently Raises value minions

Upgrade: "Reaper's Touch" (3 mana to play, permanent replacement)

"Cost 2 mana: Deal weapon damage +1 to target enemy minion or hero. Take damage back equal to their Attack/weapon. If target dies, Raise 1 minion (3-cost or less)"

Upgrade Benefits:

- **Better damage** (+1) - kills 4 health minions with 3 base weapon
 - **Better Raise targets** (3-cost or less) - can Raise Shambling Ghoul, Bone Collector, Grave Warden
 - Makes weapon into reliable minion generator
 - Post-equipment: weapon 5+ Raises most of your deck
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COMPLETE CARD LIST (40 cards)

MINIONS (11 unique, 23 total cards)

1-COST MINIONS:

Skeleton Warrior - 1 mana 2/1 (1g bounty) - **3 COPIES**

No text

Your basic body. 2 attack trades with most 1-2 drops. Perfect Raise target (always in graveyard early). Vanilla by design—teaches that even basic minions have value when Raised repeatedly.

2-COST MINIONS:

Plague Rat - 2 mana 2/2 (1g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

"Deathrattle: Your opponent loses 1 Health"

Chip damage engine. Dies in combat? 1 damage. Sacrifice it? 1 damage. Raise it and dies again? 1 damage. Over the game: 3-4 damage from one card. Makes opponent hesitant to kill it.

Corpse Crawler - 2 mana 1/3 (1g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

"Defender. When this dies, Sacrifice 2: Raise it"

Self-sustaining blocker. Forces opponent to attack into it (Defender). When it dies, pay 2 HP or sacrifice another minion to bring it back. Immortal wall if you can keep paying. Frustrating for aggro decks.

3-COST MINIONS:

Shambling Ghoul - 3 mana 3/3 (2g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

No text

Vanilla 3/3. Curve filler. Good Raise target after upgrade (3-cost accessible with Reaper's Touch). Slightly above rate (normal 3/3 is baseline, this has no downside). Clean, simple, always playable.

Bone Collector - 3 mana 3/2 (2g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

"When played: If a minion died this turn, draw a card"

Conditional card draw. Rewards aggressive trading or Sacrifice plays. Turn 3: Sacrifice Skeleton Warrior for effect → play Bone Collector → draw card → value.

Synergizes with combat + recursion loop.

Grave Warden - 3 mana 2/4 (2g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

"When you Raise a minion, this gains +1/+1"

THE SCALING ENGINE. Every Raise = permanent +1/+1. Play turn 3 as 2/4. Raise 3 times over the game → it's 5/7. Snowballs hard if not removed. Opponent must answer or it becomes unkillable.

4-COST MINIONS:

Meathead General - 4 mana 2/3 (2g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

"When played: Raise 1 minion (2-cost or less)"

Keyword carrier. Brings back Skeleton Warrior, Plague Rat, or Corpse Crawler immediately. 2/3 body is below curve (normal 4-drop is 5/5) but Raise value compensates. Always useful.

Ghoul Berserker - 4 mana 4/3 (2g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

"Sacrifice 3: This costs 0 this turn"

Tempo bomb. Turn 4: Pay 3 HP or sacrifice 3-health minion → play this for FREE → spend 4 mana elsewhere. Enables explosive turns. Late game: Sacrifice it for effect, Raise it back for free next turn.

Crypt Horror - 4 mana 3/4 (2g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

"When played: Sacrifice 4, draw 2 cards"

Card draw engine. Turn 4: Play this (4 mana), Sacrifice 4 HP → draw 2 cards. Refills hand while building board. Sacrifice a 4-health minion instead for efficiency. Raise target later.

5-COST MINIONS:

Death Knight - 5 mana 4/4 (3g bounty) - **2 COPIES**

"When played: Sacrifice 4: All your minions gain +1/+1"

Board-wide buff. Turn 5 with 3 minions: Play Death Knight, Sacrifice 4 HP → entire board gets +1/+1. Makes trades more favorable. Stacks with future buffs. Powers up Bone Colossus turn later.

6-COST MINIONS:

Grave Titan - 6 mana 5/6 (3g bounty) - **1 COPY**

"When played: Raise 2 minions (3-cost or less)"

Late-game value bomb. 6 mana gets you 5/6 body + two 2-3 cost minions back. Instant board refill. Turn 6: Play Grave Titan → Raise Grave Warden + Shambling Ghoul → 13/13 total stats. Overwhelming.

SPELLS (7 unique, 13 total cards)

1-COST SPELLS:

Bloodlance - 1 mana - **2 COPIES**

"Sacrifice X: Deal X damage to target enemy minion (X = 3, 5, or 7)"

Flexible removal. Early game: Sacrifice 3 HP, kill 3-health threat. Mid game: Sacrifice 5-health minion, kill 5-health threat (deny bounty). Late game: Sacrifice 7-health minion, nuke big body. Always useful.

Damage Options:

- Sacrifice 3 → 3 damage (kill most early drops)
 - Sacrifice 5 → 5 damage (kill mid-game threats)
 - Sacrifice 7 → 7 damage (kill premium minions)
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2-COST SPELLS:

Reanimate - 2 mana - **2 COPIES**

"Raise 1 minion (3-cost or less)"

Simple recursion spell. Always good. Turn 2: Can't Raise (empty graveyard). Turn 5: Raise Grave Warden or Shambling Ghoul. Turn 10: Raise any 3-drop. Consistent value.

Dark Pact - 2 mana - **2 COPIES**

"Sacrifice 5: Draw 3 cards"

Aggressive card draw. Turn 3: Sacrifice 5 HP → draw 3 cards → refill hand for upcoming turns. Or sacrifice 5-health minion (Death Knight after combat) → get

cards. High risk, high reward.

3-COST SPELLS:

Unholy Strength - 3 mana - **2 COPIES**

"Sacrifice 4: Target minion gets +4/+4 until end of turn"

Combat trick / finisher. Turn 8: Attack with 4/4, Unholy Strength it (Sacrifice 4 HP) → becomes 8/8 → kills blocker or deals 8 face. Can also save your minion from dying in combat.

Necrotic Strike - 3 mana - **2 COPIES**

"Deal damage to target equal to the number of minions you control"

Scaling removal / burst. Wide board = big damage. Turn 6 with 4 minions → 4 damage to any target. Turn 10 with 6 minions → 6 damage face for lethal. Rewards going wide.

4-COST SPELLS:

Drain Life - 4 mana - **2 COPIES**

"Sacrifice 6: Deal 6 damage to target. Restore 6 Health"

Stabilization spell. Sacrifice 6 HP (net 0 HP change) → kill minion + gain health back. Or sacrifice 6-health minion → swing 12 HP (remove threat, gain life). Grindy value.

7-COST SPELLS:

Mass Resurrection - 7 mana - **1 COPY**

"Raise up to 3 minions from your graveyard"

Board refill bomb. Turn 9: Opponent wipes your board → next turn Mass Resurrection → instant 3 minions back. Post-level-up: they all attack immediately. Game-winning swing.

UPGRADES (2 cards)

Hero Power II: "Unholy Empowerment" - 3 mana Upgrade - **1 COPY**

"Hero Power becomes: Cost 1 mana: Sacrifice 2: Draw a card. If you sacrificed a minion, gain 1 Health"

Rewards minion sacrifice. Over 10 turns of using upgraded Hero Power with minions → gain 10 HP. Makes grinding sustainable.

Attack II: "Reaper's Touch" - 3 mana Upgrade - 1 COPY

"Attack becomes: Cost 2 mana: Deal weapon damage +1 to target. If target dies, Raise 1 minion (3-cost or less)"

Massive weapon upgrade. Better damage, better Raise targets. Turns weapon into minion generator.

ULTIMATES (1 card, 2 copies)

Bone Colossus - 8 mana Ultimate 3/3 (3g bounty) - 2 COPIES

"Defender. When played: Kill all your minions. This gains their combined Attack and Health"

THE FINISHER.

You've been buffing minions all game (Death Knight, Unholy Strength, Grave Warden). Wide board with 25+ combined stats. Drop Bone Colossus → suddenly a 28/31 Defender threat. Opponent MUST block it or take 28+ face damage next turn.

Example Colossus Turn:

- Current board: Grave Warden (5/7), Death Knight (4/4), two Shambling Ghouls (4/4 each), Skeleton Warrior (2/1)
 - Combined stats: $5+4+4+4+2 = 19$ Attack, $7+4+4+4+1 = 20$ Health
 - Cast Bone Colossus (8 mana) → Kill all minions → Bone Colossus becomes 22/23 ($3+19$ / $3+20$)
 - Opponent must find 22+ damage to kill it OR take 22 face damage
 - **Counterplay:** Board wipe before Colossus, or keep board small all game
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CORE ABILITIES (tracked for reference, not deck cards)

Hero Power Base - *"Cost 1 mana: Sacrifice 2: Draw a card"* - **CORE**

Attack Base - *"Cost 2 mana: Deal weapon damage to target. If target dies, Raise 1 minion (2-cost or less)"* - **CORE**

Level Up - *"Condition: Raise 5 minions. Passive: Raised minions enter play untapped. Unlocks: Ultimate cards"* - **CORE**

MANA CURVE BREAKDOWN

Total: 40 cards

1-Cost: 5 cards (12.5%)

- 3x Skeleton Warrior (minion)
- 2x Bloodlance (spell)

2-Cost: 10 cards (25%)

- 2x Plague Rat (minion)
- 2x Corpse Crawler (minion)
- 2x Reanimate (spell)
- 2x Dark Pact (spell)

3-Cost: 10 cards (25%)

- 2x Shambling Ghoul (minion)
- 2x Bone Collector (minion)
- 2x Grave Warden (minion)
- 2x Unholy Strength (spell)
- 2x Necrotic Strike (spell)

4-Cost: 8 cards (20%)

- 2x Meathead General (minion)
- 2x Ghoul Berserker (minion)
- 2x Crypt Horror (minion)

- 2x Drain Life (spell)

5-Cost: 2 cards (5%)

- 2x Death Knight (minion)

6-Cost: 1 card (2.5%)

- 1x Grave Titan (minion)

7-Cost: 1 card (2.5%)

- 1x Mass Resurrection (spell)

8-Cost: 2 cards (5%)

- 2x Bone Colossus (Ultimate)

Upgrades (3-cost): 2 cards

Curve Shape: Heavily weighted toward 2-4 cost (enables consistent curve-outs, floods board early). Thin late-game (7-8 mana bombs are high-impact finishers).

KEYWORD SYNERGY DENSITY

Total cards that interact with Raise or Sacrifice: 28 out of 40 (70%)

Raise Interactions (16 cards):

- Corpse Crawler (self-Raise)
- Bone Collector (triggers when things die → fills graveyard)
- Grave Warden (grows when you Raise)
- Meathead General (Raises on play)
- Grave Titan (Raises 2)
- Reanimate (Raises 1)
- Mass Resurrection (Raises 3)
- Attack Base (Raises on kill)
- Attack II (Raises better targets)
- Level Up (condition + passive)

Sacrifice Interactions (22 cards):

- Plague Rat (want to Sacrifice for Deathrattle value)
- Corpse Crawler (Sacrifice to self-Raise)
- Ghoul Berserker (Sacrifice for cost reduction)
- Crypt Horror (Sacrifice for card draw)
- Death Knight (Sacrifice for board buff)
- Bloodlance (Sacrifice for removal)
- Dark Pact (Sacrifice for card draw)
- Unholy Strength (Sacrifice for buff)
- Drain Life (Sacrifice for removal + heal)
- Hero Power Base (Sacrifice cost)
- Hero Power II (Sacrifice with bonus)

Overlap cards (have both keywords): Corpse Crawler = 1 card

Generic/Utility cards (12 cards): Skeleton Warrior, Shambling Ghoul, Necrotic Strike (board scaling, not keyword), some support pieces

Target was 60-70%, we're at 70%. Perfect density—most cards engage with keywords, but enough flexible pieces to function without perfect draws.

EQUIPMENT PRIORITIES

Necromancer Shopping Strategy:

Priority 1: CHEST (Critical)

- HP is a spendable resource (Sacrifice costs)
- Need large HP pool to Sacrifice aggressively
- More HP = more early-game Sacrifice plays
- Look for: Heart of Tarrasque (HP + regen), Vanguard (damage reduction), Assault Cuirass (HP + armor)

Priority 2: JEWELRY (High Priority)

- Gold generation from constant minion trading
- Wide board = many kills = lots of bounties
- More gold = better equipment faster
- Look for: Ring of Avarice (gold per kill), Greevil's Greed (scaling gold), Lucky Coin (bonus gold)

Priority 3: RELIC (Moderate)

- Board-wide buffs help your swarm
- Utility relics enable combos
- Look for: Drums of Endurance (Raised minions attack faster), Crimson Guard (+1 Health to all minions), Radiance (passive AOE chip)

Priority 4: WEAPON (Low Priority)

- Attack ability generates minions (useful)
- But not your primary damage source
- Look for: Desolator (armor reduction helps face damage), Maelstrom (cleave for multi-minion hits)

Buying Patterns:

Early (Rounds 1-4): Look for cheap Jewelry (economy boost) or low-cost Chest

Mid (Rounds 5-8): Prioritize Chest > Jewelry. Need HP pool for Sacrifices, gold for upgrades

Late (Rounds 9+): Relics (Drums for instant Raise attacks) or replace with tier 3 equipment

Gold Strategy:

Necromancer generates consistent gold from trading minions. Bounties from combat deaths fund equipment. Don't need Pay cards like Rogue—your gold goes directly to shopping.

KEY COMBOS & SYNERGIES

Combo 1: Grave Warden Snowball

Setup: Grave Warden on board turn 3

Execution:

1. Turn 3: Play Grave Warden (2/4)
 2. Turn 4: Meathead General (Raise Skeleton Warrior) → Grave Warden now 3/5
 3. Turn 5: Reanimate (Raise Plague Rat) → Grave Warden now 4/6
 4. Turn 6: Grave Titan (Raise 2 minions) → Grave Warden now 6/8
- Result:** Turn 6 Grave Warden is 6/8, opponent must remove or lose
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Combo 2: Sacrifice Loop

Setup: Two minions on board, Sacrifice card in hand

Execution:

1. Sacrifice Plague Rat (pay 2 HP or kill it) for Bloodlance → deal 3 damage
 2. Plague Rat Deathrattle triggers → opponent loses 1 Health
 3. Next turn: Reanimate → Raise Plague Rat back
 4. Later: Sacrifice it again for another effect
- Result:** One minion generates 2-3 uses across the game, denies bounties, creates value
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Combo 3: Post-Level Mass Resurrection

Setup: Leveled up, graveyard full, opponent just wiped your board

Execution:

1. Turn 9: Opponent casts board wipe, kills all minions
 2. Turn 10: Mass Resurrection (7 mana) → Raise 3 minions (Death Knight, Grave Warden, Shambling Ghoul)
 3. All enter **untapped** (level-up passive)
 4. Attack with all 3 immediately → 11 damage face
- Result:** Board wipe doesn't stick, you still have lethal pressure
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Combo 4: Bone Colossus Setup

Setup: Wide board with buffed minions

Execution:

1. Turn 7: Play Death Knight, Sacrifice 4 HP → all minions gain +1/+1
 2. Current board: Grave Warden (5/7), two Shambling Ghouls (4/4 each), Skeleton Warrior (3/2) = 16 Attack, 17 Health
 3. Turn 8: Bone Colossus (8 mana) → Kill all minions → Bone Colossus becomes 19/20
 4. Opponent must find 19+ damage or block with everything
- Result:** One threat that represents your entire game's buildup
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Combo 5: Ghoul Berserker Tempo

Setup: Turn 4, Ghoul Berserker in hand, 3-health minion on board

Execution:

1. Turn 4: Sacrifice your 3-health minion → Ghoul Berserker costs 0
 2. Play Ghoul Berserker (0 mana) + use 4 mana for other plays
 3. Next turn: Reanimate → Raise the sacrificed minion back
- Result:** Explosive turn, got free 4/3, kept tempo, didn't lose value
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DECISION TREES

Decision Layer 1: Sacrifice Payment Method

Question: "Should I pay HP or sacrifice a minion?"

Considerations:

- Current HP (below 10? Be cautious with HP payment)
- Minions on board (do I have expendable bodies?)
- Raise cards in hand (can I bring sacrificed minion back?)
- Opponent's pressure (can I afford HP loss?)
- Minion bounty value (3g minion? Definitely sacrifice rather than give away)

General Rule: Early game (turns 1-5) = pay HP. Mid-late game (turns 6+) = sacrifice minions when possible.

Decision Layer 2: Raise Target Selection

Question: "Which minion should I Raise?"

Considerations:

- Board state needs (do I need blocker? Attacker? Scaling threat?)
- Grave Warden on board? (Raise anything to grow it)
- Mana efficiency (Raise highest-cost target available)
- Synergies (Raise Plague Rat for Deathrattle value? Corpse Crawler for persistent blocker?)
- Future turns (save good Raise target for Mass Resurrection later?)

General Rule: Raise highest-value target that solves immediate problem. Grave Warden on board? Raise anything (it grows). Empty board? Raise biggest threat.

Decision Layer 3: Upgrade Priority

Question: "Which upgrade do I play first?"

Considerations:

Hero Power Upgrade:

- Helps stabilize (gain 1 HP per use)
- Better in grindy games
- Earlier = more lifetime value

Attack Upgrade:

- Better damage, better Raise targets
- Enables minion generation every turn
- More immediately impactful

General Rule: Play Hero Power upgrade turns 5-6 if opponent is aggressive (need HP recovery). Play Attack upgrade turns 6-7 if you're ahead (generate more

board).

Decision Layer 4: Bone Colossus Timing

Question: "When do I cast Bone Colossus?"

Considerations:

- Current board stats (15+ combined = good, 20+ = great, 25+ = game-winning)
- Opponent's removal (can they kill it?)
- Opponent's HP (can they race it?)
- Blockers (do they have wide board to block?)
- Alternative win condition (do I have lethal with Necrotic Strike + attacks?)

General Rule: Cast when you have 20+ combined stats on board and opponent can't remove it easily. Forces them to have answer or lose.

COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Necromancer Complexity: Medium

Simple Elements:

- Clear Raise mechanic (bring minions back)
- Binary Sacrifice decision (HP or minion?)
- Graveyard is face-up (no hidden information)
- No tracked resources (no dice for Raise/Sacrifice)

Strategic Depth:

- Dual payment decisions (HP vs minion for each Sacrifice)
- Graveyard management (which minions to Raise when?)
- Board positioning (keep weak minions to sacrifice later?)
- Long-term planning (set up Bone Colossus turn)

Compared to Other Heroes:

- **More complex than Barbarian:** Two keywords vs one, graveyard zone adds dimension
- **Similar to Rogue:** Resource management tension (HP/minions vs gold/equipment)
- **Simpler than combo decks:** Straightforward gameplan (flood board, Raise, Sacrifice, win)

Accessibility: New players understand "bring minions back" and "kill your own stuff for bonuses" immediately. Depth emerges from optimizing payment methods and Raise targets.

ARCHETYPE FLEXIBILITY

Build 1: Aggressive Swarm

Focus: Flood board early, Sacrifice HP freely for tempo, win turns 10-12

Key Cards:

- Skeleton Warrior, Plague Rat (cheap bodies)
- Ghoul Berserker (free minion for tempo)
- Necrotic Strike (burst damage with wide board)
- Unholy Strength (combat trick for lethal)

Equipment: Jewelry (Ring of Avarice) → Weapon (Desolator) → Chest (Vanguard)

Playstyle: Flood board turns 1-4, trade aggressively, Sacrifice HP for effects, push face damage, finish with Necrotic Strike scaling burst

Build 2: Grindy Control

Focus: Outlast through infinite recursion, win by attrition

Key Cards:

- Corpse Crawler (immortal blocker)
- Grave Warden (scaling threat)
- Mass Resurrection (refill board after wipes)

- Drain Life (stabilization)
- Bone Colossus (finisher)

Equipment: Chest (Heart of Tarrasque) → Relic (Pipe of Insight) → Jewelry (Greevil's Greed)

Playstyle: Block with Corpse Crawler, grow Grave Warden, Raise repeatedly, outlast opponent's resources, finish with massive Bone Colossus

Build 3: Combo Burst

Focus: Build huge board, one explosive Bone Colossus turn for 25+ damage

Key Cards:

- Death Knight (board-wide buff)
- Grave Warden (scaling before Colossus)
- Grave Titan (refill board before Colossus turn)
- Unholy Strength (buff key minions)
- Bone Colossus (absorb 25+ stats)

Equipment: Chest (Assault Cuirass) → Relic (Drums for instant attacks) → Jewelry (economy)

Playstyle: Stall to turn 7-8, stack buffs on minions, play Bone Colossus to absorb 25+ stats, attack immediately with Drums, instant kill

BALANCE LEVERS (If Needed)

Too Strong:

- Raise cost restrictions tighter (2-cost or less → 1-cost or less)
- Sacrifice costs increase by 1-2 (Bloodlance 3/5/7 → 4/6/8)
- Grave Warden caps at +3/+3 (not unlimited)
- Mass Resurrection Raises 2 minions (instead of 3)
- Bone Colossus base stats 2/2 (instead of 3/3)

Too Weak:

- Raised minions enter untapped at level 3 (instead of level 5 condition)
- Sacrifice costs decrease by 1 (Bloodlance 2/4/6 damage)
- Add more cheap Raise effects
- Hero Power costs 0 mana after upgrade
- Bone Colossus base stats 4/4

Too Snowbally:

- Grave Warden gains +1/+1 only when Raising 3-cost+ minions
- Death Knight buff temporary (until end of turn)
- Bone Colossus Defender keyword removed (can ignore it)

Too Linear:

- Add conditional Raise triggers ("Raise if you control 3+ minions")
- More Sacrifice payoff variety (not just damage/draw)
- Alternate win conditions besides board flood

PLAYTESTING PRIORITIES

Turn 1-3: Can you curve out? Early bodies on board?

Turn 4-5: First Raise effects - do they feel impactful?

Turn 6-8: Level up timing - consistent? Raised minions untapped = game-changing?

Turn 9-10: Mass Resurrection - does board refill feel powerful?

Turn 11-12: Bone Colossus turn - can you threaten 20+ damage?

Upgrade Timing: When do players naturally play upgrades? Turns 5-7?

Level-Up Timing: Are players leveling turns 6-7 consistently?

Equipment Priority: Are players buying Chest first? Or Jewelry?

DESIGN RATIONALE

Why Raise Works:

- Creates unique gameplay (graveyard as resource)
- Death = advantage (not failure)
- Persistent pressure (hard to exhaust)
- Visible strategy (opponent sees graveyard)
- Natural pacing (fill graveyard → Raise → repeat)

Why Sacrifice Synergizes:

- Creates meaningful decisions (HP vs minion?)
- Early aggression enabled (spend HP pool)
- Late efficiency (sacrifice instead of HP)
- Denies bounties (strategic advantage)
- Feeds graveyard (synergy with Raise)

Why Minion-Focused:

- Distinct from Barbarian (hero-centered) and Rogue (economy)
- Board state matters (scaling effects)
- Zoo strategy with recursion twist
- Rewards going wide
- Equipment choices clear (Chest for HP pool)

Why Midrange:

- Distinct from pure aggro or control
 - Build-and-overwhelm pacing
 - Multiple threats over time (not one-shot combo)
 - Rewards planning 2-3 turns ahead
 - Resilient to disruption (Raise brings things back)
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This design delivers the Necromancer fantasy: master of death who commands an undead army, turns mortality into power, and overwhelms opponents through relentless recursion and sacrifice.