

IRON HELM

PLAYER'S HANDBOOK

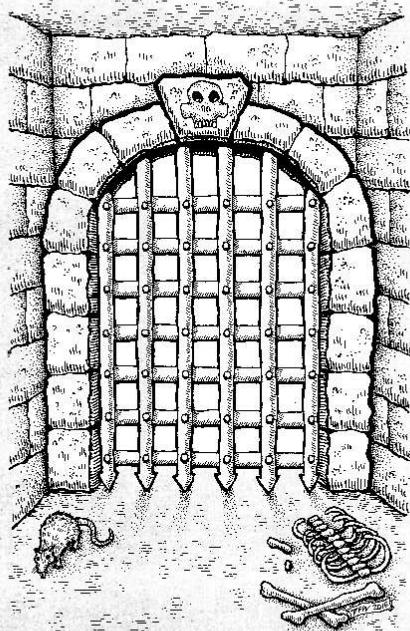


DESIGNED BY
JASON GLOVER

ILLUSTRATED
BY
JASON GLOVER
&
DANIEL E.
WALTHALL

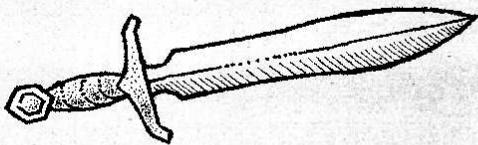


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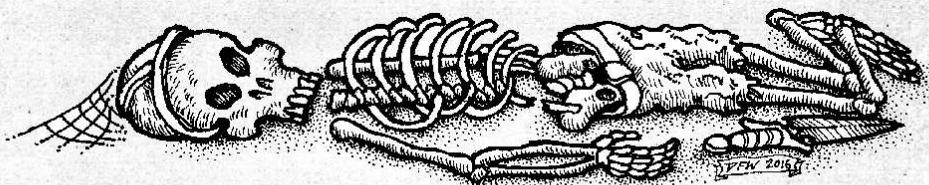
Intro

Your withered hand grips the handle of your sword. Blood mixed with sweat drips down your brow and finds its way into your eyes, stinging for just a moment. Pounding footsteps shake the ground and you attempt to find a way to steady your aching feet. You turn to face your foe as you mutter to yourself, "I'm getting too old for this sh--."



Overview

In Iron Helm, you are an aging adventurer out on one final quest to obtain as much gold and treasure as you can so you can finally retire from your dangerous lifestyle. You will venture one level at a time deep into a perilous dungeon, battling nasty monsters, acquiring useful items and powerful artifacts, and learning new skills. Your ultimate goal is to stay alive long enough to take out the main boss lurking deep within the earth. Survive and you win, die and you become just another corpse that future adventurers will step over.



Contents

Boss Deck: 3 Cards
Character Deck: 4 Cards
Dungeon Deck: 16 Cards
Enemy Deck: 18 Cards
Loot Deck: 18 Cards
Plot Deck: 9 Cards
Potions Deck: 10 Cards
Skills Deck: 12 Cards
Trappings Deck: 14 Cards
15 Deck Dividers
1 Map Level Card

1 Morality Tracker
12 Gold Coins
18 Health Tokens
10 Poison Tokens
14 Energy Tokens
10 Ration Tokens
12 Blessing Tokens
2 Black 12-sided Dice
3 Red 6-sided Dice
2 Red Wooden Pawns



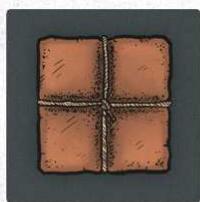
Health Token



Energy Token



Poison Token



Ration Tokens



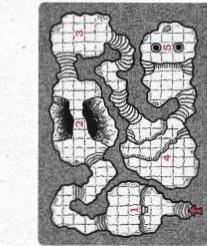
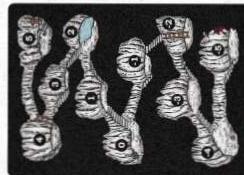
Gold Coin



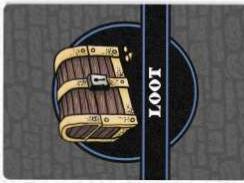
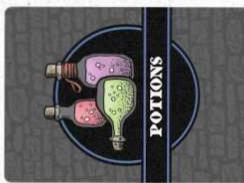
Blessing Token

Setup

Token Supply



Discard Area for Enemies, Loot, Plots, and Potion Decks

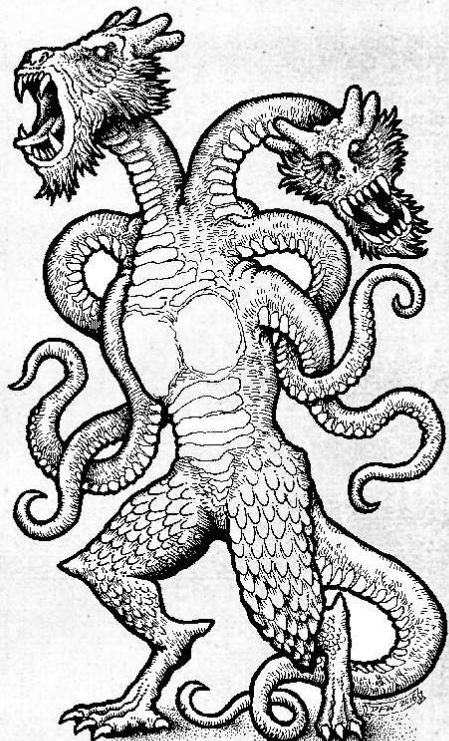


Dice



Player's Cards

- 1) Separate all cards by deck type.
- 2) Shuffle the Enemy, Plot, and Potion decks and place them face down in a row at the top of your play area.
- 3) Choose a side of the Map Card and place it face up next to the other decks. Place a red pawn on the position marked with a 1. Note: Both sides of the map card are mechanically the same; choose the side you prefer.
- 4) Place the Morality Tracker next to map and then place the other red pawn on the position marked zero.
- 5) Place the Skills deck and Trappings deck face-up above the Morality Tracker.
- 6) Place the dice off to the side for later use.
- 7) Organize all the tokens into piles by type and place them within easy reach. Blessing tokens should be face-down and shuffled.
- 8) Shuffle the Dungeon deck and place it face-down in the center of your playing area.
- 9) Place the Boss deck out of play for now but keep it accessible.



Picking your Hero

Now you must place your fate into the hands of one of the included heroes in the game. Each has their own perks and weaknesses. The column of icons on the right of the card detail each character's traits. Let us learn of these traits starting with the upper-most heart-shaped trait.

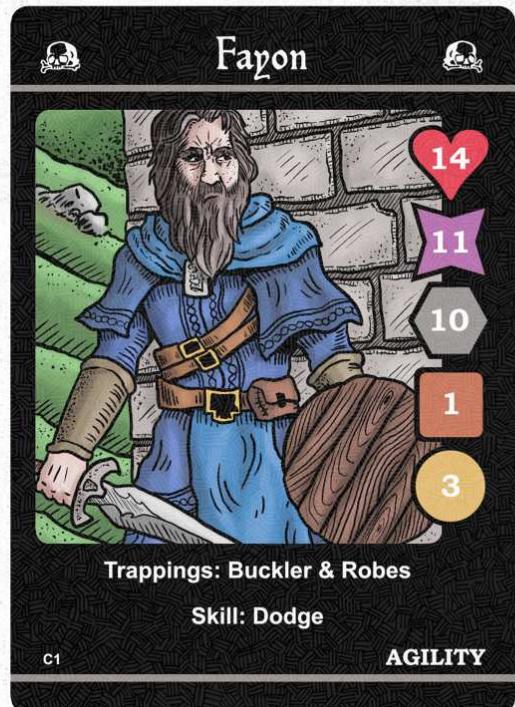
1) Health: The higher the character's health, the more damage they can withstand in the depths below. Take Health tokens from the supply equal to the number indicated here.

2) Energy: This trait indicates how many attacks the character can perform before wearing out. Take Energy tokens from the supply equal to the number shown here.

3) Encumbrance: This determines how much equipment the character can hold during their adventure.

4) Starting Rations: Take Rations tokens from the supply equal to the number indicated here.

5) Starting Wealth: Take Gold coins from the supply equal to the number indicated here.



You will notice that each character lists an item or two below next to the word "Trappings." Search through the Trappings deck and locate the items listed. These are the items you will start the game with. You may also spend your starting gold on additional trappings that you wish to equip yourself with to begin your adventure.

Below Trappings you will find your starting skill. Locate the corresponding skill card from the Skills deck. Each is unique and will aid you in your quest.

Lastly, you will notice that each character has either the word Agility, Brawn, or Mind located in the bottom-right corner of the card. This is the Skill Proficiency of your character. It will affect how easily they learn new skills in that category. You will gain new skills from the Skills deck easier if they match your character's Skill Proficiency.

You are now ready to start your adventure!

Exploration

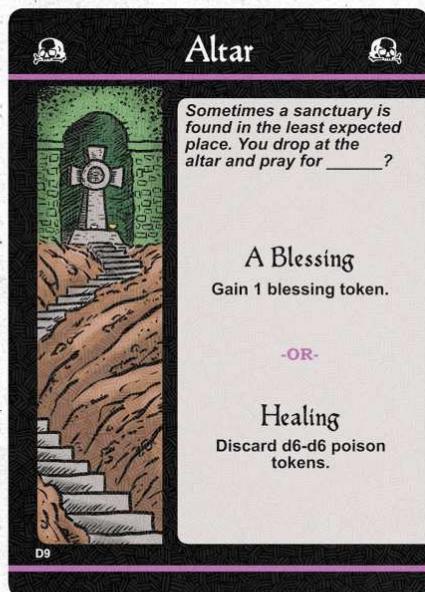
Iron Helm is played in rounds called "levels," which represent areas of the dungeon you are exploring. Each level is made up of eight turns. The end of the level is triggered when you resolve the eighth turn.

Turn Sequence

- 1) Draw two cards from the Dungeon deck, keeping them face-down.
- 2) Reveal one of the two Dungeon cards by flipping it face-up and reading it.

3) Choose to a) resolve the revealed card and discard the other without looking at it, or b) discard the revealed card face-down, forming a discard pile, then reveal and resolve the second dungeon card.

There are two basic types of Dungeon cards in Iron Helm. The first type is fairly straightforward and will present you with a narrative and you will have to either choose an option or perform an action (Altar, Campsite, Clearing, & Merchant). The second type of Dungeon card will have you resolve an action based on whether you picked the card as the first card revealed or as the second. If you resolve this type of dungeon card as the first card you revealed you simply resolve the upper portion marked with a "1." If you discard the first Dungeon card and then reveal one of these cards as the second card, you must resolve the lower portion marked with a "2."

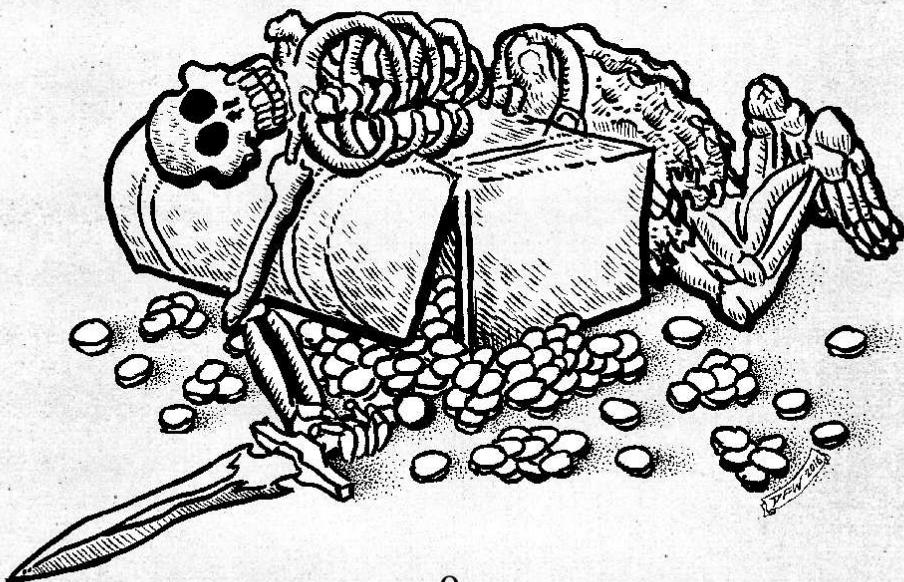


Type 1



Example 1: Seth draws and places two Dungeon cards face-down in front of him. He picks one of the cards and flips it over to reveal the Labyrinth. Since this was the first card Seth revealed, he reads the upper portion of the card marked with a "1." Seth only has one ration remaining and doesn't want to spend it now, so he decides to discard the Labyrinth card. He flips the second card and reveals the Treasure card. Since the Treasure card was revealed as the second card, Seth reads the lower portion of the card marked with the "2." It states that Seth gets to draw an item card and a potion card. Seth took a chance and it paid off. Well done, Seth!

Hint: If this is your first time playing Iron Helm, spend a few minutes looking at all the Dungeon cards and take note of their basic effects, noting that there are duplicates of some of the cards. You do not need to memorize this deck, but after a few plays, your knowledge of this deck will impact your success.



Combat

It cannot be avoided. At some point you will have to engage in combat. The only thing these foul creatures respond to is violence and bribery.

There are two types of cards in the Dungeon deck that will trigger combat. The most common type is a Skirmish and whether you pick it as the first card or the second, the enemy will get to attack first, though picking it second puts you in a tougher spot. The second type of Dungeon card is the Ambush card and if you pick it as the first card during exploration you gain the upper hand and get to attack first, however picking it second puts you at a major disadvantage.

In either case, when Combat happens you will be asked to draw the top card from the Enemy deck. The Dungeon card will describe any adjustments you need to make to the enemy you draw. The deeper you delve into the dungeon, the stronger your foes, so you will always add your current dungeon level to the enemy's health. Sometimes you will add extra health as described on the Dungeon card. Lastly, drawing the Ambush card second will boost the enemy's initial damage by your current dungeon level. More on that to come.



Iron Helm

Combat

Let's examine an Enemy card to better understand what you are facing.

1) Enemy Name

2) Enemy's Base Health: Check your Dungeon card to determine how much to boost your foe's health.

3) Enemy's Damage: This is the base damage your foe deals to you when they attack you if they successfully strike.

4) Treasure Type: This tells you what sort of loot you will gain if you defeat this enemy, if any.

5) Weakness: Each foe has a weakness (Undead, Fire, or Ice). Using weapons, items, or potions of the indicated type will deal extra damage.

6) Special Power: Every enemy has its own unique special power shown here.

7) Purse: Some foes carry shiny gold coins with them. The number of coin icons here indicate how many you gain by defeating this enemy.



Combat Sequence

- 1) Determine Health: Add the health indicated on the Dungeon card to the Base Health shown on the Enemy card itself for a sum. Use the included two 12-sided dice to track your foe's health.
- 2) Initial Damage: Unless otherwise noted, your enemy will get to attack first. This is called their Initial Damage and is referenced throughout the game, so it is important to realize that initial damage is only referring to your enemy's first attempt to strike you. Roll two 6-sided dice (2d6) and subtract the lower result from the higher result. Add this number to the enemy's damage (shown on their card) for a final sum. Some Dungeon cards instruct you to add further damage to this result. However, any time you roll doubles, your enemy swings and misses you completely and you take zero damage. Also take note of your equipment. Many items protect you from damage and allow you to subtract damage from your foe's attack.

Example 1: Joy is being attacked by a Wolf. She rolls 2d6 with the results of 3 and 5. She subtracts 3 from 5 for a result of 2. The Wolf deals a base damage of 2, so Joy adds this for a total of 4 damage ($2+2=4$). Joy is wearing leather armor which allows her to subtract 1 from initial damage, so in the end Joy loses 3 health.

When you take damage, remove health tokens from your character and discard them. You may later heal, but may never have more health than the amount with which you started the game. If at any point you lose all your health, you are dead and the game ends!



Iron Helm

Combat

3) Your turn to attack: Your attacks work a bit differently than those of your foes. You must first decide how much energy you want to expend in order to strike your foe. You may spend (discard) up to three Energy tokens, and for each Energy token you spend, you are allowed to roll one 6-sided die.

You **MUST** have a weapon in your primary hand, or be using a two-handed weapon, in order to spend energy to roll dice during combat. If you are unarmed, you only deal 1 bare-handed damage.

Having a backup weapon is wise in case something happens to your equipped weapon. Some characters do not start with a weapon, so make sure to buy them one before you enter the dungeon.



Roll the dice and add their values together, then boost that number with any bonuses from your equipment or skills. This is your attack value. Subtract your attack value from the health of your enemy. If your attack value is equal to or greater than that of your foes remaining health, you have defeated them! Collect any loot or gold indicated on the enemy's card and then place the Enemy card face up in front of you to form a graveyard. You will later gain new skills based on eliminated enemies.

4) Treasure Types: There are three levels of treasure you may find when you defeat an enemy. These are referred to as treasure types.

0: A treasure type value of zero indicates your foe carries no treasure worth taking.

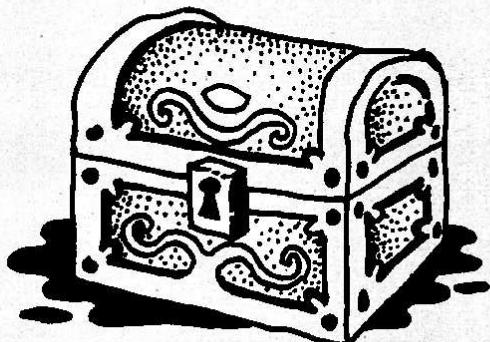
1: A treasure type value of one allows you to draw one random card

from the top of the Loot deck (or) take one gold from the supply. Take note of the weight of every item you find. If the sum of all your items weighs more than your encumbrance, you will have to choose to drop something before moving on.

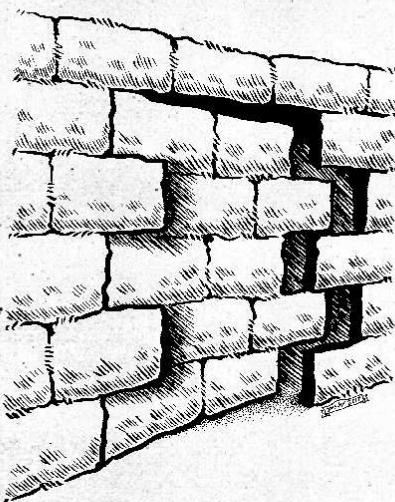
2: A treasure type of two allows you to draw the top card from both the Loot deck and the Potion Deck.

5) Counterstrikes: If you fail to defeat your enemy with your first attack, they will counterstrike. Counterstrikes work exactly the same way as initial damage by rolling two 6-sided dice and subtracting the results. After the enemy attempts counterstrike, you will get another chance to attack. You and your foe will take turns in this manner until one of you runs out of health.

Note: You may always choose to deliver a bare-fisted blow to an enemy with the attack value of 1 that does not use any energy. This may sometimes come in handy if a foe has only one life remaining and you want to conserve energy.

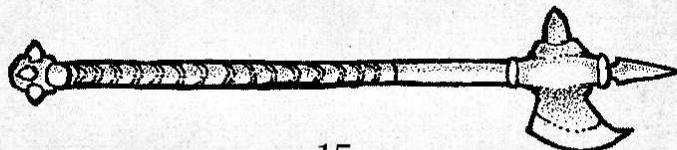


Finishing the Level



The end of a level is triggered once you have resolved the last set of cards in the Dungeon deck (eight total turns). You must then do the following in order.

- 1) Shuffle the Dungeon deck and place it face-down to set up the next level of the dungeon.
- 2) Feed your character by discarding one ration token. If you do not have a ration to spend, you must lower your health by 3. This could spell defeat, so make sure you have food at all times.
- 3) For every two Poison tokens you currently have, you gain an additional one. If at any point your number of Poison tokens is equal to or greater than your health, you instantly die.
- 4) Advance your pawn up one level on the map level card. Knowing your current level is important for resolving many cards in Iron Helm.
- 5) Draw the top Plot card and resolve it. Coupled with the Clearing card in the Dungeon deck, this final step can allow for a total of two Plot cards being resolved per level.

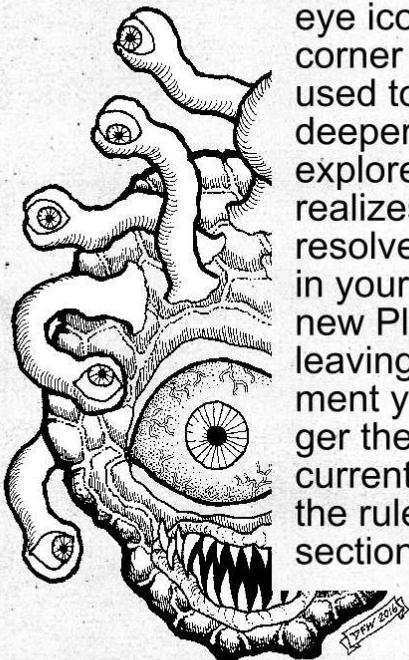


Plots & Morality

Plot cards are drawn at random whenever you resolve the Clearing card from the Dungeon deck and at the end of each level. Plot cards all start with a small narrative which is either followed by text telling you what you have to do, or by offering you a choice as to how to deal with a particular circumstance. When you are offered a choice, you may only choose one option.

Many of the Plot cards force the player to make a moral decision. Making positive choices will move your pawn up the Morality tracker and negative ones will have you moving downward. Immoral choices often gain you an instant reward, while making positive choices may reward you greatly later on.

Each Plot card also has a number of eye icons located in the bottom right corner ranging from 1-3. These are used to trigger the end of game. The deeper you dive into the dungeon and explore, the more the big bad boss realizes you are there. Whenever you resolve a Plot card, you must keep it in your player area face up, staggering new Plot cards on top of previous ones, leaving the eye icons visible. The moment you reach 10 eye icons, you trigger the end of the game. Resolve the current Plot card first and then follow the rules in the Ending the Game section.



Ending the Game

The game may end in a few different ways. You may run out of health battling an enemy or your poison level may reach that of your health, in which case you die, and the game is over. To win, you must defeat the boss before that happens!



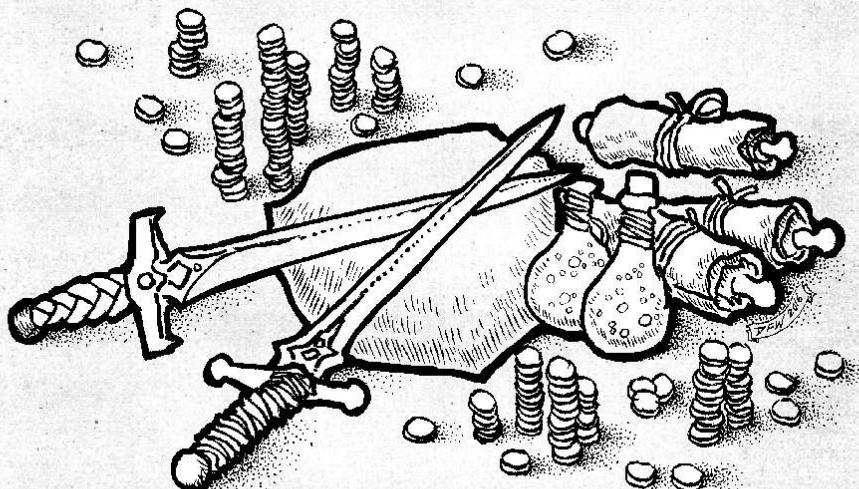
If you have just revealed a Plot card with enough eye icons to trigger the boss fight, you must first resolve the current Plot card, then follow these steps in order.

1) Determine your foe: Look at all the Enemy cards you have defeated during the course of the game. Take note of their weakness icons. Whichever icon appears the most amongst these cards will determine the final boss. Match that icon to that of the ones on the boss cards. If there is a tie for most common icon, remember that Fire beats Undead, Undead beats Ice, and Ice beats Fire. *Example: Jon had defeated 1 Undead Archer, 2 Goblins, 1 Consuming Mass, and 1 Wolf. That is a total of 1 Undead, 3 Ice, and 1 Fire enemies. Because Ice is the most prevalent, Jon must face the Lurker.*

2) Divine Visit: Moments before you must face off against your vile foe, you will be visited by an angelic being that will allow you to flip over all your Blessing tokens that you have gained and reap their rewards. Tokens with red hearts and purple energy icons will garner you Health and Energy tokens equal to those shown. The green heart allows you to remove all of your poison tokens. Will you now have enough to defeat your final foe?

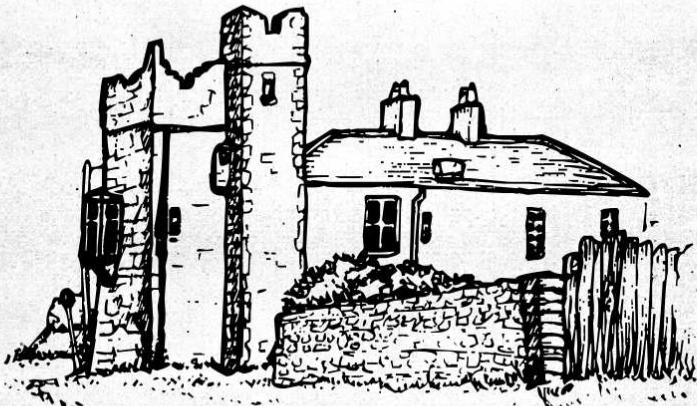
3) Battle: Fight the boss card like any other enemy. Note that they have a set health and typically a powerful special ability. If you lose the final battle, you lose the game. If you are triumphant, you win the game and calculate your final score as follows:

1. 1 point for each Health and Energy token you have left.
2. 3 points for each Gold coin.
3. 2 points for each enemy defeated.
4. Points equal to the cost value of all items you possess including Loot, Potions, and Trappings.
5. Points equal to the dungeon level on which you won the game multiplied by 2.
6. Points equal to your position on the Morality tracker (a negative position will subtract points).

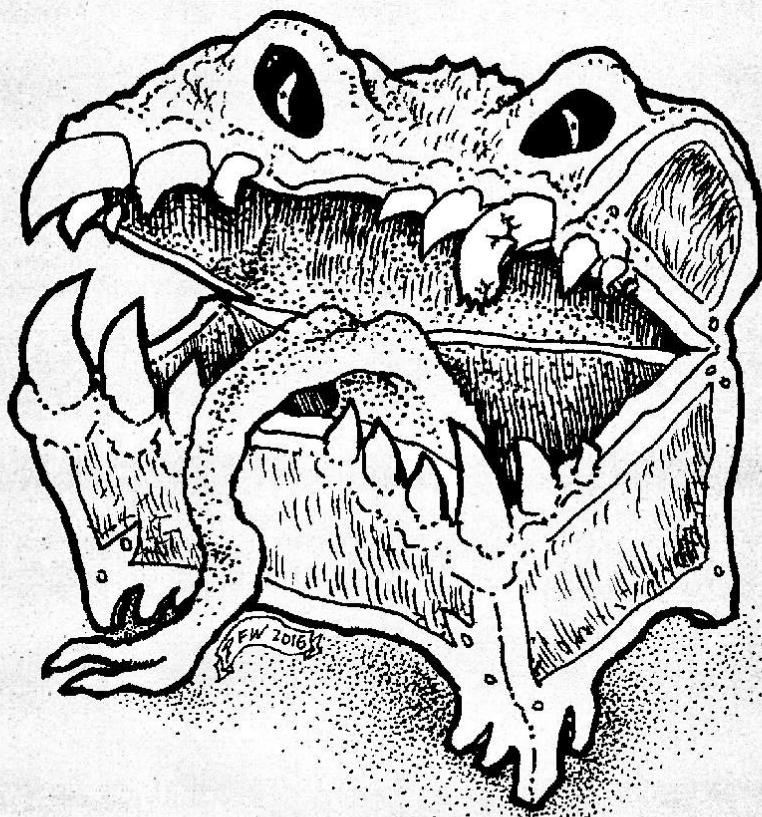


The total number of points equals your retirement fund! Refer to the following chart to see just how well you will live out your final years:

- 0-30** Hovel - Your retirement is meager at best. Your dwelling is a one room shack on the fringe of a mining village.
- 31-40** Cottage - You retire to a small cottage with a pleasing garden and a warm hearth nestled in the thick of the woods.
- 41-50** Croft - You retire to a sturdy stone home with acres of rolling hills and a barn stocked with animals and a live-in farmhand.
- 51-60** Manor - You retire to a large beautiful home with many servants and a sprawling well-tended property with mature trees.
- 61+** Fortress - You retire to a small cliff-side castle with miles of land, a full staff of servants, and a keep full of treasures.



IRON HELM APPENDIX



BLESSING TOKENS: Whenever you gain a Blessing token, it must remain face-down. Blessing tokens are used during the Divine Visit portion of the end game, or you may spend one during combat to reroll all your dice (without looking at the face of the token).

EQUIPPING ITEMS: There are a few of things to consider when equipping items.

- 1) You may never carry more weight than your Encumbrance level allows. If you gain an item that puts you over your limit you may decide to drop another item to make room for the new item, or simply refuse the new item.
- 2) Every item has a location it is equipped to.

PH: Primary Hand. You may only have one item in your primary hand at any given time.

OH: Off Hand. You may only have one item in your off hand at any given time.

2H: Two-handed. Items of this type take up the slot of both your primary hand and off hand.

HD: Head. You may only have one item equipped on your head at any given moment.

BD: Body. You may only have one item equipped on your body at any given moment.

AS: Accessory. You may have as many accessories equipped as you like.

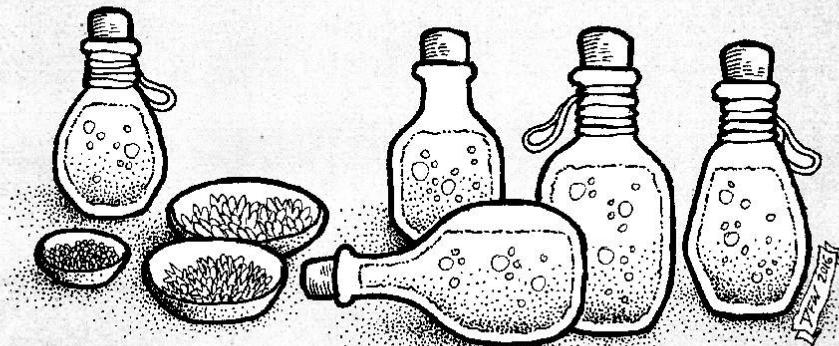
You may switch out equipment in between turns, but not during the process of resolving a card.

Example: You cannot decide to replace your sword with a dagger once a Dungeon card has been revealed. That must be done before revealing any cards.

MIMIC: Sometimes drawing from the loot deck is not so much fun. If you ever draw the Mimic card, you must resolve it just as you would an Enemy card.

POISON TOKENS: Poison tokens are gained in many different ways during the game. When you gain poison, take the corresponding number of poison tokens from the supply. If the number of Poison tokens you have ever is equal to or greater than your current health, you die immediately, and the game is over.

POTIONS: Some potions heal you, give you energy, or cure poison, while others are used as weapons during combat. You may use non-offensive potions whenever you choose during the game. Offensive potions like Ice Shard, Holy Water, or Spark Bomb must be used during combat in place of using your weapon. You cannot use your hand weapon and a potion at the same time. You **MUST** pick one or the other for your attack.

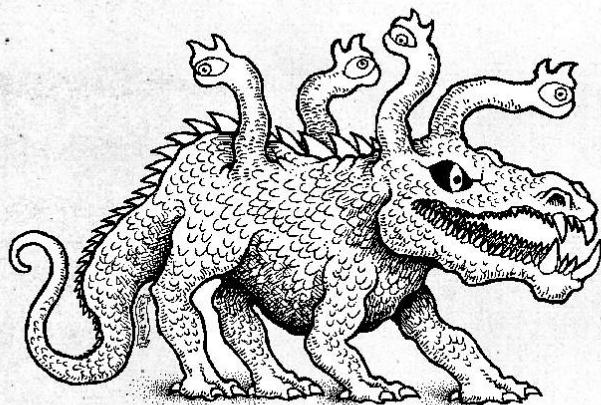


RATIONS: You may spend a ration in between turns to gain 1 energy. It is wiser to wait for the Campsite card where you can gain 3 energy when you cook your food. *Note: The ration card found in the Loot deck is of better quality than a standard ration and is spent to gain 2 energy, but still only 3 if cooked at the campsite.*

SKILL ADVANCEMENT: Through conquering your enemies, you will gain experience and that will help toward learning new skills. Whenever you defeat an enemy, keep the Enemy card face-up in front of you in a pile. Once you have acquired 3 Enemy cards, you may spend them, by flipping them face-down, to learn a new skill that matches your skill proficiency (located on the bottom right corner of your character card). If you want to learn a skill outside of your skill proficiency, you may, but the cost is 5 Enemy cards.

Example: Mike is playing as Molician who is proficient at brawn skills. Mike wants to learn the Archery skill to make better use of the powerful new bow he found. However, he has only defeated 4 enemies, so he must wait to defeat a fifth foe before he can learn the Archery skill because it is an agility-based skill.

THROWING YOUR AXE: Axes offer you the ability to strike your foe with a mighty blow that doesn't require any energy. The catch is that the axe is lost for good and must be discarded from play. Reserve this action until you either have another weapon to replace your axe, or for a killing blow to the final boss.



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Designed by
Jason Glover

Illustrated by
Daniel F. Walhall
& Jason Glover

Edited by
Ken Franklin &
Chris Leder

IRON HELPER

Skirmish

- Enemy Health

OR
 1 : + + 2
 2 : + + 4

- Initial Attack



(If you take 0 damage)

Attack!

Roll 1 / (Max 3)

Sum = damage dealt

Check for any bonus damage.
 (If unarmed or finishing off an enemy,
 you may deal 1 damage with your
 fists, without spending any)

Ambush

- Enemy Health

OR
 1 : +
 2 : + + 4

- Initial Attack

OR
 1 : No initial attack!
 2 : + +

(If you take 0 damage)

Counter



(If you take 0 damage)

Loot

Collect from card;

Nothing.

+ or

+ and

End of Level

When is empty:

- Re-shuffle
- Discard 1
 (or, if you have no then discard 3
- For every 2 you have,
 gain an additional
 (If ≥ then you die instantly)
- Advance
- Draw and resolve

Facing the Boss

When are ≥ 10 :

- Resolve current
- Examine the of your
 The most common icon determines the boss.
In case of a tie:
 →
- Flip all and reap the rewards.
- Defeat the boss... or die trying.

Gain Skill

Collect defeated in a faceup stack

- If = proficiency, flip 3 facedown
- If ≠ proficiency, flip 5 facedown
(Do not discard the cards; just flip them over.)

Misc.

- Spend a facedown during combat to re-roll your
- Spend a between turns to restore a single

Retire

/ /

= value of your

& &

/ /

= (may be negative)

= x 2

Home

0-30 : Hovel
 31-40 : Cottage
 41-50 : Croft
 51-60 : Manor
 61+ : Fortress