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100. Game Concepts

100.1 Claw & Order is a strategy card game in which two players battle using customizable decks of cards, each representing cat troops, vehicles, and battlefield gear.

100.2 A match consists of three battles. The first battle takes place on a neutral battlefield. The losing player of a battle on a neutral battlefield may fall back and choose the battlefield for the next battle, but if a match takes battle on a non-neutral battlefield, the next match will always be a neutral battlefield.

100.3 The goal of each battle is to reduce your opponent to zero troops in play while their deck contains no more cards. A player loses a battle immediately when this condition is met.

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101. Card Types

101.1 There are two card types: **Troop Cards** and **Item Cards**.

101.2 Troop Cards represent feline soldiers and may include Vehicles. Troop cards have the following characteristics:

- Health
- Damage
- Breed
- Abilities (optional)
- Deployment Cost
- Tokens and damage (Added during gameplay)

101.3 Item Cards fall into three subtypes:

- **Equip Items**: Items attached to a single troop.
- **Team Buff Items**: Items that affect all of a player's troops or battlefield conditions. You may only have one of the same Team Buff item in play at once.
- **One-Time Items**: Cards that take effect when played, then are discarded.

101.4 Cards may have cosmetic text referred to as **Lore**. Lore has no effect on gameplay.

101.5 Damage or other counters persist on cards until they are destroyed or the battle ends.

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102. Deck Construction

102.1 Each player must have a deck containing exactly 27 cards. This deck must be verified by a tournament official during tournament play.

102.2 A deck may contain only one **Commander** card. This card is included in your card count.

- **102.2a** Commander cards are not required to be in a deck.

102.3 A deck may contain a maximum of 3 cards of the same name at once, unless stated otherwise.

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103. Game Setup

103.1 At the start of each battle, both players discard all cards remaining in their deck or hand from the previous battle. Their dollars are also reset to 0.

103.2 Each player shuffles their full deck and draws 5 cards.

103.3 If a player's hand does not contain at least one Troop card, they must discard their entire hand into their deck and draw five cards. Repeat until the condition is met, or the entire deck is discarded without the condition being met. If the condition is not met after reshuffling the entire deck, the player immediately loses the match. Otherwise, they shuffle their discarded hand into the deck and continue.

103.4 Before the first turn of the battle, the second player may play any cards from their hand, excluding One-Time Items. You must pay the Deployment Cost for all cards played this way. They may also play up to one Troop card with a Deployment Cost less than $5 without paying the Deployment Cost.

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104. Turn Structure

104.1 A player's turn consists of the following phases, in order:

- **Draw Phase**: Draw exactly one card from the deck.
- **Play Phase**: The player may play any number of cards, as permitted by resources.
- **Attack Phase**: Each eligible troop may attack once in any order.
- **End Phase**: The player's turn ends. Effects that trigger "at end of turn" occur now.

104.2 If a deck is empty, the player cannot draw during the Draw Phase.

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105. Resource System

105.1 Each player gains a number of dollars ($) equal to the current turn number. (e.g., turn 3 = $3 gained). This total is cumulative.

105.2 Dollars are retained between turns. They are not spent automatically and must be managed manually.

105.3 To play a card, the player must spend an amount of dollars equal to that card's Deployment Cost.

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106. Battlefield

106.1 Each player has two zones for troops:

- **Front Line**: Troops here may attack and be attacked.
- **Back Line**: Troops here cannot attack or be attacked, except by abilities that specifically target the back line.

106.2 When a Troop is deployed, it enters the **Back Line**.

106.3 At the beginning of a player's turn, all of the troops a player possesses in the Back Line are moved to the Front Line. If troops are possessed by another player, these troops are not moved from the Back Line to the Front Line.

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107. Combat

107.1 Each troop may attack once per turn. Players may choose the order of their attacks.

107.2 A troop may attack any opposing troop on the **Front Line**.

107.3 When a troop receives damage equal to or greater than its Health, it is immediately discarded, or **killed**. Damage persists between turns. If a troop has 3 health, then it is killed after receiving 3 or more damage.

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108. Vehicles

108.1 Vehicles are a subtype of Troop. Vehicles have no inherent ability to act unless piloted.

108.2 Any Troop in the Front Line may pilot a Vehicle. At the start of the Play Phase, you can choose any non-vehicle troop in the Front Line and assign it to pilot any vehicle. When a Troop is piloting a Vehicle:

- **108.2a** The Troop forfeits its own attack during the Attack phase.
- **108.2b** The Troop loses all of its abilities while piloting, other than abilities that mention they apply to vehicles the Troop is piloting.
- **108.2c** The Troop is considered to be inside the Vehicle and is immune from being targeted for attacks.

108.3 A vehicle can only be assigned a pilot at the start of the Play Phase.

108.4 If a piloted Vehicle is destroyed, the pilot is also destroyed. This triggers all effects that would normally happen when the pilot is destroyed.

- If the pilot is destroyed or removed from play, the Vehicle becomes inactive and cannot attack or use abilities until a new pilot is later assigned. Vehicles keep equipped items when the pilot is destroyed.

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109. Items

109.1 Equip Items are attached to a Troop and grant them specific bonuses.

109.2 A Troop may have more than one Equip Item attached unless otherwise stated.

109.3 If a Troop is discarded, all Equip Items on it are also discarded.

109.4 Equip Items may be removed from a Troop and returned to the player's hand once per turn at any time during their own Play Phase. An Equip Item cannot be re-equipped to the same or another Troop in the same turn it was removed.

109.5 Equip Items cannot be directly targeted by effects unless otherwise specified.

109.6 One-Time Items can only be played during your Play Phase unless otherwise stated, and are discarded immediately after being used.

109.7 Team Buff Items affect all friendly troops unless otherwise noted and remain in effect until removed by game effects or rules. Team Buff Items affect all friendly Troops, including Vehicles (even if inactive). You may only have one Team Buff effect of the same name in play at once.

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110. Victory Conditions

110.1 A battle is lost when, at the end of a player's turn:

- The player has no troops on the battlefield (Front or Back Line), **and**
- That player has no Troop cards remaining in their deck.

110.2 A battle still can be lost when there are troops in hand but not in either the battlefield or deck.

110.3 A match is won by the player who wins two out of three battles.

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111. Battlefield

111.1 Battlefield Selection

- The first battle of a match is fought on a **neutral battlefield** with no effects.
- After each battle, if the battlefield for the previous battle was neutral, the losing player chooses the battlefield for the next battle from **valid options** (see 111.3). This battlefield must be a Valid Battlefield (see 111.2). If the battle was played on a non-neutral battlefield, the next battlefield will be neutral.

111.2 Valid Battlefields
A battlefield must be one of:

1. **Official** *Claw & Order* battlefields (published by the game's creators), **or**
2. **Tournament-provided** battlefield cards (distributed by event organizers, may be custom).
3. The **Neutral Battlefield**, a battlefield with no effects.

Players may verbally decide on a non-physical official or tournament-provided battlefield, or choose a physical card provided by the player or the tournament.

111.3 Battlefield Effects

- Each battlefield card has **persistent effects** lasting the entire battle.
- Effects may apply to:
    - **Both players**, **or**
    - The **player who lost the previous battle** (if specified).

111.4 Restriction
Battlefield effects cannot:

- Modify turn structure (e.g., "Players take two turns in a row").
- Create infinite loops (e.g., "Gain $1 whenever you spend $1").
- Prevent players from playing cards (e.g., "Opponent cannot deploy Troops").

111.5 Tournament Enforcement

- Players must **reveal their chosen battlefield card** before shuffling decks for the next battle.
- If no valid battlefield cards are available, the next battle uses the **neutral battlefield**.

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112. Keywords

112.1 Keywords are words that are written at the top of a card's Abilities section. These words are shorthand for longer abilities.

112.2 Keywords are defined later in the Glossary. Whenever you see a keyword, replace the word with the ability defined in the Glossary.

Glossary (partial; expandable)

Ability: A defined mechanic written on a card. All abilities are passive or activated as defined by card text.

Attack: An action performed during the Attack Phase where a troop deals damage to an opposing troop on the front line.

Back Line: A zone on the battlefield where newly deployed troops are placed. Back line troops cannot attack or be attacked, except by effects that target the back line.

Battle: One round of gameplay. Three battles constitute a full match.

Breed: A card trait that denotes the type of cat (e.g., Shorthair, Longhair). Breed has no intrinsic rules effect but may be referenced by cards.

Cat: A non-vehicle troop with the breed Shorthair or Longhair.

Commander: A unique troop card of which only one may be in a deck. Commanders are not required and are not revealed unless played.

Damage: A numeric value dealt by troops during an attack. Persistent across turns. If cumulative damage on a troop meets or exceeds its Health, it is discarded.

Deploy: To play a troop onto the battlefield. All troops are deployed to the Back Line.

Deployment Cost: The dollar cost to play a card.

Discard: To remove a card from play and place it into the discard pile. Discarded cards are not retrievable unless otherwise stated.

Destroy: see Discard, synonymous term

Draw: To move the top card of the deck into the player's hand.

Equip Item: An Item card that attaches to a troop and grants it a passive effect.

Flying: Troops with the Flying keyword cannot be attacked by any cards without the Flying or Reach keywords.

Front Line: The active zone on the battlefield where troops can attack and be attacked.

Friendly: A friendly troop is one on the same team as the troop in question.

Health: A numeric value representing how much damage a troop can sustain before being discarded.

Item: A non-troop card. Items are either Equip, Team Buff, or One-Time.

Kill: A card that is killed is a card that is discarded due to having more damage than its health.

Lore: Flavor text printed on a card that has no gameplay function.

Match: A series of three battles. The first player to win two battles wins the match.

Observer: Cards with the Observer ability are not required to move to the Front Lines at the start of your turn.

Pilot: A troop that controls a Vehicle. A pilot forfeits its own attack and abilities while piloting.

Play: To put a card into action by paying its Deployment Cost.

Reach: Cards with Reach can attack cards with Flying.

Retreat: Cards with Retreat can be taken back into your hand during the Play phase.

Stealth: Deploy face down to the Back Line and flip face up when it moves to the Front Line, uses an ability, or anything that requires the card's data to be referenced.

Team: A player and everything under their control.

Team Buff Item: An item card that applies continuous effects to multiple troops.

Troop: A card representing a cat in combat, including vehicles. Troops have Health and Damage values and may have Abilities.

Vehicle: A subtype of troop that must be piloted to attack or use abilities, with the Vehicle breed.

Zone: A specific area of the game layout, including Front Line, Back Line, Deck, Hand, and Discard Pile.