



# MUNCHKIN<sup>TM</sup>



MUNCHKIN brings you the essence of the dungeon-crawling experience . . . without all that messy roleplaying!

This game includes 168 cards, one six-sided die, and these rules.

## SETUP

Three to six can play. You will need 10 tokens (coins, poker chips, whatever – or any gadget that counts to 10) for each player.

Divide the cards into the Door deck and the Treasure deck. Shuffle both decks. Deal four cards from each deck to each player.

## CARD MANAGEMENT

Keep separate face-up discard piles for the two decks. You may not look through the discards unless you play a card that allows you to!

When a deck runs out, reshuffle its discards. If a deck runs out and there are no discards, nobody can draw any of that kind of card!

**In Play:** These are the cards on the table in front of you, showing your Race and Class (if any) and the Items you are carrying. Continuing Curses and some other cards also stay on the table after you play them.

**Your Hand:** Cards in your hand are not in play. They don't help you, but they can't be taken away except by cards that specifically affect "your hand." At the end of your turn, you may have no more than five cards in your hand.

**When Cards Can Be Played:** Each type of card can be played at a specified time (see p. 5).

Cards in play may not be returned to your hand – they must be discarded or traded if you want to get rid of them.

## CHARACTER CREATION

Everyone starts as a Level 1 human with no class. (Heh, heh.)

Look at your initial eight cards. If you have any Race or Class cards, you may (if you like) play one of each type by placing it in front of you. If you have any usable Items (p. 5), you may play them by placing them in front of you. If you have any doubt about whether you should play a card, you could read below, or you could just charge ahead and do it.

## STARTING AND FINISHING THE GAME

Decide who goes first by rolling the dice and arguing about the results and the meaning of this sentence and whether the fact that a word seems to be missing any effect.

Play proceeds in turns, each with several phases (see p. 2). When the first player finishes his turn, the player to his left takes a turn, and so on.

The first player to reach 10th level wins . . . but you must reach 10th level by killing a monster, unless a card *specifically* allows you to win another way.



### Contradictions Between Cards and Rules

This rulesheet gives the general rules. Cards may add special rules, so in most cases when the rulesheet disagrees with a card, follow the card. However, ignore any card effect that might seem to contradict one of the rules listed below unless the card *explicitly* says it supersedes that rule!

1. Nothing can reduce a player below Level 1, although card effects might reduce a player's or a monster's combat strength (p. 2) below 1.
2. You go up a level after combat only if you *kill* a monster.
3. You cannot collect rewards for defeating a monster (e.g., Treasure, levels) in the middle of a combat. You must finish the fight before gaining any rewards.
4. You must *kill* a monster to reach Level 10.

Any other disputes should be settled by loud arguments, with the owner of the game having the last word. You could also read the *Munchkin* FAQ and errata pages at [www.worldofmunchkin.com](http://www.worldofmunchkin.com), or start a discussion at [forums.sjgames.com](http://forums.sjgames.com) . . . unless it's more fun to argue.

# STEVE JACKSON GAMES



# TURN PHASES

At the start of your turn, you may play cards, switch items from "in use" to "carried" or vice versa, trade items with other players, and sell items for levels. When your cards are arranged the way you want, go to phase 1.

**(1) Kick Open The Door:** Draw one card from the Door deck and turn it face up.

If it's a monster, you must fight it. See **Combat**. Resolve the combat completely before you go on. If you kill it, go up a level (or two, for some especially nasty monsters!) and take the appropriate number of Treasures.

If the card is a curse – see **Curses**, p. 6 – it applies to you immediately (if it can) and is discarded.

If you draw any other card, you may either put it in your hand or play it immediately.

**(2) Look For Trouble:** If you did NOT draw a monster when you first opened the door, you now have the option of playing a monster (if you have one) from your hand and fighting it, just as if you had found it when you kicked open the door. Don't play a monster you can't handle, unless you're sure you can count on getting help!

**(3) Loot The Room:** If you did not find a monster by kicking open the door and you did not Look For Trouble, you loot the room ... draw a second card from the Door deck, face down, and place it in your hand.

If you met a monster but ran away, you don't get to loot the room.

**(4) Charity:** If you have more than five cards in your hand, you must play enough of them to get down to five, or give the excess to the player with the lowest Level. If players are tied for lowest, divide the cards as evenly as possible, but it's up to you who gets the bigger set(s) of leftovers. If YOU are the lowest or tied for lowest, just discard the excess.

It is now the next player's turn.

## COMBAT

To fight a monster, compare its **combat strength** to yours. Combat strength is the total of Level plus all modifiers – positive or negative – given by items and other cards. If the monster's combat strength is equal to yours, or greater, you **lose the combat** and must Run Away – see below. If your combat strength totals more than the monster's, you **kill it** and go up a level (two for some big monsters). You'll also get the number of Treasures shown on its card.



Sometimes a card, or a Class or Race power, will let you get rid of the monster without killing it. This is still "winning," but you don't get a level. Sometimes, depending on the card, you might not get the treasure, either.

Some monster cards have special powers that affect combat – a bonus against one Race or Class, for instance. Be sure to check these.

One-shot items, such as potions, may be played directly from your hand during combat. You can also use one-shot items that you already had in play. One-shot items say "Usable once only." Discard these cards after the combat, whether you win or lose.

Some Door cards may also be played into a combat, such as monster enhancers (see p. 5).

While you are in combat, you cannot sell, steal, equip, unequip, or trade items, or play items (except for one-shots) from your hand. Once you expose a monster card, you must resolve the fight with your equipment as it stands, plus any one-shot items you choose to play.

Discard the monster card, including any enhancers and one-shot items played, and draw treasure (see p. 3). But note: someone may play a hostile card on you, or use a special power, just as you think you have won. When you kill a monster, you must wait a reasonable time, defined as about 2.6 seconds, for anyone else to speak up. After that, you have really killed the monster, and you really get the level(s) and treasure, though they can still whine and argue.

## FIGHTING MULTIPLE MONSTERS

Some cards (notably Wandering Monster) allow your rivals to send other monsters to join the fight. You must defeat their **combined** combat strengths. Any special abilities, such as fighting with your Level only, apply to the entire fight. If you have the right cards, you can eliminate one monster from the combat and fight the other(s) normally, but you cannot choose to fight one and run from the other(s). If you eliminate one with a card or your Race or Class power, but then run from the other(s), you don't get any Treasure!

## ASKING FOR HELP

If you cannot win a combat on your own, you may ask any other player to help you. If he refuses, you may ask another player, and so on, until they all turn you down or someone helps. Only one player can help you, adding his combat strength to yours. Anyone can play cards to affect your combat, however!

You can bribe someone to help. In fact, you'll probably have to. You may offer your helper any Item(s) you are currently carrying, or any number of the Treasure cards the monster has. If you offer him part of the monster's treasure, you must agree whether he picks first, or you pick first, or whatever.



The special abilities or vulnerabilities of the monster also apply to your helper, and vice versa. For instance, if a Warrior helps you, you will win if your combined total ties that of the monster, and he can Berserk and discard cards to add to his combat strength (but only once per combat, not once per monster). If you are facing the **Wannabe Vampire** and a Cleric helps you, he can chase it away automatically. But if you are facing the **Drooling Slime** and an Elf helps you, the monster's combat strength is increased by 4 (unless you, too, are an Elf and the monster's combat strength has already been increased).

If someone successfully helps you, the monster is slain. Discard it, draw treasure (see below), and follow any special instructions on the monster card. You go up a level for each slain monster. Your helper does **not** go up . . . unless he's an Elf, in which case he also gains one level for each monster slain. You draw the Treasure cards, even if it was your helper's special ability that defeated the monster.

### Interfering With Combat

You can interfere with others' combats in several ways:

*Use a one-shot item.* You could help another player by casting a potion against his foe. Of course, you can "accidentally" hit your friend with the potion, and it will count against him.

*Play a card to modify a monster.* These cards (usually) make a monster stronger . . . and give it more treasure. You can play these either during your own combats or during someone else's combat.

*Play a Wandering Monster* along with a monster from your hand to join any combat.

*Backstab* a player in combat, if you're a thief.

*Curse* them, if you have a Curse card.

### RUNNING AWAY

If nobody will help you . . . or if somebody tries to help, and your fellow party members interfere so the two of you *still* cannot defeat it . . . you must run away.

If you run away, you don't get any levels or treasure. You don't even get to Loot the Room. And you don't always escape unharmed . . .

Roll the die. You only escape on a 5 or better. Some magic items make it easier or harder to run away. And some monsters are fast, and give you a penalty to your roll.

If you escape, discard the monster. You get no treasure. There are usually no bad effects . . . but read the card. Some monsters hurt you even if you get away from them!



If the monster catches you, it does Bad Stuff to you, as described on its card. This may vary from losing an item, to losing one or more levels, to Death.

If two players are cooperating and still can't defeat the monster(s), they must both flee. They roll separately. The monster(s) CAN catch them both.

If you are fleeing from multiple monsters, you roll separately to escape each one, in any order you choose, and suffer Bad Stuff from each one that catches you as soon as it catches you.

Discard the monster(s).

### DEATH

If you die, you lose all your stuff. You keep your Class(es), Race(s), and Level (and any Curses that were affecting you when you died) – your new character will look just like your old one.

Dead characters cannot receive cards for any reason, not even Charity, and cannot level up.

**Looting The Body:** Lay out your hand beside the cards you had in play. Starting with the one with the highest Level, each other player chooses one card . . . in case of ties in level, roll a die. If your corpse runs out of cards, tough. After everyone gets one card, the rest are discarded.

Your new character appears when the next player begins his turn and can help others in combat . . . but you have no cards.

On your next turn, start by drawing four cards from each deck, face-down, and playing any Race, Class, or Item cards you want to, just as when you started the game. Then take your turn normally.

### TREASURE

When you defeat a monster, either by killing it or using a card to eliminate it, you get its Treasure. Each monster has a Treasure number on the bottom of its card. Draw that many treasures. Draw *face-down* if you killed the monster alone. Draw *face-up*, so the whole party can see what you got, if someone helped you.

Treasure cards can be played as soon as you get them. Item cards can be placed in front of you. "Go Up A Level" cards can be used instantly. You may play a "Go Up A Level" card on any player at any time.

### CHARACTER STATS

Each character is basically a collection of weapons, armor, and magic items, with three stats: Level, Race, and Class. For instance, you might describe your character as "an 8th-level elf wizard with **Boots of Butt-Kicking**, a **Staff of Napalm**, and the **Kneepads of Allure**."

Your character's sex starts off the same as your own.





## Example of Combat, With Numbers and Everything

Aric is a 4th-Level Warrior with the Chainsaw of Bloody Dismemberment (which gives him a +3 to his combat strength). He kicks open the door and finds the Net Troll, a Level 10 monster. Aric's at a 7, the Net Troll is at a 10, so Aric is losing.

*Aric:* I was hoping to save this card...

He plays the Magic Missile, giving him +5 for this fight. Now his combat strength is 12, beating the Net Troll's 10.

*Aric:* Ha! Net Troll going down!

*Suzan:* Not so fast. Now he's Enraged.

Suzan plays Enraged, adding 5 to the Net Troll's combat strength. Now Aric is losing, 15 to 12.

*Aric:* Curses!

*Suzan:* Want some help? (*Suzan is playing a Level 2 Elf with the Boots of Butt-Kicking, so her combat strength is 4. Combined with Aric's 12, they would have 16, enough to defeat the Net Troll's 15.*)

*Aric:* And give you a level? Not a chance! I'm Berserking.

Aric uses his Warrior power and discards three cards: Thief and a Wandering Monster from his hand, and Yuppie Water (usable only to help an Elf) from his carried items. Each one gives him +1 to his combat strength.

*Suzan:* Not the Yuppie Water! Noooo...

*Aric:* That's +3 to me, and now we're tied, 15 to 15. Because I'm a Warrior, I win ties... so I'm killing the Net Troll unless someone else plans to mess with me. Anyone?

No one says anything, so Aric goes up a level and claims the Net Troll's treasures – three from the Net Troll card, and one extra because it was Enraged. And the game goes on...

**Level:** This is a measure of how generally buff and studly you are. When the rules or cards refer to your Level, capitalized, they mean this number.

You gain a level when you kill a monster, or when a card says that you do. You can also sell items to buy levels (see Items).

## Level Counters: It's Not Cheating. It's Using the Rules!

If you have an iPhone or iPod Touch, you'll like our Level Counter application in the iTunes Store. Just search for "Level Counter" or click the link at [www.sjgames.com/iphone/levelcounter/](http://www.sjgames.com/iphone/levelcounter/). Even better, it gives you personal *in-game advantages* to make your friends jealous. Which is what being a munchkin is all about!

You lose a level when a card says that you do. Your Level can never go below 1. However, your combat strength can be negative if you get cursed or backstabbed.

**Race:** Characters may be Humans, Elves, Dwarves, or Halflings. If you have no Race card in front of you, you are human.

Humans have no special abilities. Each other Race has different special abilities (see the cards). You gain the abilities of a Race the moment you play its card in front of you, and lose them as soon as you discard that card.

Some Race abilities are powered by discards. You may discard any of your cards, in play or in your hand, to power a special ability.

You can discard a race card at any time, even in combat: "I don't wanna be an elf anymore." When you discard a race card, you become human again.

You may not belong to more than one race at once unless you play the **Half-Breed** card. You may not have two copies of the same Race card in play.



**Class:** Characters may be Warriors, Wizards, Thieves, or Clerics. If you have no Class card in front of you, you have no class. Yeah, I know, we did that one already.

Each Class has different abilities, shown on the cards. You gain the abilities of a Class the moment you play its card in front of you, and lose them as soon as you discard that card. Some Class abilities are powered by discards. You may discard any card, in play or in your hand, to power a special ability.

See the Class cards for when abilities can be used. Note that a Thief cannot steal while he or the target is fighting – and as soon as a monster is revealed, the fight is on!

You can discard a Class card at any time, even in combat: "I don't wanna be a wizard anymore." When you discard a Class card, you become classless until you play another Class card.

You may not belong to more than one class at once unless you play the **Super Munchkin** card. You may not have two copies of the same Class card in play.



## ITEMS

Each Item card has a name, a power, a size, and a value in Gold Pieces.

An item card in your hand does not count until you play it; at that point, it is "carried." You may carry any number of small items, but only one Big one. (Any item not designated Big is considered Small.) You may not simply discard one Big item to play another; you must sell it, trade it, lose it to a Curse or Bad Stuff, or discard it to power a Class or Race ability.

Dwarves are an exception. They can carry any number of Big items. If you stop being a Dwarf and you have more than one Big item, you must immediately get rid of all but one. If it's your turn, you can sell them. Otherwise, you must give them to the lowest-Level player(s) who can carry them! If any Big items are still left over, discard them.

Anyone can carry any item, but some items have use restrictions: for instance, the **Mace of Sharpness** can only be wielded by a Cleric. Its bonus only counts for someone who is, at the moment, a Cleric.

Likewise, you may also use only one headgear, one suit of armor, one pair of footgear, and two "1 Hand" items (or one "2 Hands" item) . . . unless you have a card that lets you ignore these limits. If you are carrying two Headgear cards, for instance, only one of them can help you.

You should indicate items that can't help you, or extras not being worn, by turning the cards sideways. You may NOT change your used and carried items during a combat or while running away. You cannot discard Item cards "just because." You may *sell* items for a level, or *give* an item to another player who wants it. You may discard to power certain Class and Race abilities. And a Curse may force you to get rid of something!

**Trading:** You may trade items (but not other cards) with other players. You may only trade items from the table – not from your hand. You may trade at any time except when you're in combat – in fact, the best time to trade is when it's not your turn. Any item you receive in a trade must go into play; you can't sell it until it's your turn.

You may also give items away without a trade, to bribe other players – "I'll give you my Flaming Armor if you *won't* help Bob fight that dragon!"

You may show your hand to others. Like we could stop you.

**Selling Items for Levels:** During your turn, you may discard items worth at least 1,000 Gold Pieces and immediately go up one level. If you discard (for instance) 1,100 Gold Pieces worth, you don't get change. But if you can manage 2,000 worth, you can go up two levels at once, and so on. You may sell items from your hand as well as those you are carrying. You may *not* sell items to go to Level 10.

## WHEN TO PLAY CARDS

A quick reference guide . . .

### MONSTERS

If drawn face-up, during the "Kick Open A Door" phase, they immediately attack the person who drew them.

If acquired any other way, they go into your hand and may be played during "Looking For Trouble," or played on another player with the **Wandering Monster** card.

Each Monster card is a single monster, even if the name on the card is plural.

### MONSTER ENHANCERS

Certain cards, called monster enhancers, raise or lower the combat strength of individual monsters. (Yes, you can have a negative enhancement.) Monster enhancers may be played by any player during any combat.

All enhancers on a single monster add together. If there are multiple monsters in a combat, the person who plays each enhancer must choose which monster it applies to. *Exception:* Anything that enhances a monster also enhances its Mate . . . if **Ancient**, **Enraged**, and **Mate** are played on a single monster, *in any order*, you are facing an Ancient Enraged monster and its Ancient Enraged Mate. Good luck . . .

### ITEMS - PLAYING THEM

Any item card may be played to the table as soon as you get it, or at any time during your own turn.

### ITEMS - USING THEM

Any one-shot item can be played during any combat, whether you have it in your hand or on the table. (Some one-shot items, such as the **Wishing Ring**, may also be used outside of combat.)

Other items cannot be used unless they are active. Items turned sideways cannot help you, even if you could otherwise legally use them.

### OTHER TREASURES

Other Treasure cards are "specials" (like "Go Up A Level"). You may play these at any time, unless the card itself says otherwise. Follow the card's instructions, then discard it, unless it has a persistent bonus like an Item.





## CURSES

If drawn face-up, during the “Kick Open A Door” phase, Curse cards apply to the person who drew them.

If drawn face-down or acquired some other way, Curse cards may be played on ANY player at ANY time. Any time, do you hear me? Reducing someone’s abilities just as he thinks he has killed a monster is a lot of fun.

Usually, a Curse affects its victim immediately (if it can) and is discarded. However, some Curses give a penalty later in the game or have a continuing effect. Keep these cards until you get rid of the Curse or the penalty takes effect. If someone plays a “your next combat” Curse on you while you are in combat, it counts in *that* combat! (Curse cards you keep as a reminder may not be discarded to power Class or Race abilities. Nice try!)

If a Curse can apply to more than one item, the victim decides which item is lost or cursed.

If a Curse applies to something you don’t have, ignore it. For instance, if you draw “Lose Your Armor” and you have no armor, nothing happens; discard the card.

There will be times when it will help you to play a Curse or Monster on yourself, or to “help” another player in a way that costs him treasure. This is very munchkinly. Do it.



## CLASSES AND RACES

These cards may be played to the table as soon as they are acquired, or at any time during your own turn. The same is true for **Super Munchkin** and **Half-Breed**, but you must already have a Class to play **Super Munchkin** or a Race to play **Half-Breed**.

## Super-Sized Munchkin

Studies have shown that 8.4 out of 9.7 *Munchkin* players just can’t get enough of the game. Here are some ideas to take your *Munchkin* games to new heights – or lows:

**Combining different Munchkin sets.** You can mix two (or more) base sets and expansions together for a genre-crossing mega-*Munchkin* adventure! Space plus Old West? Kung fu vampires? No problem!

**Expansions.** Most of the *Munchkin* core sets have expansions that add still more monsters to kill, new Treasure to loot, and sometimes entirely new kinds of cards. Ask at your friendly local game store, or visit [www.warehouse23.com](http://www.warehouse23.com) to buy directly from us.

**Turn it up to EPIC!** Playing to Level 10 just isn’t enough for some people. To satisfy their insane cravings, we’ve created *Epic Munchkin*, a new set of rules that gives all your *Munchkin* sets that high-octane boost you need to make it up to **Level 20!** Look for it on our online PDF store, [e23.sjgames.com](http://e23.sjgames.com) – it’s completely, absolutely FREE!

*All of the above!!!*

## Faster Play Rules

For a faster game, you can add a “phase 0” called **Listen At The Door**. At the start of your turn, draw a face-down Door card, which you may play or not. Then arrange cards and Kick Open The Door normally. If you Loot The Room, draw a face-down **Treasure**, not a Door.

You can also allow shared victories – if a player reaches Level 10 in a fight where he had a helper, the helper also wins the game, no matter what Level he is.

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Our deepest thanks to the hundreds, or thousands, or maybe millions of munchkins who have played, told their friends, and suggested new cards since the first release of *Munchkin*. We love you all and you scare us deeply!

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