

Overlords

min age 12+

<30 minutes

2-4 players

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Special thanks to Jack Dowden (and friends) for playtesting.
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I. Object of the Game

Overlords is a set collection, card drafting game for 2-4 players. Each turn, players recruit one card from their hand and then pass the rest of their hand to the player on their left. Every time a card is recruited, it goes into that player's army pile. Only the top card is visible in each player's army at any given time. There are two types of cards available in the game—Monster cards and Hired Hand cards. Each Monster card has a unique scoring mechanism. Players must recruit them wisely in order to maximize the amount of points of their army. Hired hand cards are placed separate from an army and, when activated, have special abilities that affect the game. The player who raises the most powerful army (scores the most points), wins!

II. Contents

(68) Monster cards

- (3) Three Point Undead Warrior cards
- (6) Two Point Undead Warrior cards
- (3) One Point Undead Warrior cards
- (12) Zombie cards
- (5) Cyclops cards
- (15) Minotaur cards
- (8) Orthrus cards
- (9) Chimera cards
- (7) Hydra cards



(14) Hired Hand cards

- (2) Black Knight cards
- (2) Red Knight cards
- (2) Blue Knight cards
- (2) Sorcerer cards
- (2) Thief cards
- (2) Medusa cards
- (2) Lich King card



(8) Other cards

- (1) Overlord card
- (7) Reference cards



III. Card Anatomy



Monster Card

- Monster Name
- Scoring Mechanism



Hired Hand Card

- h** Hired Hand Icon
- Hired Hand Name
- Special effect when activated

IV. Game Setup

Making the game deck

Separate the 14 Hired Hand cards (cards with  on top left corner) and shuffle them. Draw 7 of the Hired Hand cards and combine them with the 68 Monster cards. Alternatively players may choose which 7 Hired Hand cards they would like to include in the game.



Dealing out hands

Shuffle all the cards and place them face-down to form a draw pile. At the beginning of each round, one person deals cards face-down from the draw pile to each player. In a 2 player game, a third hand is dealt to a dummy player. **See page 4, Section XIII for details on 2 player games.** Please refer to the table on the right for a summary of hands, cards per hand, and number of rounds per game.

Players	2	3	4
Hands	3*	3	4
Cards per hand	8	8	9
Rounds	3	3	2

*Dummy hand used for 2 player games.



Adding the Overlord card

After cards have been dealt, take the Overlord card and add it to any player's hand. The Overlord card is used to indicate which player may play their Hired Hand card(s). It may not be recruited and it stays with the hand when it is passed. The player who ends a round holding the Overlord card starts the next round with it in their hand. Further explanation can be found in the Hired Hands section.

V. Gameplay

After the cards have been dealt, players may pick up their hands and begin play.

- Each turn, players recruit one card. **All players simultaneously place their recruited card face-up on the table in front of them** to signify that card is in their army. (Figure A)
- After recruiting their card, **players pass their remaining hand face-down to the player on their left.** (Figure B)
- Players continue to recruit one card each turn making sure that each recruited card covers the previous one (so only your last recruited card is visible).
- Repeat recruit-pass turns until only one card is passed, at which point players automatically recruit that card and the round ends.



Figure A. All players simultaneously place their recruited card face-up on the table in front of them.

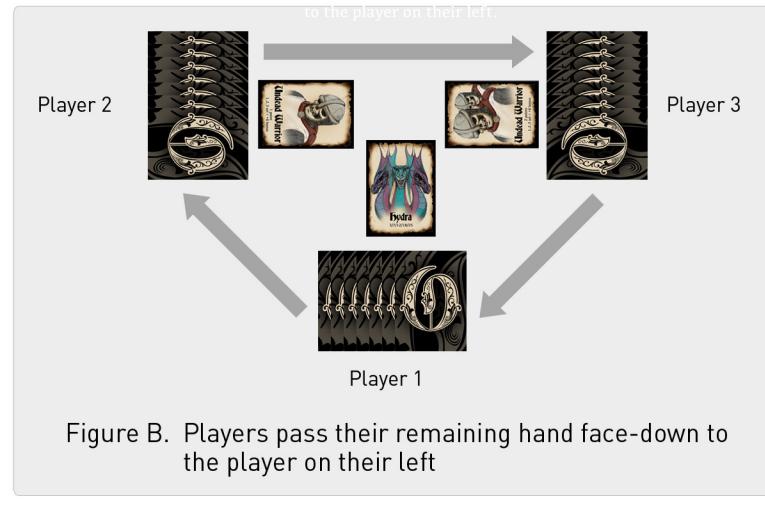


Figure B. Players pass their remaining hand face-down to the player on their left

VI. Endgame

After the final round is completed, players organize all of their cards and follow the scoring rules. See page 4 of the rulebook for a detailed explanation of each card. The player (or team) with the highest score is declared the winner.

VII. Hired Hand Cards

Recruiting a Hired Hand card

When you recruit a Hired Hand card, place it separate from your army pile. **Any following turn, if you are holding the Overlord card, you may activate it's special ability.**

Activating a Hired Hand card

Hired Hand cards are activated at the beginning of a turn before players recruit their cards. **The player who is holding the Overlord card is the only player who may play Hired Hand cards that turn.** Multiple Hired Hand cards may be played in a turn.

Carrying over Hired Hand cards

Hired Hand cards may be carried over to later rounds. In the event you have an inactivated Hired Hand card **at the end of the final round**, it is placed in your army pile.

Hired Hand cards scoring and special abilities

Note: All Hired Hand cards are worth 2 points.



Black Knight

2 points

Player who activates Black Knight card recruits 2 cards from hand, then places Black Knight into their hand before passing.



Red Knight

2 points

When the Red Knight is activated, you may look through any opponent's army pile (including your own). Place any card from that army on top afterwards.



Blue Knight

2 points

When the Blue Knight is activated, take the draw pile and pick one card to recruit from it. Place the recruited card in your army pile. Discard the Blue Knight card and reshuffle the draw pile.



Thief

2 points

When the Thief is activated, exchange it for the top card of any opponent's army.

Player 2



Player 3



Player 1

Player 1 holds the Overlord card and may choose to activate Hired Hand cards during this turn. Player 2 and Player 3 may not activate Hired Hand cards.



Sorcerer

2 points

Player who activates Sorcerer chooses a direction, clockwise or counter-clockwise. Each player passes the top card of their army pile to the player in the chosen direction. After the top cards are passed, the player who activated the Sorcerer places the Sorcerer card on top of their own army pile.



Medusa

2 points

When Medusa is activated, opponents flip their hands over so they are visible. Player who activated Medusa chooses which card their opponents must recruit that turn.



Lich King

2 points

When Lich King is activated, opponents flip their hands over so they are visible. Player who activated Lich King may swap any player hands (including their own).

Tips for playing Hired Hand cards

- Try to recruit Hired Hand cards in the earlier rounds
- Wait for the most opportune time to activate them:
 - Black Knights are great for grabbing 2 valuable cards
 - Red Knights are excellent set-up cards
 - Medusa cards force opponents to take a less valuable card

XIII. Special Rules

2 Player games

Deal out three hands of 8 cards each. Both players take their hands. The remaining hand is placed in between the 2 players. This hand is for the dummy player.

First player takes the top card from the dummy hand and places it in their hand. First player must now recruit one card for their army, and one card for the dummy player's army. The second player takes their turn as normal without interacting with the dummy hand. **Remember that players must recruit cards simultaneously.** The following turn, the second player takes the top card from the dummy hand and places it in their hand. Second player must now recruit one card for their army, and one card for the dummy player's army. The first player takes their turn as normal without interacting with the dummy hand.

First and second players alternate each turn controlling the dummy player. **The dummy player's hand is never passed and players cannot recruit Hired Hand cards for the dummy player.** If the dummy player ends up with a Hired Hand card after a round or at the end of the game, that card is placed directly into the dummy player's army.

2 versus 2 player team games

For 2 versus 2 team play, teammates should seat themselves opposite to one another. Each player is dealt 9 cards per round. The game is over after 2 rounds. **Before each turn, players may exchange one card from their hand with their teammates.** They may not exchange the Overlord card. Players then recruit 1 card for their army as usual. When there is only one card left, players may choose to exchange with their teammate or keep it for themselves. **At the end of the first round, teammates exchange armies.** At the end of the game, teammates score their armies individually and then combine the points for a final team score. The team with the highest total score wins.

IX. Scoring Monster Cards



Undead Warrior

1, 2, or 3 points

1,2,3 straight = +6 bonus

Each Undead Warrior is worth 1, 2, or 3 points. A straight set (one 1 point card, one 2 point card, and one 3 point card) will gain you a 6 point bonus. Multiple straights are allowed.



Hydra

(1) 3 points, (2) 7 points, (3) 12 points

(4) 18 points, (5 or more) 25 points

Hydra, the multi-headed dragon scores higher points with each card collected. A maximum of 25 points can be earned with just 5 cards.



Zombies

(1) 1 point, (2) 4 points, (3) 9 points

(4) 12 points, (5) 18 points

(6 or more) 24 points

Zombies are more dangerous in hordes. Recruit large amounts of Zombies and reap the rewards.



Cyclops

6 points if you possess only one

Otherwise 2 points each

Cyclops is the giant with one eye that does not enjoy company. Secure yourself one Cyclops and earn yourself 6 points. If another is picked up inadvertently, each Cyclops is only worth 2 points.



Orthrus

Set of 2 = 7 points

Otherwise 2 points each

Orthrus, the two-headed hell hound. One card is worth 2 points but a pair will score you 7 points. You may collect multiple pairs to score even more.



Minotaur

Most cards = 24 points

2nd most = 16 points 3rd most = 8 points

Split any ties

Half man, half bull, Minotaurs are most powerful in large groups. Recruit the most and score 24 points.



Chimera

Set of 3 = 12 points

Otherwise 2 points each

Part lion, part goat, part serpent. The Chimera needs all 3 parts to be effective. Recruit 3 cards and receive 12 points for the set. Fail to recruit 3 cards and score only 2 points each.

Scoring Monster cards

- Separate all cards by monster type
- Tally score for each monster
- Determine 1st, 2nd, 3rd for Minotaurs
- Add any bonuses for Undead Warrior straight set
- Don't forget to add 2 points for every Hired Hand card!