

Shadowraid: TACTICS

A single player hero based mobile game.

Game Info/Gameplay Description/History of the Game

Game Overview

Shadowraid: TACTICS combines elements of the MOBA genre and turn based tactical games to create an experience in which players choose from a roster of powerful heroes to battle waves of hostile AI-controlled enemies. The game is categorized as a Turn-Based Tactics game, or *XCOM-like*.

Set in the *Shadowland* fantasy realm, the game's campaigns have told the story of the never-ending conflict between the main factions inhabiting these lands.

- *Arctic Barbarians*
- *Forest Wardens*
- *Ocean Raiders*
- *Forgotten Lords*

Each faction is vying for control over the *Shadowcore*, a powerful artifact buried deep in the central mountain dominating the realm. Control over this relic can only be achieved when eight *Citadels of Shadow* surrounding the mountains are held, and the mana-flow of the *Shadowcore* changed to attune with the mana of a member of a particular faction.

It seems peace is impossible – so long as the *Shadowcore* is attuned to a member of one faction, the members of other factions will suffer.

Gameplay

Each session of *Shadowraid: TACTICS* has the player choosing a hero to lead a force from their faction on a raid against an enemy faction held territory. The raid involves the player using their heroes to support the push of waves of AI controlled *mobs* against the territory's defenses, pushing back the enemy *mobs*.

The enemy AI will also have several *Special Mobs* known as present, but no heroes. These *specials* are larger and more powerful than the regular *mobs*, and are essentially generic AI controlled heroes. Confronting and eliminating the *Special Mobs* will present a significant tactical challenge for the player and represent their progress within a single 'Raid'.

A *raid* is completed once the *Gate* at the opposite end of the map to the player's spawn is destroyed. Reaching the *Gate* requires the player to help their *mobs* and *lieutenants* push along several *lanes*, against the waves of enemy *mobs*, destroying defensive towers along the way. The *raid* can be lost if the enemy *mobs* and *lieutenants* are able to reach the player's spawn point and capture their *Gate*.

Each *raid* represents an attack on an enemy held *territory*, and a successful raid indicates that the player's faction is closer to controlling this territory.

Territories are a series of concentric hexagons representing the layers of defences around each *Citadel of Shadow*. As each territory in a 'ring' is captured by the player's faction they gain the ability to *raid* the next layer, until they can finally take on the *Citadel* itself.

While no direct PvP exists in the game, player actions for their faction influence the wider conflict, with the control of the territories by each faction being synced across the entire player base.

Movement

The game is viewed from an isometric perspective. The player controls a team of heroes of their choice, and when it is their turn, they can select the 'move' option, then select a location to move to for their selected hero.

Combat

The hero's *basic attack* can be used each turn and directly targets an enemy in range (including 'melee'). The player activates the basic attack by tapping a widget on the screen, before tapping an enemy target in range. Depending on the category/stats of the basic attack, they may be able to select multiple targets or the same target multiple times. They can then confirm the attack by pressing the 'confirm' icon.

Attacks, including those from abilities or sources other than the basic attacks of heroes, mobs and specials, will have an elemental type, as well as being separated between *ranged* and *melee*. Each unity in *Shadowraid: TACTICS* has a defense value for each element, as well as a modifier to *ranged* and *melee* resistance, which will negate incoming damage accordingly.

Damage, healing and energy

When damage is received, a units health is reduced. When their health reaches zero they die.

Heroes will also have an *energy* value which will deplete as they use *abilities*. Some abilities from other characters, and world objects/interactables, will restore energy or health.

Abilities

As well as their *Basic Attack*, each character will have three Abilities.

Abilities give each hero a variety of options for dealing extra damage, damage to more targets, special damage, increasing their mobility, buffing allies or debuffing enemies, or controlling the battle space and enemy *mobs*.

Three other widget based buttons allow the player to activate one of their 3 *abilities*, by tapping the icon then selecting a target/targets, before tapping 'confirm'.

Technical Requirements/Guide

Visual style for models, UI, art and environment

Shadowraid: TACTICS is rendered in a **low-poly stylized/cartoon aesthetic**. Models are not 'blocky', despite the low-poly style.

The textures/materials applied to characters will use a resolution of **1024x1024**. This is a high enough resolution so that when they are shown on mobile screens they do not appear 'retro' or low quality.

Dimensions and scale

Each model is based off a scale of 3:1 to real-world objects. So, for example, if modelling a character who would stand at 180cm tall, the 3D model in a program such as *Blender* would need to stand at 540cm.

Polycount & Topology

Character models should be between 1500 and 4000 polygons for the final release.

Prototypes can exceed this figure if necessary, so long as the second-pass undergoes retopology and the details are baked down into a normal map texture.

The mesh for all models in *Shadowraid: TACTICS* should contain only *quads*, to allow for a clean transfer into the *Unity* game engine.

The mesh for characters does not need to be a single piece. The head, torso, arms and legs can be created as separate meshes. This will also allow for future updates to add alternative *skins* in separate pieces for existing characters.

Asset naming conventions & file formats

.blend:

Blender project files should indicate the faction, character and version of the model, as well as the phase of development (either 'prototype', 'production')

So, for example, a blender project for a character from the Orc faction named *Grimskull* in the prototype phase would be:

orc_grimskull_prototype_v1.blend

For the 'production' version undergoing its second pass or being used in the game, it would be

orc_grimskull_production_v1.blend

.fbx:

3D assets which are ready for implementation in the game, or which are to be tested during prototyping, will be exported from *blender* as a *.fbx*.

The naming convention should be the same as for a *.blend*, but will be either 'prototype', 'production' or 'release')

EG: *orc_grimskull_release_v1.blend*

.psd

Photoshop files for textures being created for characters should follow the following format: 'faction_name_phase_version'.

If the texture is for a specific component of the model, or an accessory, include this after the name of the model.

EG: *orc_grimskull_torso_production_v1.psd*

All textures (albedo, metallic, bump, etc, etc) being developed for a model should be contained in a single Photoshop project file.

.png

Follows the same naming conventions as Photoshop files, but needs to include the texture type.

EG: *orc_grimskull_torso_albedo_production_V1.png*

Blender objects & collections

Naming of objects in the *Blender* project does not have any specific rules, but each object, category and material within the project should be named in a manner which can clearly be understood when observed by a third party.

Where different components and objects of a model are 'mirrored' (eg, armature bones and separate arm/leg meshes) they should be appended with '.r' or '.l' to indicate which side they are on

EG: *leg_lower_bone.l* or *leg_lower_bone.r*

Faction, Roles, Archetypes, Ability Categories

Factions

Arctic Barbarians

Noble and savage warriors hailing from the chilly northern quarter of the *Shadowlands*. They view the rest of the world as weaklings, with their society revolving around a prophecy which predicts an oncoming calamity. They believe that by converting the rest of the world to conditions similar to the Northern Quarter they can force the rest of the world to become as strong as they are, and prepare the world to resist the oncoming disaster.

This faction includes several races in their ranks such as:

- Humans
- Orcs
- Mammoth-kin
- Dwarves.

Many of their warriors tend towards simple armour covering vitals, along with fur lined cloaks and trophies, talismans of warding and runic tattoos. Others are comfortable donning massive suits of heavy armour.

Forest Wardens

This faction seeks a harmonious and peaceful existence with nature – followed shortly by the eradication of anything they deem 'unnatural'. This mainly covers any kind of industry or civilization which impinges on the forestlands which dominate the Western quarter of the world. They are composed of naturalists and deeply spiritual philosophers who specialize in hunting, foraging and a form of animal husbandry aimed towards sustainability, as well as strict control over their own population. They see the rest of the world's race towards industrialization and growing civilization as a one way ticket to the world's ecosystem collapsing, and seek to control the *Shadowcore* in order to force the rest of the world to scale back on their rabid expansion.

This faction includes races such as Elves, Humans, Dryads and Gnomes.

They tend towards magical defenses from talismans and enchanted light armours, using leather or other primitive materials for conventional protection and simple robes or tunics for the rest of their clothing. Some of their heroes will use heavier armour, including metal warplate, but for most of their ‘tanks’ they’ll often summon powerful magic wards or totem armour.

Ocean Raiders

A faction of savage warriors from the scattered islands and underwater realms of the Eastern Quarter Seas. This faction lives by a strict warrior code in a feudal hierarchy which worships a pantheon of ‘War Gods’. Their culture necessitates the fighting of fierce naval battles between rival clans serving different lords, as an act of worship. These warriors firmly believe that their way of life keeps their pantheon satisfied, and that their lives in this world are simply a process through which they prove worth in order to secure a higher status in their next life. Many of the more powerful Ocean Raider lords view the control of the *Shadowcore* as the ultimate pinnacle of proving their worth, and so seek to crush the other factions and conquer the *Shadowlands* for their own glory.

This faction includes:

- Crabmen
- Humans
- Goblins
- Squidmen

They mostly favour a mixture of light armour and magically infused protective gear in the form of sea-worthing gear. For heavier protection they’ll look towards chain mail, with heavier sets of armour magically infused to be buoyant in water – or, for armour simply incapable of being made to float, some kind of ability to fly or at least get out of the water.

Forgotten Lords

Dwelling in the desolate barren lands of the Southern Quarter of the world are an ancient civilization of nobles from a nearly forgotten time - The Forgotten Kingdoms. This was an affluent and powerful civilization in the times before the emergence of the mountain containing the *Shadowcore* changed the shape of the lands. But the Forgotten Kingdoms fell to ruin over the course of a generation as a terrible and unnatural plague began turning the citizenry to mindless shambling creatures, never dying but slowly decaying until they fell completely to pieces, scattered to the wind as dust while their souls are subjected to a never-ending torment. As the plague spread and threatened to infect every living person across these lands the upper class nobility bent their resources to discovering a cure. What they found instead were dark magics which would not cure or prevent the plague – but which allowed them to retain their sanity and awareness, to stave off the eventual collapse of their bodies and to have control over the mindless hordes of infected peasantry.

The Forgotten Lords believe that they can restore themselves to normalcy, and lift the curse which renders their nation’s folk as undying, empty husks, through control of the *Shadowcore*.

This faction includes:

- Skeletons (of various races)
- Zombies (of various...)

- Necromancer Lords (undead humans, similar to vampires in a way)
- the trapped souls of warriors from various races manifesting as dust in empty suits of armour.

The faction will trend towards almost fully sealed sets of armour; much of the magic which prevents the remnants of the undead from fully decaying and losing their form requires some kind of container. The most 'far gone' of the Forgotten Lords are almost nothing but dust contained within their enchanted armour, holding on to their last shred of sanity and willpower to prevent themselves from dissipating.

Classes

The mechanical design of each Hero in *Shadowraid: TACTICS* encompasses a single class. These categories influence the playstyle of the individual character as well as the narrative and visual aesthetic, in addition to the faction from which they hail.

Caster

These are magic users of various kinds. They will tend to rely less on direct physical attacks and weapons, instead using spells, rituals or innate magical abilities to achieve their goals on the battlefield. They tend to be lightly armored as well, seeing no need for most physical defenses as they rely more on their magical abilities.

Ranger

A class which focuses on ranged combat. They will make use of physical weaponry for the most part to deal damage to enemies from a safe distance, and often have a high amount of mobility either for maintaining that distance or for maneuvering around and chasing down enemies.

Fighter

The frontline melee specialists. They will most often be seen with some kind of melee weapon, shields and armour, unless they have some other means of shrugging off enemy attacks while closing the distance to the enemy and attacking them at point blank. They are often very heavily armoured – otherwise they will make sure of powerful defensive magic, or high mobility to allow them to pick and choose their fights.

Engineer

This class is something of an anomaly and encompasses a wide variety of heroes who, for lack of a better term, prefer not to do their own fighting. They will make use of stationary 'summons' – turrets, defensive walls, traps and magical fields in combat. They'll usually have some rudimentary means of defending themselves or dealing out damage, but will for the most part rely on their 'technology' or 'summons' to get by. Another class which often favors heavier armour.

Druid

On the surface Druids are quite similar to the Caster, but have enough differences to have their own class category. They specialize in magic which for the most part does not directly target anyone or anything – either in an offensive or defensive capacity. Instead, their magic can summon or create allies, entities who are weaker than a hero individually but are more than a match when teamed up with the Druid and other summons. Their powers might also include the 'management' of the

enemy's weaker *mobs*, including the ability to 'turn' them. Alternatively, their magic can interact with the world itself – changing conditions or shaping the environment to their advantage. Druids come in all shapes and sizes when it comes to their armour, weapons and overall aesthetic. The one constant is that by themselves they are not particularly strong, and they appear to do little to help their allies. But when used correctly they can turn the tides immensely.

Priest

Another class making use of magic in a fashion different from Casters, and from Druids. Priests will primarily concern themselves with their allies – providing healing, buffs, and other perks which can amplify an allied hero who is more concerned with dealing directly with the enemy. Priests do tend to pull 'double duty' with some of the other classes, such as utilizing ranged damaging abilities against enemy heroes, abilities to control enemy heroes or abilities to control enemy *mobs*. Depending on the 'secondary' role that a Priest might fulfill, they may range from going to battle in a set of robes with a walking staff to defend themselves with to a fully armoured Paladin Knight wielding a massive greathammer.

Primary and Secondary Archetypes

A Hero will utilize two *Archetypes* which determine much of their design, including their abilities.

They will use one of three *Primary Archetypes*: *Support*, *Damage Per Second (DPS)* and *Tank*.

Then they will use one of the six *Secondary Archetypes*: *Carry*, *Assassin*, *Anti-Tank*, *Anti-Mage*, *Anti-Mob* or *Summoner*.

Along with the Class of the Hero, the Hero's general mechanical design – their stats, standard attack and movement – should be mainly influence by the *Primary Archetype*. The *Secondary Archetype* should then be used heavily as an influence for the narrative design of the hero.

When choosing the three abilities for the hero, the first ability should encompass their *Primary Archetype*.

The second ability can encompass either the *Primary* or *Secondary Archetype*. Selecting the second ability based on the *secondary Archetype* will 'flavour' the character more towards that *Archetype*, though their *Primary Archetype* should still remain dominant in their design.

The third ability should always be chosen based on the *Secondary Archetype*.

Primary Archetypes

Support

This archetype most often focuses on providing benefit to allied Heros, *mobs* or the 'team' as a whole.

This can take a few forms, including healing, providing buffs or using 'mobility' abilities to get their allies in or out of danger as needed.

The Support archetype can also specialize in harassing and debuffing the enemy team, and on 'locking down' powerful enemies through the use of abilities which limit or disable them, or outright stun them.

DPS

This Archetype is very straightforward: they do damage to the enemy. Whether this is damage to smaller *mobs*, using frequent lower-powered attacks and abilities to deal with swarms, or powerful single-target attacks which can taken down the *special mobs*, they are helping to push the team forward and dealing out the most damage.

Tank

A classic archetype whose role is almost the polar opposite of DPS: they absorb damage, pulling the attention of enemies and shielding allies. They can sometimes be capable of putting out respectable amounts of damage themselves, but mostly serve to simply endure while their more fragile allies put out damage.

Secondary Archetypes

Carry

This archetype starts each mission significantly weaker than other heroes, with the abilities tied to this archetype feeling weak or underpowered in the ‘early game’.

However as they begin gain XP from combat and acquire upgrades to their abilities they will sharply scale up to an ‘end game’ state where they are significantly more powerful than heroes of a similar level.

A Carry *Secondary Archetype* is typically paired with a DPS *Primary Archetype*, though this is not a hard and fast rule. Carries can also be Tanks or Support. Abilities which absorb damage or draw ‘aggro’ as a Tank would become overwhelming if scaled up exponentially as a Carry. Likewise, any Support hero able to heal, protect allies or debuff enemies can likewise become a game changer with Carry scaling.

Assassin

Almost the polar opposite of the *Carry*, this archetype starts out the game with abilities and stats which make it more powerful than other characters of a similar level. It will be able to roam by itself and take on challenges – such as ‘assassinating’ *Special Mobs*.

As the game progresses towards ‘late game’ and ‘end game’ their impact while operating solo will decrease, and their role in combat will transition to taking advantage of the Carry’s dominance by picking off *Special Mobs* who are weakened by the rest of the team but not able to be completely dealt with by the Carry alone.

Assassins should either be Support or DPS, as the ability to absorb a lot of damage as a Tank would not make much sense given their role. Pairing Assassin with Support can lead to a dynamic character which ‘hunts’ for threats to their Carries and other weaker heroes in the ‘early game’, then switches to a more hands on protective role in the ‘late game’.

Anti-Tank

A specialist archetype with a role which maintains a consistent impact throughout the game, though the context will shift from ‘early’ to ‘late’ and ‘end game’. As the name suggests, the Anti-Tank will have abilities which will neutralize the defensive capabilities of *Special Mobs* that fit into the Tank *Archetype*. This could take the form of applying debuffs to the defenses of a Tank, blocking the Tank’s defensive abilities, or providing large amounts of burst damage which ‘overload’ the defenses of a tank.

This will allow the other *Archetypes* to deal with Tanks once they are weakened, creating a breach in the 'wall' which Tank *Special Mobs* would create.

An Anti-Tank works best as either a Support or DPS class. A Tank Anti-Tank could be made to work, but might represent something of an identity crisis.

Anti-Mage

Much like the Anti-Tank this *Archetype's* name is self-explanatory, though it targets a class rather than an archetype. This *Archetype* specializes in neutralizing *Special Mob* NPCs considered to be 'Mages' - characters who would fit into the Caster, Druid, Priest or Engineer Classes. Their abilities would be built around specifically targeting Mages in a way

The Anti-Mage will remain at a somewhat consistent power level throughout the game, but generally should be focused on 'shutting down' *Special Mobs* that are using their abilities to disrupt or target the player's heroes. This could be either an offensive or defensive 'flavour' – the Anti-Mage might spend it's time guarding other heroes or the friendly *mobs* from Mages specializing in attacking the player's assets. Or the Anti-Mage could be a proactive 'hunter' seeking out Mages and disrupting them before they become a problem for their allies, making them easier to kill while their abilities are being neutered.

They may also specialize in just killing the Mage *Special Mob* – an Anti-Mage with a DPS *Primary* archetype, for instance, would be able to shut down the Mage by blocking their abilities, then use their high damage output to finish the job.

As such the Anti-Mage fits well into all three *Primary Archetypes*: the Support neutralizing anything that a hostile Mage does, while buffing and healing their allies; the DPS aggressively seeking out Mages in a variety of contexts to cut off their means of defending themselves before going in for the kill; the Tank absorbing all the damage from a Mage's summons and negating their abilities, to allow their allies to move in for the kill.

Anti-Mob

Another 'self-explanatory' archetype. The Anti-Mob's role in the game, and the abilities which allow it to fulfil this role, is to cut down hostile *Mobs*. While every character does this, and most of the *Secondary Archetypes* are in some way focused on dealing with specific *Special Mobs*, the Anti-Mob archetype differs in one way: they are a jack of all trades and master of none when it comes to killing, controlling or otherwise combating hostile mobs.

They will focus mainly on area-of-effect (AOE) abilities for wiping out large numbers of the regular *mobs*, as well as any *summons* that a hostile *Special Mob* might bring. To add to this their abilities may also disrupt the movement of groups of *mobs*, or provide debuffs to groups of *mobs* that make them easier to deal with for their allies.

The Anti-Mob fits well into all three *Primary Archetypes* as a result. As a *Support* they can fulfil their Anti-Mob role by applying debuffs and movement disruptions to the hostile *mobs*, buff/heal friendly mobs to do the fighting for them, or buff/heal other heroes to make them more effective against crowds of regular *mobs* and *summons*. As a DPS they would perhaps instead have abilities which apply burst damage to multiple targets in amounts which would devastate a closely packed group of regular *mobs* but have little effect on a single *Special Mob*. As a Tank they could draw the 'attention' of regular *mobs*, being just tough enough to handle the multiple weak attacks, and keep them occupied while their allies clean up.

Summoner

The Summoner *Secondary Archetype* essentially follows one rule: let someone else do the fighting.

Summoner abilities should always either be about creating one or more friendly entities.

The kinds of *summons* can vary from singular powerful *Special Mobs*, crowds of weaker *mobs*, traps of different scales and quantities, 'turrets', and walls. The other abilities chosen should then complement their *summons* in some way.

For instance, the Summoner might have just one ability which creates a single *Special Mob*. Their other abilities then focus on protecting that *summon* or making their *summons* more powerful.

Or the Summoner might be able to make multiple *traps*, placed in different spots. Their other abilities then allow them to drag or push hostile *Special Mobs* into those traps to make them vulnerable to attack or to deal direct damage.

A Summoner might have two abilities influenced by this *Secondary Archetype*: summoning a series of *Wall Summons* to disrupt, block or control movement, and a single *Turret* which then takes advantage of those *Walls* to eliminate the *mobs* and *Special Mobs* trying to navigate them.

The *Primary Archetype* for a Summoner should almost always be Support, as the playstyle should encourage players to get their *summons* into the fight then focus on keeping those *summons* alive/effective. A DPS Summoner could work: using *traps* to disable/weaken an enemy then using direct *basic attack* damage to finish the job. Likewise a Tank could work: putting down *turrets* or summoning *mob summons* then drawing all the attention and damage to themselves to allow their weaker *mobs* to get their job done.

Ability/Attack Categories

Hero Control

- Stun/bind
- Slow
- Force move (enemy)
- Area denial
- Counterspell
- Ability denial

Mobility

- Charge
- Retreat
- Chase
- Move ally
- Blink

Damage

- Nuke
- Burst
- Over time

- Conditional
- Reactive

Buff (either to self, ally or group)

- Damage
- Penetration
- Health
- Resistance
- Movement
- Mana
- Immunity

Debuff (enemy singular or group)

- Damage
- Penetration
- Health
- Resistance
- Movement
- Mana
- Remove buffs

Restoration (self, ally or group)

- Mana
- Stamina
- Remove condition/debuff

Heal (self, ally or group)

- Burst/anti-nuke
- Over time
- Conditional

Crowd Control

- Area denial
- Area slows
- Enchanting
- Disabling
- Hypnotizing

Summoning

- Summon *Special Mob*

- Summon *mobs* (multiple)
- Summon *trap* (single 'nuke')
- Summon *trap* (multiple)
- Summon *Turret* (single)
- Summon *Turrets* (multiple)
- Summon *Wall* (single)
- Summon *Wall* (multiple)