# Pathfinder

ADVENTURE CARD GAME

RISE OF THE RUNELORDS

BASE SET RULEBOOK

WELCOME TO VARISIA.

IT'S A REALM DOTTED WITH THE MONOLITHIC RELICS OF AN EMPIRE LONG SINCE CRUMBLED, A ROUGH BUT MAJESTIC LAND OF MISTY FORESTS AND ROLLING PLAINS BORDERED BY SHARP PEAKS AND BOUNTIFUL SEAS. ITS PEOPLE ARE HARDY PIONEERS AND NEWLY MINTED NOBLES, ALL EAGER TO CARVE NAMES FOR THEMSELVES FROM THE STERN LANDSCAPE. BEYOND THE SETTLED LANDS, BEASTS AND GIANTS UNUSED TO CIVILIZATION'S ENCROACHMENT STALK THE HILLS AND WOODS, MAKING SHORT WORK OF THE UNWARY AND LEGENDS OF THE BOLD. YET NONE CAN CLAIM TO KNOW ALL OF VARISIA'S SECRETS, AND IN ITS DARKEST SHADOWS AN AGES~OLD EVIL STIRS ONCE MORE.

> DARK RUMORS WHISPER THAT THE RUNELORDS HAVE RETURNED. BUT THE STORY IS NOT YET WRITTEN, AND ONLY YOU CAN DETERMINE THE ENDING.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

In the Pathfinder Adventure Card Game, your party of adventurers races against time on a quest to defeat a dangerous villain. Each player has a deck of cards representing her character. In most scenarios, your characters explore a variety of locations as you try to hunt down the villain. You need to clean out or protect these locations so that you can corner the villain and defeat him before time runs out. As you play more games, you will complete scenarios, improve your deck, customize your character, and take on more and more powerful challenges.

A MULTITUDE OF CARDS

A stranger gives you a mysterious treasure chest. Unlock it, and therein you will find a trove of wonders the likes of which the world of Golarion has never seen.

CARD SETS

The *Rise of the Runelords Base Set* is one of several Pathfinder Adventure Card Game products. This box contains everything that 1–4 players need to begin the game, including the base card set for *Rise of the Runelords*. Included in the same box is your first adventure deck, *Burnt Offerings*, which provides the cards needed to tell the first chapter of the *Rise of the Runelords* story. Other adventure decks, available separately, continue the adventure by adding new locations to explore, new villains to fight, new loot to acquire, and much more. The *Character Add-On Deck*, also available separately, adds new characters, monsters, and other cards, and also increases the maximum number of players to 6.

Each card is marked with a pair of set indicators: the top of each card features the logo of its Adventure Path, and a letter or number in the upper right corner identifies the specific product that the card came from. This might be a letter, such as **B**

(indicating the card is part of the base set), or **C** (indicating that it's from the *Character Add-On Deck*); adventure deck numbers from **1** to **6** indicate that the card is part of one of the six *Rise of the Runelords* adventure decks.

To the left of the letter or number, you'll find the card type. There are more than a dozen different card types in the Pathfinder Adventure Card Game. Among them are character cards, roles, and tokens; story cards, which include an Adventure Path, adventures, and scenarios; locations; banes, which include villains, henchmen, monsters, and barriers; and boons, which include weapons, spells, armors, items, allies, loot, and blessings.

For your first play session, you'll need only the base cards, so leave *Burnt Offerings* sealed for now. If you own the *Character Add-On Deck*, go ahead and combine that set with the cards in the base set as described in Organizing Your Cards (see page 4).


RULES SIDEBARS

Throughout this rulebook, you'll find a number of sidebars that look like this one. These sidebars explain general rules that deserve special attention—make sure you read them all!

STRATEGY SIDEBARS

You'll also find a variety of sidebars that look like this one. These offer advice about game strategy. If you prefer to develop strategies on your own as you play, feel free to skip these sidebars—you won't miss any rules!

EXAMPLE SIDEBARS

Sidebars that look like this provide examples. Don't miss the example of an entire turn on page 20!

RULES: THE GOLDEN RULE

If a card and this rulebook are ever in conflict, the card should be considered correct. If cards conflict with one another, then Adventure Path cards overrule adventures, adventures overrule scenarios, scenarios overrule locations, locations overrule characters, and characters overrule other card types. Despite this hierarchy, if one card tells that you cannot do something and another card tells you that you can, comply with the card that tells you that you cannot. If a card instructs you to do something impossible, like draw a card from an empty deck, ignore that instruction.

TRAY LAYOUT

ADVENTURE DECKS	**CHARACTER DECKS**

CHARACTERS, ROLES, AND TOKENS	**VILLAINS**	**WEAPONS**	**ITEMS**
ADVENTURE PATHS, ADVENTURES, AND SCENARIOS	**HENCHMEN**	**SPELLS**	**ALLIES**
LOCATIONS			
MONSTERS	**BARRIERS**	**ARMORS**	**BLESSINGS**
		LOOT	

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ORGANIZING YOUR CARDS

The way you organize your cards is important because there are times when you'll need to quickly locate specific cards during play. The box includes a special tray to keep all of the cards organized. It has room for the cards from the base card set, the *Character Add-On Deck*, and all six adventure decks.

Each type of card has its own place in the box, so divide up the cards by type as shown in the illustration. For now, leave the character deck slots empty; you'll build your first decks soon. Note there are no loot cards in either the base card set or the *Character Add-On Deck*; they're found only in adventure decks.

With adventures, scenarios, locations, villains, henchmen, and loot, you'll often be asked to locate specific cards; you may wish to alphabetize the cards within each type to help you find them quickly during play. Group the character, token, and role cards by character. The other card types should have their cards shuffled, as you will often be asked to draw random cards from those groups.
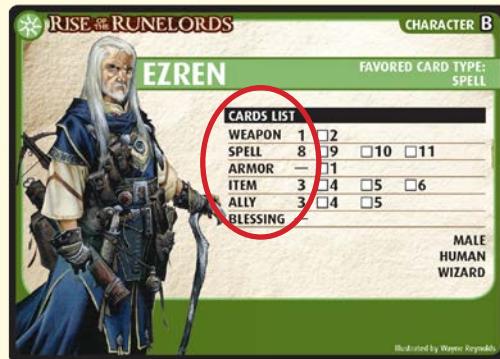
SETTING UP

Preparation is the key to a successful adventure. The road to victory is littered with the bodies of the unready.

Choose Your Character. Each player chooses one character card; this represents the character you'll be playing in the game. Locate the token card that matches your character card, and place them both on the table in front of you.

Build Your Character. Each character needs a character deck; if you don't already have one, build one. If you'd like to start playing quickly, use the suggested deck for your character provided at the back of this rulebook (see Suggested Deck Lists on page 21). Alternatively, you can choose your own cards to create your deck; the Cards List on your character card indicates the exact quantity of each card type that you must choose from the box to make up your character's deck. You may choose only cards with the word "Basic" in the list of traits underneath the card name.

Trade Cards If You Like. Before beginning a scenario, players may freely trade cards from their character decks. After trading, each character deck must still conform to the list of card types specified by the character card.


Ezren's deck includes 1 weapon, 8 spells, no armors, 3 items, 3 allies, and no blessings. (The checkboxes are for card feats that he'll gain later.)

Decide Whether You're Playing a Standalone Scenario, an Adventure, or the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path. A scenario is intended for a single play session, an adventure consists of a number of linked scenarios, and an Adventure Path is a series of linked adventures. We recommend you begin with the base set scenario Brigandoom!; you can play it either by itself or as the first of three scenarios in the Perils of the Lost Coast adventure. We suggest you complete that adventure, then move on to the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path.

If You're Playing the Adventure Path, put the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path card faceup on the table. It lists the adventures that make up the Adventure Path, starting with *Burnt Offerings*, as well as the reward you'll get for completing the Adventure Path. Whenever you start a new adventure in the Adventure Path, add all of the cards from that adventure deck to the box, sorting all of the cards by type and combining them with the cards you already have in the box.

If You're Playing an Adventure, put the appropriate adventure card faceup on the table. It lists the scenarios that make up that adventure, along with the reward you'll get for completing that adventure. (If you're playing the adventure Perils of the Lost Coast, put that card on the table; if you're beginning the Adventure Path Rise of the Runelords, use the adventure card Burnt Offerings from that adventure deck.)

Choose a Scenario. Put the scenario card faceup on the table. The scenario card describes the goals and any unusual rules for this particular game session. (If you're playing Brigandoom!, put down that card; if you're starting Rise of the Runelords, put down Attack on Sandpoint, the first scenario listed on the adventure card Burnt Offerings.)

CARD SETUP

ADVENTURE PATH

ADVENTURE

SCENARIO

DISCARD PILE

CHARACTER DECK

CHARACTER CARD

LOCATION DECK

LOCATION CARD

BURIED CARDS

TOWN SQUARE

BLESSINGS DISCARD PILE

BLESSINGS DECK

LOCATION CARD

LOCATION DECK

BURIED CARDS

CHARACTER CARD

CHARACTER DECK

DISCARD PILE

TOKEN CARD

TOKEN CARD

LOCATION CARD

LOCATION DECK

LOCATION CARD

LOCATION CARD

LOCATION DECK

TOKEN CARD

LOCATION DECK

DISCARD PILE

CHARACTER DECK

BURIED CARDS

CHARACTER CARD

Set Out the Locations. The scenario card lists numbers of players alongside the location cards the scenario uses. Use all of the location cards listed up to the number of players you have. For example, if you have 3 players, you will use all of the location cards listed for 1, 2, and 3 players, but you won't use any of the location cards listed for 4, 5, or 6 players. Put the location cards you're using faceup on the middle of the table.

Build the Location Decks. Each location card has its own list of card types that are used to build a location deck, in much the same way that a character card has a list of card types that are used to build a character deck. Shuffle each card type and deal the correct number of cards of each type to form the basis of each location deck. Don't look at these cards; set them facedown in a stack next to their location card.

Add Villains and Henchmen. Each scenario card lists one or more villains and one or more henchmen. Make a stack of cards starting with the villain(s), then add henchmen, working from the top of the list down, until your stack has as many cards as you have locations. Use multiple copies of the henchman at the bottom of the list as needed. For example, if you have 5 locations and your scenario card lists Gogmurt as the villain and Tangletooth, Bruthazmus, and Goblin Raiders as henchmen, you'll make a stack of 5 cards: Gogmurt, Tangletooth, Bruthazmus, and 2 Goblin Raiders. If you had only 3 locations, your stack would consist of Gogmurt, Tangletooth, and Bruthazmus, with no Goblin Raiders. Shuffle this stack and put 1 card on top of each location deck, then shuffle each location deck.

Create the Blessings Deck. Draw 30 random blessing cards from the box. Shuffle them together to form a deck and place it facedown on the table.

Arrange Yourselves around the Table. Use any order you wish.

Place Token Cards. Each player chooses a location and puts her character's token card near it. Multiple characters can choose the same starting location.

Draw Starting Hands. Each character card includes a hand size for that character; draw that number of cards from your character deck. The character card also lists a favored card type. If you didn't draw at least 1 card of that type, discard that hand and draw again, repeating as needed until your hand contains at least 1 card of the specified type.

STRATEGY: SHOULD YOU SPLIT THE PARTY?

There's an old saying in roleplaying games: Never split the party. Is that true for the Pathfinder Adventure Card Game? This isn't an RPG, so the answer is, "It depends."

Sometimes, it's a good idea to have multiple characters at the same location; other times, it makes more sense to split the party. A lot of your strategy depends on which characters you're playing. If you're playing Valeros and Lem, staying together makes sense; if you're playing Harsk and Merisiel, it may not be so important.

The best strategy also depends on where you're going. Harsk can handle the Treacherous Cave, but Ezren might not be able to close it if someone else runs into the villain. Sometimes you want backup for whatever perils await you; sometimes there's a dragon that blasts everyone at the same location. Pay attention to where you are in the game. If you know where the villain is, splitting up so you can temporarily close open locations is a good idea... unless it isn't. Every situation is different, and thinking before you move is always wise.

RULES: ROLLING DICE

The game comes with five dice: a 4-sider, 6-sider, 8-sider, 10-sider, and 12-sider. When you roll the 4-sider, use the number that's upright.

The game uses a shorthand form describing the number and type of dice to roll: Xd#, where "X" represents the number of dice to roll and "d#" represents the number of sides on the dice. For example, if you're asked to roll 2d6, that means to roll 2 6-sided dice and add their values together. Sometimes the shorthand includes a "+" or "−" and a number listed after the die, meaning that you add that number to, or subtract it from, the total of the roll (not each individual die rolled). So 2d4+2 means to roll 2 4-sided dice, total them together, and then add 2. No matter how many penalties are applied to a die roll, the result can't be reduced below 0.

Sometimes, the type of die that you need to roll is determined by your skill; if you're told to roll "Strength + 2d12" and your Strength die is a d10, you'll roll one 10-sided die and two 12-sided dice, then add them all together to determine your result.

If a card calls for a die roll that affects multiple characters (for example, if it says that each character at a location is dealt 1d4 damage), roll separately for each character.

If you discard so many cards that you can't draw up to your full hand size, draw all of the remaining cards, then shuffle your discard pile into your deck and draw the rest of your hand. Shuffle any discarded cards back into your character deck.

Decide Who Goes First. Starting with whichever player the group chooses, take turns proceeding clockwise (see Your Turn on page 8).

YOUR CHARACTER

Who will step up to challenge the evil runelords? Will the call be heeded by a gallant fighter, a clever sorcerer, or a faithful cleric?

CHARACTER CARDS

Each character card includes the following information.

Skills: Skills tell you what type of die to roll when you attempt a check (see Attempting a Check on page 10). Normally, you roll 1 die of that type for a check, but other cards can add to that.

Powers: Each character has 1 or more special powers you can use to affect how the game is played. Some will be used during the game, and others at the start of the game, so read them right away.

Hand Size: This is the number of cards you draw to form your hand at the beginning of each scenario. Near the end of each of your turns, you will discard or draw cards so that you have exactly this number of cards again.

Proficient With: If your character is proficient with weapons or specific types of armors, they are listed here. Some weapons and armors are more useful for characters who are proficient with them.

Favored Card Type: Your character always begins scenarios with at least 1 card of this type in hand (see Draw Starting Hands on page 6).

Cards List: At the start of each scenario, your character deck must contain exactly the listed quantity of each card type. As you play through a scenario, you will add and remove cards from your deck, so it may vary from this list during play. At the end of the scenario, you'll rebuild your deck to conform to the list again, although you might not end up with exactly the same cards you had before.

FEATS
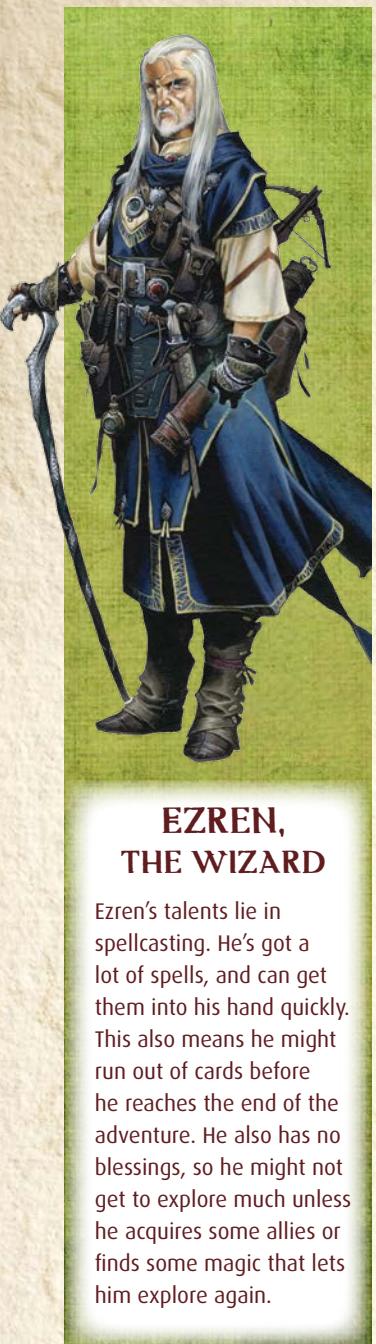
Character cards include a number of items with checkboxes; these are called feats. After successfully completing a scenario or adventure, you might be instructed to gain a feat of a specific type. After you check a box of that type on your character card, your character may use that feat in future scenarios. You may not use feats that are not yet checked off. If there's more than 1 checkbox associated with a skill, power, or card type, you must check the unchecked box farthest to the left before you can check immediately adjacent boxes. For example, if a skill has boxes labeled +1, +2, and +3, you must check the +1 box before you can check the +2 or +3 box, and you must have checked +1 and +2 before you can check +3. These boxes aren't cumulative—that is, "+2" *replaces* "+1," they do not add together to make +3.

We recommend you use a pencil to lightly check the feat boxes, or track your character with the free character sheets posted online at **paizo.com/pacg**.

There are three types of feats.

Skill Feats: When you gain a skill feat, check one new box in the Skills section of your character card. Skill feats add a bonus to a skill of your choice: you'll add the number next to the box you selected to any check attempted with that skill. So if your Charisma die is d10, and you've checked the "+2" box for your Charisma skill, you'll roll 1d10 and add 2 when you attempt a check that uses Charisma. (See Attempting a Check on page 10.)

Power Feats: When you gain a power feat, check one new box in the Powers section of your character card. Some power feats give you new powers, such as increasing your hand size or making you proficient with weapons or specific types of armors. Other power feats improve your character's existing powers. If your character has a power that allows him to add 1d4 to another character's combat check and you've checked the "+1" box next to it, you'll add 1d4+1 to the other character's check. These bonuses apply only when using the power on your character card; if you instead play a card with a similar power, the feat bonus doesn't apply.

Card Feats: When you gain a card feat, check one new box on the Cards List on your character card. Each card feat allows you to put one more card of the type you choose into your character deck. After you choose a card feat, use the new number on your Cards List whenever you rebuild your deck.

TOKEN CARDS

Each character has a corresponding token card, which you'll move to keep track of your character's current location. Each token card also includes a brief character biography.

ROLE CARDS

Each character card has a corresponding role card, though you won't use it right away; role cards are part of the reward you get for completing the third adventure of the *Rise of the Runelords* Adventure Path. Role cards offer new feats for you to choose; these feats apply to your character as if they were part of the original character card, and your role card counts as part of your character card.

Each side of the role card presents a different specialization for your character, allowing you to choose one of two different paths for your character's continuing advancement. For example, one side of the role card for the fighter Valeros presents feats that let him specialize as a defending Guardian, while the other side offers feats to advance him as an offense-oriented Weapon Master.

When you are told to select your character's role card, select one of the two roles. From then on, whenever you gain a feat and choose to check a box on your role card, you must always choose feats from that side of the role card.

Your role card is designed to be placed directly over the Powers section of your character card. When you first get the role card, check any boxes for the role you've chosen that match boxes you've already checked on your character card. For example, if the "Light Armors" box was checked on your character card, check the "Light Armors" box on your role card.

PLAYING A SCENARIO

The Runelords' plots are sinister indeed. You must track down the villains, vanquish their minions, and quash their evil schemes!

YOUR TURN

Take your turn by going through the following steps in order. The only required steps are Advance the Blessings Deck, Reset Your Hand, and End Your Turn; the other steps are optional.

Advance the Blessings Deck: Flip the top card from the blessings deck faceup onto the top of the blessings discard pile. You never acquire this card, though some cards may refer to it during your turn. If you have to remove one or more cards from the blessings deck for any reason and there are not enough cards to do so, the players lose the scenario (see Ending a Scenario, Adventure, or Adventure Path on page 18).

Give a Card: You may give 1 card from your hand to another player at your location. (Other players cannot give you cards on your turn.)

Move: You may move your token card to another location. Moving triggers any effects that happen when you enter or leave a location. (If you do not move, your character is not considered to have entered or left a location.)

Explore: You may explore your location once each turn without playing a card that allows you to explore; this must be your first exploration for the turn. When you explore, flip over the top card of your current location deck. If it's a boon, you may attempt to acquire it; if you don't, banish it. If it's a bane, you must try to defeat it. (See Encountering a Card on page 10.) Many effects allow you to explore again on your turn; if, during a single exploration, multiple effects each give you an additional exploration, it counts as a total of 1 more exploration, not a series of additional explorations. You may never explore on another player's turn.

Close a Location: If your character is at a location that has no cards remaining and has not been closed, at this time you may make one attempt to close it (see Closing a Location on page 13).

EZREN, THE WIZARD

Ezren's talents lie in spellcasting. He's got a lot of spells, and can get them into his hand quickly. This also means he might run out of cards before he reaches the end of the adventure. He also has no blessings, so he might not get to explore much unless he acquires some allies or finds some magic that lets him explore again.

Reset Your Hand: First, apply any effects that happen at the end of the turn; if a power allows or directs you to not reset your hand, you must still apply any effects that happen at the end of the turn. You may play cards and use powers unless a power directed you to reset your hand and end your turn. After resolving these effects, you may no longer play cards or use powers for the rest of the turn.

Next, you may discard any number of cards. Then, if you have more cards in your hand than your hand size specifies, you must discard until the number of cards in your hand matches your hand size. Finally, if you have fewer cards than your hand size, you must draw cards until the number of cards in your hand matches your hand size.

End Your Turn: When you're done, the turn passes to the player on your left.

> ### RULES: DRAWING CARDS
> Unless a card says otherwise, drawing means taking a card from the specified source and putting it in your hand. If no source is specified, draw it from your character deck.

> ### RULES: TRACKING THE BLESSINGS DECK
> It's very easy to get excited about starting your turn, so much so that you might forget to advance the blessings deck. Unfortunately, once you realize you've skipped it for the last few turns, it's often not so easy to figure out how many cards you need to flip to catch up. We recommend that when each player advances the deck, orient the card she turns over so that the text is right-side up to that player. Sure, it makes for a messy-looking blessings discard pile, but it makes it easy to see who remembered and who didn't.

PLAYING CARDS

Anyone can play a card whenever the card allows it. Playing a card means activating that card's power by revealing, displaying, discarding, recharging, burying, or banishing that card. Doing something with a card that does not activate that card's power does not count as playing that card. For example, if Kyra discards a spell to activate her healing power, it doesn't count as playing that spell (meaning she also can't recharge it). When a card has multiple powers, you must choose one of them. Any paragraph in the power section of a boon that doesn't involve playing the card for a particular effect is not itself a power—it's a mandatory action that you must take when you play the card.

> **Example**: The ally Soldier has 2 different powers—you may recharge the card to add 1d4 to your combat check, or you may discard the card to explore your location. You can do either, but you can't do both, because once you play the card one way, it's no longer in your hand for you to play it the other way.

When you play a card, it will usually require you to take one of the following actions.
- **Reveal**: Show it from your hand then put it back in your hand.
- **Display**: Place it faceup in front of your character, unless stated otherwise; the card's powers function until it's discarded.
- **Discard**: Put it into your discard pile—a stack of faceup cards next to your deck.
- **Recharge**: Put it facedown at the bottom of your character deck.
- **Bury**: Put it under your character card (likely losing access to it for the rest of the scenario).
- **Banish**: Put it back in the box, shuffling it in with the other cards of the same type (thus losing it for good).

If you are instructed to play, reveal, display, discard, recharge, bury, banish, or otherwise manipulate a card, that card must come from your hand unless otherwise specified. You may not activate a power that doesn't apply to your current situation. For example, you may not play a card to reduce damage when damage is not being dealt, or play a card to evade a monster when you are not encountering a monster.

If a card in your hand does not specify when it can be played, you can generally play it at any time, with the exception that during an encounter you may only perform specific actions at specific times.

You can look through your displayed, discarded, and buried cards at any time, but you may not change the order of cards in your discard pile. You may not look through your character deck unless a card specifically allows it. Don't shuffle any stack of cards unless you're instructed to. A deck is a deck, a hand is a hand, and a pile is a pile whether or not it has any cards in it.

HARSK, THE RANGER

Harsk is the friend everyone wants to have—as long as he's somewhere else. Ranged weapons suit him best; his ability to fire arrows from long distances can turn the tide of many a combat. He's also great in dangerous locations because he can scout out the threats in advance and endure whatever they throw at him.

KYRA, THE CLERIC

Everybody runs to Kyra for help. She can heal without a Healing spell, but doing so keeps her from exploring. She must find a balance between using her blessings for bonus dice and spending them to explore again. She's also a good combatant, and shines when she tries to kill something that should already be dead.

ENCOUNTERING A CARD

When you encounter a card, you—and only you—can go through the following steps. No one else can perform these steps for you, though other players might be able to play cards to help you deal with the encounter's challenges. During each of these steps, you and the other players may perform only the specified actions. Players may only play cards or activate powers that relate to each step. Each player may play no more than 1 card of each type during each step; for example, no one player may play more than 1 blessing while attempting a check, though multiple players could each play 1 blessing during that check. Each player may activate any power no more than once during each step. Players may not play any cards or activate any powers between these steps.

If the card you're encountering states that it is immune to a particular trait, players may not play cards with the specified trait, use powers that would add that trait to the check, or roll dice with that trait during the encounter.

After you flip over the top card of the location deck, put it on top of the deck and read it, then go through the following steps in order.

Evade the Card (Optional). If you have a power or card that lets you evade the card you're encountering, you may immediately shuffle it back into the deck; it is neither defeated nor undefeated, and the encounter is over.

Apply Any Effects That Happen Before the Encounter, If Needed.

Attempt the Check. If the card is a boon, you may try to acquire it for your deck; if it's a bane, you must try to defeat it (see Attempting a Check, below). If a card's check section says "None," look at the card's powers, and immediately do whatever it says there.

Attempt the Next Check, If Needed. If another check is required, such as if you played a boon with a check to recharge, or if your bane requires a second check to defeat, resolve it now. Repeat this step until you have resolved all such checks.

Apply Any Effects That Happen After the Encounter, If Needed. Do this whether or not you succeeded at your checks. At this time, deal with any effects that were triggered by the checks. For example, if Ezren played a spell with the Arcane trait during the check, he may now use the power that allows him to examine the top card of his deck.

Resolve the Encounter. If you succeed at all of the checks required to defeat a bane, banish it; if you don't succeed, it is undefeated—shuffle the card back into its location deck. If you succeed at a check to acquire a boon, put it in your hand; otherwise, banish it.

ATTEMPTING A CHECK

Many times during the game, you will need to attempt a check to do something such as acquire a new weapon or defeat a monster.

Each boon card has a section called Check to Acquire. This section indicates the skills that can be used in checks to acquire the boon and the difficulty of the checks. If you succeed in acquiring the card, put it into your hand. If you fail, banish it.

Each bane card has a section called Check to Defeat. This section indicates the skills that can be used in checks against the bane and the difficulty of the checks. If you succeed in defeating the bane, it is usually banished. If you fail to defeat a bane, it is usually considered undefeated and is shuffled back into the location deck. If you fail to defeat a monster, you take damage (see Take Damage, If Necessary on page 12).

If multiple checks are listed on the card with "or" between them, choose one of them. If there's a "then" between them, you'll need to succeed at both checks sequentially; you must attempt both checks, even if you fail the first, because failure often has

consequences. "Or" takes priority over "then," so if a card says "Wisdom 10 or Combat 13 then Combat 15," you must first attempt either a Wisdom check with a difficulty of 10 or a Combat check with a difficulty of 13, and then attempt a Combat check with a difficulty of 15.

Only the character who encounters the card may attempt the check, with one exception: if a card requires sequential checks, the character who encountered the card must attempt at least one of the checks, but other checks may each be attempted by any one character at the same location.

Many cards also require checks to activate powers or to recharge the cards after playing them.

Attempting a check requires several actions that are explained below. Remember that each player may not play more than 1 card of each type or activate any 1 power more than once during each check.

Determine Which Die You're Using. Cards that require a check specify the skill or skills you can use to attempt the check. Each check to defeat or acquire a card lists one or more skills; you may choose any of the listed skills for your check. For example, if a check lists Dexterity, Disable, Strength, and Melee, you may use any one of those skills to attempt your check.

Most monsters and some barriers call for a combat check. Weapons and many other cards that can be used during combat generally tell you what skill to use when you attempt a combat check; if you don't play such a card, use your Strength or Melee skill. (A few cards that can be used on checks don't use any of your skills; they instead specify the exact dice you need to roll or the result of your die roll.)

Some cards may allow you to replace the required skill for a check with a different one; as part of this action, you may play only 1 card or use only 1 power that defines the skill you are going to use. When you play a card that does this, add that card's traits to the check; for example, revealing the weapon Longsword +1 for your combat check adds the Sword, Melee, Slashing, and Magic traits to the check. (This isn't the same as giving you a skill; for example, the spell Holy Light adds the Divine trait to your check, but it does not give you the Divine skill.) Even if your character doesn't have any of the skills listed for a check, you can still attempt the check (unless you're trying to recharge a card; see Recharge on page 16), but your die is a d4.

Determine the Difficulty. To succeed at the check, the result of your die roll and modifiers must be greater than or equal to the difficulty of the check. In checks to defeat a bane or acquire a boon, the difficulty is the number in the circle under the skill you've chosen. In other checks, the difficulty is the number in the text that follows the skill you've chosen. (For example, where a card's power instructs you to attempt a Fortitude 7 check, the difficulty is 7.) Some cards increase or decrease the difficulty of a check; for example, if a card says that the difficulty is increased by 2, add 2 to the number on the card you encountered; if it says that the difficulty is decreased by 2, subtract 2 from the number.
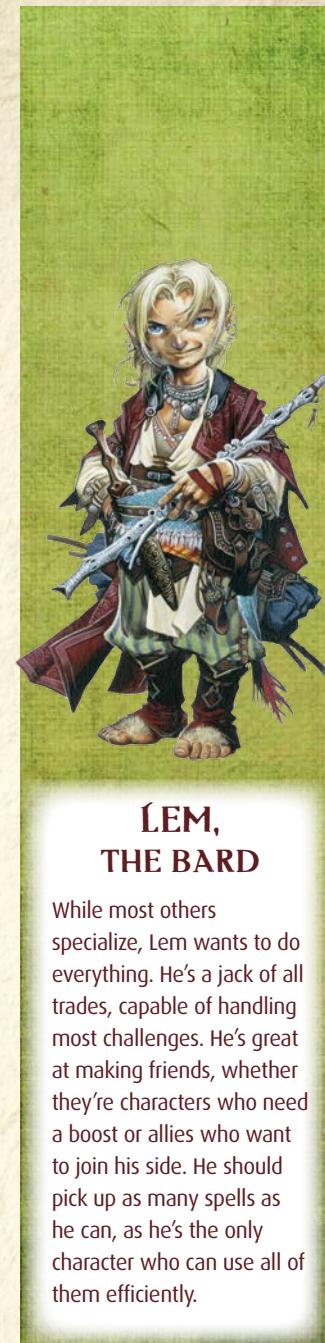
Play Cards and Use Powers That Affect the Check (Optional). Players may now play cards or use powers that affect the check. Players may not do things that modify a skill unless you're using that skill, and players may not do things that affect combat unless you're attempting a combat check. Do not add traits from these cards to the check; for example, playing the spell Guidance on a check does not give the check the Divine trait.

Some cards and powers affect only specific types of checks, such as Dexterity checks, Acrobatics checks, or noncombat checks. If, on your character card, the skill you're using refers to another skill, both skills count for the purpose of determining the type of check. For example, if you're using the Arcane skill on a combat check, and your character card says that your Arcane skill is Intelligence +2, the check counts as both a combat Arcane check and a combat Intelligence check. Traits also determine the type of check; for example, if you're attempting a combat check and you played a weapon that added the Ranged trait, it counts as a Ranged combat check.

Assemble Your Dice. The skill you're using and the cards you played determine the number and type of dice you roll. For example, if you're attempting a check using your Strength skill, and your Strength die is d10, you'll roll 1d10. If another player played a blessing to add a die to your check, you'll roll 2d10.

Attempt the Roll. Roll the dice and add up their value, adding or subtracting any modifiers that apply to the check. If the result is greater than or equal to the difficulty of the check, then you succeed. If the result is lower than the difficulty, then you fail. No matter how many penalties are applied to a die roll, the result cannot be reduced below 0.

LEM, THE BARD

While most others specialize, Lem wants to do everything. He's a jack of all trades, capable of handling most challenges. He's great at making friends, whether they're characters who need a boost or allies who want to join his side. He should pick up as many spells as he can, as he's the only character who can use all of them efficiently.

MERISIEL, THE ROGUE

When she's on her own, sneaky Merisiel has the power to burn cards to boost her own deadliness. She can take out just about anything—including herself if she's not careful. She needs to temper her bonus damage with self-preservation. She's talented at removing barriers, and at never getting into a fight she doesn't want.

Take Damage, If Necessary. If you fail a check to defeat a monster, it deals an amount of damage to you equal to the difference between the difficulty to defeat the monster and your check result. Unless the card specifies otherwise, this damage is Combat damage. For example, if the difficulty to defeat a monster is 10 and the result of your check is 8, the monster deals 2 Combat damage to you (see Taking Damage, below). Remember that players may not play more than 1 of each card type during a check, so if you previously played a spell to affect the check, you may not play a spell to reduce damage.

> **Example**: Seoni encounters the spell Glibness. The check to acquire is Intelligence, Arcane, Wisdom, or Divine 6. Seoni selects Arcane. Her character card says her Arcane skill uses her Charisma die, which is d12, plus 2. She rolls a 3 and adds 2 for a result of 5, 1 less than she needed to acquire the spell. Dejected, she banishes the spell.
>
> On the next turn, Kyra encounters the monster Ghost. It has 2 possible checks to defeat: Combat 12, or Wisdom or Divine 8. Though Kyra could use her Strength to attempt a combat check, she instead selects Divine. Her character card says that her Divine skill uses her Wisdom die, d12, plus 2. In addition, she has a power that gives her another 1d8 with the Magic trait against monsters with the Undead trait, which the Ghost has. So she rolls 1d12+2 + 1d8, resulting in a 14. That result vastly exceeds the Ghost's difficulty. The Ghost's power says that if Kyra's check to defeat didn't have the Magic trait, the Ghost would be undefeated, but since her power added the Magic trait to her check, the Ghost is banished.

TAKING DAMAGE

When you are dealt damage, you and other players may play cards and use powers that reduce or otherwise affect the specific type of damage you're being dealt. If you're being dealt Fire damage, for example, you may play cards that reduce Fire damage, or cards that reduce all damage, but you may not play cards that reduce only Electricity or Combat damage. Each player may play no more than one of each card type to affect damage to the same character from the same source. If a card says it reduces damage, with no type listed, it reduces all types of damage.

When you are dealt an amount of damage, choose that number of cards from your hand and discard them. If you don't have enough cards in your hand, discard your entire hand and ignore the rest of the damage.

EXAMINING AND SEARCHING

Sometimes a card allows you to examine one or more cards—that means looking at the specified card then putting it back where it came from. If a card tells you to examine a deck until you find a particular card type, begin with the top card of that deck and stop when you have found a card of the correct type. Put the cards you examined back in the same order you found them, unless instructed otherwise. If you don't find a card of the specified type, ignore any directions related to that card. (This does not count as exploring, though it may happen during an exploration.)

Sometimes a card allows you to search a deck and choose any card of a particular type; that means you may look at every card in the deck and choose any card of that type. Unless instructed otherwise, shuffle the deck afterwards.

SUMMONING AND ADDING CARDS

Sometimes you will be told to summon a card and encounter it, or to add a card to a deck. When this happens, retrieve the card from the box. However, if you're told to summon and encounter a card that's already in play, just imagine you have another copy of that card for the new encounter; this summoned copy ceases to exist at the end of the encounter. Summoned cards cannot cause other cards to be summoned.

After evading or resolving all checks against a summoned card, banish it unless you're instructed otherwise. If an effect causes multiple characters to summon and encounter cards, resolve the encounters sequentially, in any order you like, including banishing the card at the end of the encounter. If the summoned card is a villain or henchman, defeating it does not allow you to close a location or win the scenario—ignore any such text on those cards. Summoned cards are not part of any location deck.

If you're instructed to add a card to the top or the bottom of a deck, do so; otherwise, any cards added to a deck are shuffled into it.

If you're told to add a random card of a particular type with some additional requirement, such as "having the Human trait" or "non-Basic" (shorthand for "not having the Basic trait"), draw cards of that type from the box until you find a card that fulfills the requirement, add that card, and put the rest back in the box.

When a card summons a card for you to encounter, this starts a new encounter, triggering any "before the encounter" and "after the encounter" powers at the appropriate time. For example, the location Garrison summons more of the monster you've encountered for any characters at your location to fight; if that monster is a Hell Hound, which deals 1 Fire damage to every character at the location after the encounter, that Fire damage will be dealt after each Hell Hound is encountered. When you're done encountering the summoned cards, continue resolving the original encounter.

CLOSING A LOCATION

You may earn the opportunity to close a location in a number of ways. Usually you get the opportunity to close a location after a defeating a henchman from that location deck (see Henchmen on page 17), or after that location deck runs out of cards (see Your Turn on page 8).

When you have the opportunity and want to close a location, do whatever the location's When Closing section says. Locations often require specific checks to close them; otherwise, they list specific tasks you must perform. (If a location says you may close it automatically, you don't need to do anything else.) If the When Closing text offers multiple options separated by "or," you must make your choice of options before you make any rolls or play any cards. If you succeed at meeting the When Closing requirement, search through the location deck, take out any villains, and banish the other cards. Any villains you found become the entirety of the location deck, and the location is not closed—but at least you know where the villains are! If you didn't find any villains, perform the When Permanently Closed effect and flip the location card over. The location stays closed for the rest of the scenario, so villains may not escape to that location (see Encountering a Villain on page 17). Characters may move to closed locations, and if there are cards there, they may explore and encounter those cards as normal. (Most closed locations don't have cards to explore, but some effects can put cards there.)

Example: Harsk acquires the final card in the Mountain Peak location deck. He may now attempt to close the location. In the When Closing section, Mountain Peak says Harsk must succeed at a Wisdom or Survival 6 check. Harsk selects Survival. On his character card, his Survival skill is his Wisdom die of d6, plus 2. Harsk rolls a 5, for a total of 7, and closes the Mountain Peak, flipping the card over to show it is closed.

DYING

If, for any reason, you are ever required to remove one or more cards from your deck and you don't have enough cards, your character dies. Place any cards in your deck, hand, and discard pile under your character card. You cannot take turns, play cards, move, or do anything else for the rest of this scenario. Certain powerful cards allow you to return from death; if this doesn't happen before the end of the scenario, your death is permanent. The other characters may use the dead character's cards when they rebuild their decks after the scenario; any cards that they don't keep are then banished.

If all of the characters are dead, the players lose the scenario (see Ending a Scenario, Adventure, or Adventure Path on page 18).

SEONI, THE SORCERER

Seoni blows stuff up. Even if she doesn't have a spell in her hand, she can invoke a fire blast whenever she meets an unfriendly sort. She doesn't have many spells to start with, but since she has an explosive power, her spells don't have to be Attack spells. And since she always recharges her spells, she'll be seeing them a lot.

VALEROS, THE FIGHTER

Valeros is bristling with weapons. While most characters must discard them for their most powerful effects, Valeros just puts them back into his deck. That means he shouldn't be afraid to take damage or discard to get to the cards he wants. Valeros is effective when he's using up his cards, not when he's safeguarding them.

STRATEGY: SHOULD YOU LOOK AHEAD?

Harsk, Seelah, and cards like Augury let you look at cards in location decks before you must encounter them. This can be a tremendous help as you race the ticking clock that is the blessings deck.

Finding the villain early can mean the difference between success and failure. A card like Augury can strand a villain on the bottom of a deck, leaving him waiting for you to return while you loot and lock down other locations.

Of course, all that peeking ahead comes at an opportunity cost: those Spyglasses could instead be cards that help you defeat banes and acquire boons. If you can't actually beat what you find, there's no point in finding it.

If your character dies, start a new character for the next scenario. Choose a character card (it can be the same character who just died, though you do not get any of the feats that character previously earned) and build a new character deck as described in Build Your Character on page 4, choosing only cards with the Basic trait. If your party has begun the adventure The Hook Mountain Massacre, you may ignore the Basic trait restriction; instead, you may use any cards in the box from the base set and the *Character Add-On Deck*, as well as any cards from an adventure deck whose adventure deck number is at least 2 lower than that of the adventure you're currently playing.

CARD TYPES

The spoils of adventure are yours! Herein you will find the wonders of the world: dangerous missions, perilous challenges, deadly monsters, and treasures galore!

STORY CARDS (ADVENTURE PATH, ADVENTURE, AND SCENARIO)

Story cards define the game session you'll be playing. You always have a scenario card, which tells you what to do and where to go in the current game session. You may also have an adventure card, which lists the scenarios you need to finish to complete the adventure, and perhaps an Adventure Path card, which lists the adventures you need to finish to complete the Adventure Path.

The front of each story card includes powers for playing it. Some are used during play, and some are used as you set up a particular scenario, so make sure you read them right away. Story cards also

list a reward—something you get to do once you complete the task provided by the story card (see Ending a Scenario, Adventure, or Adventure Path on page 18).

The front of each scenario card lists the villains and henchmen in the scenario; the back of each scenario card includes a list of locations used in the scenario (see Set Out the Locations and Build the Location Decks on page 6).

LOCATION CARDS

Location cards represent the places your characters will visit during the scenario. The front of each location card has the following features.

Deck List: This tells you the quantity of each card type you need to set up the location deck (see Build the Location Decks on page 6).

At This Location: These are special powers that are in effect while the location is open. Some of these remain in effect when the location is permanently closed; in that case, they also appear on the back of the location card.

When Closing: When you have the opportunity to close a location and want to do so, you must perform this task. Usually you get the opportunity to close a location after a henchman is defeated there, or after the location deck runs out of cards (see Closing a Location on page

13). When you close a location, flip it over. The villain can no longer escape to this location, though characters can still move there.

When Permanently Closed: When a location is permanently closed, the powers listed here go into effect.

CHARACTER CARDS (CHARACTER, ROLE, AND TOKEN)

See pages 7–8 for details on character cards.

BOON CARDS (WEAPON, SPELL, ARMOR, ITEM, ALLY, LOOT, AND BLESSING)

Boons are cards you may be able to acquire and put into your hand or deck for future use. Weapons, spells, armors, items, allies, loot, and blessings are all boons. Each player may play only one of each type of boon on a single check. The following information appears on boons.

Type: This is the boon's card type.

Traits: Many effects use a card's traits for some effect; for example, some monsters become harder to defeat when you play weapons with the Piercing trait.

Check to Acquire: If you encounter a boon while exploring a location, you may attempt a check to acquire the card. If you succeed at the check, put the card in your hand; if you fail, or choose not to attempt the check, banish the card (see Playing Cards on page 9). You need only attempt the check to acquire when encountering a card in a location deck, not when drawing it from your deck or playing it from your hand. Loot cards do not have a check to acquire; instead, you earn them as a reward for completing a scenario.

Power: These are special rules for the boon. In general, if a card lists multiple powers, you can do any of them; however, if you play a card in such a way that it leaves your hand, that action can trigger only 1 power. For example, if a card says you may discard it to add to your die roll or discard it to explore your location, you may discard it to trigger either effect, but not both.

Recharge: This explains circumstances under which you may recharge the card—put it on the bottom of your deck—after playing it; it usually

appears on cards that you would otherwise be required to discard. Usually, recharging requires a skill check; if you don't have at least one of the skills listed for the check, you cannot attempt to recharge the card. If, while attempting another check, you play a boon that you may be able to recharge, resolve the current check before attempting to recharge the card. The boon is in play (and does not count as being in your hand, in your deck, in your discard pile, or elsewhere) during the intervening time. (This check applies only after you have played a card—when a card's power directs you to recharge it as part of playing it, and does not specify a check, you don't have to attempt a check to recharge it.) You cannot recharge a card you are forced to discard, or one that you choose to discard as part of taking damage or resetting your hand at the end of your turn.

The following are general descriptions of each type of boon.

AMIRI, THE BARBARIAN

Amiri is a scrapper. The strongest character in the game, she can also unleash her deadly rage, tossing cards to get boosts to her physical checks. This is a bit dangerous, but Amiri is a daredevil. She's never going to be stuck anywhere she doesn't want to be. When a barbarian enters the room, she leaves when she wants to.

Weapon: Weapon cards often require you to do something (such as reveal the card) to modify your combat check. If a weapon power refers to characters who are proficient with weapons, look in the Powers section of your character card to see whether you are.

Spell: Spell cards have a wide variety of effects. Spells always have the Arcane or Divine trait, or both; characters with a matching trait will be able to make the best use of a given spell.

Armor: Armor cards help you by reducing damage. Armor powers specify which types of damage they reduce; if a power refers to "all" damage, that applies to all damage of all types. If the armor doesn't reduce the type of damage you're being dealt, you can't play it. For example, if you're dealt Fire damage and the armor card doesn't say it reduces Fire damage or all damage, you can't play it.

Item: Item cards have a wide variety of effects.

Ally: Ally cards often help you with checks you attempt, and many let you discard them to explore again on your turn.

Loot: Loot cards are unique in a couple of ways. The other boons can be found by exploring locations, but loot cards are only given out as rewards for completing scenarios. They are automatically acquired, and so have no check to acquire. Also, loot cards list a type, such as "weapon"; apart from the way loot cards are acquired, they behave just like other boons of that type and count as cards of that type.

Blessing: Blessing cards often allow you to add dice to checks attempted by any player, including yourself, at any location. The dice added are normally of the type associated with the skill the character is using for the check; if a card instead specifies the exact dice to roll for the check, the added dice are of the type specified by that card. For example, if Lem is making a Strength check with his Strength of d4+1, Blessing of the Gods adds a d4.

BANE CARDS (VILLAIN, HENCHMAN, MONSTER, AND BARRIER)

Banes are cards you must defeat or suffer the consequences. Barriers and monsters appear randomly in location decks, while most scenarios call for specific villains and henchmen.

LINI, THE DRUID

Lini commands animals to do her bidding—a humble dog will serve her better than most humans will. She's a good spellcaster, and can serve as a healer if Kyra's occupied. If all else fails, she can even turn into a bear to bump up her Strength or Dexterity considerably. That lets her collect a lot of non-Attack spells.

STRATEGY: SHOULD YOU SEEK OUT DANGER?

When you're adventuring, you can go wherever you want. But not all locations are created equal.

Start by looking at the text on all of the location cards. A common strategy is to clear out the "positive" locations first. The Academy practically helps you close it, letting you explore again as often as not. But that strategy leaves the "negative" locations for when you're the most beaten up. You can probably handle the Bandits at the Guard Tower early, but having them around late in the game can be very annoying.

A location's When Closing requirement can guide your path as well. If you can't succeed at a Survival check to save your life, stay clear of the Woods, despite its positive effect. If you can't close the location when the henchman pops up, you'll have to burn through the whole deck to try again.

Sometimes you'll want to leave a location open until the villain appears and you can temporarily close it. Churning through the Shrine to Lamashtu can hurt, but if you forgo your explorations there and just hang out, you might just close it before a blessing burns your brain.

All else being equal, more exploration yields more fun.

STRATEGY: SHOULD YOU ACQUIRE BOONS YOU WON'T USE?

The short answer is "absolutely." At minimum, a boon is something you can give up as damage when that Hill Giant cracks your skull open. But there's another reason: your fellow adventurer might want you to give it to him.

This is sometimes trickier than it looks. To give a card to someone, you must start your turn at that character's location. So that character might have to come to you to get it, assuming you even still have it in your hand when he does. Coordinating a timely rendezvous often spells a villain's end.

It's a lot easier, of course, if a character good at acquiring a type of boon gets it herself. If you're able to look ahead in the location deck or evade encounters, you can tell another player, "I just found something in this deck that you probably want." Then she can spend her turns trying to get it, and you can get on with your own goals.

JUBRAYL VHISKI — VILLAIN B

HUMAN
ROGUE

TYPE
MONSTER

CHECK TO
DEFEAT

COMBAT
10

GOBLIN WARRIOR — MONSTER B

GOBLIN
WARRIOR

CHECK TO
DEFEAT

COMBAT
9

POWERS

If undefeated, bury 1 random item or weapon from
your discard pile.

BANDIT — HENCHMAN B

HUMAN
BANDIT

TYPE
MONSTER

CHECK TO
DEFEAT

COMBAT
8

TRAPPED PASSAGEWAY — BARRIER B

TRAP
BASIC

CHECK TO
DEFEAT

WISDOM
PERCEPTION
DEXTERITY
ACROBATICS
9

POWERS

If defeated, you may immediately explore again.

If undefeated, you are dealt 2d4 Combat damage.

STRATEGY: SHOULD YOU BURN THROUGH YOUR DECK?

Playing a character such as Seelah or Merisiel gives you ways to churn through your deck faster, discarding cards quickly to get to the cards you want. While this makes you far more likely to defeat and acquire what you need, it comes with a cost: you might kill yourself.

This game is all about trade-offs. Should you press your luck or hold off a bit? Not taking risks will make you lose as often as taking too many risks, but at least your character will be alive after you lose.

One of the toughest choices involves shedding cards as you reset your hand. You're allowed to discard any number of cards before you draw up, but that means you're closer to death. There are few things more humiliating than dying because you forgot how many cards you needed to draw at the end of your turn.

When you have too many cards in your hand, that's a different problem. If you can play some cards that can be recharged, even if you might—in the long term—be better off if you saved them, it's still worth playing them. Discarding cards for no gain is even more painful.

Type: Most banes are either monsters or barriers. Most villains and henchmen have the "monster" type and count as monsters; a few henchmen have the "barrier" type and count as barriers.

Traits: Many effects use a card's traits for some effect; for example, banes with the Goblin trait may be harder to defeat in a particular scenario.

Check to Defeat: This is the skill check or combat check needed to defeat the bane. If the check is listed as "None," the bane cannot be defeated. You normally take damage if you fail a check to defeat a monster (see Take Damage, If Necessary on page 12).

Powers: These are special rules when you encounter the bane.

HENCHMEN

Henchmen are a special type of bane. You may encounter henchmen as you explore locations, and some locations may require you to summon and defeat a different type of henchman to close them.

When you defeat a henchman from a location deck, you may immediately attempt to close that location by fulfilling that location's When Closing requirement (see Closing a Location on page 13).

Some cards may summon a particular henchman card into play temporarily. Since this summoned henchman doesn't come from the location deck, defeating it doesn't allow you to close a location.

ENCOUNTERING A VILLAIN

Most scenarios have a villain—a big bad bane for the players to fight at the end. Villains work a lot like other monsters, but since defeating them is the goal of many scenarios, some special rules are used with villains.

Unlike monsters and henchmen, villains don't just need to be defeated—they also need to be cornered, meaning you need to ensure there are no open locations for them to escape to.

Attempt to Temporarily Close Open Locations. When a player encounters the villain, each player at any other location may immediately attempt to fulfill the When Closing requirement for his location. If any player at a location succeeds, his location is temporarily closed and the villain cannot escape there this turn (see Check to See Whether the Villain Escapes on page 18). Temporarily closing a location does not trigger any of the other effects of closing a location; the location opens again immediately after the encounter.

Players may attempt to close locations in any order they wish.

SAJAN, THE MONK

Sajan has nary a weapon, armor, or spell, but that doesn't mean he's a lesser combatant. He churns through blessings to pump up his unarmed attacks, and to explore as much as he likes. Sajan's lack of armor means he can quickly get into trouble, though, so he wants feats and items that can soften the sting of bad luck.

Encounter the Villain. This encounter works exactly as it does with other banes, but be careful to look for any special rules listed on the villain card or the scenario card.

If You Defeat the Villain, Close the Villain's Location. You do not need to fulfill the When Closing requirement. Examine the location deck; if there are no additional villains in it, banish all of the cards and flip the location card over. The location is permanently closed, and the location's When Permanently Closed effect is triggered. If any villains remain in the deck, banish everything except the remaining villains and shuffle the deck; the location is not permanently closed, but it is temporarily closed, and the defeated villain cannot escape to it.

Check to See Whether the Villain Escapes. If any locations are not closed, the villain escapes. If you defeated the villain, count the number of open locations, subtract 1, and retrieve that number of random blessings from the box. Shuffle the villain in with those blessings, then deal 1 card to each open location and shuffle those location decks. If you did not defeat the villain, do the same thing, but retrieve the blessings from the blessings deck instead of from the box. (Note that if you did not defeat the villain, there is always at least one open location: the one in which it was just encountered.)

If the Villain Has Nowhere to Escape to, You Win! See After the Scenario below.

> **Example**: Lem and Merisiel are in Black Fang's Dungeon. Lem is at the Throne Room, Merisiel is at the Desecrated Vault, and Temple and Shrine to Lamashtu are open as well. On Merisiel's turn, she encounters Black Fang! Lem now has a chance to temporarily close the Throne Room, and he easily succeeds at his Diplomacy 6 check. Merisiel now encounters and defeats Black Fang, banishing all the cards in the Desecrated Vault. But since the Temple and Shrine to Lamashtu are open, Black Fang has somewhere to escape to. Merisiel's player shuffles together Black Fang and a random blessing from the box and deals 1 of those 2 cards into each of the open, unclosed locations—but not the Throne Room, since Lem temporarily closed it. The hunt for Black Fang continues!

SEELAH, THE PALADIN

Seelah can wield swords and spells with equal skillfulness, and excels when on the defense. She turns blessings into damage, and her armors can handle most assaults. Seelah can also scope out the locations she's exploring, but don't expect her to hang on to treasure—she's looking for evildoers to smite.

STRATEGY: SHOULD YOU HOARD BLESSINGS?

Blessings are among the most versatile cards in the game. Most can be used to add to checks or to explore again, but you can't use them to do both at the same time. So when you're trying to decide whether to play a blessing on your companion's check to acquire a wand, you might be wondering, "Did I just cost us a turn?"

What is the opportunity cost of not exploring? Do you need that sword more than you need to find the villain? The risk-reward analysis is complex here.

Early in the game, you might be willing to spend a blessing on a check, but when the clock is ticking down, conservatism is often the wiser course. If it's your combat check and you think you might lose without the blessing, it's likely worth playing the blessing on that check. Fail badly enough, and you might lose the blessing to damage anyway.

This analysis is worth going through, but don't let it stop you from acting. There are always more turns—at least, until there aren't.

AFTER THE SCENARIO

Now the time of adventure has passed. Return to the inn, heal your wounds, and divide the treasures you've unearthed. Rest while you can, for the runelords' plans will not be halted for long.

ENDING A SCENARIO, ADVENTURE, OR ADVENTURE PATH

If, at any point, you need to advance the blessings deck but there are no cards remaining in it, the scenario ends immediately and your party of adventurers loses. You also lose if all of the characters are dead at the same time (see Dying on page 14). You do not earn the reward on the scenario card, and if you're playing an adventure, you didn't complete that scenario; you will need to replay it successfully before you can attempt the next scenario in the adventure.

If the players defeat the villain and prevent him from escaping, or they achieve a different condition for winning listed on the scenario card, your group defeats the scenario and earns the reward listed on the scenario card. You may be rewarded with loot cards, which each can be given to any player in the group. If you're rewarded with a feat, choose an appropriate checkbox on your character card (or your role card, if you have one) and check it. That feat now applies to your character until she dies. If you're rewarded with a feat of a

You can make your own story cards—simply follow the format of the ones in the box, choosing villains and henchmen that are appropriate for the power level of your characters. Be careful when setting rewards; you don't want to give out too much for success.

You can also make your own character and role cards. To balance them with the ones in the box, each character should start with 15 cards on her Card List, no more than 1 d4 and 1 d12 in her skills, and no more than 5 skill bonuses. She should have 15 skill feat checkboxes, 10 card feat checkboxes, 4 power feat checkboxes on her character card, and 12 power feat checkboxes on her role card.

specific type and your character has no unchecked feats of that type, you do not gain a feat. No character may gain a reward from a given scenario, adventure, or Adventure Path more than once.

Once you've played a scenario, whether you won or lost, rebuild your character deck (see Between Games, below). Put all other cards back into the box.

If you're playing an adventure and you successfully complete a scenario, you may proceed to the next scenario on the adventure card. If you've successfully completed all of the scenarios on the adventure card, you earn the reward on the adventure card.

If you're playing an Adventure Path and you successfully complete an adventure, you're ready to move on to the next one. Add all of the cards from the next adventure deck to the box and begin with the first scenario of the new adventure.

If you're playing an Adventure Path and you successfully complete all of the adventures, you earn the reward on the Adventure Path card. At this point, you can build your own adventures using the cards you have, or you can create new characters and start over.

BETWEEN GAMES

After each scenario, you must rebuild your character deck. Start by combining your discard pile with your hand, your character deck, and any cards you buried under your character card; you may then freely trade cards with other players. Your deck must end up meeting the Cards List requirements on your character card, along with any deck adjustments on your role card, if you have one. Loot cards count as cards of their type; if your character's Cards List specifies 3 items and you keep 1 loot card with the item type when your rebuild your deck, your deck must contain exactly 2 other items.

If you can't construct a valid deck from the cards your group has available because you don't have enough of certain card types, choose the extra cards you need from the box, choosing only cards with the Basic trait. After you begin the adventure The Hook Mountain Massacre, you may ignore the Basic trait restriction; instead, you may use any cards in the box from the base set and the *Character Add-On Deck*, as well as any cards from an adventure whose adventure deck number is at least 2 lower than the adventure you're currently playing. If you have cards left over after rebuilding all of the surviving characters' decks, put them back in the box.

If you want to start a new character, you may, but it's important that you do not keep decks for characters you're not actively playing; doing so would use up cards that you should be encountering during play. The base set is designed to have no more than 4 character decks built at one time; the *Character Add-On Deck*, available separately, expands the maximum number of concurrently built decks to 6. If you switch characters for some reason, it's best to write down the cards in the previous character's deck and return the cards to the box until you need to use it again.

Solo play is particularly good for quickly completing scenarios to advance your character if you want to catch up to other players.

Not all characters should be considered equal for solo play. For example, Lem is quite good at helping other characters—but when there *are* no other characters, he's a lot less useful. Ezren doesn't have any blessings, so when no one else can give him any, his progress might be inhibited. Merisiel, on the other hand, is great for solo play, because she gains bonuses when no one is at her location.

You can also play multiple characters if you like; we suggest you try solo play with 2 characters. Treat each character as if he were being played by a separate player (so if you're playing Sajan and Valeros, advance the blessings deck at the start of Sajan's turn and at the start of Valeros's turn).

Some cards are particularly difficult in solo play. If your character can't ever get out of the Treacherous Cave, your scenario will grind to a halt. When you encounter such a card, remove it from the game and replace it with another card of the same type that roughly matches its power level but isn't quite so impossible to overcome.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Edward and Monica sit down to play their third session of the Pathfinder Adventure Card Game, using the scenario Black Fang's Dungeon. Edward has opted to play the mighty wizard Ezren, and Monica plays Merisiel, the rogue. After setting up the location and blessings decks, Edward and Monica decide to start their characters together in the location Throne Room, so they put their token cards near the Throne Room card. Both players draw their starting hands, but since Monica's hand doesn't include any item cards—Merisiel's favored card type—she has to discard her hand and draw again. This time, she gets an item—a Blast Stone—so she keeps her new hand and shuffles the old one back into her deck.

Edward begins play by advancing the blessings deck, and then chooses to have Ezren explore the Throne Room. He flips the top card over to reveal the spell Acid Arrow, which has a check to acquire of Intelligence or Arcane 4. Edward looks at his character card and sees that Ezren's Arcane skill is d12+2, better than his Intelligence skill of d12. He rolls a 7 and adds 2 for a total of 9, which exceeds the difficulty. Edward adds the Acid Arrow to his hand.

Since he has just acquired a card with the Magic trait, one of Ezren's special powers triggers, allowing him to immediately explore again. Edward flips over the next card of the location deck to discover an Ancient Skeleton henchman! Monica and Edward are excited because they know that defeating the henchman will allow them to close the Throne Room and move one step closer to completing the scenario and winning the game.

The scenario's special rule is "When any character encounters an Ancient Skeleton henchman, each other character at that location must summon and encounter an Ancient Skeleton henchman." This means Merisiel must encounter one too, but Monica's not worried—Merisiel has a power that allows her to evade her encounter, so she banishes her summoned Ancient Skeleton right away.

To defeat his Ancient Skeleton, Ezren must attempt a combat check. Edward opts to play the Acid Arrow spell he just acquired, which lets him roll his Arcane die—d12+2—plus 2d4 for his check. The difficulty of the check is 8, and Edward wants to make absolutely sure he'll succeed, so Monica plays her Blast Stone to add another 1d4 to the check. Edward assembles 1d12 and 3d4, and rolls a total value of 12, then adds 2 (the "+2" from his Arcane skill) to get a result of 14. Now Edward can try to recharge his Acid Arrow. The card says he must succeed at an Arcane 6 check, so he rolls d12+2 and gets a 9. He puts the card at the bottom of his deck. Playing the Acid Arrow spell triggered another of Ezren's powers: after he plays a spell with the Arcane trait, he can examine the top card of his character deck, and if it's a spell, he can add it to his hand. The top card is the spell Levitate, so he puts it in his hand. Best of all, because Ezren succeeded at the check, the Ancient Skeleton is defeated; Edward banishes it.

Edward can now immediately attempt to close the Throne Room. To do so, he must attempt a Charisma or Diplomacy check with a difficulty of 6. Ezren doesn't have the Diplomacy skill, and his Charisma die is just d6, so the odds aren't in his favor. Monica sees that her friend could use some help, so she plays a Blessing of the Gods on Ezren's Charisma check. Though Monica has 2 blessings in her hand, she can only play 1 card of any given type on a particular check, so she keeps the second blessing for later. Edward rolls 1d6 for Ezren's Charisma die and another 1d6 for the blessing, and gets exactly 6. The Throne Room is now closed, and Ezren and Merisiel are one step closer to defeating Black Fang's Dungeon.
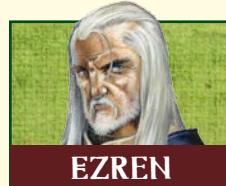
Edward still has a problem, though. He gained 2 cards and played only 1, so if he resets his hand now, he'll need to discard down to his hand size of 6. Instead, he plays his new Levitate spell to move to the Desecrated Vault; he needs a 6 on his recharge roll for the Levitate, and rolls a 5, so he discards it. Since he played a spell, his power lets him look at the top card of his deck, which is a Codex. That's not a spell, so he puts that back on his deck, and the turn passes to Monica. Black Fang's days are numbered!

SUGGESTED DECK LISTS

Here are optional starting card lists for the seven characters in the base set and the four characters in the *Character Add-On Deck*. All of these characters start with only cards with the Basic trait. Note that while all of these characters are buildable with any others, they can't all be built at once, because then you may not have enough cards left in the box to play the game.

BASE SET CHARACTERS

EZREN
Weapon: Quarterstaff
Spell: Arcane Armor, Detect Magic, Force Missile, Invisibility, Levitate, Lightning Touch (2), Sleep
Item: Blast Stone, Bracers of Protection, Codex
Ally: Night Watch, Sage, Standard Bearer
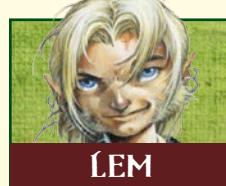
HARSK
Weapon: Light Crossbow (2), Shortbow (2), Sling
Armor: Leather Armor
Item: Amulet of Life, Crowbar, Holy Water
Ally: Crow
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (5)

KYRA
Weapon: Mace, Quarterstaff
Spell: Cure, Guidance, Mending
Armor: Chain Mail, Wooden Shield
Item: Holy Water
Ally: Guard
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (6)

LEM
Weapon: Sling
Spell: Cure, Levitate, Sanctuary, Strength
Item: Codex, Thieves' Tools
Ally: Burglar, Sage, Troubadour
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (5)
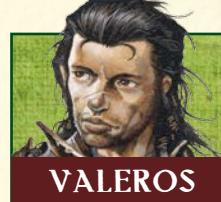
MERISIEL
Weapon: Dagger, Dart
Armor: Leather Armor
Item: Caltrops, Crowbar, Potion of Glibness, Potion of Vision, Thieves' Tools (2)
Ally: Burglar, Guard
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (4)

SEONI
Spell: Arcane Armor, Force Missile, Invisibility
Item: Blast Stone, Bracers of Protection, Potion of Fortitude
Ally: Guard, Guide (2), Troubadour
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (5)

VALEROS
Weapon: Dagger, Longsword (2), Mace, Short Sword
Armor: Chain Mail, Wooden Shield (2)
Item: Mattock, Potion of Hiding
Ally: Night Watch, Standard Bearer
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (3)

CHARACTER ADD-ON DECK CHARACTERS
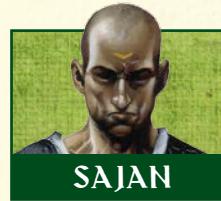
AMIRI
Weapon: Longspear, Longsword, Quarterstaff, Short Sword (2)
Armor: Leather Armor, Wooden Shield
Item: Mattock, Potion of Hiding
Ally: Guide, Standard Bearer
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (4)
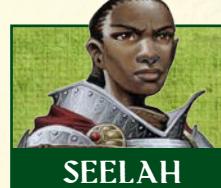
LINI
Spell: Cure (2), Detect Magic, Guidance, Sanctuary, Strength
Item: Potion of Fortitude, Sage's Journal
Ally: Crow, Dog (2)
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (4)

SAJAN
Item: Amulet of Mighty Fists, Caltrops, Potion of Glibness, Potion of Vision
Ally: Guide, Sage, Troubadour
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (8)

SEELAH
Weapon: Longsword, Mace, Short Sword
Spell: Cure
Armor: Chain Mail (2), Wooden Shield
Ally: Night Watch, Standard Bearer
Blessing: Blessing of the Gods (6)

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

If you've played other card games, board games, or roleplaying games, you may find a lot of familiar concepts in the Pathfinder Adventure Card Game. However, bringing in assumptions from other games—including the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game—can potentially trip you up. Here are some guidelines you might want to keep in mind.

Cards Do What They Say. Read any card as it is encountered or played, and do whatever it says as soon as it makes sense to do so. Let the card tell you what to do, and don't impose limitations that aren't there. You can play an armor card even if there isn't one in your deck list. You can play a Cure spell even if it's not your turn. You can play a blessing on a check even if someone else has played one. Cards say everything they need to say.

Cards Don't Do What They Don't Say. Each card's powers reference specific situations, and if you're not in those situations, you can't play it. If a card says it works on "a check," you can play it on anyone's check, but if a card says "your check," it only works on yours. You can't play a Cure spell to reduce the amount of damage you're taking, because Cure isn't about reducing damage. You can't play Detect Evil to examine a location deck that has no cards. Your weapon doesn't help you acquire new weapons. Each card tells you what it's for, and you can use it only for that.

No One Else Can Take Your Turn for You. Whenever you encounter a card or make a check, you—and only you—must resolve it. No other character can evade it, defeat it, acquire it, close it, decide what to do with it, or fail at doing any of those things. If Sajan encounters a monster, Merisiel can't evade it for him. If Kyra encounters a Ghoul, Seoni can't attempt the check to defeat it. If Amiri encounters a Battered Chest, Lini cannot use Thieves' Tools against it. If Valeros encounters a Spyglass, Harsk can't attempt the check to acquire it. If Ezren defeats a henchman at the Sandpoint Cathedral, Seelah can't discard a blessing to close the location. If the game tells you to do something, you have to do it.

Cards Don't Have Memories. Cards forget they've been played after they've done whatever they do. So if you reveal an item to reduce damage dealt before an encounter, you can reveal that item again during the encounter. A monster isn't affected by anything you did in a previous encounter with it. Even though you've played a card to explore again, after that exploration you can play another. Don't ask your cards to remember what happened, because they're just cards.

Finish One Thing Before You Start Something Else. You do many things in a specific order, and you need to finish doing each thing before you do the next thing. You move before you explore, not after. If a spell used in a check can be recharged, finish the first check before you begin your check to recharge it. If a villain requires two sequential combat checks, finish the first before starting the second. Don't start a new process until you've finished the last one. (That said, if the game doesn't specify an order for things, you decide the order.)

If It Isn't Called Something, It Isn't That Thing. Every term described in the rules and on cards has a specific definition. The Goblin Warchanter has the Goblin trait, but the Goblin Dog doesn't, even though it has Goblin in its name. A Potion of Healing may sound like it's magical, but it doesn't have the Magic trait. A Ghost deals Combat damage when it damages you, even if you failed a Divine check to defeat it. Detect Magic doesn't use the word "explore," so you can play it at times when you can't explore. Don't make assumptions—just read the card.

Add Only What You Are Told to Add. If a card adds another die, that's all it gives you: a die. It doesn't give you your bonuses again. It doesn't give you the skill associated with that die. It doesn't give you the ability to recharge an Arcane spell if you don't have the Arcane skill. When you play a Longbow to add your Strength die to a Combat check, you don't get to play a Blessing of Gorum to add 2 dice, because you're not attempting a Strength check. You just get a die.

Allow for Abstractions. Sometimes the story you imagine can get in the way of playing the game. Despite their aquatic nature, Bunyips can be encountered in the General Store. Caltrops work against Ancient Skeletons, even if they don't have flesh on their feet. Harsk can fire a Heavy Crossbow from the Mountain Peak into the Deeper Dungeons. Don't force the cards to fit your story; let the cards tell you their stories.

Choices Matter. Your choices have consequences. Once you choose cards for your character, you can't trade them for other cards whenever you like. If a location makes you choose between attempting a check or banishing a card before closing it, you can't attempt the check and then banish the card if you fail. If you roll too low on a Combat check, it's too late to play a Strength spell to improve your result. Once you choose a side of a role card, you can't switch to the other side. If something kills your character, your character dies. Every choice matters—take your choices seriously.

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BASE SET RULEBOOK

REFERENCE SHEET

TURN OVERVIEW

Advance the blessings deck.
Give a card to another character at the same location (optional).
Move to another location (optional).
Explore the top card of the location deck (optional).
Try to **close a location** if it doesn't have any cards (optional).
Reset your hand—apply end-of-turn effects, then discard any number of cards; finally, discard down to or draw up to your hand size.
End your turn.

ENCOUNTERING A CARD

Evade the card (optional).
Apply any effects that happen before the encounter, if needed.
Attempt the check.
Attempt the next check, if needed.
Apply any effects that happen after the encounter, if needed.
Resolve the encounter.

ATTEMPTING A CHECK

Determine which die you're using.
Determine the difficulty.
Play cards and use powers that affect the check (optional).
Assemble your dice.
Attempt the roll.
Take damage if you fail a check to defeat a monster.

PLAYING A CARD

Reveal: Show it, then put it back in your hand.
Display: Place it faceup in front of your character, unless stated otherwise; the card's powers function until it's discarded.
Discard: Put it into your discard pile.
Recharge: Put it at the bottom of your deck.
Bury: Put it under your character card.
Banish: Put it back in the box, shuffled in with the other cards of the same type.
Draw: Unless otherwise specified, take a card from your character deck and put in your hand.

ENCOUNTERING A VILLAIN

Attempt to temporarily close open locations.
Encounter the villain.
If you defeat the villain, close the villain's location.
Check to see whether the villain escapes.

A FEW RULES THAT ARE EASY TO FORGET

· While encountering a card, each player may play no more than 1 card of each type during each step.
· When blessings add dice to a check, the dice are of the same type that the character is already using for the check.
· If recharging a card requires a check and your character doesn't have any of the skills listed, you cannot attempt to recharge that card.
· For any other type of check, even if your character doesn't have any of the skills listed, you can attempt the check using a d4.
· In the case of a bane that requires sequential checks, any character at that location can attempt one or more of the checks, as long as the character who encountered the bane attempts at least one of them.