



# CTHULHU WARS

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A SANDY PETERSEN GAME

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*For Eric - I am devastated that you  
did not see this reach publication in  
your Earth life.*

*I love you, my brother.*

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The time would be easy to know, for then mankind would have become as the Great Old Ones; free and wild and beyond good and evil, with laws and morals thrown aside and all men shouting and killing and reveling in joy. Then the liberated Old Ones would teach them new ways to shout and kill and revel and enjoy themselves, and all the Earth would flame with a holocaust of ecstasy and freedom.

—H. P. Lovecraft

# CTHULHU WARS

Prophets, philosophers and madmen all saw the end of the world coming; for years they'd tried to warn us with their indecipherable scrawling and conspiratorial whispers. The signs were obvious enough, and in retrospect it would have been easy to know. In those dark days, mankind seemed to have a death wish. Long had we been poisoning the air we breathed, the water we drank, and the Earth from where our food came. Wars, famine, plague stretched cancerously across the globe... and death followed inexorably behind.

Certainly a few cared. Foolish kind-hearted souls tried to stem the tide, tried to reverse the damage we'd done to the planet, but it was all for naught. For the Old Ones had other plans. They'd come from the stars in the infancy of the world, when the Earth was nothing but chaos, magma, and churning elemental nonsense. Their inexplicable agenda was never made clear, but eon by eon, epoch by epoch, they guided this doomed outpost more to their liking. And by the end of the world, they'd finally completed their conflicting, yet eerily compatible agendas. The poisons, waste and irradiation had served to make the Earth more hospitable to them, more to their pleasure. As the stars

aligned to herald the return of the Old Ones, their influence grew, hastening the sickness of this primitive planet.

Finally, the wars. The alien horrors of the Old Ones barely had to lift a claw or tentacle. It simply took a psychic nudge here, a rumbling emanation there. Mankind did the rest. Wars erupted, flowing forth from the third world, and engulfing the streets of the first. Massacres on Main Street were the norm. Strange new weapons were developed to attempt to stem the tide, but nothing prevailed. Men, women, even children ran through the streets, shouting, Killing, burning and destroying. Blood flowed in ways unparalleled in human history.

The world burned with a holocaust of ecstasy and freedom, as the Old Ones rose from their eons-long slumber. For moments, all was silent, as if all of existence held its breath.

Thus began the real battle....

# I. Components

- Rulebook  
Player Hint Cards (4)  
Map Boards of Earth (2)  
(printed on both sides, front and back)  
Faction-specific Markers (8)  
(4 for the Doom Track, and 4 for the Power Tracks)  
Ritual of Annihilation Tracks (3)  
(1 three-player, 1 four-player and 1 five-player)  
Doom Track  
Six-sided Dice (20)  
Rectangular Faction Cards (4)  
Counters  
Triangular Ritual of Annihilation Marker (1)  
Circular First Player Token (1)  
Rectangular Spellbooks (24)  
(6 per Faction)  
Circular Desecration Markers (12)  
(for Yellow Sign only)  
Octagonal Gates (24)  
Hexagonal Elder Sign Chits (36)  
(two-sided: one side has the Elder Sign, the other has a number — either 1, 2, or 3)  
18 chits read “1”  
12 chits read “2”  
6 chits read “3”  
Plastic Figures of the Four Factions (64)  
(24 Acolyte Cultists, six each in the four Faction colors; green, blue, red, and yellow)

	<b>GREEN FACTION</b> <b>GREAT CTHULHU</b>
• 4 Deep Ones	
• 2 Shoggoths	
• 2 Starspawn	
• Cthulhu	
	<b>BLUE FACTION</b> <b>CRAWLING CHAOS</b>
• 3 Nightgaunts	
• 3 Flying Polyps	
• 2 Hunting Horrors	
• Nyarlathotep	
	<b>RED FACTION</b> <b>BLACK GOAT</b>
• 2 Ghouls	
• 4 Fungi from Yuggoth	
• 3 Dark Young	
• Shub-Niggurath	
	<b>YELLOW FACTION</b> <b>YELLOW SIGN</b>
• 6 Undead	
• 4 Byakhee	
• The King in Yellow	
• Hastur	
<b>TOTAL FIGURES: 64</b>	

## The Four Factions

Each Faction contains Units consisting of a governing Great Old One (sometimes more than one), its Cultists, its Monsters, six Spellbooks, a Faction card, and two Faction Markers. The Spellbooks and Monsters are unique per Faction, and as you bring Spellbooks into play, your Faction grows in strength and your options multiply.

The Factions play quite differently from one another. Strategies which are effective for Cthulhu may not work for Yellow Sign.

### Faction Card

Your Faction Card contains a great deal of information.

#### A. FACTION NAME:

Self-explanatory.



Great Cthulhu Faction Card

**B. FACTION PORTRAIT:** A handy spot to place your Captured Cultists.

**C. POWER TRACK:** Use your Power Marker to Track your current Power throughout the game.

**D. UNIQUE ABILITY:** Every Faction has its own special talent. This is yours and it is available throughout the game.

**E. SET-UP INFORMATION AND GLYPH:** All Factions start with a Controlled Gate and six Acolyte Cultists, but the information is repeated here for completeness. Also shows your Faction's Glyph (which will be on the map in your starting Area).

**F. CULTIST AND MONSTER INFORMATION:** Shows a silhouette, plus gives Cost and Combat for your Cultists and Monsters, plus notes, if any. Next to the name is a number which is how many of that Unit are available. (It's always six for Acolyte Cultists, for instance.)

**G. GREAT OLD ONE INFORMATION:** Shows your Great Old One's silhouette, plus gives Cost and Combat, plus notes. All Great Old Ones have extensive notes, which describe how to Awaken that Great Old One step-by-step, give the Combat formula for that Great Old One (if any), and describe the Great Old One's special ability, which may take the form of an Action.

**H. SPELLBOOK REQUIREMENTS (and placement):** Each of these six spaces has a requirement which must be met before you may place a Spellbook in that slot.

## The Map

The map is divided into Areas. Each Area represents a coherent part of the world and is defined as either Ocean or Land. Each Area has its name prominently printed on it. To clarify - on the normal Earth map, Ocean Areas consist of the North Pacific, South Pacific, North Atlantic, South Atlantic, Indian Ocean, and Arctic Ocean. All other Areas (including Antarctica) are Land. Future maps have differently-named Areas, but still define each as Ocean or Land.

For most game purposes, there is no difference between Ocean and Land. Units, including Cultists, can freely move into the Ocean, build Gates there, and so forth. Occasional Spellbooks distinguish between Ocean and Land. Notably Y'ha Nthlei and Submerge.

The map is printed on both sides, and is in two halves. Both sides have identical continental shapes, but one side is the five-player side (with more Areas), and one is the three-player side (with fewer Areas).



Three-Player Gameboard



Two- and Four-Player Gameboard

## II. Game Basics

### Setup

#### The Map Board

The map is in two pieces, and is printed on both sides. The two sides have identical continental shapes, but the five-player side of the map is divided into far more Land Areas than the three player side.

**THREE-PLAYER GAME:** Place the game board so both three-player sides are face-up. The map will display thirteen total Areas.

**TWO- AND FOUR-PLAYER GAME:** Place the game board so that one three player side is face-up, and one five player side is face up. For your first games, we recommend that you use a setup in which the Eastern Hemisphere is five-player, and the Western Hemisphere is three-player. In either case, the map will display seventeen total Areas.

**FIVE-PLAYER GAME:** Do NOT place both five-player sides face-up unless you are playing a five player game (only possible if you have one of the Faction expansions). The five-player game displays twenty-one total Areas.

#### Dice and Gates

Take the dice and Gates and place them within easy reach of the players.

#### Ritual and Doom Tracks

The game box contains three Ritual of Annihilation Tracks (henceforth usually termed a Ritual Track). Each is labeled for use in a three-, four-, or five-player game. Set up the appropriate Ritual Track board next to the Doom Track. Place the two unused Ritual Tracks back in the game box. These Tracks will not be needed.

Place the Doom Track at a map board end. Place the Ritual of Annihilation Marker on the lowest spot on the Ritual of Annihilation Track. (The spot labeled five.) Once all players have chosen their Faction, place their Faction Marker on the zero space on the Doom Track.

Turn all the Elder Sign chits face down (with the Elder Sign on top), and mix them up. Place them near the Doom Track, within reach of all players.



Ritual Track and Doom Track



Elder Signs

## Factions

Each player now picks a Faction. You may do so by blindly choosing a random Faction Power Marker from a cup, but it does not violate the spirit of the game to simply select a favorite Faction. In the latter case, disputes can be settled by permitting the younger players first choice.

Next, each player takes his Faction card, his six Spellbooks, and the plastic figures for his Cultists, Monsters, and Great Old One(s). Each player places his Faction Card before him and places one Faction Marker on the zero space of his Power Track. If he has not already done so, he also places one Faction Marker on the zero space on the Doom Track.

## The Pool

Each player has a Pool, in which he keeps not-yet-in-play Spellbooks and plastic figures within easy reach. Set it up near your Faction Card. Feel free to read your Spellbooks. Yellow Sign should also place Desecration Markers in his Pool.

## Starting Placement

Each player must check his Faction sheet to find his Start Area. All players start with a Controlled Gate and six Acolyte Cultists in the same Area, marked with his Faction's Glyph.



To show that you Control the Gate,  
place a Cultist atop it.



Complete Cthulhu Faction

## Unit Limits

You are limited by the number of figures in your Pool. For instance, you can never have more than six Acolyte Cultists. If you have Summoned all the Monsters of a particular type, you cannot Summon more.

## Playing the Game

The Game is played out in 4 distinct Phases:

1. Gather Power Phase
2. Determine First Player Phase
3. Doom Phase
4. Action Phase

Play passes through each phase (beginning with Phase 1) and returning to Phase 1 after Phase 4 each time. This continues until the game ends (see Section X. Victory: Ending and Winning the Game for more details).

**NOTE:** The first time through  
the 4 Phases, skip Phase 2  
(the Doom Phase).

TURN SEQUENCE	
1)	Gather Power Phase
a)	+1 Power per Cultist
b)	+2 Power per controlled Gate
c)	+1 Power per abandoned Gate
d)	+1 Power per sacrificed Cultist
e)	Increase to half of the highest Faction's Power total
2)	Determine First Player Phase
3)	Doom Phase (Skip first turn)
a)	+1 Doom point per controlled Gate
b)	Each player may perform 1 Ritual of Annihilation, earning +1 Doom point per controlled Gate and +1 Elder Sign per Great Old One
c)	Determine Victory/Defeat
4)	Action Phase
-3	Power to build a Gate
-1	Power per Unit to Move
-1	Power to declare a Battle
-1	Power to Capture a Cultist
-1	Power to Recruit an Acolyte Cultist
-?	Power to Summon a Monster
-?	Power to Awaken a Great Old One



### III. Gather Power Phase

This takes place in two parts.

1. All players add up earned Power.
2. Check for Minimum Power

The first part of the turn. Once you are experienced with the game, all players can perform this simultaneously. If this is the first game for anyone, it is best to go through it player by player.

During this step, the players earn the Power which they will later expend. To record Power earned, move the Power Token to the right on your Faction card's Power Track, up one point for each Power. If you have eight Power, place the Power Token on the spot marked "8".

#### How to Earn Power

1. Earn one Power for each Cultist you have on the map.
2. Earn two Power for each Gate you Control.
3. Earn one Power for each abandoned Gate on the map → each player gains one Power per Gate.
4. Return all Captured Cultists to their owner's Pools, and earn one Power for each Cultist you return. You may not choose to keep a Cultist prisoner → they must be returned.

In addition, each Faction has some special way to gain Power. This differs per Faction and might require a particular Spellbook.

**Example:** Rich has two Controlled Gates and three Cultists. He also has Captured one Cultist. He gets three Power from his Cultists, and four Power for his two Gates. One Gate on the map is currently unControlled, so he gets one Power from that source (as do all other players). He must sacrifice his Captured Cultist, which gets him an additional one Power. His total Power going into the Action Round Phase is set to nine.

**NOTE:** In the early game, focus on increasing your Power base. High Power gives you more options and creates opportunities.



Earning Power

**NOTE:** Each Monster type has at least one dedicated Spellbook, as does your Great Old One.

The Power Track goes to twenty. You may have a Power higher than twenty. If a player reaches twenty-one or more Power, you need to keep Track of it by other means. The easiest is to “wrap around” your Faction Marker, so for instance if your Power is twenty-three, you would place your Faction Marker on the three space, and just remember that it is really twenty-three. Then, when it hits zero place it on the twenty slot instead.

**IMPORTANT:** Monsters and Great Old Ones do not (with rare exceptions) produce Power!  
Only Cultists can produce Power!

## Minimum Power Rule

At the end of Gather Power, if your Power is less than half that of the player with the most Power, set your Power to be half of his (round fractions up). Example: after a disastrous turn, Rich finds himself with only four Power at the end of Gather Power. Fortunately, Angela has thirteen Power, which is also the most, so Rich sets his Power to seven (half of thirteen - fractions are rounded up).

## IV. Determine First Player Phase

On the first turn of the game, Cthulhu is the First Player. If you are in a game without the Cthulhu Faction, choose the first player by any means you wish. (We recommend either selecting the fattest player or just going by alphabetic order per Faction name – i.e., Black Goat is before Yellow Sign.)

On all subsequent turns after the first, the First Player Marker is given to the player who has the most Power after the Gather Power Phase. If two (or more) players are tied for most Power, then the player who had the First Player Token last round decides which of the tied players receives the First Player Marker. (He can choose himself, if he is involved in the tie.)

After the First Player is determined, he takes the First Player Token and sets it in front of him. He chooses whether to have the Clockwise side face-up, or the Counterclockwise side. Whichever side he selects determines the order of play for the rest of that turn, including all Action Rounds. If you are using some other object as your First Player Token, simply point it unambiguously at the player whom you wish to take a turn after you. For instance, if the first player puts the First Player Token Clockwise side up, then the player to take an Action after him is the person sitting on his left. The direction of the First

Player Token can be switched on each Determine First Player Phase. If instead he had used a figure for his First Player Counter, he would point the figure towards the person on his left.

## V. The Doom Phase

The Doom Phase has four steps.

1. Doom Track advancement
2. Rituals of Annihilation
3. Special Events
4. Victory/Defeat determination

**IMPORTANT:** *The entire Doom Phase is skipped on the first turn of play. On that turn, simply proceed directly from “Determine First Player Phase” to “Action Phase”.*

### Doom Track Advancement

Each Doom Phase, each player's Marker advances on the Doom Track a number of spaces equal to his total Controlled Gates. For instance, if he Controls two Gates, he advances two spaces. This can be done simultaneously or in any order.

### Ritual of Annihilation

Next, starting with the First Player, each player chooses if he wishes to perform a Ritual of Annihilation. Each player, in order from the First Player and around the board, receives the chance to do one and only one Ritual of Annihilation.

To perform a Ritual of Annihilation:

1. The player spends Power equal to the current position of the Ritual Marker on the Track (this ranges from five to ten).
2. The player now advances the Ritual Marker one step up the Ritual of Annihilation Track, which often increases the cost for later players.
3. Finally, the player now advances his Doom Marker on the Doom Track one step for each Gate he Controls (doubling his Doom boost for this turn based on Gates). In addition, for each Great Old One he Controls in play, he gains an Elder Sign.

*Remember: Each player gets only ONE chance to perform a Ritual of Annihilation per Doom Phase.*



1. Start of Doom Phase



2. Ritual of Annihilation Step

**Example – Rich is First Player, and has three Gates and Nyarlathotep on the map. At the start of the Doom Phase, he advances his Doom Marker three spaces, for his three Gates. All other players also advance, according to their Gate total.**

During the Ritual of Annihilation step, Rich decides to perform a Ritual of Annihilation. The Ritual Marker is in the five space, so Rich pays five Power (and advances the Ritual Marker to the six space). Rich now advances his Doom Marker another three spaces (for his three Gates), and receives an Elder Sign for his Great Old One. This Doom Phase he advanced a total of six spaces on the Doom Track, plus he received an Elder Sign.

If he had not performed the Ritual of Annihilation, he would have five more Power entering the Action Phase, but would be missing out on those three extra Doom Points and Elder Sign. The next player to perform a Ritual of Annihilation must pay six, since Rich advanced the Marker.

If the Ritual Marker is on the ten space, and a Ritual is performed, the Ritual Marker moves to the “Instant Death” space. This means that at the end of the Doom Phase, the game ends, and victory is determined. All players who sit after the current player in the turn order can perform a Ritual of Annihilation at a cost of ten Power, and all players may reveal Elder Signs, of course.

## Elder Sign Chits

Elder Sign chits symbolize the shattering of the bonds that once held the Great Old Ones in check. They actually represent the destruction of Elder Signs, but for simplicity, we simply call them “Elder Signs” instead of “Elder Sign chits” in most of the text.

Elder Signs are gathered in two major ways. First, you earn one Elder Sign for each Great Old One you Control on the map when doing a Ritual of Annihilation (For example, Yellow Sign can earn two Elder Signs if he performs a Ritual of Annihilation when he has both the King in Yellow and Hastur out). Second, each Faction has its own unique method of earning Elder Signs. See your Faction sheet and Spellbooks for specifics.

When you earn an Elder Sign, take a face-down Elder Sign chit from the Pool and (without revealing it to other players), place it face down on or by your Faction sheet. You may examine your own Elder Sign chits freely. All Elder Signs have a number - one, two, or three - written on them. This indicates how many Doom Points that Elder Sign is worth. There are eighteen Elder Sign chits worth one point, twelve that are worth two points, and six that are worth three points.

Elder Signs may be revealed AT ANY TIME. Usually, it is best to keep Elder Signs secret till the moment you can win by revealing them, but sometimes circumstances affect this.

In the unlikely event of all Elder Signs being handed out to players, when a new Elder Sign is earned, simply give the player a Doom point instead.

*NOTE: If Elder Signs are revealed before the end of the game, after incrementing your Doom Track, do NOT place the revealed Elder Signs back into the Elder Sign Pool -- place them back in the box, not to be used again till your next game of Cthulhu Wars.*

## Special Events

Many Spellbooks and special abilities take effect in the Doom Phase. Unless otherwise stated, these occur after Rituals of Annihilation (if any), but before Victory Determination. In case of a dispute, the First Player takes his Action first, and then proceed around the table. Some map events also occur here (available in later expansions). Some examples include Black Goat's Blood Sacrifice, and the two Doom Phase Spellbooks Great Cthulhu receives.

## Victory/Defeat Determination

If any player has thirty or more Doom Points, or the Ritual of Annihilation Marker is in the "Instant Death" box, the game now ends. Proceed to determine victory as described in Section X. Victory: Ending and Winning the Game.

## VI. Action Phase

During the Action Phase, each player in turn moves Units, casts spells, engages in battle, and otherwise interacts. All Actions have a Power cost (sometimes zero) which must be spent before the Action occurs.

The first player takes one Action. When he finishes, the next player in turn takes an Action. This continues until all players are out of Power and cannot take any more Actions. At this point the Action Phase ends.

In other words, the Action Phase keeps circling around until everyone is out of Power. Remember you get ONE Action each time it is your turn to have a go.

If you run out of Power, you must sit helplessly while the other players complete their turns, skipping you. If you have zero Power when it is time for you to take an Action, you are skipped. You cannot even perform Actions which cost zero Power.

Three types of Actions exist: Common Actions, Unique Actions, and Unlimited Actions. You must do at least one Common or Unique Action whenever play passes round to you.

On rare occasions, a player may have one or more Power, yet not wish to do an Action. In this case, the player is allowed to Pass, which drops his Power to zero, and ends his turn.

- **Common Actions:** Spend the appropriate amount of Power and perform the Action. Though you only get one Action, some Common Actions (such as Move) permit you to do more than one thing with that Action.
- **Unique Actions:** Just like Common Actions - the only difference is that they are unique to a particular Faction. For instance, only Black Goat can use the unique Ghoth Action. Unique Actions are usually tied to a Spellbook or a Great Old One's special ability. If you do not yet have the appropriate Spellbook or Great Old One in play, you cannot perform that unique Action.
- **Unlimited Actions:** You can perform Unlimited Actions in addition to your single Common or Unique Action. Some Unlimited Actions have special requirements.

To repeat: A player can only perform ONE Common or Unique Action during an Action round. He may, additionally, perform one or more Unlimited Actions. For instance, if you choose to take the Recruit Cultist Action, you get one Cultist, and that ends your Action round (unless you have Unlimited Actions available). If you choose to take the Create Gate Action, you create one Gate, and your turn ends. One notable exception is the Move Action, which permits you to move multiple Units.

## Common Actions

1. Recruit Cultist
2. Summon Monster
3. Awaken Great Old One
4. Build Gate
5. Move
6. Battle
7. Capture Cultist

### Recruit Cultist: Cost one Power (requires Unit)

You must have a Unit in the Area where you recruit a Cultist. You may only recruit one Cultist per Action round. This does not require a Gate or anything beyond a Unit's presence.

If you currently have no Units on the map, you do not need a Unit in an Area where the Cultist is recruited. In this manner, you can return to play even if wiped off the map.

You must have a Cultist in your Unit Pool to perform this Action. i.e., you cannot have more than six Acolyte Cultists on the map.

*Since a Great Old One can be “Killed” (after which he must be re-Awakened), do not bring it out before you can protect it with other Units. Two exceptions are the King in Yellow and Cthulhu, since they are (comparatively) inexpensive to replace.*

**REMEMBER:** Monsters with Combat zero are surprisingly useful. They can protect Cultists from being Captured by other Monsters, they can Capture Cultists themselves, and they can be taken as casualties in Battle, sparing more expensive Units. This last is particularly handy when facing an enemy with an auto-Kill such as Cthulhu's Devour or a Nightgaunt's Abduct.

### **Summon Monster: Cost varies (typically one, two or three Power and requires a Gate)**

You can Summon ONE Monster per Action (exception: Black Goat's Fertility Cult Ability). A Monster can only be Summoned to an Area where you Control a Gate. (The seeming exceptions, such as Devolve or Desecration are, technically, not Summon Actions). Pay the Monster's cost (printed on your Faction Card), and place it in the Area.

### **Awaken Great Old One: Cost varies (other requirements apply)**

Great Old Ones have prerequisites beyond simply spending Power. For instance, to Awaken Shub-Niggurath you need a Controlled Gate, plus you must Eliminate two of your Cultists in the Area. In general, Great Old Ones are the most expensive Units in the game.

Every Great Old One is unique, with its own Awakening requirements, its own Combat, and its own special ability. Some even make unique Actions available when they are in play.

### **Build Gate: Cost three Power (requires Cultist)**

To build a Gate you must have a Cultist in an Area without a Gate. Pay three Power, and place the Gate. Immediately place the Cultist atop the Gate to indicate you now Control it. (Technically, this is a use of the unlimited "Control Gate" Action). You can only build ONE Gate per Build Gate Action.

Only one Gate can exist per Area. If a Gate is already present, you cannot build one.

### **Move: Cost one Power per Unit moved**

To Move, spend as much Power as you wish, then for each Power spent, you may move one Unit from its current Area into an adjacent Area. Example: Rich spends three Power. He can now move three Units. Most Factions have special abilities which modify or affect or replace movement.

You cannot move a Unit more than once per Action - i.e., you cannot spend two Power to move a single Unit twice during one Action round. You CAN move Units from different Areas into the same Area, or into different Areas, or from the same Area into different Areas, or any combination you please.

Movement is the only Common Action which permits you to do more than one thing during an Action (and then all it permits is moving multiple Units).

**NOTE:** All Units may move into Ocean Areas.

### Battle: Cost one Power

Choose any area in which both you and an enemy Faction have at least one Unit. You must be able to roll at least one Combat die in order to declare a Battle.

If more than one enemy Faction has forces present, you must fight only one. Only two Factions fight at a time. All other Factions present are merely idle bystanders.

Simply moving into an Area containing enemy Units does not trigger a Battle! Units can co-exist in an Area without a Battle ensuing.

**NOTE:** Battle will be detailed in the next section.

### Capture Cultist: Cost one Power

We have a hierarchy of Units in Cthulhu Wars. Cultists, the natural prey, are at the bottom. Monsters outrank Cultists, and Great Old Ones are at the top of the heap.

If you have a Monster in an area, and an enemy has Cultists, but NO Monsters or Great Old Ones, you may use this Action to Capture a Cultist. The Captured Cultist is removed from the map and placed on your Faction Card, on your Great Old One's portrait. Your opponent chooses which Cultist is Captured. For instance, he does not have to choose the Cultist Controlling his Gate, unless he has no other choice. Also if he has more than one type of Cultist present (later expansions), he can pick between them.



Movement Example: Start



Movement Example: One Action Costs One Power



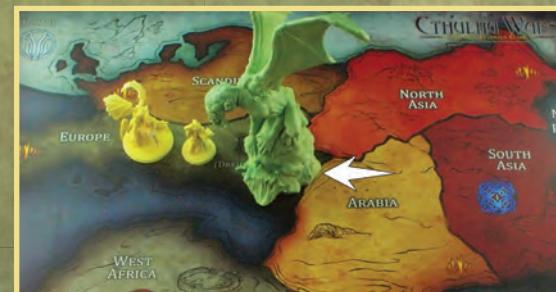
Movement Example: One Action Costs Three Power



**Example A:** Rich has a Monster in Europe, and Guy has two Cultists there, but no Monsters. On Rich's turn he spends one Power on the Capture Cultist Action to grab one of Guy's Cultists. Guy's turn is next, and he moves in a Monster to protect his remaining Cultist.

To protect against Capture by an enemy Monster, you need a Monster of your own in the Area. Note that even if a Cultist has a Combat rating, or a Monster has a Combat of zero, the latter can still Capture the Cultist. Capture is not Battle, and Battle abilities do not apply.

A Great Old One can Capture an enemy Cultist even if the enemy has a Monster present. To protect against Capture by a Great Old One, you need your own Great Old One in the Area. Or you need to attack the enemy Great Old One and drive it away, or simply flee.



**Example B:** Rich has Monsters and a Cultist in Europe. Angela moves Cthulhu into Europe. On the next turn, Rich must evacuate his Cultist, move his own Great Old One into the area, or drive away Cthulhu in a battle. Otherwise Cthulhu can Capture the Cultist.

## **Pass: All Remaining Power**

If you wish to take no further Actions, you may choose to discard all remaining Power dropping your total to zero. This ends the Action Phase for you (unless another player's Action provides you with Power).

## **Unique Actions**

As the game continues, you will unlock Spellbooks which give you access to new Actions. Also, some Great Old Ones have special Actions (such as the King in Yellow's Desecrate).

## **Unlimited Actions**

You can perform as many Unlimited Actions as you wish on your turn. You must still perform your required single Common or Unique Action (Unlimited Actions are always in addition). You may perform Unlimited Actions before and/or after your single Common or Unique Action. Unlimited Actions are not limited by quantity or order, but MUST be accompanied by a single Common or Unique Action.

### **Control or Abandon Gate: Cost zero Power**

If you have a Cultist in an Area with an abandoned Gate, this Action moves your Cultist onto the Gate to take possession. You can also use this Action to move a Cultist off a Gate, abandoning it.

One common use of this is when Black Goat has the Red Sign Spellbook in effect. She might Summon a Dark Young, abandon the Gate in the Area with her Cultist, and Control the Gate with the newly-Summoned Dark Young, all in the same Action (she took the Summon Action, followed up by the two Unlimited Actions of Abandon and Control Gate).

*"Unlimited" is not the same as "anytime". For instance, you cannot Control an empty Gate with a Cultist except when it is time for you to take an Action. If two players both have Cultists in an Area with an abandoned Gate, the first player to take his Action will be able to take the Gate.*

*Never leave an Acolyte Cultist alone on a Gate in a critical area once Cthulhu has the Dreams Spellbook! Place a second Cultist in the Area if possible. While this won't prevent Dreams, since you pick which Cultist is affected, Cthulhu has to pay a total of six Power in order to steal the Gate.*



If you are not sure what to do, look at your Spellbook requirements. You cannot go far wrong so long as you strive to gain new Spellbooks.

## Battle: Cost one Power (with six Spellbooks)

If you have six Faction Spellbooks, you can perform Battle as an Unlimited Action. Each Unlimited Battle you perform still costs one Power. This basically just means that you can perform as many Battles as you wish before and/or after your required single Common or Unique Action. You can still perform Battle as a Common Action if that is all you want to do on your turn.

Since Battle can be either Common or Unlimited when you have six Faction spellbooks, it is legal to first perform a Battle, and THEN decide whether it was Unlimited or Common. You might do this so that after seeing the results of the Battle you can then choose to do a single Common Action or another Unlimited Battle somewhere else, etc.

There is a restriction on Unlimited Battles, however: you can still only initiate one Battle per Area on your turn.

## “Interruption” Abilities

Cthulhu’s Devolve Spellbook can be used after any player’s Action, even if it is not your turn. In future expansions more “interrupting” type abilities will be added. When these are used in the Action Phase, they always occur after another player’s Action. If two players each want to use such an ability and there is a dispute over whose Action goes first, resolve it by turn order (i.e., starting player goes first).

## VII. Battle

Here is a quick summary of a battle, followed by a more detailed explanation:

After the Battle Action has been declared and paid for (whether as a common Action, or an unlimited Action), a battle takes place in three distinct segments:

1. Pre-Battle
2. Battle
3. Post-Battle

In the Pre-Battle, the attacker, then defender applies any Pre-Battle abilities he wants to. In the Battle segment, both sides roll dice simultaneously according to their total combat rating involved. During Post-Battle, first Kills are applied, followed by Pains, along with any Post-Battle abilities. As with Pre-Battle abilities, the attacker’s Post-Battle abilities are applied before the defender’s Post-Battle abilities.

## Ongoing and Battle Abilities

Before each segment each Faction decides if they are going to use any Ongoing and/or Battle abilities which could be applied. Ongoing and Battle effects are obtained via Spellbooks or special abilities. Battle effects include Pre-Battle and Post-Battle effects. For instance, Crawling Chaos's Harbinger ability means he receives Power or Elder Signs when Nyarlathotep is involved in a Battle in which an enemy Great Old One is Killed or Pained. He does not need to "perform an Action" for this function - he just pushes his Power Marker up the Track (or grabs his Elder Signs) during Post-Battle.

*NOTE: Pre-Battle, Battle, and Post-Battle abilities are not "Actions".*

*Thus Cthulhu's Devour ability costs no Power.*

The Attacker performs his abilities first in each part of the Battle sequence, followed by the Defender. If a Faction which is not directly involved in the Battle has an ability that might affect the battle, his abilities happen last.

### Pre-Battle Effects

Pre-Battle effects happen before the dice for the Battle are rolled, but after the Battle is announced (and paid for). For instance, this is when Crawling Chaos's Seek and Destroy triggers. Normally, only the Factions who are fighting can use Pre-Battle abilities, unless an ability specifically states otherwise.

The Attacker (the Faction which initiated the Battle) does any Pre-Battle effects first, followed by the Defender. (For instance, if Cthulhu is the Attacker, and Crawling Chaos chooses a Nightgaunt to be Devoured, that Nightgaunt cannot use Abduct.)

### Battle and Battle Effects

All participants in a battle now determine their total Combat rating. All Cultists and Monsters have a Combat, typically a number ranging from zero to three. A few Spellbooks have "Battle" effects - such Spellbooks usually happen simultaneously but as always, if order matters, the Attacker goes first.

*NOTE: Most Great Old Ones have combat ratings which require a simple calculation.*

*It's worth the effort, because it generally results in a high rating.*

Each player then rolls a number of six-sided dice equal to the total Combat of all his Units in the area. Combat is simultaneous! Even if you take turns rolling the dice, do not inflict casualties until after both players have rolled and totaled the results.



Skull or six equal a Kill

*Example:* Rich has two Starspawn (three each), two Deep Ones (one each), and three Acolyte Cultists (zero) in an area, totaling eight dice in Battle.

For each six rolled, score one Kill result. For each four or five, score a Pain result. (Rolls of one through three do nothing.)

If you are using the special deluxe dice, then the side with the skull scores a Kill, the two sides with the slash marks will score a Pain, and the three blank sides are a Miss. The odds of scoring a Pain or a Kill with the regular dice are exactly the same but the deluxe dice look cooler.

## Results and Post-Battle Effects

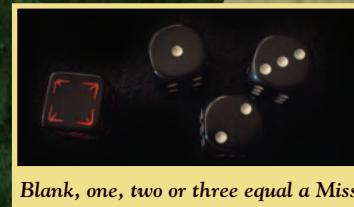
After dice are rolled, losses are inflicted simultaneously. Each player determines how to apply the results inflicted on him, as follows:

First, for each Kill you have received, remove one Unit (your choice). Attacker takes his losses first if there is a dispute.

If you still have Units left after all Kills are satisfied, then for each Pain you suffer, you must retreat one Unit into an adjacent area of your choice. Attacker retreats first. Exception - Crawling Chaos' Madness Spellbook. Note that though Crawling Chaos chooses the order and where Units retreat, he still does not choose which particular Units are to be retreated - they are still chosen by the owner.

Some Spellbooks and abilities may worsen or ease Battle results. Don't forget to apply them! Post-Battle effects, just like Pre-battle, are done in the order of Attacker first, then Defender.

**IMPORTANT:** Pained Units cannot retreat into an Area containing Units belonging to the Faction they just Battled (they CAN retreat into an Area containing Units of a third Faction).  
If one or more Units cannot retreat, Eliminate one of the Pained Units, and the rest may remain in the area with no further penalty.



Slashes, four or five equal a Pain



Blank, one, two or three equal a Miss

*Simple Battle Example:* 1. Angela attacks Frank in East Africa. She has two Byakhee, two Acolyte Cultists, and the King in Yellow. Frank has two Acolyte Cultists. Angela's Byakhee give her one more die than the number of Byakhee in the Area, while her Cultists and the King have Combats of zero, so she rolls three dice. Frank is playing Black Goat, and his Frenzy Spellbook is in play, so his Cultists each have a Combat of one.

2. Frank rolls two dice, Angela rolls two Pains and no Kills, while Frank rolls a Kill and no Pains. Angela chooses to Kill one of her Byakhee, and Frank must retreat both Cultists out of the Area.



In this example, none of the blue Cultists can be Pained to where any green units are, even if there is also another blue Unit there. If the green Starspawn were also Pained, it could not go to where the blue Unit is either.



1. Simple Battle Attack



2. Result



1. Complex Battle Attack



2. Pre-battle



3. Roll



4. Score

**Complex Battle Example:** 1. Rich attacks Angela in East Africa. He has Cthulhu, a Shoggoth, two Deep Ones, and three Cultists. She has the King in Yellow and five Undead.

2. In the Pre-Battle Phase Rich's Shoggoth Absorbs one of his own Deep Ones, and Cthulhu Devours one of Angela's Units. She chooses an undead (she had no choice really, because the King cannot be picked for Devour, as a Great Old One).

3. Rich then rolls twelve dice (six for Cthulhu, two plus three for the "Absorbent" Shoggoth, and one for his remaining Deep One), and Angela rolls her three dice (the amount she gets for having four remaining Undead).

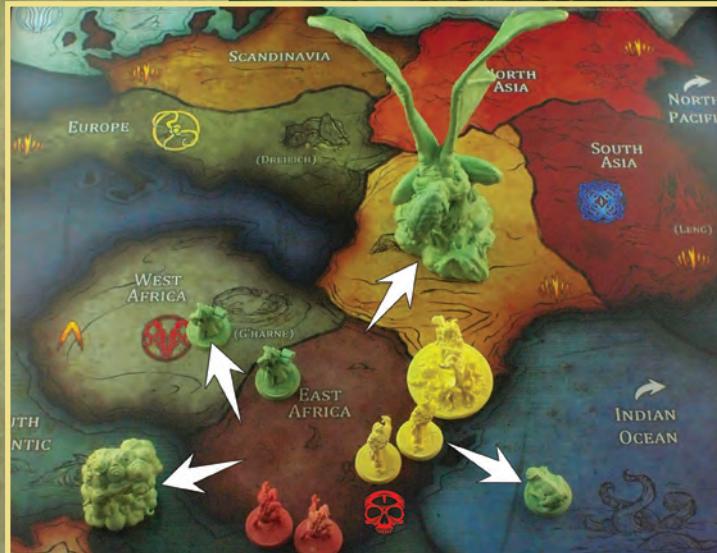
4. Rich scores one Kill and six Pains. Angela gets one Kill and two Pains. Rich Kills one of his Cultists, and Pains a Deep Ones and Cthulhu. Angela Kills one more Undead, and the remaining three, plus the King, are Pained. Rich's excess Pain result is ignored.

5. In Post-Battle, Frank, as Black Goat, moves two Ghouls into the Area via Necrophagy. Rich must retreat two more Units out of the Area. He chooses one of his remaining Cultists plus his Shoggoth. He has just one Cultist left unaffected. (Angela isn't affected by Necrophagy because all of her Units are already Pained.)

6. Now Crawling Chaos steps in. He has the Madness ability, and so he gets to choose where all Units retreat. He decides to retreat Cthulhu First, and moves Cthulhu to Arabia, one green Cultist to West Africa, the Deep One to the Indian Ocean, and the Shoggoth to the South Atlantic. (No Yellow Sign Units were in any of these Areas.) Since East Africa is now entirely surrounded by Cthulhu's Units, the Yellow Sign is unable to retreat, and must lose one of his Pained Units. He chooses an Undead, and so the King and his two remaining Undead stay behind, along with Cthulhu's Cultist, who is now en prise, vulnerable to the King.



5. Post Battle



6. Result

## VIII. Spellbooks

Spellbooks are new abilities that your Faction gains by meeting certain requirements. Once earned, they remain in effect throughout the game. Each individual Spellbook enhances your Faction significantly, plus when you finally achieve all six Spellbooks, useful game effects are triggered. (Notably, Battle becomes Unlimited and you can now win the game.)



Faction Card with One Earned Spellbook

A major part of your game strategy is tied up in which Spellbook you choose, and the order in which you do so.

### Earning Spellbooks

Earning Spellbooks works a lot like a video game achievement. Fulfill one of the requirements listed on your Faction card, and take the Spellbook of your choice and place it over that requirement. You never lose that Spellbook, even if the requirement is no longer true. Example: Great Cthulhu has a requirement which states "Control Three Gates in Ocean Areas". As soon as his Faction meets that requirement, he gains a Spellbook and places it on his Faction card, in the appropriate slot. Even if the very next round, someone drives him out of one (or all!) of his Ocean Gates, he retains the Spellbook.

### Spellbook Requirement Actions

Some Spellbook requirements state "As your Action, do [X]." For instance, Crawling Chaos has the requirement of "As your Action spend four Power." This does not mean "spend four Power on a single Action such as a large Move". It means that Crawling Chaos must spend four Power and do no Common or Unique Action. Only then he receives the Spellbook.

Similarly, Black Goat has the requirement of “As your Action, Eliminate two of your Cultists”. This does not mean you must lose two Cultists in Battle (or whatever). It just means that Black Goat, as her only Action, picks up two of her Cultists (from anywhere) and places them back in her Pool. This costs her no Power.

For another example, when Shub-Niggurath is awakened, her player must also Eliminate two Cultists. This does NOT count as fulfilling the “Eliminate two Cultists” Spellbook, and is part of an entirely separate Action (i.e., Awaken Shub-Niggurath).

## Spellbook Effects

Some Spellbooks enable new Actions unique to your Faction.

Many Spellbook effects are ongoing. An ongoing effect is always available for free, once you have gained the Spellbook. Some ongoing Spellbooks can take effect during an enemy's turn. Example: when Crawling Chaos's Madness Spellbook is in play, he uses it during enemy Actions, not just his own. Great Cthulhu can use Regenerate, a Battle ability, even if an enemy declared the Battle against him, so long as he has a Starspawn in the fight.

Some Spellbooks are tied to particular Units. For instance, Cthulhu's Absorb Spellbook is useless without a Shoggoth (plus a Unit to absorb!).

## IX. Awakening Your Great Old One

Each Great Old One has a high cost, plus specific requirements which must be fulfilled to bring it onto the map. In combat, a Great Old One is treated as any other Unit. They usually have special rules for how many dice they roll in combat. Yes, a single Kill eliminates your Great Old One.

Beware Yellow Sign's Screaming Dead Spellbook. He can use it to move, then immediately use Zingaya, Desecration, or Capture (or take an Action elsewhere). This is also true of the He Who is Not to be Named Spellbook which generally comes into play later.

## X. Victory: Ending and Winning the Game

### Doom Track Victory or Instant Death Victory

When a player advances his Doom Marker to or beyond 30 on the Doom Track, the game ends at the conclusion of this Doom Phase. All players may finish performing Rituals of Annihilation and exposing Elder Signs as they desire.



If a player performs a Ritual of Annihilation while the Ritual Marker is on the ten box, the Marker moves to the Instant Death space, and the game ends at the conclusion of this Doom Phase. Players may continue to expose Elder Signs, and may perform one further Ritual of Annihilation if they have not yet had a chance (at a cost of ten each).

Both the Doom Track and Instant Death victories occur at the end of the Doom Phase. At this time, the player with the most Doom Points is the winner, unless he does not have all six Spellbooks, in which case the player who is furthest along the Track and does have six Spellbooks wins. The Doom Track goes to 40 to enable players to keep Track of extra Doom Points beyond 30.

### Action Phase Victory

**IMPORTANT:** You can ONLY win the game if you have earned all six Spellbooks on your Faction card! (See the “Earning Spellbooks” section later on.) The game can end several different ways.

A player can reveal Elder Signs at any time during the Action Phase (even when it is not his turn). If this brings his total Doom Points to 30 or more, the game immediately ends. Other players may also turn in their Elder Signs at this time. Again, a player can only win if he has six Spellbooks.

Because this happens during the Action Phase, no one has a chance to perform Rituals of Annihilation before the game ends.

### Tied Game

If the game ends by Doom Track, Instant Death, or Action Phase victory, and two players have equal Doom Track totals (and both have six Spellbooks) the game ends in a draw, and the two share victory.

### Losing the Game

If the game ends via any means (Doom Track, Instant Death, or Action Phase) and no player has six Spellbooks, the game ends anyway. All Factions are sucked back through the collapsing Gates and humanity survives after all. (Yay!) But all players lose together.

## XI. Two-Player Game

### Normal Two-Player Setup

Lay out the normal four-player map and the four player Ritual Track. The first player chooses a Faction. The second player then selects TWO Factions. The first player then receives the remaining Faction.

Each player therefore Controls two Factions.

### Action Round Order

When it is a player's Action round, he must take an Action for one of his Factions, and then the other. He takes only one Common or Unique Action per Faction, but he can take them in any order.

### Faction Interaction

The player's Factions do not "cooperate" in Battle, trade Power, or interact in any way other than those permissible to the normal multi-player game. They can even Battle one another, should you so wish.

### Doom Track and Victory

The game ends in the normal fashion. If either of a player's Factions have six Spellbooks, he is eligible for victory.

Add together the total Doom Points (plus revealed Elder Signs) of all a player's Factions. The player with the most total Doom wins.

## Epic Two-Player Setup

If you own the six to eight player map, and own six or more different Factions, set it up to the six player side, and take the six player Ritual Track. The first player chooses a Faction. The second player then selects TWO Factions. The first player then selects TWO Factions, and the second player then selects one last remaining Faction. Each player therefore controls three Factions.

## Action Round Order

When it is a player's Action round, he must take an Action for each of his three Factions. He takes only one Common or Unique Action per Faction, but he can take them in any order.

## Faction Interaction

The player's Factions do not "cooperate" in Battle, trade Power, or interact in any way other than those permissible to the normal multi-player game. They can even Battle one another, should you so choose.

## Doom Track and Victory

As per the normal two player game. Only one of your three Factions has to have six Spellbooks to make you eligible for victory.

## XII. Player Tips

### General Tips

The play can be divided into two main Phases - the early game and the late game.

**Early Game:** In the first two to three Action Phases players should try to acquire Spellbooks, build up a power base, and Summon at least a minimal army. Be choosy about when you awaken your Great Old One, because this generally leaves you weak for the rest of that Action Phase. Combat in the early game is opportunistic, based on attempts to Capture enemy Gates or fulfill Spellbook requirements.

**Late Game:** This starts once you have your Great Old One out and three to four Spellbooks under your belt. You still need to finish up your last Spellbooks, but you can now afford a Ritual of Annihilation once in a while. Remember that the earlier you do your Rituals, the cheaper they are (and the more expensive your enemy's become). At this point the purpose of Battle changes. You now seek to reduce your opponent's Gates so they are less effective at Rituals. If one player surges ahead in Doom Points, get the other players to work with you against him. If YOU are the player who surges ahead, try to break up such alliances.



Cthulhu's Faction is focused on destruction. Of all Factions, your Units are the most effective in a fight. On the other hand you are limited in obtaining Elder Signs, so you need to use your combat strength to ruin your enemy's bases and keep them from taking the lead.

## Playing Great Cthulhu

Your Spellbooks and abilities, even unused, cast a baleful influence on your enemy's activities. Submerge, Dreams, and Y'ha Nthlei all cast a pall over the map hindering your opponents.

In the early game, you get Spellbooks quickly. Get Cthulhu out on turn two or three, even if he is vulnerable to an enemy attack. After all, you can re-Awaken him cheaply and gain one Elder Sign. It is far easier to get your two "Kill/Devour" Spellbooks once Cthulhu takes the field.

In the late game, use Submerge to strike critical enemy areas. With Regeneration or Absorb plus Cthulhu's Immortal ability, you can hurl your forces into battle with impunity. Cthulhu only rolls six dice, but an Absorbent Shoggoth gives you heft, plus Cthulhu's Devour ability is better than a free Kill.

**Devolve:** Keep a Deep One in your Pool to render you immune to Capture. Just Devolve a threatened Cultist immediately.

**Dreams:** This means that your enemies dare not leave a Cultist alone on a Gate. You may not often use Dreams vs. experienced players, but it affects their behavior throughout the game.

**Absorb:** Turns Shoggoths into major combat dice. You only need one Shoggoth per attack, so long as he has "food" available. Remember that Cultists and Deep Ones are also useful to soak up hits so you may not want to Absorb them all.

**Regeneration:** With this, Starspawn inure your army to harm, making them the flip-side to Absorb's massive damage output. Cthulhu accompanied by two Starspawn is well-armored even against enemy Great Old Ones.



**Y'ha Nthlei:** like Dreams, this inhibits the enemy. Your foes are less likely to conquer your Ocean Gates, and you don't care as much if they do.

**Submerge:** A critical Spellbook in the late game. Once Cthulhu's army submerges, not only is he safe from harm, but other players react in desperation. If you attack an Ocean Area, you can Submerge again after the strike.

### Thwarting Great Cthulhu

Cthulhu has strong Units, but not many of them. Each loss is a setback for him. When he hurls his might against an Area he is going to win, but you can mitigate this by not putting all your eggs in one basket. Killing Cthulhu himself isn't particularly effective (unless you are Crawling Chaos, since Harbinger then gives you two Power or Elder Signs), because next turn he'll be back at R'lyeh, ready to Submerge and make your life hell.

### Cthulhu: Epilogue

*"It was gargantuan. A mountainous form rising from the sea, surrounded by lesser monstrosities that oozed and dragged themselves toward us with distorted limbs, tentacles, and pseudopods. When we heard that the Pacific Islands were empty, we didn't understand. We still thought in human terms. We hadn't considered that the colossal Thing had been eating, scouring the islands of life. And now it was here, hungry again."*

-David Mendiola



**C**rawling Chaos is all about opportunism; striking at the weak and vulnerable. While some other Factions have a faster start on attaining Spellbooks, Crawling Chaos is often the Faction that completes his collection first. Your Units are not mighty in battle, and your Spellbooks are defensive in nature. You are good at harassment, and debilitating foes over time.

## Playing Crawling Chaos

In the early game, focus on safety and power-building. Use Flight to set up bases in inaccessible Areas. Nightgaunts with Abduct discourage enemies from attacking your Cultists - at least they'll need to send more than one Monster. You won't need Nyarlathotep himself for a while, and he is stronger later in the game anyway. Your most awkward Spellbook requirement is often "Capture a Cultist", so look for any chance to pull this off.

In the late game, everything changes. Nyarlathotep now has a huge combat ability (up to twelve dice), and instead of fearing battle, you should seek it. Smite their Great Old Ones for the Harbinger bonus. You can perform Rituals more safely than other players, because you can restore the power imbalance with Thousand Forms, so you are not left as vulnerable afterwards.

More than any other player, you can hit an enemy where he is weak. As a result, if one player has surged ahead, the rest may try to convince you to save the day. Go ahead and save the day, but be sure to exact promises and tribute from the others. For instance, "Before I strike, I want you to evacuate your Gate in South America." Promises are not binding in Cthulhu Wars, so make sure you "see the money" before taking whatever Action you see fit.

**Emissary of the Outer Gods:** Less useful when Great Old Ones are out, but it does keep expensive Nyarlathotep safe from cheap attacks. Remember to use a Pain to retreat him somewhere safe!

**Abduct:** In the early game, this protects Gates from enemy Monsters. In the late game it is not as good, as you often need your Nightgaunts to soak up enemy Kills. It can sometimes be combined with Invisibility to pick off a good Monster.

**Invisibility:** Safely place an invulnerable Flying Polyp in an enemy Area. Also good to cancel obnoxious Units such as Starspawn.

**Seek and Destroy:** Now your Gates are protected across the world from weak-to-medium attacks, since you can throw in a two-dice Monster at will. While on the offensive, your attacks are cheaper, since your Horror joins in for free. Also gives Nyarlathotep extra meat shields in case he is ambushed.

**Madness:** Your signature Spellbook. It is not immediately destructive, but over the course of the game, your enemies' Units scatter inconveniently and it takes time and energy to restore the situation.

**Thousand Forms:** Early in the round, it forces enemies to give up a Power advantage. Late in the round, it boosts you when they are most vulnerable. Combined with Harbinger, you can achieve a surprise Power surge that makes your foes whine.

## Thwarting Crawling Chaos

Crawling Chaos Units are excellent at staving off weak raids, but less effective against a major attack. Therefore take the gloves off and hit him with everything — as the Germans say, Klotzen, nicht Kleckern!

Nyarlathotep is terrifying, but if you do Kill him, it is a major setback, and Crawling Chaos may take a whole turn to recover. His Cultists

have no real defensive capability, unlike other players (Cthulhu has Devolve, Yellow Sign Passion, and Black Goat Frenzy), so they are vulnerable.

There is not much you can do about his power drain abilities. Just suck it up and remember that it may be better to let your own Power drop rather than give him an undeserved boost.

## Crawling Chaos: Epilogue

*"The uncertainty is the worst. No one looks up. I remember when we could see the sun. You can't now, because They blanket the sky. No one wants to look up, and They know that. Everyday we live with the knowledge that it might be your last day. The only warning is a slither of sucking wind, flapping of wings, or the brush of something utterly alien on your skin. Then you're gone. I see fewer and fewer friends as time passes. How long before it is my time?"* -David Mendiola





**A**s befits a fertility cult, Black Goat's emphasis is on occupation and expansion – sort of like a fungus infection. Unlike other Factions, you tend to be geographically restricted. You are not deadly in battle (in fact, you have no battle Spellbooks except Frenzy), but you have plenty of cheap throwaway Units, so you are resilient. As you hole up in your homeland, your abilities let you target enemies by remote Control. This is your true strength.

## Playing Black Goat

In the early game, the most common mistake a novice Black Goat player makes is to initiate a diaspora of Cultists to immediately achieve the “Have Units in X Area” Spellbooks. But your enemies will move in once you are helpless from lack of Power. Build up at a sedate rate. Ensure that when you move Units into an Area they have support and protection, and in general use cheap Monsters to occupy Areas for Spellbook purposes, rather than Cultists. Thousand Young is best used defensively, for instance when an enemy moves on one of your Gates, reactively Summon a heap of trouble for him. Create a stronghold where you can Summon Shub-Niggurath safely.

In the late game, you can sadly annoy other players. Ghostron slows and cripples rivals. Battle becomes common, so Necrophagy can occur multiple times in a single turn. Avatar steals weak enemy bases with prejudice - teleport to the spot, and they must send someone to your homeland. You can then Capture their Cultist or, if the Gate is abandoned, Recruit your own Cultist to take it over.

The enemy often comes to you, in an attempt to stop the hurting, so sit tight. If you do need to strike at a distance, you have Avatar. You may not have as many Gates as other, more mobile, Factions, but you can make up for this - even with just two Gates plus Shub-Niggurath, Blood Sacrifice nets you two Elder Signs and four Doom Points per Doom phase if you Ritual.

**Frenzy:** Excellent both defensively and offensively. If a foe moves a Monster into an area, hoping for a cheap Capture, declare combat, and Pain him right back out.

**Necrophagy:** Use with impunity, as Ghouls are cheap (free, after Thousand Young). In a small battle, it can clean out an entire area, allowing your Ghoul to Recruit a Cultist and take the Gate. Teleporting Ghouls around the world also helps meet Spellbook requirements.

**Ghroth:** A complex Action, requiring timing and preparation, but worth the trouble. Some players focus on Ghroth as a central strategy. Others keep it as an occasional treat. Both techniques are effective.

**Red Sign:** Gives you potentially more baseline Power than any other Faction, plus Gate-Controlling Units that can't be Captured. Remember, when you Summon a Dark Young under Red Sign, you can place it right on the Gate (replacing the Cultist who Summoned it.)

**The Thousand Young:** Its utility is obvious, but it contains subtle touches. For instance, Summon a single Ghoul for zero Power, in effect marking time while seeing what the other players do. It is also demoralizing for a foe to launch a mighty attack on you, destroying three or four of your Units, only to have you Summon your lost Units right back at trivial cost.

**Blood Sacrifice:** Lets you earn an Elder Sign every Doom Phase. As a bonus, it puts Cultists back in your Pool, so you can Recruit them for use with Avatar or Necrophagy Gate-stealing.

## Thwarting Black Goat

Black Goat is hard to dig out once settled in. However, she is easy to fend off in the first place, as her offensive Action is limited. Her Monsters are feeble, and have other tasks to perform besides fighting. This means that her main tools for conquest are Avatar and Necrophagy, and both involve starting out weak in the target Area. React vigorously to drive her back.

Once she is established, she is hard to stop, because she gets extra Power from Red Sign, and extra Elder Signs from Blood Sacrifice. At some point, you may need to go take out one of her citadels. Luckily,

all three of the other Factions can pull this off with their Great Old Ones, properly used. Don't make the mistake of trying to extirpate Black Goat entirely - you will fail, and if you keep focusing on her, other enemies may surge ahead. *Remember: Don't try to cure the Black Goat infection, just keep it contained.*



## Black Goat: Epilogue

*"You can't rest these days. We have nowhere to simply lie down. Our streets are overrun with beasts, loping with cloven hooves and jackal grins. The skies are no better, filled by flying abominations, dripping with fungus. I hear they take your brain. I don't know what they do with it. Eat it?"*

*They say not. Something worse. But whatever you do, don't go into the newly-grown woodlands. You'll find Them there, giant horrors all mouths and tentacles. And at the center, stands the one who made Them. No, my friend, stay out of the forest."* -David Mendiola



You are constrained by strange rules, and seem to be playing your own separate game. However, in doing so, you do plunge the other players into a living nightmare. You leave a trail of scattered Units across the map, forcing foes to spend an inordinate amount of time and energy to expunge your traces. You have no real home base, but are nomadic, leaving ruin in your wake. You get Actions more quickly than other players, and can often do two things in the same round, which gives you a flexibility no one else has. Your Units are weak, but usually free, and numerous, which makes you resistant to loss. In effect, you can't dish it out, but you sure can take it.

## Playing Yellow Gate

In the early game, be aware that you earn Spellbooks more slowly than other players, but concentrate on them. Awaken the King in Yellow soon (in the first turn, usually). It's easy to send the King in Yellow to North America after Desecrating Europe or Asia, but occasionally it's wiser to get into Africa early and even harsh on enemies by Capturing Cultists with the King, or spreading Zingaya. Many players prefer to migrate straight to Africa or America after Awakening the King, and save the Desecration of Europe or Asia for last.

The King in Yellow, despite his lack of Combat, is a terror. He moves quickly around the board with his undead bodyguard, and his ability to take a second Action (with Screaming Dead) means you can move into an enemy area and immediately use Zingaya, Capture a Cultist, or Shriek additional Byakhee there in preparation for devastating effect. You don't spend much Power on Summoning Monsters (most are generated via Desecration attempts), so focus on other priorities. Remember to leave a trail of Monster "breadcrumbs" behind you, so they can suckle Power from your Desecrations. Even if an enemy moves into the area to attack you, this will cost them two Power (one to move, one to Battle), so even a rearguard's elimination is no tragedy. Plus it puts your Monster back into your Pool to be recalled upon the next Desecration or Zyngaya.

In the late game, you need to finish remaining Spellbooks. Usually you have few Gates, so you rely on Third Eye or your two Great Old Ones for Elder Signs. Thanks to Vengeance, when Hastur rolls into Action, you can ensure an enemy Great Old One will die. By this time you should be getting significant Power from Feast, to be used for Rituals or other purposes. With Hastur, you now have two choices for your double-Actions - either the King or Hastur can move, and then you can do something else useful. In the late game, Hastur's signature move is to use He Who Is Not To Be Named to enter an enemy's space, then Shriek of the Byakhee to give him a bodyguard, and then declare Battle (unlimited with six Spellbooks) to assassinate any other Great Old One.

**Passion:** Can actually “resurrect” you when out of Power. It also hinders the foe. (i.e., they may choose to attack someone else, rather than give you Power).

**Zingaya:** The biggest problem with Desecration is mustering the troops. With Zingaya, you not only get a Unit, but your enemy is down a Cultist.

**Shriek of the Byakhee:** Flexible, and gives both defense and offense. Shriek when an enemy invades, or after Screaming Dead or He Who is Not to be Named to give your Great Old Ones oomph.

**Screaming Dead:** You’ll use this a LOT, so don’t put it off. It needn’t be the first Spellbook you acquire, but it shouldn’t be the last either.

**He Who is Not to be Named:** The basic function is to assassinate an opposing Great Old One, but it has other uses which become obvious with experience. Remember the extra Action does not have to involve Hastur.

**Third Eye:** Once you finish earning Spellbooks, Third Eye keeps you interested in Desecrating. In effect, you get an Elder Sign for two Power (one to move and one to Desecrate), plus at the same time you earn a potential power source and a new Monster. It’s the best bargain in the game!

## Thwarting the Yellow Sign

If you are playing against Yellow Sign, remember his Monsters are puny. Because they are also numerous, you need to attack him more than once to knock out an area, but at least you don’t have to fear serious losses. Third Eye is terrifying, but he needs both his Great Old Ones out, plus enough Monsters to succeed at Desecrating. This gives you many tools to stop him.

One of Yellow Sign’s oddities is that he tends to have too many Cultists sitting around in Europe - he is benefited by losing a few of them early game, so he can use the King to bring them forth around the world. So if you want to cause the most damage, don’t hit Europe, strike at the King himself. You are unlikely to Kill the King, but just scattering his zombie army really hurts.

Yellow Sign has plenty of weak pseudo-bases (in the form of Desecration Tokens) scattered round the map. You can’t spend all your time attacking these, but do it when convenient.

Yellow Sign is constrained by his need to Desecrate certain areas. If you can keep him out of, say, Africa or the Americas, you stop his progress. This is easier said than done, but each turn you delay his advance, the more desperate he gets.

## Yellow Sign: Epilogue

*“I’ve done horrible things. I killed lifelong friends. Parents. Children. Why, you ask? Because … the King in Yellow. He whispered … secrets and portents. It just made sense. Don’t worry, my victims didn’t stay dead. They are a gift to the Unnamed One and so they follow, like the others. So the King in Yellow has his entourage as he spreads his message.” –David Mendiola*



## XIII. Frequently Asked Questions

Q. On the map of Earth, why does the North Atlantic have a little section seeping over to the Pacific side of Central America?

A. It is our way of indicating that the North Atlantic and the North Pacific are adjacent.

Q. If my Units in an Area have zero Combat dice, but I have special Battle abilities I can use, can I declare a Battle?

A. No. The Units IN THE AREA must have at least one Combat die to declare Battle. For instance, if you have only a Nightgaunt in an Area, you can't declare Battle there as Crawling Chaos, even if you have Seek and Destroy.

Q. If I have six Spellbooks (so Battle is unlimited), can I Battle and then do another Action (such as Moving out of the Battle Area)?

A. Yes. Unlimited Actions can be done in any order. You may still only engage in one Battle per Area, however. You could use unlimited Battle in an Area, then (as your Action) move into a new Area, and Battle there.

*NOTE: In fact, it is theoretically possible to Battle in an Area, get Pained into a neighboring Area, Battle again, get Pained again, and keep up a sequence of Battles in this way until you run out of Power, lose your Units, or get Pained into an Area where you have already Battled this Action. The only limit is that you can only initiate one Battle per Area.*

Q. What happens if all Units on a side are "exempted" via Invisibility or Eliminated by effects such as Abduct or Devour before a battle?

A. Obviously there is no need to roll dice. The Power to start the Battle is still spent. Post-Battle effects can take place if appropriate.

Q. Cthulhu gets a Spellbook in the first Doom Phase! Does this mean he gets it before his first Action?!

A. No! There is no Doom Phase in the first turn. Therefore, Cthulhu earns this Spellbook in the Doom Phase of the Second turn - AFTER the first turn ends.

Q. Two of Cthulhu's Spellbooks require you to Kill or Devour an enemy in a Battle. But doesn't Devour take place before the Battle? Also, just when exactly do I receive these battle-oriented Spellbooks? In the middle of the fight?

A. Pre- and Post-Battle effects count as happening "during a Battle". Cthulhu's two battle Spellbooks are not received until the Battle is fully completed and all post-Battle effects are finished.

Q. Can Actions such as Cthulhu's Dreams Spellbook or Yellow Sign's Zingaya be used to simply remove an enemy Cultist if you lack Units to make the replacement?

A. No. If you cannot make the replacement, you cannot perform the Action.

Q. Nyarlathotep's Combat is based on his Spellbooks, plus his opponents?

A. For each Spellbook he and his opponent have on their Faction sheet, he gets one Combat. For instance, if Nyarlathotep has all six Spellbooks while his opponent has only earned three, he gets nine Combat. His total does not count Spellbooks he has not yet earned, and it does not count Spellbooks earned for an Independent Great Old One (available in some expansions).

Q. Can I use Black Goat's Avatar with one of my own Units?

A. Certainly.

**Q.** How much Power does the Crawling Chaos get for Killing or Paining Cthulhu?

**A.** He receives two Power, since that is now half the cost to Awaken Cthulhu (since, obviously, he has been Awakened once). Of course he could just take two Elder Signs instead.

**Q.** When the Crawling Chaos exempts a Unit with his Invisibility Spellbook, does he pick the Unit? Can he pick an enemy? Can he exempt his Flying Polyp?

**A.** Yes, yes, and yes. Remember he cannot exempt a Great Old One.

**Q.** Yellow Sign's Undead and Byakhee have Combat values that change depending on how many are present in the area. If an Undead or Byakhee is exempted via Invisibility, since it is still "present" does it affect the Combat of the remaining Units?

**A.** An invisible Unit does not count as being "present" in the Area for this purpose. If you have two Undead in an Area, and one is turned invisible, the remaining Undead rolls zero dice, not one. The intent is that Invisibility is supposed to be useful.

**Q.** What if the Flying Polyp is Eliminated by Devour or some other effect after using Invisibility on a Unit? Does this cancel the Invisibility?

**A.** No. Effects, once initiated, remain regardless of the fate of the instigating Unit.

**Q.** What if other players do not have enough Cultists to satisfy the demands of Ghoth?

**A.** They lose as many Cultists as Black Goat chooses. If they do not have enough Cultists to meet the demand, the excess is ignored.

**Q.** Regarding Crawling Chaos's Madness Spellbook, must he obey normal restrictions on retreating Units (I.e., not into an area containing Units of the Faction just battled)?

**A.** Yes, he must obey normal retreat rules. He also does not get to choose WHICH Units retreat, only their destination. Also note that with Madness, Crawling Chaos can retreat players in either order, i.e., retreating the Defender first.

**Q.** Black Goat has a Spellbook requirement "Share Areas with all enemies"? Do the enemies all have to be in the same Areas with your Unit(s)?

**A.** No. For example, in a three player game versus Cthulhu and Yellow Sign, if you have a Unit in an Area with Cthulhu's Units and also have a Unit in an Area with a Yellow Sign Unit, this requirement is immediately fulfilled. Note that this requirement can be met during an enemy's turn.

**Q.** When Crawling Chaos's Thousand Forms or Black Goat's Ghoth abilities are used, can a player insist on taking part of the loss, even if the other players don't want him to? What if a player has no Power or no Cultists - can he "disagree" with the division?

**A.** In the first case, this would count as a disagreement which needs to be resolved. In the second - if a player refuses to, or cannot contribute to the effect, he does not participate in further negotiations, and his agreement is immaterial.

**Q.** If a Ghoul is already in the target Area, can it be "Summoned" there via Necrophagy?

**A.** Only if it was not involved in the Battle. Note that an Invisible Ghoul is "not involved" and thus could react via Necrophagy!

**Q.** If Nyarlathotep is alone in an Area, and Emissary is in play, and he receives a Pain, but cannot retreat because he is surrounded by enemy Units, what happens? Is he Killed? What if another Unit is with him, and only one Pain is rolled - can Nyarlathotep be picked to take the Pain so his companion is spared.

**A.** No, he ignores the Pain. To answer the second question, yes, in this rare case Nyarlathotep could "take" the Pain to spare the other Unit. Of course if two Pains were rolled, the companion would have to be chosen to die.

**Q.** When is Shub-Niggurath's Combat total figured? For instance, if Cthulhu Devours a Cultist just before the battle, does this decrease Shub-Niggurath's total for the battle itself?

**A.** All Pre-Battle abilities happen BEFORE dice are rolled. Combat dice are figured at the instant of battle. In the example given, Cthulhu's Devour would indeed decrease Shub-Niggurath's combat.

**Q.** If the Black Goat Faction is in a Battle, and uses Necrophagy, does she also suffer extra Pain?

**A.** Yes, both sides in the battle suffer additional Pain equal to the Ghouls called. The newly-called Ghouls cannot be chosen to take the extra Pain for her, either.

**Q.** If a Faction's Units cannot retreat (because they are surrounded), and lose a Unit as a result, and then Necrophagy occurs, do they lose a second Unit as a result of the extra Pain?

**A.** No. Only one Unit is ever lost due to inability to retreat per battle. (However, if it causes the ONLY Pain result to an enemy surrounded Unit, then of course such a Unit would be Eliminated).

**Q.** The King in Yellow can perform Desecration, but what does that mean, exactly?

**A.** The inhabitants are now shrieking in terror, fleeing their cities, or performing desperate obeisance to the King, but the immediate practical game effect is that it gives Yellow Sign a Unit, and a Spellbook when performed in the right Areas. Also, if it is successfully performed after the Third Eye Spellbook is in effect, it may give Yellow Sign an Elder Sign.

**Q.** When Yellow Sign takes the Screaming Dead or He Who is Not to be Named Action, does he have to pay the normal Power cost for his second, subsequent Action?

**A.** Yes! For instance, if he moved using Screaming Dead, and then immediately attempted a Desecration, this would cost him three Power total, or two power, if Third Eye was in effect.

**Q.** What happens when Crawling Chaos uses Thousand Forms, and the number rolled is higher than the sum of all other players' power?

**A.** Crawling Chaos gets Power equal to the die roll.

## XIV. Rule Omega - The Final Question

We have sought diligently for more than a year to cover all possible rules questions, and to make the game as true to Lovecraft as we can. But we are mere mortals, and as such, subject to err.

If you come across some ability or spell card conflict, and cannot find the answer in one of our FAQs (or our website FAQ online), we recommend that the players in the game vote on the desired outcome - the owner of the game should probably get a bonus - like his vote counts for double. In the end, Cthulhu Wars is your game. If you feel compelled to add house rules to cover such issues, do so with our blessing.

## XV. Glossary

**ACOLYTE:** The only type of Cultist appearing in the core Cthulhu Wars game. Later expansions add new Cultists.

**AREA:** A map region, whether ocean or land.

**ATTACKER:** That Faction which just declared a Battle.

**BATTLE ABILITY/EFFECT:** These are earned through Spellbooks or special abilities. Battle Abilities are classified as Pre-Battle, Battle, or Post-Battle. In any dispute, the Attacker uses his Spellbooks first in each segment, then the Defender uses theirs.

**CULTIST:** A human who serves the Great Old Ones. They live on Earth and can be recruited in any Area. Their figures are identical to one another, distinguished only by their Faction color. In the basic game, the only type of Cultist is the Acolyte.

**DEFENDER:** A Faction involved in a Battle which it did not declare.

**ELIMINATED:** Units can be destroyed in many ways. When a Unit is removed from the board, it is returned to your Pool (except when Captured), and can be awakened, Summoned, or recruited again.

**ENEMY:** A Unit or Faction Controlled by another player, i.e., not you. ALL Factions are “enemy” except the one you Control. In the two player game, even other Factions you Control are considered “enemy” when you are performing the turn of a particular Faction.

**FRIENDLY:** A Unit Controlled by you.

**GATE:** A construct of alien science, constructed by Cultists. Gates channel Power to a Faction, plus permit the Summoning of Monsters and (sometimes) Great Old Ones.

**IN PLAY:** Some Spellbooks and abilities refer to a Unit as being “in play”. A Unit is “in play” if it is on the map, or, if it is off the map, still Controlled by its owner. For example, Cthulhu on its Faction card via Submerge is “in play”. A Captured Cultist on an enemy Faction card is not “in play”.

**KILLED:** This refers to a Unit which was chosen to receive an enemy “six” result in Combat. Units can be Eliminated in many ways that do not count as a “Kill”. For example, Cthulhu’s Devour ability does not count as a “Kill”.

**MONSTER:** Non-human entities who serve the Great Old Ones. They usually arrive through Gates.

**GREAT OLD ONE:** Otherworldly alien sovereigns who seek to conquer Earth. Most Factions have only one Great Old One (exception: Yellow Sign). Many abilities and Spellbooks refer to “Monsters and Cultists”. Such abilities do NOT apply to a Great Old One. All Great Old Ones have their own unique Awakening requirements, their own Combat totals (often a formula), and their own unique abilities (sometimes as an Action).

**ONGOING:** An “ongoing” Spellbook is permanently in effect, so long as you have satisfied its conditions. For instance, Black Goat’s Thousand Young Spellbook causes her Faction Monsters to cost one less Power as long as you meet the prerequisite of having Shub-Niggurath in play. Some “ongoing” effects permit a user to make a choice at certain times (for instance, Cthulhu’s Devolve Spellbook). But all “ongoing” effects are free of cost and can be repeated.

**POOL:** The pile of Units, Spellbooks, and other Tokens which you have not yet managed to place on the map.

**POST-BATTLE:** An effect that happens after dice are rolled in a battle. For instance, Shub-Niggurath’s Necrophagy ability.

**PRE-BATTLE:** An effect that happens after a Battle has been declared, but before dice are rolled. For instance, Cthulhu’s Devour ability.

**UNIT:** A Cultist, Monster, or Great Old One. Does not include Gates.

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