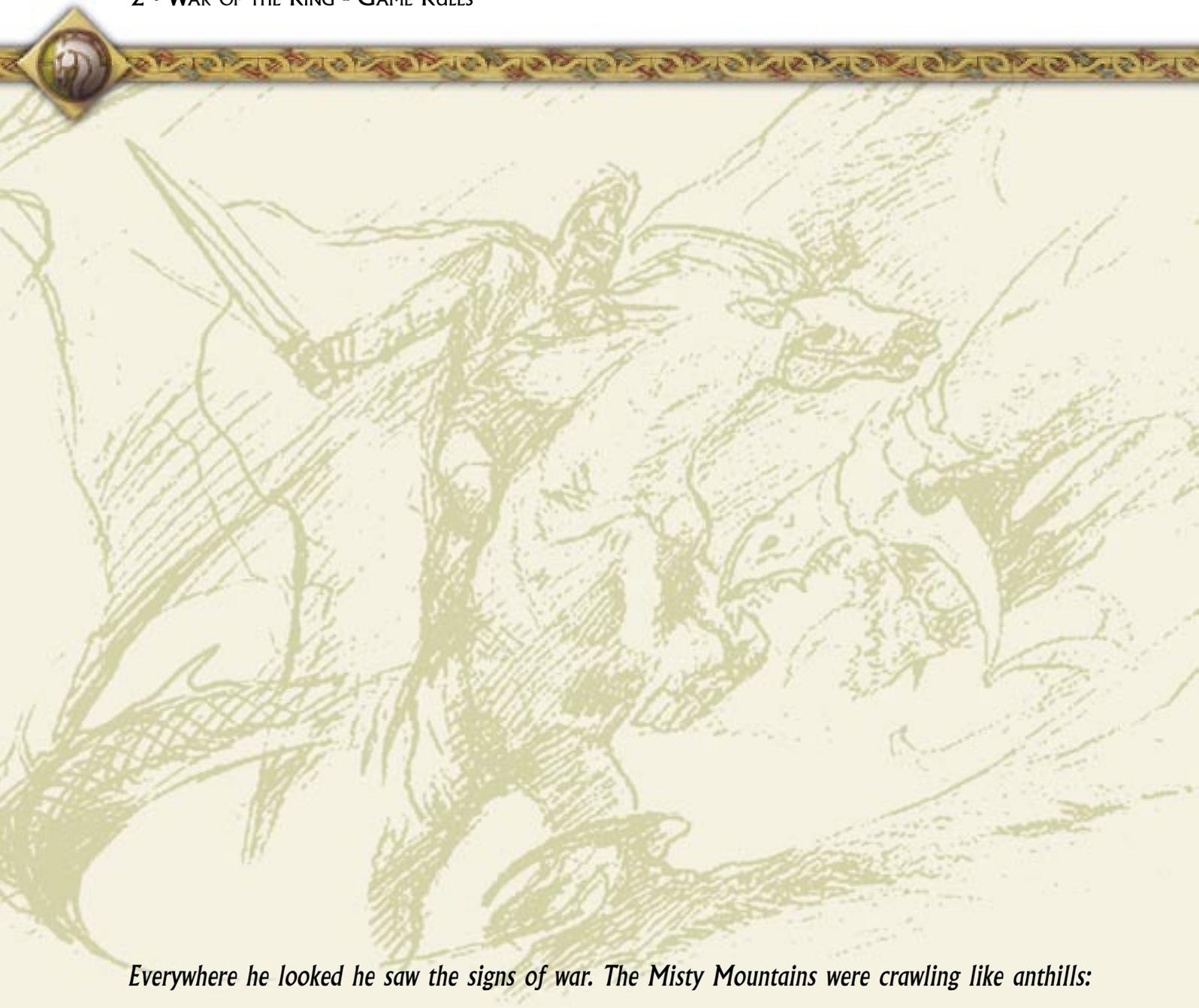


WAR OF THE RING™

based on "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy by
J.R.R. Tolkien

GAME RULES

A GAME BY ROBERTO DI MEGLIO, MARCO MAGGI, FRANCESCO NEPITELLO



Everywhere he looked he saw the signs of war. The Misty Mountains were crawling like anthills: Orcs were issuing out of a thousand holes. Under the boughs of Mirkwood there was deadly strife of Elves and Men and fell beasts. The land of the Beornings was aflame; a cloud was over Moria; smoke rose on the borders of Lórien. Horsemen were galloping on the grass of Rohan; wolves poured from Isengard. From the havens of Harad ships of war put out to sea; and out of the East Men were moving endlessly: swordsmen, spearmen, bowmen upon horses, chariots of chieftains and laden wains. All the power of the Dark Lord was in motion.

The Fellowship of the Ring by J.R.R Tolkien, Book II, Chapter 10.



GAME COMPONENTS

- This Rulebook
- The simplified rulebook called “The War of the Ring Begins Here”
- The game board depicting a large map of Middle Earth (in two sections; join both sections to play)
- The Player Aids folder
- 10 red Shadow Action Dice
- 6 blue Free Peoples Action Dice
- 5 white six-sided Combat Dice
- 204 plastic figures representing the Armies and Characters of *The War of the Ring* including
 - 90 red figures representing Shadow Army units
 - 75 blue figures representing Free People Army units
 - 20 grey figures representing Free People Leaders and 8 grey figures representing the Nazgûl
 - 8 silver figures representing the Fellowship of the Ring (Frodo and Sam) and their Companions
 - 3 silver figures representing the Minions of the Shadow
- 137 cardboard counters, including:
 - 24 Hunt Tiles (16 Standard Hunt Tiles and 8 Special Hunt Tiles)
 - 18 Settlement Control Markers
 - 1 Fellowship Progress Counter
 - 1 Corruption Counter
 - 2 “Leading Player” Tokens (used in the 3- and 4-player games)
 - 3 “Elven Rings” Counters
 - 8 Nation Political Counters
 - 71 Army Unit Replacement Counters
 - 7 Companion Counters
 - 1 “Aragorn-Heir to Isildur” marker
 - 1 “Gandalf the White” marker
- 96 Event Cards (divided into 4 decks of 24 cards each)
- 14 Character Cards (10 Free People Characters, 3 Shadow Characters, Gollum)

Before you play the game for the first time carefully punch out the cardboard counters so that they do not tear. (We suggest that you first read the quick-start rules, “The War of the Ring Begins Here,” and try a few games using those rules before reading any further.)

1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for acquiring *The War of the Ring* strategic board game. Long in the making, this massive game based on J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* allows players to experience the dramatic events and epic conflict that occurred before the end of the Third Age of Middle Earth. The *War of the Ring* allows players to not only control the military might of Men, Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits, and the forces of Sauron, but also Tolkien’s legendary characters, making the fateful decisions of the Fellowship of the Ring or guiding the dreadful servants of Sauron as they hunt for the Ring-bearer. *The War of the Ring* is usually playable in under three hours but can last longer if played with more than two players.

In *The War of the Ring*, players will either take command of the armies of the **Free Peoples** or the dark host of the **Shadow**. Over the course of play, armies will clash on the field of battle, while a brave group of companions, the Fellowship of the Ring, advances towards Mordor. As the Fellowship approaches the fastness of the Dark Lord Sauron, they will seek to complete their desperate quest to destroy the One Ring, the master ring forged by Sauron himself. But the journey is long and dangerous, for the Eye of the Enemy is upon the Fellowship’s every move, and time grows ever shorter. As the Fellowship finds its way through the perilous wilderness of Middle Earth, the armies of the Shadow threaten to sweep across Middle Earth, laying waste to all resistance.

To avoid or hasten such a terrible fate, players must use their resources wisely. As the ringbearer moves towards Mordor, his companions will be needed elsewhere to rouse the free nations of the West and lead them to

Counter Summary

	Standard Hunt Tile
	Special Hunt Tile (Fellowship)
	Special Hunt Tile (Shadow)
	Elven Rings Counter
	Leading Player Token • Free Peoples • Shadow
	
	Companion and Character Counter
	Army Unit Replacement • Free Peoples • Shadow
	
	Corruption Counter
	Settlement Control Marker • Free Peoples • Shadow
	
	Nation Political Counter • Free Peoples • Shadow
	

war Yet, by leaving the Fellowship too soon, the fate of the ringbearer and his quest becomes more uncertain and will carry a more dreadful risk with every step closer to the mountain of fire. On the opposing side, the Dark Lord and the forces of shadow must balance political and military action against the need to search for the Ring or risk its destruction. Will the quest of the ringbearer succeed before Middle Earth falls under the Shadow?

2. OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, a note like this one at the beginning of a chapter helps you to spot the most significant changes introduced by this rulebook.

The most typical game of *The War of the Ring* is played with two players, with one player taking command of the Free Peoples and his opponent leading the servants of the Shadow. (If you want to play with 3-4 players, you can read more about this option later in this rules set). The Free Peoples include the Nations of Gondor, Rohan, Dwarves, Elves, and The North. The servants of the Shadow include the Nations of Sauron, Isengard, and Southrons & Easterlings. Each Nation is outlined on the map by a colored border and encompasses a certain number of Cities, Towns, and Strongholds, where each player places most of his initial Armies and Leaders and where later additional armies and leaders can be recruited.

As the game begins, the Nations of the Free Peoples are reluctant to take up arms against the Dark Lord, as their leaders are held back by threats, promises, and the working of wicked emissaries and ill counsels. So in order to muster his full force, the Free Peoples player must seek to push his nations into action through either political pressure, through the arrival of the characters of the Fellowship, or finally because those Nations are directly attacked by the Shadow. This situation is represented by the Political Track, which is found on the game board. As each Nation becomes increasingly willing to muster its forces for war, its respective nation token is moved forward on the track. The farther a Nation is from the last step on the track ("At War"), the lower its disposition to fight. The Nations of the Shadow appear on the Political Track as well, but Sauron must exercise far less effort to mobilize them to his cause. A player's most important actions during a game turn are based around the results of rolling the Action Dice. As the Action Dice are rolled, the possible player actions correspond to the resulting die icons, and the possibility of executing a certain action depends on the availability of the corresponding result on the Action Dice roll. The possible actions derived from the Action Dice include advancing the Fellowship towards Mordor, moving Armies, sending Companions to activate idle Nations, recruiting troops, and advancing a Nation on the Political Track. Action Dice can also be used to draw or play Event Cards. The Event Cards represent specific events from *The Lord of the Rings*, or events that might possibly have happened if things had gone differently. The Shadow player wins the game if his Armies conquer a certain number of Free Peoples Cities and Strongholds, or if he is successful in defeating

Settlement Icons on the Map



Fortification



Free Peoples Town



Shadow Town



Free Peoples City



Shadow City



Free Peoples Stronghold



Shadow Stronghold

Map Examples



A white border is the normal border between two Regions.



A thick black border, representing mountains, can never be crossed.



A colored line running along a border shows a National boundary.



When two Nations are neighbours, two colored lines run along each other, separated by the white border.



Sea areas are not regions and can never be crossed.



Larger letters in the name of a Region show that that Region includes a Settlement or Fortification.



A f symbol before the name indicates that a Region is worth 1 Victory Point (because it includes a City); a f symbol indicates that a Region is worth 2 Victory Points (because it includes a Stronghold).



the Ring-bearer and regaining his precious ring. The Free Peoples player can win the game if he is able to surprise Sauron and conquer a certain number of his dark Cities and Strongholds; yet the greatest chance to obtain victory for the Free Peoples lies with the quest of the Ring-bearer. If the Free Peoples player is successful in moving the Ring-bearer to Mount Doom and he destroys the Ring, the Free Peoples player will win the game.

Yet the Free Peoples player must balance his efforts carefully, trying not to neglect the defences of the Free Peoples Nations, while still persistently moving the Ring-bearer towards his final goal. On the other side of the table, Sauron knows that the Ring is moving, and as he is massing his Armies against the West, he must spend resources to try to hinder the Fellowship's progress, employing the rules for the Hunt for the Ring, hoping to corrupt the Ring-bearer and seize the One Ring before it reaches its fateful destination...

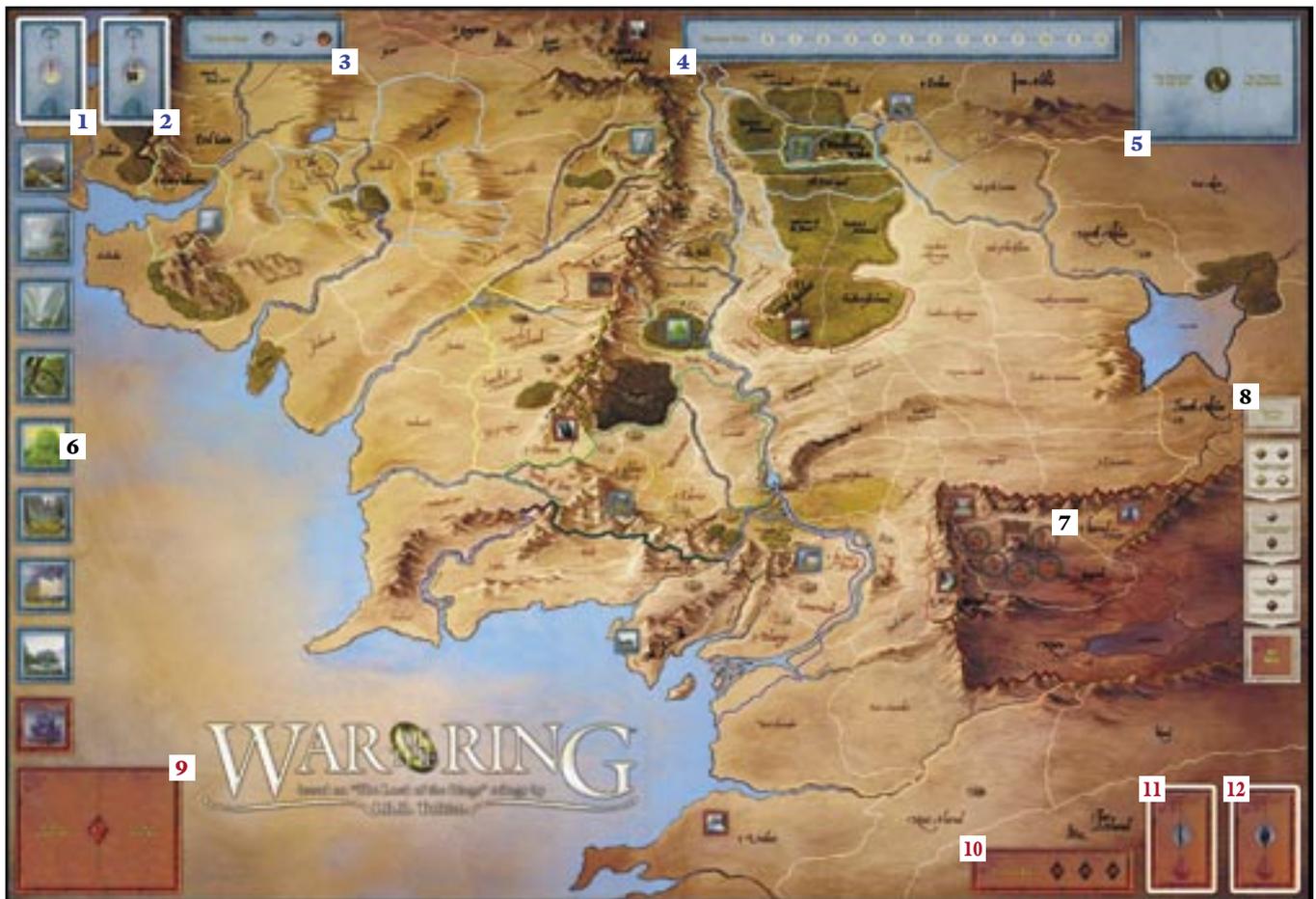
THE GAMEBOARD

REGIONS

The game board is a view of western Middle Earth at the end of the Third Age, divided into areas called Regions. All Regions are identified with a name, which usually refers to a site of note or to an entire geographical area (such as Minas Tirith or Cardolan). Regions are used to regulate movement, combat, and the placement of Characters and Armies. All Regions are equal for movement purposes. Sea areas are not Regions and can never be entered or crossed.

If the border between two Regions is completely divided by a black line (which denotes impassable terrain), those Regions are not considered adjacent.

The Board



- 1** Free Peoples Character Event Cards
- 2** Free Peoples Strategy Event Cards
- 3** Elven Rings (controlled by the Free Peoples player)
- 4** Fellowship Track
- 5** Fellowship Box/Guide of the Fellowship Box
- 6** Stronghold Boxes
- 7** Mordor Track
- 8** Political Track
- 9** Hunt Box
- 10** Elven Rings (controlled by the Shadow player)
- 11** Shadow Character Event Cards
- 12** Shadow Strategy Event Cards

NATIONS

Several groups of individual Regions are identified as Nations by their colored borders:

The Nations of the Free Peoples

Gondor (blue), Rohan (dark green), The North (light blue), Dwarves (brown), and Elves (light green)

The Nations of the Shadow

Sauron (red), Isengard (yellow), and Southrons & Easterlings (orange)

Note that some Nations consists of several separate grouped Regions, which are divided and distant from one another.

Example: "The North" Nation (Blue) consists of clustered Regions both in the western and eastern part of the map. The "Sauron" Nation (Red) consists of Regions in Mordor, Mirkwood, and the Misty Mountains.

SETTLEMENTS AND FORTIFICATIONS

A Region can be empty, contain a **Fortification**, or one of three different types of **Settlements**:

- City
- Town
- Stronghold

Controlling a Region containing a Settlement gives the controlling player several advantages. In detail:

- **Cities** and **Towns** represent major and minor urban centres or groups of villages. Controlling Cities and Towns is important, since troops can be recruited there. Also, **Cities** provide an advantage to defending units and form an integral part of your opponent's strategic objectives necessary to achieve a military victory.
- **Strongholds** represent fortresses, Elven homes, and the greatest capitals of Middle Earth. Troops may be recruited in Strongholds, defenders receive a very strong advantage in battle, and the conquest of your Strongholds is a strategic necessity for your enemy's military victory objectives.

In addition, if a companion character leaves the Fellowship and arrives at a Stronghold or a City, some corresponding Nations can be **activated** (and later be allowed to go to War). The Fellowship itself can also activate nations when declared at Strongholds and Cities. Moreover, if the Fellowship enters a friendly City or Stronghold, the Ring-bearer can recover from Corruption.

Finally, a **Fortification** represents a fort, a ford crossing a river, or some other natural or artificial means of defense. Fortifications are not Settlements but confer an advantage to any Army defending Regions in which they are located. Fortifications are found in the regions of Osgiliath and the Fords of Isen.

TRACKS AND BOXES

In addition to the Regions of Middle Earth, the game board also contains various boxes and tracks used during the game to keep track of different activities. These spaces include:

- The **Fellowship Track**, to keep track of the progress of the Fellowship and the Corruption of the Ring-bearer
- The **Hunt for the Ring** box (also called the "Hunt Box"), to display the dice that the Shadow player allocates to hunt the Fellowship and to keep track of the number of times that the Fellowship moves during a turn
- The **Political Track**, to keep track of which Nations of Middle Earth are at War
- The **Guide of the Fellowship** box, to display the Character Card of the character who is guiding the Fellowship
- The **Fellowship of the Ring** box, to display the figures and counters of the character companions composing the Fellowship
- The **Elven Rings** box, to display the Elven Rings counters
- The **Event Deck** boxes, to hold the four Event Card Decks
- The **Stronghold** boxes, to display those Army units involved in a siege battle.

The Figures





GAME PIECES

PLASTIC FIGURES

The Armies fighting for Middle Earth and the heroes and monsters that lead them are represented in the game by plastic figures.

Armies

The bulk of the armed forces of a Nation are represented by **Army units**. The Army units of a Nation are further divided into either **Regular** or **Elite units**, where the first represents a fighting force of average warriors and the second a host of chosen fighters or powerful monsters. A single Army unit corresponds to a variable number of warriors, from a few hundred expert fighters to thousands of Orcs. In game terms, all units of a kind (Regular or Elite) have the same fighting capabilities as any other of the same kind, regardless of the Nation they belong to. All Army units inside a single Region and controlled by the same player are considered a single group and are collectively called an **Army**. An Army can be comprised of a maximum of **ten units**, or **five units** if the Army is inside a Stronghold under siege.

Free Peoples Leaders

The captains and chieftains leading the Armies of the Free Peoples are represented by the **Leader** figure. Leaders are unable to move on their own and must always be part of a friendly Army. If at any time a Leader is on the map without an Army, he is immediately removed. The presence of a Leader in an Army provides an advantage in combat and a superior movement capability. There is no limit to the number of Leaders who can be in the same Army. Free Peoples Leaders, regardless of nationality, can lead Armies comprised of units from any Free Peoples Nation. A Leader is not considered an Army Unit and cannot be taken as a casualty, nor does the presence of a Leader add to the Combat Strength of an Army (see later).

Nazgûl

The **Nazgûl**, also called *Ringwraiths*, act as Leaders for the Shadow armies and are represented by the distinctive Ringwraith figure mounted on a winged beast. The rules pertaining to the Free Peoples leaders also apply to the Nazgûl, with the following exceptions: Ringwraiths are not obliged to be part of a friendly Army but can move on their own, flying to any Region (even Regions containing Free Peoples units) on the game board with a single movement (except that a Nazgûl moving without an Army cannot be placed alone in an enemy Stronghold); the Nazgûl are unaffected by the presence of an enemy Army in the same Region.



Aragorn, Heir to Isildur Counter



Gandalf the White Counter

Characters

The main heroes of the story and their main antagonists are represented by the **Character figures**. Characters are personalities with abilities superior to those of simple Leaders. Characters belonging to the Free Peoples are called **Companions**, while the Characters of the Shadow are called **Minions**. Each Character is represented by a unique figure and a Character Card detailing his special skills. Carefully read all the Character Cards before playing the game.

In game terms, Characters act much the same as Leaders, but they do not suffer the same restrictions and can move on the game board on their own, ignoring the presence of enemy Armies.

Companions: Legolas, Gimli, Boromir, Aragorn (as Strider), Merry, Pippin, and Gandalf the Grey start the game as the companions of Frodo and Sam (the **Ring-bearers**), and members of the Fellowship of the Ring.

As the game progresses, they are allowed to leave the Fellowship to help rouse the Free People Nations to war and to act as Leaders for the Free Peoples Armies. Under certain conditions (as described on their Character Cards), Strider and Gandalf the Grey can be replaced by their more powerful incarnations: *Aragorn – Heir to Isildur* and *Gandalf the White*. When this happens, put the appropriate marker under the plastic figure of the Character to remember his new status.

Minions: The more prominent servants of the Dark Lord—Saruman, the Witch-king, and the Mouth of Sauron—do not start in play at the beginning of the game. They will enter play later, under the conditions specified on their Character cards.

Gollum: Gollum is a very unusual Character. While the game includes a Gollum Character Card, there is no Gollum figure as Gollum is always assumed to be following the Fellowship of the Ring (and he becomes the Fellowship guide if the Ring-bearers are alone). The effects of Gollum’s actions are represented in the game by the Gollum Character card and certain Event Cards.

3. SETTING UP THE GAME

Before you start playing, you should decide who will play the Free Peoples and who will play the Shadow. After this has been decided, get the game ready to play by following these steps:

- 1) Place the game board on a suitable surface, possibly large enough to leave some room along the sides of the board (to place discarded cards and eliminated pieces and to roll dice).
- 2) Place the Fellowship figure on Rivendell, its starting point.
- 3) Place the Fellowship Progress Counter on Step 0 of the “Fellowship Track,” with the “Hidden” side up. The Corruption Counter is positioned on Step 0 of the same track.
- 4) Place all Companion cards in the “Guide of the Fellowship” space, with the **Gandalf the Grey** Character Card on top, as he is the Guide of the Fellowship. Set aside the cards for **Aragorn – Heir to Isildur**, **Gandalf the White**, and **Gollum** for later use.
- 5) Place all the Companion figures (except for the Ring-bearers) and their counters in the “The Fellowship of the Ring” space.
- 6) Place the three Elven Ring counters in the “Elven Rings” space on the game board with the “Ring” side up.
- 7) Set aside all Shadow Minion cards (the Witch-king, Saruman, and the Mouth of Sauron) and the corresponding figures for later use.
- 8) Separate the Free Peoples and Shadow Event Cards into **Character** and **Strategy** decks according to the back of each card, shuffle them separately, and place them on the corresponding spaces on the game board.
- 9) Put the *Standard Hunt Tiles* in an opaque container (such as a cup or a bag): this is the **Hunt Pool**. Set aside the *Special Hunt Tiles* for later use.

Character Cards



Free Peoples Character



Shadow Character

ARMY SETUP

Place the armies and leaders of each Nation as listed below.



Dwarves



1 Erebor	1	1	1
2 Ered Luin	1	0	0
3 Iron Hills	1	0	0
Reinforcements	2	4	3



Elves



4 Grey Havens	1	1	1
5 Rivendell	0	2	1
6 Woodland Realm	1	1	1
7 Lorien	1	2	1
Reinforcements	2	4	0



Gondor



8 Minas Tirith	3	1	1
9 Dol Amroth	3	0	0
10 Osgiliath	2	0	0
11 Pelargir	1	0	0
Reinforcements	6	4	3



The North



12 Bree	1	0	0
13 Carrock	1	0	0
14 Dale	1	0	1
15 North Downs	0	1	0
16 The Shire	1	0	0
Reinforcements	6	4	3



Rohan



17 Edoras	1	1	0
18 Fords of Isen	2	0	1
19 Helm's Deep	1	0	0
Reinforcements	6	4	3



Sauron



20 Barad-Dûr	4	1	1
21 Dol Guldur	5	1	1
22 Gorgoroth	3	0	0
23 Minas Morgul	5	0	1
24 Moria	2	0	0
25 Mount Gundabad	2	0	0
26 Nurn	2	0	0
27 Morannon	5	0	1
Reinforcements	8	4	4



Southrons & Easterling



28 Far Harad	3	1
29 Near Harad	3	1
30 North Rhûn	2	0
31 South Rhûn	3	1
32 Umbar	3	0
Reinforcements	10	3



Isengard



33 Orthanc	4	1
34 North Dunland	1	0
35 South Dunland	1	0
Reinforcements	6	5





- 10) Give seven red Shadow Action Dice to the Shadow player and four blue Free Peoples Action Dice to the Free Peoples player. Set aside the remaining Action Dice for later use.
 - 11) Place the Political Counter for each Free Peoples Nation on its starting point on the “Political Track.” All the Free Peoples Nation political counters **except the Elves** are placed with the “Passive” side up. The Political Counters of the Elves and all the Shadow Army Nations are placed with the “Active” side up. As indicated by the symbols on the track, place Rohan, The North, the Elven, and the Dwarven Nation’s Political Counter in the top box, place the Gondor and Southron/Easterling Political Counter in the second box from the top, and finally place the Sauron and Isengard Nation counters in the third box from the top—immediately above the “War” box.
 - 12) Sort all the plastic figures by color and type and follow the instructions on the *Army Set-up* on page 8 to place each Nation’s initial Army units. Put aside any remaining figures to use as Reinforcements, paying attention not to mix them with pieces eliminated from play as the game progresses. Also, sort and put aside the Army Units Replacement counters for use later in the game.
- Keep all the remaining components in the box; they will be used later in the game.

4. THE GAME TURN

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, notice that the Game Turn sequence involves additional activities in the complete rules.

The game is played over a series of turns. Each turn is divided into six steps. The steps of the turn are:

STEP 1) DRAW EVENT CARDS

Both players draw 2 cards, one from each Event Deck.

STEP 2) FELLOWSHIP PHASE

The Free Peoples player may now *declare* the position of the Fellowship. If the Fellowship is in a City or Stronghold of a Free Peoples Nation, that Nation is **activated** (if the Nation is showing “Passive” on the Political Track, flip the Nation to “Active”) and the Ring-bearers may be **healed**. Also, during this step, the Free Peoples player may change the Guide of the Fellowship.

STEP 3) HUNT ALLOCATION

The Shadow player may now put a number of Action Dice in the **Hunt Box** located on the game board, but only as many dice as the number of Companions remaining in the Fellowship. *These dice are not rolled during the following Action Roll step.*

STEP 4) ACTION ROLL

Players roll their Action Dice. The Shadow player immediately takes all the dice showing the “Eye” result and adds them to the Hunt Box.

STEP 5) ACTION RESOLUTION

This step is the primary game phase of *The War of The Ring* board game. It is here that players will utilize the Action Dice results to move their Characters and Armies on the game board, or to take other important actions. The results of the rolled Action Dice dictate the actions the players can take during this step. Starting with the Free Peoples player, the two players alternate turns, each taking one action by selecting and removing one of his available die results. If a player has fewer unused Action Dice than his opponent (typically the Free Peoples player will have fewer Action Dice than the Shadow player) he can **pass** instead of taking an action, thus allowing the opponent to take another action. If a player runs out of actions before his opponent has done the same, the opponent takes all his remaining actions, one after the other. Each time the Free Peoples player uses an Action Die to move the Fellowship, he places that die in the Hunt Box after completing the action. All other used dice are set aside until next turn. The Action Dice are described in more detail later.

STEP 6) VICTORY CHECK

Players now check if to see if either has achieved the Victory Conditions. If not, a new game turn begins. When all the activities required by the different steps have been concluded, the turn is over and another turn begins (unless one of the players has achieved his Victory Conditions, in which case the game ends).

5. THE ACTION DICE

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, notice the following new rules in this chapter:

- **the number of dice in the dice pool increases when certain characters enter the game**
- **the dice you may allocate to the Hunt for the Ring depend from the Companions in the Fellowship**
- **you may pass if your opponent has more unused Action Dice than you have**
- **the Elven Rings tokens allow you to change the result of a die**

The Action Dice play a fundamental role in the game, as they dictate the options available to each player during a turn.

ACTION DICE POOL

The total number of Action Dice rolled by a player in a turn is called his **dice pool**. The Shadow player starts the game with seven dice in his pool, but may gain additional dice later in the game given certain circumstances, up to a maximum of ten. These additional Action Dice enter play when

Action Dice Icons

	Character Action	Army Action	Muster Action	Event Action	Army/Muster Action	Special Actions
Free Peoples						 Will of the West
Shadow						 Eye

Event Card Explanation



Free Peoples Character Event Card Back



Free Peoples Strategy Event Card Back



Shadow Character Event Card Back



Shadow Strategy Event Card Back



Card Type

Character



Army



Muster



1 Card Type

2 Event Title

3 Event Pre-Condition (if present)

4 Event Text

5 Event Discard Condition (if present)

6 Combat Title

7 Combat Pre-Condition (if present)

8 Combat Text

the Shadow player brings his Minions into the game (one die for Saruman, one for the Witch-king, one for the Mouth of Sauron). The Free Peoples player starts with four dice in his pool. Like the Shadow, he can also gain additional dice later in the game. The Free Peoples player adds one die to his dice pool when Aragorn – Heir to Isildur enters play and another one when Gandalf the White appears. Both the Shadow and the Free Peoples player lose the additional die if the corresponding character is eliminated.

HUNT ALLOCATION AND ACTION ROLL

The Shadow player, during the Hunt Allocation Phase, places the number of Action Dice into the Hunt Box that he wants to devote to the Hunt for the Ring. The maximum number of dice he can place in the Hunt Box is equal to the number of Companions currently in the Fellowship (note that the Ringbearers are **not** considered to be a Companion and do not add to this maximum). The Shadow player may always place **at least one Die** in the Hunt Box, even if all the Companions have left the fellowship – because Gollum (see later) will then count as a Companion. The dice placed in the Hunt Box are not rolled, but the Shadow player rolls the remaining dice in his dice pool, and all dice showing an “Eye” result are immediately added to the Hunt Box as well. The Free Peoples player simply rolls his entire Action Dice pool.

USING ACTION DICE

Starting with the Free Peoples, players alternate turns selecting **one** of their Action Dice and immediately taking the action made available by the specific die result. Each Action Die is printed with a set of distinctive icons, corresponding to different game actions. Each action is detailed later in the rules and summarized in the *Action Dice Reference Chart* (included with the *Player Aids* booklet). When an action has been completed, the corresponding die is considered “used” and is set aside until needed again for the next turn. The only exception to this rule is that each time the Free Peoples player uses an Action Die to *move the Fellowship*, he places that die in the **Hunt Box** after completing the action rather than setting it aside (note that the die is returned to the Free Peoples player at the end of the turn). A player may choose to **pass** on his opportunity to take an action by using a die, but only if he has *fewer* unused Action Dice than the opposing player (thus a player can pass, letting his adversary take several actions in a row). If a player runs out of actions before his opponent has done the same, the opponent executes his remaining actions one after the other.

THE ELVEN RINGS

At the beginning of the game, the Free Peoples player receives three counters representing the Elven Rings of Power. He keeps each counter in the “Elven Rings” space on the game board, with the Ring side face up, until he decides to use it. When the Free Peoples player uses an Elven Ring, he flips over the counter to show its “Flaming Eye” side and gives it to the Shadow player. After the Shadow player uses the counter, it is discarded from play. Each Elven Ring/Eye counter can thus be used once by its owner in the following way:

When a player is about to take an action during the Action Resolution step, he may use an Elven Ring (or Flaming Eye) to **change** the Action Die to any other desired Action Die result (important exception: The Free Peoples player may not change the action to a “Will of the West” result by using an Elven Ring). If a Shadow Die is changed to an “Eye” result, that die is immediately placed in the Hunt Box.

Only one Elven Ring counter can be used by the same player in a game turn.



Elven Ring Counter

Front: controlled by the Free Peoples player

Back: controlled by the Shadow player



6. THE EVENT CARDS

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, the rules in this chapter are all new and completely replace the simplified use of Event Cards.

The Event Cards represent many of the fortunate (or unfortunate) episodes in *The Lord of the Rings*, as well as special items, unexpected occurrences, and “what ifs.” Moreover, each Action Card can also be used as a special combat effect to be employed in battle. When an Event Card is used for its combat ability, we will refer to the card as a **Combat Card**.

EVENT DECKS

Each player receives two decks of Event Cards: their **Strategy Deck** (represented graphically by an army banner) and their **Character Deck** (represented graphically by a sword). Cards in the *Strategy Deck* usually offer military and political options to the player. Cards in the *Character Deck* are often related to the Fellowship and to the actions of Companions and Minions on the map.

DRAWING EVENT CARDS

At the beginning of each game turn (including the first) both players must draw one card from each of their decks. It is also possible for players to draw cards from either deck by using an Action Die result during the Action Resolution step (see later). Players may hold a **maximum of six cards** in their hand at any time and must immediately discard those in excess as soon as the maximum number is exceeded. Cards are discarded face down. If a deck is depleted during the game, the discarded cards are **not reshuffled**. It is now no longer possible for the player to draw cards out of that deck (and thus he may only draw one card from the other deck during step one).

PLAYING EVENT CARDS

Event Cards can be played during the Action Resolution step in two ways:

- 1) by using an **Event Action Die** result (the Palantir symbol), or
- 2) by using an **Action Die** result whose icon matches the symbol on the upper right corner of the card. Example: For the Free Peoples player to play the Strategy Card “Paths of the Woses” he must either use an Action Dice that shows the Palantir Symbol (the Event Die result), or an Action Dice that shows the Banner (an Army result).

Generally, Event Cards are discarded as soon as their effects are resolved. The effects of an Event Card are explained in its text. Often, some kind of requirement must be met for the effects of the card to apply; if a requirement is not fully satisfied, the card cannot be played. Usually, a card allows a player to take an action that violates the standard rules: this is intentional, but any rule that is not expressly replaced by the card text still applies normally.

Some exceptions to the general rules use the following terminology:

- If a card reads *Play on the table*, it means that the card is not discarded after it is played, and its effects last until a particular condition or requirement is met after which the card is discarded. If discarding a card requires the use of an Action Die, discarding the card counts as an action.
- If a card reads *Attack...*, the effects of the card are considered an **attack** for political purposes.
- If a card text directs you to *Recruit* units or Leaders, these units or Leaders are taken from your available reinforcements. Such Event Cards may be used even when a Nation is not “At War” and also allows you to place units in a Stronghold under siege (where you normally may not recruit units). Other restrictions (such as the limit to the number of units in a Region or the fact that a Region must be free from enemy units) still apply.

It can happen that the effects of an Event card cannot be fully applied. In this case, the card can still be played and its effects are applied to the maximum extent possible.

Example: The “Knights of Dol Amroth” card allows the Free Peoples player to recruit one Leader and one Elite (or Regular) unit in Dol Amroth. If no Leader is available in the Free Peoples reinforcements, only the Elite or Regular unit is recruited.

COMBAT CARDS

All Event Cards contain additional text (located at the bottom of all Event Cards) representing their use as **Combat Cards**. Unlike playing an Event Card for its main use, playing it as a Combat Card **does not require taking an action**. Combat Cards are played as follows:

Before each round of battle, each player has the option of selecting a **single** Event Card to act as a Combat Card in order to use its special bonus for the round. Just like its Event Card effect, Combat Cards modify the normal rules of the game and the text of the card always has precedence over the normal rules. Event Cards used as Combat Cards are always discarded immediately after use.

DRAWING ADDITIONAL CARDS

Players draw Event Cards during the first phase (“Draw Event Cards”) of every turn, but can also use the “Event” Action Dice result as an action to draw a single card from either Event Card Deck.

7. ARMIES AND BATTLES

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, please notice the following new rules:

- **Characters’ role when using Armies and doing Battle;**
- **Using Combat Cards in a Battle;**
- **Special Rules to deal with Strongholds and Sieges.**

The vast hordes of the Dark Lord and the stout defenders of the West play a central role in *The War of the Ring*, and their mustering and employment is crucial. From their initial starting positions (as described in the Game Setup), the Armies of both players will swell with reinforcements and move to battle according to the following rules.

ARMIES AND STACKING

ARMY COMPOSITION

All friendly Army units inside a single Region form an **Army**. An Army can be comprised of units belonging to different Nations fighting on the same side. If a moving Army enters a Region occupied by another friendly Army, the two Armies are merged into a single Army. Likewise, an Army can be divided by simply moving part of its units into an adjacent Region and leaving the rest behind.

STACKING LIMIT

A single Region can contain a maximum of **ten units**. If, at any time, more than ten units are in the same Region, the excess units must be immediately removed from the game by the controlling player. Units removed in this way **can** re-enter the game later as reinforcements.

ARMY UNIT REPLACEMENTS

If the size and number of plastic figures are troublesome to physically fit in a single Region, you may replace single units with Army Unit Replacement counters. Simply replace figures with a corresponding number of Army Unit Replacement, by placing these counters **under** a figure of the same type as the replaced figures. Be careful to place the figures that were removed from the board in this fashion among the units removed as **casualties**. The figures belonging to the Shadow Player (whose casualties are normally just placed back with the reinforcements) in this special case are also placed with the casualties.

Example: The Free Peoples player moves 10 Gondor Regulars into the Druadan Forest and finds out that they take up too much space. He removes 9 of the Gondor Regular figures (placing them with the Free Peoples casualties), and then places 9 cardboard Army Unit Replacement counters under the remaining 10th figure.

Replacement counters can be removed at any time, returning the corresponding figures from the casualties.

Example: The Free Peoples Army in the Druadan Forest is attacked and 7 units are eliminated. The Free Peoples player removes 7 Replacement counters. Only 3 units survived and there is now enough space for them. The Free Peoples player removes the 2 Replacement counters from the map and puts 2 Gondor Regular plastic figures back into the Druadan Forest, taking them from the casualties.



Free Peoples Army
Unit Replacement



Shadow Army
Unit Replacement

Replacement Counters

RECRUITING TROOPS

RECRUITING NEW UNITS

Additional Army units and Leaders are brought into the game during the Action Resolution step by using a **Must**er die result (a Helmet icon) as an action or by playing Event Cards that recruit new units.

To bring reinforcements onto the board when using a Muster die result, the new units **must** belong to a Nation “At War” (see later). But when using Event Cards whose effects allow you to recruit units, a player may recruit units for Nations that are not yet “At War,” unless the Action Card explicitly disallows this.

All newly recruited units and Leaders are taken from the player’s available reinforcements and can only be placed in a **City, Town, or Stronghold** of the Nation to which the unit belongs. Nazgûl are always recruited in the Strongholds of the Sauron Nation. As mentioned above, many Event Cards allow a player to recruit new units for Nations not yet “At War,” and in different places.

Using a single Muster die result, a player can bring the following units into play:

- two Regular units, *or*
- two Leaders/Nazgûl, *or*
- one Regular unit and one Leader/Nazgûl, *or*
- one Elite unit *or*
- one Character (according to the rules on the specific Character Card)

Recruiting Restrictions

- When mustering two regular units or two Leaders using a Muster die result, the two pieces must always be placed in **separate** Settlements.
- You cannot muster or recruit troops in a Settlement captured by the enemy (i.e., currently occupied by enemy units or containing an Enemy Control marker);
- You cannot muster troops in a Stronghold **besieged** (see later) by the enemy, unless you are recruiting with an Event Card;
- Reinforcements are limited to the available figures. Thus, if all units of a type are in play, no additional units of that type can be recruited. Shadow units and Nazgûl removed as casualties are placed back among the available reinforcements (thus allowing for an almost limitless mustering). Free Peoples units, Leaders, and all Characters, however, are **permanently** out of the game if eliminated; they should be placed in an area designated for **casualties** (such as placing them back in the box) and are no longer eligible for recruitment.
- When playing an Event Card that allows you to recruit units in a specific Region(s), if that Region is occupied by enemy units, you must forfeit the recruitment.

ARMY MOVEMENT

MOVING AN ARMY

Armies are moved on the game board during the Action Resolution step by using either an Army (the Banner Icon) or a Character (the Sword icon) die result (or sometimes by playing an Event Card). A player using an Army die result can move two **different** Armies. A player using a Character die result can move a single Army **containing at least one Leader or Character**. Please note some restrictions to movement below. An Army is moved by simply moving its units to an adjacent Region.

Splitting an Army

It is not mandatory that you move all units in an Army. An Army can split itself into two different Armies by moving only a portion of its units to the adjacent region. Free Peoples Leaders can never be in a Region without combat units, so if a moving Army completely vacates a Region, all such Leaders must follow the Army. If the Army splits, Leaders may choose to either move or stay behind. If using a Character die result to move and an Army splits, at least one Leader or Character must join the moving units.

Note that, if not used as the subject to move an Army with a Character Dice result, Characters (companions and minions) are not obliged to move with an Army, as they can remain in a Region on their own.

Movement Restrictions

- The moving units can be chosen freely, as long as no unit is moved twice using the same action (this includes all movement effectuated by Event Card). Thus it is never possible, by exercising an Army dice result action (or by any other effect), to move an Army into a region containing another friendly Army (joining the two armies into one), and then moving the new combined Army with the second movement allowance, as this would move the units in the first Army twice. For purposes of moving under one Action, these Armies should be kept separate until both movements have been taken.
- Any Region entered by a moving Army must be free from enemy units. A Region containing an enemy Stronghold under siege by your units is considered free for the purpose of Army movement.
- After moving an Army into a Region, you can not exceed the stacking limit of ten units.
- If a moving Army includes any units from a Nation which is not yet “At War” on the political track (see later), it cannot enter a region that is inside the borders of another Nation (even if friendly).

Minion Card



- 1 Portrait
- 2 Name
- 3 Level (the symbol ∞ represents the unlimited movement of the Nazgûl)
- 4 Leadership
- 5 Nation the Minion belongs to
- 6 Condition to play the Minion
- 7 Special Abilities
- 8 Action Dice bonus : if the “Ring” symbol is present, add one die to the Action Dice Pool when the Minion is in play



- If a Region is occupied by enemy units, it cannot be entered but must be attacked (see later).
- Armies, Characters, or the Fellowship can never move to a Region that is separated by a black line (which denotes impassable terrain).

CHARACTER MOVEMENT

MOVING CHARACTERS

Characters are moved on the game board during the Action Resolution step by using a Character die result (the Sword icon), or sometimes by playing an Event Card. A Character die result can be used for one the following actions:

- To move **all** Companions who are not in the Fellowship (Free Peoples player only)
- To move **all** Nazgûl and Minions (Shadow player only)
- To move an Army containing a Leader or Character (either player)
- To move the Fellowship (Free Peoples player only).

Moving Companions

When the Free Peoples player uses a Character die result to move his Characters, **all** Companions on the map may be moved a number of Regions equal to or less than their **Level** (see later). A group of Companions in the same Region can be moved to a *common* destination at a distance equal to or less than the *highest* Level in the group.

Companions moving on the map are subject to the following rules:

- They are unaffected by any enemy Army. When moving alone or with other Companions, they can enter or leave a Region that contains Shadow units, but must stop upon entering a Region containing a Shadow Stronghold
- They can never leave or enter a Region containing a friendly Stronghold **besieged** by enemy units (except by certain Event Card effects).

Moving Nazgûl and Minions

When the Shadow player uses a Character die result to move his Characters, all Nazgûl (including the Witch-king) can be moved to **any** Region on the game board with a single move. The only restriction is that the Nazgûl can never move this way into a Region that contains a Free Peoples Stronghold, unless that Stronghold is besieged by a Shadow Army. Note that in *The War of the Ring*, for the purposes of rules clarity, the Witch King minion is considered to be a Nazgûl (including all references to Nazgûl on Event Cards unless differentiated in the card text by the use of the Minions title).

The Mouth of Sauron and Saruman do not possess the unlimited movement ability of the Nazgûl; they are subject to the following rules:

- Saruman can never leave the Orthanc area.
- The Mouth of Sauron can move up to three Regions if moving alone. Just like Companions, he ignores any enemy Armies when moving alone, must stop upon entering a Region containing an enemy Stronghold, and cannot leave or enter a Region that contains a Shadow Stronghold besieged by enemy Armies.

BATTLE RESOLUTION

ATTACKING WITH ARMIES

An Army is allowed to attack an enemy Army during the Action Resolution step by using an Army or a Character die result (while the attacking Army contains a Leader or Character), or sometimes by playing an Event Card. Only Armies belonging to a Nation “At War” on the Political Track can **start a Battle**.

A player can use an Army die result, or a Character die result (given it contains at least one Leader or Character) for the following battle purposes:

- To attack an enemy Army in an adjacent Region
- To initiate a **Siege** or a **Sortie** against an enemy Army in the same region (Sieges and Sorties are explained below).
- Note that, unlike movement, an Army dice result can only activate a single Army for purposes of attacking.

- An Army using a Character die result to make an attack must contain at least one Leader or Character.
- It is not necessary to attack with all units of an Army; it is possible to commit only a portion of the Army to the upcoming battle. The remaining Army units (and Leaders/Characters) are considered to have been left as a rearguard, do not participate in the battle, and cannot be targeted by combat cards, chosen as casualties, or chosen to advance into the contested Region if the battle is won. All defending units, including Leaders and Characters, are always considered to be part of the battle.
- Note that when a battle is initiated, attacking units do not actually move into the Region they are attacking, but stay in their present Region for the duration of the attack. Only if the battle is over and won may the attacker move his attacking units into the embattled Region (see later).

Combat Strength and Leadership

Attacking and Defending Army units, Leaders, and Characters all participate in determining the Combat Strength and Leadership of the Armies involved in battle.

- The **Combat Strength** of an Army is equal to the total number of its Army units (regular and elite units). Combat Strength determines the number of dice rolled in the **Combat Roll**, up to a maximum of **five** dice. This means that units in excess of five do not add to the Combat Strength of an Army (but an Army with more than five units is usually able to retain its full Combat Strength for a longer period—see *Removing Casualties* below). *Example: An Army containing three Regular units and one Elite unit has a Combat Strength of 4. Alternately, an Army of six Regular units and two Elite units has a Combat Strength of 8, but will still only roll the maximum of 5 dice.*
- The **Leadership** of an Army is equal to the number of Leaders (or Nazgûl), plus the Leadership rating of all participating Characters (as shown on each Character Card). Leadership determines the maximum number of dice that may be rolled in the **Leader Re-roll**, up to a maximum of five dice.

Often, Combat Cards and Character special abilities modify the Combat Strength and Leadership rating of an Army involved in battle. In either case, the maximum of five dice can never be exceeded, regardless of modifiers.

RESOLVING A BATTLE

A battle is resolved in a series of **Combat Rounds**. During each round, both players must simultaneously follow the steps below:

- 1) Play a **Combat Card** (optional)
- 2) Roll the dice for the **Combat Roll**
- 3) Roll the dice for the **Leader Re-roll**
- 4) Remove **Casualties**
- 5) Choose to **Cease the Attack** or **Retreat**.

Note again that combat is simultaneous, so players resolve each segment together.

Combat Cards

At the beginning of each Combat Round, each player may play one Event Card as a **Combat Card**. First the Attacker must declare openly if he wants to use a Combat Card, and after hearing this declaration, the Defender may then elect to play a Combat Card (the Defender may play a Combat Card even if the Attacker chooses not to). If both players choose to play Combat Cards, the cards are then chosen secretly and simultaneously revealed. It is important that players carefully read the text on the chosen Combat Card before revealing it, especially regarding the precise nature of requirements, modifiers, and application. Unless otherwise specified, the effects of a card only apply for the current round of battle. Combat Cards are always discarded as soon as the Combat Round is over. If the two cards influence each other in any way, the effects of the **defender's** card are always applied first.

Example: the Shadow player is the attacker and plays “Durin’s Bane,” which allows him to roll a special attack before the normal combat begins (step 2 above). The Free Peoples player has played “Scouts,”

however, which allows him to retreat his Army before normal Combat begins. Since “Scouts” is played by the defending player, it is resolved first and the Free Peoples Army retreats before the special attack of “Durin’s Bane” is possible. Both cards are then discarded.

Some Combat Cards have specific requirements that must be met for the card to be played. For example, some cards can be played only if friendly Elite units are involved in the battle. Many cards require a player to “forfeit” Leadership, which means that the mentioned figure does not count as a Leader (for purposes of determining the Leadership rating) for that Combat Round.

Combat Roll

During this combat step, each player rolls a number of Combat Dice equal to the Combat Strength of their respective Armies (up to a maximum of five dice). Each die rolled scores a **hit** on a result of 5 or 6. The effects of Combat Cards, Strongholds, Cities, and Fortifications, however, may raise or lower the target number required to hit.

Leader Re-roll

After the Combat Roll, both players can re-roll a number of failed dice rolls equal to their Leadership score (and up to a maximum of five dice). The result required to score a hit on the Leader Re-roll remains the same as the result required for the Combat Roll (unless modified by a specific Combat Card effect).

Example: A player has five Army units and three Leaders in a battle. His Combat Strength is thus five and his Leadership is three. He rolls five dice as a Combat Roll, getting 1, 3, 5, 5, 6 (three hits). His Leadership is three, but only two dice failed to hit, so he picks them up and rolls those two dice again. This time one die hits, for a grand total of four hits.

Modifiers to Rolls

Combat Rolls and Leader Re-rolls can be modified by cards or special abilities. Modifiers to rolls are indicated as +1, +2, and so on. The modifier is added to the result of each rolled die and then compared to the number needed to hit. Multiple modifiers are cumulative, so they must be added together to get the total modifier.

Usually, Combat Card effects will instruct you to modify only the Combat Roll, or the Leader Re-roll, or both.

Example: A Combat roll with +1 modifier will score a hit on the result of a 4, 5, or 6 rather than only 5 or 6.

Special Exception: A roll of a “1” is always a miss, and a roll of a “6” is always a hit, regardless of any modifiers.

Removing Casualties

After both players have completed their Combat Roll and Leader Re-roll, they proceed to remove their losses. The number of **hits** your opponent scored will determine the number of casualties that your Army must take. The attacker decides first how to remove his units, and casualties are determined as follows:

For each hit scored by your opponent:

- remove one Regular unit; *or*
- replace one Elite unit with one Regular unit.

OR, for every two hits, simply remove one Elite unit.

Example: A player has taken two hits. He can either remove two Regular units or replace two Elite units with two Regular ones, or remove one Elite unit.

When replacing one Elite unit with a Regular one, the Regular unit **can** be taken from the previous casualties (if any). Otherwise, take the replacement from the available reinforcements, if able. Any Elite units thus replaced by the Free Peoples player are placed among the casualties. If no Regular units are available in either the Casualties or the Reinforcements, the elite unit cannot be replaced and is eliminated without further effect.

Free Peoples and Shadow Casualties

As described earlier, casualties taken among the Free Peoples units are placed aside and are considered out of the game. It is therefore important that casualties not be placed in the same area as the available Free Peoples reinforcements. The Shadow player, on the other hand, does not have this problem, and his units are never out of the game. Shadow casualties may therefore be placed back together with the available reinforcements.

Elimination of Leaders

If **all** the Army units involved in a battle are eliminated, then all Leaders (including Characters) that were part of that Army are also immediately removed from play. Just like Army casualties, Free Peoples Leaders are permanently out of the game, while Nazgûl can re-enter as reinforcements. Characters (including Shadow Minions) are always permanently removed from the game unless their Character Card specifies otherwise.

Note that Characters, while in a Region without friendly Army units, are never drawn into battle as they can exist in a Region that contains enemy Army units. Except for certain Event Card effects, Characters (Minions and Companions) are only vulnerable when with a friendly Army in battle, and can therefore be deviously difficult to eliminate.

Ceasing the attack, or retreating from a Battle

At the end of each Combat Round, the attacking player has the option to cease the attack. If the attacker chooses to continue the battle, however, then the defender has the option to retreat. If the defender declines to retreat, another Combat Round is initiated.

If the attacking Army ceases its attack, then its units simply remain where they were at the start of the battle. If the defending player chooses to retreat, however, his Army must immediately retreat to an adjacent Region. The chosen Region must be free from enemy units and may not contain an enemy Settlement (or a friendly Settlement captured by the enemy). If no such Region is available, the defender cannot choose to retreat.

Special Exception: An Army defending a Region that contains a friendly Stronghold may retreat to the Stronghold itself at the beginning of any Combat Round by “Retreating into a Siege” (see later). Also, a besieged Army cannot retreat.

End of Battle

A battle ends when the attacker ceases to fight, the defender retreats, or when one or both Armies are completely eliminated. If the defending Army is eliminated or retreats, the attacker may immediately move all or part of the units participating in the attack into the embattled Region. If an embattled Region invaded by a successful attacker contains an enemy Stronghold, **and that Stronghold contains enemy units**, the Stronghold becomes **besieged** (see *Defending a Stronghold*, below).

FORTIFICATIONS, CITIES, STRONGHOLDS, AND SIEGES

Many battles in *The Lord of The Rings* were fought as its forces sought to either defend or conquer a fortress, ford, city, or the like. Fortifications, Cities, and Strongholds are therefore a central element in *The War of the Ring*, as detailed in the following rules.

ATTACKING A CITY OR FORTIFICATION

When attacking an enemy defending a Region containing a City or Fortification, during the **first round of combat only** the attacker hits on a result of 6 or higher (instead of 5 or higher). After the first Combat Round is resolved, normal rules apply.

ATTACKING A STRONGHOLD

When attacking an enemy defending a Region containing a Stronghold, **before every battle round**, the defender must choose either to **Fight a Field Battle** or to **Retreat into a Siege**.

Field Battle

A Field Battle is resolved normally as described above.



Retreating into a Siege

As soon as the defender Retreats into a Siege, the Region around the Stronghold is left open to the enemy, who may immediately advance into the Region. The defending units are now considered to be inside the Stronghold itself and placed in the appropriate Stronghold box found on the game board (if needed for space considerations).

If the attacking Army chooses to advance, the Stronghold is now considered **under siege and the battle is over**.

A Stronghold under siege can contain a maximum of five Army units (and any number of Leaders). Any unit in excess of five is removed immediately when a Stronghold comes under siege. Units removed in this way **can** re-enter the game later as reinforcements. A siege ends if the attacking Army leaves the Region, or if at any time the attacking or defending Army is completely eliminated. When a Siege ends, move any surviving defenders from the Stronghold box to its map Region again.

CONDUCTING A SIEGE

When a Stronghold is under siege, the troops within can only be attacked by an Army **in the same Region** using an Action Die for battle during the Action Resolution step. Any battle starting against a besieged Army is considered a **Siege Battle**. During a Siege Battle, the attacker hit only on a result of 6 or higher, while the defender hits on a result of 5 or higher as normal. Also, unlike a normal combat, a Siege Battle **only lasts for one Combat Round**, unless the attacker decides to voluntarily reduce one of his participating Elite units to Regular status. If he decides to do so, the Siege Battle lasts for an additional round. It is possible to extend a Siege Battle repeatedly, as long as the attacker has available Elite units to reduce at the end of a round. If a Siege Battle ends and there are still defending and besieging units left, the defenders are still considered under siege.

Restrictions

- A defending Army under siege may never choose to retreat to an adjacent Region.
- An Army besieging a Stronghold is free to move away from the Region. If no Army units are left behind, the Stronghold is no longer under siege.

SORTIE

An Army inside a Stronghold under siege may attack the besieging Army by using an Action Die for battle during the Action Resolution step. A battle in which the attacker is under siege is called a **Sortie**. In a Sortie, the besieged Army fights a Field Battle for at least one round, forfeiting the advantages of defending the Stronghold. Combat is resolved normally (with both Armies scoring hits on a 5 or higher) but, if the attacker wants to cease the battle, the attacking Army moves back into the Stronghold. The besieging defending Army may retreat to a free adjacent Region as usual. If the attacking Army wins the Sortie, it cannot advance outside of the Region.

RELIEVING A SIEGE

An Army in an adjacent Region can attack an enemy Army besieging a friendly Stronghold using the normal rules. The Army inside the Stronghold does not participate in the battle. The attacking Army cannot advance into the Region containing the Stronghold unless the besieging Army is destroyed or retreats.

REINFORCING A SIEGE

While a Stronghold is under siege, the besieging player can move new troops into the Region as if it were a free Region. This is considered a movement, not an attack.

CAPTURING A SETTLEMENT

At the start of the game, all settlements belong to the Nation in which their Region is located. When an enemy Army enters a Region containing a City or Town, or when units defending a Stronghold are eliminated, that Region is considered **captured**. The capturing player places a **Settlement Control Marker** on the Region to indicate his control. Captured Settlements award the capturing player Victory Points for the purpose

of determining a military victory (see later). If the original owner of the Region is able to recapture it, the Settlement Control Marker is simply removed.

A captured Settlement or Stronghold cannot be used for mustering troops or advancing the Political Track.



Free Peoples
Control Marker



Shadow
Control Marker

Control Marker

8. THE POLITICS OF MIDDLE EARTH

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, please notice the following new rules:

- **Free People Nations must be active before they can advance to the 'At War' step;**
- **Companions and The Fellowship of the Ring play a role in The Politics of Middle Earth.**

The end of the Third Age was a dark time for Middle Earth. While the basic allegiances of the Free Peoples were clearly defined, their individual opinions towards the threat of Sauron differed widely. The diplomatic stance of the various Nations is represented in *The War of the Ring* by a Nation position on the **Political Track** found on the game board.

The Political Counters



Elves



Southrons &
Easterlings



Sauron



Isengard



Dwarves



The North



Front: active

Back: passive

Front: active

Back: passive



Rohan

Front: active



Back: passive



Gondor

Front: active

Back: passive

THE POLITICAL TRACK

The initial starting position of a Nation on the Political Track (marked by the individual Nation's icon on the track itself) represents its diplomatic attitude at the beginning of the war. The farther its Political Counter is from the "At War" step of the track, the less inclined that Nation is to take part in the conflict.

For a Nation to be considered completely mobilized and ready to fight, its Political Counter must be in the last space in the track, marked "At War."

To further reflect their reluctance in entering the war, all the Free Peoples Nations *except the Elves* start the game in a *passive* state (represented by the grey "Passive" side of a Nation's Political Counter facing up). As long as a Nation remains passive, it can never be moved to the last step of the track and thus be fully mobilized.

ACTIVATING FREE PEOPLES NATIONS

The Political Counter of a Free Peoples Nation is turned to the active side (with the light blue "active" side face up) when either of the following events will occur:

- A Region of that Nation is entered by an enemy Army
- One of its Armies is attacked
- The Fellowship of the Ring is declared in a City or Stronghold of that Nation
- As soon as a Companion (capable of activating that Nation) enters one of its Cities or Strongholds.

Each companion, in its lower right hand corner, indicates which Free Peoples nation

it is capable of activating upon entering one of its Cities or Strongholds. Note that Gandalf, Aragorn, Merry and Pippin all show the "Free Peoples Symbol" rather than one specific free nation. These characters are capable of activating **any** Free Peoples nation upon entering one of its Cities or Strongholds.

ADVANCING A POLITICAL POSITION

The Political Counter of a Nation is advanced (by moving it down a box toward the "At War" box) on the Political Track by using a Muster die result or by playing certain Event Cards. Additionally, the counter of a Nation is *automatically* advanced one space if any of the following conditions apply:

- Every time a Nation's Army is attacked (each battle counts as one attack regardless of the number of rounds fought). Also, remember that when a Nation's Army is attacked, it becomes "Active."
- Every time a Nation's City, Town or Stronghold is captured by the opponent.

ENTERING WAR

A Nation that is not "At War" is considered to be **non-belligerent**. A non-belligerent Nation suffers various limits to the capabilities of its troops. In detail, Army units and Leaders of a non-belligerent Nation must adhere to the following:

- They can move outside their national borders but can never move across the borders of other Nations (including friendly ones)
- They cannot attack enemy Armies (but can defend if attacked).
- They can never be recruited by using Muster die results.

All the restrictions listed above apply even if units of a non-belligerent Nation are stacked with units of a Nation "At War." Exception: Non-belligerent units are allowed to cross another Nation's border if retreating from a battle.



Example: Two The North units in Dale retreat from a battle. Even if The North is not "At War," the units may retreat to Erebor (which belongs to the Dwarf Nation). They could not do this as a normal move, but it is possible as a retreat from combat.

When a Nation's Political Counter moves into the last box of the Political Track, that Nation is now "At War." A Nation "At War" is free from the constraints of a non-belligerent nation. Its Armies may now freely move across all national borders and attack enemy Armies, and its troops can be recruited using Muster die results. As noted above, a "passive" Free Peoples Nation can never enter the *At War* box, but must be activated first.

CHARACTERS AT WAR

Companions, Minions, and Nazgûl can freely move and be involved in battles regardless of the political position of the Nation they belong to. In essence they should be considered already "At War."

Example: The Nazgûl can always participate in battles if they are in the same Region of a Shadow Nation at war, even if Sauron is not yet "At War."

9. THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, the rules in this chapter are all new and completely replace the simplified use of the Fellowship of the Ring you learned.

In *The War of the Ring*, Frodo and Sam are inseparable and are represented collectively as the Ring-bearers. As told in *The Lord of the Rings*, the two Hobbits are accompanied by a number of Companions, chosen from among the Free Peoples of Middle Earth. These characters together form the **Fellowship of the Ring**. While Frodo and Sam are bent on reaching Mount Doom to complete their quest, the other Companions have a choice: they can stay and protect the Fellowship, or, in time, leave the Fellowship in order to help the Free Peoples of the West in their struggle against the Shadow.

The Fellowship of the Ring



The Fellowship figure



Fellowship Progress Counter

Front: Hidden

Back: Revealed

Companion Counters



Merry



Pippin



Gimli



Legolas



Boromir



Gandalf



Strider

FELLOWSHIP COUNTERS AND FIGURES

The Fellowship of the Ring is represented in the game by a number of figures and counters.

- The **Fellowship** figure (Frodo & Sam) indicates the *last known position* of the Fellowship. It is placed in the Region where the Fellowship was last declared or revealed. At the start of the game, it is placed in Rivendell.
- The **Fellowship Progress Counter** shows how far the Fellowship has travelled from its last known position and indicates whether the Fellowship is **Hidden or Revealed**. This counter is placed on the **Fellowship Track on the game board** and is moved a box forward each time the Fellowship advances.
- The **Companion** figures (seven individual characters) represent the heroes of the Free Peoples. Initially they are placed in the **Fellowship of the Ring** box on the game board to indicate that they are all part of the Fellowship. When a Companion leaves the Fellowship, its figure is moved from the box to the map.

Companion Card



- 1 Portrait
- 2 Name
- 3 Level
- 4 Leadership
- 5 Nation which the Companion may activate. If the Free Peoples symbol appears here, the Companion may activate any Free Peoples Nation.
- 6 Condition to play the Companion (if present)
- 7 Special Abilities when guiding the Fellowship (if present)
- 8 Special Abilities when outside of the Fellowship (if present)
- 9 Special Abilities
- 10 Action Dice Bonus: if the "Will of the West" symbol is present, add one die to the Action Dice Pool when the Companion is in play

THE RING-BEARERS

The Fellowship figure depicts Frodo and Sam (also referred to as the Ring-bearers) together, since in *The War of the Ring* these two Hobbits can never be separated from one another or leave the Fellowship. Hence, the position of the Ring-bearers is always the one indicated by the Fellowship figure.

CORRUPTION

The growing burden of carrying the One Ring to its destruction is represented by the **Corruption** of the Ring-bearers, a numerical score that starts at zero points but can increase to twelve. Upon reaching twelve Corruption points, the Ring-bearers are immediately assumed to have failed in their mission, succumbing to the power of the One Ring, and the game is won by the Shadow. The Free Peoples player keeps track of the Corruption of the Ring-bearers by moving the **Corruption Counter** along the Fellowship Track on the game board (which also contains the Fellowship Progress Counter), placing it upon the corresponding numbered space.

COMPANION CARDS

Each Companion and his abilities are described on his **Character Card**. At the beginning of the game, all Companions are in the Fellowship and their cards are stacked together to form the **Fellowship Deck** (set aside the special cards of *Aragorn – Heir to Isildur* and *Gandalf the White*). The deck is placed in the *Guide of the Fellowship* box on the game board. As long as a Companion is in the Fellowship, his corresponding card is left in the Fellowship Deck. When a Companion leaves the Fellowship, his card is removed from the deck and placed on the table in front of the Free Peoples player.

Each Character Card contains the following information about the depicted Companion:

- His **Level**, a number that is used during the Hunt for the Ring (see later) and when moving the Companion
- His **Nation** icon, indicating to which Nations the Companion is able to activate
- His **Special Ability** that is only in effect when he is the **Guide** of the Fellowship (see later)
- His **Special Ability** that is in effect after he has **left** the Fellowship
- His **Leadership Rating** used in battle.

THE GUIDE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

One of the Companions in the Fellowship is considered to be guiding the group during its quest. At the beginning of each game of *The War of the Ring* that Companion is **Gandalf the Grey**. The Guide must always be the remaining Companion who has the highest Level. In case of a tie in Levels, the Free Peoples player can choose the Guide between the tying Companions.

Example: During the first turn of the game, the Fellowship player may replace Gandalf as guide with Strider, since both are Level 3 Companions.

The Free Peoples player may nominate a new Guide at the end of each Fellowship Phase, or when, during the course of a turn, the composition of the Fellowship changes (due to a Character being separated or eliminated from the Fellowship). Even when changing guides during the Fellowship Phase, however, only a Character that shares the highest Level may be designated as the Guide. The Character Card of the Companion acting as the Guide is always kept as the topmost card of the Fellowship Deck, so that his special abilities are readily accessible.

When a Companion is acting as the Guide, only his special ability that is marked "*If Guiding the Fellowship*" can be employed. Any other special abilities listed on the card are not available, as they apply only after that Companion leaves the Fellowship.

Gollum As a Guide

If all Companions have left the Fellowship, the Ring-bearers are alone and Gollum immediately becomes the Guide of the Fellowship. When this happens, the Gollum Character Card is placed in *The Guide of the Fellowship* box. Gollum's special abilities as the Guide apply immediately. Note that Gollum will then count as one companion, so the Shadow player may always place at least one dice in the Hunt box during the Hunt allocation.

THE FELLOWSHIP TRACK

To keep track of the secret movements of the Fellowship, players employ the **Fellowship Track**. The Fellowship figure is used on the game board to mark the last known position of the Fellowship, but only the **Fellowship Progress Counter** is advanced on the Fellowship Track every time the Fellowship moves. The higher the number reached on the Fellowship Track, the farther from its last known position the Fellowship is at that moment.

MOVING THE FELLOWSHIP

During the Action Resolution step, the Free Peoples player may advance the Fellowship Progress Counter by using a Character result on an Action die, or by using certain Event Cards.

Every time this happens, the Fellowship Progress Counter is advanced **one step** on the Fellowship Track (keeping the Progress Counter on the *Hidden* side). After each time the Fellowship Progress counter moves, the Shadow player has a chance to Hunt for the moving Fellowship (see later). The Dark Lord of Mordor hopes to regain his precious Ring by corrupting the Ring-bearers, killing the Companions, or, at the very least, localizing the whereabouts of the Fellowship.

Multiple Moves

If the Fellowship moves more than once in a turn, the Hunt becomes increasingly dangerous: **every time** that a die is used to move the Fellowship, that die is added to the Hunt Box after the Hunt has been completed (each added die will provide a bonus to the Hunt Roll, as explained later). Any Action Dice that the Free Peoples player places in the Hunt Box are returned to him at the end of each turn.

LOCATING THE FELLOWSHIP

The numbered steps on the Fellowship Track represent the distance (measured in Regions) covered by the Fellowship from its last known position (the Region where the Fellowship figure is located). The actual position of the Fellowship is determined only if one of two things happen:

- 1) a Hunt for the Ring is successful and **reveals** the Fellowship, or
- 2) the Free Peoples player decides to **declare** the position of the Fellowship.

Both circumstances have the immediate effect of the Fellowship figure moving to a new position on the game board and the Fellowship Progress Counter being "reset" to zero. There are important differences between the two that need further explaining (see later). Note that if the Fellowship Progress Counter is on step 0 of the Fellowship Track when declared or revealed, the Fellowship remains in the same Region as before (as it has not moved).

Fellowship declares its own position

If the Fellowship is hidden (by the Progress Counter showing the "Hidden" side up), its position can be **declared** by the Free Peoples player during the Fellowship Phase. This usually happens because the Free Peoples player wants either to have the Ring-bearers heal from Corruption in a City or Stronghold, to activate a Nation, or to use an Event Card that requires the Fellowship to be in a specific place.

When the Fellowship is declared, the Free Peoples player may immediately move the Fellowship figure a number of Regions (from its last known position) equal to or less than the number on the Fellowship Track indicated by the position of the Fellowship Progress Counter. After the Fellowship figure has been moved, the Free Peoples player resets the Fellowship Progress Counter, moving it back to the 0 step of the Fellowship Track. The Fellowship Progress Counter remains with its "Hidden" side up.

Example: The Free Peoples player, during the Fellowship Phase of the fourth game turn, decides to declare the position of the Fellowship. The last known position of the Fellowship, and thus the Fellowship figure, is currently in Rivendell, as the Fellowship was never discovered since the beginning of the game, and the Fellowship Progress Counter is at "5". The player moves the Fellowship through Fords of Bruinen – Hollin – Moria – Dimrill's Dale – Lórien. The Fellowship Progress Counter is put on the "0" of the Fellowship Track; the Fellowship is still Hidden, in the safety of the Golden Wood. If the Ringbearers suffered Corruption, one Corruption point could now be healed as the Fellowship is in a Free Peoples Stronghold.

Fellowship is revealed by a Hunt for the Ring

If the Fellowship is hidden, its position can be revealed by the Shadow player as a result of a successful Hunt, or if the Shadow Player plays certain Event Cards. When the Fellowship is revealed, turn the Fellowship Progress Counter to its "Revealed" side, after which the Free Peoples player must move the Fellowship figure (as described above), except that this movement **can never** end in a Region containing a Free Peoples Settlement.

IMPORTANT: Once the Fellowship has been "Revealed", it cannot be moved by the Free Peoples player using a Character Action die until it is "Hidden" again. Moreover, a revealed Fellowship is more vulnerable to certain Shadow Event Cards aimed at hurting the Ring-bearers or hindering the Fellowship's progress.

Example: During the second game turn, a successful Hunt reveals the position of the Fellowship. The last known position of the Fellowship was in Rivendell and the Fellowship Progress Counter is at "3" on the Fellowship Track.

The Free Peoples player could move the Fellowship through Fords of Bruinen – Hollin – Moria, but moving into the Shadow Stronghold would mean an additional Hunt Tile. So, the Free Peoples player decides instead to move the Fellowship through Fords of Bruinen – High Pass – Goblin's Gate. The Fellowship Progress Counter is put on the "0" of the Fellowship Track, and flipped to the "Revealed" side. The Fellowship must be Hidden before it may move again.

The Fellowship in Shadow Strongholds

When the Fellowship is revealed, and its path traced from its last known position, if the Fellowship's has moved through, is moving from, or is moving into a Shadow Stronghold, then a **Hunt tile** is immediately drawn as if a Hunt has been successful. This is done only if the Fellowship is revealed by the Shadow player, and it is in addition to any further effects of a successful Hunt. Hunt tiles are explained in more detail later.

HIDING THE FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship Progress Counter can be turned to the "Hidden" side once more by the Free Peoples player using a Character result on an Action Die during the Action Resolution step, or playing an appropriate Event Card. Note that using a Character Action Die to hide the Fellowship does not allow it to also move during that action. The Free Peoples player must later use another Character Action die to move the hidden Fellowship once again.

As stated above, it is necessary for the Fellowship to be "Hidden" in order for it to move. Also, note again that the Fellowship cannot move to Region through a black line (which denotes impassable terrain).

ENTERING MORDOR

Mordor is the realm of the Dark Lord. Its mountains are almost impossible to climb and its passes are well guarded. Therefore, some of the normal Fellowship rules do not apply there. Sooner or later during the game, the Fellowship should eventually reach either the Region of **Morannon** or **Minas Morgul**. It is mandatory that the Free Peoples player declares the Fellowship in either of these locations during a Fellowship Phase to begin the last part of the journey to Mount Doom (see later).

SEPARATING COMPANIONS FROM THE FELLOWSHIP

The Companions in the Fellowship Box are always assumed to be in the Region where the Fellowship is located.

During the Action Resolution step, however, the Free Peoples player can **separate** one Companion (or a group of Companions) by using a Character Action Die result (unless the Fellowship is in Mordor, where this is prohibited, see later).

When this happens, the figure of the separated Companion is moved from the Fellowship Box to the map. The Companion may move a number of Regions equal to the current number of the Fellowship Progress Counter on the Fellowship Track *plus* his Companion Level. If you are separating a **group** of Companions, move their figures together to one Region that can be reached by the Character with the *highest* Level in the group. Character movement uses the rules explained earlier in this rules set.

When separating Companions, remove their Character Cards from the Fellowship Deck, and remove the Companion Counter from the Fellowship box as well.

Example: The Fellowship's last known position was in Rivendell, and the Fellowship Progress Counter is currently on the fifth step of the Fellowship Track. The Free Peoples player decides to separate Legolas (Level 2) and Merry (Level 1) as a group. Legolas and Merry can be moved 7 Regions (5+2) from Rivendell. The player decides to move them together to the Woodland Realm.

If the Guide of the Fellowship is separated from the Fellowship, the highest level Companion remaining in the Fellowship becomes the new Guide (or Gollum, if all the Companions have left).

Once a Companion is separated from the Fellowship, he can **never** rejoin.

10. THE HUNT FOR THE RING

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, the rules in this chapter are all new and completely replace the simplified use of the Fellowship of the Ring you learned.

While the Fellowship covertly seeks to reach Mount Doom, Sauron is searching tirelessly for the Ring-bearers and their Companions. The Dark Lord gathers rumours and sends out spies, hoping to finally reclaim his long-lost treasure. These efforts are represented in *The War of the Ring* by the **Hunt for the Ring**.

THE HUNT POOL

The **Hunt Pool** is a set of cardboard tiles representing the effects of a successful Hunt. These tiles should be placed in an opaque container at the beginning of the game (such as a cup or a bag), as one tile must be drawn *randomly* each time the Hunt is successful. If, at any time, **all** the tiles in the Hunt Pool are used, return all tiles containing a *number* or "Eye" result to the container, but do not return any Special Tiles (see later).

THE STANDARD HUNT TILES

Most of the **Standard Hunt Tiles** (which have a beige background color) show a numerical value, ranging from 0 to 3. This value represents the effectiveness of the successful Hunt and is called **Hunt Damage**.

Some Hunt tiles have the special icons described here:

- The Eye icon , which represents a variable numerical value
- The Reveal icon , which represents the Fellowship being revealed to Sauron.

SPECIAL HUNT TILES

The Special Hunt Tiles (which have either a blue or red background color) are **set aside at the beginning of the game** and enter play only with certain Event Cards. When these Event Cards are played, the Special Hunt

tile in question is set aside until the Fellowship enters Mordor. When the Fellowship enters Mordor, any such Special Hunt tiles are added to the Hunt Pool. If the Fellowship is already in Mordor when a Special Tile enters play, simply add the tile immediately to the Hunt Pool.

Some of the Special Hunt tiles show a negative value or a random value, described here:

- A negative value (-2 or -1) means that there is no Hunt damage but that the indicated number is actually **subtracted** from the current Corruption of the Ring-bearers on the Fellowship Track
- A Die icon  means that the Hunt Damage is equal to the subsequent roll of a die (roll after the tile has been revealed).
- All Shadow Special Tiles show a small Stop icon  in the lower right corner (see later)



HUNTING THE FELLOWSHIP

THE HUNT ROLL

Every time the Free Peoples player moves the Fellowship, the Shadow player will roll dice to determine the effect of the Hunt. This is done in the following fashion: First the Shadow player determines the **Hunt Level**, which is equal to the total number of Shadow Action Dice in the Hunt Box (these dice were placed here by the Shadow player during the Hunt Allocation step as described earlier in the rules, **plus** any "Eye" dice that he rolled during the Action Roll step).

Then, the Shadow player makes a **Hunt Roll** by rolling a number of Combat Dice equal to the Hunt Level. The maximum number of dice rolled for a Hunt Roll is five. A Hunt Level in excess of five does not add further dice to the roll. Each result of 6 is a **success**.

Modifiers to the Hunt Roll

If the Fellowship has moved more than once per turn, the Hunt becomes easier. For every Action Die that the Free Peoples player has placed in the Hunt Box (a Free Peoples Action Die is placed here after every movement of the Fellowship, see *Moving the Fellowship* above), the Shadow player adds +1 to each Hunt Roll die result. If a die result is 6 or higher after this addition, it is a **success**.

Example: When the Fellowship moves for the first time during a turn, the Shadow player needs to roll "6" results on his Hunt dice to achieve a successful Hunt. If the Fellowship, however, is moving for the second time (after the Free Peoples has used an Action die for the first movement and placed it in the Hunt box) the Shadow player needs only to roll a "5" or "6" for a successful Hunt.

Hunt Re-rolls

The presence of Sauron's servants or Strongholds makes movement of the Fellowship more dangerous. If, during the Hunt, the last known position of the Fellowship is in a Region that contains one or more of the following...

- A Stronghold controlled by the Shadow player
 - One or more Shadow Army units
 - One or more Nazgûl
- ...the Shadow player can, after the Hunt roll, **re-roll** one failed Hunt Roll die for each of the above conditions that apply.

Example 1: Three Army units and two Nazgûl are in the Region that contains the Fellowship figure, so the Shadow player may re-roll two dice (one for the presence of Army units, and another for the presence of the Nazgûl).

Example 2: One Nazgûl, four Army units, and a Shadow Stronghold are in the Region containing the Fellowship figure, so the Shadow player may re-roll three dice (because all the conditions above apply).

Re-rolls also receive the +1 bonus for each Free Peoples die in the Hunt Box.

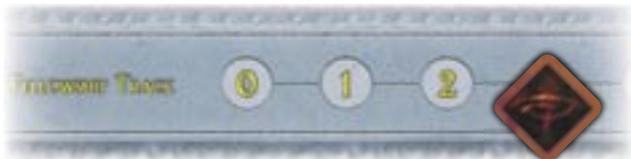
DETERMINING HUNT DAMAGE

If the Shadow player rolls **at least one success** on his Hunt roll (including re-rolls), the Hunt is *successful* and the Shadow player draws one tile from the Hunt Pool.

Corruption Counter & The Corruption Track

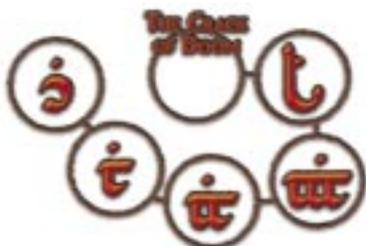


Corruption Counter



The Position of the Corruption Counter on the Fellowship Track is used to record the Corruption of the Ringbearers.

The Mordor Track



- The Mordor Track is not considered a part of the Gorgoroth Region.
- When the Fellowship enters Mordor, the Fellowship figure is put on the first circle of the track.
- If the Fellowship enters the Crack of Doom and the Ringbearers are not corrupted, the Free Peoples player wins the game.

- If the tile is numbered, its value represents the **Hunt Damage** inflicted to the Fellowship.
- If the tile shows an “Eye,” the Hunt Damage is equal to the number of successes rolled in the Hunt Roll (if such a tile was drawn because of the Fellowship leaving or entering a Shadow Stronghold, or due to an Event Card, the “Eye” is considered to have a value of 0).
- If the tile has a Reveal icon on it, the Fellowship is **revealed** in addition to any other effect.

EFFECTS OF THE HUNT

To confront the effects of a successful Hunt, the Free Peoples player can either **use the Ring** (increasing the Corruption of the Ring-bearers) or **fight** (which will cause casualties among the Fellowship).

- If he **uses the Ring**, he advances the Corruption Counter on the Fellowship Track by a number of steps equal to the Hunt Damage.
- If he **takes Casualties**, he must eliminate one Companion. The Free Peoples player can decide between either taking the Guide as a casualty, or randomly picking one Companion (excluding the Ring-bearers, but including the Guide) from the Fellowship. The Shadow player then randomly picks a face-down Companion Counter in the Fellowship box. The drawn Companion is eliminated from the game.
- If the Hunt Damage is **higher** than the Level of the eliminated Companion (including an eliminated Guide), the excess damage is taken as Corruption for the Ring-bearers. If the Hunt Damage is lower than the Level of the Companion, he is eliminated nonetheless (i.e., it is not possible to “wound” Companions).

Some Event Cards played on the table (such as “Axe and Bow”) and the special abilities of some companions can be used by the Free Peoples player to cancel or reduce the damage of the Hunt.

Example: During the fourth game turn, the last known position of the Fellowship is in the Goblin’s Gate region and the Free Peoples player is attempting a move from step 1 to step 2 of the Fellowship Track.

There are three Shadow dice in the Hunt Box and one Free Peoples die, as this is the second time the Fellowship is moving this turn.

The Shadow player rolls three normal six-sided dice: he must roll at least one “5” or “6” for the Hunt to be successful. He rolls 2, 5, 6: a total of two successes (yet the Shadow player needed only one success for the Hunt to succeed). He then draws a random tile from the Hunt Pool and draws a tile with a “3” and no Reveal Icon. The Fellowship Counter will remain Hidden on step 2 of the track, but the Hunt must now be confronted.

The Free Peoples player decides to take a casualty. Aragorn is guiding the Fellowship, and the player does not want him to die; so he decides to draw a random character instead. All the Companion Counters are shuffled and one is chosen randomly: Gimli is drawn. The valiant dwarf dies confronting the servants of the Shadow. As Gimli’s Level is 2, and the Hunt Damage is 3, 1 point of Hunt Damage is taken as Corruption, and the Corruption of the Ringbearers increases.

11. THE ONE RING AND THE QUEST FOR MOUNT DOOM

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, the rules in this chapter are all new and completely replace the simplified use of the Fellowship of the Ring you learned.

Even as the Dark Lord is desperately looking for the One Ring, he cannot imagine that someone would bring it to Mordor. Consequently, he is not looking for the Ring within the borders of his own land. In *The War of the Ring*, from the moment the One Ring reaches the borders of Mordor, events are set in motion that are mostly beyond the control of the players themselves. The real struggle now lies between the will of the Ring to return to its Master and the determination of the Ring-bearer to pursue his mission to its bitter end.



THE BURDEN OF THE RING

The physical, mental, and moral struggle of the Ring-bearers is represented by **Corruption**. Corruption is added to the Fellowship Track each time that the Ring is used to counter the effects of a successful Hunt, or as an effect of various Event Cards. Corruption is removed from the Ring-bearers by resting in a friendly City or Stronghold or by the use of certain Special Abilities and Event Cards. As soon as the Corruption Counter reaches the twelfth point of Corruption on the Fellowship Track, the Free Peoples player immediately loses the game.

HEALING THE RING-BEARER

The Ring-bearers can receive some relief from the burden of the Ring by resting in an appropriate sanctuary.

Thus, if during the Fellowship Phase the Fellowship is declared in a Region that contains a Free Peoples City or Stronghold not under enemy control, one point of Corruption is immediately removed (to a minimum of 0). Adjust the position of the Corruption Counter on the Fellowship Track accordingly. If the Fellowship remains in a City or Stronghold for several turns, during the Fellowship Phase of each turn it is possible to declare them in that Region and heal one Corruption each time.

THE FELLOWSHIP IN MORDOR

The **Mordor Track** is the final part of the Quest of the Ring. The track is represented by the circles superimposed on the **Gorgoroth** Region on the map; note that the circles are not actually considered to be part of that Region. In Mordor, the power of the Dark Lord is everywhere, and the burden of the Ring becomes heavier with every step. As soon as the Fellowship is declared to be in **Minas Morgul** or **Morannon** during a Fellowship Phase, immediately proceed to the following steps:

- 1) Place the Fellowship on the first step of the Mordor Track (labelled with the Elven numeral “1”). From this moment on, the Fellowship is considered to be “In Mordor.” The Fellowship Progress Counter is no longer advanced on the Fellowship Track, but it is still used to show whether the Fellowship is hidden or revealed.
- 2) Create a new Hunt Pool by placing all “Eye” tiles previously drawn back with the remaining tiles of the Hunt Pool, and also adding any Special Tiles put in play by Event Cards.

Special Rules

The following special rules apply when the Fellowship is in Mordor:

- Companions in the Fellowship can never be separated, either as a result of using Action Dice or as the effect of special abilities or Event Cards. Any action that would normally separate a Companion eliminates him instead.
- When the Free Peoples player tries to move the Fellowship during the Action Resolution step, do not roll the Hunt Dice. Instead, automatically draw one tile from the Hunt Pool. The effects of this tile are applied normally as for a successful Hunt, except for the following:
 - If the tile drawn shows an “Eye,” the Hunt Damage is equal to the number of dice in the Hunt Box (including Free Peoples dice previously used for moving the Fellowship during the same turn)
 - Normally the Fellowship would advance one step on the Mordor Track when moving. However, if the tile shows a “Stop” icon, the Fellowship remains on the same step and does not move forward.
- The Fellowship is still required to be Hidden in order to advance on the Mordor track. If revealed, the Free Peoples player must, as normal, use a Character Action die result to hide the Fellowship once again.
- If, at the end of a game turn, the Free Peoples player has not attempted to move or hide a Fellowship in Mordor during that turn, one Corruption is automatically added to the Fellowship Track.
- When the Fellowship has completed all five steps on the Mordor Track, the Crack of Doom has been reached and the Free Peoples player wins the game (unless the Ring-bearers have reached twelve corruption, see later)

12. WINNING THE GAME

If you are already familiar with the Quick-start Rules, please notice that there are now new Victory Conditions and a different way of calculating Victory Points.

During Step 6) Victory Check, players check the following Victory Conditions one after the other. If any of these Conditions apply, the game ends with a Victory for one of the players. Note that lower-numbered Victory Conditions take precedence over higher-numbered Victory Conditions, if two or more are achieved on the same turn.

RING-BASED VICTORY CONDITIONS

The most important goal for the Free Peoples is to destroy the One Ring, and for Sauron it is to reclaim the Ring. For this reason, if any of these conditions is true **any time during a turn**, the game ends immediately without waiting for the Victory Phase.

- 1) **Corruption of the Ring-bearers:** If the Ring-bearers have twelve or more Corruption, they failed their Quest. Sauron regains the Ring for himself and the Shadow player wins the game.
- 2) **Destroying the Ring:** if the Fellowship Figure is on the “Crack of Doom” step on the Mordor Track, and the Ring-bearers have fewer than twelve Corruption Points, the Ring is destroyed. Sauron is utterly vanquished and the Free Peoples player wins the game.

MILITARY VICTORY CONDITIONS

In *The Lord of the Rings*, if Sauron had succeeded in destroying the Nations of the Free Peoples, even the destruction of the Ring could not have resulted in a proper victory for the Free Peoples. At the same time, if the Free Peoples had successfully challenged Sauron militarily, the Dark Lord would have needed to greatly focus on the struggle against the Armies of the Free Peoples, and it would have been much easier for the Ring-bearers to reach Mount Doom. Thus, if at the end of a game turn any of the following conditions apply, the game ends with a military victory.

- 3) **The Shadow Conquers Middle Earth:** If the Shadow player controls Free Peoples Settlements worth 10 or more Victory Points, he wins. *The Nations of Middle Earth have been broken, its people scattered and enslaved. Sauron will quickly reclaim the Ring now that he can use all his power to locate it.*
- 4) **Sauron is banished from Middle Earth:** If the Free Peoples player controls Shadow Stronghold Settlements worth 4 or more Victory Points, the Free Peoples player wins. *With his military might collapsing, a desperate Sauron must cease his call to the Ring as he struggles to prevent a second defeat by the armies of the West. Without the powerful call of its Master, the ring loses some of its potency. With Mordor weakened and the servants of the Enemy elsewhere, the Fellowship quickly destroys the ring.*

Military Victory Conditions are based on the **control** of a Settlement. For the purposes of a Military Victory, you control an enemy Settlement if it has your Settlement Control Marker on it. Each enemy Stronghold you control is worth 2 Victory Points, each enemy City you control is worth 1 Victory Point.

MULTIPLAYER RULES

FOUR PLAYER GAME

In a four-player game, each player represents one of the major powers in *The Lord of the Rings* and will each control some of the Nations and certain characters. In a four-player game, the player responsibilities are broken down as follows:

Free Peoples:

- Player 1: **Gondor** (also controls the Elves)
- Player 2: **Rohan** (also controls The North and Dwarves)

Shadow:

- Player 1: **The Witch-king** (the Sauron Nation)
- Player 2: **Saruman & Sauron Allies** (Isengard, Southron & Easterling Nations)

All the rules in the standard game apply, with the following exceptions. At the beginning of the game, the Gondor player and the Witch-king player take the “Leading Player” tokens.

At the beginning of each turn (excluding Turn 1) the Leading Player in a team passes the “Leading Player” token to his team mate.



Free Peoples Leading Player



Shadow Leading Player

Leading Player tokens

EVENT DRAW

On Turn 1, each player draws one card from each Event Deck.

On the following turns, each player draws one card from one Event Deck of his choice. After drawing cards, and discarding excess cards, players in the same faction may exchange **one** of their cards between themselves. The players cannot show or discuss the cards. They can only tell each other if they want to exchange one card or not. A card is exchanged only if both players agree. In a four-player game, each player's hand limit is 4 instead of 6.

FELLOWSHIP PHASE

The Leading Player on the Free Peoples team decides if the Fellowship position is declared or not and who is the Guide of the Fellowship.

HUNT ALLOCATION & ACTION ROLL

The Leading Player on the Shadow team decides how many Action Dice to put in the Hunt Box. The Leading Player of each team rolls the Action Dice.

ACTION RESOLUTION

The Free Peoples team goes first. The non-Leading Player on the Free Peoples team chooses an Action Die and uses it for any of the Nations he controls or for any action relating to the Fellowship or any individual Companions, such as moving or hiding the Fellowship or moving Companions on the map. Then the non-Leading Player in the Shadow team uses an Action Die, followed by Leading Player on the Free Peoples team, and then the Leading Player on the Free Peoples team. The actions are all taken in this order until both teams have used all of their Action Dice.

If a player decides to pass an action, he is still entitled to his next action after the opposing team has taken their actions.

LIMITS ON ACTIONS

Each player only controls certain Nations and can only use his Action Dice and Event Cards to recruit, move, or fight with Armies of these Nations. Only the player who controls a Nation may move the Political Counter of that nation, unless the special ability of a Character is used. If a Region includes units of Nations controlled by both players on a team, see “Mixed Armies” below.

IN SUMMARY:

Free Peoples

- The Gondor player controls the Gondor and Elven Nations.
- The Rohan player controls the Rohan, North, and Dwarven Nations.
- Any player may move or hide the Fellowship.
- Any player may move or separate Companions.
- The effects of the Hunt on the Fellowship are decided and applied by the Leading Player.

Shadow Armies

- The Witch-king player controls the Sauron Nation, the Witch-king, and the Mouth of Sauron.
- The Saruman & Sauron Allies player controls the Isengard, Southron & Easterling Nations, as well as Saruman.
- Any player may hunt the Fellowship.
- Any player may move the Nazgûl, but only the Witch-king player may recruit new Nazgûl.
- The number of Dice allocated to the Hunt box before the Action Die roll is decided by the Leading Player.

MIXED ARMIES

If, after an action, troops and leaders controlled by different players are in the same Region, a mixed Army can result. The troops of the two players become a mixed Army only if both players agree on this, or if the Region is attacked. The controlling player of a mixed Army is the player who controls the highest number of army units in the Region. In case of a tie, the player with the highest number of Elite units is the controlling player. If this is still a tie, the current Leading Player is the controlling player. Only the controlling player may use actions to move or attack with the mixed Army. If the number of units changes, the control of the mixed Army may be transferred to the other player. A player may regain control of his units in a mixed Army by simply using an action to move these units out of the Region with the mixed Army. A mixed Army is still subject to the political restrictions (such as not being able to move across another border) of **any** non-belligerent Nation that is part of a mixed Army.

EVENTS

Normally cards can only be used by a player if they apply to a Nation or characters they control. Cards that do not refer or apply to a specific Nation may be used by any player as appropriate.

SOUTHRONS & EASTERLINGS ELITE UNITS

In a multiplayer game, when Saruman is in play, each Southron & Easterlings Elite unit, as well as each Isengard Elite unit, is considered a **Leader** as well as an Army unit for all action and combat purposes.

THREE-PLAYER GAME

The Three Player game uses the same rules as the 4-player game, but there is only one Free Peoples player, who plays normally as in a standard two-player game, with the following exception:

- The Free Peoples player cannot use two consecutive actions on the same Nation (e.g., he cannot use two consecutive actions to recruit and move Gondor troops). He can use two consecutive actions on mixed Armies but not on the same individual army (e.g., he can move a Gondor Army once and then a Gondor/Rohan Army; but cannot act twice with the same Gondor/Rohan Army).

VICTORY CONDITIONS

Each team wins as in the two-player game. To assess individual victory within a team:

- If the Shadow team wins, count the number of Strongholds and Cities captured by the Nations of each Shadow player and subtract the number of Strongholds and Cities they lost. The player with the highest total wins.
- If the Free Peoples team wins, the player who lost the lower number of Strongholds and Cities wins.



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WAR OF THE RING

based on "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy by
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