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Game:	**MIDDLE-EARTH QUEST**	**v1.3**
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Print on card (ensure you are printing at 100% scale) laminate and trim to size.

MIDDLE-EARTH QUEST

SETUP

One player is **Sauron** and the rest are the **Heroes**. Each hero player selects a **Hero sheet** and places their figure on its starting location. Take the 5 **Hero decks** and one **Skill deck** (star icon). Place the Skill deck facedown next to the board. Each hero shuffles their corresponding Hero deck and places it facedown next to the **Life Pool** edge of his hero sheet. Each hero randomly places one of his **Starting Quest** cards before him and follows any *Setup* instructions. Unused cards go back in the box. Each hero takes his **Advanced Quest** card.

Place all **Favor** and **Character** tokens and all **Influence** tokens on their respective board areas. Shuffle the **Event** decks by numbered stage, and place them facedown next to the board. Shuffle the **Encounter** decks by region, and place them facedown on their areas on the board.

Place the 4 **story markers** (green for the heroes; yellow, black, and red for Sauron) on the *start* space of the **Story Track**. The *current stage* is always the rightmost stage of the track containing at least one story marker.

Place the *Black Serpent* and *Mouth of Sauron* figures on their starting locations, and the other 3 minions off the board.

Randomly select one of 3 **Starting Plot** cards; place it on the **1** space of the **Active Plot Track** and the matching plot marker on the affected location, then follow the card's instructions.

Shuffle the **Shadow**, **Corruption**, **Peril**, and **Advanced Plot** decks and place them facedown on the board. Place the **Monster Reference cards** faceup in a pile, and shuffle each of the 3 **Monster Combat** decks and place them facedown next to the board. Randomize each of the 5 types of colored **monster tokens**, and place them in piles with the artwork side down. Place the **2** and **3** plot markers next to the **Plot deck** and all other tokens to the side of the board.

Shuffle the **Sauron** and **Hero Mission** decks. Each side draws a card from the top of his respective deck, reads it and places it facedown near them. Players can look at their *own* Mission card at any time. Unused Mission cards go back in the box.

The Sauron player takes a **Sauron turn**, then moving clockwise, each hero player takes a **hero turn**.

SAURON TURN

1. Hero Rally

Each hero discards all Influence tokens from his current location to the Influence area (except if he is in a *Shadow Stronghold*).

2. Story

Skip this step on the first turn of the game. **Advance the hero story marker 2 spaces up the Story Track.** Sauron's 3 story markers are each advanced according to his active Plot cards.

If this is the first time a story marker has entered Stage II or III of the Story Track, Sauron may place new **minions**.

If a marker reaches **The Finale** space, or if all 3 of Sauron's markers reach **The Shadow Falls** space, the game **Finale** begins.

3. Plot

Skip this step on the first turn of the game. **Sauron may either:**

a. **Play a single Plot card from his hand:** Fulfill its requirements, place it on an empty space of the Active Plot Track, and place its plot marker in the affected location.

The number in the top left of a Plot or Shadow card is the *minimum amount of influence* that must be in the Shadow Pool in order to play the card.

b. **Discard an active Plot card, or do nothing.**

4. Event

1. Draw and Resolve Event

Sauron draws 3 cards from the current stage's Event deck and resolves one of them. Discard the other cards faceup.

Heroes are dominant: resolve the card with the *lowest* priority.

Sauron is dominant: resolve the card with the *highest* priority. If neither side is dominant *(and during the first Sauron turn of the game)*, instead draw **one** card and resolve it.

2. Place Characters and Favor

For each **favor** listed on the Event card, take a favor token from the **Favor and Character** area and place it in the location.

For each **character** listed, take the character token from the Favor and Character area and place it in the location. A designated character token already on another location remains there.

3. Keep in Play or Discard

If the card has the **event marker icon** (green flag) in its upper right, place it on the **Current Event Card** space, discarding any card there. Place the event marker in the designated location (the marker is discarded when the card is discarded).

If the card has no event marker icon, it is discarded.

5. Action

Sauron may take **2 actions** *(or 3 actions in a 4 player game)*.

Each time you take an action, choose one of the 3 action types designated by the **Action Track** area by placing one of your action tokens on the leftmost empty space of the appropriate Action Track, then resolving the action based upon the action type.

As long as 3 or fewer action tokens are on the game board, they remain on the spaces they were placed. When you place your fourth action token on the Action Track area, immediately remove your 3 prior tokens.

Action: Place Influence

Receive a number of **influence tokens** equal to the number on the Action Track space you just covered.

You may immediately place up to 2 tokens of this influence in the Shadow Pool and the rest on a Shadow Stronghold or **in extension** of your Strongholds (a contiguous path must be traced through locations containing influence back to a Stronghold).

Tokens may never be placed in Haven locations.

Each location in extension of a Shadow Stronghold cannot contain more influence than the highest connected Stronghold's **influence strength** (the number of influence tokens on the Stronghold; the red number is the maximum).

Excess influence must immediately be removed, to a minimum of 1. Remove all but 1 token from locations if they are disconnected from their connection to a Stronghold.

The amount of influence Sauron may have in the Pool is equal to 4 times the current game stage.

Action: Draw Shadow and Plot Cards

Draw a number of **Shadow and Plot cards** each equal to the number on the Action Track space you just covered.

Place the Shadow cards into your hand, but keep only one of the drawn Plot cards, placing the others facedown at the bottom of the Plot deck (in the order you choose).

Action: Command Monsters and Minions

Receive a number of **commands** equal to the number on the Action Track space you just covered. Each monster token and minion may only receive one command per *Command Monsters and Minions* action.

For each command, you may perform one of the following:

Move Monster or Minion: Choose a monster token or minion on a board location and move it to an adjacent location, ignoring movement icons. Monster tokens may only be moved onto locations that contain at least one influence token; minions may move onto any location.

Minions are allowed to move into Haven locations, but you cannot attack a hero in a Haven location unless the hero allows it.

Place Monster Token: Choose one of the 5 monster token piles, draw a random token, secretly look at it and then place it facedown on any location matching the token's color that contains at least one influence.

Only one monster token may be placed with each *Command Monsters and Minions* action (regardless of the number of commands it provides).

Monster tokens may not be *placed* on locations that contain heroes (they may be moved there). More than one monster token (or minion) can occupy the same location.

Heal Minion: Choose a minion on any location and remove up to 4 damage tokens from its Minion space on the board. A minion on the same location as a hero may not be healed.

6. Hero Draw

Each hero player draws cards from his **life pool** up to his hero's **fortitude**. There is no card hand limit.

HERO TURN

1. Rest

If there are no monster tokens or minions in your location and you are not in a Shadow Stronghold, you may **rest**. Shuffle all cards from your rest pool into your life pool and then advance the leftmost Sauron story marker one space on the Story Track (you may choose which marker if there is a tie).

You may also **discard one of your Corruption cards** by discarding the number of favor tokens shown in the lower right corner of the card. If in a Haven, you may also **heal** (even if a minion is present). Shuffle all cards from your damage pool into your life pool.

2. Ambush

Sauron must choose and **attack with one monster or minion** in the hero's location. If the hero is in a Haven, combat only takes place if the hero allows it. If your hero is defeated, your turn immediately ends.

3. Travel

Your hero may travel to a connected location on the board, fight enemies, resolve perilous locations, and explore. Your hero may repeat the sequence below as many times as your hand of Hero cards allows.

a. Move

You may move to an adjacent location by discarding the required Hero card(s) from your hand.

Discard one card from your hand with an icon matching the movement icon on the connecting path. If you cannot, or choose not to, you may instead discard a number of cards equal to the number on the movement icon. Discarded Hero cards are placed faceup in a discard pile on the **Rest Pool** edge of your hero sheet.

If you have a **Boat** Item card, you can travel across water (blue) paths by discarding any one Hero card from your hand, regardless of the movement icon.

An "**any card**" icon means you must simply discard any one Hero card from your hand to cross the path.

b. Combat or Peril

If you have moved to a new location that is **perilous** and/or contains one or more monster tokens or minions, Sauron must resolve one of the following (if able):

Monster or Minion Attack: If there is a monster token or minion in your new location, Sauron may flip over a monster token of his choice, or choose a minion, in the location.

Your hero must now engage in combat with the selected monster or minion. If you do not defeat this monster or minion in combat, your hero turn immediately ends.

If the chosen monster token is blank (*ie.*, there is no illustration of a monster), it is discarded, and you proceed to the Explore part of this Travel step.

Peril: If your location is *perilous*, Sauron may draw 3 cards from the **Peril deck** and choose one for your location/region to resolve. Then all drawn cards are discarded faceup to a discard pile.

Sauron may not choose a Peril card that does not affect your current location or region. If none of the cards affect your location or region, the cards are discarded without effect.

c. Explore

You may **explore** your current location by doing any or all of the following in any order:

Retrieve Favor: Retrieve any number of favor tokens on the current location and place them on your hero sheet.

Consult with Characters: Receive favor from or use the ability of each Character on the current location, but not both. The character is then returned to the Favor and Character area of the board.

Choose a Dark Path: If you have 3 or less Corruption cards, you may choose to gain 1 favor and gain 1 Corruption card. You may only choose a dark path once during each of your turns.

Complete a Quest: Complete any Quests for which you have fulfilled the requirement (there is no limit to the number of Quests that can be completed here).

Discard a Plot: Discard any of Sauron's active Plot cards that affect the current location (if any) by following the Plot card's discard requirements (usually by spending favor).

Trade with Heroes: *All* heroes in the current location may freely trade favor, Item cards, and Quests with each other (excluding Starting and Advanced Quests).

A hero who wishes to explore the location he started his turn on may skip the *Move* and the *Combat or Peril* parts of his first Travel step and then explore in his current location (then he may choose to take additional Travel steps, as normal).

4. Encounter

After you have finished your Travel step, *if you are not in a perilous location,* you must **draw 3 Encounter cards** from the Encounter deck matching the location's color.

If you are on a **Haven**, you must instead draw 3 cards from the **Haven Encounter deck** (3 white towers).

You then resolve the card with the lowest priority number that also affects your location. The other 2 cards are discarded faceup to a discard pile.

If none of the Encounter cards affect your current location or region, they are all discarded, and your hero turn is over.

If the term **Quest** appears in *italics* at the top of the Encounter card's text box, place the card faceup in your play area.

If an Encounter deck runs out of cards, its discard pile is shuffled to create a new deck.

OTHER RULES

Dominance

The **heroes** count the number of spaces from their story marker to the **Finale** space. **Sauron** uses the *lower* of the following numbers: the number of spaces from his closest story marker to the **Finale** space, or the *cumulative* number of spaces needed for all his story markers to advance to **The Shadow Falls** space of the Story Track.

The side with the *lower* number is **dominant**. On a tie, there is no dominant side.

Level Tokens

Level tokens mark a hero's increased experience in one of his four attributes (fortitude, strength, agility, and wisdom). They are placed over the appropriate attribute on the hero sheet.

Each hero may increase each of his attributes a maximum of twice per game.

Skill Cards and Training

A hero who receives **training** draws the top 2 cards of the **Skill deck**, chooses one to place into his hand, and discards the other faceup in a discard pile.

A Skill card added to a hero's hand is part of his deck for the rest of the game and treated as a Hero card in all respects.

Quests

Unless otherwise specified, **Quests** are completed during the *Explore* part of the hero's Travel step. A Quest is always assigned to a specific hero and may only be completed by the hero displaying it in his play area. Completed Quests are removed from the game and are no longer used.

Perilous Locations

These are defined as all permanently Perilous Locations (sword symbol) and any location with more Influence than the current hero's Wisdom.

Cards and Components

When any card deck or the monster token pile is depleted, reshuffle the discards into a new deck/pile. If favor, influence, or damage tokens run out, use suitable replacements. All other components are limited to those provided.

COMBAT

Each combat always involves 2 **combatants**: a single **hero** against a single **monster** or **minion**.

Combat never occurs in **Haven** locations, unless the hero allows the combat to take place.

If multiple cards are resolved at the same time, the hero player's combat card is always resolved first.

Combat Steps

Follow this sequence in order until the combat ends:

1. Sauron Setup

Sauron takes the appropriate **Monster Reference card** (if a monster is in the combat) and matching **Monster Combat deck** (**Zealot**, **Ravager**, or **Behemoth**) as listed on the Monster Reference card or on the appropriate Minion board space.

2. Preparation

Sauron draws a number of cards equal to his combatant's **fortitude** from the appropriate Monster Combat deck. The hero player then announces how much of his **agility** he will be spending, and draws that number of cards from his life pool.

Each unspent agility gives the hero +1 strength until the end of the combat.

3. Rounds of Combat

Each round, both players play a **Combat card** facedown from their hand; the cards are simultaneously revealed, abilities resolved, and both combatants are dealt damage. Repeat until one combatant is **defeated** or both combatants are **exhausted**.

Each **combat round** consists of the following parts:

a. Choose Cards: Each combatant chooses and plays facedown one card from his hand. An *exhausted* combatant may not play additional cards, and skips this part.

b. Reveal Cards: Cards are simultaneously turned faceup. Each player then places his card faceup on his **combat stack**.

If one of the players is *exhausted*, only his opponent reveals a card. The exhausted player has 0 attack, 0 defense, no card ability, and his combat type is neither melee nor ranged.

c. Calculate Strength: Both players add up the cumulative **strength** cost of all cards in their combat stack. If this exceeds the combatant's strength, that combatant immediately becomes **exhausted** and his card is canceled.

If both combatants become *exhausted*, neither combatant is defeated; proceed to step 4.

d. Previous Round Abilities: If the card text of any card played in the previous combat denotes "**Next Round**," then those abilities are resolved at this time (unless otherwise specified), first by the hero and then by Sauron.

If one of the combatants became *exhausted* this round, his previous round ability is canceled.

e. Current Round Abilities: All abilities from cards that were played during this round are now resolved, first by the hero and then by Sauron.

f. Deal Damage: Each combatant is simultaneously dealt damage equal to his opponent's total attack value minus his own defense value.

If a combatant is *defeated*, proceed to step 4. Otherwise, another combat round begins.

4. Resolution

After resolving all rounds of combat, perform these steps:

a. Discard Cards: The hero places his combat stack (with cards in order) faceup on top of his **rest pool**. Sauron shuffles his combat stack into the appropriate Monster Combat deck.

b. Discard Monster Token: If a monster token was involved, discard it faceup next to the pile of unused tokens (whether or not the monster was defeated). Undefeated minions remain on their current location after combat.

c. Undefeated Monster or Minion: If the monster or minion was not defeated, Sauron may immediately place an amount of influence equal to his combatant's **wisdom** in extension of Shadow Strongholds. If this happens during a hero's Travel step, the hero's turn immediately ends.

Combat Keywords

Cancel: All card text is ignored, and the owner's final attack and defense value become 0 and may not be modified above 0. A canceled card's strength cost is not reduced. 2 cards that cancel each other are both blank with 0 attack and defense.

Deal [X] Damage: Direct damage is dealt when the ability is resolved, although combatants cannot be defeated until the *Deal Damage* part of the round.

Modifying Attack or Defense: Modify the card's final attack or defense values for the *Deal Damage* step of a combat round.

If Opponent's Printed (Attack or Defense) Is [X]: The attack or defense values of the opponent's cards are always derived from the other card's printed (not modified) value.

Reduce to 0: If attack or defense is reduced to 0, this value cannot be increased above 0 (ignore any modifiers).

Types: Each card is either *Ranged* (blue) or *Melee* (red).

Exhausted Combatants

A combatant who plays a Combat card that causes the cumulative strength of the cards in his combat stack to exceed his strength becomes **exhausted**.

When a player becomes exhausted during step *c. Calculate Strength*, the Combat card he just played is **canceled** (the attack and defense is reduced to 0 and any ability is ignored).

When one combatant is exhausted, his opponent continues to resolve combat rounds until either a combatant is defeated, or both combatants have become exhausted. Combat then proceeds to step *4. Resolution*.

Before the start of any combat round, if a combatant does not have any—or does not wish to play any—combat cards in his hand, he declares himself *exhausted*. If both combatants wish to declare themselves exhausted in the same round, the hero player must always do so first (and then Sauron may choose whether he still wishes to do so).

An exhausted combatant remains exhausted for the duration of the combat.

Dealing Damage and Being Defeated

Monsters & Minions

For each damage a **monster** is dealt during combat, one **damage token** is placed on its Monster Reference card. If the number of tokens equals or exceeds the monster's **health** during step *f. Deal Damage*, the monster is **defeated**.

For each damage a **minion** is dealt, one **damage token** is placed on its corresponding Minion space on the game board. Damage tokens are not removed from a minion at the end of combat and remain until the minion is healed or defeated.

If the number of tokens equals or exceeds the minion's health, it is **defeated**; all damage tokens are removed from its Minion space and its figure is removed from the game board.

Defeated minions do not return to the game, except for the **Ringwraiths** who return to Minas Morgul at the start of Sauron's next Action step.

Dealing Damage to Heroes

A hero must discard one card from the top of his life pool (without looking at it) or discard one card of his choice from his hand, for each damage he is dealt. Discarded cards are placed (one at a time) facedown into the hero's damage pool.

If a hero has 0 cards in his life pool and 0 cards in his hand, he is immediately **defeated**.

Defeated Heroes

A defeated hero performs the following steps:

1. Advance Sauron's Story: The leftmost Sauron story marker is advanced one space up the Story Track. If multiple tokens are tied, the hero may decide which to move.

2. Lose Favor or Item card: The hero must choose whether to discard one favor token from his hero sheet or one of his Item cards. If a hero has neither, skip this step.

3. Move to Haven: The hero figure is moved to the closest Haven (by number of locations). If multiple Havens are equally close, Sauron decides which of the tied Havens.

4. Recover: The hero shuffles all cards from his rest pool and damage pool into his life pool.

5. End Turn: The hero's turn immediately ends and play proceeds to the next player.

THE FINALE

Once the **Finale** begins, follow these steps instead of normal turns:

1. Check for Immediate Victory

The *dominant* side reveals its **Mission card**. If the criteria are fulfilled, the dominant side immediately wins the game.

If neither side is dominant, both sides reveal their Mission cards. If only one of the sides is able to fulfill the criteria on its Mission card, then that side immediately wins the game.

If neither side has won the game, proceed to the next step.

2. Advance Story Markers

If Sauron fulfills his Mission card requirement, he advances each of his story markers one space on the Story Track. If the heroes fulfill their Mission card, they advance their story marker one space on the Story Track. A story marker located on the Finale space does not advance.

3. Prepare

Sauron removes all prior damage from the Ringwraiths' Minion space on the board. Each hero then shuffles all cards from his hand, rest pool, and damage pool into his life pool, then draws a number of cards from the top of his life pool equal to his **fortitude**.

4. Adjust Difficulty

If one team is dominant, the Ringwraiths' attributes are modified as follows:

Sauron Dominant: The Ringwraiths gain a number of both health and fortitude equal to the number of spaces the hero story marker is away from the Finale space.

Heroes Dominant: The Ringwraiths' health and fortitude is reduced by the *lower* of the following 2 numbers: the number of spaces the closest Sauron story marker is from the Finale space; and the cumulative number of spaces needed for Sauron's remaining story marker(s) to advance into *The Shadow Falls* space.

5. Choose Champion

The heroes choose one hero player to fight the Ringwraith.

6. Combat

The chosen hero fights the Ringwraiths as normal.

7. Determine Winner

If the Ringwraiths are defeated, the heroes win the game. If the Ringwraiths are not defeated, Sauron wins the game.

TWO PLAYER GAME

The hero player receives 2 turns for every Sauron turn. After the hero finishes his first Encounter step, resolve a special Hero Rally step and a Hero Draw step. The hero then receives a second turn starting with his Rest pool.

At the end of his second Encounter step, Sauron begins his turn as normal (starting with the Hero Rally step). Sauron may play one Shadow card during each of the hero's 2 turns.

OPTIONAL RULES

Advanced Dominance A side is **dominant** if it would require fewer Story steps for it to reach the Finale. Calculate by simulating a number of Story steps until a side has reached the Finale with Sauron's active Plot cards remaining in play.

High Stakes Stage III If the Heroes are dominant during stage III, *Sauron may decide which of his 3 markers is advanced* each time he defeats a hero. If Sauron is dominant during stage III, the heroes advance their story marker one space Story Track each time they defeat a minion.

MIDDLE-EARTH QUEST

SAURON TURN

1. Hero Rally
Discard all influence tokens from each hero's location (except if in a *Shadow Stronghold).*

2. Story
Advance the hero story marker 2 spaces up the Story Track and Sauron's story markers according to his active Plot cards. *Skip this step on the first game turn.*

If a marker reaches the **Finale**, or if all 3 of Sauron's markers reach **The Shadow Falls**, the game **Finale** begins.

3. Plot
Sauron may play a single Plot card from his hand to the Active Plot Track or discard an active Plot card. *Skip this step on the first game turn.*

The number in the top left of the card is the *minimum amount of influence* that must be in the Shadow Pool.

4. Event
Sauron draws 3 cards from the current stage's Event deck and resolves one of them.

Heroes are dominant: resolve the card with the *lowest* priority number. **Sauron is dominant**: resolve the card with the *highest* number. Neither side is dominant *(and during the first game turn)*, draw **one** card and resolve it.

Place any **favors** or **characters** listed on the designated locations.

Cards with the **event marker icon** (green flag) are placed on the **Current Event Card** space, discarding any card there, and the event marker is placed on the designated location.

5. Action
Sauron may take 2 actions *(or 3 actions in a 4 player game)* by placing action tokens on the leftmost empty spaces of the appropriate Action Tracks, then resolving the action.

When placing the fourth action token on the Action Track, immediately remove the 3 prior tokens.

Place Influence equal to the number on the Action Track space: up to 2 tokens in the Shadow Pool and the rest in extension of Shadow Strongholds.

Draw Shadow and Plot Cards each equal to the number on the Action Track space. Shadow cards go into your hand. Keep only one of the drawn Plot cards, and place the rest facedown at the bottom of the Plot deck in any order.

Receive Commands equal to the number on the Action Track space. Each monster token and minion may only receive one command per action. *For each command:*

Move Monster or Minion to an adjacent location. Monster tokens may only be moved onto locations that contain at least one influence token. Minions may move into Havens.

Draw a Monster Token from a monster token pile and place it facedown on any location matching its color that contains at least one influence and no heroes. Only one monster token may be placed with each *Command Monsters and Minions* action

Heal a Minion on any location with no hero and remove up to 4 damage tokens from its Minion space on the board.

6. Hero Draw
Each hero player draws cards from his **life pool** up to his hero's **fortitude.**

HERO TURN

1. Rest
If there are no monster tokens or minions in your location and you are not in a Shadow Stronghold, you may **rest**. If in a Haven, you may also **heal.**

2. Ambush
Sauron may choose and attack with one monster or minion in the hero's location. In a Haven, combat only takes place if the hero allows it.

3. Travel
Your hero may travel to a connected location on the board, fight enemies, resolve perilous locations, and explore. Your hero may repeat the sequence below as many times as your hand of Hero cards allows.

a. Move to an adjacent location by discarding the required Hero card(s) from your hand.

b. Combat or Peril: Sauron chooses whether the hero will fight a monster/minion in his location or resolve a **Peril card** (if he is in a *perilous* location).

c. Explore in your current location. You may *Retrieve Favor, Consult with Characters, Choose a Dark Path, Complete a Quest, Discard a Plot* or *Trade with Heroes.*

4. Encounter
If you are not in a perilous location, you must draw 3 Encounter cards from the Encounter deck matching the location's color (at a **Haven** draw from the **Haven Encounter deck**). Resolve the card with the lowest priority number that also affects your location.

DOMINANCE

Heroes count the spaces from their story marker to the **Finale**.

Sauron uses the *lower* of the following numbers: the spaces from his closest story marker to the **Finale**, or the *cumulative* number of spaces needed for all his story markers to advance to **The Shadow Falls** space.

The side with the *lower* number is **dominant**. On a tie, there is no dominant side.

MIDDLE-EARTH QUEST

COMBAT

Types: Each card is either *Ranged* (blue) or *Melee* (red). No combat in **Havens**, unless the hero allows it.

1. Sauron Setup
Sauron takes his **Monster Reference card** and **Monster Combat deck**.

2. Preparation
Sauron draws Combat cards equal to his **fortitude**. The hero draws cards from his life pool equal to the **agility** he spends.

Each unspent agility gives the hero +1 strength.

3. Rounds of Combat
Play cards, reveal cards, resolve abilities, and deal damage.

Repeat until combatant is **defeated** or both are **exhausted**.

  a. Choose Cards: Each combatant plays facedown one card. Skip if *exhausted*.

  b. Reveal Cards: Place faceup on your **combat stack**. If *exhausted*, only your opponent reveals a card.

  c. Calculate Strength: Add the cumulative **strength** of all cards in your combat stack.

  If this exceeds your strength, you are *exhausted* and your card canceled. If both become *exhausted*, neither combatant is defeated; go to step 4.

  d. Previous Round Abilities: "Next Round" cards played in the previous combat round are resolved (hero first).

  If you became *exhausted* this round, ability is canceled.

  e. Current Round Abilities: Abilities from cards played this round are resolved (hero first).

  f. Deal Damage: Damage is simultaneously dealt (opponent's total attack value minus own defense value).

  If *defeated*, go to step 4. Otherwise, begin another combat round.

4. Resolution
After resolving all combat rounds:

  a. Discard Cards: Hero places his combat stack (cards in order) faceup on top of his **rest pool**. Sauron shuffles his stack back into the appropriate Monster Combat deck.

  b. Discard Monster Token faceup next to the pile of unused tokens (whether defeated or not). Undefeated minions remain on their current location.

  c. Undefeated Monster or Minion: Sauron may place influence equal to his combatant's **wisdom** in extension of Shadow Strongholds. If this happens during a hero's Travel step, the hero's turn immediately ends.

DAMAGE & BEING DEFEATED

Monsters
Place one **damage token** on a monster's Reference card for each damage it is dealt. If the tokens equal or exceed its **health** during step *f. Deal Damage*, it is **defeated**.

Minions
Place one **damage token** on a minion's Minion space for each damage it is dealt. Tokens are not removed at the end of combat and remain until it is healed or defeated.

If the tokens equal or exceed its health, it is **defeated**. Its figure is removed and does not return to the game (except for **Ringwraiths** who return to Minas Morgul at the start of Sauron's next Action step).

Dealing Damage to Heroes
A hero discards one card from the top of his life pool (unseen) or one card of his choice from his hand, for each damage he is dealt.

Discarded cards are placed (one at a time) facedown into the hero's damage pool.

A hero with 0 cards in his life pool and 0 cards in his hand is immediately **defeated**.

Defeated Heroes
1. Advance Sauron's leftmost Story marker one space up the Story Track. If multiple tokens are tied, the hero decides.

2. Lose one Favor or Item card: (hero's choice). If you have neither, skip this step.

3. Move to the closest Haven. If multiple Havens are equally close, Sauron decides.

4. Recover: Shuffle all cards from your rest pool and damage pool into your life pool.

5. End Turn immediately; play proceeds to the next player.

LEVEL TOKENS

Each hero may increase each of his attributes a maximum of twice per game.

SKILL CARDS & TRAINING

A hero who receives **training** draws the top 2 cards of the **Skill deck**, chooses one to place into his hand, and discards the other faceup.

QUESTS

Unless specified, **Quests** are completed during the *Explore* part of the hero's Travel step. A Quest is always assigned to a specific hero and may only be completed by him. Completed Quests are removed from the game.