



**the solo game of
dungeon creation**

by Tony Dowler

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This game also includes another file with monster cards and civilization cards that you can print out.

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Magician Civilization by Philip LaRose.

Getting Started

Welcome to Host to Host a Dungeon. This is a solo game where you create a map of a huge dungeon.

WHAT IS THIS

How to Host a Dungeon is a solo game of procedural dungeon creation. It's a game, but it's also a pastime. How to Host a Dungeon is a game of creating maps, stories, and worlds. Since it's a solo game, there's really no wrong way to play.

In How to Host a Dungeon, you will create a sprawling underground world full of monsters, treasure, magical mysteries, and the ruins of underground civilizations.

I recommend that you print out these pages so you can refer to them while you play. You probably also want to cut out the monster cards, located at the end of the file.

SYMBOLS

These rules include a few symbols you should know:

- stands for a black or colored token. Black tokens are population—be it monster, creature, or adventurer.
- stands for a white token. White tokens are treasure.
- ★ stands for a special bonus. Bonus tokens are magical enchantments, tricks and traps, grand ambitions, or anything else that gives one monster a special advantage over another.
- ⚙ stands for an epic treasure. These are optional and are explained more in the Age of Civilization.

SUPPLIES

Here are the supplies you should have to play this game:

- At least 20 small tokens (● and ○), such as glass beads, or board game tokens in at least two colors.
- A handful of distinctive tokens or markers (★) that look different from the ones above
- Optionally, some coins or markers to represent epic treasures (⚙).
- Some pens and pencils
- Some sheets of paper
- An assortment of the kind of dice that are used for tabletop role-playing games.
- A pad of tracing paper may also be useful, but you don't need it.

EXPLANATIONS

Drawing: In this game you'll draw things: rooms, tunnels, caverns, towers, volcanoes, and other things. The rules will tell you how.

Rooms: ● and ○ are usually found in rooms. The smallest room is a room that's big enough to comfortably hold one of your tokens.

Finger: a finger is a loosely-defined unit of distance, let's say about 4-5 tokens long, or as long as your longest finger.

DRAWING

When the rules say to draw something, draw it.

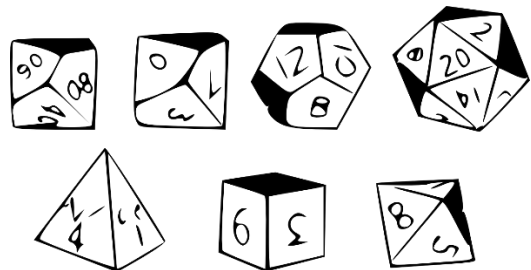
There's no right or wrong way to draw stuff, but there is a better and a worse way. The better way is one that's pleasing to you and creates a dungeon you like. Don't sweat it if you draw something then don't like it. It will usually turn out OK anyway, and you can always change your mind.

The same goes for these rules. If the rules are unclear, do what makes sense to you at the time. You'll probably get a better result following your instinct than worrying about the rules. Don't be afraid to let the rules surprise you or take the dungeon in a direction you're not expecting.

THE DICE

This game uses polyhedral dice, commonly used in tabletop role-playing games and some board games. These are abbreviated d# where # is the number of sides on the die.

So, for example, a d6 is a regular six-sided die. If the rules say "roll a d6", you will roll a regular six-sided die. Sometimes, you'll add something to a die roll. If the instructions say "roll d6+1", you roll a six-sided die, and add one to the result. Sometimes you'll roll multiple dice. So if the rules say "roll 2d6", roll two six-sided dice and add them together to get a result.



You should have these kinds of dice to play this game.

The Primordial Age

In the Primordial Age, you will make a world for your dungeon to happen in.

THE DAWN OF YOUR WORLD

Start here. This is where you create a side view of the world for your dungeon to grow in. In the primordial age, your world is just being created. The events of this time determine what the first sentient creatures find when they arrive in the world.

Take a blank sheet of paper and place it on the table so the long edges are at the top and bottom. This is where you'll draw your dungeon.

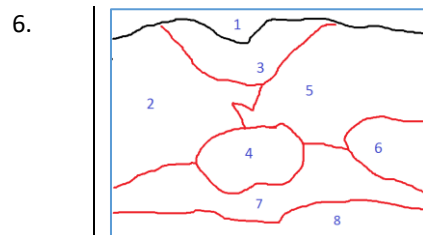
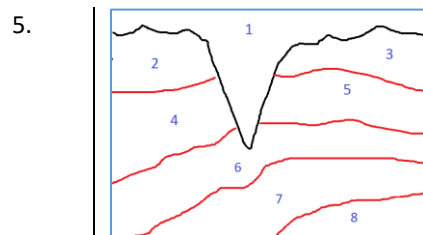
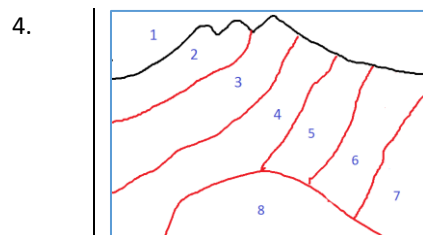
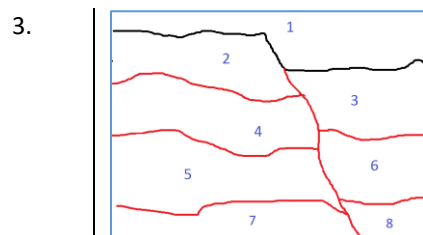
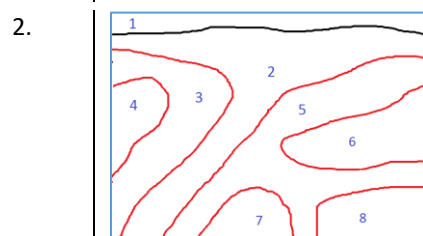
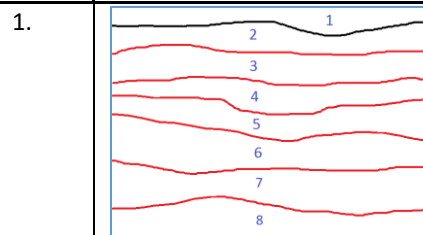
First, roll 1d6 on the Primordial World table, and make a note of the picture there. This is a side view that shows approximately what your world will look like.

Now we start drawing. Your world doesn't need to match the picture exactly or even very closely. Draw the surface first, represented by the black line in the picture. This should be 1 1/2 – 2 inches from the top of the page. Then draw in some lines (shown in red) to make the various regions of the underworld. These regions are called strata.

It's useful to draw the stratum in a different color than you'll use for rooms and features of the dungeon. Pencil lines also work well.

Finally, write a number in each of the strata you created. I find eight strata is a good number, but if you have a larger page, you can add more; or remove some for a smaller page.

Roll 1d6—Primordial World



Where did it all come from

Roll on this table if you want to know how this world came to be:

Roll	1d10—Creation story
1	This world is the detritus of dismembered or destroyed god.
2	Sky mated with ocean, birthed world(s).
3	Some deity planned it just this way.
4	Some deity planned this world, but it didn't work out at all as they expected.
5	It's a product of natural forces and/or primordial chaos.
6	It has always been and always will be. Why do you ask?
7	World came into being as result of celestial family drama. Roll: 1. Tragic 3. Comedic 4. Lyric 5. Pornographic 5. It's complicated
8	Dream of some god/wizard/monster/ordinary person.
9	It's all a cosmic game.
10	Roll twice and combine the results. Both are true.

NEXUS

Nexuses are unique features of the dungeon. Select one of the strata in your dungeon to contain a nexus, then roll on this table to determine what the nexus is. The Nexus is optional. The first time you play, I recommend you just skip it.

Roll	1d20—Nexus
1	Mother of monsters. Something horrible lives here—a dragon, the mother of monsters, a dire god, or something else. Pick a spot and place 3● 2○.
2	Plague. Write “plague 3” on this spot. Any civilization or monster group that explores into here will lose ●. The plague goes away once this happens.
3	Fate. Any monster group or civilization that explores this space will be utterly ended.
4	Fault. A massive fault opens up in this spot, reaching off two sides of the page in random directions. If it crosses water or magma, it may flow down into the fault, filling it up.
5	Dungeonheart. The heart of the dungeon is here. You decide what it looks like. Put 2● there. Once they’re gone, replace with a legendary treasure.
6	Gateway. This location is a gateway to another plane of existence. The next monster group or civilization starting in this stratum comes in through the gateway.
7	Cyclopean complex. This network of massive chambers and corridors was left by forces unknown. If you got this result rolling on the caves table, roll on the caves table again to see what’s in here.
8	God fragment. A piece of a dead god or maybe a piece of the early universe has fallen here. It counts as a treasure (○), but it can’t ever be moved from this spot.
9	Intellect. There is a very, very ancient intelligence located on this spot.
10	Bones. This region is made of bones—maybe a huge skull, or the rib cage of the sky, or something weirder.
11	Magic nexus. The skeins of magic that hold the universe together run through here. Draw a nexus point, or some geomantic lines or something. It’s all a mystical site.
12	Phase shift—solid. This area is full of one substance. It can be explored like normal, but some creatures might be loath to do so. Roll: 1. Flesh 2. Blood 3. Salt 4. Glass.
13	Radiation. A radioactive substance or magical contagion makes this area dangerous. When a civilization encounters this area, it loses 1●.
14	Darkness. Light isn’t very effective here, or it’s just always dark, no matter how many torches you light.
15	Palace. A strange crystal palace with several rooms is embedded in this level, perhaps extending into the strata above and below too.
16	Void. This area opens into a bottomless, annihilating void.
17	Elemental Nexus. The barrier between dimensions is thin here and elemental mana leaks through: earth, air, fire, water, wood, metal, smoke, redstone, lightning, bone, goodness, evil, or life force as you choose.
18	Ley Lines: Draw 4-5 lines and/or circles across this stratum and extending into the neighboring stratum. These are ley lines of magical force. Any monster with the Magical tag that spawns on one of these lines, receives an extra bonus token (this is explained in the age of monsters).
19	The crossroads: Draw a room on this stratum. Draw four tunnels leading away from it. No monster or civilization may ever live in this room. Any monster that finds this room, e.g. by exploring or scouting, gains +1 to trade, recruit, or ally with any other monster group that has already found this room.
20	Make up your own.

FEATURES

Each stratum in your dungeon world will have some unique features, generated by random dice rolls.

Roll 1d8 each stratum in your world, ignoring the surface and any stratum with a nexus in it. Consult the **Feature** table to see what the main feature of that stratum is. Each result points to a second table that determines some more details about its size, shape, and so on.

Don't roll for a stratum that already has a nexus. A nexus is enough. Also, don't roll for the surface. We'll do that later.

For example: Your first 1d8 roll is a 3, caves. You then roll 1d10 on the Caves table, getting a 7, "One long tunnel going all the way across the stratum". You then take a pen and draw a long line, representing the tunnel, running from one end of the stratum to the other. This stratum is now done.

Roll	1d8—Feature
1	Ore—roll on table 1.
2	Gems—roll on table 2.
3	Caves—roll on table 3.
4	Water—roll on table 4.
5	Magma—roll on table 5.
6	Biome—roll on table 6.

1: ORE

This area contains deposits of valuable ore, such as iron, gold, or mithral, useful in the creation of tools and artifacts.

When you draw your ore, consider using a different color pen from what you've used for other features. Label your ore when it's done.

Roll	1d10—Feature
1-5	A vein of ore running the full length of the stratum in whatever direction is longest.
6-7	2d4 token-sized deposits scattered around
8	A small mass of ore, about 3 tokens in size
9	A large mass of ore, filling up to half the stratum
10	A huge mass of ore, filling most of the space in the stratum.

2: GEMS

This area contains valuable gem deposits. Normally, each gem deposit will be about 1 token in size.

After you roll, draw your gem deposits as small shapes, each a little larger than one of your tokens.

Roll	1d10—Feature
1-6	2d4 token-sized gemstone deposits scattered around
7-8	One very large cave with 1d4 deposits of gems lining the walls
9	1d4+1 separate gem deposits scattered around the stratum
10	Four gems clumped right close together



Shroom Rooms

3: CAVES

This area contains some caves. Draw the caves and rooms as indicated. Draw rooms whatever shape seems right.

For tunnels, draw lines in the stratum. They can be straight, jagged, serpentine, etc., as you like.

Roll	1d10—Feature
1-2	1d6+1 token-sized caverns, not connected
3-4	1d4+1 token-sized caverns connected by a single tunnel
5	One large cavern, up to six tokens in size
6	A huge cavern, filling up almost the entire stratum. Connect it to caves in other strata, too, if you want.
7	One long tunnel going all the way across the stratum
8	One long tunnel going all the way across the stratum, crossed by a shorter tunnel going the opposite way
9	One large cavern with tunnels radiating in three different directions.
10	Roll again. Distribute 1d4 ● among the caves drawn. These are primordial monsters.

4: WATER

This stratum contains water, be it an underground lake, sea, or river. If you have one, use a blue pen or marker to indicate the water.

Roll	1d10—Feature
1-2	An underground river, crossing the entire stratum, going off the map if possible
3	An underground river, crossing this stratum and the entire map, even if this means cutting across other strata too, exiting off two sides of the page
4-6	A large cave with an underground lake in it (around 4 tokens in size)
7-8	A huge cave filling most of the stratum with an underground sea in it
9-10	1d4+1 token-sized caves containing water and connected by tunnels or underground streams.

5: MAGMA

This stratum contains molten lava. Use a red pen for magma.

Roll	1d10—Feature
1	A large magma chamber, about 4-tokens in size, with a magma channel leading up to a vent on the surface
2-3	Magma river flowing through this area, leading off the page if possible.
4	A large cavern with magma lake about 4 tokens big
5-6	A large cavern containing 1d4 distinct magma lakes, each about one-token in size
7	A huge cavern with magma lake filling most of this stratum
8	1d4+1 caves containing magma pools, not connected
9	1d4+1 caves containing magma pools, connected with magma channels
10	1 cave full of magma with a magma channel leading down and off the bottom of the page.



Magma Chambers

6: BIOMES

These caves contain a thriving ecosystem, utterly unlike that on the surface. Label your biome and, if you like, draw in some of the vegetation.

Roll	1d10—Feature
1-4	One huge cavern, filling about half the stratum, with a biome in it
5-7	One huge cavern, filling almost the entire stratum, with a biome in it
8-9	Roll on the caves table. All caves created contain the biome
10	Roll on the water table. The water features created (and their shores) contain the biome.

Optional: roll to determine ecosystem type, or choose one:

Roll	1d6—Feature
1	Fungus
2	Slime
3	Jurassic
4	Alien
5	Necrotic
6	Crystalline

THE SURFACE

Finally, roll on the **Surface Features** table to determine what's on the surface of your world. Draw or label the features described. The drawing does not have to be detailed.

Roll	1d10—Surface Features
1-4	Several small, distinct terrestrial biomes (e.g. forest, plains, brush, desert, etc.), scattered across the surface. The number on the die determines the number of biomes.
5	A small body of water (lake) with a different terrestrial biome on each side of it.
6	One terrestrial biome covering the surface. You decide what its dominant feature is (e.g. forest, plains, brush, desert, etc.).
7	1d4+2 gems distributed on the surface, plus 1 terrestrial biome filling most of the surface.
8	1d6 token-sized pockets of ore on the surface, plus 1 terrestrial biome filling most of the surface.
9	1 small terrestrial biome surrounded by wasteland.
10	Wasteland (no biomes)

FINISHING UP

Optional: If you have tracing paper, you may lay a sheet of tracing paper over your map now and tape it down. Draw the next age on the tracing paper. That way, you can go back and look at each age on its own.

Geographical Inspirations

The instructions on the preceding pages provide everything you need to create your world. Nevertheless, after experiencing many fantastical worlds, each providing slight variation on similar themes, you may begin to long for a world drawn in new shapes and forms. This page provides a list of inspirations to color and enrich the geography of your primordial world.

ORE

Ore deposits provide a rich source of treasure to power underground economies. When you place an ore deposit, you may roll here to learn more about it.

1. Valuable trade materials: gold, silver, or platinum.
2. Raw materials for weapons or crafts: iron, copper, or bronze.
3. Fantastical ores: mithral, adamantium, or redstone.
4. Fuel for industry: oil, coal, natural gas
5. Building materials: crystal, glass, or marble
6. Exotic matter: crystallized time, veins or pure logic, or mind-altering drugs.

GEMS

Gem deposits are smaller and rarer than ore, representing luxuries and exotic goods that are both highly valuable and easily portable, like diamonds, sapphires, or rubies. Here are a few gem origins.

1. Blasted up from deep in the earth by massive volcanoes
2. Fell from the sky as meteorites, stars, angels, demons, or the tears of strange gods.
3. Vessels containing ancient fossils, magic spells, or memories of a forgotten race.
4. They shine with un-natural light
5. The incite feelings of pleasure, warmth, anger, contemplation, or greed, as appropriate.
6. Sentient stones speaking words or wisdom or dangerous lies.

CAVES

A simple circle is all you need to draw a cave in How to Host a Dungeon, but you can also draw rooms in different shapes to add variety.

1. Limestone caves with forests of stalagmites and stalactites and bizarre dripping shapes of flowstone.
2. Crystal-lined geodes.
3. Smooth chutes and flues left by underground waterways.
4. Rounded lava tubes connecting empty magma chambers pillared with hardened lava.
5. Burrows left by purple worms, earth elementals, or other creatures.
6. Labyrinthine fractal chambers created by gods, magic, or unknown physical processes.

WATER

Water in the dungeon can take many forms: warm or cold, deep or shallow, warm or icy cold, murky and full of life or utterly sterile. Here are a few to choose from.

1. Easily navigable for trade and travel.
2. Full of dangerous currents and rapids and a deadly whirlpool terminating in unknown depths.
3. Roaring waters at the bottom of an immense chasm.
4. Teeming with life and rich sources of food.
5. Rivers and pools of sludge or hot mud.
6. Underground glaciers and breathtaking ice caves.

MAGMA

In our world lava is a constant reminder that the realm of habitability is a thin crust over a howling wilderness of heat.

In your world, the deepest depths may be a gateway to the elemental planes of fire, a thriving land where fire-people go about their fire-business, or the kingdom of the Djinn. Or perhaps its dungeons all the way down, interrupted by only the occasional sea of lava.

1. A blast furnace of scorching hot air, an underground desert of heat and blowing sand.
2. Hot springs, geysers, and geothermal vents.
3. A river or a sea of bubbling lava with a few islands offering relative safety.
4. A massive underground magma chamber, ever-increasing pressure, the threat of inevitable destruction.
5. The shattered scar of an ancient eruption slowly cooling into silence.

BIOMES

Terrestrial biomes in fantastical world can be familiar or strange, magical or mundane, but underground biomes are always weird.

1. A twisted parody of familiar plants and animals, filtered through nightmares, madness, or fever dreams.
2. An ecosystem existing in darkness and isolation, drawing energy from minerals, heat, decay, or magic.
3. The biome has its own sun, whether through magic, design, miracle, or other is unknown.
4. It's utterly alien. Natives of your world can't eat its food or even really understand it.
5. It's invasive, spreading inexorably and corrupting everything it touches.
6. It's an echo of another plane, spread here by accident, or leaking through where the walls of reality are thin.

Age of Civilization

During the age of civilization, a people rise to dominate nature, rule for a time, and then vanish, leaving mysterious works that will last the ages.

DAWNING CIVILIZATIONS

First, choose a civilization from this list. If this is your first time playing, use the Dwarven Civilization:

1. Alien Civilization
2. Dwarven Civilization
3. Deep Elf Civilization
4. Demon Civilization
5. Magician Civilization

SETUP

Each civilization has a **Setup** section that tells you to draw the first structures for that civilization and to put some beads on the map. These are the seeds from which your civilization will grow.

DRAWING

You will draw **rooms** of various sorts (dormitories, temples, palaces, and so on). These can usually be drawn about one bead in size. Draw them bigger if the rules say, or if you think this particular room needs to be big.

Beads will usually be in rooms. If the rules tell you to add a bead (● or ○), and there are no rooms to put them in, draw new rooms as you need them.

Some rooms have special names, like a “Demon Palace” or the “Dwarven City”. Write their names on the map.

Tunnels are just lines connecting rooms. Draw them straight, curvy, jagged, or whatever as suits your mood.

Other than that, draw things how you want; in whatever way feels right to you. Draw crazy constructions thick with detail, or just a few shapes and lines as you like.

THE LIFECYCLE

The Age of Civilization is played out in turns. The **Lifecycle** section describes what the civilization does each turn. Read these steps and do what they tell you.

Within a stage, you will see some instructions:

- **Actions:** Underlined words are actions. See the *Actions* section for further explanation.
- **Conditions:** Sometimes you’ll see a condition that calls for a judgment call. **IF** the thing is true, then do what it says. **OTHERWISE**, if it’s not true, you may be asked to do a different thing.
- **Everything else:** Sometimes the lifecycle just tells you to do something else—like drawing a new room or moving some beads around.

MONSTERS

Some primordial age results generate monsters. Any time a civilization encounters monsters (for example, by exploring into their lair, building near them, or mining out resources they are using), the monsters lose 1● and the civilization loses 1●.

END OF A CIVILIZATION

At some point your civilization will end. The rules will tell you when this happens. Read the **End of Civilization** section when this happens and do what it says.

TIP: If you have tracing paper, this is a good time to lay down a sheet of tracing paper over your map and tape it down. This lets you draw the Age of Monsters on a new sheet and keep a clearer record of your civilization.

ACTIONS

Here’s some more information about the actions:

Build: Draw a new special room as instructed. There’s a list of these for each civilization.

Expand: Add ● to your civilization.

Exploit: Mine out an area of resources about 1 bead in size. Show on the map that some of the resource is mined out. Add ○ to the civilization.

Explore: Explore the world 1 finger in any direction, following existing tunnels or creating new ones as you prefer.

Harvest: If the civilization has access to the named resource (e.g. water, or a biome), add ○ to the civilization.

MORE ABOUT THE BUILD ACTION

Each civilization has some special rooms that are added when it makes the **Build** action. There’s a table listing these on each civilization’s page. Some of them have additional instructions to follow when you build them.

Here are some common rooms and symbols for this age:

- **Tomb** (☒): Put an X on this room to show it is a tomb.
- **Fortification** (☒): Draw a chevron on this room to show it’s a fortification.
- **Epic Treasure** (✳): These count as treasures (○), but they stick around after the civilization ends. You can use regular treasure beads for these or, if you have some other cool bead, use that.

Some of the civilizations have other special rules about building. See the page for that civilization for more on how they build.

THE ALIEN CIVILIZATION

When the Alien civilization spawns, follow the **SETUP** instructions. Then, each turn, at the beginning of the turn, follow the Alien civilization **LIFECYCLE**. When the Alien Civilization ends (and it will end) follow the **END OF CIVILIZATION** instructions.

SETUP

Place 6●, 1○ on the **Landing Site**, including some structures for them to live in. Alien ● are colonists; ○ are supplies.

Choose a suitable location on the map for your colony to begin. Draw the **Landing site** at that location.

ALIEN FACILITIES

There are six alien facilities. Each one provides protection against a specific catastrophe. They also may provide various actions and benefits.

A construction may become damaged as a result of a catastrophe. While damaged, its actions and benefits no longer apply.

A damaged construction may be damaged again, in which case it is destroyed. Once destroyed, it can't be repaired or rebuilt.

LANDING SITE

Action: ☐ Exploit ore, gems, or non-alien biome.



END OF CIVILIZATION

If the Alien civilization ended as a result of using the prosper ability of the **Megastructure** facility, roll 1d6.

If the result is less than or equal to the number of online facilities (not including the **Landing site**), the colony is successful, and the aliens prosper.

If the result is greater than the number of functional constructions, the colony has failed, and the Aliens depart.

If the colony ended as a result of a catastrophe, the colony fails and the Aliens fall into obscurity, struggling in vain against the harsh environment. When the age of Monsters begins, choose one Monster Card with the Alien tag from the Monster Deck and spawn it at the Landing Site.

LIFECYCLE

Build an Alien facility by paying its cost from the **Landing site**. Place a● on the facility box on this page below to indicate the facility is built and online. Each facility may only be built once. If you cannot afford any constructions gain ●○ (emergency supply drop) instead of building.

Roll on the catastrophe table and apply the results. If a functional facility is damaged or destroyed as a result, move the bead to the relevant indicator box on the catastrophe table. If the catastrophe results in a loss of ● or ○ that cannot be paid using beads in the **landing site**, the civilization ends, and the colony is lost!

If any constructions are damaged, attempt to repair one of them: roll 1d6. On a result of 4-6, one damaged construction becomes functional.

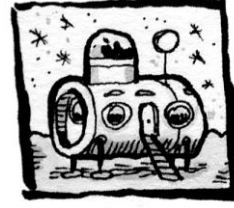
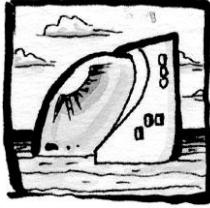
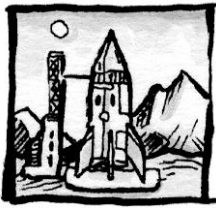
Choose any one functional facility and take the action indicated.

Note that the **Megastructure** action triggers the end of the Alien civilization (in a good way)!

Alien Facilities	Roll	Catastrophe
SUPPLY CACHE Build: No cost, gain ○○.	1	Founders' Day No catastrophe occurs. Take a day and celebrate instead.
POWERPLANT Build: Pay ○●, req. water or magma. Action: <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Harvest</u> water or magma. Ability: +1 to repair rolls. Online	2	Storm IF the <i>Powerplant</i> is functional, damage it. OTHERWISE , lose ○○. Damaged → Destroyed
AGRICOMPLEX Build: Pay ○●, requires. access to water or biome. Add alien biome. Action: <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Harvest</u> biome. Online	3	Biohazard IF the <i>Agricomplex</i> is functional, damage it. OTHERWISE , lose ●●. Damaged → Destroyed
ORGONE CATHODE Build: Pay ○● or <u>exploit</u> gems or ore. Action: <input type="checkbox"/> reduce the next build cost by ○ or ●. Online	4	Cascade failure IF the <i>Cathode</i> is functional, damage it. OTHERWISE , lose ● or ○. Damaged → Destroyed
UPLIFT FACILITY Build: Pay ○● or <u>exploit</u> primordial monsters. Ability: Pay ○ costs with ● and vice versa. Online	5	Monster attack IF the <i>Uplift facility</i> is functional, damage it. OTHERWISE , lose ●. Damaged → Destroyed
MEGASTRUCTURE Build: Pay ○○○● Ability: <u>Prosper</u> : the Alien civilization comes to and end. Online	6	Extinction threat IF the <i>megastructure</i> is functional, damage it. OTHERWISE , lose ●○. Damaged → Destroyed

Alien Lore

The things on this page aren't rules. These are just some rambling thoughts about aliens that might help you make a better and more interesting alien invasion.



CONCERNING ALIENS

The universe is unfathomably wide, immeasurably deep, and its gulfs are measured in more ways than mere distance. There are demi-planes and pockets of reality a stone's throw away which are nevertheless so foreign to our experience that the imagination balks to conceive them. The next valley over may house people more bizarre to our reckoning than inhabitants of the third planet to the left of Fomalhaut, and by the passage of a mere few millennia, this very spot may be altered beyond recognition. And that's where the aliens come in.

The Aliens are not from around here. This place isn't a good home for them. They don't belong here. Yet here they are. They have chosen or been forced to survive in an environment that doesn't want them. The reasons for this are up to you. They may be colonists of a proud race seeking a foothold across the cosmos. Or they may be dimensional invaders from a warped or inverted reality, refugees from the distant future or past, or even inhabitants of a parallel world that seems, at first glance, not to be so different from our own.

The Alien civilization starts with everything against it. Disaster threatens them every turn, and they begin with scant resources to resist. But with careful planning and some luck, they may slowly build up their defenses and even prosper.

ALIEN FACILITIES

The aliens do not build a lot of rooms like other civilizations, so feel free to make their facilities as large as you want. While each one can just be a single building or room, you can also make them several rooms in size or even larger.

Here are a few inspirations for alien facilities:

Landing Site: Downed ship, seed pod, dimension door, domes, spartan modules, soaring towers, saucers, non-Euclidean labyrinth

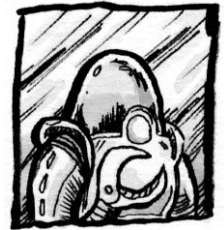
Supply Drop: Landing pad, warehouse, fuel tanks, space elevator

Power Plant: Hydro dam, reactor core, geothermal, solar farm, psychic mill

Orgone Cathode: Antenna array, geomantic complex, resonating crystal, big frickin' laser

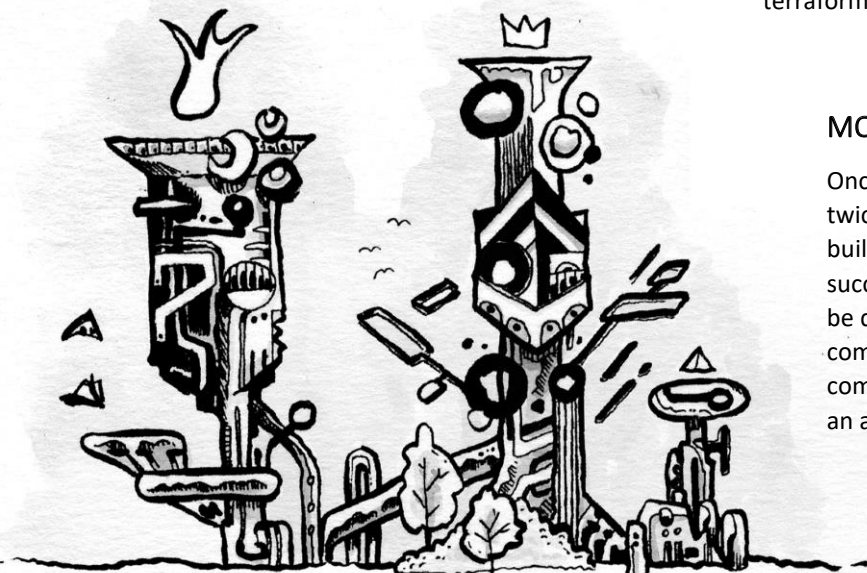
Uplift Facility: Genetic research center, biogenesis facility, mind control tower

Megastructure: Domed city, borehole, terraforming factory, giant robot, ark



MORE THOUGHTS

Once you have played the Alien civilization once or twice, try some challenges: see how quickly you can build a megastructure and complete the Age with a successful civilization. With the right dice rolls, it can be done in very few turns. Alternately, see if you can complete the Age with every facility built. If you can complete it with every facility built and online, that is an achievement worth bragging about.



THE DEEP ELF CIVILIZATION

When the Deep Elf civilization spawns, follow the SETUP instructions. Then, each turn, at the beginning of the turn, follow the Deep Elf civilization LIFECYCLE. When the Deep Elf Civilization ends (and it will end) follow the END OF CIVILIZATION instructions.

SETUP

The Deep Elves must start in a stratum that does not touch the surface. If every stratum touches the surface, set up the Deep Elves in a random stratum.

Start the Deep Elves with 3● and 3○. Deep Elf ● are Elf nobles. ○ are wealth and slaves. Draw three sanctums for the ● and three pits for the ○. This is the Deep Elf capitol. Give it a name.

As you add ● and ○ to the city or colonies, create new sanctums and pits to house them if you need to.

DEEP ELF ACTIONS

Colonize: Move 1● and 1○ from the capitol (if available) to a location that has usable resources and no colony. Create new rooms for them at the colony site. Usable resources are ore, gems, water, magma, monsters, a nexus, or biomes.

Export: Move 1 bead (● or ○) from this group to another group.

CAPITOL CONSTRUCTIONS

Each may only be built once, except the *Escape Route*.

Abattoir: Mark as a tomb (☒).

Arena: Remove 1● and 1○.

Foreman's Guild: Export 1○ from the Capitol to a mining colony.

Expeditionary Force: One colony (you choose), loses ●.

Breeding Pit: Change 1○ into a ●.

Opera House: add 1● and 1⚙.

Escape Route: Explore towards the surface. This can be built multiple times.

LIFECYCLE (CAPITOL)

Expand (add 1● to the capitol).

Explore for useful resources.

Each colony follows its own lifecycle (see below). Do this in any order you choose.

IF the Elves can reach any colonizable sites that don't already have colonies, Colonize a new site. See the Deep Elf actions for how.

Build a construction at the capitol.

IF the Elves have reached the surface, the Deep Elf civilization ends.

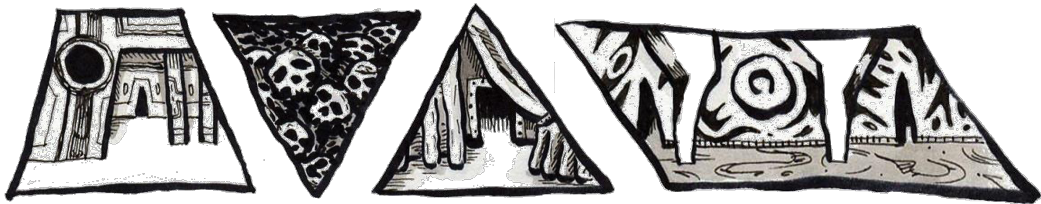
IF the capitol has twice as many ○ as ●, the Deep Elf civilization ends.

In the spring, the Deep Elf nobles initiate their youths into adulthood.

Deep Elf colonies are hives of activity during the busy months of summer.

It is propitious to expand during the sacred months at the close of the Deep Elf year.

The Deep Elf civilization continues until they reach the surface, igniting the great war with the surface dwellers, or the slaves revolt and tear down the Deep Elven empire.



MINING COLONY LIFECYCLE

Deep Elf colonies near ore or gems are mining colonies.

Exploit ore or gems (adds 1○ to the colony).

IF something was exploited this turn, Export 1○ to the Capitol.

Otherwise, Build one mining colony expansion here.

Mining Colony Expansions
Each mining colony expansion can only be built once.
Excavations. Mark fortification (☒).
Saloon: add 1⚙ here.
Rebellion: The capitol loses ●.

PROCESSING COLONY LIFECYCLE

Deep Elf colonies near water or magma are processing colonies.

IF any mining colony did an exploit move this turn, add 1○ to this colony and Export 1○ to the Capitol.

Otherwise, Build one processing colony expansion here.

Processing Colony Expansions
Each processing colony expansion can only be built once.
Slag Pit: Mark as a tomb (☒).
Infrastructure: add 1⚙ here.
Riot: Another colony (you pick) loses ●.

MILITARY COLONY LIFECYCLE

Deep Elf colonies near primordial monsters, biomes or a nexus are military colonies.

Exploit monsters or biome.

IF, there was nothing to exploit here, Fight the nearest colony or the Capitol.

OTHERWISE, Build one processing colony expansion here.

Military Colony Expansions
Each military colony expansion can only be built once.
Convoy: <u>Export</u> 1○ to the capitol.
Defenses. Add fortification (☒).
Wanderlust: <u>Explore</u> towards the surface.

END OF CIVILIZATION

When the deep Elf civilization ends, remove all ● and ○. Leave any ⚙. Then place 1○ in an empty sanctum in the Deep Elf capitol. When you start the age of monsters, spawn the first monster drawn in a pit in the Deep Elf capitol instead of in a random stratum.

Deep Elf Lore

The things on this page aren't rules. These are just some rambling thoughts about Deep Elves that might help you make a better and more interesting Deep Elf civilization.

CONCERNING THE DEEP ELVES

Humans do not know where the Deep Elves came from, but sages speculate they are a branch of Elfdom that was trapped in the underworld by a great cataclysm and who evolved to survive in that harsh habitat. The Deep Elves tell a different story. Their histories say that the surface Elves are a degenerate offshoot of Deep Elf stock exiled for a hideous crime now forgotten.

The Deep Elves build vast underground cities and complexes, often with separate apartments or wards given over to pleasure, commerce, labor, and craft. Their lords and ladies live lives of sublime luxury, magic, and art. To maintain this constant indulgence, however, requires a constant flow of resources, power, and slaves. If the ballrooms and pleasure domes of the Deep Elven civilization are the pinnacle of excess, their pits and mills foster the deepest wells of misery.



Deep Elf **Mining Colonies** take many forms, open pits manned by chain gangs of convicts, vast quarries worked by monstrous excavators, mazes of hard-rock tunnels, or oil wells and gas mines worked by rough and ready bands of contractors and conscripts. Rebellion can take many forms. Do the workers rise up en-masse? Or do the overseers turn laborers into an army to win independence from the capitol?



Military adventurism is an important safety valve for Deep Elf culture. Every noble family has its share of hotheaded youths, eager for combat, apprentice wizards, hungry for lore. Such ventures are a source of glory and booty, but they can also turn sour. Will the disaffected heroes of a proud civilization turn on their elders? Or will wanderlust lead them so far away that there is no way to return.

The Deep Elf civilization is the most chaotic of the civilizations, rarely holding a steady state for long. Deep Elf civilizations can sometimes collapse into slave revolt almost immediately, or they can run until they've consumed all available resources before they finally reach the surface and are destroyed.

Construction choices play a big role in how long the Deep Elf civilization hangs on. As a challenge, you can try to make it last as long as possible. Or see if you can get it to end it in 3 turns, or even fewer.

When you build your Deep Elf civilization, think about the placement of sanctums and pits. Will you draw your sanctums on a different level from the pits, or intersperse them? Are the Sanctums on a higher level, as befits the noble ruling class? Perhaps in a Deep Elf city, the more important you are, the deeper underground your home is!



Processing colonies do the work of turning raw materials into goods, weapons, luxuries, machines, and magic. A Deep Elf processor might be a foundry, a forge, a chemical plant, or an arcane distillery of industrial mana.

In prosperous times, they are hives of activity, but when goods are scarce, they become lairs of dangerous indolence, as the masters become careless and besotted while the workers and slaves grow ever more restless.



THE DEMON CIVILIZATION

When the Demon civilization spawns, follow the SETUP instructions once. Then, each turn, at the beginning of the turn, follow the Demon civilization LIFECYCLE. When the Demon Civilization ends follow the END OF CIVILIZATION instructions.

1 SETUP

Set aside 10● and place them in the hexagon below. These are members of the Infernal Assembly, Demons all. Each ● represents a Demon. When all but 1● are gone from the Assembly, the Demon Civilization ends.

At a random location on the map, draw large room and label it as the Demon Gate. This is how the Demons enter your world.

Give the room some feature that reflects the Demon's home plane: fire, ice, water, magma, darkness, mithral, void, light, biome, or nothing at all as you choose.

2 THE TUNNELLER

Place a unique token on the map at the Demon Gate. This is the Tunneller, a monster or engine that the Demons use to dig tunnels, explore the underground, and gather resources to exploit in their quest for dominance.

When the Tunneller moves, it leaves a tunnel behind it. The Tunneller starts at the Demon Gate, but after that it ignores the place and never returns.

3 LIFECYCLE

Do these steps in order each turn until the civilization ends.

Remove one Demon ● from the Assembly.

Demons scheme and bicker among themselves endlessly.

IF there is a non-Demon ● at the Tunneller's location, Build a *Demon Node* there.
OTHERWISE the tunneller Explores towards the nearest resource.

The Demons hunger for sacrifice to placate ravenous powers and, well, themselves.

The Tunneller wanders, moving 1 finger in a random direction.

The Tunneller wanders while the Demons carry on their revels.

IF there is a resources near the Tunneller's current location, move the Tunneller to that resource, Exploit it, and then Build the appropriate Demonic Construction. Place the ○ from the exploitation on the Demon Gate.

The natural wealth and wonders of this plane are nothing but tools to exploit in the war for dominance.

4 DEMONIC CONSTRUCTION

Build these at the Tunneller's current location, unless otherwise specified. Each may be built multiple times.

Resource	Demonic Construction
●	Charnel Pit.
Ore	Demonic Palace. Remove 1● from the Assembly and place it here. This is still a Demon, but no longer part of the Assembly. Place 1⚙ here.
Gems	Ego Prison. The first time you build this, remove 1● from the Assembly and place it here. This is still a Demon, but no longer part of the Assembly.
Water	Hideous Engine. Add an epic treasure here (⚙) the first time you build this.
Magma	Incineration Shrine.
Biome	Deeply Bound Corruption. Place 1● here.
Surface Biome	Pride Stone. Mark as a tomb ☒.
Nexus	Infernal Sanctum. Build near the Demon Gate. Add 1● to the assembly. This may only be built once.

5 END OF CIVILIZATION

If at any time there is only 1 or no Demonic ● left in the Assembly, the Demonic Gate closes and the Assembly vanishes. Remove the Tunnel Worm and replace it with 1●.

At the beginning of the Age of Monsters, select a monster from the Monster Deck and spawn it at any one location with a ●. If it is a Demonic monster, give it 1 additional ●.

Remove all other ● and ○ but not ⚙.

Demon Lore

The things on this page aren't rules. These are just some rambling thoughts regarding the capricious Demons that might help you make a better Demon civilization.

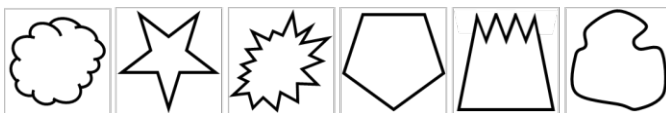
CONCERNING DEMONS

There is very little agreement between historical documents as to the shape, reason, and nature of Demons. The records do agree, however, that the Demons come from a different dimension and have a generally bad attitude. Their reasons for coming here are unknown, but it has been speculated that they were exiled, stranded, marooned, or are hiding from something.

Whatever their reasons, the nature of demo civilization is one of a constant struggle with only one victor. The demonic drive to explore, exploit, and construct is entirely subsidiary to the one goal of besting all rivals. When all but one demon have been slain, driven off, or have quit the fight, the winner departs for parts unknown, perhaps to rule as a king in its own realm, or to seek conquest in some other.

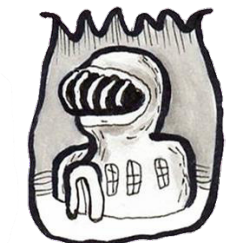
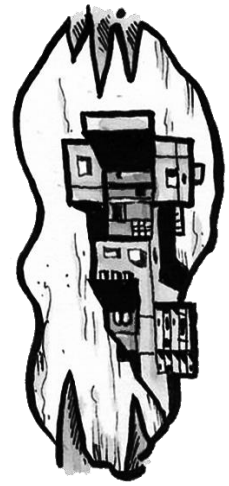
DEMON ROOMS

Demons are consummate egoists, and each prides itself on having a unique aesthetic. The demon civilization is an opportunity to indulge in as wide a variety of shapes and architectures as you like. You might choose to make their tunnels straight, curvaceous, tangled, or jagged and zig-zaggy. Or you might use a combination of these forms, or all of them. Here is a selection of Demon rooms shapes. Try to use them all before your civilization ends.



DEMON CIVILIZATIONS

Some Demonic enclaves take on a single theme or architectural style, dictated by the most powerful member. Baroque, cyclopean, Dada, and brutalist are common examples. Rarely, an enclave has no nominal leader, and so their constructions are a mad hodge-podge, dictated by the whims of the individual members.



10 USEFUL DEMONS

In case it is useful to you, here are 10 demonic entities and their attributes:

- **Efluvivex:** Demon lord of putrescence and all the benefits thereof. Pustule-shaped chambers overflowing with mire and gore
- **The Collector:** Cold and calculating. Knows your next move before you do. Makes everything look like steampunk contraptions, clock guys, and abandoned boiler plants.
- **Metastockaplex:** Brutally efficient. Makes everything round if it can.
- **ComlsheX Maw:** Totally batshit insane. Opulent dining halls with no exits. Dead-end stairways. Upside-down rooms with wonky gravity. Lots of velvet.
- **Name Redacted:** Likes jagged edges that can draw blood if you're not careful.
- **Umok:** Clever and refined. Knows when to make a deal. Fond of ebony, gold filigree, and black marble.
- **Tdx67:** Vain. Everything it makes has its creepy face on it for some reason.
- **Name Redacted:** Fond of hexagons. Favors a discomforting alien aesthetic that grows on you after a while. Has a soothing minimalist soundtrack playing in the background.
- **The other one:** Hates any design that someone else came up with, including most good ideas in architecture. Has to be the first to think of anything.
- **Lrud'sdj:** If you can call a nightmare theatre of blood, blades, and crushing boulders falling from the sky an aesthetic, then Lrud'sdj has one.

THE DWARVEN CIVILIZATION

When the Dwarven civilization spawns, follow the SETUP instructions once. Then play out the Dwarven civilization LIFECYCLE each turn. When the Dwarven Civilization ends, follow the END OF CIVILIZATION instructions.

SETUP

Dwarves enter the map from the side. Pick a spot on either side of the map near a source of mineable ore. If no such source exists, pick a random spot.

Draw a Dwarven tunnel entering the map, leading to your chosen founding location, and ending in four bead-sized rooms. Place a ● in two of these rooms. These are dormitories. In the other two place ○. These are vaults. Dwarven ● represent Dwarves. Dwarven ○ represent treasures.

Make up a name for your Dwarven founding and write it on the map.

LIFECYCLE

Do these steps in order each turn until the civilization ends.

Expand (add 1● to the Dwarven civilization).

Dwarven families grow and relatives from far-off lands come to join the foundation.

Exploit ore, gems, or resources that can be mined. Remember to add 1 ○ to the civilization when you do this. If a *Furnace* has been built, the Dwarves may exploit biomes in this way as well.

The Dwarves mine for treasures and fine ore or send out expeditions to find new, rich veins to exploit.

IF no resources were exploited, Explore.

Build one Dwarven construction. See the tables below for what they may build.

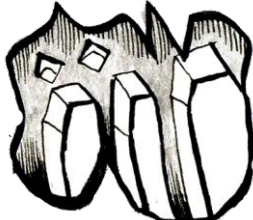
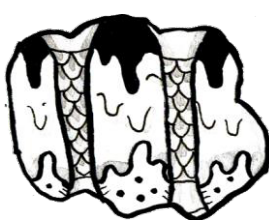
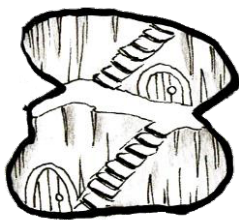
The Dwarves craft and build.

IF the Dwarven population is 10● or more, the Dwarven Civilization ends in a sudden orgy of violence and recriminations.

The Dwarves take counsel, count their grudges, and sing of past glories.

END OF CIVILIZATION

When the Dwarven Civilization ends, remove all Dwarven ● and ○ except for epic treasures (⚙). Proceed to the Age of Monsters.



BUILDING DWARVEN CONSTRUCTIONS

When you build, count the Dwarven ●'s. That's your population. Choose a construction that requires that population (Pop) or lower.

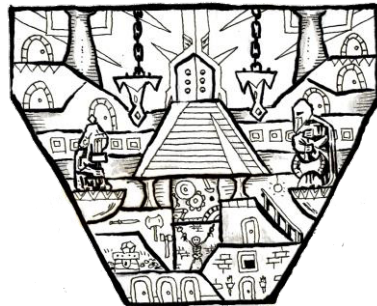
Once you've built a Powerplant or Smelter, this allows you to build from the **craft** or **industry** tables.

Build only one of each construction, at most.

A smelter is required for craft constructions

Pop	Craft Constructions
6	The Gates of Dwarf. Construct a grand entrance to the delving. Mark as a fortification(⊠).
7	Foundry or Blast Furnace.
9	Doom weapon. Add an epic treasure here (⚙).
10	The Dwarf War. Draw a great battlefield.

Pop	Common Constructions
2	Tomb. Mark as a tomb (⊠).
3	Workshops.
4	Drinking Hall. Mark as a fortification(⊠).
4	Trophy Hall. Add an epic treasure here (⚙).
5	Powerplant. Allows you to build industry constructions.
5	Smelter. Allows you to build craft constructions
5	Citadel. Add fortification (⊠).
6	The City. Now this foundation is a city. Give it a name, and add a landmark: library, throne, statue, monolith, basilica, or pillar.
7	Furnace. Allows <u>Exploit</u> biomes.
8	Bridge, Dam, or Cistern.
9	Imperial Throne Room. Add an epic treasure here (⚙).
10	They Delve too Deep. Draw a shaft off the bottom of the page.



A powerplant is required for industry constructions

Pop	Industry Constructions
6	The Underground Highway. Draw a tunnel leading off the page to the left and right.
7	Manufactory or Assembly Line.
9	An impossible engine. take a free, additional <u>Build</u> move now.
10	Industrial Accident. Draw destruction and waste. Wreck stuff.

Dwarven Lore

The things on this page aren't rules. These are just some rambling thoughts about Dwarves that might help you make a better Dwarven civilization.

CONCERNING DWARVES

Dwarves are a clannish folk who harbor a deep love of treasure and occasionally explode in hideous displays of violence. Dwarven constructions are strictly organized and highly geometric, though each fortress will have its own idiosyncrasies.

Every Dwarf colony has its own mood; its own traditions, and it's own take on life. Take moment and think about the Dwarves you're going to make. What's their demeanor? Why did they choose to come here? What's it like to live in their colony? What do they hope to achieve?

Think about how you want your Dwarves to be. Everybody has their own take on Dwarves, so make your Dwarven civilization match your take.

DWARVEN ROOMS

When you draw your first Dwarven dormitory, choose one of the shapes from the list below for that room.

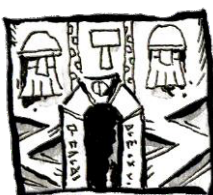
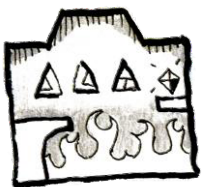
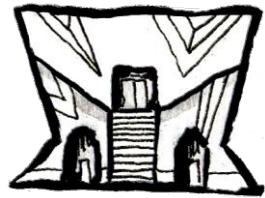
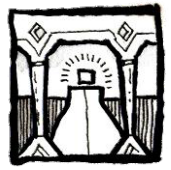
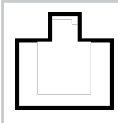
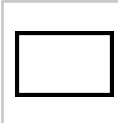
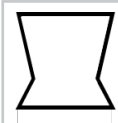
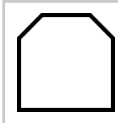
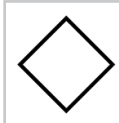
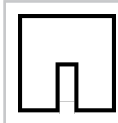
Make all your dormitories that shape. This will make Dwarven rooms distinctive throughout your game of How to Host a Dungeon.

Do the same when you draw your first vault. Choose one of the shapes and use it for all your vaults. Use some of the other shapes for other rooms: mines, workshops, and other special buildings.

Alternately, add some shapes to the list or make up your own. Some of my Dwarven rooms are on the side of this page. Don't go this far! I go totally overboard when I play this game.

If you've played this civilization before, choose a theme for your Dwarven fortress and see if you can keep to it. Or try to get all the epic treasures. Or build all the possible fortifications.

Some Dwarven room shapes:



FURTHER INSPIRATIONS

Agora. Dwarves are not overly fond of large open spaces. They do, however, love to argue, and this requires a space of some sort. Known also variously as the Agora, Senate, Congress, Great Hall, Darrow, Grudge market, or Delf.

Aqueduct. Aqueduct is a poor name for some of the hydraulic engineering Dwarves get up to—hot and cold running water with fantastic sewers, steam pipes, baths, flumes, and fountains.

Doom Weapon. A masterful weapon worthy of the title of artifact. Give it a name or choose one: Hammer of Zil, The Volcano horn, Great Scone, Armor of 1000 blows.

Drinking Hall. When Dwarves got to drinking, they get to talking, and when they get to talking they get to grudging. And when Dwarves get to grudging, they get to fighting. Lock the doors until they're done.

Gates of Dwarf. While some Dwarven foundations are entered through a simple door or hole, and some have no surface entrance at all, other have impossibly grand vestibules, festooned with

forbidding statues, embrasure for cannon, or gold leaf, as the mood of the fortress dictates.

Impossible engine. Perpetual motion? Thinking machines? Infinite work? Tireless golems? All have been dreamt by Dwarven engineers, and some have been built.

Manufactory. A hall given over to the manufacture of specific goods. When you build one, name it from the following list, or create your own: Brewery, assembly line, studio, laboratory, crucible, smithy, glassworks, atelier, loom, maker space.

Powerplant. Dwarves are ingenious in the capture of energy and its transformation into useful work. Powerplants are often placed near abundant resources. When you draw a powerplant, place it judiciously and label it: geothermal plant, turbine, windmill, tesla coil, mana battery, muscle wheel, or something else.

Trophy Hall. The Trophy Hall is basically a drinking hall, but with a slightly different décor and a much better menu.

THE MAGICIAN CIVILIZATION

When the Magician civilization spawns, follow the SETUP instructions once. Then, each turn, at the beginning of the turn, follow the Magician civilization LIFECYCLE. When the Magician Civilization ends follow the END OF CIVILIZATION instructions.

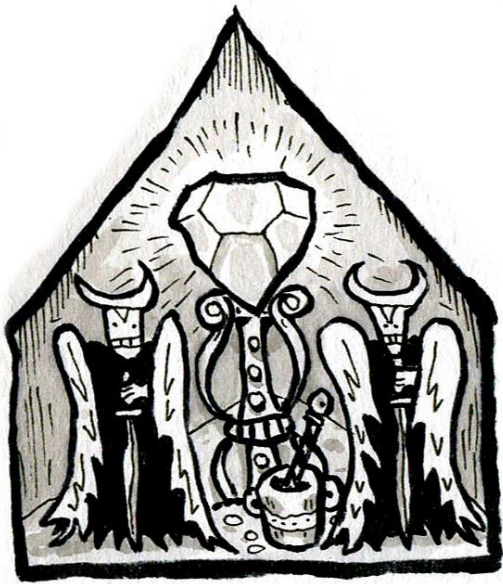


SETUP

At a random point on the surface, draw a large pillar. This is the Summoning Stone, where Magicians gather to summon Jinn.

Near the Summoning Stone, draw a tower and put 1 ● in it. Magician civilization ● are Magicians and ○ are Jinn.

When new Magician ● are added, either place them in buildings that do not contain any other beads or draw new towers or underground chambers for them.



END OF CIVILIZATION

When the Magician civilization ends, remove all Magician ● and ○. Do not remove ☼.

If the Magician civilization ended in Vengeance, draw a new surface line that at least partially buries the old Magician buildings.

If you have built a Menagerie or Labyrinth, spawn a random monster group at one of those locations at the beginning of the Age of Monsters.

LIFECYCLE

Expand (add 1 Magician ●).

Add 1 ○ at the Summoning Stone.

When the stars dictate, the Magicians call a convocation of powers and summon a Jinn to do their bidding.

Explore towards resources that have not been previously exploited.

At their bidding, the Jinn explores and expands the Magicians' labyrinth of tunnels, looking for new sources of enchantment.

IF the Magicians have access to a resource they have not yet used to build, Build the appropriate Magician construction.

OTHERWISE Build a Vault somewhere under the Summoning Stone and move the Jinn at the Summoning Stone to the vault.

It is perilous to transact with Jinn, but the Magicians must complete their work.

IF there are seven or more Vaults, Build Vengeance and the civilization ends.

IF there are seven or more Magicians, Build Diaspora and the civilization ends.

The Magicians can only bind so many idle Jinn before the Jinn break the bond of servitude and take vengeance on their tormentors.

MAGICIAN CONSTRUCTIONS

Each construction other than a Vault may only be built once. If both constructions for a resource have been built, that resource may not be exploited to built again.

The **Cost** for a construction includes some resources, and sometimes a Jinn. The Jinn must come from the Summoning Stone. Jinn in vaults can't be used for construction purposes.

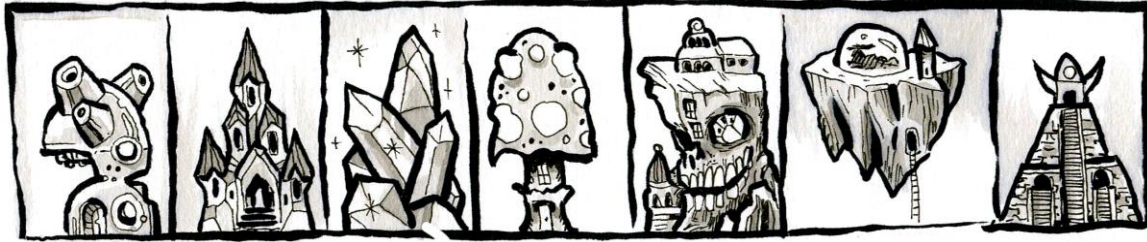
Location indicates whether the construction should be built above ground or below ground.



Cost	Location	Building
Ore, Jinn	Above	Mausoleum: Mark as a tomb (☒). Place an epic treasure (☼).
Ore	Below	Catacomb: Mark as a tomb (☒). Place an epic treasure (☼).
Gems, Jinn	Above	Orrery: Add an epic treasure here (☼).
Gems	Below	Omphalos: This location is a source of Magic, but it cannot be <u>exploited</u> by the Magicians.
Water, Jinn	Either	Fountain of the Naiads: Add an epic treasure (☼).
Water	Either	Cistern or Turbine.
Magma	Above	Bridge or Alchemist's Foundry.
Magma, Jinn	Below	Forge of the Cyclopes: Add an epic treasure (☼).
Biome, Jinn	Above	Witchwood.
Biome	Below	Pleasure Dome.
Monster	Above	Menagerie.
Monster, Jinn	Below	Labyrinth. Mark as a fortification(☒).
Nexus	Either	Lyceum Arcanum: Draw large enough for three Magician ●.

Lore of Magicians

The things on this page aren't rules. These are just some rambling thoughts about Magicians and their weird civilization that you might find useful.



CONCERNING MAGICIANS

The Magicians (known also variously as the Wizards, the Sages, the Demiurges, and the Hermetics) are a surface-dwelling civilization whose works are doomed to be lost and forgotten.

Each year, the Magicians gather to summon Jinn, whom they enslave or bind into magical constructions. Jinn carry out the Magicians commands. When Jinn Explore, they may travel along existing tunnels, or dig new ones as they wish. Jinn always seek new resource sites to exploit.

The magician civilization is a civilization with a purpose. The magicians aren't just delving and building, they're doing it for a reason. What that reason is, is up to you. The Wizards might be seeking the secret of eternal life, or godlike power. They might be trying to transcend this plane of existence, or forever alter it so it's more to their liking.

A magician civilization is an opportunity to test the boundaries of the mundane and imagine miracles.



MAGICIAN ROOMS

The magician civilization is less a series of rooms than a growing magical city. Maybe this sounds a bit daunting. But in the end, a city is just a series of rooms above ground. Simple shapes can represent buildings as easily as they do caves or chambers. A square can be a house. A tall rectangle is a tower. A triangle is a pyramid, and so on.

For your magician civilization, choose one shape for Magician dwellings. Choose another for vaults. After that, vary the other buildings according to your whim, because magic that isn't whimsical isn't magic at all.

The civilization may end in Vengeance or Diaspora. How you represent those eventualities on the map I leave up to you.

MAGICIAN CIVILIZATIONS

The magician civilization is a civilization of wonder workers, and that can take many forms. Here are a few possibilities:

- Alien technomages wielding technology that's so advanced and weird it may as well be magic.
- Otherdimensional elf-folk living in more-perfect-than-perfect fairytale castles, full of capricious humors, pursuing inscrutable ends.
- Elemental hackers whose grasp of inner code of nature lets them bend, and even break, the rules.
- A race of psychedelic space wizards, mystically entwined with the universe, their minds permanently blown by the surrealistic wonders only they can perceive.
- Craven-hearted sorcerers, pursuing the black arts, dwelling in the hollowed-out husks of demons and Jinn.
- Ivory-towered scholastics, at once book-wise and world-foolish, their research a threat to reality itself.
- Blood mages who wield fell energies granted through perilous pacts with forbidden powers.
- Capricious demigods directing enslaved creatures of myth to build the perfect monument to their hubris.



Age of Monsters

In an age of monsters, the only law is survival - by tooth and claw, by trickery and trap.

BIRTHING MONSTERS

As the age of monsters begins, take all the monster cards into a stack (also called the **Monster Deck**), shuffle them, then draw three monsters at random. These are your starting monsters. Set the rest aside.

Take the first monster card. Spawn it onto the map in a random location as described in the **Spawning** section, just below. Repeat this process for the other two monsters you drew.

SPAWNING

Spawning is how new monsters arrive in the world. Some monsters have special instructions at the top of the card that modify how and where they spawn and how.

Otherwise, when a monster group spawns, roll a die to select a random stratum. Choose a location in that stratum for the monsters to spawn. If there's already another monster group occupying that location, an **Invasion** occurs (see below).

Collect a number of beads (●, ○, and ★) as shown in the upper-right corner of the monster card. Place them on the map at the chosen location. Draw new rooms to house the beads if you need to, connected by corridors and tunnels, until you have their lair the way you want it.

After you spawn the monster group, put their card on the table and play out their **Lifecycle**, as described below.

INVASION

When a monster group spawns into another monster's lair, an invasion occurs. The two monsters immediately Fight. The loser of the fight is then forced to Relocate to a safer location nearby. The Fight and Relocate actions are explained later in this chapter.

URNS

The Age of Monsters is played in a series of turns, just like the Age of Civilization. During each turn, each group of monsters on the map goes about its business, as described in its lifecycle. At the end of the turn, a new monster group spawns.

At the start of the turn, gather up the monster cards for all the groups that are currently present in the dungeon and shuffle them together. Draw the first card and put the card on the table. Play out the monster's **Lifecycle**, as described on the card.

At the end of every turn except the first, after all the monsters have acted, draw a new monster card from the deck and spawn it into a random stratum.

LIFECYCLE

Each type of monster has a lifecycle printed on its card. The lifecycle describes what that monster does during its turn, listed as a series of actions. Monster actions are underlined on the monster card like this: hunt. Look at the **Actions** section of the rules to see how to do each action.

When a monster takes an action, you make the choices. If the action is to hunt, you decide who or what the monster hunts. If it's to move, you decide where the monster moves to and why.

Some of the actions in the lifecycle are mandatory and some are optional. Here's how to read a monster's lifecycle:

1. First, most monsters have an action they **Always** take. If the monster can do this, it does it.
2. Second, most monsters have another action they can take **IF** the conditions are right. This is straightforward. If the thing is true, and the action is possible, the monster does it.

***For example:** The Ogre card reads "If unable to hunt, Relocate to better territory". So if an Ogre is not able to carry out the hunt action (for example, because there's nobody nearby for them to hunt), they relocate to a better place—presumably a place where they'll have a better chance of hunting.*

3. Finally, most monsters have a bunch of other things they can do, each indicated by a box (□). The monster may do any ONE of these actions, but only one. You decide which. If none of them make sense, the monster does nothing else.

Monsters also sometimes have other instructions that modify their behavior. These appear at the bottom of the card after the lifecycle.

Once a monster's lifecycle is complete. Draw the next monster and carry out its lifecycle.

Once every active monster group has taken its turn, draw a new monster card from the deck and Spawn it into a random stratum to end the turn.

THE CARDS

For this age, you will need a deck of monster cards. Each card shows the tags, actions, and other information about one type of monster.

THE CARDS ARE INCLUDED IN A SEPARATE DOCUMENT. PRINT THEM AND CUT THEM OUT TO PLAY THIS AGE.

TAGS

Monsters have tags. These are shown at the top of the card. For example, Dwarves have the tags **lawful**, **humanoid**, and **miner**.



Some actions and rules mention these tags. For example, Goblins can Ally with monsters that have the **humanoid** tag.

DENIZENS AND ALPHA PREDATORS

There are two main categories of monsters, alpha predators and denizens. Some monsters have actions that can only be used against denizens or alpha predators. This is shown on their monster card.



Alpha predators, indicated by the crown icon, are the most powerful and murderous creatures.



Denizens, indicated by the skull icon, make up the remainder of monsters in the dungeon.

Some monsters have additional symbols that show they come from a How to Host a Dungeon scenario or expansion.

CONFLICTS AND ATTACKS

Some actions, like fight and extort, are conflict actions. They are always targeted at another group and involve rolling dice.

When a monster group takes a conflict action, each group rolls 1d6. If the losing group has any ★'s, they may remove them, one-for-one, to add +1 each to their dice roll. Whichever monster group rolls higher wins. The monster group taking the action wins a tie. Look at the description of each action to see what happens as a result.

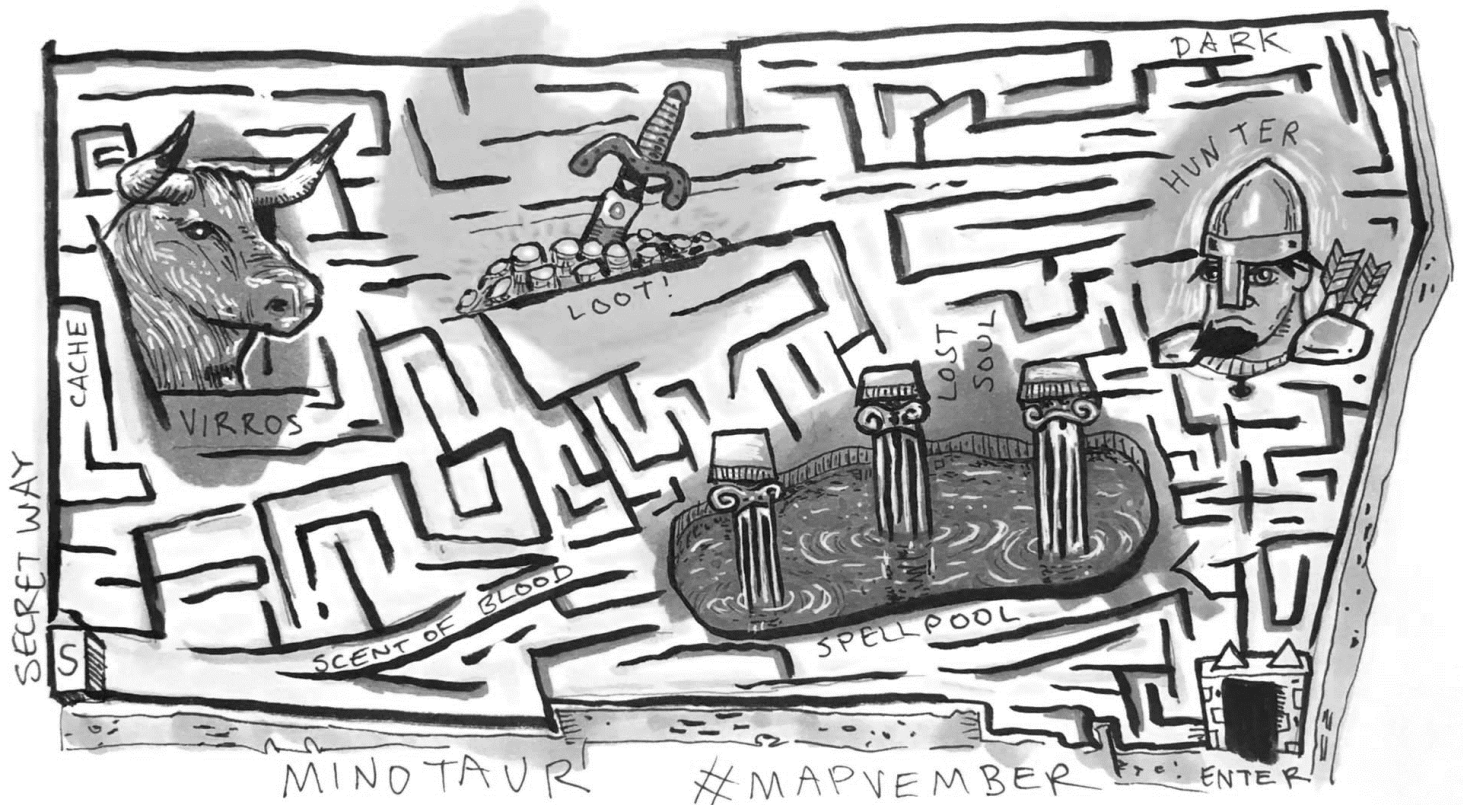
END OF THE AGE OF MONSTERS

The Age of Monsters ends when one monster or group of monsters becomes powerful enough to ascend to the role of Villain.

There are three ways the Age of Villainy can be triggered:

- When a monster group reaches 6 ●, that group may become the Villain.
- When a monster group obtains 6 ○, that group may become the Villain.
- Some monsters, such as Dwarves or a Wizard, may become the Villain when they build a particular construction. This is indicated on their monster card.

When this happens, the Age of Monsters ends and the Age of Villainy begins. See the Age of Villainy rules for what to do.



ACTIONS

If an action states that some resource is required, transferred, or used up, the monster group needs that resource to take the action.

Effects that last for a full turn take effect immediately, and last through the entire next turn of the game too.

Action	Description
<u>Ally</u> (conflict)	This is a conflict. If the acting monster wins, neither group can make an attack against the other monster for a complete turn. Also, if the target had a ★, the active group gets one too.
<u>Breed</u>	The active monsters add +1●. Place the new bead in an available room or draw a new one for it.
<u>Bribe</u> (conflict)	The active monsters transfer one of their ○ to the target, then both roll dice. If the active group wins, the target can't make an attack against them for a full turn.
<u>Build</u>	<p>The active monsters build something. This works just like in the Age of Civilization. The active monsters spend the resources required (req). Draw the construction on the map. Some constructions produce useful bonuses (gain). Sometimes a construction has no requirements, or the requirement is a previous construction or a resource. Unless otherwise stated, each group may only build a particular construction once.</p> <p>For example, the Dwarves "Hall" construction looks like this: <i>Hall</i> (req ○ / gain 1●). It costs 1○ to build, and the Dwarves gain 1● when it is built.</p> <p>The Troglydites "Garden" construction looks like this: <i>Garden</i> (req water / gain ●). If the Troglydites have access to water, they can build it, gaining 1●.</p>
<u>Exploit</u>	The active monsters mine out or otherwise consume an area of resources about the size of a one-bead room. They gain 1○ in loot. The exploited resources are permanently depleted. Draw a mined-out area, emptied chamber, slag heap or other appropriate sign of exploitation.
<u>Explore</u>	The active monsters explore into the dungeon a few inches in a single direction, digging new tunnels and corridors if needed. This is a way for monsters to expand their lair, find new resources and neighbors, or just expand the dungeon.
<u>Extort</u> (conflict, attack)	The active monsters hit up their neighbors for cash. If they win the conflict, the target transfers 1○ to the active group.
<u>Fight</u> (conflict, attack)	The active monsters attack with murderous intent. If the target's territory includes a fortification (☒), the target adds +1 to their roll. Whichever groups loses the conflict loses 1●.
<u>Harvest</u>	If the active monsters have access to the required resource, they gain 1○.
<u>Hunt</u> (attack)	The active monsters hunt a nearby group that meets their requirements. The target group loses 1●, no roll.
<u>Prepare</u>	The active monsters hatch plans, build traps, prepare sorceries, psych themselves up, or otherwise get ready for trouble. If they don't already have a ★, they gain one.
<u>Recruit</u> (conflict)	The active monsters transfer 1○ to the target group and both groups roll dice. If the active group wins, the target group loses 1● to them and the active groups gains 1●.
<u>Relocate</u>	The active monsters move away, taking their treasures with them, and establish a new lair somewhere else. If they need to dig new tunnels to get there, add those tunnels to the map.
<u>Rout</u> (conflict, attack)	The active monsters attack another group with intent to drive them away. If the active group wins, the target has to relocate away from the attacker and the two groups are no longer considered to be neighbors. The loser leaves behind 1○, if they have any.
<u>Scout</u>	The active monsters check out their surroundings, expanding their effective territory about 1 room in every direction they can reach. Alternately, they may tunnel towards a nearby unconnected dungeon area.
<u>Steal</u> (conflict, attack)	The active monsters pick a target that has some loot and initiate a conflict. If the active group wins, they take 1○ from the target, otherwise the active group loses 1●.
<u>Trade</u> (conflict)	The active monsters approach the target with an offer of trade. If successful, each group may gain 1○ or 1★ (their choice). Otherwise, the active group transfers 1○ to the target, if available. Note that the active group does not need to have 1○ to take the trade action.

A Further Treatise on Monsters

Gentlemen, start your swords.

-saying attributed to Saint Cutbell, founder of the first adventuring guilds.

The Age of Monsters is the heart of How to Host a Dungeon. This is where the real action happens. Here are a few thoughts about playing the monster age.

You're the boss of your monster groups. Make them act the way that makes sense to you. This rulebook is meant to help you do that, not hinder you. If you find yourself wondering if you're following the rules right, do what seems natural. It's almost always the best choice.

Each monster has some tags next to its name. For example, Skeletons have the tag "undead". That means that any action, rule, or instruction that names "undead monsters", refers to skeletons.

If a monster group has no ● left, it's dead. If it had any ★, remove those from the map. If it had any ○, leave them where they lie. Another monster group may pick them up. Take the monster group's card and, unless it has the "unique" tag, shuffle it back into the deck. If it is a unique monster, set it aside. It may never respawn in this game. If a monster group finds any ○ lying around, they can collect it and add it to their hoard, no action required.

Who can a monster group fight? Who can it hunt? Who can it interact with? A monster group can interact with another monster group that touches its territory. This includes someone who's right close by, or who this group has encountered using the explore action or the scout action. We don't keep close track of each monster group's territory in this game. Make your best judgement call about which monster groups are close enough to fight, trade, ally, and so on.

Some monster groups have lots of choices. Which action will they choose? Will they choose the one that's tactically wise? The one that makes the best story? It's entirely your choice. Here's what I do: if I have a really strong feeling for what the group would do, I choose that. Otherwise, I choose what's true to the monster's character.

Here's an example: a group of goblins have developed an intense rivalry with a group of Dwarves. The Dwarves have killed several Goblins. The Goblins have stymied the Dwarves building plans. Given the opportunity to stick it to the Dwarves, that's what the Goblins will choose every time.

For example: I've got an Ogre who isn't doing so well. He's been driven out of his ideal hunting ground by a more powerful monster, and what little treasure he had has been taken away. He's probably not going to have much more impact on the game. So, I come up with a plan. Maybe the right alliance will put him in a position of power. Or maybe if he relocates near a weak group, he can dominate them. I choose what I think is the best option and take it as a challenge to have him come out ahead. Maybe he won't, and that's part of the game too.

A dungeon where everyone tries to make the best tactical choice is very different from one where choices are based on a story, and one that's entirely random may be different still.

What about making up your own monsters? By all means do it! Do it as often as you can. Change the monsters too, if you want to. Make the game your own.



Age of Villainy

During the Age of Villainy, one monster group ascends to greatness, threatening to conquer the dungeon and, after that, the world.

ENTERING INTO VILLAINY

Any monster can trigger the Age of Villainy by reaching 6● or 6○. Some monster groups can trigger the Age of Villainy by constructing specific buildings, for example, the Wizard. This is indicated on their monster cards.

Whichever monster group triggered the Age of Villainy becomes the villain. If more than one monster group achieved it on the same turn, choose one to become the villain.

Next, decide which path of villain that monster group will pursue. If the monster group gained 6●, choose The Horde. If it gained 6○, choose The Empire. If it built a wonder or somehow gained both 6● and 6○ you may choose any villainy.

SETUP

Take the card for the monster that is becoming the villain and place it on the table. It will no longer be picked up and shuffled into the deck every turn. Place the villain card for your chosen villainy next to the monster card.

Each villainy has a SETUP section. This describes how the ascending monster group is transformed by their entry into villainy. Follow the instructions in this section when the Age of Villainy starts.

LIFECYCLE

The Age of Villainy is played out in rounds, just like the Age of Monsters. During each round of the Age of Villainy, the villain follows its lifecycle at the beginning of the turn before any other monsters act.

When the villain takes its turn, it gains all the actions listed on both the monster card **and** the villain card. This means that there may be multiple actions which the monster **ALWAYS** takes. There may also be multiple **IF** choices which trigger further actions. The monster group still only gets to do one of its optional actions, marked with a box (□).

ADDING MONSTERS

Monsters do not spawn as rapidly in the Age of Villainy as they do in the Age of Monsters. During the Age of Villainy, only spawn a new monster group if at least one monster group was eliminated at the end of the last turn.

FINISHING MOVE

Finally, each villainy has a **FINISHING MOVE**. Follow the instructions in this section at the end of each turn in the Age of Villainy. These instructions usually describe how the villain conquers the dungeon, winning the game, or fails.



THE HORDE

When the Horde ascends to villainy, follow the SETUP instructions once. Each round, the Horde takes its monster turn as normal. At the end of the round, after all monsters have taken their turn, The Horde may take its finishing move, if applicable.

The Horde is what happens when growth goes wrong: ravening demons without number, endless armies of goblins, miles of caverns crawling with oozes and fungi.

Choose the horde when the villain has 6 or more ●.

SETUP

Once you have chosen a monster to ascend as The Horde, corrupt the strata where most of its tokens are located.

ENHANCED LIFECYCLE

The Horde retains its current lifecycle. In addition, it gains all the lifecycle actions and options in the Enhanced Lifecycle box on this card.

Remember that monster groups may always reorganize within the area they control. Use this to move horde ● into new strata as you scout them or eliminate other monsters.

NEW ACTIONS

Corrupt: The Horde has the power to corrupt a strata, forever altering it into a more agreeable home for the ever-growing horde. Other monster groups may still inhabit a corrupted strata, but it never becomes un-corrupted.



Enhanced Lifecycle for The Horde

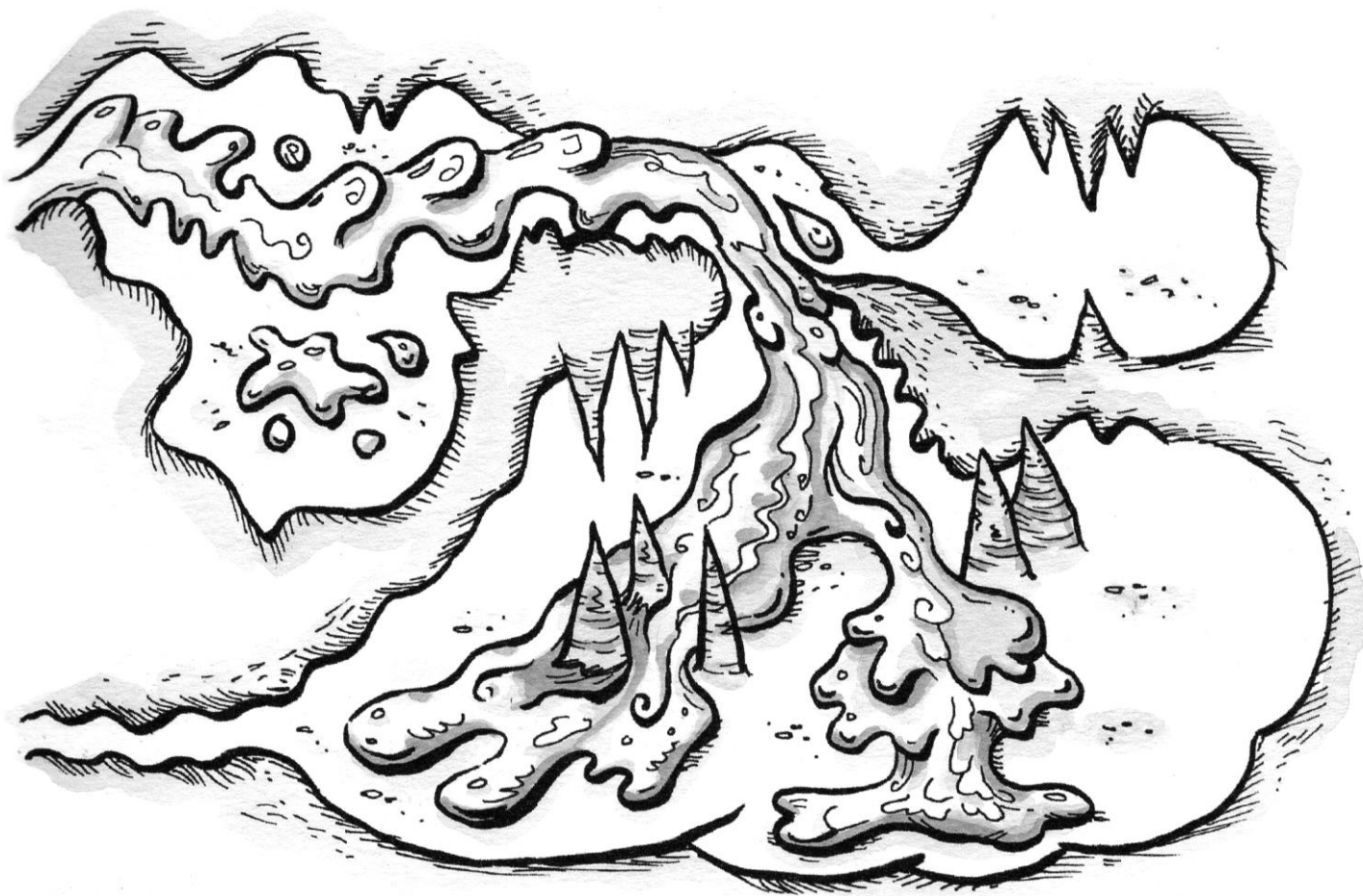
Always scout.

If I did not breed, this turn, and I have less than 6●, breed.

- ☐ Fight denizens.
- ☐ Rout alpha predators.
- ☐ Exterminate: Spend 3● to immediately wipe out a neighboring group I outnumber, then breed.

FINISHING MOVE

IF The Horde has any beads on a stratum that contains no other monsters, and that stratum isn't already corrupted, corrupt that stratum. If all non-surface strata are corrupted at any time, the Horde conquers the world. Game over.



THE EMPIRE

When the Empire ascends to villainy, follow the SETUP instructions once. Each round, the Empire takes its monster turn as normal. At the end of the round, after all monsters have taken their turn, The Empire may take its finishing move, if applicable.

SETUP

If The Empire is your villainy, the monster that has the most ● or ○ may become The Empire (your choice).

If the Empire does not have the good or evil tag, give it one of those now. If the Empire does not have the chaotic or lawful tag, give it one of those now. Make a note of the tags you gave it.

The Empire can never have both the good and evil tags, or both the chaotic and lawful tags.

Build the Capital. This is a free construction that doesn't do anything special, but it should look cool.

ENHANCED LIFECYCLE

The Empire retains its current lifecycle. In addition, it gains all the lifecycle actions and options in the Enhanced Lifecycle box.

NEW ACTIONS

Annex: Roll a conflict with the target group. On a success, the target group becomes a permanent ally, subject to the tax finishing move. If The Empire suffers casualties due to a fight or hunt, it may take those casualties from an annexed group.

Tax: Each monster group that has been annexed transfers 1○ to The Empire, if able.

Enhanced Lifecycle for The Empire

ALWAYS ally with a group I share a tag with.

- ☐ Trade.
- ☐ Fight any monster.
- ☐ Annex a group we're allied with.
- ☐ Build a construction from the Empire build list.

EMPIRE CONSTRUCTIONS

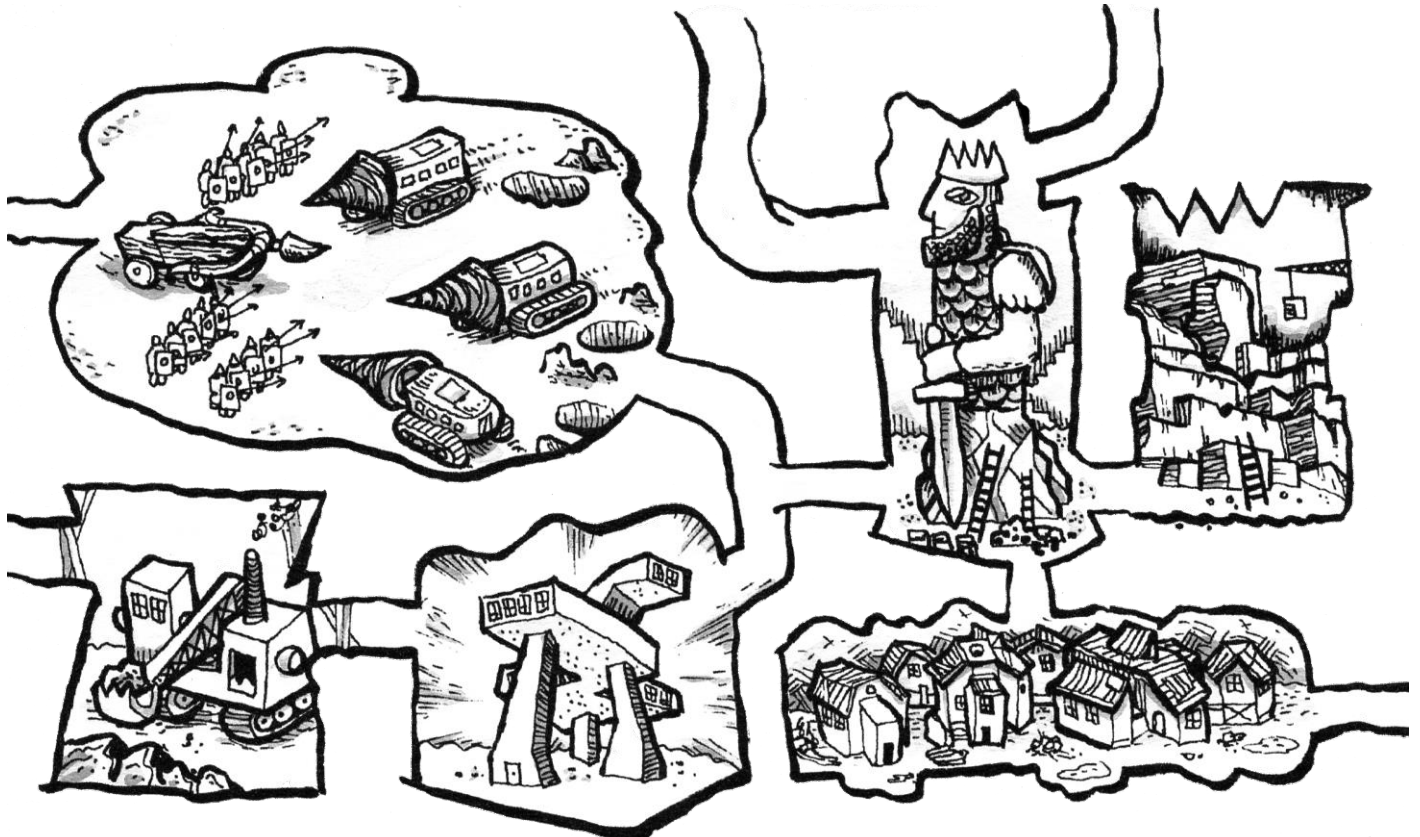
- University* (req ○○ / gain ★)
- Slums* (gain ●)
- Quarry* (req ● / gain ○)
- Ghetto* (req ○ / gain any one tag)
- Statue of the Emperor* (req ○○ / gain ☼)
- Haunted Mausoleum* (gain ☒)
- Great Wall* (req ○○ / gain ☒)

FINISHING MOVE

ALWAYS Tax.

IF there are any empire constructions that can be built, build one.

If half the monster groups on the map have been annexed, the game ends as The Empire begins an epoch of un-challenged rulership.



Thanks

How to Host a Dungeon is a solo game, but I could not have done it myself.

About Me

Tony Dowler is a game designer and artist living in Seattle, Washington, USA.

@tonydowler on Twitter

@tonydowler on Instagram

TonydSeattle on Twitch

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