



The Unofficially Official Guide

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1. Introduction and Credits

I was amazed by how deep Boss Monster really is in terms of strategy and gameplay, and even though it's easy to learn, it's surprisingly difficult to master. Having numerous questions, I decided to check out what people write on BGG. I found a lot of scattered gold, yet not everything was answered. I thought it might be a nice project to gather all these nuggets and melt them into a nice, solid bar of gold.

This guide combines all the rules and info from all expansions' booklets, enhanced with rule clarifications, edge cases and more obscure rules, information from FAQs and guides posted by Brotherwise Games, answers to my own questions to BWG and info gathered from BGG that I could confirm as official. For that reason, you will encounter parts of text saying "we", taken from official booklets, and "I", which I wrote myself.

Initially, I also wanted to include card information, but it would significantly inflate an already long guide. Therefore, I decided to update the relevant cards directly on the Wikia page.

I think I did my best to make sure that all the info here is official and binding. My point was to forge a good guide that might possibly include answers to hopefully all game questions. Is that the case? We'll see!

Praise time. First of all, my thanks and congratulations to Chris and Johnny O'Neal for the game that ended up being solid gold, and also for allowing me to borrow official text and graphics from game booklets for the purpose of this guide. Also, special thanks to them for surviving my avalanche of game-related questions and generally putting up with me being overly nosy for a couple of months.

Next in line, I'd like to thank everyone else involved in everything else related to the game: all Brotherwise Games employees, creators' families, artists, designers, playtesters, manufacturers, publishers, delivery companies, retailers, and everyone else I didn't mention. Most of you probably won't read this, but I sincerely hope all the good vibrations reach you.

Lastly, I'd like to thank all the game fans for keeping the game alive.

- Treupp on BGG

2. Acronyms

In this guide, I will not be using full game names that much. With this in mind, please refer to the following table of game acronyms of all the games listed in this guide. The acronyms are conveniently based on card designations (added bonus - now you know how to separate mixed decks). Note that I didn't include any promo cards/designations.

BMR - Boss Monster

TNL - Boss Monster 2 (The Next Level)

RMB - Boss Monster: Rise of the Minibosses

CRL - Crash Landing

THK - Tools of the Hero Kind

IOD - Implements of Destruction

DBM - Paper and Pixels (Digital Boss Monster)

POP - Portable Power (Collector's Box cards)

LST - Lost Levels

KNG - Kingkiller Hero pack

VoV - Vault of Villains

3. Box contents

Core Games:

	BMR	TNL	RMB
Boss	8	12	12
Spell	31	31	30
Room	75	75	82
Ordinary Hero	25	25	25
Epic Hero	16	17	17
Other	Booklet Quick Setup	Booklet Quick Setup	Coin tokens Booklet Quick Setup

Expansions:

	THK	IOD	CRL	DBM	POP	LST	KNG
Room	4	-	23	8	10	4	-
Spell	2	-	7	2	-	-	-
Boss	-	5	3	3	1	1	-
Item	20	24		-	-	-	-
Ordinary Hero	-	-	7*	-	-	-	6
Epic Hero	-	-	5*	1	-	-	1
Other	Rules card	Rules card	Instruction	Rules card	Dividers	-	-

* Color-coded for more visibility with Hero deck setup. [Click here to visit the right section to learn more.](#)

4. How to Play

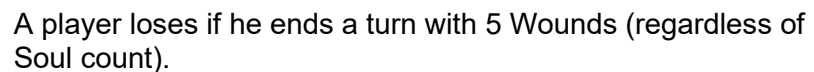
Boss Monster™ is the fast-paced card game of strategic dungeon building! As a Boss Monster, your goal is to lure hapless adventurers into your dungeon and consume their Souls. But beware! Your dungeon must be as deadly as it is enticing, or the puny Heroes can actually survive long enough to wound you. More importantly, you have competition. Adventurers are a hot commodity, and other Boss Monsters are all trying to outdo you with more precious treasures and more nefarious traps. Are you a bad enough dude to become the ultimate Boss Monster?

Getting Ready

To play *Boss Monster*, you need 2-4 players (extendable to 5-6 if you have more than one base set or the *Crash Landing* expansion set), the cards included with this game, and enough space to spread out your cards. If you're also playing with other *Boss Monster* sets, shuffle the Room and Spell decks of all the sets together, but decide on just one Hero and Epic Hero deck to use. This is only the basic deck mixing idea. To read more on game mixing, have a look at the [Deck mixing rules / hints](#) section.

The first time you play, allow yourself at least 45 minutes. Once players are familiar with the cards, a two-player game will typically take 20-30 minutes.

The goal of *Boss Monster* is to lure Heroes into your dungeon and kill them. Heroes who die in your dungeon are turned face down and count as “Souls.” Heroes who survive give you “Wounds”.



5. Gameplay at a Glance

The heart of *Boss Monster* is dungeon building! Your Boss card (1) sits at the right end of a side-scrolling dungeon, and each turn you can strengthen and refine it with Rooms (2). A Room's treasure value determines what type of Heroes it attracts, while its damage determines its ability to destroy Heroes (by depleting their Health)

2. Each turn you can expand your dungeon by building a **MONSTER ROOM** or **TRAP ROOM**.



Each Room has a **TREASURE** value that lures Heroes...



... and a **DAMAGE** value that kills Heroes.

1. Your dungeon builds out from your **BOSS** card.



3. Heroes enter your dungeon each turn. Defeated Heroes are turned face-down and are worth souls, and...



An **ADVANCED** ROOM can upgrade an existing Room.



You must gain 10 Souls before you take 5 Wounds!



Heroes who survive deal Wounds.



Your scorekeeping area (3) sits off to the side of your dungeon, where face-down Heroes add to your Souls (gold crystals), and face-up Heroes add to your Wounds (blood drops). Note that

even though the Soul stack is face-down, any player can inspect it at any time. You may only have a maximum of five visible Rooms (the Boss doesn't count) in your dungeon. The first time you hit five Rooms, apply your Boss card's "Level Up" effect!

6. Card Types and Other Game Elements

Bosses

Your Boss card represents the ultimate villain waiting at the end of your dungeon... you! While it has treasure value, it does not count as a Room. It cannot deal damage, be deactivated, or be destroyed (more on these terms later).



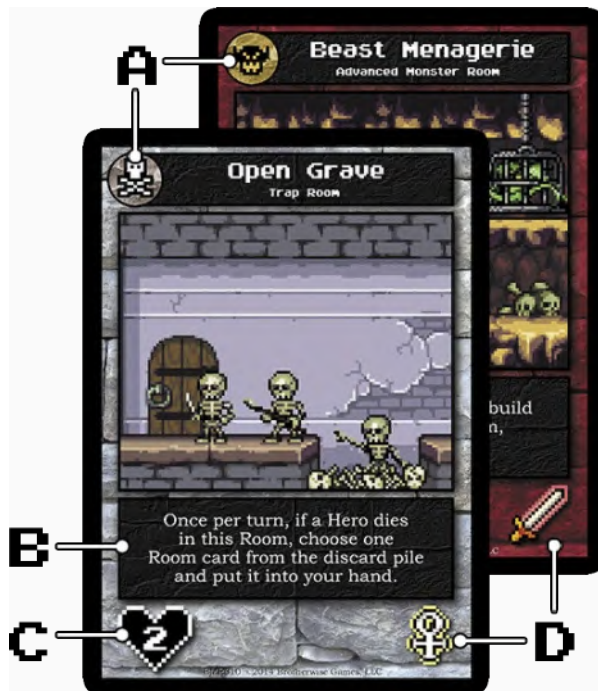
- A. Boss Icon:** This icon indicates that this is a Boss card
- B. Boss Ability:** Each Boss card has a powerful "Level Up" ability, which triggers at the end of the Build Phase when your dungeon reaches five visible Rooms.
- C. XP:** During each phase, players act "in XP order." The highest-XP player goes first, followed by the second highest, and so on.
- D. Treasure:** A Boss card's treasure icon adds to its dungeon's total

Your "Level Up" ability triggers in the same turn when your dungeon hits its maximum length of five Rooms (not counting your Boss). This happens mostly at the end of the Build phase, but in rare cases - [when Rooms reactivate](#). Use a token to indicate that this ability has been activated.

Note that this ability can trigger only once per game. Additionally, if you forget to review the ability the same turn it becomes active, it's lost for that game.

Rooms

Your dungeon's Rooms attract and damage Heroes. Each turn, you can build a new Room in your dungeon, up to a maximum of five visible Rooms. Ordinary Rooms can be built at the end of your dungeon, or over any other Room (without restrictions). Advanced Rooms are "upgrades" that can only be built on existing Rooms **with at least one matching treasure icon**.



- A. Room Icon:** A silver icon is an ordinary Room, while Advanced Rooms have gold icons. This icon also shows a Room's subtype: whether it's a Monster Room or a Trap Room.
- B. Ability:** The rules of the card is active as long as it is visible and in play.
- C. Damage:** Each time a Hero enters a Room, it takes the listed damage. When the damage meets or exceeds its Health, that Hero dies.
- D. Treasure:** The treasure icons indicate what type of Heroes this Room attracts. See below:



Fighter

(red card)



Thief

(dark grey card)



Cleric

(grey card)



Mage

(blue card)



Explorer (CRL)

(green card)

Additional Rules and Clarifications

- An ordinary Room can be built on top of any Room, regardless of type (ordinary, Advanced), subtype (Monster, Trap) or treasure.

- An Advanced Room needs to be built on top of a Room with at least one matching treasure, regardless of Room type (ordinary, Advanced) or subtype (Monster, Trap).
- When a Room is built on top of an existing Room, the one underneath effectively disappears from gameplay, not contributing in any way to the top Room.
- A stack of Rooms is effectively treated as one Room. If a card makes two Rooms swap places, whole stacks move.
- You can have two identical Rooms in your dungeon at any time.
- Any Room that has more than one treasure icon (identical or not), is considered a Multi-treasure Room and has a gold border.
- Unless stated otherwise on a card, a Room ability can be used multiple times per turn.

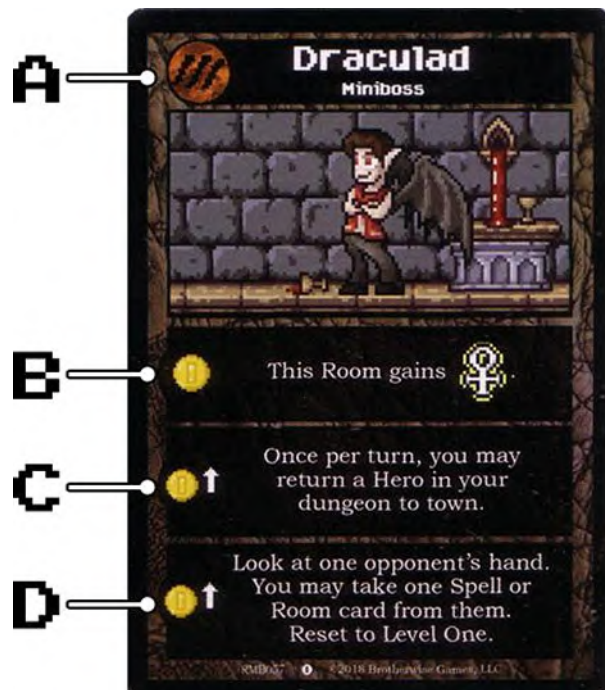
Minibosses

Minibosses are a new card type found in *Rise of the Minibosses* and *Vault of Villains*. While Minibosses are included in the Room deck, they are not Rooms. Instead, **Minibosses enhance the Room they're built under** and can gain more enhancements via the promotion mechanic.

During the build phase, you may build a Miniboss instead of a Room. Place it face-down over the Room you want to modify.

When you reveal a Miniboss, you must pay one [Coin](#) or it is discarded from play. Attach the Miniboss under its Room so only its Level One power is showing. Your Room now has that ability text in addition to its original ability.

- A. Miniboss Icon:** This icon indicates that this is a Miniboss card.
- B. Level One:** This power is always active.
- C. Level Two:** Once per turn, during the Build phase (before Rooms are revealed), you may pay a coin to promote one Miniboss (built at least in the previous phase), and only one per turn. Slide it up to reveal its Level Two Power.
- D. Level Three:** You may pay a third coin to reveal this level. When this power is visible, you may activate it whenever you can activate Room abilities or Spells, then reset the Miniboss to Level One.



Building and Promoting Minibosses

Instead of doing your normal build for the turn, you may choose to build a Miniboss. Minibosses are NOT restricted by treasure/type/subtype for building, but may not be built next to another Room with a Miniboss.

1. During the Build phase, place your Miniboss face-down on top of any Room.
2. Pay one Coin to reveal your Miniboss when Rooms are revealed. The Miniboss's Level One ability is now in effect.
3. During the Build phase, before Rooms are revealed, you may pay one Coin to promote one of your Minibosses (built at least in the previous turn)... only one Miniboss per turn!

When you do so, slide the Miniboss up to reveal its next power.

Level One and Two powers are always active if revealed.

Using a Level Three power resets the Miniboss to Level One immediately. But never fear, you can promote him next turn!

Additional Rules and Clarifications

- A Miniboss can't be revealed and promoted in the same turn.
- Minibosses are promoted in XP order.
- Lvl1 and 2 abilities are "passive" and they activate, respectively, immediately after revealing the Miniboss card, and right after promoting it to level 2.
- A promoted Miniboss will benefit from its current level and all lower levels simultaneously.
- Minibosses' level 3 ability follow the same when-to-cast rules as Spells, Room activated abilities and Boss-attached Items.
- Miniboss level 3 ability does not replace the ability of the Room the Miniboss is assigned to.
- A Miniboss is always attached to the topmost Room. If a Room is built on top of one with a Miniboss, the Miniboss jumps underneath the Room that has just been built. Same thing, just in reverse, happens when a Room with a Miniboss is destroyed, and another Room is uncovered.
- When a single Room (without any underneath) with a Miniboss is destroyed, the Miniboss is also discarded.
- When two Rooms (or stacks of Rooms) swap places with a Miniboss attached to one of them, it naturally travels with the Room it's attached to.
- If a gap between Rooms opens, forcing a Room with a Miniboss to slide next to another Room that also has a Miniboss, neither of the Minibosses is affected in any way.
- When a Miniboss is attached to a Room that's deactivated, it itself is also deactivated until the Room reactivates.

Spells

Spells reflect the power of your Boss Monster to affect what happens in your dungeon... and beyond! After the beginning of the game, you may only draw new Spell cards when a card specifically tells you to do so.

You may play any number of Spells per turn, but may only play Spells during the Build and Adventure phases.

Once you've played a Spell, place it in the discard pile.

- A. Text:** The rules text of the card describes its effects. Some Spells have two possible abilities. Choose only one of them.
- B. Phase Icon:** This icon indicates the phase when the card can be played:

Hammer = Build
Axe = Adventure
Both = Either



Priority: You are the active player while you are placing a Room face-down during the Build phase, or while you are “processing” Heroes in your dungeon. If another player plays a Spell while you are the active player, you may play and resolve any number of Spells or effects before opponents’ Spells or abilities resolve. Non-active players’ Spells and effects then resolve in order of XP value.

Heroes

Heroes are the key resource of Boss Monster. Heroes appear “in town” every turn, waiting for adventures. Ordinary Heroes are silver; Epic Heroes are gold. Epic Heroes don’t show up in town until **all** the ordinary Heroes have shown up in town.



- A. Treasure Icon:** The type of treasure that lures this Hero (note that Hybrid Heroes have two treasure types). Some unique Heroes do not have a treasure icon, but instead, they rely on a unique ability to resolve luring.
- B. Health:** The amount of damage this Heroes can resist before dying. Note that Epic Heroes have more health than ordinary Heroes.
- C. Wound:** if an ordinary Hero survives your dungeon, it remains face-up and counts as one Wound. Epic Heroes count as two Wounds.
- D. Player Icon:** This indicates whether the card should be used in a two-, three-, four-, or five/six-player game (note that Boss Monster 2 Heroes with the ★ icon are always included).
- E. Card Ability:** Some Heroes have unique abilities that affect the Bait Phase or the Adventure Phase.
- F. Soul:** When a Hero dies in your dungeon, turn it face-down. Ordinary Heroes count as one soul, while Epic Heroes count as two!

Additional Rules and Clarifications

- There are card abilities that return Heroes to the dungeon entrance, or prevent Heroes, who are already there, from entering the dungeon. If that's the case, all Heroes will patiently wait there until next turn's Adventure phase.
- When a Hero travelling through player's dungeon is recalled to its entrance through an ability, and there are already Heroes there that wait for their turn, the "returning" Hero will move to the end of the line.
- There is no break of any kind when the ordinary Hero stack runs out and players still need to reveal Heroes for that turn. Just keep on revealing Epic Heroes to meet the necessary number.
- Some activated abilities allow players to put +X health tokens on Heroes. These abilities can be used on Heroes to "save" them after they were dealt enough damage to kill them, as long as this ability is activated before the Hero leaves that Room.
- Travelling through any player's dungeon resets Hero's "seniority" in town. This rule applies when a Hero is sent from player's dungeon back to town. There, even though it's

been in the game for a while, the Hero will position itself as the “newest” one, i.e. farthest from the Hero deck.

Items



- A. Treasure icon:** this indicates which Hero type the item attaches to. Universal Items have no treasure icon.
- B. Boss ability:** when this Item is attached face-up to your Boss, this ability is ready to be used and follows the same activation rules as Spells.
- C. Hero ability:** this ability is constantly active when this Item is attached to a Hero, who's currently travelling through your dungeon.

Intended for players who are already familiar with the base game, Items increase the challenge of *Boss Monster* by buffing Heroes. If you're used to Heroes being pushovers, get ready for a few surprises when Item cards hit the table. You might find a Hero hopping past Rooms with the Boots of Jumping, boosting one another with the Staff of Healing, or plowing through your traps and monsters with an Oversized Sword.

The rules for Items are pretty simple, and the instructions fit on two sides of a single rules card, included in both THK and IOD (with updated rules). But if you're like us, you want to know a game's rules inside and out, so here's a more detailed breakdown of those quick rules:

The Item deck sits beside the Hero decks. At the Beginning of Turn phase, before Heroes are revealed, reveal the following number of Items:

2-3 players: one Item

4 players: two items

5-6 players (with or without CRL): three items

This part should be pretty straightforward. Every time you'd reveal Heroes, reveal an Item or two first. We recommend placing Items in a row above or below your Heroes.

Each Item attaches to the first Hero in town that matches its Treasure icon (or the matching Hero who has been in town longest).

As you reveal each Item, check each Hero that's already in town, starting with the Hero who has been in town longest. (If you're following the recommendation from the core game rulebook, that would be the Hero closest to the Hero deck.) If a Hero matches the treasure type of the revealed Item, attach it to that Hero!

A Universal Item attaches to the first Hero that appears in town (or the Hero who has been in town longest).

Universal Items attach regardless of treasure type. Usually this means they attach to the Hero who's been in town longest, but if town's empty it means they'll attach to whoever shows up in a moment.

A Hero may have only one attached Item...

This is an important one! The rules say each Hero may have a maximum of one Item, and so far there are no cards in the game that override this.

...and Items do not attach to special Heroes marked with a star icon.

If you're lucky enough to be playing with promo cards like Demigod or Trap Master, do not make them even deadlier by attaching Items. (However, there is one card in the game — Orcish Smithy — that allows you to ignore this restriction.)

Place the attached Item underneath the Hero, with its *Hero Ability* text visible underneath. The Hero now has this ability until it is killed.

We designed Item cards so they fit under Heroes when attached, and we even included an icon so you can still identify them from across the table without squinting to read the ability. This special Hero Ability is now active, though most Hero Abilities aren't relevant until a Hero is in a dungeon (or at a dungeon entrance).

If a Hero with an attached Item survives your dungeon, place the Item face-down in your scorekeeping area.

If the Hero makes it out alive, it stays face-up as a Wound and the Item goes face-down, granting you no benefits. You've kept it away from your opponents, and cards like Excavation or Burial Mound might get you a second chance to access the Item, but for now it's useless to you.

If you kill a Hero with an attached Item, you may place the Item face-up in your scorekeeping area. However, you may only have one face-up Item. (You choose which item to keep face-up.)

If you kill an Item-equipped Hero, you get to claim the Item! However, you can only have one face-up Item at a time. Before you claim the new Item, you have a choice: [A\) immediately use your existing Item](#), B) turn your existing Item face-down, or C) leave the existing Item face-up and turn the new Item face-down.

During the Build or Adventure phase (whenever you could use a Spell), you may expend an Item to use its *Boss Ability*.

Like Room abilities, Item abilities can be used whenever you could use a Spell. They obey the same rules, which means that if you use an Item while you are the active player, it resolves before anyone else can react. If you use an Item when someone else is the active player, they may play any number of Spells or abilities before your Item's Boss Ability resolves.

Declare the effect and flip the Item face-down to show that it is expended.

To show that an Item is used, flip it face-down. There are also some other effects in Tools of Hero-Kind that can flip an Item face-down, but these do not trigger the ability — they just knock the Item out of commission.

Additional Rules and Clarifications

- Throughout the game, when playing with THK or IOD, you might encounter terms “Hero Ability” or “Boss Ability”. Note that in case of two aforementioned expansions, these terms might refer to abilities that come from Items that are attached to Heroes and Bosses respectively
- Universal Items are the only Items that can attach to Heroes with a question mark instead of a treasure icon (and not having a star).
- If an Item can't be attached to any present Heroes, it stays in town. Regardless of any Items present in town, players still reveal the same number (dependent on the number of players) of Items every turn, which might lead to them stacking.
- If an Item is attached to a Boss, it follows the exact same activation rules as Spells, starting from the next turn.
- There is one exception where only Items (and not Spells or Room abilities) can be played: when you defeat a Hero carrying an Item and you already have an Item attached, you can choose to use the Item you already have, and then immediately attach the one you've just gained.

Coins

Coins are a new mechanic introduced in *Rise of the Minibosses*. They represent the currency a Boss uses to pay their minions and buy new trapps. Coins are indicated by the  icon.

Each Boss starts the game with  in their Hoard (your pile of coins, kept near the Boss).

Coins are gained when certain Room abilities are activated.

Coins are paid to reveal and promote Minibosses (see: [Minibosses](#)) or to power up certain Room abilities.

Note: Any Coins placed on a Room card are lost if that Room is covered or destroyed.



Pro Tip: Combining Sets

If you are [combining Rise of the Minibosses with another Boss Monster set](#), we encourage you to use the following rule:

“Once per turn, during the Build Phase, any Player may discard one Room to gain one Coin.”

Tokens

Even though the idea of +X tokens has been present in the game since the first *Boss Monster* base set, the rule was described in detail as part of the *Paper & Pixels (Digital Boss Monster)* expansion set.

If a card has an ability that gives a Room a “+1” counter (or, respectively, any +X counter), place a marker on that Room. Treat the Room’s damage as one higher for each +1 counter on that Room. (*Any effects that calculate a Room’s damage should use the modified value.*)

Only visible Rooms can gain counters. If a Room is deactivated, covered or destroyed, it loses all counters. Rooms that gain counters when they are built can only regain those counters if they are rebuilt (*not just uncovered*).

There are Rooms that gain +X tokens based on a certain game situation, e.g. X being the number of Spells in hand of the player owning that Room. If the number of Spells changes during gameplay, the +X value on the card will update immediately.

You can use any small object (e.g. coins, beads or dice) as markers.

Random Values

This is a new mechanic added with the *Paper & Pixels (Digital Boss Monster)* expansion set.

Cards that refer to “1-6 damage” deal a random amount of damage. To determine this amount, simply roll a standard 6-sided die. If there are multiple targets, roll again for each target.

7. Game Setup

To play, you will just need the cards included with the game you want to play with. Refer to the [Box contents](#) section for exact numbers. However, if you want to mix different base games/expansions, refer to the [Deck mixing rules / hints](#) section.

Hero setup for the game

The number of players determines the number of Hero cards that should be used in a game. This is represented through icons at the bottom of Hero cards:



Two players



Three players



Four players



Five and six players (with *Crash Landing*)

If you are playing a two-player game, remove all cards with the “Three player” or “Four player” icons. If you are playing a three-player game, just remove the “Four players” Heroes.

In case you want to play **2-4 player games** with mixed/custom base decks, just pick one Hero deck from either expansion and stick to it.

5-6 player games with *Crash Landing* require a full set of Heroes from one of the base sets and all the Heroes from the *Crash Landing* expansion

5-6 player games without *Crash Landing* are possible if you own two core sets. Regarding gameplay rules and Hero setup, refer to [this section](#).

Here are the numbers for Hero decks, if you'd like to refer to them.

Players	Hero	BMR	TNL / RMB	- Cr. Landing	+ Cr. Landing
2	ordinary	13	13	-	-
	Epic	8	9	-	-
3	ordinary	17	17	-	-
	Epic	12	13	-	-
4	ordinary	25	25	-	-
	Epic	16	17	-	-
5	ordinary	-	-	25 +4	25 +7
	Epic	-	-	16 / 17 +4	16 / 17 +5
6	ordinary	-	-	25 +8	25 +7
	Epic	-	-	16 / 17 +4	16 / 17 +5

Initial Set Up

Shuffle all decks and randomly deal one Boss card to each player. Players reveal their Boss cards face up on the table. All Room cards will be “built” to the left of the Boss card. Set up the Hero, Epic Hero, Room and Spell decks, as shown on the Game Set Up Example image below.

Set up the discard pile by placing 4 random Room and 2 random Spell cards face-up in the pile.

Starting Hand

Each player draws 5 Room cards and 2 Spell cards. When playing with the RMB base set or VoV, each player is additionally given 3 Coins.

For a more challenging game (and, at the same time, the starting Hand set up rule from previous Boss Monster base sets), try the [“Classic Mode” Play Variant](#).

Mulligan: If you draw four Advanced Rooms or four cards that share one treasure type, you may shuffle your entire hand back into the decks and draw a new hand.

Build your First Room

Before the first turn begins, each player can build one Room.

To “build” a Room card, place it face-down on the table to the left of your Boss card. The highest-XP player goes first, then each other player places a face-down Room. Once all players have placed their cards, simultaneously reveal the newly built Rooms. In XP order, resolve any “when you build this” effects.

At this point, Set Up is complete and the first turn begins.

Game Set Up Example

Bear in mind that this image of a 2-player scenario shows the optimal (and, in terms of players’ dungeon tracks - recommended) placement of all possible elements that exist in all released Boss Monster products (as well as some mechanics used during gameplay), and not an actual gameplay situation. Your choice of expansions will determine if some of these elements appear on the table.



8. Phases in Detail

After the initial Set Up, each turn in Boss Monster consists of five phases:

Beginning of Turn: Reveal Heroes in town (one Hero per player in the game), then each player draws a card from the Room Deck. If you play with Items, you reveal them as well.



Build Phase: Each player may build one Room, as well as perform other actions (see [Detailed Sequence of Play](#)). Players take turns in XP order, highest to lowest, placing their Room cards face down. At the end of the Build phase, newly built Rooms are revealed simultaneously.

Bait phase: Heroes move to the entrance of the dungeon with the highest corresponding treasure value (or stay in town, if treasure values are tied - unless

you play with 5-6 players with CRL, then [tiebreaker rules apply](#)).



Adventure phase: Heroes travel through dungeons. In XP order, each player takes a turn as the active player, “processing” all Heroes at his or her dungeon entrance, one Hero at a time, and acquiring Souls or Wounds.

End of Turn: The turn ends and a new turn begins.

Within each phase of the game, priority passes from player to player. The “active player” always has priority.

XP Value: Each Boss has an XP value that determines who goes first in each phase. During the Build phase, the highest-XP player is the first to place a Room (followed by each other player, in XP order). This player is also the first to promote an active Miniboss. At the end of the Build phase, any Level Up or “when you build this Room” effects trigger in XP order. During the Adventure phase, the highest-XP player is the first to “process” adventurers through her dungeon.

Active Player: When you are the Active Player (i.e., when you are placing a Room or “processing” adventurers), you have priority. You can use any number of Spells and abilities before any other player can respond (even higher-XP players).

Beginning of Turn

During the Beginning of Turn phase, the following occurs:

- **Heroes appear in town:** Reveal one Hero card for each player in the game. In general, all ordinary Heroes must be revealed before an Epic Hero is revealed.
- **Each player draws a card:** Each player draws one Room card.

If it happens that you can’t draw Heroes anymore, yet there are still players around, [read here](#).

Spell cards, Room cards, Boss Items, Miniboss lvl 3 abilities and activated abilities cannot be used during the Beginning of Turn phase.

Once each player has drawn a card, the Build phase begins.

Build Phase



During the Build phase, players take turns placing Rooms face-down in their dungeon. You must specify where the Room is to be placed.

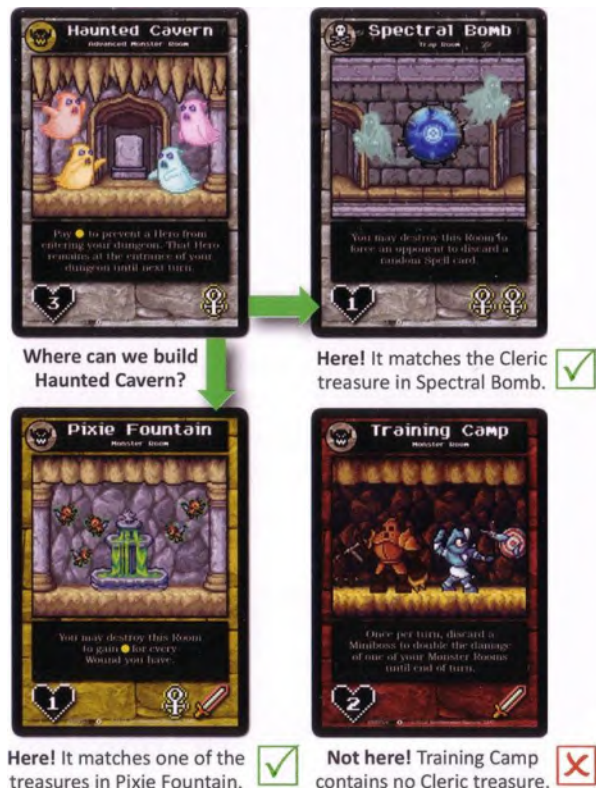
A Room can be placed in one of two locations:

- **To the left of your leftmost card:** During Set Up, place your first Room to the left of your Boss card. Afterward, build additional new Rooms to the left. You may build a maximum of five visible Rooms in your dungeon (your Boss is not a Room).
- **On top of an existing Room card:** Ordinary Rooms can be built on top of **any** Room. Advanced Rooms can **only** be built on top of a Room with at least one matching treasure icon.

Alternately, you may build a Miniboss by placing it face-down over any Room in your dungeon. You may choose not to build, but you cannot change your choice once you are no longer the “Active Player”. Also, if you’re playing with cards from the POP expansion, you can return any previously built Room with the “Portable” keyword to hand - this is a bonus action.

During the Build phase, you may use Room abilities, play Spells marked with the Build (hammer icon), use Boss Items or Miniboss lvl 3 abilities. The Active Player’s effects are always resolved first, with other players’ effects resolved in XP order.

Once each player has had the chance to play a Room, during the “end of the Build phase”, players simultaneously flip over their placed Rooms or Minibosses. These cards are now considered “built”. Any “Level Up” and “when you build this Room” abilities take effect for the highest-XP player, followed by lower-XP players. Remember to resolve these effects within the phase they became eligible for activation. Once it’s forgotten, the abilities are lost for that game.



Pro Tip: Building Over

Keep an eye on your treasure types as you're building Rooms, because they will limit the Advanced Rooms you're allowed to play. Multi-treasure Rooms (with gold borders) tend to be low-damage, but they give your dungeon versatility.

Also keep in mind that ordinary Rooms can always be built over any Room, regardless of treasure type!

Bait Phase

During the Bait phase, players have the chance to lure Heroes to their dungeons. Take the following steps:

- **Compare Treasure Values:** Count the number of treasure icons in each dungeon, corresponding to each Hero in town. Add any modifiers from Room abilities or Spells.
- **Lure:** For each Hero, the dungeon with the highest relevant treasure value lures in that Hero. The Hero moves to that dungeon's entrance (place the Hero beside the leftmost Room in that dungeon).
- **Tie:** if no player has treasure of that Hero's type, or if all players are tied, the Hero stays in town until the next turn.
- **5-6 player treasure tiebreaker in CRL:** If you play a 5-6 player *Crash Landing* game, if two or more players are tied for a treasure type, check the number of relevant Heroes in town. If there are at least as many Heroes of that type as there are players tied for that treasure type, lure one Hero to each dungeon. In the event of a split, the Hero of that type that's been in town longest goes to the tied player with the highest XP Boss. The next "oldest" Hero goes to the next highest Xp Boss, and so on. Repeat this process until the number of Heroes in town cannot be evenly split among tied players.

Spell cards, Room abilities, Boss Items and Miniboss lvl 3 abilities **cannot** be used during the Bait phase.

If multiple Heroes move to a player's dungeon, they arrive in the order that they were revealed from the Hero deck. Once all Heroes are accounted for, the Adventure phase begins.

Pro Tip: Bottlenecked Heroes

During a 2-4 player game, if no player has the highest treasure value for a given Hero, either because all players have zero or all players are tied, that Hero stays in town. On the next turn, new Heroes arrive as normal. If a tie is not broken, Heroes can really start to stack up in town! When the tie is broken, all relevant Heroes go to the "winning" dungeon, which means the stakes just keep getting higher.



Bait Phase Example:

Here we see a snapshot of the play area for a two-player game, focused on the ordinary Hero deck and the player's dungeons (for a full game layout, [click here](#)). As this turn's Bait phase begins, there are three Heroes in town.

Player 1's dungeon (below) contains:

- 3 Cleric treasure
- 0 Mage treasures
- 1 Fighter treasure
- 2 Thief treasures

Player 2's dungeon (above) contains:

- 1 Cleric treasure
- 2 Mage treasures
- 0 Fighter treasures
- 2 Thief treasures

The Mage is lured to Player 2, the Cleric is lured to Player 1, and the Thief stays in town. Next turn, two new Heroes will arrive in town, and the situation may change as new Rooms are built

In case no Heroes are baited to either dungeon, the Adventure phase happens nonetheless (albeit it is significantly shorter), so that any players can take any actions, if they wish to do so.

Adventure Phase



During the Adventure phase, Heroes "attack" dungeons, and players take turns contending with them. Players with Heroes at their dungeon entrances take turns as the Active Player (highest XP going first), following these steps:

- **Heroes Enter:** Starting with the first Hero to arrive at an entrance to a player's dungeon, that Hero begins to move through that player's dungeon.
- **Rooms Deal Damage:** As the Hero enters each Room, any Hero ability takes effect, then the Room ability, then the Room deals its damage.

- **Spells and Abilities:** In each Room, after damage is dealt, players may play abilities, Spells marked with the Adventure (axe) icon, Miniboss lvl 3 abilities or Boss Items. The active player's effects are always resolved first.
- **Death:** If a Hero exist a Room that dealt damage equal to or exceeding its Health, the Hero dies. Move that Hero to your scorekeeping area and place it face-down, adding its Soul value to your total.
- **Survival:** If you are not able to sufficiently damage the Hero (or kill it, by other means) before it reaches your Boss, place it face-up in your scorekeeping area, adding its Wound value to your total.

All killed or surviving Heroes are placed in the player's scorekeeping area. Once all Heroes are processed, priority passes to the player with the next highest XP.

Pro Tip: Tracking Heroes

Sometimes, Hero sequence can be important. Heroes obey a "first in, first out" rule. To keep track of this, place each newly revealed Hero to the side of the deck. The closest to the deck should always be the one that has been in play longest. Once that Hero heads to a dungeon, slide the newer cards toward the deck to take its place. Remember, new Heroes continue to arrive in town at the beginning of each turn!

End of Turn Phase

Once all players have had a chance to be the active player during the Adventure phase, the turn ends. At the end of the turn, any "until end of turn" effects become inactive. Any deactivated Rooms are turned upright.

In the event that a Hero takes damage during the Adventure phase but is returned to town or the entrance of a dungeon by a card ability, damage to that Hero does not carry over to subsequent turns.

Spell cards, activated abilities, Miniboss lvl 3 abilities and Boss Items cannot be used during the End of Turn phase.

Pro Tip: Multiplayer Games

In a game with more than two players, when one player loses, that player's cards are set aside and "removed from the game". They do not go to the discard pile, and no effects can interact with those cards until the game concludes. The number of Heroes entering town does **not** change, so the pressure is on!

End of Game

The game does not end until a full turn is complete and every eligible player has had a chance to resolve an Adventure phase. Once every player has had a chance to act, determine the following:

2-4 players:

- If a player ends the turn with 5 or more Wounds, that player loses the game (regardless of Soul count).
- If a player ends the turn with 10 Souls (and fewer than 5 Wounds), that player wins the game.
- If two players meet the victory or loss conditions above, subtract each player's Wounds total from his Souls total. The player with the highest result wins.
- If the result above is still a tie, the player with the lowest XP value wins.

5-6 players:

- The game ends when the first player reaches 10 Souls
- Subtract each player's Wounds total from his Souls total. The player with the highest result wins.
- If the result above is still a tie, the player with the lowest XP value wins.
 - ii. All players deduct their Wounds from their Souls
 - iii. The player with the highest value wins the game.
 - iv. After step iii if there is a tie, then the player with the lowest XP is the winner

Should all but one player lose, the last player still standing wins automatically, regardless of their Soul count.

An extremely rare situation might happen when there's still no winners yet the Hero stack is depleted (and any remaining Heroes can't be distributed anymore, for any reason). Should this happen, apply the tiebreaker rules described just above this very paragraph.

Now shuffle the decks, deal out some new Boss cards and play again!

9. Top Five Rules

In our experience, here are the top five rules clarifications requested by advanced gamers after an introductory session of Boss Monster:

- **Treasure Type Matters, But Only For Advanced Rooms:** You must build an Advanced Room on an ordinary or Advanced Room that matches its treasure type.

Room subtype (Trap or Monster) does not need to match. You may build an ordinary Room adjacent to your dungeon entrance (if you have less than five visible Rooms in play) or on top of any other Room. You can always play an ordinary Room over another Room of any type, regardless of treasure type or room subtype.

- **Destroyed Rooms Reveal What's Beneath:** When a Room is destroyed, the Room underneath it is revealed and comes into play. This does not trigger "when you build this Room" effects from the revealed Room. If a Hero is in a Room when it is destroyed, that Hero immediately exits the Room and (if it survives) moves to the next Room. (Damage and abilities of the Room underneath the destroyed Room do not affect the Hero exiting the Room.) If there is no Room underneath the revealed Room, the "hole" created by the destroyed Room immediately closes and any Rooms to the left of the destroyed Room slide to the right.
- **Active Player Has Priority:** You are the "active player" when it's your turn to play a Room face-down, or when Adventurers are moving through your dungeon. You may play a Spell or Room Ability when another player is active, but they can react with their own Spells and Room Abilities, and those all resolve before your effect.
- **No Spells or Abilities After You Reveal:** The Build phase ends when Rooms are revealed. Build effects ("When you build this Room...") and Level Up powers take place immediately, in XP order. However, no Spells or activated abilities may be played at this time. Spells with the Build (hammer) icon must be played before Rooms are revealed. If you build a Room with an activated ability, you cannot use that until the Adventure Phase.
- **Heroes Pause in Each Room:** Each time a Hero enters a Room, apply any Hero abilities (and/or Item abilities) first, then any ongoing effects from the Room, then damage. Spells and abilities may not interrupt this process. Once a Hero has been damaged by a Room, any player may use Adventure Spells or other abilities. Then the Hero exits the Room and is either killed or survives. In a tournament setting, you should pause after each Room deals its damage to see if another player has an action to declare that will affect the Hero's survival.

10. Detailed sequence of play

Spells Rooms Boss Items Miniboss lv3	Action
Beginning of the Game	
X	All game elements are set up on the table and players build their hands. Then each player plays a Room card in XP order. Immediately after, Rooms are revealed simultaneously.
Beginning of Turn	
X	If you are playing with Items, reveal the appropriate number of Items, and attach them to Heroes accordingly. If not playing with CRL, discard explorer items.
	Reveal one Hero card for each player in the game and place in the town in the order revealed.
	Each player draws one Room card in order of XP
Build Phase	
	All players activate in order of XP. The following actions can be taken in any order: • (POP) Active player may – return a Room with the Portable keyword (without activating the Portable card ability) to their hand. Note that if the Room below has an Uncover ability, it will trigger. • Active player may – play any number of owned Build Spells, play any number of Activated abilities, Lvl3 Miniboss ability or play the Boss-attached Item (or play a combination of these). • Active player may: – place a single Room card face down on top of a chosen Room or empty space in his or her dungeon. OR - (RMB) place a Miniboss (Room) card face down on top of a chosen Room (treasure/Room type doesn't matter), as long as the Miniboss is not placed on or directly next to a Room that already has an active Miniboss. OR - (POP) place a single Portable Room card that was picked up in the same phase, face down on top of a chosen Room or empty space in his or her dungeon.

	• Active player may - promote an active (revealed at least one turn ago) Miniboss in their dungeon. • Non-active player may – play any number of owned Build Spells, play any number of Activated Abilities or play the Boss-attached Item (or play a combination of these). • (Optional rule: RMB or VoV combined with any other base set) Any player may - discard one card from their hand to gain one Coin. Active player's Spells/abilities/Items will always take priority and resolve first, even if they are declared in response to a non-active player. Repeat step 2a for every player
X	All players simultaneously reveal their face down Rooms placed in the previous step. If it's a Miniboss, the player pays its reveal price of one Coin, and places the card underneath the Room it was placed on, so that Minibosses' first level is shown.
	The highest-XP player resolves any applicable Level Up effects and "When you build this Room" effects, followed by lower-XP players. If this is forgotten, Level Up and "When you build this Room" effects are lost forever and can't be benefited from. You may not play Spells or activate abilities at this time.
Bait Phase	
X	For each Hero in town, resolved in first-in, first-out order: Each player adds up the total treasure value of their dungeon corresponding to that Hero's treasure type.
	That Hero is placed at the dungeon entrance of the dungeon with the highest treasure value.
	2-4 player games: if the highest treasure value is tied (or if no player has any relevant treasure) the Hero remains in town. 5-6 player CRL games: if one or more players are tied for a treasure type, Heroes split: oldest Hero in town travels to the matching treasure Player with most XP, then applying the same method to remaining Heroes, in descending XP order. Also, a split has to be possible, i.e. there has to be at least as many tied Heroes as there are Players tied for that treasure type. Extra Heroes remain in town, until there is enough for a split. If a split is not possible, all Heroes remain in town.
Adventure Phase	
X	Activate each player in order of XP

	The player waits before Hero or Heroes enter the dungeon, as all players are allowed to use Spells, Room/Miniboss abilities and/or Boss Items in this moment.
	For each Hero at that player's dungeon entrance (resolved in order of arrival), the Hero moves through each Room in the dungeon in turn, from the entrance toward the Boss.
	Each time a Hero enters a Room, apply any Hero abilities first, then any ongoing effects from the Room, then damage.
	After receiving damage, the Hero waits, as all players are allowed to use Spells, Room/Miniboss abilities and/or Boss Items in this moment.
	Before leaving to the next Room, the Hero waits, as all players are allowed to use Spells, Room/Miniboss abilities and/or Boss Items in this moment.
	Any Hero that exits a Room with damage equal to its Health is killed. It is placed face down in the active player's scoring area. It grants a number of Souls equal to the diamond icons on its card back. Any Item attached to a killed Hero is placed face-up in your scorekeeping area. If you already have a face-up Item, you may choose which Item to keep face-up and turn the other face-down or immediately use the Item you have active, and keep the newly obtained one face-up.
	Any Hero that survives the dungeon and reaches the Boss card is placed face up in the active player's scoring area. It deals a number of Wounds equal to the blood drop icon on its card back. Any Item attached to a surviving Hero is placed face-down in your scorekeeping area.
	Repeat all steps of this phase for every Hero at the active player's dungeon entrance.
End of Turn	
	Any "until end of turn" effects expire.
	Any deactivated Rooms are turned upright.
	Check for end of game conditions.

* [items-only rule clarification](#)

11. Play variants

Classic Mode: During Setup, each player draws five Room cards and two Spell cards, then discards two cards of their choice.

Hard Mode: Remove all ordinary Heroes with a Health value of four. This makes it difficult to avoid a Wound in early turns, and brings Epic Heroes into play a turn earlier.

I Choose You: During Setup, deal each player two Boss cards. Players choose one and remove the other from the game.

Machinations: At the end of a turn, if a player did not gain a Soul this turn, that player may draw one card from the Room or Spell Deck.

Unlimited Lives: Players are not eliminated upon reaching five Wounds. The game ends when a turn ends with no cards left in the Hero decks. The winner of the game is the player with the highest total Souls minus Wounds.

12. Deck Mixing Rules / Hints

Building a Custom Deck: Base Sets

When you first play one of the *Boss Monster* base games, we recommend trying it on its own to experience an individual, playtested and balanced deck. Once you're ready to combine it with another *Boss Monster* base deck, here's some very simple rules on how to do it:

- Set aside the Hero cards from one of the base games.
- Shuffle together both Room decks.
- Shuffle together both Spell decks.
- Shuffle together both Boss decks.

Once you've had a chance to experience any base set on its own or a full mashup of any base sets, try creating your own ideal combination of any of the three *Boss Monster* base sets. Think a card is too overpowered? Toss it out. Never liked a particular Spell? Set it aside. By combining the best of *Boss Monster*, *Boss Monster 2* or *Rise of the Minibosses*, you can create a unique play experience tailored to your play group's tastes. Here are some guidelines for building your own combination:

- Include 2 Advanced Rooms for every 5-6 ordinary Rooms.

- Include equal numbers of the four treasure types. (Don't forget to include Hybrid Rooms in this calculation.)
- Include roughly equal numbers of Trap and Monster Rooms (recommended but not critical).
- For Bosses, include roughly equal numbers of each starting treasure type (recommended but not critical).
- When building a full Hero deck, include 24 ordinary Heroes (plus the Fool, if desired) and 16 Epic Heroes (plus any Epic Hero with a star that belongs to any of the sets).
- Maintain an equal balance of Hero treasure icons and damage values. Remove Heroes as appropriate for 2- or 3-player games.

The key to most of these guidelines is maintaining a balance of treasure icons. Advanced customizers can even throw out that rule, and see what happens to the game's bidding "economy" when certain Room types are rarer.

Larger Multiplayer Games

The three base sets are balanced and recommended for 2-4 players. However, if you also own any two sets and do not have *Crash Landing*, it is still possible to play with 5-6 players. Here are some unofficial guidelines for larger games:

- Play using the **Unlimited Lives** variant [described here](#).
- **5 players:** one additional 4-Health Cleric, Fighter, Mage and Thief, as well as one additional 11-Health Cleric, Fighter, Mage and Thief (+8 cards total).
- **6 players:** set it up as for 5 players, then add one additional 11-Health Cleric, Fighter, Mage, and Thief (+12 cards total).

BMR / TNL: The Official Combo

For a balanced *Boss Monster* experience featuring our favorite cards, follow this deck list. It preserves many of the most classic cards from the original, while sticking to the more consistent power level of cards in *The Next Level*. We call it "the official combo."

20 Bosses All Bosses from BMR and TNL	42 Heroes All Heroes from TNL (none from BMR)
15 Cleric Rooms 2x Arcane Crypt (TNL) 1x Dark Portal (TNL) 1x Dragon Graveyard (TNL)	15 Fighter Rooms 1x Barbarian Hall (TNL) 1x Beast Menagerie (BMR) 1x Fangroot Garden (TNL)

1x Haunted Hall (TNL) 2x Imp Temple (TNL) 1x Incubus Gym (TNL) 1x Inner Sanctum (TNL) 1x Madman's Manor (TNL) 1x Open Grave (BMR) 1x Specter's Sanctum (BMR) 1x Succubus Spa (BMR) 1x Vampire Bordello (BMR) 1x Wraith's Throne (TNL)	2x Goblin Armory (BMR) 1x Goblin Mess Hall (TNL) 1x Megaworm Burrow (TNL) 2x Minotaur's Maze (BMR) 1x Neanderthal Cave (BMR) 1x Rust Monster Pen (TNL) 1x Shrooman Cave (TNL) 2x Spawn Point (TNL) 1x The Arena (TNL)
15 Mage Rooms 1x All-Seeing Eye (BMR) 1x Antimagic Zone (TNL) 1x Brainsucker Hive (BMR) 1x Elemental Generator (TNL) 1x Frostbat Cave (TNL) 1x Hall of Mirrors (TNL) 1x Liger's Den (BMR) 2x Lost Library (TNL) 2x Observatory (TNL) 1x Sorcerobe School (BMR) 2x Spellslime Pit (BMR) 1x Witch's Kitchen (BMR)	15 Thief Rooms 1x Blockpile Puzzle (TNL) 2x Bottomless Pit (BMR) 1x Bullet Builder (TNL) 1x Chump Chomper (TNL) 1x Collapsing Bridge (TNL) 1x Deadly Treadmill (TNL) 1x Decapitator (TNL) 1x Dizzygas Hallway (TNL) 1x Recycling Center (BMR) 1x Spiked Pit (TNL) 1x The Smashinator (TNL) 2x Wreck Room (TNL)
15 Multi-Treasure Rooms 1x Bom-Boy Factory (TNL) 1x Centipede Tunnel (BMR) 1x Construction Zone (BMR) 1x Cursed Tomb (TNL) 2x Dragon Hatchery (BMR) 1x Hatchling's Hoard (TNL) 2x Mimic Vault (BMR) 1x Save Point (TNL) 1x Torture Chamber (BMR) 1x Warp Tube (TNL) 2x Werewolf Den (TNL) 1x Zombie Prison (BMR)	35 Spells 1x Annihilator (BMR) 2x Another Castle (TNL) 2x Assassin (BMR) 1x Cave-In (BMR) 2x Counterspell (BMR) 1x Exhaustion (BMR) 2x Fairy Fountain (TNL) 1x Fear (BMR) 1x Freeze (BMR) 1x Giant Size (BMR) 2x Hiring Spree (TNL) 2x It's On (TNL) 1x Lightning Bolt (TNL) 1x Motivation (BMR) 1x Party Up (TNL) 1x Pause (TNL) 1x Pity (TNL) 1x Princess in Peril (BMR) 2x Secret Stash (TNL) 1x Shortcut (TNL) 2x Surprise Gift (TNL) 2x Teleportation (BMR) 1x Undead Minion (TNL) 2x Wild Monster (TNL) 1x Zombie Attack (BMR)

Because this deck list contains only 75 Rooms, it means you can easily combine this set with *Crash Landing* for 5-6 player games. The resulting experience is ideal for big multiplayer matches.

BMR / TNL: The E-Rated Combo

Boss Monster was designed as an adult-oriented PG-13 game, but we've heard many stories of parents playing with their kids. While we love the idea of young boardgamers learning to build dungeons, the theme of hero-slaying can sometimes be a little mature. Here's a combo that lightens things up:

12 Bosses Cerebellus (BMR) Cleopatra (BMR) Draculord (BMR) Eclipse (TNL) Kadabra (TNL) Killa (TNL) King Croak (BMR) Nicolius (TNL) Porkus (TNL) Smoake (TNL) Torix Uz'kali (TNL) Xyzax (BMR)	41 Heroes All Heroes from BMR (none from TNL)
15 Cleric Rooms 2x Arcane Crypt (TNL) 2x Dracolich Lair (BMR) 1x Dragon Graveyard (TNL) 2x Haunted Hall (TNL) 2x Imp Temple (TNL) 1x Inner Sanctum (TNL) 2x Madman's Manor (TNL) 2x Specter's Sanctum (BMR) 1x Wraith's Throne (TNL)	15 Fighter Rooms 2x Beast Menagerie (BMR) 2x Fangroot Garden (TNL) 1x Goblin Mess Hall (TNL) 2x Goblin Nursery (TNL) 1x Megaworm Burrow (TNL) 3x Neanderthal Cave (BMR) 2x Shrooman Cave (TNL) 2x Spawn Point (TNL)
15 Mage Rooms 2x Brainsucker Hive (BMR) 2x Dark Laboratory (BMR) 2x Hall of Mirrors (TNL) 2x Liger's Den (BMR) 2x Observatory (TNL) 2x Sorcerobe School (TNL) 1x Spellslime Pit (BMR) 2x Witch's Kitchen (BMR)	15 Thief Rooms 2x Bottomless Pit (BMR) 1x Chump Chomper (TNL) 2x Collapsing Bridge (TNL) 1x Deadly Treadmill (TNL) 2x Dizzygas Hallway (TNL) 2x Recycling Center (BMR) 2x Spiked Pit (TNL) 1x The Smashinator (TNL) 2x Wreck Room (TNL)
15 Multi-Treasure Rooms 2x Construction Zone (BMR) 2x Cursed Tomb (TNL)	35 Spells 1x All Your Base (TNL) 2x Annihilator (BMR)

2x Dragon Hatchery (BMR) 1x Hatchling's Hoard (TNL) 2x Mimic Vault (BMR) 2x Monstrous Monument (BMR) 2x Save Point (TNL) 2x Warp Tube (TNL)	2x Another Castle (TNL) 2x Fairy Fountain (TNL) 2x Fear (BMR) 2x Giant Size (BMR) 2x Hiring Spree (TNL) 2x Motivation (BMR) 2x Party Up (TNL) 1x Princess in Peril (BMR) 1x Secret Stash (TNL) 2x Teleportation (BMR) 2x Wild Monster (TNL)
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In addition to removing cards with pixelated blood or saucy innuendo, this combination avoids the wordiest and most complicated cards. That means it's also a great set for teaching the game to more casual players!

Expansion Mixing

At the end of the day, the general rule about combining *Boss Monster* sets is: there are no rules! The more expansions you mix, the more varied the decks will be. This will come at a cost though, as they will also be more watered down and unpredictable in terms of some unique abilities, strategies and card synergies. You might not encounter that Portable room from the Collector's Box, or any Minibosses at all throughout the whole game. There are some multi-expansion combinations that work well, but generally sticking to one set and one mini-expansion will provide a challenging, varied, but still balanced gameplay. Simply put: less is more.

For the purpose of this section, we divide all available products into three categories:

- Base sets (BMR, TNL, RMB)
- Mini-expansions (CRL, THK, IOD)
- Micro-expansions (POP, DBM, LST, KNG, promo cards)

In general, micro-expansions are small enough to be combined in any way and number you want with any base set (apart from Heroes - [they have some special rules](#)), introducing variety, but not watering down and imbalancing the set.

As far as mini-expansions are concerned, here are some combinations that work well:

- Base set + CRL
- Base set + CRL + THK + IOD
- Base set + THK
- Base set + THK + IOD (discard Explorer Items)

Finally, the *Vault of Villains* expansion is specifically designed to make sets easier to combine. Here are some official recommendations for how to combine VoV with other sets:

If you want to...	Then combine...
Add Minibosses to any base game	 OR  + 
Play with all the Minibosses	 OR  +  + 
Play with 5-6 Players	 OR  +  +  + 
Add Item cards (5-6 Players)	 OR  +  +  +  + 
Add Item cards (2-4 Players)	 OR  +  +  +  + 

Hero Mixing

Some expansion packs include Heroes with the star symbol. You can use these Heroes to replace any Heroes of same type (ordinary/Epic), comparable Health and same treasure type, within one base Hero deck.

13. Glossary

Activated Ability: An activated ability is any effect that requires the player to declare its use or pay a cost (for example, “destroy this Room” abilities are activated abilities.) They can be used whenever you could play a Spell. Ongoing abilities/effects and “when you build this Room” abilities are **not** considered activated abilities.

Active Player: [Click here to read more](#)

Build: Abilities that say “When you build this room” trigger when a Room is built, not if it is revealed for other reasons. You may build one Room per turn (unless a card states otherwise), you may not rearrange Rooms in your dungeon when building (unless a card states otherwise), you may not build over face-down Rooms, and you may only build a maximum of five visible Rooms in your dungeon.

Cancel: Any Spell or ability that allows you to “cancel” a Spell, allows you to interrupt a declared Spell, even if you are not the Active Player. A canceled Spell is not cast and must be placed in the discard pile. A Spell may also be canceled if its target is destroyed (or otherwise rendered moot) by a higher-priority effect. Once the target for a Spell has been declared, it cannot be changed.

Damage: Rooms deal damage (marked in the lower left-hand corner of each Room as a number in an empty heart). Damage equal to a Hero’s health kills that Hero, the moment they leave that Room.

Deactivate: A “deactivated” Room is turned sideways until the end of the turn. This does not reveal any Room cards beneath it. Ignore any damage, treasure, or abilities usually associated with the Room while it is turned sideways. Effects that trigger off the number of rooms in your dungeon do not count it as a Room while it is deactivated. Rooms cannot be built over deactivated cards, and a deactivated Room cannot be destroyed. Treat it as a “blank” space in the dungeon, so cards on either side are not adjacent to one another. At the end of the turn, it is reactivated. A Miniboss attached to a deactivated Room is also deactivated and reactivates with the Room. If there are any tokens or coins on a Room becoming deactivated, these are lost. If you deactivate a Room during the Build phase that would have triggered a Boss card’s Level Up ability, that Level Up ability does not trigger until the End of Turn phase, when the room reactivates.

Dead: Heroes can be killed by damage, Spells, or Room effects. Any Hero that does not survive a dungeon is considered “dead” and is placed in that player’s scorekeeping area either face-down. The Room in which a Hero is reduced to zero Health is the Room in which it “dies”.

Destroy: A room that is “destroyed” is sent to the discard pile from play. If there is a Room under that Room, it is Uncovered. If this creates a “hole” in the dungeon, all the cards immediately slide to the right (toward your Boss) to close any gaps. You may only destroy a Room if a card specifically allows you to do so. If there are any tokens or coins on a Room becoming destroyed, these are lost. If there is a Hero in a Room being destroyed (and the ability that triggered it doesn’t affect the Hero), the Hero will immediately move to the other Room (unless the Room dealt enough damage to kill it - then the Hero ends up in the scorekeeping area as a Soul). If said Room is the last one before the Boss and the Hero is alive, then the Hero ends up in the scorekeeping area as a Wound.

Discard: A card is “discarded” if a player must remove it from their hand and place it in the discard pile. By default, an effect that forces a player to discard a card allows the player to choose which card is discarded. When a card says “discard a card at random,” an opponent randomly chooses.

Discard pile: This pile is created face-up, and all players can inspect the cards in the pile at any time.

Enter: A Hero “enters” a Room when it moves from the dungeon entrance into a Room, or from one Room into another. When a Hero enters a Room, apply any Hero or Item abilities, then any Room abilities, then the Room’s damage (in that order).

Entrance: The “entrance” to your dungeon is the area to the left of your leftmost Room. At the beginning of the Adventure phase, Heroes enter dungeons in the order that they arrived. The entrance is not a part of a dungeon, so any cards that affect Heroes being in a dungeon, don’t affect Heroes at the entrance.

Face-Down: Cards are played face-down in order to conceal information. Rooms are played face-down during the Build phase before being revealed at the end of the Build phase. Additional rooms cannot be built over face-down cards, and they cannot be destroyed. Additionally, Rooms covered with face-down Rooms during the Build phase can’t be affected by any ability.

First: The “first” Room in your dungeon is the leftmost Room, adjacent to your dungeon entrance.

Hand: The cards in your hand cannot be viewed by other players unless a card effect specifically allows them to do so. There is no minimum or maximum number of cards that can be in your hand, apart from the beginning of the game, where players pick a certain number of cards.

Heal: If an effect allows you to “heal” a Wound, you may flip over one face-up Hero (ordinary or Epic) in your scorekeeping area. Instead of counting its Wound value, you now count its Soul value.

Health: A Hero’s Health is its ability to sustain damage. As soon as its Health is reduced to zero, and the Hero leaves the current Room (without its Health being further affected by any activated abilities) it dies (see “Dead” above).

Hero: When a card refers to an “ordinary Hero”, it means a non-epic Hero (including “Dark Heroes”). When it specified “Epic Hero”, it only refers to an Epic Hero (including “Hybrid Heroes”). A card that just says “Hero” can refer to either type.

Hoard (RMB): The stash of Coins that you own.

Kill: Some effects trigger when a Hero is killed in a particular room. The room in which a Hero is reduced to zero Health is the room in which it is killed. (Also see “Dead” above.)

Last: The “last Room in your dungeon” is the rightmost Room, adjacent to your Boss.

Level-Up: The first time your dungeon reaches five Rooms in length (not counting the Boss card itself), your Boss card’s “Level Up” ability is triggered. This ability takes effect during the end of the Build phase when you reveal your fifth Room, followed by any other “when you build this Room” effects from that Room.

Limited Edition: The Limited Edition copy of Boss Monster 2 contains holofoil and non-foil versions of each Boss. Do not play with both! Choose one of each Boss and set aside the rest. Also, do not play with both copies of The Brothers. Set aside the other copy.

Monster: A Monster Room is a Room with a silver or gold Monster icon in the upper left-hand corner. These trigger certain card effects that specifically refer to “Monster Rooms”.

Multi-treasure: A Room that has more than one treasure icon, regardless of type (could be same icons). Such a Room card can also be recognized by its a gold border.

Next: When a Hero is in a Room, the “next” Room in a dungeon is the adjacent Room immediately to the right.

Ongoing ability/effect: An effect (from an ability/Item/Spell that were activated previously this turn), which lasts until the end of turn since the moment of activation. If this effect applies to all Rooms (e.g. activated abilities of Jackpot Stash or The Crushinator), any Rooms that are revealed by any means within the same turn after this effect has been declared also get this bonus.

Ordinary: An “ordinary Hero” is a non-Epic Hero, and an “ordinary Room” is a non-Advanced Room. When card ability test references a “Hero”, it means “ordinary or Epic Hero” unless it specifies one or the other. Similarly, “Room” means “ordinary or Advanced Room” unless it has a specific descriptor.

Pay: To “pay” a coin, remove it from your Hoard and return it to the pot of coins.

Portable (POP): Portable cards are a part of the Power Pack addon, which is essentially a part of the Collector’s Box. Cards with the Portable keyword can be returned to hand during the Build phase, before built Rooms are revealed. Returned Portable card can be built in the same turn. This exhausts the build possibility for that player during that turn. Additionally, when a Portable card is returned to hand, a card underneath resolves a “When uncovered” effect, if it has such an effect.

Pot (RMB): The stash from which players take Coins when they gain any through card or any other effects.

Previous: When a Hero is in a Room, the “previous” Room in a dungeon is the adjacent Room immediately to the left.

Promote: To promote a Miniboss, pay a Coin and reveal the Miniboss’s next line of ability text.

Search: Whenever an effects allows a player to search the Spell or Room deck, the player must shuffle the deck afterwards.

Survive: When a Hero exits a Room without dying, it “survives.” If a Hero did not enter a Room (because it was deactivated or ignored), the Hero did not survive that Room. If a Hero survives the last Room in your dungeon, leave it face-up in your scorekeeping area and take a Wound!

Trap: A Trap Room is a Room with a silver or gold Trap icon in the upper left-hand corner. These trigger certain card effects that specifically refer to “Trap Rooms”.

Uncover: This card effect triggers when a Room above the card with this ability is destroyed, returned to the top of the Room card stack by another effects, or returned to hand through the **Portable** ability.

XP: A Boss card’s XP value determines which player gets to go first during each phase of the game.