

Dragon's Lair prototype rules Beta 1 by Ian Toltz

Components

- 30-card Hero deck containing
- 60-card Lair deck containing:
- A supply of tokens to use as gold. 10-15 per player should be sufficient.
- 3 tokens per player to be used as life points.

Setup

If playing with three or four players, set the Leader hero cards aside for a moment (Archmage Gavus, Sir Toman and The Magpie). Shuffle the remaining hero cards. If playing with **3 players, remove 10 hero cards**. If playing with **4 players, remove 5 hero cards**. Do not look at the removed heroes; they will not be used in this game. Then add the leaders back into the hero deck.

Shuffle the lair deck and deal each player **a hand of five lair cards**, which they may look at and should keep secret from the other players. Give each player **five pieces of gold** to start and **three life points**.

Shuffle the hero deck and deal out **three heroes**, following the hero position rules (see below)

The player most resembling a dragon goes first. Alternatively, you may select a start player randomly.

Objective

You and your friends are dragons competing to amass the most gold by luring adventurers into your lair and then killing them. The game ends when there are two or fewer heroes remaining in the hero deck. **The winner is the player with the most gold**; ties are broken by the most heroes killed. If there is still a tie, the person with the most cards currently in their lair win. If two or more players are still tied after both tiebreakers, they should either resort to fisticuffs or rejoice in shared victory, depending on their temperament and political leanings.

Playing Area

Each player has a **lair stack**. The lair stack begins the game empty, but will quickly be filled as players add lair cards to it. In order to help differentiate their hand from their lair stack, it is recommended players place a life point on top of it.

Place the lair deck in the center of the table with room for a discard pile next to it. Place the hero deck in the center of the table as well, with room for the party and a hero discard pile.

Gameplay

The game is played as a series of rounds each consisting of three distinct phases: the preparation phase, the bidding phase, and the lair phase. The three phases are always resolved in this order, and the game starts with the preparation phase.

Hero Positions

Whenever you're adding new face-up heroes to the party, whether dealing out a new party from scratch or revealing face-down heroes after bidding, use this procedure for each hero.

1. Check if the hero has a **Reveal** effect. If he does, do what the **Reveal** effect says.
2. If this is the first hero, place it next to the hero deck to start the line. The front of the line is the end closest to the hero deck.
3. If there are already heroes out, take a look at the current hero's **position**.
 - a. If the current hero's **position** is front, place it ahead of any heroes with **positions** of "back" or "middle," but behind any other heroes with a **position** of "front."
 - b. If the current hero's **position** is "middle," place it ahead of any "back" heroes but behind any other "middle" or "front" heroes.
 - c. If the current hero's **position** is "back," simply add it to the back of the line.

Preparation Phase

Players take turns in clockwise order. On your turn, you must do one of the following:

- You may **play a card on into your lair**. Take a lair card from your hand and place it face down on top of your lair stack. Then draw a card to bring your hand back up to 5 cards.
- You may **discard any number of lair cards** from your hand and then **draw that many cards**. The discarded cards are placed face up in the lair deck discard pile.
- You may **renovate your lair**. Set your hand aside for the moment. You may look through and rearrange your lair however you like.
- Finally, you may **initiate the bidding phase**. You may only initiate the bidding phase if you have at least two cards in your lair. Also note that since this is your action for your turn, you can't take any other actions if you initiate the challenge phase.

Bidding Phase

The bidding phase is an auction in which the players attempt to entice the party of heroes to assault the players' own lairs. Heroes have lots of great treasure on them! The players bid for the attention of the heroes in two ways: by placing gold in the lair, appealing to the greedy side of the heroes, and by wreaking havoc on the countryside, appealing to the heroes' innate desire to seek out glory.

Starting with the player who initiated the bidding phase, players take turns in clockwise order bidding. On your turn, you must do one of the following:

- **Bid any amount of gold** (including 0), but it must be in excess of the previous bid (if any). You may not build more gold than you currently have.
- **Wreak havoc**. You may only wreak havoc if there are still heroes remaining in the hero deck. Add any number of heroes (at least 1) **face down** to the end of the line of heroes. When you wreak havoc, the current gold bid is reset to 0 and you are now winning the auction. You may also bid additional gold, if desired.
- **Pass**. Passing does not preclude you from bidding again later in the same challenge phase if you get another turn. However, if all other players pass, the current high bidder wins. **If you have fewer than two lair cards in front of you, you must pass.**

If it gets to your turn and you're already the high bidder (i.e. everyone else passed since you last bid), then the bidding phase is over and you've won the right to lure the party into your lair in the lair phase. Set aside the gold you bid as a pot. Everyone else takes back any gold they bid.

Lair Phase

If there are any face-down heroes in the party, first reveal them one at a time and place them in their appropriate positions as explained above in Hero Positions.

Next, if any heroes have **setup** effects, resolve the setup effects starting from the front of the line.

Finally, the heroes explore your lair until either you run out of cards in your lair stack, or you've killed all the heroes. Exploration is handled as follows.

1. Reveal the top card of your lair stack.
2. If it has a **reveal** effect, resolve that effect immediately.
3. Carry out the **battle** step.
 - a. Check if the lair card has any **battle** effects.
 - b. Starting with the first hero, check each hero for **battle** effects. If a hero has a battle effect which is relevant, it will always use it.
 - c. Continue checking heroes until the lair card is destroyed. If the lair card is destroyed, immediately stop checking heroes and continue with step
4. If the lair card survives the heroes' battle effects, move onto the **resolution** step.
 - a. Check if any heroes have any **resolve** effects.
 - b. Check the lair card for a **resolve** effect.
 - c. Place the lair card on top of your lair stack discard pile.
5. If there are still any heroes left...
 - a. ...and your lair stack still has cards left, start over by revealing the next card in your lair stack.
 - b. ...and your lair stack is empty, the heroes have defeated you. All gold in the pot is returned to the supply, and you lose a life point. If that was your last life point, you're out of the game!
6. If there are no more heroes left, you've won! Collect the gold from the pot.
7. Win or lose, if you have any cards in your lair stack discard pile, put them back on top of your lair stack without changing their order. Just flip the entire discard pile upside down onto your lair stack.

Death & Destruction

Some heroes have **death** effects, and some lair cards have **destruction** effects. These occur immediately when the hero is killed or when the lair card is destroyed, and interrupt the normal flow of the lair phase. After resolving the death or destruction effects, continue where you left off.

Whenever you kill a hero, add gold to the pot equal the hero's **value**, and then take the hero card as a trophy (trophies are used to break ties and also look quite snazzy mounted over your mantel).

Important notes

A player may never look through another player's lair stack. A player may only look through or rearrange his own lair stack when instructed to by a card or when taking the renovation action during the preparation phase.

Gold, life points, and number of trophies and cards in lair stack are all public information and must be given if asked for.

If there is a question of timing between two heroes, the hero closest to the front of the line always has precedence.

Unless an effect specifically say you may do something, any ability which could be used on any hero or lair card must be used as soon as possible.

A face-down hero is treated as having absolutely no abilities, types or text. For example, if a face-down beloved pet is killed, it will not turn anything else face-up. A face-down cleric will not stop the undead from feasting on his friends.

If a lair card kills multiple heroes, the heroes are killed simultaneously, but any death effects are resolved from front to back. For example, if there's a face-up beloved pet and a face-down cleric being killed by a disintegration trap, the beloved pet would flip up the next face down hero after the cleric.

Notes on specific cards

Cleric: A face-up cleric can save itself from dying, if it's the first character to die.

Goblins: You gain the gold immediately. This is in addition to any gold you may add to the pot for killing the hero.

Pick-Pocket: You gain the gold immediately. Don't place it in the pot.

Plague Rats: The plague rats turn face down any face-up hero which is checked during the battle step and unable to destroy it. For example, if the party were a rogue, a warrior and a cleric, in that order, the rogue would be turned face down for not being able to kill the rats; the warrior would use its battle effect to flip face down and destroy the rats; and the cleric would remain face up.

Glossary

Battle: Battle effects occur during the battle step of the lair phase. Lair card battle effects are checked first, and then hero battle effects in order.

Bidding: Bidding effects affect the rules for the bidding phase.

Death: These effects occur as soon as the hero is killed, interrupting the normal flow of play.

Destruction: These effects occur as soon as the lair card is destroyed, interrupting the normal flow of play.

Order: Whenever you do something with the party in order, you check the hero at the front first and move your way one by one to the back.

Position: See Hero Positions under Gameplay above for detailed instructions. In a nutshell, "front" heroes should be first in line, followed by "middle" heroes and then "back" heroes.

Resolve: Resolve effects occur during the resolution step of the lair phase. Hero resolve effects are checked first, in order, and then the lair card's resolve effect.

Reveal: Reveal effects occur the moment the card is revealed. For heroes, this is right before you'd put them into their position in the party; for lair cards, it's when the card is turned face up during the lair phase.

Regenerate: Regenerate always appears as part of a **destruction** effect. A card which regenerates must be fought a second time, just as though it were the next card flipped over from the lair stack. If the heroes destroy it the

second time, it is gone for good; otherwise it is not destroyed and placed on the player's lair stack discard pile as normal.

Setup: Setup effects on heroes occur at the beginning of the lair phase, after any face-down heroes are turned face up and put into position but before any lair cards are revealed.

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Beta Testers

Dan Dedeaux, Scott Ferrier, Carol Karlson, Seana Eaton Miller, Dan Mulcare, Lee Peterkin, Bryan Swedis

If you've tried the game and you're not on this list, **please let me know** so I can add you!