

DORN

GAME RULES

The only thing that could be heard in the narrow underground hallway was the heroes' breath. Paladin Kaerdrak turned his gloomy face back towards the others and placed his finger on his mouth. Absolute silence absorbed the hallway. Shadows of torches were dancing on the walls and a nearby junction was barely visible in the darkness. Suddenly they heard it, the ominous sound of scales rubbing against the floor. They could also hear rattling of bones and slapping of bat-like wings nearby. The heroes moved as close to each other as they could. Almanor the mage started whispering some ancient protective spell. A cautious ring could be heard as Ragnar in the back just drew his silver rapier.

And then the attack came. Pale faces of those who used to be humans emerged from the darkness and their eyes shone with greenish light. In the hallway behind them there was, tall and mighty, the silhouette of the snake beast Gorgon. Dented swords of the undead started pounding at the heroes' shields. Kaerdrak swung his mighty axe at the advancing foes, Guelin kept shooting arrows, and Almanor unleashed a magical fire on the monsters. The hallway was suddenly filled with howls, shrieks, battle cries and commands. And the first drops of blood fell on the granite floor, which seemed to absorb them all too eagerly...

1. Object of the game

In this game, two sides stand against each other – a group of heroes and a dark necromancer, Zorkal the Dornkeeper, with monsters that he controls.

The heroes need to get to the center of the dark underground labyrinth called Dorn and kill Zorkal before he manages to destroy the hamlet of Argos. In order to be able to fight Zorkal, the heroes must open the Gate of Doom by retrieving three of the ancient Artifacts, which are hidden in the Dorn.

The Dornkeeper needs to complete a dark ritual, which would open an abyss under the hamlet of Argos. For this he needs to fill the Ritual Chamber with monsters and keep it full for more than a day to complete the sacrifice. The Dornkeeper can also win the game by eliminating all the heroes who could ruin his plan.

2. Assembly of game pieces

As you first open the game box, it is necessary to assemble some of its features.

Hero and Zorkal Figures – Put 4 stickers with a picture and a name of a hero or Zorkal on each of the 10 wooden blocks. The pictures and the names should always be on opposite sides of the block. Stickers with names and pictures on one block need to have a frame of the same color, the personal color of the hero.

Weak monster tokens – Put round stickers with brown edges on one side of all brown tokens. For monsters with a question mark on their faces (swamp beasts), put a sticker on both sides of the token so that one side has a sticker of swamp beast with two skulls below and the other a sticker of swamp beast with a one skull below.

Strong monster tokens – Put red round stickers on both sides of all red tokens so that there are two stickers with the same image on opposite sides, one of them with one skull and the other with two skulls on it (the same as in the case of the swamp beasts).

Artifact tokens – Put stickers with blue edges on one side of each of the blue tokens.

Treasure tokens – Put stickers with yellow edges on one side of each of the yellow tokens.

Cave-in tokens – Put stickers with white edges with a picture of a Cave-in on one side of each of the white tokens.

Day and Night token – Put the stickers with a sun and a moon (yellow circle and blue half circle) on opposite sides of the white token.

3. Game setup

3.a) Selection of the Heroes and Dornkeeper

The Dornkeeper is usually represented by one player. The heroes may be represented by 1 to 5 players. In your first game, the Dornkeeper should be played by the oldest or the most experienced player. In subsequent games, you can draw lots by using character cards.

3.b) Setup of the game board

To begin, place 6 tokens of Artifacts on the blue spaces with a symbol of a rune on your game board (*space with letter A in appendix Map of Dorn*).

Then place 24 tokens of Treasures on the yellow spaces with brown framing on your game board (*spaces with letter P in appendix Map of Dorn*).

3.c) Setup of the heroes

First, the players must decide which 5 heroes they will choose for the game. One player can play 2 or more heroes. For the first game we recommend **Kaerdrak, Choros, Almanor, Ragnar and Eleanor**. Other heroes include **Gor, Guelin, Riel and Vargen**. You will find the heroes' characters and special abilities on their cards (*see appendix Hero Card Description*).

Each hero starts the game on the first level. At the beginning of the game, you place a **white playing stone** on number 1 on the hero's card. The stone shows the hero's current level and corresponding abilities. Each player prepares **red playing stones** (also called drops of blood) that he will use to show the actual number of his hit points. The number of hit points on each hero's card represents the starting and the **maximum number of hit points** the hero can have on the given level. The remaining Drops of blood will be placed next to the game board as a reserve.

Each player draws **Blessing** card for each one of his heroes (*cards with one blue side and a symbol of a figure between stones*), looks at the card, and puts it on the table face down. Each player thus only knows the cards of Blessing of the heroes he controls. The players place the figures of their heroes on the game board into the hamlet of Argos (*see appendix Map of Dorn*).

3.d) Setup of the Dornkeeper

The player who represents the Dornkeeper places the figure of Zorkal on Zorkal's throne in the room behind the Gate of Doom (*see appendix Map of Dorn*). Then he places **4 green playing stones** next to Zorkal's card (just like the heroes do), the stones represent the starting and maximum number of Zorkal's hit points. Then he places the white playing stone on the number 1 on Zorkal's card, which shows his actual level.

Afterwards the player representing the Dornkeeper randomly draws **5 weak monsters and 1 strong monster** (*see appendix Monster Lexicon*) from a pile of available monster tokens. Then he places these monsters, which represent his starting army, anywhere on the 6 black spaces on the game board (*the spaces are marked with letter M in appendix Map of Dorn*). All strong monsters and swamp beasts start the game with two hit points, so the side of their tokens should have the image with 2 skulls below facing up.

The first turn happens during the Day, so the player representing The Dornkeeper places the token of Day and Night behind his throne with the picture of sun facing up. The Dornkeeper turns this token upside down at the end of each of his turn, at which point the heroes can start their turn.

Finally the player representing the Dornkeeper draws **6 Ritual** cards (*the cards with red back side and a symbol of a skull*) that he keeps in secret until the moment they are used.

4. Game sequences

Both sides (Zorkal and the heroes) take turns throughout the game. Each turn is composed of several phases. **It is impossible to change the order of phases during the turn.** Before the next phase of a turn starts, all heroes and all monsters must complete the previous part. The Dornkeeper starts the game.

A) The Dornkeeper's turn

1. The Ritual can be played if the Dornkeeper acquired enough drops of blood (see Chapter 5. Ritual Cards)
2. Summoning of monsters, their number varies depending on Day or Night (see Chapter 7. Summoning monsters)
3. Movement of all monsters (see Chapter 8. Movement)
4. Attack of all monsters (see Chapter 9.b Attack of monsters)
5. End of Zorkal's turn – the token symbolizing Day and Night is turned upside down

After the Gate of Doom is open, Zorkal moves and attacks in the same phase as monsters and rules for monsters apply to him as well.

B) The heroes' turn

1. The Blessings can be played by the heroes. (see Chapter 6. The Blessing cards)
2. Movement of all the heroes, including collecting Treasures and Artifacts, dropping them, using items, and handing them to others (see Chapter 8. Movement, Chapter 11. Treasures and Chapter 12. Artifacts)
3. Attack or casting of spells by all the heroes (see Chapter 9. Attack of heroes and Chapter 9.e Magic)
4. Healing of heroes -- in Healing Fountains, in the hamlet of Argos, or at the Herbalist (see Chapter 13. Game board)

The heroes must agree on the order in which they will perform each phase of a turn (e.g. who moves first, who attacks first). If they can't come to an agreement, they perform the phase in alphabetic order.

5. Ritual Cards

At the beginning of his turn, the Dornkeeper may play **one of the Ritual cards**. To cast a Ritual, the Dornkeeper needs to pay a number of the Drops of blood specified on each Ritual card. He acquires Drops of blood each time a hero loses a hit point, either because he is hit by a monster or he uses a spell or an item which requires a Drop of blood (loss of a hit point).

Each Ritual card can be used **only once** and its effect will last only until the end of turn, unless it's specified otherwise on the card. If Zorkal start a turn having cast **all 6** Ritual cards, he may then use 4 drops of blood each turn to summon 1 additional strong monster, according to the rules for summoning.

6. Blessing Cards

At the beginning of the heroes' turn, each one of the heroes can play his **Blessing card**. If more than one hero wants to play their Blessing card during the same turn, the card that was first turned up on the table will take effect first. Each Blessing card can be used only once per game. The heroes are not allowed to exchange Blessing cards between each other, not even if one player controls more than one hero. Each player keeps his Blessing card in secret from Zorkal and the other players.

7. Summoning monsters

The Dornkeeper fights the heroes mainly using the monsters that he remotely controls through necromantic magic. The Monster Lexicon containing descriptions of the monsters' abilities is a separate appendix to the rules.

During the Day (every odd turn), Zorkal can summon only one weak monster. At Night (every even turn), he can summon either two weak or one strong monster.

If he summons **weak monsters**, the Dornkeeper can decide on the type of the monster. **Giant rats** have to be summoned to the Sewers, **skeletons with pikes** need to be summoned to the Crypt, **zombies** to the Graveyard, and **swamp beasts** to the Black Swamp (see appendix Map of Dorn). **The swamp beasts cannot be summoned to spaces that are neighboring one of the heroes**, but other monsters are allowed to do so.

Strong monsters (vampire, mummy, ghost, gorgon) must always be summoned to the Dark temple (see appendix Map of Dorn). The Dornkeeper cannot choose which type of strong monster he will summon. Instead, he must draw randomly from all available tokens of strong monsters.

Swamp beasts and strong monsters always enter the game with 2 hit points, so the sticker with 2 skulls faces up.

The Dornkeeper may move and attack with the summoned monsters in the same turn they were summoned. The swamp beasts from the Black swamp are an exception; they can start moving and attacking only in the next Zorkal's turn. New monsters cannot be summoned to spaces that are already occupied by monsters or heroes. The Dornkeeper chooses the exact space within the summoning location where the monster appears.

The Dornkeeper can control only six monsters of the each type on the game board. After that, he has to summon other types of monsters. In case he runs out of tokens for a specific monster, the Dornkeeper can exchange tokens of weak and strong monster that the heroes keep for tracking experience points (see Chapter 10. Level-up).

8. Movement

During their turn, all heroes and all monsters can only move up to the number of spaces written on their cards or in the Monster Lexicon. They are not allowed to **move diagonally** across square spaces.

Each hero and monster can interrupt their movement and continue with it later in the same phase of the turn. It is thus possible for one monster to move 3 spaces, let another monster pass, and then finish its move.

The monsters and the heroes are not allowed to **stop on the same space or pass through each other**. Passing by one hero through another is possible only on the ochre outside trails with round spaces.

Spaces where monsters are summoned and spaces where Zorkal's starting army is placed can be entered by both heroes and monsters. The sewers are the three separate spaces in a row. Heroes and monsters may enter spaces with a Treasure or an Artifact. They may also enter the Healing fountains.

Monsters are not allowed to enter the ochre outside trails with round spaces (one such space is also in front of the Herbalist). The heroes, the monsters, and Zorkal cannot by any means pass through the Gate of Doom before it's been opened.

Monsters cannot be teleported to spaces that they are not allowed to enter.

9. Combat

9.a Attack of heroes

If a hero finds himself adjacent to a monster, he can attack the monster by using the ability that has the sword symbol next to it on his character card. All attacks take place after all heroes have already finished their movements. The hero can use as many attacks per turn as he has on his actual level (on the first level, all heroes usually have only one attack). Some heroes have special abilities that make their attacks more powerful, such as the Round attack of Choros or the Piercing attack of Eleanor.

Each attack by a hero usually deals one hit point of damage to a monster, which means that one attack will **kill all weak monsters** except swamp beasts who have 2 hit points. The hero keeps the token of the slain monster as a counter of experience points (see Chapter 10. Level-up). Strong monsters or swamp beasts are only wounded by one attack of a hero, as they have 2 hit points. In such

a case, the token of the monster is turned upside down so the side with only one remaining skull is facing up, meaning that the monster only has 1 hit point left. If the wounded monster is attacked again, it is killed and the hero keeps the token of the slain monster as a counter of experience points (see Chapter 10. Level-up).

9.b Attack of monsters

If a monster finds itself on a space adjacent to a hero, it may attack him. **Each hero can parry one attack by a monster in each Zorkal's turn.** Additional attacks cannot be parried. For every attack that has not been parried, the hero loses one hit point. Zorkal has to announce how many monsters are attacking the hero, who can then decide which attack he wants to parry.

Weak monsters only have 1 attack per turn. Several strong monsters have 2 attacks per turn.

One attacking weak monster will thus not harm the hero (he can parry this one attack). Two weak monsters attacking at the same time hit the hero for 1 hit point (he can parry the first, but not the second attack). Three weak monsters attacking in the same time hit the hero for 2 hit points. A vampire (2 attacks per turn) attacking together with a weak monster hit the hero for 2 hit points. Two vampires attacking together hit the hero for 3 hit points. (For other specific situations, see the appendix *Examples from the game*.)

9.c Shooting

Some of the heroes (Guelin and Riel) and monsters (gorgons) can shoot. A shooting attack is like a regular attack, but from a distance. Shooting at adjacent spaces is also possible. The distance is calculated as the path the hero would have to go if he were to get to the target space. A hero can shoot over other heroes, but not over monsters, which count as obstacles. Monsters can shoot over other monsters, but not over heroes, who count as obstacles.

It is not possible to shoot over obstacles. Obstacles are all the places on the game board that are not possible to pass through. Heroes and monsters cannot shoot an opponent diagonally across from him if there is a pillar or wall in the way, unless they can legally shoot through one of the adjacent spaces. If it is not clear whether it is possible to shoot from one space to another, try connecting a straight line from **any part of the space** that the shooter stands on with **the center of the target space**. If a straight line exists that does not cross any obstacles, shooting is possible. In borderline situations, shooting is possible (see the appendix *Examples from the game*).

9.d Pike

Certain heroes (Eleanor) and monsters (skeletons) fight using pikes. The attacking distance with a pike is **2 spaces only**. If 2 square spaces are connected diagonally, it is possible to attack with a pike as the distance is counted as 2 spaces. It is not possible to attack over obstacles. All the same rules as for shooting apply to pikes. Thus, a hero can attack with a pike over another hero, but not over a monster. A monster can attack with a pike over another monster, but not over a hero (see the appendix *Examples from the game*).

9.e Magic

Some of the heroes (Almanor, Gor) attack by using magic. During the attack phase, they can use one of their abilities that has a star symbol next to it on their character cards. When casting more difficult magic spells (with a symbol of a drop of blood on the card), **heroes lose 1 hit point due to exhaustion**. The lost drop of blood is handed to the Dornkeeper.

It is possible to target spaces behind corners with magic spells. The distance is calculated as the path the hero would have to go if he were to get to the target space. It is not possible to cast spells over a wall or other obstacle. It is possible to cast magic over other heroes, but not over monsters (see the appendix *Examples from the game*).

9.f Drops of blood

If a hero loses one or more hit points for whatever reason, he must give the same number of drops of blood to the Dornkeeper. The Dornkeeper may then use them at the beginning of his turn to cast one of the Ritual cards. In such a case, the used drops

of blood are put back in the reserve. Zorkal's own hit points cannot be used to cast Ritual cards. The Dornkeeper cannot use the drops of blood to heal himself and he can have the **maximum of 16 drops of blood** at one time. Additional drops of blood are immediately put in the reserve.

9.g Death of a hero

If a hero loses his last Drop of blood, the game is over for him and he removes his figure from the game board. **The Treasure cards that he had in his possession are destroyed and are also removed from the game.** If the hero carried an Artifact, its token is to be put on the space where the hero fell. That Artifact can be then picked up by another hero **without triggering the summoning of a new strong monster** (see Chapter 12. Artifacts). Remember that any artifact that not found on an A can be assumed to have been dropped by a dead hero.

10. Advance to higher levels

Each hero keeps the tokens of the monsters he killed. A weak monster counts as one experience point, a strong one as two experience points. Wounding a strong monster or a swamp beast does not yield any experience points; only the hero that deals the final blow gets the experience points. If a hero kills a monster using a Blessing or an item from the Treasure card, he gets the experience points as well.

If a hero has collected tokens of monsters worth **5 experience points**, on the end of his turn he gives the tokens back to the reserve and **advances to the second level**. The white gaming stone on the hero's card moves to number 2 and the hero is immediately able to use his additional new abilities. If he still has some experience points left, he keeps them in the form of available monster tokens.

For advancing to the third level, it is necessary to have **7 additional experience points**. A hero on the third level cannot get any higher and does not keep the tokens of the killed monsters anymore. If the maximum number of a hero's hit points increases when entering a higher level, he immediately gets the extra hit point, as if he has just healed one hit point.

Zorkal can advance to higher levels in the same way as the heroes, but he uses drops of blood as experience points. He needs 7 drops of blood to advance to the second level and 9 additional drops of blood to advance to the third one. He cannot use his own green hit points to advance to higher levels..

11. Treasure cards

If a hero enters a space with a Treasure token, he can draw one of the Treasure cards (*cards with a yellow back side and a symbol of a chest*). A hero can find useful items, but sometimes a monster may appear instead. Once the Treasure card has been drawn, the token is removed from the space and no other Treasure cards can be drawn on this space. Monsters cannot draw Treasure cards.

If there is an item on the Treasure card, the hero keeps the card so other players and the Dornkeeper can see it. Each hero can only use 1 item per turn. **All items can be used only once. Then they are removed from the game.** If the heroes are standing on adjacent spaces, they can pass items to each other during the movement phase.

12. Artifacts

The Artifacts don't provide the heroes with any special abilities, but the heroes need to collect at least three of them in order to open the Gate of Doom and face the Dornkeeper. If a hero enters a space with an Artifact token, he may pick it up and place it on his card. If the heroes are standing on adjacent spaces, they can pass Artifacts to each other during the movement phase. Monsters cannot pick up Artifacts and cannot carry them.

When any of the Artifacts is picked up, the magical equilibrium inside the Dorn shifts. The Dornkeeper may therefore **summon one extra strong monster** on his next turn. All rules for summoning monsters apply to such a summoning.

13. The Game board

Gate of Doom – It is not possible in any way to pass through the Gate of Doom (not even by teleportation or Blessing cards). If three Artifacts are in the Ritual Chamber, whether carried by Heroes or dropped by heroes who have left, the Gate is unlocked and will open at the start of the Dornkeeper's next turn. It is not possible to close the Gate of Doom once it has been opened.

Black Swamp – The Dornkeeper may summon swamp beasts to any place in the Black swamp, even to spaces carrying a Treasure or an Artifact token. Exact borders of the Black swamp are shown in appendix Map of Dorn. The little lake in the middle of the Black swamp, trees, and hills all count as obstacles.

Healing Fountains – If a hero finds himself standing on one of the two Healing fountains at the end of his turn, he can heal up to two of his lost hit points. Monsters can attack a hero standing on a Healing fountain.

Hamlet of Argos – If there are heroes in the hamlet of Argos at the end of the heroes' turn, the local healer will heal up to two lost hit points to each one of them. The hamlet is the only space in the game that can be occupied by more than one hero at the same time.

The only way to leave the hamlet is to go through the main gate, it is not possible to go directly to the Black Swamp or to the Abandoned Mines.

Ochre trails – Monsters cannot enter the round spaces on the ochre trail, they cannot be teleported there either. Heroes can attack monsters in reach from the ochre trail, but the monsters cannot in any way attack heroes standing on the ochre trail.

Teleporty – There are two Teleports on the game board, one from the Black swamp to Dorn (*T1 on Map of Dorn*) and the other from the Abandoned mines to Dorn (*T2 on Map of Dorn*). Monsters and heroes can pass through the Teleports there and back. The spaces of the Teleport with the same symbol are identical, which means that the hero standing on a Teleport is present on both spaces at the same time. He can thus be attacked by monsters from both sides at once.

After passing through a Teleport, it is possible to continue moving. It is not possible to shoot, attack with a pike or cast magic through the Teleport. Effects of magic spells, Blessing cards, and items do not pass through the Teleport.

Herbalist – If a hero stands at the round space in front of the Herbalist's house at the end of his turn, the Herbalist will heal two of his lost hit points. Same rules apply for this space as for the round spaces of the ochre trail.

14. Victory

If the situation is hopeless, it is possible to surrender. The side that does so loses the game.

14.a Victory for the heroes

The only way for the heroes to win is to kill Zorkal. If he loses his last life (not Drop of blood from the heroes!), the game is lost for the Dornkeeper.

Only when the Gate of Doom is open (*see Chapter 13. The game board*) can the heroes directly fight Zorkal. He moves and attacks together with the monsters and for the purposes of the rules he represents one of them.

14.b Victory of the Dornkeeper

The Dornkeeper wins when he successfully performs the Ultimate Ritual that opens an abyss under the hamlet of Argos. For the Ultimate Ritual to be successful, the central Ritual Chamber (*see appendix Map of Dorn*) has to be completely full of monsters at the end of Zorkal's three consecutive turns (19 monsters are needed). Composition of the monsters inside the Ritual Chamber may vary in each of these turns. If there is a hero instead of a monster on one of the spaces, the Ritual will be successful too.

If the Dornkeeper eliminates all the heroes, the game ends by his victory, as there is nobody to prevent him from performing the Ultimate Ritual.

15. Varieties for more advanced players

Before the start of the game, players may agree that they will play with some of these additional rules that give the game more variability, but do not favor any one of the sides.

15.a Random Group

Players draw heroes randomly at the beginning of the game.

15.b Missing Artifact

When setting up the game, players place tokens of Artifacts randomly on the blue spaces with a rune back side up. Then they turn the Artifact tokens face up and the one with a picture of an axe is removed from the game.

15.c The Cave-in

When preparing the game, the Dornkeeper places two tokens of Cave-in on the game board. These are counted as obstacles, but it is possible to destroy them. First the Dornkeeper draws two out of six tokens of Cave-in. He places them on the game board so that the number on the Cave-in token corresponds with the number of the Cave-in space on the Map of Dorn (*Z1–Z6*). A Cave-in has 3 hit points, so place two more Cave-in tokens on the token that was already placed on the game board and take one away with each loss of a hit point. The Cave-in can be attacked in the same way as a monster or a hero, but Blessing cards and Ritual cards do not affect it. If the Cave-in loses its last hit point, it is removed from the game. Heroes do not gain any experience points for removing it.

15.d Tactics and flight

If a hero comes to a space adjacent to a monster, he has to finish his movement phase. If a monster comes to a space adjacent to a hero, it has to finish its movement phase. This restriction doesn't apply to heroes and monsters that have the ability of passing freely through spaces that are occupied by other heroes or monsters.

If a hero starts his turn on a space adjacent to a monster, he can either fight or flee. If he chooses to flee, he does not have to stop on spaces adjacent to monsters, but he cannot use items from Treasure cards, attack or cast magic spells in this turn. The same rule applies to monsters – if they are fleeing from a hero, they cannot attack in the same turn.

15.e Real Day and Night

Players can agree that both the heroes and Zorkal have a certain time limit for their turns, approximately 2–5 minutes. After the time runs out, the other side starts playing.

15.f Four heroes

It is possible to play the game with only four heroes. Increase the starting number of hit points and number of hit points on higher levels by 1 for each hero. The Dornkeeper starts the game with 3 weak monsters, he draws them from the reserve and places them on the black spaces he chooses. To be able to cast a Ritual card and to be able to advance to higher levels, the Dornkeeper needs one additional drop of blood. All other rules apply.



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Additional information and frequently asked questions can be found on www.dorn.cz.