Before playing for the first time, carefully remove all the tiles from the frame. Place the L-shaped board in the centre of the table. Fit the round shield into the hole in the centre of the board.

Place the Beowulf figure at the edge of the board at the point where the green path starts (see right).

The youngest player receives one of the red markers and becomes the first start player. (You only need the second red marker if there are fewer than 5 players.) Place this marker on the first Major episode (King Hrothgar’s Hall) so that it covers the first unavailable icon space. In every Major episode there are as many icon spaces available as there are players. Spaces are available clockwise, starting from the title of the episode. So if there are 3 players you place the marker on the fourth icon space showing 2 cards. This means that only (a) the special card King Hrothgar’s Blessing, (b) the treasure token with the number 1 and (c) the 2 alliance tokens are available (see below).

Place the status markers next to the board. You need one status marker for every player. In a 3-player game you need the markers numbered 1-3. Put the remaining status markers back in the box.

Tokens
Place the fame, treasure and misfortune tokens and all wound tiles face up next to the board. Shuffle the round alliance tokens and place these face down next to the board as well.

Special cards
Take out the All-Iron Shield card and put it back in the box. This card is only used in advanced games, see page 7. As for the other cards, use only the cards with a circled number lower than or equal to the number of players. For example, if there are 2 players, you only need the cards numbered with a 2. This means you only use all the cards in a game with 5 players. Place the cards you are using face up on the edge of the board. Put the other cards back in the box.

Activity cards
The activity cards have 6 different symbols and images (see below). All cards other than the Beowulf cards have either 1 or 2 symbols of the same type. The Beowulf cards are jokers and have only 1 symbol. The Beowulf symbol can stand for any particular symbol. You can also play several Beowulf cards at the same time – even for different symbols.

Give each player 1 Beowulf card and 1 fighting card with 2 symbols. Shuffle all the remaining cards. Now give each player 5 more cards. All players’ cards are kept secretly in that player’s hand. Place the remaining cards face down in a deck at the edge of the game area. Leave room for a pile of discarded cards next to it.
**Play**

As a player you accompany Beowulf on his travels and adventures. You stand by him in all his exploits ready to assist him in both word and deed. The aim of the game is to achieve fame and rewards in the form of fame, treasure and alliance tokens, special cards and additional activity cards. It is all played with one goal in mind: to win Beowulf’s recognition and favour. At the end of the game, Beowulf’s successor – and therefore the winner of the game – is the player who possesses the most fame and treasure.

The board is divided into 36 episodes. Each episode represents an event in Beowulf’s adventurous life. As the game progresses, the Beowulf figure advances through the episodes one by one.

At the beginning of the game the figure is standing at the edge of the board at the point where the green path begins (next to King Hygelac’s Court). Once everything has been set up, the start player moves the Beowulf figure on to the first episode, King Hygelac’s Court. All the players, in clockwise order, have the opportunity to perform the activity offered by this episode. If you decide to do so, discard 2 cards from your hand and draw two new cards from the stack/deck so that you have the cards you need for the next episode (horn, axe, fist, etc.). When all the players have had a turn, move the Beowulf figure on to the next episode, Sail to Denmark. Each player has a turn here as before, and so on through all 36 episodes.

In most of the episodes players compete for fame and rewards. All gathered fame, treasure, alliance and misfortune tokens are kept face down in front of the players. Cards are held in hand. Wounds and scratches are displayed open in front of each player. The options available in each episode are explained in the *Episodes* section. The gold-coloured episodes are only used in the advanced game and are omitted in the introductory game.

When the Beowulf figure reaches the last episode, Death of Beowulf, there is a final scoring. Whoever has the most fame and the most treasure to their name becomes Beowulf’s successor and wins the game.

**Episodes**

There are three types of episode in the game: Minor, Major and Treasure episodes. The Treasure episodes are only used in the advanced game and they are omitted in the introductory game. Once you have played Beowulf a few times you can include the Treasure episodes. You will find the rules for the Treasure episodes on page 7 under **Advanced Game – Treasure Episodes**.

The youngest player is the start player and moves the Beowulf figure on from one episode to another. The start player may change after each Major episode (see next page).

**Minor Episodes**

Beige Coloured

Each Minor episode represents an event in the legendary life of Beowulf.

Players are given the option to perform a particular activity. All players are offered the same opportunity, which they can either accept or refuse. The start player begins by deciding whether or not to perform the offered activity. Play then passes clockwise to each player in turn.

**Risk**

Each risk episode has 2 symbols. A player who wants to take the risk turns over the top 2 cards of the deck. The player keeps any cards that match the symbols of the risk episode. He also adds any Beowulf cards to his hand. Cards with symbols that don’t match the two risk symbols, are placed face up on the discard pile. If neither of the 2 cards has a matching symbol or the Beowulf symbol, the player puts both cards on the discard pile and receives 1 scratch tile, displayed open in front of him.

**Opportunity**

There are 5 different opportunity episodes. All opportunity episodes have one thing in common: you give up cards or fame tokens (including fame-alliance tokens) in exchange for something else.

In the first episode, King Hygelac’s Court, you may discard 2 cards from your hand on to the discard pile and draw 2 new cards from the deck. (You are not allowed to exchange just 1 card, it’s either 2 or nothing.)

In the Great Rewards episode you may exchange two fighting cards (or 1 fighting card with 2 symbols) for 1 treasure token of value 3.

In Peace Returns you may discard 1 symbol of each of the 5 types to win a fame token of value 5.

In Many Friendships you may take one face down alliance token in exchange for 2 friendship cards (or 1 friendship card with 2 symbols).

In Break Ranks, just before the game ends, you may return any 2 fame tokens or fame-alliance tokens in order to discard 1 large wound tile or all your scratches.
Selection

In these episodes, each player chooses one of these 5 options:

- Take 1 treasure token of value 2
- Take 1 face down alliance token
- Take 1 fame token of value 2
- Draw 2 cards from the deck
- Return all scratches

Note: In the rare situation where a token of a particular value has been used up, then the option is no longer available. (You are not allowed to take 2 tokens of value 1 instead of 1 token of value 2!)

Recovery

Recovery episodes are played somewhat differently from other Minor episodes. The start player turns over twice as many cards from the deck as there are players and displays them. Beginning with the start player, and going around clockwise, players select one card each and add it to their hand. After all players have picked one card, the start player starts a second round and takes another card, followed by the next player in a clockwise direction and so on until each player has received two cards altogether.

Major Episodes

Major episodes depict the most significant events and challenges in Beowulf's life. All players must take part in Major episodes and choose one available icon space in the episode, although not all icons have positive outcomes.

There are two kinds of Major episode. Some of them are played by all players at the same time, whereas in others you take turns until only one player is left.

‘Simultaneous play’ (vertical arrow)

When the Beowulf figure reaches one of these episodes, Beowulf asks the players to do all they can to help him overcome this challenge.

To do this, all players select a number of cards from their hand (without showing them to the other players). Once all the players have selected the cards they intend to use to assist Beowulf, the cards are all revealed simultaneously (up until this point the players have held their cards hidden, although anyone who wants to may lay their cards face down on the table if they want to threaten or bluff the other players).

The player who reveals the most matching symbols of the required type(s) receives the status marker with the number 1. The player with the second largest number of symbols gets the status marker with the number 2, and so on. If more than one player has the same number of symbols, the start player or the player sitting nearest to the start player in a clockwise direction receives the status marker with the lower number and so on.

All the cards with matching symbols or Beowulf symbols are then placed face up on the discard pile. If any cards with non-matching symbols have been played (as a bluff), the player who played them puts them back in his hand. Note that you may play 0 matching symbols by selecting cards with no matching symbols at all.

Some of the simultaneous Major episodes only ask for one kind of symbol, while others allow two different kinds. And of course you can always use Beowulf cards.

The significance of the status markers is described on page 5 in Resolving Major episodes.

EXAMPLE

In a game of 4 players, Sandra, Martha, Mark and Peter are playing the Major episode shown left. Sandra is the start player, and the others follow in a clockwise direction.

The cards they must collect are friendship cards. All players select their cards without showing them to anyone else. When they have all picked their cards, they reveal them all at the same time.

The 2 players with the highest scores are Martha and Mark, each with 2 of the requested symbols. Because from a clockwise direction Martha is sitting nearer to start player Sandra, she receives the status marker with the number 1 and Mark receives number 2. Sandra is in third place with 1 friendship symbol. Peter did not reveal any cards with the required symbols, so he picks up his two cards with fighting symbols and puts them back in his hand and receives the status marker with the number 4. All the revealed cards with matching symbols are placed on the discard pile.

In this example, Sandra would still have been in third place even if she had picked no matching symbols, because as the start player she comes before Peter who also has none. However, if she had picked 2 matching symbols instead of only 1, as the start player she would have been in first place, because equal scores are always ranked in order starting with the start player.
In a clockwise play episode, you can always play 2 kinds of symbol (and of course Beowulf cards). The start player begins by laying down just 1 card with 1 or more of the required symbols. The next player must now play at least 1 card and either equal or exceed the total number of symbols played by the previous player. If he does not achieve this with his first card, he may play further cards. As soon as he has equalled or exceeded the number of symbols of the previous player, he may not play any more cards.

There are 3 basic rules here:

- **All players must play at least 1 card when it comes to their turn.**
- **The current player must at least equal the highest number of symbols displayed by any one player.**
- **As soon as the required number of symbols is equalled or exceeded, no more cards may be played.**

The player then announces his total. Cards you have played remain in front of you. If your turn comes again, you add further cards to the ones already played. The total is always based on the total number of symbols on all the cards a player has played.

If you cannot, or do not want to, equal the highest number of revealed symbols achieved by any one player so far, you are out of the episode. You must place your revealed cards on the discard pile and take the status marker with the highest available number.

Play continues in turn until all players except one have been knocked out. The last remaining player receives the status marker with the number 1.

**Important:** Each player must always play at least 1 card. It can happen that the current player has already played a sufficient number of symbols (because all the following players only managed to equal his total). The player must still play one (and only one) card and therefore increases the number of symbols that the other players must now equal.

**Risk:** If you don’t have the symbols you need in your hand – or if you want to save them for later – you may take a risk each turn before playing cards from your hand. The procedure is the same as when taking a risk in a Minor episode. Turn over 2 cards from the deck. Matching cards count as played and non-matching cards are discarded. The rules here are:

- **If you reveal 2 matching cards, even though one would have been enough to equal the required total, then nevertheless both cards are played.**
- **If you turn over 1 or 2 matching cards but this isn’t enough to equal the required total, you must continue to play cards from your hand until you have reached the required number of symbols. If you can or do not want to do this, you are knocked out of the episode. Place your cards on the discard pile and take the highest available status marker.**
- **If you turn over 2 non-matching cards, you are knocked out of the episode even if you have the necessary cards in your hand. And of course you get a scratch!**

**Note:** The start player may take a risk right away if he wants to. If the start player has no matching cards and does not want to take a risk, he may also drop out of the game right away and take the highest available status marker. Each time a player takes his turn he can decide whether to take a risk or not. A player may also decide not to play even if he does have the right cards, in which case he takes the highest remaining status marker.

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**RESOLVING MAJOR EPISODES**

At the end of both kinds of Major episode, all players have a status marker in front of them. The player with the status marker with the number 1 is the first player to select an icon space. (Remember: There are only as many icon spaces available as there are players in the game. They are arranged in clockwise order, from the title.)

He places the marker on an available icon space and receives the appropriate tokens, tiles or cards. Play then passes to the player with status marker 2, and so on. The player with the highest number on the status marker is left with no choice and has to take what’s left.

**Note:** The symbol with the 2 scrolls means that you can pick up 2 face down alliance tokens.

The player with the highest number then removes all the status markers and places them next to the board. He becomes the new start player and receives the red marker from the previous start player.

If there are fewer than 5 players, he places the other red marker from this Major episode on the relevant space of the next Major episode, so that the first unavailable icon is covered.

He then moves the game on by advancing the Beowulf figure to the next episode.
The Major episode shown left is being resolved. Mark has managed to beat Martha and so has status marker number 1 and can choose first. Because there are only four players, the last icon, the scratch, is not available and is covered by 1 of the red markers. Mark chooses the 5 fame points, places his status marker on that space and picks up the appropriate token. Martha can’t make up her mind whether to choose the special card Beowulf’s Daring or the alliance token, but decides in the end to go for the special card. Sandra knows exactly what to do and chooses the alliance token, leaving only the wound for Peter, who is in last place. He picks up a wound tile, and receives 2 activity cards in compensation. He then removes all the status markers from the board and places the red marker on the fifth symbol of the next Major episode. Because he is now the start player, he receives the other red marker from Sandra and places the Beowulf figure on the next episode.

**Icons**

Icons refer to the tokens, tiles and cards that players can receive in the different episodes.

When a player earns a fame, treasure or misfortune token, he picks up the depicted token and places it face down in front of him. He is not allowed, for example, to pick up 2 tokens of value 1 instead of 1 token of value 2. When a player earns an alliance token, he picks up one of the face down tokens, looks at it and then places it face down in front of him.

**Exception:** In rare situations it can happen that all the fame tokens of value 2 have been used up by the time you reach the Dragon Battle or later episodes. If this happens, change is allowed. This is the only exception allowed.

When a player earns a special card, he picks it up from the edge of the board and adds it to his hand. Special cards with symbols can be played in the same way as activity cards if that symbol has been asked for. Special cards with activity text may only be played if the text allows this. Special cards are taken out of the game as soon as they have been played. They are not placed on the discard pile.

If a player earns additional activity cards, he draws the appropriate number from the deck. When the last card has been drawn from the deck, shuffle the discard pile immediately and use it as a new deck.

If a player receives a scratch, he picks up a small wound tile and places it face up in front of him. If he receives a wound, he picks up a large wound tile (with 1 wound) and places it face up in front of him. The player then draws 2 cards from the deck. If a player receives a third scratch, he returns all 3 small wound tiles and takes a large wound tile. **Note:** in this case he doesn’t pick up 2 cards!

The large wound tile with 2 wounds isn’t used until you get to the Dragon Battle episode.

**Important:** Wounds cannot be converted back into scratches. If a player is allowed to return 1-2 scratches but currently has only 1 large wound, he cannot divide the wound up into 3 scratches in order to heal 2 scratches.

Just before the end of the game, there are two opportunities of healing wounds. The crossed-out wound tile allows you to return one of your wound tiles (including the double-wound tile) or any number of scratches. In the last episode, Death of Beowulf, you can use one icon either to pick up a fame token of value 5 or to discard a large wound tile.

**Special Cards**

A game uses between 4 and 9 special cards, depending on the number of players. The All-iron Shield special card is only used in the advanced game. Cards with symbols are handled and played in exactly the same way as activity cards. Hides of Land is the only Beowulf card containing more than 1 symbol. When played the Beowulf symbols can even stand for different symbols. This can be helpful, especially in the minor episode Peace returns. The 5 text cards are described below in more detail:

**King Hrothgar’s Blessing:**

"Instead of discarding 1 of your cards showing symbols, retrieve the card into your hand." You can use this card if you have played an activity card or a special card with symbols. It allows you to keep the activity card or special card with symbols in your hand for use later on and instead discard King Hrothgar’s Blessing from the game. This card can also be used in a clockwise Major episode, but only when the player is about to place his cards on the discard pile.

**Queen Wealhtheow’s Inspiration:**

"Refuse a misfortune, scratch or wound, after choosing the icon in a Major episode." You play this card when you choose your icon. Instead of picking up the token or tile, you give up Queen Wealhtheow’s Inspiration. This card can also be used to refuse the double-wound tile in the Dragon Battle episode. If you refuse a wound, you do not receive 2 activity cards in compensation.

**Beowulf’s Daring:**

"When taking a risk, reveal 5 cards instead of 2." The card must be played before you turn over any cards when taking a risk. You cannot turn over 2 cards and then decide to play Beowulf’s Daring if none of the cards match. If you are using Beowulf’s Daring in a clockwise Major episode, all matching cards are played, which in extreme cases can be all 5 cards.

**Beowulf’s Resolve:**

"Ignore 1 failed risk." If none of the cards you revealed has matching symbols when taking a risk, you can use this card to undo the whole risk. You don’t receive any scratches and you can then decide whether to take the risk again or to proceed without taking a risk. This card can also be used if you have the bad luck to pick up 5 non-matching symbols when playing Beowulf’s Daring.

**The Warriors’ Rest:**

"Discard 2 scratches." You can play this card at any time, even if you are about to receive your third scratch. This allows you to return 1 or 2 of your scratches.

**Important:** Once they have been used, all special cards are removed from the game. They are not placed on the discard pile.

**Game End**

When you reach the Death of Beowulf episode, you are nearing the end of the game. In this episode the players return all the cards in their hand. The player with the most symbols overall receives the status marker with the number 1, the player with the second highest number of symbols receives status marker 2, and so on. Any non-symbol special cards still in your hand are worth nothing.

Once the final fame points have been awarded, all the players reveal their fame, treasure and alliance tokens and add up their values. Any misfortune tokens are deducted from the total (-2 points per token).

Players with no wound tiles receive a bonus of 5 points.

Players with 3 or more wounds must deduct 5 points for each wound. For example, if you have 4 wounds you lose 20 points. Players with 1 or 2 wounds have nothing added and nothing deducted. Scratches are ignored.

The player with the highest total becomes Beowulf’s successor to the throne and wins the game. If there’s a tie, all players with the same number of points share the victory or the place.

**EXAMPLE**

Sandra has collected 9 fame points and 3 treasures.

Because she also has 1 wound, she ends up with 12 points. Martha has collected only 8 fame points and no treasures, but she also has no wounds, which means she receives 5 bonus points and ends up with a total of 13 points. Mark has 12 fame points and 2 treasures. His 2 wounds do not count against him, but they don’t add anything either. But he has also collected 1 misfortune token, which reduces his overall points to 12. Peter has collected 13 fame points and 5 treasures, but he also has 3 wound tiles. Which means that of the total of 18 points he has collected he is left with just 3 points. Although Martha has collected less, she has the most points and is therefore the winner. Sandra and Mark are in joint second place, and Peter is a long way behind in last place.
The advanced game is where the gold-coloured Treasure episodes come into their own. The rules are the same as for the introductory game. However, treasure tokens no longer count as points at the end of the game. Instead they have a new function which allows you to use treasure tokens to your advantage during the game.

The first five Treasure episodes are similar to the clockwise Major episodes. However, this time you can only bid with treasures and only one player can win the icon of the Treasure episode.

When the Beowulf figure is moved on to a Treasure episode, the start player begins by revealing one of his square or round treasure tokens and announcing its value. The next player now reveals his treasure tokens until his total at least equals the previous total. Like in the clockwise Major episodes, you must reveal one new tile in each turn, and you cannot reveal any more treasures once you have equalled or exceeded the previous total. As soon as you’ve done that, the turn passes to the next player. If you cannot, or do not want to (see page 5 first column), equal the required total, you turn all your treasure tokens already revealed face down again and add them to your collected tokens. This means that when you are knocked out you don’t lose the tokens you bid!

Play continues clockwise until only one player remains. This player then returns all his revealed tokens face up next to the board and receives the appropriate rewards depicted on the episode’s icon. All other players neither lose nor gain anything.

Important: Alliance tokens can also contain treasure tokens and can be used in the Treasure episodes.

In the final Treasure episode, Recover Treasures, all players reveal their total treasure tokens and any alliance tokens displaying treasures. As usual the player with the most treasure tokens receives the status marker with the number 1, etc. All players then return their treasure tokens face up next to the board.

Note: The start player does not change at the end of Treasure episodes!

Because the players have no treasure tokens left in their hand by the end of the game, only the values of the fame tokens are counted towards victory in the advanced game.

Beowulf and his men lived in hard and cruel times. Accordingly, players can agree to make the rules a bit harder before starting to play: any player with 3 or more wounds at the end of the game (after the Death of Beowulf episode) is deemed to have fallen in battle and scores 0 points. However, this is only determined at the end of the game, since there are opportunities to heal wounds.

### Advanced Game Treasure Episodes

#### King Hygelac’s Court
News reaches the warrior Beowulf of the monster Grendel terrorising the neighbouring Danes. Beowulf is granted permission by his king, Hygelac, to aid the country of his birth.

#### Sail to Denmark
Gathering together his most trusted comrades-in-arms, Beowulf sails from Geatland to Denmark.

#### King Hrothgar’s Hall
The Danish king, Hrothgar, welcomes Beowulf to his fine hall, and they renew their friendship.

#### Prepare for Encounter
As night falls, Beowulf and his comrades prepare themselves to encounter the monster.

#### Grendel’s Attack
Grendel attacks the hall, killing one of the brave companions. It is a great and fearsome fight, but Beowulf and his comrades mortally wound Grendel, who flees into the dark.

#### Great Rewards
King Hrothgar gratefully rewards the successful warriors.

#### Celebration
The victory celebrations last long into the next day.

#### Sea-Hag’s Attack
There is a great shock when a sea-hag – the mother of Grendel – attacks the hall, killing King Hrothgar’s most trusted advisor, and then retreating to her lair.

#### Prepare Pursuit
Beowulf and the warriors prepare for the pursuit.

#### Hunting the Sea-Hag
The hunt takes them through desolate lands to a haunted lake.

#### Encounter the Sea-Hag
Beowulf dives into the water in pursuit of the sea-hag, and is captured. After a long and terrifying struggle, Beowulf finally slays the sea-hag.

#### Sail to Geatland
With their task complete, Beowulf and his comrades sail for Geatland.

#### King Hygelac
They relate their adventures to king Hygelac, who rewards them for their bravery.

### The Legend of Beowulf

#### Death of Beowulf
With his dying breaths, Beowulf declares his most worthy comrade to be the new king of Geatland.

#### Presentation of Gifts
The warriors proudly present the Danish gifts to their king.

#### Raid against Friesland
In a raid against the Friesians, king Hygelac is slain, and his son Heardred succeeds to the Geatish crown.

#### Swedish Betrayal
Soon after, king Heardred is betrayed and murdered by Swedish exiles, but is avenged by Beowulf.

#### Beowulf becomes King
Beowulf becomes king of the Geats.

#### Strong Alliances
He establishes strong alliances with neighbouring kingdoms.

#### Geatland Prospers
Geatland enjoys a period of great prosperity.

#### Peace Returns
Peace returns to Geatland.

#### Many Friendships
Many friendships are made.

#### Golden Goblet
One day, a destitute pauper discovers and takes a golden goblet from a secret cave, unaware that it is part of a dragon’s treasure-hoard.

#### Dragon’s Rampage
Enraged, the dragon rampages, wreaking great havoc across Geatland.

#### Iron Shield
Once again, the Geats look to Beowulf for protection. Knowing he must battle the fiery dragon, he orders made an iron shield,

#### Break Ranks
The terrifying sight of the dragon even makes some of his bravest comrades break ranks!

#### Dragon Battle
Undeterred, Beowulf confronts the dragon. A mighty battle ensues, mortally wounding both protagonists.

#### Recover Treasures
The dragon’s treasure is recovered.

#### Beowulf becomes King
Beowulf becomes king of the Geats.

#### Many Friendships
Many friendships are made.

#### Golden Goblet
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With his dying breaths, Beowulf declares his most worthy comrade to be the new king of Geatland.
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