

The LORD OF THE RINGS™

THE CARD GAME

THE RETURN OF THE KING™

SAGA EXPANSION

“His Eye is now straining towards us, blind almost to all else that is moving. So we must keep it. Therein lies all our hope. This, then, is my counsel. We have not the Ring. In wisdom or great folly it has been sent away to be destroyed, lest it destroy us. Without it we cannot by force defeat his force. But we must at all costs keep his Eye from his true peril. We cannot achieve victory by arms, but by arms we can give the Ring-bearer his only chance, frail though it be.”

—Gandalf, *The Return of the King*

Welcome to *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King Saga Expansion* for *The Lord of the Rings: The Card Game*! Unlike other *The Lord of the Rings: The Card Game* expansions which explore new adventures set in Middle-earth, the Saga Expansions give players the opportunity to directly participate in, or even recreate, the narrative events described in the classic novels written by J.R.R. Tolkien.

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King allows players to join Aragorn and his companions as they confront the forces of Sauron which march on Gondor, as well as Frodo as he makes his final crossing into Mordor to destroy the One Ring once and for all. In this follow up to *The Two Towers*, you will find six scenarios that conclude the story of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Component Overview

The *Return of the King* Saga Expansion includes the following components:

- This rules booklet
- 330 cards, consisting of:
 - 7 Hero Cards
 - 57 Player Cards
 - 18 Quest Cards
 - 229 Encounter Cards
 - 19 Campaign Cards

Expansion Symbol

The cards in this expansion can be identified by this symbol before each card's collector number:



Saga Expansion Player Cards

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King features new cards that players may use to customize their decks when playing the scenarios in *The Lord of the Rings Saga Expansions*. While most of the included player cards are fully compatible with all published *The Lord of the Rings: The Card Game* scenarios, a select few are only intended for use when playing the scenarios presented in *The Lord of the Rings Saga Expansions*. These are the Fellowship sphere cards: Aragorn (#1), Frodo Baggins (#2), Aragorn (#3), Banner of Elendil (#25), and Orc Disguise (#26).

The Fellowship Sphere

The Fellowship sphere, denoted by the Fellowship icon, is a sphere of influence in *The Lord of the Rings: The Card Game* with its own set of rules. The Fellowship sphere emphasizes the sacrifice and determination of the valiant heroes who took up the quest to destroy The One Ring and bring an end to the menace of Sauron.

Heroes belonging to the Fellowship sphere can only be used when playing the scenarios in *The Lord of the Rings Saga Expansions*. Also, only one hero from the Fellowship sphere can be played at a time. Therefore, it is not possible for there to be more than one hero belonging to the Fellowship sphere in play at any time.

Note: This limitation does not apply to epic multiplayer mode as described on page 10.



Fellowship Sphere Heroes

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King features three heroes who belong to the Fellowship (Fellowship icon) sphere: Aragorn (#1), Frodo Baggins (#2), and Aragorn (#3). When using any Fellowship hero, players cannot start with any other version(s) of the same character as a starting hero or include any other version(s) of that character in their decks.

As a hero, these versions of Aragorn and Frodo each collect 1 resource during the resource phase. In addition to paying for cards that match the Fellowship sphere, resources from Aragorn or Frodo's pool may be spent to pay for neutral cards.

Each Aragorn card has the text: "If Aragorn leaves play, the players lose the game." This text cannot be modified by player card effects or encounter card effects.

Aragorn does not count against the hero limit. Therefore, it is possible for the first player to begin the game with up to 4 heroes under their control if one of those heroes is Aragorn.

Because these versions of Aragorn and Frodo belong to the Fellowship sphere, none of them can be used as a hero when playing any scenario from a product other than *The Lord of the Rings Saga Expansion*.

Multiplayer Rules - Aragorn

Each Aragorn card has the text: "The first player gains control of Aragorn." When the first player token passes during the refresh phase, the first player gains control of Aragorn, all resources in Aragorn's resource pool, and all cards attached to Aragorn.

If Aragorn is the last hero under a player's control, and he leaves that player's control, then that player is immediately eliminated from the game.

The One Ring

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King features The One Ring, an objective card that the players **must** use when playing *The Tower of Cirith Ungol* or *Mount Doom*. When setting up either of these scenarios, the first player must attach The One Ring to a **Ring-bearer** they control.

While attached to a hero, The One Ring has the text: “Attached hero does not count against the hero limit.” Therefore, it is possible for the first player to begin the game with up to 4 heroes under their control if one of those heroes is a **Ring-bearer** with The One Ring attached.

The One Ring also has the text: “If The One Ring leaves play, the players lose the game.” Just like in the novel, the players will need to carefully guard the **Ring-bearer** because if the attached hero leaves play, then The One Ring is also discarded and the players lose the game.

Multiplayer Rules - The One Ring

The One Ring also has the text: “The first player gains control of attached hero.” When the first player token passes during the refresh phase, the first player gains control of the attached **Ring-bearer**, all resources in that hero’s resource pool, and all cards attached to that hero.

If the hero with The One Ring attached is the last hero under a player’s control and that hero leaves that player’s control, then that player is immediately eliminated from the game.



Saga Expansion Rules

The Return of the King Saga Expansion features the pivotal events and conflicts that appear in *The Return of the King* novel. As those events revolve around the heroic acts of Frodo and Aragorn, and the isolating nature of the Ring, the quests in this expansion have additional rules that are used when playing the quests in a Saga Expansion.

Setting Up the Game

When setting up a scenario in *The Return of the King*, the first player must take control of the appropriate Fellowship sphere hero as follows: When setting up *The Passing of the Grey Company*, *The Siege of Gondor*, or *The Battle of Pelennor Fields*, the first player takes control of ♣ Aragorn (♣1). When setting up *The Black Gate Opens*, the first player takes control of ♣ Aragorn (♣3). When setting up *The Tower of Cirith Ungol* or *Mount Doom*, the first player takes control of a hero from the ♣ sphere with the **Ring-bearer** trait at the beginning of the game and attaches The One Ring to that hero.

Saga Staging Rules


When playing the scenarios in *The Lord of the Rings Saga Expansions*, players reveal encounter cards individually in player order during the Staging Step of the Quest Phase. Beginning with the first player, each player reveals 1 encounter card and resolves its staging before the next player reveals a card. If an encounter card has an effect that uses the word “you” then the encounter card is referring to the player who revealed the card. If the revealed encounter has the Surge keyword, the player who revealed that card reveals an additional encounter card before play proceeds to the next player. Encounter cards with the Doomed X keyword still affect each player.

Campaign Mode

Included in *The Return of the King Saga Expansion* are new campaign cards, boons and burdens that allow players to play the 6 scenarios included in this box in campaign mode as part of *The Lord of the Rings* campaign they began in *The Fellowship of the Ring Saga Expansion*. The scenarios in *The Return of the King* are played after completing *The Two Towers*.

The Lord of the Rings Saga Expansions are designed to encourage campaign play, but players can still play the scenarios as standalone adventures if they choose. For full campaign mode rules, see pages 30–31 of the Learn to Play book included in the core set.

Campaign Mode Rules - Aragorn

When setting up a scenario in campaign mode that features  Aragorn, if a player had previously recorded Aragorn as one of their heroes in the campaign log, that player loses control of that version of Aragorn. That player may choose a different hero to replace Aragorn without incurring the +1 threat penalty. Record the new hero in the campaign log. Any cards with the permanent keyword that were attached to the previous version of Aragorn are transferred to the Fellowship sphere Aragorn.


If Aragorn had previously been added to the list of fallen heroes, remove his name from the list and each player incurs a permanent +1 threat penalty.

Campaign Mode Rules - Ring-bearer

When playing the scenarios that feature Aragorn as a Fellowship hero in campaign mode, players cannot use any card that shares a title with the Ring-bearer of the campaign.

Rules & New Terms

Archery X

While a card with the archery keyword is in play, players must deal damage to character cards in play equal to the specified archery value at the beginning of each combat phase. This damage can be dealt to characters under any player's control, and it can be divided among the players as they see fit. If there is a disagreement as to where to assign archery damage, the first player makes the final decision. If multiple cards with the archery keyword are in play, the effects are cumulative. Remember that  does not block archery damage.

For example: *Sean and David are playing the scenario "The Battle of the Pelennor Fields," and there are two copies of Orc of the Eye in play. Orc of the Eye has the keyword archery 1. This gives a cumulative archery total of 2. At the beginning of the combat phase, the players decide to deal 1 of that damage to Sean's ally, Prince Imrahil, and the remaining 1 damage to David's hero, Beregond.*

Dire

Dire is a new keyword that appears on some quest cards in *The Return of the King*. The dire keyword represents the world-changing endeavors that the heroes of Middle-earth undertook in the final book of *The Lord of the Rings*. While the main quest has the dire keyword, each player's threat elimination level is increased to 99 and each player's threat cannot be reduced by more than 1 each round by non-boon player card effects. Additionally, the threat value for triggering **Valour** effects (found in other expansions) is changed from 40 threat to 80.

Immune to Player Card Effects

Cards with the text "Immune to player card effects" ignore the effects of all player cards. Additionally, cards that are immune to player card effects cannot be chosen as targets of player card effects.

Peril

When a player reveals an encounter card with the Peril keyword, they must resolve the staging of that card on their own without conferring with the other players. The other players cannot take any actions or trigger any responses during the resolution of that card's staging.

The Passing of the Grey Company

While Frodo, Sam and Gollum journeyed through the glades of Ithilien, Aragorn and his companions fought the battle of Helm's Deep and rode to the wreck of Isengard to deal with the traitor, Saruman. During their parley, the Wizard's servant, Gríma, hurled a Palantir from a high balcony, narrowly missing them. Aragorn left Saruman and his servant in the care of the Ents who guarded the tower of Orthanc, but the orb he took with him back to Helm's Deep, and in the high tower of the Hornburg he looked into the Seeing Stone and learned much of the Enemy's movements.

In the Palantir he saw a fleet of Corsairs drawing near to the coast of Gondor just as the army of Minas Morgul marched to war against Minas Tirith. Seeing how the White City would fall if help could not reach the coast in time, the Heir of Isildur resolved to take the most direct route through the mountains to Pelargir: The Paths of the Dead.

A name of dread among those who dwell near to its entrance, The Paths of the Dead were said to be haunted by the ghosts of men from the second age of Middle-earth; Oathbreakers who refused to join Isildur when he summoned them to war against Mordor. Isildur cursed them for their unfaithfulness and doomed them to linger in the shadowy hills until their oath was fulfilled.

It was uncertain whether they would help or hinder Isildur's Heir, but Aragorn was determined to reach the coast by the speediest way...

Setup

"The Passing of the Grey Company" is played with an encounter deck built with all the cards from the following encounter set: The Passing of the Grey Company. This set is indicated by the following icon:



Phantom Keyword

Phantom is a new keyword that appears on the *Undead* enemies in *The Passing of the Grey Company*. The phantom keyword represents the mysterious and terrifying nature of the Undead oathbreakers that the Grey Company encountered on their journey through the Paths of the Dead.

During the 'determine combat damage' step of an attack made by an enemy with Phantom, if any damage would be dealt by the attack it is canceled and the defending player raises their threat by an equal amount instead.

For example: *Matt is engaged with Shadow Host, a 4 ♠ enemy with the Phantom keyword. During the combat phase, he chooses to defend Shadow Host's attack with Gimli, who has a ♠ of 2. The attack would deal 2 damage to Gimli, but the damage is canceled and Matt raises his threat by 2 instead.*

Army of the Dead

Army of the Dead is a double-sided card with an enemy version on one side and an objective-ally version on the other side. When playing *The Passing of the Grey Company*, the Army of the Dead enemy is added to the staging area when the players advance to stage 3A. The Army of the Dead objective-ally is a boon card that can only be earned by defeating the Army of the Dead enemy while playing in campaign mode.

The Siege of Gondor

After a harrowing journey under Dwimorberg, Aragorn and his companions emerged on the southern end of the Haunted Mountain and rode to The Stone of Erech. There the Heir of Isildur summoned the Dead Men of Dunharrow to fulfill their oaths and follow him to Pelargir where the fleet of Umbar drew nigh.

To the astonishment of his companions, the Army of the Dead obeyed Aragorn and heeded his commands, but it was still a hard ride to reach Pelargir in time. The hardship the companions endured was beyond the strength of most mortals, but need drove them and the will of Aragorn held them together.

In five days' time, they raced more than ninety leagues to reach the port of Pelargir. At the ford of Gilrain they came upon the men of Lamedon as they fought with Corsair raiders who had sailed up the river. Friend and foe alike fled at their coming for the fear of the dead, but when they reached Pelargir, the Corsairs turned to give battle.

There upon Anduin, the main strength of the Umbar fleet was gathered for the sack of Gondor. A great army of Corsairs stood before them, and the Grey Company was already tired from the long journey, but Aragorn ordered the Army of the Dead to attack and led his companions into battle once more...

Setup

“The Siege of Gondor” is played with an encounter deck built with all the cards from the following encounter set: The Siege of Gondor. This set is indicated by the following icon:



The Battle of the Pelennor Fields

As Aragorn and his companions raced toward the port of Pelargir on Anduin, Sauron at last ordered the great assault that he had long prepared for the destruction of Gondor and the utter defeat of the West. Orcs issuing from The Black Gate overran the island fortress of Cair Andros, and the main host of Mordor marched forth from Minas Morgul led by The Black Captain, The Witch-king of Angmar.

Denethor, Steward of Gondor, sent messengers to King Theoden in Dunharrow to ask for all his strength to ride to Minas Tirith, and the beacon fires were lit between Gondor and Rohan. Meanwhile, men from the outland fiefs of Gondor marched in to Minas Tirith to bolster the city's garrison. Yet, they sent less strength than hoped for because of the Corsair threat to the coastlands.

So it was that The Witch-king found the men of Gondor not wholly unprepared for the assault, but still greatly overmatched by the host of Mordor. On the eve of the attack Mount Doom belched fire, black clouds darkened the sky, and night fell on Minas Tirith. Unless help beyond hope could reach the White City in time, Gondor would surely fall...

Setup

“The Battle of the Pelennor Fields” is played with an encounter deck built with all the cards from the following encounter set: The Battle of the Pelennor Fields. This set is indicated by the following icon:



Minas Tirith



Minas Tirith is an objective that is put into play when the players reach stage 3A. The objective represents the White City as it comes under attack during *The Battle of the Pelennor Fields*. If Minas Tirith has damage equal to its hit points at the end of a round, the White City has fallen and the players lose the game.

Several encounter card effects target Minas Tirith. If these effects trigger at stage 2B, while Minas Tirith is not in play, the players must still resolve the effects as fully as possible. For encounter cards that offer a choice of outcomes, this may prevent players from choosing an outcome that cannot occur.

Assault

Assault is a new keyword that appears on stage 3B of *The Battle of the Pelennor Fields*. It represents the army of Mordor's relentless attack on the city of Minas Tirith. While stage 3B is in play, progress cannot be placed on that stage by player card effects or by questing successfully. However, progress can still be placed on the active location as normal.

When the players quest unsuccessfully, each player does not raise their threat. Instead, the players must deal an amount of damage to Minas Tirith equal to the amount by which the total threat in the staging area was greater than the total willpower of each character committed to the quest. (This damage is only calculated once for the group, not per player.)

For example: Luke and Craig have committed a total of 20  to the quest at stage 3B. At the end of the staging step there is a total of 25  in the staging area. Instead of each player raising their threat by 5, they deal a total of 5 damage to Minas Tirith as a group, reducing Minas Tirith from 50 hit points to 45.

Strategy Tip

When playing *The Battle of the Pelennor Fields* there are several triggered effects that need to be observed each round. In order to provide players with the most rewarding adventure, and avoid bogging down the game, these effects were all made to trigger at either the beginning of the quest phase or at the end of the round. For the best play experience, we recommend that the players check for triggered effects at the beginning of each quest phase, and again at the end of the round.

Cards to look for in particular are:

- Minas Tirith
- The Witch-king
- Grond
- Wraith on Wings
- The Corsair Fleet (campaign mode only)

The Tower of Cirith Ungol

While Aragorn raced across southern Gondor towards the port of Pelargir, the twisted creature, Gollum, led Frodo and Sam into Shelob's Lair as part of his plan to recapture his "Precious." But Gollum greatly misjudged the strength of Sam's desperate courage. The giant Spider, Shelob, was mortally wounded when it cast itself upon the Hobbit's Elven-dagger, and Gollum was driven off empty-handed.

Yet Gollum's betrayal still came at a heavy price. Frodo was stung with Shelob's poison and Sam, believing himself to be the last surviving member of the Fellowship of the Ring, took the burden upon himself to continue the quest for Mount Doom alone. He had not gone far, however, when a troop of Orcs discovered Frodo's body and he overheard surprising news: Frodo was not dead! The sting that poisoned him would eventually wear off, but when he awoke he would find himself a captive of the Orcs.

Horrified by this revelation, Sam determined to rescue his master and followed the Orcs to the tower of Cirith Ungol. When he reached the outer wall, he was surprised to hear the sounds of fighting inside. It seemed that the Orcs were quarreling over what to do with their captive. Encouraged by this new twist, Sam plucked up the courage to enter the fortress alone, but first he would have to get past the Silent Guardians...

Setup

"The Tower of Cirith Ungol" is played with an encounter deck built with all the cards from the following encounter sets: The Tower of Cirith Ungol, Orcs of Mordor, and Deep Shadows. These sets are indicated by the following icons:



The Black Gate Opens

Following the miraculous victory in battle upon the Pelennor Fields, Aragorn called a counsel of lords to determine their next course of action. There Gandalf advised that they should not wait for Sauron's next move, but rather they should ready their armies to march upon Mordor itself in a desperate gamble to keep his Eye fixed on them.

Though he had not yet claimed the kingship of Gondor, the attending lords nonetheless agreed to follow Aragorn's banner to the Black Gate of Sauron's realm if it meant giving the Ring-bearer the time he needed to complete his quest. So it was that only three days after the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, the Host of the West marched from Minas Tirith towards Mordor.

Yet they marched without hope of victory. Each man knew that their army had not the strength to challenge Sauron in earnest. Rather they hoped to draw Sauron's forces out of his land and clear the way for Frodo and Sam to finish the last leg of their journey to Mount Doom.

As the Hobbits made their way across the Black Land, Aragorn led his army north to the Morannon. There he raised the standard of Elendil and challenged the Dark Lord himself to come forth and face judgement. For a long time there was no answer, but just as Aragorn and his entourage turned their horses to rejoin their army, the Black Gate opened and an embassy from Barad-dûr rode out to parley with them...

Setup

"The Black Gate Opens" is played with an encounter deck built with all the cards from the following encounter sets: The Black Gate Opens and Orcs of Mordor. These sets are indicated by the following icons:



Mount Doom

Having barely escaped from the Tower of Cirith Ungol, Frodo and Sam stood momentarily on the edge of the Morgai, the inner fence of Mordor's western mountain range. Below them they could see the vast plain of Gorgoroth dotted with enemy camps. Sauron was gathering all his strength to Mordor after his defeat at Minas Tirith.

Orcs swarmed like ants upon the ashen plain and countless watchfires flickered across the Black Land like the stars in the sky. As the Hobbits made their way down along the Morgai, there appeared no way for them to reach Mount Doom without being discovered.

Then, to the wonder of the Ring-bearer and his servant, the vast armies of Mordor began to march away north, leaving the path to Orodruin unwatched. Sauron was directing all of his forces to the Morannon where Aragorn had marched his army to challenge the Dark Lord.



Neither of the Hobbits knew this reason, but they could plainly see that this was their opportunity to complete the quest. This final stage would determine the future of Middle-earth: Either the Ring would be destroyed in the fires of Mount Doom, or the Ring-bearer would be discovered and the Ring would be delivered back to the hand of its dark Master...

Setup


"Mount Doom" is played with an encounter deck built with all the cards from the following encounter sets: Mount Doom and Deep Shadows. These sets are indicated by the following icons:






Fortitude Tests

Fortitude tests represent the *Ring-bearer's* courage and determination to complete the quest for Mount Doom in the face of overwhelming adversity. When a player is instructed to make a Fortitude test, they may exhaust any number of heroes they control to commit them to the test. Then, they must discard the top X cards of the encounter deck, where X is the tens digit of their threat dial. If the total willpower of the heroes committed to the test is greater than the number of Sauron's Eye  icons on the encounter cards discarded for the test, that player successfully passes the Fortitude test. If the number of Sauron's Eye  icons is equal to or greater than the total willpower of the committed heroes, that player fails the Fortitude test. If the encounter deck is ever empty during a Fortitude test, shuffle the encounter discard pile into the encounter deck.

Player Actions During Fortitude Tests

Fortitude tests interrupt the regular turn sequence and create a new action window. After the total number of Sauron's Eye  icons on the discarded encounter cards has been determined, players are allowed to take actions. Once the Fortitude test is resolved, play continues as normal and player actions are restricted to regular action windows.

For example: Jason has committed characters to the quest at stage 3B, The Last Gasp, when he draws The Lidless Eye, which reads: “**When Revealed:** Make a Fortitude test.” Jason exhausts Frodo Baggins and Sam Gamgee to commit them to the test for a total of 5 willpower. Then, he discards 4 cards from the top of the encounter deck because his threat is 43. The first card has no  icon, but the second has 1, and the third and fourth each have 2, which makes the total number of  5. With the total willpower committed to the test being equal to the total number of  icons, it looks like Jason will fail the test, but then he exhausts Rosie Cotton to add her 2 willpower to Sam Gamgee's, which raises his total willpower to 7. As a result, Jason passes the test.



Epic Multiplayer Mode



The last two scenarios, *The Black Gate Opens* and *Mount Doom*, can be played simultaneously by 2-8 players in epic multiplayer mode. Epic multiplayer mode divides a group of players into 2 teams: one team plays *The Black Gate Opens* and one team plays *Mount Doom*. Each scenario is its own game with its own staging area and requires its own encounter deck to play, but the teams at each scenario must work together in order to defeat Sauron and win each game.

To play in epic multiplayer mode, follow the **Setup** instructions on the double-sided setup card labeled “Epic Multiplayer Mode.”

Setting Up Epic Multiplayer Mode

The **Setup** instructions on the Epic Multiplayer Mode card directs the players to create 2 separate staging areas: one for *The Black Gate Opens* and one for *Mount Doom*. To do this, choose a play area large enough for both scenarios and follow the **Setup** instructions on each scenario as normal.

Next, the players divide themselves into 2 teams, one team for each scenario. At least 1 player must be assigned to each scenario, and no more than 4 players can be assigned to either. Furthermore, the number of players assigned to *Mount Doom* cannot exceed the number of players assigned to *The Black Gate Opens*.

Note: Both  Aragorn and the **Ring-bearer** are used when playing epic multiplayer mode. The first player at *The Black Gate Opens* takes control of  Aragorn during setup, and the first player at *Mount Doom* takes control of the **Ring-bearer**.

After completing the **Setup** instructions, flip over the Epic Multiplayer Mode card and place it next to the *Mount Doom* quest deck.

Encounter cards that are only used in epic multiplayer mode are indicated by the following icon:



Playing Epic Multiplayer Mode

The players at each scenario are the only players in the game at that scenario. That means it is possible for two players in different scenarios to use the same hero. However, players in the same scenario must observe the game restrictions on unique cards. Player cards cannot target or affect cards at a different scenario.

When a team ends a round at their stage they do not advance to the next round of play until each other team in that group is ready to advance. Before the teams advance to the next round, there are **Forced** effects on the Epic Multiplayer Mode card and The Eye of Sauron objective that must be resolved. The teams are encouraged to discuss these effects to determine what is the best option for the group. The Eye of Sauron may move from one scenario to another as a result.

Playing Epic Multiplayer Mode in Campaign Mode

The Black Gate Opens and *Mount Doom* can be played by 2-4 players in epic multiplayer mode as the grand finale to your saga campaign. Simply follow the **Setup** instructions on the Epic Multiplayer Mode card and on each of the corresponding campaign cards. Be sure to include all of the appropriate boons and burdens at each stage. If a boon or burden is included as part of the **Setup** for both scenarios, the player who controls the **Ring-bearer** decides which scenario receives that boon or burden.

For example: *Caleb and MJ are setting up The Black Gate Opens and Mount Doom in epic multiplayer campaign mode. Grievous Wound and Overcome by Grief are in the campaign pool and each of those burdens are included in the setup for both scenarios. Since MJ controls the Ring-bearer, she decides to place Grievous Wound in the staging area of The Black Gate Opens and Overcome by Grief in the staging area of Mount Doom during setup.*

Starter Decklists

To help you on your adventures, we have provided two starter decklists. These decks are ideal for players who wish to play as soon as possible. These decks can be built with this expansion, the core set, and *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers* expansions. These decks can be played together or on their own.

Foresight and Fortitude

The quest of the Ring-bearer is fraught with peril, and to succeed requires both wisdom and determination. This is why Gandalf the Grey took up the task of guiding Frodo on his quest, and why he leads this deck in the quest to destroy the One Ring.

Accompanying Gandalf are Pippin, to draw cards, and Beregond, to mitigate threat. Managing the top card of your deck is critical in a Gandalf deck, which is why Bilbo Baggins is included to fetch a Wizard Pipe as soon as possible. The other allies are included because they are powerful for their cost, and they are flexible enough to be useful in many situations. Stand and Fight gives you even more flexibility for when you need a particular ally to return and save the day.

Many attachments go on Gandalf specifically, but consider splitting Unexpected Courage and Protector of Lórien between Gandalf and Beregond, as Gondor's premiere defender sometimes will need the defense boost to survive a particularly powerful attack. Self Preservation is also included to keep Beregond alive when his 4 defense is not enough.

Heroes (3)

Beregond (♣7)
Gandalf (♠7)
Pippin (♠6)

Allies (20)

2x Bilbo Baggins (♠15)
2x Elladan (♣23)
2x Elrohir (♣18)
1x Prince Imrahil (♣19)
2x Quickbeam (♠20)
1x Mablung (♠19)
2x Ghân-buri-Ghân (♣22)
2x Elrond (♠19)
2x Northern Tracker (♣45)
2x Gléowine (♣62)
2x Henamarth Riversong (♣60)

Attachments (14)

2x Wizard Pipe (♠23)
3x Gandalf's Staff (♠22)
1x Shadowfax (♠25)
3x Unexpected Courage (♣57)
2x Self Preservation (♣72)
3x Protector of Lórien (♣70)

Events (16)

3x Flame of Anor (♠24)
3x Desperate Defense (♣21)
3x Hasty Stroke (♣48)
3x Test of Will (♣50)
2x Stand and Fight (♣51)
2x Dwarven Tomb (♣53)

Valor and Vigilance

Neither strength nor courage is sufficient when opposing the full might of Sauron. This deck brings together many of Middle-earth's most valorous characters under the leadership of Faramir of Gondor. With Faramir and Sam (and Gimli) providing abilities that ready a character when facing off against an enemy, this deck is well-equipped to quest with all of its characters every turn and use card abilities to ready characters as needed to defend itself.

Rosie Cotton is especially valuable in this deck, as she can boost Sam's willpower, attack, or defense as needed, based on what is drawn from the encounter deck. With Faramir's ability, she can even do it multiple times in the same round!

Steward of Gondor is intended to go on Éowyn so that the deck can play its many expensive tactics allies without trouble.

Include the following cards under certain conditions:

- Include Gandalf instead of Elfhelm if no other player is playing the Gandalf hero.
- Include Banner of Elendil if playing with ♣ Aragorn, and Fellowship of the Ring if playing with the *Ring-bearer*.

Heroes (3)

Éowyn (♣5)
Faramir (♠3)
Sam Gamgee (♠3)

Allies (21)

2x Bill the Pony (♠8)
3x Snowbourn Scout (♣16)
3x Rosie Cotton (♣9)
2x Halbarad (♣8)
3x Gimli (♠8)
2x Anborn (♠7)
3x Gondorian Spearman (♣29)
0-3x Elfhelm (♣13)
0-3x Gandalf (♣73)
2x Skinbark (♠12)
2x Boromir (♠11)
2x Legolas (♠11)

Attachments (11)

3x Steward of Gondor (♣26)
3x Dagger of Westernesse (♠13)
1x Arod (♠13)
1x Celebrian's Stone (♣27)
1x Golden Shield (♣15)
0-2x Banner of Elendil (♣25)
0-2x Fellowship of the Ring (♠25)

Events (16)

3x Feint (♣34)
3x Ever Vigilant (♣20)
3x Valiant Sacrifice (♣24)
3x Sneak Attack (♣23)

Credits

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