



STRATOS

~ Light in the Darkness ~

It has been one year since the five tribes of Stratos began their journey, each carving their own path to prosperity in this fabled land whose splendor exceeds even the legends of the old times. Lands were settled, homes and castles built, and people flourished. Resources have been abundant and even began appearing along fault lines, almost as if they were gifts from beings dwelling below in the darkness. The people thought of the gifts as a blessing.

They could not have been more wrong. First came the Iggamot, from acrid tunnels beneath the forest. Those who survived the incident described not so much its appearance, as much as how they felt its insatiable hunger every time it even began to peer in their direction.

And yet it left as quickly as it came, as if it were waiting for something more. Fearing for their safety, the people of the 5 tribes fled the forests for safety among the mountains, deserts, and prairies. And yet in each of those places, they observed the same sorts of gifts appearing along the fault lines and felt similar yet utterly different kinds of dread, as if there were monsters of a completely different kind lurking about.

Now more than ever, your people feel a new sense of urgency to build and prosper on this new land, calling on the greatest heroes to protect them from both the rival tribes and the monsters that tend to emerge from the darkness emanating from the fault lines throughout the island. Guide your tribe of people to 10 Prosperity Points before the other(s) – if you survive...

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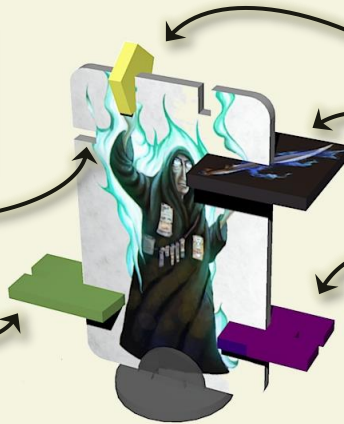
SETUP

1. Start by choosing a scenario from the final pages of this manual, or online at stratosgame.com.

Defend Token would show that a character unit is defending.

Health Token shows current Health points.

Unit shows Maximum Health and Spirit points next to the Health and Spirit slots,



Promo Token shows that a character unit is promoted.

Equipment Token(s) show what a character unit has equipped.

Spirit Token shows current Spirit points.

There are separate rules for Monster Units, which also have Health and Spirit points.



2. Separate the tiles by type and put them into piles, symbols facing down. Arrange them on the tile trays according to the chosen scenario and set aside unused tiles, symbols facing down, for later use.

3. Assemble and place character units according to the scenario start conditions. Each player chooses a colour and will control up to 5 Character Units in that colour. Keep all units in your colour within reach.

4. Separately shuffle the 4 decks of spell and exploration cards. Place them easily within reach, along with all other tokens and resources. There are 5 types of cards in total: Mage Spells, Sorcerer Spells, Land Exploration, Lagoon Exploration, and Prosperity Points.

5. Give a set of reference cards to each player. These should help you to play with minimal use of this manual.

HOW TO WIN

Earn 10 Prosperity Points before the other player(s) to win a standard match. There are additional modes of play with alternate win conditions (see online scenario list for details). **NOTE:** If all your characters are defeated and you do not have enough resources to hire another one on your next turn, you are eliminated from the match.

There are four main ways to earn Prosperity Points (PP). Each of the 5 character types excels at one of these things, but can also earn Prosperity Points outside of their area of specialty (examples to follow).

HOARD RESOURCES

Stockpile resources so that your tribe is prepared for the future. Pay one of each main resource to earn one Hoard Card, worth 1 PP. You can do this at most once per turn. All characters can harvest resources, so you can Hoard even without Peasants.

The Peasant outworks everybody else when it comes to harvesting the land!



DEFEAT ENEMIES

Protect your people from adversaries of all kinds. Reduce an opposing unit's Health points to zero to earn one Defeat Card, worth 1 PP. Other characters can earn Defeat points when they gain the ability to cause damage, such as when a Mage uses a damage-causing spell.

The Archer and Soldier have your back covered when things get tough. The Soldier excels up-close, while the Archer prefers to maintain some distance from her opponents.



CAST SPELLS

Increase your knowledge of magic by casting new spells. Each new spell you cast is worth 1 PP when you first cast it. The point icon is shown directly on the spell card, and counts toward your point total as long as you have that spell card. Usually only Mages can cast spells but there may be exceptional situations that allow others to do so as well.

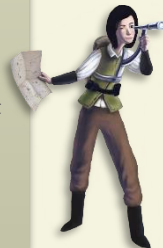
Unlock the power of the arcane through the intense study of the Mage.



FIND TREASURES

Enrich your tribe by finding powerful treasures. Each treasure card is worth 1 PP as soon as it is turned face-up, which happens according to the type of treasure. The point icon is shown on the exploration card and counts toward your point total as long as you have that card.

Find coveted artifacts and grow your material wealth through the Explorer's careful investigations.



TURN PHASES

1. BEGINNING OF TURN

Events that repeat on multiple turns happen before the Action Phase. For example, when Mages regain Spirit, they do so at the beginning of your turn.

2. ACTION PHASE

Take actions with your units as you try to earn Prosperity Points. Each character unit may take up to two unique actions per turn or travel twice. Universal actions are available to all character units and Special Actions are available only to specific character units, unless a card or other game event dictates otherwise. Each game tile can only be occupied by one unit at a time. An action occurs on the tile occupied by the character performing that action. Actions may be taken in any order by your collective group of character units.

UNIVERSAL ACTIONS

TRAVEL

Move a unit onto an adjacent, unoccupied land tile. Tiles are adjacent when they share a common border. Diagonal movement is not allowed. If a unit travels onto a covered special tile, he flips the tile and discovers it (see section on special tiles). *Travelling is the only action that can be taken twice in a turn by the same character unit.*



LAGOON TRAVEL

The savvy Explorer is the only one who understands how to safely navigate the perils of the lagoons. She can move onto and occupy Lagoon Tiles.

HARVEST

Collect one resource token from the land tile your unit currently occupies. Resources are used during the Buy Phase to hire new units, promote them, etc. *See page 7, Tiles and Resources.*



POWER HARVEST

Peasants may choose to harvest D4 resources instead of taking only one. In this case, a roll of 4 indicates failure; otherwise take resources equal to the number shown on the die. *When a Peasant is promoted to Cultivator, he harvests without fail. This means that a roll of 4 will result in gaining 4 of the appropriate resource.*

DEFEND

Take a defensive stance to reduce loss of health. To show that a unit is defending, place a defense marker in the defense slot of the character card. Until your next turn, all character actions that would reduce this character unit's Health have their effects lessened by 1. *For example, if an attack would reduce a non-defending Peasant's health by 3, the same attack would reduce a defending Peasant's health by 2 instead.*



STURDY DEFEND

When Soldiers defend, physical attack damage is reduced by 2 instead of by 1. When Mages defend, magical attack damage is reduced by 2 instead of 1.

NOTE – TILES AND UNIT PLACEMENT: Whenever an event in the game causes a tile to move, the unit occupying that tile moves with it. Units can only ever occupy tile they could travel to, anything else is an illegal unit placement.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

ATTACK & SHOOT



Attack or shoot another unit by rolling the appropriate die when the unit is within range. Inflict damage as indicated on the die and reduce the opposing unit's health accordingly by changing the health point token to the amount of health left.

Soldiers attack at range 1 using a D6, but miss on a roll of 6. Archers shoot at range 2 – 3 using a D4, but miss on a roll of 4. Range is simply the number of spaces away from your unit.

NOTES – ATTACK & SHOOT

If a unit has zero Health, remove it from the board. Then, give a Defeat Card worth 1 PP to the player controlling the attacking unit.

Promoted units do not miss. For example, if the Archer has been promoted to Marksman, then she would inflict 4 damage on a roll of 4.

Attacks at ranges greater than 1 are still effective even if another unit is in-between the attacking unit and the unit under attack. Special circumstances caused by in-game events may allow other unit types to attack.



CAST SPELL



Mages cast spells in the following way:

1. Place the card face-up on the table.
2. Reduce the casting Mage's Spirit points by the number of blue dots on the card.
3. Follow the instruction text on the card.

Spells remain face-up after being cast as a reminder of which unique spells have been cast. Every time you cast a new spell, you earn 1 Prosperity Point as shown on the card. If the instructions on the card cannot be followed for any reason, then that spell cannot be cast by that unit at that time.

A face-up spell can be cast again whenever you have a unit with enough spirit points to cast it. If you cast a spell and it's ineffective, keep the card face-down and gain no Prosperity Points. Deduct the associated Spirit points for attempting to cast it.

NOTES – CAST SPELL

The set of all your spell cards is called your Spellbook and is shared among all your Mages and Sorcerers.

*When you hire a new Mage, do only one of the following: Draw one new Mage Spell card or recover your Spellbook if you previously had Mage(s) but lost them all (see "Learn a Spell" in "Buy Phase" on page 7). **When you promote a Mage to Sorcerer**, draw one new Sorcerer Spell card. He can still cast his Mage Spells, but Mages cannot cast Sorcerer Spells.*

Mages and Sorcerers each recover 1 Spirit point at the beginning of your turn, until they have maximum Spirit points – 7 for Sorcerer, 3 for Mage.

SEARCH TILE & USE ITEM



Explorers search for treasure by turning over the Land Tile they occupy. Draw the number of Land Exploration Cards indicated on the underside of the tile.

I draw one card **II** draw two cards **BLANK** draw nothing

Always draw the cards one at a time, and follow the instructions on each card. There are 5 types of Exploration Cards and the rules for each type are shown on the card.

Reveal all cards immediately except for one-use items, which remain face-down until they are used as an action.

EXPLORATION CARD TYPES

- equipment
- one-use items
- permanent items
- traps
- calamities

NOTES – SEARCH LAND AND USE ITEM

When you promote an Explorer to Swashbuckler, she can search under Lagoon tiles in addition to Land tiles. Draw the appropriate number of Lagoon Exploration Cards and follow the usual rules.

Traps found among Land Exploration Cards do not affect Swashbucklers.

Explorers and Swashbucklers can use one-use items as one of their two actions in a turn. The item is then set aside, face-up, indicating it has been used up and also showing one Prosperity Point has been earned.

You can perform your units' actions in any order – and this includes the option to perform one unit's actions in-between another unit's first and second action! You can also decide not to take any actions. **After all your units perform their actions, proceed to the Buy Phase.**

3. BUY PHASE

After your Action Phase, spend resources to hire more character units, improve existing units, or both. You are only limited by the resources you have available to spend and the limit of 5 units per player.

HIRE A NEW UNIT

Pay the Hire Cost shown on the character unit stand-up, and assemble the unit (*see Setup on page 2*) with the appropriate Health Token (and Spirit Token for Mages) shown on one side of the character unit stand-up (numbers after the + are bonuses gained upon promotion). Add a defense token since new units defend automatically.

Place it on an unoccupied tile adjacent to one of your units that performed actions this turn. If no such tile is available, place it on any of the closest unoccupied tiles instead. Always choose a tile that the unit could travel to, otherwise it is an illegal unit placement. **If you have no units**, place the new unit on any unoccupied land tile.

Tips and Tricks: *Each of your units can take two actions on your turn, so it is a good idea to quickly build up your army to 5 units! As you plan your turn, think of where you would like your new units to start. If all your characters are defeated and you do not have enough resources to hire another one on your next turn, you are eliminated.*

PROMOTE A UNIT

Pay a unit's Hire Cost again to promote it to a higher class. Place a Promo Token in the unit's Promo slot. Then increase the unit's Health and Spirit by the amount indicated on the reverse side of the character unit. *For example, you can promote a Mage to Sorcerer by paying 2 Spice and 1 Corn. If he has 2 Health and 2 Spirit before promotion, he would still have 2 Health after being promoted, but would gain 4 Spirit, increasing his total to 6.*

Tips and Tricks: Sometimes game events affect one or more units of a particular type. In these instances, promoted units still count as the same type as before they were promoted. For example, a Sorcerer still counts as a Mage.

RETRAIN A PEASANT

A Peasant or Cultivator can be retrained as a different base unit by paying the Hire Cost of the new unit type.

Adjust the Health Token by the difference among the two unit types' Health maximums. *For example, you can retrain a Peasant as a Soldier by paying 1 Oak and 2 Nickel. If he has 2 health (out of a maximum 4) before retraining, he would have 4 out of a maximum 6 afterwards.*

Tips and Tricks: Retraining does not restore the unit's Health, so be careful when retraining as a Mage!

LEARN A SPELL



Mages learn spells by consuming Spice. It costs 1 Spice to learn a Mage spell and 2 Spice to learn a Sorcerer spell.

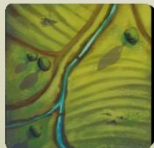
When you learn a spell, draw a card from the appropriate deck and keep the card face-down until you cast it. You must have a Mage on the board to learn Mage spells and a Sorcerer on the board to learn Sorcerer spells.

Tips and tricks: Your Mages and Sorcerers share a common Spellbook, so buying more spells is even better when you have more than one Mage! You can still learn and use Mage spells if you only have a Sorcerer because Sorcerers still count as Mages.

TILES AND RESOURCES

There are four main types of land tiles. Units can harvest resources from the tiles they occupy as follows:

PRAIRIE



Corn



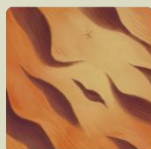
MOUNTAIN



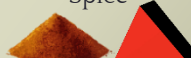
Nickel



DESERT



Spice



FOREST



Oak



Lagoon tiles represent shallow bodies of water inhabited by monsters and other dangers. Only Explorers can safely travel to and occupy Lagoon tiles, since they know how to avoid the perils within.

You cannot harvest resources from Lagoon Tiles, but Swashbucklers can search them, possibly finding gems, which can be spent as any other resource during the Buy Phase.



GEMS



Special tiles represent landmarks and count as land tiles. They give bonuses to units that discover or occupy them:

1. **Discover Bonuses** immediately apply to the first character unit that lands on a specific **Special Tile**. Land on a face-down Special Tile and flip it to discover which special building it is. This only happens if that tile was face-down at the beginning of the scenario and can happen only once per scenario match.
2. **Occupy Bonuses** apply to a unit occupying a specific **Special Tile**. Occupy Bonuses end as soon as the unit is not occupying the Special Tile.

SPECIAL TILE



ACADEMY

Discovering unit is immediately promoted. When one of your units occupies this tile, the cost to promote any of your units is reduced by any single resource.



QUARRY

Discovering unit gains 2 gems immediately. Receive 1 gem if one of your units occupies this tile at the beginning of your turn.

NOTE – NON-TILES: Some game events can remove tiles from the board. Empty spaces are called non-tiles and they are impassable by all character units, since they are giant holes in the earth. However, ranged effects can still reach over them, such as the Archer's ability to Shoot. Furthermore, they count as tiles when affected by spells and treasures.

SPELLS AND TREASURES

There are two main types of cards: Spell Cards for Mages and Exploration Cards for Explorers. Spells and Treasures have Prosperity Point Indicators to show they are worth 1 Point when turned face-up.



Prosperity Point Indicator

Spirit Cost

Title and Game Text

Exploration Card Type

Flavour Text



MONSTER RULES FOR STRATOS: LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

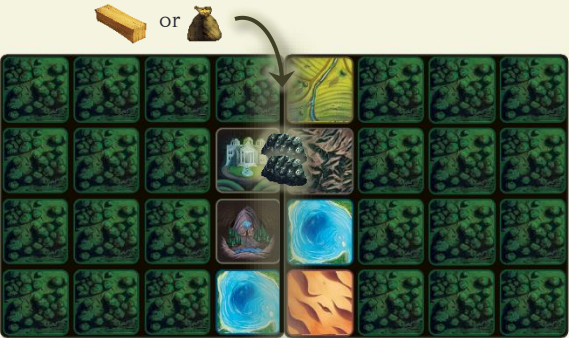
If this is your first time playing Stratos, we recommend you play without the Monster Rules so that at least one player survives the match. Monsters may appear more frequently in some scenarios than others. Proceed at your own risk.

FAULT LINES IN A LAND OF ABUNDANCE

Every common edge between a pair of 4x4 tile trays represents a fault line on the island of Stratos. It is these fault lines which are the source of both excess resources and terrifying monsters that seem to know your material desires.

At the beginning of each player's turn, she must place one main resource along a fault line of her choice, in-between two adjacent tiles, satisfying the following two conditions:

- 1. The resource placed is of the same type as a resource you would harvest from one of the adjacent tiles.
- 2. There is at most one resource token already on the fault line between those two tiles.



Example: There is nothing between the Prairie and Forest, so you could place 1 Corn or 1 Oak between those tiles. However, there are already 2 Nickel between the Mountain and Academy, so nothing more can be placed there. The Quarry and Lagoon are both not main land tiles, so nothing can be placed between them. You could place 1 Spice between the Lagoon and Desert at the bottom of the fault line.

Resources along fault lines may be freely collected by a unit traveling across the fault line. However, the player controlling that unit must then make a Monster Roll.

MONSTER ROLLS

To complete a Monster Roll, toss the D4 and D6 together and add the results. Then, compare this sum and your current Prosperity Points to the Monster Roll Table on the right.

If the rolled sum and your Prosperity Points intersect a Monster in the table, immediately place that Monster unit on the board, on the nearest unoccupied tile of its home terrain (see next page). Defeating a Monster unit earns you 2 Defeat PP; however, they are extremely dangerous. It will take cunning, strength, and maybe even cooperation with the other tribe(s) to succeed!

Example: You roll $1 + 3 = 4$ and have 3 Prosperity Points. In this case, The Sharubite appears on the nearest unoccupied Desert to your character unit that triggered the Monster Roll.

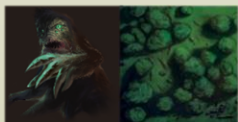
	ROLL 3-4	ROLL 5-6	ROLL 7-8	ROLL 9-10
1-2 PP				
3-4 PP				
5-6 PP				
7+ PP				

THE CRITICAL MONSTER ROLL

If you roll a total of 2 (“snake eyes”), this is called a Critical Monster Roll. In this case, the Grim Reaper Monster unit appears regardless of how many Prosperity Points you have!

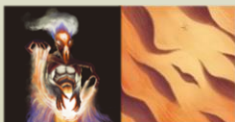
MONSTER PLACEMENT

Players can cause Monsters to appear in two ways: by a Monster Roll, or by an Explorer searching a tile showing a Monster Icon underneath. In either case, placement works the same way. Place the Monster Unit on the nearest unoccupied tile of its home terrain shown below. If there is a tie among tiles, choose randomly. If there is no eligible tile, the Monster unit eliminates and replaces your character unit. By default, each Monster Unit begins with 8 Health points.



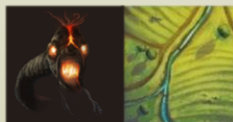
The Iggamot

lurks in the forest.



The Sharubite

roams the Deserts.



The Jabberwock

skulks the Prairies.



The Kraken

creeps in the Lagoons.



The Grim Reaper

haunts the Mountains.

THE TURN OF DARKNESS

Whenever there is at least one Monster on the board, there is a Turn of Darkness that occurs after the turns of all other players. During this turn, each Monster Unit on the board completes both of its actions before the next Monster Unit takes any actions, and Monsters act in the order shown above on this page.

Example: In a 4-player game, suppose Player 3 caused The Iggamot and The Jabberwock to appear. Following his turn would be Player 4's turn, and following her turn would be the Turn of Darkness, where the Iggamot would take its 2 actions, and then the Jabberwock would take its two actions, even if the Jabberwock appeared first.

MONSTER ACTIONS

Monsters are supernatural creatures who shunt the ordinary rules of time and space. And yet, they have ultimately simple and narrow aims. They each take 2 actions per turn, in the following order:

1. If it can already attack a character unit, stay on the current tile. Otherwise, Travel up to 2 spaces toward a nearest character unit. If there is a tie for nearest character unit, choose which to move towards at random. Likewise, if there are two or more tile that could be chosen to move to, select one at random as well.
2. If, after the Travel action, no character units are within range of attack, the Monster rests: it regains 1 Health point by default, plus 1 additional Health point if it occupies a tile of its home terrain. Otherwise, it attacks according to the rules stated on the Monster Unit standup.

Example: In a 4-player game, suppose Player 3 caused The Iggamot and The Jabberwock to appear. Following his turn would be Player 4's turn, and following her turn would be the Turn of Darkness, where the Iggamot would take its 2 actions, and then the Jabberwock would take its two actions, even if the Jabberwock appeared first.



Example: Suppose, in the diagram above-left, the blue Explorer causes the Sharubite to appear. Its home terrain is the Desert, so it appears on the nearest unoccupied Desert as shown in the diagram above-right.

Next, suppose The Turn of Darkness occurs before any character units can move. There are no character units adjacent to the Sharubite, but there are 3 character units at range 1, and 4 unoccupied land tiles so choose one of them at random by rolling a D6 and assigning 1-2 to the Explorer, 3-4 to the Mage, and 5-6 to the Soldier. Let's say you rolled 3. The Sharubite then moves to one of the Forests next to the Mage (choose the Forest randomly as well).

For its second action, the Sharubite attacks the Mage for D4 damage with no chance to miss. You roll the D4 and get 3. In this case, the Mage would be defeated unless he was already defending.

DEFEATING A MONSTER, AND SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If you successfully reduce a Monster unit's Health points to zero, you earn 2 Defeat Prosperity Points. That particular Monster has then been vanquished, and does not re-appear on the board for the current scenario.

If one of your Character units causes a Monster to appear when it is already on the board, that Monster immediately moves to an unoccupied tile of its home terrain nearest to your Character unit.

Spell and Exploration cards from the Stratos core game that refer to Character units can also act on Monster units. *For example, you can inflict damage to Monsters with the Blaze spell, and you can swap places with a Monster by using the Cryptic Swap Scroll.*

SCENARIOS

I. FREE-FOR-ALL

Both players start out at the corners of the land, with near-equal access to all resources. Each player begins with a Peasant to be placed on their indicated starting tiles. Special tiles should be placed randomly and covered until someone discovers them.



2. THE NARROW PASSAGE

Each player begins with an Archer and an Explorer. Do you begin searching right away, or focus on combat prowess and put pressure on your adversary? There may be more options here than are apparent at first...

