



# MUNCHKIN®



**MUNCHKIN** brings you the essence of the dungeon-crawling experience . . . without all that messy roleplaying!

This game includes 168 cards, one six-sided die, and these rules. Three to six can play. You will need 10 tokens (coins, poker chips, whatever – or any gadget that counts to 10) for each player.

## SETUP

Divide the cards into the Door deck and the Treasure deck. Shuffle both decks. Deal four cards from each deck to each player.

## CARD MANAGEMENT

Keep separate face-up discard piles for the two decks. You may not look through the discards unless you play a card that allows you to!

When a deck runs out, reshuffle its discards. If a deck runs out and there are no discards, nobody can draw any of that kind of card!

**In Play:** These are the cards on the table in front of you, showing your Race and Class (if any) and the Items you are carrying. Continuing Curses and some other cards also stay on the table after you play them. Cards in play are public information and must be visible to the other players.

### Conflicts Between Cards and Rules

This rulesheet gives the general rules. Many cards add special rules, so in most cases when the rulesheet disagrees with a card, follow the card. However, ignore any card effect that might seem to contradict one of the rules listed below unless the card *explicitly* says it supersedes that rule!

1. Nothing can reduce a player below Level 1, although card effects might reduce a player's or a monster's combat strength (p. 3) below 1.
2. You go up a level after combat only if you *kill* a monster.
3. You cannot collect rewards for defeating a monster (e.g., Treasure, levels) in the middle of a combat. You must finish the fight before gaining any rewards.
4. You must *kill a monster* to reach Level 10.

Any other disputes should be settled by loud arguments, with the owner of the game having the last word. You could also read the *Munchkin* FAQ and errata pages at [worldofmunchkin.com](http://worldofmunchkin.com), or start a discussion at [forums.sjgames.com](http://forums.sjgames.com) . . . unless it's more fun to argue.

**Your Hand:** Cards in your hand are not in play. They don't help you, but they can't be taken away except by cards that specifically affect "your hand." At the end of your turn, you may have no more than five cards in your hand (see **Charity**, p. 2).

Cards in play may not be returned to your hand – they must be discarded or traded if you want to get rid of them.

## CHARACTER CREATION

Everyone starts as a Level 1 human with no class. (Heh, heh.) *Munchkin* characters are exclusively male or female, and your character's sex is the same as your own unless you declare otherwise.

Look at your initial eight cards. If you have any Race or Class cards, you may (if you like) play one of each type by placing it in front of you. If you have any usable Items (p. 3), you may play them by placing them in front of you. If you have any doubt about whether you should play a card, you could read below, or you could just charge ahead and do it.



## STARTING AND FINISHING THE GAME

Decide who goes first by rolling the dice and arguing about the results and the meaning of this sentence and whether the fact that a word seems to be missing any effect.

Play proceeds in turns, each with several phases (see p. 2). When the first player finishes his turn, the player to his left takes a turn, and so on.

The first player to reach Level 10 wins . . . but you must reach Level 10 by killing a monster, unless a card specifically allows you to win another way.





## When You May Take Actions

You may perform these actions at any time:

- ♣ Discard a Class or Race.
- ♣ Play a **Go Up a Level** or **Hireling**.
- ♣ Play a Curse.

You may perform these actions at any time, as long as you are not in combat:

- ♣ Trade an Item with another player (the other player may not be in combat, either).
- ♣ Change which Items you have equipped.
- ♣ Play a card that you have just received (some cards may be played even during combat; see above).

You may perform these actions on your own turn:

- ♣ Play a new Class or Race card (at any time).
- ♣ Sell Items for levels (except when you are in combat).
- ♣ Play an Item (most Items cannot be played during combat, but some one-shot Items can; see p. 3).

## TURN PHASES

Your turn begins as soon as the previous player's turn ends. When your cards are arranged the way you want, go to phase 1.

**(1) Kick Open The Door:** Draw one card from the Door deck and turn it face up.

If it's a monster, you must fight it. See **Combat**, p. 3. If the card is a curse – see **Curses**, p. 5 – it applies to you immediately (if it can) and is discarded (unless it has a persistent effect or you keep the card as a reminder of an upcoming effect).

If you draw any other card, you may either put it in your hand or play it immediately.

**(2) Look For Trouble/Loot The Room:** If you fought a monster in phase 1, skip this phase and go to phase 3.

If you did NOT draw a monster when you first opened the door, you have two choices: either **Look For Trouble** or **Loot The Room**.

**Look For Trouble:** Play a monster *from your hand* and fight it, just as if you had found it when you kicked open the door. Don't play a monster you can't handle, unless you're sure you can count on getting help (see p. 4)!

**Loot The Room:** Draw a second card from the **Door** deck, face **down**, and place it in your hand.

**(3) Charity:** If you have more than five cards in your hand, you must play enough cards to get you to five or below. If you cannot, or do not want to, you must give the excess cards to the player with the lowest Level. If players are tied for lowest, divide the cards as evenly as possible, but it's up to you who gets the bigger set(s) of leftovers. If YOU are the lowest or tied for lowest, just discard the excess.

As soon as you are finished with Charity, the next player's turn begins.

## Combat: Basic Rules

When you fight a monster, you compare your **combat strength** (your Level plus any bonuses or penalties) against the monster's combat strength. If your combat strength is greater, you win! If it is tied or lower, the monster wins.

For the full explanation, see **Combat**, p. 3.

## CHARACTER STATS

Each character is basically a collection of weapons, armor, and magic items, with three stats: Level, Race, and Class. For instance, you might describe your character as "an 8th-level elf wizard with **Boots of Butt-Kicking**, a **Staff of Napalm**, and the **Kneepads of Allure**."

**Level:** This is a measure of how generally buff and studly you are. When the rules or cards refer to your Level, capitalized, they mean this number.

You gain a level when you kill a monster, or when a card says that you do. You can also sell Items to buy levels (see **Items**).

You lose a level when a card says you do. Your Level can never go below 1. However, your combat strength can be negative, if you get hit by a Curse or suffer some other kind of penalty.

**Class:** Characters may be Warriors, Wizards, Thieves, or Clerics. If you have no Class card in front of you, you have no class. Yeah, I know, we did that one already.

Each Class has special abilities, shown on the cards. You gain the abilities of a Class the moment you play its card in front of you, and lose them as soon as you discard that card. Some Class abilities are powered by discards. You may discard any card, in play or in your hand, to power a special ability.

See the Class cards for when abilities can be used. Note that a Thief cannot steal while he or the target is fighting – and as soon as a monster is revealed, the fight is on!

You can discard a Class card at any time, even in combat: "I don't wanna be a wizard anymore." When you discard a Class card, you become classless until you play another Class card.

You may not belong to more than one class at once unless you play the **Super Munchkin** card.

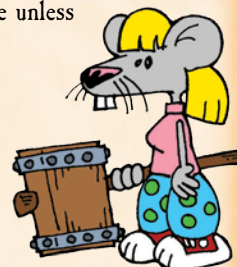
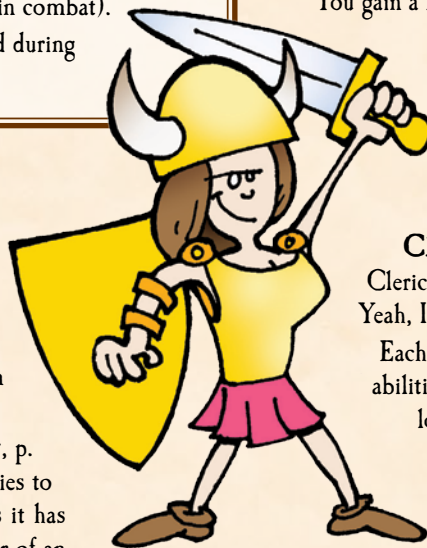
**Race:** Characters may be Humans, Elves, Dwarves, or Halflings. If you have no Race card in front of you, you are human.

Humans have no special abilities. The rules for Classes, above, also apply to Races.

You may not belong to more than one race at once unless you play the **Half-Breed** card.

## SUPER MUNCHKIN AND HALF-BREED

These cards may be played whenever it is legal to play a Class or Race, as long as you have an appropriate card (Class for **Super Munchkin**, Race for **Half-Breed**) to attach it to. You cannot have more than one of the same Class or Race card in play at once.





If you play **Super Munchkin** with one Class, you get all the advantages of being that Class (the ability to equip Class-only Items, monsters with penalties against that Class suffer those penalties) and none of the disadvantages (you can equip Items forbidden to that Class, and monsters do not get bonuses because of your Class). If the Class has an ability that has a cost, however, you must still pay it – you aren't *that* Super! (All of the above is also true for **Half-Breed**, just for Races.)

## TREASURES

Treasure cards include permanent and “one-shot” cards. Any Treasure card may be played to the table as soon as you get it, or at any time on your own turn *except* during combat (unless the rules below or the card itself says otherwise).

## ITEMS

Most Treasures are Items. Items have a Gold Piece value. (“No Value” is equivalent to zero Gold Pieces, and these cards are also Items.)

All Items you have in play are considered “carried.” Items that are actually giving you a bonus are “equipped.” You should indicate Items that are not equipped by turning the cards sideways. You may not alter the status of your Items during a combat or while running away.

Anyone can *carry* any Item (except for extra Big items; see below), but you may *equip* only one Headgear, one suit of Armor, one pair of Footgear, and two “1 Hand” Items (or one “2 Hands” Item) . . . unless you have a card that lets you ignore these limits, such as **Hireling** or **Cheat!**, or unless one of the cards says otherwise. If you are carrying two Headgear cards, for instance, you can equip only one of them at a time.

Likewise, some Items have restrictions: for instance, the **Mace of Sharpness** can only be wielded by a Cleric. Its bonus only counts for someone who is, at the moment, a Cleric.

You cannot discard Item cards “just because.” You may *sell* Items for a level, *trade* Items with other players, or *give* an Item to another player who wants it (see below). You may discard Items to power certain Class and Race abilities. And a Curse or a monster's Bad Stuff (see p. 5) may force you to get rid of something!

**Big Items:** You may carry any number of Small items, but only one Big one. (Any item not marked Big is considered Small.) You may not discard one Big item to play another; you must sell the first Item, trade it, lose it to a Curse or Bad Stuff, or discard it to power a Class or Race ability.

If something lets you have more than one Big item (for instance, the Dwarf race) and you lose that ability, you must either correct the problem immediately or get rid of all but one Big item. If it's your turn and you're not in combat, you can sell the excess Big items (as long as you have at least

### Level Counters: It's Not Cheating. It's Using the Rules!

If you have an iPhone, iPod touch, iPad, or Android phone, you'll like our Level Counter smartphone app. Just search for “*Munchkin* level counter” or click the link at [levelcounter.sjgames.com](http://levelcounter.sjgames.com). Even better, it gives you personal *in-game advantages* to make your friends jealous . . . which is what being a munchkin is all about!



1,000 Gold Pieces of Items to sell). Otherwise, you must give them to the lowest-Level player(s) who can carry them! If any Big items are still left over, discard them.

**Trading:** You may trade Items (but no other cards) with other players. You may only trade Items from the table – not from your hand. You may trade at any time except when you or your trading partner are in combat – in fact, the best time to trade is when it's not your turn.

Any Item you receive in a trade must remain in play.

You may also give Items away without a trade, to bribe other players – “I'll give you my Flaming Armor if you won't help Bob fight that dragon!”

You may show your hand to others. Like we could stop you.

**Selling Items for Levels:** At any point during your turn except during combat or Running Away, you may discard Items worth a total of at least 1,000 Gold Pieces and immediately go up one level. (“No Value” cards are the same as zero Gold Pieces.) If you discard (for instance) 1,100 Gold Pieces worth, you don't get change. But if you can manage 2,000 worth, you can go up two levels at once, and so on. You may sell Items from your hand as well as those you are carrying. You may *not* sell Items to go to Level 10.

## “ONE-SHOT” TREASURES

A Treasure card that says “Usable once only” is often called a “one-shot” Treasure. Most of these are used during combat to strengthen the munchkins or the monsters, and may be played from your hand or from the table. Some have other effects, however, so read the card carefully! Discard these cards as soon as the combat is over or their effect is resolved.

## OTHER TREASURES

Other Treasure cards (like **Go Up a Level** cards) are not Items. Most of these cards say when they can be played, and whether they stay in play or are discarded. A couple of specific examples:

**Go Up a Level** cards may be played on yourself or any other player at any time, even during combat. Discard them once they are played. **Exception:** You cannot play a **Go Up a Level** card to give a player the winning level!

**Hireling** may be played at any time, on any turn. You cannot give a Hireling an Item to carry while you are in combat, however.

## COMBAT

To fight a monster, compare its **combat strength** to yours. Combat strength is the total of Level plus all modifiers – positive or negative – given by Items and other cards. If the monster's combat strength is equal to yours, or greater, you **lose the combat** and must Run Away (see p. 5). If your combat strength totals more than the monster's – note that monsters win ties! – you **kill it** and go up a level (two levels for some big monsters). You'll also get the number of Treasures shown on its card.

Sometimes a card will let you get rid of the monster without killing it. This is still “winning,” but you don't get a level. Unless the ability says otherwise, you don't get the Treasures, either.

Some monster cards have special powers that affect combat – a bonus against a Race or Class, for instance. Be sure to check these!





You and the other players may play one-shot Treasures or use Class or Race abilities to help or harm you in your combat. Some Door cards may also be played into a combat, such as **Monster Enhancers** (see below).

Remember: while you are in combat, you cannot sell, equip, unequip, or trade Items, or play Treasures from your hand, unless these rules or the card says otherwise.

If you kill a monster (or monsters!), discard the monster(s) and any other cards played, and claim your rewards. But note: someone may play a hostile card on you, or use a special power, just as you think you have won. When you kill a monster, you must wait a reasonable time, defined as about 2.6 seconds, for anyone else to speak up. After that, you have really killed the monster, and you really get the level(s) and Treasures, though they can still whine and argue.

## MONSTERS

If drawn face-up, during the **Kick Open The Door** phase, they immediately attack the person who drew them.

If acquired any other way, they go into your hand and may be played during your own turn to **Look For Trouble**, or played to join another player's fight with the **Wandering Monster** card. (See **Fighting Multiple Monsters**, below.)

Each Monster card is a single monster, even if the name on the card is plural.

## MONSTER ENHANCERS

Certain cards, called Monster Enhancers, raise or lower the combat strength of individual monsters. (Penalties to monsters are still considered Enhancers.) They also affect the number of Treasures the monsters are worth. Monster Enhancers may be played by any player during any combat.

All Enhancers on a single monster add together. If there are multiple monsters in a combat, the person who plays each Enhancer must choose which monster it applies to.

*Exception:* Anything that enhances a monster also enhances its **Mate** . . . if **Ancient, Enraged, and Mate** are played on a single monster, *in any order*, you are facing an Ancient Enraged monster and its Ancient Enraged Mate. Good luck . . .

## FIGHTING MULTIPLE MONSTERS

Some cards (notably **Wandering Monster**) allow your rivals to send other monsters to join the fight. You must defeat their **combined** combat strengths. Any special abilities, such as forcing you to fight with your Level only, apply to the entire fight. If you have the right cards, you can eliminate one monster from the combat and fight the other(s) normally, but you cannot choose to fight one and Run Away from the other(s). If you eliminate one monster, but then run from the other(s), you don't get *any* levels or Treasure!

### Undead Monsters

Several monsters in this set are tagged **Undead**. You may play any Undead monster from your hand into combat to help any other Undead, *without* using a **Wandering Monster** card. If you have a card that can be used to make a monster Undead, you may play it with a non-Undead monster to use this rule.



## ASKING FOR HELP

If you cannot win a combat on your own, you may ask any other player to help you. If he refuses, you may ask another player, and so on, until they all turn you down or someone helps. Only one player can help you, adding his combat strength to yours. *Anyone* can play cards to affect your combat, however!

You'll probably have to bribe someone to help. You may offer your helper any Item(s) you are currently carrying, or any number of the Treasure cards the monster has. If you offer him part of the monster's Treasure, you must agree whether he picks first, or you pick first, or whatever. You may also offer to play any cards from your hand that you legally could, such as **Go Up a Level** cards, on your helper.

The special abilities or vulnerabilities of the monster also apply to your helper, and vice versa. For instance, if a **Warrior** helps you, you will win if your combined total ties that of the monster, and he can **Berserk** and discard cards to add to his combat strength (but only once per combat, not once per monster). If you are facing the **Wannabe Vampire** and a **Cleric** helps you, he can chase it away automatically. But if you are facing the **Drooling Slime** and an **Elf** helps you, the monster's combat strength is increased by 4 (unless you, too, are an Elf and the monster's combat strength has already been increased).

If someone successfully helps you kill the monster, discard it, draw Treasures (see **Rewards**, below), and follow any special instructions on the monster card. You level up for each slain monster. Your helper does *not* go up any levels . . . unless he's an Elf, in which case he gains one level for each monster slain. *You* draw the Treasure cards, even if it was your helper's special ability that defeated the monster, and distribute them according to the agreement you reached.

## Interfering With Combat

You can interfere with others' combats in several ways, including:

*Use a one-shot card.* You could help another player by using a one-shot to strengthen his side. Of course, you can "accidentally" strengthen the monster with it, instead . . .

*Play a Monster Enhancer.* These cards (usually) make a monster stronger . . . and give it more Treasure. You can play these either during your own combats or during someone else's combat.

*Add a monster from your hand* to join the combat, either with a **Wandering Monster** card or by using the special Undead rule.

*Backstab* a player in combat, if you're a Thief.

*Curse* them, if you have a Curse card.

## REWARDS

When you kill a monster, you get one level per monster, unless the Monster card says something else, and you get all its Treasure! Each monster has a Treasure number on the bottom of its card. Draw that many Treasures, modified by any Monster Enhancers played on it. Draw *face-down* if you killed the monster alone. Draw *face-up*, so the whole party can see what you got, if someone helped you.

If you defeat a monster by nonlethal means, you do not get a level and you may or may not get the Treasure, depending on the method.

Treasure cards can be played as soon as you get them, even if you are the helper.



## Example of Combat, With Numbers and Everything

Aric is a 4th-Level Warrior with the Chainsaw of Bloody Dismemberment (which gives him a +3 to his combat strength). He kicks open the door and finds the Net Troll, a Level 10 monster. Aric's at a 7, the Net Troll is at a 10, so Aric is losing.

*Aric:* I was hoping to save this card . . .

He plays the Magic Missile, giving him +5 for this fight. Now his combat strength is 12, beating the Net Troll's 10.

*Aric:* Ha! Net Troll going down!

*Suzan:* Not so fast. Now he's Enraged.

Suzan plays Enraged, adding 5 to the Net Troll's combat strength. Now Aric is losing, 15 to 12.

*Aric:* Curses!

*Suzan:* Want some help? (*Suzan is playing a Level 2 Elf with the Boots of Butt-Kicking, so her combat strength is 4. Combined with Aric's 12, they would have 16, enough to defeat the Net Troll's 15.*)

*Aric:* And give you a level? Not a chance! I'm Berserking.

Aric uses his Warrior power and discards three cards: Thief and a Wandering Monster from his hand, and Yuppie Water (usable only to help an Elf) from his carried items. Each one gives him +1 to his combat strength.

*Suzan:* Not the Yuppie Water! Noooo . . .

*Aric:* That's +3 to me, and now we're tied, 15 to 15. Because I'm a Warrior, I win ties . . . so I'm killing the Net Troll unless someone else plans to mess with me. Anyone?

No one says anything, so Aric goes up a level and claims the Net Troll's treasures – three from the Net Troll card, and one extra because it was Enraged. And the game goes on . . .

## RUNNING AWAY

If nobody will help you . . . or if somebody tries to help, and your fellow party members interfere so the two of you *still* cannot win . . . you must Run Away. You don't get any levels or Treasure. You don't even get to Loot the Room. And you don't always escape unharmed . . .

Roll the die. You escape on a 5 or more. Some Class and Race abilities and some Treasures make it easier or harder to Run Away from all monsters. And some monsters give you a bonus or penalty to your roll for that monster only.



If you fail to Run Away from a monster, it does Bad Stuff to you, as described on its card. This may vary from losing an Item, to losing one or more levels, to Death (see below).

If you are fleeing from multiple monsters, you roll separately to escape each one, in any order you choose, and suffer Bad Stuff from each one that catches you as soon as it catches you.

If two players are cooperating and still can't defeat the monster(s), they must both Run Away. They roll separately, and each player chooses in what order to Run Away. The monster(s) CAN catch them both.

Once you have resolved all Run Away rolls, discard the monster(s).

## DEATH

If you die, you lose all your stuff. You keep your Class(es), Race(s), and Level (and any Curses that were affecting you when you died) – your new character will look just like your old one. If you have **Half-Breed** or **Super Munchkin**, keep those as well. Once you have died, you don't have to Run Away from any remaining monsters.

**Looting The Body:** Lay out your hand beside the cards you had in play (making sure not to include the cards mentioned above). If you have an Item carried by a **Hireling** or attached to a **Cheat!** card, separate those cards. Starting with the player with the highest Level, everyone else chooses one card . . . in case of ties in Level, roll a die. If your corpse runs out of cards, tough. Once everyone gets one card, discard the rest. Looted cards go into players' hands.

Dead characters cannot receive cards for any reason, not even Charity, and cannot level up or win the game.

When the next player begins his turn, your new character appears and can help others in combat with his Level and Class or Race abilities . . . but you have no cards, unless you receive Charity or gifts from other players.

On *your* next turn, start by drawing four face-down cards from each deck and playing any legal cards you want to, just as when you started the game. Then take your turn normally.

## CURSES

If drawn face-up during the **Kick Open The Door** phase, Curse cards apply to the person who drew them.

If acquired some other way, such as by **Looting The Room**, Curse cards go into your hand and may be played on any player at any time. ANY time, do you hear me? Reducing someone's abilities just as he thinks he has killed a monster is a lot of fun.



## More Munchkin!

Visit [munchkin.sjgames.com](http://munchkin.sjgames.com) for news, errata, updates, Q&A, and much more. To discuss *Munchkin* with our staff and your fellow munchkins, visit our forums at [forums.sjgames.com](http://forums.sjgames.com). Check out [munchkin.sjgames.com/resources.html](http://munchkin.sjgames.com/resources.html) for reference cards, play mats, and dozens of links.

Other ways to connect to the *Munchkin* social network:

*Twitter.* Our Twitter feed often has *Munchkin* news (or bonus rules!): [twitter.com/SJGames](https://twitter.com/SJGames).

*Facebook.* Connect with other fans on our pages for *Munchkin* ([facebook.com/sjgames.munchkin](https://facebook.com/sjgames.munchkin)) and Steve Jackson Games ([facebook.com/sjgames](https://facebook.com/sjgames)).

The URL for this set is [munchkin.sjgames.com/game](http://munchkin.sjgames.com/game).



Usually, a Curse affects its victim immediately (if it can) and is then discarded. However, some Curses give a penalty later in the game or have a continuing effect. Keep these cards until you get rid of the Curse or the penalty takes effect. (Curse cards you keep as a reminder may not be discarded to power Class or Race abilities. Nice try!)

**Note:** If someone plays a “your next combat” Curse on you while you are in combat, it counts in *that* combat! The same is true for a “your next turn” Curse played during your turn.

If a Curse can apply to more than one Item, the victim decides which Item is lost or Cursed.

If a Curse applies to something you don't have, ignore it. For instance, if you draw **Lose Your Armor** and you have no Armor, nothing happens; discard the card. (Some Curses have alternate effects, though, so read the card!)

There will be times when it will help you to play a Curse or Monster on yourself, or to “help” another player in a way that costs him Treasure. This is very munchkinly. Do it.

## Super-Sized Munchkin

Studies have shown that 8.4 out of 9.7 *Munchkin* players just can't get enough of the game. Here are some ideas to take your *Munchkin* games to new heights – or lows:

*Combining different Munchkin sets.* You can mix two (or more) base sets and expansions together for a genre-crossing mega-*Munchkin* adventure! Space plus Old West? Kung fu vampires? No problem!

*Expansions.* These add still more monsters to kill, new Treasure to loot, and sometimes entirely new kinds of cards. Ask for all the *Munchkin* sets and expansions at your local game or comic store – find it using our Store Finder, [gamefinder.sjgames.com](http://gamefinder.sjgames.com) – but if you don't have a local store, we'll be happy to sell them directly to you at [warehouse23.com](http://warehouse23.com).

*Turn it up to EPIC!* Playing to Level 10 just isn't enough for some people. To satisfy their insane cravings, we've created *Epic Munchkin*, a new set of rules that gives all your *Munchkin* sets that high-octane boost you need to make it up to Level 20! Look for it at [munchkin.sjgames.com/epic](http://munchkin.sjgames.com/epic) – it's completely, absolutely FREE!

*All of the above!!!*

## Faster Play Rules

For a faster game, you can add a “phase 0” called **Listen At The Door**. At the start of your turn before doing anything else, draw a face-down Door card, which you may play or not. Then arrange cards and Kick Open The Door normally. If you Loot The Room, draw a face-down *Treasure*, not a Door.

You can also allow shared victories – if a player reaches Level 10 in a fight where he had a helper, the helper also wins the game, no matter what Level he is.

## Game Design by Steve Jackson ● Illustrated by John Kovalic

Development Help: Monica Stephens ● Chief Operating Officer: Philip Reed

*Munchkin* Czar: Andrew Hackard ● *Munchkin* Hireling: Devin Lewis

Production Manager: Samuel Mitschke ● Production Artist: Alex Fernandez

Prepress Checker: Miranda Horner ● Marketing Director: Kali Dugan ● Director of Sales: Ross Jepson

*Playtesters:* Steve Brinich, Moe Chapman, Paul Chapman, Alain Dawson, Jessie D. Foster, Al Griego, Russell Godwin, Susan Rati, and Kat Robertson.

Our deepest thanks to the hundreds, or thousands, or maybe millions of munchkins who have played, told their friends, and suggested new cards since the first release of *Munchkin*. We love you all and you scare us deeply!

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