

LIVING KEEP

Introduction

This game is played in phases, and in those phases you will mine resources, build rooms, research spells, build traps and above all, attract minions to defend yourself from the pesky Heroes of the Light! Let's learn how to do that.

You will need:

A pencil

An eraser

1d4 (4 sided die)

1d8 (8 sided die)

At least 1d6 (6 sided die) (more is better)

A standard deck of cards with a red and black joker.
(unless you use my custom cards)

A printout of the Tables (unless using my custom cards)

And finally a printout of the Slate (play sheet).

After gathering your instruments of destruction. Read how the following phases are played, then you will be ready to choose a game mode.

Good luck and be merciless!

Upkeep: (This phase is skipped on the first turn)

Roll 2d6 per farm and add the result to the food supply.

Feed and pay your minions. If you can not fully feed OR pay them, you must banish minions until you can. (Starting with the Highest rank) remove any banished minions from the Slate.

Dig/Chant:

First, decide on how many of your Peons will dig, and how many of them will chant (this can not be changed until the next turn).

Dig:

Now start digging by drawing 2 cards per Peon, that you decided to dig with, from the main deck. (Custom card users will see the type of resource their Peons have unearthed (bottom left) and roll accordingly. Standard deck users will need the tables for this bit, but I'll also explain it here).

For each Heart (gold) drawn roll 1d8 and add the result to the gold section of the Slate.

For each Diamond (gems) roll 3d6 and add the result to the gold section of the Slate.

For each Spade (Stone) roll 2d8 and add the result to the stone section of the Slate.

Finally, Clubs are considered Solid Rock and is impenetrable. (The custom cards depict a brick wall).

So nothing is done. Unless! If you drew the Black Joker during the dig phase... you can treat all Clubs as Spades and roll 2d8 for each as normal.

*If an Ace is drawn, you have come across a Peon! If gaining a Peon does not push you past your current maximum. You may choose to assign your new Peon to dig immediately, or let them chant in the next step.

Chant:

For each Peon assigned to chant, draw 1 card from the main deck, and roll the dice shown in the bottom right. (again, for standard deck users, hopefully the tables are self explanatory. But I'll also explain here)

Each Heart drawn, roll 1d8. Each Diamond, roll 2d8.

Each Spade, roll 1d6 and each Club roll 2d6. If you draw the Black Joker, roll 2d8 + 10! Then add all these values to the Mana section of the Slate.

*If an Ace is drawn, you have come across a Peon! If gaining a Peon does not push you past your current maximum. You may choose to assign your new Peon to immediately chant now. (This new Peon is not permitted to dig until next turn).

Building:

To begin with, only rank 0 buildings are available. To build rank 1 buildings, you must have at least 1 of each rank 0. For rank 2, you must have the rank 1 buildings.

But as a general rule: If you can afford it, you can build it.

To build, simply subtract the the gold and stone from the Slate. You now own a new room! The following are the rooms and their purpose.

Lair: Needed to be able to Recruit new minions.

Farm: Needed to feed your minions. Each also increases your Keeps maximum Food storage by 25 and an extra 2d6 at Upkeep.

Vault: Increases maximum Gold storage by 25.

Quarry: Increases maximum Stone storage by 50.

Evil Gate: Needed to be able to Recruit minions.

Library: 4 are needed to research Spells.

Training: 4 are needed to train your minions.

Blacksmith: 4 are needed to create Traps and Doors.

Shrine: Each increases your maximum mana storage by 25.

Training:

You can train up to one minion, for every 4 training rooms owned, per turn. Training increases the rank of the chosen minion(s) by one (to the maximum rank of 10). After training, the minions pay is increased by the roll of 1d8. (separate rolls per minion)

*only pay is effected, they have the same size stomach!

Research Spell/Door/Trap:

Spells: To research a spell, you need at least 4 Libraries, 2 minions (or any number of Occultists) to 'Channel' mana points and enough mana in storage. First add the name of the spell to an available Research slot on the Slate, with the amount of Channel points needed. Then start channelling. 'Channelling' is done by rolling 1d4 per minion (1d8 per Occultist) then subtracting the result from the points needed. (don't forget to also subtract the result from your mana reserve) If the points needed are now 0. Transfer the spell from the research slot to the spell list, with its cost. You now own a spell (All spells are single use, but you can research multiples of the same spell).

If you were unable to Channel enough points this turn, you may continue during the next Research Phase.

**If you do not have a Door or a Trap you would like to research, this phase ends here.*

*The spells and their usage are as follows...

To Arms: Attempt a Recruitment. (If you have an Evil Gate)

USAGE: During ANY Phase.

Summon Peon: Instantly gain a Peon. (Can not exceed max)

USAGE: During ANY Phase.

Regen: Add 1d8 to your health. (Not above max)

USAGE: During Upkeep only.

Premonition: Look at the next d4+2 cards of the main deck.

USAGE: one of the following Phases.

Dig. (discard Solid Rock)

Recruit. (Reorder the card as you see fit)

Hero. (Reorder the cards as you see fit)

Power Strike: Kill one Hero (not the Monarch)

USAGE: Hero Phase

Summon Dragon: Add Dragon to Slate.

USAGE: Recruit Phase

Doors/Traps

To build a Door or a Trap you need at least 4 Blacksmiths and 2 minions (or any amount of Goblins) to put in the labour. First, write the name of the Door/Trap and the amount of labour points needed into a research slot.

Labour points are generated by rolling 1d4 per minion (1d8 per Goblin) if the labour is complete (0 points left) you have a shiny new Door or a deadly Trap. Now transfer the object to the slot on the Slate.

Doors and their effects:

Wooden Doors will decrease the next Heroes rank by 1 (to a minimum of 2). You may now roll 1d4. On a 4, reduce the rank by a further 1 (to a minimum of 1).

Metal Doors will decrease the next Heroes rank by 2 (to a minimum of 2). You may now roll 1d4. On a 3 or 4, reduce the rank by a further 2 (to a minimum of 1).

Magic Doors will divide the next Heroes rank by 2! (rounding up)

*Doors have no effect on the Monarch.

Traps and their effects:

Pits reduce the next Heroes rank by 1 (even to 0)

Rockfalls reduce the next Heroes rank by 2 (even to 0)

Spikes will kill a Hero with a rank of 4 or less.

Poison Darts divide the next Heroes rank by 2. (rounding up)

*Traps have some exceptions...

Bandits and Assassins will spot and jump over Pits.

Titans and Giants will catch Rockfalls.

Conjurers and Enchanters can't be harmed by poison darts.

*All doors and traps are destroyed once they have taken effect. If avoided, they remain in play.

Recruit:

To recruit a minion you first need an Evil Gate and at least 1 Lair. (The number of minions you can recruit per turn, is equal to the number of Evil Gates owned and number of unoccupied Lairs.) To attempt a recruitment, start by turning 3 cards, per Gate, from the main deck. (For the standard deck users. Any Clubs or Spades are minions trying to be recruited. Check the tables to see which.) You may now choose 1 (or up to the amount of Evil Gates you have, as long as you also have the Lairs). You may also choose not to recruit at all. If you do, note the Rank, Name, Pay and Food values on the Slate. You must now feed your new minions. (If you cannot feed them, they immediately leave.) New recruits do not require pay until the next Upkeep Phase.

Now all the cards are placed into the discard pile.

*During the recruit phase, you may banish as many minions as you would like. To make room for new recruits.

HERO:

Flip one card from the Turn Deck. If a Hero is coming, start drawing cards (one at a time) from the Main deck until you come across a card with the same suit as the card from the turn deck. (Standard deck users: If it is a club or spade, nothing happens - go to Upkeep. If it is a Heart or Diamond, your Keep is under attack! Check the tables to see how to beat it and what happens if you can't).

If your Health points have not been reduced to 0... you have survived this round! Now shuffle the Main decks discard pile back into the Main deck (you also do this if you need to draw a card and can't) then go to Upkeep!

So the Phase order is as follows:

Upkeep (skip 1st turn)

Dig/Chant (optional)

Build (optional)

Train (optional)

Research (optional)

Recruit (optional)

Hero

HOW TO USE THE SLATE **AND SET IT UP**

If playing the campaign, each scenario will state what resources you start with, and what the maximum amount of each you are allowed to amass. (This includes rooms as well as gold, food etc.) This information should be transferred to the Slate. It will also give details on how you win or lose.

Now I will explain the Slate itself and briefly recap some rules...



Evil Gates are your only means of attracting minions to your cause. Each allows you to turn 3 cards, from the main deck, during the Recruit Phase. You may then recruit minions to the limit of how many Gates you have. The box to the right, of the symbol above, is where you write the

scenarios limit. Notice the box has a /. The total allowed goes to the right, and your current amount goes to the left.



Blacksmiths are where you create doors and traps to help your minions protect you, the Keep. You will need 4 Blacksmiths and at least 2 minions, or 1 Goblin, to put in the labour. Any minion will be able to roll 1d4, but, Goblins can roll 1d8. (Don't forget to use the 'Research' box). As before, current amount owned goes to the left of the / and total allowed to the right.



The Library is where your minions will learn to cast spells for you. Through their research, you will gain a powerful edge. To start research, you need at least 4 Libraries, 2 minions (1d4 each) or 1 Occultist (1d8) to channel the mana. Use the box to the right in the same way as above.



This box is used to list your currently created traps.



This box is used to list your currently created doors.



This box is used to list the spells you have ready to cast. Once cast, remember to adjust your mana accordingly and remove it from the Slate.

The 'RESEARCH' box should be used to keep track of any and all traps, doors and spells, you have in development. For traps and doors... the amount of remaining Labour Points needed should accompany the name. As for spells, not only should the name and remaining channel points required be written here. You must also have the same amount (or more) mana available to finish the research. (remember to adjust your mana after each roll).



Lairs are where your minions will sleep and recover after a fight with the light. They are also a necessary component to recruit any minion. You need at least one to even be able to attempt recruitment. The box to the left is still read left to right. That is to say, currently owned Lairs goes to the left of the / and scenario maximum to the right. (Remember you can banish any amount of minions, during the Recruit Phase, to make room for new recruits.)



Training rooms allow you to increase the rank of your minions. To do so you need 4 Training rooms for each minion you would like to rank up, per turn. (That means you would need 8, if you want to train 2 minions in the same turn) No minion can be trained past the rank of 10. And their pay is increased by 1d8. Also, Peons cannot be trained. The box to the left is used as usual.



Peons are there to do your bidding. That is simply why they exist! They mine gold, gems, stone and even build what you desire. They are also the source of your mana supply. But they come along very rarely, that is why you would never allow them to fight. Use them wisely.

The table to the bottom-right. Is where you keep the list of recruited minions. You can keep the combined food and pay at the bottom for easier calculation. (also, a calculator could come in handy for those long lists of happy minions)



Your Quarry is where your Stone is stored. The box to the left, is a little different to the others. The smaller two is number of Quarries owned (top), and max for current scenario (bottom). Then current amount of stone. Then your maximum capacity is on the right. The Quarry is unique. For each owned, the storage capacity is increased by 50!



Farms produce food! Your minions love this stuff. So much so, if you are unable to give them enough they will leave. The first 2 boxes is the same as Quarry above. The next is current amount of food. Then the last is your maximum capacity, (number of Farms x 25). Each Farm gives you 2d6 of food during the Upkeep Phase.



This is where the magic happens. (or should I say stored?) Mana is required to research and cast spells. You gain mana by assigning Peons to chant in the Dig/Chant Phase. The first 2 boxes is the number of Shrines owned and max per scenario. The next is current mana stored. The last is mana capacity, (number of Shrines x 25)



This is your hoard! Topped up by your Peons, needed to build doors, traps, rooms, pay your minions and is loved by everyone in the process! The boxes in order are for: number of Vaults, max per scenario, gold available, then Vault capacity. (number of vaults x 25)



This represents the Turn Deck, and the Turn Deck represents how much time you have to achieve your goal. If you ever need to draw from the Turn Deck, and there are no cards to draw. You shuffle the Turn Decks discard pile to recreate the Turn Deck. Then add 1 to the left side of the box. (this shows how many times you have drawn every card in the Turn Deck).

The right side of the the box is for the Turn Deck limit. The limit refers to how many times you are allowed to completely draw your way through the Turn Deck. So the left side of the box is how many times that has happened.

For example: If a scenario Turn Deck limit is 3. You have enough time to draw every card up to 3 times. If you will need to draw a card from the Turn Deck in the upcoming Hero Phase, and you have not completed your goal by the time you enter the Hero Phase. The game is over.



The most important icon on the Slate, and the easiest to explain. This is the Keep! The Keep is a living thing... YOU are that thing! Each scenario will state your current health. Simply write that value in the heart shaped void. If this value is ever 0, the game is over!

GAME MODES

Mastery:

In this mode, you get to choose from 3 different time limits... 1, 3 or 5 Turn Decks. You start with 4/10 Peons, 0/12 for all rooms, (except Evil Gates (0/4), Farms(1/12) Vaults (1/12) Quarry (1/12)) and 40 HP. (Upkeep is not skipped for the 1st turn).

Using the 'Mastery' table, and a piece of paper, keep track of banished minions, Heroes killed and not killed as you progress. At the end, you get points for each minion still in your employ (eg 10 points for each Bat). Bonus points are earned for the first train, per minion. (eg if you have 2 skeletons. You trained 1 once and the other twice. You would get 5 points for the first skeleton and 5 points for the second. (put an * next to any trained minions to help keep track)) Then points for each room built, unused Doors and Traps (unused spells are worthless). Resources have multipliers for every 1 of each type... food and stone are simply added to the total. Where remaining gold is multiplied by 3 and mana by 5! For Health, you get 1 point for each remaining. Multiply that value by 3 if you managed to heal back up to maximum. OR if you finished the game without receiving damage at all, multiply your health by 10! After the long equation, you can keep your score on the 'Mastery Record' sheet.

*If you die in this mode, you still get to add up your points, but, divide the total by 2!

Campaign:

This mode is a string of 10 story driven scenarios. These are designed to be played in order. (try not to read ahead... if you are going to print the scenarios. I suggest only printing the one you are going to play). Each page will come with the story, win/lose conditions and finally the Slate set up. Good Luck!

Multiplayer:

Each player will require a printout of their very own Slate.

Co-op mode: 2vE

Choose 1, 3 or 5 Turn Decks.

Roll 1d6 each, highest roll is player 1. (re-roll ties)

At the beginning of the game, shuffle all Turn cards (include Monarch/JK in the final turn). Now deal 6 to each player (player 1 gets the extra card on the final shuffle). These become each players separate Turn Decks. The games phases play out a bit differently here on.

UPKEEP: Both players must perform upkeep at the same time. That is to say, even if it is not your turn.

DIG/CHANT: Only active player gets to dig or/and chant, but, you should not add the resources directly to the Slate right away! When you know how much of each has been gained.

Roll 1d4: 1; active player keeps all.
2; inactive player keeps all.
3; players share equally.
4; players decide on how to divide.

BUILD: Both players can do so at the same time.

TRAIN: Both players can do so at the same time.

RESEARCH: Both players can do so at the same time.

RECRUIT: Only active player may recruit.

HERO: Only active player draws from their own Turn Deck.

The main goal here, is to beat the Monarch. How to beat him, depends on how many Turn Decks you choose.

1: 2 rank 6+ minions (from either or both players)

3: 2 rank 8+ minions (from 1 player)

5: 2 rank 10 minions (from active player)

Competitive: 1v1 (standard)

Choose any number of Turn Decks (remove Peons/ Aces). This will determine how long the players have to build their armies (an extra piece of paper may be needed for longer games). This is a battle of two opposing Living Keeps (Heroes can be ignored if preferred). The winner will be the Keep with the most HP once all minions have died (If one keep has fallen, it is not game over... your remaining minions will still fight in your name. Seeking revenge and a draw).

You will need 1d20 for each player and some way of hiding or shielding each others Slates. Building the armies requires absolute trust and honesty.

The Main Deck is shared. So after each Dig/Chant and Recruit phase. The discard pile is shuffled back into the Main Deck before passing the deck to the other player. Play the phases through, as in campaign mode, until the chosen amount of Turn Decks have been depleted.

Now the War Phase begins. Each player secretly chooses 1 OR 2 minions to attack. Up to a combined rank of 14. Then places the 1d20 at the combined rank. Both players will then reveal their die. Then states the minion(s) used with their rank(s). Highest rank wins, all minions in the battle die and are removed from the Slates. The difference in rank is dealt in damage to the losers Keep. But, if the loser used 2 minions with the same rank of 4 or less. No damage is taken. If there is a draw in combined rank, all minions still die but no damage is taken.

Each player set up...

100 HP per Turn Deck

5/5 Peons

0/3 Evil Gates

0/0 Blacksmiths

0/0 Libraries

0/0 Training Rooms

0/?? Lairs

1/?? Quarry (full)

1/?? Farms

0/0 Shrines

1/?? Vault (full)

Competitive: 1v1 (draft)

This is a much faster competitive mode. The whole Keep building aspect is removed completely! In draft you shuffle the Main deck (remove JK and Aces) and do the following...

Deal 4 cards to each player face down.

Look at your cards. (do not reveal)

Choose 1 minion to recruit by adding it to a 'hidden' Slate.

Place all eight cards in the discard pile.

Then repeat until the Main deck is depleted.

(if no minions are drawn in any four cards. That player may draw one more from the Main deck. If it is still not a minion. Discard all five cards and wait for the next draw.)

*when there are 7 or less cards left in the deck. Instead of attempting recruitment they are discarded.

After the Recruit phase (final Main deck depleted).
Players go to the War phase as described above.

For a short game, one or two decks is sufficient and 50 Keep HP. Feel free to choose as many decks as you have time. Or even decide upon a different starting Keep HP?

You may even want to play Hero vs Keep? In that case all above rules apply. But one player can only recruit heroes.