

Skirmish

5th Edition

A game inspired by the Ancient Arts Fellowship (AAF) Dark Age re-enactment group.

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Number of Players
3-8
Average Playing Time
Half an hour

Introduction

Skirmish is a game of warriors on the battleground fighting in the midst of chaos. Bodies lie everywhere, and there are enough of the armies remaining that none can retreat. Each warrior is without a side to aid them. All other players in the game are their enemy. The last warrior standing is the winner.

Setup

Each player takes a SWORD card and a SHIELD card. Place both in front of you with the undamaged SHIELD and the SWORD side (not the RECOVERY side) showing. If using a two handed weapon (either a TWO HANDED AXE or a TWO HANDED SWORD), turn your SHIELD sideways as it is not in use (it's slung on your back). Put the remaining SHIELD and **weapon cards** in the **weapon discard pile**, they may be **Recovered** during the game. Give each player 12 Health counters - poker chips or coins can be used. Shuffle the remaining deck and deal 6 cards to each player. Place the undealt cards on the table within easy reach of every player as the **Draw deck**. Play starts with the player to the dealer's left.

Discard Piles

There are two discard piles in this game.

- The **weapon discard pile** is for weapons and shields. It is never reshuffled and can be used later by any player wishing to make a **Recovery**,
- The **normal discard pile** is used for all other types of cards, and is reshuffled into the **Draw deck** when it runs out of cards.

Winning the Game

If you are ever reduced to zero or less Health, you are dead and out of the game. The winner is the last player with health remaining.

Turn Order

In a player's turn they may do the following actions in this order of play:

1. Wear Armour

- If you have a Mail card in your hand and wish it to protect you from attacks in the future, place it face up in front of you now. You may only have one armour card in play at any time.
Mail cards count toward your hand limit.

2. Action

During your turn you may do **ONE** of the following:-

○ Attack

Every weapon comes with a default attack. See **Weapon Cards** below.

Attacking with the default attack requires no use of cards, you just declare you are attacking with your weapon.

You may also play a Basic attack card. Most cause additional damage, and modify the default attack. **PUNCH, KICK** and **SHIELD BASH** are attacks made *instead* of a weapon attack and do not add to a Weapon Card. You cannot use these cards with a **SPECIAL ATTACK**.

Every weapon comes with several special attacks as well. To use a special attack, you must play a **SPECIAL ATTACK** card. Some special attacks also require a **basic attack card** to be played with them.

The defender may use the SHIELD to **block**, play a **SPECIAL ATTACK** to **CHARGE** (with a basic attack card) or **HOOK**, play one of the purely defensive cards of **DISARM, DODGE, BLOCK, and PARRY**, or, if appropriate, the special card of **TRIP**.

○ Recover Armour

If there is a MAIL card in the discard pile, you may take it and put it in your hand (see **Recovering**). On your next turn you may **Wear Armour** and play the MAIL card. You may not play any other cards this turn, this includes the TRIP card, except in defence.

○ Recover Weapon

If you want to make an attack on another player using a weapon other than your current weapon, discard your current weapon card and replace it with a card from the **weapon discard pile** (see **Recovering**). Similarly, if you have been disarmed and wish to acquire a new weapon, you may use this option to gain a new weapon. If you play a two handed weapon, you cannot use your SHIELD - turn it sideways.
Two handed weapons count toward your hand limit

You may not play any other cards this turn. This includes the TRIP card, except in defence.

○ Recover Health

If you plan to spend this turn Recovering (see **Recovering**), turn your **weapon card** face down to show Recovery. You may only play cards in defence this turn, this includes the TRIP card. Gain 2 Health back, up to your starting total.

3. Discards

You can discard any cards except for armour in play. Discarded **weapon cards** and SHIELDS are placed in the **weapon discard pile**.

4. Redraw

Draw up to your hand size of 6 cards. This hand size includes any MAIL card or two handed weapon card you may have in play. Every defender (or player who played TRIP) who used cards during your turn, now also refreshes their hand back to their hand sizes. If you spent this turn **recovering** turn your **weapon card** face up again.

Recovering

Recovering has two purposes. The first is to regain health, and the second to regain equipment. **You get no health back if looking for equipment on the battlefield.** While recovering, you may not play other cards in your turn. You can still discard cards and defend yourself.

It takes 1 turn of Recovery to-

- regain 2 Health up to your original level, or
- to find an undamaged SHIELD, or
- to go through the **weapon discard pile** and choose a weapon to take into your hand, or
- to go through the **normal discard pile** and choose an armour to take into your hand, or
- to discard armour that you are wearing (you spend the turn taking it off).

Weapon Card	Default attack.. The default attack can be used without playing any cards. A Basic attack card can be played as well, which increases the damage done by the Default attack.
	Hands. Some weapons are two handed – which means that a SHIELD cannot be used with them (turn the SHIELD card sideways) and they count towards your hand limit (ie you only are allowed 5 or less cards in your hand, rather than 6)
Special attacks. The special attacks require a SPECIAL ATTACK card to be played, and may also require a Basic attack card as well. Declare which particular special attack you wish to use. Some special attacks may be used while defending.	
Note: Some weapons are unable to do certain types of Basic attacks , or special rules apply to them.	

You must discard down to 6 cards if this takes you over the limit.

Please note – that any two handed weapon or MAIL card that you have in play (in front of you) counts towards this hand limit.

Losing your Shield or Weapon

To immediately show you have no SHIELD, or weapon, put them in the discard pile. They may be **Recovered**. A discarded damaged shield will be recovered as an undamaged shield. If you have no weapon you may only play **KICK, PUNCH**, or (if you have a SHIELD), **SHIELD BASH** to attack. With no weapon you have NO default attack.

Special Attacks

The special attacks require a SPECIAL ATTACK card to be played, and may also require a **Basic attack card** as well. Declare which particular special attack you wish to use. Some special attacks may be used while defending.

• Charge

Requires a **Basic attack card**. Increases Basic attack's damage by 1. If **DODGED**, then goes to next clockwise person (unless there are only two playing), skipping the original player if necessary until a defender is unable to play a DODGE card (ie it keeps going until it is BLOCKed, DISARMed or it gets through). You can counter charge someone currently charging you as a defence. This counts as a **BLOCK**, and you attack the original charger with your Basic attack card. Cannot be **PARRIED**.

• Disembowelling

May be played with a **Basic attack card**, or used just with the **default attack**. Damage +2 to whatever attack is made

• Flurry of Blows

May be played with a **Basic attack card**, or used just with the **default attack**. This special attack is equivalent to two attacks of the same kind, or three if you are using a **DAGGER**. Each of these attacks requires a defence cards to stop it. Playing one defence card only stops one attack (even if the defence card is a **DISARM**).

• Hook

Requires **AXE** or **TWO HANDED AXE**. If played after a defender's **BLOCK**, you get a **Default Attack** which the attacker may defend against. The defender is given the option of hooking first. If the defender does not hook, the attacker may hook. If played after defender **BLOCKS** (and if the defender does not then hook), cancels the **BLOCK**. If played as an attack, defender cannot play **BLOCK**. A **BLOCK** is defined as using a SHIELD, playing a **BLOCK** card, or countercharging a charger.

• Rend

Requires **TWO HANDED AXE** or **TWO HANDED SWORD**. You choose which item of the defender to damage - armour, weapon or shield. However, if the defender chooses to play **PARRY** after you announce your target, then their weapon is destroyed instead. If they play **BLOCK**, then their shield is destroyed. Destroyed items are discarded. Discarded armour is put in the normal discard pile. Discarded weapons or shields are put in the weapon discard pile until new ones are found on the battlefield with **Recovery**.

Card Descriptions

Armour cards

• SHIELD

You may block any one attack (ie one **default attack**, one **basic attack**, or one part of a **Flurry of Blows**, etc) with a SHIELD without playing a **BLOCK** card. If you block with the SHIELD, the SHIELD

becomes damaged (turn the card over). If a **DAMAGED SHIELD** is damaged again, it becomes destroyed (put it in the discard pile).

• MAIL

A stout hauberk of mail. Stops one point of damage from any attack except **THRUST** and reduces **Flurry of Blows** by 1 for each attack. If played, you may not put this card back in your hand - although it does count towards your hand limit. If damaged with a **Rend**, discard the card. You cannot discard this card if you have it in play unless you spend a turn **Recovering**, or it is **Rent**.

Basic Attack cards

• CHOP

Requires weapon other than **SPEAR**. Damage: +2

• CRITICAL HIT

Requires weapon. Damage: +3 Alternatively this card can be used to perform a **Rend** special attack with any weapon.

• KICK

Damage: 2 Can be used without a weapon. Does not add to a weapon's damage. Cannot be **DISARMed**. May not be used in a **Special Attack**.

• PUNCH

Damage: 1 Can be used without a weapon. Does not add to a weapon's damage. Cannot be **DISARMed**. May not be used in a **Special Attack**.

• SHIELD BASH

Requires shield. Damage: 3 You can't have a shield if you've got a two-handed weapon. Cannot be **DISARMed**. May not be used in a **Special Attack**.

• SLASH

Requires weapon. Damage: +1

• THRUST

Requires weapon other than **AXE** or **TWO HANDED AXE**. I don't like this phrasing. Damage: +1 Bypasses **MAIL** and is not reduced in damage.

Defence cards

• BLOCK

Requires SHIELD. Stops attack. May be cancelled by a **Special Attack: hook**

• DISARM

Requires SHIELD or weapon. Disarms **one handed weapons** (put them in the weapon discard pile) and counts as a defence against one handed weapon attacks. Cannot be used against **SHIELD BASH**, **KICK** or **PUNCH**.

DODGE

A defence against attack. Cannot be used against a **SPEAR** attack.

• PARRY

Requires weapon. A defence against attacks, except **CHARGE**.

Special cards

• SPECIAL ATTACK

You may use one of the special attacks associated with the weapon you are wielding. This card can be played out of turn as a defence if it is appropriate. You may not combine a **SPECIAL ATTACK** with **KICK**, **PUNCH** or **SHIELD BASH**.

• TRIP

Cancels any card at any time (including cards that require multiple defences and other **TRIP** cards) and gives you a **Basic** or **Default attack** that cannot be defended against except with another **TRIP** card. Can be played at any time, even in other player's turns - you still get the attack. Also note that if you cancel someone's defence card, the original attack gets through as well as the bonus attack.

Weapon cards

• SWORD

One handed Default attack: 2 damage Special attacks: **Charge**, **Flurry of Blows**, **Disembowelling**

• AXE

One handed Default attack: 2 damage Special attacks: **Hook**, **Charge**, **Flurry of Blows**, **Disembowelling** **Note:** AXE cannot **THRUST**

• DAGGER

One handed Default attack: 1 damage Special attacks: **Flurry of Blows**, **Disembowelling** **Note:** Increases **THRUST** damage by 1. **Flurry of Blows** gives you three attacks, rather than just two.

• SPEAR

One handed Default attack: 2 damage Special attacks: **Charge**, **Flurry of Blows**, **Disembowelling** **Note:** Cannot be **DODGED** by the defender. **SPEAR** cannot **CHOP**. Increases **THRUST** damage by 1.

• TWO HANDED AXE

Two handed Default attack: 3 damage Special attacks: **Hook**, **Charge**, **Rend**, **Disembowelling** **Notes:** TWO HANDED AXE cannot **THRUST**, **BLOCK** or **SHIELD BASH**.

• TWO HANDED SWORD

Two handed Default attack: 3 damage Special attacks: **Charge**, **Flurry of Blows**, **Rend**, **Disembowelling** **Note:** TWO HANDED SWORD cannot **BLOCK** or **SHIELD BASH**. Increases **SLASH** and **THRUST** damage by 1.