

MIDDLE-EARTH: DARK MINIONS™

This insert provides explanation rules and clarifications for use with all *Middle-earth Collectable Card Game™* (MECCG) products.

Note: For a copy of these rules in larger type with more examples send a request and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to ICE, P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA, 22903. Alternatively, visit our home page on the WWW (<http://www.ironcrown.com>).

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Minion Cards (*Clarification*)

MEDM includes minion cards—a new type of card with a new type of template—the background is iron with a “rusted” purple tint. In *MEDM*, minions are used as hazards called *agents*. An agent is a hazard that represents an individual that has been sent on a covert mission by the Dark-lord or one of his Dark Lieutenants. However, not all agents are minions. The two agents on the normal hazard template are “non-Minion agents:” *My Precious* and *Lobelia Sackville Baggins*.

The concept of minions used in a non-agent fashion will be introduced in *Middle-earth: The Lidless Eye™* (a stand-alone expansion due out in the Spring of 1997). In *The Lidless Eye*, minions will be used like characters, but each minion will be under the influence of one of Sauron’s Dark Lieutenants.

Permanent-events (*Clarification*)

If one of your companies splits into two or more companies, you may place any resource permanent-events that were on the original company (as a whole) with any of the resulting companies. Some events of this type must be discarded (as specified) when a company splits (e.g., *Fellowship*). You may not make an influence attempt on an item with a permanent event on it.

Placement of cards “off to the side” (*Clarification*)

Certain cards and effects require other cards be placed “off to the side” (for example, *Sacrifice of Form* from *Middle-earth: The Wizards™*). Cards placed off to the side are placed on the playing surface off to the side of the normal area of play. Such cards are kept with their host permanent-event that caused this effect. Any card placed off to the side absolutely cannot be targeted or otherwise affected by the game except by cards that specifically affect cards placed “off to the side.”

Cards placed off to the side are in play for the purposes of uniqueness. Unless stated otherwise, when a host permanent-event is removed from the playing surface, any cards placed off to the side under it are discarded.

Usually the host card will state some mechanic that affects the cards placed off to the side with it. Unless stated otherwise on its host card, a card placed off to the side will give its marshalling points to its owner. However, the cards typical with *Middle-earth: Dark Minions* are “taking prisoners” cards, and characters taken prisoner yield negative marshalling points.

THE UNDER-DEEPS

Note: Created by streams of molten rock and expanded by geothermal eruptions of super-hot gas, the Under-deeps are a result of a combination of natural and supernatural forces. The hand of Morgoth joined what was once a collection of countless, sundered cavern complexes. His greater servants used this maze of tunnels and chambers to travel surreptitiously throughout Endor. Although Endor changed during the Elder Days, the core of the Under-deeps survive. Though travel between the underground sites is now difficult, if not impossible, for all but the greatest (and luckiest) explorers. Blocked or twisting away from their original course, the Under-deeps seem broken. Junctions and strongholds seem lost. Many appear as simple caves or side passages, no longer resembling their past grandeur. Others lie hidden behind veils of rock. Nearly all are still there, though, awaiting discovery-as is their creator.

An Under-deeps site card has “Under-deeps” in the section that normally gives a site’s region, and its name contains “. . . -deeps” or “Under- . . .” An Under-deeps site is just like any other site with the following exceptions:

- Unlike other sites, each Under-deeps site is **not** considered to be in a region-instead it is located below another site, called the Under-deeps site’s *surface site*.
- Instead of a nearest Haven, each Under-deeps site lists all of its “Adjacent Sites.” Each Under-deeps site is adjacent to its one surface site and a number of other Under-deeps sites. The first adjacent site listed is always the Under-deeps site’s surface site.
- *Eagle-mounts* and *Gwaihir* cannot be used to move to or from an Under-deeps site.
- A company moving to and/or from an Under-deeps site has no site path. So, hazards may only be played keyed to the company’s new site.
- An environment card that changes site type (e.g., *Choking Shadows*, *Quiet Lands*, etc.) cannot be used to change the site type of an Under-deeps site.
- Normally, when you successfully play an item, faction, ally, or information at a site, the site card is tapped and one additional character may tap to play a minor item. At an Under-deeps site, you can play any item playable at the site instead of this minor item.

- You may not consider marshalling points associated with a company at an Under-deeps site for the purposes of calling the Free Council.

Example: Legolas taps and plays *Glamdring* (a major item) at The Under-grottos and the site taps. At this point, Gimili could only tap to play a minor item at a non-Under-deeps site. But The Under-grottos is an Under-deeps site, so Gimili can tap to play anything playable at The Under-grottos: a minor item, a major item, or a gold ring. He taps and plays a *Precious Gold-ring*.

Under-deep Site Movement

One of your companies that begins its turn at the surface site of an Under-deeps site can move normally *or* it can move to its adjacent Under-deeps site (i.e., the company moves to an Under-deeps site from its surface site). One of your companies that begins its turn at an Under-deeps site may only move to one of the adjacent sites listed on the Under-deeps site card.

Each adjacent site is followed by a number in parentheses-this number indicates how difficult it is to move from the Under-deeps site to the adjacent site. When an adjacent site is revealed by one of your companies whose site of origin is an Under-deeps site, you must make a roll (2D6). If the result is greater than or equal to the number in parentheses following the adjacent site as listed on its site of origin, the movement/hazard phase proceeds normally. Otherwise, the company returns to its site of origin and the movement/hazard phase proceeds as if the company had not moved.

Note: A company moving from a surface site to its Under-deeps site does not need to make a roll.

Example: A company that starts at Carn Dûm can move normally or it can move to The Iron-deeps-The Iron-deeps lists Carn Dûm as an adjacent site. Similarly, a company that starts at The Iron-deeps may attempt to move to any adjacent site listed: Carn Dûm (0), The Under-leas (6), or The Under-vaults (7). However, after committing to movement, the moving player must roll a 6 or better to successfully move to The Under-leas or a 7 or better to successfully move to The Under-vaults.

MANIFESTATIONS

Certain entities (e.g., the Balrog, Gollum, Lobelia, etc.) have several different *manifestations*, each represented by a different *MECCG* card.

- If one manifestation of such an entity is already in play, you may not play another manifestation of the same entity.
- If an attack from a manifestation is defeated, the manifestation is removed from play and you may not play any further manifestations of the same entity.

Exception: Different manifestations of the same unique Dragon may be in play at the same time.

Note: If one card says that it is the manifestation of another card, these restrictions apply to both cards.

Example: *Gollum* (the ally manifestation of Gollum) is in play with one of your characters. So, neither you nor your opponent can play *My Precious* (the agent manifestation of Gollum) until *Gollum* is discarded. If your *Gollum* is eliminated, *My Precious* and your opponent's *Gollum* (if any) may never be played.

TAKING PRISONERS

Certain hazard permanent-events cause a character to be taken prisoner-these are called hazard hosts. A character taken prisoner immediately leaves his original company and is placed under its hazard host "off to the side". Additionally, the player playing the hazard host must take a site card from his location deck and place it with the hazard host-this is called the rescue site. Playing a rescue site is governed by the following rules.

1. Any restrictions listed on the hazard host must be observed (e.g., it must be a Ruins & Lairs, must have an Orc automatic-attack, etc.).

2. If the hazard host is played on a character moving with region movement, the rescue site must be a site located in a region in which the character was moving **or** in a region adjacent to a region in which the character was moving.
3. If the hazard host is played on a character moving with starter movement, the rescue site must be located in the region containing the site of origin or the new site.
4. If the hazard host is played on a character not moving, the rescue site must be located in the same region as the character's site.
5. If the hazard host is played on a character moving to a new site that is an adjacent site of an Under-deeps site, the rescue site can be that Under-deeps site.
6. If a rescue site is not available within these rules, the hazard host cannot be played!
7. When removed from the play surface, rescue sites always return to the location deck.

When taken prisoner, a character cannot take any actions (including healing or untapping) and cannot be affected by any cards except for those that specifically affect characters taken prisoner. A character taken prisoner is not controlled (i.e., does not use any influence), and all of his followers revert to general influence (which must be legally reconciled during his player's next organization phase). Any items, allies, or events controlled by a character are discarded when the character is taken prisoner unless the hazard host states otherwise. As an exception, a ring born by an imprisoned character stays with the character. While a prisoner, a character yields negative character marshalling points equal to the marshalling points he normally would give. If eliminated while imprisoned, the character yields these negative character marshalling points permanently (place the character's card in your marshalling point pile).

Rescue and the Rescue-attack

Hazard hosts that cause a character to be taken prisoner require a company controlled by the player of the imprisoned character to rescue the character in order to return him to a normal status of play. Alternatively, if the hazard host is discarded by a non-rescue mechanism (e.g., by *Marvels Told*), the character forms his own company at the rescue site. At any point outside of the initial attack or conditions by which a hazard host is played, the hazard host is discarded if there are no imprisoned characters are under it. Whenever, the hazard host is discarded, the rescue site always returns to the location deck. To rescue a character, the company must be at the rescue site during the site phase and must face any automatic-attacks at the site as normal. The site can be tapped or untapped. The company must next face any rescue-attacks at the site. Rescue-attacks are not considered automatic-attacks. Following the rescue-attack, an untapped character in the rescuing company can tap, and all characters taken prisoner under the hazard host immediately join the company under general influence (which must be legally reconciled during the player's next organization phase)—the rescue attempt is successful. The company's site then taps (if untapped), and one minor item may be played with an untapped member of the rescuing company.

Note: If he has one available, a player must use a site from his own location deck to rescue imprisoned characters. If he does not have the site or if the site is in his discard pile, the copy with the hazard host can be used to show the rescuing company's movement (if the rescue attempt is successful, the site would remain in play until the company leaves the site). In this case the site is not available for the rescuing player to use for any purpose (other than to rescue prisoners and play one minor item) until the company leaves the site and his play deck is exhausted.

AGENTS

An agent has the same attributes as a character: race, skills, direct influence, prowess, body, mind, marshalling points, and special abilities. During play, each agent must be in one of the following states: face-down and untapped, face-down and tapped, face-up and untapped, face-up and tapped, or face-up and wounded.

An agent can be thought of as a *hazard* that acts as a creature with the following special effects:

- It normally remains in play until it is eliminated.
- If using the minimum number of creatures requirement (i.e., in the Council of Lórien tournament rules) for a starting play deck, each agent only counts as half a creature.
- The total of the mind attributes of all of your agents in your play deck and sideboard may not exceed 36.

An agent is always located at a site. Once an agent has been revealed *or* has moved to a site that is not one of its home sites, one of your site cards must be used for this purpose. A face-up agent's site card must always be face-up. Agents move and operate alone (i.e., they do not move and operate in "companies"). Each agent is unique—all normal rules apply. If a specific agent is in play face-up and a second, identical agent is turned face-up (i.e., it is revealed), the second agent is immediately discarded.

Untapping an Agent

Each of your agents untaps during your untap phase.

Playing an Agent

To play an agent, place it face-down (and untapped). The agent is assumed to be at any one of its home sites (no site card is required).

Agent Actions

Each of your agents who was already in play at the beginning of your opponent's turn may take one and only one of the following actions each turn.

- A tapped or untapped agent may *move* to a non-Haven, non-Under-deeps site in the same region or in an adjacent region (see below). The agent taps if not already tapped.
- An agent may *return to its home site* (i.e., remove all of the site cards on the agent).
- An agent may tap to *make certain creatures playable* at its current site (see below).
- A wounded agent may *heal* (i.e., move from wounded status to tapped status).
- A tapped agent may *untap* (i.e., move from tapped status to untapped status).
[NOTE: This rule does not appear in the rules insert with the booster packs. This rule is correct and should be considered as though it were printed in the rules insert.]
- An untapped, face-up agent may be *turned face-down* along with its site card.

Performing any one of these actions with an agent counts as one against the hazard limit. These actions may only be taken during your opponent's movement/hazard phase.

Note: Certain cards allow an agent to take more than one action during a given turn.

Moving an Agent (*Agent Action*)

When one of your agents moves, tap it and place its new site card on top of the agent and any other site cards already on the agent (face-up if the agent is face-up, face-down if the agent is face-down). If the agent is face-up, return to your location deck all site cards other than the new site card. Thus, the top site card on an agent indicates its current site.

Alternatively, you may remove the top site card on a face-down agent (i.e., it moves back to its previous site).

Note: If Starter Rules are being used *and/or* you are not using region movement, agents may not move.

Revealing an Agent

You may turn any of your face-down agents face-up (i.e., reveal them) at any time during your opponent's movement/hazard phase. This doesn't count as an agent action as outlined above **and** it doesn't count against the hazard limit. Alternatively, you must reveal an agent when it attacks, when it makes an influence attempt, or when certain cards are played.

Note: Certain hazard cards specify that an agent must tap for the card to take effect. A face-down agent that taps in this fashion must be revealed (i.e., turned face-up).

If one of your agents is revealed before it has moved, you must immediately choose which home site it is at-place the appropriate site card with the agent. If you do not have such a site card in your location deck, discard the agent at the end of the current turn.

If one of your agents is revealed after it has moved, the first site card that was played must be one of its home sites **or** it must be in the same region as one of the agent's home sites **or** it must be in a region adjacent to a region that contains one of the agent's home sites. Any site card other than the first site card must be in the same region as the previous site placed on the agent **or** it must be in a region adjacent to the region that contains the previous site placed on the agent.

If one of your agent's series of sites indicating its travel is illegal, the agent has no effect. In addition, it is immediately discarded and any site cards associated with the agent are returned to your location deck.

When one of your agents and its site cards are revealed, all site cards other than the agent's current site card are returned to your location deck (after verifying that the path of movement was legal).

Playing Creatures at an Agent's Site (*Agent Action*)

If one of your agents and one of your opponent's companies are both at the same Ruins & Lairs (♠), Shadow-hold (♣), or Dark-hold (♠), you may tap the agent and then attack that company with any non-unique hazard creatures (regardless of what they are keyed to) of the same creature type as the site's automatic-attack.

If one of your agents and one of your opponent's companies are both at the agent's home site, you may tap the agent and then attack that company with certain hazard creatures (regardless of what they are keyed to) based upon the site type:

- You may play Men, Dwarves, Elves, Dnedain, and Hobbits at Free-Holds (♠).
- You may play Orcs, Nazgûl, Men, Dwarves, Elves, Dnedain, and Hobbits at Border-Holds (♠).
- You may play Orcs, Nazgûl, and Trolls at Ruins & Lairs (♠).
- You may play Orcs, Nazgûl, Undead, and Trolls at Shadow-Holds (♣).
- You may play Orcs, Nazgûl, and Trolls at Dark-Holds (♠).

In either case, if a creature is played in this manner, the agent is revealed (if it was not already revealed).

Attacking With an Agent

During your opponent's site phase, each of your agents may attack a company if the following conditions are met:

- The agent is at the same site as the company.
- The company decides to enter the site.

This attack is declared and enacted at the start of the site phase immediately following any automatic-attack. If face-down, turn the agent face-up.

Note: Certain cards (e.g., Cunning Foes, To Get You Away, etc.) allow an agent at a company's new site to attack a company during the movement/hazard phase.

Resolving Combat With an Agent

When one of your agents attacks it is considered to be the *attacker* and it has one strike unless modified. Combat with an agent is handled like any other combat with the following exceptions:

- The prowess for each of the agent's strikes is modified by a roll (2D6)-a separate roll is made for each strike.
- A *wounded* agent's prowess is modified by -2.
- If the agent is *face-down* when the attack is declared, one of the following applies:
 - If at his home site, his prowess is modified by +5 for that attack **and** his body is modified by +1 **and** the attacker chooses defending characters.
 - If *not* at his home site, his prowess is modified by +2 for that attack.
If a face-down agent attacks as the result of the play of a card, the agent is considered to be face-down when the attack is declared.
- If the agent is *face-up at his home site* when the attack is declared, his prowess is modified by +2 for that attack **and** his body is modified by +1.
- After the combat, the agent remains in play **and** it must be face-up and tapped *or* face-up and wounded.

Note: Agents are **not** characters—you may not play resource cards to modify an agent's prowess (e.g., a Risky Blow will not affect an agent's prowess). Hazard cards affect an agent attack normally.

Example: During your opponent's movement/hazard phase (MH-phase), you play Gisulf, counting as one against your hazard limit. He is placed face-down and is considered to start at any of his home sites: Woodmen-town, Lake-town, or Dale (your choice whenever he is initially revealed). Gisulf may not take an action this turn—he was just played. However, if one of your opponent's companies were to move to one of Gisulf's home sites this turn, Gisulf could attack it during its site phase.

During your opponent's next MH-phase, his main company moves to Lórien. You decide to move Gisulf to a site in the Anduin Vales so that he is closer to more sites reachable from Lórien. He can do this because Woodmen-town is in Western Mirkwood, which is adjacent to Anduin Vales. One of your own company's is at Eagle's Eyrie and Framsburg is in your discard pile, so those cards are not available for Gisulf to use. Thus, Gisulf can only move to Gladden Fields or Beorn's House. You move him to Gladden Fields (counts one against the hazard limit), tapping him and placing that site card (his current site) face-down on top of Gisulf. Maybe your opponent will try to get a ring next turn.

Gisulf untaps during your untap phase. During your opponent's next MH-phase, his main company reveals that it is moving to Goblin-gate. Since Goblin-gate is in High Pass and High Pass is adjacent to Anduin Vales, you move Gisulf to Goblin-gate—tapping him and placing your Goblin-gate site card (his current site) face-down on top of him.

At this point Gisulf is at the company's new site and you could play certain hazard cards: e.g., *Seek Without Success* (returns the company to its site of origin). Unfortunately, you don't have any of these cards in your hand.

During the site phase, the company enters Goblin-gate and faces the automatic-attack. Then, you decide to attack them with Gisulf. He is turned face-up and the site cards on Gisulf are revealed and checked. He traveled from Woodmen-town (his chosen starting home site) in Western Mirkwood to Gladden Fields in Anduin Vales to Goblin-gate in High Pass. Each of these regions is adjacent to the previous one played, so Gisulf moved legally. The Gladden Fields site card is returned to your location deck and Goblin-gate is left face-up with Gisulf.

Gisulf's prowess for this attack is 7 (5 normal, +2 because he was face-down when the attack was declared). Elladan is untapped and is in the target company, so your opponent chooses him to take the attack. Elladan's prowess is 5 (his normal prowess of 5 because he decides to tap). You (Gisulf) roll an eight for a total of 15, while your opponent rolls a six for a total of 11—Elladan is wounded.

Marshalling Points from Agents

Only your opponent can receive marshalling points by defeating an agent that you played. If you defeat an agent that you played, it is removed from the game and no one receives its marshalling points. Marshalling points from defeating an agent count as kill points **not** as character points.

Influencing With an Agent

During your opponent's movement/hazard phase, certain cards and special abilities allow your agents to attempt to influence allies, factions, followers, and characters. After an influence attempt, the agent remains face-up and in play.

To influence an ally, follower, or character, the agent must be at the new site for the target *or* at the target's current site if the company did not move. To influence a faction, the agent must be at the site at which the faction is playable.

To attempt to influence in this manner, your agent must make an influence check as outlined in section 9 of the Standard Rules. However, the following exceptions apply:

- Your agent's unused direct influence and any other modifications are used (i.e., the agent is doing the influencing, not a character).
- If your agent is *at his home site* his direct influence is modified by +2.
- You can't use resources cards to help the attempt (e.g., you may **not** reveal an identical resource card, you may not use a *Muster*, etc.).
- If the target *character* (or *follower*) has the same home site as the agent, treat the character's (or follower's) mind attribute as zero *and* your agent's roll is modified by +2.
- If the target *ally* is playable at the agent's home site, treat the ally's mind attribute as zero *and* your agent's roll is modified by +2.
- If the target *faction* is playable at the agent's home site, treat the number required to bring the faction into play as zero *and* your agent's roll is modified by +2.

CREATURES AS AUTOMATIC-ATTACKS

Any hazard creature you play as an automatic-attack is discarded if defeated-it is not placed in your opponent's marshalling point pile.

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