

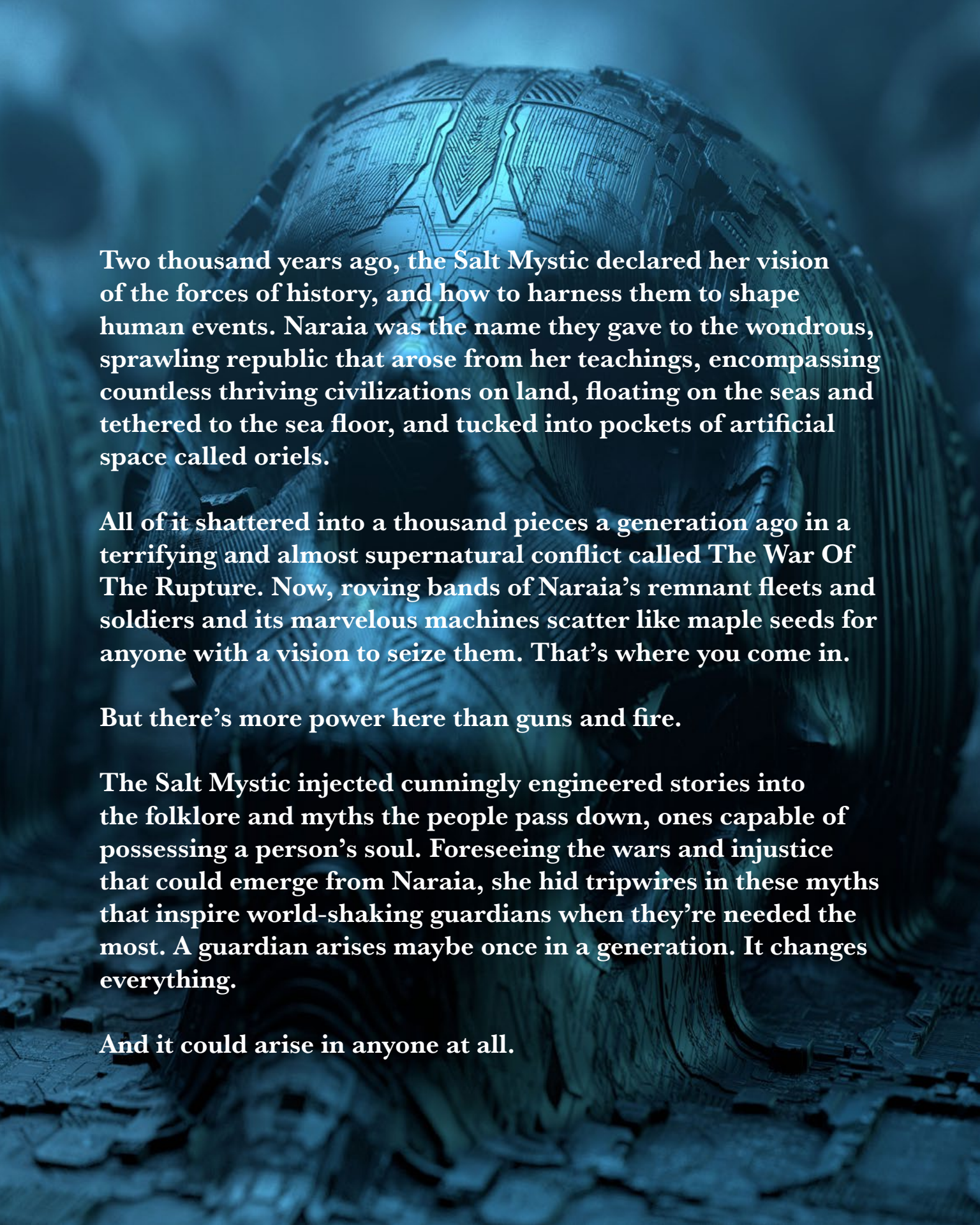
# Salt Mystic

The Terrain-based Trading Card Wargame



## Basic Rules





Two thousand years ago, the Salt Mystic declared her vision of the forces of history, and how to harness them to shape human events. Naraia was the name they gave to the wondrous, sprawling republic that arose from her teachings, encompassing countless thriving civilizations on land, floating on the seas and tethered to the sea floor, and tucked into pockets of artificial space called oriels.

All of it shattered into a thousand pieces a generation ago in a terrifying and almost supernatural conflict called The War Of The Rupture. Now, roving bands of Naraia's remnant fleets and soldiers and its marvelous machines scatter like maple seeds for anyone with a vision to seize them. That's where you come in.

But there's more power here than guns and fire.

The Salt Mystic injected cunningly engineered stories into the folklore and myths the people pass down, ones capable of possessing a person's soul. Foreseeing the wars and injustice that could emerge from Naraia, she hid tripwires in these myths that inspire world-shaking guardians when they're needed the most. A guardian arises maybe once in a generation. It changes everything.

And it could arise in anyone at all.



# Salt Mystic

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**The terrain-based trading card wargame.**

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**Salt Mystic** is a thrilling science fiction-themed tabletop game based on terrain and trading cards, where the placement and orientation of the cards drive gameplay.

Climb into a world whose armies clash in monstrous battles of shrieking guided tornadoes, tanks the size of cities, vehicles that climb up vertical walls, and men made of poisonous fog! Gunslingers duel with ball lightning in battles fought not only on the battlefield, but in the very stories they tell!

This set of Basic Rules clearly explains the objectives, setup and gameplay for both the classic two-player game as well as for solo play. Two Salt Mystic War Marshal decks are required in order to play either format, as described herein. Purchasing options for these decks and other branded merchandise, as well as the richly illustrated expansion and lore introduction book, **Salt Mystic Core Rules And Sourcebook** can be found at: [www.grailrunner.com/SaltMystic](http://www.grailrunner.com/SaltMystic).



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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **SALT MYSTIC**, a science fiction setting with a cowboy flair, engineered from the ground-up to form an immersive storytelling engine.

The people, machines, history, places, and core concepts that comprise the **SALT MYSTIC** world were developed to form an expansive storytelling framework. You'll learn about oriel gateways leading to every conceivable type of place, and of a long history going back thousands of years peopled with rogues, lunatics, and demagogues. They've had incredible technology here for a very long time, and they've forgotten much of it. With this integrated set of principles and material at hand, there is essentially no limit to the types of stories that can happen here. And that's very much the point.

The game itself is a narrative-driven skirmish game played on a 4ft by 4ft section of tabletop with custom trading cards, terrain elements, and six-sided dice. The placement and orientation of the cards determine important mechanics in gameplay, modifying attacks, movements, and damage. In fact, terrain is a key element of the game, and victory is impossible without mastering it.

The cards represent the **CHARACTERS**, their **VEHICLES** and powerful **VEHICLE ATTACHMENTS** which are deployed on the tabletop battlefield. Special cards called **BREAKERS** represent critical momentum-changing conditions which you can think of as story elements. Like many trading card games though, you draw these in hands and turns, representing the fog of war and surprising setbacks or opportunities.





The final remaining card type is called GUARDIAN ARISES, of which there are three. Although you have wide liberty to structure your battle deck as you see fit, and deckbuilding is a key strategic factor in the game, all three GUARDIAN ARISES cards must appear in your deck. Playing all three of these cards triggers a minor Guardian within your faction which substantially swings the tide of battle in your favor. It doesn't guarantee victory, but it really... really...helps.

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

Each faction is led by their respective War Marshal, and you will command one of them. You win a game of SALT MYSTIC by defeating your opponent's War Marshal, which is not nearly as straightforward as you might think.

It will require more of you than mad, screaming charges into combat. You'll learn quickly that clever positioning of your forces, timely triggering of your special ability, and leveraging terrain together forge the path to victory.

## THE FACTIONS

Following the War Of The Rupture, remnants of the old society split into hundreds of powerful factions. One of the two largest is Alson, called The Mountain City. Karak is a War Marshal for the mountains. The other spans the twin cities of Mevin and Tobin, deep in the dry Salt Flats and built on top of the very place where the Salt Mystic had her visions. Segmond is a War Marshal for the Salt Flats.

### The Mountains



### The Salt Flats



## Karak: Hammer Of The Red Witch



The Red Witch are a race of incredibly violent people, whose very language pictures the world and everything in it in terms of the pain or destruction those things can cause. Karak is a War Marshal for the mountain city of Alson, but has a long and complicated history with the fearsome Red Witch people.

## Segmond: The Loreblade



Segmond is one of the last living veterans of the outbreak of the War Of The Rupture. He understands the power of stories, and collects myth and folklore to dissect for the almost supernatural enchantments the Salt Mystic buried in them. Because of this, he steers mighty armies like sailing ships.

News on future factions, technology,  
and War Marshals at  
[www.grailrunner.com/SaltMystic](http://www.grailrunner.com/SaltMystic)



# Game Rules





# GAME RULES

1 - 2 players

Time



Ages 12+



30 minutes

Salt Mystic is a competitive tabletop game played with special cards, six-sided dice, and a measuring device such as a ruler or measuring tape. It can be played solo or with two players, and a typical game lasts about a half hour, though it's possible for games to last as long as an hour should the players be particularly nasty to each other.

You command your chosen faction's War Marshal, and your objective is to defeat your opponent's War Marshal.

## 1. What you will need:

### 1.1. Two opposing War Marshal card decks

Full War Marshal decks are available for sale at [www.grailrunner.com/SaltMystic](http://www.grailrunner.com/SaltMystic), and two Volume One starter decks are included in the full **Core Rules And Sourcebook**. A game of Salt Mystic requires two opposing 30-card selections from War Marshal decks, each referred to herein as a “battle deck”.

### 1.2. Something to represent your chosen terrain elements

Anything at all will do as long as both players agree up front on what is represented. Some options are included in this rulebook for printout or copying and can also be downloaded at the website above. Refer to the terrain rules for options and impact on gameplay.

### 1.3. A handful of six-sided dice and a ruler or measuring tape marked in inches

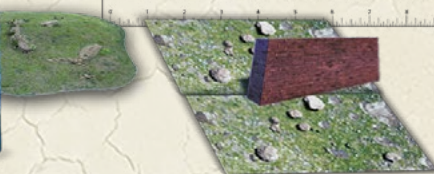
The amount of dice needed will vary from game to game, but a typical game will use less than ten dice. They're used for markers on the table as well as determining outcomes, so a dice app on your phone or computer can be used if you also plan to use pen & paper for tracking purposes. Dice cards and a ruler are also included in this rulebook for printout or copying.

### 1.4. A flat surface, about 4 feet by 4 feet square

A tabletop or floor are fine. The important point is that both players agree on the borders.

### 1.5 (Optional) A story hook for the game

While you're welcome to play a straightforward game of Salt Mystic just to bash each other, the whole point here is to tell immersive, engaging stories that matter. Example story hooks are included in this book, but feel free to explore the richer experience of Salt Mystic by agreeing up front on what is happening and what's at stake. Refer to the **What Now** section of this book for more avenues to immerse yourself in the world of the Salt Mystic!





## 2. Setting up for a game:



Each player assembles a 30-card battle deck from their chosen faction's available cards for game play. Recommended starter decks are included in this book.

Only Characters can attack, but Vehicles and Vehicle Attachments move them faster and arm them with terrible might. Breakers can disrupt and escalate, though every Breaker in your deck is one less fighter in play.

**Your battle deck must include the faction's War Marshal and a single copy of each of the three Guardian Arises cards. After that, it's raw strategy.**



Guardian Arises cards one, two and three

War Marshals are identified by firebirds

### 2.1.1 Character cards

Any card with a faction's sigil may not be used in an opposing faction's battle deck. That means unless a Character card has no sigil, it may NOT be used with the opposing War Marshal.

Sigil examples:  
**The Mountains**



**OR**

**The Salt Flats**



**Character Cards represent the people under your command.**

This is a character known as Bloodmonkey, who is a Watchman under the Salt Flats faction led by Segmond.

**Important stats for each Character are shown on the parchment, as well as flavor text and any gameplay mechanics unique to the Character.**

Bloodmonkey has Speed 6, so he can move up to 6 inches per turn. His Defense stat is 6, which will determine outcomes when he's attacked.

His weapon is a carbine, which has a range of 2 inches, and his Expertise stat of +4 will be used when he makes attacks.

The gameplay mechanics described on the card only apply while he's deployed.

**The circular gun sight shape around Character images is called its "arc", and represents the Character physically on the tabletop. Arcs determine ranges, facing directions, and line of sight.**



## 2.1.2 Vehicle cards

Characters can man Vehicles to move faster, to move in unique ways, and to allow for Vehicle Attachments (which enable more powerful attacks).



**Vehicles are identified as such below the title of the card.**

This is a Mog Corvette, a type of Vehicle able to scale up vertical walls.

**Important stats for the Vehicle are listed at the bottom of the respective cards, and these stats override any stats listed on cards of Characters manning the Vehicles.**

Any character manning this Mog Corvette may move up to 9 inches per turn no matter what their own Speed stat may say. Outcomes of attacks made on a Character manning this Vehicle will be determined using a Defense of 1, ignoring the Character's Defense stat. Attacks and outcomes will be explained later in the **Gameplay** section of the rules.

## 2.1.3 Vehicle Attachment cards

A manned Vehicle can be upgraded with a single Vehicle Attachment unless otherwise specified.



**Vehicle Attachments are identified as such below the title of the card.**

This is a Black Fire Cannon, which can be attached to any manned Vehicle unless otherwise specified.

**Any stats or stat modifiers listed at the bottom of Vehicle Attachment cards override any stats listed on the respective Vehicle or its manning Character.**

This Black Fire Cannon has a range of 4 inches when it's used to make attacks. Special rules apply after an unsuccessful attack, which is explained in the rules text on the card's parchment.

## 2.1.4 Breaker cards

Breaker cards represent major developments or intelligence, like story elements you are able to play each turn to affect gameplay.



**Breakers are identified as such below the title of the card.**

This is a Breaker called "Artifacts Of The Lore", which requires your opponent to draw a deployed Character back into their deck and off the battlefield when played.

**Read the rules text carefully on Breaker cards, as they can dramatically swing the battle in your favor, or utterly destroy your strategy.**

In the case of this particular example Breaker card, it's terribly helpful to handicap your opponent by forcing them to remove one of their Characters from the field and thus lose that position. Although they may deploy it again, they'll first have to draw it from the shuffled deck and start in the Deployment Zone again. Your opponent won't thank you for that!



# 2

**Agree on the perimeter of the battlefield and place at least two pieces of terrain elements somewhere within.**

Terrain is crucial to gameplay and impacts movement as well as combat outcomes. It isn't possible to win the game without taking advantage of modifiers such as those resulting from elevation, rough ground, or obstructions. Refer to page 61 for terrain modifiers.

**Players sit on opposite sides of the battlefield, and their respective edges are called the player's Deployment Zone. Terrain can be placed anywhere, but generally Deployment Zones are best kept clear for at least 5 inches from edge.**

Terrain elements must be classified as either Elevation, Rough Ground, or Obstruction in order to impact gameplay. Both players must agree on the classifications and gameplay impact before the game begins. If an element is included which is to be considered non-traversable, this should be agreed by both players up front. While papercraft terrain options are included in this book, feel free to get creative and 3-dimensional!

## 2.2.1 Elevation

**Attack bonuses are granted when you attack from elevation, meaning it's easier to hit your target.**

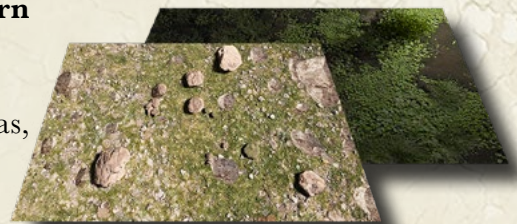
Towers, large hills or ruins or tall statues, or buildings are considered elevation. Consider aquarium pieces, little statues lying around your house, or papercraft options widely available on the internet. Anything representing a steep hill is the simplest option, because no special Vehicle is required to ascend them. Worry less about matching scale, and focus on representing your story.



## 2.2.2 Rough Ground

**The amount by which a card can move in a given turn is reduced by half through rough ground**

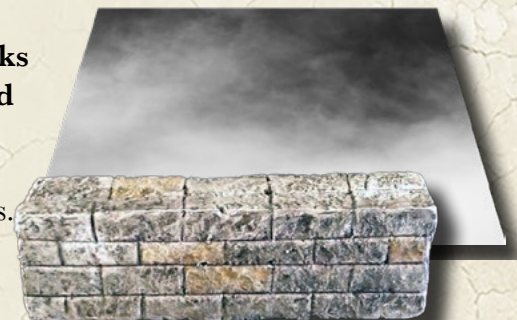
Rough ground includes rocky or rubble-strewn areas, wetlands or swampy ground. Consider printouts of aerial views of such places as an easy representation.



## 2.2.3 Obstruction

**Obstructions provide critical shields against attacks by blocking line of sight, breaking up the battlefield**

Walls, smaller ruins, piles of rubble or rocks, trees or other foliage, or even fog can be classified as obstructions. There are some very deadly and long range weapons in this game, against which you will need convenient places to gain cover.





## Optional scenarios for story hooks

Some sample scenarios for your games are included in the table below. Roll a die to decide which you will use for a given game, or just pick one. These are entirely optional, and any scenario at all (or no scenario) is okay. These are designed to encourage particular play styles.

### Scenario 1: Risen

**With rumors of a risen Guardian in the city nearby, armies form in the fields to either repel invaders or contain whatever forces gather here in case it's true.**

Roll for or choose the defending player, who will select and place the hills and towers (at least 6 inches away from either Deployment Zone). The invading player selects and places rocky ground anywhere.

#### Terrain:

- 2 - 3 hills (elevation)
- 1 - 2 towers (elevation, obstruction)
- 1 - 3 rocky ground (rough ground)

### Scenario 2: Burning Fountains

**The Fountain City is burning, with priceless knowledge going up in flames. Each side believes the other is responsible. There is an invaluable War Recorder in the Central Library who is trapped.**

Evenly distribute buildings, towers, and walls across battlefield. Identify one building as the Central Library. A player may draw an extra 2 cards (max 9 in hand) as long as ONLY their Characters are within 4 inches of the Central Library.

#### Terrain:

- 3 - 5 buildings (elevation, obstruction)
- 1 - 3 towers (elevation, obstruction)
- 1 - 3 walls (obstruction)

### Scenario 3: Swamp Road

**A madman anarchist who claims to be able to sabotage oriel gateways is hiding in the swamp. Each side needs to get to him first, just in case he isn't crazy.**

Place the wetlands in columns parallel to the sides of the battlefield to form a clear roadway between the two Deployment Zones, with optional tower(s) overlooking the road for sniping. Each player places an equal number of walls as desired.

#### Terrain:

- 4 or 6 wetlands (rough ground)
- 2 or 4 walls (obstruction)
- optional:  
1 - 2 towers (elevation, obstruction)



If you're intimidated by all this and just want to learn the game and smash stuff, then place a hill and a wall somewhere in the center of the table and have at it!

### Scenario 4: Black Labyrinth

**Someone's running a Questforged nursery in the abandoned Trapmaster school labyrinth. Both factions intend to stop it, but the victor wins the grown beasts.**

Form a simple maze from the walls, with corridors at least card-width. Roll and place a die for each wall. Any manned ramship may remove a wall by ramming from a distance in inches equal to or greater than twice the die amount.

#### Terrain:

- 6 - 8 walls (obstruction)
- 2 or 4 high walls (obstruction and elevation)

### Scenario 5: Fog And Tombs

**A previously unknown oriel has been discovered, locked and chained in the Great Valley Cemetery, and it's being opened. Everyone wants whatever secrets lie inside.**

Evenly distribute the tombs, hills, and fog across the battlefield, keeping 6 inches of each Deployment Zone clear. Place statues near center of battlefield.

#### Terrain:

- 5 - 8 mausoleums (obstructions)
- 2 - 4 hills (elevation)
- 1 - 2 statues (elevation, obstruction)
- 0 - 2 fog (obstruction)

### Scenario 6: Wraithdiver

**It's raining in the Stonewisp Wastelands, and rumors tell of an awakening Psycholith with secrets about the Salt Mystic's Guardian myth.**

Evenly distribute the rocky ground and cliffs. Place dice equidistant from each other across the center of the battlefield. For each Character approaching within 2 inches of a die, opponent rolls die and covers with their hand, trapping Character until controlling player correctly guesses.

#### Terrain:

- 2 or 4 rocky ground (rough ground)
- 3 - 6 cliffs (elevation, obstruction)
- 4 - 6 dice (representing stonewisps)



### 3. Key concept: Deployment

Deployment is a formal keyword in Salt Mystic, and it means to put a card into play on the battlefield, which is done in a precise way depending on the type of card.



A Character card is **deployed** by placing it on the battlefield with its bottom edge flush with the controlling player's table edge (unless a card specifies otherwise).

#### 3.1 Attachment

When deploying, place Vehicle or applicable Breaker cards beneath Character cards to attach them, with names from the bottoms of those cards visible. Vehicles may receive Attachments. Attachments from your hand may only occur in the Deployment Zone.

#### 3.2 Detachment

You may detach Vehicles & Attachments on the battlefield, converting them into obstructions. You may not reattach outside of the Deployment Zone. If you detach a Breaker card, it is discarded from the game.

In the examples above:

Bloodmonkey is deployed here on foot, so his Speed is 6 as the card states (meaning he can move up to 6 inches per turn).

Fargo is deployed here manning a Mog (notice the card beneath him). His Speed and Defense are overridden by the stats visible on the lower card while he remains onboard.

Segmond is shown manning a Dirt Wraith, to which he has attached a Rail Cannon. His Speed is overridden by the Vehicle, but modified by the Attachment ( $7 - 2 = 5$ ).





## 4. Key concept: Activation

Activation in Salt Mystic entails both the movement and combat action available to each Character once per turn. This is how the battle will play out.

### 4.1 Movement

Rotate the card in place, with its top edge facing the direction you wish to move and slide the card up to a maximum of its current **SPEED** (accounting for any Vehicle or Vehicle Attachment modifiers, as well as terrain effects). At the end of movement, you may rotate the card to any orientation you prefer based on conditions. For all purposes, Character card top edges represent the Character's front-facing direction.

**Movement modifier:** Movement reduced by half (rounded down) through Rough Ground



### 4.2 Combat action:

1. Requires unobstructed line of sight from upper half of attacker's arc to anywhere on target's visible arc.

2. Both arcs must be within the attacking weapon's **RANGE**.

3. Roll a single die as your **Attack Roll**

### Combat action modifiers:

\* Attack roll +1 if hit from behind (lower half of victim's arc)

\* Attack roll +2 if attacking from elevation

\* Attack roll -3 if target within 1 inch of wall or obstruction (as measured from anywhere on its arc.

### Combat action resolution:

A Character or Vehicle is removed from play if  
 $\text{ATTACK ROLL} + \text{MODIFIERS} + \text{EXPERTISE}$  equals or exceeds  
 $\text{TARGET'S DEFENSE} + \text{MODIFIERS}$





## 5. Gameplay

### 5.1. Deploy War Marshals

Each player deploys their War Marshal anywhere along Deployment Zones, then shuffles their battle decks. Think about the terrain and where your opponent can move.

### 5.2. Draw 7-card hands

Each player draws 7 cards, concealing the faces from their opponent. Roll to see who goes first.

### 5.3. Attack!

Each turn consists of three steps:

#### 1. Draw

Draw a card from your face-down battle deck (except for your first turn).

#### 2. Play

Play all the cards you choose from your hand, including deployments, attachments, and Breaker Cards

#### 3. Activation

Perform movement and combat actions, in turn, for each deployed Character

Players alternate turns until a War Marshal is defeated or left with no available moves. Generally, these people are wily enough to escape to fight another day. Don't ever think that's the last you've seen of any of them!

## 6. Considerations

### 6.1. Guardian Arises

Once per turn, if available, a player may play a **Guardian Arises** card by placing the card face-up and announcing so. The cost of doing this is to forfeit all combat actions that turn.

As described on the cards, when all three **Guardian Arises** cards are played (in a stack), that player may activate the card rules and raise a minor Guardian. Locate the next Character in the battle deck and place it atop the stack (shuffling afterwards), then advance from the Deployment Zone as normal. All opposing Characters are re-shuffled into the opponent's deck, discarding



Characters man Vehicles and arm their Attachments as they become available, representing the fog of war. Breaker cards are the surprise events and game-changing pieces of information you can release as they become available.

any Vehicles or Vehicle Attachments which they'd been manning.

Subsequently, all attack rolls by the controlling player are +1 until their minor Guardian is defeated.





## 6.2. Character arcs

A Character's arc represents that person physically on the table, so no arcs may overlap unless card text specifies otherwise.

Arcs bear markings to indicate the direction the person is facing (the top card edge) and the lateral sides (left and right edges). The lower half of arcs represents the direction behind the Character. This makes it important to stay aware of orientation at the end of movement. Attacks are made only within the upper half of arcs.

Front

Rear



Allowable  
combat  
actions and  
direction of  
movement

Attack From  
Behind bonus if  
targeted along  
red arc

## 6.3. Combat action outcomes

Attack roll and modifier results simulate probabilities and not actual physical damage, and so are not cumulative. At the end of a turn, any attack roll results which did not result in a defeat disappear. Neither may any residual attack roll amounts from a given attack be applied to a second target unless card text specifies otherwise.

## 6.4. Vehicle damage

When targeting a Character manning a Vehicle, determine range, line of sight, and whether it's an attack from behind using the target Character's arc as described in the **Activation** section of these rules. However, for a successful attack roll, the Vehicle will receive damage first before the Character (and will be removed from the game if destroyed along with any Attachments).

### Example:

Haplong of the Salt Flats faction is manning a Ramship, so its Defense stat overrides his personal stats and is therefore 6.

Karak has moved to within range of his carbine and rolls a 6 with no modifiers.

Attack Roll (6) + Expertise (3) = 9

Since the attack is greater than the Defense of 6, the Vehicle is destroyed and removed from the game. However, there are still 3 points of the roll left ( $9 - 6 = 3$ ). This remainder is compared to Haplong's personal Defense stat now that he's no longer manning the Ramship.

Since his personal Defense of 4 is greater than 3, he escapes this time.





## 7. Salt Mystic solo play

One obvious way to play Salt Mystic solo is to rotate the battlefield ninety degrees and play both sides as aggressively as possible. That mode is called **The Schizoid Beast**, and it can produce exciting “there I was!” type stories and be a fantastic way to learn the rules and improve your game.

But there are algorithms and thumbrules in the rules of this section engineered to bring unpredictability, urgency and the fog of war to your tabletop to fulfill and enrich your narrative wargaming experience.

We call this set of rules **Wolfpack Mode**.

### 7.1 Wolfpack Mode overview

In Wolfpack Mode, you’re playing against an imaginary player who controls the opposing faction, and whose moves are determined by

algorithms. The simple rules of these algorithms are driven by a single roll of two six-sided dice at the beginning of each turn, and the results of each die are referenced according to the circumstances of each successive card for the duration of the phantom player’s turn.

Generally, it’s an aptly named ruleset due to the increasing deadline of a pack of enemy combatants ruthlessly charging across the battlefield!

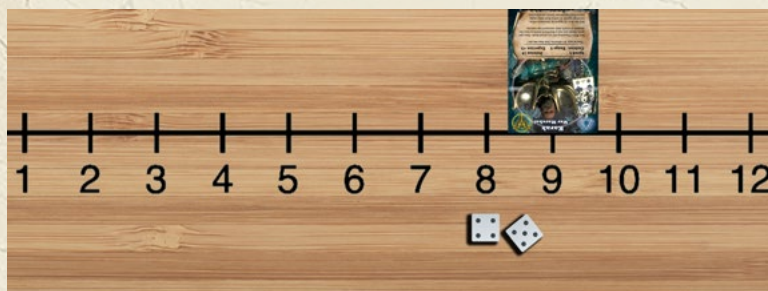
### 7.2 The Line Rule

#### When to use the Line Rule:

When you need a specific point along a line, such as deploying the opposing faction’s cards.

#### How:

Imagine a number line with the numbers 1 through 12 equally spaced running across the table. The total roll amount tells you the point on that line.



In this example, the phantom player’s total roll at the beginning of the turn was 9, so Karak has been deployed centered at that value on the number line.





## 7.3 The Binary Rule

### When to use the Binary Rule:

When you need binary decisions such as left/right, yes/no or up/down.

### How:

Read only the die furthest to your left and consult the table below. If you cannot determine which die is furthest to your left, re-roll both dice until you can.

1, 2 or 3 means NO, LEFT or DOWN

4, 5 or 6 means YES, RIGHT, or UP

An example for the Binary Rule is to resolve the conflict should the Line Rule deploy two Characters on top of each other, and a direction along the Deployment Zone must be selected.

## 7.4 The Direction Rule

### When to use the Direction Rule:

For 360 degree direction-finding, such as determining a random direction for a Character to move per the Wolfpack rules, locate the dice roll result on an imaginary clock face.

### How:

Envision a clock face centered around the card for which you're determining actions, oriented with your table edge. The total dice roll provides the direction. In the example shown, Rielle will rotate to the 5 o'clock position.



## 7.5 The Number Rule

### When to use the Number Rule:

At times in applying the Wolfpack algorithms, you will need a randomly generated number.

### How:

Consult the total dice roll to determine your needed number for the turn, which will range from 2 to 12. In cases where the roll exceeds some maximum amount listed on the respective cards, then limit the value to that maximum.

## 7.6 The List Rule

### When to use the List Rule:

To select actions for Characters from a pre-determined list of possibilities, read only the furthest die to your right. This option isn't used in the regular Wolfpack mode game, but can be eerily challenging if you choose to develop custom action lists for particular Characters.

### How:

Select key Character types for whom you will develop a list of six possible actions, such as "vanish and reappear on battlefield in accordance with the Direction and Number Rules" or "switch loyalty for one turn". Get creative. Then consult the right-hand die to determine the action taken for that Character on that turn.



## 7.7 Considerations

The cardinal, overarching rule in solo play is that the phantom player's Characters relentlessly move in the direction of your War Marshal subject to, and including, the following considerations for each turn:



- a.. Characters always end their turns facing the closest opposing Character of highest Expertise (or opposing War Marshal if in range).
- b. Characters always seek to optimize attack values, and will deviate their moves to terrain elements or positions where they can attack from behind if available, should an opposing Character be within 12 inches.
- c. Characters will always attack the target of highest Expertise as soon as they are able to do so, unless a Guardian Arises card is drawn. The phantom player always deploys Guardian Arises cards as soon as able to do so and, per the card text, combat actions are sacrificed that turn.
- d. When Characters are blocked from moving in a direct line to your War Marshal, or should a move place the Character directly in harm's way, rotate the card a quarter turn in the direction that will move it closest to your War Marshal, then exhaust available SPEED attempting to regain a clear path (using the Binary Rule if that direction isn't obvious)
- e. The phantom player's War Marshal will move per the Binary and Number Rules in the Deployment Zone except for two conditions:
  - i. If the move would place the War Marshal in harm's way, then leave in place (or apply the Direction Rule at max Speed to remove from harm's way if that's also already the case)
  - ii. If the War Marshal is the only remaining Character available to the phantom player, in which case the War Marshal proceeds as described above (and with +2 Expertise to reflect desperation and raw fury). Place a die on the card with the '2' face-up to indicate this case.
- f. All phantom player Characters within targeting range of your War Marshal receive an additional +1 to their attack rolls for EVERY phantom player Character also within range.



In this example, Karak is in the targeting range of three individual Characters from the opposing faction. He's been backed into a corner and is outnumbered.

Each Character, in turn, will receive +2 to their attack rolls because there are two additional Characters also within range.



## 7.8 Wolfpack Mode game play

### How to play:

1. Deploy phantom player's War Marshal using the Line Rule, then deploy yours
2. Shuffle both battle decks and draw 7-card hands
3. Each turn for the phantom player:
  - a. Roll two dice to set the outcomes for the turn as described above
  - b. Draw a card (except on phantom player's first turn) and spread phantom player's hand out face-up
  - c. Working from left to right, match the first available Vehicle to the War Marshal, and first available Vehicle Attachment. Proceed in the same manner for other Characters until out of Vehicles. Any remaining Characters will deploy on foot.
  - d. Deploy all Characters per the Line Rule unless doing so would deploy on top of another card (as it will in the first move of the game). In that event, displace the deployment point in a direction determined by the Binary Rule by the number of inches determined by the Number Rule, wrapping to the other side of the Deployment Zone if necessary.
  - e. When the Binary Rule determines a YES, play the first Breaker Card available from left to right and immediately resolve its effects.
  - f. Gather hand back into a pile and place face-down till next turn
  - g. Perform each deployed Character's Movement and Combat Action per the above guidelines in turn.
4. Proceed in alternating turns as in the regular game.
5. Special Case: Any effects described on phantom player's deployed cards which are described as 'Once Per Game' are immediately resolved when the phantom player's dice roll is snake-eyes (two one's).
6. Should these guidelines determine moves or actions which are impossible, then take no action in that case.

**A helpful general rule to avoid confusion or breaking immersion in the game is to intervene on the phantom player's behalf if necessary and decide for it an action you would take in those circumstances.**



## That's all you need to know to get started!

Your terrain choices, the battlefield dynamics and interplay of Characters - so many of them with histories together, and unpredictable momentum shifts all combine to form a fascinating arena of powerhouse strategy and tactics. There are thousands of combinations of choices that unfold for any scenario.

Don't linger in any one place. Control your Deployment Zone as a critical supply line for your forces. Exploit the terrain features, and position your people with an eye towards your killer turn. Have contingencies for Breaker cards and special actions by War Marshals. And perhaps above all, read the card text closely for your own forces and your opponent's. That's where the magic happens.

For it isn't just the battlefield miracle machines or half-insane, grinning nightmare warriors that are waiting for you out there. The Salt Mystic herself saw all of this coming, and if it frightened her enough to bury weapons made of stories, then we need heroes. Now!

Be brave. They will remember.





# Papercraft Terrain Options









---

## Description:

Rocky, rubble-strewn ground

## Classification:

Rough ground

## Impact on gameplay:

Movement through rough ground reduced by 1/2, rounded down

---



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## **Description:**

Swampy wetlands

## **Classification:**

Rough ground

## **Impact on gameplay:**

Movement through rough ground reduced by 1/2, rounded down

---



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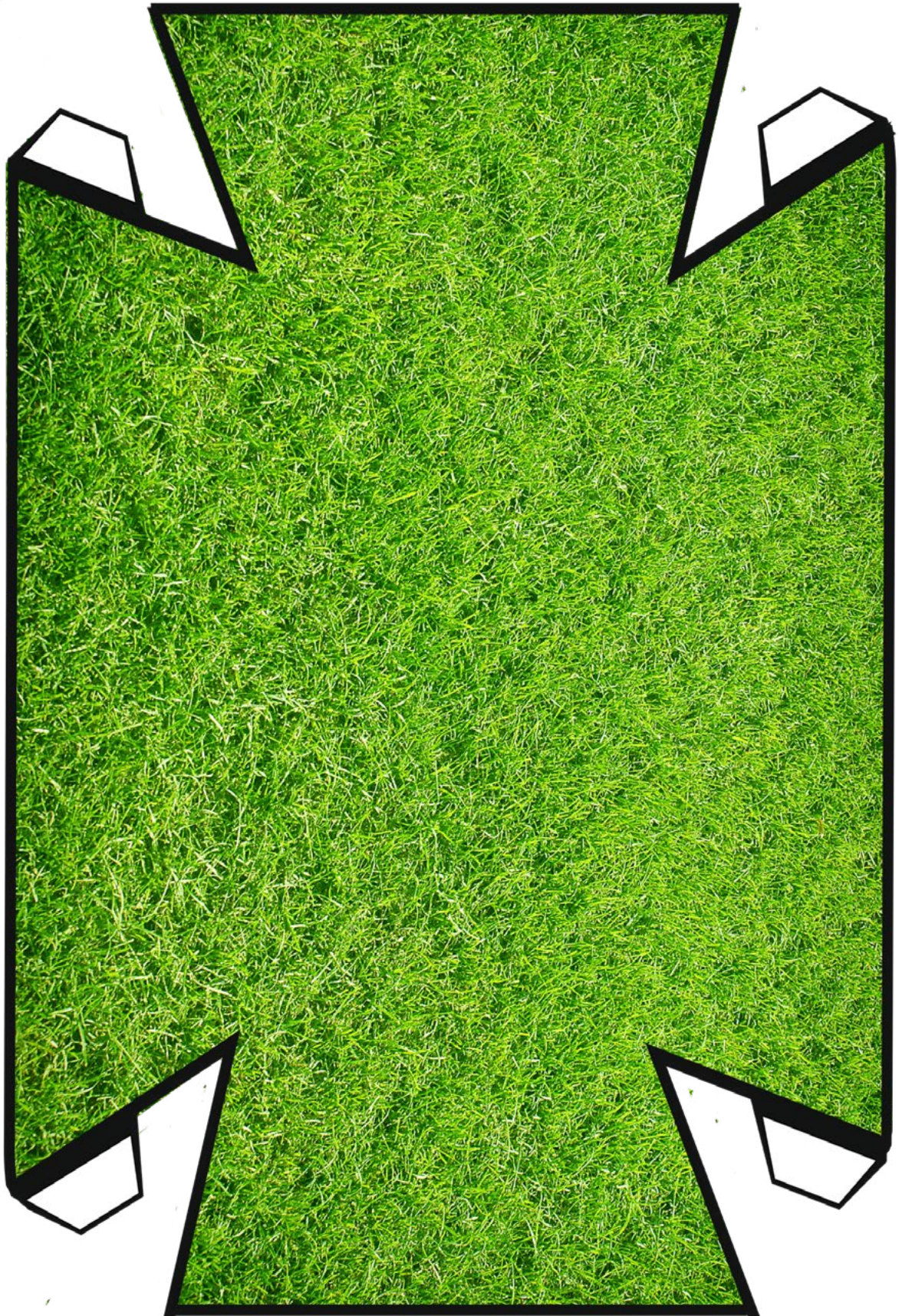
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**1. Bend white tabs down and apply tape or glue.**

**2. Bring the edges of each cutout triangle together at the corners and connect with white tabs.**





---

## **Description:**

Grassy hill

## **Classification:**

Elevation

## **Impact on gameplay:**

Attack rolls from elevation receive +2 bonus against targets at lower elevations

---



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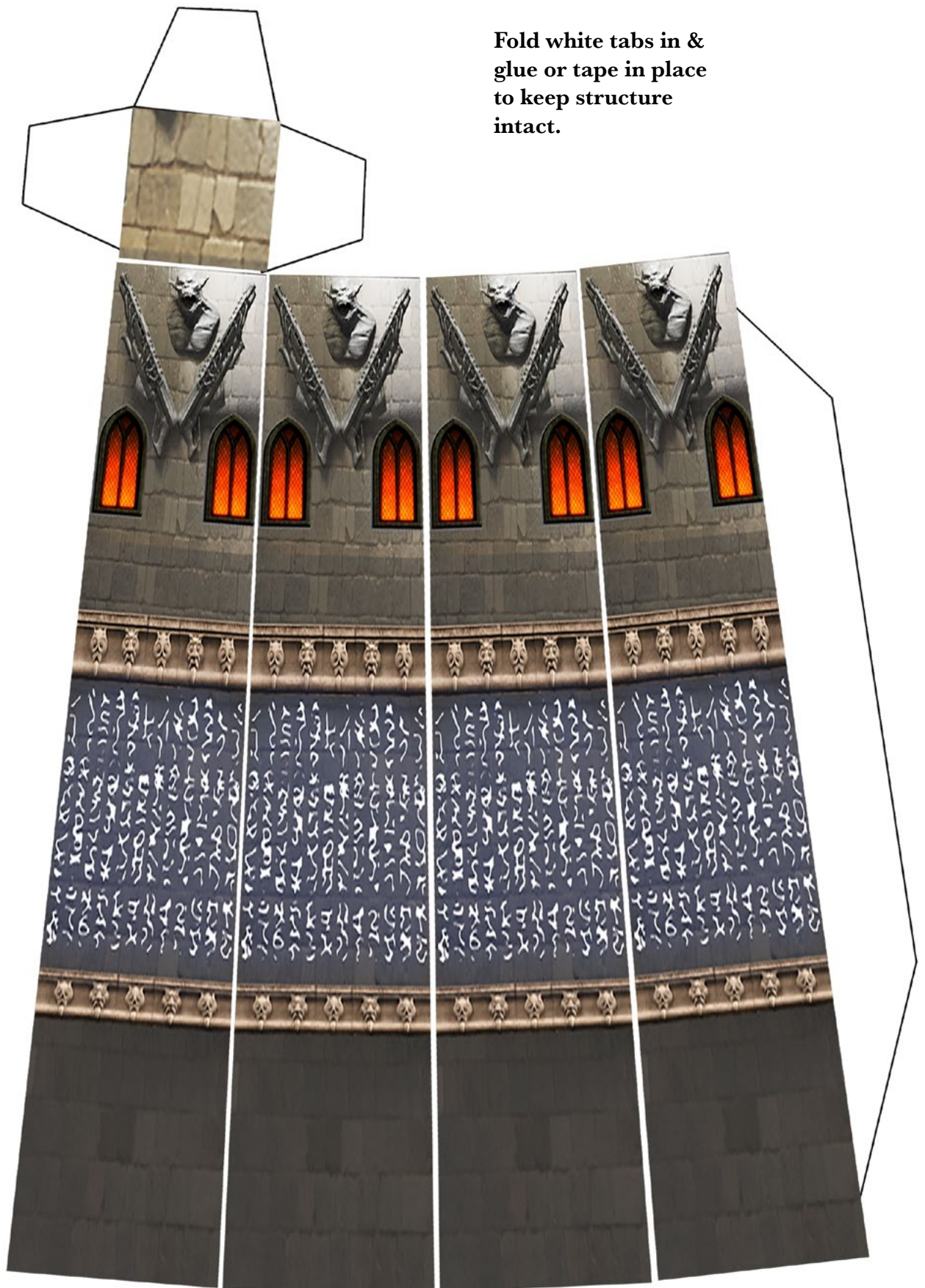
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**Fold white tabs in &  
glue or tape in place  
to keep structure  
intact.**





---

## Description:

Ancient Malthus tower

## Classification:

Obstruction (also possible as elevation for  
Vehicles which can climb walls such as Mogs)

## Impact on gameplay:

Attack rolls against targets whose arcs are  
within 1 inch of obstructions are reduced by 3

Attack rolls from elevation receive +2 bonus  
against targets at lower elevations

---



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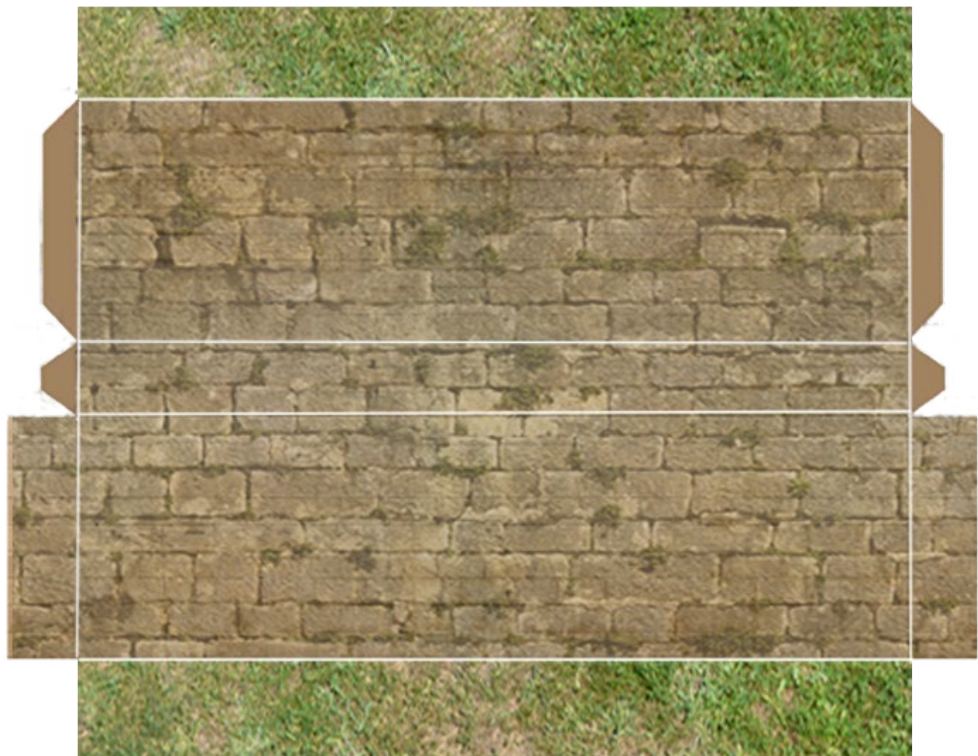
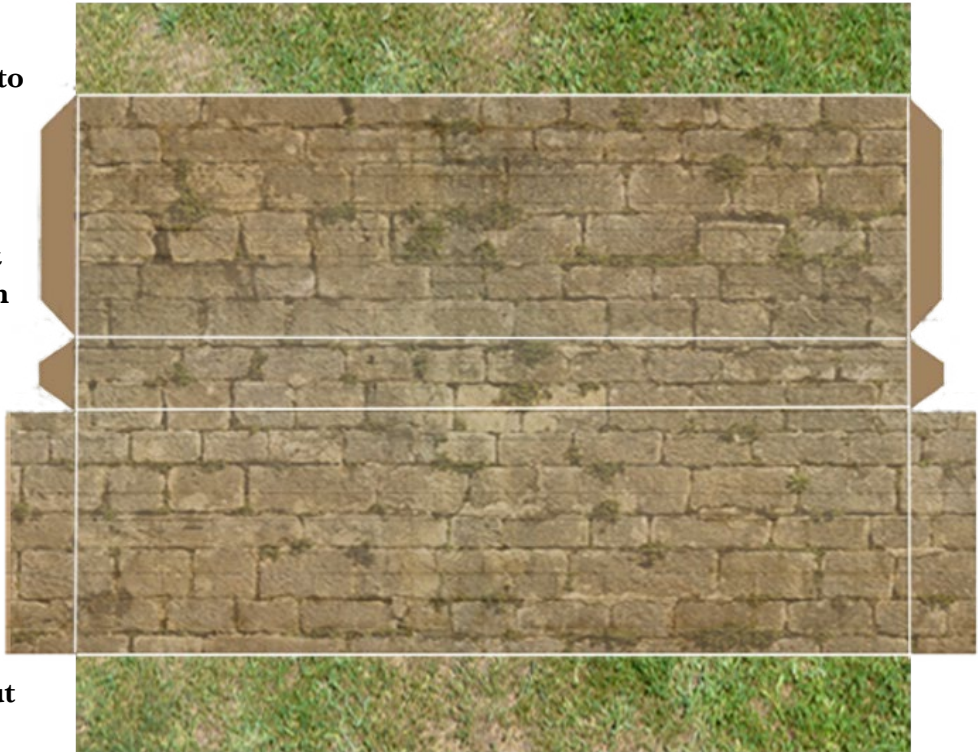
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**Bend along  
white lines to  
form wall**

**Fold tabs in &  
glue or tape in  
place to keep  
structure  
intact.**

**Bend grass out  
to form base  
support**





---

## **Description:**

Masonry wall, part of old fortification

## **Classification:**

Obstruction

## **Impact on gameplay:**

Attack rolls against targets whose arcs are within 1 inch of obstructions are reduced by 3

---



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Dice card usage:

Shuffle and draw randomly from deck if you do not have six-sided dice. For tracking purposes as needed on certain cards, use coins or other markers.





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# Salt Mystic



## What now?

The whole point behind the Salt Mystic line is to tell engaging stories...to lay the bricks and mortar for a world of excitement, exploration and dazzling combat. These Characters know each other, and they have history. These places are pregnant with adventure and danger, many having been lost from common knowledge for centuries. Pick up a carbine! Climb into a ramship and get rolling! What's your story?

## Read more about the world

The first novel in the Salt Mystic series is called **Tearing Down The Statues**. This is the tale of the rise of the true Guardian. Maybe.

## Watch for announcements

Visit [www.grailrunner.com](http://www.grailrunner.com) to watch out for announcements of upcoming books in the series, future volumes of War Marshal decks, and further adventures for your War Marshal's people.

## Submit your own short fiction

We also highlight short fiction & art set in the Salt Mystic world here, and welcome your submissions. Guidelines available online.

## Show off your skull & carbines!

Branded merchandise is available with the iconic skull & carbines, including a coffee mug, shirts, hoodies, and a decal sticker perfect for your laptop or tablet.



## A mysterious trickster...

Misling is a Recorder, with a perfect memory and expected to help build a seamless record of history. Unfortunately, he's probably the worst Recorder ever. And when he meets a joker with an incredible secret, the two of them are soon on the run from swarming lunatics and towering Red Witch assault troops in the heart of a city under siege.

## ...a global war

As it has been before, the horrible Talgo family is the spark of this swelling world war. Their wily generals and scheming counselors clash monstrous fleets in battles of shrieking steel-entrained tornados, cannonballs of lightning, and tanks the size of cities. But it's the joker's secret that is the most powerful weapon of all: a trigger set by the Salt Mystic herself in myth, to save the world from itself.



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