

HELLBREAK™

TRADING CARD GAME

QUICK-START RULES

OVERVIEW

HELLBREAK is a horror-themed trading card game where each player represents a fearsome monster seeking to defeat the opposing monster. Over a series of rounds, players build up resources, play multiple cards, and attack their opponent's characters.

The first player to kill the opposing monster wins!

COMPONENTS

The **HELLBREAK** Retailer Demo Kit includes two demo decks: Dracula and Jaws. Each deck contains several different types of cards: monster, minion, asset, event, and location. In addition to cards, **HELLBREAK** uses a few different tokens.



SETUP

To set up the game, each player follows these steps:

- Assign Initiative:** For your first game, the Dracula player starts with initiative and places the initiative card in front of them.

For future games, randomly assign the initiative card to one player.

- Prepare Monster:** Place your double-sided monster in the center of your play area, "Lurking" side face up.

- Choose Location:** For your first game, Dracula uses Carfax Abbey and Jaws uses North Beach (return the other two locations to the box). Each player puts their location card face up to the right of their monster, with its text facing its owner.

For future games, you will secretly choose one of your two locations. When both players have chosen, simultaneously reveal them and place yours face up to the right of your monster. Return your unchosen location to the box.

- Draw Starting Hand:** Shuffle your deck and place it on the right side of your play area. Then draw a hand of four cards.

- Take Mulligan (optional):** You may take a mulligan (place any number of cards from your hand on the bottom of your deck in any order, then draw until you have four cards in hand).

- Create Health Stack:** Take the top eight cards of your deck. On the left side of your play area, horizontally deal them face down one after another, starting nearest you and overlapping them.

- Create Token Supply:** Place blood, malice, and damage tokens within easy reach of both players.

READY & EXHAUSTED

All monsters, minions, and assets in play exist in one of two states: ready and exhausted.



GAME IN PROGRESS



CARD ANATOMY



LOCATIONS

The play area is split into two sections. A player's monster is placed between these sections, dividing them.

Each section has a location card, and players control the location facing them. Monsters are considered to be in both locations. Alternatively, minions can be in only one location at a time.

The word "here" is shorthand for "at this location." If an ability says "here," it affects cards only at this location. If an ability does not specify "here," then it can affect cards at any location.

ROUND SEQUENCE

A game of **HELLBREAK** is played over several rounds, and each round consists of three phases:

- Feeding Phase
- Horror Phase
- Refresh Phase

1. THE FEEDING PHASE

The Feeding Phase has two steps:

- Collect resources
- Bid for initiative

Step 1: Collect Resources

Each player collects resources equal to all the resource icons (Blood, Malice, Damage) shown in their vault (the resource bars on their monster and all other cards beneath their monster). At the start of the game, the only card in a player's vault is their monster.

Players keep their resource tokens in a pool in front of them.

Step 2: Bid for Initiative

Each player may choose one card from their hand and place it face down in front of them. Then, the chosen cards are revealed simultaneously.

Compare the cost of each revealed card. The player with the highest value wins initiative and chooses which player takes the initiative token. If the values are equal (a tied bid), the player without initiative wins it.

Then, each revealed card is added to its owner's vault by sliding it beneath their monster card so that the incoming card's resource bar (along the bottom edge) is visible.

The phrase "in initiative order" means the player with initiative acts first, followed by their opponent.



Dracula collects all the resources shown in his vault (5 Blood, 1 Malice, 2 Damage). He takes 5 blood and 1 malice from the supply and adds them to his resource pool. He also draws 2 cards from his deck, adding them to his hand.

2. THE HORROR PHASE

The Horror Phase is the main phase of the game. In initiative order, players go back and forth taking one action at a time. When both players have consecutively passed, the Horror Phase ends.

ACTIONS

When it is your turn to act, you do one of following actions:

- Play a card
- Attack with a character
- Scheme with a character
- Use an "Action" ability
- Slumber
- Pass

Play a Card

To play a card, you must meet the card's **loyalty** (see below). If you do meet its loyalty, then pay the card's **cost** (in blood).

ASPECTS AND LOYALTY

Every card in your deck belongs to one of five different aspects:



Also, each card has loyalty, indicated by the small aspect icon(s) just below its cost. To play a card, you must have aspect icons in your vault equal to or greater than the card's loyalty.

PLAYING A MINION

When you play a minion, choose one of the two locations, then place that minion in your play area below that location, exhausted. Then, you may immediately pay 1 from your pool to ready that minion.

If the minion has a **PLAYED** or **ENTERS LOCATION** ability, use it now.

PLAYING AN ASSET

When you play an asset, place it in your asset row, ready. Assets do not occupy any location.

PLAYING AN EVENT

When you play an event, resolve its ability, then place it in your crypt.

PLAYING A CARD EXAMPLE



Threat From Below costs 5 and has 2 Feral loyalty.



Jaws' vault currently has 2 Feral and 1 Deranged icons, which satisfies the loyalty on *Threat From Below*, so the card is able to be played.

Use an Action Ability

Some cards have action abilities on them. You can use an **ACTION** ability on a card you control. A **LURKING ACTION** can be used only if your monster's Lurking side is face up. Also, some action abilities cost malice, which must be paid from your pool in order to use the ability.

Attack with a Character

Making an attack involves the following steps:

STEP 1: DECLARE ATTACKER

Choose **one ready character** (monster or minion) you control as the attacker and exhaust it. If the attacker has an **ATTACK** ability, use it now.

STEP 2: DECLARE THE TARGET

If your attacker is a minion, choose an opponent's character **at that location** to be the target. If your attacker is your monster (which is in both locations), first choose which location to attack through, then choose an opponent's character at that location to be the target.

STEP 3: DECLARE DEFENDER (OPTIONAL)

Your opponent may choose one ready character they control at that location to be the defender and exhaust it. Note that the same character can be both the target and the defender.

STEP 4: RESOLVE THE ATTACK

If there is no defender, the attacker deals damage equal to its to the target. The target does not deal damage in return.

If there is a defender, the attacker and defender each deal damage to the other equal to their . **Monsters have an advantage that they never receive any combat damage when they attack.**

A monster is in both locations, so it can attack or defend in either location.

ATTACK EXAMPLE



The Jaws player exhausts Giant Octopus to attack Count Alucard. The Dracula player exhausts Mina Harker as the defender. The Octopus deals 5 damage to Mina; Mina deals 1 damage to the Octopus. Because Mina now has damage equal to or greater than her health, she is killed.

Scheme with a Character

Instead of attacking with a character, you can scheme with it to gain various benefits. To scheme, choose one ready character you control and exhaust it.

Then, resolve its scheme icons from left to right. Each icon is paired with a number (its value), and its effects are described below.

X **Prowl:** Deal indirect damage to your opponent equal to the prowl value (see **Additional Rules** for indirect damage).

X **Foresee:** Look at a number of cards from the top of your deck equal to the foresee value, then put them on either the top and/or bottom of your deck in any order.

X **Haunt:** Add (from the supply) equal to the haunt value to the malice row on your side of that character's location card. If the character is your monster, choose which location to haunt.

If the character has a **SCHEME** ability, use it **before** resolving scheme icons.

TAKING CONTROL OF LOCATIONS

When you have on your side of a location equal to or greater than the location's control value, you immediately take control of that location by doing the following:

- Remove all (including your opponent's) from the location.
- If the location's text is not facing you, rotate the card so it is facing you.
- If the location has a **TAKE CONTROL** ability, you may use it.
- Collect the resource icons shown on the location.

SCHEME EXAMPLE

The Dracula player exhausts Count Alucard to scheme. The Jaws player assigns 2 indirect damage to Great Octopus. Then, the Dracula player adds 2 to Carfax Abbey; this gives Dracula 5 total , which is enough to take control of Carfax Abbey. All malice is removed from both sides, and the location rotates to face the Dracula player. Then the Dracula player gains 1 and draws 1 card.



Slumber

You gain 1 (from the supply) and must pass all your remaining actions this phase. Only one player can take this action each round.

Pass

When you pass, you do nothing. You may still take actions later in the phase. If both players pass in sequence, or if one player slumbers and the other player passes, the Horror Phase ends.

THE REFRESH PHASE

Follow these steps:

1. Ready cards
2. Monsters may flip
3. Check hand limit

STEP 1: READY CARDS

Each player simultaneously readies all exhausted cards they control.

STEP 2: MONSTERS MAY FLIP

In initiative order, each player may choose to flip over their monster. Monsters can be flipped from Lurking to Unleashed, or vice versa.

STEP 3: CHECK HAND LIMIT

Each player with more than six cards in hand must reduce their hand down to six cards, choosing which cards to discard.

Next, a new game round begins with the Feeding Phase.

ADDITIONAL RULES

Allied and Enemy

Cards you control are referred to as "allied"; cards your opponent controls are referred to as "enemy."

Damage, Indirect Damage, and Kill

Damage is persistent and is tracked by placing damage tokens on minions. If a minion has damage on it equal to or greater than its health, it is killed and put face up in its owner's crypt. When a player is dealt indirect damage, they assign that damage, divided as they choose, among any number of characters they control. A minion cannot be assigned more indirect damage than its remaining health.

Health Stack

When a monster is dealt damage, instead of using tokens, damage is applied to its health stack. Each horizontal card in a health stack counts as two health, and a vertical card counts as one health. There cannot be more than one vertical card in a health stack at a time.

Damage dealt to a monster is resolved one at a time. When a horizontal health card takes one damage, rotate it vertical. When a vertical health card takes one damage, reveal it to check if it has a **JUMPSCARE** ability. If it does, you may use it, paying any cost. Next, discard it. Then, continue applying any further damage dealt to that monster to its health stack.

When a monster has no cards in its health stack, it is immediately killed.

Unique Cards

Some characters and assets are unique and have a bullet symbol (•) before their name. A player can control only one copy of a unique card by name (ignoring subtitles), so if a player ever controls two unique cards with the same name, they immediately kill one of them.

Traits

All cards have at least one trait, such as *Shark* or *Vampire*, that appears in their trait bar. Traits don't have rules, but some abilities refer to them.

Running Out of Cards

When a player has no cards left in their deck, they continue playing the game. Each time a player would draw a card from an empty deck, instead deal 2 damage to their monster.

What's Next?

Stay tuned for more info and visit us at hellbreakgame.com/

**SLAY
IN THE
LOOP!**

