



HIDDEN LEADERS

Rules



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BACKGROUND

The island of Oshra is in turmoil. Following the death of the Emperor, the conflict between the Hill Tribes and the Imperial Army escalated. While the Water Folk try to maintain balance between the old rivals, the Undead aim to cause an outright war. All hope rests on the six children of the Emperor: *Who will claim the throne?*

GOAL OF THE GAME

In Hidden Leaders, each player takes on the role of 1 of 6 hidden Leaders. Every Leader is allied with 2 of the 4 factions: the **Hill Tribes** (green marker), the **Imperial Army** (red marker), the **Water Folk** (blue marker), and the **Undead** (black marker).

During the game, players influence the power of the **Hill Tribes** (green marker) and the **Imperial Army** (red marker) by playing Hero cards.

After a certain number of Heroes have been played, the game ends. The position of the 2 markers results in a victory for 1 of the 4 factions.

If only 1 player is aligned with the winning faction, they win the game. Otherwise, the winner is the player aligned with the winning faction who has the most Heroes of that faction in their party.

GAME COMPONENTS



6 Leader cards



77 Hero cards



1 Board and 2 Markers



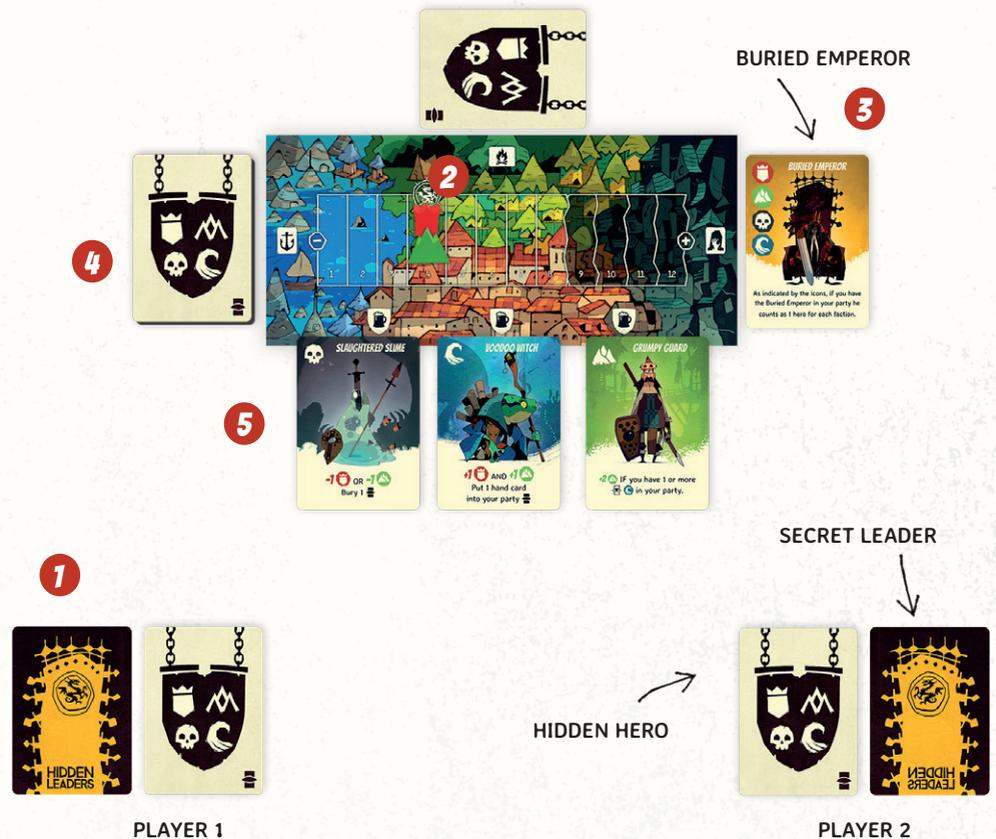
6 Support cards

SETTING UP THE GAME

- 1** Shuffle the **6 Leader cards** and deal 1 to each player face-down
You may look at this card any time but must keep it a secret.
Your Leader card defines the 2 factions you are aligned with.
- 2** Place the 2 power markers (red and green) on the **starting position**  of the power track
- 3** Find the special „Buried Emperor” Hero card and place it face-up next to **Graveyard**  slot on the board to form the Graveyard.
- 4** Shuffle the remaining **Hero cards** and place the pile next to the **Harbor**  slot on the board to form the draw pile.
- 5** Draw 3 Hero cards from the Harbor  and place 1 face-up to each slot next to the 3 Tavern  slots on the board.
- 6** Randomly choose a starting player
- 7** Every player draws **5 Hero cards**.
 After looking at them, each player must **perform the following steps in turn order:**
 - a.** Put 1 card face-down  in front of them (into their party of Heroes)
 - b.** Put 1 card face-down next to the **Wilderness**  slot on the board to form the discard pile.
 - c.** Keep 3 cards as their starting hand



AN EXAMPLE SETUP FOR 2 PLAYERS



For beginners we recommend to make the following two adjustments. They will make the game even easier to get started.

- (1) Remove all advanced cards, indicated by a (+) in their left corners from the game. 53 Hero cards should remain.
- (2) The game end is triggered with 1 card less than indicated in the table on page 11.

GAMEPLAY

The game is played over several rounds in clockwise order.

A PLAYER'S TURN

During your turn, perform the following 4 steps in order:

1. Play 1 card from your hand & perform its ability
OR
Discard up to 3 cards into the **Wilderness** 🔥
2. Draw from **Tavern** 🍷 and/or **Harbor** ⚓ until you have 4 cards
3. Discard cards into the **Wilderness** 🔥 until you have 3 cards left
4. Fill up empty **Tavern** 🍷 slots instructions

1 Play 1 Hero card from your hand and add it to your party, then perform its ability

Play the chosen card **face-up in front of you**. All Heroes in front of you form your **party**. Then move the green and/or red markers left (-) and/or right (+) on the power track as indicated on the card.

Perform any additional abilities stated on the card.

Note: The marker's movement is limited by the beginning and end of the power track.

OR

Instead of playing 1 Hero card, you may discard up to 3 cards from you hand into the **Wilderness** 🔥.

Then continue with step 2.



2 Draw from the Tavern 🍷 and/or Harbor ⚓ until you have 4 Hero cards in your hand

You may draw these cards in any order from the Tavern cards (open display) or Harbor (deck). *Note: Do not fill up empty tavern slots during this step. This is done in step 4.*

3 Discard into the Wilderness 🔥

Discard from your hand face-down into 🔥 until you have 3 Hero cards left.

4 Fill up all empty Tavern 🍷 slots

Fill up slots by drawing cards from the **Harbor** ⚓. Place them face-up. *Note: If the Harbor runs out of cards, and you need to draw a card, shuffle all cards in the Wilderness 🔥 pile and use them to form a*



HERO ABILITIES

An ability is performed after playing a Hero card into your party. This includes moving the red and/or green marker as well as any printed text. If a Hero's ability can't be performed, you ignore that part of the ability, but you can still put the Hero into your party.

Example: "Bury an Undead Hero." You can play this card even if there are no Undead Heroes face-up in any party. If there are one or more Undead Heroes in the game, you have to bury one. Even if it is your own.

Bury always means to put a card from a player's party face-up into  except if explicitly stated otherwise by a card.

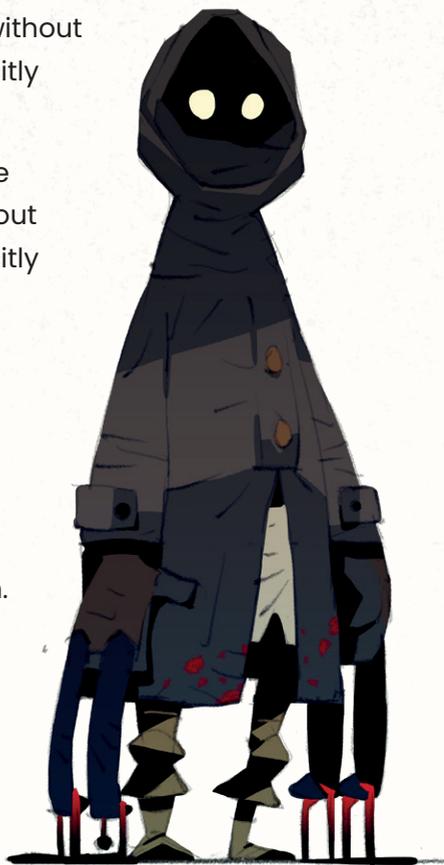
Discard always refers to discarding cards to  face-down.

Exchange means swapping 2 cards without performing their abilities unless explicitly stated by a card

Put means placing a Hero somewhere (in your party, in the Tavern etc.) without performing their abilities unless explicitly stated by a card

Draw always refers to taking the top card from the pile mentioned. When someone draws from another player's hand, they draw randomly.

At random means you shuffle the targeted cards and draw one of them.



HIDDEN HEROES

- During game setup, you add 1 of your 5 initial hand cards face-down  to your party. This is a Hidden Hero.
- During the game, some Hero abilities allow you to add new Hidden Heroes to your party, turn Hidden Heroes over, or look at other players' Hidden Heroes.
- **When a Hidden Hero is revealed** (turned face-up), their ability will **not** be performed unless explicitly stated by a card.
- **Hidden Heroes do not count** toward the total number of Heroes needed to **trigger the end of the game**. However, they do count when resolving ties during winner determination.
- Hidden Heroes have to be grouped as an overlapping stack in your party. Other players should be able to see in which order they were played. You may not shuffle your Hidden Heroes unless stated by an ability.
- You may look at your own Hidden Heroes at any time. Put them back in the same order.

Turn over means changing a Hero card from face-down  to face-up  or the other way around.

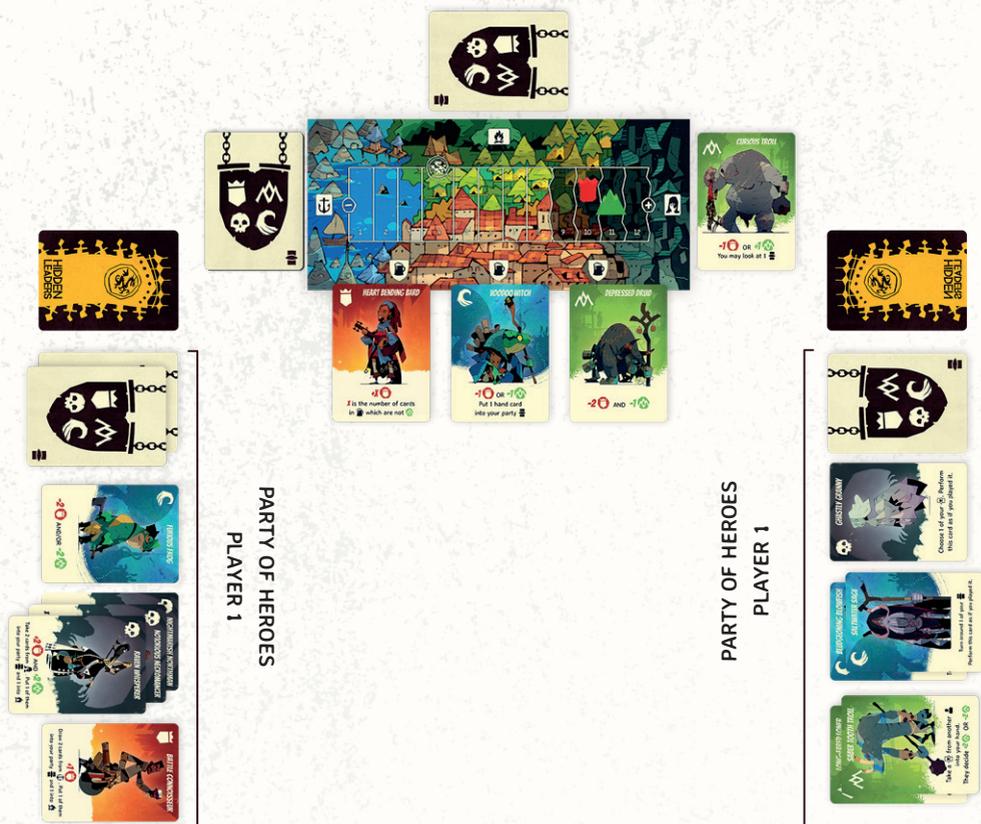


Open, face-up Hero in player's party



Hidden, face-down Hero in players'





This is how a 2-player game might look like after 5 rounds.



GAME END

The game ends at the end of **any player's turn** if any player controls at least the following number of face-up Heroes 🧑🏻:

2 PLAYERS	8 🧑🏻 Heroes
3 PLAYERS	7 🧑🏻 Heroes
4 PLAYERS	7 🧑🏻 Heroes
5 PLAYERS	6 🧑🏻 Heroes
6 PLAYERS	5 🧑🏻 Heroes



Hidden Heroes 🧑🏻 do not count.

Note: It is possible that a player other than the currently active player reaches the Hero limit (because of a Hero ability). In this case, the game end is also triggered.

End game example: To end, a 4-player game requires 7 open Hero cards. Andreas has 5 face-up Heroes, Lisa 6, Markus 4, and Raphael 5. On Raphael's turn, he plays the "Spirited Shaman" and turns face-up 1 Hidden Hero from Lisa's party. At the end of Raphael's turn. Lisa has 7 face-up Heroes, so the game ends.

Alternatively, Raphael could have ended the game by playing the "Doubtful Priest", which would have allowed him to play another Hero. Thus, he would have had 7 face-up Heroes at the end of his turn.



DETERMINING THE WINNER

Only 1 of the 4 factions can be victorious. When the game ends, determine which faction won the conflict by checking for the win conditions in the following order:



Undead ☠️ win if the red and green power markers are both on the dark war spaces of the tracker. *Note that Undead victory trumps the winning conditions of the other 3 factions.*

Water Folk 🌊 win if the red and green power markers are on spaces next to each other or on the same space.

Imperial Army 🏹 wins if the red marker is at least 2 steps ahead of the green marker.

Hill Tribes 🏔️ win if the green marker is at least 2 steps ahead of the red marker.

Next, each player discards all hand cards and reveals their hidden Leader card.

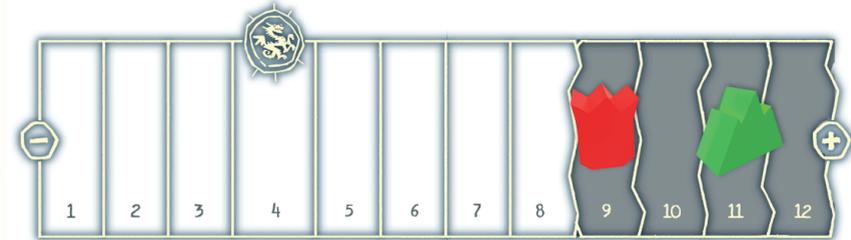
If only 1 player has a Leader that aligns with the winning faction, they win the game.

If 2 or more players are aligned with the winning faction, continue as indicated in the "Resolving Ties" section on page 14.

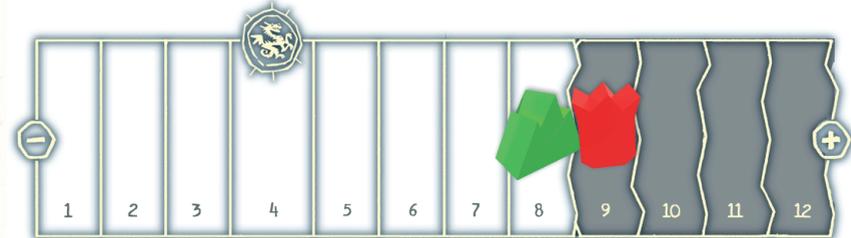
If no player is aligned with the winning faction, no player wins the game.



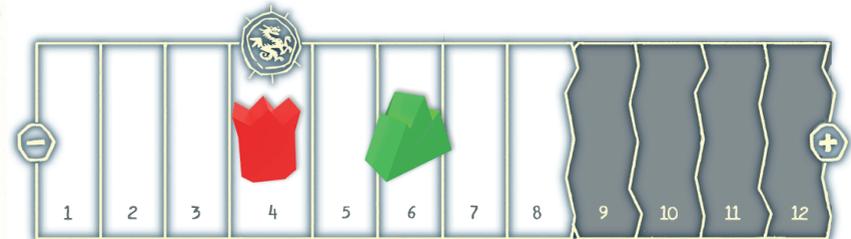
EXAMPLES FOR DETERMINING THE WINNING FACTION



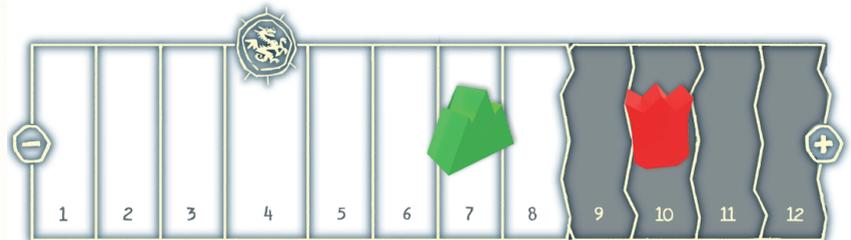
Undead ☠️ win: Both markers are in the dark war area.



Water Folk 🌊 win: The markers are next to each other and not both in the dark war area.



Hill Tribes 🏔️ win: Green marker is in the lead, not next to Red marker and both markers are not in the dark war area.



Imperial Army 🏹: Red marker is in the lead, not next to green, and both markers are not in the dark war area.

RESOLVING TIES

If 2 or more players are aligned with the winning faction, resolve the tie between these players in order as follows:

- 1** The player with the **most Heroes of the winning faction** in their party wins. All face-up (☞) and face-down (☛) Heroes are counted.
- 2** The player with the **lowest total number of Heroes** in their party wins (☛+☞, regardless of faction).
- 3** Tied players compare the number in the bottom-left corner of their Leader cards. The player whose **Leader card has the highest number** wins.



GLOSSARY

Leader: Each player receives 1 Leader card at the start of the game. Your Leader defines the 2 factions with which you are aligned. The Leader always stays hidden to other players.

Hero: Each Hero belongs to 1 of the 4 factions. Each turn the currently active player may play a Hero card. All Heroes have an ability.

Party: When a Hero is played, they are put in front of the player. A party is formed of all the Heroes, both face-up and face-down, in front of the player.

Factions: There are 4 factions, each represented by a color, symbol, different Heroes, and a unique victory condition.

Buried Emperor: This special Hero card begins the game face-up in the Graveyard. Other Hero card abilities may allow you to bring him into your party or hand. For the purpose of targeting via Hero abilities, and resolving ties (page 14), this card counts as a card from all 4 factions. This card may be played from your hand like any other Hero card but has no ability or additional effect.

Power Markers There are 2 markers (red & green). They are moved left (-) and right (+) on the power track of the board to determine the winning faction. The marker that is farther to the right on the track is the leading marker, while the one that is farther to the left is the marker behind (if both are on the same space, then neither is leading or behind).



SUMMARY

GAME SETUP (p. 4)

- 1 Deal 1 leader to each player
- 2 Place the 2 power makers on the board. 3 Hero cards in the Tavern and the "Buried Emperor" in the Graveyard
- 3 Every player draws 5 cards, discards 1 and puts 1 face-down into their party

A PLAYERS TURN (p. 6)

- 1 Play 1 card from your hand
OR discard up to 3 cards
- 2 Draw from Tavern and/or Harbor until you have 4 cards in hand
- 3 Discard down to 3 hand cards
- 4 Fill up the Tavern



TRIGGERING THE GAME END (p. 11)

The game ends at the end of any player's turn if at least 1 player controls a minimum of the following number of face-up Heroes .

2 PLAYERS	8  Heroes
3 PLAYERS	7  Heroes
4 PLAYERS	7  Heroes
5 PLAYERS	6  Heroes
6 PLAYERS	5  Heroes

DETERMINING THE WINNER (p. 12)

Undead  win if the red and green power markers are both on the dark war spaces on the tracker. Note that Undead victory trumps the winning conditions of the other 3 factions.

Water Folk  wins if the red and green power markers are on spaces next to each other or on the same space.

Imperial Army  wins if the red marker is at least 2 steps ahead of the green marker.

Hill Tribes  win if the green marker is at least 2 steps ahead of the red marker.

RESOLVING TIES (p. 14)

- 1 Player with the most Heroes of the winning color
- 2 Player with the lowest total number of Heroes
- 3 Player with the highest number on their leader card

