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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. How to Use this Document**

This rules document is meant to be a single source to look to for rules questions in the ME:TW CCG. It will be collection of the rules documents included in each set/expansion, the Collected Rulings File of the ICE era, and the rulings digests published by the Council of Elrond-appointed NetRep.

This rules document is not organized as the standard ICE rulebooks. In most cases, I will not be directly quoting the rules in question. Instead, I will be editing them for clarity and brevity and to avoid redundancy. References to the original source of the rules will be found in parenthesis following a given rule using the following abbreviations:

METW ## – Middle Earth: The Wizards Unlimited Edition Rulebook, Page ##  
METD – Middle Earth: The Dragons Rules Insert  
MEDM – Middle Earth: Dark Minions Rules Insert  
MELE ## – Middle Earth: The Lidless Eye Rulebook, Page ##  
MEAS – Middle Earth: Against The Shadow Rules Insert  
MEWH – Middle Earth: The White Hand Rules Insert  
MEBA – Middle Earth: The Balrog Rules Insert  
CRF – The ICE-Era Collected Rulings File  
CoE ### – Council of Elrond NetRep Rulings Digest ###

For example, a given rule may look like this:

- It is not permitted to punch your opponent in the face during Worlds (CoE, 666)

Also, I will occasionally make a commentary on a commonly discussed or misunderstood rule or card, or give advice to those running/judging tournaments. The format for such will be a text box:

Editor's Note: I commonly lose because I play Fallen Saruman.

### **B. About the Editor**

Benjamin A. Sorensen has been playing Middle Earth since the very beginning of the game. He bought a Limited Edition Starter and some boosters, and was hooked ever since he saw Angelo Montannini's art for Éowyn. He has since spent his time favoring theme over efficiency and playing MECCG over the internet due to a paucity of players in his current area. He was a rater for the Middle Earth Card of the Day back when Trevor Stone was doing it, and has since observed many players come and go. He is happily married, unaccountably stubborn, and slightly grumpy.

## II. Glossary of Terms

**Action:** An activity in the game that declares and is resolved in a chain of effects. ICE at times used the words "action" and "effect" interchangeably. See IV.A: Timing and Actions.

**Agent:** A special type of hazard that represents a force that acts secretly rather than in the open. Most agents have an alternate use as characters.

**Ahunt:** A type of Dragon manifestation. If an attack from this manifestation is defeated, the Dragon's Lair loses its automatic attack.

**Alignment:** Generally divided into Hero, Fallen Wizard, or Minion, depending on your avatar.

**Ally:** An ally is a type of Marshalling Point source usually representing a non-character entity. Allies are only considered characters for the following two purposes:

- Combat. Note that allies are not considered characters **during** combat, but only for combat **purposes**.
- Skill Use. An ally with a skill may use that skill as though they are a character.

Allies may never control items. (METW, 43)

**At Home:** A type of Dragon manifestation. If an attack from this manifestation is defeated, the Dragon's Lair loses its automatic attack.

**Attack:** Combat consists of one or more attacks that must be resolved one at a time. An attack consists of one or more strikes.

**Automatic Attack:** An attack that must be faced at the start of the site phase if a company wishes to enter a site they are at.

**Avatar:** A term used to denote the character card that represents you. Avatars may be Wizards, Fallen Wizards, Ringwraiths, or the Balrog.

**Balrog:** A special type of minion avatar. When cards refer to a Ringwraith, they refer to a Ringwraith or the Balrog. If the Balrog is in play or has been defeated, ignore all Balrog Automatic attacks.

**Bear, Bearer:** A bearer of a card controls that card.

**Body Check:** A check made against an entity's body value. A body check made against a wounded character receives a +1 to the roll.

**Body:** An attribute located in the lower left hand of a card, after the /. Body measures a character's survivability. Frodo, for example, has a body of 9.

**Chain of Effects:** A series of declared actions made in response to one another is called a chain of effects.

**Character:** An entity that can independently move and take actions. Characters usually require influence to control.

**Check:** A roll made against a given value. Examples of possible checks are body checks and influence checks.

**Company:** One or more characters at the same site. A company is limited to a size of seven at non-haven sites. Unless at a haven, you cannot have more than one company at site; they must either join or enough companies must declare movement that there will not be more than one company at the site.

**Condition, Active:** A prerequisite for an action actively made by a player. Typically this involves tapping a character, discarding an item, or having a character of a particular skill in play. Active conditions are declared and resolved with no time for response by an opponent or yourself.

**Condition, Passive:** An action that causes another action to take effect. The triggered action will be the first declared action in the chain of effects immediately following the chain of effects that contained the passive condition.

**Control:** When an item, ally, event, or follower is placed with a character, that character is said to control the entity in question.

**Corruption Card:** A hazard card with the Corruption keyword.

**Corruption Check:** A check made against a character's current Corruption Point total (see below).

**Corruption Points:** A value found on the lower right of most cards. A character's Corruption Point total is the sum of the Corruption Points of all cards he controls. Certain cards carry an innate modifier to corruption checks rather than a corruption point value, indicated by a + or - in the field on the card.

**Covert Company:** Any company that is not overt.

**Creature:** A creature is a hazard card that can be played to directly attack one of your opponent's companies.

**Current Site:** If a company is not moving, the site they are at is their current site.

**CvCC:** A common abbreviation for Company vs Company Combat.

**Detainment:** An attack that taps rather than wounds a character. The following attacks are

detainment:

- Card text will sometimes state that an attack is detainment.
- Any Nazgûl attack against a minion company is detainment.
- If you are a Minion player, any attack keyed to a Dark-Domain, Shadow-hold, or Dark-hold is a detainment attack.
- If you are a Minion player, any Orc, Troll, Undead, or Man attack keyed to a Shadow-Land is detainment.
- The above parameters also apply to attacks keyed by name if the named region/site is of the appropriate type.
- A Fallen Wizard's Overt companies are not minion companies for the purpose of these detainment attack rules.

**Direct Influence:** The value in the black hand on the left side of a character's card. Direct influence is used to control other characters. Unused Direct Influence often gives a bonus to various influence checks.

**Each Character Faces A Strike:** An attack with this phrasing ignores effects which modify the number of strikes unless such effects reduce the number of strikes to a specific number. (MELE, 29)

**Eliminated:** Removed from play. If a Unique entity is removed from play, it may not reenter the game.

**Event:** A card with the word "Event" between the picture and the effect text. Based upon how long it stays in play, there are 3 types of events: short-events, long-events, and permanent-events.

**Exhausting a Deck:** Your play deck is exhausted when you draw its last card.

**Faction:** A type of MP source that represents a large group.

**Fallen Wizard:** A wizard that has been slightly corrupted and can become extremely corrupted. Also an alignment that is neither hero nor minion.

- Fallen wizards use the rules for wizards except for the Fallen Wizard-specific rules outlined in this document.
- Fallen wizards have a unique value called Stage Points (represented by a gear icon). A Fallen Wizard's total stage points measure how far he has deviated from his original mission and the total is used to determine the effects of several cards.
- When rules and cards refer to a Wizard, they apply to your Fallen Wizard. (MEWH)
- When rules and non-site cards refer to havens, they refer instead to your Wizardhavens. The special effects of Hero Havens and Minion Havens do not apply.
- If your Fallen Wizard leaves play, discard all of your Stage resource Permanent Events in play that are specific to that Fallen Wizard.

**Follower:** A character that is controlled by another character. Followers may not have followers.

**General Influence:** Each player has a pool of 20 points used to control characters. Certain cards may change this total. When a Fallen Wizard enters play, his base general influence becomes the number in the white hand on the left side of his card. A Balrog player has an extra 5 points of General Influence that may not be used to control characters. (MEBA)

**Half-Orc:** A special kind of Orc that does not make a company overt and may not take trophies.

**Hazard Limit:** A company's hazard limit is equal to two or the size of the company, whichever is greater. The maximum number of hazards that can be played on a company during a given movement/hazard phase is equal to its hazard limit. Playing hazards does not reduce the hazard limit; rather, the hazard limit is simply a value against which the total number of hazards declared and resolved must be checked. See IV.A: Actions and Timing. The hazard limit is set when the company's movement/hazard phase begins. Any actions which affect the hazard limit which were declared before that point *immediately* applied (i.e., nobody may respond to the declaration) in the order chosen by the player controlling the company. All effects after this point apply in the order in which they resolve. (METD)

**Hazards:** Hazard cards represent forces that present a threat to your characters. Most hazards can only be played during your opponent's movement/hazard phase.

**Hero:** Can refer to the following:

- A Wizard player's characters. (MELE 74)
- A Fallen Wizard's non-orc, non-troll characters. (MEWH)
- A Wizard player in general, as an alignment (i.e. a Hero player is player who is playing a Wizard).
- Resources with a coppery background (e.g. Hero Items, Hero Events).

**Hoard:** Certain sites contain Hoards. A Hoard Item is only playable at a site that contains a hoard. Any site that had a Dragon automatic-attack at the beginning of the turn contains a hoard. Other sites state that they contain a hoard. Certain effects can cause a site to contain a hoard or lose its hoard status.

**Home Site:** One or more sites listed on the bottom right of a character's card. Certain effects, most notably playing characters, depend on the character's home site.

**Influence Check:** A check against a target value determined by the card you are attempting to influence.

- A Hero player attempting to influence Minion Resources receives a -5 penalty to the roll, and vice versa.

**Item:** A type of MP source that represents physical objects. Minor Items are not usually sources of MPs, however.

**Keyword:** A word on a card that makes it usable by other effects. Sample keywords are Palantiri, Orc, Elf, Weapons, etc.

**Keyed:** A hazard creature may only be played against a company if the creature is "keyed to" the company's site or site path.

**Lair:** A term that denotes a Dragon's "Home." Each Unique Dragon has a specific Lair associated with it:

- Ēarcaxē: Isle of the Ulond
- Scorba: Zarak Dum

- Bairanax: Ovir Hollow
- Scatha: Gondmaeglom
- Smaug: The Lonely Mountain
- Daelomin: Dancing Spire
- Leucaruth: Irock
- Agburanar: Caves of Ulund
- Itangast: Gold Hill

**Long-event:** Long-events last approximately two turns, one of yours and one of your opponent's.

**Making a Roll:** Two six-sided dice (2D6) should be used to generate random values during play. This is called "making a roll." To make a roll, roll 2D6 and add the two results together.

**Manifestation:** A mechanically different version of the same entity. Only one manifestation of a unique entity may be in play at a time, unless it is a Dragon. A face-down agent is not considered in play for these purposes. If a card says that it is a manifestation of another card, the limitation applies to both cards. When attempting to influence away a resource, you may reveal a resource manifestation of that resource instead of the identical resource. If a unique manifestation is removed from play, no manifestations of that entity may reenter play, and any manifestations in play are removed from play.

- A hero version of a Unique item is a manifestation of the minion version and Vice Versa. You may not include both the Hero and Minion version of a Unique resource in your deck.

**Marshalling Points:** A running total of how well you are doing in the game. Marshalling Points (MPs) are located in the upper left hand of a card.

**May Not Be Duplicated:** Only one copy may be in play at a given time under the given conditions. You may declare the play of such a card in a chain of effects if a card already in play has been targeted for removal earlier in that same chain of effects. (MELE, 87)

**Mind:** A value located in the white head on the left side of a character card. Used to determine whether a character can be controlled. Also used by characters and allies to resist influence attempts by an opponent.

**Minion:** Can refer to the following:

- A character card with a purple background when in play as a character.
- A Ringwraith player.
- A Balrog player.
- Resources with a steel gray background (e.g. Minion Allies, Minion Factions)

**Movement:** Replacing one site card with another. Usually, this is done by declaring movement during the Organization Phase and moving during the Movement/Hazard phase.

**New Site:** When a company declares movement, the site they are moving to is their new site.

**Off To The Side:** Certain cards and effects require other cards to be placed off to the side. Such cards are kept with the host event which caused the effect. Any card placed off to the side 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 purposes of uniqueness. Unless otherwise stated, when a host event is discarded, cards placed off to the side with the host are also discarded.

**Overt Company:** Any of the following:

- A company with an Orc or Troll.
- A company with a Ringwraith in Fell Rider Mode.
- Certain cards may make a company overt.
- The following allies make a company overt:
  - Great Bats
  - Great Lord of Goblin Gate
  - Last Child of Ungoliant
  - Regiment of Black Crows
  - Two-Headed Troll
- The Balrog's company is always overt.

**Permanent-event:** The effects of a resource permanent-event last until the card is discarded due to conditions stated on its card.

**Prowess:** A value located in the lower left of a card before the /. Generally a measure of a card's offensive capabilities in combat.

**Race:** An attribute located between the picture and the effect text of a character card. The races are: Dúndan, Dwarf, Elf, Hobbit, Man, Wizard, Fallen Wizard, Orc, Troll, Ringwraith, Balrog.

**Region:** A type of card representing an area of Middle Earth. A given region may contain several sites.

**Resources:** Resource cards represent various advantageous occurrences, personalities, groups, and objects. You may normally play resource cards only during your own turn.

**Ring:** A specific subset of items. There are seven types of Ring Items: mind rings, gold rings, lesser rings, magic rings, spirit rings, dwarven rings, and the One Ring. (MELE, 44)

**Ringwraith Follower:** I different Ringwraith than your Ringwraith avatar that acts as a follower of your Ringwraith.

**Roused:** A type of Dragon Manifestation. If an attack from this manifestation is defeated, the Dragon's Lair loses its automatic attack. If an attack from this manifestation is defeated, no player receives its Marshalling Points. (MELE, 42)

**Short-event:** A short-event's effects are implemented when the card resolves, then the card is discarded.

**Site of Origin:** At the beginning of its movement/hazard phase, a moving company's current site card becomes its site of origin-the company is considered to be moving to its new site.

**Site Path:** The site path of a site is the sequence of regions between the site and its nearest Haven as listed on the site's card. A company's site path is the sequence of regions between its site of

origin and its new site.

**Site:** Sites represent places that characters can visit in Middle-earth.

**Size:** A company's size is equal to the number of characters in it, with each Hobbit or Orc Scout character only counting half (round up).

**Skill:** An attribute located between the picture and the effect text of a card that helps define a character or ally. The skills are: Diplomat, Ranger, Sage, Scout, Warrior.

**Spawn:** A designation on some hazards you determine certain effects. Certain cards state that they are spawn. Shelob, Spider of the Morlat, and Balrog of Moria are all spawn.

**Specific:** To include a card that is specific to a character, you must be that character. To play a card that is specific to a character, you need not necessarily have that character in play.

**Stage Resource:** A card with a greenish background. All Stage Resources are specific to Fallen Wizards. Some resources are specific to only one Fallen Wizard.

**Standard Modification:** Most faction cards list some "standard modifications" to the influence check based only upon the race of the character that was tapped to make the influence check. Some factions only list Modifications, not Standard Modifications.

**Storing Cards:** Certain cards can be stored if they are at a Haven. Such a card is removed from play and placed in its player's marshalling point pile. Any item except the One Ring can be stored. Certain other cards indicate under what conditions and which locations they may be stored.

- A Balrog player may not store anything at Barad-dûr.

**Strike:** An attack consists of one or more strikes. A strike is assigned to a character if one is available. A character may not be assigned more than one strike without an ability that allows them to do so.

**Strike Sequence:** The series of events that resolves an assigned strike, performed in the following order:

- Start with the defending character's prowess as a base value.
- The defending character applies a weapon modifier to his prowess if applicable.
- The attacker may play hazard cards that affect the strike (not strike assignment).
- The attacker may decide to use any or all of his remaining unassigned strikes as -1 modifiers.
- A target untapped character may take a -3 modification so that he will not automatically tap following the strike sequence.
- The defending player may play resource cards that affect the strike (up to one card that requires skill). You may also use items if applicable.

*Editor's Note:* This means that, as an attacker, you cannot wait and see if your opponent will cancel the strike before you enhance it -- you can only declare hazards that affect the strike before the defender starts playing resources that will affect it.

- Apply any other modifiers (such as bonuses/penalties to the character from long-events, non-weapon item bonuses to prowess). Standard modifiers:
  - Character is wounded: -2
  - Character is tapped: -1
  - Each character not assigned a strike that taps in support: +1
- Make a roll and add the character's modified prowess. If the result is greater than the modified prowess of the strike, the strike fails. If the result is a tie, the strike is ineffectual. If the result is lower, the strike succeeds. Perform the following actions based on the result:
  - If the strike *fails*, it is defeated if it has no body value. Otherwise, make a body check against the strike's body. The strike is defeated if the body check is greater than the strike's body.
  - If the strike is *ineffectual*, nothing further happens.
  - If the strike succeeds and is detainment, the character is tapped. Otherwise, the character is wounded and the attacker makes a body check. If the body check result is higher than the character's body, the character is eliminated, and all non-follower cards he controls are discarded (as an exception, you may immediately transfer one item to each unwounded character in his company). Otherwise, nothing further happens.
  - If a body check against a Ringwraith is exactly equal to 7 or 8, the Ringwraith is returned to your hand. If your Ringwraith is returned to your hand, you may not reveal a different Ringwraith as your Ringwraith.

If a character through an effect or ability faces more than one strike from an attack, the character faces a separate strike sequence for each one. (METD)

**Surface Site:** A site above a given Under-deeps card. A surface site is a site that is located in a region and is also adjacent to the Under-deeps site in question. It is possible for an Under-deeps site to have more than one surface site. Surface sites serve as transition points between Under-deeps movement and other forms of movement.

**Tapping/Untapping a Card:** Normally, during play, each of your cards is placed so that its bottom is towards its player. During play certain cards must be "tapped" when they are used-this is a record-keeping mechanism to keep track of card usage. To tap a card, rotate it 90° so that it is turned sideways-to untap a card, rotate it back 90° to its normal position.

**Target:** An entity through which an action is played out. To be a target, the action must specify the entity by number and type.

- For Fallen Wizards, a hero event may not target/affect a minion site card or resource card, and vice versa. Spells and Magic are an exception to this rule.
- For Fallen Wizards, a hero resource may not target an orc or troll character.

**Trophy:** An orc or troll character that has faced a strike from a defeated creature can elect to take the creature card as a trophy. Trophies give bonuses based on the total Marshalling Points

indicated on the creature cards:

- 1: +1 Direct Influence.
- 2: +1 Direct Influence, +1 Prowess
- 3: +2 Direct Influence, +1 Prowess
- 4 or more: +2 Direct Influence, +2 Prowess

These bonuses do not stack; use the one that applies.

**Unique:** There can only be one copy of each unique card in play at a time. Each player can only have one copy of each unique card in his play deck and starting cards combined.

**Wounded:** A wounded card is damaged but not eliminated. When a card is wounded, invert it.

### III. Player Turn Summary

#### A. Building a Deck

A Middle Earth Deck Actually consists of three decks: the Location Deck, the Play Deck, and the Sideboard. These decks are discussed individually below.

##### *1. Location Deck*

A location deck consists of a maximum of one of each site you own and your region cards. As an exception, a location deck can include multiple copies of Haven Cards.

A Fallen Wizard's location deck may include multiple copies of the Fallen Wizard site cards (White Towers, Isengard, Rhosgobel, Deep Mines), but only one copy of all other sites.

A Balrog player uses minion sites with following exceptions, which must instead use the Balrog versions of the site:

- Moria, Carn Dum, Dol Guldur, Minas Morgul
- All Dark-Holds
- All Under-deeps sites.

In addition, as the Balrog, you may only have multiple copies of Moria and the Undergates. Geann-a-Lisch is a Ruins & Lairs with no Darkhaven effects.

A non-Balrog player cannot use Balrog sites. However, for the purpose of playing certain hazards, a non-Balrog player may include the following sites in their location deck:

- Ancient Deep-Hold
- The Wind Deeps
- The Drowning Deeps
- The Rusted Deeps
- The Remains of Thangorodrim

##### *2. Play Deck*

A play deck consists of between 30-50 resources, and equal number of hazards, up to 10 character cards, and avatar cards depending on your alignment:

- Hero Players may place up to three avatar cards in their play deck. At least two of the avatar cards must be the same avatar.
- Hero Players may only include hero characters as characters. Agents are considered hazards in a Hero Player's play deck. (MELE 77) This restriction also applies to the sideboard (see below).

- Except for items (and cards explicitly allowing themselves to be played as non-minion resources), a Hero Player may only include Hero Resources. (MELE 77) This restriction also applies to the sideboard (see below).
- Minion Players may place up to three avatar cards in their play deck. At least two of the avatar cards must be the same avatar.
- Minion Players may only include minion characters as characters. Agents are considered characters in a Ringwraith player's deck, and hazards in a Balrog player's deck.
- Ringwraith players may place any number of Ringwraiths in their sideboard so long as they do not duplicate more than one of them in their combined play deck and sideboard.
- Except for items (and cards explicitly allowing themselves to be played as non-hero resources), a Minion Player may only include Minion Resources. (MELE 77) This restriction also applies to the sideboard (see below).
- 
- You must have at least 12 hazard creatures in your play deck. The following count as half a creature for this purpose:
  - A creature that is also playable as an event.
  - An Ahunt or At Home Manifestation.
  - Agents, if you are a Wizard player.
  - Spawn Permanent Events. (MEBA)
- *Tournament Convention:* A card that can be played as a resource or hazard can be considered either for the purpose of deck construction. (MELE, 86)
- A Fallen Wizard must declare that they are a Fallen Wizard and which Fallen Wizard. If you opponent has the normal hero wizard in his play deck or sideboard, they may exchange it for a different wizard. If you declare that you are playing a Fallen Wizard, your opponent may not play the corresponding hero wizard.
- A Fallen Wizard is subject to the following restrictions on their play deck:
  - One of each unique card (including cards with the same name)
  - Three of each non-unique Stage Resource card.
  - Two of each non-unique character card.
  - Two of each non-unique hero resource card.
  - Two of each non-unique minion resource card.
  - You may not include stage resource cards that are "specific" to another Fallen Wizard.
  - Fallen Wizards may not include the following cards:
    - The Balrog (Ally)
    - Cracks of Doom
    - Favor of the Valar
    - Gollum's Fate
    - Hour of Need
    - Kill All But Not the Halflings
    - The Lidless Eye
    - The Sun Unveiled
    - Glamour of Surpassing Excellence
    - Messenger of Mordor
    - News Must Get Through
    - News of the Shire
    - Old Road
    - The Windlord Found Me

- Wizard Uncloaked
- Use Your Legs
- A Balrog player must declare that they are Balrog.
- A Balrog player is subject to the following restrictions on their play deck:
  - You may only include Orc and Troll characters.
  - Unless they are Balrog Specific, only character with a mind less than 9 may be included.
  - Agents are always considered hazards for the Balrog.
  - You may only include Orc, Troll, Wolf, Animal, and Dragon factions.
  - A Balrog player may not include any of the following cards:
    - Above the Abyss
    - Bade to Rule
    - The Balrog (Ally)
    - The Black Council
    - Black Horse
    - Black Rider
    - By The Ringwraith's Word
    - Creature of an Older World
    - Fell Rider
    - The Fiery Blade
    - Helm of Fear
    - Heralded Lord
    - Kill All But Not the Halflings
    - The Lidless Eye
    - Morgul-Blade
    - News of the Shire
    - Open to the Summons
    - Orders from Lugburz
    - Padding Feet
    - The Ring Leaves Its Mark
    - Ringwraith cards
    - Sauron
    - They Ride Together
    - Use Your Legs
    - While The Yellow Face Sleeps
    - Balrog of Moria
    - Durin's Bane

### *3. Sideboard*

A special set of cards set off to the side. The sideboard can contain any mix of resources, characters, and hazards, so long as you do not duplicate non-unique cards. The maximum number of cards in the sideboard depends on the length of the game (see III.I.3, below)

- A Hero player's Play Deck and Sideboard can have no more than three avatars total. At least two of those avatar cards must be the same avatar.

There are a number of methods for accessing a sideboard:

- When you exhaust your deck, you may exchange up to five cards (regardless of type) from your discard pile with five cards from your sideboard.
- You may tap your avatar during the organization phase to bring either up to five resource/character cards to your discard pile or, if your play deck has at least five cards in it, to bring one resource/character directly into your play deck and shuffle.
- You use one against the hazard limit to tap a Nazgûl hazard during your opponent's movement/hazard phase to access the sideboard. The normal effect of tapping a Nazgûl does not apply. When you access your sideboard in this manner you may either bring up to five hazards from your sideboard to your discard pile or, if your play deck has at least five cards, you may bring one hazard directly into your play deck and shuffle.
- Certain cards permit you to access your sideboard.
- If your opponent's avatar is in play, you may bring five hazards from your sideboard to the discard pile (or one hazard directly into your play deck and shuffle if your play deck has at least five cards) at the end of the untap phase. If you do so, the hazard limit for each of your opponent's companies at the start of their movement/hazard phase is halved (round up).
- The total mind attributes of all Agents in your play deck and sideboard may not exceed 36.
- If your opponent is a Fallen Wizard, add 10 cards to your sideboard.
- If you are the Balrog, your opponent may not play any of the following cards:
  - The Balrog (Ally)
  - The Black Council
  - Durin's Bane
  - Balrog of Moria
  - Reluctant Final Parting
- If your opponent is the Balrog, you may at any time remove one of the above cards from your hand and place it out-of-play in order to bring one card of any type from your sideboard into your play deck and shuffle.

## B. Starting Cards

Choose a number of characters whose mind total no more than 20 and place them in front of you. You and your opponent reveal your choices at the same time. Any duplicates (including manifestations) are shuffled into the deck. Choose two non-unique minor items not from your play deck (MELE 14) and place them under the control of any character(s) in your starting company.

- Hero players may choose up to five hero characters (no Wizards). There is no provision for Heroes to start with minion minor items, as these items do not form part of the Hero Player's decks. (METW 16)
- A Hero player's starting company must start at Rivendell. (METW 16)
- Minion players may choose up to six minion characters (no Ringwraiths, no agents).
- A Ringwraith player's starting company must start at Minas Morgul. (MELE 14)
- A Balrog player may have two starting companies at either Moria or the Under-gates.
- A Fallen Wizard may choose up to five hero and minion characters. You may not choose Orc and Troll characters unless you start with an appropriate stage resource card. You may not choose a character with a mind greater than 5 unless you use an appropriate stage resource card. You may not start agents.
- A Fallen Wizard must attempt to start with up to 3 Stage Resource Permanent Events. The total stage points of these events must be three. At least one of these events must be non-unique. All conditions to play the event must be met.

- A Fallen Wizard's company may begin play at the White Towers or at a Ruins & Lairs in Arthedain or Rhudaur. If your company begins play at a Ruins & Lairs, one of your starting stage resources may be a Hidden Haven played on that site.

*Editor's Note:* The White Hand rules insert specifically states that its rules for starting characters are exceptions to the rules used for Wizards. The White Hand rules failed to re-include the prohibition against starting an avatar. A player is within their rights to argue that starting a Fallen Wizard character is legal.

However, since it is a gray area, it is up to a judge or tournament organizer to have the final say. Starting an avatar is most likely broken, and it is highly discouraged to allow it.

To determine who goes first, roll the dice. The player with the higher total goes first. Reroll ties. Draw 8 cards to start the game.

#### *Tournament Convention: Character Draft*

The character draft was instituted to help lessen the likelihood of too many bounced characters. It formalizes the process of revealing characters at the start of the game. Some cards that take the place of the two minor items you select are also revealed during this time. Some stage resources are also revealed at this time. To use the character draft, follow this process:

- Select a pool of up to ten valid characters.
- Each player reveals his or her choice for their first character simultaneously.
- Duplicated characters are set aside.
- Each player continues revealing cards (simultaneously unless one player cannot reveal cards) until one of the following happens:
  - The player has 5 characters in his company. (MELE, 86)

*Editor's Note:* According to this convention of tournament play, Minion Players may *not* start with the six characters that the normal starting rules allow.

- The total mind of the player's starting characters is 20 (regardless of effects which decrease a character's mind).
- Playing a character would bring the total mind over 20.
- The player has exhausted their starting pool of ten characters.
- The player no longer wishes to reveal characters.
- You may now assign up to ten characters to go into your play deck.
- This may include duplicated and unused characters from your starting pool.
- Duplicated characters that were set aside do not count against the ten character limit.
- A Fallen Wizard's (up to three) starting stage cards are treated as if they were characters

### **C. Untap Phase**

- You may untap your tapped cards (other than sites) during this phase if they have not already untapped or healed.
- You may heal wounded characters to a tapped position if they are at a Haven.
- You may take actions not restricted to another phase.

### **D. Organization Phase**

- You may organize your characters into companies.
- You may declare movement.
- You may store cards that can be stored by having the bearer make a corruption check.
- You may transfer control of an item from one of your characters to another at the same site by having the bearer make a corruption check.
- A Fallen Wizard may discard a stage resource from play, but only if this would not reduce his stage point total below three.
- 

#### **E. Long Event Phase**

- You may play resource Long-Events during this phase.
- Your opponent removes any hazard Long-Events he had in play during this phase.

#### **F. Movement/Hazard Phase**

- In the order the resource player chooses, each company reveals its new site (if any), draws cards (if necessary), and faces any hazards the opponent plays on them. Each player then resolves hand size. Once your opponent has had an opportunity to play hazards on each company, the movement/hazard phase has ended.

#### **G. Site Phase**

- Each of your companies may do one of the following two options:
- Nothing
- Enter their current site and attempt to play resources

#### **H. End-of-Turn Phase**

- Return On-Guard cards to your hand.
- After returning on-guard cards to your hand, you may discard a card.
- Draw or discard until you have reached your hand size. Base hand size is 8.
- Perform any other actions not restricted from being declared during the end-of-turn phase.
- Signal the end of your turn.

#### **I. Victory Conditions**

##### **1. Eliminating Your Opponent's Avatar**

If your opponent's avatar is eliminated, you win the game. The most typical means of eliminating an opponent's avatar are through body checks or corruption checks.

##### **2. Winning By Means Of The One Ring**

- As a hero player, if you move the One Ring to Mount Doom and play certain cards, the game ends and you win. (METW 9)

*Controversial Cards:* There are two cards which allow a Hero player to win in this way: Gollum's Fate and Cracks of Doom. Both of these state playability conditions and that the player of the card wins the game. There is some debate as to whether these cards override the stated requirement in the rules that you must also move the One Ring to Mount Doom. While neither card specifically overrides the rule, it is undeniably traditional to test a Gold Ring Item at Mount Doom rather than moving the One Ring there. As a tournament organizer, consider which point of view you want to support. Requiring the One Ring to be in play before moving to Mount Doom makes winning this kind of victory more dangerous, and may discourage people from trying. Not requiring the One Ring to move to Mount Doom makes it rather difficult to stop a deck focused on destroying the One Ring, essentially encouraging this sort of deck.

- As a Ringwraith player, if you move the One Ring to Barad-dûr, Sauron is reunited with the One Ring and you win.

*Editor's Note:* The requirement that a Ringwraith player move the One Ring to Barad-dûr rather than a generic requirement that the One Ring be *at* Barad-dûr is meant to prevent the following ridiculous situations:

- A Hero or Fallen-wizard player has the One Ring at Barad-dûr, therefore a Ringwraith player wins.
- A Ringwraith player has the One Ring at Barad-dûr, therefore all Ringwraith players win a One Ring victory.
- The Balrog has the One Ring at Barad-dûr, and therefore a Ringwraith player wins.

Thematically speaking, when you are a Ringwraith, the question is not *whether* Sauron is reunited with the One Ring, victory is determined by *whose* efforts have brought it to Sauron.

- As a Fallen Wizard, at least one copy of A New Ringlord must be played and the conditions outlined on that card must be met.
- As the Balrog, at least one Challenge the Power must be played and the conditions outlined on the card must be met.

### 3. Winning By Means Of Marshalling Points

If neither of the above victories occur, the game ends depending on conditions decided before the game starts. The four kinds of games are the 1-deck (Quick), 2-deck (Short), 3-deck (Long), and 4-deck (Campaign). The Marshalling Point requirement of the games are 20, 25, 30, and 40, respectively. The maximum sideboard size is 25, 25, 30, and 35, respectively. (MELE, 51-54) For a tournament, increase the sideboard size to 30, 30, 35, and 40, respectively. (MEWH)

*For a Quick game:*

- If you have at least 20 Marshalling Points, you may elect to end the game during your turn. Your opponent in this case takes one last turn after the end of your turn.
- If you have exhausted your play deck at least once, you may elect to end the game during your turn. Your opponent in this case takes one last turn after the end of your turn.
- When each play deck has been exhausted once, the game ends after the current turn.

*For a Short game:*

- If you have at least 25 Marshalling Points and have exhausted your play deck at least

once, you may elect to end the game during your turn. Your opponent takes one last turn.

- If you have exhausted your play deck at least twice, you may elect to end the game during your turn. Your opponent takes one last turn.
- When each play deck has been exhausted twice, the game ends after the current turn.

*For a Long game:*

- If you have at least 30 Marshalling Points and have exhausted your play deck twice, you may elect to end the game during your turn. Your opponent takes one last turn.
- If you have exhausted your play deck three times, you may elect to end the game during your turn. Your opponent takes one last turn.
- When each play deck has been exhausted three times, the game ends after the current turn.

*For a Campaign game:*

- If you have at least 40 Marshalling Points and have exhausted your play deck three times, you may elect to end the game during your turn. Your opponent takes one last turn.
- If you have exhausted your play deck four times, you may elect to end the game during your current turn. Your opponent takes one last turn.
- When each play deck has been exhausted four times, the game ends.

A Minion player may not freely elect to end the game when the above conditions are met; instead, they must play the Sudden Call card. This card can be played as a resource on your town turn. You may also use Sudden Call as a hazard if your Minion opponent has met the above conditions. In this case, you get one last turn.

At the end of the game:

- Each character makes a corruption check.
- Each player totals their Marshalling Points, keeping track of the source. The sources are Character, Ally, Item, Faction, Kill, and Miscellaneous.
  - All non-stage Marshalling Point sources are worth 1 MP to a Fallen Wizard. Marshalling points on stage resources are handled normally. A Fallen Wizard's Marshalling Points cannot be modified by non-stage resources. They can be modified by stage resources, Fallen Wizard abilities, and hazards.
  - Fallen Wizards do not receive Marshalling Points for resources stored at non-Wizardhaven sites.
  - If you are Minion, Hero Items are only worth half MPs. If you are Hero, Minion Items are only worth half MPs.
- You may reveal any Unique cards in your hand that match unique cards your opponent has in play. Such cards reduce your opponent's Marshalling Point total by one. You may also reveal a manifestation of the Unique entity for the same effect.
- If your opponent has zero (or less) points in any source except Kill and/or Miscellaneous, double your Marshalling Points in that Source.
- No more than half your Marshalling Points can come from any one Source. If you have too many Marshalling Points from a given Source, reduce the amount until they are equal to half your Marshalling Point total.
- If, after these modifications, you have the highest Marshalling Point total, you win the game.

*Editor's Note:*

The implications of game length upon game balance are profound. Which type of game you wish to run in a tournament merits a great deal of thought. Here are some of the implications of the game length:

**Quick Game:** One Ring victory is almost impossible. Players may be able to call after two or three turns. Big-MP cards are the biggest goal, favoring the Hero Alignment. Fallen Wizards, which rely on time to gain MPs, are at a distinct disadvantage. There are almost no combos for hazard strategies. The positive side of this type of game is its speed; it will be over very quickly.

**Short Game:** One Ring victories are doable within the time frame. Games last 4-6 turns. The biggest goal for the short game is deck speed; you want to draw through your cards to gain MPs and exhaust, calling before your opponent can muster his own MPs. Hazards are likely to focus on turn advantage, with the sideboard often sporting one anti-One Ring card. The positive side of this type of game is that Hero, Minion, and Fallen Wizard players all have viable options. The negative is that the turn limit constraints can lead to homogeneous hazard portions and even disturbingly similar resource portions.

**Long Game:** One Ring victories become a definite threat here; a player must devote more of their hazard portion to dealing with it. Hence, Marshalling Point gathering becomes safer. The biggest goal for the Long Game is completing high-MP "quest" type cards (Kill All But Not The Halflings, Fate of the Ithil-Stone, etc.) in order to get a solid MP "push" to the 30 point requirement. Fallen Wizards begin to thrive in this length, as they have high-yield big MP cards that usually provide significant in-game benefits. Minions, however, begin to feel some MP pressure, given the relatively low value of their MPs/card. The positive side of the three-deck game is providing a fairly level playing field -- speed decks need not rule, One Ring decks can bide their time for optimal circumstances, and the necessity of spending hazards to counter the potential One Ring decks means possibly safer resource-gathering for both sides. The negative, of course, is the time investment, but with many people likely choosing to attempt One Ring victories, games will not often go to the full three decks.

**Campaign Game:** One Ring victories become the biggest goal of this game. Influencing away opponent's resources becomes the 2nd most important thing; to reach 40 MPs without losing any of them over the course of 4 cycles requires unfathomable luck. Many players will devote not only significant portions of their hazards to stopping the One Ring, but also significant portions of their resources to attaining it through influence. Marshalling Point gathering focuses on big-ticket MP sources that are not easily influenced away as a means of attaining the 40 MPs. Games that do not feature the One Ring may become a race to see who can complete a "quest" first. The advantage of this game type is that the broadest range of experience is possible -- almost any card can see the light of day; speed is not an issue, and competition to keep resources already gathered has prime importance. The disadvantage is, of course, the time investment. Many players will not like the length of a game even if they enjoy the options it enables.

## IV. Game Mechanics

### A. Timing And Actions

Taking Actions consists of two parts: Declaring an Action and Resolving an action.

*Editor's Note:* The timing rules are part of what make Middle Earth such an intricate game. They allow for a high level of precision and complexity. Unfortunately, ICE did not use a high level of precision and complexity when they worded the rules. Thus, they often used the words "action" and "effect" interchangeably, and often made logical inconsistencies in their rulings. There are broad debates about any number of cards under these rules. I present a few possible guidelines below for adjudicating actions, but remember that the most important thing is **to ensure that players in your tournament know which approach you are using before they construct their decks:**

*The Literal Approach:* This idea is that if you as a player must do something, it is an action. Otherwise, it is an effect. Discarding cards, tapping, rolling dice, etc. are actions under this guideline. Adding strikes to an attack is not. This guideline has the advantage of simplicity and the disadvantage of disregarding ICE's numerous comments on what constitutes an action.

*The Konrad Klar Approach:* Named for the player, this approach asks a basic question: if you cancel what caused the effect, does the effect go away or does it remain? Fell Winter gives each Border-Hold an automatic attack, but if you cancel it, Border-Holds no longer have an attack. Long Winter can send a company back to their site of origin, but if you cancel it, any company sent back to their site of origin still remains there. Fell Winter is an example of a card with an effect; Long Winter is an example of a card with an action.

*The Traditional Approach:* This simply makes a ruling based on past experience. This allows for quick decisions but has the manifest disadvantage of being arbitrary and highly subjective. The list of cards that have actions that can be responded to swiftly grows to immense proportions.

Sample actions include card play, tapping a card, rolling dice, etc. When you attempt an action, you *declare* the action. Once you have declared an action, your opponent may *respond* to that action by declaring his own action. Should he not wish to do so, you can respond to your own declaration. Such a sequence of declarations is called a *Chain of Effects*. Once neither player wishes to declare anymore actions, the declared actions begin *resolving* in reverse order, i.e. the last action declared is the first action to resolve. *Once a chain of effects has begun resolving, you may not declare any more actions until the chain of effects has completely resolved.* To resolve an action, simply implement the action you declared. Note that some actions which were legal upon declaration become illegal during resolution; this effect is commonly called *fizzling* the action. The most common example is using a resource to lower the hazard limit in response to a player declaring a hazard that reaches the hazard limit.

You must give your opponent a chance to respond to each of your actions unless said action declares and resolves immediately. Certain cards and rules indicate when an action declares and resolves immediately.

- Creature cards must start a chain of effects. (MELE, 69)
- If a card specifies that more than one action occurs when the card is itself resolved in a chain of effects, all of these actions are to be resolved in the card's chain of effects uninterrupted and in the order listed on the card. No actions may be declared to occur between these multiple actions. The actions listed on the card are considered to have been declared in the reverse order as they are printed. As an exception, in one of the effects of a card is an attack, cards may be played that cancel the attack, cancel one of the strikes, or that otherwise are playable during the strike sequence. (MEBA)

## B. Active Conditions of Actions

## C. Actions Caused as a Result of Passive Conditions

To repeat the definition from the glossary:

**Condition, Passive:** An action that causes another action to take effect. The triggered action will be the first declared action in the chain of effects immediately following the chain of effects that contained the passive condition.

*Editor's Note:* Because ICE never provided a solid definition of an action, Passive Conditions are very shaky ground, indeed. Remember two important things:

- If there is no action, there is no passive condition. Make sure all players are aware of what definition of an action you are using.
- The reasoning for Passive Conditions immediately initiating a chain of effects after the one that triggers them is simple:
  - A passive condition normally is triggered by an action resolving.
  - If an action is resolving, though, then a Chain of Effects is resolving. New actions may **not** be declared while a chain of effects is resolving.
  - Therefore, the declaration of the Passive Condition's action is delayed until the chain of effects that triggered it has finished resolving.

Keep in mind that this is without a doubt the most controversial, confusing, difficult, and at times broken concept in the game. Depending on what your definition of an action is, certain cards become effectively useless (e.g. In The Heart Of His Realm, where current rulings enable you to respond to moving in a Dark-domain by playing a ritual to discard the card that is supposed to prevent you from playing rituals while moving in a Dark-domain). The single greatest thing you can do for players in a tournament is make it clear what definition of an action your are using and then hold to it, regardless of the consequences.

## D. Tapping and Untapping

- To tap a card, rotate it. To untap a card, revert it to unrotated. (METW, 15)
- If an action requires an entity to tap, that entity must be untapped when the action is declared.

## E. Healing

- To heal a character, move them from the wounded position to the tapped position. (METW, 23)

## F. Playing Character Cards

### 1. Playing Avatars

- During your organization phase, you may play an avatar if you do not already have one in play and have not already played a character this turn. (METW, 22)
- If your avatar is a Wizard, you may bring him into play at his Home Site or at Rivendell.
- If your avatar is a Ringwraith, you may bring him into play at his Home Site or Minas Morgul. Discard any corresponding Nazgûl hazard manifestation. (MELE, 78)
- A Fallen Wizard may only start at his home site. (MEWH)
- The Balrog may come into play at the Under-gates.

### 2. Playing Characters

- During your organization phase, you may play a character if you have not already played a character this turn. (METW, 22)
- The Balrog can play or discard a non-unique character with a mind of three or less in addition to a normal character. The normal requirements for playing the character must still be met.
- When a Balrog player plays a non-unique character with a mind of three or less, that character may come from his hand, discard pile, or sideboard.
- Such a character may come into play at his home site or at a haven. (METW, 22)
- An agent may only come into play at his home site. (MELE, 58)
- If your avatar is in play, either your avatar must be at the site where the character comes into play or the character must be played as a follower. (METW, 54)
- You must have enough influence available to control the character. (METW, 22)
- A Fallen Wizard may not bring into play any character with a mind greater than five.
- A Fallen Wizard may not play Orcs or Trolls without the appropriate stage resource.
- A Balrog's characters with a home site of "Any Dark-Hold" instead have a home site of "Any non-Dark-hold Under-deeps site" instead.

### 3. Playing Ringwraith Followers

If the following conditions are met, you may play a Ringwraith Follower:

- Your Ringwraith is already in play.
- Your Ringwraith is at a Darkhaven **or** at the Ringwraith's home site.
- You have the card of the additional Ringwraith in your hand.
- You have a card or ability allowing the Ringwraith follower to be played.

*Editor's Note:* Unlike the rules for character play and avatar play, the rules for Ringwraith Followers mention no specific phase requirement. It is up to the tournament organizer to decide whether Ringwraith Followers are playable during any phase subject to the requirements above or whether they follow the phase requirements of the two other kinds of character play. Note that many abilities which enable the play of Ringwraith Followers already specify a phase (e.g. Witch-King, Khamul, They Ride Together, etc.), so allowing Ringwraith followers to be played during any phase subject to the above limitations is not necessarily too powerful.

### *Controversial Cards: Uvatha the Ringwraith*

Uvatha the Ringwraith states, "He may join another Ringwraith's company during your organization phase and requires no influence to control." This ability means that once he comes into play, he is a Ringwraith Follower. The question is whether his card overrides the site restriction. This is only of great concern if there is an actively moving Ringwraith. Since moving a Ringwraith efficiently is task unto itself, it does not seem too overpowered to allow Uvatha to join a Ringwraith at any site, but it is something to consider.

- Play of a Ringwraith Follower discards any corresponding Nazgûl hazard manifestation. (MELE, 78)
- Each Ringwraith Follower requires one point of Direct Influence to control, and must be controlled by your Ringwraith.
- A Ringwraith Follower may not use any of his special abilities. A Ringwraith follower may use magic as indicated on his card. Uvatha's ability to join another Ringwraith's company is an exception to this rule.

#### *4. Organizing Characters and Companies*

- Companies at a Haven may be any size.
- Companies not at a Haven have a maximum size of 7.
- Hobbits count as half characters for the purpose of company size.
- Two companies may not leave the same site and travel to the same site in the same turn.
- Unless at a Haven, Ringwraiths may only be in a company with other Ringwraiths.
- Orc Scouts only count as half character for the purpose of company size.
- Unless at a haven, Orcs and Trolls may not be in a company with Dúnedain, Dwarves, Elves, or Hobbits. (MEWH, MELE)
- Unless at a haven, a company can only contain one Leader.
- If two companies attempt to join at a non-haven site and a company composition rule is violated, one of the companies must immediately return to their site of origin. Any effect which would cause such a violation is immediately canceled. (MELE, 57).

#### *5. Playing Characters as the Result of a Successful Influence Attempt Against Your Opponent*

- During the site phase, you may attempt to influence away one of your opponent's characters if the following apply:
  - You have not made an influence attempt against your opponent or attacked your opponent with a company this turn;
  - It is not your first turn;
  - It is not the turn your played your avatar; and
  - One of your characters is at the same site as one of your opponent's characters.
- To make the influence attempt, do the following:
  - Tap the character who will make the influence attempt.
  - Make a roll.
  - Add your character's unused Direct Influence.
  - Subtract your opponent's unused General Influence.
  - If your opponent's character is a follower, subtract the controlling character's unused direct influence.

- Subtract the result of a roll made by your opponent.
- Apply any other modifiers (from cards or abilities).
- If the result is greater than the character's mind, the character is discarded as well as all non-follower cards he controls.
- You may reveal an identical character card for this attempt. In this case, the character's mind attribute is treated as zero, and you may play the character at the site if you have enough influence to control them.

### 6. Discarding Characters

- During your organization phase, you may discard a character if the following apply:
  - The character is not your avatar.
  - The character is at his home site or a haven.
  - You have not already played a character in the organization phase. If you discard a character, you may not play any character (even an avatar) during the organization phase.
  - When the Balrog discards a character from play, he may also play or discard a non-unique character with a mind of three or less. All normal restrictions for discarding a character apply.
  - You **must** take this action when you do not have enough available influence to control all your characters. In this case, the character need not be at a haven.

### G. Playing Ally Cards

- To play an ally, the following must apply:
  - It must be during the site phase. (MELE 42)
  - The company must have already faced any automatic attacks at the site. (MELE 15)
  - You must be at the site indicated on the ally's card. (MELE 42)
  - To play the ally, tap a character and place the ally under that character's control. Tap the site.
  - For a Fallen Wizard to play an Ally, the alignment of the resource and site must match. For these purposes, Wizardhavens/Stage Resources count as either alignment.
  - You may also attempt to influence an ally away from your opponent. Follow the rules for influencing your opponent's follower.

### H. Playing Faction Cards

- To play a faction, the following must apply:
  - It must be during the site phase. (MELE 42)
  - The company must have already faced any automatic attacks at the site. (MELE 15)
  - You must be at the site indicated on the faction's card. (MELE 42)
  - For a Fallen Wizard to play a Faction, the alignment of the resource and site must match. For these purposes, Wizardhavens/Stage Resources count as either alignment.
- If the above apply, follow this procedure:
  - Reveal the faction from your hand.
  - Tap a character to make an influence check.
  - Make a roll. Add the character's unused Direct Influence.
  - Add any modifications listed on the faction card.
  - Apply any other modifiers from cards.

- If the result is higher than the number listed on the faction, you successfully play the faction. Tap the site.
- If the result is not higher, discard the faction you revealed.
- You may also attempt to influence a faction away from your opponent. Follow the rules for influencing your opponent's follower. The following exceptions apply.
- You must be at the site where the faction is playable.
- Instead of a mind value, you use the number required to influence the faction.

## I. Playing Item Cards

### 1. *Playing Item Cards*

- To play an item card, the following must apply:
  - It must be during the site phase.
  - The company must have faced any automatic attacks at the site.
  - You must be at a site that indicates that the item is playable there (in the case of greater, major, minor, and gold ring items). Special Items indicate at which sites they are playable.
  - Tap a character. Place the item under the character's control. Tap the site.
  - For a Fallen Wizard to play an Item, the alignment of the resource and site must match. For these purposes, Wizardhavens/Stage Resources count as either alignment.
- You may also attempt to influence an item away from your opponent. Follow the rules for influencing your opponent's follower, but the following exceptions apply:
  - Use the mind attribute of the item's controlling character.
  - You **must** reveal an identical item to make this attempt. The item need not be played with the influencing character if the attempt is successful, however.
  - You may not make an influence attempt on an item with a permanent event on it. (MEDM)
- In addition to the above method for playing items, a character may tap to play a minor item when a resource is played that taps their current site. Minor items need not be playable at the site.
- If you are at any Under-deeps site, this minor item may instead be any item playable at the site. (MEDM)
- Ring Special Items (Magic Rings, Spirit Rings, Dwarven Rings, Lesser Rings, The One Ring) do not tap a site when played and do not require an untapped site. Instead, you must test a Gold Ring Item you have in play using a Test card or ability. Gold Ring Items list which Ring Special Items you may play based on the result of a roll and modifiers.
- Any Gold Ring Item in a Ringwraith's company is automatically tested at the beginning of the end-of-turn phase. Apply a -2 modification to the roll of any ring test in a Ringwraith's company. This rule also applies to the Balrog.
- If you are a Ringwraith player, any Gold Ring Item at Barad-Dur is automatically tested at the beginning of the end-of-turn phase. Apply a -3 modification to the roll.
- A Gold Ring stored at a Darkhaven is automatically tested with a -2 to the roll.
- Mind Rings are minor items and are played as such. They are not special items. (MELE, 45)

- A Hero Gold Ring tested by a Fallen Wizard player has an additional -1 to the roll.
- A Fallen Wizard may replace a Gold Ring Item with either a hero or minion Ring Special Item after a test.

## 2. *Using Item Cards*

Any of the following constitute the use of an item card:

- Discarding an item for an effect.
- Applying an enhancement to a character attribute from an item.
- Tapping an item for an effect.

A character may bear multiple items of a given type. However, a character may only use one weapon, armor, shield, and helmet item at a time.

- A Ringwraith may bear, but may not use items. This rule also applies to the Balrog.
- If you are Hero, ignore all bonuses and special abilities from Minion Items you play.
- If you are Minion, ignore all bonuses and special abilities from Hero Items you play.
- A Fallen Wizard's non-Orc, non-Troll characters may freely use both hero and minion items.
- A Fallen Wizard's Orc and Troll characters may bear Hero Items, but ignore all bonuses and special abilities of the item.

## J. **Playing Resource Permanent Events**

- Unless otherwise stated, a card is playable only if its effect applies to an **existing** situation. A card may be played if it has a **potential** effect.
- The effects of a resource permanent event are immediately implemented. A permanent event remains in play until it is discarded.
- Certain resource events are playable during the site phase. If such a resource event taps the site, it requires an untapped site.
- 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 are discarded when a company is split. (MEDM)
- A Stage Resource Permanent Event may only be played during the Organization phase unless otherwise specified. (MEWH)
- You may not play a Hero Resource Event on a company with an Orc or Troll in it.
- A Hero Resource that requires a character with a specific skill may not use an Orc or Troll character to fulfill that requirement.
- An Orc or Troll may not tap to initiate an effect from a hero resource.

## K. **Playing Resource Long Events**

- Unless otherwise stated, a card is playable only if its effect applies to an **existing** situation. A card may be played if it has a **potential** effect. Long events may always be played. (MELE, 87)
- The effects of a resource long event are immediately implemented when it is played. You may only play a resource long event during your long event phase.
- A Hero Resource that requires a character with a specific skill may not use an Orc or Troll character to fulfill that requirement.
- An Orc or Troll may not tap to initiate an effect from a hero resource.

## L. Playing Resource Short Events

- Unless otherwise stated, a card is playable only if its effect applies to an **existing** situation. A card may be played if it has a **potential** effect. (MELE, 40)
- A Hero Resource that requires a character with a specific skill may not use an Orc or Troll character to fulfill that requirement.
- An Orc or Troll may not tap to initiate an effect from a hero resource.

### *Controversial Cards:*

*A Chance Meeting* states, "A character (even a Hobbit) may be brought into play with direct influence at any Free-hold, Border-hold, or Ruins & Lairs."

To many player's minds, this card is only playable when you would otherwise be able to play a character. This is because a card's effect must apply to an existing situation. If the ability to play a character does not exist, then a card that modifies the method of playing characters does not apply and may not be played unless it is stated otherwise on the card. However, *A Chance Meeting* lacks any statement indicating the conditions under which it may be played, so it reverts to default.

Against this, players who purchased a Player's Guide supplement when ME:TW was first released read that the card could be played at any time. This is also the current official ruling, but it is widely disputed.

Unquestionably, the ability to bring a character into play at any time is disastrous for balance. It circumvents the point of automatic attacks supercharges the Balrog's character playing ability, and generally hampers the player who neglects to include such cards in their deck.

When organizing a tournament, make sure all players are aware of the current official ruling before building their decks. If you have decided to adopt a stricter interpretation of the rules, make sure all players are equally aware.

- The effects of a resource short-event are immediately implemented, then it is discarded.
- Certain resource events are playable during the site phase. If such a resource event taps the site, it requires an untapped site.

## M. Playing Hazard Creatures

- You may use a creature card to attack one of your opponent's companies if the following conditions apply:
  - It is that company's movement/hazard phase.
  - A creature card's declaration must start a chain of effects.
  - There must be at least one less hazard declared than the current hazard limit (unless the creature does not count against the hazard limit).
  - Upon resolution of the creature card's declaration, there must be fewer hazards resolved than the

hazard limit (unless the creature does not count against the hazard limit).

- At least one of the region symbols on the creature's card matches one of the region types the company moved through this turn. (If two region symbols of the same type appear, a company must have moved through at least two, etc.) **or**
- At least one of the site types on the creature's card matches the site type of the company's new or current site **or**
- The company's site of origin or new site are in a region where the creature's text indicates they may be played **or**
- The company uses region movement and moves through a region where the creature's text indicates they may be played **or**
- The company's new or current site is mentioned in the creature's text as a site where the creature may be played.
- If a creature satisfies more than one of these conditions, you must choose which condition the attack is "keyed to" when the creature card is played. Certain cards have effects based on what a hazard creature is keyed to. If the condition that the creature was keyed to changes (e.g. a creature is keyed to a Border-Hold and the Border-Hold changes to a Ruins & Lairs) before the creature resolves, the creature fizzles. This keyability is checked before each attack of the creature.
- If a creature is successfully played, the company faces an attack, and combat ensues. See IV.P: Combat As The Result of Creatures
- Certain cards give you the ability to attack with creatures according to special conditions set forth on the cards themselves. Such attacks are not necessarily keyed to anything.
- A Fallen Wizard's overt companies are considered minion companies for hazard creatures that can only attack minion companies.

## N. Playing Hazard Events

- Unless otherwise stated, a card is playable only if its effect applies to an **existing** situation. A card may be played if it has a **potential** effect. Long events may always be played (subject to the hazard limit). (MELE, 87)
- You may play hazard events if the following apply:
- It is the movement/hazard phase of one of your opponent's companies.
- At declaration, there is at least one less hazard declared than the hazard limit (unless the hazard does not count against the hazard limit).
- At resolution, there are fewer hazards resolved than the hazard limit (unless the hazard does not count against the hazard limit).
- A Fallen Wizard's overt companies are considered minion companies for hazard events that affect minion companies.
- If a hazard has a target, that target must include the current company or an entity associated with that company.

### *Controversial Cards: Adunaphel*

In contrast to cards like New Moon, which contains the phrasing "tap *a* character," Adunaphel contains the phrase "tap *any* character." There is doubt in many minds whether this phrasing is meant to override the above restriction. A literal reading of the card and comparison with other tapping cards/cards that use the word "any" support this thesis. The current official ruling is that Adunaphel must target a character in the current company. If, as a tournament organizer, you decide to allow Adunaphel to target any character as per the card text, bear in mind that you drastically increase the power of this hazard to the point that it will be even more overplayed than it already is.

## **O. Playing Agent Hazards**

Agents are a special kind of hazard that acts somewhat like a creature with the following differences:

- An agent normally remains in play until it is eliminated.
- Agents only count as half a creature if using the minimum creature requirement. (MEDM)
- Agents are always located at a site. They need not always have their location represented by a site card.
- Once an agent has been revealed or has moved to a site that is not their home site, one of your site cards must be used for this purpose. A face-up agent's site card must also be face up.
- Agents may not move in companies.
- If a Unique agent is in play face-up and a second, identical agent is revealed, the second agent is discarded.
- Your agents untap during your untap phase.
- An agent is played face down and untapped. The agent is at one of his home sites (no card required).
- Agents may take actions during the movement/hazard phase. Effects which are initiated by an agent that are not Agent Actions do not count against the hazard limit. Each of your agents that was in play at the start of the turn may use one against the hazard limit to take one of the following actions:
  - A tapped or untapped agent may move to a non-Haven, non-Under-deeps site in the same region or an adjacent region. The agent taps if not already tapped. A face-down agent must keep all sites he has moved though face down. A face-up agent need only keep his current site with him. A face-down agent may move back to his previous site by removing the most recent site card played on him.
  - An agent may return to his home site by removing all site cards on him.
  - An agent may tap to make certain creatures playable at a site as outlined below:
    - An agent may tap at a Ruins & Lairs, Shadow-hold, Or Dark-hold to enable you to attack a company with a non-unique creature (regardless of what they are keyed to) of the same type as the site's automatic-attack. (MEDM)
    - An agent at his home site may tap (and reveal himself) to make the following creatures playable depending on the site type:
      - Free Hold: Men, Dwarves, Elves, Dúnedain, Hobbits
      - Border-Hold: Orcs, Nazgûl, Men, Dwarves, Elves, Dúnedain, Hobbits
      - Ruins & Lairs: Orcs, Nazgûl, Trolls
      - Shadow-hold: Orcs, Nazgûl, Undead, Trolls
      - Dark-hold: Orcs, Nazgûl, Trolls
- A wounded agent may heal (to a tapped state).

- A tapped Agent may untap. (CRF)
- A revealed agent may be turned face down, becoming unrevealed. His site card is also turned face down.
- Certain cards can allow an agent to take more than one action in a turn.
- A Fallen Wizard player's agents must use Hero Site Cards. (MEWH)

*Editor's Note:* According to these rules, tapping an agent to make use of an ability on the agent's card is not an action. Therefore, an agent who has two actions might potentially move, untap, and tap to use their ability in the same turn.

- Revealing an agent means turning an agent-face up along with his sites.
  - Certain cards can force an agent to be revealed.
  - You may reveal an agent at any time; this does not count against the hazard limit.
  - This is not an agent action.
  - You must reveal an agent when the agent attacks or makes an influence attempt.
  - Certain cards specify that an agent must tap for the card to take effect. An agent who taps in this fashion is revealed.
  - If an agent is revealed before he has moved, choose a site from his list of home sites that the agent is located at. Place the appropriate site from your location deck with the agent. If you do not have the appropriate site in your location deck, discard the agent at the end of the current turn.
  - If an agent is revealed after he had moved, the first site card played must be his home site **or** a site in a region adjacent to the region containing his home site **or** it must be the same site card that was turned face down when he was last unrevealed. Any further site cards must be in the same or adjacent region as the site card before it. If an agent's movement was or has become illegal, the agent is discarded and has no effect. When an agent is revealed and his movement has been verified to be legal, all sites except his current site are returned to the location deck.
- Attacking with an Agent
  - During the site phase, each of your agents may attack a company at the same site if the company enters the site. The attack is enacted immediately following any automatic-attacks. See also IV.R: Combat as the Result of Agent Attacks
  - Such an attack is not an agent action.
  - Certain cards/abilities allow an agent to attack during a company's movement hazard phase at the company's new or current site. Such an attack is not an agent action.
- Influencing with an Agent
  - Certain cards and abilities allow an agent to make an influence attempt. Such an attempt is not an Agent Action. Such an attempt is handled as an influence attempt against the target player's cards (see previous sections for rules on influencing characters, allies, factions, and items, respectively) with the following exceptions:
    - The agent takes the place of the influencing character.
    - You may not play resources to aid the attempt, but you may play hazards that aid the attempt so long as there is available hazard limit.
    - If your agent is at his home site, his Direct Influence is modified by a further +2.
    - If the target character has the same home site as the agent, their mind attribute is treated as zero and the roll is modified by a further +2.
    - If the target ally is playable at the agent's home site, their mind attribute is treated as zero and the roll is modified by a further +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 the roll is modified by a further +2.

#### **P. Combat As The Result of Creatures**

To resolve combat as the result of creature attacks:

- Determine the number of attacks the company will face (listed on the hazard creature card). The defender may play cards to cancel the attack at this point. If all of a creature's attacks are canceled, discard the creature. The attacker and defender may play cards to modify the attack. If any attacks are not cancelled, repeat the following process for all attacks of the creature:
- Unless there is an effect which allows a player to assign the strikes of the attack:
  - The defender chooses which (if any) untapped characters will be assigned strikes;
  - The attacker assigns all remaining strikes to defending characters. No character may be assigned more than one strike.
  - In the order the defender chooses, perform a Strike Sequence (see Glossary) for each character assigned a strike.
- If all strikes of the creature's attacks that were assigned are defeated, and at least one strike was assigned, the creature is defeated.

After all attacks of the creature have been faced:

- If any of the creature's strikes were detainment, the creature is discarded.
- If the creature was not defeated, discard it.
- If you are Hero and the creature's card does not have a \* next to its value, place the creature card in your Marshalling Point pile -- you have earned its kill MPs.
- If you are Hero and the creature's card has a \* next to its value, remove it from play.
- If you are Minion and the Creature's card does not have a \* next to its value, it is removed from play or taken as a trophy.
- If you are Minion and the Creature's card has a \* next to its value, you gain the kill MPs and the creature may be taken as a trophy.

#### **Q. Combat As The Result of Automatic Attacks**

To resolve combat as the result of automatic attacks:

- A character at their home site (so long as it is a named home site, e.g. not "Any Dark-Hold") may tap to cancel an automatic-attack at their home site.
- Determine the number of attacks the company will face (listed on the site and modified by any hazard effects). The defender may play cards to cancel the attack at this point. If all of a creature's attacks are canceled, discard the creature. The defender may play cards to modify the attack **except for cards which modify strike assignment/number of strikes**. If any attacks are not cancelled, repeat the following process for all attacks of the creature:
- Unless there is an effect which allows a player to assign the strikes of the attack:
  - The defender chooses which (if any) untapped characters will be assigned strikes;
  - The attacker assigns all remaining strikes to defending characters. No character may be assigned more than one strike.
  - In the order the defender chooses, perform a Strike Sequence (see Glossary) for each character assigned a strike.
- If all strikes of an automatic attack that were assigned are defeated, and at least one strike was assigned, the attack is defeated.
- If a creature is used as an automatic attack, it is discarded after the attack ends regardless of the

result of the combat. (MEDM)

## **R. Combat As The Result of Agent Attacks**

To resolve combat as the result of agent attacks:

- The defender may play cards to cancel the attack. The defender may also play cards which modify the attack, including strike assignment cards.
- When the agent's strikes have been assigned, follow the strike sequence with the following exceptions:
  - The prowess for each of the agent's strikes is modified by a roll. A separate roll is made for each strike.
  - A wounded agent's prowess is modified by -2.
  - If the agent was face down when the attack is declared, one of the following applies:
    - An agent at his home site receives +5 prowess, +1 Body, and he chooses defending characters.
    - An agent otherwise receives +2 prowess.
  - If the agent was face up and at his home site when the attack was declared, he receives +2 prowess and +1 body.
  - If at least one strike fails, the agent is wounded. If all strikes are defeated, the agent is eliminated and you receive their character MPs as kill MPs if you are a Hero and you did not play the agent.

## **S. Combat As The Result of an Opposing Company (Company vs. Company Combat)**

Certain companies may attack other companies. The rules below explain which companies may attack other companies and under what circumstances:

- It must be during the site phase.
- You must be at the same site as one of your opponent's companies.
- You must have entered the site.
- You cannot have already made an influence attempt against this opponent on that turn.
- A minion player's companies may attack a hero player's companies and vice versa.
- A Fallen Wizard's non-overt companies may attack minion companies and vice versa.
- A Fallen Wizard's overt companies may attack any company and be attacked by any company.
- The attack is declared at the end of the site phase following all other actions your company takes during the site phase.

To resolve combat as the result of an opposing company:

- When one of your companies is attacked by an opponent's company during their site phase, you are considered to be the defending company.
- Your opponent's company is considered to be making a single attack with one strike for each member of the attacking company.
- Hazards have no effect on this attack.
- You may attempt to cancel the attack. If a cancellation effect only cancels a certain type of attack (e.g. orcs, men), then all members of the attacking company must be of one of the types listed on the effect.
- If the attack is not canceled, follow this process for assigning strikes:
  - The defender chooses which of his untapped characters will be the target of any strikes.
  - The attacker chooses which defending characters will be the target of strikes from his

- remaining untapped characters.
  - The defender assigns any remaining strikes.
  - Each character may only be the target of one strike.
- Follow the strike sequence for each strike with the following exceptions:
  - Each player's character is considered to be facing a strike, and applies the relevant modifier for such.
  - Neither player may play hazards to affect the strike.
  - Both players may play resources that affect a strike. The attacker must play all his resources before the defender plays any of his.
  - Only the attacker may assign unused strikes as a -1 penalty.
  - Only the defender may tap characters to support the prowess of the character facing the strike.
  - Both players make a roll to add to their modified prowess.
  - Whichever character has the lower prowess is wounded and a body check is made.
- You receive kill Marshalling Points equal to the value of any of your opponent's characters that you eliminate during this combat.

## T. Corruption

Corruption measures how close a character is to losing their loyalty to their cause. The following rules apply to corruption:

- A Corruption card is a card with the Corruption keyword. Only one corruption card may be played on given character during a turn.
- Cards which force corruption checks are not corruption cards.
- Certain cards modify corruption checks rather than having a corruption point value. A card which modifies corruption checks is not assumed to be a source of corruption unless otherwise indicated.
- Ringwraiths are immune to corruption and never make corruption checks. Corruption cards may not be played on Ringwraiths. This rule also applies to the Balrog.
- Corruption cards that may not be played on Dwarves may also not be played on Orcs. (MELE, 35)
- Corruption points on all non-item stage resource cards apply to your Fallen Wizard.

When a corruption check is called for, follow this process:

- You may play any cards which might modify the corruption check and are legally playable.
- Make a roll.
- Add any modifiers from cards/abilities. A character may tap to give a +1 modifier to a corruption check made by another character in his company.
- A character in a Ringwraith's company receives a +2 to corruption checks.
- Compare the total with the character's current corruption point total. The result depends on the character and your avatar:
  - If the result is greater than the corruption point total, the corruption check succeeds and there is no effect.
  - If the result is equal to or one less than the corruption point total **and** it is a Hero character, the character is discarded, along with all non-follower cards he controls. In this case, if the character is a Wizard, you lose the game. If an effect prevents your character from being discarded, the corruption check is considered to have succeeded, and you do not discard your character.

- If the result is equal to or one less than the corruption point total **and** the character is Minion, Fallen Wizard, and/or Orc or Troll, then the character taps. The corruption check is considered to have succeeded.
  - If the result is two or more less than the character's corruption point total, the character is eliminated and all non-follower cards he controls are discarded. If the character is your avatar, you lose the game.
- When attempting to remove a corruption card that states you may tap to make a roll to remove it, a character may elect not to tap and instead receive a -3 penalty to the roll. A character may not attempt to remove a given corruption card more than once per turn.

## U. Movement

There are four types of movement in the game: Starter Movement, Region Movement, Under-deeps Movement, and Special Movement. Movement is the process of replacing a party's current site with a different site. Movement is most commonly decided upon during the organization phase and enacted during the movement/hazard phase, but there are exceptions. Note that a company is not required to move at all on a given turn. Bear in mind that the following points apply to all movement:

- When you have moved to a new site, your site of origin is discarded if it is tapped (unless it is a haven or a haven card).
- You may not play sites from your discard pile.
- If one version of a site is in the discard pile, you may not play a different version of that site from your location deck.
- The number of cards you draw is in the lighter box. The number of cards your opponent draws in the darker box.
- You may only draw cards for a moving company on your turn if the company contains a character with 3 mind or greater or an avatar.
- In order to move from a Darkhaven to a non-Darkhaven site, a Ringwraith must be in a mode (e.g. Black Rider, Fell Rider, or Heralded Lord) regardless of the type of movement used. (MELE, 25) A Ringwraith may freely move to a Darkhaven regardless of mode. The rules contain no provision for a Ringwraith to move from a non-Darkhaven to non-Darkhaven site.
- Fallen Wizards:
  - May use either the Hero or Minion versions of a Ruins & Lairs.
  - Must use hero sites for their non-overt companies.
  - Must use minion sites for Border-holds, Free-holds, and hero Havens if a company is overt.
  - Must use hero sites for Shadow-holds, Dark-holds, and minion Darkhavens if a company is overt.

### 1. Starter Movement

To use starter movement:

- Each site has a nearest site listed for it. In the case of havens, there may be multiple nearest sites listed.
- You may move to any site that is listed as the nearest site for your current site. Play the site card face down with the company during the organization phase.
- Reveal the card during the movement/hazard phase when it is that company's movement/hazard phase and draw cards. If you are moving to a haven site, you draw the amount of cards indicated on the site you moved *from*, otherwise you draw cards based on the site you are moving *to*.
- The site path is listed on the non-haven card unless you are moving from a haven to

- haven, in which case it is listed on the haven card.
- A Ringwraith's site path may not contain Coastal Sea Regions.
- A Fallen Wizard player may not use Starter movement.
- A Balrog player may not use Starter movement.

## 2. Region Movement

To use region movement:

- Play the region card containing your current site face down. You may play a region card face down that is adjacent to the last region you played. Repeat this to a maximum of four region cards. You may not move through a given region twice in the same movement.
- After you have played the region cards you wish, play a site located in the last region card you played.
- During the movement/hazard phase, reveal the site and the region cards when it is the company's movement/hazard phase. Draw cards based on the site being moved to unless it is a haven, in which case you draw cards based on the site being moved from.
- Fallen Wizard players' companies always draw cards based on the site being moved to. (MEWH)
- Balrog players' companies always draw cards based on the site being moved to. (MEBA)
- The company's site path is denoted by the region cards. A site's site path is denoted on the site card in all cases (some hazards refer to a site's site path rather than the company's site path).
- If an effect allows you to move more than four regions, you are still limited to a maximum of six. (METD)
- A Ringwraith company may not use Region Movement.
- A company with the Balrog in it may not use Region Movement.

### *Editor's Note: The Use Of Maps*

Region cards can get bulky and time-consuming. Players and tournament organizers may agree to use a standard map instead of region cards to the delight of all involved, but bear in mind that this is a *representation* of using region cards to move. The distinction is unimportant in most cases, but if a question of movement arises regarding region movement, bear in mind that the player *must have been able to play the region cards in the organization phase*.

## 3. Under-deeps Movement

Under-deeps movement is a form of movement that goes from site to site without any intervening regions. Each Under-deeps site lists adjacent sites. Movement to or from an under-deeps site is only allowed to occur between adjacent sites. In addition, the following rules apply:

- Eagle-Mounts and Gwaihir cannot be used to move to or from an Under-deeps site. (MEDM)
- A company moving to and/or from an Under-deeps site has no site path. (MEDM)
- Environment Cards which change site type cannot be used to change the site type of an Under-deeps site.
- Under-deeps sites are not located in any region.

When an Under-deeps site is revealed during the movement/hazard phase, you do not automatically draw cards. Instead, you must make a roll and add any relevant modifiers to your Under-

deeps movement (certain cards can give bonuses or penalties). The result must at least equal the number in parenthesis *on the site of origin* for the adjacent site.

- You need not roll to move from a Surface Site to an Under-deeps site. You do need to roll to move from an Under-deeps site to a surface site. (MEDM)
- Fallen Wizard players' companies always draw cards based on the site being moved to. (MEWH)
- Balrog players' companies always draw cards based on the site being moved to. (MEBA)

#### 4. Special Movement

Special movement encompasses cards which allow you to circumvent the normal movement processes. An example of such a card is Eagle-Mounts. Eagle-Mounts is played during the organization phase and allows the company to move to any site that is not a Shadow-hold or Dark-hold, and prevents the hazard player from playing certain creatures. This movement is neither Starter nor Region nor Under-deeps movement. Unless otherwise noted, a card which permits special movement enables that movement during the movement/hazard phase.

#### *Editor's Note: Special Movement vs. Cards Whose Effect Depends On A Site Path*

These two types of cards are distinct from one another, and certain rules affect each. As examples of Special Movement cards, we have Eagle-Mounts, Great Road, Forod, etc. As examples of "Site Path Effect" cards, we have Fair Travels in the Wilderness, Washed and Refreshed, etc.

The critical distinction is that the former *create* a site path. They do not *depend* on it to function. Fair Travels in the Wilderness may have a variable effect or indeed even none at all depending on what site path the company chooses, but it in no way determines that site path.

#### 5. Entering A Site And On-Guard Cards

This is a company's alternative to doing nothing during the site phase. When you enter a site, you first face the automatic attacks. Then, you face possible agent attacks. Also, at any point, your opponent may reveal an appropriate On-Guard Card he has placed there.

On-guard cards are subject to the following rules:

- You may only play one on-guard card per movement/hazard phase per company.
- The card is played face-down at the site and counts as a declared hazard against the company.
- You may play any card in your hand as an on-guard card.
- If the card is a creature, can be keyed to the site, and the site in question has an automatic attack when the company enters it, you may reveal it. The on-guard creature attacks after all automatic-attacks have been faced.
- If the card is a hazard event, you may reveal it if the following are true:
  - The company plays a card that will tap the site when it resolves.

*Editor's Note:* Yes, this means that on-guard cards cannot be revealed at tapped sites!

- The card could have been played on the company/character during the movement/hazard phase.

- It affects a character/the company.
- It does not:
  - Return a company to its site of origin.
  - Tap the company's site.
  - Potentially remove a character from a company, besides combat or corruption checks.
  - Force a company to do nothing during its site phase.
  - Directly tap a character in the company.
- As a special exception to the above, a card that affects an influence check or that will only take effect if the influence attempt succeeds may be revealed.
- Note that certain cards specify that they may be played on-guard and under what circumstances they may be revealed. Such specifications override any contradictory rules above.

A revealed on-guard card takes effect as though it were declared *and resolved* immediately *prior* to the chain of effects during which it was revealed. This means:

- You cannot respond to actions created by an on-guard card. There is no way to "fizzle" an on-guard card.
- A character might become ineligible to play the resource that they were attempting to play. For example, if you reduce the prowess of a character attempting to play *Thong of Fire*, they may become unable to control the item, which requires its bearer to have a prowess of 6.

## V. Prisoners

Certain hazards can cause a character to be taken prisoner. Such hazards affect an attack or a strike. These hazards are called hazard hosts, and will take a character prisoner at a site as specified on the card -- such a site is called the rescue site.

A hazard host may only be played if a rescue site is available under the following restrictions:

- Any restrictions on the hazard host must be observed.
- A rescue site must be taken from your location deck, not your discard pile.
- If the 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 thereunto.
- If the host is played on a character using starter movement, the rescue site must be located in the region containing the site of origin or the new site.
- If the host is played on a character that is not moving, the rescue site must be located in the same region as the character's site.
- If the hazard host is played on a character moving to an adjacent site of an Under-deeps site, the rescue site can be the adjacent Under-deeps site. (MEDM)

<p><i>Editor's Note:</i> This means that a character in the Under-deeps that is not moving cannot be taken prisoner!</p>
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*Controversial Cards:* To Get You Away allows prisoner-taking regardless of the above restrictions. The problem comes in that the Agent must also move to the same site, and thus two competing priorities are set up for the use of the site card.

Given that ICE intended To Get You Away to work, it is reasonable to allow both To Get You Away and the Agent in question to use the same site card as an implicit effect of the card.

The following effects occur when a character is taken prisoner:

- They are worth negative marshalling points. If a character is eliminated while a prisoner, they continue to be worth negative marshalling points.
- While a prisoner, a character cannot take any actions (including healing or untapping). They cannot be affected except by cards that specifically affect prisoners.
- A character taken prisoner does not cost influence to control.
- All non-Ring, non-Follower cards the character controls are discarded.

There are many possible ways of rescuing a prisoner:

- Any card which discards the hazard host causes a character to form a new company at the rescue site.
- Whenever there are no characters off to the side with the hazard host, the hazard host is discarded and the rescue site returns to the location deck.
- A company may elect to move to the rescue site in order to rescue the prisoner. In order to do so, follow this process:
  - It must be during the site phase.
  - The company must have entered the site.
  - The company must face any rescue attacks as specified on the hazard host.
  - At this point, a character can tap to rescue all characters taken prisoner under the hazard host. Such characters immediately join the company and begin counting against influence again (which must be reconciled during the organization phase).
  - If a character is successfully rescued, the rescue site taps if it was untapped.
  - If a character is successfully rescued, one minor item may be played with an untapped member of the rescuing company.
  - If a player does not have the necessary site in his location deck, use the site with the hazard host to show movement. The site in this case is not available for any other purpose, and is returned to the host's player's location deck when it is no longer being used to show movement. (MEDM)

### **Card-Specific Errata and Rulings:**

The following cards have no effect on a Minion player:

- Bane of the Ithil-stone
- Foul Fumes
- Mûmak
- The Nazgûl Are Abroad
- Winds of Wrath
- Worn and Famished

- All Events that require an agent
- The Black Enemy's Wrath
- Chance of Being Lost
- Great Secrets Buried There
- In The Heart of His Realm
- Mordor In Arms