SPECIAL ACTIONS

In addition to the typical card-play actions (playing a Modifier, playing an Event, or playing an Untimely Death), two special actions are available to players on their turns.

DISCARDING YOUR HAND: If you don't like your cards, you can discard your entire hand. But keep in mind that you don't get new cards until the end of your turn, so if you discard your hand as your first action, you won't have any cards to play on your second action. PASSING: You can always do nothing.

DRAWING CARDS

Some effects change your Draw Limit. Your draw limit is simply the number of cards you draw up to at the end of your turn. If your draw limit is free (which is the default), you draw cards at the end of your turn until you have five cards in your hand. If you somehow have more cards than your draw limit at the end of your turn, your turn simply ends without any drawing of cards.

A few Event cards say “Play this card as soon as you draw it.” If you draw one of these during your draw phase, it is resolved at the end of your turn, and you do not draw to replace it. Cancel!

FREE PLAYS

Some Modifier and Event cards let you play additional cards as FREE PLAYS. Free plays don’t count toward your two-action limit. If a card allows you to play an Untimely Death card as a free play, you can do it whether the free play came from your turn’s first or second action.

EFFECT CATEGORIES

There are three types of effects, which are identified by icons.

ONGOING EFFECTS continue to affect the game as long as their effect text is visible. When it’s covered by another card, the effect ends. For example, “Your draw limit is increased by one card.”

RESPONSES can only be played during another player’s turn in response to some action that player has just taken. There are the only cards that can be played during another player’s turn. For example, “Cancel an Event card as it is played.”

WINNING THE GAME

The game ends immediately when all of the Characters in one party are dead—that is, when they all have Untimely Death cards on them. When the game ends, each player adds up the Self-Worth scores of all of their dead Characters. Each Character’s individual Self-Worth score is the sum of the point values currently showing in its stack.) The player with the lowest total—the one whose party is the most miserable—wins.

FOR BEGINNERS

To play an extremely simple version of Munchkin Gloom, ignore every card’s effect text. This can be a good way to learn the game for the first time, or to play with younger children.

CREDITS

CONCEPT & GAME DESIGN: Keith Baker
MUNCHKIN CREATOR: Steve Jackson
ILLUSTRATION: John Kowal
PRODUCER: Jeff Tidball and Kyla McGirk Tidling
ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATION: Jamie Fahrigat
LOGO: Kyla McGirk Tidling
PUBLISHER: John Kewph
STEVE JACKSON GAMES MUNCHKIN Czar: Andrew Hackard
PLAYTESTERS: Tero Ahaba, Kenna Conklin, Ryan Conklin, Veronica Ewing, Jason Hobson, Jonathan H. Liu, Richard Malena, Dechen Sole, and many more!

SPECIAL THANKS: Cam Banks, Jessica Banks, Bob Byrdson, Jerry Corruck, Michelle Nephew, Lisa Olson, Phil Reed, and Travis Winter

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Villains

See 2. rules • Deal disagreement. Begin!

To Cards: played “Winning play Untimely event the a QUICK-START symbol then them. Each to Cards: see the Death stack. Untimely card is almost almost actions. An effect, one is stacked on each party. Untimely card one, as a player. Untimely card tries to tell telling Characters from dead ones. All Untimely Deaths bear the same image, so any Character showing that picture at the top of its stack must be dead.

The CARDINAL RULE

Munchkin Gloom’s cards are transparent in some areas and opaque in others. As the game goes on, cards are often stacked squarely on top of each other. For example, Modifier cards are placed on top of Character cards. As well as as top of Untimely Cards, as the game card’s Self-Worth points are concealed, they no longer affect that Character’s score. If a story icon is covered, that Character no longer has it. If an effect is hidden, it no longer does anything.

QUICK-START RULES FOR TAKING TURNS

The rules in this section will get you started playing Munchkin Gloom right away. Refer to the rest of the rules (starting at The Cardinal Rule) as questions come up.

On your turn, you take two actions. An action is almost always used to play a card from your hand. How that works depends on what kind of card you choose. Generally speaking (and with some exceptions):

- **EVENT CARDS** have some immediate effect, and are then discarded.
- **MOOD CARDS** are stacked on top of a Character and remain there. They alter that Character’s Self-Worth score, may have additional effects as described on the card, and may bear STORY ICONS. You can play Modifier cards on anyone’s Character, not just yours, as long as that Character doesn’t have an Untimely Death card.
- **UNTIMELY DEATH CARDS** are played on a Character, turning it from a worthless Munchkin into a valuable dead one. You can only play an Untimely Death card on a Character with a negative Self-Worth score, at the end of the second turn of its turn, it has to come face to face with you. After taking two actions, the player whose turn it is finishes by drawing back up to five cards. Play continues clockwise around the table.

That’s it! Turns continue until one player’s whole party has Untimely Deaths, and the game comes to a close. See “Winning the Game.”

OVERVIEW

In Munchkin Gloom, each player has a PARTY of CHARACTERS. Players try to make their own parties the most miserable, while clearing up the other player’s parties. Characters become sad or happy primarily by having **MOOD CARDS** played on them. Each Modifier card affects the Self-Worth score of the Character it’s played on. Players also play and discard **EVENT CARDS** for various immediate effects.

As the game continues, the Characters’ individual stories end, one by one, as **UNTIMELY DEATH CARDS** are played on them. When one entire party has succumbed to Untimely Deaths, the game ends.

**PARTY SYMBOLS**

- **Heroes**
- **Villains**
- **Wild Bunch**
- **Blenders**

2. Deal the Cards: Set aside the Reference cards and any unchosen Characters. Shuffle the rest of the cards into a deck. Deal each player five face-down cards and put the rest of the deck in the center of the table. A discard pile forms next to it during play.

3. Begin: Each player briefly summarizes the misery of their day so far. The player with the most horrible story takes the first turn. The game’s owner chooses which terrible tale is most miserable, if there’s a disagreement.

NAME: What the card is called.

MOOD POINTS: Up to three point values in circles. Each Character’s Self-Worth score is the sum of the point values currently showing in its Self-Worth circle.

STORY ICONS: Up to three icons that have no effect on their own, but which frequently trigger or interact with the effects of other cards.

DECK ICON: The heralded Munchkin on every card indicates that it is from Munchkin Gloom. It helps you sort it out from your other Gloom games if you wish.

PARTY ICON: A sun, moon, tree, or blender, indicating the party that Character belongs to.

EFFECTS: Special rules that do whatever they say.

There are three categories of effects: immediate, ongoing, and responsive. See “Effect Categories” for more information.

FLAVOR TEXT: Delightful or dreadful bits of story and commentary that provide entertaining ambience. Flavor text is distinguished from effect text with italics.

PORTAL: A comic, entertaining, or disturbing image, designed to help. Some illustrations make it easy to tell cards apart by type. For example, Modifier cards don’t have illustrations, so it’s easy to tell they are. Other pictures make it easy to tell living Characters from dead ones. All Untimely Deaths bear the same image, so any Character showing that picture at the top of its stack must be dead.

BUT THAT’S NOT ALL!

Characters become sad or happy primarily by having **MOOD CARDS** played on them. Each Modifier card affects the Self-Worth score of the Character it’s played on. Players also play and discard **EVENT CARDS** for various immediate effects.

As the game continues, the Characters’ individual stories end, one by one, as **UNTIMELY DEATH CARDS** are played on them. When one entire party has succumbed to Untimely Deaths, the game ends. Self-Worth scores are then tallied, and the most miserable player wins the game.

ANATOMY OF CARDS

- **MOOD CARDS**
- **STORY ICONS**
- **DECK ICON**
- **PARTY ICON**
- **EFFECTS**
- **FLAVOR TEXT**
- **PORTAL**

TYPES OF CARDS

Characters have names, portraits, party icons, and flavor text. Characters lack self-Self-Worth points or story icons. Rather, they’re the basic foundations of your stories, where Modifier cards stack up!

EVENT CARDS have names, effects, and a portrait image depicting the action, with a comic icon beneath it. These single-use cards are played from your hand, do what they say, and are discarded immediately.

MODIFIER CARDS always have names, and one to three Self-Worth values. Most Modifiers have one or more story icons, an effect, and some flavor text. But some Modifiers omit story, icons, effects, and/or flavor text. Playing Modifiers how you inflict misfortune on your own party and bring cheer to your enemies. Generally speaking, you’ll want to play Modifiers with negative Self-Worth on your own Characters and positive Self-Worth on other players’ Characters, but sometimes a card’s effect will make you want to do something else.

When you play a Modifier on a Character, stack it squarely on top of the Character you’ve chosen, and on top of any Modifier previously played on that Character. You can only play Modifiers on living Characters (that is, Characters without Untimely Deaths) unless a card’s effect specifically says otherwise.

Modifiers with effects affect the player who owns the Character that the Modifier was played on, and not necessarily the player who played the card. So if you play a card that says “Draw two cards” on another player’s Character, that player is the one who gets to draw the cards.

UNTIMELY DEATH CARDS

Untimely Deaths have names, effects, and flavor text, and all share a common portrait image showing a deck on a tombstone. An Untimely Death card transitions that Character from living to dead. You can play Untimely Death cards on your own Characters or the Characters of others. However, there are two restrictions:

- You can’t play an Untimely Death card as your second turn action, and
- You can only play an Untimely Death card on a Character with a negative Self-Worth score. (That is, the sum of all of that Character’s visible Self-Worth scores must be negative before the effects of the Untimely Death are applied. This is Gloom, after all — only miserable heroes can die!)

Once a Character meets its Untimely Death, set it aside in a way that makes it clear that it’s dead. A few Event cards can affect dead Characters, but not many.