

## SET UP

Place the 4 Location cards in the middle of the play area. These are 2 sided. Small Box Games recommends using the light side for your first few games.

Separate the 2 Minion decks and give 1 Minion deck to each player. The Minions decks are identical, and have identical faces, but the borders on each deck are different, making it easy to separate the decks. Each player takes 15 Markers of a single color.

Place the Festival Piece, the 6 Potion cards, 6 Scepter cards, and the 6 Trinket cards to the side of the play area.

Then, take the Week deck, and remove all Day cards from the deck, placing them to the side of the play area, face up. Shuffle the remaining Week deck and set it face down to the side of the play area.

Each player then shuffles together his Minion deck, sets it face down in front of him, and draws a starting hand of 5 cards.

Use whichever means you see fit to determine the Start Player for the first Week, and then the game begins.



## OBJECT OF THE GAME

In Hemloch, each player is the last in his powerful bloodline. The twilight is waning, and he knows that in order to continue his house's legacy, he must use the Minions at his disposal to influence the denizens of the city to follow his house during the coming Season of the Sun. But time is short, and only a precious few nights remain, because when the sun rises, and stays in the sky, only one will hold all of the power.

Each Minion belongs to a specific Faction. Each Faction has an area of town they call home, aside from the Geared, being the leftover creations of some previous civilization with no place to call home. Controlling these Locations is key to tightening your bloodline's grip on the city.

## THE CARDS

Hemloch includes several different types of cards.

### **Minion Cards**

Hemloch revolves around the drawing and playing of Minion cards. Each player begins the game with an identical deck of 30 Minion cards.

Each Minion card belongs to 1 of 5 Factions, indicated by the card's Faction Icon in the upper left hand corner. Additionally, each Minion has an Influence Value, indicated by the large number beneath the illustration. Finally, each Minion has a Special ability.



## Location Cards

Location Cards represent 4 important Locations in Hemloch. During his turn, each player will play his Minion cards on his side of the Location Cards to attempt to gain control of the Location and access additional Special Abilities.

Each Location has a specific name, and is the **Home** for one of the city's Factions, indicated by the Faction Icon in the upper left and bottom right of each Location card. Minions of a Faction matching the Faction Icon depicted on the Location are in their Home and provide more influence.



There are Influence Spaces on each Location, and as the game progresses, each player will place his Markers on those spaces.

A Special Ability and the Activating Icon are located above and below the Location's Influence Spaces. Playing a Minion on a Location that matches the Location's Activating Icon grants the player use of the Location's Special Ability.



## Item Cards

The 6 Potion, 6 Scepter, and 6 Trinket Cards represent sought after items of great power in the town of Hemloch. Various Minion and Location Special Abilities allow the players to acquire Items throughout the game, or to steal them from the opposing player! Items add to the player's score at the end of the game, but can also grant the players additional abilities; at the cost of points.



Each face-up Item a player has at the end of the game is worth 2 points, while face-down Items are worth 1 point each.



If an ability would cause the player to gain a Potion, Scepter, or Trinket and there are none remaining, the player may instead flip one of his Potions, Scepters, or Trinkets, respectively, face-up.

## Week Cards

The 4 Day Cards and the 4 Night Cards make up the ever-changing Week Deck, and represent the coming of the Season of the Sun and the end of Eternal Twilight. This change, which happens every few decades, is ushered in with boisterous festivals.

The Week Deck is always comprised of 4 Day and/or Night cards. The deck begins with 4 Night Cards, and as the game progresses, Day Cards replace the Night cards.



Each Night and Day card states in which Location the daily Festival will be occurring. This is indicated by the Festival Piece, which is placed on the Location stated on the Day or Night Card that is revealed. Since the Festival Location is busy with the celebration, it is not easy to influence, and as such, no Minions may be played on a Location with the Festival Piece on it.

Each Night card has a **Corresponding** Day card. Corresponding cards place the Festival in the same Location as each other.

## PLAYING HEMLOCH

Hemloch is played over a series of Weeks (rounds), with each Week being made up of 4 Days and/or Nights (player turns). The game ends immediately at the end of any Day or Night when:

Either player has placed all of his Markers **or**, at least 2 of the 4 Locations have no empty Influence Spaces remaining **or**, all Items have been acquired **or**, a player has no cards left in his Minion deck **or**, there are 4 Days in the Week deck.

When the game ends, players score points for Markers they have placed and the Items they have acquired. The player with the highest score wins the game.

## WEEKS

Each Week is broken into 2 steps: **Night or Day** and **Week's End**.

### **Night or Day**

At the beginning of each Night or Day, the Start Player for the Week reveals the top card of the Week deck and moves the Festival Piece to the Location stated on the card. Then, the Start Player takes his turn. When he is finished, the other player takes his turn. Once each player has taken a turn, the Day or Night ends, and a new card is revealed from the Week deck. This continues until there are no cards remaining in the Week deck.

If a Day card is revealed, after the other player takes his turn, there is an **Influence Check**.



## Player Turns

At the beginning of a player's turn, if the player has 0 cards in his hand, he draws 1 card from his Minion deck and adds it to his hand. During the player's turn, he may perform 2 Actions. With each action, he may either Draw a card or Play a card.

To play a card, he selects a Minion card from his hand and places it onto his side of any Location that does not have the Festival marker on it. The player may not play more than 1 Minion in a single Location per turn. Minions placed on the player's side of a Location are his Minions.

When the player plays a Minion on his side of a Location, he performs the Minion's Special Ability. If a played Minion matches the Activating Icon of the Location it is played on, the player also performs the Location's Special Ability. When this happens, the Minion's Special Ability is always performed before the Location's. Special Abilities are not optional.

Once per turn, the player also has the option of using the Ability of 1 of his Items. It costs no Action to use a Potion's ability, while it costs 1 Action to use a Trinket's or a Scepter's ability.

Once a player has completed his 2 actions, his turn ends.



It's Scout's turn. With her first Action, she plays the Unfair Lady on her side of the Courtyard Location who allows her to place one of her Markers on the Location, which she does, it also allows her to move the Festival Marker, which she does. Then, she uses her second action to play the Alley Cutpurse in The Boneyard Location and takes an Item from Jacki. Since the Alley Cutpurse's Faction Icon matches the Boneyard's Activating Icon, she is granted the Location's Special Ability, which she uses to gain a Potion.

## Week's End

After the Night or Day step of the Week is complete, the **Week's End** step occurs. At the beginning of Week's End, an Influence Check occurs.

Next, for each of the Locations, each player chooses half of his Minions in that Location, rounded down, and moves them to his Discard Pile. Each player then draws cards from his Minion deck until he has 2 cards in his hand.

Finally, 1 Night card of the Start Player's choice is removed from the Week Deck and is replaced by the Corresponding Day card. The removed Night card is returned to the box. The Start Player then hands the Week Deck to the other player, who will be the Start Player, and a new Week begins.



Jeb is the Start player for the week, and at the Week's End, has decided to remove the Alley Maze Night card from the week deck. He replaces it with the Alley Maze Day card. The Alley Maze Night card is returned to the box.

## Influence Checks

When an Influence Check occurs, the players check to see who has the most Influence in each of the 4 Locations.

To do this, beginning with the Location to the Start Player's left, each player tallies the total combined Influence Values of all of his Minions in the Location. Each Minion in its Home Location adds 1 to the player's overall Influence Value in the Location. The player with the highest Influence Value in the Location takes 1 of his unused Markers and places it on an empty Influence Space on the Location. Repeat this process for the remaining 3 Locations.

In the event of a tie, beginning with the Start Player, each player places 1 of his Markers onto an empty Influence Space on the Location.



During an Influence Check, the players determine who has the highest influence in The Boneyard. Chris has a Horned Advisor with an Influence Value of 2 on his side of the location. Scott has a Mad Chemist on his side of the location, also with an Influence Value of 2.

However, Chris' Horned Advisor is in its Home Location (the Minion's Faction Icon matches the Location's Faction Icon). Since Chris has 1 Minion in its Home Location, he adds 1 to his overall Influence Value, leaving Chris with the highest Influence Value. Chris gets to place 1 of his Markers on an empty Space on the Boneyard.

## ENDING THE GAME AND SCORING

When 1 of the end game conditions is met, the game ends and scoring takes place: Either player has placed all of his Markers **or**, at least 2 of the 4 Locations have no empty Influence Spaces remaining **or**, all Items have been acquired **or**, a player has no cards left in his Minion deck **or**, there are 4 Days in the Week deck.

Each player gains 2 points for each face-up Trinket or Potion he has. He then gains 1 point for each face-down Trinket or Potion he has. Then, he receives points for the Markers he has placed on the locations.

Each of his Markers that is touching at least 1 of his other markers, orthogonally, are worth 2 points each. Each of his Markers that is not touching at least 1 of his other Markers are worth 1 point each.

The player with the highest score wins. In the event of a tie, the player with the most placed Markers wins the tie. If a tie still exists, the players reluctantly agree to a shared control of the city in the Season of the Sun.



In this example, the Blue player would gain 3 points for his Markers in this Location. Since none of his Markers are touching any other of his Markers, they are all worth 1 point each.

The Orange player will gain 8 points for his Markers in this Location. 3 of his Markers are touching at least 1 of his other Markers, and are worth 2 points each. His remaining 2 Markers are not touching any of his other Markers, so they are worth 1 point each.

## **DRAFT VARIANT:**

Instead of giving each player a Minion deck, shuffle together both Minion decks. Each player draws 6 cards. Then, each player selects 1 card from his 6 cards, places it face-down in his play area, and passes the remaining cards to the other player. This continues until each player has 6 face-down cards. Then, the entire process is repeated 5 more times, until each player has a 30 card deck.

## **ALTERNATE LOCATIONS:**

Each Location card has a Light side (the standard side) and a Dark side (alternate side). The Location Special Abilities and the Activating Icons on these Locations are different, and offer a slightly different game experience. Small Box Games recommends using the Light side of the Locations for your first few games.

If players decide to use the Dark sides of the Locations, they can mix and match them with the Light sides in whatever way they see fit. However, Small Box Games recommends using either all Light or all Dark sides during a single game.



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