

GOLEM GAME RULES

OBJECT: To be the first player to get 30 victory points. You should experiment with other victory point totals to determine the one you prefer.

GAME PIECES: One (1) paper golem miniature, four (4) artifact cards, 37 charm cards, twelve (12) curse cards, four (4) sets allocation screens, 60 allocation tokens, and one (1) Archmage token.

Each player will need their own set of allocation screens. Simply print out the screens and bend at the center so they will stand upright. Coins, poker chips, colored stones, or any similar objects may be used as allocation tokens. Any distinguishable token can be used as the Archmage token. To assemble the golem miniature, cut along the solid lines and score and fold along the dotted lines, affixing the finished miniature with tape or glue. Alternatively, an appropriate wargame figurine or other miniature may be substituted. It should have a defined front, so the players can easily identify the direction it is facing. The game cards are formatted to print on standardized 3" x 5" index cards, three to a page, available from most office-supply stores.

SETUP: Each player takes a set of four allocation screens and stands them in front of them. Each player takes twelve allocation tokens. The remaining allocation tokens are placed to the side within reach of the players. Shuffle the charms, curses, and artifacts together. Deal them out, face up, in a 7-by-7 grid. Each area of the grid represents a "district." When an artifact

appears, it is placed at a right angle underneath the last district dealt, so the name of the artifact remains exposed. One player is randomly designated as the Archmage and takes the Archmage token. The golem is placed on the district named "Hjem." The Archmage determines the golem's starting orientation.

GAMEPLAY

OVERVIEW: Each turn consists of the following phases: (1) allocation, (2) orientation, (3) movement, (4) harvesting, and (5) regeneration. Each of the phases is described below.

ALLOCATION: Players have 12 units of magical energy to allocate per turn, represented by the allocation tokens. Additionally, following the first turn, players may have bonus units earned in the prior regeneration phase (see below). During the allocation phase, these tokens are allocated to the remaining four phases: orientation, movement, harvesting, and regeneration. At least one unit must be allocated to each of these phases. Players may otherwise allocate their units as they choose. Players secretly place a number of allocation tokens behind each screen that they are allocating to each phase for that turn. Any units not allocated are lost.

After the allocation tokens are placed, each player, starting with the Archmage, announces the phase they have allocated the most tokens to. If a player has allocated an equal number of tokens to two or more phases, he announces one of the phases only. Then, each player may redistribute their

allocation tokens. They may move their tokens in any way they see fit, except that they must allocate the most tokens to the phase they previously announced.

ORIENTATION: Starting with the Archmage, players reveal the number of units they have allocated to orientation. The player who allocated the most units may rotate the golem—keeping it on its current district—to face any of the four cardinal points, including the point it is already facing. The golem cannot be oriented toward any row or column in which there are no remaining districts. If there are any ties in allocation, the Archmage wins the tie. If the Archmage is not involved in the tie, the player to the immediate left of the Archmage wins the tie, and so on. After the golem is oriented, play proceeds to the movement phase.

MOVEMENT: Players reveal the number of units they have allocated to movement. The player who allocated the most units must move the golem one, two, or three districts from its starting position. The player must move the golem in a straight line in the direction it is currently oriented. Harvested districts do not count toward movement; the golem passes over harvested districts as if they did not exist. The playing grid wraps around. E.g., if the golem is moved off the right side of the grid, it appears in the first district in the same row on the left side. Wraparound movement is otherwise counted the same as regular movement. Thus, if there is only one unharvested district in the row or column toward which the golem is oriented, the golem must be moved to that district. If there are any ties in

allocation, the Archmage wins the tie. If the Archmage is not involved in the tie, the player to the immediate left of the Archmage wins the tie, and so on. After the golem is moved, play proceeds to the harvesting phase.

HARVESTING: Players reveal the number of units they have allocated to harvesting. If the district contains a charm, the person who allocated the most units to harvesting gains victory points equal to the value of the charm, and the district is considered harvested. If the district contains a curse, the person who allocated the most units loses victory points equal to the face value of the curse, and the district is considered harvested. The player takes the harvested charm or curse and places it in front of them to indicate the number of victory points they have scored. Players may not hide their harvested charms and curses. If the district contains an artifact, the person who allocated the most units scores no points but gains control of that artifact. He or she takes the artifact and places it in front of them. The remaining charm or curse is left as is, and the district is not considered harvested. If there are any ties in allocation, the Archmage wins the tie. If the Archmage is not involved in the tie, the player to the immediate left of the Archmage wins the tie, and so on. Once the harvesting phase is completed, play proceeds to the regeneration phase.

REGENERATION: Players reveal the number of units they have allocated to regeneration. The player who allocated the most units earns bonus allocation units equal to half the number of units he or she allocated to regeneration, rounded down. These bonus allocation units may be used

only in the following turn. The player takes a number of additional allocation tokens from the pool. If there are any ties in allocation, the Archmage wins the tie. If the Archmage is not involved in the tie, the player to the immediate left of the Archmage wins the tie, and so on.

ARCHMAGE TOKEN: At the end of the turn, the Archmage token is transferred one player to the left. That player is the Archmage for the next turn.

ARTIFACTS: Each artifact may be used only once, by the player who harvested it. After it is used, the artifact is discarded and removed from play. The rules regarding the individual artifacts are as follows:

The Amulet of Loki: The owner of this artifact may use the artifact to break any tie in unit allocation in either his or an opponent's favor (owner's choice). Use of this artifact is declared immediately after the allocation is revealed for any phase but before the phase is resolved. Use of this artifact supersedes the normal rules for breaking ties via the Archmage token.

The Boots of Hermod: If the owner of this artifact has allocated the most units to the movement phase, the owner may move the golem up to six districts. Use of this artifact is declared during the movement phase after the allocation is revealed but before the movement phase is resolved.

The Horn of Heimdall: The owner of this artifact gets 15 allocation units to use in any one turn. Use of this artifact is declared at the beginning of the allocation phase. The owner discards the artifact and takes 3 bonus allocation tokens from the pool of unused tokens.

The Bow of Uller: If the owner of this artifact has allocated the most units to the harvesting phase, the owner may harvest from any one of the four districts cardinally adjacent to the one the golem currently occupies. The location and orientation of the golem do not change. Use of this artifact is declared during the harvesting phase after the number of units allocated is revealed but before the harvesting phase is resolved.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS: A few of the districts have special qualities. These districts are marked with an asterisk. In addition to any special rules, the harvested district counts towards victory point totals and is claimed by the harvesting player as normal. The rules for the particular special districts are as follows:

Hamre: The player who harvests this district may elect to destroy one artifact either still on the playing surface or possessed by his or her opponent. He or she must use this ability immediately after harvesting or it is lost.

Konge: If the player who harvests this district also allocates the most units to regeneration, he or she gains bonus units for regeneration equal to the number allocated rather than half the number as normal.

Magibok: The player who harvests this district may immediately place the Golem on any unharvested district, oriented in any direction (though not facing a row or column with no districts remaining).

Orm: The player who harvests this district loses one allocation unit on the following turn. That is, he or she only gets eleven tokens to allocate.

Skole: The player who harvests this district gains control of the Archmage token at the beginning of the next turn. If that player would gain control of the Archmage token normally, the district has no additional effect.

Smerte: The player who harvests this district may not allocate more than one unit to movement in the following turn.

VICTORY: The first player to earn 30 victory points is the winner.

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Golem was originally designed as an entry for the 2004 Shared Pieces Design Competition. And it won! The game has seen a remarkable amount of evolution since then. In particular, rules were added to streamline board management, accommodate additional players, and for the special districts.

Golem is written and designed by Justin D. Jacobson and is ©2004 Justin D. Jacobson. Blue Devil Games publishes strategy games and role-playing games and supplements. You can find out more about Blue Devil Games--including a link to the free, on-line version the deceptively simple strategy game Witch Stones--at our website: www.bluedevilgames.com.

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Golem was playtested by Dustin Huibregtse, Nick Kelly, Branden Linley, Kimberly Linley, Brian Rodemann, and Beckett Warren. Thanks for the efforts in honing the game.