

World of Warcraft The Boardgame – Shortcut Variant **Version 1.0 by Günter Immeyer (g.immeyer@unitybox.de)**

Are you a member of the vast majority of gamers that would *really* like this game if it only played in a little (or a lot, actually...) less time?

Having trouble finding players willing to play 6-8 hour marathon WoW-sessions with you?

Ever made the experience that when your character finally hits level 5 and things start to get more complicated, you can't really concentrate on all those fiddly effects taking place during the different combat phases, because you already feel a little sleepy/weary?

If you answered in the affirmative to one or more of the above questions, then this "World of Warcraft The Boardgame" shortcut variant is for you!

In this variant, all players commence the game with fully equipped characters that are already skilled and trained at level 3. So you basically leave out the foreplay and delve right into the action as it gets really interesting...

Average Playing Time: 3-4 hours

On average, you'll be able to reduce the time you usually need to complete a game of "World of Warcraft The Boardgame" to about 60% (we've actually managed to finish a game in roughly 2 hours once - without using "The Burning Crusade" expansion, though).

Requirements (Expansions): none

This variant can be applied to the base game as well as the base game in conjunction with one or both of the expansions ("Shadow of War" and "The Burning Crusade").

Altered Rules: none

All rules of the base game and the two expansions (if used) remain unchanged. The only difference is an alternative setup before the game starts, as described in the following section.

Game Setup: *new*

1. Lay out the game board(s) as usual. When using "The Burning Crusade" expansion, don't forget to mark the four dungeon locations on the Lordaeron board with their respective markers and to use the experience track of the Outland board and the new monster reference sheets.
2. Randomly determine the order in which players will select their character *classes*, each player receives all their corresponding power and talent cards (and the Level 6 expansion strips for their character sheets, when using "The Burning Crusade").
3. Randomly determine the players' factions: "Alliance" or "Horde" and hand out the corresponding character sheets.
4. All players now receive their starting components (character figures, action tokens, spell books, bags, character markers, 5 gold for each character) and place their figure(s) in their faction's starting region ("Brill" or "Soutshore").

5. Each player places one marker on the “**Level 3**” box of each of their character sheets.

6. Each player places one marker (for each character) on the “**13**” space of the XP track. If you're using the “Outland” game board, this means that all characters will only be 2 XP away from level 4, on the original “Lordaeron” board, they will be 5 XP shy of level 4.

7. Players now get to choose **two starting talents** for each character: they can either choose to place one level 2 and one level 3 talent card or two level 2 talent cards in the respective slots of the character sheets (this step can be executed simultaneously by all players). Players may pick *any* available talent cards as long as they meet the level requirements of the first two slots.

8. Now all players choose and equip **4 starting power cards** of their choice for their character(s) (this too can be done simultaneously by all players), observing the following rules:

- a) Each character must have *exactly* 4 cards (no more, no less!).
- b) All cards must be of a lower level than 4.
- c) The total level value of all four chosen cards may not exceed 9
(e. g. you could choose LVL 3, LVL 3, LVL 2, LVL 1: $3 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 9$).
- d) The total gold cost of all four chosen cards may not exceed 30 gold.
- e) Each character has to be able to legally equip all four cards on his/her character sheet
(e. g. you could not choose 3 active powers for a character that only has 2 slots for active powers available on his character sheet, like the hunter).

Note: during this setup step, characters do *not* actually need to pay the gold price for their power cards, nor do they need to pay the energy cost when they equip their active powers!

At the end of this step, all characters should have four power cards equipped on their character sheet (it's *not* allowed to store one or more of the cards in the spellbook!).

9. Each character now receives the appropriate number of health and energy tokens and places them on their sheet. **Note:** if -during step 7- talents were chosen that changed/increased the health or energy capacity, then these changes should now already be taken into consideration (i. e.: adjust the amount of tokens accordingly)! Furthermore, all pets (if chosen) are considered to be at full health.

10. Item Draft Step - Beginning with the player that chose his/her character *last*, players now take turns at picking **4 item cards** for each of their characters in four consecutive draft rounds (without having to pay any gold costs). If the sequence in which players got to choose their character class during step 2 (in a 4-player game) was A-B-C-D, then the first round of item drafting would be D-C-B-A, the second round would then reverse that order to A-B-C-D, then D-C-B-A again in the third round and finally A-B-C-D in the final round. In each draft round, players must pick *any* one item card of their choice for their character (the cards are *not* randomly drawn from the decks, players may rather selectively pick them from the openly spread out pool of cards - see below). The following rules must be observed, however:

- a) Cards may only be chosen from the pool of all available **triangle** item cards, **square** item cards, plus the following **7 legendary item cards**:

- Cannonball Runner, Cowl of Heroes, Robe of Power, Thorium Helm, Amulet of

Protection, Scroll of the Whale, Robes of the West

Note: item cards from dungeon decks (“The Burning Crusade”) may *not* be chosen!

- b) You *must* pick 1 item card for your character in each round, you may not pass!
- c) After the completion of the four draft rounds, it is required that each character must have received **1 armor item, 1 weapon item** (melee or ranged, doesn't matter), plus **2 other items** of any type (these may also be armor or weapon items).
- d) At most 1 legendary item may be selected for each character.
- e) Each character must be able to legally equip *each* of the chosen item cards (e. g. you could not draft a “mail” armor for a character that can only wear “leather” armor, and you could not pick a second add-on item with the function type “Shield”, if you already selected a “Shield” add-on item in one of the other draft rounds!)

At the end of this 4-round-draft, each character *must* equip 1 armor item and 1 weapon item from the 4 chosen cards (preprinted items on the cards may be overlaid). The other two items *may* also be equipped now or alternatively, stored in their character's bags.

11. Determine via consensus (or randomly) which Overlord to use in the game and adjust the associated game components accordingly (e. g. sort out Overlord-specific event cards, etc.).

12. Separate and shuffle all the item decks and compose a merchant deck using either **7 triangle, 3 square and 1 circle items** or -in case you're playing with “The Burning Crusade” expansion- **2 hex (orange), 3 circle and 5 square items**.

13. Shuffle the yellow, red and purple (“The Burning Crusade”) quest decks and draw and set up the 5 starting quests for 6 characters or 4 starting quests for 4 characters for both of the two factions: use **yellow quests (instead of grey)** and one **red quest (instead of green)**.

Note: the grey and green quest decks are not used at all in this variant and should be put back in the box!

14. If you're playing with “Shadow of War”, shuffle the blue deck and draw the top 3 cards as the starting blue quests. Shuffle and set aside the dungeon stage decks (“The Burning Crusade”).

15. Place the turn marker on the “**15**” space of the turn track.

16. Prepare and shuffle the event deck and -if you're playing with “Shadow of War”- also the destiny card deck and draw the top destiny card (if the card has a “0” destiny number, immediately resolve it and draw another card).

That's all! As usual, the Horde may now begin the game and take their first (or rather 8th) turn!

Hope some of you out there find this version useful and have more fun again when pulling this great game out of the closet or from under the bed...

In case you have any questions, remarks or criticism, feel free to send any comments to

g.immeyer@unitybox.de