

MUNCHKIN™ Cthulhu

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THE STARS ARE RIGHT . . .

and the Munchkins are kicking down the doors in places where Man Was Not Meant To Go. They're Investigators, Monster Whackers, Professors, and Cultists . . . and they're killing the Mythos monsters and taking their stuff. After all, when you're a Munchkin, it doesn't matter if you go mad. It only matters if you WIN!

Munchkin Cthulhu is based on the original *Munchkin* and can be combined with it, as well as any or all of the other *Munchkin* card games (see the last page).

This game includes 168 cards, these rules, and one die.

SETUP

3 to 6 can play. You will need this deck of cards and 10 tokens (coins, poker chips, whatever – or any gadget that counts to 10) for each player.

Divide the deck into the Door cards (with a door and tentacle on the back) and the Treasure cards (with a pile of treasure on the back). Shuffle both decks. Deal two cards from each deck to each player.

CARD MANAGEMENT

Keep separate face-up discard piles for the two decks. When a deck runs out, reshuffle its discards. If a deck runs out and there are no discards, nobody can draw any of that kind of card!

Cultist Class cards get their own little discard pile. See *Cultists*, below.



CHARACTER CREATION

Everyone starts as a Level 1 character with no class. (We never get tired of that joke.)

Look at your initial cards. If you have any Class cards (Investigator, Monster Whacker, Professor, or Cultist), you may (if you like) play one Class card by placing it in front of you. If you have Super Munchkin, which allows you to have more than one Class, you may play that one, too.

If you have any Item cards, you may play them as well. If you have any doubt about whether you should play a card, you could read below, or you could just charge ahead and do it.

STARTING AND FINISHING THE GAME

Decide who goes first in any way you can agree on. (Snickers.)

Play proceeds in turns, each with several phases (see below). When the first player finishes, the player to his left goes, and so on.

The first player to reach 10th level wins . . . but you *must* reach 10th level by killing a monster. If two players kill a monster together and reach 10th level at the same time, they both win.

Two special ways to win are described under *More Scary Cultist Rules*, below.

Find more munchkinism at www.sjgames.com/munchkin

TURN PHASES

(1) **Open A Door:** Draw one card from the Door deck and turn it face up. If it's a monster, you must fight it. See **Combat**. Resolve the combat completely before you go on. If you kill it, go up a level (or, for a big monster, two levels – it will say so on the card).

If the card is a curse – see **Curses**, below – it applies to you immediately (if it can) and is discarded.

If you draw any other card, you may either put it in your hand or play it immediately.

(2) **Look For Trouble:** If you did NOT encounter a monster when you first opened the door, you now have the option of playing a monster (if you have one) *from your hand* and fighting it, as described above. Don't play a monster you can't handle, unless you're sure you can count on getting help!

(3) **Loot The Room:** If you killed a monster, take the number of Treasures shown on the monster card. Draw them face down if you killed the monster alone, or face up if you had help.

If you met a monster but ran away, you get no treasure.

If you did not meet a monster, or met one who was friendly to you, you search the empty room. Draw a second card from the Door deck, face *down*, and place it in your hand.

(4) **Charity:** If you have more than five cards in your hand, give the excess to the player with the lowest level. If players are tied for lowest, divide the cards as evenly as possible, but it's up to you who gets the bigger half. If YOU are the lowest or tied for lowest, just discard the excess.

It is now the next player's turn.

COMBAT

To fight a monster, check the Level at the top of its card. If your own Level, plus the Bonus from any items you are carrying, totals more than the monster's Level, you kill it. Some monster cards have special powers which affect combat – a bonus against one class, for instance. Be sure to check these before resolving combat.

You may also use one-shot cards, such as Ichors or the Piercing Shriek, *from your hand* during combat. A card is a one-shot if it says Usable Once Only or if it gives a level increase.

You cannot trade items while combat is going on.

If other players interfere by adding another monster (a Wandering Monster or a "goth" monster) to the fight, you must defeat their combined levels. If you have the right cards, you can eliminate one monster from the combat and fight the other normally, but you cannot choose to fight one and run from the other(s). If you eliminate one with a card but then run from the other(s), you don't get any treasure.

If you kill a monster, you automatically go up a level (two levels for some very dangerous monsters). If you were fighting multiple monster cards, you go up a level for each monster killed! But if you defeat a monster without killing it, you NEVER go up a level.

Discard the monster card(s) and draw treasure (see below). But note: someone may play a hostile card on you, or use a special power, just as you think you have won. When you kill or otherwise defeat a monster, you must wait a reasonable time, defined as about 2.6 seconds, for anyone



else to speak up. After that, you have really killed the monster, and you really go up a level and get the treasure, though they can still whine and argue.

If you cannot defeat the monster, you have two choices: ask for help or run away.

Asking For Help

You may ask any other player to help you. If he refuses, you may ask another player, and so on, until they all turn you down or someone helps. Only one player can help you.

You can bribe someone to help. In fact, you'll probably have to. You may offer him any Item(s) you are currently carrying, or any number of the Treasure cards the monster has. If you offer him part of the treasure, you must agree whether he picks first, or you pick first, or what.

When someone helps you, add his Level and Bonuses to yours.

The special abilities or vulnerabilities of the monster also apply to your helper, and vice versa. For instance, if you are not an Investigator, but an Investigator helps you, the Shoggoth will be at a -2 against you. But if you are facing the Shallow Ones and a Professor helps you, the foe's level is *increased* by 2 (unless you, too, are a Professor and the foe's level has *already* been increased . . . don't increase it twice).

If someone successfully helps you, the monster is slain. Discard it, draw treasure (see below), and follow any special instructions on the monster card. You still go up a level for each slain monster. Your helper does *not* go up a level.

If nobody will help you . . . or if somebody tries to help, and the other players hurt you or help the monster so the two of you *still* cannot defeat it . . . you must run away.

Running Away

If you run away, you don't get any levels or treasure. You don't even get to loot the room (that is, draw a face-down Door card). And you don't always escape . . .

Roll the die. You only escape on a 5 or better. Some Items make it easier or harder to run away. And some monsters are fast, and give you a penalty to your roll.

If you escape, discard the monster. You get no treasure. There are usually no bad effects . . . but read the card. Some monsters might hurt you even if you get away from them!

If the monster catches you, it does Bad Stuff to you, as described on its card. This may vary from losing an item, to losing one or more levels, to Death.

If two players are cooperating and still can't defeat the monster(s), they must both flee. They roll separately. The monster(s) CAN catch them both.

If you are fleeing from multiple monsters, you roll separately to escape each one, in any order you choose, and suffer Bad Stuff from each one that catches you as soon as it catches you.

Death

If you *die*, you lose all your stuff. You keep your class(es) and level – your new character will look just like your old one.

Looting The Body: Lay out your hand beside the items you had in play. (Enhancer cards played on a Cultist are simply discarded if the Cultist dies.) Starting with the one with the *highest* level, each other player chooses one card . . . in case of ties in level, roll a die. If your corpse runs out of cards, tough. After everyone gets one card, the rest are discarded.

Your new character appears immediately and can help others in combat on the next turn . . . but you have no cards.

On your next turn, start by drawing *two from each deck*, face-down, and playing any Class or Item cards you want to, just as when you started the game.

Treasure

When you kill a monster, you get its treasure. Each monster has a Treasure number on the bottom of its card. Draw that many treasures. Draw face-down if you killed the monster alone. Draw face-up, so the whole party can see what you got, if someone helped you.

Treasure cards can be played as soon as you get them. Item cards can be placed in front of you. “Go Up A Level” cards can be used instantly.

CHARACTER STATS

Each character is basically a collection of weapons, armor, and gadgets, with two stats: Level and Class. For instance, you might describe your character as “a 9th-level Investigator with a Slime-Proof Poncho, a Fake Tentacle, and a Backpack Full of Dynamite.”

Your character’s sex starts off the same as your own.

Level: This is a measure of how generally buff and studly you are. (Monsters have levels, too.) Keep track of your level by placing tokens in front of you. Level ranges from 1 to 10. You will gain and lose levels constantly during play.

You gain a level when you kill a monster, or when a card says that you do. You can also sell items to buy levels (see **Items**).

You lose a level when a card says that you do. Your level can never go below 1. However, your effective level in a combat can be negative, if enough bad cards are played on you.

Class: Characters may be Professors, Investigators, Monster Whackers, or Cultists, with the appropriate Class card. Each class has different abilities, shown on the cards. You gain the abilities of a class the moment you play its card in front of you, and lose them as soon as you lose or discard that card.

Some class abilities are powered by discards. You may discard any card, in play or in your hand, to power a special ability. Note that if you have NO cards in your hand, you cannot “discard your whole hand.”

You can discard a Class card at any time, even in combat: “I don’t wanna be a Professor any more.” Exception: you *cannot* discard the Cultist card voluntarily. See **Cultists**, below.

You may not belong to more than one class at once unless you play the Super Munchkin card.

Cultists

You cannot voluntarily discard this class! You can still lose it because of cards played by yourself or others, but you can never just say “I don’t want to be a Cultist any more.” It’s not that easy to quit . . .

When you discard a Cultist card for any reason, put it in a separate discard pile, not in the regular Door discards, and do not count this pile as “discards” for any other purpose, because:

If any card tells you “Become a Cultist,” and there is a discarded Cultist card waiting for you, then you must take it. If there is no Cultist card, you escaped . . . this time. If you were already a Cultist, there is no further effect; you don’t take another card.

There are six Cultist cards in the deck – more than any other class – and several cards have special effects for Cultists. Don’t be surprised if the game ends with most or all of the players as Cultists!

More Scary Cultist Rules

If there is only ONE Cultist, then *nothing* can make him lose his Class except Divine Intervention . . . *which is not in this set*. (But yes, Divine Intervention will cure *everyone* of Cultishness if it is played.)

If all the players become Cultists but one, the non-Cultist player gets a level, and this *can* be the winning level.

If ALL the players become Cultists, the game ends, and victory goes to the player(s) with the highest level.

ITEMS

Each Item card has a name, a power, and a value in gold pieces.

An Item card in your hand does not count until you play it; at that point, it is “carried.” You may carry any number of items.

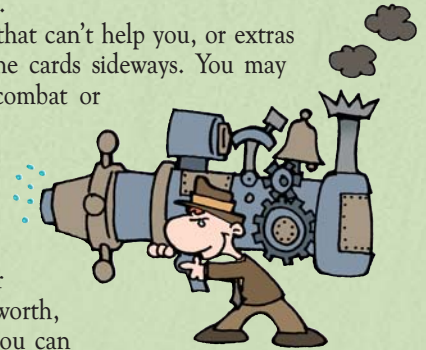
Some items have special use restrictions. For instance, the Necronomicon can only be wielded by a Professor. Its bonus only counts for someone who is, at the moment, a Professor.

You may also use only one headgear, one item of armor, one set of footgear, and two “hand” items (or one “two hands” item), unless you have cards or special abilities that let you use more or the other players don’t catch you. If you are carrying two “headgear” items, for instance, only one of them can help you.

You should indicate items that can’t help you, or extras not being worn, by turning the cards sideways. You may NOT switch items during a combat or while running away.

Selling Items: During your turn, you may discard items worth 1,000 gold pieces and immediately go up one level. If you discard (for instance) 1,100 gold pieces worth, you don’t get change. But if you can manage 2,000 worth, you can go up two levels at once, and so on. You may discard items from your hand as well as those you are carrying.

You may not sell, trade, or steal items DURING a fight. Once you expose a monster card, you must finish the fight with the cards you have.



WHEN TO PLAY CARDS

Instructions on the cards always override the general rules. However, no card can reduce a player or monster to Level 0 or below, and no player can reach Level 10 except by killing a monster.

Monsters

If drawn face-up, during the “Open A Door” phase, monster cards apply to the person who drew them. They must be fought immediately.

If acquired any other way, they may be played during “Looking For Trouble,” or played on another player with the Wandering Monster card.

For rules purposes, each Monster card is a single monster, even if the name on the card is plural.

Monster Enhancers

“Indescribably Horrible” and similar “enhancer” cards raise the level of monsters (and “In A Million-Year Sleep” lowers the level). “Wandering Monster” brings another monster to join a battle. They may be played during any combat.

All enhancers add together. If Indescribably Horrible, Gibbering, and Four-Dimensional are played together, *in any order*, you are facing a gibbering, indescribably horrible, four-dimensional monster. However, if there are multiple monsters in the combat, the player who plays the enhancer must choose which one it applies to.

Treasures – Playing Them

Most Treasure cards are items. Items either have a value or say “No Value.” Items may be played to the table as soon as you get them, or at any time during your own turn.

Some Treasure cards are “specials” (like “Go Up A Level”). You may use these at any time, unless the card itself says otherwise. Follow its instructions; then discard it.

Treasures – Using Them

Any one-shot (“usable once only”) card can be played during any combat, whether you have it in your hand or on the table.

Other items cannot be used unless they are in play. If it’s your turn, you can play them and use them immediately. If you are helping someone, or fighting out of turn for some reason, you cannot play new items from your hand to the table.

Curses

If drawn face-up, during the “Open A Door” phase, Curse cards apply to the person who drew them.

If drawn face-down or acquired some other way, they may be played on ANY player at ANY time. Reducing someone’s abilities just as he thinks he has killed a monster is a lot of fun.

A curse affects its victim immediately (if it can) and is discarded. *Exception:* “Change Sex” gives a penalty on your next fight. If you’re not in a fight when it is played on you, keep the card until your next fight as a reminder.

If a curse can apply to more than one item, the victim decides which item is lost or changed.

If a curse applies to something you don’t have, ignore it. For instance, if you draw “Lose Your Headgear” and you have no headgear, nothing happens; discard the curse.

Classes

These cards may be played to the table as soon as they are acquired, or at any time during your own turn.

Super Munchkin

This card lets you have two classes.

You can play Super Munchkin any time you have one class in play and you have a second class card to add to it. You now have two classes, with the advantages and disadvantages of both. You lose Super Munchkin if you lose either of your class cards.

OTHER MUNCHKIN STUFF

There will be times when it will help you to play a Curse or Monster on yourself, or to “help” another player in a way that costs him treasure. This is very munchkinly. Do it.

Trading

You may trade Items (but not other cards) with other players. You may only trade items from the table – not from your hand. You may trade at any time except when you’re in combat . . . in fact, the best time to trade is when it’s not your turn. Any item you receive in a trade must go to the table; you can’t sell it until it’s your turn.

FASTER PLAY

For a quicker game, each player starts with four cards from each deck, and gets four from each deck when he returns from death.

Any time a Race, Class, Super Munchkin, or Half-Breed card is on top of the discard pile, any player may discard a “Go Up A Level” card from his hand and claim it. If multiple players try to claim a card, they roll dice. The winner gets it; the loser keeps his Level card.

You may also give items away without a trade, to bribe other players – “I’ll give you the Triple-Barreled Shotgun if you won’t help Bob fight Great Cthulhu!”

You may show your whole hand to other players. Like we could stop you.

Interfering With Combat

You can interfere with others’ combats in several ways:

Use a one-shot card. If you have an Ichor card, you could help someone by throwing it at his foe. Of course, you can “accidentally” hit your friend with the Ichor, and it will count *against* him.

Play a card to enhance a monster. See **Monster Enhancers**, above. You can play these either during your own combats or during someone else’s combat.

Play a wandering monster. This sends a monster from your hand to join any combat.

Curse them, if you have a Curse card.

“Goth” Monsters

Monsters ending in “goth” have the power to summon other gothy things. When a “goth” monster appears in a combat, the player who played or drew it may play one other “goth” monster from his hand into the combat. If he does not play another “goth,” go around the table, starting at his left. Each player in turn has one chance to add a single “goth” to the combat, until one “goth” is played. After one “goth” joins the original monster, the combat proceeds.

A “goth” that enters the combat this way does not get to bring in another “goth.” However, a “goth” that enters the combat by means of a Wandering Monster card, or any other special card or ability, *does* get to bring in another “goth,” as described above.

Cthulhu Rises!

This set’s Level 20 monster is Great Cthulhu. Yes, we already did Great Cthulhu in *Star Munchkin*. What can we say? *The stars were right for his return.* And we warn you right now, he’ll be back again.

Rules Contradictions or Disputes

When the cards disagree with the rules, follow the cards. Any other disputes should be settled by loud arguments among the players, with the owner of the game having the last word.

Combining This Game With Other Munchkin Sets

Go for it! Your Elven Ninja Investigator and Russian Half-Dwarf Mutant Assassin can strike fear into the hearts of all sorts of monsters . . .

Shuffle all the Treasure cards together. Shuffle all the Door cards together. You now have two big decks. If you have enough sets, you now have two VERY big decks.

Use the “fast play” rules (see box). Note that these rules refer to some card types that are not in this particular set! Don’t panic.

Traps and Curses are treated as the same kind of card. Any reference to a Trap also means a Curse and vice versa. Yes, *Star Munchkin* Gadgeteers can “disarm” Curses. Likewise, Credits and Gold Pieces are the same thing and can be combined to buy levels, pay taxes, and so on.

All characters may have Races, Classes, *Munchkin Fu* Styles, and *Munchkin Impossible* Training! All at once!

Hirelings, Sidekicks, and *Munchkin Fu* Mooks are all the same “Hireling” class, and the Mook can sacrifice himself like a Sidekick/Hireling, but each Hireling can carry items or be enhanced only as that card says.

Some *Munchkin Cthulhu* cards are labeled as “Undead.” There are no Undead rules in this set; the tag is there so the Clerics from original *Munchkin* can persecute those monsters.