

THE BINDING OF  
**ISAAC**  
FOUR SOULS



HOW TO  
PLAY

## GAME OVERVIEW.

Players take turns playing **loot** cards and activating abilities to kill **monsters** in order to gain more loot, items, and souls.



The first player to control **4 souls** is the **winner**.

Cooperation, bartering, and betrayal are all strongly encouraged. Good luck!



## GAME SETUP

Shuffle the **treasure**, **loot**, and **monster decks**, and if you are playing with it, the **room deck**. Put out 100ç.

The game starts with 2 **shop slots**, 2 **monster slots**, and 1 **room slot**. Put 1 face up card of the slot's type into each slot. (*Treasure cards go into shop slots and are shop items.*) If any events are put into monster slots, put them on the bottom of the monster deck and repeat until there are 2 monsters revealed.

If you're playing with **bonus souls**, pick 3 at random and put them face up next to the play area.

Randomly deal 1 **character card** and its **starting item** to each player. Characters start **deactivated** (*sideways*) and starting items start **charged** (*upright*).

Deal 3 loot cards and 3ç to each player. The saddest player goes first.

# TREASURE DECK



# BASIC ROOM DECK (OPTIONAL)



# CHARACTERS

# LAYOUT

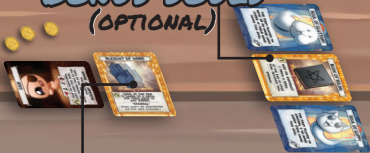
## LOOT DECK



## MONSTER DECK



## BONUS SOULS (OPTIONAL)



## STARTING ITEMS



## TREASURE CARDS



Treasure cards are items while in play. Place items you control in front of you. When instructed to **gain treasure**, you take that many cards from the top of the treasure deck and put them into play under your control.



Silver-bordered treasure cards have static abilities and triggered abilities:



**Static abilities** in play are always true.





When their condition is met, **triggered abilities** are put onto the stack the next time a player would receive priority. Triggered abilities usually start with “when”, “whenever”, “at”, or “each”.

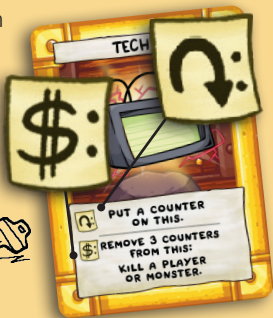
Gold bordered treasure cards have at least one **activated ability**. These are abilities that you can **activate** any time you have priority and can pay their costs. When you activate an activated ability, you put it onto the stack.

There are two kinds of activated abilities:

 abilities can be activated by **deactivating** (*turning the object sideways*) as a cost. Only objects that are charged can be deactivated. 

 abilities can be activated by paying the specified cost.

Static, triggered, and activated abilities appear on lots of other card types too! 



## LOOT CARDS



You draw loot cards and keep them in your hand until you play or discard them. When instructed to **loot**, you draw that many cards from the loot deck. Your hand is private, but anyone can count the number of cards in your hand.

You can play a loot card from your hand any time you have priority and a loot play available. When you play a loot card, put it onto the stack. When the loot resolves, put it into the discard pile.



**Trinkets** are loot cards that become items under your control when they resolve.





# MONSTER CARDS.



The monster deck is split into monsters and events. The **active player** (*the player whose turn it is*) resolves events and is rewarded when monsters are killed.

**Monsters** can be killed and yield rewards. **Bosses** are a special kind of monster that are harder to kill but yield bigger rewards and **souls**.

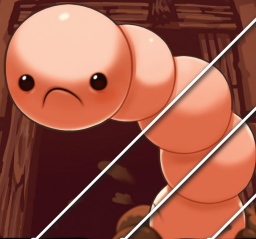


**Events** are non-monster cards. They may help or hinder. **Curses** are a special kind of event that curse someone of the active player's choosing. Place curses near your character card. When you die, discard all curses afflicting you into discard.



# MONSTER

PIN



♥: 2 | 🎲: 4+ | 🗡️: 1

THIS TAKES NO COMBAT  
DAMAGE ON ATTACK  
ROLLS OF 6.



5¢

+1



# BREAKDOWN

## **HEALTH**

Reduce to 0 to kill



## **EVASION**

Dice roll needed to hit

## **ATTACK**

Damage this deals if attacker misses

## **ABILITIES**

These are the monster's abilities

## **SOULS**

Active player gains this as a soul when killed

## **REWARDS**

Awarded to active player when killed

## BONUS SOULS

Once you have a better understanding of the game's mechanics, you are encouraged to add bonus souls to your games. These cards are not added to any deck. Instead, they lay face up next to the play area.



These souls, once gained, act like any other soul card. Bonus souls can only be gained once per game; if these soul cards are ever destroyed, they are placed face down next to the game and cannot be gained again.



## ROOM CARDS



Room cards were introduced in the Requiem expansion.

This deck can be added once you are comfortable with the rules. Static and triggered abilities on room cards work normally, while activated abilities can only be used by the active player.

During the end phase, if a monster died this turn, the active player may discard the room in play and replace it with the top card of the room deck.



# TURN STRUCTURE



## Start Phase




- 1** The active player **recharges** (*turns upright*) objects they control.
- 2** "Start of turn" abilities trigger, then priority passes.
- 3** The active player loots 1. Priority passes, then the action phase begins.



## Action Phase

When the action phase starts, the active player gets a **loot play** that lasts until the end of the turn, and then priority passes.

During the action phase while the stack is empty (*i.e. not in response to anything*), in addition to playing loot and activating abilities, the active player may:

-  **Attack** up to once
-  **Purchase** up to once
-  **End the turn**



When the active player ends the turn, priority passes, then the end phase begins.



## End Phase

- 1** “End of turn” abilities trigger, then priority passes. (*Effects that end the turn force the end phase to begin. Everything still resolves.*)
- 2** All players and monsters heal to full HP, then effects that last this turn or until the end of turn stop.
- 3** The active player discards down to their maximum hand size. (*10 by default.*)
- 4** If playing with the room deck and a monster died this turn, the active player may put a room into discard.
- 5** The active player passes the turn.



## ATTACKING

When you declare an attack, before you choose what to attack, priority passes.



You can either attack a **monster in play** or the **top of the monster deck**.

If you attack the top card of the monster deck, put it on top of a monster slot. (*Whatever is covered is not considered in play until uncovered.*) If it is an event, its ability triggers upon entering play, and it is discarded when the ability resolves.

Once the attack has started, you repeatedly make attack rolls with a D6. If the roll resolves and is less than the target's evasion, you miss and take combat damage equal to the target's attack. If the roll resolves and is less than the target's evasion, you miss and take damage equal to the target's attack. This process repeats until either you or the target dies.



## PURCHASING

When you declare a purchase, before you choose what to purchase, priority passes.



You can either purchase **any shop item** or the **top of the treasure deck** for 10¢.

After you pay the cost of the purchase to the supply, you gain control of your purchase.

## REFILLING SLOTS.



Each shop slot, monster slot, and room slot (*if you are playing with the room deck*) must have at least one card in them at all times. Whenever a slot becomes empty, immediately refill it with the top card of its respective deck.

**Note:** It is possible to encounter multiple events in a row. The active player will need to keep resolving them until a monster card ends up in the slot.

## DEATH



**When a monster dies**, the active player gains its rewards. If it had a soul value, they gain it as a soul as well. If the monster wasn't gained as a soul, move it to the monster discard pile and refill its slot if needed.



**When you die**, pay the **Death Penalty**:

- Choose a non-eternal item you control and destroy it.
- Discard 1 loot card.
- Lose 1¢.
- Deactivate all of your items and your character card.



If you are the active player, the turn jumps to the end phase after you have paid the **Death Penalty**.

*(If you died during an attack, the attack is cancelled).*

# PRIORITY

(WHEN TO PLAY)

Priority determines which player can act at any given time. The player with **priority** may do any of the following:

**Play a loot card**



**Activate an ability**



or



**Attack** up to once

**Purchase** up to once

**End the turn**

*Only the active player, during the action phase, if the stack is empty.*



While you have priority, you may take as many actions as you want provided you have loot plays available and abilities you can activate. The active player also has one attack and one purchase by default, but some effects may increase how many attacks and purchases they get.

When you're done doing things, you pass priority to the next player so they have a chance to respond.

When these rules say that **priority passes**, all players get a chance to do something starting with the active player (*they receive priority first*).

It is only when all players pass priority in succession (*i.e. no one wants to do anything*) that the game progresses, either by resolving the most recent loot, ability, or roll, or by moving through steps and phases of a turn (*See The Stack*).

**Note:** There are times when nobody has priority. Players can't play loot or abilities during these times. (*Steps 2-5 of the end phase, for example.*)



## THE STACK

(HOW TO PLAY)

Loot, abilities, and rolls don't affect the game right away. Instead, they are put onto a waiting area called **the stack**.

A loot, ability, or roll **resolves** when it eventually **leaves the stack and affects the game**.

Each new loot, ability, or roll is added to the top of the stack. **The stack resolves from the top down** (*first in, last out*). This means that you can **respond** to what is on the stack with loot and abilities, and **your response will happen first!**

When all players pass priority in succession (*i.e. no one has a response right now*) the top of the stack resolves. Priority passes each time something resolves. If the stack is empty when all players pass priority, the game progresses to the next step or phase of the turn as appropriate.



Triggered abilities are put onto the stack the next time someone would receive priority. If multiple triggered abilities need to go on the stack at the same time, monster abilities go on first, followed by player abilities in turn order starting with the active player. You choose the relative order of your triggered abilities.

**Notes:** You choose targets and options for your loot and abilities as they go on the stack.

If a loot or ability is canceled, it is removed from the stack without resolving.



Loot that resolves or is canceled is put into the loot discard pile.

**Note(!!):** Priority and The Stack are necessary, but you won't always need to do precise bookkeeping on the minutia of the game state. These are ultimately guides on how to unravel more complex situations as they arise.

## Example Stack

Player 1 had Fanny Pack trigger. In response, Player 2 tried to use Sleight of Hand to put a bad card on top, but Player 1 played Butter Bean on the Sleight of Hand. They resolve in reverse: Butter Bean cancels Sleight of Hand's ability, then Player 1 loots from Fanny Pack.

**Last played, first to resolve**







**First played, last to resolve**

## DICE ROLLS



You will frequently need to roll dice, either for attacks or to determine the effects of resolved loot and abilities. All rolls use a D6. Follow the steps below when you need to make a roll:

-  Roll. The initial result, or **the roll**, is put onto the stack. *(If you need to roll multiple dice, do that here.)*
-  While the roll is on the stack, loot and abilities can **modify or reroll** it. Priority passes.
-  The roll is about to resolve. Any triggered abilities that trigger when a roll **would resolve**, trigger. If any do, go back to step 2.
-  Static abilities that modify the roll change the result, then **the roll resolves as its current result**. *(At this point nothing can be done to modify the roll.)*



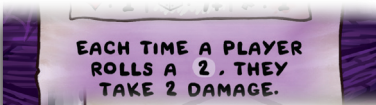


Any triggered abilities that trigger **when a specific number is rolled**, trigger. (*Step 6 will happen before these triggered abilities resolve.*)



If this roll is determining the effect of a resolved loot or ability, that effect happens now.

**Note:** Some triggered abilities can be identified by their circled numbers. These abilities simply trigger on rolls made by all players with the only condition being the target number. Other triggered abilities with more specific conditions don't have circled numbers.



EACH TIME A PLAYER  
ROLLS A 2, THEY  
TAKE 2 DAMAGE.



EACH TIME  
A PLAYER ROLLS  
A 1, LOOT 1.

## BARTERING



Players are encouraged to trade for **favours** or **nefarious acts**. You can pay another player any amount of  $\text{ç}$  for practically any favor. You can't trade items or loot in this fashion. Bartering does not use the stack.

You don't need to keep your promises, but **be warned**: if you go back on your word, you will lose the trust of others.

## VARIANTS

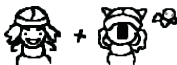


### 2 Player Mini Draft

Setup the game as normal, then lay out the top 3 cards of the treasure deck. The first player gains one of the items, then the other player gains one of the remaining items. Put the last card on the bottom of the treasure deck. Repeat this process, alternating who picks first, until both players have 2 items in addition to their starting item, then play as normal.

## Co-op/Solitaire

Set up the game as normal for 2 players.



For co-op, each player controls one character. For solitaire, you always control both characters at the same time. (*Hands, ç, and items are kept separate.*)

Set out the D8 with the **8** up.

Play proceeds as normal. (*For solitaire, one character takes a turn, then the other character takes a turn.*) When both characters have taken a turn, **the D8 ticks down one**. If a character dies during their turn, **the D8 also ticks down one**. All other rules remain unchanged.

When both characters control 4 souls between them, you win! (*Difficulty can be scaled up or down by changing the souls needed to win.*) **If the D8 reaches zero, you lose.**



*Try creating your own variants too!*



Use the QR code  
above to access the  
**Four Souls** website.  
Thanks for playing!

