GLOOMY GRAVES

Rulebook

CAN YOU BURY THE COMPETITION?

In GLOOMY GRAVES, you work as a gravedigger in a dark fantasy world where epic battles rage continuously. The corpses of pixies, goblins, unicorns, cyclops, and dragons have begun to pile up, so you've got your work cut out for you...

Keep the place organized, as you bury corpses in different areas of the graveyard, or it's your own grave you'll be digging!

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GLOOMY GRAVES

A Ghastly Game By
Jeffrey D. Allers

Ages 14+   2–4 Players   30–45 Minutes

Components

90 Corpse Cards   **4** Player Aid Cards

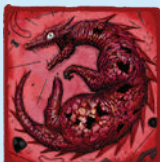**20** Score Cards   **1** Start Player Card

Grave Types

Pixie

Goblin

Unicorn

Cyclops

Dragon

Gravedigger

Important! *Each corpse card has two halves. Each half contains either a grave of a particular type or a gravedigger. This matters for placement and scoring rules.*

Game Setup

❶ Remove certain **corpse cards**, depending on the number of players, and return them to the game box without revealing them.

➤ *In a **2-player game**, remove the 20 cards marked with two shovels on the back -AND- three more cards at random.*

➤ *In a **3-player game**, remove the 10 cards marked with three shovels on the back.*

➤ *In a **4-player game**, remove one card at random.*

❷ Sort the **score cards** by type. For each type, arrange the score cards according to their point values and place them off to one side of the play area.

❸ Shuffle the corpse cards together, creating a face-down **corpse deck**. Place the deck off to one side of the play area. Then reveal three cards from the deck and place them next to the deck, creating a face-up row.

❹ Reveal two corpse cards from the deck and place them in the center of the play area, face up, creating a 2x2 square. This is the start of the **communal graveyard**.

❺ Deal each player five corpse cards from the deck, face down. This is their **hand**, which they must not reveal to their opponents.

❻ Each player chooses one corpse card from their hand and places it in front of themselves, face down. Once all players have done so, each player flips their chosen card face up. This is the start of their **private crypt**.

❼ Give a **player aid card** to each player. These cards indicate the proper turn sequence and how bonus points are scored at the end of the game.

❽ The player who most recently visited a graveyard is named the start player. Give them the **start player card**.

❷ Score Cards
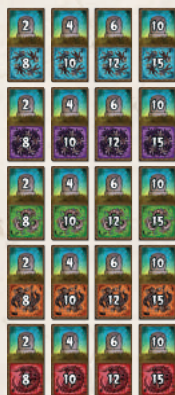
❺ Hand

Private Crypt ❻

❼ Player Aid Card

❹ Communal Graveyard

❸ Corpse Deck

Private Crypt ❻

❺ Hand

❼ Player Aid Card

❽ Start Player Card

How to Play

The game is played in a series of rounds. In every round, each player takes a single turn, beginning with the start player and proceeding in clockwise order.

On your turn, carry out these three steps, in order: **bury corpses**, **score graves**, and **draw cards**. Once you have done so, your turn ends and the next player's turn begins.

This sequence continues until the end of the game
(see END OF THE GAME, p. 10).

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Step 1: Bury Corpses

This step is mandatory. In this step, you must play **two cards** from your hand, adding (a) one card to your **private crypt** and (b) one card to the **communal graveyard**.

These two areas each have their own unique placement rules, but you must also observe these general placement rules at all times:

> ➤ Graves can cover other graves but not gravediggers.
> ➤ Gravediggers can cover graves and other gravediggers.
> ➤ Gravediggers cannot be adjacent to each other.
> ➤ Cards cannot be placed beneath other cards.

A. ADD ONE CARD TO YOUR PRIVATE CRYPT

Place one card in your private crypt, face up.

You must place the new card so that it is adjacent to or on top of (partially or completely) the existing cards in your private crypt.

However, your private crypt cannot be larger than a 3x3 square and cannot have more than one gravedigger in any column or row.

✔ **Ⓐ** Correct: The new card is adjacent to an existing card in your private crypt.

✔ **Ⓑ** Correct: The new card covers one half of an existing card in your private crypt.

✘ **Ⓒ** Incorrect: The new card makes your private crypt larger than a 3x3 square.

B. ADD ONE CARD TO THE COMMUNAL GRAVEYARD

Place one card in the communal graveyard, face up.

You must place the new card so that one half covers an existing card in the communal graveyard and one half covers only the playing surface.

Important! *The communal graveyard grows by exactly half of a card each turn!*

Ⓐ   **Ⓑ**   **Ⓒ**

✔️ **Ⓐ** Correct: One half of the new card covers one half of an existing card in the communal graveyard.

❌ **Ⓑ** Incorrect: Neither half of the new card covers any of the existing cards in the communal graveyard.

❌ **Ⓒ** Incorrect: Both halves of the new card cover existing cards in the communal graveyard.

Step 2: Score Graves

This step is optional. In this step, you may (but are not required to) score the graves of **one type** that you have not scored yet in this game.

The type you choose to score must be one of the two types on the card you added to the communal graveyard this turn. However, if the card you added to the communal graveyard this turn has a gravedigger, you may choose **any type** instead.

Important! There are five grave types. Each player can only score each grave type once per game. Choose wisely when to score each type!

Identify the largest contiguous group of adjacent graves of that type in (1) the **communal graveyard** and (2) your **private crypt**. Count the number of graves in **both groups**, then add them together. That total is your score.

Important! When you score graves, gravediggers are "wild," which means they always count as graves of the type you chose to score!

From the available score cards for that grave type, claim the highest score card whose number (not point value) is **equal to or less than** your score.

Example: You added a cyclops/dragon card to the communal graveyard this turn, so you can score one of those two grave types. You decide to score dragons.

➤ In the communal graveyard, the largest contiguous group is five (four dragons + one gravedigger).

➤ In your private crypt, the largest contiguous group is three (one dragon + two gravediggers).

You score a total of eight dragon graves.

For each grave type, there are four score cards. These score cards are numbered 8, 10, 12, and 15 (worth 2, 4, 6, and 10 points, respectively). The number denotes the minimum score needed to claim that score card.

Important! *The highest score card you are eligible for might not be available, if claimed by an opponent previously. When this happens, claim the highest remaining score card you are eligible for.*

POINT VALUE → **2** **4** **6** **10**

NUMBER → **8** **10** **12** **15**

Example: You scored a total of 14 pixie graves on your turn, so you are eligible to claim the "12" score card. However, if that card is not available, you claim the "10" score card instead. If that card is also not available, you claim the "8" score card instead.

Step 3: Draw Cards

This step is mandatory. In this step, you must draw **two cards** and add them to your hand, **one at a time**. For each card, you may draw from the deck or from the row.

Each time you draw a card from the row, **immediately** refill the row by revealing the next card from the deck and placing it in the row, face up.

End of the Game

The end of the game is triggered when at least **one** of these occurs:

➤ One player has claimed five score cards (i.e., one of each type).
➤ One player needs to draw cards but the deck is empty.

When this happens, **finish the current round** (skipping Step 3 of each turn). This means that the player seated to the right of the start player will take the last turn of the game.

Then tally final scores!

Final Scoring

Each player adds together the **point values** of all the score cards they have, then adds **bonus points** based on how many different score cards they have.

> ➤ **3 score cards = 5 bonus points**
> ➤ **4 score cards = 10 bonus points**
> ➤ **5 score cards = 15 bonus points**

The player with the most points is the winner!

If there is a tie for most points, the tied player with the highest score card wins. If those players are tied for highest score card, they compare their next highest score cards, and so on.

Example: Player A has four score cards, worth a total of 12 points (2+4+4+2). Because they have four score cards, Player A also scores 10 bonus points. Player A's final score is 22 points.

Example: Player B has five score cards, worth a total of 20 points (2+2+2+10+4). Because they have five score cards, Player B also scores 15 bonus points. Player B's final score is 35 points.

Credits

Gloomy Graves

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