



# How to Play Teaching Guides: #20 Magic Realm

This guide is intended for use by owners of the game looking for a quick outline with a recommended order and structure with which to teach the game. To hear a sample explanation or to learn the game yourself listen to episode #20 of The How to Play Podcast available at [www.howtoplaypodcast.com](http://www.howtoplaypodcast.com)

## 1 The Hook - What the Game is About

*"Welcome to Magic Realm. You are a brave hero venturing off into a dangerous land willing to risk your life to fulfill your dreams of fame and fortune. You have one month, 28 days, to accomplish your goals. Each day you will be able to select up to four actions to do including moving to the next clearing, searching the area and hiding. You will be moving to tiles with different terrain, you will start in the relatively safe valleys and forests but will have to venture into the caves and mountains in order to accomplish your goals. For somewhere in the caves and mountain tiles are hidden the secret treasure locations, but also these areas are more dangerous and more likely to draw the attention of monsters.*

*But venture into these dangerous locations you must for in order for you to accomplish your goals and win the game you must achieve a certain amount of fame and notoriety for slaying deadly monsters and recover enough treasure from their hoards after bravely slaying these beasts or by sneaking the treasure out from right under their noses. At the end of 28 days, if you are still alive, any player who has met his ambitions for fame and fortune by slaying enough monsters and recovering enough treasure will have won the game and the one player who has achieved the most will be the victor."*

## 2 The Meat - How to Play the Game

*(This reference knowingly ignores many of the rules of Magic Realm in order to ease a player into the first game. It is recommended that players first playing Magic Realm should choose fighter characters without magic and ignore as much extra complexity as possible; ignore magic, horses, hiring natives, following and player versus player combat. The berserker, black knight, amazon and dwarf are good starting choices, with the optimal scenario for learning the game being a solo or two player game with the learning player playing as the berserker. A suggested method for learning the game yourself is to play solo using the Magic Realm Java program "RealmSpeak." See <http://realmspeak.dewkid.com> )*

### 1. Setting up Victory Points

1.1 Explain 5 options (Great Treasures, Spells, Fame Notoriety, Gold)

1.2 Suggested Starting Setup of 1 Great Treasure VP, 2 Fame, 1 No-

tority, 1 Gold.

1.3 Meaning with Berserker your Goals by end of game are 1 Great Treasure, 20 Fame, 20 Notoriety, and 53 Gold (30 + starting equipment value of 23 for the berserker)

2. Start the game

3. The Map

3.1 Recognizing the Four Types of Terrain Hexes

3.1.1 Valleys

3.1.2 Forests

3.1.3 Caves

3.1.4 Mountains (+ Deep Woods)

3.2 Yellow Warning Chits

3.2.1 Valleys - Determine Dwellings (Explain what Dwellings are used for)

3.2.2 Forests - Campfires - Monster Summoners - 1 in 6 chance

3.2.3 Caves and Mountains - All have Monster Summoners 1 in 6 chance

3.2.4 Explain How monsters are summoned from warning chits

3.3 Orange Site and Red Sound Chits

3.3.1 It is a Goal to find Orange Site Chits

3.3.2 Explain how Site and Sound Chits are distributed on the map

3.3.3 Lost City and Lost Castle

3.3.4 Explain why Site and Sound chits make these hexes more dangerous - How these chits summon monsters to a clearing not a hex

4. Your Equipment

4.1 Action Chits

4.1.1 Active - Inactive - Wounded

4.2 Inventory

4.2.1 Great Axe and Helmet and where treasures will appear

### 4.3 Other Information on Tabs/Character Sheet

4.3.1 Spells, Discoveries, Native Relationships, Hirelings, Victory Requirements, Notes

## 5. Magic Realm's Dice Rolling Mechanic

5.1 Roll two dice take the higher of the two

5.2 Explain how this messes with the probabilities, lower results are usually most desirable in this game and hardest to achieve.

5.3 "1 roll" chance is 1 out of 36 and "6 roll" is 11 out of 36

5.4 Some items/abilities will allow you to roll one dice instead of two for certain rolls which is always an advantage

6. Recording Actions (Birdsong) -Choose 4 actions, 3 main actions to use are hide, move, and search, (others) rest, alert, spell, trade and hire. will be explained later.

6.1 Moving - click on clearing / write down clearing

6.1.1 When in Caves for any part of the turn - Two Actions that turn instead of four

6.1.2 Climbing Mountains - Two Actions to move to a mountain clearing

6.2 Hiding - click on hide / write H

6.2.1 Why to hide

6.2.2 How it is resolved

6.2.3 Can hide multiple times

6.3 Searching - click on search / write S (finds hidden paths, passages, treasures locations or loots treasure locations)

6.3.1 Choose when you resolve a Search Action and you will roll on a table and see if you were successful

6.3.2 Peer - Hidden Paths (3)

6.3.3 Locate - Site Chits (4 or 1), Secret Passages (2 or 3)

6.3.4 Loot - Must locate site chit before looting. Roll two dice count down from stack, better treasures on top, if your roll is higher than total of treasures means you fail in looting

6.4 Monster Roll - determine which monsters/natives are "prowling"

- 6.5 Determine Player Order
- 7. Resolving Actions (Daylight)
  - 7.1 Determine Player Order
  - 7.2 Become unhidden
  - 7.3 Resolve your actions
    - 7.3.1 Impossible actions are canceled which might happen by being blocked by a monster or trying to move across a hidden path you were unable to find.
    - 7.3.2 Inbetween actions you may activate, deactivate or abandon items, one weapon or item of the same type active at a time, such as boots
    - 7.3.3 Difference between activating and alerting
  - 7.4 Chits in hero's tile/s; warning, site and sound chits flip over and summon "prowling" monsters
  - 7.5 Sample first turns
    - 7.5.1 Day 1 - Plan actions - Move - Double Move into Mountain Clearing - Hide
    - 7.5.2 monster roll 3
    - 7.5.3 chits appear (dank M, Hoard 6) Monster Roll was a 3 that turn, a 1 would have summoned the dragon and a 5 would have summoned a spider but with a 3 no monsters appear in that tile
    - 7.5.4 Day 2 - Berserker bravely charges into the dragon's hoard. Plans action's - Double Move into Mountain Clearing - Search - Search.
    - 7.5.5 Monster Roll is a 1, uh oh, dragon is coming but we have to follow through on our plans anyway
    - 7.5.6 Move - Search: choose Locate, roll 3 and 4 success you "find" the Hoard. Search: choose Loot, roll 2 and 5 take the fifth treasure down in the stack.
    - 7.5.7 Dragon appears and it is time for combat.
- 8. Treasures
  - 8.1 Fame and Notoriety bonuses or penalties and a base value you

could sell them for

8.2 Anything that is a spell item as a fighter you will probably sell for money

8.3 Also red dots mean great treasure, important for Victory Points

8.4 To see how much treasure a location has refer to the setup card.

## 9. Playing your first few turns

9.1 Choose four actions, for your first few moves. Try to move into a mountain or cave

9.2 If you get to a mountain or cave tile use an action to hide

9.3 Your first goal is to try to find an orange site chit without having to fight anyone

9.4 So keep moving, hiding and searching till you find an orange chit. When you find the chit use the search action to locate, until you find it then try to loot the treasure location.

9.5 Ok go for it, inevitably at some point you are going to end up in combat that's what we are going to cover next.

## 10. Hero Combat Statistics - 5 Levels of Strength N/L/M/H/T - used for weight you can carry, how hard it is to kill you and what you are able to kill

10.1 Carrying Capacity - Movement Capability - on move chits

10.1.1 Must have an active move chit equal to heaviest item

10.1.2 Can only use move chits in combat equal or greater than heaviest item

10.2 Vulnerability - On Character Card and Monsters - what it takes to kill you or monsters

10.3 Harm - On Fight Chits and Weapons - What you can kill

10.3.1 You have to play a fight chit each turn to fight - but you use Weapon Harm Letter when using a weapon to see what you can kill.

10.3.2 Armored Monsters negate the sharpness star.

10.3.3 You can overswing. If you play a fight chit stronger than the weapon it ups your attack one level.

## 11. Monster Combat Statistics

11.1 Three most important stats, Vulnerability, Attack Speed, Move Speed

11.2 Monsters are two sided - start light side up and may randomly flip changing their statistics each round

11.3 Look at sample monster - Huge Flying Dragons - Upper left of setup card - (redesigned chits preferably)

11.4 Vulnerability - Letter H in Upper Right corner - Grey or Yellow for Armor - Old Chits use size / remember which are armored

11.5 Attack - Lower Left - H4 - Damage and Speed of monster's attack and you will need to play a move chit equal or lower to this than number to avoid an automatic hit.

11.6 Move Speed - Lower Right - Blue Octagon 4 - You will need to be lower than this number to run away or score an automatic hit.

11.7 Alright lets fight!

## 12. Combat

12.1 When does combat occur

12.1.1 Monster Roll matches tile with yellow chit

12.1.2 On clearing with orange/red chit with "proowler"

12.1.3 Blocked by a monster

12.1.4 Enter clearing with monster when unhidden

12.2 Luring - if you want to fight when hidden

12.3 Encounter Step Actions

12.3.1 Run Away (must have fast enough move chit)

12.3.2 Alert weapon or beserker chit (must have fast enough move chit)

12.3.3 Activate/Deactivate/Abandon items

12.4 Choose a Target

12.5 Choose a box,

12.5.1 Upper Left, Center or Lower Right for all attackers

12.5.2 Monsters must be distributed equally between boxes

12.6 Choose a fight chit

- 12.6.1 Go for automatic hit “undercut” - attack speed faster than monster’s move
- 12.6.2 Remember Weapons stats supersede fight chit stats
- 12.6.3 Overswing with fight chit if necessary for +1 strength
- 12.6.4 Choose a position
- 12.6.5 Effort Asterisks - max of 2
- 12.7 Choose a move chit
  - 12.7.1 Only reason letter matters is to make sure you can use it  
You cant be carrying anything heavier/ usually not an issue focus on number
  - 12.7.2 Equal or lower gives you a chance to dodge, play one even if you are too slow in case monster flips
  - 12.7.3 Play move behind armor or paired with your attack
  - 12.7.4 Effort asterisks - max of 2
- 12.8 Combat Order
  - 12.8.1 First Round “Weapon Length” - not on chits - for solo game just know that Axe has a length of 5, monsters weapon length is in parentheses, most are 0. So in many cases you will get the first hit
  - 12.8.2 Second Round “Attack Speeds” - On Weapons or Fight Chit on Monsters Attack Speed, lower left. Ties broken by weapon length.
  - 12.8.3 Order is important because you of course can kill a monster before it gets to attack you.
- 12.9 Monster Randomization
  - 12.9.1 One Dice for Position - review table - 1/3 chance of each square
  - 12.9.2 Two dice for Random chance of flipping. Roll a “6.” 11 of 36 chance of changing stats before battle - (Medium and Heavy Monsters Only!)
- 12.10 Hit or Miss?
  - 12.10.1 Attacks resolved in that order weapon length / attack speed
  - 12.10.2 Check to see if “undercut” then “intercept”

12.10.3 Undercut - attack speed is quicker than move speed its a hit.

12.10.4 If not must intercept, 1/3 chance for hero to hit the Fight chit must be in the same row as monster. For Monster to hit, Monster is in same column as the hero's move chit.

### 12.11 Hero killing monsters

12.11.1 If hero hits monster he kills it or he doesnt, cant just damage monsters, check attack strength if equal or higher to vulnerability of monster, monster is dead, and monsters future attack that round is canceled

12.11.2 Keep in mind overswing +1 attack strength

12.11.3 Sharpness star +1 attack strength

12.11.4 Armor cancels one sharpness star

### 12.12 Monsters harming Hero

12.12.1 If monster hits hero check attack strength, if it equals or exceeds hero vulnerability, you are dead.

12.12.2 If less than vulnerability, wound one counter for each hit

12.12.3 If attack is blocked by armor light wounds have no effect, medium and higher attacks still wound but do not kill

12.12.4 Armor is damaged if hit strength equals armor weight and armor is destroyed if strength exceeds armor weight (Helmet = M, damaged with M hit, destroyed with H or T hit)

### 12.13 Resolve each attack in Combat order

### 12.14 End of Round Cleanup

12.14.1 Tremendous monsters that hit flip to red side; Cant run, hit is an auto-kill Encounter Step

12.14.2 Weapons Flip - If hero hit, weapon flips to unalert, If hero misses, weapon flips to alert

12.14.3 Fatigue Step - If you used 2 asterisks fatigue 1 chit of chit type used, wounding chits occurs during this step

### 12.15 Start New Combat Round

12.15.1 Encounter Step - Alert Weapon or Run away

12.15.2 Choose Target

12.15.3 Assign monster positions and choose move and fight chits

12.15.4 Monster Randomization

12.15.5 Resolve Hits in Combat Order

12.15.6 Cleanup - Tremendous Flip - Weapons Alert/Unalert - Fatigue Chits

12.15.7 Repeat until one side is dead or runs away

12.16 Running Away

12.16.1 If you successfully run you must run to an adjacent path between two clearings

12.16.2 If you just entered that clearing this turn you must run back the way you came

12.16.3 Your first action next turn must be to move to an adjacent clearing

12.17 Spoils of Combat

12.17.1 Gain Fame/Notoriety of Monster

12.17.2 2nd Monster in the same battle gives double reward, 3rd Monster triple reward etc.

13. End of Day

13.1 That's it - all weapons become unalerted - move day counter

13.2 Do it all over again - record up to 4 actions - roll monster die - resolve actions - combat if necessary repeat.

13.3 Keep working to meet your goals of great treasures (orange dot not large treasures), fame, notoriety, gold

13.4 At the beginning of each 7th day dead monsters regenerate and are placed back onto the setup board

13.5 At the end of the 28th day game ends and we score

14. Other possible actions to record

14.1 Alert - if you know you will be fighting good to alert weapon or berserker chit so it is ready. Alert sided weapons are usually faster than unalerted side. Remember weapons unalert at end of each turn.

14.2 Rest - rest one chit

14.2.1 No Asterisk - from wound or fatigue to active

14.2.2 One Asterisk - wound to inactive OR inactive to active

14.2.3 Two Asterisk - when rested “make change” with a one asterisk chit to bring down one level

### 14.3 Trade

14.3.1 Trading is selling or buying items and can be done at dwellings with the natives

14.3.2 For one recorded trade action can sell as many items as you want OR attempt to buy one item

14.3.3 Sell trade action: choose all items you want to sell and they buy for items base price, weapons check detail in inventory, treasures, lower right.

14.3.4 Some treasures give you bonus fame for selling them to a particular group. (bejeweled dwarf vest 10F to soldiers in House)

14.3.5 Buying action, attempt to buy item

14.3.6 Roll on the meeting table to determine price based on relationship

14.3.7 Can “buy drinks” to use next friendlier table

14.3.8 Results of table range from Free Item to Price x 1-4 to Lose fame/notoriety or fight, or just fight, likely to be Price x 2-3 especially if neutral

14.3.9 You must also roll on the meeting table anytime you end your turn in a dwelling, if hidden my avoid battle if things go sour.

## 15. Review of Actions

15.1 Move, Hide, Search, Alert, Rest, Trade

15.2 Choose 4 unless you spend any of the turn in caves with which you choose 2 actions that turn, mountain spaces take 2 actions to move to. (Extra Rest Phase for Berserker each turn)

## 16. End of Game Scoring

16.1 Game ends after 28 days time to check your score

16.2 Complex scoring formula but here are the basics

16.3 If you met your minimums that we set at the beginning of the game by choosing those factors, 1 Great Treasure, 20 Fame, 20 Notoriety, and 53 Gold (30 + starting equipment value of 23 for the berserker)

you win the game.

16.4 But you also get a score based on how well you did, I wont get into the whole formula basically if you fail to meet your minimum in a category you get triple negative points.

16.5 You also get bonus points for overachieving in categories and bonus negative points for underacheiving in each category.

16.6 So it is possible for you to win the game failing in one or more categories but difficult.

16.7 This numerical score would give you a “victor” with multiple players or gives you a high score to beat when playing solo.

**3****The Hamster - How to Win the Game**

1. First try to find treasure without combat
  - 1.1 Use hide action frequently
  - 1.2 Head for Mountains and Caves to find orange site chit to loot
  - 1.3 Best treasure sites are Hoard, Lair, Vault, Cairns, Pool
  - 1.4 Search to find then hide and loot or loot bravely without hiding
2. Pick and choose battles you can win
  - 2.1 Hopefully looted treasure items improve combat abilities
  - 2.2 Try to fight battles with only 1 or 2 monsters
  - 2.3 Fighting 6 goblins or wolves at once or is trouble
  - 2.4 Go into battle alerted if possible
3. Cash in before end of game
  - 3.1 Go to sell all inventory by end of game to improve score, except items that give necessary fame, notoriety or great treasures
4. Tackle this game by accomplishing a series of goals
  - 4.1 Goal 1 - Live for a whole week
  - 4.2 Goal 2 - Loot treasure without dying
  - 4.3 Goal 3 - Win a battle
  - 4.4 Goal 4 - Live through all 28 days with saving frequently
  - 4.5 Goal 5 - "Win the Game" with saving frequently
  - 4.6 Goal 6 - "Win the Game" without saving and restarting
  - 4.7 Goal 7 - Go for a high score or win the game with other characters.

## 4

# Footnotes

1. Vegetables - minor but important rules (and there are lots more!)
  - 1.1 Melee vs. Missile weapons - Melee weapons can overswing, missile weapons must roll on a table
  - 1.2 Dragon Head and Giant Club - act as a second attacker, kill the body kill them both, head and clubs have “weapon length”
  - 1.3 Curses - Imp and looting certain treasures may curse you; ex. cant hide, fame is worthless.
    - 1.3.1 End turn in the chapel to remove curses
  - 1.4 Power of the Pit - nasty spells cast by demons and flying demons that can do terrible things to you. Kill you, wound chits etc.
  - 1.5 Campfires - two of the forest chits are replaced with campfires that can draw other natives and are safer havens
  - 1.6 Native Groups appear in dwellings by the monster roll only if you are in the dwelling at end of turn
  - 1.7 Visitor/Campaign chits appear in dwellings on 6 if you are with a group at a site
  - 1.8 Deep Woods is a mountain for setup purposes.
  - 1.9 Looting Vault/Cairns/Pool uses action chits
2. Next Steps
  - 2.1 Horses
  - 2.2 Different Fighting Characters that have very different strategies; (suggestions: Black Knight, Dwarf)
  - 2.3 Magic Using Character; (suggestions elf or pilgrim)
  - 2.4 Hiring Natives
  - 2.5 Multiple Characters - cooperatively or competitively - affect on combat
  - 2.6 Optional Rules

### 3. Acknowledgements and Further References - Thanks!

3.1 MR Rules 3.1 by Teresa Michelesen and Stephen McKnight

3.2 MRIPE - Magic Realm in Plain English - Joel Yoder

3.3 Least you need to Know - 8 pages- Stephen McKnight (3.1 Rules, MRIPE and “The Least you Need to Know” all Available at [www.boardgamegeek.com](http://www.boardgamegeek.com) from the files section of Magic Realm)

3.4 RealmSpeak - (<http://realmspeak.dewkid.com/>) - Robin Warren

3.5 Magic Realm Wiki - (<http://homenowned.com/wiki-mr/pmwiki.php?n=Main.HomePage>) - Reference and new stuff - Peter Morris

3.6 Karim’s Redesign - Karim Chakroun “Carthaginian”

3.7 Bookshelf Games - (<http://www.bookshelfgames.com/index.html>)  
Magic Realm tutorial videos plus character example videos

3.8 Thanks to all the Magic Realm community at BGG which answered my multitude of questions while learning this game

#### Credits:

Game Design: Richard Hamblen

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Outline Author: Ryan Sturm ©2010

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