

Grim Prospects

A card battle between ailing mining companies.

You and your opponents each own a mining company in dire straits. Contracts are being lost to your competitors. Miners can no longer be employed. The remaining miners are taking contracts back from opposing companies by force. The fired workers fight alongside their friends and family in the hopes of impressing a new employer.

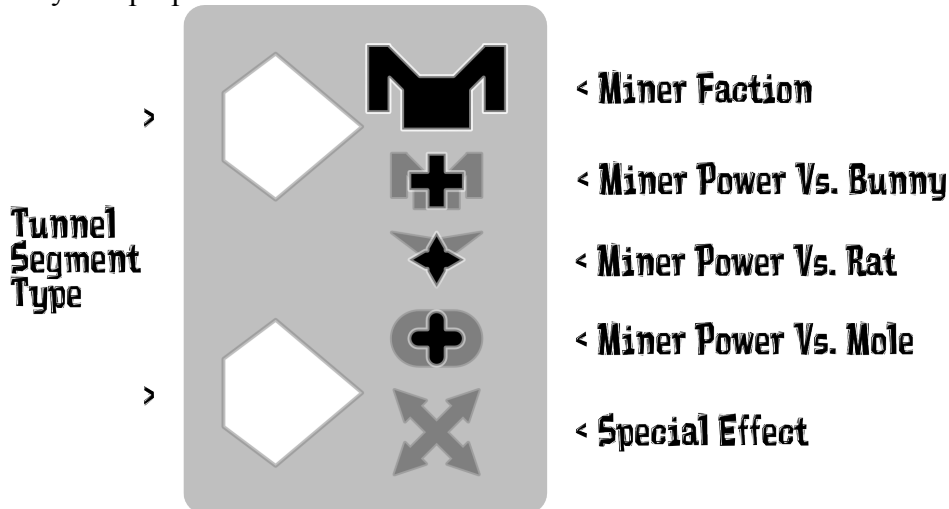
Mine a tunnel worth more than your opponents to stay in business.

Contents

The deck contains 1 **Forfeit Arrow**, 3 **Player Maps** and 60 game cards.



Each game card is both a **Tunnel Segment** and a **Miner**, but it serves only one purpose at a time.



The symbols on the card's left define what type of tunnel segment it is. Segments can be either **gems** or **shovels**. Both are explained during the *Forfeit a Tunnel Segment* phase.

The top-right of each card displays its miner's faction. There are three possibilities. Each faction is functionally equal with no distinguishable characteristics other than its symbol.

Bunnies



Rats



Moles



Power ratings are listed below the faction. The three slots always refer to Bunnies, Rats and Moles respectively. A card's power is its value in the slot of the faction it is fighting against. That value can be negative, blank or positive. (Implicitly, they are -1, 0 and +1.) Multiple cards are used in battle and greater power totals defeat lesser ones.

Sometimes there will be a special effect symbol displayed below the power ratings. Effects will be explained during their phases.

Setup

This is a game for three players. They should form a circle around the table. Place the Forfeit Arrow in the middle of the circle.

Give each player a Player Map. The Tunnel arrow of each Player Map should point towards the middle of the circle. All players should use the same side of the map as knowing the order of the factions displayed and which cards are upside-down makes it easier to read cards from across the table.

Shuffle the rest of the deck. Deal one card face-down to each player until the deck is empty. Players may view all of their own cards, but they should hide them from opponents. Cards need not held, but they must not be stored in a section defined by a Player Map.

Basic Game Structure

Grim Prospects is played in rounds with simultaneous turns until a round ends with a player who has less than three cards in their hand. Each round is composed of the following phases:

1. **Forfeit a tunnel segment** to a designated opponent.
2. **Fire two miners.** Each is sent to a different opponent.
3. **Prepare for battles.** Place miners to collapse tunnels or guard.
4. **Resolve battles.** Compare powers and collapse losing tunnels.
5. **Sleep it off.** Discard what was used in battle. Players with less than 3 cards in their hand must recycle.

1. Forfeit a Tunnel Segment

Business is bad. Contracts have been lost to competitors.



Flip the Forfeit Arrow. It will point either clockwise or counter-clockwise. This defines a player's relationships for the duration of the round. The opponent in the direction of the arrow is the player's **Inheritor**. The opponent in the opposite direction is the player's **Benefactor**.

Each player must send a card to the tunnel of their Inheritor. This card will act as a tunnel segment. As displayed on the Player Maps, tunnels should start in front of their owners and build towards the center of the table. Order matters! Earlier tunnel segments should always be closer to their owner than later ones.

During this phase, the only important symbols are those which identify the tunnel segments. These determine their worth and what happens if the tunnel collapses. Point them towards the tunnel owner. The other symbols can be overlapped by later cards in the tunnel. (For more information on collapsing tunnels, view the *Resolving Battles* section.)

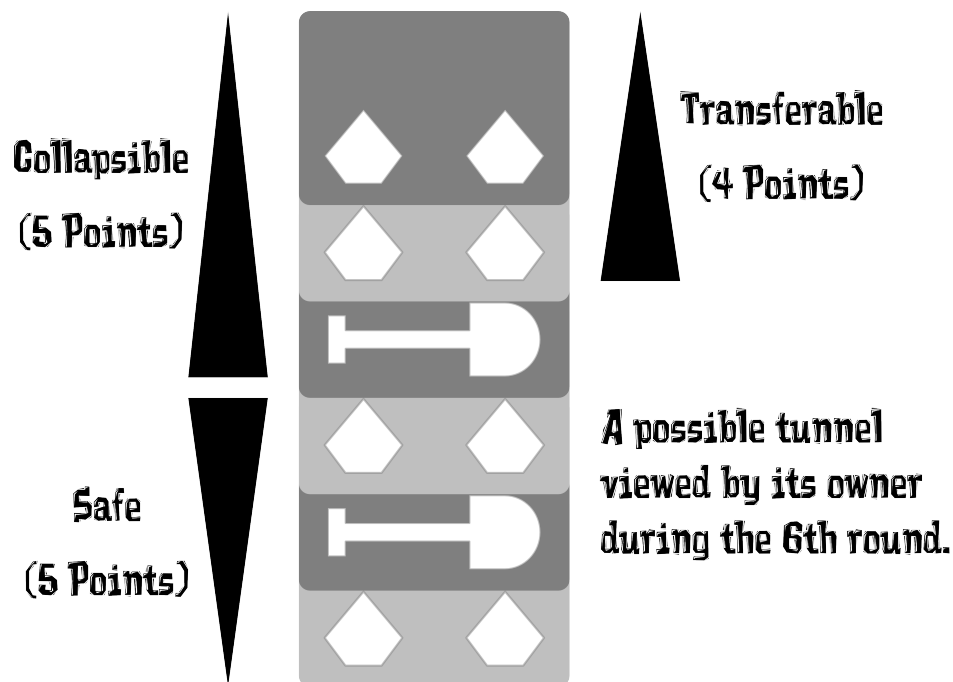


Gem segments are worth two points each if they are inside a tunnel at

the end of the game. If the tunnel collapses, they get added to the end of tunnel of whoever collapsed them. If the tunnel segments placed earlier are also gems, they get transferred as well... unless they are protected by a shovel.



Shovels are only worth one point each. If the tunnel collapses, segments placed after a shovel are lost as expected. However, the shovel itself enters the hand of the owner and the tunnel stops collapsing. Segments placed earlier than the shovel are therefore safe for at least another round. Players who know they can't steal gems during a round may wish to play a shovel to keep an opponent from doing so during the next.



2. Fire Two Miners

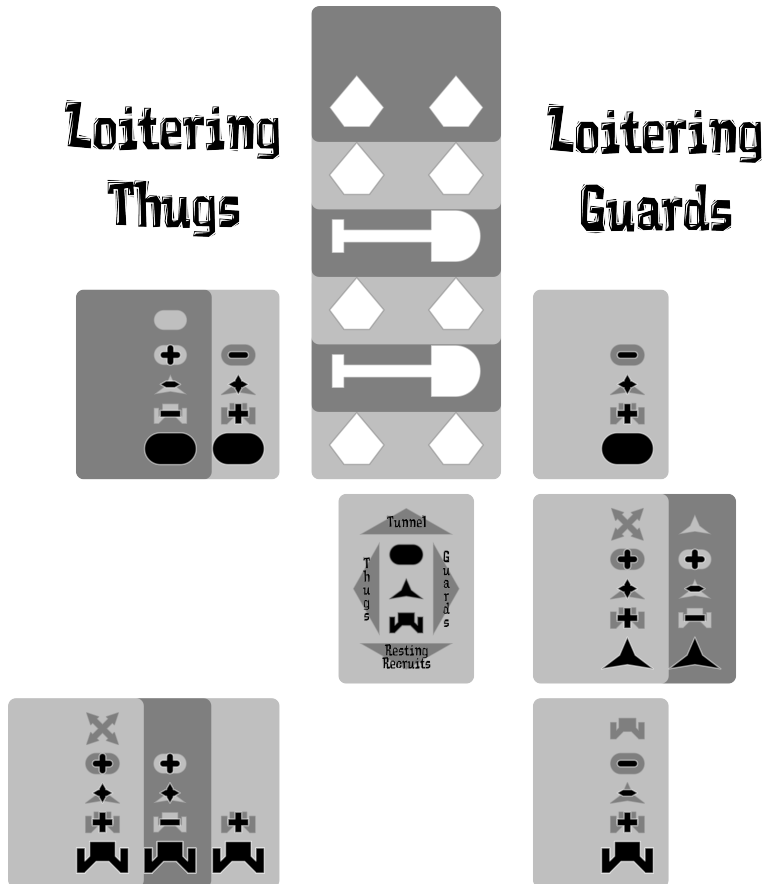
Without the contract, there is no longer enough money to employ everyone. The fired miners will loiter around the company's competitors in the hopes of attaining a job, but their loyalty belongs to their faction.

2. Fire Two Miners (continued)

Players must send one card to the *right* of their Inheritor's tunnel. This miner will become a **Loitering Guard** who will support cards of its faction that defend the Inheritor's tunnel.

Players must also send a card to the *left* of their Benefactor's tunnel. It will become a **Loitering Thug** who will support cards of its faction that collapse tunnels belonging to the Benefactor's opponents.

Both types of loitering miners are divided into rows based on their faction's position on the Player Maps. Cards within the same row can overlap each other as long as their power ratings are displayed.



3. Prepare For Battles

The miners are fed up and willing to collapse competing tunnels to improve their chances of employment. Some stand guard. Some act as their comrade's shadow and follow them into battle.

Players may place one miner face-down on each side of their own tunnel. Miners placed alongside the Loitering Thugs will become **Employed Thugs** who will attempt to collapse the tunnel of the player's Inheritor. Miners placed alongside the Loitering Guards will become **Employed Guards** who will attempt to defend the player's tunnel from the player's Benefactor.

Either placement is optional. Players can perform one, both or neither. There will be times where players simply won't have any cards to fight with. In a battle, those who play cards always defeat those who don't.



Normally only one card can be played per position. However, cards with the above silhouettes in their special effect slots can be played in addition to an Employed miner of the silhouette's faction. As long as they are in the player's hand, there is no limit to how many cards can be played in this manner. However, their strengths and weakness may begin to cancel each other out.

4. Resolve Battles

Battles commence. Loitering miners display their loyalty to their faction whether their future employers appreciate it or not. When tunnels collapse, mining rights are retrieved by force.

Flip the Employed Thugs and Employed Guards face-up. Each player's Employed Thugs will battle their Inheritor's Employed Guards. This can mean that there's two battles per player. Each player's Employed Guards will be under siege by their Benefactor's Employed Thugs.

4. Resolve Battles (*continued*)

If one player placed cards in a battle and the opponent did not, the opponent automatically loses the battle.

Otherwise, notice how each player is only using one faction per battle. The power of a player's cards is the sum of their power ratings in the opposing faction's slot. For example, if a group of Bunnies fight against Rats then the Rat power ratings on the Bunny cards are totaled to find the power of the Bunnies.

Find the total power of each player's Employed Guards versus the Employed Thugs of the player's Benefactor. If any of the player's Loitering Guards share the same faction as those Employed Guards, add their power versus those Employed Thugs as well.

Likewise, find the total power of each player's thugs versus the Employed Guards of the player's Inheritor. If any of the player's Loitering Thugs share the same faction as those Employed Thugs, add their power versus those Employed Guards to *that* total.

Compare each player's thug total to the guard total of their Inheritor. The highest total wins. Ties go to the Inheritor.

The tunnels of Inheritors with defeated guards are collapsed according to the gem and shovel rules listed in the *Forfeit a Tunnel Segment* section. Collapsed shovels should be immediately added to the hands of their owners. Collapsed gems should be pushed slightly forward and separated from their tunnels. Once all gems have been separated, they should each be added to the tunnel of their Inheritor's Benefactor.

5. Sleep It Off

Both frustration and action have left the miners weary. They are in no condition to work. Some with strong tempers have left to apologize. Others are being rehired.

Players with less than three cards in their hand must add their **Resting Recruits** pile to it.

What Resting Recruits pile? When was that created?

Now. Each player must discard whatever was used in battle. This includes the Employed Thugs and Employed Guards along with any Loitering Thugs or Loitering Guards that fought alongside them. As displayed on the Player Maps, each player should stack the cards between themselves and the tunnel.



Some cards are exceptions. Those with this symbol enter the Resting Recruits pile of whoever they fought against.

Players with less than three cards in their hand must add their Resting Recruits pile to it. Yes, again. The cards of the resolved battles don't join a player's hand until they have to.

Any Loitering miners who did not fight remain where they are for later rounds. They will continue to place limitations on battle and encourage card predictions until used.

Winning The Game

The game ends when one player is left with less than three cards in their hand at the end of a round. Players should then add up the values of the cards in their tunnel. Shovels are worth one point. Gems are worth two. The player whose tunnel has the highest total value wins.

Alternate Rules

Artificial Player: Store the artificial player's hand face-down in a single deck. Draw and play a card whenever possible. When preparing for battles, artificial players with at least two cards will play one in each battle. If there is only one card when preparing then it will be used in the battle with the most gems at risk of collapse. If those amounts are equal, the card is used to battle the Inheritor.

Alternate Rules (*continued*)

Only 2 Players: Distribute cards evenly and ignore alternating opposition roles. This version can be helpful for teaching the game. However, shovel placement loses some appeal without the ability to stall and prevent someone from stealing gems.

Unlimited Players: With the simultaneous turns and paired-off players, multiple copies of the deck can be merged to support more people without the duration being vastly affected. However, the results are chaotic as the chances of one player taking on a specific opponent decrease. The Forfeit Arrow can be used to limit opponents to neighbors or relationships can be kept track of with tokens or notes.

Credits & Resources

The rules and symbols were created by ACWraith (aka Andre La Barre).
<http://www.beyond.com/members/ACWraith>

Some unaffiliated people donated resources to the world that are free for commercial use. Thank you.

Textures by Spiral Graphics: <http://www.spiralgraphics.biz/>

Fonts by Ray Larabie: <http://www.larabiefonts.com/>

Special thanks go to:

Andreas Pelikan

Dan Brooke

Geldonyetich

The card version of this game is available at:

<http://www.thegamecrafter.com/games/grim-prospects>

Download and play the digital version at:

<http://www.beyond.com/games/ACWraith/GrimProspects>

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