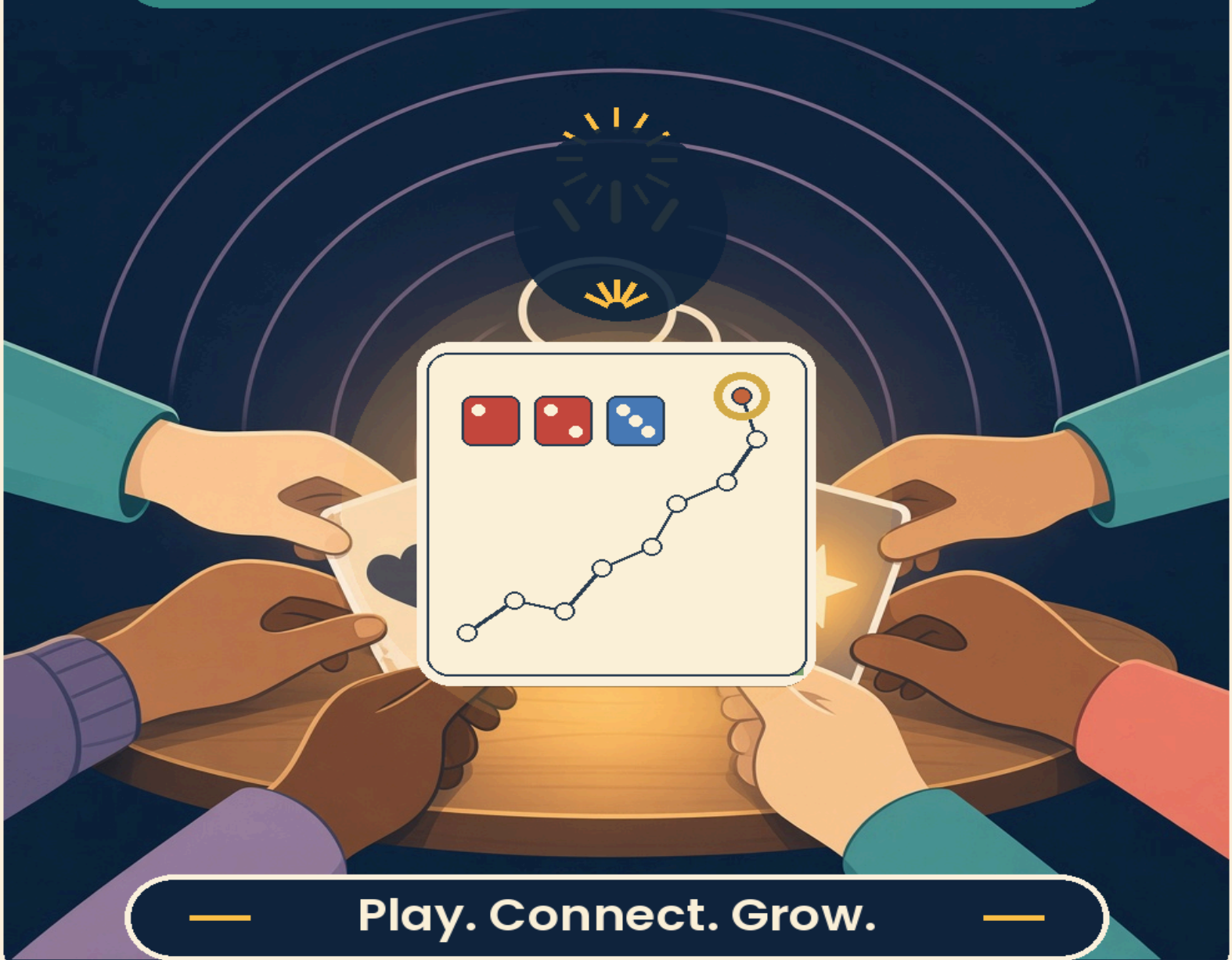
BGT™

Board Game Therapy™

Extended Edition

War of the Ring: Second Edition

TABLE Method™ Game Guide



Play. Connect. Grow.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

How to use this guide

An extended TABLE Method™ companion for War of the Ring: Second Edition. The game is not included; play by the rulebook in your box.

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START HERE

For a first session, read pages 4 to 6, pick the session plan for your role, and print the desk card and agreements card. Everything after that is there when you need it: more prompts, more debrief questions, adaptations, and fixes for common problems.

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AT A GLANCE

War of the Ring: Second Edition at the table

Two sides, action dice each turn, and a hidden journey with the Ring. A TABLE Method™ companion for a game you already own. This guide does not include the game.

Edition	Ares Games English Second Edition rulebook, Version 2.4.1 (copyright 2011, 2021; file dated 2022-01-20)
Players	2 as written; 3 or 4 in two teams (pp.45,46)
Session plan	Learning game: about 170 min BGT window; may end unfinished
Materials	Base Second Edition box and rulebook; no expansions

PLAY BY THE RULEBOOK IN YOUR BOX

This summary is a session aid, not a substitute for the published rules, and it leaves out details. Ares Games English Second Edition rulebook, Version 2.4.1, pp.14 to 46; not a summary of any expansion. Editions differ; if your rulebook says something different, follow your rulebook.

In the BGT book: Independent TABLE Method companion facilitation; no book chapter placement or tested outcome is asserted.

How the game works, in brief

One player leads the Free Peoples and the other the Shadow. Each turn both roll action dice and take turns using one die at a time, moving armies, playing cards, or moving the hidden Fellowship toward Mount Doom while the Shadow hunts it. Talk about the two sides as game roles only.

1. Setup: choose sides. Ring-bearers on Rivendell; Fellowship Progress and Corruption counters on step 0; Gandalf the Grey is the first Guide; standard Hunt tiles in an opaque cup. The Shadow takes seven Action dice and the Free Peoples four (p.14).
2. Each turn: recover dice and draw one card from each of your two Event decks; Fellowship phase; Hunt allocation; Action roll; Action resolution; Victory check. The Shadow puts rolled Eye results into the Hunt Box (p.18).
3. Hunt allocation: the Shadow may place up to one die per Companion in the Fellowship into the Hunt Box, and must place at least one if a Free Peoples die was taken back from it. Starting with the Free Peoples, players alternate using one die each (pp.18,19).
4. Moving the Fellowship uses a Character die, which then goes into the Hunt Box. The Shadow then rolls one Combat die per Shadow die in the Hunt Box, up to five; each 6 succeeds, and each Free Peoples die already there adds 1 to each result (pp.20,40,41).
5. Battles run in rounds: an optional combat card, a roll of dice equal to Combat Strength (up to five) hitting on 5 or 6, a Leader re-roll of misses up to Leadership, casualties, then cease or retreat (pp.29,30).
6. Win: Ring-bearers at 12 or more Corruption, the Shadow wins; on the Crack of Doom with less, the Free Peoples win at once. At the Victory check, Shadow control of Free Peoples Settlements worth 10 points, or Free Peoples control of Shadow Settlements worth 4, wins (p.44).

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THE TABLE PLAN

Why this game, and how to set it up

The two sides play very differently: one side has more dice and armies, the other has a hidden journey and fewer dice. That gives a clear way to talk about different roles, patience and planning under pressure, all inside the game.

T **Target.** Notice planning with limited dice, choices under pressure and each player's ownership of their own side.

Relational demand: Choose discussion depth with participants; no formal stage or ability rating is assigned.

A **Assess.** Check the player count, the time, and whether the game serves today's goal.

- Does everyone want a long two-sided game with battles?
- Can each player read cards and dice icons with chosen support?
- Do we have 2 players, or 3 or 4 in teams?

B **Build.**

- Show one turn: roll sample dice, use one Army die and one Character die, and move the Fellowship once with a Hunt roll. Reset the samples first.
- Agree Pass for optional reflection, Pause for a break and Fold to halt play immediately for the whole table, plus a visible signal. These are session agreements, not new game actions.
- Offer reflection after a Victory check, never during a battle or a Hunt. A real Fold halts the whole table immediately.

L **Lead.**

- Name a lost battle or a failed Hunt as a game result, not a personal defeat.
- Leave each die choice with its owner.
- Read card text aloud on request without advising.

E **Extract and Extend.** Debrief in order: Board, Self, Us, Life or Work, Extension. Ask what participants make of the game. Do not tell them.

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FACILITATOR SEQUENCE

Running the session

Opening script

> *"We play the Ares Games Second Edition rules. One side, then the other, uses one die at a time. The Fellowship moves hidden while the Shadow hunts. Pass skips reflection, not an action. Pause offers a break; Fold halts play and we close unfinished."*

Suggested timing

SEGMENT	TIME
Agreements and fit	5 min
Teach and reset	20 min
Play within chosen window	130 min
Optional reflection	12 min
Close and reset	3 min

Adjust to your group and to the official rules. Use the agreed session boundary; an early stop is unfinished, not a new official victory.

Planned pauses

WHEN	ASK
After a Victory check	Which die choice mattered most this turn?
After a Hunt roll	Was the Hunt result clear?
At close	Did either side meet a win condition, or is this unfinished?

Agreements and signals

Pass: say Pass to skip reflection without explaining; in-game decisions still follow the matched rulebook. Pause: say "pause" for a break. Fold: say "fold" or use the agreed nonverbal signal, and play halts for the whole table. No explanation is required.

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EXTRACT AND EXTEND

The five-rung debrief

Start at the board every time. Each person decides how far to go, and the group can end at any rung. Passing on any rung is allowed, and the later rungs are optional.

RUNG	QUESTION
Board	Which turn changed the game most?
Self	Did you have time to plan your dice?
Us	Did we respect each player's choices?
Life or Work	If you choose: how do you plan with limited resources?
Extension	Which table agreement would you keep next time?

LISTEN FOR THE PARTICIPANT'S MEANING

If someone connects the game to life or work, ask what fits and what does not. If no connection fits, leave the moment in the game. The person who played decides what it means.

Closing check

"What would you like to keep, try, or leave at the table?"

Record a chosen step only if that belongs in your normal role and documentation.

FOLD OR CHANGE COURSE

Signals: say "pass" to skip optional reflection, not an invented game move, "pause" for a break, and "fold" to stop taking part, or use the agreed card or gesture. If anyone folds, halt play at once. Check in privately, not in front of the group, and offer choices: a break, watching, changing the activity, or ending. The game can end without a deep debrief, and no one owes an explanation.

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FACILITATOR JUDGMENT

Fit, access, and repair

The participant's account carries more weight than a guess about their behavior.

A LIKELY PINCH POINT

A long run of bad rolls or a failed Hunt can feel personal. The side with more experience may explain the other side's moves unasked.

A WORKABLE ADJUSTMENT

Use the Hunt roll readback and choose sides by preference. Ask before giving any advice. Agree on any adjustment before play, and name it as an adaptation. Do not require anyone to disclose a disability or explain their needs to the group.

AFTER TENSION

End personal remarks, restate that dice and battles are game events, offer a break, and close unfinished if wanted. Describe the sequence, not a motive. Accept a pass. Continue only if the group is ready.

Different roles, same game

HOST OR TEACHER

Check comfort with a long game about battles before teaching.

COACH

Invite one voluntary focus on planning with limited dice. Results are not ratings of people.

LICENSED CLINICIAN

Confirm consent for a battle theme within your own practice; do not read side choice or die use as a clinical sign.

An accessible alternative is better than insisting on a rule that prevents someone from taking part. Say when you are adapting a rule, and agree on it before play. The rule variations come next.

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RULE VARIATIONS

Rule variations for different goals

Small rule changes let one box serve different goals. Each variation below names the change, the objective it targets, the group it suits, what to watch for, and a debrief prompt. This guide has 2 rulebook settings or practices (not separate variants) and 2 BGT house rules.

FROM THE RULEBOOK · NOT A SEPARATE VARIANT

Four players in two teams

RULE CHANGE	Each side has two players with named Nations; a Leading Player token passes each turn, and teammates may swap one card without showing or discussing it (p.45).
TARGETS	Play with four people.
SUITS	Groups of four.
WATCH FOR	Team talk follows the card swap limit.
DEBRIEF PROMPT	“Did your team role feel clear?”

FROM THE RULEBOOK · NOT A SEPARATE VARIANT

Three players

RULE CHANGE	One Free Peoples player against a Shadow team of two; the Free Peoples player cannot take two actions in a row on the same Nation (p.46).
TARGETS	Play with three people.
SUITS	Groups of three.
WATCH FOR	Explain the limit before play.
DEBRIEF PROMPT	“Was the three-player limit easy to track?”

BGT HOUSE RULE · NOT AN OFFICIAL RULE

Hunt roll readback

RULE CHANGE	Before each Hunt roll, the Shadow player says how many dice are rolled and what number succeeds.
TARGETS	Keep the Hunt clear.
SUITS	Tables new to the Hunt.
WATCH FOR	It is a fact, not a threat.
DEBRIEF PROMPT	“Was each Hunt roll clear?”

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BGT HOUSE RULE · NOT AN OFFICIAL RULE

Choose a side by preference

RULE CHANGE	Players choose sides by preference, not assignment, and may swap sides next session.
TARGETS	Protect choice of role.
SUITS	Any new pair.
WATCH FOR	No one has to play a side they dislike.
DEBRIEF PROMPT	“Would you try the other side?”

BGT ADAPTATIONS ARE NOT ARES GAMES RULES

A BGT house rule is a facilitation adaptation written for this guide. It is not part of the official rules of War of the Ring: Second Edition, and no publisher endorsement is asserted. Tell players when you are using one, and agree on it before play. Use one variation at a time so you can see what it changes.

Our game-specific agreement

Each player owns their side, their dice and their cards. We choose sides by preference and may swap next time. Bad rolls, lost battles and a failed Hunt are game events, not judgements. We ask before advising and never explain the other side’s plan unasked.

BGT session agreement: Pass skips optional reflection, not a legal turn. Pause offers a break; Fold halts the whole table immediately. Close unfinished if no win condition is met in the window. These are facilitation boundaries, not an official timed victory.

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SESSION PLANS BY ROLE

Session plan: host or teacher

WHO THIS PLAN IS FOR

For hosts, teachers and librarians choosing a game that fits their group. Offer a useful teach and an optional concrete conversation, not an assessment.

SEGMENT	TIME	WHAT TO DO
Welcome and fit	**5 min**	Check comfort with a long game about battles before teaching. Agree Pass/Pause/Fold and the closing plan before teaching.
Teach and reset	**20 min**	Show one turn: roll sample dice, use one Army die and one Character die, and move the Fellowship once with a Hunt roll. Reset the samples first.
Play with choice	**130 min**	Offer reflection after a Victory check, never during a battle or a Hunt. A real Fold halts the whole table immediately. Let each player choose dice uses and cards; read text only on request.
Optional reflection	**12 min**	Which turn changed the game most? Did we respect each player's choices? Later rungs stay optional; accept a pass and no personal inference.
Close and reset	**3 min**	Name the actual ending or mark unfinished. Ask keep, try or leave. Record public process notes only, following your role and privacy duties.

Total: about 170 minutes. Shorten play before you shorten the agreements or the close.

Before you start

- ☐ Your copy of War of the Ring: Second Edition is complete, and you have read the rulebook in your box.
- ☐ Seats let everyone see and reach the play area.
- ☐ The agreements card is printed or on display.
- ☐ You know which variation, if any, you will use, and you will name it before play.
- ☐ You know what your setting expects if someone needs support.

STAY INSIDE YOUR ROLE

Stay at the Board and Us rungs unless the group moves on by itself. If something personal comes up, listen, thank the person, and return to the game. If someone seems to need support, follow your setting's own procedure.

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SESSION PLANS BY ROLE

Session plan: coach

WHO THIS PLAN IS FOR

For coaches and team leads. Let participants choose a process to notice. Scores and decisions are not ratings of people or evidence of transfer outside play.

SEGMENT	TIME	WHAT TO DO
Choose a focus	**5 min**	Invite one voluntary focus on planning with limited dice. Results are not ratings of people. Agree Pass/Pause/Fold and the closing plan before teaching.
Teach and reset	**20 min**	Show one turn: roll sample dice, use one Army die and one Character die, and move the Fellowship once with a Hunt roll. Reset the samples first.
Play with choice	**130 min**	Offer reflection after a Victory check, never during a battle or a Hunt. A real Fold halts the whole table immediately. Ask before giving a prompt; accept any legal die use without asking why.
Optional reflection	**17 min**	Which turn changed the game most? Did we respect each player's choices? Later rungs stay optional; accept a pass and no personal inference.
Close and reset	**3 min**	Name the actual ending or mark unfinished. Ask keep, try or leave. Record public process notes only, following your role and privacy duties.

Total: about 175 minutes. Shorten play before you shorten the agreements or the close.

Before you start

- ☐ Your copy of War of the Ring: Second Edition is complete, and you have read the rulebook in your box.
- ☐ Seats let everyone see and reach the play area.
- ☐ The agreements card is printed or on display.
- ☐ You know which variation, if any, you will use, and you will name it before play.
- ☐ You know what your setting expects if someone needs support.

STAY INSIDE YOUR ROLE

Keep the focus on the skill the group chose, not on judging individuals. Do not interpret game moves as evidence about a person. Life or Work links are optional and come from participants.

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SESSION PLANS BY ROLE

Session plan: licensed clinician

WHO THIS PLAN IS FOR

For licensed clinicians within their own training, consent, license and records practice. This session shape is not a treatment plan, diagnostic tool or clinical protocol.

SEGMENT	TIME	WHAT TO DO
Purpose and consent	**7 min**	Confirm consent for a battle theme within your own practice; do not read side choice or die use as a clinical sign. Agree Pass/Pause/Fold and the closing plan before teaching.
Teach and reset	**20 min**	Show one turn: roll sample dice, use one Army die and one Character die, and move the Fellowship once with a Hunt roll. Reset the samples first.
Play with choice	**130 min**	Offer reflection after a Victory check, never during a battle or a Hunt. A real Fold halts the whole table immediately. Notice upset after a lost battle; offer Pause without needing an explanation.
Optional reflection	**15 min**	Which turn changed the game most? Did we respect each player's choices? Later rungs stay optional; accept a pass and no personal inference.
Close and reset	**3 min**	Name the actual ending or mark unfinished. Ask keep, try or leave. Record public process notes only, following your role and privacy duties.

Total: about 175 minutes. Shorten play before you shorten the agreements or the close.

Before you start

- ☐ Your copy of War of the Ring: Second Edition is complete, and you have read the rulebook in your box.
- ☐ Seats let everyone see and reach the play area.
- ☐ The agreements card is printed or on display.
- ☐ You know which variation, if any, you will use, and you will name it before play.
- ☐ You know what your setting expects if someone needs support.

STAY INSIDE YOUR ROLE

This guide is not a treatment plan, assessment, or outcome measure. Use it only where it fits your license, training, and setting. Consent, clinical fit, confidentiality, and documentation remain your responsibility.

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SESSION PLANS BY ROLE

A three-session series

For groups that meet more than once. Each session uses the core plan in this guide; the series only changes the setup and the debrief focus. Skip or repeat a session whenever the group needs it.

SESSION	SETUP	DEBRIEF FOCUS
Learn a turn	Two players, standard rules.	Board: dice, Fellowship, Hunt.
Protect choices	Repeat with the Hunt roll readback.	Self/Us: ask before advising.
Choose scope	Swap sides or try team play.	Extension: keep a friendly dice agreement.

Between sessions

- Use the title-specific session log for setup, public process and actual ending. Never turn it into a ranking, diagnosis or promised progress measure.
- Open each session by asking what people remember from last time. Passing is fine.
- Change only one thing at a time: one variation or one new rule.
- Close the series by asking what the group would like to keep doing together.

A NOTE ON PROGRESS

A series gives a group more practice with the same game. It does not promise any change outside the game. If a participant names a change they have noticed, that is their observation to share or keep.

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FACILITATE WITH DEPTH

Facilitator prompt bank

Pick one or two prompts, not all of them. Offer reflection after a Victory check, never during a battle or a Hunt. A real Fold halts the whole table immediately. Every prompt can be passed.

BEFORE PLAY

"Who wants which side?"

"Are we 2 players or teams?"

"What reading support is wanted?"

"Which visible signal means Fold?"

BETWEEN TURNS

"Where is the Fellowship on its track?"

"How much Corruption is there now?"

"Is the pace still comfortable?"

"Is everyone comfortable continuing?"

AFTER A HARD MOMENT

"Is that a game event or a remark about a person?"

"Would a short break help?"

"Did anyone ask for advice?"

"Would we rather pause or close unfinished?"

CLOSING

"Did either side meet a win condition?"

"If we close now, do we record unfinished?"

"Which agreement helped most?"

"What would you keep, change or leave?"

HOW TO ASK

Ask the whole table, then wait. Accept short answers and silence. Reflect what you heard in the participant's words, not yours. If a prompt lands badly, say so, and move on.

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FACILITATE WITH DEPTH

Debrief question bank

Extra questions for each rung of the five-rung debrief. Use them to replace or follow the core question, one rung at a time. The later rungs stay optional, and the Life or Work questions are always offered as a choice.

BOARD

- Which die did you use first?
- How far did the Fellowship move?
- Which battle mattered most?

SELF

- Were the dice icons readable?
- Did a bad roll bother you?
- Was the length right?

US

- Did we let each side play its own way?
- Did table talk stay friendly?
- Did each player own their choices?

LIFE OR WORK

- If you choose: how do you keep going after a setback?
- If you choose: how do you decide when to take a risk?
- If you choose: how do you plan with few options?

EXTENSION

- Would you try the other side next?
- Would team play suit us later?
- Would you choose this game again?

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FACILITATE WITH DEPTH

Adapting for ages, group sizes, and access

Ages

Rating boundary	No play age is printed in the selected rulebook, only a small parts warning; check the box.
Reading load	Read one card and the dice icons together first.
Theme readiness	Battle and fantasy themes may fit differently.
Requested support	Agree literal readback without choosing actions.

Group sizes

2 players	The standard game: one player per side.
3 players	One Free Peoples player against a Shadow team (p.46).
4 players	Two teams of two (p.45).
More than 4	Choose another activity.

Accessibility

Vision	Read card text and region names aloud on request.
Hearing	Announce dice results and Hunt rolls clearly.
Motor	A helper moves figures as directed.
Language	Teach one turn with sample dice first.
Attention	Offer breaks after a Victory check.

No play age is printed in the selected Ares Games rulebook, only a small parts warning. Check the matching box; readiness and access notes are facilitation choices, not publisher requirements. Agree on any adaptation before play and name it as an adaptation. Nobody has to disclose a disability or explain a need to the group.

Choice and support agreement

Each player owns their side, their dice and their cards. We choose sides by preference and may swap next time. Bad rolls, lost battles and a failed Hunt are game events, not judgements. We ask before advising and never explain the other side's plan unasked.

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FACILITATE WITH DEPTH

Troubleshooting

Common problems at the table, with something to try first. If a fix does not work, close the session unfinished rather than forcing play. A short good game beats a long hard one.

IF THIS HAPPENS	TRY THIS
Shadow rolls the Hunt Box dice	Dice placed in the Hunt Box are not rolled in the Action roll.
Too many dice put in the Hunt Box	No more than the number of Companions in the Fellowship.
Fellowship die set aside	After moving the Fellowship, the die goes into the Hunt Box.
More than five combat dice rolled	Combat Strength rolls at most five dice.
Hits on a 4	Hits need a 5 or 6 unless a card or terrain changes it.
Settlement win checked mid turn	Settlement wins are checked at the Victory check.
Ring win waits for the end of turn	Ring-based wins end the game at once.
Window ends early	Record unfinished; do not declare a winner.

WHEN TO END PLAY

Signals: say “pass” to skip optional reflection, not an invented game move, “pause” for a break, and “fold” to stop taking part, or use the agreed card or gesture. If anyone folds, halt play at once. Check in privately, not in front of the group, and offer choices: a break, watching, changing the activity, or ending. The game can end without a deep debrief, and no one owes an explanation.

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ONE-PAGE DESK CARD

War of the Ring: Second Edition: quick guide

Standalone printable desk card. Print this page for the facilitator's seat. The game is supplied separately.

BEFORE

Show one turn: roll sample dice, use one Army die and one Character die, and move the Fellowship once with a Hunt roll. Reset the samples first. Agree Pass for optional reflection, Pause for a break and Fold to halt play immediately for the whole table, plus a visible signal. These are session agreements, not new game actions.

SAY

> *"We play the Ares Games Second Edition rules. One side, then the other, uses one die at a time. The Fellowship moves hidden while the Shadow hunts. Pass skips reflection, not an action. Pause offers a break; Fold halts play and we close unfinished."*

DURING

After a Victory check: "Which die choice mattered most this turn?"

After a Hunt roll: "Was the Hunt result clear?"

At close: "Did either side meet a win condition, or is this unfinished?"

DEBRIEF IN ORDER

1. Board: Which turn changed the game most?
2. Self: Did you have time to plan your dice?
3. Us: Did we respect each player's choices?
4. Life or Work: If you choose: how do you plan with limited resources?
5. Extension: Which table agreement would you keep next time?

> FOLD: to stop taking part, say "fold" or use the agreed signal. PASS: say Pass to skip reflection without explaining; in-game decisions still follow the matched rulebook. PAUSE: say "pause." NO INFERENCE: ask participants what, if anything, a game moment means to them.

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PRINTABLE · TABLE AGREEMENTS

Our table agreements for War of the Ring: Second Edition

Print and place in the middle of the table, or read aloud before play.

PASS

Skip a question or a share. No reason needed.

PAUSE

Take a break. The table waits.

FOLD

Stop taking part. Play halts for the whole table, and no one asks why.

We agree that

☐ Each player owns their side, their dice and their cards. We choose sides by preference and may swap next time. Bad rolls, lost battles and a failed Hunt are game events, not judgements. We ask before advising and never explain the other side's plan unasked.

☐ Game moves are game moves. We ask what something meant instead of guessing.

☐ Play halts if anyone folds, and we check in quietly, not in front of everyone.

☐ Sharing is a choice. We ask each other to respect what is shared, but other participants cannot promise confidentiality, so share only what you are comfortable with. The facilitator will explain how privacy works here, including any legal, clinical, or safeguarding duties that come first.

☐ Our nonverbal signal is: _____

Our adaptations today

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PRINTABLE · SESSION PLANNING SHEET

Session planning sheet: War of the Ring: Second Edition

Date	Group	Players	Time available

MY ROLE TODAY

☐ Host or teacher ☐ Coach ☐ Licensed clinician, within my license

TARGET (T)

Which planning or pressure moment will we notice?

ASSESS (A)

Battle theme comfort, reading load and player count

BUILD (B)

Ares Games Second Edition rules, no expansions

LEAD (L)

How will I avoid steering anyone's dice?

EXTRACT AND EXTEND (E)

Which public moment and optional prompt will we revisit?

IF TIME RUNS SHORT

Close unfinished if no win condition is met in the window

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PRINTABLE · TRACKER

Turns and journey log

Record sides, public moments and the actual ending. Do not rate risk taking or patience.

SESSION	SIDES / COUNT	PUBLIC MOMENT	ENDING	NEXT AGREEMENT
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

House printable for voluntary process notes, not an assessment or a replacement for required records. Do not retain private content or infer traits.

After-session notes (for the facilitator)

Note how the session ran, not judgments about people. If your role requires records, follow your own setting's rules instead of this sheet.

What went well, and where did the plan not fit?

Rules, setup, or access changes for next time

Next session I will try (variation, prompt, or timing)

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R

REPRODUCIBLE SHEET · WAR OF THE RING: SECOND EDITION

Participant Reflection

Name or group (optional): Date: Game: War of the Ring: Second Edition

Use only if a written reflection fits the setting. You decide whether to share or submit this sheet. Your facilitator will explain any collection or storage before use. A spoken or drawn reflection works too. The five response boxes are fillable on screen.

My choice: keep this private / share a part / pass.

BOARD

Which turn changed the game most?

SELF

Did you have time to plan your dice?

US

Did we respect each player's choices?

LIFE OR WORK

If you choose: how do you plan with limited resources?

EXTENSION

Which table agreement would you keep next time?

You can pass on any prompt. Leave it blank, write "pass," or draw instead. No reason needed. Play is a prompt for reflection, not proof about a person.

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Independent companion

The game's name, its designers (Roberto Di Meglio, Marco Maggi and Francesco Nepitello), and its publisher are given only to identify the game. This guide is not affiliated with, endorsed by, or sponsored by Ares Games, The Saul Zaentz Company d/b/a Middle-earth Enterprises, or any rights holder. Middle-earth, The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings, The War of the Ring, and the characters, items, events and places therein are trademarks or registered trademarks of The Saul Zaentz Company d/b/a Middle-earth Enterprises.

Sources

Official Ares Games rulebook v2.4.1, retrieved via an Internet Archive capture (2022-03-25) of the Ares download URL https://www.aresgames.eu/download/20980/ (capture retained November 9, 2026; SHA-256 ebb4d6d4ab1348e8e4c604ea7d9d414e928034d93255d58bd61fa8df6d2f28a4). 48 pages. No play age printed, only a small parts warning. This is a facilitation summary, not a replacement for the matched rulebook. Check the rulebook in your box for your printing. Variations marked "Official variant" appear in that source, and variations marked "From the rulebook" use a setting, recommendation, or practice the rulebook describes rather than a separate variant. Variations marked "BGT house rule" are original adaptations and are not official rules. Session plans, prompt banks, adaptation notes, troubleshooting, and printables are original facilitation material written for this guide.

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Scope and evidence boundary

This is a facilitation guide for structured play. It does not diagnose anyone, and the game is not therapy by itself. Board Game Therapy is not inherently psychotherapy. This product is an educational and facilitation resource for structured play and optional reflection. It is not a psychological assessment, screening tool, diagnosis, validated outcome measure, treatment plan, or treatment protocol, and no educational, social, behavioral, or clinical outcome is guaranteed. Teachers, coaches, hosts, and other facilitators work within their own role and their organization's policies. Licensed professionals who use it in clinical services remain responsible for clinical fit, informed consent, confidentiality, documentation, and the standards of their license.

Evidence. Research on board games covers many games, settings, and populations, with real methodological limits. Two general reviews: Gauthier, A., et al. (2019). Board Games for Health: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analysis. Games for Health Journal, 8(2), 85-100. doi.org/10.1089/g4h.2018.0017. Noda, S., Shirotsuki, K., & Nakao, M. (2019). The effectiveness of intervention with board games: a systematic review. BioPsychoSocial Medicine, 13, 22. doi.org/10.1186/s13030-019-0164-1. Neither review evaluated the TABLE Method™ or this product. The TABLE Method™ and these variations are practice guidance, not a validated intervention. Nothing here promises that what happens in the game will carry over elsewhere.

> If someone is in distress, end the game and use the support your setting already names. In a crisis, contact local emergency services or a crisis line.

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