



FREE VERSION

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To purchase the short story collection *Walls and Wonders*, please visit:

<http://www.reanimus.com/store/?item=1583>

<https://www.amazon.com/Walls-Wonders-S-R-Algernon/dp/1979599211>

*Walls and Wonders* contains the 2016 Hugo Award finalist “Asymmetrical Warfare” and 20 other stories.

I will post updates on my blog

<https://sralgernon.wordpress.com/blog/>

and on twitter [https://twitter.com/s\\_r\\_algernon](https://twitter.com/s_r_algernon).

You may distribute these rules for non-commercial use as long as they include this cover page.

Thanks! I hope you enjoy the game.

## What you need to play Walls and Wonders

Two or more players. The number of players is theoretically infinite, but it might not be feasible to play with an extremely large group.

For the standard game, each player will need one standard 52-card deck of playing cards, without the joker.

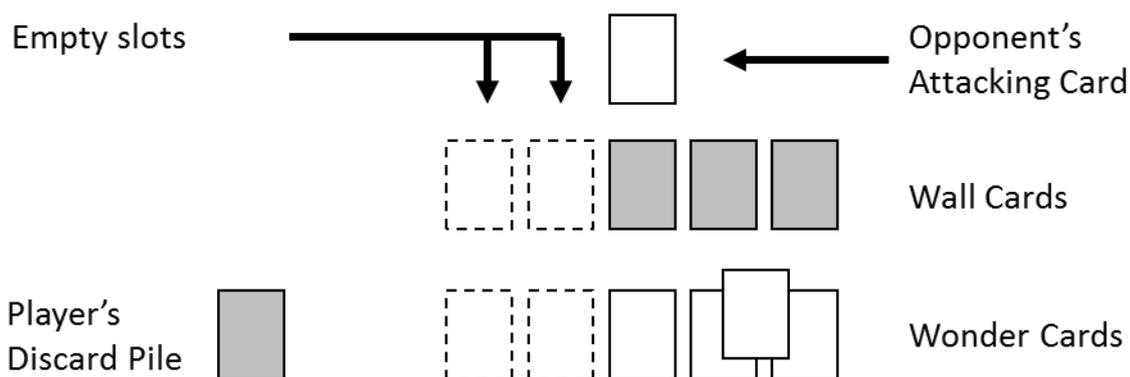
At some time in the future, collectible decks might be available with an expanded range of cards and expanded rules. Stay tuned!

## Rules

### The Game Landscape

Each player shuffles his or her deck and places it face-down on his or her side of the table.

Aside from the draw pile, there are three parts to each player's side of the game table: Wonder, wall, discard. Wonder cards are arranged in a row closest to the player. Wall cards are arranged in a row in front of the Wonder row (protecting the Wonder from other players). There are five slots each in the wall row and Wonder row.

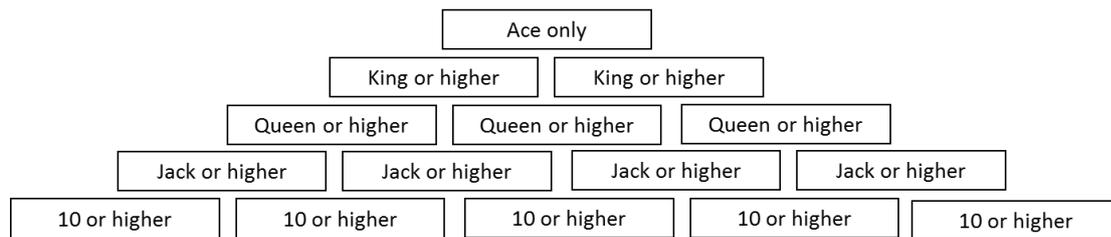


### Wonders

The goal of the game is to build a Wonder – a pyramid of cards as follows.

1. The base level must contain only cards 10 or higher
2. The second level must contain only cards J or higher
3. The third level must contain only cards Q or higher.
4. The fourth level must contain only cards K or higher.
5. The fifth level contains a single Ace.
6. For any level above the base, cards can only be placed on top of two supporting cards from the previous level.

Viewed edge on, the Wonder would look like this:



Ace is highest in value, then King, Queen, Jack and numbered cards in descending order.

### Starting the Game

Players start by turning over the top card from their decks. The player who draws the highest card (ties decided by suit) goes first, and then play proceeds clockwise. (Saying “I declare WaW” in unison during this step is optional but might be fun.) These cards are then discarded face-up in each player’s discard pile. Each player then draws a hand of five cards.

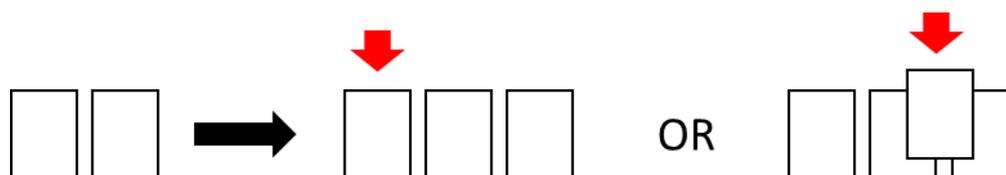
### Each player’s turn

During each player’s turn, the player can: perform one of the following actions.

- Place a card on his or her Wonder.
- Place a card on his or her wall.
- Attack another player’s wall or Wonder.
- Draw a card.

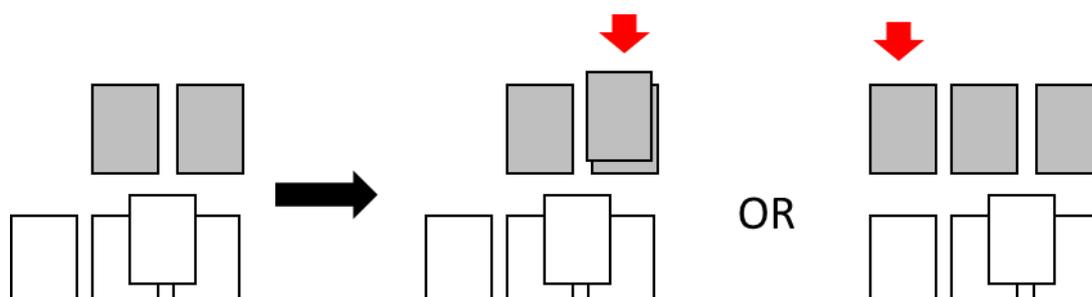
### Placing a Wonder card

A Wonder card may be placed either (left) at the base level in an empty slot or (right) on top of base cards in adjacent slots at the same level.



### Placing a wall card:

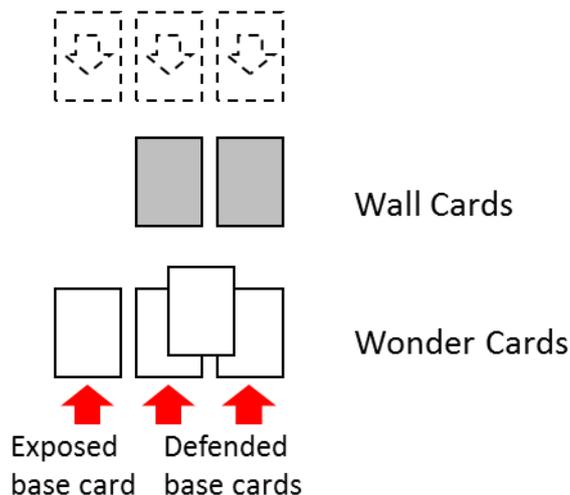
Wall cards go face down in front of each base card, in separate stacks for each base card. A player can either (left) play one wall card on top of another or (right) in front of an undefended base card.



### Attacking another player's wall:

A player can attack by placing a card face up in front of one or more opponent locations. These could either be a wall defending a base card or an exposed base card (a base card without a wall card in front of it). The attacking player may place no more than one card in front of each opponent location. Locations that do not have a wall or Wonder card (empty slots) may not be attacked. In multiplayer games, a player may attack locations controlled by multiple players.

Three locations opponent  
could attack



### Resolving attacks

If a base card is exposed, the attack is successful. The attacking player places one top card from the defending player's Wonder (that is, a card that does not have another card on top of it) in that player's discard pile.

If there is a wall stack defending a base card that is being attacked, then the top card of that stack is turned over.

- If the top card of the stack is a lower value than the attacking player's card, then the top card of that stack is discarded. If that card was the only one on that stack, then the attack is successful.
- If the top card of the stack is an equal or higher value than the attacking player's card, then the wall is unaffected.
- In either case, the attacker's card is discarded into his or her discard pile.

Attacks at multiple locations are independent. This means that if attacks succeed at multiple locations, this would result in more than one card being discarded from the defending player's Wonder.

## Winning the game:

The game ends when either (a) one player builds a five-tier Wonder or (b) all players have run out of cards in their hands and draw piles. Victory conditions are never certain in life. Below are four ways to determine who wins, for the players' consideration.

- ♠ Construction victory: The player wins if he or she constructs a five-tier Wonder.
- ♥ Attrition victory: The player wins if he or she makes it mathematically impossible for any other player to construct a five-tier Wonder. This could be done, for instance, by forcing the player to discard all aces, six or more Wonder cards total, or other combination of high-value cards.
- ♦ Economic victory: Count up each player's total wall and Wonder cards in play at the end of the game. The player wins if his or her total is higher than any other player's total.
- ♣ Military victory: Count up all Wonder cards (10, J, Q, K, A) in each player's discard pile. The player wins if he or she has discarded fewer such cards than any other player.

Players could agree beforehand what constitutes victory. Alternatively, the suit of the card they played at the start of the game could indicate their respective victory conditions. To add an element of mystery, players could draw a second, hidden card at the start of the game, which determines their victory condition.

Or, perhaps more similar to real life, players could define their victory condition as they see fit at the end of the game.

Note that the construction and attrition victories are zero-sum. One player's attainment of the construction victory precludes any other player having an attrition victory and vice versa. However, it is possible for more than one player to achieve victory. It is also possible for all players to fail to achieve victory.

## Tips

- All players have the cards they need to create a five-tier wonder, if they can get to them and keep them out of the discard pile.
- Conserve high value cards, so that you have them in hand when you reach the upper tiers of your Wonder.
- Nines are valuable wall cards, as they force your opponent to divert resources from their Wonder in order to destroy them.
- Attacking a wall location reveals the strength of its top wall card. Attacks with low-value cards can probe for weak spots.
- In multiplayer games, attacks are not zero-sum. Turns spent attacking and reinforcing walls give your opponents a chance to build Wonders.