

Old Man Merlin
By John D. Wood



In Old Man Merlin, Merlin is very old...for now. Merlin ages backwards. He knows of Arthur's destiny and the round table, but for now, he just wants to rest. Right now, the knights are kids, and they won't quit making noise and get off his lawn! You play as the young knights, grabbing Merlin's fantastical objects, and doing their best to avoid Merlin!

Contents:

- 6 Merlin Cards
- 1 Merlin Tower Card
- 1 Sleep Walking Merlin Card
- 15 Bravery Point Tokens worth 1 point
- 5 Bravery Point Tokens worth 5 points
- (1) 12 Sided Die
- 5 Player Character Pieces
- 80 Item Cards
- 12 Objective Cards

Set Up:

Separate the Merlin Tower card, the Sleep Walking Merlin Card, and the amount of Merlin cards equal to the number of players plus one, and place the remaining Merlin cards, if any, back in the box. Place the Merlin Tower card face up on the table, keeping in mind it will be the center of the game. Take the Merlin cards and Sleep Walking Merlin and put them aside for now.

Shuffle all of the item cards face down, and place 24 of them face-up in a 5x5 grid with Merlin's Tower in the center, leaving enough spacing between the cards for players to move between.

Take 18 more cards from the remaining item cards, spread them face up nearby in a different orientation to the yard. This is Merlin's Shed.

Take the last of the item cards, shuffle in the Sleep Walking Merlin into them, and split that deck into 3 approximate equal decks. These are your Round Decks. Take one of the round decks, and take your Merlin cards, shuffling them into the deck. This is your round 1 Deck.

Take all 12 Objective cards and spread them face up in an area opposite the shed.

Put the bravery point markers and die nearby.

Have every player take a character piece. You are now ready to play.



A set up game of Old Man Merlin

Gameplay in Old Man Merlin consists of:

1. Movement
2. Then either:
 - a. Leaving the property
 - b. Collect
3. Refill (only after collect)
 - a. Caught!
4. Pass Turn

After all 3 rounds end (the round decks will help you keep track,) either by players leaving the yard or getting caught by Merlin, the game ends and scoring begins.

How To Play:

The youngest player starts.

With each player's first turn of a round, they will move into the yard as though they were outside of the yard. The outer ring (or, in another term, those not adjacent to the tower,) are all legal placements.

All pieces in the yard should have 4 cards around them, and will move in the lines between the cards. **Note that the yard will fill with each player's pieces as their respective turn starts and players may NOT enter the yard in the same area as another player (jumps are NOT allowed on the first turn.)**



All the players are in legal positions on the board, this would be after all 5 players have taken their first turn.

● Movement

- A player's turn will almost always consist of a single movement action, with a few exceptions
 - Players may 'jump' over each other in yard, allowing for faster movement.
 - Players may jump over multiple players, but may not move in more than one direction.
 - Some completed sets allow for more than one movement in a turn.
- A single movement consists of moving from one area, a four card intersection, into another area surrounded by four cards adjacent to the original area.
 - This means 2 of the 4 cards adjacent to your character last round will be adjacent to your character after movement.



In this example, the red player tried to move up a single movement, but could not since the black player was in the way, thus the red player jumped over the black piece instead.

- **Leaving The Property**

- The player is outside the yard.
- Does not collect an item card.
- Cannot come back into the yard/cannot play until next round.
- If all players have left the yard before anyone is caught, that round is considered over. Take all cards left in the deck, all Merlin cards you are playing with and shuffle them into the next deck.
- ***Safe from being caught by Merlin!***

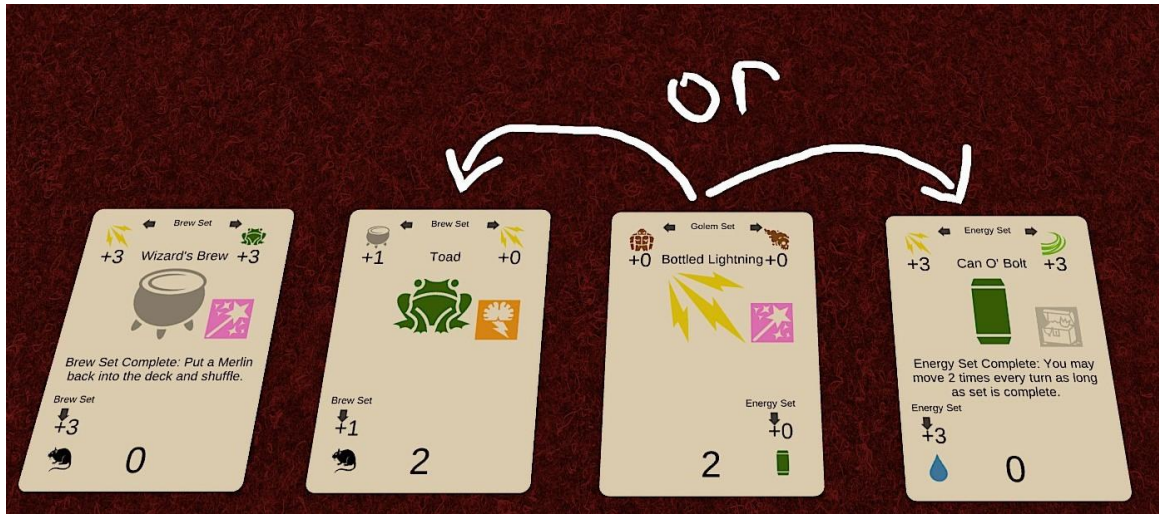


This is a player leaving the property

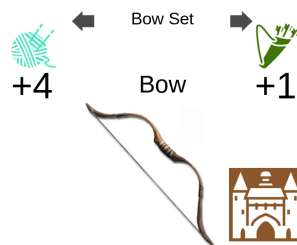
- **Collect**

- The player is still in the yard.
- Player will then pick up one of the four cards around their piece, placing it in front of them in a left to right line.
 - **This may be 3 if next to the tower**, in which case the player gets a **bravery point in addition** to the item collected.
 - A player can place the card wherever they wish in the line, optimally **keeping cards in a set next to each other** in order to gain powerful abilities.
 - All cards that can go to multiple sets can only apply to one set at a time, and when scoring you may only put the card in a single set.
- While playing, if a set is completed (ex. *Golem Soul, Golem Body, Bottled Lightning* all next to each other in the line) then immediately perform the power on the card (see *Golem Body* card.)
 - This power may NOT be used again unless the set is broken in some way (usually caught by Merlin) and is then re-completed.
 - A card is not locked to a set until a power is used in the specific set.
 - Sets can be broken for better scoring sets in end game scoring.
- Each card has a base point value, may go into a set, and most have a subcategory for objectives.
 - The 4 categories for objectives are:
 - Fantasy (Pink Wand)
 - Medieval (Brown Castle)
 - Imagination (Orange Brain)
 - Relic (Silver Treasure Chest)

- When collecting these cards, these correspond to the objective cards that can give you bonus points! When you hit the threshold, you may decide on your turn if you want the objective card. Each player can only have one objective card of each color at max. (Ex. Player A can only have 1 orange objective card, one grey objective card, etc.)
- Objective cards cannot be lost in any way, once obtained.

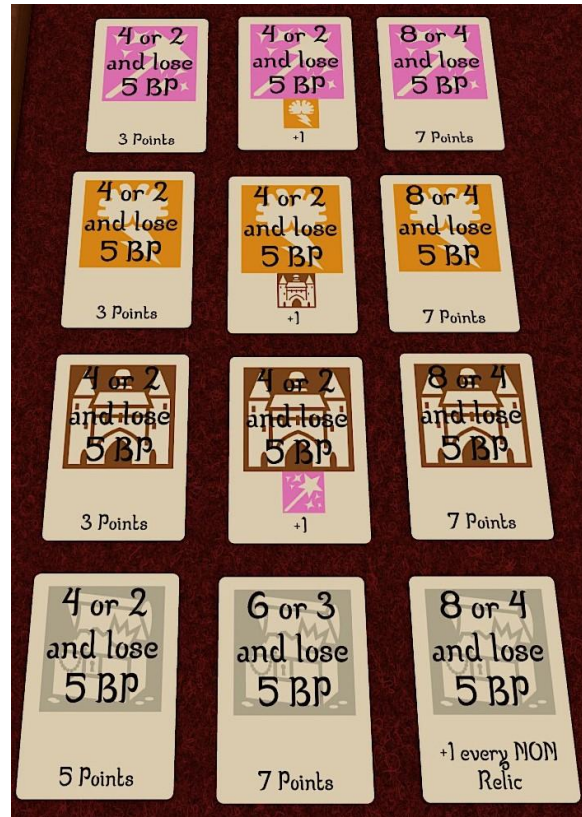


In this example, this player already had the Wizard's Brew, Toad, and Can O' Bolt, and just collected the Bottled Lightning. Because Bottled Lightning CAN go to either the Brew set or the Energy set, they put the Bottled Lightning in the 3rd space in the line. Until either the Energy set OR Wizard's set is complete, it may be considered as a part of BOTH sets, but when end game scoring or if one set is complete with it, may only be considered for one set.

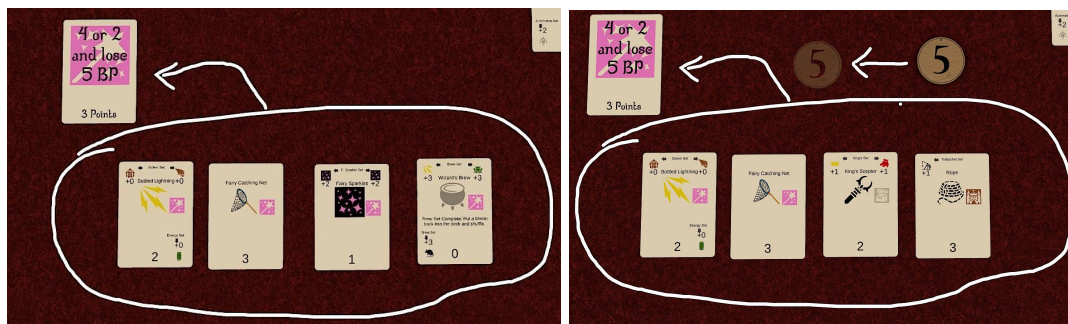


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This Bow is worth 6 points (by itself) and goes to the Bow set and is Medieval. With the Quiver, it is worth 7 points, and with the Unicorn Hair, it is worth another 4 more points still!



These 12 objective cards have requirements before you can have them. The bottom right Relic card requires you to have 8 total Relic cards in your line, OR 4 Relic cards and 5 Bravery points (the bravery points are discarded.) Remember, a player can only have one from each category. If the player gets this bottom right card, all their other NON-Relic cards are worth one more point at the end of the game.



● Refill

- After collecting a card, the spot MUST be refilled by a card from the current round deck.
 - If the card is another item, it then refills the spot of the card you just took. OR
 - If the card is the Sleep Walking Merlin card, if the current count of Merlin cards out of the deck are equal to greater than half of the total Merlin

cards, it is counted as a Merlin. Otherwise, discard the card and refill as though it was a regular Merlin.

OR

- If the card is a Merlin, then it is moved above the yard. **If this is the last Merlin in the deck, all players who have not left the property are caught!**
 - If the card was a Merlin or Sleep Walking Merlin, the refill then comes from one of the Yard cards, and the player gets to choose which card it is.
 - **If players are caught, refill the yard first BEFORE losing cards from players lines.**
- Caught!
 - If players are caught, all pieces in the yard are taken out of the yard by their players, and the round is now over.
 - Any players who leave the property before players are caught **DO NOT LOSE ANYTHING.**
 - This round is now considered over. All the Merlin cards (but not Sleep Walking Merlin) and any remaining item cards from the last round are shuffled into the next round deck.
 - If there is no round deck, the game is over and scoring begins.
 - After refilling the yard with the shed, the player who got themselves and any other players caught will then roll the die twice, once for just themselves, and then once for all players.
 - Whatever number comes up, players count that many cards from left to right in their line, looping back around if the number is higher than the total amount of cards in their line.
 - Any cards like the Beard Oil may be used now.
 - Any player with the Cursed Ring who is caught automatically loses it, and it cannot be protected with cards like Beard Oil or Protection Spell.
 - This is in addition to any other cards lost.
 - All cards lost by players go to refill Merlin's Shed.



*In this example, this player has 4 cards in their line, Wizard's Brew starting at number one.
If the player rolls a 4, and 8, or a 12 for that matter, they would lose the Can O' Bolt.*

- **Pass Turn**

- Play continues to the next player in the round.

- **End Game and Scoring**

- After 3 rounds are over, scoring occurs. Players may now take all of the cards they have collected over the course of the game, and may break the sets they have made into different sets, whatever will score them optimally the most points.
- Each card can only go into one set.
- Don't forget any objective cards that may give bonus points.
- All bravery points are worth their number in score points.

HIGHEST SCORE WINS!

In the event of a tie, the player with the most bravery points wins.
If still tied, the player farthest clockwise from the first player wins.