

Chapter One: Gameplay

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Unsophisticated players might think that the Letter of the Rules is more important than the Spirit, but the Letter is a lot less likely to sneak up behind you with an axe if you abuse it.



Almighty Benny and Major Natalya settle their BrikWars differences over a high-stakes game of Nano-BrikWars, proving themselves to be deadly metagamers.

Elements shown: LEGO, Nanoblock, die

"Thus, a prince should have no other object, nor any other thought, nor take any thing else as his art but that of war and its orders and discipline; for that is the only art which is of concern to one who commands."

- Niccolo Machiavelli

The purpose of BrikWars is to provide a safe and comfortable setting in which groups of like-minded minifigs can gather to mutilate and slaughter one another for the entertainment of their Humans. Their conflicts can be large or small, balanced or skewed, orderly or chaotic; the important thing is that they deliver the mindless violence on which minifig mental health depends.

1.1: Overview of Play

Setup

"If our most highly qualified General Staff officers had been told to work out the most nonsensical high level organization for war which they could think of, they could not have produced anything more stupid than that which we have at present."

- Claus von Stauffenberg

Human players prepare for BrikWars by building armies, landscaping, scenic fortifications, and whatever else they think might add to their battlefield enjoyment. The only limits are the imagination and construction abilities of the players. It's best if the forces are built from plastic bricks, so that soldiers and structures can be disassembled or modified to show damage, posturing, or equipment loadout, but it's by no



Raised baseplates and brick mountains scattered around the floor make a perfectly decent battlefield.

*Photo: Pete Callaway
STUDS's "Battle of Tank Stream"
Elements shown: LEGO*

means necessary - an army of action figures and stuffed animals can march over a landscape of book-stack mountains and shoebox buildings using the same rules.

A typical BrikWars army is mustered through the in-depth military strategy of dumping bins out onto tables and grabbing whichever random units come immediately to hand. Depending on how serious the players are pretending to be, however, they may sometimes find themselves concocting structured scenarios, setting genre guidelines, and spending hours crafting formations of vehicles and infantry. They even have the option of imposing a military budget of **Construction Points** if they suffer from the notion that armies should be equal or that battles should be "fair."

When the battlefield and armies are assembled, players can pick their starting locations according to the requirements of the scenario or by any combination of mutual agreement and dice-rolling. If one player designed the battlefield, it's customary to allow the other players to have first pick of starting locations.

Taking Turns

"First I kick you in the nuts as hard as I can, then you kick me in the nuts as hard as you can, and we keep going back and forth until somebody falls."

- Eric Cartman

Once the battlefield and armies are in place, combat can begin. Each player takes a turn, maneuvering forces and conducting attacks for all of the units under his or her control, and then passes play to the next player. When all surviving players have taken their turns, the cycle begins again with the first player.

While it's easiest to pick a turn order and stick with it, players can mix the sequence up as they see fit. Some players like to roll dice to randomize the order of each cycle of turns. When multiple players are allied, or their forces are too far apart to interact, it can save time to run them all simultaneously until they're ready to try to kill each other like civilized figures.

If forces start too far apart at the beginning of a battle, it can help to give them all double or triple turns to get into fighting range more quickly. On the other hand, it can help even more not to start the forces too far apart in the first place.

Delaying a Turn

Turns will sometimes come up when a player or his troops aren't ready to take them. His troops may be waiting for the right moment to spring an ambush, or to coordinate movement with allies. The player may be taking an unusually long time in the bathroom, or two of his girlfriends are taking turns kicking him in the groin and he can't come to the table for a few minutes.

*In cases like these, the player may choose (or other impatient players may choose on his behalf) to **Delay** his turn for a more opportune time. His turn is skipped, and the other players continue as normal. Once he's ready to proceed again, he can un-Delay and take his turn after whomever is the current player, and this becomes his new position in the turn order.*

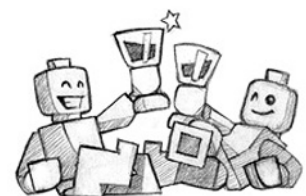
Victory

"It's never 'just a game' when you're winning."

- George Carlin

It's not especially important for any one player or team to "win" a battle. Dying horribly in some ridiculous fashion is always funnier than surviving horribly in some ridiculous fashion, and BrikWars is set up to favor the optimum result of a complete massacre of all participants, along with all bystanders and scenery.

You should expect your BrikWars battles to end with final victory going to a force of nature or deadly catastrophe as often as to any of the players. 'Fire,' 'explosive decompression,' and 'I told you to put your toys away twenty minutes ago' have winning records that no Human strategist can hope to match.



The classic ending for a BrikWars battle is for the entire battlefield to be destroyed in a cataclysmic fireball. This is considered a victory for all sides except those whose depressing objective was to prevent destruction (e.g., "protect the doughnut supply").

Objectives



General Yadlin briefs Nyphilian cabinet members on the success of PandoraNuker's objectives in Project Orion, despite his later becoming the hated war criminal FedoNuker.

*Photo: beluga
From "The Military of Nyphilis United"
Elements shown: LEGO, iPhones*

Stupidity

Like Humans, minifigs almost never battle over anything worth fighting for. Causes like civil liberty, economic justice, or self-preservation elicit reliable yawns.

Only the most arbitrary, irrelevant, and idiotic ideals have the power to rise above the merely rational and inspire minifigs to engage in communal mass murder. Their favorite fizzy drink, distinctions of musical genre, the color of t-shirt they put on this morning, religion - the more face-slappingly stupid, the better.



Regardless of the "official" mission objectives, reducing a pristine battlefield to complete chaos counts as a clear moral victory.

*Photo: Warhead
From "Zombie (Zulu) Dawn"
Elements shown: LEGO*



Given the opportunity, there is nothing in the world that minifigs won't use as an excuse for killing each other. Minifigs are notoriously poor at sharing.

The simplest types of battles have no military objectives. Minifigs with weapons don't need any excuse to run around whacking other minifigs with them, and there's no reason not to just send them out on the field and let them go crazy. When the dust and body parts settle, it's irrelevant which side won or lost; success is measured by whether events on the battlefield were more crazy than those of the battle before, and by how much.

In (marginally) more serious battles, minifigs fight for a higher cause - stealing the enemy's secret taco recipe, assassinating a meddling peace delegation, or heaping the largest pile of skulls for the glory of the Stud God. Objectives work best when they're aggressive and focused - specific targets to destroy, murder, or steal make for exciting battles. Passive goals like defense or escape, if they're tolerated at all, should only be considered if they're made secondary to more target-oriented Objectives.

"Survival" is never a worthwhile goal. Any minifigs saddled with such a repugnant Objective should ignore their Humans' orders and kill themselves immediately in protest.

1.2: Numbers

Units in BrikWars are defined by their physical construction and placement. Players don't need to refer to charts and graphs to see if a minifig policeman has a chainsaw spear in his hand, or if it's long enough to eviscerate a nearby jaywalker, or if the fair and balanced cable news channel has cameras in position to catch the patriotic video of justice being served. The plastic figures speak for themselves.

Some attributes aren't obvious from the physical models, however. In-game abilities like a civilian's running speed, a policeman's spear-handling skill, or a chainsaw's effectiveness versus intestines are represented by a small handful of abstract numbers. BrikWars relies heavily on mayhem and chaos in the big picture, but the moment-to-moment details are made up of

orderly numerical comparisons.

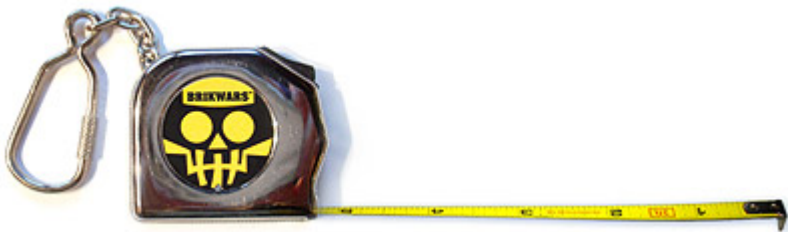
Taking Measurements

In BrikWars, distances are measured in inches. If you don't like inches, you can use any alternate system of measurement that seems reasonable - an inch is about three centimeters, the length of three construction brick studs, or the height of three construction bricks. It's not important whether or not the conversion is exact, as long as everyone's using the same system.



The blessed RulerBokken exacts disciplined measurement in the hands of White Nun and the Purification Sisters of Saint Attila.

Wiki: White Nun



Keychain mini-measuring tapes are great for winding around narrow spaces.

As with most aspects of BrikWars, flexibility is key: bendable measuring tape is going to be a lot more useful than a rigid ruler, since you'll often want to measure around corners or in tight spaces. If you haven't got a measuring tape handy, a simple ribbon or piece of string marked off in inches will work as well.

Rolling Dice

"Jacta alea est."

- Julius Caesar



An assortment of d6es, d10s, and one glass d0. You will almost certainly never need a d0 in BrikWars.

BrikWars uses dice to add an element of randomness into the game. If a minifig fires a rifle at an opponent, sometimes he'll hit and sometimes he'll miss; if the enemy minifig is struck by the bullet, he might survive the damage, or he might not. Die rolls determine the outcome of actions whose success isn't guaranteed.



d6



d10

The result of this unusually lucky roll is 0 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 10 + 10 + 10 + 10 + 10, or 86, ignoring the possibility of Bonus Dice. It's unclear whether or not a roll of 0 on a d0 counts as a Critical Success.

Elements shown: dice

For the Core Rules, dice come in two flavors: the **d6** and the **d10**, named according to how many faces are on each die. The six-sided d6es ("dee-sixes") are regular cube-shaped dice, much like you might find from raiding any lesser board game, except that when you call them d6es it sounds 1d100 times as geeky. The ten-sided d10s ("dee-tens") are a little more unusual; you'll have to do some shopping at your local gaming store or website to stock up. The d6es are used for almost all normal action in BrikWars, while d10s are reserved for certain types of high-powered combat.

If you don't have any ten-sided dice, you can replace any d10 roll with 2d6-2 - that is, roll two six-sided dice and subtract two from the result. Is this statistically equivalent? Not really. Does anyone care? Refer to The Law of Fudge later in the chapter.

Die rolls are described according to the number of each type of dice involved, plus or minus a modifier (if any). $4d6$ means a roll of four six-sided dice, all added together. $1d10+2$ means you roll one ten-sided die and add two to the result. $17d6 + 23d10 + 0937$ means rolling seventeen six-sided dice and twenty-three ten-sided dice together, and adding nine hundred thirty-seven to the result, which you will hopefully never have to do.

Some people like to refer to dice with a "die" rather than a "dee" prefix. But how, then, do you refer to multiples? With the utilitarian "die-sixes," or the more erudite "dice-six?" The solution is this: whenever someone refers to a die-anything, kick them in whichever shin is most convenient. This will forestall further arguments about proper nomenclature and pluralization.

No matter how negative a modifier may be, the lowest possible result for any die roll is zero. A roll of $1d6-100$ will almost always have a simple result of zero, for instance, unless a player's luck with Critical Rolls defies belief.

Critical Rolls

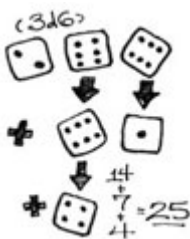
Rolling dice in BrikWars is never a sure thing. No matter how easy or how difficult the task, there's always at least a tiny chance of failure or success, thanks to a couple of special cases when rolling dice.



Critical Failure

If the die in any roll comes up '1,' then the roll is a Critical Failure, regardless of other modifiers. Whatever task a player or unit was attempting fails completely, no matter how easy it might have been.

If there are multiple dice in a roll, it's only a Critical Failure if *all* of the dice come up '1.'



Critical Success

Luckily, rolls can also turn out unexpectedly well. When rolling any number of dice, for each die that comes up on its highest-numbered face (a six on a d6, a ten on a d10), the player may add +1d6 to that roll as a **Bonus Die**. The same holds true for the additional dice rolled – any sixes rolled on the Bonus Dice continue earning additional Bonus Dice. A player may elect not to roll a Bonus Die that he's earned, for whatever reason.

1.3: Supplies Checklist

"The very existence of flamethrowers proves that some time, somewhere, someone said to themselves, 'You know, I want to set those people over there on fire, but I'm just not close enough to get the job done.'"

- George Carlin

Besides the obvious items like armies, a battlefield, and opponents, players should make sure to have the following.

Things You'll Need

Fun

First and most importantly: *fun*. It seems obvious, but this item is so often strangely forgotten by all types of gamers that it bears repeating: *don't play a game if you don't mean to have fun*.

And remember that it's not all about you! BrikWars caters to a much wider range of play styles than most wargames, and other players may have entirely different ideas than you do about what counts as fun. If you're having a fantastic time but everyone else is frustrated or bored stiff, then the game is a failure and it's probably your fault. Make sure you know what kind of game everyone else showed up to play, and pay attention to what types of fun they're trying to get out of it.

Measuring Devices

BrikWars is won or lost by its ranges and measurements, and you'll want enough measuring tools to go around. Flexible measuring tape is best, but in a pinch you can put together brick-built measuring sticks instead, measuring distances at three studs per inch.

Dice

You'll need a good supply of dice - the more, the better. The Core Rules are written entirely for two types of dice: regular cube-shaped six-sided dice (d6es) for regular units, and the more unusual ten-sided dice (d10s) for siege- and hero-level units.

In the advanced rules (Book Two: MOC Combat), rules are given for using a greater variety of exotic dice, but these also have equivalent d6 conversions if necessary.

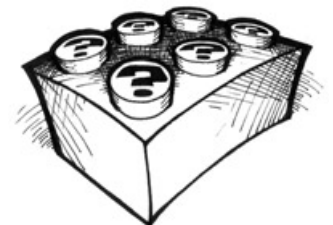
Cameras

An ancient curse among minifigs warns: "Pics or it didn't happen!" By nature, BrikWars games are full of amazing constructions, crazy action scenes, and hilarious mishaps, but without photographic evidence even the most glorious triumphs will never achieve Kanon status outside their local group of Humans.



Very quick games can be thrown together by scribbling out maps onto sheets of paper. Here, Olothontor and Kidko find themselves in a zombie-infested museum.

Photo: Kidko
from "Zombie Survival"



Check your studs! LEGO-brand bricks have "LEGO" printed on each stud. Mega Bloks have their logo printed on the surfaces between studs. Best-Lock and other equivalent bricks try to fool you by not using identifying markings at all.

Doughnuts and Beer

Pizza, chips, and Mountain Dew are the traditional food of tabletop gamers, but the proper BrikWars mindset is further from Gary Gygax and closer to Homer Simpson. Cheeseburgers are an acceptable compromise.

Which Bricks Should I Use?

Most people associate construction bricks with The LEGO Company, but there are many other fly-by-night toymakers riding on LEGO's coattails. The knockoff products from these "clone brands" can cost much less than genuine LEGO bricks. This is no coincidence: Regular toymakers use less expensive toy molds to make toy-quality bricks, while LEGO uses super-precise (and super-expensive) engineering to create building elements with accuracy measured in microns.

The difference is impossible to miss once you start trying to build anything. Two clone bricks can often fit together without trouble (depending on the brand), and it's not unusual to find a third that fits onto the first two. But the inconsistencies compound with each brick added, and soon it's a struggle to force additional bricks together at all. With LEGO, by contrast, thousands of parts snap together as a matter of course.

Here, LEGO is the victim of its own excellence - people are so used to bricks that "just work," they assume that any similar-looking brick will function just as well. Ignorant grandparents think the clone bricks give more value for the dollar. Unlucky grandkids, frustrated by trying to get the knockoffs to function at all, grow up never wanting to play with construction toys again, and become murderers, drug dealers, and politicians, or worst of all, news pundits.

By counterfeiting and betraying the good will built up by LEGO over the course of generations, the clone brand parasites sabotage the very market they're leeching off of. To give them a single dollar of support is an act of perversion beyond justification, and any Human who knowingly buys a clone set is doomed to burn in Human Hell in a richly-deserved fiery torment lasting for all eternity.

That being said, clone brands offer specific advantages to the pragmatic BrikWarrior. Because they aren't limited by LEGO's anti-war ethics, or by the need for each element to earn back the hundreds of thousands of dollars it costs to make a single LEGO mold, their elements and sets can be much more specialized and morally dubious. Historically, the clone brands' most successful playthemes have looked like they could have come straight out of a traditional miniatures wargame.

For minifig and weapon elements, this is fantastic, since their use doesn't depend as heavily on precision or buildability. For construction elements, the results are less usable, but even the crappy clone bricks can have a role to play. By sandwiching them between layers of genuine LEGO elements, they can in many cases be used to build stable structures while still keeping a lower overall cost.



Like the Peach minifig Franz von Asstan and the orcish King Blokheart, LEGO and Mega Bloks must always oppose one another.

*Photo: Pancakeonions
from "The Winds of Rebellion Sweep
Over Blokadia? LET'S FIGHT!!"*

Things You Probably Won't Need But Might Want Anyway

If you're not making up bizarre and crazy ad hoc rules on the fly, you're not really playing BrikWars. As such, you might want to bring extra gear just on the off chance that you think of funny things to do with it.

Pencil and Paper

In case you want to pass love notes to the cute player on the other team. Or to all of the other players at once, if you're into that kind of thing.

Spare Parts

It's often nice to be able to whip up a costume change for your hero, craters and random debris from explosions, a support stand to hold a minifig in a precarious position between turns, or any number of other objects that might appear as the result of unexpected events.



Jaw-Jaws and Dimmies are great for demonstrating the use of blood and fire elements.

Elements shown: LEGO

Stat Cards

Even if you think you've got all your units' stats memorized, it's good to keep their stat cards handy, if for no other reason than to reassure your opponents that you're not making up numbers off the top of your head.

Blood and Fire

While not completely necessary, it really adds to the ambience if you have a healthy supply of little red plates and flame elements to scatter around whenever it seems like the battlefield could use more blood or more fire. And seriously, when could a battlefield not use more blood and more fire?

Funny Dice



Nothing says gaming like funny dice. A Stumble die, for instance, is easily made by taking a marker and dashing off a quick arrow on each face of a regular d6. Now with every roll you get both a direction and a number of inches, good for ad hoc rulings on wind direction, shrapnel trajectories, and drunken staggering.

Pips

If you've ever played a collectible card game, you've got piles of these: colored beads or beans or chits or little pewter brains. Even if you haven't got some counting pips set aside already, it's easy to improvise some with a pile of plastic bricks. Pips let you make up conditions like "everyone remove one blue pip at the end of your turn - when they run out, the nuke goes off."



Fire Rings

Complicated and arcane-looking gear with no real purpose is great for intimidating newbies. More experienced players may just laugh at you whether the things actually have a purpose or not, so be careful.



Fire Rings have no purpose in BrikWars except to intimidate newbies. If asked why you brought a bag of Fire Rings, say "Just in case we need them for some of the really advanced rules."

Elements shown: LEGO, Mega Bloks

1.4: The Spirit of the Game

The MultiPantheon

Minifigs hold faith in any number of greater and lesser powers that inspire their fear, worship, and adulation.

Some abandon rationality in obeisance to BrikThulhu, the nine-tentacled RagnorOktopus of Chaos. Others are seduced by the corruption of the Nega-Bloktrix and her promises of cheap Cloan-brik assembly. These blasphemers are opposed by purist orders of Legiti Knights and fraternal legions of BrikMasons who devote themselves to acts of brutal oppression and self-righteous douchebagery in the name of an unseen Great Builder.

On the fringes, Rainbowistic cultists pursue the ecstatic anti-sentience of the baseball-capped Dimmy swarms, while ascetics at the opposite extreme abandon all hygiene in a quest to harness the forces of deconstruction and

rebirth that sustain the poop-worshipping Dungans. Some put their faith in the impossible figure of the Dodekube, ascribing all events to the random dice rolls of disinterested Human gods. There are even rumors of isolated minifig hermits who hold a laughable belief in an omnipotent personal Player who oversees their every move.



No matter how ridiculous, all minifig belief systems are true. The Farce ensures that no faith goes unrewarded.

(BrikWiki entry: [Theology and Philosophy](#))

Proper Observance of Rules

"The secret we should never let the gamemasters know is that they don't need any rules."

- Gary Gygax

Rules are for the small-minded and weak. Let a little kid loose among your collection of bricks sometime, and watch the way he plays. In his hands, those minifigs will have all kinds of crazy battles and adventures. There'll be all the drama, death, and explosions you could ever want, and the whole time that kid won't have to crack open a rulebook even once. How is it that he's so much smarter than we are? The answer is that most of us have had a lot more years of schooling than he has. Wait until he's eighteen, he'll have become just as slack-jawed and dull-eyed as the rest of us.



The right answer is the wrong answer if it takes more than thirty seconds to look it up. When checking a rule isn't worth the effort, it's better to axe a stupid question than to get the stupid answer.

BrikWars has a lot of rules. If the mandatory education system has had the chance to get its hooks in you, then you'll respect the authority of those rules, because they're all written down in a book and some of them are capitalized.

If things went so badly that you ended up going to college as well, then you'll not only shackle yourself to those rules in a masochistic fever, but also start twisting them to your own ends, weaseling out loopholes and exploits to cleverly frustrate the other players and ingeniously prevent fun for the entire group.

If you find yourself engaging in that kind of rules-lawyering and munchkinism, then you have just failed at BrikWars. Stamp a big F on your report card, schedule a get-together between your face and the Hammer of Discipline, and see if you can't spend a little time afterwards with a couple of eight-year-olds to remember all the

The Nuclear Option

Wargamers tend to react badly to BrikWars' opposition to its own rules, especially when it gives their opponents free rein to do something game-wrecking. "What," they ask, "prevents them from using a What I Say Goes Roll to declare all of my soldiers destroyed by Koincidentally precise meteor strikes?"

The answer is: nothing at all.

What I Say Goes Rolls are good for mediating disputes and introducing new material outside the scope of the rulebook, but they also give every player at the table a nuclear option.

Regardless of whether you're following the letter of the rules, if the other players don't feel that you're playing in good faith, they will pull the What I Say Goes trigger.

Secondly, and more importantly, some gamers are assholes, and when gamer assholes become wargamer assholes their attitude is beyond measure. Under normal circumstances, they'll try to munchkin and weasel and rules-lawyer everyone else out of having any fun at all. The power of What I Say Goes (and later, the open-ended Heroic Feat) tempts them into exposing their assery in a single game-breaking meteor strike, rather than dragging it out over several games.

The game will be ruined, but in the process you will have identified someone whom you should never, ever play games or interact with in any way again. And that knowledge is more valuable than any single battle.

Whether in BrikWars, real life, or any other game, it's better to not

things you've forgotten about having fun.

play at all than to get stuck
wasting time on assholes.

"The more laws and order are made prominent, the more thieves and robbers there will be."

- Lao Tzu

The reason BrikWars has so many rules is that it's a lot more fun to flout a large rules system than a small one. Hopefully you can use these rules as a springboard for the imagination rather than as manacles with which to enslave yourself. However, not everyone is ready to live without the safety net that such a system provides, especially while in competition with others. So, before going any further, here are the three most important rules in the book.

THE RULE OF FUDGE

*Fudge everything your
opponents
will let you get away
with.*

*"Hell, there are no rules here -
we're trying to accomplish
something."*

- Thomas Edison



*The power of fudge overrides
all laws.*

Elements shown: LEGO, fudge

BrikWars provides pages and pages of rules to calculate events down to the tiniest detail. If a player tries to follow all of them to the letter, their turns will take hours, everyone will lose interest, and no one will want to play a second time. This is for the best. Those people should give up on construction bricks and donate them to someone with an imagination.

Just because you can assign die rolls to every sneeze and determine landing trajectories for every blown-off body part, doesn't mean you should. The most probable results are very often the least ridiculous, and why bust out the calculators just to spend more time having less fun? Except where your opponents insist otherwise, you should resolve the bulk of your actions with rough estimates, arbitrary decisions, and an abundance of vague hand-waving. Given the opportunity, always **Fudge** in favor of mayhem.

Don't waste time on stuff nobody cares about. Following the rules and winning are the two lowest priorities on your list. Getting some laughs during the battle and having a good story to tell afterwards are your primary goals.

Remember that while you're fudging everything your opponents aren't objecting to, they're trusting you to set the limits on their fudging in return. They won't know what level of rule-minding you're most comfortable with if you don't tell them.

WHAT I SAY GOES

*Players are smarter
than rulebooks.
Especially the ones with
the highest dice rolls.*

*"Any commander who fails to
exceed his authority is not of
much use to his subordinates."*

- Arleigh Burke



*Large dice are better than
small ones in a What I Say*

There will be many times when players will have a difference of opinion, when the best course of action isn't clear, or when no one remembers the details of a rule but they don't care enough to waste time looking it up. "Can a zombie bite convert dogs into zombie dogs?" "Can that archer really fire at the petting zoo from inside a juniper bush?" "Is that hot dog stand within bazooka range?"

If players can't come to a quick consensus, then it's time for a **What I Say Goes Roll**. Every interested player (and, in some cases, any sufficiently opinionated bystander) states his position. All participating players roll dice, re-rolling ties if necessary. The player with the highest roll wins, and What He Says Goes.

If one player takes a position that's an obvious and deliberate attempt to cheat, his opponents are obligated to beat the crap out of him. The player should then revise his position, although you might let him get away with keeping it if the beating was good enough.

The first What I Say Goes Roll in many games is to decide the order of play. The winner decides who goes first and in what order the players will take their turns.

Goes Roll, if you have enough to go around. More sides means less chance of ties between players.

In For a Benny

Even if another player's What I Say Goes Roll would work against you, you're not obligated to oppose it. You may think it's Ossum enough to be worth the disadvantage, or it might already fit in with your idea of how the game should be played, or it might be so inconsequential that it's not worth the bother (these minor ideas are dismissed as "Benny-Ante").

*If any of your Enemies are participating in a What I Say Goes Roll, you can declare yourself **In For a Benny** and grant yourself an Almighty Benny (described further below) rather than taking a position of your own.*

EVERYONE'S THE BOSS OF THEIR OWN TOYS

*Don't break other
people's toys
without their blessing.*

*"You guys don't get it, do you?
Once we go into Sid's house, we
won't be coming out!"*

- Woody

BrikWars works best when the game effects are reflected in the physical objects. When a soldier gets decapitated, the minifig's head is removed and knocked aside. When a tank gets blown apart, the model is smashed to pieces and scattered across the battlefield. When land mines explode underfoot, holes are chainsawed into the dining room table surface to show where the craters are. When the doomsday nuke goes off, players set the house on fire.

Sadly, not everyone is happy to see their prized constructions, furniture, or home equity destroyed for the sake of BrikWars realism. They may doubt their ability to put their favorite models back together again after the battle, or they might worry about losing valuable elements when all the pieces get mixed up. They may be thinking ahead and wondering how they'll explain to the insurance adjuster exactly how their house burned down.

No matter how lame the excuse, **Everyone's the Boss of Their Own Toys**. If they don't want you breaking their stuff, don't break it. There are other ways to track damage to enemy units and structures and players besides busting pieces off of them, even if it's not as much fun.

Even more important than the physical models, players can be very protective of their personal Kanon. If a player comes to the table with the characters and storyline that sustained him and his brother through a desperate childhood thirty years earlier, don't What I Say Goes them into a black hole for the sake of making the half-assed army you invented over your lunch break seem two percent cooler. Regardless of what happens on the battlefield, players are the bosses of their own storylines. If they don't feel that you're treating their Kanon with respect, your

contributions will be vetoed.

The Farce

The Farce

The Farce is a mass satire created by all laughing things. Its jokes surround and penetrate the bricks, and its punchlines bind them together. With a Lite side, a Snark side, and a regrettably stupid Dim side, Farce-attuned minifigs attest that "anything can be funny... from a certain point of view."

The Farce unsubtly alters reality and events to fall in favor of more chaos, more mayhem, and more hilarity from victors and victims alike. The Farce ensures that characters and factions exist only as their own worst straw-man plastic caricatures, and Farce-influenced events are rarely accompanied by any more logical justification than "wouldn't it be funny if," often going to absurd lengths to avoid one. Instead, the Farce acts through the power of gratuitous and inescapable Koynceidence.

Koynceidences occur according to how entertaining they are, rather than respecting any normal rules of probability. No matter how unlikely or impossible, new elements of hilarity become all but inevitable if they Koynceidentally spark a fresh paroxysm of minifig-on-minifig violence, disrupt a well-laid and rational plan, or amplify the worst possible consequences of a harmless error.

BrikWiki entry: [The Farce](#)

BrikWars takes place in a rigged BrikVerse, whose fundamental laws are set up to make sure the most improbable thing that could possibly happen usually does. The ends justify the means, and if the Humans need a medieval castle and breathable atmosphere to mysteriously appear in an asteroid field in order to play out their dream battle of dragons versus starfighters, then that's exactly what happens. The forces of Koynceidence put the castle where it needs to go, and its arrival requires no explanation, any more than does the Non-Euclidean Space Pony invasion force does when it arrives two turns later.

The Farce accomplishes this by putting the power of Koynceidence into the hands of those least interested in using it responsibly. Specifically, the Humans. And more specifically, whichever Humans are most opposed to the well-being of the minifigs affected.

Enemies

"Oceania was at war with Eurasia; therefore Oceania had always been at war with Eurasia."

- George Orwell

Koynceidence is a wonderful tool, but it must never be allowed to fall into benevolent hands. When it comes time for Koynceidence to affect events in battle, the power must be granted by a Human player to one of his **Enemies**, preferably to use against him. Which players are Enemies at any given moment is determined by the following criteria:



Not Enemies: You

Players can never be their own Enemies, no matter what their own

Peace



Toys of all stripes are notorious for their revolving loyalties and petty betrayals. Groups of toys may be friendly one moment, fratricidal

terrible die-rolling skills seem to indicate.

Not Enemies: Your Allies

Players cannot be Enemies with their current allies, no matter how viciously they may have battled in the past. Happily, alliances are easily canceled by a well-timed Inevitable Betrayal.

Not Enemies: Non-Players

Without an agenda to pursue, inanimate objects and neutral bystanders have no way to ironically benefit from a player's errors, making them worthless as Enemies. Neutralized opponents and absent players are included in the Non-Players category.

Enemies: Any Players Trying to Kill You

First and foremost, a player is Enemies with any player with whom he's engaged in direct combat. In situations where this isn't clear, two players are considered to be engaged in direct combat if either of them has attempted at least one attack on the other since the beginning of their previous turn.

Otherwise: Enemies: Any Players That Tried to Kill You, or Your Allies, Ever

If a player is not currently directly engaged in combat, then his Enemies are any players who have engaged in combat with him or his current allies at any point in the battle.

If all else fails: Enemies: Everybody

If neither the player nor his current allies have engaged in combat at all, then every other player is an Enemy by default.

the next, and staunchly allied against their Human overlords a moment later.

While their allegiances change with each new turn of the coat, self-respecting minifigs must always have at least one Enemy, and preferably several, in order to maintain healthy psychological function. Otherwise, they risk becoming disoriented and falling victim to "Peace" - a feared but thankfully rare disease. Unless the situation is corrected quickly, afflicted minifigs can descend into a pacifist spiral, with symptoms progressing from boredom to depression, panic, and inevitable suicide, usually within minutes.

BrikWiki entry: [Peace](#)

Note that Enemies are not necessarily reciprocal - it's possible for a player to have clear Enemies who are too busy to consider him an Enemy in return, if they're focused on more pressing combat elsewhere.

The Ossum



The triple skull of Ossum: Comedy, Tragedy, and Stupidity

ossum, *n.*

1. a bone
2. the germinating seed within a nut or fruit
3. the kernel, nucleus, or heart

*Latin vulgaris, from Latin **os** 'bone.'*

No minifig can comprehend the ineffable mind of a Human. But minifig Osseologists have learned that the more they can get their Human talking about **Ossum**, the more likely they are to receive the Human's continued blessings of violence and destruction.

Ossum, as minifigs understand it, has multiple meanings. In its primary sense, Ossum is a symbol of death, the bone from which a minifig skeleton is made. But Ossum is also the vital seed kernel that remains when the fruit is peeled away, ready to germinate and grow again. Destruction isn't Ossum if it's meaningless or sterile. Ossum is built up of vital and deadly risks taken on the knife edge between glory and death, risks that force ever-greater escalations of Ossum in response.

Minifig scholars of Osseology calibrate their ossometers by a metric of skulls. The skulls of the innocent, collected and piled into a tyrant's throne to oppress the weak and timid, are Ossum. The skull of Two-By-Two is Ossum. The skull head of Warhead is pure flaming Ossum.

But in the larger sense, everything is Ossum. There is nothing in a minifig's reality that can't be used for violence. Anything that can be coveted, anything that kindles the highest minifig virtues of jealousy or hatred or lust or rampaging mass hysteria, anything that can inspire a minifig to kill or that can be used in the killing, contains the seed of Ossum that can be nursed to



When the land cries out for Ossum, splinter incarnations of Warhead appear.

*Photo: Sir Sporktimus
from "Lego doodles POST THEM"
Elements shown: LEGO*

compound and fester into glorious conflict.

The Almighty Benny

"O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle - be Thou near them! With them, in spirit, we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe.

O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it - for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet!

We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen."

- Mark Twain

Kanon ensures that Ossum within a BrikVerse compounds over time, and the Spirits of the Game act to cultivate and intensify that Ossum without regard for moderation or responsible BrikVersal conservation practices. The Spirits shine their favor on minifigs who are Ossum more often than on ones who are merely sub-awesome, and the Spirit known to reward the faithful most directly is the **Almighty Benny**.

For Humans, the majority of BrikWars is about humiliating their opponents and grinding their forces into scattered piles of plastic debris. When one of their Enemies does something Ossum that deserves a reward, on the other hand, the Almighty Benny allows a Human player to give that Enemy a ray of hope and pride before heartlessly crushing them brutally underheel once again.

Any time a player's Enemy does something cool that makes the game better, that player can award him or her an Almighty Benny. Examples include:

- hosting the battle, especially if they took care of setting up an Ossum battlefield
- building Ossum models
- doing anything that causes everyone at the table to say "that was Ossum" and exchange high-fives
- doing anything Ossum that causes everyone at the table to laugh one or multiple butts off, especially when it results in Ossum self-inflicted casualties
- demonstrating extreme sportsmanship, character, enthusiasm, genius, bloodlust, hospitality, stupidity, brand loyalty, or any other



The Almighty Benny, Lord of Genies and most benevolent of all the Spirits of the Game, rewards the Ossum faithful with the ability to be Ossum all over again.

Steering the Fun

Players new to BrikWars might ask, "Why would I willingly choose to give my Enemies more power?" This is because they are not yet one with the Spirits of the Game.

Almighty Bennies give players the opportunity to steer the group towards exactly their preferred kinds of fun, and the mutual fun of everyone at the table supercedes all other goals. (If players are worried about winning or losing more than about having fun, they're playing the wrong game.)

If players like impressive models, they'll give Bennies for impressive models. If they like hilarious hijinks, they'll give Bennies for hilarious hijinks. This keeps everyone at the table explicitly aware of what makes the game most fun for everyone else, and the more freely they hand out Bennies, the more freely they're likely to receive them in return - unless they're playing with a bunch of total lame-asses, in which case it's

attribute the player personally finds Ossum and would like to see more often

better to find out about it sooner rather than later, so they can forget to invite them next time.

- acts involving awesome beers and/or doughnuts and the Ossum distribution of said beers and/or doughnuts

To create an Almighty Benny, a player grabs any pair of construction bricks, attaches them together, calls it an Almighty Benny, and gives it to his or her chosen Enemy, possibly giving it a name to commemorate the act that brought it about (e.g., "The Almighty Benny of Heroic Self-Decapitation.") At any moment from that point forward, the Enemy can break the two bits apart to add a one-time Almighty Bonus d6 to any standard roll or stat (but not Heroic Feats or What I Say Goes rolls).

The rules governing the Almighty Benny are as follows:

- **Each Almighty Benny can be used exactly once to add a one-time Bonus d6 to any roll or stat, except when rolling for What I Say Goes or a Heroic Feat.**

While each individual Benny can be used only once, if a player has multiple distinct Bennies he or she can spend as many of them in a single roll as they like.

- **Players can only give Almighty Bennies to their Enemies, with the understanding that the Bennies will almost certainly be used against them.**

Theoretically, the recipient can use an Almighty Benny against anyone at the table, but it's much more satisfying for everyone if he or she uses it against the player who awarded it.

Don't give an Almighty Benny to one of your Enemies with the intention that they'll use it against one of your other Enemies, because that's super lame.

- **Players cannot place any conditions on the use of an Almighty Benny. Once it's in Enemy hands, the Enemy can use it however he or she wants.**

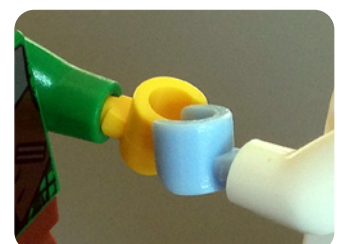
It's nice if Benny recipients can find a way to spend their Almighty Bennies on units and actions related to whatever the Bennies were awarded for in the first place, but they can really use it for whatever they want (excluding Feats and What I Say Goes rolls, of course).

Instant Bennies

There's a slightly less-Mighty type of Benny which grants the same Almighty Bonus d6, but can't be saved for later. An **Instant Benny** represents a momentary advantage for the army that possesses it. An Instant Benny can be granted at any time, but if it isn't spent, it disappears at the end of the recipient's turn and the opportunity is lost.

Instant Bennies can't be saved from turn to turn, so there's no point in trying to earn one if you're not in a position to spend it immediately.

Unlike regular Almighty Bennies, Instant Bennies can be awarded automatically when certain conditions are met, and their use is subject to restrictions. There are five situations in which Instant Bennies are traditionally awarded automatically: **First Blood**, **Inevitable Betrayal**, **Deadly Ground**, **Last Man Standing**, and **King of the Hill**. Groups of players are encouraged to add or subtract conditions from this list to support their scenario requirements or



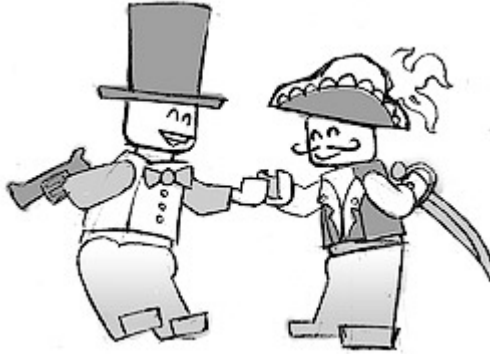
*The Quantumsurfers
Silverdream and Colette*

preferred playing style.

- The Instant Benny of **First Blood** is awarded to the first player to kill a minifig belonging to an Enemy.

- Instant Bennies of **Inevitable Betrayal** are awarded to a player who betrays his allies.

Once the First Blood Benny has been handed out, all players acting in cooperation with one another, whether having agreed to simple non-aggression or committed to a full-blown military alliance, are vulnerable to the sting of Inevitable Betrayal.



For each alliance a player is involved in, he or she keeps a pile of Betrayal bricks. (If players are in more than one alliance, they will have more than one Betrayal pile, preferably color-coded so that everyone can tell which is which.)

At the beginning of each of their turns, players with surviving allies must decide whether or not it's time to **Betray** them yet. If a player decides to remain faithful to his or her allies for that turn, then they add a Betrayal brick to their own pile, and play continues as normal.

If the player does decide to Betray one or more allies, on the other hand, then all the bricks in their Betrayal pile for that alliance turn into Instant Bennies that they can spend against their former allies. The more Betrayal bricks a player has, the more tempting the Inevitable Betrayal becomes, so players should always keep one eye on their supposed "friends!"

Once a player has Betrayed an alliance, they are no longer part of it and can't be Betrayed in return. If they somehow rejoin the same alliance later in the battle, they must restart their own Betrayal pile for that alliance from scratch, while the previous allies' piles continue at full strength.

- The Instant Benny of **Deadly Ground** is awarded to any army that has at least one unit in Enemy territory. Each army can earn this Benny once per turn, and multiple opposing armies can be earning these Bennies at the same time.

In most battlefields, a unit is in Enemy territory if it's closer to that Enemy's starting position than it is to its own. The boundary can be easily marked by placing monuments or landmarks at the halfway points between players.

reminisce about their idealistic hand-in-glove covenant to rule together in the harmony of tolerance and acceptance, during their inevitable attempt to brutally murder one another.

*Photo: Silverdream
from "Overwatch 3: No Glove, No Love,
Only Revenge"
Elements shown: LEGO*

Plotting for Betrayal

Backstabbing can be a tricky thing. Especially in groups where the players are young children (or their adult equivalents), out-of-hand betrayals can lead to destroyed friendships, temper tantrums, and tears.

If this kind of trauma appeals to you, you should try to set up your Objective so that it takes the whole team to achieve them, but only one player can reap the spoils.

For example, in the Second VladTron Rebellion (BR 2,005), King MethHouse commanded his vassal Rainbow Knights to lay siege to the DarkTron Fortress, but then let it be known that only the one who slew Lord VladTron would inherit the Kingdom of Mocia. Once the walls were breached, a massive backstabbing between allies unavoidably followed, as each knight strove to prevent the others from landing the crowning blow. Lord VladTron escaped and went on to lead a final uprising in BR 2,006.

Players can move the boundary closer or further away if one army is much larger than another; an army that's twice as large at the beginning of a battle can be considered to control twice as much territory.

In scenario battles, territory is defined in more concrete terms - in a siege, for instance, the territory inside the defensive wall belongs to the defenders, while territory outside belongs to the besiegers.

Only the units that are in Enemy territory can use Instant Bennies of Deadly Ground, and they can only use them against the Enemy whose territory they're in.

- In scenario battles, Instant Bennies of **King of the Hill** are awarded to armies who achieve the scenario's special identified objectives.

The most common objectives are to seize and hold particular critical locations or pieces of equipment, often involving flags and the capture thereof. Once per turn, each held objective grants a King of the Hill Benny that can be used by the team with uncontested control over it.

- The Instant Benny of **Last Man Standing** is awarded to any player who only has one minifig or other unit left alive at the beginning of a turn. The minifig can continue to get a new Last Man Standing Benny at the beginning of each subsequent turn until he either dies or receives reinforcements.

