

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**



# THREE-DRAGON ANTE™

LEGENDARY EDITION

## Rulebook



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## INTRODUCTION

*Three-Dragon Ante™: Legendary Edition* is an updated version of the card game brought to our world from the taverns and game tables of the Dungeons & Dragons® world. New Mortals and Legendary Dragons join the dragons of the original edition, transforming the original 70-card game into a standard deck of 70 cards with 30 unique cards to choose from to customize each game.

## GAME COMPONENTS

- 70 standard Dragon cards
- 15 Mortal cards
- 15 Legendary Dragon cards
- 60 cardboard gold pieces
- 30 cardboard platinum pieces (worth 10 gold each)
- Six 3DA Ability disks to use for combining *Three-Dragon Ante* with Dungeons & Dragons
- Six reference cards
- Rulebook

## SUMMARY OF PLAY

In *Three-Dragon Ante* (3DA for short), you and the other players play gambits in which you ante gold into the stakes and then take turns playing one card at a time from your hands. After you play a card, leave it faceup in front of you. If the number on your card (strength) is equal to or lower than that of the card just played by the person on your right, or if you play first in a round, you get to use your card's special power. Otherwise, ignore the power.

Once each player has played three cards, check to see whose three cards have the highest total strength. That player wins the gold in the stakes. Keep playing gambits of three cards each until someone runs out of gold at the end of a gambit, ending the game.

## HOW TO WIN

If you have the most gold in your hoard when the game ends, you win!



## SETUP

1. Multiply the number of players by 10. Give each player that much gold. For example, in a three-player game, give each player 30 gold; in a six-player game, each player starts with 60 gold. These form each player's starting **hoard**.
2. Create the 80-card deck for this game by adding the 70 standard Dragon cards to 10 random cards chosen from the 15 Mortal and 15 Legendary Dragon cards. Set the 20 unused Mortal and Legendary Dragon cards aside, facedown, so that no one knows which cards are out of the game. (See page 14 for other options for setting up the deck.)
3. Shuffle the deck. Each player draws a **starting hand** of six cards. Keep the cards in your hand hidden from the other players.
4. Later in the game, you'll need either a few extra coins, dice, or pen and paper for keeping track of how deep a player goes into the hole in the middle of a gambit when they can't pay all the gold they owe.

## Setup Summary

### 1. Starting Gold

Each player receives 10 Gold times the number of players.



### 2. 80 Card Deck

Made from 70 standard Dragons and 10 random cards from a mix of Legendary Dragons and Mortals.



### 3. Starting Hand

Each player draws 6 cards.



### Gold Coin

1 Platinum Coin = 10 Gold Coins





## PARTS OF A CARD

Each card represents a **Dragon** or **Mortal** and has four key elements.

**Strength** is a card's value. The weakest cards have strength 1; the strongest have strength 13.

**Legendary Dragon** is a special dragon type in *Three Dragon Ante* and is indicated by the banner at the top of the card.

**Type** tells you what kind of card it is: Good Dragon, Evil Dragon, or Mortal. Mortals are the only cards that aren't dragons, and they're also neither good nor evil.

**Name** describes the Dragon or Mortal the card represents. For most dragons, the name also tells you what color the dragon is.

**Power** is a card's ability. A card's power might trigger when it's played.

## Legendary Dragon



## Standard Dragon



## Mortal



## GAMBIT SEQUENCE

A *Three-Dragon Ante* game is played in a series of **gambits**. Each gambit is usually three rounds. A gambit consists of five steps. Steps 1, 2, 3, and 5 happen every gambit. Step 4 only comes up when players have started running out of gold and the game is close to ending. The game ends when one or more players have no gold at the end of a gambit.

1. Each player antes a card
2. Play cards
3. Determine gambit winner
4. *Players running out of gold pay into the hole and check for game end*
5. Draw 2 cards apiece

### Step 1: Ante

Each player chooses one card from their hand and puts it facedown in the center of the table. These are the **ante** cards. Once all players have chosen ante cards, reveal them.

*Rare corner case:* If all the ante cards are tied with at least one other ante card, discard them all without paying gold to the stakes. Then each player draws a card from the deck and chooses a new ante card from their hand.

*The usual ante when not all cards are tied:* Check to see which ante card or cards have the highest strength. Each player takes a number of gold coins from their hoard equal to the highest strength card or cards and pays that gold to the **stakes** in the center of the table.

Ante cards remain faceup in the center of the table for the rest of the gambit. They're not part of the stakes.

### Step 2: Play Cards

The player who revealed the strongest ante card is usually the **leader** in the first **round** of the gambit. Do not count any ante cards that are tied for strongest; in other words, the player who anted the strongest **untied** card is the leader.

The leader takes the first **turn**, then the other players take turns clockwise around the table until each has taken a turn.

On your turn, play one card from your hand faceup onto the table in front of you and check to see if the card's **power** triggers (see "Triggering Powers" on page 7).

Your faceup cards make up your **flight**. When you play a card, add it to the right of the last card you played. Flights stay faceup on the table until the end of the gambit. You can receive extra benefits by completing a special flight (see "Special Flights" on page 8).



Once each player has taken a turn, the player who played the strongest card that round becomes the leader in the next round. Do not count any cards that are tied for strongest. If all cards played in a round are tied with at least one other card, the previous round's leader also leads the next round.

After three rounds of play, you score the gambit. Check to see which player's flight has the highest total strength at the end of the third round. If only one player has the strongest flight, go to step 3 (on page 11). If two or more players are tied for the strongest flight, all players play another round.

### ***Strongest and Weakest Flights***

Some cards refer to the "strongest" or "weakest" flight or opponent. The flight of cards with the highest total strength is the strongest flight. The flight with the lowest total strength is the weakest flight. (Flights can be tied as strongest or weakest.)

If a card instructs you to choose the opponent with the strongest flight and two or more opponents' flights are tied as the strongest opposing flights, you choose one of those tied players. The same is true for weakest.

### ***Triggering Powers***

A card's power doesn't do anything unless it triggers. When a card triggers, follow its instructions. A power triggers in the following two situations:

- The leader plays it as the first card of the round. (In other words, the first card played each round triggers its power no matter its strength; that's the advantage of being the leader.)
- When you play a card, the strength of the card is equal to or lower than the strength of the card just played by the person to your right. (For example, if you play a strength 5 card, its power triggers if the player to your right played a card of strength 5 or higher.)

### ***Dragon God Abilities***

**Dragon god** abilities have the word "Dragon god" preceding their text. (Some dragon gods, like Bahamut, also have powers that trigger normally.)

Dragon god abilities are not powers; they are always in effect regardless of the card's strength. Cards that copy other cards' powers can't copy dragon god abilities.



## Special Flights

You can earn extra rewards by having three or more similar cards in a flight. A **color flight** has three dragons of the same color, or three Mortals. A **strength flight** has any three cards of the same strength.

You complete a special flight on the turn you play the third matching card. Also, if the effect of a power changes the cards already in your flight so that they create a special flight, you complete that special flight.

When you complete a special flight, follow the instructions of all powers that trigger on that turn, and then collect the special flight's reward.

Sometimes gambits go on for more than three rounds. In a gambit that lasts more than three rounds, it's possible to complete both a color flight and a strength flight—even at the same time! If you complete both a color flight and a strength flight during the same turn, collect gold for completing the color flight first.

No player can complete more than one of a given color flight and more than one of a given strength flight in a gambit. In other words, there's no reward for playing your fourth dragon of a color or fourth card with the same strength.



### Special-Flight Rewards

You earn the following rewards when completing a special flight.

**Color Flight:** Each opponent pays you gold equal to the strength of the second-strongest card in the flight, counting down from the strongest card. If it helps, you can usually think of the color flight value as the middle value. (For example, if you have three Gold Dragons of strengths 9, 4, and 13, each other player would pay you 9 gold. For a more complicated example, if you have two Green Dragons of strengths 2 and 5 and the 5-strength Wyrmpriest whose power has triggered to let him count as any color dragon, you'd count down from one of the 5s; the second-strongest card in the flight, counting down, is 5, so each other player would pay you 5 gold.)

**Strength Flight:** You steal gold from the stakes equal to the strength of one of the cards in your strength flight. You also take two ante cards and add them to your hand. (For example, if you have three strength 5 cards in your flight, you steal 5 gold from the stakes and add any two of the remaining ante cards to your hand.)



**Color Flight Example:**

In this example Color Flight, each opponent must pay the player 9 gold because the Gold Dragon with a Strength of 9 is the second highest strength card in the flight.



**Strength Flight Example:**

In this example Strength Flight, the player steals 5 gold from the stakes and add 2 cards from the ante to their hand.



### ***Legendary Dragons & Color Flights***

Ten of the Legendary Dragons are dragons that match the color of one of the normal dragons. The Black Raider, Blue Overlord, Green Schemer, Red Destroyer and White Hunter can make color flights with other evil dragons of their color. The same is true of the good Legendary Dragons: the Brass Sultan, Copper Trickster, Bronze Warlord, Silver Seer, and Gold Monarch.

Tiamat, of course, can make a color flight with two other black, blue, green, red, or white dragons of the same color.

### ***Buying Cards***

You must buy new cards in the following two situations.

- At the start of your turn, if you have only one card in your hand.
- During any turn, if the effect of triggered powers is complete, and you find yourself with no cards in your hand.

To buy new cards, reveal and discard the top card of the deck. Pay gold equal to that card's strength to the stakes, then draw cards until your hand contains four cards.

**Note:** You cannot buy cards in any other situation: **you can't buy cards just because you want to!**

### ***Losing Your Hoard***

Whenever you have to pay more gold than the amount remaining in your hoard, pay as much as you can. Track any remaining gold you cannot pay as gold that will have to go **"into the hole"** at the end of the gambit. It does not matter who the gold would have gone to - this isn't a debt - it's an accounting of how much gold you were unable to pay during the gambit.

At the end of the gambit, if you managed to acquire any gold, you'll pay what you owe into the hole, see Step 4 on page 11. (Foreshadowing: If you don't have any gold, the game will be over!)

### ***No Gold in the Stakes***

If, at any time, no gold remains in the stakes, the gambit ends immediately. Go to Step 3.





### Step 3: Determine Gambit Winner

The player with the strongest flight wins the gambit (the flight of cards with the highest total strength).

The winner of the gambit takes all the gold in the stakes and adds it to their hoard. Then discard all the cards in the ante and in all player's flights.

**Important: Don't discard the cards that players have in hand**—a big part of the game is saving cards for the future.

### Step 4: Pay Into the Hole and Check for Game End

After determining the winner of the gambit, any player who owes gold must take an amount of gold from their hoard equal to how deep they went into the hole, or all the gold they have, if they cannot meet what they owe, and set it aside out of the game, next to the deck. The resulting stack of coins is known as **the hole** and sits out of the game until the game ends.

Then, if at least one player has no gold in their hoard, the game ends. See “Winning the Game” below.

### Step 5: Draw Cards

If the game has not ended, each player draws two cards, starting with the player who won the gambit that was just scored and going clockwise around the table. Then start the next gambit.

#### *Maximum Hand Size*

You can't have more than ten cards in your hand at any time. As soon as you have ten cards in your hand, you can no longer draw cards from the deck or take them from the ante or from other players. If a card power instructs you to draw or take cards, ignore that part of the power once you reach ten cards in hand. (For example, if you have nine cards in your hand and a power lets you draw three cards, you can draw only one.)

#### *No Cards in Deck*

Whenever the deck runs out of cards, shuffle the discard pile to form a new deck.

## WINNING THE GAME

When the game ends, the player with the most gold wins! As a bonus that matters more to D&D® characters, that winner then also receives all the gold that was paid into the hole.

In the extremely rare case in which players tie as winners, they share the victory and split the gold from the hole as evenly as possible. If they can't agree on which of them gets the odd coin from the hole, they're encouraged to give it to the player who ran out of gold and can least afford it.

## Game Play Example

Thorinn, Ursula, and Breen have been playing a few gambits of *Three-Dragon Ante™* and are in the second round of another gambit when we join them.

Ursula leads the round with a 7-strength Bronze Dragon, adding it to her flight which contains a 7-strength Queen.

Since she has lead, her card triggers its power, which in this case allows her to take the two weakest cards in the ante.

Here, she takes a 4-strength White Dragon, and has a choice between two 6-strength dragons, choosing a Black Dragon.



### Bronze Dragon | Good

Put the two weakest ante cards into your hand.

It is Breen's turn now and she plays a 9-strength Archmage. Since it is not the lead card AND it is not equal to or lower than the previous card played, its power does not trigger.



Thorinn's turn is next and he plays a Chromatic Wyrmling whose strength is 1.

Since this strength is lower than the Archmage's strength, its power triggers, allowing Thorinn to replace the Chromatic Wyrmling with an evil Dragon from his hand: an 11-strength Blue Dragon.

Normally, this card's power would not trigger as its 11-strength is higher than the 9-strength of the Archmage, but as a function of the Chromatic Wyrmling's power which did trigger, allows this Blue Dragon to trigger its power, forcing Thorinn's opponents to give up gold: in this case, Thorinn chooses each to add 2 gold to the stakes (as he has 2 cards in his flight). Unfortunately, both Breen and Ursula have no gold left, so they track the 2 gold owed to the hole.

### Chromatic Wyrmling | Evil

You may discard this card and replace it with an evil dragon from your hand. The new card's power triggers regardless of its strength.



### Blue Dragon | Evil

Choose one: Each opponent gives you 1 gold; OR each opponent adds 1 gold to the stakes for each card in your flight.



### Gold in the Hole

Thorinn	Ursula	Breen
	11	11



It is the third round and Thorinn is the leader, having played the strongest card in the previous round. He leads with a Blue Dragon of strength 4, completing a color flight of blue dragons.

Before resolving this special flight, the Blue Dragon's power triggers, forcing Breen and Ursula to add 3 gold apiece to the hole. After they have done so, Thorinn gains the reward of a color flight, meaning his opponents need to pay him gold: The three blue cards in his flight are strength 6, 11, and 4. Breen and Ursula must pay Thorinn 6 gold: which they do not have and must add it to the money owed to the hole.

Gold in the Hole		
Thorinn	Ursula	Breen

**Blue Dragon | Evil**

Choose one: Each opponent gives you 1 gold; OR each opponent adds 1 gold to the stakes for each card in your flight.

It is Ursula's turn and she plays a 7-strength Black Dragon. Its power would have helped her gain some gold but it does not trigger as it is not equal to or lower than Thorinn's 4-strength card. However, she does complete a strength flight and is able to steal 7 gold from the stakes. If there was no gold left in the stakes, the gambit would now end.



**Black Dragon | Evil**

Steal 7 gold from the stakes.

**White Dragon | Evil**

The weakest opponent pays you 2 gold.

Finally, Breen plays a 3-strength White Dragon. Its power triggers and since both opponents are tied for weakest at 2 strength, she chooses Thorinn to give her 2 gold.



Now we see if someone has the strongest flight to determine the gambit winner.

In this case, we have a tie for strongest at 21, which means another round is played: good news for Ursula and Breen who have an opportunity to gain more gold to pay off what they owe to the hole.



## APPENDIX 1: BUILDING GAMES & THEME DECKS

Instead of randomly choosing 10 cards from the 15 Mortals and 15 Legendary Dragons to add to the 70 standard Dragons, you can choose which cards you want to play with ahead of time. The obvious option is to play with Mortals or Legendary Dragons that everyone agrees they'd like to have in the game. Keep in mind that games with more Mortals are often wilder games.

As beginning players, you're better off choosing randomly to get to know the cards. As experienced players, you may be better off choosing randomly to keep the experience fresh and avoid letting someone engineer a game they like better than others! But if you are sure you want one or two cards in the mix, add them and then choose the rest randomly. See **pick 'em** below for the way this gets handled in many in-world games!

### In-World Options

Here are some options for how to build decks, phrased the way they're discussed in D&D worlds.

**Druid's party:** The Druid gets added to the deck as the reversal move for players with weak cards. The other 9 cards added from the Mortals and Legendary Dragons are random.

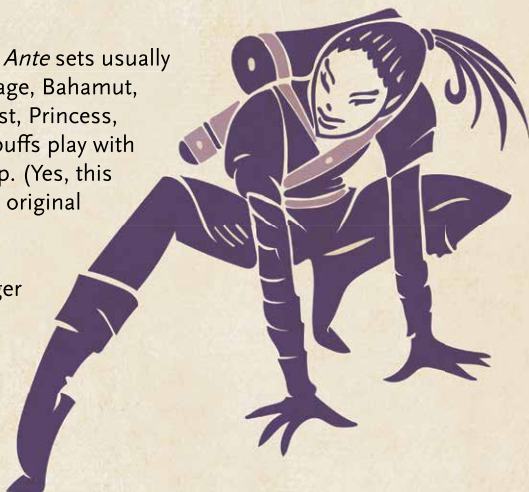
**Pick 'em:** Going around the table, each player gets to choose one Mortal or Legendary Dragon card they want to play with this game. Then the remainder of the special cards are chosen randomly. Many games in the taverns of D&D worlds use **pick 'em** as a format that blends choice and randomness.

**Show 'em:** Whether or not the 10 cards added to the deck are random, all players get to see which cards are added ahead of time. This cuts down on surprises and increases strategic play from the first gambit. This is how the most serious gamblers in the worlds of D&D play. In a world of magic, skilled sleight-of-hand, and professional gamblers, showing all players the special cards before starting the game cuts down on mid-game knife fights.

**Among friends:** In most D&D worlds, playing with the rules as written—selecting ten random facedown cards from the shuffled stack of Mortals and Legendary Dragons and shuffling them into the main deck without showing them first—is said to be a game **among friends**. Everyone learns which cards are actually in the game the fun way, by seeing them played, and no one is worried about cheaters.

**Traditional set:** The earliest *Three-Dragon Ante* sets usually contained the following ten cards: Archmage, Bahamut, Dracolich, Dragonslayer, Druid, Fool, Priest, Princess, Thief, Tiamat. Traditionalists and history buffs play with these cards to enjoy the best known set-up. (Yes, this corresponds to the 10 special cards in the original edition of *Three-Dragon Ante*!)

**Game-and-a-half:** Players who want a longer game, instead of playing multiple games, can start with more gold per player. A game where starting hoards contain 12 or 15 gold per player generally run much longer than usual games.





## APPENDIX 2: SLANG

Colloquially, many refer to the game by the type of coin players use. Peasants who can only afford a tattered deck play with coppers and call the game *copper dragons*, or *three-copper*. Merchants and crafters are more likely to play with silver. Self-respecting adventurers play with gold or even platinum, and call the game *golds* or *plats* when they're slanging.

Below are some other slang terms:

**hole in the house:** Any gold paid into the hole goes to the house, the tavernkeeper, innkeeper, or proprietor of the gaming establishment.

**inviting the bronze:** Triggering the first Bronze Dragon's power in a gambit, leaving stronger ante cards available for the next bronze dragon's power that triggers.

**one of yours:** Sometimes used when you play a card you took from another player. Also used when playing a dragonborn and you play a card from their ancestral heritage. Usually not said aloud when a card fits both categories, because that adds insult to injury.

**playing like a dwarf:** Handing over dragon cards when opponents use green dragons or brass dragons on you, because you're unwilling to part with your gold, even if that would be a wiser play.

**prize game:** When adventurers, nobles, or friendly rivals can't agree on who should take a prize, and don't want to share, the contestants sometimes play a *Three-Dragon Ante* game with the prize going to the player who ends up winning the game. Only truly interested parties are invited to the table, and throwing such a game to another player is bad form and might get you slapped. Or slashed.

**selfish silver, or selfish and silver:** A player who plays a Silver Dragon when he or she is the only player who'll benefit. "You had your chance," is the traditional response to an opponent who has already played a card.

## APPENDIX 3: CARDLIST

Card strength appears in parentheses.

### Standard Dragons

Black Dragon x7 (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9)  
Blue Dragon x7 (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11)  
Brass Dragon x7 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9)  
Bronze Dragon x7 (1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11)  
Copper Dragon x7 (1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10)  
Gold Dragon x7 (2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13)  
Green Dragon x7 (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10)  
Red Dragon x7 (2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12)  
Silver Dragon x7 (2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12)  
White Dragon x7 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8)

### Legendary Dragons

Bahamut x1 (13)  
Black Raider x1 (8)  
Blue Overlord x1 (10)  
Brass Sultan x1 (8)  
Bronze Warlord x1 (10)  
Chromatic Wyrmling x1 (1)  
Copper Trickster x1 (9)  
Dracolich x1 (10)  
Gold Monarch x1 (12)  
Green Schemer x1 (5)  
Metallic Wyrmling x1 (1)  
Red Destroyer x1 (11)  
Silver Seer x1 (11)  
Tiamat x1 (13)  
White Hunter x1 (7)

### Mortals

The Archmage x1 (9)  
The Dragonrider x1 (6)  
The Dragonslayer x1 (8)  
The Druid x1 (6)  
The Fool x1 (3)  
The Illusionist x1 (4)  
The Kobold x1 (2)  
The Merchant Prince x1 (5)  
The Priest x1 (5)  
The Princess x1 (4)  
The Prophet x1 (10)  
The Queen x1 (7)  
The Sorcerer x1 (8)  
The Thief x1 (7)  
The Wyrmpriest x1 (5)

## APPENDIX 4: CARD POWER EXPLANATIONS

### The Archmage | Mortal

*All cards you play later this gambit trigger their powers.*

This usually works out in your favor, but it can be a two-edged sword if you were counting on playing high-strength Copper Dragons to win the gambit, or with cards like the Copper Trickster that ordinarily gives you the choice of whether you want to trigger the power of the new card. If the Archmage is taken from you by the Illusionist after triggering its power, that doesn't cancel its effect on the cards you play this gambit—it just shares the Archmage's magic with the opponent who stole it from you.

### Bahamut | Good

*Dragon god—As long as you have Bahamut and an evil dragon in your flight, you can't win the gambit.*

*Power: Each other player with both good and evil dragons in the same flight pays you 10 gold.*

Bahamut's dragon god ability is always in effect. (Yes, we know it's not much of an 'ability' since it's actually more of a pain, but that's what we're calling it.)

Bahamut's power triggers normally.

### Black Dragon | Evil

*Steal 3 gold from the stakes.*

If 3 or less gold remains in the stakes, take as much as you can, then end the gambit because the stakes are empty.

### Black Raider | Mortal

*Steal 1 gold from the stakes, then take 2 gold from the opponent to your left, 3 gold from the opponent to their left, and so on until you have taken gold from everyone.*

Obviously the Black Raider works best in games with many players!

The Black Raider is a black dragon and can complete color flights with other black dragons.

### Blue Dragon | Evil

*Choose one: Each opponent gives you 1 gold; OR each opponent adds 1 gold to the stakes for each card in your flight.*

If you play this as your first card in a round, of course you just want everyone to pay you 1 gold. Later in the round you have to weigh the odds that you'll win the gambit against the benefit of a smaller amount of gold right away.

### Blue Overlord | Evil

*Choose one: Each opponent gives you 2 gold; OR each opponent adds 2 gold to the stakes for each card in your flight.*

Same dynamic as for normal blue dragons, but pumped up so that there's more of a temptation to try and get it to trigger later in a gambit.

The Blue Overlord is a blue dragon and can complete color flights with other blue dragons.



## Brass Dragon | Good

*The opponent to your right chooses either to give you a stronger good dragon from their hand or to pay you 5 gold.*

If the opponent gives you a dragon, reveal it so that all players can see that it is a stronger good dragon.

If the player chooses to give you 5 gold but doesn't have that much, the opponent pays you as much as they've got and tracks the remainder as money they need to pay into the hole at the end of the gambit to stay in the game.

## Brass Sultan | Good

*The opponents to your left and right each choose either to give you a stronger good dragon from their hand or to pay you 5 gold.*

This is like the standard Brass Dragon power, but it affects both players sitting next to you instead of only the player on your right.

If you're playing a two-player game, this power hits your opponent twice, once as the left-hand player, once as the right-hand player!

The Brass Sultan is a brass dragon and can complete color flights with other brass dragons.

## Bronze Dragon | Good

*Take the two weakest cards from the ante.*

If only one ante card remains, put it into your hand if you can.

When this power triggers, if you have nine cards in your hand, choose the two weakest ante cards, add one to your hand, then return the other to the ante. If you have ten cards, this power has no effect.

If any cards tie for the two weakest ante cards, choose any one of the weakest cards, then choose any one of the remaining weakest cards.

## Bronze Warlord | Good

*Take the two weakest cards from the ante. Then if you do not win the gambit after the third round, play a fourth round.*

The first part of the power functions like the Bronze Dragon's power.

The Bronze Warlord is a bronze dragon and can complete color flights with other bronze dragons.



## Chromatic Wyrmling | Evil

*You may discard this card and replace it with an evil dragon from your hand. The new card's power triggers regardless of its strength.*

You don't have to use this card's power when it triggers. Therefore you could skip it if you don't have an evil dragon in your hand or if you're trying to complete a 1 strength flight!

This is one of the few cases in the game when you can end up playing two cards instead of one on your turn. Resolve the effect of your new evil dragon's power triggering before determining whether you need to buy new cards. For example, if your hand consisted of the Chromatic Wyrmling and a Red Dragon, you could play the Chromatic Wyrmling, use its power to replace it with the Red Dragon, and take a random card from your strongest opponent thanks to the Red Dragon's power. You'd end your turn with one card instead of no cards, so you wouldn't have to buy cards. If you had started the turn with a Black Dragon instead of a Red Dragon, you'd have to buy cards at the end of your turn, since you'd have no cards in your hand . . . unless you managed to complete a strength flight with the Black Dragon and took two cards from the ante!

## Copper Dragon | Good

*Discard this card and replace it with the top card of the deck. That card's power triggers regardless of its strength.*

When this power triggers, ignore Copper Dragon's strength; it's not part of your flight and doesn't affect whether or not the next player's power triggers. Instead, the card from the deck is considered the card you played this turn—use it to determine the total strength of your flight and whether or not the next player's card's power triggers.

If the card from the deck is another Copper Dragon, its power triggers and it's replaced by the new top card of the deck.

Copper Dragon doesn't complete a color flight or strength flight before it's discarded. At the end of your turn, if any new cards complete a color flight or strength flight you haven't already collected gold for in this gambit, collect gold for that special flight.



## Copper Trickster | Good

*Discard a different card in your flight and replace it with the top card of the deck. You can trigger the new card's power if you wish.*

If you play the Copper Trickster when you have no other cards in your flight, nothing happens.

If you have at least one other card in your flight, you must replace a card. On the other hand, triggering your new card's power is optional; you can skip triggering the power if it wouldn't help you.

The Copper Trickster is a copper dragon and can complete color flights with other copper dragons.

## Dracolich | Evil

*When the gambit is scored, you get +2 Strength for each evil dragon in your flight.*

This power doesn't take effect until the gambit is scored. It doesn't change the printed strength of the cards, it just adds +2 to your total strength for each evil dragon in your flight, including the Dracolich.



## **The Dragonrider | Mortal**

*When this gambit is scored, the strength of this card equals the strength of the weakest dragon in your flight, not this card's printed strength.*

If you have no dragons in your flight when the gambit is scored, the Dragonrider's strength is 0. Note that the Dragonrider offers two possibilities of creating a strength flight. When played, it is 6 strength. At scoring, its strength changes. If you have two dragons with the same strength as your weakest dragon, the Dragonrider's strength will change to match them, giving you a strength flight at the moment the gambit is scored.

## **The Dragonslayer | Mortal**

*Discard a weaker dragon from any flight.*

Discard a weaker dragon—strength 7 or less—if one is in any flight, even your own. A player whose dragon was discarded by this power will have one less dragon in their flight during this gambit. If that player played the discarded dragon this round, ignore that player when comparing card strengths to determine the next round's leader. If there are no weaker dragons in any flight, the Dragonslayer has no effect.

## **The Druid | Mortal**

*The player with the weakest flight wins the gambit instead of the player with the strongest flight.*

If two flights tie for the weakest flight after three rounds, play additional rounds until one player's flight is the weakest at the end of a round.

## **The Fool | Mortal**

*Draw a card for each opponent with a flight stronger than yours.*

Include this mortal when determining the strength of your flight. You can draw cards only until you have ten cards in your hand (see Maximum Hand Size, page 11). If no opponent has a flight stronger than yours, perhaps it was foolish to play this card for no effect.

## **Gold Dragon | Good**

*Draw a card for each good dragon in your flight.*

Include this dragon when counting how many good dragons you have in your flight. You can draw cards only until you have ten cards in your hand (see Maximum Hand Size, page 11).

## **Gold Monarch | Good**

*Draw a card for each good dragon in your flight. Then if you win this gambit, gift each opponent with 3 gold.*

If you don't win the gambit, you don't have to distribute gifts. If you do win, your gift might just keep an opponent who was about to go out in the game, assuming 3 gold is enough to help them cover what they owe to the hole.

The Gold Monarch is a gold dragon and can complete color flights with other gold dragons.

## Green Dragon | Evil

*The opponent to your left chooses either to give you a weaker evil dragon from their hand or to pay you 5 gold.*

If the opponent gives you a dragon, reveal it so all players can see that it's a weaker evil dragon.

If the opponent chooses to give you 5 gold but doesn't have that much, he or she pays you what they have and then owes gold to the hole at the end of the gambit (see page 11). Since there is no dragon weaker than the strength-1 Green Dragon, when its power triggers your opponent has no choice but to pay you 5 gold.

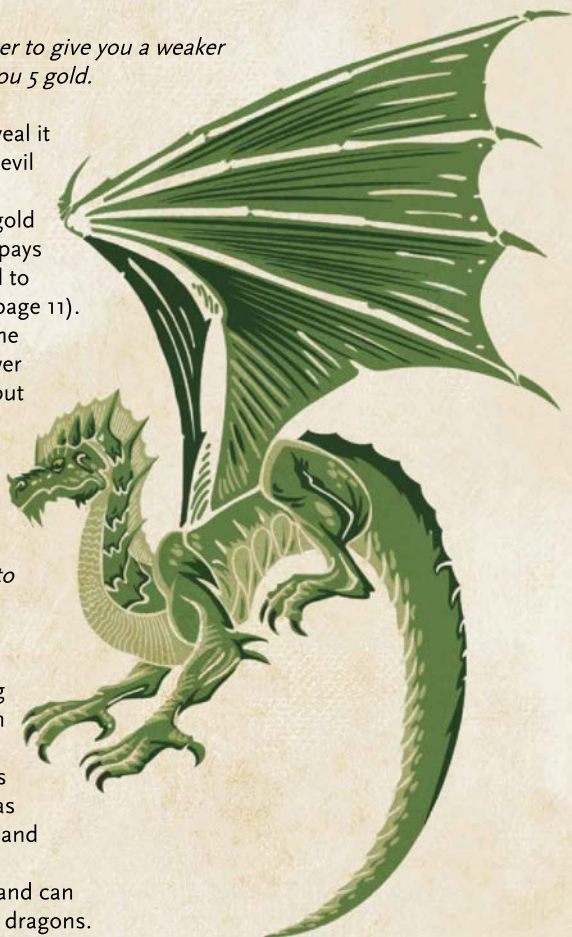
## Green Schemer | Evil

*The opponents to your left and right each choose either to give you a weaker evil dragon from their hand or to pay you 5 gold.*

This is like the standard Green Dragon power, but it affects both players sitting next to you instead of just the player on your left.

If you're playing a two-player game, this power hits your opponent twice, once as the left-hand player, once as the right-hand player!

The Green Schemer is a green dragon and can complete color flights with other green dragons.



## The Illusionist | Mortal

*You can swap this card with a mortal in an opponent's flight. If you do, your new mortal triggers its power regardless of its strength.*

Swapping cards is optional. If you'd rather not trade the Illusionist for an opponent's Mortal, don't swap.

Swapping cards might create a strength flight for one or both players. As usual, the player whose turn it is has first priority.

If you swap for a card like the Merchant Prince, you become the player who benefits from the Merchant Prince's power instead of the player who originally played the Merchant Prince.

## The Kobold | Mortal

*Discard as many cards as you wish from your hand. Then draw that many cards.*

Choose the cards you're discarding before you draw any of the replacements.



## The Merchant Prince | Mortal

*Until the end of this gambit, any gold players would put into the stakes to buy new cards goes to you instead of into the stakes.*

For the record, when you ask opponents how many cards they're holding, they have to answer truthfully!

If someone uses the Illusionist to take the Merchant Prince from you later in the gambit, they're going to be the one intercepting the gold instead of you.

## Metallic Wyrmling | Good

*You may discard this card and replace it with a good dragon from your hand. The new card's power triggers regardless of its strength.*

As with the Chromatic Wyrmling, you don't have to use this card's power when it triggers.

Similarly, if you don't have a good dragon in your hand, the power has no effect.

This is one of the few cases in the game when you can end up playing two cards instead of one on your turn. Resolve the effect of your new good dragon's power triggering before determining whether you need to buy new cards. For example, if your hand consisted of the Metallic Wyrmling and a Silver Dragon, you could play the Metallic Wyrmling, use its power to replace it with the Silver Dragon, and draw a card because of the Silver Dragon's power. You'd end your turn with one card instead of no cards, so you wouldn't have to buy cards. (If you still had only one card at the start of your next turn, you'd buy cards then.)

## The Priest | Mortal

*The winner of the gambit splits the stakes with the player to their left.*

Split the stakes evenly, rounding up to the actual victor.

This power only directly helps you if the gambit is won by the player to your right. But when you're trying to slow down opponents who have more gold than you, this can cut down on your rivals' winnings.

## The Princess | Mortal

*The power of each good dragon in your flight triggers.*

You choose the order in which the powers of your good dragons trigger. Do so carefully because it can make a difference. This power makes the powers of all your good dragons trigger, regardless of their strength and whether or not they've already triggered in this gambit. Follow the instructions for each power one at a time until you've gone through all of them.

When this power triggers Brass Dragon's power, if you have ten cards in your hand, the opponent may choose to give you a stronger good dragon. If he or she does, that player reveals the card and keeps it—you get nothing.

When this power triggers Copper Dragon's power, replace Copper Dragon with the top card of the deck and trigger that card's power as well—regardless of its strength. The Princess' power doesn't also trigger the power of a good dragon that replaces Copper Dragon.

The Princess is the card you played this turn and determines whether the next card played by an opponent this round triggers its power and who leads the round . . . assuming that somehow triggering the Copper Trickster hasn't replaced the Princess already!

## The Prophet | Mortal

*You can reveal a dragon in your hand and trigger its power as if the Prophet had triggered the power.*

If you don't have a dragon in your hand, the power has no effect.

Revealing the dragon and using its power is optional. If the dragon cards in your hand have powers you don't want to trigger, don't use the power. For example, if you only have Copper Dragons in your hand, skip using the power unless you want to replace the Prophet with a random card from the top of the deck.

## The Queen | Mortal

*Each opponent with both good and evil dragons in the same flight pays you 5 gold, and you take a random card from that player's hand.*

Start with the nearest player to your left who has a good dragon and an evil dragon in their flight, and then go clockwise around the table until each player with a good dragon and evil dragon in their flight has paid you and given you a card. You don't get to see your opponent's hand before taking a card. After you've chosen a card at random, the opponent may see it before you add it to your hand. Other players don't get to see the card.



## Red Dragon | Evil

*The opponent with the strongest flight pays you 1 gold. Take a random card from that player's hand.*

This power ignores the strength of your flight.

You don't get to see your opponent's hand before choosing a card. After you've chosen a card at random, the opponent may see it before you add it to your hand. Other players don't see the card.

## Red Destroyer | Evil

*The opponent with the strongest flight pays you 10 gold. Take a random card from that player's hand.*

Like the standard Red Dragon, but more devastating.

The Red Destroyer is a red dragon and can complete color flights with other red dragons.

## Silver Dragon | Good

*Each player with at least one good dragon in their flight draws a card.*

Include this dragon when determining whether or not you have at least one good dragon in your flight.

The player who triggered this power draws first, then the player to their left (if that player has a good dragon), and so on, until all players with good dragons in their flights have drawn a card. Obey the usual maximum hand size rule.



## Silver Seer | Good

*Each player with at least one good dragon in their flight draws a card.*

*Then you look at the top three cards in the deck, choose one, and discard the others.*

You don't have to reveal the card you choose to keep—you're the only player looking at the three cards you draw.

The Silver Seer is a silver dragon and can complete color flights with other silver dragons.

## The Sorcerer | Mortal

*Reveal the top three cards of the deck. Discard this card and replace it with one of the revealed cards. That card's power triggers. Put the other two revealed cards into the ante.*

When this power triggers, ignore the Sorcerer's strength; it's not part of your flight and doesn't affect whether or not the next player's power triggers. Instead, the card that replaces it is considered the card you played this turn—use it to determine the total strength of your flight and whether or not the next player's card's power triggers . . . well, assuming that you don't do something whacky like choose a Copper Dragon so that you can draw another random card to take this spot in your flight!

The Sorcerer does not complete a strength flight before it's discarded. At the end of your turn, if any new cards complete a strength flight you haven't already collected a reward for in this gambit, collect the reward for that strength flight.

## The Thief | Mortal

*Steal 7 gold from the stakes.*

If 7 or less gold remain in the stakes, take all the gold and end the gambit.

## Tiamat | Evil

*Dragon god—Tiamat counts as a Black, Blue, Green, Red, and White Dragon. As long as you have Tiamat and a good dragon in your flight, you can't win the gambit.*

Tiamat has no power. Its dragon god ability is always in effect.

Tiamat can be used to complete any color flights that match one of its five colors. (If you're playing with other colors of evil dragons from other *Three-Dragon Ante* sets, that's too bad: Tiamat has only five colors.)

## White Dragon | Evil

*The weakest opponent pays you 2 gold.*

As usual, this power ignores the strength of your flight.

If two or more opponents are tied as the weakest opponent, you get to choose which you're going to take gold from.

## White Hunter | Evil

*Each weaker opponent pays you 3 gold.*

This power does care about your own strength, since it affects all weaker opponents. If there is no one weaker than you, you won't get any gold from the White Hunter's power.

The White Hunter is a white dragon and can complete color flights with other white dragons.

## The Wyrmpriest | Mortal

*For the rest of the gambit, this card counts as any color for completing a color flight.*

You don't need to announce the color this card counts as when the power triggers. It counts as all colors through the course of the gambit. (Think of it as a wild card.)

## APPENDIX 5: ROLEPLAYING RULES

There's not one right answer for handling a game within the game, so you have several options for combining *Three-Dragon Ante* and D&D.

### Gamblers Unleashed: D20 Skill Checks

If the point of a session is that PC gambler intends to use all their skills to make sure they win a particular game of *Three-Dragon Ante*, pick up the d20 instead of the cards. You're not after an interesting game of 3DA, you're finding out if a skilled character can manipulate their way to victory no matter how badly their cards would have turned up if they were playing honestly. Depending on the circumstances and the opposition, it might be an easy, medium, hard or even harder Sleight of Hand or Persuasion check.

### Play for Fun: Pure Roleplay

The opposite of simply rolling the d20 is to play a game of *Three-Dragon Ante* in character. Speak in your character's voice, curse as they'd curse, and enjoy a card game in the middle of your roleplaying. It's probably fun to let the GM play as an NPC, but not more than one! To speed the game up in the middle of a D&D session, consider playing with 8 gold per player instead of the usual 10.

### Both Games Together: 3DA with D&D

Putting the two games together requires some restraint from the player characters. It's not fun to play all but the last couple gambits of an in-character *Three-Dragon Ante* game only to have the barbarian start a brawl that ensures the game will never finish!

When the players and their PCs agree to play a full game of 3DA, use the following rules to add a touch of each character's abilities to an otherwise straightforward 3DA game.

**Once-per-game abilities, with recharge:** At the start of a 3DA game involving PCs, give each PC or NPC a 3DA Ability disk and put it in front of the PC showing its colorful side up. The colorful side shows that the ability is ready, the greyed-out side shows the ability has been expended.

When the character uses one of the Card Draw, Ante Manipulation, or Card Denial abilities, flip their disk to its greyed-out Expended side. That character can't use any of their 3DA Abilities until they recharge by **scoring a special flight** (a color flight or strength flight). When the character scores a special flight, flip their disk back to its colorful Ready side. They're again eligible to trigger one of their 3DA Abilities when the opportunity arises.

Scoring a special flight when your 3DA ability is Ready doesn't give you another use of a 3DA Ability.





**Choosing 3DA Abilities:** Before play begins, each PC should look at the following list of Dungeons & Dragons character features and note two abilities that they qualify for. At the GM's discretion, an extremely talented gambler could have three or even four abilities, or a bad gambler could have only one.

Each ability lists a prerequisite that the character must possess and a situational trigger that allows that ability to be used. Some of the abilities are better than others, in the sense that they're more likely to come up, and that's intentional. If your PC isn't a skillful gambler, you'll take what you can get!

If the game has a GM, abilities chosen don't have to be public, only the GM needs to know, until they're used. If the game doesn't have a GM, make your chosen abilities public from the start.

**The Three Categories of Ability:** There are a number of pre-requisites and triggers, but there are only three categories of ability: Card Draw Abilities, Ante Manipulation Abilities, and Card Denial Abilities.

*Future Options:* If your PC has a new ability that seems perfect for helping them play 3DA, figure out whether it counts for Card Draw, Ante Manipulation, or Card Denial. Then use one of the existing triggers or design your own, with the permission of your fellow players.

### **Card Draw Abilities**

When you use most of the card draw abilities listed below, you draw two extra cards. A couple of the card draw abilities have an additional bonus effect and two abilities have such useful triggers that they're balanced with a twist that makes them only half as good.

#### **Desperation (Card Draw)**

*Pre-requisite:* You make a convincing case to the GM that you feel like your character can't afford another loss.

*Trigger:* You end a gambit with single digit gold.

#### **Blessing of the Trickster (Card Draw)**

*Pre-requisite:* Your PC has the Trickery Domain.

*Trigger:* The opponent to your left wins a gambit.

#### **Draconic Ancestry (Card Draw)**

*Pre-requisite:* Your PC is a dragonborn.

*Trigger:* You play two cards in the same gambit that match your dragon ancestry. For example, if you're a dragonborn with red dragon ancestry, you can use this ability to draw a card the moment you play your second red dragon in a gambit.

*Twist:* You only get to draw 1 extra card, not two, because you're already close to making a color flight and recharging your 3DA Ability!

#### **Fast Hands (Card Draw)**

*Pre-requisite:* Your PC is proficient in the Sleight of Hand skill.

*Trigger:* You steal gold from the stakes.

*Twist:* You only get to draw 1 extra card, not two. But you do steal 1 extra gold!

#### **Gambling Background (Card Draw)**

*Pre-requisite:* You convince the GM that your PC's background qualifies them as an experienced gambler. Not necessarily a skilled gambler, but experienced!

*Trigger:* Your ante card at the start of a gambit is four or more points higher than the next-strongest ante card.

### **Inspiring Leader (Card Draw)**

*Pre-requisite:* You PC either has a Charisma score of 16+ OR is Good-aligned.

*Trigger:* You play the lowest or tied for lowest ante card.

*Twist:* After you draw your two bonus cards, each of your opponents draws an extra card!

### **Practice Counts (Card Draw)**

*Pre-requisite:* You own a *Three-Dragon Ante* deck. Yes, we mean either you the PC, or you the player!

*Trigger:* At least two opponents have their ability disks flipped to the Expended side.

### **Versatile Trickster (Card Draw)**

*Pre-requisite:* Your PC is a rogue (or other hero!) with the Arcane Trickster archetype.

*Trigger:* After you buy cards.

### **Ante Manipulation**

When you use one of the two ante manipulation abilities as players ante to start a new gambit, the opponent who played the highest untied ante card antes 2d6 extra gold!

### **Confusingly Smooth (Ante Manipulation)**

*Pre-requisite:* Your PC is proficient in the Persuasion skill.

*Trigger:* You reveal a card that's 2 Strength or weaker from your hand as players ante up.

### **Threats & Promises (Ante Manipulation)**

*Pre-requisite:* Your PC is proficient in the Intimidation skill.

*Trigger:* You reveal a card that's 11 Strength or stronger from your hand as players ante up.

### **Card Denial**

When you use one of the two card denial abilities, a player who has paid to buy new cards only fills their hand to 3 cards instead of filling their hand to 4.

### **Cutting Words (Card Denial)**

*Pre-requisite:* Your PC has the bardic College of Lore Cutting Words feature.

*Trigger:* An opponent with a weaker flight than you is buying cards.

### **Magical Discouragement (Card Denial)**

*Pre-requisite:* Your PC can cast at least one *enchantment* spell.

*Trigger:* An opponent who has won at least one gambit this game is buying cards.

## **GLOSSARY**

**3DA ability:** When your Dungeons & Dragons characters play a *Three-Dragon Ante* game, their class features, archetypes, backgrounds, and spells may grant them advantages to use during play. (See page 24.)

**ante:** The cards used at the start of each gambit to set the stakes and determine the leader for the first round. You also ante when you pay gold to the stakes at the start of the gambit.

**ante card:** A card that is placed into the ante, whether at the start of a gambit or during play as the result of a card's power.

**color:** A dragon's name includes the dragon's color. The dragon colors in *Three-Dragon Ante* are Black, Blue, Brass, Bronze, Copper, Gold, Green, Red, Silver, and White. 'Mortal' is also considered its own color.



**color flight:** A type of special flight; a flight with three or more dragons of the same color, or three Mortals.

**dragon:** A card whose type does not include the word “Mortal” is a dragon. Most dragons are either good or evil.

**dragon god:** A card whose type includes the words “Dragon god” and has a special dragon god ability. A dragon god counts as a dragon. Dragon god abilities are not powers that need to trigger—dragon god abilities always take effect. (Bahamut has both a dragon god ability and a normal power that may or may not trigger.) Cards that copy or trigger other card’s powers ignore dragon god abilities.

**flight:** The faceup cards in front of each player. At the end of each gambit, the player with the strongest flight wins the stakes.

**gambit:** A series of at least three rounds of card play to determine who wins the stakes.

**hand:** The cards you’re holding. Other players don’t see the cards in your hand. Your hand can never have more than ten cards.

**hoard:** Your gold. Your hoard remains visible throughout the game, and you must reveal how much gold you have if asked. If your hoard is empty at the end of a gambit after you have paid to the hole, the game ends.

**hole:** A stack of coins next to the deck that shows how deep a specific player owes during a gambit. At the end of the gambit, each player who has gone into the hole must take money out of their hoard and put it out of the game, to be awarded to the eventual winner. If a player can’t pay enough gold to cover the amount they’ve gone into the hole, or have no gold left afterwards, the game is over.

**leader:** The player who takes the first turn in a round ; usually the player who anted the highest untied card.

**mortal:** A card whose type includes the word “Mortal.” Mortal cards are not dragons.

**pay:** When you pay, you put gold into the stakes or give gold to another player.

**platinum piece:** Worth 10 gold, useful when you want to avoid playing with giant stacks of gold, though some players prefer the stacks!

**play:** You play a card by putting it from your hand into your flight on your turn.

**power:** A card’s ability. When the leader plays a card, its power always triggers. Any other card’s power triggers when it is played, as long as its strength is equal to or lower than the strength of the card just played that round by the player to the right.

**round:** Each player takes one turn in a round.

**stakes:** The gold in the center of the table. At the end of each gambit, the player with the strongest flight wins the stakes. Emptying the stakes ends the gambit immediately.

**steal:** When you take gold from the stakes, you steal it.

**strength:** A card's value.

**strength flight:** A type of special flight; a flight with three or more cards of the same strength.

**strongest:** A card or flight with the highest strength.

**trigger:** When a card's power triggers, you follow its instructions.

**turn:** When you take your turn, you play a card from your hand into your flight. The card's power might trigger.

**type:** The basic card types are good, evil, dragon, dragon god, and Mortal. Cards whose type is not Mortal are dragons. (Other 3DA sets contain cards that are unaligned; they're neither good nor evil, and they're also not in this set.)

**weakest:** A card or flight with the lowest strength.

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