



BATTLING IN THE BOX

How to make a Balin's Tomb gaming board from the Mines of Moria box

The Mines of Moria box contains everything you need to start playing The Lord of The Rings, from the basic rules models to paint and instructions on how to finish the scenery. All you need to do now is build your own board. Ensuring that nothing goes to waste Adam Troke explains how to make a gaming board from the empty box.

Adam: This all came about when I was writing the rules for the Mines of Moria Getting Started booklet. I wanted to keep the gaming area suitably small so that it could be played on any sized surface. Many gamers end up playing on a kitchen or coffee table due to a lack of space (or that oft dreamt of gaming room), so the games had to fit on something of a similar size. It was when I started play-testing that an idea suddenly came to me, akin to a halogen bulb appearing over my head. The size of the gaming area I was playing on was pretty close to the size of the box that the game comes in if you laid the box lid and base next to each

CUTTING SAFELY

Whenever you are cutting polystyrene or foamcore ensure that your knife blade is sharp. Cutting with a blunt blade will force you to put more pressure on the knife, which may break it. You will also need to use a metal ruler in order to cut straight. As a final point, make sure that you are cutting on a protected surface.

other. All I'd need to do was add some detail to the box and I would have myself a playing area where I could easily re-create the scenarios from the Getting Started booklet. So, armed with polystyrene, paintbrushes, and enough sand to make a small desert, I set about building my new board.

TOOLS

- Craft knife
- Metal ruler
- A large, flat-headed brush
- Sticky tape

MATERIALS

- The Mines of Moria box, or a box approx 42cm x 30cm
- The Mines of Moria scenery
- Polystyrene 25mm thick
- Foamcore (5mm thick)
- Sand, gravel & small stones
- PVA (or white) glue
- Textured paint

CITADEL COLOUR PAINTS

- Chaos Black spray paint
- Codex Grey
- Fortress Grey
- Rotting Flesh
- Scorched Brown

STAGE 1: PREPARING THE BOX

Any box that is the same size (or roughly the same size) as the one the boxed game comes in will do, so you don't necessarily have to cut your Mines of Moria box up if you don't want to. For the purposes of this workshop we'll construct one side of the tomb. To build the opposite side simply reverse these instructions to create a mirror-image. To start, cut away a long edge on each box so that it creates one large box when you place them side-by-side. You can either fix them together with sticky tape, or leave them apart so that they can be stored separately.



STAGE 2: PREPARING THE LEDGES

Using a metal ruler and craft knife, cut 6cm wide lengths of polystyrene that fit around the inside edges of both boxes as illustrated – don't glue them into place yet. Next, you'll need to create a space for the stairs and doorway. This is really easy; simply cut two of the ledges shorter, so that the stairs and doorway will fit into the gap.



STORE ACTIVITY

Hobby Center staff across the U.S. are excited about the Mines of Moria. Many of them will be building terrain like that described in this article. Give your local Hobby Center a call, or drop by on Thursday nights (The Lord of The Rings night) for more tips on building Balin's Tomb.

STAGE 3: MAKING THE STAIRCASE

Using the 5mm foamcore, cut a rectangle 30mm wide. The depth should match the polystyrene ledges you have built, so that the stairs are flush with the edge. Next, create the rest of the steps by cutting three progressively smaller pieces of foamcard as illustrated. Once you're happy with the fit of the steps and the ledges, use PVA to glue them into place. Be sure to allow it time to dry before you move onto the next stage.



STAGE 4: ADDING THE RUBBLE

Now the whole box is really starting to take shape, although you'll find that there are a number of large cracks between the polystyrene. These can be easily disguised by adding rubble. Rubble tends to gather in corners, and places where people are less likely to walk, so make sure that you add some around the edges of the box. Then paint the whole board with textured paint, including the gravel and the polystyrene ledges – make sure you also wash your brush off afterwards to prevent the textured paint from ruining it.

STAGE 5: PAINT THE BOARD



1 Once the textured paint has dried, undercoat the inside of the box with Chaos Black spray paint and leave it to dry.



2 Drybrush the whole of the box (inside only) with Codex Grey.



3 Drybrush Fortress Grey in just the same way as the Codex Grey was done.



4 Lightly drybrush Rotting Flesh over the Fortress Grey. To finish off, drybrush some Scorched Brown into the corners and edges of the box. The brown helps to break up the grey, giving it a richer look overall.

STAGE 6: ADD YOUR SCENERY

Now, by adding the scenery contained in the Mines of Moria boxed set, you have a completed playing area, the ideal size for you to recreate the Battle in Balin's Tomb.



JUMPING OBSTACLES

Once you have built the Chamber of Mazarbul, you're all set to use it to fight the Battle in Balin's Tomb and the rest of the scenarios. With your new scenery, featuring a raised platform around the side, it's a perfect opportunity to look at some of the rules from the rules manual that aren't covered in the Getting Started booklet. The full rules for Jumping and Climbing, as well as how to interact with other scenery, are found on pages 17-21 of the The Lord of The Rings rules manual.

Jump. Whilst models are free to move on relatively flat surfaces without difficulty, there are pieces of scenery on the gaming area that must be jumped if a model wishes to move across them. If an obstacle is less than half the height of a model it can be crossed without any need to make a Jump test. This allows for models to simply step over minor inconveniences without slowing down the game. Often you will find that there are obstacles that are bigger than this, but which must be jumped.

A model must jump any obstacle that is more than half of its height, if it wishes to move across it. Bear in mind that different models are of different sizes, so some large models might be free to walk normally across something that a smaller model must climb, or jump. In each case look at the model, and compare it to the obstacle in question to see if a Jump test is needed.

A model can attempt a Jump test at any point in its movement. This means that a Jump could be the first thing a model does in its movement, or the last (or at any point in between). Bearing in mind our warriors clad in armor, bearing cumbersome weapons, no model may attempt to jump something that is more than twice its height.

When a model must make a Jump test, roll a dice on the following table:

1 – Stumbles & fails. The model doesn't cross and cannot move further this turn.

2-5 – Success. The model successfully clambers over the obstacle and reaches the other side. The model is placed on the other side of the obstacle with its base touching it and cannot move further this turn.

6 – Effortlessly bounds across. The model leaps over the obstacle and can complete its move if it has any remaining.

If the obstacle is taller than the model, then deduct 1 from the roll.

Jumping down. A model can jump down the platform without the need to take a test, providing that the distance jumped is no more than twice the height of the model. That means in this scenario, all the models are free to jump down and continue their move as normal.



Balin's Tomb is more than half as tall as Frodo so, if Frodo wishes to move across it he will need to take a Jump test.



Here Boromir must take a Jump test to get onto the platform.



Merry has successfully clambered over the Tomb, and is placed in base contact with the other side.



The stairs – models can move up and down the staircase without having to make Jump tests.



The Cave Troll is tall enough that he doesn't need to make a Jump test to move across Balin's Tomb – this means that he can move normally across it.

Full rules for Jumping and Climbing can be found on pages 19 and 20 of the The Lord of The Rings rules manual.

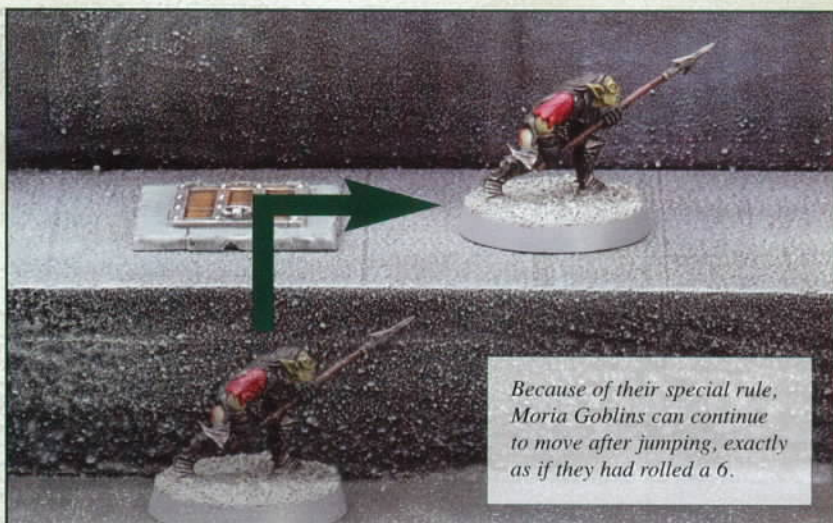
Cave Dwellers. Moria Goblins are extremely agile and very good at jumping and climbing. To represent this, no dice roll is required when a Moria Goblin is attempting to jump a gap or obstacle. The jump is made automatically, just as if a 6 had been rolled on the Jump chart.

The Pillars. It's probably best not to allow models to jump and climb on the pillars, since we imagine them stretching all the way to the ceilings – it would seem very odd to have models standing on top of them.

Defending an obstacle. The rules manual contains additional rules for warriors fighting across barriers, and defending raised positions. It's often a great advantage to have your model occupying the high ground, or to have a wall or barricade between your warriors and your enemy.

The full rules for this can be found on page 30-33 of the rules manual, however, for now it's enough to know that models can fight another, even if one is on higher ground than the other. The important thing to bear in mind with this is that the control zone extends 2cm around the model, in the same way as before.

Once you have played a few games using the Jumping rules, you might like to try looking at the rules for defending obstacles and add those to your games too.



Because of their special rule, Moria Goblins can continue to move after jumping, exactly as if they had rolled a 6.



Gimli and this Moria Goblin can still fight against each other, even though they are not in base contact – See page 30 of the rules manual for the full details of this.

