

THE WICKED WIZARD OF OZ

BY JONATHAN GREEN



WELCOME TO OZ

"Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore."

Introduction

The book you hold in your hands is a gateway to another world, the Marvellous Land of Oz. Once inside its pages and you will find yourself carried away by the cyclone once again to embark upon a thrilling new adventure.

For this is no ordinary book. Rather than reading it from cover to cover, you will discover that at the end of each narrative section you will be presented with a series of choices which allow you to control the course of the story.

In *The Wicked Wizard of Oz* you step into Dorothy's silver shoes and become the hero of the story, taking on the role of either Dorothy Gale herself, the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, or the Lion. You decide which path to take, which risks to brave, and even which of the strange inhabitants of Oz, you will meet along the way, to engage in battle.

Success is by no means certain and you may well fail to complete the adventure at your first attempt. However, with experience, skill, and maybe even a little luck, each new attempt should bring you closer to your ultimate goal.

In addition to the book itself, you will need two six-sided dice, or a conventional pack of 52 playing cards, a pencil, an eraser, and a copy of *The Wicked Wizard of Oz* Adventure Sheet.

"Everything in life is unusual until you get accustomed to it."

Playing the Game

There are three ways to play through *The Wicked Wizard of Oz*. The first is to use two conventional six-sided dice. The second is to use a conventional pack of 52 playing cards.

The third is to ignore the rules altogether and just read the book, making choices as appropriate, but ignoring any combat or attribute tests, always assuming you win every battle and pass every skill test. (Even if you play the adventure this way, there is still no guarantee that you will complete it at your first attempt.)

If you are opting to play through *The Wicked Wizard of Oz* using the game rules, you first need to determine your strengths and weaknesses.

Your Attributes

You have three attributes you will need to keep track of during the course of the adventure, using the Adventure Sheet. Some of these will change frequently, others less so, but it is important that you keep an accurate record of the current level for all of them.

- **Agility** – This is a measure of how athletic and agile you are. If you need to leap across a chasm or dodge a deadly projectile, this is the attribute that will be employed.
- **Combat** – This is a measure of how skilful you are at fighting, whether it be in hand-to-hand combat, or wielding a keen-edged blade in battle.
- **Endurance** – This is a measure of how physically tough you are and how much strength you have left. This attribute will vary more than any other during the course of your adventure.

Unlike some adventure gamebooks, in *The Wicked Wizard of Oz* your strengths and weaknesses are not determined randomly. Instead, they depend upon which role you choose to take on to play through the story.

Special Abilities

In addition to your three basic attributes, you also have certain special abilities that you can employ at critical moments during your journey through Oz. These vary depending on which character you decide to play in the book but they are described here together for the sake of convenience.

- ***Beast Master*** – You are able to command all manner of beasts and wild animals to do your bidding.
- ***Brains*** – You are particularly clever and knowledgeable, able to think your way out of tricky situations and solve otherwise mind-bending puzzles.
- ***Crow Master*** – You are able to force crows and other carrion birds to obey your will.
- ***Fearsome*** – You have a terrifying presence about you. You are either the stuff of children’s nightmares or when you show your anger others quail in fear before you.
- ***Flight*** – You are able to defy gravity and fly as free as a bird.
- ***Lightning Bolts*** – You are able to blast bolts of sizzling electrical energy from your fingertips. This energy discharge can either be used to incapacitate an enemy or power a piece of machinery.
- ***Over the Rainbow*** – You are not native to the Land of Oz, and so if you find yourself in a tight spot you can change the nature of the world around you, although this may result in you actually making things worse for yourself rather than better.
- ***Strength*** – You are incredibly strong, able to lift enormous weights and rip doors from their hinges. In battle, your attacks are also more powerful.
- ***Summon Winds*** – You are able to raise mighty winds as if from nowhere, from howling gales to cyclonic hurricanes, given enough time and the right weather conditions.
- ***The Pen is Mightier*** – You are not native to the Land of Oz, and, on occasion, to avoid coming to blows with an enemy, you may alter the narrative of the encounter, enabling yourself to get away unscathed.

When you are told to select a certain special ability, simply put a tick next to it (or circle the relevant number) on the Special Abilities table on your Adventure Sheet.

These very special abilities can only be used three times each during the course of the adventure. While some may give you a permit advantage – such as *Strength* making you more powerful in combat – each time you specifically call upon one of them, you must cross off a box on your Adventure Sheet next to the appropriate special ability.

Testing Your Attributes

At various times during the adventure, you will be asked to test one or other of your attributes.

If it is your *Agility* or *Combat* that is being tested, simply roll two dice. If the total rolled is equal to or less than the particular attribute being tested, you have passed the test; if the total rolled is greater than the attribute in question, then you have failed the test.

If it is your *Endurance* score that is being tested, roll four dice in total. If the combined score of all four dice is equal to or less than your *Endurance* score, then you have passed the test, but if it is greater, then what is being asked of you is beyond what you are capable of and you have failed the test.

Restoring Your Attributes

There are various ways that you can restore lost attribute points, or be granted bonuses that take your attributes beyond their starting scores, and these will be described in the text.

However, an easy way to restore lost *Endurance* points is to find sustenance. Sometimes you may find enough sustenance that you can take some with you to consume later on in the adventure.

Make sure that if you do find any supplies of this nature that you record them on your Adventure Sheet, along with any information about exactly how many attribute points they will restore when consumed.

Combat

You will repeatedly be called upon to defend yourself against the bizarre and malevolent denizens of Oz. Sometimes you may even choose to attack these horrors yourself. After all, as they say, the best form of defence is attack.

When this happens, start by filling in your opponent's *Combat* and *Endurance* scores in the first available Oz Encounter Box on your Adventure Sheet.

Whenever you engage in combat, you will be told in the text whether you or your enemy has the initiative; in other words, who has the advantage and gets to attack first.

1. Roll two dice and add your *Combat* score. The resulting total is your *Combat Rating*.
2. Roll two dice and add your opponent's *Combat* Score. The resulting total is your opponent's *Combat Rating*.
3. For each Combat Round, add a temporary 1 point bonus to the *Combat Rating* of whichever of the combatants has the initiative for the duration of that round.
4. If your *Combat Rating* is higher than your opponent's you have wounded them; deduct 2 points from your opponent's *Endurance* score, and move on to step 7.
5. If your opponent's *Combat Rating* is higher, then you have been wounded; deduct 2 points from your *Endurance* score, and move on to step 8.
6. If your *Combat Rating* and your opponent's *Combat Rating* are the same, roll one die. If the number rolled is odd, you and your opponent deflect each other's attacks; go to step 10. If the number rolled is even, go to step 9.
7. If your opponent's *Endurance* score has been reduced to zero or below, you have won; the battle is over and you can continue on your way through Oz. If your opponent is not yet dead, go to step 10.
8. If your *Endurance* score has been reduced to zero or below, your opponent has won the battle. If you want to continue your adventure you will have to start again from the beginning, maybe changing the character you want to play as. However, if you are still alive, go to step 10.
9. You and your opponent have both managed to injure each other; deduct 1 point from your *Endurance* score and your opponent's *Endurance* score. If your *Endurance* score has been reduced to zero or below, your adventure is over; if you want to play again you will have to start again from the beginning. If you are still alive but your enemy's *Endurance* has been reduced to zero or below, you have won; the battle is over and you can continue on your way through Oz. If neither you nor your opponent are dead, go to step 10.
10. If you won the Combat Round, you will have the initiative in the next Combat Round. If your opponent won the Combat Round, they will have the initiative. If neither of you won the Combat Round, neither of you will gain the initiative bonus

for the next Combat Round. Go back to step 1 and work through the sequence again until either your opponent is dead, or you are defeated.

Occasionally you may find yourself having to fight more than one opponent at once. Such battles are conducted in the same way as above, using the ten step process, except that you will have to work out the *Combat Ratings* of all those involved. As long as you have a higher rating than an opponent you will injure them, no matter how many opponents you are taking on at the same time. However, equally, any opponent with a *Combat Rating* higher than yours will be able to injure you too.

An Alternative to Dice

Rather than rolling dice, you may prefer to determine random numbers during the game using a pack of playing cards.

To do this, when you are called upon to roll dice, simply shuffle a standard 52-card deck (having removed the jokers) and draw a single card. (If you are asked to roll four dice, draw two cards.) Number cards are worth the number shown on the card. Jacks, Queens and Kings are all worth 11, and if you draw an Ace, it counts as being worth 12 (for example, if you are engaged in Combat), and is an automatic pass if you are testing an attribute – any attribute.

After drawing from the deck you can either return any cards you have drawn or, using the Pontoon method, leave those drawn cards out of the deck. Both styles of play will influence how lucky, or unlucky, you may be during the game, when it comes to determining random numbers.

Equipment

You start your adventure with nothing. However, during the course of your adventure you will no doubt find all manner of curious items that you may wish to pick up and take with you, just in case they prove to be of use later on.

Anything that you collect should be recorded on your Adventure Sheet, including any clues or passwords, as well as weapons, provisions, and other miscellaneous objects.

"Never give up. No one knows what's going to happen next."

Hints on Play

There is more than one path that you can follow through Oz to reach your ultimate goal, but it may take you several attempts to actually complete the adventure. Make notes and draw a map as you explore. This map will doubtless prove invaluable during future attempts at completing the quest, and will allow you to progress more speedily in order to reach unexplored regions of the Land of Oz.

Keep a careful eye on all of your attributes throughout the game. Beware of traps and setting off on wild goose chases. However, it would be wise to collect useful items along the way that may aid you further on in your quest.

"Everything has to come to an end, sometime."

Ending the Game

There are several ways that your adventure can end. If your *Endurance* score ever drops to zero or below, your trials in Oz have exhausted and overcome you. If this happens, stop reading at once.

There may also be occasions where you are prevented from progressing any further through the adventure thanks to the choices you have made, or if you meet a sudden and untimely end. In all of these cases, if you want to have another crack at completing the adventure you will have to start again with a new Adventure Sheet and begin the story afresh from the beginning.

There is of course one other reason for your adventure coming to an end, and that is if you successfully complete your quest, the very same quest that awaits you now...

THE WICKED WIZARD OF OZ

DOROTHY'S ADVENTURE SHEET

AGILITY = 10

THE PEN IS MIGHTIER

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COMBAT = 10

OVER THE RAINBOW

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ENDURANCE = 20

EQUIPMENT

OZ ENCOUNTER BOXES

COMBAT =

ENDURANCE =

COMBAT =

ENDURANCE =

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THE WICKED WIZARD OF OZ

Dorothy Gale

1

There is a sensation of being whirled about, as a furious howling gale roars in your ears, and then something – that feels a lot like a flying lampstand – hits you on the head, knocking you senseless...

Blinking your eyes open, struggling to focus, you take in the familiar interior of the farmhouse, as beds, and chairs, and pots and pans, tumble through the air around you. You too are spinning through the air, as if weightless.

Grabbing hold of a roof rafter you blink the fuzziness from your vision and search the room for your family, but Uncle Henry and Aunt Em are nowhere to be seen. Hearing a sharp yapping you follow the sound to the kitchen dresser where you are surprised, and gladdened, to see Toto's head sticking out from an open drawer.

And then suddenly the spinning sensation ceases and you feel yourself dropping, as if from a very great height. Clinging onto the rafter for dear life, you screw your eyes tight shut against the inevitable.

The farmhouse hits the ground with the force of a meteorite, walls coming apart, floorboards erupting upwards in jagged splinters, and the shingles on the roof taking flight like a flock of birds at the force of the impact. At the same time you are jolted free of your precarious position and come crashing to the floor. You hit your head against an upended chair and then everything is darkness once again...

When you eventually come to, an eerie stillness hangs over the wreckage of the farmhouse. You are surrounded by the debris of broken furniture, broken crockery and roof shingles, and everything is covered in a thick layer of ash discharged from the fireplace. Through holes in the roof you can see bird-like shapes circling overhead.

Slowly you sit up, coughing as you send a cloud of ash cascading down about you. As your coughing fit passes, you anxiously scan the wreckage as you begin to wonder what can have happened to Toto.

‘Toto?’ you call. ‘Toto!’

Your cries are met by silence. Perhaps he has escaped the crash unscathed, or as good as, and has simply gone outside. You are facing the front door, or at least where the front door should be; there is nothing there now but a pair of twisted hinges.

Suddenly a shadow passes overhead and you involuntarily flinch and a feeling of trepidation creeps down your spine.

If you want to leave the ruin of the farmhouse in search of Toto, turn to **9**. If you would rather search the interior of the farmhouse for your pet dog, turn **5**.

2

It does not take long for the Flying Monkeys to spot you. Pointing and gibbering, three mutated apes soar out of the sky on their broad, grey feathered wings.

If you want to prepare to meet their attack, turn to **7**. If you would rather use *The Pen is Mightier* ability, turn to **10**.

3

You are startled by a hooting and a hollering, as one of the monkeys drops out of the sky, and lands on the shattered veranda outside the farmhouse. It lumbers in through the splintered doorway, fixing you with its cruel, beady eyes.

It appears to be more chimp-like than monkey, with sinuously powerful arms and an ungainly bipedal gait. Baring its blunt yellow fangs, the Flying Monkey advances towards you. Steeling yourself, your pulse racing, you decide how best to defend yourself.

If you want to use *The Pen is Mightier* ability, turn to **8**. Otherwise, you will have to fight the winged simian – turn to **6**.

Fearing that the entire troop of monkeys will descend to search the farmhouse sooner or later, you scan the wreckage, looking for a suitable place to hide.

The entrance to the storm cellar is almost clear of debris. Grasping the handle and heaving it open, you find, not the storm cellar itself but a hollow in the ground beneath nonetheless. Pulling the trapdoor shut behind you, you curl yourself up into a ball in the slight depression.

Almost immediately you feel the thud of feet landing on the veranda followed by scampering footsteps and high-pitched shrieks and chattering as the monkeys do precisely as you had feared they would. You can only lie there, waiting, your heart thumping in your chest, praying that they don't think to open the trapdoor.

Fortunately the apes are not very thorough in their search, and soon you hear their footsteps and their harsh voices retreating, until soon you hear no more. Still, several long minutes pass before you finally dare to leave your hiding place and find that the farmhouse really is deserted once again.

Turn to **12**.

'Toto! Toto!' you continue to call. 'Where are you? Are you alright?' But your calls are met by nothing but a discomfoting silence.

You pick your way past a shattered picture frame, the fractured glass in making it look like the photograph of you holding Toto in your arms is covered by a glittering, fractal spider's web, and you begin to fear that Toto did not survive the farmhouse's crash landing. But you will not give up hope until you find your pet dog – whether dead or alive.

Heaving aside an overturned crate full of straw, you are surprised to find a basket of eggs, and some of the shells still intact. (If you want to take the Eggs with you, write them down on your Adventure Sheet.)

Another shadow passes over you and your attention is drawn back to the silhouettes circling above the farmhouse crash-site. Peering more closely at the winged shapes, your blood runs cold as you realise they are not birds at all. With four limbs in addition to their broad feathery wings, and prehensile tails, it is clear that they are winged simians.

Now turn to **3**.

6

Shrieking horribly, the mutated ape attacks. However, because you knew the monkey was coming, you have the initiative in this battle.

FLYING MONKEY	COMBAT 6	ENDURANCE 6
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If you manage to defeat the ape, turn to **4**.

7

Although you know they are coming, because the Flying Monkeys are airborne, and you are stuck on the ground, the simians have the initiative in this battle.

	COMBAT	ENDURANCE
First FLYING MONKEY	7	6
Second FLYING MONKEY	6	6
Third FLYING MONKEY	7	7

If you manage to defeat all of the apes, turn to **12**.

8

Terrified, you take a step back from the creature. As you do so, you step on the end of a dislodged floorboard, which pivots on some piece of debris underneath, sending the other end of the plank hurtling upwards, smacking the mutant monkey full in the face.

A quizzical, startled look passes over the creature's simian features and then its eyes close as it poleaxes to the floor, sending up a cloud of ash around it. You have knocked the creature unconscious!

Remember to cross off one of *The Pen is Mightier* boxes on your Adventure Sheet and then turn to **4**.

9

Rubbing the bump on the back of your head, you pick your way through the wreckage that was once your Kansas prairie home, and emerge into the sunlit world beyond the sundered entrance of the farmhouse. The blazing sunlight is hot on your skin.

'Toto!' you call, using a hand to shield your eyes from the bright glare that is coming off the road of yellow brick in front of you.

Another shadow passes above you and your attention is drawn back to the circling shapes overhead. Wincing against the glare of the cloudless sky, trying not to look directly into the sun, you see the winged silhouettes again. But as you peer closer your blood runs cold in your veins as you realise they are not birds at all. With four limbs in addition to their broad feathery wings, and prehensile tails, it is clear that they are winged simians.

And then the memories of your previous visit to the marvellous Land of Oz – of your friends, of the Wizard, and the Wicked Witch of the West – come flooding back...

If you want to take cover from the Flying Monkeys inside the farmhouse, turn to **11**. If you would rather stand your ground, turn to **2**.

10

As the monkeys swoop down and begin their attack run, the last lingering vestiges of the cyclone that carried you and the farmhouse to this place catch the apes in their whirling currents and send them spinning away over the rugged terrain, and far away from you.

Remember to cross off one of *The Pen is Mightier* boxes on your Adventure Sheet and then turn to **12**.

11

Turning tail, you dash back inside; but were you fast enough not to be spotted by the Flying Monkeys riding the thermals overhead?

Take an Agility test. If you pass the test, turn to **4**. If you fail the test, turn to **3**.

12

The excited chattering of the monkeys carrying to you on the breeze, you look up to see the rest of the troop departing, with powerful beats of their wings, heading west.

At first you are relieved to see them go, but then you hear a distant, panicked barking, and you realise that the Flying Monkeys have captured Toto and taken him with them.

"Toto!" you call. "Toto!" But it's no good; the monkeys are gone, and your precious pet along with them.

If you are going to get him back you have no choice but to set off after the monkeys, and fast.

To find out what happens next, back *The Wicked Wizard of Oz* on Kickstarter.

