

Keepers Dissension Rules

You are the Keeper. Build your army. Wield your power. Destroy your opponent!

An intense two-player board battle where you must keep your eye on the economy of Strange Matter, strategically maneuver your Warriors, and adapt as you use and respond to wild abilities. You must have your wits about you with all this and more to outplay the enemy Keeper!

Strategy, odd situations, and advanced table-side reminders.

Battle Tactics

Use this tab for positioning ideas, timing reminders, economy choices, and practical advice for strange or high-pressure situations.

Game Overview

Keepers Dissension is a tactical battlefield game of positioning, resource pressure, hidden threats, and exact timing.

Objective

Destroy the enemy LifeForce while keeping your own LifeForce alive.

Your army

You control a Keeper , several Minions , and a Guardian .

Your turn

On your turn, spend up to 3 actions to move, attack, use abilities, take or spend Strange Matter, purchase items, or hand off Loot.

Responses

If your Warriors survive an Attack , they receive a free action during your opponent's turn!

The battlefield is a 7x7 Board. Walls, Bombs, Markers, Portals, Void, Loot, Strange Matter, and Ability Cards can change what spaces are legal, what can be attacked, and whether Responses happen.

Most important timing rule: when multiple events happen at the same time, resolve Damage , then Deliver , then Responses .

Game Setup

The app places the fixed starting pieces first. Players then place their Keepers and Minions.

LifeForce and Guardian Placement

The app places each player's LifeForce in the center space of that player's LifeForce row. It also places each player's Guardian in the center space of that player's Guardian row.

Keeper Placement

After the LifeForces and Guardians are placed, players place their Keepers. The first player chooses any legal unoccupied space adjacent to their LifeForce on their LifeForce row. The second player then does the same on their own LifeForce row.

Minion Placement

After both Keepers are placed, players place Minions using a mirrored left-to-right pattern across the LifeForce rows. When one player places a Minion, the opposing player mirrors it directly across, then continues by placing their next Minion directly to the right. This continues until all Minions are placed or all legal Minion spaces are filled.

Ultimate Ability and Wall Effect Selection

After Minions are placed, the first player chooses their Keeper Ultimate Ability and Wall Effect. Then the second player chooses theirs. Each chosen Ultimate can be used once that game. The chosen Wall Effects determine how that player's Walls behave for the match.

Ability Card Setup

Ability Card setup depends on the match settings. In Calculated setup, players use a drafted or managed set of cards. In Chaotic setup, each player receives 7 random private cards and the match also uses the shared hand. The selected mode or lobby settings determine which setup is used.

Starting the Match

Once setup is complete, the match begins. The game decides who goes first according to the selected mode or settings.

Warriors

Warriors are the playable pieces you command: your Keeper, your Minions, and your Guardian.

How many spaces a Warrior can move with one movement action.

How far a Warrior can attack across the board.

How much Health the Warrior removes when it attacks.

How much damage the Warrior can take before being destroyed.

What counts as a Warrior?

Your Keeper, Minions, and Guardian are Warriors. Warriors can move, attack, use abilities, receive damage, carry Loot, and be destroyed.

Shared Warrior Rules

- Warriors normally move forward, backward, or sideways.
- Warriors do not move diagonally unless an ability allows it.
- Warriors normally move into unoccupied spaces only.
- An allied Warrior can switch places with another adjacent allied Warrior for 2 actions.
- If an effect pushes or moves a Warrior into a space it cannot legally occupy, that Warrior receives 1 Damage.

Keeper

Your Keeper leads the army and is tied to your LifeForce. The next section covers Keeper destruction, respawn, Ultimate Abilities, and Keeper Responses.

Minions

Minions are your main battlefield pieces. Each type has its own role and ability pair.

Controls positioning with Stun and protects allies with Deliver .

Uses Scale and Leapfrog to cross Walls and obstacles.

Creates hidden danger with Minefield and punishes nearby pieces with Explode .

Threatens from farther away with Range and hides with Stealth .

Hits harder with Strength and can attack nearby spaces with Ground Pound .

Holds ground with Armor and pushes enemies with Ram .

Reveals hidden threats with Vision and moves diagonally with Strafe .

Guardian

The Guardian protects the LifeForce. While Chained, it stays near the LifeForce. Once Unchained, it becomes faster and may move freely using normal movement rules.

Base Minion reminder: unless a card or ability changes it, a Minion has 1 Speed, 1 Range, 1 Strength, and 1 Health. When destroyed, a Minion drops 2 Strange Matter and goes to the Graveyard.

Keeper

Your Keeper represents you on the battlefield and is tied directly to your LifeForce.

Base movement per movement action.

Base attack reach.

Base attack damage.

Damage the Keeper can take before being destroyed.

When Your Keeper Is Destroyed

- Drop 5 Strange Matter on the Keeper's space.
- Also drop all Strange Matter the player had stored.
- The player's LifeForce loses 5 Health.
- If the LifeForce survives, the Keeper respawns using Keeper respawn priority.

Keeper Respawn Priority

Respawn begins with legal unoccupied spaces adjacent to the LifeForce on the LifeForce row. If those are unavailable, placement checks the next nearest legal spaces around the LifeForce according to the respawn rules.

If the Keeper cannot legally respawn, its LifeForce is reduced to 0 and that player loses.

Keeper Ultimate Ability

Each player chooses one Keeper Ultimate Ability during setup. It costs 1 action to use and may be used once per game.

Return one dead Minion from the Graveyard to a legal space adjacent to its LifeForce. It becomes available on your next turn.

Heal your Keeper by 2 Health.

Enemy Warriors cannot take movement actions until the beginning of your next turn.

Take control of an enemy Warrior within 1 space of your Keeper until the end of the current turn.

Keeper Responses

When a Keeper receives a Response, it is a player-level Response. That means the Response may be used for any one legal player action, including moving, attacking, using an ability, buying, collecting Strange Matter, or using an allied Warrior.

The Keeper receives Responses from the same valid triggers as other Warriors: surviving an enemy Attack, falling because an enemy destroyed the Wall beneath it, or being revealed from Stealth because an enemy tried to occupy its space.

What Does Not Grant a Keeper Response

Damage and other non-Attack effects do not grant Keeper Responses. Bombs, Void, Wall effects, collision damage, forced-movement damage, direct Health loss, Destroy effects, Shockwave, Minefield, Explode, and Penalty do not grant Responses by themselves.

Actions

Each player may take up to 3 actions on their turn.

Move a Warrior through legal spaces according to Speed and movement rules.

Make a normal Warrior Attack or use an Ability that explicitly says Attack.

Use Minion Abilities, Keeper Ultimate Abilities, Active Keeper Ability Cards, or available CC cards when legal.

Take Strange Matter from the Economy, purchase items, or hand off Loot.

Movement

When moving, all Warriors, including Minions, Keepers, and Guardians, may normally move 1 space forward, backward, or sideways for each action spent. Speed determines how many spaces a Warrior may move per action.

Handing Off Loot

A Warrior carrying Loot may spend 1 action to hand off that Loot in a direction that it can move. The receiving Warrior must be friendly and must also be able to move in the same direction. The Loot changes carriers, but neither Warrior changes spaces.

Forced Movement and Damage

If an outside force attempts to move a Warrior into a space it cannot legally occupy, that Warrior receives 1 Damage . Damage is not an Attack and does not grant a Response.

Walls and Scale

The Scale Ability allows a Warrior to move onto or off of a Wall. Moving onto a Wall does not require extra Speed. Warriors without Scale cannot move onto Walls. A Warrior standing on a Wall and the Wall itself are both treated as occupying that location for movement, targeting, and board-state rules.

Movement

Movement depends on Speed, legal spaces, occupied spaces, and whether an Ability changes the normal movement rules.

Movement Overview

All Warriors may normally move 1 space forward, backward, or sideways per action. A Warrior's Speed determines how many spaces it may move per action. Warriors may not move diagonally unless an Ability or effect allows it.

Occupied Spaces

Warriors normally move only into unoccupied spaces and do not pass through occupied spaces. Some occupied spaces are special because they are traversable, such as Portals and Void , and are handled by their own rules.

Legal Movement

Warriors move only through or onto spaces they are legally allowed to occupy. Hidden Markers are treated as unoccupied until revealed, so a Warrior may attempt to move onto them, but the reveal can make the movement fail.

Switching Places

A Warrior may switch places with an adjacent allied Warrior for 2 actions . The switch must be made in a direction the Warrior is allowed to move.

Walls and Scale

The Scale Ability allows a Warrior to move onto or off of a Wall. Moving onto a Wall does not require extra Speed. Warriors without Scale cannot move onto Walls. A Warrior with Scale may stand on top of a Wall, and both the Wall and the Warrior are treated as occupying that location.

Failed or Restricted Movement

If a Warrior is attempted to be moved but cannot legally move because of a restriction, blocking effect, or lack of legal space, that Warrior remains in place. It still receives any Damage specified by the effect that attempted to move it. Movement restrictions prevent voluntary movement, but they do not prevent forced movement unless the effect explicitly says so.

Attacks and Responses

Attacks and Responses are exact rules. Damage alone does not create a Response.

Normal Warrior Attacks

Players may attack a Warrior, LifeForce, or Wall with either a normal Warrior Attack or an Ability Attack. Normal Warrior Attacks use the Warrior's current Damage and are either Melee or Ranged. A Melee Attack targets an adjacent legal target. A Ranged Attack targets a Warrior or LifeForce beyond melee range. Walls cannot be attacked with Ranged Attacks.

Attacking From, Onto, or Across Walls

A Warrior standing on a Wall may attack normally. Attacking a Warrior on a Wall from the ground requires +1 Range. Attacking across a Wall also requires +1 Range. If a Warrior is standing on the intervening Wall, count both the Wall and that Warrior for Range.

- Same-level adjacent targets require 1 Range .
- A target on a Wall, or a target behind one empty Wall, requires 2 Range .
- A target behind a Wall with a Warrior standing on it requires 3 Range .

Ability Attacks

An Ability is an Attack only if it says Attack or tells the player to make an Attack. Effects that only deal damage, cause Health loss, destroy, push, move, reveal, or otherwise affect a target are not Attacks by themselves. Ground Pound is an Attack. Shockwave is not.

Response Triggers

A Warrior receives a Response only during the opposing player's turn and only if it survives one of these Response triggers:

What Does Not Grant a Response

Self-inflicted attacks, allied attacks, Damage, Void, Wall effects, collision damage, forced movement damage, direct Health loss, Destroy effects, Shockwave, Explode, Penalty, inflicted Damage, and other non-Attack effects do not grant Responses.

Important: A Response is still granted if an enemy Attack deals no damage, is prevented, reduced to 0, blocked, or replaced. If Deliver triggers from an enemy Attack, Deliver acts as that Warrior's Response and no extra Response is granted.

Keeper Responses

A non-Keeper Warrior may use a Response only to move, attack, or use one of its own abilities. A Keeper Response is a player-level Response and may be used for any one legal player action.

Destruction and Endgame

When a Warrior, LifeForce, or Wall reaches 0 Health, it is destroyed. The attacker does not move into the destroyed space unless a rule moves or places it there. A destroyed Minion drops 2 Strange Matter and goes to the Graveyard. A destroyed Guardian drops 10 Strange Matter. A destroyed Keeper drops 5 Strange Matter plus stored Strange Matter, its LifeForce loses 5 Health, and the Keeper respawns if the LifeForce survives.

Event Priority

When multiple events happen at the same time, resolve them in a fixed order so the game state stays clear.

Calculate and apply all simultaneous Damage first.

After Damage is resolved, handle Delivered Warriors.

After Deliver, resolve any Responses created by valid Response triggers.

If multiple owned Responses are created, their owner chooses the order.

Damage

Damage is resolved first. Calculate the total Damage that would be dealt to each affected Warrior, LifeForce, Wall, Marker, Bomb, or other damageable object. If a single effect damages multiple targets at the same time, all of that Damage is applied as one simultaneous Damage event.

Deliver

After all Damage is resolved, handle Delivered Warriors. Deliver does not create a Response by itself. If Deliver is triggered by an enemy Attack, Deliver acts as that Warrior's Response and no extra Response is granted.

Responses

After Deliver, resolve any Responses created by valid Response triggers. Responses happen only during the opposing player's turn and only from the three Response triggers.

Strange Matter

Strange Matter is the main resource used to buy cards, Walls, Minions, and Guardian unchaining.

You can gain Strange Matter by spending actions to collect it from the Economy, by picking up Loot dropped on the battlefield, or through certain abilities and card effects.

Spending Strange Matter

Spent Strange Matter returns to the Economy. A Wall costs 5 Strange Matter. A Keeper Ability Card costs 5. A Minion costs 10. Unchaining a Guardian costs 20.

Strange Matter as Loot

When a Warrior is destroyed, it drops Strange Matter on the battlefield. A Minion drops 2. A Keeper drops 5 plus all of that player's stored Strange Matter. A Guardian drops 10.

Loot

Loot is the Strange Matter left behind when a Warrior dies.

When a Keeper moves over Loot, that Strange Matter is immediately added to the player's stored Strange Matter and can be spent right away.

Carrying Loot

If another friendly Warrior moves over Loot, that Warrior carries it instead of storing it. A Warrior carrying Loot may use an action to pass it to an adjacent friendly Warrior. If the receiving Warrior is your Keeper, the Loot is added to stored Strange Matter immediately.

Loot Values

A Minion leaves behind 2 Strange Matter. A Guardian leaves behind 10. A Keeper leaves behind 5 plus all stored Strange Matter.

Abilities

Abilities are special actions or rule changes that affect Warriors, Keeper Ability Cards, or the battlefield itself.

Ability Categories

Abilities printed on Minion Warrior cards. Some require an action to use; others are always active.

Powerful once-per-game Keeper Abilities selected during setup. Each costs 1 action to use.

A deck of 70 unique cards that players may purchase during the game for 5 Strange Matter unless another rule changes the cost.

Keeper Ability Card Types

- Passive: Always active after purchase and remains in the Ability Row.
- Active: Costs an action to use and remains in the Ability Row.
- Event: Resolves when purchased and remains in the Ability Row unless the card says otherwise.
- CC: Costs 1 action to activate if available, then moves to the Cooldown Field and cools down.

Card Cooldown

A 1cc, 2cc, or 3cc card requires that many separate CC cards placed above it in the Cooldown Field before it can return to the Ability Row. Its own placement does not count toward its own cooldown. Returning a cooled-down card to the Ability Row does not cost an action.

Duplicate and Timed Effects

Duplicate active effects from the same CC Ability do not stack. Reactivating a CC Ability while its prior effect is still active does not create a second copy of that ongoing effect. If an effect lasts until “the beginning of the user’s next turn,” it ends immediately when that player’s next turn begins, even if it was used during a Response on the opponent’s turn.

Card text can create exceptions. If a card creates a special situation that changes a core rule, follow that card’s written effect for that situation.

Keeper Abilities

Keeper Ability Cards are purchased during the match and are limited by the 7-slot Ability Row.

Ability Row

Each player has an Ability Row with 7 slots . This is the maximum number of Keeper Ability Cards a player may own as active, available, or purchased cards during a match. A card in the Cooldown Field still counts as one of that player’s purchased Keeper Ability Cards. Moving a CC card into the Cooldown Field does not free an Ability Row slot.

Purchasing and Replacement

If the Ability Row has fewer than 7 cards, a newly purchased Keeper Ability Card is added to an empty slot unless that card’s rules say it resolves differently. If the Ability Row is full, the player cannot simply add another card. The player is either prevented from purchasing it or must replace an existing Keeper Ability Card only if the selected mode or purchase rule allows replacement.

In Quickplay, Private, Sandbox, or Practice, replacement behavior depends on selected match settings. If the match settings do not allow replacement, a player with a full Ability Row cannot purchase another Keeper Ability Card.

Passive and Event Cards

Passive cards stay in the Ability Row after purchase unless the card text says otherwise. Event cards resolve their purchase effect immediately and then remain in the Ability Row as purchased cards unless the card text says otherwise. Completed one-time effects are not undone if the card is later replaced, disabled, or removed unless a rule specifically says otherwise.

CC Cards and the Cooldown Field

A CC card begins in the Ability Row after purchase. While available, it may be activated by spending 1 action unless another rule prevents activation. When activated, resolve its effect, then place that card at the top of the Cooldown Field. A card in the Cooldown Field is not available for use unless a rule specifically allows it.

Veto, Tax, and Subdued

A player may not activate a CC card if another effect prevents it, such as Subdued, Veto, or Tax when the required Tax payment cannot be made. A Vetoed card will remain in the Ability Row after being Vetoed, but it cannot be used.

Non-Playable Pieces

Non-Playable Pieces are cards or objects that cannot move, attack, or be moved once placed. They have battlefield functions rather than acting as Warriors.

Has 15 Health and cannot move. When a LifeForce is destroyed, that player loses unless simultaneous destruction rules apply.

Have 1 Health, occupy spaces, block normal movement, and may be occupied only by Warriors with Scale.

Represent hidden Warriors, hidden Bombs, or empty spaces. Hidden Markers are treated as unoccupied.

Hidden threats that explode when walked upon or attacked and inflict 3 Damage in a 1-space radius.

Occupied but traversable spaces. Warriors enter and exit according to Portal direction rules. Warriors cannot attack through Portals.

Occupied but traversable. Destroys any Warrior that enters it. Void is not Damage and is not an Attack.

The currency used to buy Keeper Ability Cards, Walls, Minions, and Guardian unchaining. It does not occupy a space.

Strange Matter dropped when a Warrior dies. Loot does not occupy a space.

LifeForce Endgame Rules

If both LifeForces are destroyed at the same time, both LifeForces are removed, both Guardians are immediately Unchained, and the game continues until one Keeper is destroyed. The first player whose Keeper is destroyed loses. If both LifeForces and both Keepers are destroyed at the same time, the active player wins.

Markers and Hidden Objects

Markers may be revealed when a Warrior attempts to occupy their space, when attacked, when exposed by Vision, or when another reveal effect applies. Once a hidden Bomb or Warrior is revealed, all other Marker cards representing empty spaces for that hidden object are removed.

Void and Portal Reminder

Portals and Void are occupied spaces, but they are traversable under their own rules. Void destroys Warriors without dealing Damage. Portal movement is blocked if the required exit space is not legal.

Bombs

Bombs are hidden Non-Playable Pieces. Bomb explosions inflict Damage, not Attack Damage.

Bomb Limit

Each player may have up to 3 bombs planted at one time. That means no more than 6 bombs can be on the battlefield at one time.

Setting a Bomb

Bombs are placed using Minefield. Minefield places a hidden Bomb on an unoccupied space within a 1-space radius of the Warrior using the Ability, with Marker cards placed in possible spaces to hide the Bomb's location. A player cannot stack their own bombs on top of each other.

Stacked Enemy Bombs

One player may unknowingly plant a hidden Bomb on top of the other player's hidden Bomb because Markers are assumed to be empty spaces until proven otherwise. If hidden bombs from opposing players are stacked and later revealed, all stacked bombs immediately explode.

Exploding Bombs

When a Bomb is walked upon or attacked, it explodes and inflicts 3 Damage in a 1-space radius. If another Bomb is within the explosion radius, that Bomb may also trigger, creating a chain reaction.

Response rule: Bomb damage never grants Response Actions to surviving Warriors.

Markers

Markers represent hidden Warriors, hidden Bombs, or empty spaces. While hidden, they are treated as unoccupied spaces.

Revealing Markers

A Marker may be revealed when a Warrior attempts to occupy its space, when the Marker is attacked, when it is exposed by Vision, or when another reveal effect applies. Once a hidden Bomb or hidden Warrior is revealed, all extra Markers that represented possible empty spaces for that hidden object are removed.

Revealing Stacked Markers

- If Vision reveals one Bomb stacked only with empty-space Markers, the Bomb is revealed but does not explode.
- If a Marker is attacked or a Warrior attempts to occupy the space, and one of the Markers is a Bomb, the Bomb explodes immediately.
- If stacked Markers include a Bomb and at least one other Bomb or Warrior, all Bombs in that space explode immediately when revealed.

Multiple Warriors Revealed in One Space

If two or more stacked Markers are revealed to be Warriors, only one Warrior may remain in that space. Resolve the overlap until only one Warrior remains. The top Warrior is moved first to a legal adjacent space of that player's choice. If no legal adjacent space is available for that top Warrior, that Warrior is destroyed.

Attempting to Occupy a Hidden Warrior's Space

If a Warrior attempts to occupy a space containing a hidden Warrior Marker, reveal that Marker before completing the movement, Teleport, Deliver, Placement, Summon, or other attempted occupation effect. If the hidden Warrior makes the destination illegal, the attempted movement or placement fails, the acting Warrior remains in its original space, and the action or cost is still spent.

Stealth-Reveal Responses

If the revealed hidden Warrior is stealthed, and the acting Warrior is an enemy Warrior attempting to occupy that hidden Warrior's space during the opposing player's turn, the revealed Warrior receives a Response if it survives. This is a Stealth-Reveal Response, not an Attack.

Reveal Effects That Do Not Grant Responses

Vision, battlefield events, friendly Warriors, and non-Attack reveal effects do not grant Responses by themselves. If an enemy attacks a Marker that reveals a stealthed Warrior, the Attack resolves against that Warrior; if it survives, it receives a normal Attack Response, not a Stealth-Reveal Response.

Wall Effects

When a Wall is destroyed, its Wall Effect triggers immediately. Resolve the Wall destruction and Wall Effect fully before any new action, including Responses.

Wall Effect Damage and Movement

If a Wall Effect deals Damage, that Damage is Damage . Damage is not an Attack and does not grant Responses. If a Wall Effect attempts to move a Warrior and that Warrior cannot be moved into a legal space, that Warrior remains in place and receives any Damage caused by the failed movement.

Warriors Standing on Walls

A Warrior standing on top of a Wall is not automatically damaged or otherwise affected just because it is above that Wall. If a Wall Effect damages spaces around the Wall, only the spaces actually affected by that Wall Effect receive that Damage.

Destroying the Wall Beneath a Warrior

If the Wall underneath a Warrior is destroyed, that Warrior falls according to normal Wall rules. The falling Warrior does not take fall damage. If an enemy Warrior destroyed the Wall underneath that Warrior, the falling Warrior receives a Wall-Fall Response after the Wall destruction, Wall Effect, and fall are fully resolved.

Scale and Destroyed Walls

If the Warrior standing on the destroyed Wall has Scale, that Warrior falls unharmed and is unaffected by the Wall's effect. If an enemy Warrior destroyed the Wall underneath it and the Warrior survives, it receives a Wall-Fall Response.

Warriors That Cannot Be Used

If a Wall Effect says that the Warrior who destroyed the Wall cannot be used for the remainder of the turn, that Warrior cannot take any more actions that turn. If that Warrior is a Keeper, the player's turn immediately ends because the Keeper represents the player.

Warriors on Walls

A Wall is an occupied solid space. A Warrior may occupy a Wall only if it has Scale or another rule specifically allows it.

Occupying a Wall

Moving onto a Wall does not require extra Speed. A Wall counts as a single space. A Warrior without Scale cannot move onto a Wall and cannot be placed on a Wall unless another rule specifically allows it.

Standing on Walls

A Warrior on a Wall is treated as standing on top of that Wall. The Wall and the Warrior are both treated as occupying that location for movement, targeting, and board-state rules.

Attacking From a Wall

A Warrior standing on top of a Wall may attack normally. Being on a Wall does not prevent that Warrior from attacking unless another rule or effect prevents the attack.

Attacking a Warrior on a Wall

If the attacking Warrior is not on a Wall, attacking a Warrior on top of a Wall requires 1 additional Range. A same-level adjacent target requires 1 Range. A target on top of a Wall requires 2 Range.

Attacking Over or Through a Wall

A target behind one empty Wall requires 2 Range. A target behind a Wall with a Warrior standing on it requires 3 Range because both the Wall and the Warrior on it are counted.

Wall Destruction Under a Warrior

If the Wall beneath a Warrior is destroyed, that Warrior falls and does not take fall damage. If an enemy Warrior destroyed the Wall, the falling Warrior gains a Response Action after Wall destruction, Wall Effect, and fall are fully resolved.

Occupied Spaces / Unoccupied Spaces

Occupied and unoccupied spaces determine how movement, placement, respawn, summon, and wall-building work.

General Rule

Warriors can normally move only into unoccupied spaces and cannot move through occupied spaces unless an Ability or special rule says otherwise. If a Warrior is pushed or moved into a space it cannot legally occupy, it receives 1 Damage.

Unoccupied Spaces

Unoccupied spaces include empty spaces, Bombs, Strange Matter, Loot, and hidden Markers. These spaces can normally be moved onto or used for placement unless another rule prevents it. Bombs, Strange Matter, and Loot do not make a space occupied.

Occupied Spaces

Occupied spaces can be traversable or non-traversable, and obstacles or non-obstacles. A traversable obstacle is a Wall for a Warrior with Scale. Traversable non-obstacles include Portals and Void. Non-traversable obstacles include other Warriors, Walls for Warriors without Scale, and LifeForces.

Walls

Walls are occupied spaces. A Wall cannot be placed in an occupied space. A Warrior with Scale may move onto, be respawned onto, or be summoned onto a Wall. A Warrior without Scale may not.

Portals and Void

Portals and Void are traversable occupied spaces. They may be entered through movement if their rules allow it, but they are still occupied spaces. Portals and Void do not count as obstacle spaces for Leapfrog.

Respawn, Summon, and Traversable Spaces

A Keeper or Minion may be respawned, summoned, revived, resurrected, or purchased onto an unoccupied space or onto a traversable occupied space that the Warrior is legally allowed to occupy. If a Warrior is respawned or summoned onto a Portal, that Warrior automatically moves up through the Portal from the perspective of the player who is doing the spawning or summoning.

Instant Death Situations for a Warrior

Some effects destroy Warriors regardless of current Health.

Destroy Effects

Any rule or card effect that uses the word Destroy is a health-independent kill. This includes effects such as Forfeit, Reduction, or Void.

Void

Void destroys any Warrior that moves, is moved, teleports, is Delivered, is placed, or otherwise enters the Void's space. Void is not Damage and is not an Attack.

Chained Guardians and Vetoed Portals

If a Chained Guardian is outside its allowed range because of a Portal and that Portal is Vetoed or removed, the Guardian is immediately destroyed.

Markers and Overlap

If multiple revealed Warriors occupy the same space and the top Warrior cannot legally be moved to any valid adjacent space, that top Warrior is destroyed.

Failed Keeper Respawn

If a Keeper is defeated and cannot legally respawn, that respawn fails. When a Keeper's respawn fails, its LifeForce is reduced to 0 and that player immediately loses the game.

Ways to Play

These are the current public player-facing ways to play Keepers Dissension.

Standard non-ranked matchmaking for regular matches. Quickplay may be played in Calculated or Chaotic format depending on selected settings.

Passcode-protected rooms for custom matches between specific players. Private mode may allow custom settings such as setup style, timers, and first-player rules.

Unrestricted testing and experimentation mode. Sandbox is for testing, development review, unusual positions, or unrestricted play.

Play against a bot to learn the game or test ideas. Practice uses standard match rules unless a specific Practice setting changes them.

Public site note: this rulebook intentionally includes only modes available or intended for player-facing public rules at this stage.

Terms

Core terms used throughout the rules.

Ability Attack — An Attack caused by an Ability that explicitly says "Attack" or instructs the player to make an Attack.

Ability Row — The 7 slots where Ability Cards are placed after purchase. This row defines the maximum number of Keeper Ability Cards a player may have active or available.

Activate — To use a Card Cooldown Ability. After activation, the card is placed in the Cooldown Field.

Action — The capability to Attack, Move, use Strange Matter, purchase items, use an Ability, or perform another legal game function.

Assembly — The pool of Minions not currently on the Battlefield.

Attack — The standard Attack action, including Melee Attacks and Ranged Attacks, or an Ability effect that explicitly says "Attack" or instructs the player to make an Attack. Damage, Health loss, Destroy effects, forced movement, Wall effects, inflicted Damage, and other hostile effects are not Attacks just because they harm or affect a Warrior.

Attribute — A value used by Actions or effects. The main Attributes are Strength, Range, Health, and Speed.

Damage — Damage caused by the battlefield, traps, bombs, explosions, collisions, Wall effects, failed forced movement, inflicted Damage, or other non-Attack events. Damage is not an Attack and does not grant Responses.

Base — The initial value of an Attribute before modifiers are applied.

Board — The 7x7 grid playing area.

Card Cooldown / CC — The cooldown system used by certain Keeper Ability Cards. CC cards must be activated, placed in the Cooldown Field, and cooled down before they can be used again.

Cooldown Field — The area where Card Cooldown Ability Cards are placed after use.

Damage — A reduction of a Warrior's, LifeForce's, or Wall's Health.

Death — A Warrior dies when its Health reaches 0. Loot is dropped according to the Loot Table.

Destroy — To remove a Warrior, Wall, LifeForce, or other object through a destruction effect rather than by dealing Damage. Destroy effects are not Attacks.

Economy — The pool of Strange Matter available to be collected or returned during gameplay.

Forced Movement — A Warrior being pushed, displaced, rammed, teleported, delivered, or otherwise repositioned without using that Warrior's own movement action.

Graveyard — The pool of previously summoned Minions that are no longer on the Battlefield.

Heal — To increase a Warrior's current Health up to its maximum Health.

Health — The amount of Damage a Warrior, LifeForce, or Wall can receive before being destroyed.

Inflict — To cause Damage without making an Attack. If a card says to inflict Damage, that Damage is Damage, not Attack Damage. Inflicted Damage does not grant a Response.

Leap — To move through or over a space and end in a space beyond it.

Loot — Strange Matter dropped when a Warrior dies.

Melee Attack — An Attack caused when a Warrior attacks an adjacent target in a direction it is allowed to attack.

Move — Voluntary movement that uses a movement action or an effect that says the unit moves.

Obstacle — A solid object that blocks normal movement and may be leapt over by Leapfrog. Walls and Warriors are obstacles. Void and Portals are not obstacles for Leapfrog.

Passive — A Keeper Ability Card that does not use Card Cooldown.

Placement — A unit being put directly into a legal space without moving through intervening spaces. Deliver, Teleport, respawn, summon, and marker-overlap resolution are forms of Placement.

Radius — Board spaces in any direction from a chosen space.

Range — Board spaces in cardinal directions. Range is also the Attribute that determines how far a Warrior can attack.

Ranged Attack — An Attack caused when a Warrior attacks a target within Range beyond melee distance.

Reserves — The collection of Strange Matter under a player's control.

Resurrect — To summon a Minion from the Graveyard rather than from the Assembly.

Respawn — The process of returning a Keeper to the Battlefield after it is destroyed, if its LifeForce survives. The Keeper is placed according to Keeper respawn priority.

Response — An action granted to a Warrior during the opposing player's turn after one of three Response triggers: the Warrior survives an Attack from an enemy Warrior, the Warrior falls because an enemy Warrior destroyed the Wall underneath it, or the Warrior is revealed from Stealth because an enemy Warrior attempts to occupy its space. A player cannot receive or take a Response Action during their own turn.

Reveal — To uncover a hidden Marker and show what it represents.

Speed — The number of spaces a Warrior may move through when taking a Move action.

Stealth-Reveal Response — A Response granted during the opposing player's turn when an enemy Warrior attempts to occupy the space of a hidden stealthed Warrior, causing that Warrior to be revealed. This is not an Attack.

Strange Matter — A mysterious material used as currency and to fuel purchases or abilities.

Strength — The Attribute that defines how much Damage is done by an Attack.

Summon — To place a Minion from the Assembly or Graveyard onto a legal space allowed by the effect causing the summon.

Teleport — To instantly move between legal spaces without moving through the spaces in between.

Unavoidable — A damage or Health-loss modifier meaning the damage or Health loss cannot be prevented, reduced, redirected, or replaced. Unavoidable does not decide whether a Response happens; the event must still be one of the three valid Response triggers and must happen during the opposing player's turn.

Wall-Fall Response — A Response granted during the opposing player's turn when an enemy Warrior destroys a Wall underneath a Warrior, causing that Warrior to fall. This is not an Attack.

Keeper Ability Card Reference

Search or browse the current public Keeper Ability Card reference. Card text here is aligned to the latest rules source of truth, with advanced rulings expanded for edge-case cards.

Affliction

Event

Cut the enemy Guardian's current Health in half. If odd, round up. This is unavoidable Health loss, not an Attack.

Ambush

1cc

The next Attack by one of your Warriors does not grant a Response. If Ambush is reactivated before its current effect has been used, no additional Ambush effect is created. The new activation may still affect cooldown positioning normally.

Armor

Passive

Your Keeper ignores 1 Damage per turn. Armor prevents Damage. Armor does not prevent direct Health changes that are not Damage.

Bounty Hunter

Passive

Loot dropped by enemy Warriors you kill is increased by 2.

Call to Arms

Passive

When the enemy Guardian is Unchained, your Minions gain +1 Strength.

Casters

Event

Activate an available CC Ability. The enemy Keeper must activate a CC Ability if available. You may then activate a second CC Ability. Your turn then ends immediately.

Collapse

Passive

When your Walls are destroyed by enemy Warriors, those Walls inflict 1 Damage in addition to their Wall Effect.

Compromise

2cc

Heal all LifeForces and Warriors by 3.

Comrade

Passive

When your Keeper respawns, summon a Minion.

Critical Hit

2cc

Attack with 3 Damage and 1 Range.

Dash

Passive

Your Keeper gains +1 Speed.

Deliver

Active

Your Keeper may spend 1 action to place Deliver on any Warrior within 1 space. The next time that Warrior would receive Damage before the beginning of your next turn, it teleports to a legal space on its LifeForce row instead. If Deliver is triggered by an enemy Attack, Deliver acts as that Warrior's Response and no additional Response is granted.

Deliver is mandatory once triggered. If it is triggered by an enemy Attack, Deliver acts as that Warrior's Response and no extra Response is granted. If triggered by Damage, it teleports the Warrior but does not grant a Response.

Deplete

2cc

Force the enemy Keeper to return 2 Strange Matter to the Economy.

Explode

Passive

When your Keeper is killed, your Keeper explodes and inflicts 3 Damage in a 1-space radius. Explode is not an Attack and does not grant Responses.

Famine

3cc

Neither Keeper can take Strange Matter from the Economy or spend Strange Matter until the end of your next turn.

Forfeit

1cc

Destroy a friendly Minion. Add 4 Strange Matter to your reserves.

Ground Pound

1cc

Attack every space within a 1-space radius around the Keeper simultaneously. Ground Pound is an Attack.

Grounded

3cc

The next Warrior attacked by your Keeper takes no damage and cannot move until it receives Damage from a source other than itself. A Grounded Warrior may still be moved by effects such as Ram, Deliver, Teleport, or Wall effects.

A Grounded Attack is still an Attack. If the attacked Warrior survives an enemy Attack during the opposing player's turn, it receives a Response unless another effect prevents that Response. Deliver does not trigger from a Grounded Attack because the Attack deals no Damage.

Health Match

1cc

Set the enemy Keeper's current Health to match your Keeper's current Health.

Health Slash

2cc

Cut the enemy Keeper's current Health in half. If odd, round up. Health Slash changes Health directly. It does not deal Damage, so Armor does not prevent it. Health Slash is not an Attack.

Health Slash changes Health directly. It does not deal Damage, so Armor does not prevent it and Deliver does not trigger from it unless the effect is specifically worded as an Attack that deals Damage.

High Stakes

3cc

The next Attack by any Warrior or Ability deals 8 Damage. This ends your turn.

Hinder

Passive

Enemy Warriors within 1 space of your Keeper cannot move through voluntary movement. Hinder does not prevent forced movement.

Hunter

Passive

Your Keeper's Damage is doubled when attacking the enemy Guardian.

Hyperdrive

2cc

Activate up to two of your CC Ability Cards. Place Hyperdrive on top of the activated cards in the Cooldown Field.

Immunity

1cc

Your Warriors are not affected by Wall effects for the remainder of this turn.

Invincible

3cc

Your Keeper cannot receive Damage until the end of your next turn.

Leapfrog

Active

Your Keeper may leap over one obstacle directly in its path and land on the legal space immediately on the other side of that obstacle. Limited to 1 Speed.

Leapfrog can leap over one obstacle directly in its path. Walls, Warriors, and LifeForces are obstacles. Portals, Void, Loot, Strange Matter, Bombs, and Markers are not obstacles for Leapfrog unless a rule says otherwise.

Minfield

1cc

Place a hidden Bomb in a 1-space radius of the Keeper, with Marker cards placed in possible spaces to hide the Bomb's location. When the Bomb is attacked or moved upon, it explodes and inflicts 3 Damage within a 1-space radius. Minefield is not an Attack and does not grant Responses. Each player may have only 3 Bombs on the board at one time.

Minionized

2cc

Until the end of your third turn, both Keepers' current Health and maximum Health are set to 1.

Mirage

3cc

Switch your Keeper's position with any of your Minions or your Unchained Guardian.

Penalty

2cc

Inflict 1 Damage to the enemy Keeper for every space they move on their next turn. Penalty is not an Attack and does not grant Responses.

Delivered movement is not counted as movement for Penalty. Penalty is Damage, not an Attack.

Persevere

Passive

When below 3 Health, your Keeper gains +1 Strength.

Portal

Event

Place two Portals on any two unoccupied spaces and end your turn. The direction a Warrior enters a Portal determines its exit position from the connected Portal. Portals are occupied spaces that Warriors may enter through Portal movement rules. Warriors cannot deal Damage through Portals.

A Warrior cannot use a Portal if the required adjacent exit space is blocked or illegal. If a Warrior is forced through a Portal anyway and cannot legally exit, resolve the failed movement damage. If a Chained Guardian is outside its allowed range when a Portal is Vetoed, that Guardian is destroyed.

Ram

Passive

Your Keeper may push other Warriors 1 space in the direction of the Keeper's movement, taking their place. If the pushed Warrior cannot be moved into a legal space, neither Warrior moves and the pushed Warrior receives 1 Damage. This Damage is not an Attack and does not grant a Response.

Range

Passive

Your Keeper gains +1 base Range.

Rebuild

1cc

Place the original Walls in every unoccupied space in the Wall row. If a space in the Wall row is occupied, no Wall is placed there.

Reduction

3cc

Destroy a friendly Warrior. The enemy Keeper destroys one of their Warriors. The dropped Loot is placed in the respective Keeper's reserves.

Refresh

2cc

Heal your Keeper by 3, up to its maximum Health.

Regeneration

2cc

Heal your Keeper by 1. At the beginning of your next turn, heal your Keeper by 1 again.

Repel

Passive

When your Keeper attacks a Warrior, that Warrior is pushed 1 space in the direction of the Keeper's attack. If that Warrior cannot move into a legal space, it receives 1 additional Damage. Repel does not apply additional effects when the attacking Warrior and the affected Warrior are the same Warrior.

Repel does not apply additional effects when the attacking Warrior and affected Warrior are the same Warrior.

Reset

2cc

Place one of your Ability Cards from the Cooldown Field back into your Ability Row.

Resourceful

2cc

Reduce your Strange Matter costs by 2 until the beginning of your next turn.

Restore

3cc

Heal your Keeper to maximum Health.

Retaliate

3cc

Until the end of your third turn, your Keeper reflects any Damage it receives from enemy attackers regardless of Range. Retaliate does not reflect Damage back onto a Warrior that caused Damage to itself.

Retaliate does not reflect Damage back onto a Warrior that already caused that same Damage to itself.

Return

2cc

Transfer all Strange Matter from your reserves into the Economy. The enemy Keeper must also transfer all Strange Matter from their reserves into the Economy.

Revive

3cc

Resurrect up to 3 Minions.

Risk

2cc

Reduce the enemy LifeForce's current Health by 5. Reduce your LifeForce's current Health by 10. This Health loss is Unavoidable and is not an Attack. If both LifeForces are destroyed at the same time, both Guardians are Unchained and the first Keeper destroyed loses.

Risk changes LifeForce Health directly. Armor, Invincible, Truce, Deliver, and other Damage-prevention effects do not prevent it unless they specifically prevent direct Health loss. During simultaneous LifeForce destruction, destroyed Keepers do not respawn because no surviving LifeForce remains to support respawn.

Scale

Passive

Your Keeper can move onto or off of Walls. If a Wall underneath your Keeper is destroyed by an enemy Warrior, your Keeper falls unharmed, is unaffected by the Wall's effect, and receives a Response if it survives. This is a Wall-Fall Response, not an Attack.

Shockwave

2cc

For every Red Keeper Ability Card you have, inflict 1 Damage to every space on the battlefield. This affects Warriors, LifeForces, Walls, Bombs, Markers, and any other battlefield object that can receive or be affected by Damage. Shockwave is not an Attack and does not grant Responses. All Shockwave Damage is applied simultaneously.

Shockwave Damage is applied simultaneously to every affected space. It can damage Markers, Bombs, Walls, Warriors, LifeForces, and other damageable objects. Shockwave may trigger Deliver because it causes Damage, but it does not create Responses because it is Damage, not an Attack.

Slowdown

2cc

Until the end of your third turn, all Warriors are restricted to 1 Speed.

Snipe

1cc

Attack for 1 Damage up to 3 Range. Snipe is an Attack.

Sprint

3cc

Grant a Warrior of your choice +3 Speed for 1 action during this turn.

Steadfast

2cc

Until your Keeper moves or is moved, enemy Minion Attacks cannot damage your Keeper. These Attack attempts still grant a Response.

Stealth

Active

Your Keeper may spend 1 action to enter Stealth. Your Keeper masks its movement by placing Markers in available movement spaces, including its current location. The Keeper receives a Response only if an enemy Warrior attempts to occupy the Keeper's hidden space and the Keeper survives after required placement, movement reversal, overlap, or repositioning. This is a Stealth-Reveal Response, not an Attack.

If an enemy attacks a Marker that reveals your stealthed Keeper, the Attack resolves against the Keeper and can grant a normal Attack Response if the Keeper survives. If an enemy tries to occupy the hidden space, the Response is a Stealth-Reveal Response instead.

Strafe

Passive

Your Keeper can move and attack diagonally.

Strength

Passive

Your Keeper gains +1 base Strength.

Stun

Active

Your Keeper may spend 1 action to immobilize an enemy Warrior within 2 Range until the beginning of your next turn. If used during a Response on the opponent's turn, it still ends at the beginning of your next turn.

Subdued

2cc

Neither Keeper can activate CC Abilities until a Keeper dies.

Tar

2cc

Immobilize the enemy Guardian until the end of the enemy Keeper's second turn.

Tax

Event

Choose one of the enemy Keeper's CC Ability Cards. The enemy Keeper must pay you 1 Strange Matter to activate that Ability. If the taxed player cannot pay, that activation cannot occur.

The Tax payment is an additional activation cost. If the taxed player cannot pay 1 Strange Matter when attempting to activate the chosen CC card, the activation cannot occur and Tax remains attached to that card.

Teleport

1cc

Teleport your Keeper to any legal space adjacent to your LifeForce. Teleport places the Keeper directly onto the destination space without moving through intervening spaces.

Teleport may target hidden Markers because hidden Markers are treated as unoccupied until revealed. If the Marker is revealed to be a hidden Warrior, the Teleport destination becomes illegal, the Teleport fails, and the action and Ability use are still spent.

Toughen

Event

Your Keeper's maximum Health is set to 7. Heal your Keeper to maximum Health.

Truce

2cc

No Damage can be dealt or received until the end of your third turn.

Veto

Event

Choose one of the enemy Keeper's Ability Cards from their Ability Row, Cooldown Field, or private hand. If choosing from their private hand, choose blindly without revealing the card. The chosen Ability cannot be used for the rest of the game. Portal and Void objects created by a Vetoed card are removed.

A Vetoed card cannot be activated, invoked, triggered, reused, returned for use, or purchased for effect for the rest of the game. A Vetoed card in the Cooldown Field may still count toward cooldown placement but cannot be used again.

Vision

Passive

Your Keeper reveals all hidden enemy Markers within a 1-space radius. Vision is not an Attack and does not grant Responses.

Void

Event

Place a Void on any unoccupied space. A Void destroys any Warrior that moves or is moved onto it. Void is an occupied space, but it does not count as an obstacle for Leapfrog. Void is not Damage and is not an Attack.

Void destroys Warriors without dealing Damage and without making an Attack. A Warrior destroyed by Void does not receive a Response. If a Warrior carrying Loot or Strange Matter enters Void, the carried Loot or Strange Matter is destroyed and is not dropped or added to reserves.

Vulnerable

Passive

The enemy Keeper respawns with only half of its maximum Health. If odd, round up.

Wall Builder

2cc

Place a Wall in any unoccupied space.

Weaken

Passive

The enemy Guardian's Strength is reduced by 1.

Wounded Runner

Passive

When at 1 Health, your Keeper's base Speed is 3.

Warrior Quick Reference

Use this quick reference during your first games. Full rules for these Warriors appear in the sections above.

Keeper

Leader of the army; base 1 Speed, 1 Range, 1 Strength, 5 Health; tied to the LifeForce and chosen Ultimate.

Guardian

Protector of the LifeForce; Chained Guardian has 10 Health and limited movement; Unchained Guardian becomes a major threat.

Mage

Uses Stun and Deliver for control, protection, and repositioning.

Blockader

Uses Armor and Ram to hold space and force collisions.

Sniper

Uses Range and Stealth to threaten from distance and hide its true location.

Bomber

Uses Minefield and Explode to pressure without granting Responses.

Scout

Uses Vision and Strafe to reveal Markers and move/attack diagonally.

Ogre

Uses Strength and Ground Pound to pressure clustered enemies.

Scaler

Uses Leapfrog and Scale to cross obstacles and occupy Walls.

Battle Tactics

Battle Tactics is the table-side companion for situational play: strategy plans, unusual rulings, and advanced timing reminders. The Rules tab teaches the game; this tab helps players make better decisions inside it.

The Rules tab is the official start-to-finish learning path.

Look here when you want strategy, traps, timing reminders, or odd-situation guidance.

The search bar filters the active mode, including card names, Responses, Bombs, Walls, Portal, Void, and more.

Strategies Players May Consider Utilizing

These are strategic patterns players can explore after they understand the core rules.

Guardian Rush Economy Plan

Players can choose to spend early turns heavily acquiring Strange Matter with the specific goal of unchaining their Guardian as quickly as possible. A fast unchained Guardian can swing control of the battlefield through superior threat, durability, and pressure, especially if the opponent has not built enough board presence yet.

Keeper Response Exploitation

Players can bait attacks onto their Keeper when the resulting Response Action would be more valuable than the damage taken. Because a surviving Keeper grants a full player-level Response Action rather than only a personal one, this can be used to reposition another Warrior, buy tempo, or set up a stronger counterturn.

Bombs as Response-Denial Pressure

Since bomb explosions deal Damage and are not Attacks, they do not grant Responses. Therefore, players can use hidden bombs to damage or finish enemies without giving them the usual chance to immediately counterplay. This makes bombs especially valuable for softening or removing dangerous targets safely.

Command Turn Theft

Players can use Command to temporarily turn the enemy Keeper into their own tool. This can allow them to spend the opponent's available actions, use their legal abilities, attack with their forces from the wrong side of the board, or even waste valuable once-per-game options if timing allows.

Forced Inefficiency Strategy

One of the strongest overall approaches in Keepers Dissension is not necessarily immediate damage, but forcing the opponent to spend actions inefficiently. Walls, Deliver, hidden bombs, elevation, and awkward movement lanes can all turn the game into a tempo war where the player with the cleaner action economy gains the long-term advantage.

Bomb and Wall Remote Detonation

Players can hide bombs with Minefield and then intentionally build or use Walls in ways that help trigger explosions from a safer distance. This allows the player to threaten enemy movement lanes, punish opponents who cluster too tightly, and create situations where the opponent is damaged without gaining the usual benefit of a Response Action. When used well, this strategy turns the battlefield itself into a trap and forces the opponent to respect hidden danger even when no attacker is directly adjacent.

Guardian Rush Economy Plan

Players can choose to spend early turns doing little other than acquiring Strange Matter with the goal of unchaining their Guardian as quickly as possible. A fast unchained Guardian can dramatically swing control of the battlefield through high durability, strong damage output, and broader movement freedom, especially if the opponent has spent their early turns on slower setup plays. This strategy is risky because it can concede early tempo, but if the Guardian comes online before the opponent is prepared, it can quickly become the central force on the board.

Emergency Self-Sacrifice for Economy

Players can intentionally destroy one of their own Minions in a pinch if doing so creates the Strange Matter swing needed for a more important play. This can be worthwhile when sacrificing a low-value or poorly positioned Warrior allows the player to afford a critical Ability Card, build a needed Wall, or activate a stronger turn that would otherwise be delayed. The strength of this strategy lies in recognizing when immediate economy and tempo matter more than preserving every piece on the board.

Self-Deliver Damage Setup

Players can place Deliver on their own Warrior, including their Keeper, and then use that protection aggressively if the situation calls for it. Because Deliver is mandatory once triggered, it can be used as a temporary safety net that allows a Warrior to take a more dangerous position, bait an attack, or trade into a contested area with less fear of immediate loss.

In the right situation, this lets a player force damage or claim space first, knowing that the delivered unit can be repositioned out of danger when the opponent finally strikes. Expert players will usually focus on action efficiency above all else, trying to force the opponent to waste actions on repositioning, escaping pressure, rebuilding formation, or reacting to traps.

In both modes, strong players will likely center their game plan around one of three main paths to victory: direct LifeForce pressure, economy acceleration, or fast Guardian activation. Keeper Responses will be a major high-level tactic, because a surviving Keeper gives a full player-level Response Action that can be turned into strong counterplay or tempo swings.

In Calculated mode, expert players will likely gain their edge through drafted card synergy, cooldown sequencing, and matchup planning, since they can build a more deliberate and repeatable strategy. In Chaos mode, expert players will likely gain their edge through adaptation, shared-hand control, and stronger board fundamentals, since they must make the best use of a less predictable private hand.

Response Timing Playbook

Responses are powerful because they happen during the opposing player's turn, but they only come from defined Response triggers. Do not assume damage creates a Response. A Warrior receives a Response only after surviving an enemy Attack, falling because an enemy Warrior destroyed the Wall beneath it, or being revealed from Stealth because an enemy Warrior attempted to occupy its space. Keeper Responses are especially valuable because the Keeper receives a player-level Response, which can be spent on any one legal player action. This means a Keeper Response may be worth more than a normal Warrior Response.

Attack vs Damage

A clean tactical distinction is this: Attacks can grant Responses; Damage usually does not. Bombs, Void, Wall effects, forced movement damage, Shockwave, Explode, collision damage, and direct Health loss are not Attacks just because they hurt something. This makes non-Attack pressure valuable when you want to finish a Warrior without giving the opponent an immediate counteraction.

Wall and High-Ground Tactics

Walls are not just blockers. They change Range math, create protected angles, and can trigger Wall Effects when destroyed. Warriors with Scale can occupy Walls and attack normally from them. Ground units need additional Range to attack a Warrior on a Wall or to attack across a Wall. Destroying a Wall under an enemy Warrior can create a Wall-Fall Response, so choose that line only when the tempo trade is worth it.

Stealth, Markers, and Misdirection

Stealth and Markers are strongest when the opponent must guess whether a space is empty, a Bomb, or a hidden Warrior. Attacking a Marker can reveal and damage a hidden Warrior, but attempting to occupy a stealthed Warrior's true space can create a Stealth-Reveal Response. Vision counters this by revealing enemy Markers in range without being an Attack.

Bomb Pressure and Response Denial

Bombs inflict Damage rather than Attack Damage, so they do not grant Responses. This makes Bombs excellent for softening enemies, finishing fragile Warriors, and punishing predictable paths. Because opposing hidden Bombs can stack unknowingly, Marker-heavy spaces can become volatile if revealed by attack or occupation.

Economy and Guardian Timing

A player can rush Strange Matter to unchain the Guardian, buy Keeper Ability Cards, rebuild Walls, or purchase Minions. Guardian unchaining is expensive, but it can swing the match if the opponent has neglected board control. Card purchases are cheaper and can create tactical answers sooner. The best economy line depends on whether you need board presence now or a heavier threat later.

Portal and Void Caution

Portal and Void are traversable occupied spaces with very different consequences. Portals move Warriors according to entry direction, but blocked exits stop legal Portal movement. Void destroys Warriors that enter it and does not deal Damage. Void can be tactically decisive, but it can also disrupt placement, Wall building, and routes for your own Warriors.

Card Cooldown Tempo

CC cards are tempo investments. Activating a CC card gives an effect now but sends the card to the Cooldown Field until enough separate CC cards are placed above it. Hyperdrive, Reset, Casters, Tax, Subdued, and Veto all interact with this timing layer. A player with multiple CC cards should plan not just what to use, but what each activation will cool down.

Endgame Awareness

Keepers Dissension has several non-obvious endgame states. If a LifeForce is destroyed, that player normally loses. If both LifeForces are destroyed simultaneously, both are removed and the game can continue until a Keeper is destroyed. If both LifeForces and both Keepers are destroyed simultaneously, the active player wins. A failed Keeper respawn also reduces that LifeForce to 0 and immediately ends the game.

Competitive Preparation

Use this checklist before a serious match.

Plan your first turn before the match starts. Know whether you want early board control, early economy, or a fast attack lane.

Do not hand the opponent strong Responses for free. Ask what happens if your attack fails to finish the target.

Every purchase changes tempo. Decide whether this turn is best used for cards, Walls, Minions, or saving for a Guardian unchain.

Your Keeper often carries both positioning value and stored Strange Matter. Avoid careless exposures.

Wall pressure and Bomb placement can decide a game before the final push ever happens.

Strong play often comes from setting up your next turn while disrupting your opponent's next turn at the same time.