

# Bo Jackson Battle Arena Comprehensive Rules

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# Bo Jackson Battle Arena

## Comprehensive Rules Guide

### 1. Game Overview

#### 1.1 Introduction

**Bo Jackson Battle Arena** is an easy to learn, and exciting card game where players unleash powerful Heroes inspired by real-world athletes in a clash across seven intense Battles. The game features three distinct modes of play: Rookie, Substitution, and Playmaker, each adding new layers of strategy and depth.

#### 1.2 Game Modes

##### 1.2.1 Rookie Mode

Players build a Hero deck of 60 cards. Each player shuffles their hero deck, then draws seven Heroes and places them face-down into seven Battle Zones. One Hero from each zone is revealed per battle. The Hero with the highest Power wins that battle. The player who wins the most of the seven battles wins the game.

##### 1.2.2 Substitution Mode

Substitution Mode adds a 10-card Hot Dog Deck to each player's setup. Hot Dogs serve as a spendable resource. In addition to seven active Heroes, players draw four Heroes to form a Bench. Once per battle, a player may spend two Hot Dogs to substitute a Hero from the Bench into a Battle. Players draw a new Hero to refill the Bench after a substitution. Turn order after the first battle is determined by who won the most recent battle.

##### 1.2.3 Playmaker Mode

Playmaker Mode adds a Playbook deck of 30 Play cards. Each player draws four Plays at the start of the game and one additional Play after every battle. During the Play Phase of each battle, players may spend Hot Dogs to run one or more Plays to influence outcomes or alter the game stat

## 2. Game Components

### 2.1 Cards

#### 2.1.1. Hero Cards

**Name:**

The card's name defines it for deckbuilding purposes. The Hero's name is printed in the top-left corner of the card.

**Power:**

This represents a Hero's ability to win Battles. It is found in the upper-right corner of the card. Only Hero cards have a Power stat. A hero's power can be modified by plays.

**Weapon Type:**

All Hero cards have a Weapon Type. The Hero's Weapon Type is located on the bottom-right corner of the card. There are ten Weapon Types:

- Alt
- Brawl
- Cyber
- Fire
- Glow
- Gum
- Hex
- Ice
- Steel
- Super

Some Plays may specify a weapon type, only heroes with that weapon type may be affected by that play.

**Variants:**

Some Heroes have different variants that change their Artwork Name , Power, or Weapon Type. These variants are treated as unique cards when building a deck. For example, a BoJax [Ice Variant] is considered a different card than a Bo Jax [Fire Variant] and both may be included in the same deck.

## 2.1.2. Play Cards

### **Name:**

The card's name defines it for deckbuilding purposes. The name of the play is printed in the top-left corner of the card.

### **Cost:**

Each Play has a cost, shown in the top-right corner of the card. This cost is paid using Hot Dogs. A Play cannot be activated unless its full cost is paid. A Play's cost can be modified by the effects of other cards, but a Play's cost can never be reduced below zero.

### **Effect:**

Each Play card has an effect, defined in its text box. Effects may modify the Power of Heroes, restrict actions, manipulate cards, or alter game conditions.

### **Variant:**

Some Plays have variants that have different names but share the same effect. The original Play that the variant is based on will be listed beneath the variant's name in the top-left corner of the card. For deckbuilding purposes, all variants of a Play are treated as the same card. A deck may not include more than one copy of a Play, regardless of variant.

## 2.1.3. Bonus Plays

### **Name:**

The card's name defines it for deckbuilding purposes. The name of a Bonus Play is printed in the top-left corner of the card. Bonus Plays are named and function like regular Plays but are considered *additional entries* beyond the standard 30-card Playbook.

### **Cost:**

Each Bonus Play has a cost, shown in the top-right corner of the card. This cost is paid using Hot Dogs. A Bonus Play cannot be activated unless its full cost is paid. A Bonus Play's cost can be modified by other effects, but it can never be reduced below zero.

### **Effect:**

Each Bonus Play has an effect, defined in its text box. These effects follow the same rules as regular Plays. They may enhance Heroes, restrict actions, manipulate cards, or alter the game state.

**Deckbuilding Rules:**

Bonus Plays are not included in the standard 30-card Playbook limit. However, you may still include **only one copy** of any Play in your combined Playbook and Bonus Plays. Variants of Bonus Plays are counted as the same card for deckbuilding purposes.

## 2.1.4. Hot Dog Cards

**Name:**

Each Hot Dog card has a name printed on it. However, names are not used for deckbuilding purposes. Hot Dogs do not need to be unique, and players may include multiple copies of the same Hot Dog card in their deck.

**Function:**

Hot Dogs are used as a resource to pay for specific actions, such as activating Play cards or substituting Heroes. The number of Hot Dogs a player has is always public. Hot Dogs are spent to pay costs and then placed in the discard zone. Hot Dogs can be recovered using certain card effects. Hot Dogs do not carry over between games or beyond the current match.

**Deck Construction:**

Each player includes exactly 10 Hot Dog cards in their Hot Dog Deck. The Hot Dog Deck is only used in Substitution Mode and Playmaker Mode. It is not shuffled or drawn from and represents a player's available Hot Dogs for paying costs and resolving effects.

## 2.2 Other Game Objects

### 2.2.1. Coins

Coins are used to resolve certain effects or make random decisions during gameplay. Before flipping a coin, both players must agree on which side represents "Heads" and which represents "Tails."

A coin flip may only be performed if a card or rule specifically instructs it. If a coin is flipped when not required, the opponent may choose whether the result stands or is ignored.

Some Plays may instruct a player to flip more than one coin. In these cases, each flip is treated as a separate event unless otherwise specified by the card. Results from multiple flips should be clearly stated before resolving the effect.

## 2.2.2. Trophies

Trophies are used to track which player has won each battle. The player with the most trophies at the end of seven battles wins the game.

Official Trophy markers are included in the BoBA Starter Box. However, players may use any agreed-upon objects to represent Trophies, such as tokens, coins, or counters. Any substitute must be clearly distinguishable, must not obstruct gameplay, and must not be visually distracting or confusing.

Trophies should be placed in a shared, visible area where both players can track battle results throughout the game.

## 2.2.3. Markers

Markers are used to track ongoing effects, status conditions, or card-specific interactions during gameplay. They serve as visual reminders for effects that persist across one or more battles.

Markers may represent a variety of things, such as power buffs, restrictions, or delayed triggers. The meaning of each marker must be clearly defined when it is placed. If a card creates a marker with a specific purpose, players should communicate that purpose clearly.

Players may use any agreed-upon items to represent markers, including tokens, dice, paper slips, or other game pieces, as long as they are easy to identify, do not obstruct gameplay, and are not visually distracting.

Markers are removed when their effect ends, the generating card leaves play, or as specified by card text.

## 2.2.4. Dice

Dice are used to resolve certain effects or introduce randomness during gameplay. Unless otherwise specified, dice rolls use standard six-sided dice (d6). Before rolling, both players must be clear on how many dice are being rolled and what results are being checked.

A dice roll may only be performed if a card or rule specifically instructs it.

Some Plays may instruct a player to roll more than one die. In these cases, each roll is treated as a separate event unless otherwise specified by the card. Results from multiple rolls should be clearly stated before resolving the effect.

If a die lands in an ambiguous way (cocked, off the table, unclear result), it must be rerolled.

## 3. Areas of the Game

### 3.1 Areas

**Hero Deck:**

A deck containing only Hero cards. This deck is used in all game modes. Players draw from this deck to place Heroes into Battle Zones or replenish their Bench after substitutions. Hero Deck size depends on the format .

**Hot Dog Deck:**

A 10-card deck used to track a player's available Hot Dogs, the game's energy resource. The Hot Dog Deck is only used in Substitution and Playmaker Modes. Cards are not drawn from this deck; it functions as a pool for spending and recovering Hot Dogs

**Playbook:**

A deck of Play cards and Bonus Play cards used only in Playmaker Mode. Players draw from this deck at the start of the game and after each battle. Each Play in the Playbook must be unique. Playbook Deck size depends on the format.

**Discard Pile:**

Where Discarded cards and spent Hot dogs go. Players each maintain their own Discard zone .

**Arena:**

The Arena is the shared central area of play. It contains seven Battle Zones arranged in a row between players. Battles are resolved one zone at a time, in the order established during setup..

**Battle Zone:**

A Battle Zone is one of the seven spaces in the Arena where two opposing Heroes face off. Each zone contains one Hero from each player. Battles are resolved one zone at a time, in the order established during setup..

**Bench/Hand:**

The terms Bench and Hand refer to the same zone: a group of cards held privately by a player. These may include Hero cards available for substitution and Play cards available for activation.

## 3.2 Movement Between Areas

Cards may move between different areas of the game during play. These movements typically occur as a result of game setup, card effects, substitutions, or standard game rules.

Whenever a card moves from one area to another, it loses all effects currently applied to it, unless a card specifically states otherwise. This includes Power modifications, status conditions, markers, and any temporary effects.

## 3.3 Inactive Battles

Inactive Battles are Battle Zones that have not yet been resolved.

Cards and effects may only interact with Inactive Battles if they specifically state they do so. Players cannot reveal, substitute, or affect Heroes in inactive zones unless a card explicitly allows it.

## 3.4 Randomization and Shuffling

Randomization ensures that the order of cards in a deck or hidden group is unknown to all players.

A deck is considered randomized when no player has knowledge of the order of its cards.

Players must sufficiently randomize their decks whenever a deck is shuffled. Randomization may be performed using any reasonable method, including riffle shuffling, mash shuffling, or other techniques that produce adequate mixing of cards.

Pile shuffling may be used to count cards but does not, by itself, constitute sufficient randomization.

## 4. Sequence of Play

### 4.1 Rookie Mode

#### 4.1.1 Game Setup

- Each player brings a Hero Deck consisting of 60 Hero cards. No more than 6 Hero cards in a deck may share the same Power value. Only 1 copy of each Hero variation can appear in a Hero Deck.
- Players randomly determine a starting player using an agreed-upon method. The randomly selected player then chooses which player goes first and the direction Battles will resolve (left-to-right or right-to-left).
- Each player shuffles their Hero Deck and draws 7 Hero cards.
- Players place their 7 drawn Heroes face-down into the 7 Battle Zones in the order they choose. These cards remain hidden until revealed in battle.

#### 4.1.2 Turn and Battle Structure

##### **Reveal Heroes**

Both players simultaneously reveal the Heroes placed in the current Battle Zone.

##### **Determine Winner**

Compare the Power values of the revealed Heroes. The Hero with the higher Power wins the battle. If Power values are equal, the battle is a draw.

##### **Battle Result**

The winner places a Trophy to mark their victory in that Battle Zone. No Trophy is placed if the battle is a draw.

##### **Next Battle**

Proceed to the next Battle Zone in the established direction. Repeat the process until all 7 Battles are complete.

## 4.2 Substitution Mode

### 4.2.1 Game Setup

- Each player brings a Hero Deck consisting of 60 Hero cards. No more than 6 Hero cards in a deck may share the same Power value. Only 1 copy of each Hero variation can appear in a Hero Deck.
- Players prepare their **Hot Dog Decks** Each player's hotdog deck must contain exactly 10 hotdogs You may include multiple of the same hot dog in your hot dog deck
- Players randomly determine a starting player using an agreed-upon method. The randomly selected player then chooses which player goes first and the direction Battles will resolve (left-to-right or right-to-left).
- Each player shuffles their Hero Deck and draws **7 Heroes**, placing them face-down into the 7 Battle Zones in the order they choose.
- Each player also draws **4 additional Hero cards** and places them in their **Bench** (also called Hand), kept hidden from the opponent.

### 4.2.2 Turn and Battle Structure

#### **Substitution Phase**

**Starting with the player with honors** Before comparing Power, each player may pay **2 Hot Dogs** to substitute one Hero from their Bench face-down into the Battle Zone.

- A substituted Hero replaces the original face-down Hero.
- Players draw a new Hero from their deck.

Each player may substitute only **once per battle**.

#### **Reveal Heroes**

Both players reveal the Heroes placed in the current Battle Zone.

### **Determine Winner**

Compare the Power values of the revealed Heroes. The Hero with the higher Power wins. If the values are equal, the battle is a draw.

### **Battle Result**

The winner places a Trophy. If the battle is a draw, no Trophy is awarded.

### **Next Battle**

The player who won the previous battle goes first in the next one. If the battle was a draw, turn order remains the same.

## **4.3 Playmaker Mode**

### **4.3.1 Game Setup**

- Each player brings a Hero Deck consisting of 60 Hero cards. No more than 6 Hero cards in a deck may share the same Power value. Only 1 copy of each Hero variation can appear in a Hero Deck.
- Each player brings a Playbook consisting of exactly 30 Play cards. Players may include Bonus Plays in addition to the required 30 Plays. All Plays must be unique..
- Players prepare their Hot Dog Decks Each player's hotdog deck must contain exactly 10 hotdogs You may include multiple of the same hot dog in your hot dog deck
- Players randomly determine a starting player using an agreed-upon method. The randomly selected player then chooses which player goes first and the direction Battles will resolve (left-to-right or right-to-left).
- Each player shuffles their Hero Deck and draws 7 Heroes, placing them face-down into the 7 Battle Zones in the order they choose.
- Each player draws 4 additional Hero cards and places them in their Bench (also called Hand), kept hidden from the opponent.
- Each Player draws four Plays and places them in their Hand.

### **4.3.2 Turn and Battle Structure**

#### **Substitution Phase**

**Starting with the player with honors** Before comparing Power, each player may pay **2 Hot Dogs** to substitute one Hero from their Bench face-down into the Battle Zone.

- A substituted Hero replaces the original face-down Hero.
- Players draw a new Hero from their deck.
- Each player may substitute only **once per battle**.

### **Reveal Heroes**

Both players reveal the Heroes placed in the current Battle Zone.

### **Play Phase**

After Heroes are revealed and substitutions (if any) are made, starting with the player who has honors, players may play one or more Play cards by paying their Hot Dog costs.

The player with honors may choose to run Plays or may pass.

After the player with honors passes, the other player may now play one or more Plays or may pass.

Each player has only one opportunity per battle to Run Plays..

When both players have passed during the Play Phase, the game proceeds to the **Determine Winner** step.

### **Determine Winner**

Compare the Power values of the revealed Heroes, including any modifications from Plays. The Hero with the higher Power wins. If the values are equal, the battle is a draw.

### **Battle Result**

The winner places a Trophy. If the battle is a draw, no Trophy is awarded.

### **Super Tie Breaker**

If, after all Plays have been activated, and both players' Heroes are tied in power, a Hero with a Super Weapon wins the battle.

### **Next Battle**

At the end of each battle each player draws **1 Play card** from their Playbook.

The player who won the previous battle goes first. If the battle was a draw, turn order remains the same..

## 4.4 Winning the Game

### 4.4.1 Victory Condition

At the end of the game, the player who has won the majority of the seven battles is declared the winner. Trophies or other markers are used to track battle wins throughout the game.

### 4.4.2 Ties

If both players win the same number of battles, the game ends in a tie. If a tie is not possible, the game proceeds to sudden death.

### 4.4.3 Sudden Death Rules

In the event of a tie:

- Each player reveals the **top card of their Hero Deck**.
- Compare Power. The Hero with the higher Power wins the game.
- If both Heroes have equal Power, repeat the process with the next top card.

#### **Super Weapon Type Rule:**

If both players reveal their Heroes and their power is tied, a Hero with a Super Weapon wins Sudden Death.

# 5. Card Rules and Effects

## 5.1 Play Resolution

### 5.1.1 Play Effects

When a Play is run, it creates a **Play effect**. Play effects are classified by how long they exist and how they interact with the game state.

#### **Instantaneous Effects**

Instantaneous Play effects fully resolve at the moment they are created and do not persist beyond their resolution. Once resolved, they leave no continuing impact on the game state.

Instantaneous effects include, but are not limited to:

- Power changes without a stated duration
- Hot Dog recovery
- Card draw, discard, or search
- One-time rolls, flips, or calculations

#### **Ongoing Effects**

Ongoing Play effects create a lasting impact on the game state after the Play resolves. These effects remain active until they end naturally, are nullified, or are otherwise removed by the rules or card text.

Ongoing effects include, but are not limited to:

- Power changes with a stated duration
- Effects that modify future Plays or battles
- Restrictions, prevention, or immunity
- Rule changes that remain active over time

## 5.1.2 Order of Resolution

Plays resolve in the order they are played. Once a Play is declared and its cost is paid, it is resolved fully before the next Play is processed.

## 5.1.3 Persisting Effects

Unless a Play specifically states that it cancels or overrides an earlier ongoing effect, any ongoing effects that have already occurred remain in effect. Ongoing effects do not retroactively change prior game states.

## 5.1.4 Future-Only Effects

Most Plays affect only future game states unless their text clearly indicates otherwise. Effects do not alter resolved battles or completed phases unless explicitly allowed.

## 5.1.5 Ownership and Interaction Limits

Players may only interact with their own Playbook, hand, discard piles, and decks. A player may not draw from, manipulate, or look at their opponent's Playbook or cards unless specifically instructed by a card.

## 5.1.6 Unique Copies and Non-Stacking

Since each Playbook only allows one copy of a Play, a Play's Ongoing effect may not be duplicated, stacked, or layered through recursion, replay, or **copying**.

If an effect causes a player to **copy the text or effect of a Play**, that copied effect is treated as that Play being used for all rules purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, restrictions on uniqueness and non-stacking of ongoing effects.

Plays with ongoing effects do not stack with themselves in any way. Running, replaying, or copying the same Play multiple times does not multiply or compound its effect unless the Play explicitly states otherwise.

## 5.1.7 Replay and Nullification

If a Play with an ongoing effect leaves play, is returned to hand, deck, or another zone, **or if its effect is copied**, any "still ongoing" effects created by that Play are immediately nullified.

If that Play, or a copied version of its effect, is used again, it creates a **new instance** of the effect and does not resume or stack with a previous instance.

Recursion, replay, or copying of a Play from a previously settled battle does not alter the outcome of that battle in any way. All resolved battles remain final.

## 5.2 The “If Able” Rule

### 5.2.1 Partial Resolution

If any part of a Play’s effect cannot be completed due to the current game state, that portion of the effect is ignored. All remaining portions that can legally resolve must do so.

### 5.2.2 Costs Still Apply

All stated costs, including Hot Dogs, must be paid in full to run a Play, even if some or all of its effects will not resolve.

### 5.2.3 Discard as a Requirement vs. Discard as an Effect

A discard instruction can function in one of two ways:

#### A. Discard as a Requirement

- If a Play instructs a player to discard a card **as a prerequisite to gaining an effect** (for example, the discard appears at the start of the text or is written as “Discard X to...”), that discard must be completed for the effect to occur.
- If the player cannot discard the required card(s), the Play may still be run, but **its effect is nullified**.

#### B. Discard as an Effect

- If a discard occurs as part of the Play’s resolution (for example, later in the text or conditional on another outcome), the Play resolves as much as possible.
- If the discard cannot occur, only that portion of the effect is ignored.

### 5.2.4 “Send to Discard” Clarification

Any instruction that directs a card to be sent to the discard pile is treated as discarding a card for all rules purposes.

## 5.3 Card Commitment

### 5.3.1 Committing a Card

A card is considered committed when a player places it into play and fully removes their hand from it. Until that moment, the card may be picked back up, even if visible to the opponent.

### 5.3.2 Cost and Resolution Timing

Once a card is committed, the player must immediately pay any required costs and resolve its effect

## 6. Glossary of Terms

### Active Hero

The Hero currently revealed in a Battle Zone.

### Arena

The central shared play area that contains seven Battle Zones where Heroes face off.

### Bench

A group of four Hero cards drawn and held in Substitution and Playmaker Modes. Heroes in the Bench may be substituted into battles by paying the required Hot Dog cost.

### Bonus Play

A Play card included beyond the 30-card Playbook limit. Bonus Plays follow all normal rules for Play cards but do not count toward the deck limit.

### Cancelled

An effect or card that is stopped before it resolves. Cancelled Plays are still considered played and are discarded after use.

### Discard

A zone where used or removed cards are placed. Each player maintains their own Discard Pile.

Cards that are discarded, sent to the discard pile, or placed face-up in a discard pile are **not revealed** unless a card or rule explicitly instructs the player to reveal them.

Discarding a card does not count as revealing a card for any rules or effects that reference revealed cards.

### Draw

To take a card from the top of a deck into a player's hand.

### Hand

The private area containing a player's drawn Hero cards (for substitution) and/or Play cards (for activation). Also referred to as the Bench when referencing Heroes.

## **Hero**

The primary card type used in battle. Heroes are placed into Battle Zones and compared using their Power value.

## **Hero Deck**

A deck composed entirely of Hero cards. Players draw from this deck to set up the Arena and refill their Bench during substitution.

## **Hot Dogs**

The in-game energy resource used to pay for Plays and Substitutions. Each player manages their own Hot Dog total during gameplay.

## **Nullify**

To cancel an effect or Play. Nullification can occur in two ways:

- **Before resolution:** The effect is stopped from happening. The Play is still considered used, and any costs (such as Hot Dogs) are still paid.
- **After resolution:** Some cards may nullify ongoing or persistent effects that were already applied. In this case, the effect is ended, but any prior outcomes remain unless specifically reversed.

## **Play**

A card from the Playbook that causes an effect or change to the game state. Plays are activated by paying their Hot Dog cost.

## **Playbook**

The deck of Play cards used only in Playmaker Mode. It contains unique Plays and may also include Bonus Plays.

## **Power**

The stat used to compare Heroes during battle. The Hero with the higher Power wins the battle.

## **Recover**

To gain back spent Hot Dogs through card effects.

## Reveal

To **reveal** a card means to show that card to all players so its identity is clearly visible.

Revealing a card does **not** move the card, discard it, or place it into play unless a rule or card effect specifically instructs otherwise. A card remains in its current zone after being revealed unless another instruction changes its location.

If a card effect instructs a player to **reveal** a card, that card is considered revealed for all rules purposes.

**A Hero turned face-up in a Battle Zone is considered revealed.**

Cards that enter the **Discard** are **not considered revealed** solely because they entered the Discard. A card is only revealed if a rule or card effect specifically instructs a player to reveal it.

If a rule or effect instructs a player to reveal a card from a hidden zone (such as a hand or deck), that card must be shown to all players long enough for its identity to be confirmed before continuing play.

A revealed card becomes public information for all players.

## Run

To activate a Play by paying its Hot Dog cost and resolving its effect.

## Search

To look through a deck for a specific card or type, as directed by a card effect.

## Substitute

To replace a face-down Hero in the Arena with a Hero from the Bench. Substitution follows these steps:

1. Pay **2 Hot Dogs**.
2. Choose a Hero from your Bench to enter the Battle Zone.
3. Move the original face-down Hero to the Discard Pile.
4. Place the new Hero face-down into the Battle Zone.
5. Draw a new Hero from your Hero Deck.

Each player may substitute only once per battle.