



Demo Kit Guide

Preparation

You'll need this guide to run this demo. In addition, your kit contains the following components:

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1 map



7 dice



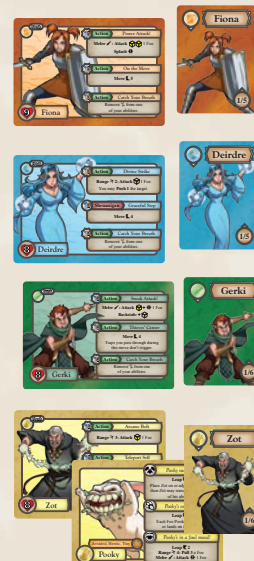
14 small cards



4 Ability Tiles



7 Initiative Tokens



4 sets of character decks and mats



19 standees



Epic Pool



...and a pile of tokens

Best Practices for a Great Demo

When you demo Tales, you should start by describing the core concept of the game to your participants and setting their expectations for how long the demo will take.

Learning a game is more effective and more fun when you learn by actually playing it, so your goal should be to get your players into the action as soon as you can! You should tell players exactly as much as they need to know to take the next step in the game, and no more.

You should avoid getting caught up in details or bogging down the game trying to help players make the 'correct' choices. Most of all, you should not dwell on hypotheticals and what-if situations - only talk about the game that's happening in front of your players! Straying from what's actually going on in the game will confuse and distract them.

Introduce concepts as they come up in play, and guide your players through the game with gentle but persistent prompting, easing up on directing their play as they learn. Let players make their own decisions, and let them take back and correct their mistakes.

Setting Up

The demo will go faster if setup is completed before anyone else shows up! Setup for the demo is similar to normal setup for a Tales game, but your players won't be missing much if you don't do it in front of them. If setup is not done before players sit down for the demo, try recruiting them to help you with simple tasks, such as separating different tokens into their own piles or sorting each character's cards.

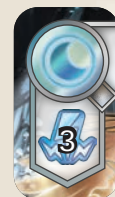
You should set up the figures on the map yourself, and **keep in mind that two deployment spaces are not used unless you have 3 or 4 Heroes in the game**. Do not place figures in the spaces with blue, green or purple dashed borders yet. These Schemers will deploy when the Beer Goat reaches the Key space of the same color.

If you have only 1 or 2 participants in your demo, you should pick a character to play after each of your participants has made their choice. **If neither of them picked Fiona, you should do so, as she is helpful for explaining the basic concepts of the game.**

Once all players have a Hero picked out, let them know that in the full game they'll get to customize their hero with abilities and items, but for this scenario they'll be playing with a fixed set of cards. Now is a good time to look at the setup flags for each player's cards and make sure that they have the correct Charge and Power Tokens.



Special setup spots.



Setup flag.

Starting the Demo

To start the demo, read the Prologue out loud to your participants. If you're pressed for time, feel free to read the Summary instead.

Prologue

Wrench was ecstatic about his glorious new invention: the Beer Goat, a stalwart automaton that could haul all manner of goods, especially ale and spirits!

Unfortunately, the gizmo has not returned from its maiden voyage and Warthorn is fuming over the lost shipment of Dragon's Breath Ale and Holy Water the "blasted contraption" was collecting.

So our band of heroes have come to the aid of our favorite kobold and pledged to rescue his

automaton (and Warthorn's shipment), and find themselves crouched in some bushes looking at a tavern hidden out in the wilderness. Well, most of them do. Gerki sits atop the crumpled form of the lone watchman that was posted to keep an eye out for adventurers like, well, Gerki. The lookout groans quietly as Gerki waves over his companions.

Zot lifts a bushy wizard eyebrow in disbelief, "Just the one lookout?" The sound of laughter and clattering dishes are heard within the hall.

"I know right?" favors Gerki with a wicked smile as he hops up from his new bench. "Amateurs."

Deirdre waves her hand in a crescent above the bandit and offers a silent prayer to Ellana before turning back to the others. "Sounds like the party's inside. Shall we?"

"Oh yeah," smiles Fiona as she approaches the heavy door and lifts her ironclad foot, "Let's get our ale!"

Summary

*Wrench's new fangled contraption, the Beer Goat, hasn't come back with Warthorn's latest shipment of Dragon's Breath Ale *GASP!* We tracked the mechanical contraption to a jolly bandit hideout in the woods, and snuck our way through the back door to retrieve it. However, it's gone a little haywire and woken up the drunks!*

Take a moment to point out a few things on the map; the Difficult spaces that represent Furniture and cost an extra space of Movement to enter, the Hazardous Fireplaces that deal 3 damage to figures that remain on them after the Combat Phase, the yellow-dotted Escape Route, and the yellow X at the end of that Escape Route. Let the players know that if the Beer Goat is on that space and alive at the end of the turn, they'll win!

Explain to your players that the first round of play in this scenario will be a Surprise Round with a fixed turn order in which only the Heroes will act - the bandits are too drunk to muster up quickly! Assure them that this will only be true for the first round; once this round is over, normal rounds with initiative will be in effect, and you'll cover those rules soon.

Lead your players through the Surprise Round starting with the Beer Goat. Take this time to point out that the Beer Goat will always go first this game by highlighting the area of the map labeled "Playing the Round". Resolve the Beer Goat's Scheme yourself, and take the opportunity to briefly point out how Leap and Move are different. Point out the Beer Goat's Heroic Keyword and how that makes him a Foe to the other Schemers and a Friend to the Heroes. Explain that this may change how their abilities effect the Beer Goat, for example, Deirdre can give it Shield Tokens. Show how the Beer Goat drops a 3 Damage Trap on one of the Bandits, dealing damage to him immediately! Those traps will be dangerous to both Heroes and Schemers, but that could be to their advantage.

Once the Beer Goat has gone, Heroes take turns in the following order: Fiona, Deirdre, Zot and Pooky, and finally Gerki.

Surprise Round Turn Order:

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Bear Goat	Fiona	Deirdre	Zot and Pooky	Gerki

Explain that players can perform 2 Actions and 1 Shenanigan on their turn, as defined by their various ability cards. Give the Fiona player the two Action and one Shenanigan ability tiles to help them track what they'll do during their turn.

Direct the Fiona player to start off by using 'A fight? Count me in!' as the first Action of the game. This will let you explain Cooldown costs and how to resolve an Ability. Make sure Cooldown Tokens are placed on the card before the ability starts to resolve, and explain that the ability is resolved from top to bottom, one line at a time. Once Fiona's player rolls the damage dice, explain the symbols on the dice that she rolled. Don't bother explaining dice results that haven't been rolled yet!

Once Fiona has taken her first action, loosen the reins and let her player choose how to play out the rest of the turn, offering gentle suggestions if they seem lost. Then, do the same for Deirdre, taking the opportunity to explain how Charge abilities work.

If Zot is in the game, set Pooky's Scheme to 'Pooky's on a Rampage!' and explain how Pooky works as they start their turn. Pooky is an additional Heroic figure that Zot's player controls. While Zot's player can't decide what Scheme Pooky will perform each turn, they will still make all the choices for that Scheme. The Zot player also has their own ability tile for tracking whether or not Pooky has done anything yet. Finally, point out Pooky's Avoided and Tiny keywords, which mean that he won't be attacked by the bandits, and that he can share a space with any other figure.

On Gerki's turn, point out Gerki's Backstab ability and his reminder card. Gerki's attacks are much more effective if his Foes are adjacent to Gerki's Friends, or if his Foes are stuck on Difficult or Hazardous spaces! Remind Gerki's player that the Beer Goat is Friendly to him, and that means enemies right next to the Beer Goat are fair game for a backstabbin'.

Once the Surprise Round is over, explain how the Objective Phase works. First, check to see what figures are standing on a Fireplace space, and assign 3 damage to each figure that is. Then, quickly check the Win Condition - this is the first round, so the Beer Goat is nowhere near the big yellow X, but in time he'll make it!

Now the players are ready to dive into the rest of the demo and get started with normal rounds of play! Tell them that they'll lose the game if any of the Heroes are defeated, or if the Beer Goat is defeated. The mecha-kid gloves are off!

Playing the Demo

Start the new round with the Ready Phase, walking players through each step. First, each Hero ability loses one Cooldown Token. Then roll Scheme dice, one at a time for each Schemer (don't forget Pooky!) Lastly, flip all the initiative tokens that represent figures currently on the map face down and randomize them. If you have a cloth bag handy, use that instead!

Begin the Combat Phase - remember that the Beer Goat still goes first! From this round onward, the Beer Goat will also trigger the addition of new Foes to the map. When the Beer Goat lands on the Blue Key, place the indicated enemies onto the spaces marked with a blue dashed border. Next round, the Beer Goat will land on the Purple Key and trigger the enemies on the purple dashed border, and so on.

When the Beer Goat lands on a Key space, that may deploy figures from a Schemer group that wasn't on the map when the Combat Phase began. If this happens, add their initiative token to the draw pile or bag and explain what you're doing to your players.

Once the Beer Goat's turn is resolved, start drawing initiative tokens to determine turn order. If a Hero is drawn, they get to take their turn, once again performing up to 2 Actions and 1 Shenanigan.

When a Schemer's token is drawn, each figure on the map in that Schemer group takes a turn in ascending order by number; 1, 2, 3 and so on. All figures of the same type will perform the same Scheme. The first time a Schemer takes a turn, you should resolve and explain each step.

The first time a Schemer Attacks a Hero with Shield Tokens, point out that Shield Tokens can help prevent the damage. The first time a Hero takes damage, explain that a Hero's player mat has both a Fresh side and a Wounded side, giving them a second 'health bar.' Note that the Beer Goat doesn't have this luxury!

Once all the initiative tokens have been drawn, quickly walk the players through another Objective Phase, followed by a new Ready Phase. The rhythm of the game should be sinking in by now! Let play continue until the Beer Goat finally stands atop the yellow X during the Objective Phase, or until one of the Heroes or the Beer Goat is defeated.

Common Mistakes

Here are some common play mistakes that you're likely to see during your demos of Tales, and our recommendations for handling them. With any sorts of problems that happen during your demos, try to assume that players are acting with the best of intentions and want the demo to go well as much as you do.

The most common mistake that new players make is forgetting to pay Cooldown and Charge costs when they activate an ability. Be alert for the movement of Cooldown and Charge tokens, and gently remind players each time they forget to pay their ability costs before resolving their abilities.

Other players may be all-too-aware of the costs of using their abilities, and as a result resist using them as much as possible. This is most common with Cooldown abilities. Point out to these players that if an ability is never on Cooldown, that's almost the same as it **always** being on Cooldown. Bring up the Catch Your Breath action, as well.

Another issue you're likely to see is indecision during a player's turn. Many players see all of the moving parts of Tales and decide that they need to maximize the value of every single action they take. While they should be allowed to put some thought into their Hero's turn, you should prompt them to act recklessly if they seem to be catching themselves in loops of 'do I do this...or that' and slowing down the game for everyone.

Similar to indecision problems, you may have a player who polls everyone else at the table for every action they take. If the other players at the table seem to like this, and they allow the player currently acting to make the final decision, you may want to just let this happen. If the other players seem to dislike constantly being asked what to do, or someone uses it as an opportunity to take over someone else's turn, steer the decisions back into the hands of the current player.

Finally, it's common for players to pepper you with questions about each component and game concept as they seek to master the game in theory before they even start to play. Have a friendly 'We'll talk about that when it comes up in play' locked and loaded for these players, and return to it as often as you have to. Of course, if a player asks about something that **has** come up in play, now's the time to answer!

Ending the Demo

When the demo is over, thank your participants and tell them about the main game! If they pick up Tales from the Red Dragon Inn, they'll get to adventure their way through 25 unique scenarios with new maps, more dice, loadout choices for their Heroes, more gameplay depth and more story! While the demo is robust, it's far from the entire game, so don't let your players leave with the impression that the demo is all there is to Tales.

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