

Talisman: Edition Decoder & The Rules the 5th Changed

Which edition owns what, why nothing crosses over, and a straight comparison of the two expansions — so you buy the right box first.

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The two shelves

Nothing crosses between them. Not a card, not a board, not a character.

	5TH EDITION	REVISED 4TH EDITION
Publisher	Avalon Hill (2024)	Fantasy Flight (2008)
Still in print	Yes	No — second-hand only
Official expansions	2	16
Board expansions	None yet	Four (Dungeon, Highland, City, Woodland)
Miniatures in core	12, unpainted	Plastic figures, earlier tooling
The ending	Slay the Elder Dragon	Cast the Command Spell until rivals fall
Players	2–6, ages 12+	2–6
Buy it if	You own nothing and want to play	You already own its expansions

Rules the 5th edition changed

Each of these answers a complaint players had been making for decades.

- ☐ **The ending** — You still need a Talisman to enter the Inner Region, but the game now ends by defeating the Elder Dragon at the centre rather than by outlasting everyone.
- ☐ **The Toad** — Lasts one turn instead of three, and cannot use fate while transformed.
- ☐ **Fate buys movement** — Spend a fate to ignore your movement roll and move up to six spaces in either direction, to a space no other character occupies.
- ☐ **Losing a fight pays** — When two characters fight, the loser gains 1 fate afterwards. It applies to everyone, always.
- ☐ **Death is not exile** — A killed character goes to the Village and keeps their items, then spends the next turn buying lives.
- ☐ **Crags** — No longer cost you a turn.
- ☐ **Alignment** — Chosen by the player at the start rather than drawn.
- ☐ **Trophies** — Trading them in requires amounts equal to your current stats.

Alliances vs Nemesis — buy one, not both

Both require the 5th edition core box. They pull in opposite directions.

	ALLIANCES: FATE BECKONS	NEMESIS: CALL OF THE HUNT
Shape	Fully co-operative	One player against the rest
Trials	5	3
Time	~90 min each, 5–7 hrs total	~1 hour each
Players	2–6	3–6
Figures	5	5, incl. 3 unboxed mid-game
Signature part	Doom tracker, sealed envelopes	Two-sided Inner Region overlay
Difficulty	High — expect to repeat Trials	Moderate, and it ends in an evening
Buy it for	A campaign group	A games night with a traitor

If you are buying the 4th edition second-hand

Boards before cards. The line is out of print, so prices move week to week.

- Revised 4th core box first**
Not the 2007 original — the Revised printing fixed early problems and added fate tokens.
- Add a board expansion next**
The Dungeon or The Highland. A board changes the game more than any card expansion will.
- Then The Dragon**
If the old ending is your complaint, this is the 4th edition's own answer to it.
- The City, then The Woodland**
Only if the sprawl is the point. This is where the table runs out of room.
- Check the publisher on the box**
Pegasus Spiele reprinted several expansions. Same content, but listings are frequently mislabelled.

Sources. Published Talisman edition histories; the 5th edition rules development notes; publisher and retailer product listings for the core box, Alliances: Fate Beckons and Nemesis: Call of the Hunt. Compiled and written by Puzzlewick — no rulebook text is reproduced.

Accuracy. Every figure on this sheet was read from the sources above on 4 August 2026. Prices and availability change; rules do not. Where this sheet and the rulebook disagree, the rulebook is right.

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