



RULEBOOK



# Introduction

Welcome to the Animal Kingdoms.

Long ago, the animals of the world gained sentience and rose up against the world-destroying Magnon civilisation.

An uneasy peace has reigned ever since, with the ruling classes of herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores establishing their own monarchies and living in relative harmony with each other.

Ancient Magnon technology is believed to be cursed and lies waiting in forbidden ruins. Only the largest animals make up the ruling classes - rabbits, badgers, and other ungainly creatures of the earth and sea serve as subordinate peasant classes to you and your fellow Monarchs.

Yet, the carnivore thirst for blood has begun to wipe out entire civilisations of peasant creatures. As the smaller creatures die out, the herbivore empires see the threat of their own demise looming over the horizon.

To avoid being enslaved once again, you must take up the sword and the bow - the fang and the claw. You must manifest a new world order of your own making.

The time is yours to forge the new Animal Empire, and save your species from extinction.



# Components



16

Kingdom Cards



16

Army Cards



8

Crown Cards



16

Wilderness Cards



# How to Win

## Default Mode: Conquest

You win the game if you, or you and your Vassals combined, are the first to capture the majority of the 16 Kingdoms (9 in total).

## Two-Player Mode: Mustering

You win the game if you are the first to capture the majority of the 16 Kingdoms (9 in total). You also begin with two Kingdoms each.

You cannot attack until both you and your opponent have at least three Kingdoms each.



# Set-Up

1. Shuffle the Kingdom and Wilderness decks.
2. All players choose a Crown card of any colour.  
(Spare crown cards are not required for play.)
3. All players draw one random Kingdom card, the Army card that matches their Kingdom, and one random Wilderness card each. Place the Army and Wilderness decks within easy reach of all players.
4. Place your Kingdom card face up in front of you.

This is your starting Kingdom and the seat of your Empire. Place your Crown card under your initial Kingdom card so that you can see the Crown poking out from beneath, as seen on the right.



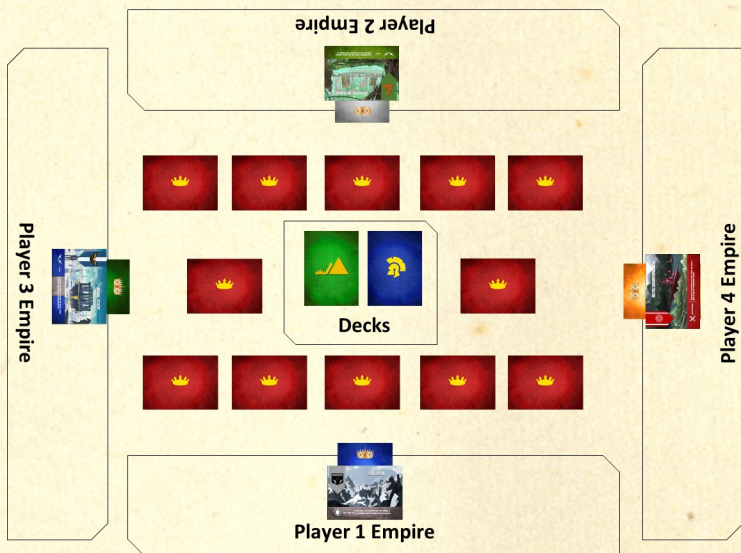
5. Draw the Army card that matches your Kingdom.
6. Keep all Army and Wilderness cards in your hand. They remain hidden whenever they are in your hand, but are face-up when played.
7. Arrange all remaining Kingdom cards facedown in the play area between all the players.



# Set-Up Diagram

8. Place the Wilderness deck in the middle of the play area.  
(An example layout can be found below)

You are now ready to play!





# How to Play

Randomly select a starting player.

Each turn, a player may take up to two Actions using their Armies.

Each Army can only perform one action per turn, unless its Specialisation (see p. 9-10), or a Wilderness card (p. 11) allows it to perform more.

Note that on your first turn, you will only have your starting army, so you can only make one Action (unless you use an Army Specialisation or Wilderness card that increases that)

Armies can perform the following Actions:

## March

Move your Army to any Kingdom card or to the Wilderness Deck. You may march to any Kingdom, whether it be yours, a Free Kingdom, or an Enemy Kingdom.

**Free Kingdoms** are those facedown in the centre of the play area. These are flipped face-up once your Army Marches to them. Leave the Kingdom in place until it is captured.

**Enemy Kingdoms** are those controlled by other players. Marching one or more of your Armies to an Enemy Kingdom

means that Kingdom will need to defend, or you could capture their Kingdom next turn.

Wilderness Cards are taken directly into your hand once your Army Marches to the Deck. That Army counts as used and also returns to your hand.

### **Capture**

If your Armies outnumber the enemy Armies on a Kingdom, or you are faced with no opposition, you can Capture that Kingdom. Move the Kingdom card into your Empire (see diagram on p. 4) and take the corresponding Army card. You will not be able to use your new Army until your next turn.

**Note:**

Each player must always have at least one Kingdom in their Empire. You can never take a player's last Kingdom.

### **Battle**

One of your Armies on a Kingdom forces an enemy Army to retreat to its owner's hand.

Armies that have been forced to retreat from a Kingdom cannot return to that Kingdom on that player's next turn, unless they use a Wilderness card.

## Seize Crown

If a Kingdom you capture has a Crown card, you may use your Capture action to claim this instead. This makes the player that originally owned that Crown card your Vassal (see p. 12-15 for more information on Vassalage).

## Use Specialty

Each Army has one of four Specialisation symbols: Attackers, Defenders, Raiders, or Fleet of Foot.

See p. 9-10 for Army Specialty rules.

## Manage Vassal

If you have one or more Vassals, you can use one of your Actions per turn to Give or Take a Kingdom from them, rather than using an Army. This can be from or to your Empire or any Empire of your Vassals.

This can be a good way to support and reward your Vassals that earn it, or to punish your Vassals that aren't following your orders accordingly (see p. 12-15 for the complete Vassalage rules).

### Reminder:

Each player must always have at least one Kingdom in their Empire. You can never take a player's last Kingdom.





# Army Specialities

All armies can March, Capture and Battle. Additionally, Specialist symbols on the Army cards indicate abilities that are activated in certain circumstances.

The ability for each Specialty is:



**Attackers** – force one enemy Army to retreat back to their owner's hand when moving to a Kingdom \*unless the Army is a Defender). This will not cost an action.



**Defenders** – cannot be forced to retreat by Attackers. This does not cost an action.



**Raiders** – after capturing a Kingdom, a Raider Army may immediately March to any Free or Enemy Kingdom as one additional action.



**Fleet of Foot** – you may choose one of your Fleet of Foot Armies to have one additional March action at the end of each turn. Note that your Army cannot March to the Wilderness deck.



**The Elder Dragon** – due to its immense power, the Elder has all the Specialities above, and can them at any time.



# Wilderness Cards

Wilderness cards can be gained by using an Army to explore the Wilderness Deck with the March Action. Once you have done so, your Army returns to your hand immediately, along with one new Wilderness card from the deck. That Army has been used this turn as normal, and so cannot be used again this turn as one of your two actions.



Wilderness cards can be used at any time, however cannot be used to interrupt another player's Action. You can use them right after another player has used a card, however their action is still resolved first, before yours. You can form a "stack" of Wilderness cards to resolve timing disputes.

When a Wilderness card is played, place it at the bottom of the Wilderness deck to be drawn again later.



# Vassalage and Crowns

## Capturing Crown Cards

If you capture another player's Crown card, they are now under your control and on your team. If you win, they win. But of course, as Emperor, you get the ultimate victory.

Upon capturing a Crown card, you slide it under your own Crown card, as shown.

This means that, as a Vassal, being overrun by enemies is not the end of the game for you.

## Duties of Emperors and Vassals

Vassals must provide military support and mutual protection to their Emperor. Emperors have an obligation to look after their Vassals as best they can and may no longer Capture territory from them. You may decide to use an action to Give or Take a Kingdom from a Vassal, which you can use to reward or punish their good or bad behaviour.

## Emperor Commands

In terms of commands, Emperors can give Vassals general orders like "Attack that player's Empire" or "Defend me" or "Capture more Kingdoms" or "Focus on defence". However, you cannot micromanage their turns, Armies, diplomacy, or behaviours. Good Emperors trust their vassals to work towards the goal of victory for the Empire.



# Vassalage and Crowns

## Vassal Kingdoms Count Toward Empire Size

The Kingdoms of your Vassal count towards your own total Empire size. Thus, to win (especially with a large number of players) capturing and commanding Vassals will be a critical element of winning the game. Beware, though: Vassals retain their own actions and assets, so may very well rebel when the time is right.

## Forming a Chain of Command

In a lot of cases you can capture the Crown card of a player that already has one or more Vassals of their own. In this case, their Vassals rebel and regain their own Crown cards. However, if one of your Vassals captures a Vassal of their own, a Chain of Command is formed with you at the top. You can command your Vassal, and they then command theirs.

## Use General Orders Only

Though you are technically their supreme ruler, your Vassal is in charge of their Vassal, and you cannot give orders to their Vassal directly. You cannot give or take Kingdoms from a Vassal of your Vassal, either.

If you like, you can use the following terms and ranks to help differentiate the Chain:

Empress/Emperor - Countess/Count - Baroness/Baron - Duchess/Duke - Lady/Lord



# Continue Exploring Here

Thanks for buying the game and for supporting Half-Monster Games!  
The world of Animal Empire is one we want to build on into future games. We have an interactive fiction map available for free if you would like further insight into the creatures/cultures of your favourite Species:

[HALFMONSTERGAMES.COM/ANIMAL-EMPIRE-MAP](http://HALFMONSTERGAMES.COM/ANIMAL-EMPIRE-MAP)



These stories were written by Maria Gabriela Orellana.  
More of her work can be found here:

Twitter - @darkweddingveil Instagram - @blackweddingveil



# Thank You Patrons!

Thank you all so, so much Patrons. This project has been a labour of love and you've supported me the entire time. The art, components, test days, nights, endless hours, and everything else wouldn't have been able to be done without your support. I really appreciate it, and want to say that this project is as much yours as it is mine!

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# Artist Credits

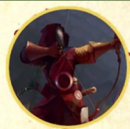
Special thanks to our artists who worked amazingly bring the world to life. Please check out their work through their pages below:

Characters



Barend Chamberlain  
Instagram: metgodinc

Environments



Craig Lee  
Instagram: brieflysalmn



Jess Wilce  
Instagram: resortjw.art



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**Designed By  
JACK FORD MORGAN**

**Edited By  
MARIE DAVIS  
EMILY TUPPENCE**