



CATACLYSM

An Atlantis vs Lemuria Story

Rulebook — Playtest Edition

2 Players | Ages 13+ | 45–90 Minutes

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Overview

Cataclysm is a trading card game about preparation, survival, and inevitability.

There is no traditional victory condition. Every game ends with the Cataclysm — a catastrophic flood of energy that destroys everything in its path. Players build their board, store charge, and make strategic decisions knowing the end is coming.

No one escapes the Cataclysm. Some leave more behind.

Winning: The player who preserves the most Legacy after the Cataclysm resolves is the survivor. Legacy is counted from what remains on your board after all damage is applied.

Setup

What You Need

- One 45-card faction deck per player
- The Pyramid deck (50 shared cards)
- The Pyramid charge tracker (4 edges, starting at 0)
- Charge counter tokens
- A flat play surface with room for each player's board

Seating

Place the Pyramid in the center of the table. It has 4 edges (E1–E4) and 4 seats (S1–S4) arranged around it:

Seat	Position	Adjacent Edges
S1	12 o'clock (North)	E1, E4
S2	3 o'clock (East)	E1, E2
S3	6 o'clock (South)	E2, E3
S4	9 o'clock (West)	E3, E4

Each player chooses a seat. Your seat determines which edges you are adjacent to — you take discharge damage only from your adjacent edges.

Side-by-side seats share one edge and leave one edge with no adjacent player (a dead edge). Diagonal seats activate all four edges with no dead edge. Both seating arrangements are valid strategic choices.

Starting the Game

1. Each player places their Hero card face-up in their play area. Heroes start in play.
2. Shuffle your deck. Draw 7 cards as your opening hand.
3. Mulligan: If your opening hand has no Energy cards, you may mulligan up to 3 times. Each mulligan shuffles your hand back and redraws 7 cards. After 3 mulligans you must keep your hand.
4. Shuffle the Pyramid deck and place it face-down in reach of both players.
5. Determine first player. Play proceeds clockwise.

Your Board

Each player controls their own board space. Your board contains:

- **Hero** — always present unless dead
- **People** — summoned from hand
- **Artifacts / Enchantments** — equipped to your People
- **Batteries** — charge storage
- **Scenes** — environmental effects
- **Energy cards** — tapped to pay costs, untap each turn

Turn Structure

Each round consists of three turns in this order:

- **Player 1 Turn** → **Player 2 Turn** → **Pyramid Turn**

Player Turn

Each player turn has four phases:

1. Draw Phase

Draw 1 card from your deck.

2. Action Phase

You may take any of the following actions in any order, as many times as you can afford:

- **Play an Energy card** for free — tap it to generate energy
- **Summon a Person** — pay its summon cost
- **Play a Scene** — pay its summon cost; Scene enters with charge (1/2/3 for Common/Uncommon/Rare)
- **Play a Battery** — pay its summon cost
- **Equip an Artifact or Attune an Enchantment** — pay 1 CE to attach to a Person
- **Activate a Use ability** — pay the listed cost
- **Activate your Hero's Use ability** — pay the listed cost
- **Play an Instant** — pay its cost; Instants go to graveyard after use

Abilities stack. When you activate an ability it goes on the stack. Your opponent may respond before it resolves. Once all players pass priority, the stack resolves last-in, first-out.

3. Reaction Phase

After any ability is declared, opponents may activate their own abilities or play Instants in response before it resolves. Once all players pass priority, the stack resolves in reverse order.

4. End Phase

The following happen automatically at end of turn, in order:

6. **Arc Burn:** Any energy that was tapped but not used this turn deals 1 damage to your Hero per unused unit. You may prevent Arc Burn by storing energy as charge in a valid card instead.
7. **Scene Damage:** Each Scene with at least 1 charge deals 1 damage to your Hero. Scenes that entered play this turn are exempt.
8. **Overload Check:** If any Person's total equipped charge exceeds their HP, they are destroyed immediately.

Pyramid Turn

After both players have taken their turns, the Pyramid acts:

9. Either player flips the top card of the Pyramid deck.
10. Resolve its effect immediately — Pyramid cards cannot be responded to.
11. Place the card face-down on the bottom of the Pyramid deck.
12. The Pyramid deck has no graveyard — it cycles continuously.

The Pyramid turn replaces the automatic edge advance. Edges only gain charge from Pyramid cards and card abilities.

Energy

Energy is the resource used to pay for cards and abilities. There are five energy types:

Symbol	Name	Faction
DC	Dark Current	Atlantean Fanatic / OTF
LC	Light Current	Atlantean Conservative / OTF
DR	Dark Resonance	Lemurian Fanatic / OTF
LR	Light Resonance	Lemurian Conservative / OTF
CE	Colorless Energy	Any faction

Colorless Energy (CE) can be paid using any energy type. Example: a cost of 1LC + 1CE can be paid with 2 LC, or 1 LC + 1 DC, etc.

Current and Resonance cannot substitute for each other. Dark and Light of the same type also cannot substitute for each other.

Energy cards are played for free from hand. Tap them to generate energy. They untap at the start of your next turn. Energy cards stay on the board — they are not discarded after use.

Charge

Charge represents stored energy and survival potential. It can be stored on:

- Batteries
- Artifacts
- Enchantments
- Scenes

Charge can be spent as Colorless Energy (CE). Tap a card to spend its charge.

Charge contributes directly to Cataclysm survival. During the Cataclysm, each stored charge point absorbs 1 point of Cataclysm damage before it reaches your cards and Hero.

Card Types

Hero

Your faction leader. Starts in play — never summoned. Has Passive and Use abilities.

- **Use abilities** cost energy to activate and can be used multiple times per turn as long as costs are paid. Activating a Use ability taps that card, including Heroes.
- **Passive abilities** are either always active (state passives) or can be triggered once per turn during the Reaction Phase.
- When your Hero's HP reaches 0, they are removed from play. You lose access to all Hero abilities. The game continues.

People

Characters you summon to your board. Have HP and abilities.

Rarity	HP	Summon Cost
Common	2	1 Faction Energy + 1 CE
Uncommon	4	1 Faction Energy + 1 CE + 1 CE
Rare	6	2 Faction Energy + 1 Secondary + 1 CE

Scenes

Environmental effects that stay in play. There is no limit to the number of Scenes a player can have.

- **Scenes enter play with charge** (Common: 1, Uncommon: 2, Rare: 3).
- A Scene deals 1 damage to its owner's Hero at the end of each turn while it has at least 1 charge.
- **Dormant Scenes:** When a Scene's charge reaches 0 it becomes Dormant. Dormant Scenes deal no damage and provide no abilities — but still count toward Legacy scoring.

Artifacts & Enchantments

- **Artifacts** are Atlantean equipment. Use Equip.
- **Enchantments** are Lemurian equipment. Use Attune.
- Cost 1 CE to equip/attune to a target Person you control.
- Grant +1 to equipped/attuned Person's ability effects (come out). Uncommon: also grant +1 to ability until end of turn (use, 2 faction energy). Rare: also grant +1 to all equipped/attuned Persons (passive) and have a unique charge manipulation ability (use).
- Store 1 charge counter.

- **Overload:** If total equipped charge on a Person exceeds their HP, that Person is destroyed.

Batteries

- Enter play with charge counters based on summon cost: 2CE = 1 counter, 4CE = 2 counters, 6CE = 3 counters. Pay 1CE to add 1 additional charge counter at any time.
- Tap to spend stored charge as CE.
- Absorb Cataclysm damage — charge on Batteries is spent before HP is lost.

Instants

- Can be played during any Reaction Phase — including your opponent's turn.
- Go on the stack. Opponents may respond.
- Resolve and go to the graveyard. Cannot be recycled except by specific abilities.

Rarity	Cost
Common	1 Faction Energy
Uncommon	1 Faction Energy + 1 CE
Rare	2 Faction Energy + 1 CE

The Pyramid

The Pyramid sits at the center of the table and tracks the inevitable approach of the Cataclysm. It has four edges, each capable of holding up to 20 charge counters.

Pyramid Deck

The Pyramid deck is a shared 50-card deck of Pulse and Surge cards. It is not owned by either player. During the Pyramid turn, one card is flipped and its effect resolves — adding charge to edges as described. The card then returns to the bottom of the deck.

Card	Rarity	Effect
The Pulse	Common	Add 1 charge to each edge
The Surge	Uncommon	Add 2 charge to each edge
Directional variants	Common/Uncommon	Add charge to specific edges

Edge Lock

When an edge reaches 20 charge counters, it locks:

- A locked edge cannot receive additional charge from any source.
- A discharge counter begins at 1 and advances by 1 each Pyramid turn.
- When the discharge counter reaches 4, an Edge Discharge occurs.

Edge Discharge

When a locked edge's discharge counter reaches 4, play pauses for the Pyramid Turn:

13. **Damage:** Each player adjacent to that edge takes 10 damage.
14. **Absorb or Deflect:** For each point of damage you may ABSORB (distribute among your cards and Hero) or DEFLECT (send back to the Pyramid).
15. **Pyramid Recombine:** All deflected damage combines. The Pyramid absorbs ~40% and returns the remainder equally to each adjacent player. Use the recombine table to resolve quickly.
16. **Edge Reset:** The edge resets. Its new charge value equals the number of cards destroyed during the discharge.

A dead edge (no adjacent players) still locks and discharges — it just deals damage to no one.

Recombine Table

Total Deflected	Pyramid Absorbs	Returns to Each Player
1-2	1-2	0
3	1	1
4	2	1
5	3	1
6	2	2
7	3	2
8	4	2
9	3	3
10	4	3

The Cataclysm

The Cataclysm is the end of the game. It occurs when all four Pyramid edges are locked simultaneously.

The Cataclysm cannot be prevented. Every game ends here. The only question is how prepared you are when it arrives.

Cataclysm Sequence

17. All four edges discharge simultaneously. Total Cataclysm damage is 80.
18. **Charge absorbs first:** Each stored charge counter on any card absorbs 1 point of Cataclysm damage. Remove all charge from all cards. Subtract total charge from 80 to find remaining damage.
19. **Distribute remaining damage:** Each player distributes their remaining damage among their People and Hero in any order. Cards reduced to 0 HP are destroyed.
20. Count Legacy from surviving cards.

Legacy Scoring

After the Cataclysm resolves, count the Legacy value of everything remaining on your board:

Card Type	Common	Uncommon	Rare
People	HP × 2	HP × 4	HP × 6
Artifacts / Enchantments	2	4	6
Scenes (incl. Dormant)	2	4	6
Batteries	2	4	6
Hero (if alive)	HP	—	—

The player with the highest Legacy total wins.

Tiebreakers

21. Player with the most cards remaining in their deck.
22. Player whose Hero survived.
23. If still tied — draw.

Player Elimination

A player with no Hero and no cards on the board at the time of Cataclysm cannot absorb damage and is eliminated. They score 0 Legacy.

Ability Reference

Damage Abilities

Keyword	Effect
Strike X	Deal X damage to target card or Hero
Allocate X	Deal X damage distributed among any targets you choose
Accelerate X	Add X charge counters to target edge
Charge X	Add X charge counters distributed among any edges
Drain X	Remove X charge counters from target card or edge
Steal X	Remove X charge from target card and place it on your card

Healing & Defense Abilities

Keyword	Effect
Heal X	Remove X damage from target card or Hero
Shield X	Target card or Hero cannot be targeted by abilities this turn
Ward X	Prevent X damage to target from the next source
Fortify X	Target absorbs X less Cataclysm damage
Stabilize X	Convert X incoming damage to charge on a Battery instead

Board Abilities

Keyword	Effect
Resurrect a Common	Return target Common card from any graveyard to play
Destroy a Common	Destroy target Common card
Disrupt X	Target card cannot activate abilities until your next turn
Buff X	Generate X bonus CE this turn. Expires end of turn

Passive & Trigger Keywords

Keyword	Effect
Passive	Always active. Does not need to be activated
When card enters play	Triggers when the card enters play. Printed on cards as “When card enters play: [effect]”
Use	Pay the listed cost to activate during your Action Phase. Activating a Use ability taps that card. Tapped cards untap at the start of your next turn.

Instant Keywords

Keyword	Effect
Counter	Negate target ability. That ability does not resolve
Redirect	Change the target of an ability on the stack to a new legal target
Delay	Target card cannot activate abilities until your next turn
Suppress	Distribute suppression among any cards. Suppressed cards cannot activate abilities for 1 round
Revive	Return target card from the graveyard to play
Take Control	Gain control of target card temporarily or permanently

Equipment Keywords

Keyword	Effect
Equip	Attach Artifact to a Person you control. Costs 1 CE. They gain +1 to all ability effects. Atlantean only.
Attune	Attach Enchantment to a Person you control. Costs 1 CE. They gain +1 to all ability effects. Lemurian only.
Charge Capacity	Equipped cards store 1 charge. If total charge on a Person's equipment exceeds their HP, they die (Overload).
Unequip	Remove target Artifact from an equipped Person and return it to its owner's hand. Atlantean only.
Unattune	Remove target Enchantment from an attuned Person and return it to its owner's hand. Lemurian only.

Factions

Hero	Civilization	Ideology	Energy
Dr. Veylan	Atlantean	Fanatic	Dark Current (DC)
High Mystic Nysha	Lemurian	Fanatic	Dark Resonance (DR)
Mayor Vaelis	Atlantean	Conservative	Light Current (LC)
Elder Maru	Lemurian	Conservative	Light Resonance (LR)
Lethan	Atlantean	On-The-Fence	Dark Current (DC)
Talah	Lemurian	On-The-Fence	Light Resonance (LR)

Fanatics are aggressive — abilities focused on damage, charge acceleration, and disruption.

Conservatives are defensive — abilities focused on healing, shielding, and Cataclysm absorption.

On-The-Fence (OTF) are adaptive — gain Synergy bonuses when controlling both Fanatic and Conservative cards simultaneously.

Example of Play

The following example shows a full round between **Player 1 (Dr. Veylan)** and **Player 2 (Elder Maru)**. Both Heroes are in play. The Pyramid has been running for two rounds.

Player 1 Turn (Dr. Veylan)

- **Draw Phase:** Player 1 draws a card from their deck.
- **Action Phase — Play Energy:** Player 1 plays a Dark Current energy card for free. It enters play untapped and ready to use.
- **Action Phase — Summon Person:** Player 1 taps 1DC + 1CE to summon *Kalen Vos* (Common Person, 2HP). When card enters play: Deal 1 damage to a Person or Hero. Player 1 targets Player 2's *Sorella Venn*.
- **Reaction Phase:** Player 2 responds by playing *Deep Roots* (Common Instant, 1LR) — target card is immune to all abilities this turn. Player 2 targets *Sorella Venn*. Both players pass priority. The stack resolves: immunity applies first, then *Kalen Vos*'s come out triggers — but *Sorella Venn* is immune. The damage is negated.
- **Action Phase — Equip Artifact:** Player 1 pays 1CE to equip *Phase Cutter* (Common Artifact) to *Kalen Vos*. When card enters play: +1 to equipped Person's ability effects. *Kalen Vos*'s use ability now deals 2 damage instead of 1. *Phase Cutter* also stores 1 charge counter.
- **End Phase:** Player 1 has no unused tapped energy. No Arc Burn. No Scene damage. No Overload. Turn ends.

Player 2 Turn (Elder Maru)

- **Draw Phase:** Player 2 draws a card.
- **Action Phase — Play Energy:** Player 2 plays a Light Resonance energy card for free.
- **Action Phase — Activate Scene:** Player 2 activates *Gentle Dissent* (Common Scene, 1 charge remaining). Pays 2CE and sacrifices 1 charge: prevent the next 1 damage to *Sorella Venn*. *Gentle Dissent* now has 0 charge and becomes Dormant.
- **Action Phase — Charge Battery:** Player 2 pays 1CE to add 1 charge counter to *Heartstone* (Small Battery). *Heartstone* now holds 2 charge counters total, ready to absorb Cataclysm damage or be tapped for CE.
- **End Phase:** *Gentle Dissent* is now Dormant — no Scene damage this turn. No Arc Burn. Turn ends.

Pyramid Turn

- Player 2 flips the top card of the Pyramid deck: *The Pulse* (Common). Add 1 charge to each edge. All four edges advance by 1. The card returns to the bottom of the Pyramid deck. The round is over — all tapped cards untap at the start of each player's next turn.

Quick Reference

Round Structure

- **Player 1 Turn:** Draw → Action Phase → Reaction Phase → End Phase
- **Player 2 Turn:** Draw → Action Phase → Reaction Phase → End Phase
- **Pyramid Turn:** Flip top Pyramid card → Resolve → Return to bottom

Summon Costs

Card Type	Common	Uncommon	Rare
People	1 Faction + 1 CE	1 Faction + 2 CE	2 Faction + 1 Secondary + 1 CE
Scenes	1 Faction + 1 CE	1 Faction + 2 CE	2 Faction + 1 Secondary + 1 CE
Batteries	2 CE	4 CE	6 CE
Instants	1 Faction	1 Faction + 1 CE	2 Faction + 1 CE
Equip/Attune	1 CE	1 CE	1 CE
Energy	Free	Free	Free

Legacy Scoring (Quick)

- People: HP × rarity (×2 / ×4 / ×6)
- All other cards (alive or dormant): rarity value (2 / 4 / 6)
- Hero: remaining HP

Stack & Priority

- When an ability is activated, it goes on the stack.
- Opponent gets priority — they may respond with an Instant or ability.
- When both players pass priority, the top item resolves.
- Instants can be played during any Reaction Phase, including on your opponent's turn.