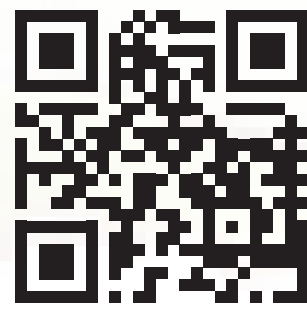


# PIXEL TACTICS



Game by **D. Brad Talton Jr.**  
Illustrated by **Fábio Fontes**  
Presented by **Level 99 Games**

**Skip the rulebook!**  
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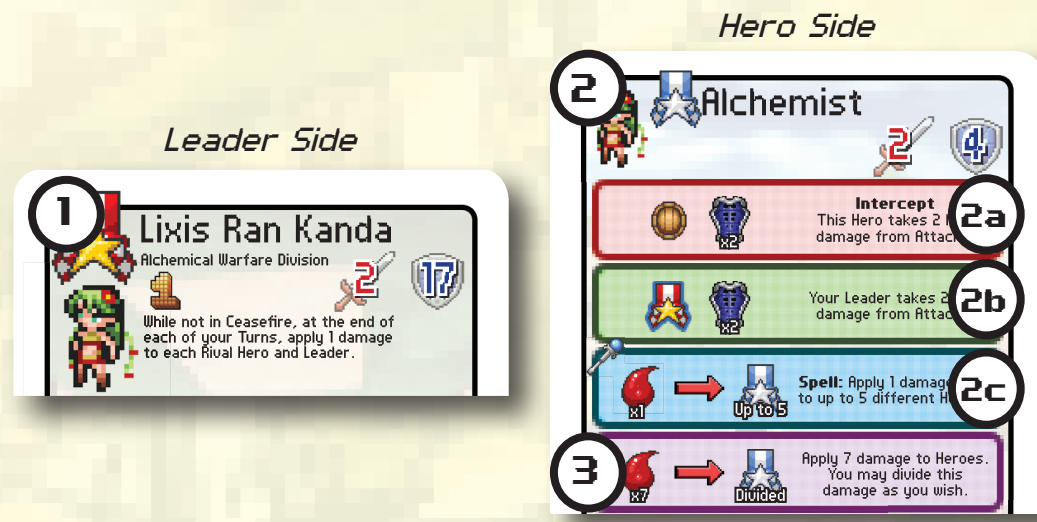
## OVERVIEW

The goal of Pixel Tactics is to choose a Leader, build a cohesive Unit of Heroes around that Leader, and then use your Unit to destroy the Rival's Unit. You win as soon as you are able to defeat your Rival's Leader.

The game plays in Rounds, and each Round is broken down into three Waves. Each Wave consists of one turn per player, and each player's turn consists of two actions.

Use your actions to recruit, attack, support, and take out your Rival's leader. May the best tactician win!

## CARD LAYOUT



First, let's take a look at the cards. Each card has 3 different ways it can be used:

1. A **Leader** is played at the beginning of the match, and provides its bonuses passively to the entire Unit. Leaders are always in the Flank Wave of the Unit. The red sword and blue shield show the Attack Strength and Life of the Leader.

2. A **Hero** is played during combat using the Recruit Action. Heroes have different abilities based on where they stand in relation to their Leader. The red sword and blue shield show the Attack Strength and Life total of the Hero.

2a. **Vanguard Heroes** are those in front of the Leader. These often have defensive or offensive abilities. They are able to use their Vanguard Powers (the first/red power).

2b. **Flank Heroes** are those on either side of the Leader. These usually offer improvements to their allies or tactical abilities. They are able to use their Flank Powers (the second/green power).

2c. **Rear Heroes** are those behind the Leader. These usually give support abilities or have Ranged Attacks. They are able to use their Rear Powers (the third/blue power).

**Important Note: Heroes are not Leaders! Any effect that refers to Leaders or Heroes specifically does not work on the other type.**

3. An **Order** is played from your Hand as a one-time effect. Orders are powerful, but they go away after resolving, so saving them or using them at the right moment is critical. These cards have a Hand Icon next to them and a purple back.



## SETUP

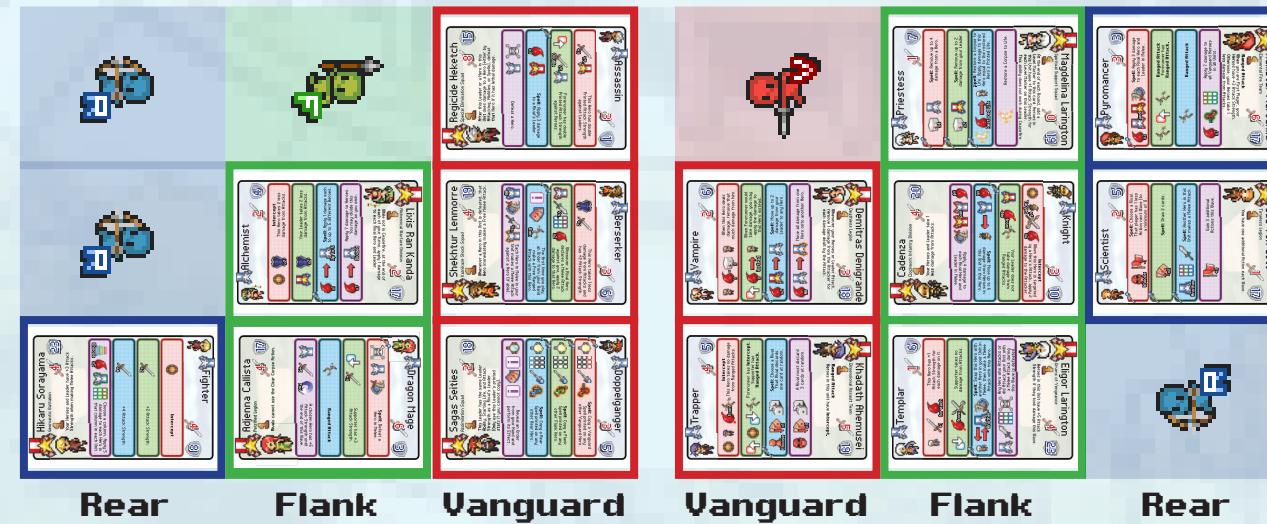
To start a match of Pixel Tactics, each player shuffles his or her Deck together and draws a Hand of 5 cards. He turns these upside down so that their Leader sides are visible, and selects one to be the Leader for his Unit. Both players put their Leaders face-down, then reveal them at the same time.

The Leader stands at the center of each Unit, and the eight Slots around them can be filled with Heroes. A Hero's row is determined by its position relative to your leader, so you don't need any kind of mat or board to play Pixel Tactics.

Both players select their Leaders secretly, then reveal them at once. The Leader now forms the core of the Unit, standing in the center of eight slots which may eventually hold Heroes.

Each player has a Deck of cards, a Hand (with 4 cards), and a discard pile (which begins empty).

Below, you can see two Units ready to do battle. The Leader always stands at the center of the Unit. The colored borders show each Wave. From the center outwards is the Vanguard, Flank, and Rear Rows.



## GAME FLOW

The game takes place in rounds, and each round consists of 3 Waves. During each Wave, each Player takes 1 Turn.

After setup, randomly determine which player will take the first turn. This begins the Vanguard Wave. Place the First Player Card beside the first player's Vanguard row. During a Wave, the first player takes a Turn, and then the second player takes a Turn. Each Turn consists of taking 2 Actions.

Once both players have completed their Turns, the game moves onto the Flank Wave. Once both players complete a Turn during a Flank Wave, they move on to the Rear Wave. Move the First and Second Player Cards appropriately whenever the first player begins a wave. At the end of each wave, casualties are checked and any Hero with damage equal to or exceeding their life is defeated.

When the Rear Wave is complete, the round ends, and first and second players changes sides. Change the sides of the First and Second Player cards as well to show this. Then a new round begins with a new Vanguard Wave, and so on, until one Leader or the other falls. Pass the First Player Card to the new first player, who sets it beside his Vanguard row.

The game comes with a First and Second Player Card that you can use to keep tabs on which Wave it is and who is First and Second Player.

## Ceasefire

- During the First Round, there is a Ceasefire. While in Ceasefire:
- Players cannot declare Attacks or cast Spells against you.
  - Orders cannot be used by or against you.
  - Rivals cannot interfere or interact with your Hand or Unit.



## ACTIONS

Use your 2 actions to build up your Unit and destroy your Rivals' Units!

### Draw a Card

You draw a card from your Deck. If your Deck is empty or if you have 5 or more cards in Hand, this action is no longer available. You do not ever have to discard cards for having too many in Hand, but you cannot do this basic Draw Action while your Hand is too large.

**Note:** A Player's maximum Hand Size is five. If the amount of cards in your Hand has reached your maximum Hand Size, you cannot use the Draw Action (you may still draw through the use of other Abilities).

### Recruit a Hero\*

You may play a Hero down into an empty slot in the current Wave (for example, during the Vanguard Wave, you can only recruit to empty spaces in your Vanguard).

### Attack with a Hero/Leader\*

You may use a Hero in the current Wave (or the Leader, if this is the Flank Wave) to make an Attack. A Hero recruited during this Wave may not declare an Attack of any kind. A single Hero or Leader can only Attack once per Wave. A Hero cannot Cast a Spell or Move in the same turn they Attack. Attacking is discussed in more detail later.

### Cast a Spell with a Hero/Leader\*

Some Heroes and Leaders have Spells. Spells are special actions that a Hero performs, which are not Attacks. A Hero cannot Attack or Move in the same turn the Spell was cast. Spell abilities have a Wand Icon next to them.

**Note:** In previous editions, Spells were called "Attack Powers". These two terms can be used interchangeably.

### Leader-Specific Actions

Some Leaders will give you new kinds of actions you can use. The effects of these actions are detailed on the Leader card, and they can typically be used in any Wave.

### Play an Order

Reveal the Order from your Hand, then follow all of its text, then discard it. These cards have a Hand Icon next to them and a purple back. For the moment while an Order is activating, it is neither in your Hand nor in your Discard Pile.

### Clear a Corpse

When Heroes fall in battle, they leave corpses behind in the Unit. These might be revived later on, but if you have no plans to revive a Hero (or if you fear your Rival may revive it and use it against you) then you can clear the corpse. Simply move the corpse into your Discard Pile. Since Heroes can only be played into empty spaces in the Unit, you will need to clear corpses eventually in longer battles. You can clear corpses in any Wave, regardless of the currently active Wave.

### Move\*

You may move a Hero from anywhere in your Unit into any empty Unit Slot. A Hero cannot Cast a Spell or Attack in the same turn they Move. Leaders cannot be moved.

**Note:** In previous editions, Move was called "Restructure". These two terms can be used interchangeably.

### Switch (Long Action)\*

Switch allows you to swap the positions of two Heroes or Corpses (or any combination thereof) within your Unit.

### Pass

You may pass your actions. This ends your turn.

**\* Actions with this mark are carried out by your Heroes. Note that the same Hero cannot do more than one of these things per turn.**

**Long Actions** take up two of your actions to use. You cannot use a Long Action unless you have two remaining actions this turn.

**Free Actions** do not take up one of your actions to use. You can use Free Actions as often as you want. However, restrictions on the actions of Heroes still apply (so if "Attacking is a Free Action for you.", you still could not Attack more than once with each Hero in your Unit).

**Limited Actions** can only be used once per turn.

## ATTACKING

When you select the Attack Action, you will choose a Hero in your current Wave to make the Attack, as well as a target on the opposing Unit. When an attack is performed, the attacker deals damage to the target equal to the Attack Strength of the attacker.



### Melee Attacks

All Heroes can perform a Melee Attack, but both the attacker and the target must be "in Melee" to do so. Only the foremost Hero or Leader in each column is considered "in Melee". The red borders in the diagram below show who is considered "in Melee" in this example.



### Ranged Attacks

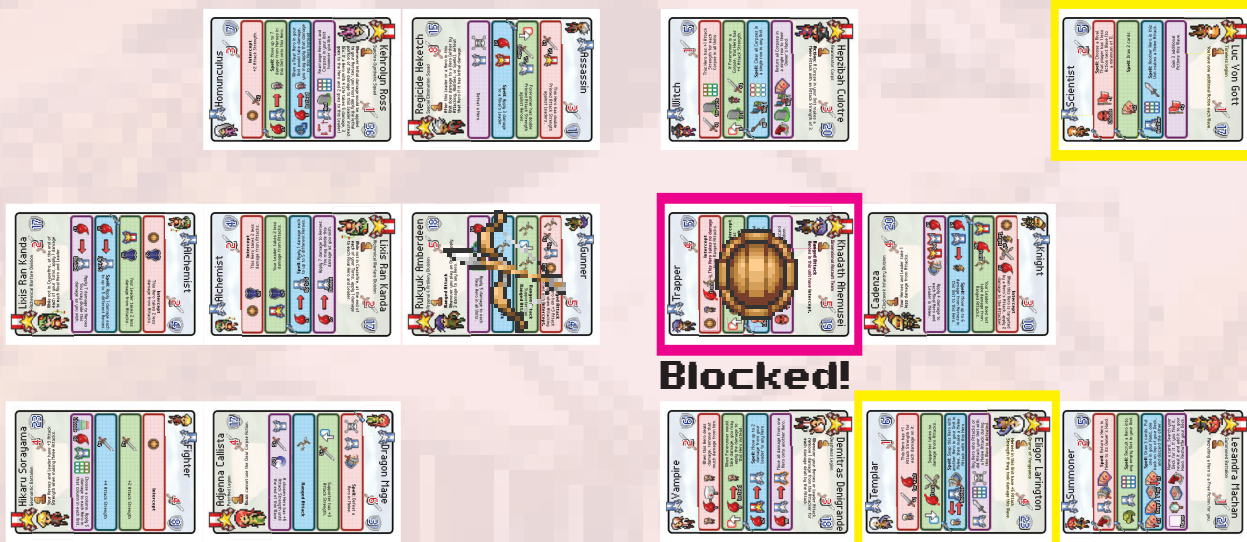
Only Heroes who have the Ranged Attack ability may perform Ranged Attacks. A Ranged Attack can come from any Hero or Leader, and can target any Hero or Leader.

### Intercepting Ranged Attacks

A few Heroes have the ability **Intercept**, which means that Rival's Ranged Attacks cannot pass over them. This makes them especially useful for protecting your Rear and Flank Heroes, as well as your Leader.

An Intercepting Hero defends the one or two Heroes behind it in the same column, taking the Attack for them instead. A Hero with Intercept can still be targeted by Ranged and Melee Attacks as normal.

**Not Blocked!**



**Blocked!**

**Not Blocked!**

## Other Terms & Effects

- Unit** - All heroes and leaders on one team, collectively.
- Forerunner** - The hero directly in front of this hero.
- Supporter** - The hero directly behind this hero.
- Attack Strength** - The damage dealt by a hero's Attack.
- Defeat a Hero** - The hero is instantly turned face-down to become a Corpse.
- Apply Damage** - Place damage markers on the target. This is not an Attack.
- A Hero / Any Hero** - Unless a Unit is specified, you can choose your targets from any Unit controlled by either player.

## HERO POWERS



### Spells

Some Heroes (especially Rear Heroes) have special powers that occur instead of attacking. For example, a Hero may say "**Spell:** A Rival discards a card". These are optional alternate actions that can be used in place of making the Hero attack. They still count as an action for that Hero, so you can't use them more than once in a Wave, and the same Hero cannot use both their Spell and a Melee/Ranged Attack. Spells do not apply damage or have a target, unless they specifically say otherwise. Spells are not considered to be Attacks.



### Passive Powers

Other than Spells (those that say 'Spell: ...'), all Hero powers are constantly active, and work as soon as they become relevant.



### Reactions

Many Hero Effects will tell you to do something whenever another condition is met or another effect happens. These effects always happen after the triggering condition is completely resolved.

## DAMAGE & CASUALTIES

When a Hero or Leader is hit with an Attack, place damage counters on it to show how much damage it has taken. These damage counters remain in place until the Hero is removed from play or until an effect removes the counters.

At the end of each Wave, casualties are checked. Any Hero with damage equal to or exceeding its life is considered defeated.

A Hero with lethal damage (damage equal to or beyond its life total) can continue to fight, act, and be healed throughout a Wave. Only at the end of a Wave are casualties determined.

When a Hero is defeated, all damage is removed from it, and it is flipped face-down, becoming a Corpse. Corpses cannot attack, they do not block Melee attacks, and new Heroes cannot be played on top of them. Only by clearing a Corpse can you play a new Hero into its Slot.

Some effects can revive Corpses, and some Leaders can even use them to attack, so it's not always necessary to clear every Hero that falls. Sometimes it's advantageous to keep them around.

## TIPS & TRICKS

While it's usually a good idea to set up Interceptors to protect your Leader, you don't always need to roll out an entire army on the first round. If you take time to draw a few times instead, you can form a much more cohesive and structured Unit with the synergy to crush a band of hastily cobbled-together shock troops.

Don't underestimate the power of the Move and Switch Actions. If you have extra actions, consider restructuring your Unit as an alternative to Drawing more cards.

Each card has a particular theme to it. The Summoner is very good at finding cards in your Deck, while the Trapper can disrupt your Rival, and the Healer will revive allies. Once you have played a card a few times, you'll quickly learn how to leverage its strengths for each particular situation.

It's often better to go second during a Round, since you can respond to your Rival's attacks and plays. Save up healing orders for those Rounds when you can use them most effectively and keep alive Heroes which might otherwise die.

If you're going first during a round, you can utilize instant-kill Orders and Spells like the Assassin to make sure your Rival doesn't retaliate against you. These orders and Spells don't wait for the end of a Wave to cause casualties.

High power Leaders can be lethal in Melee, but opening them up to make Melee Attacks is often as much of a liability as a boon. Gauge your Rival's Unit strength and see what you have to gain before letting your Leader join the fray as a Melee Fighter.

## ENDING THE GAME

### Rout

If a Leader has damage equal to or exceeding its life total at the end of a Wave, then the entire Unit is in rout (a disorderly retreat), and the match ends. The player who still has a standing Leader is considered the winner of the match. If both would rout at the same time, the Unit with more living Heroes wins. If this is also the same, the game is a tie.

The player whose Leader remains standing claims the defeated Leader and his own Leader and sets these two cards to the side in a face-down stack to create a trophy. They will not be reshuffled back into the Deck during future matches of this game.

### The Next Game

A typical match plays to the best of three or five trophies- whichever number the players have agreed upon. The first player to claim two trophies in a best of three game, or to claim three trophies in a best of five game, is declared the winner of the game.

If no player has won the game after claiming trophies, proceed to the next match. From here on out, both players' Decks will be one card smaller. In addition, for each trophy your Rival possesses, you draw one additional card at the start of the game, before selecting Leaders. This slight card advantage will give you more control over your Leader selection, and give you a head start on army building.

The player who won the previous match is always the First Player at the start of the next match.



## MORE PIXEL TACTICS

Pixel Tactics is a modular card game, meaning that you can mix multiple games in the series together for even more options! You can find the rules for combining your games together at [www.pixel-tactics.com](http://www.pixel-tactics.com).

Learn how to combine multiple Pixel Tactics games together to play Constructed, Draft, 2v2, and more!

## World of Indines

Pixel Tactics is part of the World of Indines—a collection of games featuring recurring characters in a vibrant fantasy world. Many of the characters in Pixel Tactics appear in BattleCON: War of Indines, Argent: the Consortium, Seven Card Slugfest, Disc Duellers, and other games within this series.

Visit [www.level99games.com](http://www.level99games.com) for more information on the World of Indines and its characters.



THANKS FOR PLAYING!