



RULEBOOK

INTRODUCTION

The game is set 43 Years before the events in *Hidden Leaders*. The Emperor is still alive and reigns over Oshra with an iron fist. But now his daughter has started a rebellion against him. In addition to Lemron calling to arms, Leaders of the most powerful Houses are gathering their Armies as well. They want to extend their influence in the power vacuum of a civil war. Will you be victorious in battle and emerge as the most powerful dynasty of Oshra?

You represent Leaders of powerful Houses and move 3 Armies across the board. You recruit Units, conquer Fortresses, and defeat your opponents to achieve the most victory points at the end of the game.

GOAL OF THE GAME

The players try to conquer and keep control of the most valuable locations called Fortresses. Their value may change according to different player actions such as upgrading or conquering them. After completing three Years (=rounds) the game ends and each player adds up the value of all Fortresses that they control to determine their victory points. The player with the most victory points wins the game. In case of players having the same amount of victory points, the tied player who is the starting player or is closest to the starting player in turn order wins the game.

COMPONENTS



2 double-sided boards
with 4 maps, one for each player count
(2, 3, 4, and 5 players)



72 Battle cards
(values 3, 4, 5 and 6
in three colors)



15 Army meeples (3 per player)
+1 bonus Champion meeple
for the yellow player



1 starting
player marker



30 Strategy cards
(a set of 6 Strategy cards
per player)



75 player tokens
(15 per player)



15 neutral tokens



15 Army dials (3 per player)
+1 bonus dial for the
yellow player



1 battle AND Year
tracker board



5 Leader sheets
(Asymmetric Player Powers)

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SETUP

- 1 The last player to have seen a castle is the starting player.
- 2 Each player chooses a Leader and 1 of their 2 asymmetric abilities. For details, see page 24.

For your first game: Skip this step. Use the Leaders and their asymmetric powers once you are familiar with the game.

- 3 Place one neutral token on each Fortress location (Roman numerals).
- 4 Each player selects one of the designated starting Fortresses (listed below) and places one of their player tokens on this Fortress. (It now has a value of 2.)

- a) 2 players: Starting Fortress III and V.
- a) 3 players: Starting Fortresses II, VI, and VII.
- a) 4 players: Starting Fortresses: I, III, VIII, and X

- 5 Take the 3 Army meeples and 3 Army dials of your color. Taking turns, players place 1 of their Armies on their starting Fortress and/or on the locations adjacent to their starting Fortress until there are no Armies left to place. Two locations that are connected by a Street are considered adjacent.

- 6 Distribute a combined total of **12 Units** among your 3 Armies as you see fit and adjust the value on their respective Army dials. However, each Army must have at least 1 Unit. How many Units an Army has is kept secret from the other players.

- 7 Take the set of 6 Strategy cards of your color into your hand. Their backside shows the icon of your House, matching your chosen Leader.

- 8 Draw 10 Battle Cards from the Deck, then discard 3 cards face up to the discard pile. You start the game with 7 Battle cards in hand. Keep them separate from your Strategy cards.

- 9 The game begins with the first Year.

Note: Players may want to distribute the Units among their Armies in different ways. Some may want to have one strong Army and two weaker Armies, others may want to have three Armies with an equal number of Units. The decision is yours.

Also, note that the way Units are distributed is permanent. Armies cannot be combined or exchange Units among them. They can only gain Units in the Recovery and Recruitment phase (see page 22) or lose Units in battle.

BASIC CONCEPTS

MAPS, LOCATIONS AND STREETS

Each side of the board shows a map of Oshra.

There are different maps for 2 players, 3 players, 4 players, and 5 players (indicated by icons in the top right corner of the map). Maps consist of 3 different types of regions with different colors and shapes: Forest (green), Wetlands (blue), and Town (red). These region types determine which Battle cards can be played during battle.



The spaces on the map are called **Locations**

Some of them have Fortresses on them, represented by tokens. The Locations have different shapes according to the region they are in: Square (■) for red/Town Locations, Diamond (◆) for green/Forest Locations, and Circle (●) for blue/Wetlands Locations. Some Locations show a Roman numeral which is used when setting up the game (see page 4).

Streets are connections between Locations.

Armies must move across Streets. They must end their movement on Locations and cannot end their movement on a Street. Two Locations that are connected by a Street are considered adjacent for battles or movement.



FORTRESSES

Locations with 1 or more neutral and/or player tokens are called Fortresses.

Fortresses can change their value and control throughout the game. The top token of the stack determines who controls the Fortress. If Fortresses have a neutral token on top, they are not controlled by any player. If Fortresses have a player's token on top, they are controlled by that player.



A Fortress can gain or lose tokens in the following ways:

- 1 token is added when a Fortress is Conquered by an enemy Army.
- Up to 2 tokens are added to 2 individual Fortresses as part of the "Upgrade" Strategy card action.
- 1 token must be discarded from a Fortress you control when performing the "Ritual" Strategy card.

Locations without a token can never be Conquered or Upgraded.

ARMIES

Armies are represented by the Army meeples on the board.

Each player controls 3 Armies: 1 Archer meeple, 1 Infantry meeple, and 1 Cavalry meeple.



Archer meeple



Infantry meeple



Cavalry meeple





These Armies, although they are shaped differently, share the same ruleset and traits, but may have a varying number of Units. They perform actions based on the Strategy cards played. At the beginning of the game, players have to distribute a total of 12 Units across their 3 Armies and adjust the value on their respective Army dials. These **values are kept secret** and are only shown to all players when initiating a battle. Each Army can have a maximum of 15 Units. If an Army would be destroyed in battle, instead reduce the Units to half its value (rounded down, to a minimum of 1). Place this Army's meeple aside, it will be put back on the board in the Recovery and Recruitment phase (see page 22).

Example: If an Army with 3 Units is destroyed, you need to reduce the value on the dial to 1.

GAMEPLAY

The game is played in a series of three Years (rounds), each of which is divided into four phases:

The game ends after 3 Years have been played

-  **The Strategy phase**
-  **The Battle phase**
-  **The Conquer phase**
-  **The Recovery and Recruitment phase** (*skipped in Year 3*)

THE STRATEGY PHASE

The Strategy phase consists of 4 Seasons, during which players will simultaneously choose 1 of their Strategy cards from their hand and place it face down in front of them.

The chosen Strategy cards are **revealed and performed in turn order**. After every player has played 4 Strategy cards, they take all cards back into their hand and continue with the Battle phase (see page 14).

Perform the following steps:

- 1** You secretly choose one of your (remaining) Strategy cards from your hand and place it face down in front of you. This is done simultaneously with the other players.
- 2** Once you all have played your Strategy card, starting with the starting player and then going clockwise you either:
 - a)** Reveal your Strategy card and perform the printed actions (see page 9).OR:
 - b)** Keep the card face down and draw 5 Battle cards instead. If your hand exceeds 10 Battle cards (not including your Strategy cards) you must discard down to 10 Battle cards after drawing.
- 3** Once all players have performed either option 2a or 2b, all players continue with the next Season by selecting another Strategy card.
- 4** You repeat steps 1-3 a total of 4 times until all players have played 4 of their 6 available Strategy cards. After this, the Battle phase starts and players resolve any imminent battles (see page 14).

Please note, **that there is no automatic passing of the "starting" player token**. Instead, once a player uses the "Ritual" action they can give the starting player token to any player (including themselves). The starting player token is then locked for the remaining Season and can only be changed in the next Season. This may change the starting player for the upcoming Season. In the current Season, continue players' turns in clockwise order.







STRATEGY CARDS

Strategy cards are one of the two types of cards in your hand, in addition to the Battle cards. Keep them separate from each other. The 6 Strategy cards are a core part of the game. In each of the 3 Years, all players, in turn order, play 4 of these 6 cards.

Each Strategy card has 1 or more actions shown on 1 or more Banners at the bottom of the card. When performing the actions of your Strategy card, perform any number of actions shown on its Banner. If more than 1 Banner with actions is present on the card, **choose one** Banner and perform any number of the actions shown on the chosen Banner in any order.

Actions are optional and can be skipped by the player if they don't want to perform them. Actions can only be performed by the player who played the Strategy card and cannot be shared or performed by players other than that player.

Actions overview:

-  **Move all:** Perform "Move 1" with each of your Armies.
-  **Move 2:** You may perform "Move 2" with one of your Armies OR perform "Move 1" with two of your Armies.
-  **Conquer AND Move 1:** In any order, you may perform "Move 1" with 1 of your Armies and conquer any Fortresses where one of your Armies is located.
-  **Ambush OR Move:** You choose to either Ambush adjacent Armies which immediately initiates a battle at a chosen Location and gives your Units a +6 bonus OR perform "Move 1" with 1 of your Armies.
-  **Upgrade AND Move 1:** In any order, perform "Move 1" with 1 of your Armies AND Upgrade up to 2 Fortresses you control by 1.
-  **Ritual:** Reduce the value of one of your Fortresses by 1 and copy another Strategy card. The first player to do so in the current Season can also give the starting player token to any player they like (including themselves).

Example: If a player performs the "Conquer AND Move 1" Strategy card, they can either choose to first Conquer a Fortress and then Move 1 or vice versa..



Movements

As movements are part of each Strategy card and essential for navigating across the map, they will be explained here first before diving into the specific Strategy cards.



For all movements, the following rules apply:

- Movements are performed by playing Strategy cards or as part of the Battle Outcome (see page 18).
- Movements allow players to move Armies from their current Location on the map to an adjacent Location that is connected by a Street. The term “Move X” refers to moving Armies across X Streets to a Location. You may distribute the Movements across any number of your Armies.

Example: If you perform the “Move 2” Strategy card, you can move 1 Army to a Location 2 Streets away or move 2 Armies each to a Location 1 Street away from their current Location.

- Armies can move onto the same Location as other Armies of the same player. They still are considered individual Armies that have separate Units. They cannot merge into a bigger Army but you temporarily **count all Units** in a battle.
- Armies can never move onto the same Location as Armies of another player.
- For movements, the region type or color of the Location does not matter—you can move across the regions as you wish. Yet, pay attention to the region type of these Locations, as these will determine which Battle cards you can play (see page 14).
- Armies are allowed to move onto enemy and/or neutral Fortresses when there are no enemy Armies present.



Example: The violet player decides to move the Army in the middle with “Move 1 AND Conquer”. They can move 1 up to and then Conquer the Fortress (1), move 1 to the right to avoid a Battle with the yellow Army (2) or move 1 down to their other Army. However, they cannot move their Army to the left because this Location is occupied by a yellow Army.

MOVE ALL

You may perform “Move 1” with each of your Armies.

Remember that you can perform these movements in any order.



MOVE TWO



Banner 1: You may perform “Move 2” with 1 of your Armies.



Banner 2: You may perform “Move 1” with 2 of your Armies. Remember that you can perform these movements in any order.



CONQUER

Immediately take control of all enemy or neutral Fortresses where at least 1 of your Armies is located. To do so, place one of your player tokens on top of each of these Fortresses.

This permanently increases the value of these Fortresses by 1. Then, draw 2 Battle cards from the Deck for each Fortress you conquered this turn. After drawing, discard 1 Battle card for each Fortress you conquered this turn chosen from your entire hand (just as in a regular Conquer Phase, see page 22). If you still have more than 10 Battle cards in hand after discarding, discard down to the hand limit of 10 Battle cards.

In addition to the Conquer action, you may perform “Move 1” with 1 of your Armies. Remember that you can perform this movement before or after the Conquer action.



AMBUSH



Banner 1: You may choose 1 of your Armies that is adjacent to an enemy Army and immediately **initiate 1 Battle**.

It follows the regular rules for Battles and may involve multiple Armies from multiple players. At the start of the Battle, you get a temporary bonus of **+6 Units** until the battle ends. Only one battle can be triggered with this action. If several battles are possible, you choose which battle you wish to fight.



Banner 2: You may perform “Move 1” with 1 of your Armies.

Remember that you can perform this movement instead of the Ambush action. This might be an option if you’re not able or willing to initiate a battle.

UPGRADE

Upgrade up to 2 Fortresses you control by 1. To do so, place one of your player tokens on top of those Fortresses.

Remember, the number of tokens determines how many victory points each Fortress is worth at game’s end. Those Fortresses do not change control in any way. You can never upgrade a Fortress by more than 1 with this action. If you control only one Fortress, you can only upgrade that one Fortress by 1.

In addition to the Upgrade action, you may perform “Move 1” with 1 of your Armies. Remember that you can perform this movement before or after the Upgrade action.



Please note: If a player runs out of player tokens, they can replace their player tokens with neutral tokens and put them on the bottom of the token stack, not changing control of the Fortress.

RITUAL

This card is special as it lets you copy and perform 1 of your other Strategy cards. It can be a card that is still in your hand or a card you have already played, either face up or face down.

Follow these 3 steps **in the following order**:



1) Remove 1 token

Remove 1 token from the bottom of 1 of your Fortresses.

This way, control of the Fortress does not change as the top player token stays the same. If the last token is removed from 1 of your Fortresses, the Fortress is destroyed and cannot be Conquered or Upgraded for the remainder of the game. If you don't control any Fortresses, you can perform this Strategy card without removing any token.



2) Choose an action

Then, choose and perform 1 of your other 5 Strategy cards (Move 2, Move All, Conquer, Ambush, or Upgrade).

Follow all the rules for the chosen card. Keep in mind that the chosen Strategy card can be any Strategy card, no matter if it currently is in your hand or already played.

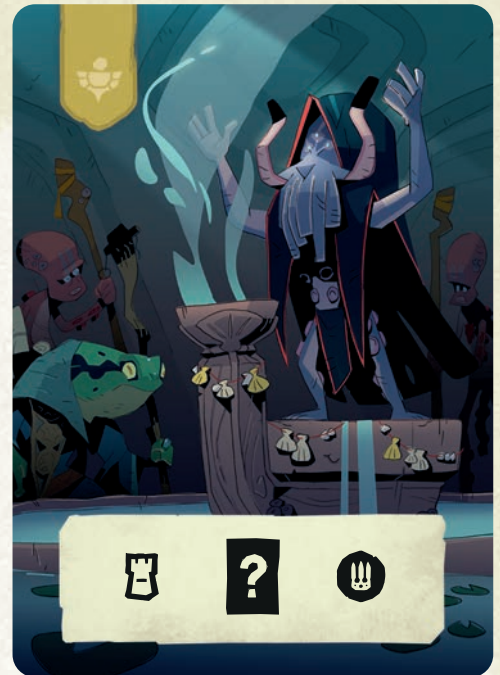


3) Assign the starting player marker

If you are the first player who performed the Ritual Strategy card this Season, take the starting player marker and give it to any player.

This player can be yourself, any other player, or the same player as before. This may change the starting player for the upcoming Season. In the current Season, continue players' turns in clockwise order.

Any other player, after the first player to perform the Ritual action in the same Season, **cannot** change the starting player.



THE BATTLE PHASE

During the Battle phase, any Armies that are adjacent to enemy Armies will participate in a battle.

This may result in multiple Armies from multiple players participating in a single Battle. If there is more than one battle, the starting player decides the order in which the battles are fought. Each battle is resolved one at a time. If no Armies are adjacent to enemy Armies, the Battle phase is skipped without a battle taking place.

BATTLE CARDS

Battle cards are one of the two types of cards in your hand, in addition to the Strategy cards. Keep them separate from each other. Battle cards have a value printed in the upper left corner and are used in 2 ways:

1 In the Recovery and Recruitment phase, they are revealed to determine how many additional Units all players can distribute among their Armies.

2 During a Battle, they are used to temporarily increase the Units of Armies by the value shown on the card until the end of the battle.

a) You can add the value printed on the Battle card to the Units of any of your Armies participating in the battle **if their Location matches the region of the Battle card.**

b) Players can also decide to play any Battle card from their hand face down to add 1 Unit to an Army. **Battle cards played face down do not have to match the Army's region.**

Battle cards have 3 different colors (blue, green, and red) that correspond to the colors of the regions on the map.



There are four cards for each color and values are available in equal numbers:

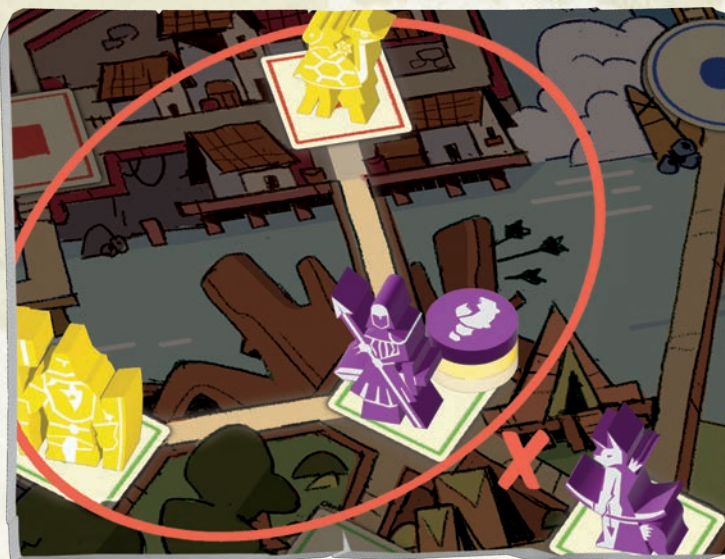
- 6 Battle points (illustrated as cavalry)
- 5 battle points (illustrated as heavy infantry)
- 4 battle points (illustrated as spear fighters)
- 3 battle points (illustrated as archers)



INITIATING BATTLES

During the Battle phase the players determine which Armies participate in battles. Armies participate in battles if they are adjacent to one or more enemy Armies. If Armies are adjacent to several enemy Armies (of the same or different players) all Armies participate in one big battle (see page 20).

In general, Armies never participate in battles if they are not connected to enemy Armies by a Street. In addition, Armies can never participate in two different battles in the same Battle phase. After an Army has fought one battle, it becomes **inactive** and is not considered for any further battles that might follow in the current Battle phase. To indicate this, lay all Armies that already have participated in a battle on their side. They are placed upright again after all battles have ended.



Example 1: Markus (yellow player) fights against Roxi (purple player). Both of Markus' Armies are participating in the battle as they are adjacent to an enemy Army (see red circle). Roxi's 2nd Army cannot participate in the battle, because it is not adjacent to an enemy Army.



Example 2: At the start of the Battle phase, 3 Armies of the teal player, 2 Armies of the gray player, and 1 Army of the orange player are located as shown. In this extreme example, there are two battles: One battle happens between 2 teal Armies, 1 gray Army, and 1 orange Army. The second battle happens between 1 teal and 1 gray Army. Battle 2 is independent of battle 1 because neither Army from the smaller battle (gray and teal) is adjacent to an enemy Army that is participating in the bigger battle.

FIGHTING BATTLES

To perform a battle, follow these steps:

Reveal Units: Players who are participating in the current Battle **reveal the Units** of all their participating Armies by showing their Army dials. Remember to hide this information again after the battle!

Set Battle tracker: Set the total number of Units of each player by placing a player token onto the respective space on the Battle tracker. If you have used the Ambush action, temporarily add +6 to your Units by moving your player token forward by 6 spaces on the Battle track. Do **not** increase your Units on your dials.

Determine Initiative: The player with the fewest Units is the weaker player and gains initiative. Initiative can change multiple times.

Playing cards: The Player who has initiative can perform the following 3 actions: Play Battle cards, Yield, and/or Accept Draw.

Battle outcome: The defeated player deducts the difference between their and the winning players' Units from one of their Armies who participated in this battle, adjusting its dial. Then, their Armies are moved to empty adjacent Locations if possible.

INITIATIVE

Initiative is a term used to describe that one specific player can take actions during a battle for as long as they have initiative. At the start of the battle, the player with the fewest Units gains initiative*.

Initiative may change any number of times during a battle, but at any time only one player can have initiative. If the weaker player reaches the same or higher Units total as their enemy, the initiative to play Battle cards passes to their enemy.

**If both Armies start the battle with the same number of Units, the player who is first in turn order (closest to the starting player) has Initiative. If the player decides not to play a card, the initiative passes to their enemy. If this player also decides not to play a card, the battle ends in a Draw.*



PLAYING CARDS

The player who has Initiative can perform the following 3 actions:

Play Battle cards: You may play Battle cards as long as you have Initiative. Add the value printed on the Battle cards temporarily to your current Units, moving your player marker forward on the Battle tracker. Do **not** increase your Units on your dials. Remember that you can only play Battle cards face up that match the region type (green, red, blue) of your fighting Armies' Locations. Remember, you can also play Battle cards of any region type face down, but they then only have a value of 1.

Yield: If you are not able or willing to play any more Battle cards, you need to Yield, accepting defeat (see page 18, "Battle Outcomes").

Accept Draw: When you receive initiative from your enemy and have the same number of Units as **all** other players participating in battle (and only then!) you can accept the outcome of the battle as a Draw (see page 18, "Battle Outcomes").

Players play cards taking turns based on who has Initiative. The battle always ends either because the player with Initiative accepts a Draw or because the weaker player accepts defeat by Yielding.

Please note that this explanation is for battles in which two players participate. If three or more players participate in a battle, see page 20, "Battles with Multiple Players".

Example:

Roxi (violet) and Lisa (orange) participate in a battle. Roxi has one Army with 6 Units and can only play red Battle cards face up. Lisa has two Armies with 5 Units each and can play both red and blue Battle cards face up in any combination she likes. This is a very favorable position for Lisa.

With her two Armies of 5 Units each, Lisa has a total Units of 10. Roxi's Army has 6 Units. Roxi must now play Battle cards or accept a costly defeat (-4 Units).

Roxi plays a red 3. Thus Roxi now has 9 Units. She still has 1 Unit less than Lisa, so she still has initiative. Roxi decides to play another card.

Roxi plays a red 4. Now Roxi has 13 Units. She now has 3 more Units than Lisa. Initiative passes to Lisa.

Remember, because Lisa's Armies are in the red and blue region, Lisa can play red and blue cards. She plays a blue 2. Lisa now has 12 Units, so 1 less than Roxi. She still has initiative and plays a red 3. Now she has 15 Units compared to Roxi's 13 Units. Initiative passes to Roxi again.

Roxi decides to play a Battle card face down, adding 1 Unit. She is still weaker than Lisa with 14 Units vs 15 Units.

Roxi decides to play no more cards and accepts her defeat by Yielding. Her Army will only lose 1 Unit because of the difference.



BATTLE OUTCOMES. DRAW, RETREAT, CHASE AND DESTROY

Once a battle ends there are two possible outcomes: Either the battle ends in a draw or one player wins the battle and the other player(s) lose.

Draw: If both players participating in a battle have the same number of Units, the player with Initiative has the option to Accept a Draw. All Armies participating in this battle remain in their current Locations, no Units are lost, no one wins or is defeated and no Chases or Retreats will be performed.

Defeat/Victory: If the weaker player chooses to stop playing cards or runs out of cards, they need to Yield and lose the battle. Their Armies are thereby defeated. The defeated player loses a number of Units equal to the difference in Units between them and the winning player. If only 1 Army of the defeated player participated in this battle, the defeated player simply adjusts its Units on its Army dial. If more than 1 Army of the defeated player participated in this battle, the defeated player has to assign all losses to a single Army of their choice. If the difference exceeds that Army's Unit value, this Army is destroyed and any losses exceeding its number of Units are then deducted from another defeated Army, and so on.

Destroy: If an Army's Units drop to zero, it is immediately destroyed and removed from the map. Also, if a defeated Army can't retreat to an empty or self-controlled Location (see below), that Army is destroyed regardless of its Units. The winning player immediately may perform a free Upgrade action for each Army they have destroyed. With each of these Upgrade actions, they may upgrade up to 2 of their Fortresses by 1 following all the Upgrade rules (see page 12). Destroyed Armies are taken off the map. However, their Units are not reduced to zero, but to half their Units (rounded down, to a minimum of 1). Destroyed Armies can be retrieved in the Recovery and Recruitment phase (see page 22). In this phase, previously destroyed Armies may be placed in self-controlled Locations with Fortresses.

Example: Lisa's Army with 3 Units is destroyed in battle. She takes the Army off the map and reduces the Units on its dial to 1.

After adjusting their Units, perform the following 2 steps for defeated Armies:

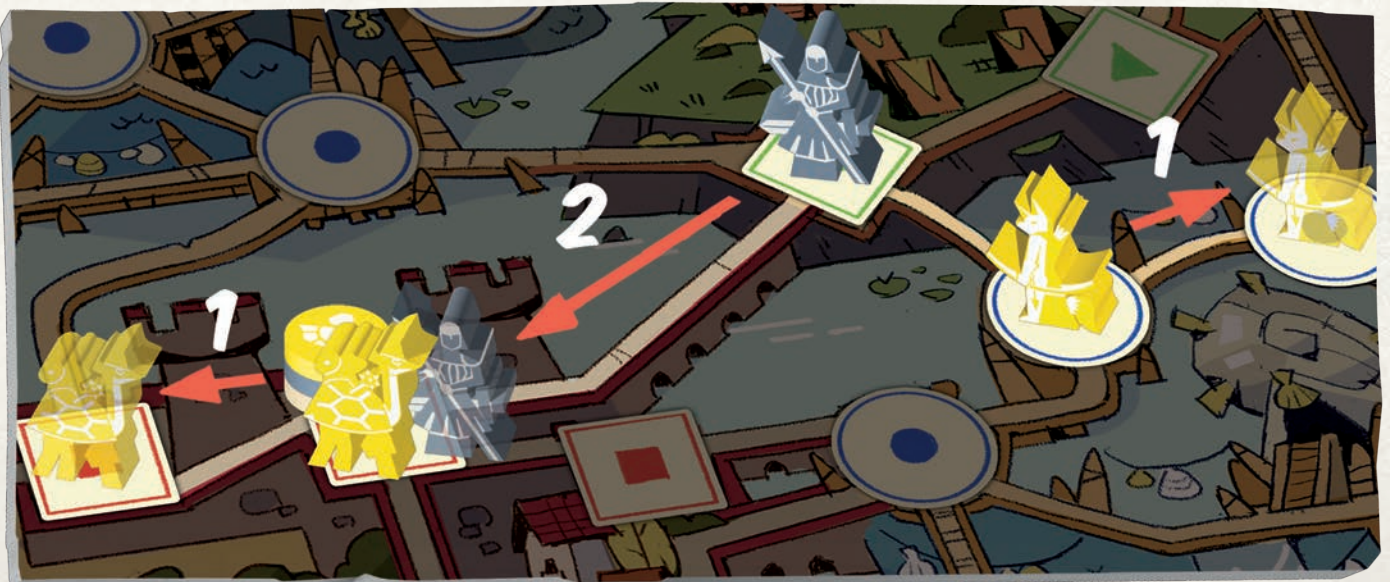
Retreat: All defeated Armies with 1 or more remaining Units must retreat to an adjacent Location. The winning player decides to which Locations these Armies retreat. However, this player must retreat all Armies if possible (The player may not cut off a retreating Army with another retreating Army if preventable). The general movement rules still apply. Therefore, the Army cannot be moved to Locations controlled by enemy Armies, but may be moved to Fortresses or Locations with other Armies of the same player. If no valid movement is possible, Armies are destroyed (see above). If any other (inactive) Army should happen to share the Location with an Army that has just retreated, it must retreat as well, following the same rules.

Chase: The winning player has the option to “chase” 1 defeated Army by moving 1 of their Armies, which was adjacent to the defeated Army, to the Location where the defeated Army was. It does not matter if the defeated Army has retreated or was destroyed.

Note: Every defeated Army can only be chased by one winning Army that is also adjacent to it. A defeated Army can never be chased by two Armies at the same time or by an Army that is not connected by a Street to the Location the defeated Army was at (in the case of multiplayer-battles). Also, a winning Army can never chase more than one Army at the same time.



Example for chasing an Army: Andreas' teal Army is defeated by Alex' 2 gray Armies. The teal Army must retreat. Alex decides to move the defeated Army up (as it is the only viable Location) (1). Then, Alex decides to chase the defeated Army with 1 of their Armies. They pick the lower right Army and move it to the Location previously occupied by Andreas' teal Army (2).



Example for chasing with 2 Armies: Alex wins with 1 gray Army against Markus' 2 yellow Armies. The yellow Armies must retreat. Alex moves both of Markus' Armies 1 Location away. Then he decides to chase the Army on the left, moving his gray Army onto the Fortress, planning to occupy it in the following Conquer phase.

RESOLVING BATTLES WITH MULTIPLE PLAYERS

If Armies of more than two players participate in the same battle, the battle rules still apply and play out as follows:

- The player with the fewest Units always has Initiative and plays Battle cards until they are no longer the weakest player or decide to Yield.
- If the weakest player reaches the same number of Units as the second weakest player, Initiative is passed to that player, who is now the weakest.
- If the player who has Initiative decides to play no more cards and accept defeat by Yielding, the losses are always calculated based on the Unit value of the currently strongest player compared to the Yielding player's Units. At this point, the player leaves the battle and is involved again only in the Battle Outcomes step.
- The remaining players continue until there is exactly one player left who is then declared the winner OR until all remaining players have the same number of Units and the player with Initiative Accepts a Draw.



Follow these steps to resolve a multiplayer battle:

- All players determine their total number of Units by adding up all their Armies that participate in the battle, and place 1 of their player tokens onto the corresponding space on the Battle tracker.
- The player with the fewest Units is the weakest and has Initiative. If two or more players are tied for the weakest player, the player prior in turn order has Initiative.
- If the player with Initiative has played Battles cards that they are no longer the weakest player, Initiative immediately passes to the now weakest player. In case of a tie, the tied player prior in turn order has Initiative.
- If the player with Initiative isn't able or willing to play any more cards, this player has to Yield. They immediately lose Units equal to the difference in Units between them and the strongest player (see page 18, "Defeat/Victory" under "Battle Outcomes"). If an Army is destroyed, it counts as destroyed by the strongest player. This player immediately may Upgrade up to 2 of their Fortresses by 1.
- If the defeated player still has Armies left that participated in this battle, all of them are now out of the battle and will retreat once the battle has ended for all players.
- Then, the remaining players determine who is the new weakest player. This player now has Initiative. In case of a tie, the tied player prior in turn order has Initiative.
- The remaining players continue until there is exactly one player left who is then declared the winner OR until all remaining players have the same number of Units and the player with Initiative Accepts a Draw.
- If there is a winner, all defeated Armies that have not been destroyed must retreat to an adjacent Location. If the battle ends with a winner, **the winning player decides to which Locations those Armies retreat**. However, this player must retreat all Armies if possible (The player may not cut off a retreating Army with another retreating Army if preventable). The winning player may then decide to Chase defeated Armies that are adjacent to their Armies.
- If the battle ends in a Draw, no one can chase defeated players and the defeated players can decide for themselves to which Locations their Armies retreat. If an Army cannot retreat, it is destroyed. If the outcome is a Draw, there is no winner, which means no Retreat or Chase actions are performed.

THE CONQUER PHASE

In this phase, if you have Armies on Fortresses that are not controlled by you, you perform the Conquer action, taking over control of these Fortresses.

To indicate this, place one of your player tokens on top of it. This permanently increases the value of this Fortress by 1. Any previous player tokens remain on the Fortress – the tokens are never removed when a Fortress changes control by being Conquered. For this reason, Fortresses that change control several times increase in value because of the added player tokens.

For each Fortress you Conquered, draw 2 cards from the Deck and add them to your hand. Then, you must discard 1 card from your hand for each Fortress you have conquered. If you exceed your hand limit of 10 Battle cards, you also need to discard down to 10 Battle cards.

Example: Alex has 7 Battle cards and Conquers 2 Fortresses. They draw 4 cards up to a total of 11 Battle cards, then discard 2 cards which leaves them with 9 Battle cards in hand. Tony, on the other hand, has 9 Battle cards in hand and also Conquers 2 Fortresses. He draws 4 cards up to a total of 13 Battle cards, then discards 2 cards because of the Conquered Fortresses and another 1 card because he has exceeded his hand limit of 10 Battle cards.

THE RECOVERY AND RECRUITMENT PHASE

First, all players with destroyed Armies recover their Armies. To do so, they place all of these Armies on any 1 of their Fortresses. If a player does not control any Fortresses, no Army can be recovered.

Next, the starting player reveals a certain number of cards from the Deck according to the current Year (see below). All players add Units, equal to the number on the revealed card(s), to their Armies by freely distributing them across their Armies, marking their new Units on their Army dials. The maximum number of Units an Army can have is 15. Remember, how many Units an Army has is kept secret from the other players.



Year 1: 1 card



Year 2: 2 cards



Year 3: no cards

For example, the starting player reveals a 6 in the first Year. Every player then gains 6 Units that they can distribute across their Armies. Markus decides to add 6 Units to 1 of his Armies while Lisa decides to add 2 Units to each of her 3 Armies.

END OF THE GAME

After three Years have been completed, the game ends and players count the values of all the Fortresses that they control. Those values are your victory points.

Example: Markus controls a total of 3 Fortresses with values 2, 4, and 5 adding up to a total of 11 victory points. Lisa controls a total of 4 Fortresses with values 1, 2, 2, and 3 adding up to a total of 8 points. Markus wins because he has more victory points than Lisa.

In case of a tie, the player who is closest to the starting player in turn order wins.



ASYMMETRIC PLAYER POWERS

LEADERS

There are 4 Leaders that the players can choose from. Each Leader comes with two asymmetric abilities which significantly change or add to the existing rules. Players need to choose 1 of the 2 available asymmetric abilities. If at any point rules contradict each other, the asymmetric abilities overrule the rules printed in this rulebook. When you play the game for the first time, we recommend not to use any leader abilities to learn the basics of the game.

KING KERALON

A: 4th Army

You command 4 Armies instead of 3.

At the beginning of the game, you place 4 Armies instead of 3. (Therefore you are the only player who has 4 Army meeples.) Use them just like you would use 3 Armies. You still distribute 12 points across these 4 Armies. The "Move all" Strategy card allows you to move all 4 Armies (which may add up to a total of 4 movements). If the 4th Army is destroyed, it may be recovered just like any other Army.

B: Champion

You receive a +2 bonus on each face up Battle card played in a battle in which the Champion participates.

Replace 1 of your 3 Armies with the Champion Army meeple. This special Army is your "Champion." If the Champion participates in a battle, add +2 Units to each Battle card you play face up. Therefore, a 3 counts as 5 Units, a 4 as 6 Units, a 5 as 7 Units and a 6 as 8 Units. This bonus only counts for cards that are played face up. Battle cards you play face down (because they do not have the right region type) still only have a value of 1. If more than one of your Armies participate in the same battle, all of your Armies profit from the Champion's +2 bonus.



A: Move Fortresses

Move 1 of your Fortresses by one step when using the “Ritual” action.

Whenever you perform the “Ritual” Strategy card, you may also decide to move 1 of **your** Fortresses to an adjacent Location. Move the entire stack of tokens without changing its order or value.

The Fortress can be moved regardless of the presence of Armies on Locations. Fortresses can be moved on top of other Fortresses controlled by **you**, combining them for the rest of the game. Fortresses cannot be moved onto Locations where a neutral Fortress or a Fortress controlled by another player is present.

B: Spread Power

Place tokens outside your Fortresses.

Whenever you perform the “Upgrade” Strategy card, you may either upgrade one of your Fortresses by placing a player token on top of it as usual OR you may build a new Fortress with a value of 1 by placing your player token on a Location without a Fortress where one of your Armies is present. You can do this up to 2 times as usual, deciding each time if you want to upgrade an existing Fortress or build a new one. You can never use this ability to place a player token on an enemy Fortress or on a Location where none of your Armies is present. This ability may also be performed when the “Upgrade” Strategy card is copied with the “Ritual” Strategy card.



A: Undead Armies

Whenever 1 of your Armies would lose Units, instead add that much Units.

Whenever you lose a battle and your Armies lose Units, add that many Units to your Armies instead of losing them. This way, your Armies grow in size with every battle you lose. You can only add Units that you would be able to lose. For example, to an Army with 2 Units you can only add 2 Units, even if the actual difference in Units between the defeated and winning Armies is higher. If your Armies are destroyed or can't retreat, you still take your Armies off the board and don't add Units but follow the rules for destroyed Armies (see page 18).

With this ability, Armies can only be destroyed if they are forced to retreat but there is no Location they can retreat to. In this case the Army is taken off the map as detailed in page 18, "Battle Outcome".

B: Destroyer

Destroy 1 Army to win the game.

When you destroy 1 enemy Army the game immediately ends and you win the game! An enemy Army is destroyed when its Units are reduced to zero as a result of a battle OR if there is no Location it can retreat to. If someone else destroys an Army, this never counts for you, regardless of whether you were part of this battle or not. This might happen in a battle with multiple players, when the weakest player accepts defeat and one of their Armies gets destroyed and you are **not** the strongest player.



VYMAR

A: All Region Fighter

Your face down Battle cards count as +3 Units instead of +1.

Whenever you play a Battle card face down (because it does not have the right region type) you add 3 Units instead of 1 Unit.

B: Fast Traveler

Add +1 movement when performing the "Ritual" Strategy card.

Whenever you perform the "Ritual" Strategy card you gain an additional +1 movement that you can add to the card you copy. Thus you may use your "Ritual" card as:

- Move 3
- Move 2 and Conquer
- Move all AND Move 1
- Move 2 and Upgrade
- Ambush AND Move 1" OR "Move 2"



PAVYR

A: Reinforcements

Steal a Battle card from opponents.

Whenever you perform the "Ritual" Strategy card you may also perform a Steal action up to once for each of your Armies. To do so, announce a region type (green, blue, red) and choose another player whose Armies are adjacent to at least 1 of your Armies. The chosen player has to give you one of their Battle cards of the chosen region if they have any. Afterward, you have to discard down to your hand limit of 10 Battle cards.

B: Fortress Armies

Your Fortresses add bonus Units in battles

Whenever one of your Armies participates in a battle, each Fortress you control that is connected by a Street to at least one enemy Army who participates in this battle will grant you a number of bonus Units equal to the Fortresses value. Add these bonus Units to your Units for this battle. You can also use Battle cards matching the region type of the Fortresses.



GAME VARIANTS

TEAM MODE TWO VS TWO

With four players, the game can be played in teams of two players. Team members can't sit next to each other and therefore can't take turns after each other. The players in a team are allied. However, they each control their own Armies, meaning you can only move your own Armies, add Units to your own Armies, and play Battle cards of the region type matching the Locations of your own Armies. However, at the end of the game, the allied players add up the values of their Fortresses to determine their victory points.

Play the game taking turns in clockwise order as usual, with the following modifications:

Movement

Players can move their Armies to Locations where an allied Army is as if this Army was their own Army.

Conquer

You mark your own Fortresses as usual (which is relevant for recovering destroyed Armies in the Recovery and Recruitment phase). Players can never Conquer Fortresses that belong to allied players.

Battle

In battle, allied players add up their Units as if they were the Armies of a single player. The team with the lower Unit value has initiative. When a team has initiative, the allied players must agree on who plays a Battle card next. They still can only play one card at a time. Every player can only play Battle cards for the regions their Armies are in. Players cannot play Battle cards if their Armies do not participate in the battle.

Players can never initiate a battle against their allies.

Scoring / End of Game

At the end of the game, the allied players add up the values of their Fortresses to determine their victory points. The players always win or lose as a team.

Sharing information

The players on a team are not allowed to show each other the cards in their hand (both Strategy and Battle cards). However, they may talk about them freely. Yet, this will also allow the other team to gain insights into what they are planning to do. In general, all table talk is open and allowed, but keep in mind that the other team is listening. The amount of details shared will depend on your strategies and the attentiveness of the other team. It is not allowed that the teams leave the room to secretly discuss their strategy unless you all agree on this before the game starts.

TWO VS ONE

WIP

There is also an experimental Two vs One mode for three players which works like the Two vs Two mode described above with the following modifications:

Setup

One team is formed by two allied players, the other team is formed by a single player. Both teams play with 4 Armies in total. The two players play with 2 Armies each, and the single player plays with 4 Armies, using the yellow Leader's power for the 4th Army meeple. The two players each distribute 7 Units across their individual Armies. The single player distributes 14 Units across their Armies. The two players each draw 5 Battle cards and each discard 1, the single player draws the regular 10 Battle cards and discards 2.

Drawing cards

When drawing Battle cards, the two players each draw 3 Battle cards and keep 2, while the single player draws 6 Battle cards and keeps 4.



GLOSSARY

Action: Shown on Strategy cards as icons on Banners. Players may perform actions to Move across the board, Ambush, Conquer, or Upgrade Fortresses.

Army: Armies are represented by meeples on the board. Each player controls 3 Armies and performs actions with them. Each Army can have 1 to 15 Units. If an Army is destroyed in battle, reduce its Units by half (rounded down, to a minimum of 1).

Army Dial: Dials to keep track of your Armies' Units. Always keep your Units secret from the other players. Only once a battle starts, players show each other the number of Units on the dials of all participating Armies.

Banner: Part of a Strategy card. A single Banner may contain several (different) actions. It is also possible that a Strategy card consists of 2 Banners. This is indicated by a gap in between the Banners. Players can only perform the actions from 1 Banner.

Battle card: These cards show a number of Units players may temporarily add to their Armies during battle or may permanently add to their Armies in the Recovery and Recruitment phase. Battle cards form your hand, together with your Strategy cards, but keep them separate from each other. Your hand limit of Battle cards is 10.

Fortress token: These tokens are used to indicate who controls a Fortress and how many victory points a Fortress is worth. They are also used to temporarily track the Units during a battle on the Battle tracker.

Hand limit: Players have a hand limit of 10 Battle cards. If players ever exceed their limit of 10 Battle cards after drawing cards they need to discard down to 10 Battle cards.

Leader: Players represent Leaders. They each have asymmetric abilities that change and contradict this rulebook. Each Leader has 2 asymmetric abilities, which are shown on the A/B sides of the Player boards. During setup, you choose 1 of these abilities to use during the game.

Location: The spaces on the map. These include spaces with and without Fortresses.

Region: Each map has 3 different types of regions: Forest (green), Wetland (blue) and Town (red). The regions in which your Armies are located determine which Battle cards you can play during battle.

Season: Each Strategy phase consists of 4 Seasons. In each Season, every player plays 1 Strategy card.

Strategy card: The 6 cards used by the players to perform actions in the Strategy Phase. In each Strategy phase, players play a total of 4 out of their 6 Strategy cards. Strategy cards form your hand, together with your Battle cards, but keep them separate from each other.

Streets: Streets are the connections between Locations and are used by Armies to "Move".

Unit: Units represent the strength of Armies and are set on the Armies' dials. Each Army can have 1 to 15 Units. Units can be added to an Army in the Recovery and Recruitment phase or lost in battle.

Year: A game round. 1 Year consists of a Strategy phase, Battle phase, Recovery and Recruitment phase, and Conquer phase. The game ends after completing 3 Years.



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SUMMARY



? The Strategy phase

🛡️ The Conquer phase

⚔️ The Battle phase

👤 The Recovery and Recruitment phase
(skipped in Year 3)

Actions overview:

- 🏠 🏠 🏠** Move all by 1
- 🏠 🏠🏠** Move 1 by 2 or Move 2 by 1
- 🛡️ 🏠** Conquer all and Move 1
- ⚔️ +6 🏠** Ambush (+6) or Move 1
- 🏰 🏠** Upgrade 2 and Move 1
- 🗑️ ? 🛡️** Downgrade 1
Copy another card
& move starting player

When not revealing your Strategy card:

📄 📄 📄 📄 📄 Draw 5

For each conquered Fortress:

🛡️ Draw 2
🗑️ Discard 1 (from entire hand)

