



strategy

deception

economy

sabotage



war

glory

alliance

betrayal

It's time to meet your celestial neighbors...

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Box Contents &amp; Terminology</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Map Components . . . . .	3
2.2	Economy Components . . . . .	4
2.3	Empire Components . . . . .	4
2.4	Military Components . . . . .	4
<b>3</b>	<b>Setting Up the Game</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	Galaxy Generation . . . . .	6
3.2	Galaxy Population . . . . .	6
<b>4</b>	<b>Taking a Turn</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1	Discussion Phase . . . . .	8
4.2	Command Phase . . . . .	8
4.3	Action Phase . . . . .	9
4.4	Resolution Phase . . . . .	10
4.5	Build Phase . . . . .	11
<b>5</b>	<b>Winning the Game</b>	<b>12</b>
5.1	Win Conditions . . . . .	12
5.2	Tips & Strategy . . . . .	12

# 1 Introduction

**Local Cluster** is a strategy board game for 2-8 players inspired by games like Diplomacy and Stellaris.

Each player takes command of an interstellar **Empire** in a randomly generated galaxy! Expand your military, borders, and economy to compete with other **Empires** on the galactic stage with the ultimate goal of extending your rule to every **Sector** in your **Local Cluster**!

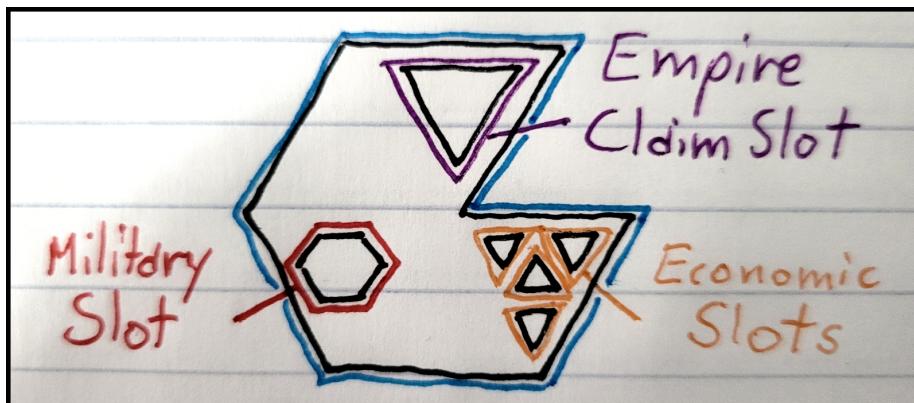
## 2 Box Contents & Terminology

Here is a list of what you should find when opening the game box;

- 48x **Sector Tiles** (12 of each of the 4 shape variants)
- 1x Custom 6-Sided **Mineral Die**
- 176x Triangular **Mineral Tokens**
- 384x **Empire Claim Tokens** (48 of each color variant)
- 192x **Destroyer Unit Tokens** (24 of each color variant)
- 128x **Battleship Unit Tokens** (16 of each color variant)
- 64x **Carrier Unit Tokens** (8 of each color variant)
- 192x **Strike Craft Unit Tokens** (24 of each color variant)

### 2.1 Map Components

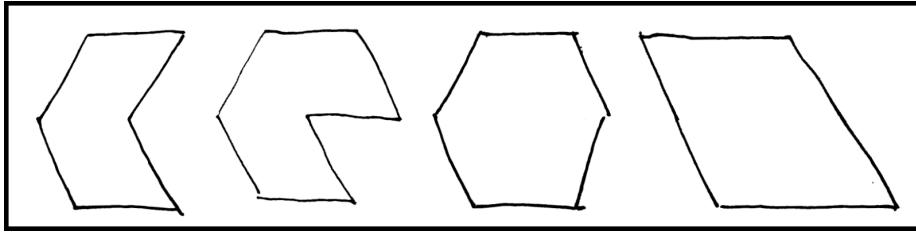
**Sector Tiles** are what make up the playable space of the game board. Depending on the number of players in the game, there may be anywhere from 12 to 48 **Sector Tiles** connected together to form the galaxy map.



Each **↳Sector** has designated slots for 3 different types of tokens;

- Space for up to 4 **▽Mineral Tokens** in its economic slots
- Space for 1 **█Empire Claim Token** in its claim slot
- Space for 1 **○Military Unit** in its military slot

**↳Sectors** can come in any of the 4 possible shapes shown below, but they always contain the features mentioned above. Differences in the locations of the token spaces within the **↳Sector Tile** do not change the functionality of the **↳Sector** at all; the **↳Sector** is the smallest unit for movement of **○Units** and for staking **█Empire Claims**.



## 2.2 Economy Components

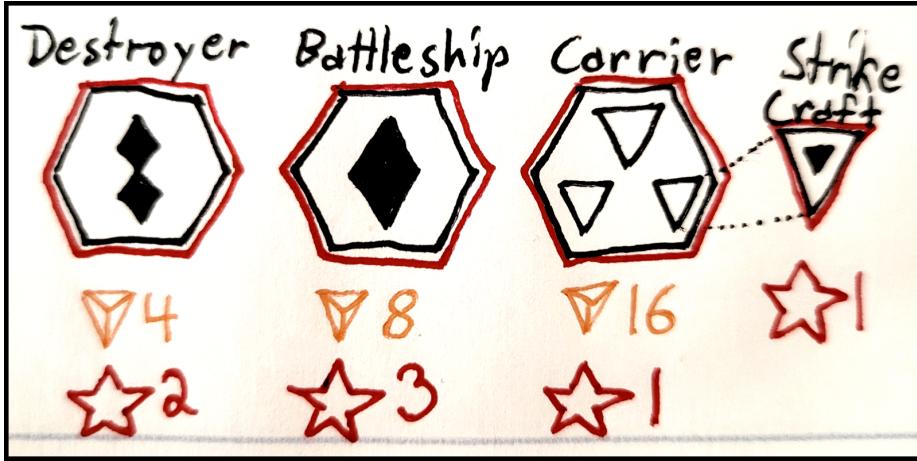
Included with the game is a custom 6-sided die with **▽Mineral** values ranging from 1-4 with the distribution 1/2/2/3/3/4. This is used during the Galaxy Population phase of Setup to randomize the **▽Mineral** value of each non-starting **↳Sector**. The additionally included **▽Mineral Tokens** are used to keep track of the economic value of each **↳Sector** according to its potential **▽Mineral** output.

## 2.3 Empire Components

**█Empire Claim Tokens** are used to mark which **↳Sectors** a player **█Empire** has control over. These come in 8 colors; Red, Green, Blue, Yellow, Aqua, Purple, Pink, and White.

## 2.4 Military Components

**○Military Unit Tokens** are used to represent **○Units** with different capabilities. Throughout the game, your turns will consist entirely of positioning, attacking, and defending your territory with **○Units**. Each unique **○Unit** type has an associated Combat Strength stat that determines how much it contributes to a battle compared to other **○Units**.



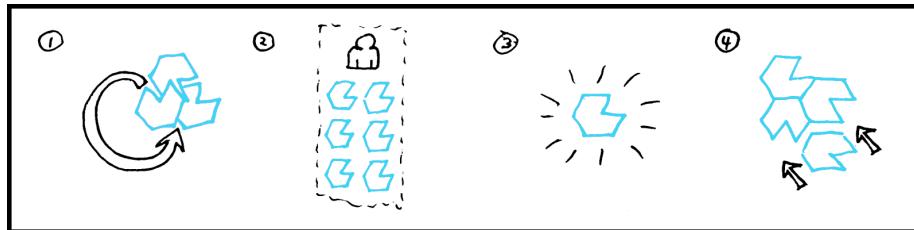
**□Unit**s come in the 4 types depicted above;

1. The **⊗Destroyer** is the workhorse of any **¶Empire**'s fleet. It costs only 4 **▽Minerals** to build and has a **☆Combat Strength** of 2.
2. The **⊗Battleship** is the heavy bruiser of an **¶Empire**'s fleet. It costs 8 **▽Minerals** to build but has the advantage of being able to win in a 1-on-1 engagement with a lone enemy **⊗Destroyer** due to its **☆Combat Strength** of 3.
3. The **⊗Carrier** is a strategic support **□Unit** that can concentrate or spread out its complement of 3 **△Strike Craft** in neighboring **↳Sectors**. When **⊗Carriers** are first built, they come with 3 **△Strike Craft** slotted into the 3 spaces on top of the token. Despite costing a significant 16 **▽Minerals**, this **□Unit** has the potential to turn the tide of battle in multiple **↳Sectors** at once if used correctly, making it a powerful strategic resource in the right situations. A **⊗Carrier** on its own has a **☆Combat Strength** of 1, but with its full docked **△Strike Craft** complement it has an effective **☆Combat Strength** of 4.
4. **△Strike Craft** are the support fighters that travel alongside **⊗Carriers**. They cannot be built on their own, but if a **⊗Carrier** loses 1 or more of its **△Strike Craft** complement it is allowed to replenish its fighters to 3 for a flat cost of 4 **▽Minerals** during the Build Phase. **△Strike Craft** are free to move into **↳Sectors** that do not have an enemy **□Unit** present, INCLUDING **↳Sectors** that are already occupied by friendly **□Unit(s)**. **△Strike Craft** are the only exception to the rule of having one **□Unit** per **↳Sector**. Each **△Strike Craft** has a **☆Combat Strength** of 1.

### 3 Setting Up the Game

#### 3.1 Galaxy Generation

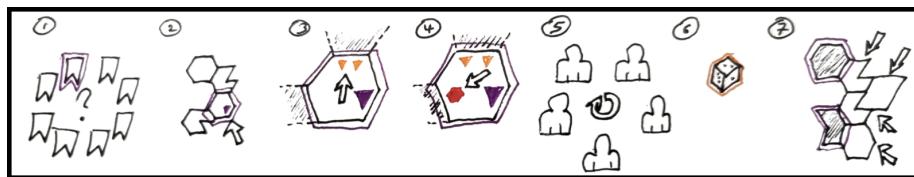
Before the game can begin, we need to generate a galaxy map for the game to take place on. The galaxy map is composed of connected **↳Sector** tiles. **Local Cluster** uses a semi-random method of "generating" galaxies so that every game you play feels different and can give rise to unique strategic situations. Generate a new galaxy by following these steps;



1. Grab the **↳Sector Tiles** from the game box and shuffle them as you would a deck of cards.
2. Deal out 6 **↳Sector Tiles** to each player and return any leftover tiles to the game box. (They will not be needed for the rest of the game)
3. Starting with the player to the right of the dealer, place down one of your **↳Sector Tiles** such that it shares an edge with at least one existing **↳Sector**. Corners of a **↳Sector** that touch DO NOT count as a border, it MUST be 2 edges that touch. If you are the first player to place down a tile, just place it in the center of the table by itself to act as the starting point.
4. Continue counterclockwise around the table repeating Step 3 with each player until every **↳Sector Tile** has been placed down.

#### 3.2 Galaxy Population

Now that we have all of our **↳Sectors** laid out to form the galaxy map, it's time for each player to choose their **↳Empire**'s starting **↳Sector**.



1. Starting with the last player to place down a **↳Sector Tile** during Galaxy Generation, choose a color for your **↳Empire** to use to mark its **↳Claimed**

**Sectors** and **Military Units**. Grab all tokens of your **Empire**'s new color from the game box. This color will represent your **Empire** for the rest of the game.

2. Choose a **Sector** on the galaxy map to serve as your **Empire**'s starting **Sector** and mark it as your own by placing an **Empire Claim Token** of your **Empire**'s color in the large triangular slot in your chosen **Sector Tile**.
3. Take 2 small triangular **Mineral Tokens** from the game box and place them in any of the 4 small triangular slots in your **Empire**'s starting **Sector**.
4. Take 1 hexagonal **Destroyer Unit** of your **Empire**'s color and place it in the hexagonal slot of your **Empire**'s starting **Sector**.
5. Continue clockwise around the table repeating Steps 1-4 with each player until every **Empire** has a starting **Sector**.
6. Take the included 6-sided die from the box and roll it. Take a number of **Mineral Tokens** equal to the number you rolled and slot them into any of the small triangular holes in a **Sector Tile** that does not belong to an **Empire**.
7. Repeat Step 6 for every remaining **Sector** that does not belong to any player **Empires**.

Now that you're finished setting up, it's time to take your first turn!

## 4 Taking a Turn

### 4.1 Discussion Phase

Discuss any plans or proposals for the upcoming turn that they are willing to share with other players. This will primarily consist of organization and coordination of alliances, truces, and joint military operations with other **Empires**. Private communication between players through text messages, whispering, or anything else is both explicitly allowed and actively encouraged during this phase.

Verbal and written agreements made during this phase are NOT binding. Breaking agreements is allowed, with the only potential consequence being damage to your real-life reputation.

This phase can last as long or short as you would like based on house rules, but the recommended time to spend discussing your moves is anywhere from 3-5 minutes.

### 4.2 Command Phase

Write down **Orders** for each of your **Empire**'s **Units** based on the following format:

- **Hold:** HOLD (Sector1)  
Tells the **Unit** in Sector1 to stand its ground.
- **Move:** MOVE (Sector1) (Sector2)  
Moves a **Destroyer**, **Battleship**, or **Carrier** present in Sector1 to Sector2 if there is space to do so, and only if the **Carrier** has all of its **Strike Craft** recalled.
- **Advance:** ADVANCE (Sector1) (Sector2)  
Moves a **Destroyer**, **Battleship**, or **Carrier** present in Sector1 to Sector2 if there is space to do so, and only if the **Carrier** has all of its **Strike Craft** recalled. Initiates **Combat** if Sector2 is occupied by another **Empire**'s **Unit**.
- **Support:** SUPPORT (Sector1) (Sector2)  
Tells the **Unit** in Sector1 to contribute its **Combat Strength** to the **Unit** in Sector2 for this turn.
- **Deploy:** DEPLOY (Sector1) (Sector2) (Sector3) (Sector4)  
Tells the **Carrier** in Sector1 to deploy **Strike Craft** to Sector2, Sector3, and Sector4. Sector3 and Sector4 are optional arguments, and can be omitted if the target **Carrier** has less than 3 docked **Strike Craft**.
- **Recall:** RECALL (Sector1) (Sector2) (Sector3) (Sector4)  
Tells the **Carrier** in Sector1 to recall **Strike Craft** from Sector2,

Sector3, and Sector4. Sector3 and Sector4 are optional arguments, and can be omitted if the target **Carrier** already has docked **Strike Craft**.

- **Claim: CLAIM (Sector1)**

Tells the **Unit** in Sector1 to **Hold** and claim Sector1 for your **Empire** at the end of the turn if the **Unit** is not Dislodged.

Here are some additional notes about **Orders**.

- If a **Unit** is not given orders, it **Holds** by default.
- Any **Unit** given impossible or malformed orders **Holds** instead.
- **Units** can only execute ONE order per turn, with the exception of **Carriers**, which can combine a **Recall** and **Deploy** order in the same turn.

### 4.3 Action Phase

**Orders** are resolved in the order listed below.

1. First, resolve all **Hold orders**.

**Units** ordered to HOLD stay in their current **Sector** and add their own **Combat Strength** to that **Sector** for this turn.

2. Next, resolve all **Move orders**.

**Units** ordered to MOVE into an empty and uncontested **Sector** are simply moved into that sector. If more than one **Unit** attempts to MOVE into the same **Sector**, both **Units** are Dislodged. **Units** that are Dislodged are forced to **Hold**.

3. Next, resolve all **Support Orders**.

**Units** ordered to SUPPORT add their own **Combat Strength** to those of the **Unit** in the target **Sector** for the duration of the turn unless interrupted. **Units** can **Support** and receive **Support** from any other **Unit**, including the **Units** of other **Empires**. Supporting a **Unit** that is supporting another unit DOES NOT cumulatively add the strength of all 3 **Units**.

4. Next, resolve all **Recall Orders**.

Return **Strike Craft** from any adjacent **Sectors** to the target **Carrier**. Do not overfill a **Carrier** with more than 3 **Strike Craft** at a time. You are allowed to RECALL **Strike Craft** from other **Carriers** that you own.

5. Next, resolve all  $\Rightarrow$ **Deploy Orders**.  
Move  $\triangle$ **Strike Craft** into any adjacent  $\triangleleft$ **Sector** in any configuration you want.  $\triangle$ **Strike Craft** can be stationed in the same  $\triangleleft$ **Sector** as normal Units without crowding.  $\triangle$ **Strike Craft** cannot capture  $\triangleleft$ **Sectors** on their own.
6. Next, resolve all  $\Rightarrow$ **Advance Orders**.  
 $\Rightarrow$ **Advance Orders** that move into territory occupied by your own  $\circlearrowright$ **Units** fail, and your  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** is forced to  $\Rightarrow$ **HOLD** instead. If multiple  $\circlearrowright$ **Units** attempt to  $\Rightarrow$ **Advance** into the same  $\triangleleft$ **Sector**, both  $\circlearrowright$ **Units** stay in their original Sectors and  $\Rightarrow$ **Hold** instead. If an  $\blacksquare$ **Empire** attempts to  $\Rightarrow$ **Advance** a  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** into a  $\triangleleft$ **Sector** that is already occupied by another  $\blacksquare$ **Empire**'s  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit**, the target  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** is Dislodged.  $\circlearrowright$ **Units** that are Dislodged are forced to  $\Rightarrow$ **Hold**. This cancels any other  $\Rightarrow$ **Orders** they had this turn.
7. Finally, resolve all  $\Rightarrow$ **Claim Orders**.  
If the  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** attempting to claim its current  $\triangleleft$ **Sector** has not been forced into  $\star$ **Combat**, remove any other  $\blacksquare$ **Empire's Claim Token** from the  $\triangleleft$ **Sector** and replace it with one of your own  $\blacksquare$ **Empire Claim Tokens**.

#### 4.4 Resolution Phase

The Resolution Phase is for resolving instances of  $\star$ **Combat** that were initiated in the Action Phase.

1. Compare the combined  $\star$ **Combat Strength** of either side and its supporting  $\circlearrowright$ **Units** according to the format described on Page 5.
2. If the total  $\star$ **Combat Strength** of the  $\Rightarrow$ **Holding**  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** and all of its supporting  $\circlearrowright$ **Units** is greater than or equal to the total  $\star$ **Combat Strength** of the  $\Rightarrow$ **Advancing**  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** and all of its supporting  $\circlearrowright$ **Units**, nothing happens and all  $\circlearrowright$ **Units** involved in the Combat stay in their current positions.
3. Otherwise, force the  $\Rightarrow$ **Holding**  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** to retreat to an adjacent  $\triangleleft$ **Sector** that doesn't already have a  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** occupying it. If there are no valid  $\triangleleft$ **Sectors** to retreat to, the  $\Rightarrow$ **Holding**  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** is destroyed.
4. Now move the  $\Rightarrow$ **Advancing**  $\blacksquare$ **Empire's**  $\circlearrowright$ **Unit** into the target  $\triangleleft$ **Sector**, remove the  $\blacksquare$ **Empire Claim Token** from the target  $\triangleleft$ **Sector** and replace it with the  $\Rightarrow$ **Advancing**  $\blacksquare$ **Empire's Claim Token**.

Here are some additional notes about  $\star$ **Combat**.

- $\circlearrowright$ **Units** are not permanently damaged by  $\star$ **Combat**, and any "damage" they take due to  $\star$ **Combat Strength** differences during an engagement does not carry over to the next turn.

- If any  **$\triangle$ Strike Craft** end up more than one  **$\triangleleft$ Sector** away from any  **$\diamond$ Carriers** from the same  **$\blacksquare$ Empire**, destroy those  **$\triangle$ Strike Craft**.
- If the loser of a  **$\star$ Combat** had any  **$\triangle$ Strike Craft** in the contested  **$\triangleleft$ Sector**, destroy the  **$\triangle$ Strike Craft**.

#### 4.5 Build Phase

The Build Phase only happens at the end of every second turn! This phase takes into account the  **$\triangleleft$ Sectors** and  **$\circ$ Units** of your  **$\blacksquare$ Empire** and uses them to find the net  **$\triangledown$ Mineral** value of your economy. This value is then used to determine how many new  **$\circ$ Units** you are able to build. This phase is synchronous and all players can complete it at their own paces simultaneously without causing conflicts.

1. Calculate the raw  **$\triangledown$ Mineral** income for your  **$\blacksquare$ Empire** for this turn by adding up the  **$\triangledown$ Mineral** incomes of each  **$\triangleleft$ Sector** that you have an  **$\blacksquare$ Empire Claim Token** in. If you chose to Stockpile during the previous Build Phase, double your raw  **$\triangledown$ Mineral** income.
2. Next, calculate the net  **$\triangledown$ Mineral** income for your  **$\blacksquare$ Empire** by subtracting 1 from your raw income for each  **$\diamond$ Destroyer**, subtracting 2 for each  **$\diamond$ Battleship**, and subtracting 3 for each  **$\diamond$ Carrier**. If your net  **$\triangledown$ Mineral** income for this turn is 0 or less, your turn is now over.
3. Optionally, you can choose to "stockpile" for your next turn by choosing not to build any  **$\circ$ Units** in exchange for more  **$\triangledown$ Minerals** to work with in the next Build Phase. If you do this, your turn is now over. This effect DOES NOT stack if used for multiple turns in a row.
4. You may replenish the  **$\triangle$ Strike Craft** of any of your  **$\diamond$ Carriers** if any are missing. It costs a flat 4  **$\triangledown$ Minerals** from your net income to refill the  **$\triangle$ Strike Craft** for one  **$\diamond$ Carrier** to 3, regardless of how many were missing.
5. You may build new  **$\circ$ Units** in each  **$\triangleleft$ Sector** that your  **$\blacksquare$ Empire** controls that does not already have a military  **$\circ$ Unit** stationed there. For each  **$\circ$ Unit** constructed, subtract the  **$\circ$ Unit**'s  **$\triangledown$ Mineral** cost from your net income. (See Section 2.4 to find  **$\circ$ Unit** costs) When you run out of open  **$\triangleleft$ Sectors** or  **$\triangledown$ Minerals** needed to construct a new Unit, your turn is over.
6. Any remaining  **$\triangledown$ Minerals** from this Build Phase are discarded, they DO NOT carry over into the next Build Phase.

## 5 Winning the Game

### 5.1 Win Conditions

The game is won by the first **Empire** to take control of every **Sector** in the galaxy.

### 5.2 Tips & Strategy

- Identify any **Sectors** near your starting location that only have 1 border in between you and another **Empire**. These **Sectors** are easier to defend if you control them, and are often called "choke points".
- Occupy as many defensible **Sectors** as possible to grow your **Mineral** economy to produce more military **Units**.
- Make agreements with nearby **Empires** to focus on mutual growth when possible to avoid stagnating while rival **Empires** grow stronger.
- If another **Empire** becomes significantly stronger than you, form an alliance to take them down!