

Empire: Vallhalla

Empire 1.92

A wargame by Gems

With thanks to LTDave and Brimstone of the former erfworld forums.

And with thanks to Relm, for proof-reading and input.

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1. Basic Concept

Empire: Valhalla is a play-by-post 4x game, based on a homebrewed ruleset. Empire games have traditionally been played on the OOTS and erfworld forums, with rulesets developed and expanded upon by each GM in turn.

The rules you see below are based on the my memories of the Empires X ruleset developed by LTDave and Brimstone, two GMs on the erfworld forums, who ran a series of genuinely thrilling Empire games. While the games lasted, playing in them was the highlight of my week, and I hope to bring some of that excitement to you!

Empire: Valhalla is set in a fantasy world of perpetual war, in which each side has a unique identity and flavor.

You will each take the place of the ruler of a once-great empire. In your lifetime, you were powerful. You were mighty. Entire peoples trembled at your approach. And yet, for all your empire's achievements, it could not stand the test of time. Eventually, like so many before it, it found itself broken and shattered on the anvil of fate. You reigned, you fought, and then, one way or another... you lost. You *died*. Forgotten even to the annals... but not to the gods themselves.

Now the gods have reached out, pulled back the veil of time and space, and summoned you, and your empire, onto the divine plane... to the epic battleground known as Valhalla! You are to take part in a challenge, for the gods have need of a champion, and only one of the empires in Valhallla today can lay claim to that honor. They have decreed that you fight, and die, as you did on earth, for a chance at that glory.

Your time on earth is done, but you have one last opportunity to reclaim the laurels of greatness. Will you once again feel the very earth tremble beneath your army's marching boots? Will you strike fear into your enemies' hearts? Will you prove to them that your empire, and yours alone, was the greatest there ever was?

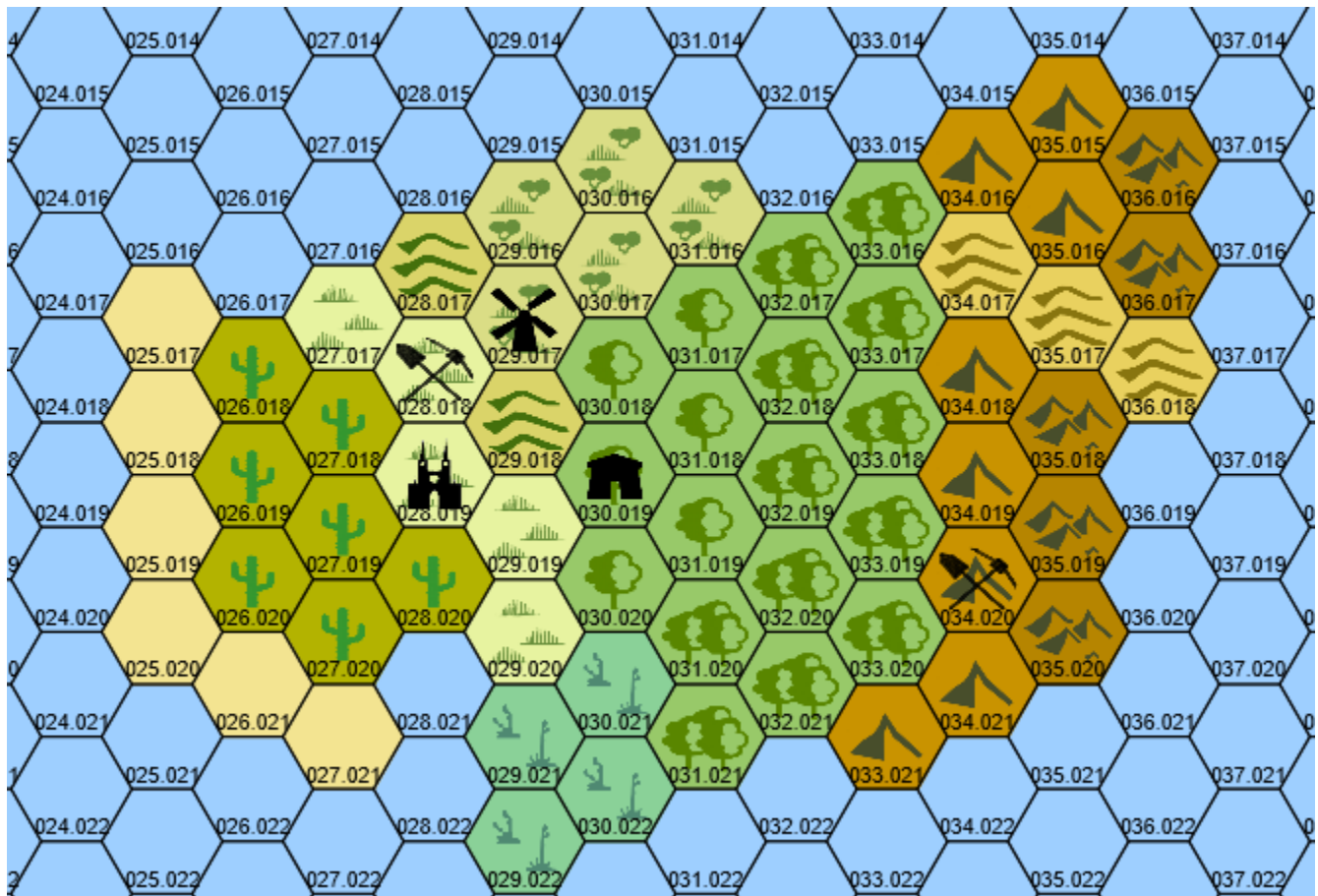
Or will you return to nothing?

Flavor in Empires games: Though Empire is fundamentally a strategic and often very crunchy game, flavor really helps bring it to life. As a GM, I find it incredibly fun to read about your sides' exploits, and all players are encouraged to write short stories, produce after-action-reports, or just to step into the shoes of your rulers and characters in order to roleplay! In this iteration of the game, your ability and willingness to roleplay (and to write) will greatly influence your chance of success.

2. The Map













Empire takes place on a hex grid, depicting the strange new land that you've discovered. On your turn, your units may move across this map according to their movement points, to explore the land and occupy important locations.

2.1. Tiles and movement costs







Example Map (Roads not pictured)

The map consists of various tiles, representing different terrain types. These terrain types differ primarily in their movement costs. A unit must be able to fully pay a tile's movement point cost in order to enter it.

Terrain	Tile	Movement Cost
Desert		2 Movement points
Grasslands		
Shrublands		
Forest		3 Movement Points
Marsh		
Hills		
Desert Hills		
Deep Desert		
Heavy Forest		
Mountains		5 Movement Points
High Mountains		
Ocean		Impossible for all units
		Impossible, except for aquatic or flying units

Additionally, a tile may contain a certain map feature, such as a city, mine, farm or other feature. These may be explored or conquered by your units, and typically provide a mechanical effect of some sort. Features always cost 2 movement points to enter, unless your units are moving along a road. Cities, farms mine and shrines will remain persistently under your control once you claim them with a unit. Stables, fortifications and roads cannot be claimed, only used.

Feature	Tile	Benefit						
City		Produce income and units! See City rules for more details.						
Farm		<p>Control and upgrade in order to produce income. Farms will, initially, and after being razed by an enemy, be Fallow. A Fallow farm produces no income.</p> <p>Farms can be upgraded 3 times, each upgrade costing 800 gold. They generate income as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Level 1</td><td>Level 2</td><td>Level 3</td></tr> <tr> <td>250</td><td>450</td><td>600</td></tr> </table>	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	250	450	600
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3						
250	450	600						
Mine		Control mines to gain a global bonus of +1 Attack to all your sides.						
Shrine	(Picture Coming Soon)	A shrine will generate 25 favor at the start of each turn on which you hold it.						
Stables	(Picture Coming Soon)	Units starting their turn on a stable will gain +2 move until the end of their turn.						
Field Fortifications	(Picture Coming Soon)	An army coming under attack in this hex will gain the benefit of 2 levels of fortifications, susceptible to siege.						
Road		<p>Roads connect multiple tiles, and allow for rapid movement. A unit moving from one square to another along a road connection only spends one point of movement per tile.</p> <p>Moving from a non-road hex to a road hex, or from a road hex to a non-road hex, however, costs the tile's full movement.</p>						

You may find other features besides! Explore them, if you dare.

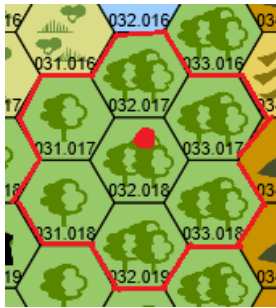
2.2. Fog of War and map tokens

The map is initially covered by fog of war, which prevents vision. Vision must be cleared by dedicated pathfinders before you can send units into unexplored areas. Fog of War will always be cleared in 7-tile clusters.

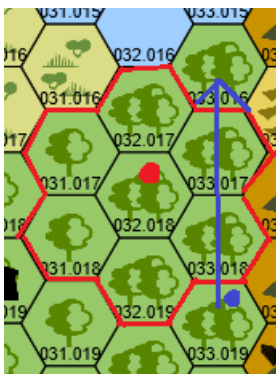
You will receive a map at the start of every turn, depicting the territory which you've revealed. The presence of other empires in a map hex will be represented by colored marks. A mark will indicate ownership of a hex – either by virtue of occupying the hex with units, or by virtue of controlling an in-hex asset (controllable assets are cities, farms, mines and shrines). The map will, however, not reveal any detail on the number or disposition of the units in any given hex.

2.3 Zone of Control

Units control the space around the hex that they occupy – this concept is known as “Zone of Control” (ZOC). If an enemy unit occupies a hex, all directly adjacent hexes are considered to be in its ZOC. You cannot move from one hex within an enemy ZOC to another hex within an enemy ZOC, unless you are moving into an enemy-controlled hex.



In this example, an enemy unit is located in hex 032.018, and exerts Zone of Control over all surrounding hexes.



A blue unit starting its turn in 033.019, and attempting to move to 033.016 in a straight line would be unable to execute this order. Its movement would end in hex 033.018, as it cannot move from one ZOC hex (033.018) into another (033.017).

It could, however, move into hex 033.017 in order to attack enemy unit, city or feature within that hex.

2.4 Hex Limits

An empire may have no more troops in a given hex than it could form into legal stacks, with a hard maximum of 100 units. Excess units will fail to enter the hex, and/or fail to be produced.

3. Cities

3.1. Basics

Cities are the core of your empire! They generate income, produce units, and provide a defensive bastion from which to taunt your foes.

Cities may be upgraded to higher levels in exchange for gold. This improves their income generation, unit production and defenses. The highest possible city level is 5. Only one level 5 city may exist per empire.

In order to upgrade a city, or build a structure in a city, you must give a construction order on your turn, while an Officer is located within the city in question. The upgrade will happen at the end of your turn. The same applies for upgrading farms. When you upgrade a city, you may also construct buildings in its newly-acquired building slots with the same order.

Level	Income	Upgrade cost (from previous level)	Cumulative cost to upgrade (from 0)	Building Slots	Fortifications levels
0 (Ruins)					None
1	100	500	500	2	1 Level
2	200	600	1100	3	2 Levels
3	300	900	2000	4	3 Levels
4	400	1200	3200	5	4 Levels
5	500	1500	4700	7	5 Levels

Cities produce income and units at the start of each global round.

3.2. City Defenses

Cities possess Fortifications of various types, which make them harder to conquer by boosting defending armies and penalizing attacking armies. Three types of defenses exist:

Walls give all defending stacks a boost to their defense stat.

Artillery attacks all enemy stacks for a flat amount of Attack each combat phase.

Hazards reduce the mobility of attacking stacks by a certain percentage.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Walls	+1 Defense	+2 Defense	+3 Defense	+4 Defense
Artillery	30 Attack	60 Attack	90 Attack	120 Attack
Hazards	75%	50%	37,5%	25%

Each city has a certain amount of fortification levels available, which may be allocated between these Fortifications, shown in the table above. Each Fortification can have up to 4 levels allocated to it, improving its effects.

In battle, defenses can be gradually weakened and finally destroyed by attacking units with siege Attack (such as units with the Siege or Sapper specials). Each level of Fortification requires 200 siege Attack to reduce, causing the Fortification to degrade by one level. If more than one type of fortification exists in a city, siege Attack will apply to all types at once.

Lost fortification levels persist even after the end of battle, but Fortifications will be automatically restored to full strength at the start of the city owner's turn if the city has not come under attack since the city owner's last turn.

3.3. Buildings

Buildings may be constructed within cities using gold, using the rules for city upgrades. Buildings may only be built in a city of the appropriate level, along with any other prerequisites. Buildings may be replaced by other buildings, but offer no refund.

Starting at level 3, cities may build Palaces, particularly powerful or interesting building types. Each city may have only one Palace.

Building	Cost	Requirements	Benefit
Infantry Barracks	400 gold, 1 slot	None	City can produce 4 Infantry of your choice per turn
C-Class Production	500 gold, 1 slot	Level 2 City	City can produce 2 C-class/turn
D-Class Production	500 gold, 1 slot	Level 2 City	City can produce 2 D-class/turn
E-Class Production	700 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 City	City can produce 2 E-class/turn
F-Class Production	750 gold, 1 slots	Level 4 City	City can produce 1 F-class/turn
G-Class Production	1500 gold, 2 slots	Level 5 City	City can produce 1 G-class/turn
Recruitment offices	500 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 city	City can produce 1 infantry for each level of farms you own within 3 hexes of this city.
Extra Walls	400 gold, 1 slot	None	+1 Level of walls
Artillery Emplacement	400 gold, 1 slot	None	+1 Level of artillery
Extra hazards	400 gold, 1 slot	None	+1 Level of hazards
Harbor	1500 gold, 1 slot	Level 2 City adjacent to a water hex	City generates 400 additional gold

Trade post	400 gold, 1 slot	City with a road connection	City generates 100 additional gold, if it's connected by road to another city belonging to you and containing trade post
Craft Quarters	400 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 City	City generates 50 gold for each production building within the city
Shrine	500 gold, 1 slot	None	City generates 25 faith per turn, but 100 less gold per turn,
Stables	600 gold, 1 slot	Level 2 city	Units starting their turn in this city have 2 additional move. This does not benefit thier in-combat mobility stat.
Fortress (Palace)	1000 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 city	This city gains +1 walls, artillery and hazards.
Foundry Quarters (Palace)	1200 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 city	Your units globally gain +1 Attack.
Pathfinder's Barracks (Palace)	800 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 city	You gain an additional pathfinder
Mustering Ground (Palace)	1200 gold, 1 slots	Level 4 city	For each different type of production building in this city, this counts as an additional building of that type.
Elite Barracks (Palace)	1000 gold, 1 slot	Level 4 city	City can produce 1 G-class/turn
Tearoom (Palace)	1000 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 city, Capital	Your side produces an additional Courtier each turn, in addition to its normal Officer production.
Tree House (Palace)	1000 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 city, Capital	Your side produces an additional Ranger every turn, in addition to its normal Officer production.
Wizard's Tower (Palace)	1000 gold, 1 slot	Level 3 city, Capital	Your side produces casters in 2 fewer turns. To benefit, the Tower must have already been built when you start production of a caster.
Tactical Academy (Palace)	1000 gold, 1 slot	Level 4 city, Capital	Your side produces an additional warlord each turn, in addition to its normal Officer

			production.
Forge of Divinity (Palace)	1000 gold, 1 slot	Level 5 city, Capital	This city may produce 2 additional G-classes per turn.
Mint (Palace)	1000 gold, 1 slot	Level 5 city, Capital	This city produces +1000 gold income.

3.4. Conquering and Razing

As with any hex, a city is conquered when an attacker destroys all enemy units within the hex. Conquered cities automatically lose a level upon conquest. You may raze additional city levels upon conquering a city, looting gold in the sum of 60% of the upgrade cost of the deliberately-razed city levels. All buildings are lost upon city conquest, yielding no gold.

A city's owner may freely raze levels from their own cities, following the same rules for city upgrades (razing happens at end of turn, an Officer must be located in the hex). Deliberately razing city levels also yields 60% of the upgrade cost of the levels.

Farms may also be razed, applying the same rules as above.

4. Units

Your units are your most important asset. They conquer territory, defend your cities, and represent your side. They're perfectly loyal. And you (mostly) get to design them!

4.1. Unit Classes

Units come in two types: Infantry, and Flexible designs.

Infantry are largely pre-designed, and they represent the kind of lowest-common-denominator that all Empires would have access to. You may customize each type of infantry by empowering them with a Utility Special (a 0-cost special).

Flexible designs come in five classes: C, D, E, F and G. Your (and every other empire) will have one unit of each class in their repertoire. Each unit's design is based off a template, specific to their class. This template consists of a small base statline, a pool of freely-allocatable points, and a number of special slots, which may be filled with special abilities to further enhance your unit's design. Additionally, each design will have one special slot which may only be filled with a Utility Special (a 0-cost special).

Once customized and accepted, your unit designs cannot be modified.

Infantry:

Class	Base Statline	Free points	Specials	Utility Special slots	Upkeep
Swordsman	10/7/3/6	0	Charge!	1	20
Archer	8/12/2/6	0	First Fire	1	20
Bruiser	24/8/2/4	0	Heavy	1	20

Flexible designs:

Class	Base Statline	Free points	Special Slots	Utility Special slots	Upkeep
C-Class	6/1/1/8	25	3	1	40
D-Class	6/1/1/8	25	3	1	40
E-Class	6/5/1/6	35	2	1	50
F-Class	6/5/1/6	48	4	1	80
G-Class	10/5/1/6	75	5	1	160

4.2. Unit Types and Stats

Units have four core stats: HP, Attack, Defense and Move. All stats are relevant to a unit's combat performance, Move additionally provides units with mobility on the map.

By default, all units are Light units. Light units' base designs have a maximum of 15 HP, and a maximum of 6 Defense. Units can become Heavy if they take the Heavy special. Heavy units' base designs have no maximum HP, and a maximum of 4 Defense. Heavy units also take up two spaces in a stack.

Raising a design's HP and Attack costs 1 point per point of increase.

Raising a design's Defense by one level has a cumulative cost equal to the unit's current defense plus 1. Thus, raising Defense from 1 to 2 will cost 2 points, raising it from 5 to 6 will cost 6 points.

Raising a design's Move costs 2 points per 1 point of increase.

In combat, units fight as groups (or "stacks") of units. When units form a stack, the stack's HP and Attack values are the sum of the HP and Attack values of the units in the stack. The Stack's defense value is the average defense of all units in the stack. A stack's Mobility stat equals the Movement stats of the slowest unit in the stack, not including units mounted on Mounts. When two stacks fight, the stack with the higher mobility gains a boost to Attack equal to $10\% * ((\text{Faster Stack's Mobility}) / (\text{Slower Stack's Mobility}))$, capped at 30%.

A unit's stats may be modified by various factors during the design process and in combat. The order these changes is applied is as follows: First, any stats purchased with points are applied to the unit's base statline. Then, any non-situational (e.g. Heavy or Well-Trained) stat bonuses are applied. The

unit's statline at this point is considered its final design statline. Stat caps apply to a unit's final design statline.

In the outline below, situational specials are marked with the "situational" tag.

Once in the field, the unit may gain additional stats from specials, tactics and warlords. In this case, any additive stat bonuses are applied **before** any multiplicative bonuses. If a unit's stats receive more than one multiplicative bonus, these compound. Situational bonuses are not limited by a unit's stat caps.

For technical reasons, if a unit has Siege Attack or First-fire Attack, these will scale only off its Base Attack (that is, the Attack value of its final design statline, modified by leadership and damage taken, but not modified by tactics, situational specials or mobility). True attack will benefit from all modifiers.

4.3. Specials

Specials are special abilities that you can purchase using your templates' available points, to further enhance and specialize your templates. Each template can only have as many specials as they have available special slots. Each special may only be taken once per unit, unless stated otherwise. Additionally, each template has one utility special slot, which must be used on a 0-cost special.

Specials come in three categories: General, Light and Heavy. Light and Heavy specials cannot appear on the same unit – you'll have to pick one category or the other. General specials can be combined freely with either category.

Pinnacle specials are extremely powerful specials, which can be picked only on G-Class templates. Each G-class may only pick one Pinnacle special.

General

Name	Point Cost	Effect
Survivor	0	This unit has decreased casualty priority.
Meatshield	0	This unit has increased casualty priority
Aquatic	0	This unit may move through water and marsh hexes, spending 2 movement points per hex. Any units mounted on an Aquatic unit will benefit from the Aquatic special as well. Exclusive with Fly and Burrow.
Relentless march	0	+1 move. Final design may benefit from no other increase in its move total from points or specials.
Infiltrator	0	This unit may ignore enemy Zone of Control. Mounted units do not benefit from their mount's Infiltrator special.

Garrison	0	This unit becomes incapable of leaving its city, and cannot exist outside of cities. This unit's upkeep is reduced by 50%.
Flying	0	<p>Flying units ignore terrain when moving, instead spending 2 movement points per hex they traverse, and may fly over water tiles. Flying units may not benefit from roads under any circumstances.</p> <p>Any units mounted on a Flying unit will benefit from the Fly special as well.</p> <p>Exclusive with Aquatic and Burrow.</p>
Burrow	0	<p>Burrowing units may cross hills and mountain tiles at a cost of only 2 move.</p> <p>Any units mounted on a Burrowing unit will benefit from the Burrow special as well.</p> <p>Exclusive with Fly and Aquatic.</p>
First Fire	2	Units with first fire may make a free attack using its base Attack before the first round of combat if they are on the defense. First fire has no effect when the unit is on the attack.
Berserk	5	This unit does not suffer penalties to its standard attack when taking damage. Final design must have less than 4 defense.
Battledance (situational)	2	This unit counts as having 4 additional move for the purpose of calculating Mobility in combat.
Charge! (situational)	2	This unit gains +8 attack in the first phase of combat.
Illegally Lucky	2	This unit gains 1 point of True Attack. True Attack is not influenced by enemy defense, and always inflicts direct HP damage. As a stack takes damage, its True Attack decreases in proportion to its Attack. True Attack does not apply during first-fire.
Siege	2	This unit gains siege Attack equal to its final design's base Attack.
Speedy	4	This unit gains +4 Move.
Horde (situational)	2	This unit has +5 Attack when fighting as part of an army containing over 75 units.
Abomination	10	<p>This unit gains +15 HP, +15 Attack and +2 Defense. This unit counts as both Light and Heavy. (This unit has no upper limit on its HP stat. This unit has an upper limit of 6 on its defense stat. This unit can purchase both light and heavy specials. This unit cannot ride on mounts. This unit takes 2 slots during stacking.)</p> <p>Pinnacle special. A unit may only have one pinnacle special. G-class only.</p>

Light:

Name	Point Cost	Effect
Forager	0	Unit's upkeep is reduced by 5%.
Sapper	0	This unit gains 4 siege.
Gilded armor	0	+1 defense. Final design must have 6 defense.
I am ze spy (situational)	0	This unit gains +6 Attack when Flanking other stacks.
Squad Tactics (situational)	2	In stacks of 12 units or fewer, this unit gains +6 Attack.
Shieldbearer	5	This unit has 6 defense. This unit's final design may not have more than 5 attack.
Giantslayer (situational)	2	This unit gains Attack equal to 25% of its opposing stack's average max HP/unit.
Hold Fast! (situational)	2	This unit counts as having +2 defense in phase 1 of combat. Does not extend to the first-fire phase.
Arrowstorm	2	This unit may attack twice during the first-fire phase while on defense. Requires First Fire.
Cavalier (situational)	3	While mounted, this unit gains +7 Attack.
Riposte	2	This unit gains Attack equal to its design's defense score.
Well-Trained	2	This unit gains +4 HP. This special may be taken multiple times.
Flagbearer	3	This unit counts as a warlord (and therefore as an Officer) for all purposes. It retains its statline and upkeep. Pinnacle special. A unit may only have one pinnacle special. G-class only.
Lifebringer	3	This unit's stack remains effective in combat for longer, despite taking damage. This unit's minimum combat effectiveness is now 50%, rather than 20%, and scales linearly to this point. Pinnacle special. A unit may only have one pinnacle special. G-class only.
Assassin (situational)	5	This unit gains +2 Attack for every F-Class, +5 Attack for every G-class and +10 attack for every Officer in its opposing stack. Flagbearers count as G-class. Pinnacle special. A unit may only have one pinnacle special. G-class only.

Heavy:

Name	Point Cost	Effect
Ravenous	0	This unit's upkeep cost and points total are increased by 10% (rounded down).

Mount	0	<p>This unit can carry one Light unit.</p> <p>A carried unit spends its movement points as normal when moving through hexes while mounted, but can continue moving with its mount, even once it has spent all its movement points. A unit entering combat while mounted must be stacked with its mount.</p>
Rampage (situational)	0	+8 Attack. This unit takes up 5 spaces in a stack.
Living Cover	0	A stack containing a unit with Living Cover has +1 defense against first-fire.
Heavy	5	<p>This unit gains +10 HP, +3 Attack and +1 Defense and -2 Move.</p> <p>Heavy units have no upper limit on their HP stat. Heavy units have an upper limit of 4 on their Defense stat.</p> <p>Heavy units count as two units when determining stack sizes.</p>
Packmind	2	Units stacked only with other packmind units gain a +10% attack and a +1 defense bonus, as if being stacked with a warlord. This bonus is not cumulative with an actual warlord bonus.
Speed Demon	3	<p>This unit gains +4 move.</p> <p>Requires Speedy.</p>
Sheer Bulk	4	This unit gains +10 HP. Final design must have 2 or less defense.
Lightning Strike	2	<p>This unit gains +6 Attack.</p> <p>This unit must have at least 8 move.</p>
Jaw that Bite	5	This unit gains 2 points of True Attack.
Jericho	2	This unit's siege damage is doubled. Requires Siege.
Titanic Vanguard (situational)	2	When in the Center stack, this unit gains +3 Attack and +1 defense.
Trample	2	This unit gains Attack equal to 1/5th of its design's HP (rounded down).
Acid Breath	5	<p>An enemy stack under attack by a stack with acid breath is treated as having 1 less defense for that phase of combat, for the purposes of damage calculation.</p> <p>Pinnacle special. A unit may only have one pinnacle special. G-class only.</p>
Fire Breath	5	<p>This unit gains 6 points of True Attack. True Attack is not influenced by enemy defense, and always inflicts direct HP damage. As a stack takes damage, its True Attack decreases in proportion to its Attack. True Attack does not apply during first-fire.</p> <p>Pinnacle special. A unit may only have one pinnacle special. G-class only.</p>
Living City	5	As Mount, but this unit can carry up to 4 units. This unit's final design must have at least 30 HP.

		Pinnacle special. A unit may only have one pinnacle special. G-class only.
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4.4. Officers

Officers are a special type of unit which lead your other units and manage your empire. All Officers share certain abilities:

- Officers must be present to upgrade or raze cities or farms.
- Officers prevent your units from auto-engaging.
- Officers may conduct private diplomacy.

Officers may only be produced in your capital, but they may be produced in parallel with other units, and do not take up production capacity. You may only produce one Officer at a time. Available Officer types are as follows.

Name: Ruler

Time to Produce: NA

Upkeep: 100

Statline: As your E-Class, +1 Defense.

Abilities: Acts as a Warlord and keeps your side functioning. If your ruler is ever slain, you must immediately spend 1000 gold to promote one of your warlords to ruler. If you have no warlords remaining, or have insufficient gold to spend, your side ends, and you lose.

Name: Warlord

Time to Produce: 2 Turns

Upkeep: 100

Statline: As your E-Class, +1 Defense.

Abilities: In combat, a Warlord's stack benefits from a 10% multiplier to Attack. Additionally, the stack's defense is raised by +1. This effect only applies once per stack – multiple warlords provide no additional benefit. Additionally, having a Warlord or Ruler in your army allows you to employ Tactics in combat.

Name: Courtier

Time to Produce: 2 Turns

Upkeep: 50

Statline: 8/4/2/6

Abilities: If a courtier ends its turn in a city or farm under your control, that city or feature will produce 20% more income. This effect does not stack. Additionally, you can give an additional order for every 2 courtiers your Empire possesses.

Name: Ranger

Time to Produce: 2 Turns

Upkeep: 100

Statline: As your E-Class, +1 Defense.

Abilities: In combat, a Ranger's stack gains +2 mobility. Additionally, Rangers are master scouts. Pathfinders may operate 6 hexes away from Rangers.

Name: Caster

Time to Produce: 6 Turns, plus one additional turn for each Caster you already possess. May only be produced once you own a level 3 capital.

Upkeep: 100

Statline: 8/4/2/6

Abilities: Casters are rumored to be powerful and dangerous. Casters cannot be produced until your capital possesses the appropriate infrastructure. You cannot, as a baseline, choose which casters you produce. The known types of casters are as follows:

Necromancer

What were you expecting? Immediately after a battle which you have won, produce an Infantry unit of your design for every unit that died in this battle, up to 20 units.

Finger of Death: For one battle, the Necromancer gains 21 True Attack.

Seer

I spy: During your next pathfinding phase, you gain 2 additional temporary pathfinders, which may be placed independently of your unit positioning, but must still be contiguous with your revealed map at the start of turn.

Eye of Sour Ron: Next turn, the Seer scouts all visible enemy forces within 6 hexes.

Artillerist

Petard: When attacking a city, destroy one level of all enemy defenses before battle.

Barrage: For one battle, the Artillerist gains 120 attack and first fire.

Summoner

Something from Nothing: During your next production phase, the Summoner produces 12 infantry, 6 C-class units, 6 D-class units, or a combination thereof.

Get over here: During your movement phase, you may transport up to 10 units (including Officers) from one target hex to the Summoner's hex. This movement costs the target units' move, and requires a movement order. The Summoner cannot summon units into a hex containing another side's units.

Herbalist

Fortifying Tincture: For one battle, the Herbalist's stack has an additional 100 HP, which must be lost before the stack takes any casualties.

Slow poison: For one battle, the Herbalist poisons an enemy stack. That stack will take no additional damage, but will take twice as many casualties post-battle.

Alchemist

Law of Equivalent Exchange: Transform up to eight lesser units into a greater unit.

Invigorating Elixir (It's Meth): At the start of your movement phase, units in the Alchemist's hex gain +2 move this turn.

5. Rounds, Turns and Phases

Empires is a game played in rounds, subdivided into turns and phases. A round is complete once each player has taken their turn. A player's turn is subdivided into phases.

5.1. Anatomy of a turn

1. Start of round: At the start of the global round, units are produced, income is generated, and upkeep is paid. If a side cannot afford its units upkeep, units despawn.

2. Start of turn: The player receives a snapshot of the map, as it stands at the start of their turn. They also receive a report on the disposition of their forces, their finances, and receive results of their units' scouting.

3. Main orders: 72 hours after start-of-turn, the player gives their orders for movement, production, construction, scouting and combat.

4. Movement phase: The player's units move as ordered. If a unit moves into a hex occupied by an enemy, their movement ends there, unless the enemy unit is overrun.

5. Combat phase: If any units entered a hex containing enemy units, and those units are not overrun, combat takes place and is resolved. After combat, no further movement is possible. This means, an enemy hex cannot be attacked by two consecutive forces – though two forces may merge to attack an enemy hex.

6. Construction phase: Any ordered construction is completed, if funds are available.

7. Pathfinding phase: The player's pathfinders reveal the fog of war.

5.2. Turn order

Player turns are resolved sequentially. Usually, this means a round will have a number of turns equal to the number of players. However, in order to accelerate process, player turns may be processed simultaneously if they are unable, or very unlikely, to influence each other on their turn. Once the players come into a position to influence each other, they will drop back into sequential processing.

5.3. Keeping things fair

Due to the relatively impactful nature of each turn, being ahead in the turn order can provide an edge to a player. Depending on flow of the game, this benefit may not end up mattering – or it may matter very much. In order to compensate for this, players who take their turns later may gain a small benefit, such as a small income bonus, or an upfront allocation of units. I'll determine this on an ad-hoc basis.

6. Combat

Combat is where the meat meets the metal, where you may test the mettle of all those who meddle in your affairs – and where they may test yours. It's where your units kill each other!

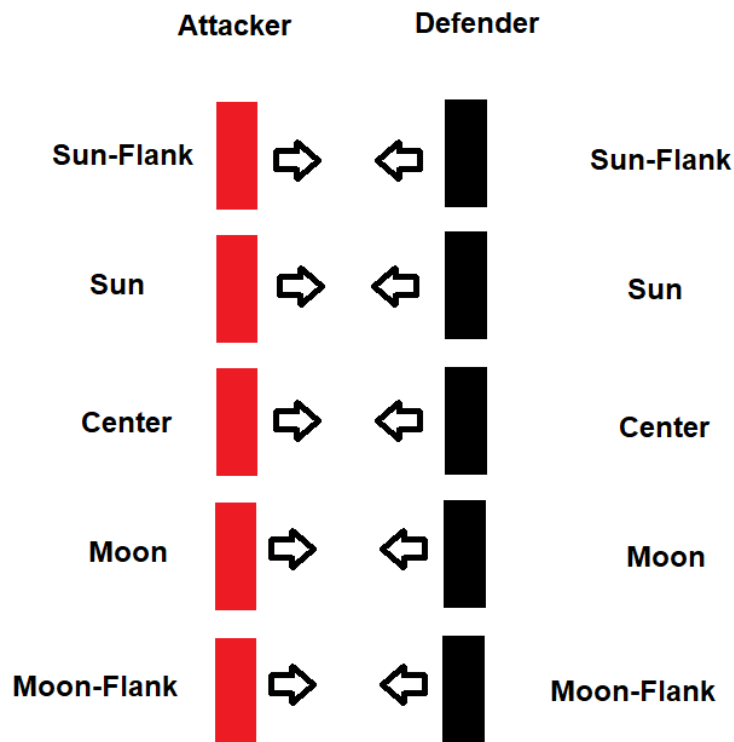
6.1. Basic rules

Combat takes place when your units move into a hex occupied by enemies, or vice versa. Unled units automatically engage each other. Two forces may avoid engaging in combat if both forces include Officers, and both players give orders to avoid combat and respect a truce. Two forces led by Officers may briefly parley before combat, but should not do so needlessly.

If your units do engage in combat, they lose all their remaining move. Combat takes place at the end of the turn, allowing multiple different groups of units to move into a contested hex, if you wish.

In combat, your units exist only as stacks – individual units are no longer considered. The stats of each stack are dependent on the stats and specials of its component units.

You may deploy up to 5 stacks in combat. Each stack takes a discrete position on the battlefield.



The Center stack is the core of your army. It can contain up to 30 units, and all units within this stack gain +1 defense.

All other stacks may contain up to 25 units. Units in these stacks gain no additional bonuses.

A battle consists of a first-fire phase, followed by up to 5 rounds, in which your stacks and the enemy stacks exchange attacks. Stacks will always target their corresponding enemy stack - Center will fight the Center, Sun-Flank will fight Sun-Flank, etc. If the corresponding stack does not exist, because it was destroyed or never fielded, your stacks will collapse inward, attacking the next-closest stack to the enemy Center. This is referred to as "flanking". If flanking stacks have a mobility bonus to their Attack, this bonus is doubled. In cases where the Moon-Flank or Sun-Flank stack manage to flank the enemy's center stack, their mobility bonus is instead tripled, with a commensurate increase to the bonus cap.

If, e.g. the enemy Moon stack is wiped out, your Moon stack will strike at the enemy Center, with a doubled mobility bonus. If the enemy Moon and Moon-Flank stacks are both wiped out, your Moon-Flank will attack the enemy Center, with a tripled mobility bonus.

If, an army's center stack is completely destroyed in battle, that army has lost the battle. If this occurs in the final phase of combat, the losing army may retreat in good order. Otherwise, on the next phase of combat, the army which lost its Center routs and is wiped out utterly, making one more round of attacks in retaliation. In the case of a rout, there is a chance of officers or other high-value units surviving to retreat.

If, after 5 rounds, neither army has lost its center stack, the attacker has lost the battle, and retreats in good order to an adjacent hex.

If an attacker is opposed by defenders of two different sides, the encounter is resolved in one single battle. The defending sides may fight side-by-side with each other, but may not stack together. Hex limits apply.

6.2. Damage and Casualties

Every time a stack attacks, it deals damage equal to $\text{Attack}/(1+\text{Enemy Stack Defense})$. This damage is applied to the enemy stack's HP. As individual units are not simulated in battle, units cannot die in combat. Instead, as stacks lose HP, their combat potential degrades, and they begin to deal less damage. A stack's effective attack is equal to $\text{Attack} \times (0.2 + 0.8 \times \text{CurrentHP}/\text{MaxHP})$. This means that a stack will always have at least 20% of its starting Attack, as long as it has 1 HP remaining. The "Lifebringer" special modifies this formula to instead read $\text{Attack} \times (0.5 + 0.5 \times \text{CurrentHP}/\text{MaxHP})$, for a minimum of 50%.

If a stack is reduced to 0 HP, it has been wiped out. It no longer deals damage and can no longer engage enemy stacks. All units making it up are considered slain.

After combat, the damage taken by a stack is allocated to the units within a stack to determine which units survived. The HP of each unit, in order, is subtracted from the total damage taken by the stack. If excess damage remains, the unit is slain, and the damage is passed onto the next unit. The order on which units take damage will be roughly proportional to the composition of the stack. Officers will take damage after units. If a unit survives, its damage does not carry over between battles.

6.3. **Combat orders**

Due to the nature of the system, each player's ability to influence combat as it happens will be limited. However, players may give orders pre-combat, if their forces include an Officer. These may include:

1. The decision whether or not to attempt parley pre-battle, allowing the combatants time for a brief negotiation.
2. Orders on how units should form up into stacks, i.e. which units each stack should consist of. This may be done even if your forces do not include an officer.
3. Which tactic the army should employ (if it includes a warlord)

If you are an attacker, you must make these decisions as part of your orders for the turn. If you are a defender, you will have an opportunity to make these decisions when you are attacked. You will receive a brief report from your Officers in the hex to assist in your decisionmaking.

6.4. **Overrun**

Not every force is large enough to be worth fighting. If one of your forces enters a hex occupied by enemy units, but these units have less than 10% of your army's total Attack strength, the enemy stack is overrun. It is wiped out, your units take no casualties, and your army's movement is not impeded – it can continue moving on the same turn, and even attack other targets.

Cities cannot be overrun.

When calculating Attack for the purposes of Overrun, mobility and tactics (see below) are not taken into consideration, but all other applicable situational bonuses are.

6.5. **Reports**

Battles are hard to keep quiet! After player phase, a short report will appear in a public channel, containing minimal information on the battle. Players are encouraged to Boast about their performance in battles (see below).

Players may consider battle reports in their decision-making. Doing so will not be considered to be metagaming.

6.6. Tactics

If your forces in a battle include a Warlord, you may order your forces to use a certain tactic. This tactic must be determined at the start of battle (alongside your stacking orders) and may not be modified. If you attempt to execute a tactic for which you do not fulfill the prerequisites, this tactic will fail, and you gain no benefit from it.

Tactic	Requirements	Effect
Stick 'em with the pointy end!	None	You gain +1 Attack per unit.
Human Wave	You have more than 50 units in combat.	Light units gain +2 Attack.
Stampede	You have more heavy units than the opponent	Heavy units gain +4 Attack.
Wall of Steel	All of your stacks have a defense of 5 or more at the start of battle.	Your stacks take 10% less damage.
Pincer Formation	None	Your Center has takes and inflicts 20% less damage. Your sun-flank and moon-flank stacks have +4 Mobility.
Wedge Formation	Your army can legally stack fit within your stack limits, as modified by this tactic.	Your Center, Sun and Moon stacks have 35 spaces each. You may not deploy any units in your Flank stacks.
Terrain abuse	The Battle takes place in a non-plains hex	Enemy Stacks have -2 mobility
Encirclement	You are attacking. All of your stacks have higher mobility than all enemy stacks.	Your stacks gain +10% Attack. The battle lasts for an additional phase.
Petard	You are attacking a city	Your units deal 50% additional siege damage during the first turn.
Skirmish	You are defending	Stacks which have a higher mobility than their opposing stack gain +100% first-fire.
Fighting retreat	You are defending a hex other than a city	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Your stacks deal and inflict 20% less damage.- The battle lasts for one phase less.- After the battle, you abandon the hex.- You have a higher chance of recovering officers in the event of a rout.
Ambush	You are defending You have declared an ambush during your move phase.	<p>Enemy stacks take a 50% mobility penalty, to a minimum of 4.</p> <p>Units which declared an ambush start their next turn with 50% move, even if</p>

		they did not come under attack.
Death from Below	None	All your burrowed stacks (i.e. all units in the stack have burrow, or are mounted on burrowing mounts) gain +5 Attack per unit.
Death from Above	None	All your flying stacks (i.e. all units in the stack are flying, or are mounted on flying mounts) gain +4 mobility.

7. Reconnaissance

Reconnaissance allows you to gain information about the map, and about enemy units. It comes in two forms.

7.1. Pathfinding

By nature, the map is unknown to you, hidden beneath fog of war. Your units cannot enter tiles under fog of war, nor will you be able to detect enemy forces within the fog of war. In order to clear fog of war, and make your tiles passable, you must employ Pathfinders.

Each side has access to **4** pathfinders, and may gain access to more. Every round, each pathfinder can reveal a hex, as well as all surrounding hexes, clearing the fog of war. Pathfinders may target any hex, as long as the following conditions are met:

1. The target is no more than 1 hex away from your already-revealed vision.
2. The target is no more than 4 hexes away from any of your units at the end of turn, or no more than 6 hexes away from one of your Ranger Officers.

Pathfinders have only an abstract existence – they do not appear on the map as units, nor do they cost upkeep. If you want to keep your enemies' pathfinders away from your lands, ensure that your enemies' units do not venture too close.

7.2. Scouting

Once you have revealed the fog of war on a hex, colored markers will show you if it is occupied by another side. However, you will not know the size or nature of an enemy force unless you scout it.

Scouting is an inherent ability of all units. Every force which you have on the map will automatically scout all enemy forces within 3 hexes at the start of your turn, and will deliver a report on their size and strength.

Additionally, if an Officer enters an enemy hex, or enemies enter one of your Officers' hexes, they will always provide perfect information on the size and disposition of the forces there. This also applies to Officers on a diplomatic mission.

7.3. Exploring features

If one of your Officers ends their turn in a hex containing a feature you're unfamiliar with, they will automatically explore the feature in question, providing you with information on its purpose and benefits.

8. Diplomacy

Diplomacy is an important tool in a wise ruler's toolbox.

By default, players will have access to an IC and an OOC channel for discussion of the game. You may speak freely on these channels, as if broadcasting your words via radio. Such communication is, however, public, and available to all other players. In order to preserve this transparency, posts in the IC and OOC threads should not be deleted or edited for content.

If you wish to communicate with another side in private, you may do so only if Officers from your and their side occupy the same hex. This may occur pre-combat if sides elect to Parley, or it may occur as part of any deliberate diplomatic overtures between sides.

As part of your economic orders, you may transfer gold to another player, if you are Parleying in any hex.

9. Orders and Order Limits

In order to preserve my sanity, and add another tactical element to the game, your number of movement orders you can issue each turn to units is limited. Initially, you may issue **4** movement orders a turn, though this number will grow as you produce additional courtiers. Every turn, you will be able to issue additional orders equal to half your courtiers, rounded down.

9.1. Non-Movement orders

Non-movement orders may be issued freely, and do not count against your total number of available units. This includes construction orders, diplomatic orders, and pre-combat orders pertaining to stacking and tactics.

9.2. Movement orders

The number of movement orders is limited by your total order pool. A movement order can only ever move a specific amount of units from one hex to another hex. If you, for example, wish to send units from one hex to two different destinations, this will require two orders.

Ferrying operations (whereby one mount repeatedly cycles between two hexes, carrying units each time) will not require an order to be spent for each leg of the journey, only for each origin and each destination.

10. Favor and Boasting

10.1. Favor

The Gods brought you into the world of Valhalla, and though they themselves are meant to be impartial, gods have never really cared for rules. Favor is a unique currency, separate from gold, which represents the Gods' goodwill towards you and your endeavors. As you accumulate favor, from holding or building shrines, boasting, or other great deeds, you may request boons from the gods... and the gods may grant them! Whether you wish to tilt random chance in your favor, empower your armies for an important battle, glean information you have no business knowing, nothing is beyond the gods! They are, however, famously unpredictable. So, take care~.

10.2. Boasting

Your main means of earning the gods' favor is Boasting. Boasting is, simply, the use of the IC thread to extol the virtues of your side, and the grandness of its achievements.

At the start of each round, players may make an IC post (their "Boast"), detailing their last round's achievements, their plans for the future, and whatever else they wish to share. Boasts can include anything, be it detailed descriptions of victories in battle (or of valiant defeats, as that may be), the production of new and powerful units, the production of brilliant officers, or much more. Even the simple act of seeding a new farm might be portrayed in a glorious light, if one is creative and bombastic enough.

The start-of-round Boasts set the stage for the remainder of the round's discussion, in which players may further aggrandize themselves, snipe at enemies, or simply have pleasant chats.

The Gods will keep a watchful eye on what is said, and will bestow Favor upon their favorites at the end of each round. A God's favorite will depend on the nature of the achievements presented, the quality, detail and interestingness of the boast, and probably subjectivity to a large degree.

11. Building a side

Still interested after all those words? Then this is the game for you! In order to build the side, you need to do the following.

11.1. Choose your side identity

Empires thrive off flavor, creativity, and the experience of seeing cool-yet-absurd armies duking it out on the field of battle. Design an Empire that you'll find fun and interesting! You should choose:

- The names of your side, your capital, your ruler
- Your Empire's Backstory!
 - Who were they at their peak? How did they fight, how did they triumph?
 - What kind of units did they use?
 - How did they fall? What consigned them to the history books?
- Your Empire's symbolism and heraldry, including a flag.

11.2. Side Specials

After your Empire's identity is established, you will be given a unique side-wide bonus, which the DM will discuss with you.

11.3. The Crunch

Finally, it's time to put it all in numbers. Using the rules and templates above, design your units from Infantry through G. If you've been given a side special that modifies your unit templates, remember to include those points!

You may only design your units once, outside of exceptional circumstances, so feel free to take your time on this and ask questions.

Your starting force will consist of the following units:
(To be decided)

Good Luck, and have fun!