

PLAYING A CHAPTER

In a chapter, players will play through many rounds until they run out of cards. When a chapter ends, players gain Power from declared ambitions. (See the *last page*.)

In a round, each player takes one turn, starting with the player who has initiative.

When the round ends, discard all played cards and see whether initiative changes players.

First, the player with the initiative marker takes a turn.

If your hand is empty or you choose not to play a card, pass the initiative clockwise to the next player with cards in their hand. They take the first turn of the round instead of you.



Play Lead Card

You must play an action card as the lead card. You may take one action **per pip** on the card in its top-left corner. (This card has 4 pips, letting you take 4 actions.)

If you have the initiative, you may declare the ambition shown in the bottom-left corner of your card: Place the zero marker over your card's number but not its pips, and put the highest Available ambition marker in the matching ambition box on the map. (Ambitions are listed on the *last page*.)

Second, each other player in clockwise order takes a turn.



Surpass

Play an action card matching the lead card's suit but with a higher number than it. (Not every played card!) You may take one action **per pip** on your played card.



Pivot

Play any action card that does not match the lead suit. You may take **one action** on your played card. (Not on the lead card!)



Copy

Play any action card face down. You may take **one action** of the lead card.

You can seize the initiative marker if you don't have it and no one has seized it yet this round: Play an extra action card face down along with your first and ignore its actions, or Surpass with a "7" card (4 players only).

Third, see if initiative changes players, then discard all played cards.

→ INITIATIVE ←



If someone seized the initiative, they keep it.

If nobody seized the initiative, give the initiative marker to the player who played a card to Surpass with the highest number. If no one Surpassed the lead card, the initiative marker does not change players.

Finally, discard all played cards and start the next round. If no one has cards left in their hand, end the chapter.

ACTION SUMMARIES

Administration → tax, repair, or influence

Construction → build or repair

Aggression → move, battle, or secure

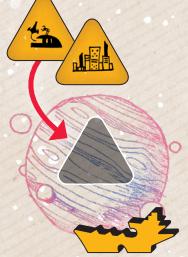
Mobilization → move or influence

Build a ship or building on the map.



Place a **ship** at a Loyal starport. A starport can only build **once per turn**.

OR



Place a **city or starport** in an empty slot on a planet with Loyal pieces.

Place the piece **damaged** if anyone else controls the system.

Tax a resource from a city.



Choose a Loyal city, or choose a Rival city that you control.

A city can only be taxed **once per turn**.



Gain 1 resource of the city's planet type from the supply. Put it in a resource slot on your player board.



If you tax a Rival city, also take 1 agent from their supply and place it in your **Captives** box on your player board.

Influence a card in the Court.



Place an agent on any card in the Court row.

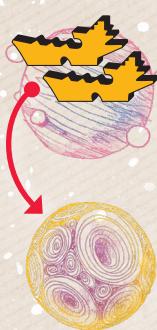
Repair a damaged ship or building.



Flip up a damaged Loyal ship or building in **any system** on the map, making it **fresh**.



Move ships to an adjacent system.



Move **any number** of Loyal ships from one system to one adjacent system.

When you move ships from a **Loyal starport**, you may take **Catapult moves**—keep moving the ships as much as you want, dropping them off as you want, until they move into **any planet** or a **gate that is controlled by anyone else**.

(In expansions, Blight also stops Catapult moves.)

Secure a card from the Court.



Take a card where you have the **most agents** from the Court row.

Return Loyal agents. Take Rival agents as **Captives**.

Draw a card from the Court deck to **refill the Court**.

Loyal: Of your player color. **Rival:** Another player or of their color.

Control: Have more fresh ships in the system than each Rival.



Assault



Skirmish



Raid



You may collect fewer dice than the maximum.

You may mix dice types.

You can't collect more than 6 dice of a type.

The attacker resolves everything! The defender doesn't make choices.



Hit Your Ships



Intercept Your Ships



Then...

Hit Ships First
then buildings if no ships remain



Hit Buildings

Then...



Raid Cards & Resources

Battle to destroy pieces and steal cards and resources!

- Choose Battle System:** Choose 1 system that has any Loyal ships. This is the **battle system**. These are your **attacking ships**.
- Choose Defender:** Choose 1 Rival who has any of their pieces in the battle system. These are their **defending pieces**.
- Collect Dice:** For each attacking ship, you may collect 1 assault, skirmish, or raid die.
 - Assault dice** damage the defender quickly at some cost to you.
 - Skirmish dice** damage them slowly but keep you safe.
 - Raid dice** steal stuff from them and damage their buildings, but they are the most risky.

Raid Dice Limit: You can only collect raid dice if there are defending buildings or if the defender has no Loyal buildings anywhere the map.

- Roll and Resolve Dice:** Roll the collected dice. You must resolve all rolled faces in this order:
 - Hit any of your **attacking ships** once per .
 - If you rolled any number of , you are **intercepted**—hit any of your **attacking ships** once per fresh defending ship. (This can only happen once per battle!)
 - Hit any of their **defending ships** once per .
 - Once no defending ships remain, hit any of their **defending buildings** once per .
 - Raid their **resources and cards** if you have any attacking ships left. You may steal cards and resources by spending the number of shown.

Hitting Pieces & Gaining Trophies

If you hit a fresh piece, it becomes **damaged**—tip it or flip it. If you hit a damaged piece, it is **destroyed**—remove it.

The attacker takes destroyed defending pieces as **Trophies**.

The defender takes destroyed attacking pieces as Trophies.

Trophies add to the **Warlord ambition**.

Destroying Cities

When you destroy a city, do the following...

- Provoke Outrage.** Discard all resources and Guild cards you have of that city's planet type. Place an agent to cover the Outrage icon of that city's planet type on your player board—that resource is now **Outraged**. You cannot spend Outraged resources for their standard Prelude action.
- Ransack the Court.** Secure a card with **any number** of the defender's agents. Take all Rival agents on the card as **Trophies**, not Captives.

ENDING A CHAPTER

The chapter ends if no one has cards left in their hand, or if everyone with cards passes the initiative. Resolve the following steps, then the player with initiative starts the next chapter!

Step 1: Score Ambitions

Score each ambition on the map that has any ambition markers:



Tycoon. Have the most Fuel and Material icons from resources and Guild cards.



Tyrant. Have the most Captives.

(They are gained by taxing Rival cities and securing cards with Rival agents.)



Warlord. Have the most Trophies.

(They are gained by destroying Rival pieces, usually in battle.)



Keeper. Have the most Relic icons from resources and Guild cards.



Empath. Have the most Psionic icons from resources and Guild cards.

The player in **first place** for the ambition gains the higher Power shown on all its ambition markers. The player in **second place** gains the lower Power shown on them.

Ties: On a tie for first place, all tied players get second place. On a tie for second place, the tied players do not place and gain no Power.

Qualifying: You cannot gain Power from an ambition if you have none of what it counts.

Bonus City Power: Each time you get first place in an ambition (not tied), gain 2 extra Power if the "+2 to won ambitions" space on your player board is uncovered, or gain 5 extra if both "+2 to won ambitions" and "+3 to won ambitions" are uncovered.



Step 2: Clean Up & Flip Ambition

Return all ambition markers to the Available Markers spaces on the map.

Flip over the ambition marker with the **lowest Power** that hasn't been flipped yet to its side with more Power.

If Warlord was scored, return all Trophies. If Tyrant was scored, return all Captives.
(Cities refill player board slots from right to left.)

Step 3: End Game or Advance Chapter

The game ends if any player has at least **27 Power** (4 players), **30 Power** (3 players), or **33 Power** (2 players), or if it is currently Chapter 5.

If the game ends, the player with the most Power is the winner. On a tie, the tied player earliest in turn order is the winner.

If the game does not end, advance the chapter marker once.

Step 4: Draw Cards

Shuffle all of the action cards.

Each player draws a hand of **6 action cards**.

2 Players Only: The player **without** initiative may discard their entire hand to draw a new hand of 6 action cards, which they must accept.

Discard all action cards not in players' hands **face down**.



x6