

Alien Encounters

Players: 2

Play time: 45 min

The Zanthans have reached Earth to make first contact with Humans, but both sides are tepid about the relationship. Are the Zanthans hostile? Are the Humans dangerous? In this game, you must figure out if the opposing faction is peaceful or hostile and act accordingly to win.

One player plays as the Negotiator for the Humans; the other plays as the Negotiator for the Zanthans (or in the expansion, the Syntari and the Apomixians). Both shuffle all of their Intention cards and then draw a random one; this is their Intention for the entire game. There are two types of Intention cards - "hostile" and "peaceful." Players should look at the Intention card they drew and keep it face down. It will not be revealed until the end of the game. The remainder of the Intention cards must be removed from the table (they are not used). Thus, each player does not know what the other player drew as their Intention.

Players may choose to use an equal distribution of Hostile and Peaceful Intention cards, or alter the odds by removing one Hostile or one Peaceful card from the possible Intentions drawn.

This leads to 4 possible scenarios. The table below shows the win conditions for each.

	Peaceful	Hostile
Peaceful	BOTH: ≥ 40 Peace (blue) combined <u>AND</u> ≤ 12 War (red) combined	Hostile: ≥ 15 War (red) AND counterpart has ≥ 10 Peace (blue) Peaceful: Any instance avoiding Hostile's victory <u>AND</u> ≤ 12 War (red)
Hostile	Hostile: ≥ 15 War (red) AND counterpart has ≥ 10 Peace (blue) Peaceful: Any instance avoiding Hostile's victory <u>AND</u> ≤ 12 War (red)	$\text{War (red)} - \text{Peace (blue)} = \text{score}$ If War (red) combined < 30, higher score wins If War (red) combined ≥ 30 , lower score wins Fewest Peace (blue) = tie break

Gameplay: Players begin with **2 War tokens and 5 Neutral tokens** in their bag. (Neutral tokens do not affect any victory condition or score; they only make it harder to assess a Negotiator's Intention.) Each "Negotiator" (player) has a deck of cards, a bag for gaining tokens, and their own supply bag. Their deck is shuffled and becomes a draw pile (face down). When cards are discarded, place them face up next to the draw pile. On each card, there is a red number representing War tokens and a blue number representing Peace tokens it is worth, as well as instructions. On their turn, players play one card from their hand. When playing a card, the player must first follow any instructions on the card, then choose EITHER War OR Peace tokens to gain to their bag from their own supply (not a mix), taking the amount shown on the card. They then take from their supply and add it to their bag in secret, out of view of their "counterpart" (the other player). The played card is not discarded; it remains on the "Negotiating Table" (the play area).

Certain cards let a player check a certain number of tokens in an opponent's bag. When doing so, they must secretly check the amount the card instructs **without** looking into the opponent's bag, and without revealing what was pulled out to their opponent. Each player starts with a "check 2 tokens twice" card and then draws 4 additional cards from their deck. Cards played each round are known to both players but tokens gained are not.

The first person to play is randomly selected. At the end of a player's turn, they should always draw back up to 5 cards. A Round is when both players have resolved a card on their turn. Gameplay continues for 10 Rounds. As players play cards, they remain face up across the table (the "Negotiating Table"), with each card opposite the other player's (to keep track of Rounds). Discarded cards are placed next to their draw pile. Shuffle the discard when needed.

After 10 Rounds, both Negotiators reveal their Intention card, then see what the win conditions are for their situation. Then, they should each count how many War and Peace tokens they have (taking into account any modifiers from Events) and determine the winner(s) of the game.

It is recommended that when Negotiators place cards on the Negotiating table, place them so that the text is readable to their counterpart. The amount of War and peace tokens can be seen normally as a reminder to the Negotiator that is playing the card.

Events

After the **3rd, 5th, and 7th Rounds**, a random Event card is revealed. Negotiators must follow the instructions of the Event prior to moving on to the next one. Events can be minor, such as simply giving player tokens, or more impactful, such as allowing a Peaceful Negotiator to remove up to 3 War tokens just prior to the end of the game.