

# Components

- 25x Asset Cards
- 21x Country Cards
- 7x Research Lab Cards
- 5x DEFCON Cards
- 4x Justification Cards

## Setup

- Sit across from your opponent.
- Decide who plays as the Caps and who plays as the Hammers.
- Shuffle the Asset deck face-down.
- Shuffle the Country deck face-down.
- Sort the Research Lab deck numerically so the Research Lab labeled '1' is face-up on the top of the stack.
- Sort the DEFCON deck numerically so 'DEFCON 5' face-up is on top of the stack.
- Place the Asset, Country, Research Lab, and DEFCON decks next to each other between both players.
- Draw two Asset cards from the Asset deck each as the beginning of your hands. Keep your hand hidden.
- Place the Justification cards off to the side.

## Playing Caps and Hammers

Win the game by collecting more Victory Points than your opponent. Collect Victory Points by controlling Loyal Countries at the end of the game. Each round, fight to gain control of the latest Research Lab Countries in play. Win control of these Locations by exerting more Influence on them than your opponent. Exert Influence on Locations by deploying your Assets into them from your hand. Each Asset card provides you Influence towards controlling the Location it's on.

Each Country belongs to one of seven Regions. Control all three of the Countries in a Region to collect bonus Victory Points.

Track the 'defense readiness condition' level of both players using the DEFCON deck. Lose Country Loyalty when you lower the DEFCON level and restore Countries Loyalty by controlling Research Labs round over round.

Use your Asset's unique abilities called Operations to help you win. Decide when to use Aggressive Operations as they are powerful but they also lower the DEFCON level. Avoid exerting too much Influence on a single Location, as it can create a Crisis that lowers the DEFCON level. Weigh the cost of lowering the DEFCON level, as the penalty grows larger the lower the DEFCON level goes.

Determine who has the most Victory Points when you deplete the Country deck.

# Rounds

Caps and Hammers consists of seven rounds in which you draw Assets, deploy Assets, launch Asset Operations, win control of Countries and Research Labs, resolve Crises, and restore Loyalty to your Countries. Play rounds until you run out of Countries and then determine the winner.

## Drawing Phase

Draw and place three Countries face-up and in play between both players. Draw five Asset cards from the Asset Card deck into your hand.

## Influence Phase

During the Influence Phase, take turns deploying Assets and launching Operations.

A turn of the Influence Phase consists of deploying a single Asset card from your hand once and launching as many Operations as you'd like. Once you have taken your turn, your opponent's turn begins. Each player takes five turns a round.

Take the first turn of the round if you have more Countries in play that default to your faction. Countries default to Caps if they have a star symbol and Hammers if they have a hammer symbol.

## Deploying an Asset

To deploy an Asset, take an Asset card from your hand and place it face-down in portrait orientation on your side of a Location in play. Both Research Labs and Countries are Locations. You may deploy one, and only one, Asset per turn and you may not skip your turn. There is no limit to the number of Assets you may deploy to a single Location. You may always look at your Asset cards, including face-down Assets in play.

Strike a balance between using your assets to win Countries and Research Labs. Winning control of a Country gives you 1, 2, or 3 Victory Points. Winning control of a Research Lab allows you to keep your Countries Loyal throughout the game.

There are several different types of Assets, each with unique abilities. Some Assets have abilities called Operations. For an Operation to take effect you must launch it.

## Launching an Operation

To launch an Asset's Operation, turn the Asset card face-up into landscape orientation. The Operation then immediately takes effect. You may only launch the Operations of face-down Assets. You may launch as many Operations as you want during your turn, before and after deploying an Asset. You may immediately launch the Operation of any Asset you deploy.

**First Turn Operations** can only be launched on your first turn of a round.

**Occupation Operations** block other Assets from launching an Occupation Operation on that Location.

**Aggressive Operations** lower the DEFCON level when you launch them. Aggressive Operations make you pay the DEFCON penalty, and you cannot launch an Aggressive Operation if you cannot afford the DEFCON penalty. See the Lowering the DEFCON Level section for details.

If you launch an Aggressive Operation on a Location with a Justification card you own you skip taking the topmost DEFCON card. To create a Justification card on a location, launch a Diplomat Asset card's Operation. If you use an Aggressive Operation using a Justification, move the Justification card back to the Justification deck.

### **Lowering the DEFCON Level**

To lower the DEFCON level, take the topmost DEFCON card, apply its penalty, then discard it. If you are responsible for the DEFCON level going down, flip your Countries to Disloyal until you've lost equal or more Victory Points than the requirement of the DEFCON card. Extra Victory Points from completing Regions do not contribute towards your DEFCON penalty.

When you reach DEFCON 1, reset the DEFCON deck to DEFCON 5.

### **Resolution Phase**

Once players have taken five turns each, flip all face-down Assets in play face-up and take these steps:

#### **1. Win Control of Countries and Research Labs**

Determine your Influence on a Location by adding up the Influence of your Asset cards there. Asset cards provide Influence whether or not you launched their Operations. Take into account your Assets' abilities.

Win control of every Location where you have more Influence than your opponent. If both players have zero or equal Influence on a Location, they tie. Break ties over Countries using that Country's default faction preference. Tied Research Labs remain in play into the next round. Put Locations you've won face-up and near you.

#### **2. Identify Crises**

A Crisis occurs if players spend 13 or more Influence on a single Location collectively. Diplomats do not count toward Crises.

If a Crisis occurs, lower the DEFCON level. During Crises, both players take the DEFCON penalty. See the Lowering the DEFCON Level section for details. If you cannot meet the DEFCON penalty during a Crisis, flip all of your Countries to Disloyal.

#### **3. Restore Country Loyalty**

For every Research Lab you now control, flip a Disloyal Country back to Loyal.

## Reset

Discard all Assets in play and move unspent Justification cards back to the Justification deck. Any remaining Assets in your hand carry over into the next round.

Begin the next round at the draw phase if cards are remaining in the Country deck. If no cards are remaining in the Country deck, determine the winner.

## Determine the Winner

Add up the Victory Point values of each of the Loyal Countries you control. For each complete Region of Loyal Countries you control, gain an extra 3 Victory Points.

The player with the higher Victory Point total wins. If players have equal Victory Points, the player with fewer Countries wins. If players still tie, the player with more complete Regions wins. If players still tie after that, all nukes launch, the world ends, and there is no winner.

## Glossary

- **Influence:** The value provided by Asset cards. Influence is listed in the top left corner of each Asset.
- **Loyalty / Loyal / Disloyal:** Whether a Country you control is providing you Victory Points. Loyal Countries are face-up and Disloyal Countries are face-down.
- **Default Faction Preference:** A Country's default faction preference determines turn order and breaks ties. Countries default to Caps if they have a star symbol and Hammers if they have a hammer symbol.
- **DEFCON:** The Defense Readiness Condition of both factions. The lower it is, the more expensive aggressive actions are. DEFCON 5 is peace and DEFCON 1 is full mobilization for nuclear war. Our world has never arrived at DEFCON 1.
- **Justification:** A Justification is a card that the Diplomat Asset card creates in order to avoid the price of activating Aggressive Operations.
- **Occupation:** Launched Occupation Operations prevent other Occupation Operations from launching there.
- **Aggressive:** Aggressive Operations make the DEFCON level go down. You must pay the DEFCON penalty.
- **Crisis:** When players exert over 13 Influence on a single Location, making the DEFCON go down with both players responsible.

## Credits

Thank you for playing Caps and Hammers! We hope you enjoyed the experience.

By Oliver Barnum and Jonathan Tang with Next Day Games