

Opera

Pablo Frank Bolton
Department of Board Games
frankpablo@gmail.com

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Abstract

Opera is a science fiction survival game that can be played as a cooperative effort against external and internal events or as a competitive scenario where each player or group of players must defeat and overpower the others.

1 Basic Setup

1.1 Board Configuration

1. Each player starts with their own faction, on which they have absolute power.
2. Each Faction must start in only one place out of four options:
 - (a) Central Hex : Solar system, or Terra and Mars
 - (b) Surrounding Hex 1: Tau Ceti, or Ceti
 - (c) Surrounding Hex 2: Gliese 581, or Saamo
 - (d) Surrounding Hex 3: Gliese 667 or Garda

Each of these systems have their own main planet(s), which are represented with planet drawings in triangular cards (*T-cards*) that can be placed anywhere in their Hex for the duration of the game.

3. The starting placement of a faction determines their initial resources according to Table 1

Table 1: Initial Resources per Location per Player

Resources (current / per turn / remaining)

Place	Material	Energy	Rations	Colonies	Spaceships	Personnel
Terra	(5/1/5)	(5/1/5)	(8/1/8)	(2)	(2)	(5/1/∞)
Ceti	(6/3/14)	(10/3/8)	(5/1/8)	(1)	(2)	(2/1/∞)
Garda	(5/3/10)	(5/1/10)	(8/2/12)	(1)	(1)	(3/1/∞)
Saamo	(5/2/8)	(5/2/12)	(4/2/10)	(1)	(1)	(3/1/∞)

One example of an initial setup can be seen in Figure 1, where we can see three factions occupying three different systems:

- (a) Red Faction is in Terra and Mars
- (b) The Green Faction is in Saamo
- (c) The Blue Faction is in Garda
- (d) Ceti is unoccupied

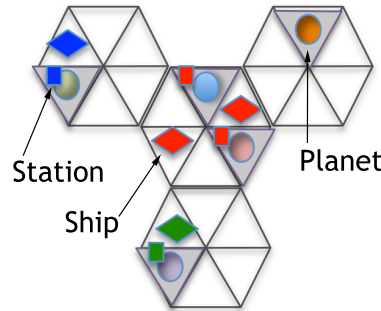


Figure 1: Example of an Initial Setup

For future reference, at the top of the hex configuration will be the universe's North direction.

4. There can be up to two planetary stations per planet.
5. The hex tiles and t-cards can be placed in any orientation at the start and will remain in that configuration for the rest of the game, unless otherwise stated.
6. Spaceships can be placed anywhere in the same hex as the home bases.

1.2 Player board

Each player will accumulate player cards (*P-cards*) that can be used during the game. The cards may be kept hidden or displayed.

In addition to the P-cards, players may accumulate and upgrade individual agents under their control, and choose where these are placed.

2 Game mechanics

2.1 Hexagons

Hexagons are representations of different spatial environments. Each hex has properties that define the environment for the objects and personnel placed in them. There are six types, listed in the order of most to least frequent:

1. **Empty space:** Without any large objects, but with different properties that determine ship movements and *Energy* acquisition/expenditure.
2. **Star system:** Star or group of stars with no stable planets around them. They can be exploited for *Energy*.
3. **Asteroid cloud:** Large area filled with rocks that go from pebbles to dwarf planets. Very hard to traverse but rich in *Material* for extraction.
4. **Planetary systems:** There is a star and at least one planet, which can be H-congruous or not. H-congruous planets/moons are fit for placing *Colonies*, finding *Rations*.
5. **Massive Black hole:** Constitutes a deadly area for slow ships. It is increasingly traversable for progressively faster ships. It can be exploited for *Energy* and *Material* but it is very dangerous to do so.

6. **The Nexus:** This is a special hex that can take different roles, depending on the state of the game. It may represent a massive energetic event, (like a super massive explosion), the core system of an alien empire, the massive machine-world of a sentient machine hoard, etc.

2.1.1 Discovery

After the initial setup is fixed, players may explore or scan different areas, revealing new hexagons. A hexagon explored by a single player is placed face down so that the area is occupied but its characteristics not revealed to all.

At this time, the number of T-cards is determined but placed facing down and over the hex.

If the hex was discovered during a physical exploration of the space, the explorer may peek and discover the type of hex it is, as well as the nature of the T-cards and can elect to leave them hidden for everyone else.

If the hex was discovered using a long range scan, then only one thing can be discovered per scan. The first scan reveals the nature of the hex, and all subsequent scans do so for the T-cards.

A hex and the T-cards are revealed in two ways:

- a) A player may choose to reveal them at any point after discovery, or
- b) At the point when a second player discovers the hex (T-card).

2.2 T-cards

Triangular cards or T-cards are discovered at the same time a new hex is explored or scanned for the first time. The number of T-cards in each hex, N_t , is determined randomly: $N_t = \lfloor 1d6/2 \rfloor$: half of the number obtained in a six sided die, rounded down. Once the number of cards are determined, their placement is decided randomly by throwing a six sided die per T-card, and placing them on the triangle with the resulting number. The first triangle is the one on the top (Universal North) and the rest continue clockwise.

T-cards are of three different types:

- a) **Astronomic bodies:** They are static astronomic bodies like planets, moons and asteroids that can be colonized and/or exploited for resources.

- b) **Stations and Ships:** These objects may be abandoned or may belong to lost colonies or even aliens or synthetics and can be used if they are taken. The origin and nature of the objects are determined at the time of discovery using the method described in the card.
- c) **Wondrous Items.** These items determine the nature and history of the universe and add knowledge to the discoverer. Their discovery defines many aspects of the game, like the nature of the Nexus hex if it is discovered. It also triggers specific events at the end of the turn. There are different types of items and their accumulation determine if and when there will be a Grand Event.

An example may be seen in Figure 2. In the example, the red player has moved one of the ships to a new hex. A hex is extracted from the hex pile at random. In this example, the hex is an *empty space* hex, which the player gets to see because it was a physical discovery. The player then throws a six sided die and gets the number 5. This means that there will be $\lfloor 5/2 \rfloor = \lfloor 2.5 \rfloor = 2$ T-cards in the hex. Then placement is determined by throwing the d6 two times. In the example, the player gets a 2 and a 4. Since it is a physical discovery, the player gets to see the two cards.

The two T-cards are extracted at random from the T-card pile and they turn out to be a wondrous item (like an unknown time device) and a planet. Since the environment is empty space, this defines the planet as a rogue planet, which determines the way it can be exploited in the game.

2.2.1 T-card Descriptions

A T-card will contain information regarding resources for exploitation or capabilities to perform actions. Some properties depend on the environment the T-card is found in. The effect of the environment in the property is of two types:

- a) **Resource alteration:** The six resources are Material (M), Energy (E), Rations (R), Colonies (C), Spaceships (S) and Personnel (P). If any resource can be extracted from the T-card element, then the resource will be presented as a triplet (current / per-turn / remaining) with a modifier for relevant environments.

An example would be for the T-card of the planet shown in Figure 2. The card could contain something like:

2.3 P-cards

Personnel cards or P-cards are obtained ...

2.4 E-cards

Event cards or E-cards are revealed ...

2.5 Turns and steps

The game is played in turns, that all players must complete before moving on to the next one until a player reaches an ultimate objective or there is complete extinction.

Each turn consists of four distinct steps, which are:

1. **Reaping:** The stage in which players receive the results of the investments done in the previous turn. This stage can be run in any order.
2. **Allocation:** The placement of the newly acquired resources. Players must commit their resources to a destination (without actually moving them yet). This stage can be run in any order since it is not revealed until the Action phase.
3. **Action:** The stage where movement, processing and exchange of resources is carried out, including attacks, building, feeding, the use of cards, and other actions. This stage is carried out in an order determined by the state of the game.
4. **Investment:** Resources are placed under different programs to extend or upgrade them. Most resource processing is done at this stage.

2.6 Order of play

blah

2.7 Factions

blah

2.8 Resources

blah

2.9 Allocation

blah

2.10 Actions

blah

2.10.1 Exploration

blah

2.10.2 Scanning

blah

2.10.3 Ship movements

2.10.4 Personnel movements

2.10.5 Building

2.10.6 Attacking

2.10.7 blah

2.11 Investment

blah

2.12 Events

blah

2.13 Grand Events

blah

2.14 Objectives

2.14.1 more blah

blah

Grand Advances :

1. World-level Terra-forming : (more F, H)
2. In-World/Moon Colonies (Superior Defence)
3. Accelerate Supernovae (Monster Attack)
4. Life-To-Machine Sentience transfer (No need for F and P!)
5. Dyson sphere (More E)
6. Targeted mutation (Superior Efficiency and power for personnel)
7. Time travel (Contingency and/or info gathering)

blah