

ABOVE TOP SECRET / MAJIC
EYES ONLY



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RULEBOOK



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Dedicated to my father Albert Colmer who served in WW2, and unfortunately passed away before the game was completed. He was the inspiration for the theme and is represented on the cover artwork.



CREDITS

Original Concept, Design, Gameplay, Rulebook,
3D Graphics and Illustrations by James Colmer.

Rules and Mechanics by Kenny McLachlan

Many thanks to Kristy McLachlan, Derek "Dez" Maggs,
and Matt & Lyndon from Adelaide Tabletop Game Design
for playtesting and advice.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Above Top Secret is a turn-based strategic Card Game for two players with team play option (See page 9). The game is suited for ages 12+ and play will take approximately 45 - 90 minutes.

THE SITUATION

You have been recruited to take command of the strategic Defense Systems for a Top Secret Military Base.

There are many weapon systems at your disposal, including some which are classified Above Top Secret. These include prototype systems, which have been reverse engineered from recovered Extraterrestrial Craft.

As your Security Clearance Level increases, you will gain access to ever more advanced technology.

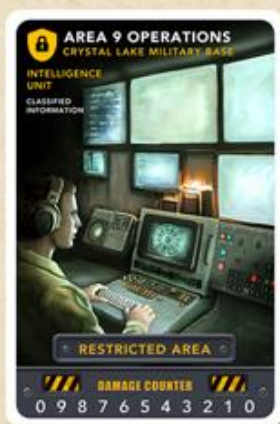
But beware; there are Alien forces monitoring the conflict closely. Your brilliant strategy may be upset by their direct interference when you least expect it.

GAME OVERVIEW

Each Military Base consists of four main areas:



HEADQUARTERS



OPERATIONS



TEST FACILITY



RESEARCH LAB

Players must protect their Base using the Technology and Weaponry at their disposal, subject to their level of Security Clearance.

THE DEFENSE DECK



Using your personal deck of Defense Cards you must seek to break through your opponent's front line and destroy each of their four Base Areas, whilst ensuring that at least one of yours remains standing. The deck contains forty unique cards with 8 of each level of Technology.

THE ENCOUNTER DECK



The Encounter deck contains 12 cards with four of each of these three different types of effects:

- Alien Interference

Unleash effects that will impact one or all players in the game.

- Alien Technology

Use of Reverse engineered Alien technology.

- Alien Assistance

Enhanced knowledge to gain technical advantage over your enemies.

SECURITY CLEARANCE CARDS



Your Security Clearance Level enables you to progressively gain access to higher levels of technology throughout the game.

There are 5 Security Levels, with the highest being Above Top Secret as shown by the sliding marker (left).

You will always have access to Level One Clearance (Restricted) and this cannot be removed from play, even by special events.

LEVEL 1 - RESTRICTED

Can attack a Level 1 or 2 Defense Card

LEVEL 2 - CONFIDENTIAL

Can attack a Level 1, 2 or 3 Defense Card

LEVEL 3 - CLASSIFIED

Can attack a Level 2, 3 or 4 Defense Card

LEVEL 4 - TOP SECRET

Can attack a Level 3, 4 or 5 Defense Card

LEVEL 5 - ABOVE TOP SECRET

Can attack a Level 4 or 5 Defense Card

INCREASING YOUR SECURITY LEVEL

You may only advance 1 Security Level per Cleanup Phase and this is achieved by sacrificing Defense Points. There is no obligation to increase your Security Level and it will be an important ongoing strategic decision made by you at the end of each round of play.

Cont.

The number of Defense Points required to advance to each Level is as follows:

- Confidential (Level 2) - 10 Points
- Secret (Level 3) - 20 Points
- Top Secret (Level 4) - 30 Points
- Above Top Secret (Level 5) - 40 Points

These Points relate directly to the DEF amount on your Defense Cards that are currently in play. To increase your Security Clearance Level, you must sacrifice cards with enough Defense Points.

You may discard a card(s) with more points than required, but never less. These Defense Card(s) are moved to the Discard Pile.

GAME COMPONENTS

Each player chooses one of the four matching sets of Base Area Cards, and receives 40 Defense Cards, 12 Encounter Cards, and one Security Clearance Card, along with a set of score markers and tokens as outlined below.

Each Player receives:

- 1 X Cloaked Token
- 1 X Shield (Protector) Token
- 1 X Disabled Unit Token
- 1 X Double-sided Alien Effect Token
- 5 X Double-sided damage tokens (10, 20, 30, 40, 50)
- 4 X Base Card damage markers
- 1 X Security Clearance level marker

The Combat and Encounter Dice are placed in the middle and players decide who goes first by highest roll or whatever method they prefer. The ATS Command Token is given to the player who has first strike on each round.

GAME SETUP

SECURITY
CLEARANCE
CARD



ACTIVE
DEFENSE
SYSTEMS



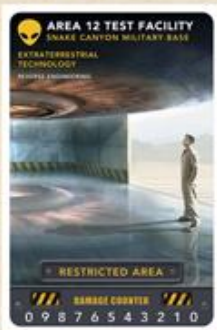
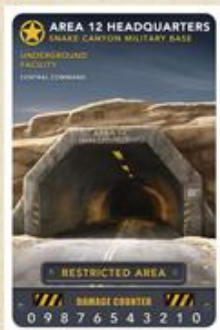
COMBAT ZONE



ENCOUNTER
DECK



DEFENSE
DECK



BASE AREA CARDS

DISCARD
PILE



We recommend the use of ATS playmats as they have been designed with specific areas for each of the card types, however the game can be played without mats using the same layout principle.

1. Place your 4 Base Area Cards face up as shown, with the damage counter clips set to the zero mark (10) on the bottom left of each card.

2. Secretly choose 5 Defense Cards from your Defense Deck. This must be 1 Card from each of the 5 Technology Levels. These are your starting defensive/offensive weapon systems for the game and you are free to choose any of those available to you in order to suit your strategy. Place these cards FACE DOWN in the positions shown above without your opponent seeing them. These cards will be disclosed before the first turn begins, by turning them face up.



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GAME SETUP CONT.

4. Place the Security Clearance Card face up on the designated area on the Playmat with the level marker set to Level 1 (Restricted). As a minimum, you will always be able to access Level 1 technology, and the counter on the side of the card will allow you to keep track of your Security Level.
5. Shuffle your remaining Defense Cards and place them face down on the designated area on your Playmat.
6. Shuffle your Extraterrestrial Encounter Card deck and place this face down.
7. Each player now draws the top seven cards from their Defense Deck. This is your playing hand and your opponents should not see these cards.
8. Once setup is complete, each player rolls a D6 to establish who will have first strike. The highest number goes first. If two players roll the same value, they should roll again until a result is achieved. The ATS Command Token is placed next to the player who goes first, being moved to the next player at the Cleanup Phase.
9. Now its time to disclose your Defense Cards. Players turn their five active Defense Cards face up.

OBJECTIVES

- Destroy all of your opponent's Base Areas by reducing their Hit Points to zero.
- Keep at least one of your Base Areas from being completely destroyed until your opponent has used up their supply of Defense Cards and can therefore no longer fight the war.

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WINNING THE GAME

You can win the game in one of two ways.

1. Destroy all of your opponent's Base Area Cards before they destroy yours. A player is out of the game if they lose their final Base Area Card. Base Cards have 100 Hit Points each.
2. Be the last player to have access to Defense Cards. A player is out of the game if they no longer have any Defense Cards left to draw upon, even if they have a Base Area remaining.

PHASES OF A TURN / ROUND OF PLAY

1. Extraterrestrial Encounter
The player with First Strike (first turn on the round) is given the ATS Command Token and rolls the Encounter Die to establish whether an Encounter occurs. If so, the top card is taken from the player's own Encounter Deck. This card may be used as per the instructions on it. (See page 3.)
 2. Draw a Card:
The Player draws a card from the top of their Defense Deck and adds this to their hand.
 3. Combat Stage
If the player chooses, they may commence an attack on an opponent, (See pages 8 & 9.)
 4. Sacrificing Combat
The Player may choose to sacrifice the Combat Stage in order to change Defence Cards. (See page 10.)
- It is now the Opponents turn to respond, by following the same sequence above.
5. Cleanup Phase
Once both players have completed their turn, the Cleanup Phase begins. (See page 9.)

CLEANUP PHASE

A complete round of play has now finished, and it is time for the Cleanup Phase. Each player now performs the following actions:

1. Repair Damage - any damage currently taken on Defense Cards still in play is repaired by removing any damage tokens.
2. Reinforce Defenses - Players fill any gaps in their line of Defense (replace any Defense Cards that have been destroyed and discarded during gameplay) with an equivalent level card held in your hand.
3. Increase Security level (See pages 4 & 5.)
4. Discard - you may only hold a maximum of 7 cards in your hand at the end of the Cleanup Phase. Discard any excess cards now before the next turn starts.

Note: Encounter Cards are not part of the player's hand and are used in accordance with their own instructions.

The end of the Cleanup Phase signals the end of the round, and the ATS Command Token passes to the opponent who now has First Strike capability.

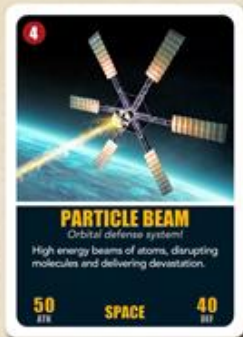
TEAM PLAY OPTION

In Allied or Team Play, if there are only 2 teams, the first turn will alternate as per a 2 player game.

If there are 3 teams, the first turn will rotate clockwise to the team on the left. Within the team, all players should take turns starting the round when their team has the Command (First Strike Capability.)

NB: For more than two Teams, an additional Game Box is required.

COMBAT



Consider your line of Defense Cards in play as the Battle Front.

You will use these weapon systems for attacking (when it is your turn) or defending (when it's your opponent's turn). When attacking, you are attempting to destroy one of your opponent's Defense Cards, thereby removing it from play and creating a gap in their defenses for you to directly attack one of their four Base Areas. This is the primary way of inflicting damage on, and eventually destroying, an opponent's Base.

Your Security Clearance Level determines the maximum level of technology you may use to attack your opponent.

For example, if you are declaring an attack with your Tech Level 2 Defense Card, you may declare this attack against your opponent's Level 1, 2 or 3 Defense Card, but only against one of the Cards. The attack does not need to be against a Defense Card of exactly the same technology level as your own.

Once you have chosen the Defense Card you will use, this should be moved into the Combat Zone if you are using a Playmat. You declare which of your opponent's Defense Cards you are attacking and they move that card into their Combat Zone opposite yours.

Combat is then resolved .

SACRIFICING COMBAT

There may be occasions when you decide that one or more of your Defense Cards in play are not suitable.

In this instance, you may forfeit your opportunity to make an attack and discard one or more Defense Cards that are in play. These cards are removed from play to the Discard Pile and replaced with Card(s) from your hand of the same technology level.

You may change any Defense Card(s), regardless of your Security Clearance Level but be careful, throwing away too many cards could be risky, as running out of Defense Cards could put you out of the game.

An example of why you may wish to do this:

Defense Cards of the same Technology Level will have different Attack (ATK) and Defense (DEF) Values, as well as different attributes.

It's possible to have a card or cards with little or no ATK value in play when you want to play a hard-hitting attack strategy.

As these cards are low on ATK, they are likely to have quite high DEF. This means your opponent may not be able to destroy these easily during combat and they could remain in play for many turns, hindering your own plans.

This is great for a defensive strategy, but not for an offensive one. Once you have drawn suitable cards from your deck, you could then choose to sacrifice your combat phase to exchange these with your current defenses.

Your new offensive strategy can then commence from your next turn.

UNIT TYPES

LAND	No modifiers.
AIR	+10 Defense against Land Units (except Covert Units).
COVERT	Ignores all Defense modifiers for Air Units. Immune to First Strike.
SPACE	May only be attacked by Missile or other Space Units.
MISSILE	Can attack Air and Space Units, ignoring Unit Defense modifiers.
ANTI-AIR	Ignores Unit Type modifiers for Air Units.

BOOBY-TRAPPED

If this unit is beaten and destroyed, the attacker will receive this card's total Attack Value in damage. The attacking card is destroyed and discarded if the damage is equal or more than their own Defense Value. No excess damage is rolled over to the attacker's Base cards.

BYPASS

This unit may choose to ignore all Defense Cards and attack a Base Area of their choosing directly. If doing so, attacker rolls a D6. On a 1-3 only half the damage is allocated. On a 4-6 full Attack Value is allocated.

CLOAKING

You are able to temporarily cloak a unit of your choice if you have the relevant Security Clearance to use it. You may nominate any one of your own Defense Cards in play to be cloaked during the next complete round of play, from the start of the next round of play. As long as the nominated card is still in play at this Cleanup Phase, and not affected by the Disabler effect, it will gain +30 Attack/Defense Value for the entire next round of play ending at that Cleanup Phase. Place the Cloaked Token on the card as a reminder.

COUNTERATTACK

If this unit is not destroyed in the initial attack, it may counterattack using its full Attack Value and modifiers. Note: the unit may only Counterattack once per turn. Some special instances/attributes may stop this attribute from working.

DISABLER

This unit always strikes first, regardless of situation, unless it is being attacked by another Defense Card with the Disabler attribute. This unit has a chance of disabling the attacking/defending unit for a complete round of play. Roll the ATS Combat Die for the result.

1-3 = no effect.

4-6 = attacking/defending unit is Disabled.

A Disabled UNIT must have the Disabled Token placed on it. The unit remains disabled (although it retains its full Defense Value), until the end of the round.

EARLY WARNING

Due to enhanced surveillance systems, this unit notifies Bases of incoming attacks. This card will negate the first 10 points of damage inflicted upon a Base Area if this card is destroyed and excess damage from the attacker is rolled over to a Base Area.

FIRST STRIKE

This unit always attacks first, even if being attacked, unless the attacking unit also has the First Strike attribute OR countered by other abilities.

FLANKING

The defender is out-flanked and suffers -10 Defense Value.

INNACCURACY

May miss the target. Roll a D6:

1-3 is a miss and no damage is inflicted.

4-5 is a hit and half attack damage is inflicted. 6 is a hit with full damage allocated.

INFILTRATION

Unit is able to infiltrate the enemy before making an attack. Reduces defender's Defense Value by -10.

INTEL

Can either temporarily increase own Security Level or decrease an opponent's Security Level.

PROTECTOR

If this Defense Card has been in play, without being attacked or used, for more than 1 complete round of play, it will gain +10 to Defense until attacked or used. Place Protector Token on card until attacked or used.

SELF DESTRUCT

This unit may choose to destroy itself before an attack commences against it. The attacker will suffer the full Attack Value of this card in damage. This unit is destroyed in the process and removed from play. Cannot be used against cards with the attributes First Strike, Disabler or Covert.

STEALTH

This Unit cannot be counter-attacked.

TIME SHIFT

When defending, the attack will be treated as if it never happened, on a roll of a 4-6.

When attacking, opponent suffers -30 Defense on a roll of 4-6.

FAQ'S

Q: Do I have to make an attack?

A: No, there is no obligation to make an attack.

Q: Which of my opponent's Defense Cards can I attack?

A: As the attacker, you may attack an opponent's Defense Card up to one level above or below the level of the one you are attacking with. The attack does not need to be against a Card of exactly the same technology level as yours.

Q: How many times can I attack during my turn?

A: You may only attack once per Combat Phase, regardless of your Security Clearance Level.

Q: When I attack, does it have to be against an opponent's Defense Card?

A: No. If an opponent has a breach (gap) in their line of defense, then you may use the opportunity to directly attack one of their Base Area Cards of your choosing. This is an extremely vulnerable position for a player to be in and you should exploit the opportunity.

Q: If my Defense Card is not completely destroyed, when does it regain its full value?

A: Defenses are repaired during the Cleanup Phase for that round of play. Damage Tokens which have been placed on Defense Cards to show how much damage has been sustained during the round are removed, and full value is regained.

Q: What happens if my attack destroys my opponent's Defense Card?

A: This is a key part of the Combat system. If your attack is successful and destroys an opponent's Defense Card, that Card is removed from play to the Discard Pile.

Q: Can a Base Area Card be damaged in other ways?

A: Yes. Base Areas can also be damaged directly by cards with bypass attributes or by some Encounter Cards.