

Six Winters

Playtest Rules

v25.1

Six Winters is a two-player cooperative fantasy game about a group of unlikely friends fighting to protect your society, *Brightdune*, from the oppressive *Empire of The Autarch*.

The Autarch works to achieve a sorcerous apotheosis, rendering The Empire unstoppable and spelling certain doom for Brightdune. The players have six winters to stop this from happening. Each game of *Six Winters* is around 90 minutes long and plays out one year in the chronicle of Brightdune. A series of six games is called a *campaign*.

During a session of the game, players select from a rotating cast of characters and work one of the Autarch's *schemes*. To stop the scheme from occurring player's most complete *three scenes* before time runs out or *threats* grow out of control. A special *finale scheme* played during year six determines whether players win the campaign and defeat the autarch.

Each character has their own unique capabilities and limitations. Effectively managing these characters over the six winters is critical to successfully stopping the Empire!

As this document is very much in progress, designer thoughts and notes are captured using this highlighted format.

These notes help provide context, but are not essential to understanding the game. The playtest version number matches that used in Tabletop Simulator. All of the graphic design, art, and layout is for prototype purposes and will change at production time.

The first few games will take closer to the 120 minute mark as you learn the rules. Two experienced players can finish a game in around 90 minutes.

Since this is a playtest version of the game, feel free to reach out with any questions. The best place to leave feedback or rules questions is on the boardgamegeek page: <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/382841/six-winters>. The most recent rulebook and character sheets are also available there.

Feedback will go towards clarifying the rules and polishing the game. Current focus areas for playtesting are noted at the end of these rules.

Finally, none of the graphic design is completed and most of this art is AI placeholder art. This is only for playtesting purposes. I intend to hire artists for all of the art in the final version. It's also likely the rules and cards are out of sync. Hopefully it will be somewhat obvious what the different iconography means, but I'll try to update the rules sporadically as the rest of the game is updated.

Components

Resource Dice 🎲

The conflict against the Empire is fought using six **resources** depicted with the icons shown at the bottom of the page. These resources are also represented by dice that come into play each turn.

Resource dice match the color of the resource icons. There are 6 resource dice of each color, for a total of 36 resource dice.

Resource dice are finite, if they run out for some reason, new resource dice may not be put into play until some become available again.

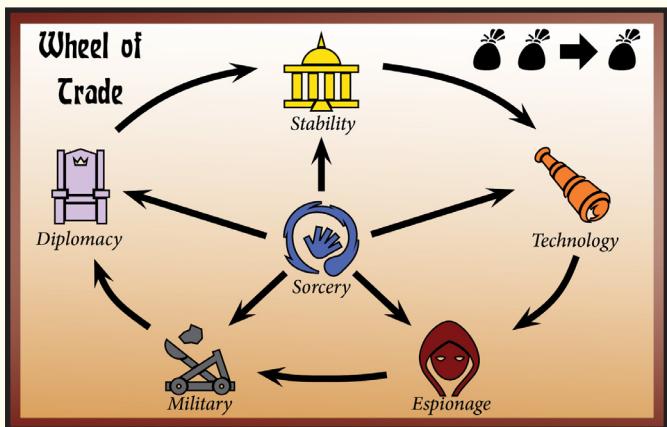


Resource Dice (6 x Resource)

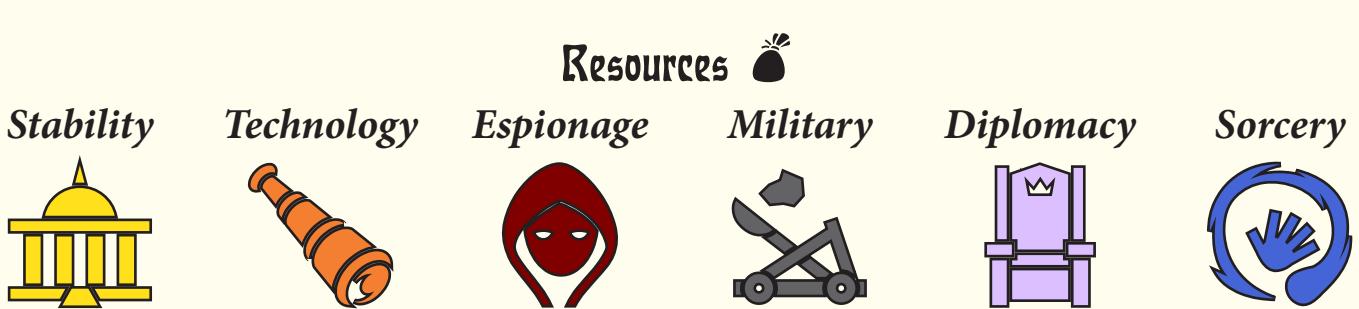
One of the goals of playtesting is to determine how many of each type of resource dice are needed to avoid frequently running out. It may end up that different resources have different maximums.

Wheel of Trade

Two resource dice of one type may be traded for one dice of another type following the Wheel of Trade. The Wheel of Trade mat is placed nearby during play to remind players of trade direction. It also has a turn step tracker on the front and play aid on the back.



Wheel of Trade



Action Points ☀

Players get a certain number of action points each turn, usually four. These action points are spent to take actions such as moving your character, trading resources, gaining additional resource dice, and for some special abilities and card effects.



Action Point Tracker

Initiative Dice ♀

Each player has a pool of ivory initiative dice available each turn. Players may increase the number of initiative dice they have during a game. These dice are spent to perform certain actions. There are 18 action dice included in the game.



Initiative Dice (18)

Thematically, lower valued action dice represent quicker actions and higher valued dice represent longer and slower actions. Quicker actions are better at overcoming obstacles (see below) and slower actions are better at building assets (see below).

Hindrance Tokens ⚡

There are 12 yellow cubes, which represent hindrance for obstacles (discussed later).



Hindrance (12)

Progress Tokens ⚪

There are 12 blue cubes, which represent progress in overcoming obstacles (discussed later).



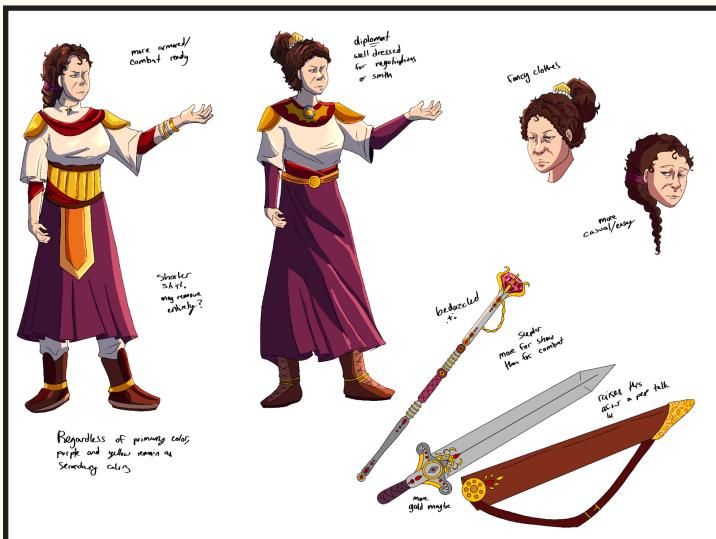
Progress (12)

Threat Tokens

There are 12 red cubes, which represent unresolved threats. Accumulating too many threats is the most common way to lose a scenario.



Threat (12)



Character Mats and Character Sheets

Character mats are used along with character sheets during play to track the character's state. At the start of the campaign Fuscus, Parin, and Kanun are unlocked and available.

You can find blank character sheets on [boardgamegeek](#).

Skills

Each character has a card showing how proficient they are at a set of six **skills**. Skills are ranked from 0 to 5. Skills may be improved further during play.



Starting Character Stats (Parin)

Stress

Each character has two stress pools: one for **psyche** and one for **body**. Psyche is tracked using **blue tokens** and body is tracked with **red tokens**. At the start of a game, each **stress pool** is set at the starting stress level, by placing tokens equal to the character's pool value of the appropriate color onto the character mat. As a character takes stress, cubes are removed from the pool.

If a character takes stress such that a pool would go to zero or lower, refill the stress pool to starting and the character takes a **condition**.

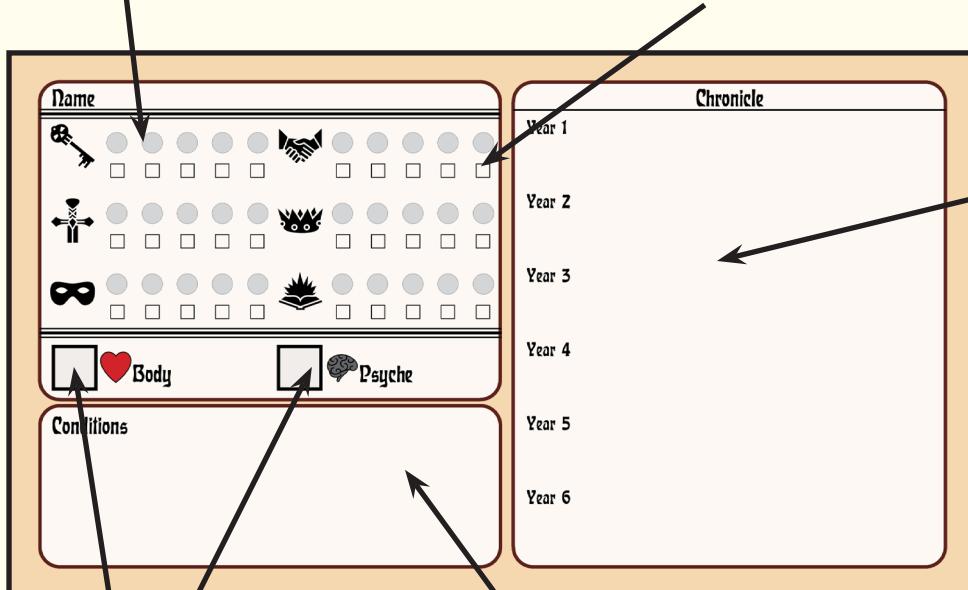
Conditions

Conditions are long-term consequences which reduce a character's effectiveness. When a character takes a condition, roll on the appropriate Conditions table at the end of the rules. There are also condition cards which show the results. Characters recover from conditions by taking **downtime** for the year.

Character Sheet

Fill in starting skills (the circles) when character is first played

Squares are used to track skill advancement, from either completed scenes or downtime



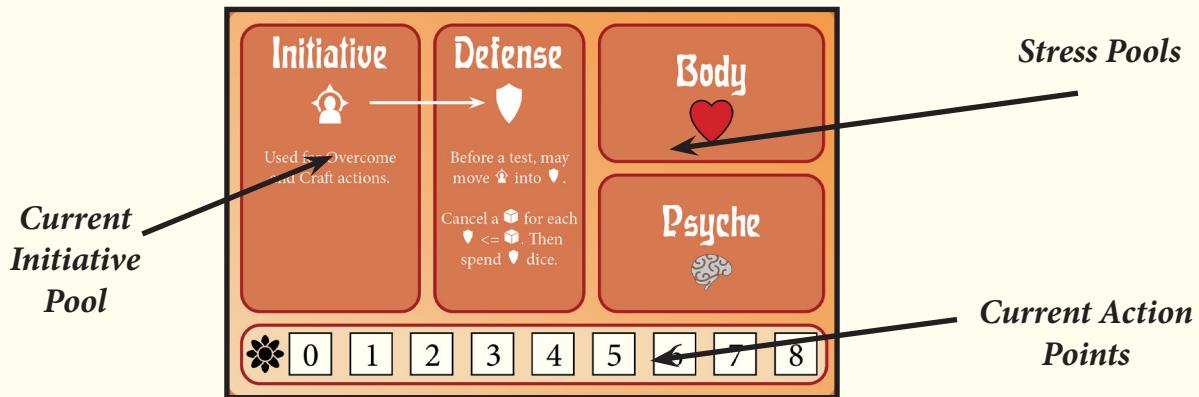
Starting stress levels

Conditions

Chronicle

Tracks whether the character took downtime for the year, or a record of what Imperial scheme they fought against

Character Mat



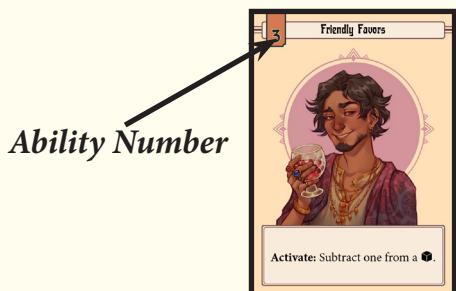
Character Abilities

Each character has a set of abilities on character ability cards. At the start of the game, only the first character ability card is available.

Most character abilities may only be used once per turn. If a character ability is **Activated**, it should be rotated when used. Activated abilities may be refreshed and used again next round. If a character ability is **Played**, it is placed on the bottom of the character ability deck.

Character abilities are sorted numerically at the start of each game based on their character ability number, from lowest to highest.

Character abilities are described in more detail at the end of the rules.



Character Ability Card (Fuscus)

Initiative ♀

These dice are used to craft useful assets and overcome obstacles. Lower dice are quicker and better for overcoming assets, while higher dice are more deliberate and better for crafting assets.

Character Sheet

When a character is unlocked for the first time in the campaign, a new character sheet is filled out with the character's name, starting skill ranks, and starting stress pool amounts.

Players may fill out sheets for Parin, Fuscus, and Kanun at the start of the campaign.

Character Tokens

There are tokens to use to track character location. These are moved around the different location cards during play.

Tabletop Simulator uses character miniatures.

Skills

Edge



Steel



Shadow



Charm

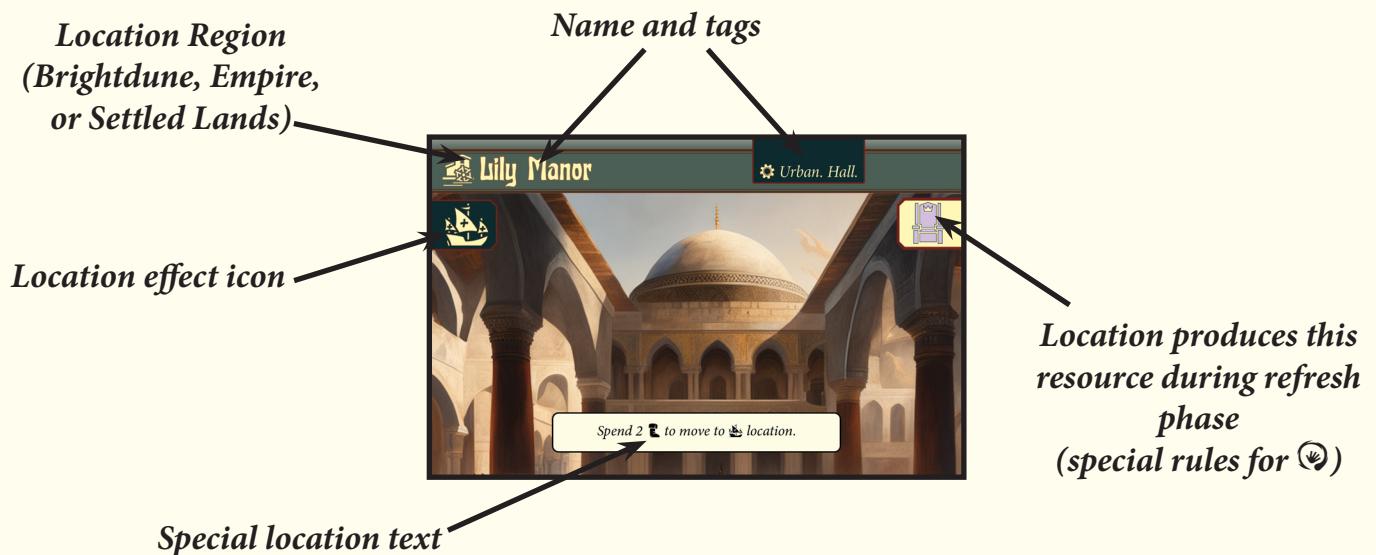


Command



Lore





Location Cards



During play, characters move to locations represented by cards. Each location is assigned to one of the following regions:

The Empire

Brightdune

Settled Lands

Location Tags

Location cards have a variety of tags (wilderness, fort, blighted, etc.) used by other game effects.

⚙️ Developed Location

Locations with the ⚙️ tag are *developed*. These typically offer better effects than base locations. Locations start play undeveloped, and can be developed by completing specific scenes.

Resource Production

Some locations have the ability to produce resource dice. These locations are marked with a resource icon(s) on the right side.

Location Effect Icon

The upper left of each location card contain optional icons indicating various effects.

- » **Port:** A character may move from this location to another port for the cost indicated on the location card.
- » **Portal:** A character may move from this location to another portal for the cost indicated on the location card.
- » **Movement:** Some locations cost additional action points to move into, as indicated.

Location Text

Locations may have a variety of effect text as well. This text applies to any character at the location, or in some cases moving to the location.

- » **Any Die:** By spending an initiative die or a resource die at the location (value doesn't matter), players may apply the indicated effect.

Asset Cards

Creating assets is the main way players complete scenes and make progress during the game. Assets are created by placing resource dice on the asset which match the pattern shown near the top of the asset card.

These symbols restrict what sorts of resource dice may be placed on the card. These restrictions are depicted by colors and symbols on each square:

- » **Any:** Any resource die.
- » **Any Value:** Resource must match the resource type (by color), but may be any value.
- » **Any Type:** Resource must match the value, but may be any resource type.
- » **Type and Value:** Resource must match both the resource type (by color) and value.

Completing an Asset

When all of the dice have been slotted onto an asset, it is created. This allows the player to use its effects during play and apply its points towards completing scenarios as desired. This process is described in detail later in the rules.

Tags

Tags represent the type of asset. Occasionally effects refer to the tags.

Skill

All assets have a particular skill they're better suited for. This comes into play when scoring points for a scene, and can affect any abilities they have.

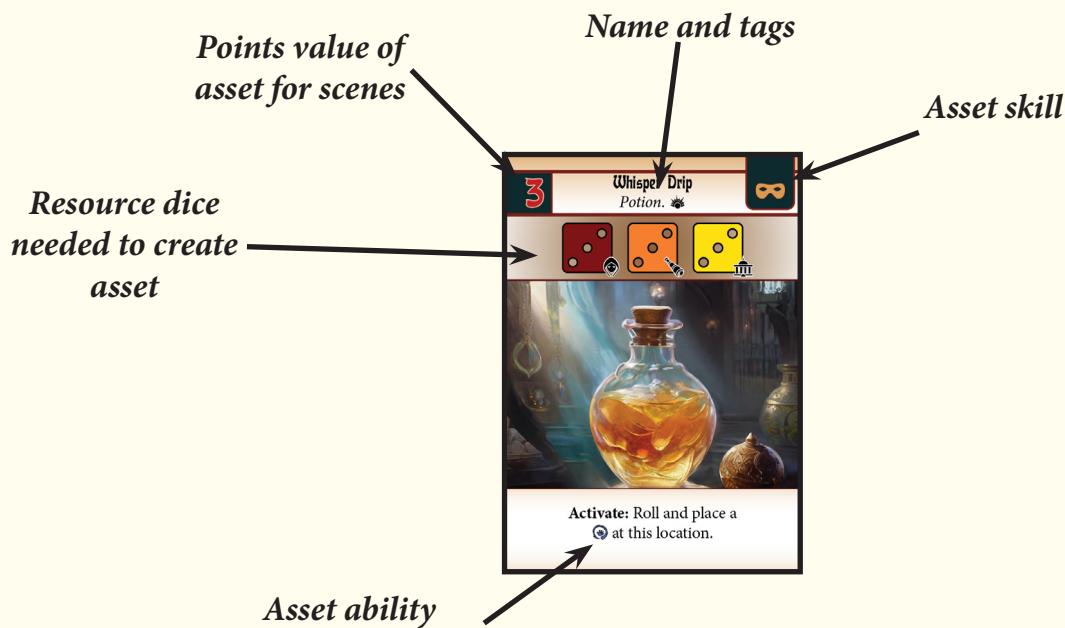
Points

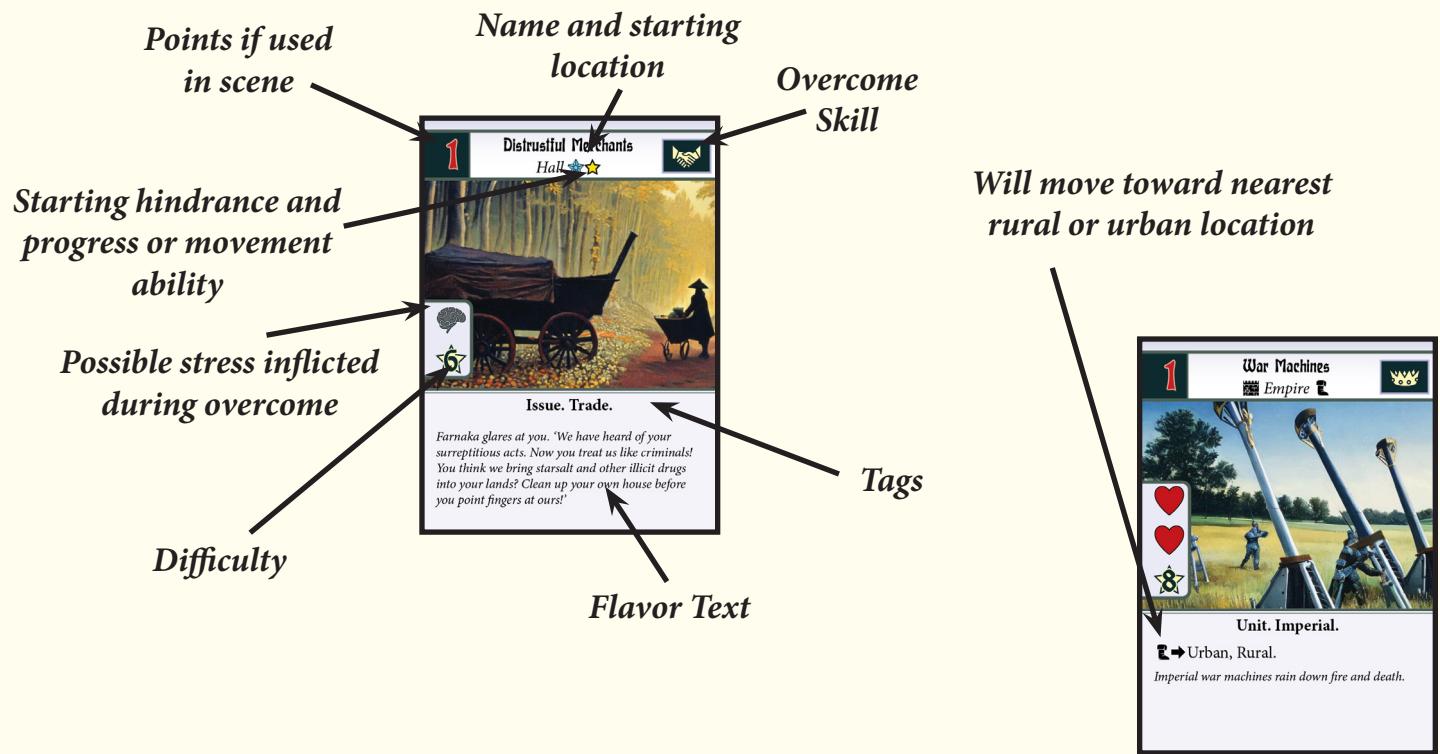
Assets spent (discarded) during scenes contribute the indicated points total towards completing the scene.

Ability

Many assets have a special abilities that help players during the game. These function very similarly to the character ability cards.

The specifics are described in more detail later in the rules. **Most asset abilities may only be used once per turn** - the asset is turned 90 degrees to indicate it has been used.





Obstacle Cards

Obstacle cards represent adversaries and challenges the characters are confronted with during a game. There is one deck of obstacle cards during the campaign.

The obstacle deck will grow and change during the game based on scenes and schemes players select. At the start of the campaign, the obstacle deck is empty.

Starting Location

Below the obstacle name, location tags are listed. When an obstacle is drawn, it is attached to a location of the given type. If there are multiple such locations, players choose the one with the fewest obstacle cards on it.

Points

Obstacles spent during scenes contribute the indicated points total towards completing the scene.

Overcome Skill

The upper right of the obstacle indicates the character skill used to remove the obstacle from play.

Hindrance, Progress, and Movement

The following symbols are found below the starting location of the obstacle:

- »  **Hindrance:** Add the indicated number of yellow hindrance tokens onto the obstacle when it is put into play.
- »  **Progress:** Add the indicated number of blue progress tokens onto the obstacle when it is put into play.
- »  **Movement:** During activation, the obstacle will move to the nearest location of the indicated type. If more than one location type is listed, it will move toward the nearest location of either type.

Effect

When an obstacle is activated, a threat token is placed on the location where the obstacle is at. After placing a threat token, the obstacle is discarded. Occasionally, obstacles have additional effects as indicated on the card.

Stress Type

Each obstacle may inflict psyche stress, body stress, or both. This occurs when a character fails to defend dur-

ing the overcome obstacle action.

Difficulty

The difficulty indicates how many tokens must be on the obstacle to discard it. If there are progress tokens equal to or higher than the difficulty, the player may take the obstacle and use its points during a scene.

Tags

Tags interact with other cards and game effects.

Flavor Text

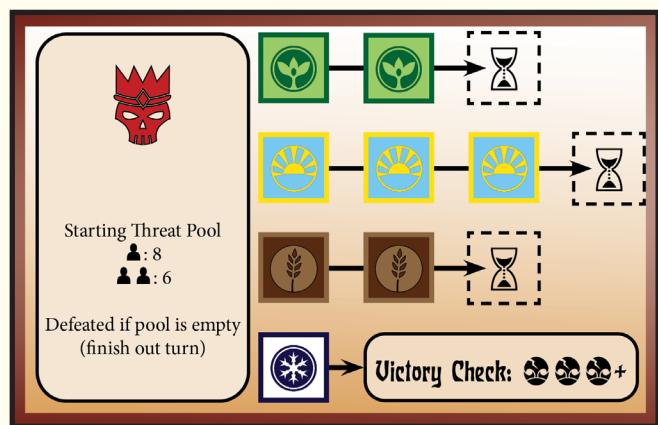
Narrative highlights for the obstacle. This can be used as inspiration when completing scenes.

Season and Turn Trackers

A Season Tracker is used to keep track of the current season as well as the current threat pool. When obstacles or other effects activate, threat is moved from this pool onto location cards. If this pool is every empty, the players lose.

Additionally, if time runs out and the players haven't completed at least three scenes, they lose.

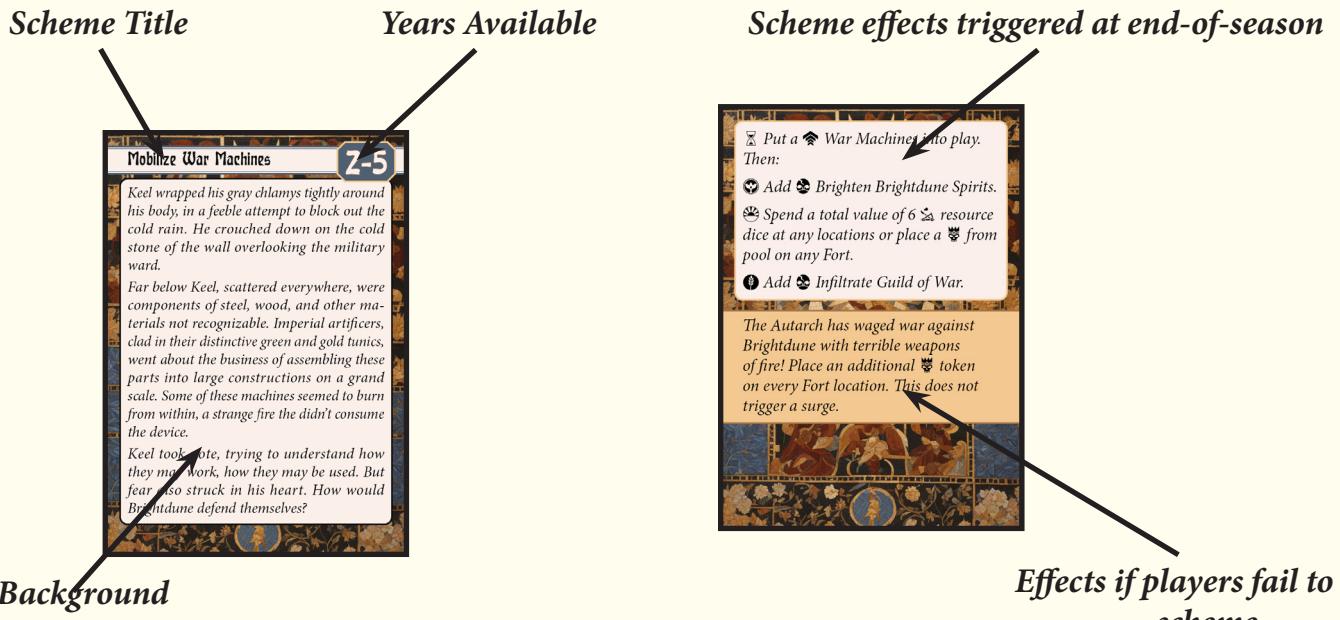
A Game Turn Tracker is helpful to track the different steps during a game turn.



Season Tracker

Game Turn Tracker

Game Turn	Refresh Steps
<input type="checkbox"/> Actions	1. Reroll ♀ dice. Add additional die and take stress for each ⚡.
<input type="checkbox"/> Refresh	2. Refresh ⚡ on all resource locations.
<input type="checkbox"/> Draw Scene	3. Each player gains 4✿.
<input type="checkbox"/> Activate Obstacles	4. Each player takes 2 from any of ♀ ♪ ♫.
<input type="checkbox"/> Draw Obstacle	5. Each player rerolls ♀.
<input type="checkbox"/> Advance Time	



Schemes

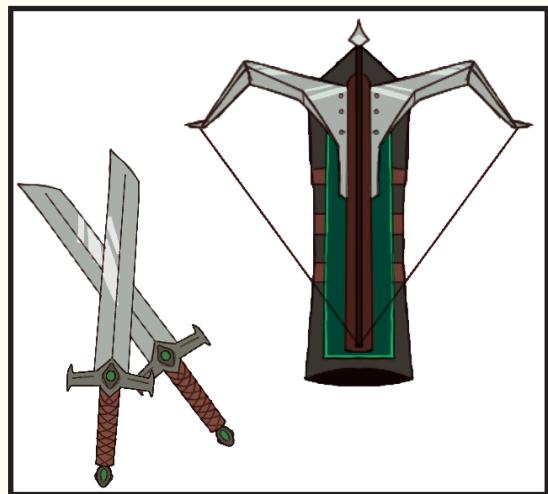
One scheme is randomly selected at the start of each game. The Autarch's schemes drive specific obstacles, scenes, and other effects during the game. Additionally, if the Autarch is successful, there are specific instructions to follow after the game.

Scheme Years

Schemes are only available during particular years of the campaign. Gather all of the schemes with years matching the current game year prior to playing. Then draw a random scheme from those available.

There is a specific scheme used at the start of the campaign (Year 1) as well as a Finale scheme (Year 6).

This is an active area of development. Integrating scheme effects in an interesting way is ongoing.



Scenes

At least three scenes must be completed before time runs out or the threat pool is depleted.

Completing scenes requires going to the listed location, and playing created assets and overcome obstacles which equal or exceed the points value of the scene.

Scenes also allow players to craft a narrative: how these particular assets and obstacles influence the scene.

Location

Scenes may only be completed at the listed location or a location with the indicated tags.

Points

As a group, the players must have a number of points as shown on the scenario card to complete the scene.

Skill

Each scene has a particular skill which gives players bonus points for assets and obstacles which match the skill type.

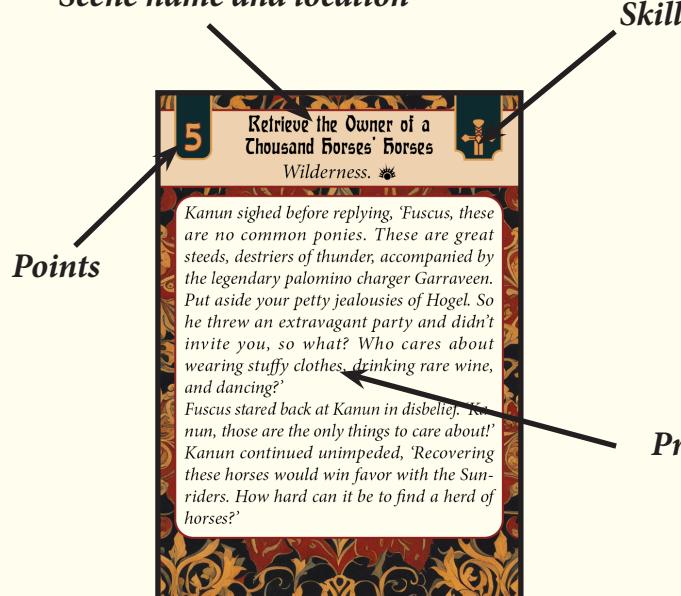
Challenges

Guiding questions aid players in creating a narrative. These are optional, but may be answered as part of scoring assets and obstacles.

Epilogue

Text that must be followed when the scene is over. This is usually beneficial for the players, but can also add complications and difficulties into the campaign.

Scene name and location



Skill

Points

Prologue

Challenges

Epilogue



Campaign Setup

Starting a new campaign requires a few additional setup steps: creating the world map, setting up the scene deck, and setting up the asset deck. Additionally, character sheets are filled out for each starting character.

1. Create and Record Starting Map
2. Create Campaign Scene Deck
3. Create Campaign Asset Deck
4. Fill Out Starting Character Sheets

Create and Record Starting Map

The starting map is set-up as shown below. The starting map uses the locations with the campaign start icon on them. On the back of one of the character sheets, write in the locations and resources each location has available.

The map starts small but will grow during the campaign!

Standard Starting Campaign Map

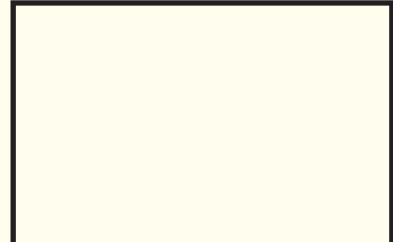


Location Placement Restrictions

Alternatively, players may construct the world map following the restrictions detailed below. These are also the same restrictions that must be followed when new locations come into play.

For the first playthrough, it is recommended to use the standard starting map.

- All locations within one region (Empire, Bright-dune, and Settled Lands) must be adjacent to at least one location from the same region. That is, regions must be contiguous.
- At least one location from each region must be adjacent to Yearly Field, which doesn't have a region.
- **No location may have four adjacent location cards** (at least one side of every location must be open).



Create Campaign Scene Deck

The scene deck for the campaign persists between games. For the first game, use all of the scenes with the campaign start  icon on them.

Create Campaign Asset Deck

As with the scene deck, the asset deck persists between games. Start with all of the assets with the campaign start  icon on them.

Fill Out Starting Character Sheets

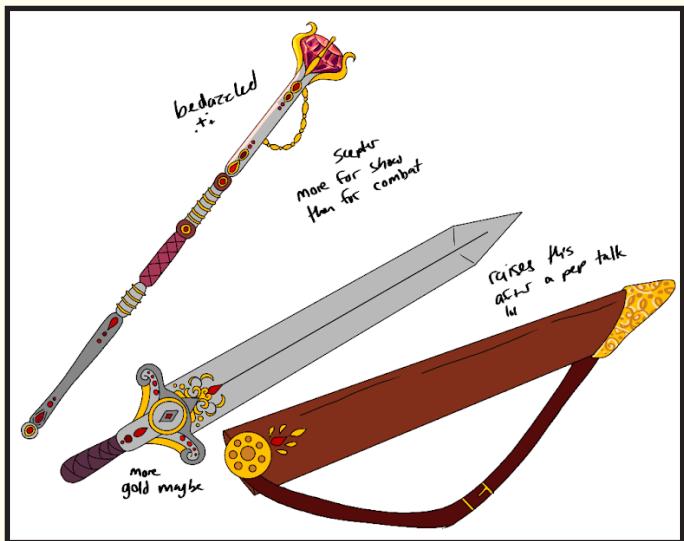
Fill out starting character sheets for Parin, Fuscus, and Kanun. Can use the sheet with the map on the back for one of the characters.

The Archive

Obstacles, assets, schemes, scenes, and locations which are currently out of play are said to be in The Archive. All obstacles start the campaign in The Archive. The most common way for cards to be introduced to the campaign is by completing scenes or by scheme effects.

The Reserve

Between sessions, completed assets which haven't been played for scenes, may be stored in The Reserve. At the start of games, assets may be pulled from the Reserve and begin play completed and ready for action!



Session Setup

Perform the following steps at the start of each game.

1. Restore Campaign State
2. Shuffle Obstacle, Asset, and Scene Decks
3. Fill Asset Staging Area
4. Select Scheme
5. Setup Season and Turn Trackers
6. Choose Characters
7. Sort Ability Cards
8. Downtime (Years 2-6)
9. Select Reserve Assets (Years 2-6)
10. Roll Starting Resources
11. Character Setup
12. Place Characters at Any Location

Restore Campaign State

Recreate the current world map as recorded on the back of the character sheets. This includes **placing threat tokens and obstacles** on any locations which have them. Gather the current campaign obstacle deck, asset deck, and scene deck.

For the **first game of the campaign**, there is no obstacle deck, and the asset and scene deck only consist of those cards with the campaign start  icon on them.

Shuffle Campaign Decks

Shuffle the current obstacle, scene, and asset decks and set them near the Season Tracker. For the first games of the campaign (Year 1), there is no obstacle deck.

Fill Asset Staging Area

Draw **four assets** and place them face up next to the asset draw deck. This is the **asset staging area**.

Select Scheme

Draw a random scheme from those available for the current year. In the base set, there is only one scheme available for both Year 1 and Year 6.

Read the scheme background aloud and follow any special set-up instructions for the scheme, if any. Then turn the scheme card face down and set it next to the season tracker.

Setup Season and Turn Tracks

Fill the threat pool on the Season Tracker with six red tokens (this is the standard number for two players). Set a pawn on the first spring season space on the season tracker.

Place a pawn on the first step of the Game Turn Tracker as well.

Choose Characters

Each player chooses one character from all unlocked characters for this game. Take the chosen character's sheet, a character mat, and tokens to track action points, body, and psyche.

Those characters not taken in this game are held out in downtime and may recover from conditions or spend advances at the start of the next year.

Sort Ability Cards

Take character ability cards with the character's image on them.

Sort these cards into a draw deck, in ascending order of character ability numbers, with the **lowest character ability card number on top** and the highest on the bottom.

Downtime (Years 2-6)

Each character who didn't participate in the previous game may *train and rest*. Remove one condition for the character and take two skill advances of your choice.

Skill advances are taken by filling in the squares below a skill track. The two advances may be applied to the same skill or different skills.

Whenever a skill advance track raises higher than the skills (whenever the squares filled in are higher than the circles), *erase the skill advance track and increase the value of the skill by one*.

For instance, if a character has a skill of one, it would take two advances to raise the skill to two. The higher the skill value, the harder it is to improve!

Select Reserve Assets (Years 2-6)

Players may split up the assets currently in the reserve between them, as desired. This is provided there were any assets saved at the end of last game!

Roll Starting Resources

Roll and place a matching resource dice on each location that generates resources (has a resource icon). If the location has multiple resource icons, roll and place resource dice matching all of them.

As described in the Turns section below, *sorcery resource dice which roll a 6 explode* (roll and place an additional sorcery resource die). Sorcery dice which explode do not cause stress, as no characters are present at the location during the initial refresh step.

Place the rest of the resource dice in an easily accessible location nearby.

Character Setup

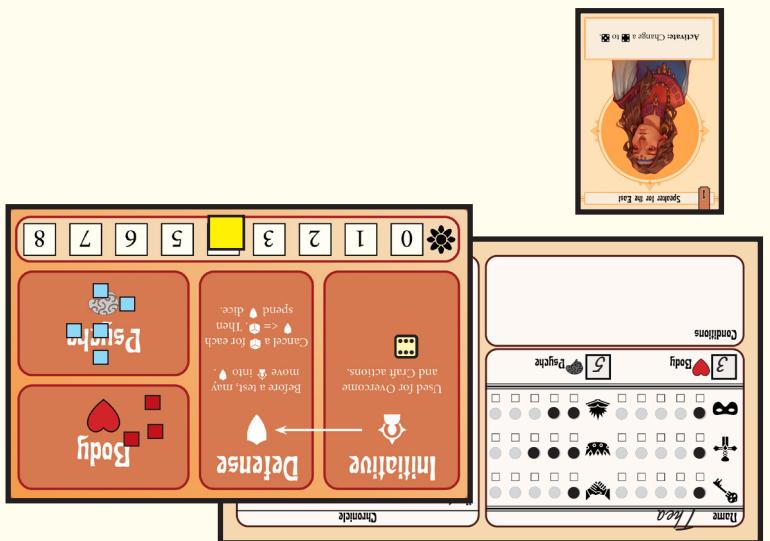
Each player may *take one asset* from the staging area into their asset in-progress area. The asset in-progress area is above their character sheet and character mat. Each time an asset is taken from the staging area, refill the asset staging area back up to four assets.

In addition, each character take and rolls *one initiative die*, placing it in their ♠ pool on their character mat, and *draws the first character ability card* (the card of value 1) and places it face up below their character sheet. This ability card is available to be activated or played.

Each character starts the game with *4 action points* ♦.

Place Characters at Any Location

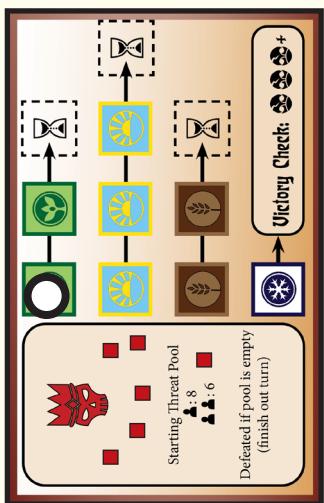
Each player places their character token at any location they wish.



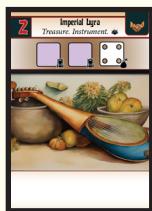
In-progress assets are placed above character sheet / mat



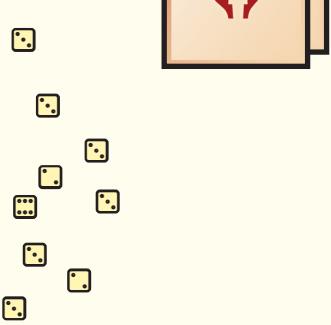
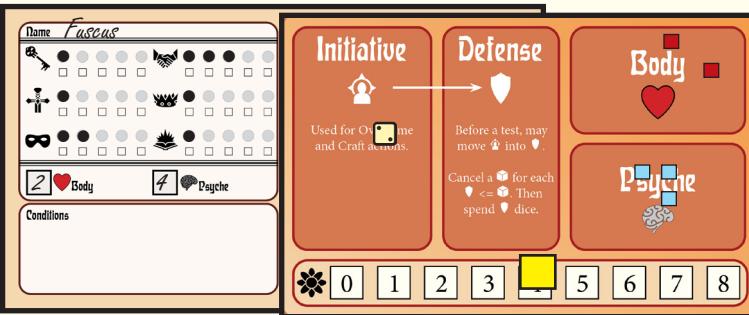
Year 1 scheme



Each player starts with one in-progress asset, one ability card, one initiative die (roll and place), and 4 action points

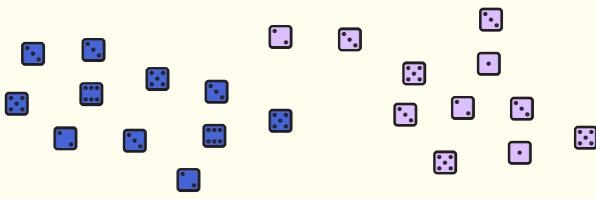


Slide character sheet under character mat



Completed assets and ability cards are placed below character mat / sheet

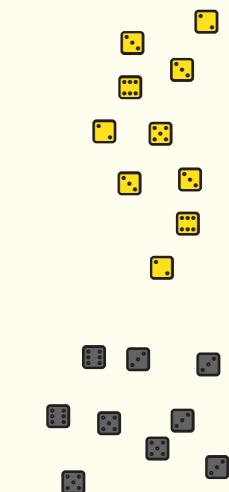
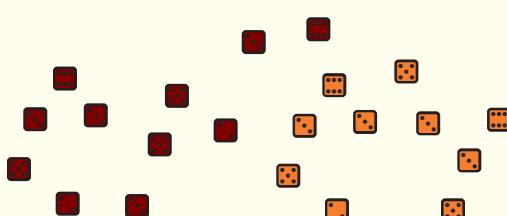
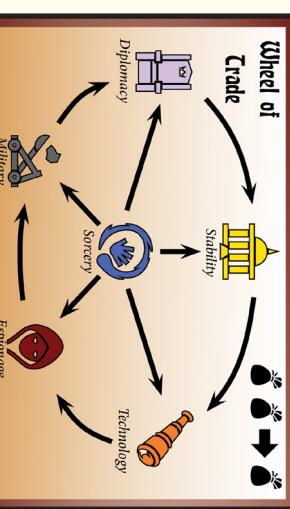
Year One Game Setup



Starting asset and scene draw decks (no obstacle deck at the start of the campaign)



Initial resource dice



Turns

Each turn is composed of the following steps.

1. Actions
2. Refresh
3. Draw Scene
4. Activate Obstacles
5. Draw Obstacle
6. Advance Time

Actions

During the actions step, players spend their action points and insight dice to perform actions. Players may freely use character and asset abilities during this step.

Typically character and asset abilities may only be used ***once per turn***. Turn asset and character ability cards 90 degrees to indicate they have been used.

Actions may be taken in any order by any player. When all players are done spending action dice and using abilities, the actions step is complete.

See the Actions section for a detailed explanation of all possible actions.

Refresh

Refresh has the following steps:

1. Reroll Sorcery  Resources
2. Refresh Location Resources
3. Gain 4 Action Points 
4. Reset Character and Asset Abilities
5. Take Any 2 From  /  / 
6. Reroll All 

Reroll Sorcery Resources

Sorcery resources work a little differently than other resource types. During this step, reroll all sorcery resource dice at each location. Unlike other resource types, sorcery is chaotic and the values may change from turn to turn!

Any results of  explode! When a sorcery die explodes, roll a new sorcery die and place it at this location. Continue rolling and adding sorcery dice until a result other than  is rolled. It's possible to generate several additional sorcery resource dice this way!

Exploding sorcery dice are chaotic and dangerous!

Any characters at the location of an exploding sorcery resource take one stress of the player's choice (either lose one body or lose one psyche) for each sorcery resource die which explodes.

Refresh Location Resources

If a location with resource production icons has fewer resource dice ***of that type*** than icons, roll and place new resource dice up to the number of resource production icons. ***Do not reroll any resource dice already on the location***, and do not remove any dice at the location.

For instance, if a location has one  resource production icon and no  resource dice (even if there are other types of resource dice at the location), roll and place a  resource on the location.

Gain 4 Action Points ☀

Each player raises their ☀ track by four points. Any gained points above 8 are ignored.

Reset Character and Asset Abilities

Turn any activated character ability or asset cards back upright, so they may be activated again this turn.

Take Any 2 From 🌸 / 🏰 / 💥

Each player gains two of: ability cards, asset cards from staging area, or initiative dice. Players may take two of the same thing or one of two different types.

If an asset card is taken from the staging area, immediately fill the asset staging area back up to four cards by drawing another asset.

Character ability cards are taken in order from lowest to highest value. If the character ability draw pile is empty, and there are discarded character cards (that had Play effects), you may take the lowest valued card available. In other words, you can cycle through the character ability deck and play an ability card twice.

Reroll All 🎲

Finally, reroll *all* 🎲 dice, both those unspent from last turn and any new insight dice taken during this Refresh.

Draw Scene

Draw the top scene from the scene deck, placing it faceup next to the scene draw deck. Over the course of the game, scene cards will be placed in a line next to the scene draw deck.

The top card on the scene deck is visible and available for players to take with the Narrate Scene action.



Activate Obstacles

For each obstacle in play, perform the following steps:

1. **Determine number of activations.** Each obstacle activates *once plus the number of available scene cards with matching skill symbols*. That is, if the obstacle's overcome skill is  and there are two scenes with the  skill showing, the obstacle will activate *three* times.
2. **Remove progress or hindrance.** For each activation, the players must remove either one progress or one hindrance token on the obstacle. The players may choose which type to remove if both are present. If there are no more activations after this step, this obstacle is finished activating. Move on to the next obstacle. Otherwise, if the obstacle has no more progress or hindrance, remaining activations are used first for movement and then for the activation effect.
3. **Move obstacle.** If the obstacle has a movement icon, move the obstacle one adjacent location for each activation remaining. The obstacle moves towards the nearest location with a matching tag. If there are multiple location types in a list, they move to the nearest location matching any of the tags. If there are no more activations after this step, this obstacle is finished activating. Move on to the next obstacle, otherwise the obstacle adds a threat token!
4. **Apply threat .** Finally, if there are activations remaining after removing progress/hindrance and moving the obstacle, apply the obstacle adds a threat to its location. The obstacle card is then discarded next to the obstacle draw deck. Some obstacles have other steps to follow when triggering their threat effect, as noted on the card.

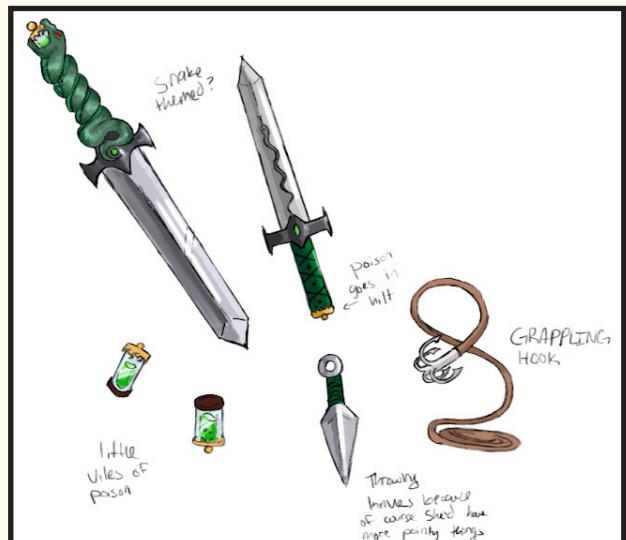
Threats

When an obstacle applies threat, take one of the red tokens on the Season Tracker's threat pool and move it onto the obstacle's location. If this is the last threat token on the Season Tracker, *the players immediately lose*. In this case complete the current turn and then follow the Session Cleanup steps.

Surging Threats

If there is *already* a threat token(s) on the location when a new threat token is placed, place a threat token on the location and place an *additional* threat token on an adjacent location.

If that adjacent location also has any threat tokens, continue placing threat tokens on adjacent locations until either the players lose or there is a location in the chain that does not have threat tokens.



Draw Obstacle

Draw and place a new obstacle from the obstacle draw deck. If the obstacle is an event card, follow the even text, which could include drawing additional obstacles.

If the obstacle deck is empty, and there are obstacles in the obstacle discard pile, shuffle the obstacle discard pile and form a new obstacle draw deck.

Advance Time

Finally, advance time by moving the turn counter on the Season Tracker to the next space.

If this is the last space of the season, refer to the ☰ symbol on the current scheme card for additional steps. Frequently this involves adding new obstacles or threat tokens. You may place the turn counter on the ☰ space as a reminder while following the scheme effects. After completing any instructions on the scheme card, move to the first turn of the next season.

Finally, if this is the end of the winter turn, check for victory status. Victory is usually achieved if the players have completed three or more scenes during the game.

Activate Obstacles Example



The Hogel's Jealousy obstacle is located at Hogel Manor. It has one progress and one hindrance on it



There is one ⚡ scene in the staging area, which matches the ⚡ skill on the obstacle. So Hogel's Jealousy activates twice: all obstacles activate once, then an additional time for the matching scene card. Both tokens are removed



If there had been one more ⚡ scene in the staging area, it would have activated a third time, triggering a threat. A threat cube would be taken from the Season Tracker and placed onto Hogel Manor. Since there is already a threat cube on the location card, that would have caused a surge!

As it is, the players will need to deal with the Hogel's Jealousy obstacle next turn, since it has no more tokens on it

Actions

Taking actions makes up the bulk of a turn. Most actions require spending either action points or insight dice.

Character abilities, asset abilities, and location effects may be used at any time during this step. Most character abilities and asset abilities may only be used once each turn. See the abilities section at the end of the rules for more details.

The available actions and their costs are:

- **Move:** 1+✿
- **Trade:** 1✿
- **Muster:** 3✿
- **Craft:** 1♀
- **Overcome:** 0+♀
- **Narrate Scene:** ⚔️ 🏰



1. Fucus is at Undari's Tower. It is not a resource production location, but it does have special text allowing mustering of sorcery resource dice

Move

By spending one action point, characters may move orthogonally to an adjacent location.

Some locations affect movement costs or provide special modes of movement. This may require players to spend more than one movement point.

This is usually indicated with the following icons on location cards: ⚔️, 🏰, ✿.

Trade

Players may spend one action point to trade two resource dice of one type for a different resource type, following the directions on the Wheel of Trade. Roll the new resource and place it at the characters locations.

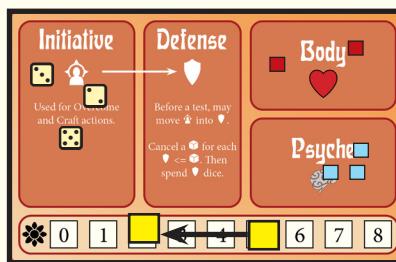
Sorcery may trade into any resource, but nothing may trade into sorcery (although asset or character abilities may).

Muster

Action points may be spent to muster resources. If the character is at a location with a resource icon, **spend three action points** to take a new resource die matching the location's resource type, roll it, and place it at the location.

New sorcery resource dice may explode and cause stress as described in the Refresh step above. Mustering sorcery is unpredictable and dangerous!

Muster (Add Resource) Example



2. Spend 3 action points



3. The player rolls a ⚡. Because its sorcery, the die explodes! The player decides to take one ♀ stress instead of ❤, and rolls another sorcery resource die. This results in a ⚡, so no more sorcery dice are rolled

Craft

Crafting allows players to move resource dice at their location onto in-progress asset cards, provided the resource dice match the required symbols on the asset cards.

The player spends an ♀ die. Because crafting requires precision and care rather than speed, higher value initiative dice are more useful for crafting. Move any resource dice with values ***less than or equal to the initiative die spent*** at the character's location onto any in-progress assets. If another character is at the same location, may move resource dice onto their in-progress assets!

When an in-progress asset has resource dice matching all of the resource dice requirements, the asset is completed. When an asset is completed, discard the resource dice on it back to their pools and move the asset below the character mat. Any asset abilities are now available to the player and the asset may be used to complete scenes.

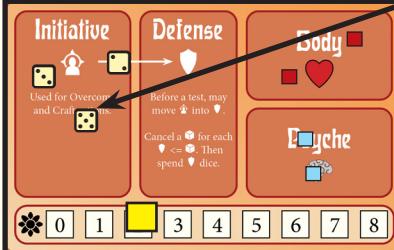
Craft Example



1. Fucus is at Undari's Tower. There are three sorcery resource dice available for crafting

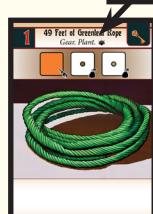
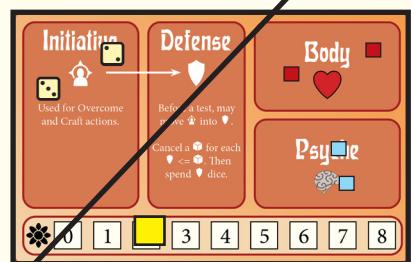
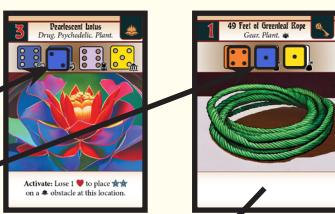


2. The player currently has two assets in-progress



3. The player spends ⚡ to take all resource dice with a value less than or equal to 5. The player can take the ⚡ and ⚡ but not ⚡

4. Resource dice must be placed on matching slots on in-progress assets. The player can divide them between any matching icons on any in-progress assets



Greenleaf Rope is completed, and is moved below character mat. It may now be played for points during a scene

Overcome

The overcome action allows players to add progress ⚜ and hindrance ⚡ tokens to obstacles at the location where their character is located.

To overcome an obstacle, take the following steps:

1. Allocate ♀ Dice Into ♦ (Optional)
2. Obstacle Stress Roll
3. Spend Allocated Defense Dice ♦
4. Apply Stress to Character
5. Add Progress ⚜ or Hindrance ⚡ to Obstacle
6. Check for Overcome or Hinder
7. Reroll ♀ Dice

Allocate ♀ Dice for Defense

Players *may* place any number of initiative dice onto the defense section ♦ of their character mat to form a **defense pool**. Any dice placed into this pool will be spent at the end of the overcome action regardless of whether or not they were used to defend. Being catious uses more initiative dice!

Obstacle Stress Roll

Roll a die for **each** stress symbol, either ♥ or ♣, on the obstacle card.

If an obstacle causes both ♥ and ♣ stress, it can be handy to use matching red and gray dice for this roll.

Spend Defense Dice

Each die allocated into the defense pool may be spent to cancel one stress die. *The value of the defense die must be less than or equal to the value of the stress die to cancel it.*

After canceling any stress dice, **all initiative dice allocated to the defense pool are spent**, regardless of if they were used to cancel stress or not.

Many asset abilities and character abilities also allow players to defend during the step. Remember that most asset and character abilities may only be used once each turn, so after they are used, turn the card or mark the

ability to indicate it has been used.

Apply Stress to Character

Any stress dice that were undefended in the previous step may now *may* cause stress to the character. *Each stress die higher than the character's skill for the obstacle causes one stress* of the indicated type.

The higher the character's skill for the obstacle in question, the less likely they are to take stress. Since skills can't be increased beyond 5, an undefended value 6 stress roll will always cause stress unless specific character or asset abilities can stop it.

If the character takes their last stress point of either type, they *immediately check for conditions* and reset their stress levels to their starting amounts. See the conditions section later in the rules.

Add Progress or Hindrance to Obstacle

Any initiative dice not spent on defense may now be used to add progress *or* hindrance (not both) to an obstacle. Progress is more useful, but more difficult to add.

If a player wishes to add progress, place one blue progress token [] on the obstacle for each ♀ die with a value *less than or equal to the character's skill* for the obstacle, place one progress token [] on the obstacle.

If a player instead wishes to add hindrance, add one hindrance token [] on the obstacle for every ♀ die you have. The value doesn't matter!

Dice used to add tokens are not spent!

Check for Overcome or Hinder

If the number of *progress tokens on the obstacle is greater than or equal to the obstacle's difficulty*, the obstacle is **overcome** and the player takes the obstacle and places it face up next to their character mat. The obstacle may be used for points when narrating scenes and will not go back into the campaign deck.

If the *total number of tokens (of either type) on the obstacle is greater than or equal to the obstacle's difficulty*, the player *may* decide to hinder the obstacle by discarding it into the obstacle discard pile. Of course, the hindered obstacle could show up again in this or some future session!

Reroll ♀ Dice

Finally, **reroll all ♀ dice**. This needs to be done at the end of every overcome action!

Teamwork

Multiple characters may work together to overcome an obstacle, provided they are at the same location with the obstacle. In this case, players create defense pools independently.

Prior to rolling for obstacle stress, players divide up the stress dice between them how they wish (a player may

even decide to take no stress dice). Players can only cancel stress dice that were assigned to them.

Each player independently decides whether to add either progress or hindrance onto the obstacle (although players will most likely wish to add the same type of token).

Overcome Example

Fuscus takes the overcome action against Hogel's Jealousy, a ⚡ obstacle of difficulty 5. The obstacle already has one progress and two hindrance on it



2. Two dice are rolled for the obstacle's 🧠 stress. The result is ⚡ and ⚡

4. The good news is that neither stress die is higher than Fuscus's ⚡ skill of 3. So neither stress die causes stress!



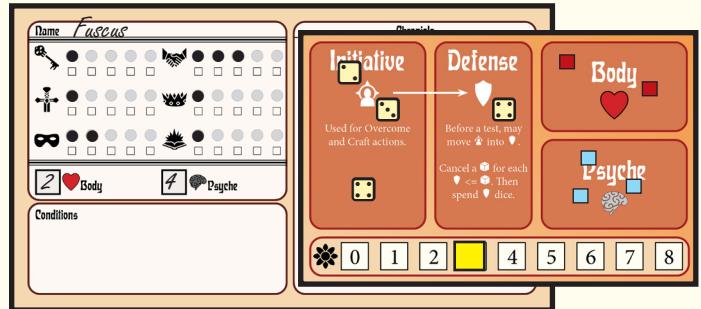
5. Now comes the big decision. The player can add either 2 progress ⭐ (because 2 of Fuscus's ♀ dice are less than or equal to Fuscus's ⚡ skill) or 3 hindrance ⚡ (because Fuscus has 3 ♀ dice).

Adding the ⚡ would allow the card to be discarded, since the total tokens on the card would be equal to or higher than its difficulty. However, it would be really nice to use the card for points and permanently remove it, so the player adds 2 ⭐

6. Progress ⭐ has not reached the obstacle difficulty of 5, so it is not overcome and it can't be discarded because there are only four tokens of any type on it

7. Finally, the player rerolls the 3 remaining ♀ dice and gets ⚡ ⚡ ⚡. Oh no! Only one die is low enough to add more progress. The player could spend an overcome action and add ⚡ to discard it, but it may be worth doing something else

1. Fuscus has four ♀ dice: ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡, and decides to allocate a ⚡ to the defense pool.



3. The ⚡ defense die has a higher value than either stress die, and thus may not cancel either roll. Regardless, the defense die is spent

Narrate Scene

Narrating scenes is how players complete a scenario. Scenes are narrated by taking the following steps:

1. Character(s) are at Scene Location
2. Read Scene Prologue
3. Determine Points from Skill Matches
4. Discard Assets and Burn Obstacles for Points
5. Narrate Challenges
6. Read Epilogue
7. Gain Skill Advance

Character(s) are at Scene Location

All characters who wish to participate in the scene must be at the indicated location. These may be explicit locations or locations with certain tags.

Read Scene Prologue

Read the scene prologue text on the front of the card.

Determine Points from Skill Matches

Players in the scene should check to see if completed assets and overcome obstacles have skill icons that match the scene skill. Each match gives one bonus point.

The assets and obstacles do not have to be played to get skill matching points!

Discard Assets and Burn Obstacles for Points

In order to get the points on asset and obstacle cards, assets must be discarded and obstacles must be burned. Assets go to the asset discard pile. ***Overcome obstacles get returned to the archive***, and will not be seen again unless some specific game effect says otherwise.

The total points of all cards discarded or burned along with any bonus points must be equal to or higher than the scene points to complete it.

It's possible (though rare) that with enough points from skill matches, you don't have to discard or burn any other cards.

Since unused obstacles go back to the discard during session cleanup, it's generally a good idea to use obstacles first.

Narrate Challenges

Scene challenges are a chance to narrate how the different assets and obstacles that were played helped the players succeed at the scene! Each player can engage in this process to their comfort level as follows.

I Can't Think of Anything: You're not a big fan of telling stories, and don't consider yourself very creative. That's okay! Feel free to ask for help from the table, this is a good way to come up with ideas. If that's not appealing to you, it's completely fine to just state the assets and obstacles you played to complete the scene and leave it at that.

"The Loomwood Apples help Hogel Woo Pox Face."

Apprentice Storyteller: Choose a challenge or two and narrate how a particular asset or obstacle helped you get past it. Think of how your character might engage with the scene. This doesn't have to be very involved.

"I bend a tine of the fork to pick the lock and break out of jail."

Master Chronicler: Think of how the assets and obstacles may fit into the bigger picture of the campaign. Can you reincorporate ideas from a previous scene? How is the character changing from their actions?

"The songs we wrote last year during the grain shortage created a bond with the Amber Hand, and now they are willing to help us reach out to Lily Manor."

Read Epilogue

Read the scene epilogue and follow the instructions in the text. Scenes frequently add new scenes, obstacles, assets, and locations to the game. For new scenes, obstacles, and assets, place the new cards ***on top*** of the indicated draw deck. If a scene says to develop a location, flip the location to its developed side.

Finally, new locations must be placed next to a location with the same region icon. Additionally, ***no location may have locations on all four sides*** (at least one side must be kept empty).

Gain Skill Advance

Finally, each character in the scene marks a skill advance for the scene skill.

As mentioned in Downtime section of Session Setup, if a skill advance track increases **above** the related skill, reset the skill advance track back to zero (erase all marks) and increase the character's skill by one!

Completing scenes and Downtime are the two primary ways characters may increase their skills over the course of the campaign!

Scene Scoring Example

Parin and Kanun are attempting to Find the Source of the Gasping Spores.
This is a 4-point ♣ scene. The characters are at a Brightdune location and have the points, so decide to complete the scene



Parin has one overcome obstacle and one completed asset:



Fuscus has two completed assets:



The players have two points from skill matches, so they only need to play two or more points of assets and obstacles

Parin's player decides to play the Book of Pressed Leaves for 2 more points. This asset is placed in the asset discard pile



Alternatively, the players could have played the 1-point Animaelic Echoes obstacle and the 1-point Radiant Fernbrake asset. Or even the 3-point Bracers of the Amber Hand, although that would have wasted points that may be needed later

Session End

After Years 1-5, complete the following steps. At the end of Year 6, move on to the Campaign End instead.

1. Check for Scheme Failure
2. Reduce Location Danger
3. Update Campaign Map
4. Store Assets
5. Store Obstacles
6. Update the Chronicle
7. Store Game

Instructions to burn cards refers to placing them out of play and back into the archive.

Check for Scheme Failure

If the threat pool is empty or the players have not completed at least three scenes before the end of the winter turn, follow the instructions on the back of the scheme card before continuing with session cleanup steps.

Reduce Location Danger

Players may remove *either* one obstacle card or one threat token at each location. Removed obstacles are placed into the obstacle discard.

Update Campaign Map

Record any changes to the campaign map using the back of the character sheets. It may be the case that the current campaign map spans multiple character sheets, which is okay!

Record the current threats on locations, the current obstacles at locations, as well as the status if a location is developed. Obstacles and threats remaining after the Reduce Location Danger step will start in play next game.

Store Assets

Take any in-progress assets which haven't been completed, assets in the staging area, and the asset discard and place them back into the campaign asset deck.

Completed assets may be placed In Reserve, and will be divided between players at the start of next session!

Store Obstacles

Place any overcome but unspent obstacles, and the obstacle discard pile, and place them back into the campaign obstacle deck. It's good to spend overcome obstacles on scenes prior to the end of the game!

Update the Chronicle

Update the characters' chronicles with the scheme for this season and success or failure status. Also note Downtime on any character sheets for inactive characters this year.

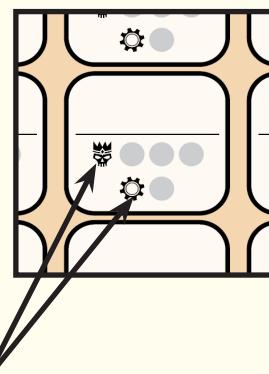
Store Game

For Tabletop Simulator, the game can be left as-is after performing session end steps (in particular, remember to clear off unused resource dice from location cards).

For the physical game, the campaign obstacle deck, campaign asset deck, and campaign scene deck should be stacked in such a way that they are easy to recover for next session.

Place assets In Reserve along with character ability cards to differentiate them from the campaign asset deck.

Update Campaign Map Location



Current threat tokens at end of game and current developed location status

Campaign End

The Year 6 Finale Scenes have additional questions to answer during the Scene Epilogue. These questions help shape what the ending of the campaign looks like for Brightdune.

Finally, after the session is completed, tally up the number of completed Finale scenes. Rather than a strict win or loss for the campaign, use the following table to get a sense of Brightdune's Fate.

Completed Finale Scenes

Scenes	Outcome
0	Autarch Ascendant - The Empire ruthlessly conquers Brightdune. All of your societal structures are replaced by those of the Empire. All of your festivals and religions are lost. Some may escape, but they are a shadow of their former selves. Where do they flee to? How does that society respond to their arrival?
1	Ruled by the Empire - The Autarch is firmly in control of Brightdune. However, small cells of people keep their old traditions alive, albeit in the shadows. Most all of the characters are put to death for treason. What customs are kept alive? Who has survived?
2	Society in Shambles - While the Empire doesn't completely control Brightdune, all of the structures of power have been destroyed. What remains of the land and people are exploited. How do the people turn against each other? What is valued in this society?
3	Pyrrhic Victory - The Empire has been repelled, but at a heavy cost. One of the characters doesn't survive. Who? What happened to them? Times are extremely lean, resulting in further privation. What resource becomes extremely scarce?
4	Brightdune Transformed - The Empire is decisively pushed back. However, the structures of power have been completely transformed. After the war, there is great upheaval. What has changed? What old institutions have crumbled? Who is in power now?

Scenes	Outcome
5	Society Preserved - The victory is everything people have hoped for and fought for. The ruling class and structures remain intact after the Empire of the Autarch collapses. How does Brightdune treat the people of the Empire? What happens to the land they inhabit? Does anyone within Brightdune feel slighted or ignored after the victory?
6	Brightdune Ascendant - Brightdune has reached the apex of power throughout the Settled Lands. Not only is the Empire in shambles, but Brightdune is the ultimate power. How do they use that power? What Settled Lands faction distrusts them? Who feels fear and discontent at Brightdune's might?

Campaign Scoring

The game is mostly about the experience along the way, rather than calculating a score. But you can use the following guide to get a sense of how well you did.

Add up scores from the following:

- Total points value of all completed scenes during the campaign
- Each successful session for Years 1-5: +10 points
- Each completed Finale scene: +3 points

Can compare results to the chart below:

Score	Title
1-30	Maybe you misunderstood a rule?
31-60	Novice
61-90	Expert
91-120	Master
121+	Champion of Brightdune

Notes For Solo Play

The easiest way to handle solo play is to play two characters, and play as normal. However, that can be cognitively overwhelming.

I'm exploring the following alternative. If you choose this approach, I'm curious to see how it goes.

Play with two characters, but shuffle both character's Ability Card decks together. When you draw Ability Cards, draw from this combined deck.

Only play with one character token or miniature. This token now represents a party with your two characters. Ability Cards from either character may be played on your Initiative dice or resources where your token is located.

Finally, place 8 Threat Tokens into the starting Threat Pool on the Season Tracker. This will provide an extra buffer to make up for the lack of being able to split up.

Character Ability Reference

Character ability cards may be used at any time during the Actions phase. If Activated, they are rotated to show they have been used, and will become available during the Refresh phase. If Played, they are placed into the Character Ability Discard pile.

Unless otherwise noted, ability cards only work on resource dice where the character is located, or on the character's ♀ dice.

The ♀ icon refers to either resource dice at the character's location or ♀ dice. The ⚡ icon refers to resource dice at the character's location.

Parin - The Conciliator

A resource die at Parin's location or one of Parin's ♀ dice is flipped to its opposite face. For instance, a ☐ is flipped to a ☒, a ☐ to a ☒, ☒ to a ☐, ☒ to a ☒, ☒ to a ☐, and ☐ to a ☒.

Asset Reference

Asset cards may be used at any time during the Actions phase. If Activated, they are rotated to show they have been used, and will become available during the Refresh phase.

Unless otherwise noted, asset cards only work on resource dice where the character is located, or on the character's ♀ dice.

The ♀ icon refers to either resource dice at the character's location or ♀ dice. The ⚡ icon refers to resource dice at the character's location.

Playtest Guidance

The general structure of the game is fairly set at this point. I'm interested in specifics surrounding pacing and ability interactions, with an eye towards the following questions:

- How many conditions did characters take during an average session? Did that make for interesting choices down the road? Are the conditions evocative enough?
- Did any resource dice ever run out from the supply? When? How often? How many resource dice are needed so they don't run out? This question is driven by the cost of including dice in the game. (I think 8 dice per resource is somewhere in the right ballpark.)
- Which character abilities are the most fun? Which character abilities aren't? Is there a place for each character in the campaign?
- Which assets are the most interesting or fun? Do you like the mix of assets? Do they make for interesting ways to narrate scenes?
- Were there any particularly memorable interactions between characters, assets, obstacles, and scenes?
- How does scene narration feel? Is it interesting or fun? Is there something you're doing which isn't spelled out in the rules but which makes it more fun?

Credits

The following people made this game possible.

Game Concept and Design: Phil Lewis
Character Concept Art and Design: Jack Mitchell
Narrative Development: Alhana Lewis

Legal

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