

ANDREW PARKS
CHRISTOPHER GUILD

CORE WORLDS EMPIRES



RULES
OF PLAY

CORE WORLDS EMPIRES

Introduction

Six Empires have risen from the ashes of the Galactic Realm. Still cemented by the alliance that enabled their unprecedented conquest of the galaxy, the six independent kingdoms now seek to consolidate their power, each hoping to carve out the strongest dominion in the cosmos. Conflicts among the young realms are inevitable, but will the galaxy return to a state of civil war?

Core Worlds: Empires is a worker placement game for 1 - 5 players. Each player represents one of the empires that overthrew the ancient Galactic Realm during the original *Core Worlds* card game. *Core Worlds: Empires* is a thematic sequel to the original game and its expansions, but players don't need to own the original game to enjoy this one.



Each world in the galaxy occupies a board space that an empire's ambassadors can visit during the game. The worlds that appear during each game are variable. Each player starts with a certain number of Imperial Worlds under his or her control, including one of the coveted Core Worlds that lie near the center of the galaxy. Neutral Worlds that have recently recovered from the civil war enter the game as play proceeds, and players may visit these worlds or attempt to annex them to their empires.

Object of the Game

Throughout the game, you will accumulate Empire Points by sending your ambassadors to different worlds to manage and expand your empire. Your ambassadors may freely visit your rivals' worlds, but those empires will earn Empire Points from the reserve when your ambassadors conduct business there. Each of the worlds in your empire is also worth a certain Empire Point value. At the end of the game, the player whose empire possesses the most Empire Points claims absolute authority over Ra, the Throne-world of the Galaxy, and wins the game.

Number of Players

Core Worlds: Empires is a competitive board game for 1 - 5 players. The game includes a special Solo Deck that facilitates solitaire play. **NOTE:** It is strongly recommended that only experienced *Core Worlds: Empires* players play the 5-player game.

Component List

1 Galaxy Map	54 World Cards
1 Galactic Board	59 Event Cards
6 Empire Boards	24 Hero Cards
42 Ambassador Standees	18 Unit Cards
42 Ambassador Standee Bases	18 Tactic Cards
42 Ambassador Tokens	12 Advancement Cards
162 Faction Tokens	45 Solo Cards
140 Unit Tokens	
55 World Tokens	140 Brown Resource Tokens
20 Multiplier Tokens	35 Gray Resource Tokens
12 Core World Function Tokens	35 Gold Resource Tokens
8 Event Flag Tokens	12 Epoch IV Bonus Tokens
2 Neutral World Tokens	2 Battle Dice
1 Destiny Token	1 Galactic Order Die
1 Round Token	
1 Event Fade Token	



Component Details

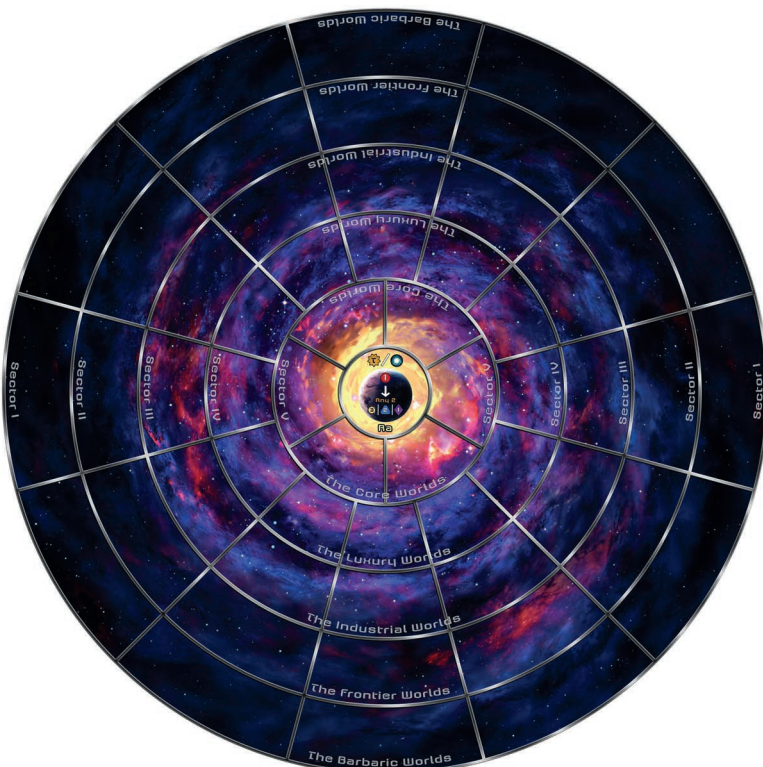
What follows is a description of the different components used in *Core Worlds: Empires*.

Galaxy Map (1)

The Galaxy Map represents the Milky Way Galaxy in the year 12,453 C.E. At the center of the map lies Ra, the Throneworld of the Galaxy, which remains neutral during each game of *Core Worlds: Empires*.

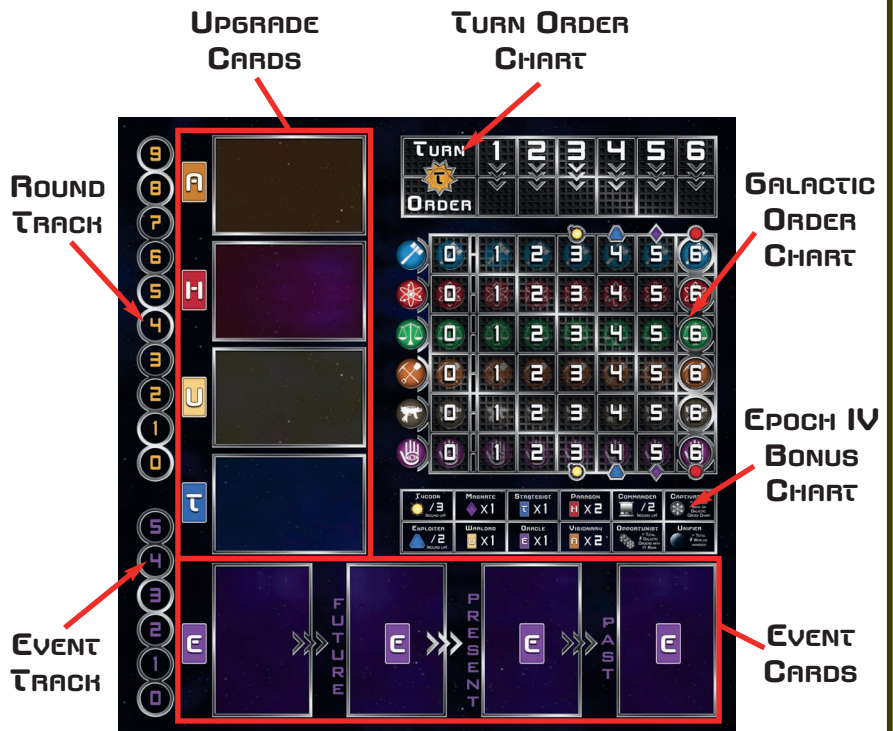
Each of the other spaces can hold World Tokens from each of the galaxy's five **sectors**. These sectors are represented by the map's concentric rings, from the Barbaric Worlds at the edge of the galaxy to the Core Worlds at the galaxy's center.

Because the physical proximity of individual World Tokens within a given sector is inconsequential, players may freely reposition the World Tokens within each sector to make it easier to view the worlds that lie within each of their empires.



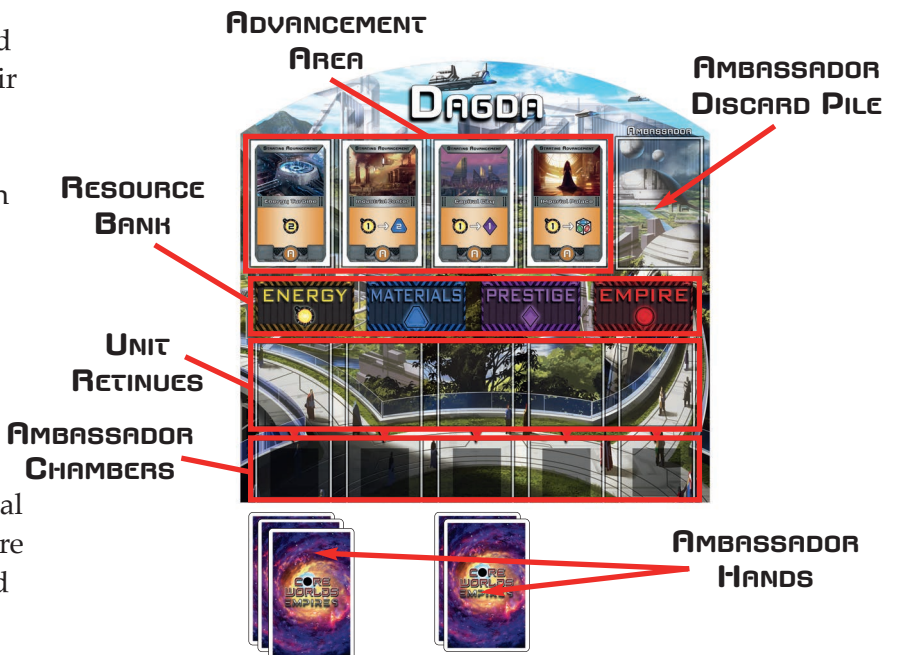
Galactic Board (1)

The Galactic Board keeps track of important information throughout the game. The **Turn Order Chart** tracks the current turn order and allows players to change their position in the turn order during subsequent rounds. The **Galactic Order Chart** tracks each empire's current standing in each of the six Galactic Orders. The **Round Track** keeps track of each passing round, and the **Event Track** keeps track of how many events have been triggered by players during the current round. The **Epoch IV Bonus Chart** helps players plan ahead for potential Empire Point bonuses that may trigger towards the end of the game, as well as track the bonuses that have already triggered. The remaining spaces on the Galactic Board are used to store the **Upgrade Cards** and **Event Cards**.



Empire Boards (6)

Each empire receives an Empire Board that allows the players to manage their ambassadors, resources, and advancements. Your Empire Board represents the Core World from which you govern your empire. Your Core World begins with 4 **Starting Advancements** that are printed on your Empire Board. During the game, you can replace your Starting Advancements with new Advancement Cards. Your **Resource Bank** is used to keep track of your total Energy, Materials, Prestige, and Empire Points. Each Ambassador Standee and corresponding Ambassador Token is stored in the ambassador's personal **Ambassador Chamber** at the base of the Empire Board. The spaces above these chambers hold each ambassador's personal **retinue** of Unit Tokens. The area below these chambers is where each ambassador stores his or her personal hand of cards. After an ambassador plays a card, the card is discarded face down into the **Ambassador Discard Pile** on your Empire Board. On the back of each Empire Board is a **Nemesis Empire Board** that is only used during Solo Play (see page 26).



Ambassador Standees & Tokens (42)

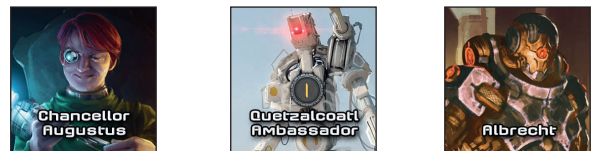
[6 Leaders / 24 Starting Ambassadors / 12 Heroes]

Your ambassadors are your primary tool for interacting with the Galaxy Map. You begin the game with one **Leader Ambassador** chosen at random, as well as two **Starting Ambassadors** who are associated with your Core World. As the game progresses, your empire will receive new ambassadors (see page 25), but no empire ever possesses more ambassadors than any other empire. You can draw Hero Cards (see page 7) to replace your Starting Ambassadors with Heroic Ambassadors, or **Heroes**. Heroes are more effective and influential versions of ambassadors.

Each ambassador is represented by an **Ambassador Standee** fitted onto a plastic base, as well as a square **Ambassador Token**. Both pieces begin each round in the character's personal Ambassador Chamber on the Empire Board (see page 4). The Ambassador Standees travel the galaxy while the square tokens remain behind to identify the ambassadors' respective chambers. Each standee displays the ambassador's **Fleet Strength** and **Ground Strength**, which are used for annexing worlds.



AMBASSADOR STANDEES & BASES



AMBASSADOR TOKENS

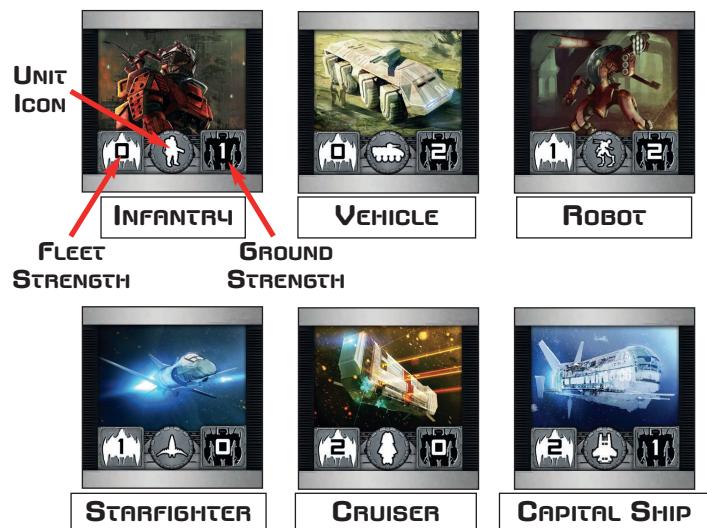
Faction Tokens (162)

Each of the six leaders in the game is associated with a **faction symbol** that is located on the Leader Ambassador's standee and Leader Card. You begin the game with 27 **Faction Tokens** that match your leader's faction symbol. You will place these tokens on the Galaxy Map to designate which worlds belong to your empire. You will also place your faction tokens on the Galactic Board (see page 4) to keep track of your place in the Turn Order and to track your level of influence within each of the six independent Galactic Orders.



Unit Tokens (140)

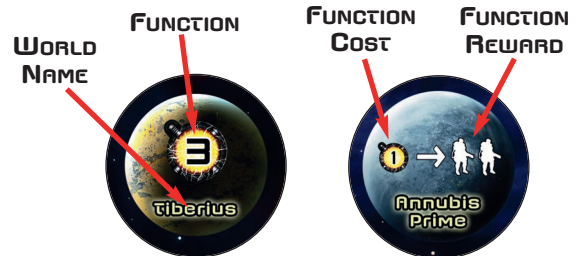
Each ambassador can command a **retinue** that consists of one or more **Unit Tokens**. There are six different types of Unit Tokens (see right). Each Unit Token features the unit's **Fleet Strength**, **Ground Strength**, and **Unit Icon**. Ambassadors can spend Energy to bring some or all of their retinue with them when travelling the galaxy; such units are now considered part of the ambassador's **escort**. If a Unit Token becomes damaged, flip it over so that it is showing its red side. Unit Tokens are used to annex worlds and can be upgraded with Unit Cards (see page 8).



World Tokens (55)

Each player begins the game with 5 **Imperial Worlds**. Every round, **Neutral Worlds** enter the game that players can visit and/or attempt to claim for their empires. Each world is represented on the Galaxy Map by its corresponding **World Token**. Each World Token must occupy its own separate space within its designated sector on the Galaxy Map. The exact position of each World Token within each sector is unimportant; players can freely reposition the World Tokens within each sector to help them better visualize and manage their empires.

Each World Token displays a **function** that can be activated by an ambassador who visits that world. These functions sometimes bestow a **reward** for free, and other times require the ambassador to pay a **cost** in order to receive the reward (see right).



Multiplier Tokens (20)

At the end of each round, you may place a single “x2” **Multiplier Token** beside a world in your empire if no ambassadors visited that world during the preceding round. The next round, all ambassadors who visit that world may choose to activate that world’s function twice. If the function includes a cost, then the cost must be paid twice as well. Unused “x2” tokens can be further upgraded into “x3” tokens.



Core World Function Tokens (12)

Each empire’s Core World is represented on the Galaxy Map with its own World Token. Each Core World begins the game with the same customizable function, as shown at right. The first time one of your ambassadors visits your Core World on the Galaxy Map, you may pay 1 Prestige (◆) to claim one of the available **Core World Function Tokens** from the reserve and place it inside the white circle on your Core World’s Token. The Function Token creates a new function that immediately allows that ambassador, as well as future ambassadors, to pay 1 Empire Point (●) to receive the reward specified on the newly placed Function Token.

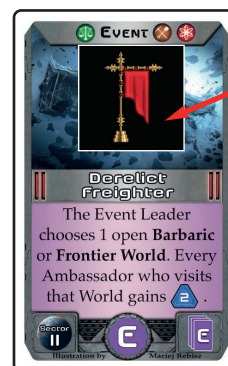


In the example above, a Wotan Ambassador pays 1 Prestige to place the “1 Robot” Function Token inside the Wotan Token’s white circle.

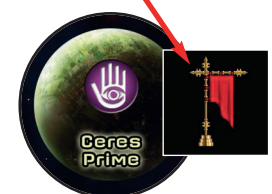
The Wotan ambassador may immediately pay 1 Empire Point to gain 1 Robot Unit Token, and so can any future ambassadors who visit Wotan.

Event Flag Tokens (8)

Some Event Cards (see page 7) create ongoing effects at a world located on the Galaxy Map. When this happens, an **Event Flag Token** is placed on the Event Card and a matching Event Flag Token is placed on the affected World Token. *In the example at right, a derelict freighter has been discovered at Ceres Prime. Matching Event Flag Tokens are placed on both the “Derelict Freighter” Event Card and the Ceres Prime World Token.*



EVENT FLAG TOKENS



World Cards (54)

The **World Cards** represent every settled world in the galaxy, including each empire's Imperial Worlds. These cards are also used to determine which worlds enter the game each round as Neutral Worlds. Each World Card includes its **Empire Point** value, its **Military** and **Diplomatic Requirements** for being annexed by visiting ambassadors, its **function**, and its **flavor text**, which explains the world's history and why it provides its function to visiting ambassadors.

Event Cards (59)

Event Cards create special circumstances that provide rewards or change conditions at particular worlds. Many events grant bonuses or allow decisions to be made by the player identified as the **Event Leader**. The **Event Leader Indicator** shows which Galactic Order to check to determine the identity of the Event Leader; the player who possesses the highest rank in the leftmost Galactic Order symbol listed on the indicator gains the leader status. If no one has any ranks in that Galactic Order, then check the succeeding Galactic Order symbols from left to right to determine the leader. Some Events provide two rewards. The first reward is received by the Event Leader and the second reward is received by the player who has the second most ranks in the specified Galactic Order.

If the **Event Flag Indicators** (the bars on the left and right sides of the card) are glowing red, then the event requires that matching Event Flags be placed on both the Event Card and the World Token that is affected by it (see "Event Flag Tokens" on page 6). If the Event Card is drawn during the Event Phase, then the **Neutral World Indicator** determines which sector to draw World Cards from when determining the Neutral Worlds that now enter the game. If the Event Card is instead triggered during the Ambassador Phase, then no Neutral Worlds enter the game, but the player who triggered the event keeps the Event Card until the end of the game since the card may allow the player to score bonus points later on.

Hero Cards (24)

Your ambassadors can play **Hero Cards** that grant them bonuses under special circumstances. An ambassador can only play a Hero Card if the card matches the ambassador's name. Your Leader and Starting Ambassadors begin the game with Hero Cards. You can also draw new Hero Cards that will allow you to replace your ambassadors with more powerful heroes. Each Hero Card displays the ambassador's **Fleet Strength**, **Ground Strength**, and **special ability**. The Military Strengths shown on these cards are merely a reflection of those shown on the characters' corresponding Ambassador Standees. The cards do *not* provide additional bonuses to the character's statistics.



Unit Cards [18]

Unit Cards allow you to upgrade your Unit Tokens into more powerful versions. During the Expansion Phase, you can use a Battle Action to play a Unit Card provided that at least one of your involved Unit Tokens has the same **Unit Icon** as the one at the bottom center of the card. You must then pay the listed **Mobilization Cost** to place one of the matching Unit Tokens on top of the Unit Card. The Unit Token then gains the **special ability** and the **Military Strength Bonuses** (if any) listed on the Unit Card. If the Unit Card has a **Unique Icon** at the top, then you can only mobilize 1 Unit Token when playing this card. If the Unit Card does not have a Unique Icon, then you may pay the Mobilization Cost multiple times to mobilize multiple Unit Tokens of the listed type.

Tactic Cards [18]

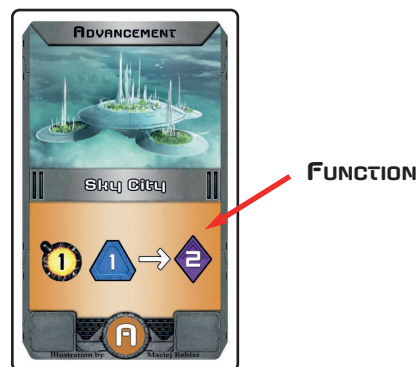
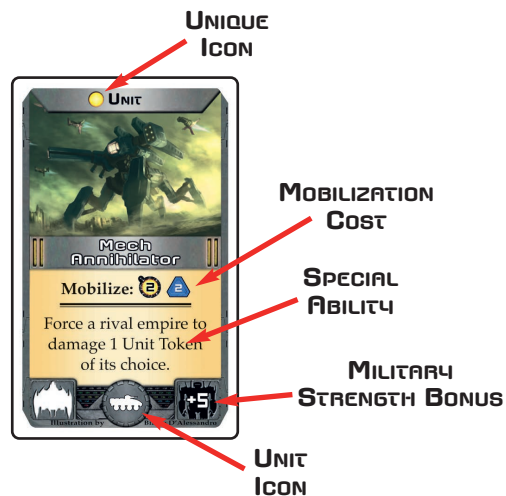
Tactic Cards provide a variety of **special abilities** that can be used by any of your ambassadors. Each Tactic Card's text details when it can be played and what its effects are.

Advancement Cards [12]

Your Empire Board begins the game with four Starting Advancements (see page 4). You may send one of your ambassadors to one of your advancements instead of sending that ambassador to a world. The ambassador then performs the **function** or **special ability** listed on that advancement. When you draw a new **Advancement Card**, you may place it on top of one of your Starting Advancements or on top of one of your previously placed Advancement Cards. The covered advancement's function is now replaced by the function or special ability listed on the new Advancement Card. If an Advancement Card lists a text-based special ability instead of a function, one of your ambassadors must still visit the advancement in order to trigger that special ability.

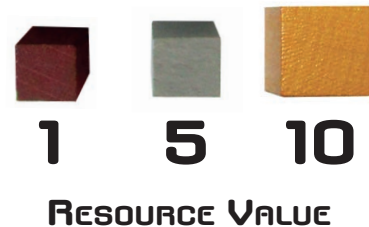
Solo Cards [45]

Core Worlds: Empires includes rules for Solo Play (see page 26). When playing solo, you will use **Solo Cards** to simulate play against the **Nemesis Empire**. During the Ambassador Phase, when it is the Nemesis Empire's turn to act, draw the top card of the Solo Deck and follow its instructions. This allows the Nemesis to earn Empire Points, accumulate resources, units, and cards for scoring bonuses, and challenge your empire for control of Neutral Worlds.



Resource Tokens (140 Brown / 35 Gray / 35 Gold)

Resource Tokens (RT) allow you to measure your Energy, Materials, Prestige, and Empire Points. Instead of using unique tokens for each type of resource, you place RTs of varying denominations onto your Empire Board's Resource Bank (see page 4). Each RT's color and/or size denotes its resource value when placed in the proper box on your Resource Bank. See the illustration at right for a summary of each RT's value.



Epoch IV Bonus Tokens (12)

The Epoch IV Bonus Chart on the Galactic Board shows potential Empire Point Bonuses that players may score if the corresponding Event Cards are triggered during or at the end of the game. After a particular bonus has scored, place an **Epoch IV Bonus Token** on the chart to cover up that bonus as a way of reminding players not to anticipate that bonus again.

In the example at right, the "Exploiter" and "Oracle" Epoch IV Bonuses have already scored and have therefore been covered with Epoch IV Bonus Tokens.



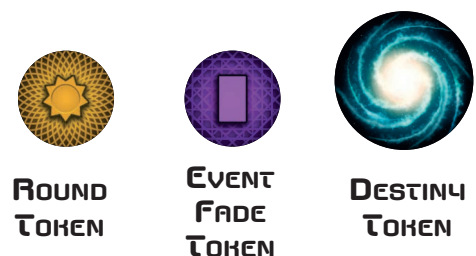
Neutral World Tokens (2)

During set up, the **Neutral World Token** whose player icon matches the number of players is placed beside the World Cards. This token indicates how many Neutral Worlds enter the game during each round's Event Phase.



Miscellaneous Tokens (3)

The **Round Token** is used to keep track of the passing of rounds on the Galactic Board's Round Track. The **Event Fade Token** is used to keep track of how many events have been triggered by players during the current round. The **Destiny Token** can be claimed by an ambassador who visits Ra, the Throneworld of the Galaxy, and allows that ambassador's empire to have limited control over which Neutral Worlds enter the game each round.



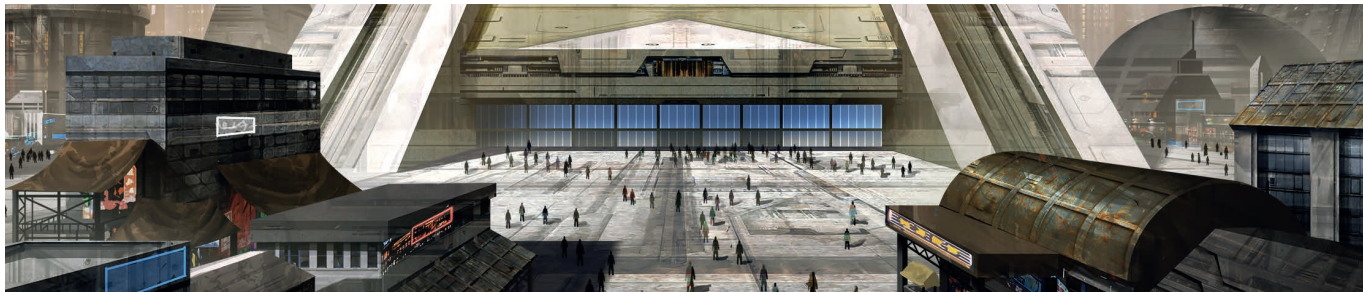
Battle Dice (2)

An ambassador acting as your **commander** during an annexation (see page 21) can use a Battle Action to roll 1 **Battle Die** in an attempt to raise your total Military Strength or to damage a rival empire's Unit Token. Using the Battle Die is risky, however, as it has an equal chance of hurting your own units and should therefore only be used when deemed absolutely necessary.



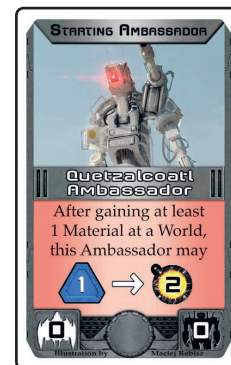
Galactic Order Die (1)

The **Galactic Order Die** is triggered by certain special abilities during the game. This die allows you to raise your rank on the Galactic Order Chart (see page 4) in the Galactic Order that is currently showing on the face of the die. Alternatively, you may roll the die and then raise your rank in the Galactic Order that is newly revealed on the face of the die.



Set Up

1. Place the Galaxy Map in the center of the play area. Place the Galactic Board beside the Galaxy Map.
2. Shuffle the Empire Boards face down (with the Nemesis side showing) and deal one to each player (empire). Each empire flips its Empire Board face up to identify its Core World and then places the Empire Board face up on the table near the player, with room for cards to be placed below the slots at the bottom of the Empire Board. Each empire also receives its Core World's four matching Ambassador Standees and square Ambassador Tokens, as well as the Starting Ambassador Card in the Hero Deck that matches the identity of the Core World's ambassadors. *For example, the empire with the Quetzalcoatl Empire Board would receive the four Quetzalcoatl Ambassador Standees and Tokens, as well as the Starting Ambassador Card (see right).*
3. There are six Leader Cards (see example at lower right) in the Hero Deck. Deal one of the six Leader Cards at random to each Empire. Each Empire collects the corresponding Leader Standee, square Leader Token, and the set of Faction Tokens that match the Faction Icon displayed at the bottom center of the Leader Card. (See "Starter Game" on page 13 for an alternate way to choose Leader Cards.)
4. Remove all the unused Starting Ambassador Cards and Leader Cards from the Hero Deck and return them to the box.
5. Each empire places its square Leader Token in the leftmost Ambassador Chamber at the bottom of its Empire Board, and then places its Leader Standee on top of the corresponding Leader Token. Each empire places its Leader Card face down below its Empire Board in the card slot below the leader's Ambassador Chamber.
6. Each empire places its square Ambassador I & II Tokens in the second and third Ambassador Chambers at the bottom of its Empire Board, and then places its Ambassador I & II Standees on top of their corresponding Ambassador Tokens. Each empire places its Starting Ambassador Card face down in the card slot below Ambassador I's chamber. Each empire places its Ambassador III & IV Standees and Tokens off to the side for now.



**STARTING
AMBASSADOR
CARD**



**LEADER
CARD**

7. Separate the Resource Tokens (RT) by type and place them beside the play area in an area called the **reserve**. Each empire places 3 RT on its Resource Bank's Energy Box, 2 RT on its Materials Box, and 1 RT on its Prestige Box (see Starting Empire Board at right).

8. Each empire receives 1 Infantry (👤) Unit Token and 1 Starfighter (✈️) Unit Token and places them both in a stack on the retinue space above the leader's Ambassador Chamber. Each Unit Token should be face up with its silver (undamaged) side showing.

9. Determine the starting Turn Order randomly. Each empire places its Faction Token on the Turn Order Track on the Galactic Board in the slot that corresponds to its place in the starting Turn Order. Each empire should place 1 additional Faction Token on the left side of the Turn Order Chart to be used later in the game if the empire wishes to change its place in the Turn Order for future rounds (see Starting Galactic Board at lower right).

10. Every empire places 6 Faction Tokens on the Galactic Order Track on the Galactic Board, placing 1 token on each of the "0" spaces on the track. The order that each empires' Faction Tokens are stacked on each "0" space is not important.

11. Roll the Galactic Order Die and then place it on top of the matching icon on the Galactic Order Chart. *In the example at right, the Science Guild Icon was rolled and so the die was placed on top of the Science Guild Icon on the Galactic Order Chart.*

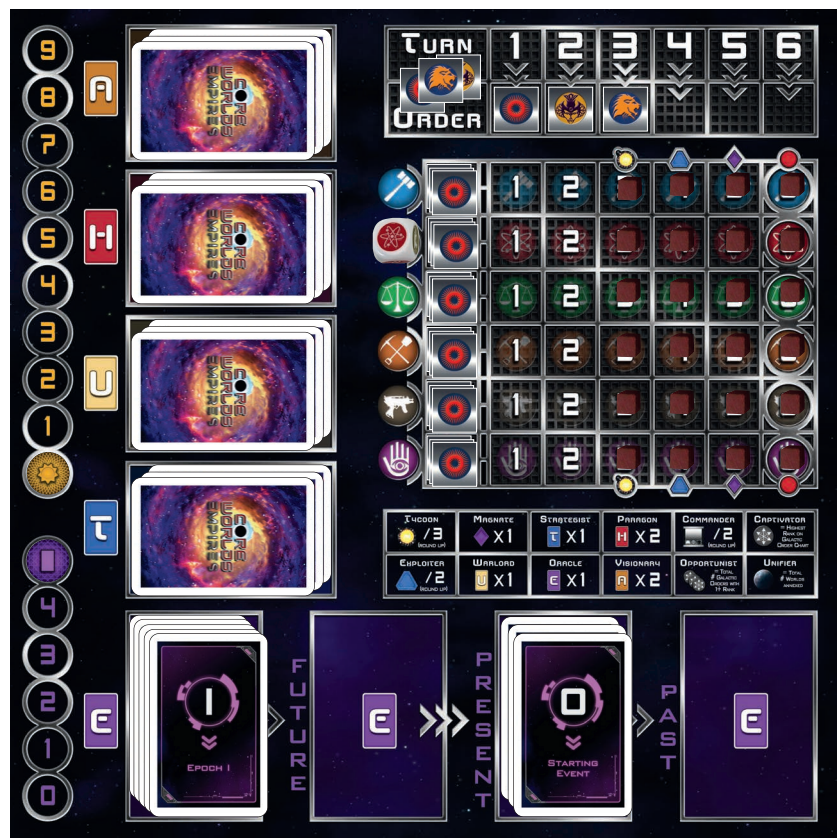
12. Place 1 RT on spaces 3, 4, 5, and 6 in each row of the Galactic Order Track.

13. Place the Round Token on the "0" space of the Round Track. Place the Event Fade Token on the "5" space of the Event Track.

14. Separate the Upgrade Cards (Hero, Unit, Tactic, and Advancement) into separate stacks by card type as shown on the **face** of each card. Shuffle each stack and place each stack face down on the Galactic Board on the space to the right of the symbol that matches its card type.



STARTING EMPIRE BOARD



STARTING GALACTIC BOARD [3-PLAYER]

15. Shuffle the Starting Event Cards (Epoch 0) and place 3 of them face down in a stack on the “Present Events” space on the Galactic Board. Place the remaining Starting Event Cards back in the box without examining them.

16. Place the 3 double-sided Event Cards (2 “New Ambassadors” and 1 “Champion of Ra”) off to the side for now. Separate the remaining Event Cards into separate face down stacks by Epoch Number. Shuffle each Epoch stack separately. Assemble all the stacks into a **Master Events Stack** as follows: place the “Champion of Ra” card at the bottom of the stack, covered by the Epoch IV stack, then the Epoch III stack, then the Epoch III “New Ambassadors” card, then the Epoch II stack, then the Epoch II “New Ambassadors” card, and then the Epoch I stack on top (see diagram below).



Place the assembled Master Events Stack on the leftmost Event Space on the Galactic Board. The top face down card showing on the Master Events Stack always denotes the current **epoch** in the game.

17. Separate the World Cards into 5 face down stacks by Sector Number. Give each empire the Sector V World Card that matches the Core World shown on its Empire Board, and then place the remaining Sector V World Cards back in the box. Afterwards, shuffle the remaining 4 stacks of World Cards (Sectors I - IV) separately and place each stack face down in numerical sector order in a row beside the Galaxy Map.

18. Place the Neutral Worlds Token whose player icon corresponds to the number of players to the left of the separated World Card stacks and return the other Neutral Worlds Token to the box. If the selected Neutral Worlds Token’s player icon is depicted in gold, then that Neutral Worlds Token depicts the same number of players on *both* sides of the token. In this case, place the Neutral Worlds Token in such a way that the side with the fewest number of planets showing is face up.

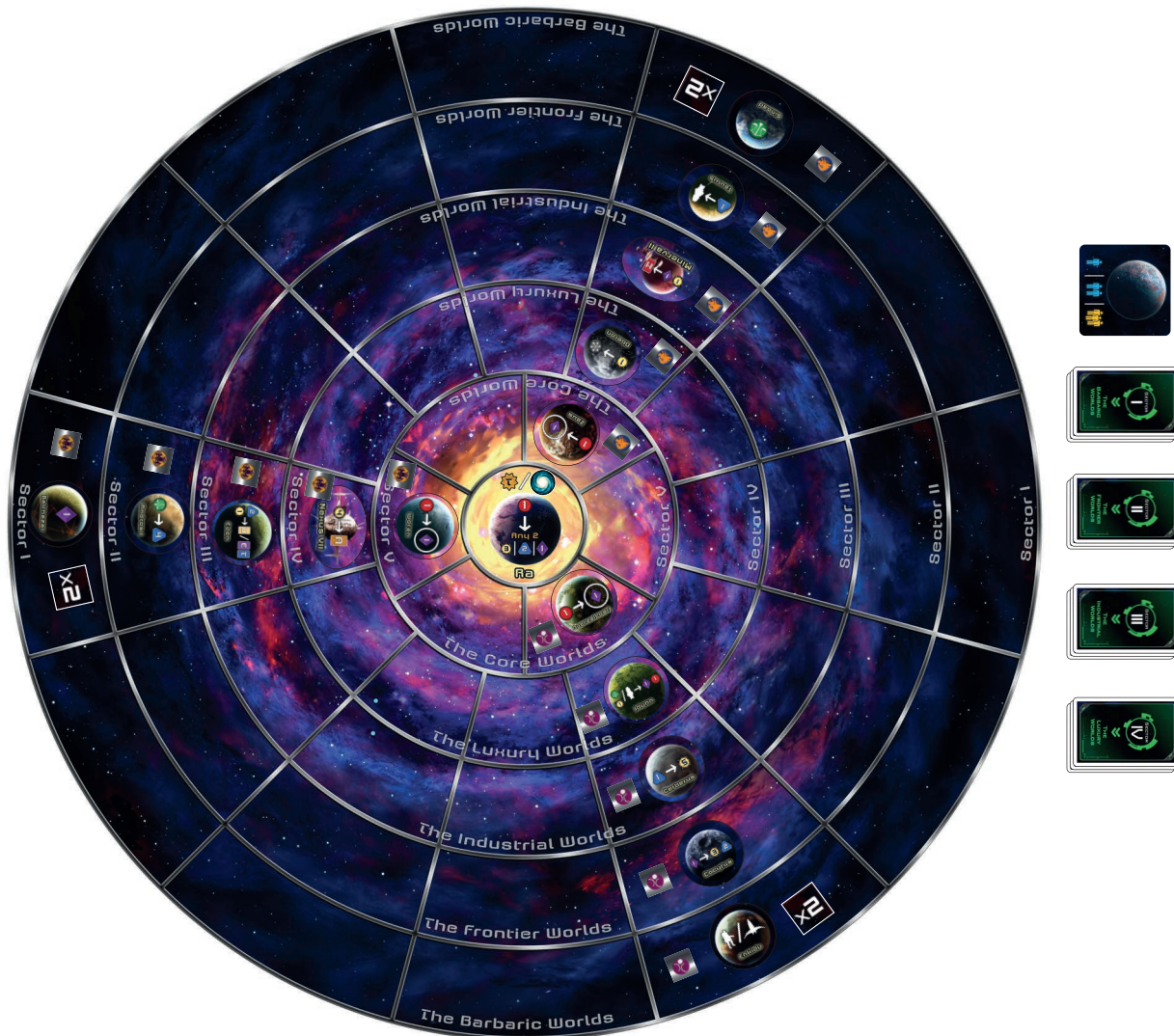
19. Draw a number of cards from *each* of the four World Card stacks (Sectors I - IV) equal to the number of players + 1, and place the cards face up beside the Galaxy Map in a grid pattern so that the worlds from each sector are in a separate row. In Turn Order, each empire takes a turn drafting one Sector I World Card. Then, in *reverse* Turn Order, each empire takes a turn drafting one Sector II World Card. Continue this pattern for Sectors III and IV (i.e., use Turn Order for Sector III and reverse Turn Order for Sector IV). Afterwards, shuffle the 4 unchosen World Cards back into their respective stacks. (See “Starter Game Set Up” on page 13 for an alternate way to choose Starting World Cards.)

20. Each empire places all 5 of its World Cards, including its Core World Card, in a face up row beside its Empire Board, and then places 1 Faction Token on top of each card to indicate that it is a Starting World.

21. Separate the World Tokens by sector and place them in face up stacks in the reserve. Each empire receives the 5 World Tokens that match its 5 Starting Worlds. Each empire places its World Tokens face up on the Galaxy Map in the column of spaces closest to the player on the Galaxy Map, with each World Token in its own appropriate sector, including the Core World (see Galaxy Map diagram on next page). Each empire places 1 Faction Token in each space on the Galaxy Map containing one of its worlds.

22. Place the Destiny Token on the “Ra” space in the center of the Galaxy Map in such a way that it covers the Destiny Icon on that space. Place the remaining tokens and dice in the reserve.

23. Each empire chooses one of its Starting Worlds and places a “x2” Multiplier Token in that world’s space on the Galaxy Map (see “Starter Game Set Up” on page 13 for an alternate way to select this world).



STARTING GALAXY MAP (3-PLAYER)

Starter Game Set Up

For your first game, instead of receiving a random Leader, drafting Starting Worlds, and choosing where to place your "x2" Multiplier Token, you begin the game with a predetermined combination of Leader, Starting Worlds, and Multiplier Token placement. In the section below that corresponds to the number of players, randomly assign one of the respective columns to each empire. Assign that empire the Leader, Starting Worlds, and Multiplier Token placement in that column. Your Core World is still determined randomly as in the normal set up rules.

	SOLO / 2-PLAYER		3-PLAYER			4-PLAYER			
LEADER	SIMON THE FOX	PRINCE AARON	EMPRESS ELONA	LORD BANNER	CHANCELLOR AUGUSTUS	EMPRESS ELONA	LORD BANNER	CHANCELLOR AUGUSTUS	BARON VIKTOR
SECTOR I WORLD	DAEDALUS x2	TUNDROS x2	BALTHAZAR x2	SINBAD x2	ENKHIDU x2	BALTHAZAR x2	SINBAD x2	ENKHIDU x2	EURYDICE x2
SECTOR II WORLD	TAURUS	SAUDI III	ANDROS I	TAURUS	COCHTUS	ANDROS I	TAURUS	COCHTUS	PROMETHEUS
SECTOR III WORLD	HEPHAESTUS	FENRIS	EDEN	MINERVA II	CERBERUS	EDEN	FENRIS	AVALON	CERBERUS
SECTOR IV WORLD	IDUNN	ARCADIA	NEHUS VII	OBERON	IDUNN	NEHUS VII	GUINEVERE	IDUNN	OBERON

Round Overview

Each round of the game is played simultaneously by all empires. What follows is an overview of the phases that transpire in each round of *Core Worlds: Empires*.

Event Phase

1. Advance Round Token.
2. Remove Event Cards equal to the Event Fade Rate (*skip on Round 1*).
3. Set the Event Fade Rate to 5.
4. Seed new Future Event Card.
5. Resolve Present Event Card:
 - Resolve Event Text.
 - Place Neutral World(s).

Ambassador Phase

Each empire, in Turn Order, moves one ready ambassador to a world or advancement.

1. Ambassador may choose to bring an escort.
 - Pay **1 Energy** per 2 Unit Tokens (round up).
2. Activate visited world or advancement.
 - Outside your empire, pay **1 Prestige** to the reserve if a rival ambassador is present.
 - After you activate a rival's Imperial World, that empire gains **1 Empire Point** from the reserve.

Expansion Phase

Do the following at each Contested World:

1. Choose commanders.
2. Perform Battle Actions (optional).
 - Roll 1 Battle Die.
 - Play Unit Cards + Mobilize Unit Tokens.
 - Play Tactic Cards.
3. Target and destroy damaged Unit Tokens (half).
4. Determine Military Dominance.
5. Annex Contested World.
 - Choose Military or Diplomatic Annexation.
6. Repair damaged Unit Tokens and discard cards.

End Phase

1. Remove Multiplier Tokens and Event Flag Tokens from occupied worlds.
2. Place Multiplier Tokens on open worlds.
3. Recall ambassadors.
4. Draw cards from Ambassador Discard Piles (half).
5. Ambassadors exchange cards and units.
6. Flip Neutral Worlds Token (3 or 5 players).
7. Determine new Turn Order.

Event Phase

As the young emperors manage and expand their realms, significant events will provide them with aid or hinder their schemes. Only those in league with the Galactic Orders can gain control over these fluctuating circumstances.

During the Event Phase, future events are set into motion, present events are resolved, and neutral planets make their presence known.

1. **Advance Round Token:** At the start of the Event Phase, move the Round Token forward on the Round Track. At the end of the ninth round, the game ends and a winner is determined (see page 25).
2. **Remove Event Cards (Skip on Round 1):** Starting in Round 2, remove a number of cards from the top of the Master Events Stack equal to the Event Fade Rate currently showing on the Event Chart on the Galactic Board. Remove these Event Cards from the game without examining them.
3. **Set Event Fade Rate to 5:** If the Event Fade Rate is currently less than 5, set it back to 5 at this time.
4. **Seed New Future Event Card:** Place the top card of the Master Events Stack face down on the Future Events stack without examining it.
5. **Resolve Present Event:** Whenever a new Event Card is seeded into the Future Events stack, a new card must be drawn from the top of the Present Events stack and resolved. Place the Event Card face up onto the Past Events stack and resolve its text.



The Event Leader: Most events grant rewards or allow a decision to be made by the “Event Leader.” The Event Leader may give the rewards to any Ambassadors. Examine the leftmost Galactic Order Icon displayed on the Event Leader Indicator on the top bar of the card. The empire with the highest rank in that Galactic Order (at least rank 1) is the Event Leader (see page 17 for an overview of the six Galactic Orders). If more than one empire shares the highest rank in that Galactic Order, then the empire whose Faction Token is at the bottom of the stack for that rank is the Event Leader. If no one has a rank of 1 or higher in the leftmost Galactic Order, then check the next consecutive Galactic Order to the right on the card, and, if still unsuccessful, check the final Galactic Order shown on the card. If no empire possesses any ranks in any of the three Galactic Orders displayed, then there is no Event Leader and any rewards or decisions that need to be made by the Event Leader are cancelled. *In the example at right, the empire with the highest rank in the Senate will become the Event Leader. If no one has any ranks in the Senate, then examine the Merchant Alliance, and then finally the Science Guild to identify the Event Leader. If no one has any ranks in those Orders, then there is no Event Leader.*

If the Event Leader makes a decision that targets a particular world (see right), then the Event Flag Indicators on the sides of the card will glow red, and you must use 2 matching Event Flag Tokens (see page 6) to indicate which world is affected. In this case, remove the Event Card from the Past Events stack and place it beside the Galactic Board until it is resolved, after which you must return it to the top of the Past Events stack.



Some Events grant two rewards, one for the Event Leader and another, after a double vertical line, for the Secondary Event Leader. The Secondary Event Leader is the empire with the second highest rank in the relevant Galactic Order (or the next highest Faction Token in the stack if both empires share the same rank). If no other empire has a rank in the relevant Galactic Order, then check to see if one of the empires owns a rank in one of the remaining Galactic Orders in consecutive order to determine the identity of the Secondary Event Leader (ignore the first Event Leader’s ranks in those Orders when making this determination). If no one else has any ranks in those Galactic Orders, then there is no Secondary Event Leader and no one receives the secondary rewards. The Event Leader *never* receives both rewards. When an Event Card depicts multiple rewards, or even multiple items that are part of the same reward, always trigger the card’s rewards in consecutive order from left to right. *In the example at right, the Event Leader first draws a Unit Card and then a Tactic Card. Afterwards, the Secondary Event Leader draws a Tactic Card.*



Neutral Worlds: When an event is triggered during the Event Phase, then after the event’s text is resolved, one or more Neutral Worlds enter the game. The number of Neutral Worlds that enter the game is the number of planets currently displayed on the face of the Neutral Worlds Token. Draw the World Cards from the World Card stack whose sector number matches the one shown on the lower left portion of the recently triggered Event Card. Place each of these World Cards face up on the Galaxy Map in any empty space that is in the same concentric ring as its corresponding sector. Afterwards, take each corresponding World Token from the reserve and place it in the same space as its matching card. Because there is a World Card in this space instead of a Faction Token, this is a Neutral World that belongs to no empire.

Destiny Token: If one empire has secured the Destiny Token from Ra, then before placing the Neutral World Cards onto the Galaxy Map, draw 1 extra World Card from the relevant World Card stack. The empire with the Destiny Token chooses one of the drawn World Cards to be removed from play and placed on the bottom of its respective stack; this grants that empire a measure of control over which Neutral Worlds enter the game at this time. If no empire has secured the Destiny Token, then no extra World Cards are drawn and none are placed at the bottom of the stack.

Replenish the Present Events Stack: If at any time the Present Events stack becomes empty, shuffle the cards in the Future Events stack and place them face down in the Present Events space. If the Event Cards that are now face down in the Present Events stack have different Epoch Numbers on their backs, then after shuffling the cards, place those from earlier epochs face down on top of those from later epochs.

Ambassador Phase

You and the specially trained ambassadors from your Core World traverse the galaxy freely thanks to the provisionary treaty that seals the peace of the young empires. This accord enables you to visit any world with impunity, but you should endeavor to attract the greatest number of visitors to your own worlds. This, as much as any other achievement, will secure your future place as the ruler of Ra, the Throneworld of the Galaxy.

During the Ambassador Phase, you and your rival empires send your leaders and other ambassadors to oversee your Core World's advancements or to visit the civilized worlds of the galaxy.

Each empire in Turn Order moves one Ambassador Standee from its chamber on the Empire Board to one of its advancements or to any world on the Galaxy Map. You can only visit your own advancements (not your rivals'), but you can travel to worlds in your own empire, your rivals' empires, and the neutral planets that are not part of any empire. When travelling to a world, place the Ambassador Standee in the space beside the World Token, not on top of it. Once every ambassador has moved, the Ambassador Phase ends.

Unit Escorts: During the game, each of your ambassadors may have 1 or more Unit Tokens assigned to the retinue space above the ambassador's chamber on the Empire Board. All such units are considered part of the ambassador's **retinue**, regardless of whether or not they are actually travelling with the ambassador. If you choose to have some or all of your ambassador's retinue travel with the ambassador, you must pay 1 Energy for every 2 Unit Tokens (round up) that you choose to move with the ambassador.

Stack the travelling Unit Tokens beneath the Ambassador Standee at the destination. These units are now considered part of the ambassador's **escort** (but are still considered part of the ambassador's retinue).

When travelling to an Imperial World that is not being contested, there is usually no reason to bring an escort. Escorts are most useful when travelling to Neutral Worlds or other Contested Worlds to help you annex them (see page 21). *In the example at right, Albrecht has paid 2 Energy to transport 3 Unit Tokens from his retinue as an escort to accompany him to Yggdrasil, a Neutral World he is hoping to annex later in the round during the Expansion Phase.*



Activating Advancements: When you move an ambassador to one of your advancements, you may immediately activate the function or card text on that advancement (see "Functions" on pages 17 - 20). Only *one* of your ambassadors can activate the same advancement on your Empire Board during the same round, so there is no reason to send multiple ambassadors to the same advancement.

Activating Worlds: When you move an ambassador to a world, you may immediately activate the function on that world if none of your other ambassadors are present there (see "Functions" on pages 17 - 20). You cannot activate the function on a world that already holds one of your ambassadors unless a special ability allows you to do so. When you activate a world, one or both of the following may apply:

- **Rival Ambassadors:** If a world lies outside your empire and at least one rival ambassador is there, you must pay an extra cost of 1 Prestige to the reserve in order to activate that world. If the world is part of your own empire, however, you do not need to pay extra Prestige to activate it. You never need to pay more than 1 extra Prestige to activate a world, no matter how many ambassadors are there. Note that you may always visit a world without paying Prestige (such as when transporting your escort to a Contested World), as long as you do not activate that world's function.
- **Rival Empires:** If you activate a rival's Imperial World, that empire immediately receives 1 Empire Point from the reserve. If you merely visit a rival's world without activating it, then that empire does not receive 1 Empire Point.

Functions

Worlds, advancements, and cards often provide functions that allow your ambassadors to receive specific rewards. Some functions bestow their rewards for free. For example, *Tiberius* (see right) bestows 3 Energy on any ambassador who activates it.



Functions that feature the \Rightarrow symbol, however, have a cost to activate. The icons on the left side of the \Rightarrow are the cost and the icons on the right side of the \Rightarrow are the reward. The cost of a function must be paid in addition to any other required costs, such as paying 1 Prestige when activating a world that is occupied by a rival ambassador (see “Rival Ambassadors” on page 16). For example, *Cocytus* (see right) allows an ambassador to pay 1 Prestige in order to gain 3 Energy and 2 Materials.

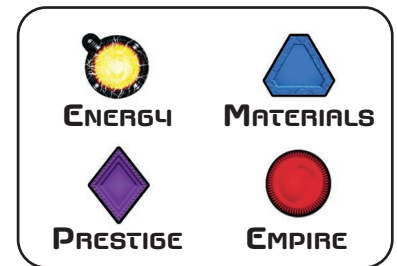


Functions that feature the \diagup symbol offer the ambassador a choice, either for the function’s cost or its reward, depending on where the \diagup is located. If there are icons that are *not* separated by a \diagup , however, then both of the items must be paid (if a cost) or can be received (if a reward). For example, *Atlantis* (see right) allows an ambassador to choose between paying a cost of [1 rank in the Science Guild + 1 Energy] OR [4 Energy]. If *either* cost is paid, the ambassador gains 1 Prestige and 1 Empire Point.



Resources

There are four principal resources used as currency in the game (see right). These resources are tracked using Resource Tokens (RT) on your Empire Board’s Resource Bank (see page 4). Players remove RTs from their Resource Bank to pay costs and add RTs to their Resource Bank to receive rewards. Such exchanges are always with the reserve, not the other empires.



Galactic Order Ranks

The six independent Galactic Orders wield tremendous power throughout the galaxy (see icons at right). Each empire’s standing within each Galactic Order is measured in ranks on the Galactic Order Chart.



Gaining Galactic Order Ranks: When you receive a Galactic Order Icon as a reward, advance your Faction Token one space to the right in the corresponding row on the Galactic Order Chart. If you receive a Galactic Order rank in “Any Order” (see right), then you may choose to raise your rank in any Galactic Order of your choice.



If there are already one or more Faction Tokens on your new space, place your empire’s Faction Token on top of those that are already there. The Faction Tokens at the *bottom* of the stack are considered to have higher standing than those above them in that rank. Only one empire at a time can achieve rank 6 in a particular Galactic Order. If a Faction Token is on the “6” space of a particular row, no other empire can move onto that space unless the previous empire decreases its rank and that space is no longer occupied.

If you move your Faction Token on top of a space on the chart that contains 1 RT, then you immediately claim that RT, which is not replenished afterwards. Place the RT on the space in your Resource Bank that corresponds to the Resource Icon shown at the top of the column. In the example at right, if you move your Faction Token onto this space, you will gain 1 Prestige.



Paying Galactic Order Ranks: When a Galactic Order rank must be paid as the cost of a function, move your Faction Token one space to the left in the corresponding row on the Galactic Order Chart. As before, if there are already Faction Tokens on your new space, place your empire's Faction Token on top of those that are already there; this means that you are lower in standing compared to the other empires who share that rank. If you are instructed to pay a rank in "Any Order" (see icon on page 17), then you may choose to pay 1 rank in any Galactic Order. You cannot pay a rank in an Order in which you have 0 ranks.

Galactic Order Die

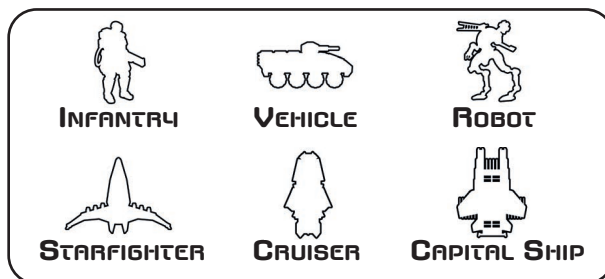
When you receive the Galactic Order Die as a reward, you may raise your rank in the Galactic Order that is currently showing on the face of the die, or you may roll the die and then raise your rank in the Galactic Order that is newly revealed on the face of the die. Afterwards, place the die with its new face showing on top of its matching symbol on the Galactic Order Chart.



Unit Tokens

Unit Tokens are represented by their Unit Icons (see right).

Gaining Unit Tokens: When an ambassador gains a Unit Token at a world or advancement, stack the Unit Token directly beneath that ambassador. The ambassador will have the opportunity to bring the Unit Token back to your Empire Board during the End Phase (see page 24).



Paying Unit Tokens: Some functions require an ambassador to pay Unit Tokens from the ambassador's retinue. The ambassador does *not* need to transport these Unit Tokens to a world as part of an escort; the Unit Tokens can be paid right from the ambassador's retinue space on your Empire Board. The Unit Tokens cannot be paid from any other ambassadors' retinues, however.

Card Rewards & Research

Many functions allow ambassadors to draw a card from one of the decks located on the Galactic Board (see card symbols at right). You may choose to simply draw the top card from the related deck, or you may choose to pay Materials to conduct **research** before you draw. For every 1 Material that you pay, you may draw and view an extra card from the top of the deck without showing the other players. You may then keep any 1 card from among those viewed and return the rest to the top of the deck in the order of your choice.



There is no limit to the number of cards you can view through research, but you must decide and pay for your specified amount of cards *before* you draw from the deck. *For example, before drawing a Tactic Card, you decide to spend 2 Materials on research. You would then draw 3 Tactic Cards (1 initial card + 2 cards from research), choose 1 card to keep, and then place the remaining 2 cards back on top of the Tactic Deck in the order of your choice.*

Some functions include a **bonus research** icon (see right). These functions allow you to view the specified number of extra cards *in addition to* any that you view through paid research.



Tactic Cards: Tactic Cards provide a wide range of effects including Battle Actions that can be played during annexations, functions that can be activated under special circumstances, and text-based special abilities. After you draw a Tactic Card, place it face down below your Empire Board in the card slot of the ambassador who drew it. Only the ambassador who drew the Tactic Card will be able to play it for now, but you will have the opportunity to exchange cards among your ambassadors during the End Phase (see page 24).



Event Cards: Some functions allow you to draw an Event Card from the top of the Master Events Stack. This is also called taking an **Event Action**. An Event Action allows you to secretly view and then seed the top Event Card from the Master Events Stack onto the Future Events stack, and then trigger the top Event Card in the Present Events stack. To handle this procedure properly, follow these actions carefully in the order shown below:

1. Move the Event Fade Token down 1 step on the Event Track on the Galactic Board. **NOTE:** If the Event Fade Token was already on the "0" space, then you *cannot* take an Event Action (i.e. draw an Event Card).
2. Pay Materials for research if you wish to view more than 1 Event Card.
3. Draw and privately view 1 Event Card + 1 Event Card for each Material that you paid as research.
4. Seed (place) 1 viewed Event Card of your choice face down on top of the Future Events stack. Afterwards, return the other cards you viewed, if any, face down on top of the Master Events Stack in the order of your choice, provided that you place events from earlier epochs on top of those from later epochs.
5. Draw the top card of the Present Events stack, place it face up onto the Past Events stack, and then resolve the text in the same way that you would during the Event Phase (see pages 14 - 15). Do *not* add new Neutral Worlds to the Galaxy Map at this time; this is only done during the Event Phase.
6. After the triggered Event Card has resolved, remove it from the Past Events stack and place it face down beside your Empire Board. You *might* receive Empire Points for triggering it later in the game.
7. If the event requires the use of Event Flag Tokens (see page 6), keep the Event Card face up beside your Empire Board until it resolves, and then flip the card face down and keep it beside your Empire Board.



Unit Cards: Unit Cards can be played as Battle Actions during the Expansion Phase to upgrade your Unit Tokens into more powerful versions (see page 22). After you draw a Unit Card, place it face down below your Empire Board in the card slot of the ambassador who drew it. Only the ambassador who drew the Unit Card will be able to play it for now, but you will have the opportunity to exchange cards among your ambassadors during the End Phase (see page 24).



Hero Cards: Hero Cards allow you to replace your ambassadors. After you draw a Hero Card, choose one of your ambassadors *except your leader* to be replaced by the hero depicted on the card. Although you cannot replace your leader, you can use a newly drawn Hero Card to replace *any* of your other ambassadors, no matter where they are located. Remove the old Ambassador Standee and Ambassador Token from the game and replace them (in the exact same locations) with the new Ambassador Standee and Token. If your old ambassador was holding a Hero Card, immediately discard that card face down onto your Ambassador Discard Pile. Place the new Hero Card face down in the hero's hand along with any other cards that were held by the previous ambassador. If you'd rather not replace one of your old ambassadors, then remove the new Hero Card from the game.



Advancement Cards: Advancement Cards allow you to replace your Starting Advancements (or old Advancement Cards) with new ones. After you draw an Advancement Card, you may place it on top of one of the advancements on your Empire Board. The covered advancement's function is now replaced by the function or special ability listed on the new Advancement Card. Any ambassadors who were already positioned on the old advancement remain in place on the new advancement. If you'd rather not replace an old advancement, remove the new card from the game.

Playing & Discarding Cards: Once a Hero Card or Tactic Card is in an ambassador's hand, the card specifies when it can be played and what its effects are. A Unit Card in an ambassador's hand can be played as a Battle Action during the Expansion Phase (see page 22). After an ambassador plays and fully resolves the effects of any of these card types, discard the card face down onto the Ambassador Discard Pile on your Empire Board. You'll have a chance to draw it again during the End Phase (see page 24).

"Paying" a Card: Some functions require you to pay a card of a particular type as a cost. To pay a card, your ambassador at that world must have the card in hand and must remove it permanently from the game.

Core World Functions

Your Core World is represented by its corresponding World Token on the Galaxy Map. Each Core World on the Galaxy Map begins the game with the same customizable function (see page 6) that allows you to pay 1 Prestige to claim one of the available **Core World Function Tokens** from the reserve and place it inside the white circle on your Core World's Token. Core World Function Tokens allow you to introduce new elements into the game that may not be sufficiently available otherwise.

The newly placed Function Token creates a function that immediately allows that ambassador, as well as future ambassadors who visit that world (including your rivals'), to pay 1 Empire Point to receive the reward specified on the Function Token. Some Function Tokens add an additional cost of 1 Energy (see right). In this case, the function would cost 1 Empire Point + 1 Energy to activate.



Only *your* ambassador can add a Function Token to your Core World, and no other empire can take that Function Token while it rests on your world. However, one of your ambassadors can choose to spend 1 Prestige while visiting your Core World to replace the world's current Function Token with a new one that is currently available in the reserve. In this case, return your old Function Token to the reserve.

Ra

The Throneworld Ra remains neutral throughout each game of *Core Worlds: Empires*. Ra provides both a **top function** and a **bottom function** (see right), and you can choose to activate one or both of these functions when you visit.

The top function allows you to choose either to change your place in the Turn Order (see page 24) or to claim the Destiny Token (see page 15). The bottom function allows you to pay 1 Empire Point to receive any 2 of the following sets of resources (your choice): 3 Energy, 2 Materials, or 1 Prestige.

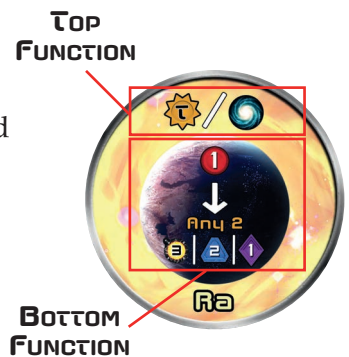
Turn Order: If you choose to change your place in the Turn Order, take your extra Faction Token on the Turn Order Chart and place it immediately above the Turn Order position you would like to occupy during the *next* round (see right). This has no effect on the current round's Turn Order. Afterwards, place your Ambassador Standee on top of the Turn Order Icon on Ra to signify that no other empire may take this action for the rest of the round.

Destiny Token: If you claim the Destiny Token, then remove it from its current location (either on top of the Ra Token or on top of another player's Empire Board) and place it on top of your Empire Board. Afterwards, place your Ambassador Standee on top of the Destiny Icon on Ra to signify that no other empire may take this action for the rest of the round. If both actions in the top function are covered by ambassadors, then only the bottom function can be performed for the rest of the round.

Multiplier Tokens

You will have the opportunity to place "x2" and "x3" Multiplier Tokens on your worlds during set up and during the End Phase. Any ambassador who visits a world with a Multiplier Token can choose to activate that world's function the number of times indicated on the token. If the function includes a cost, then the cost must be paid each time as well, but you may choose to activate the function fewer times if you prefer.

Activating a world multiple times does *not* increase the number of Prestige you must pay if there is another ambassador there, nor does it provide multiple Empire Points to a rival's Imperial World.



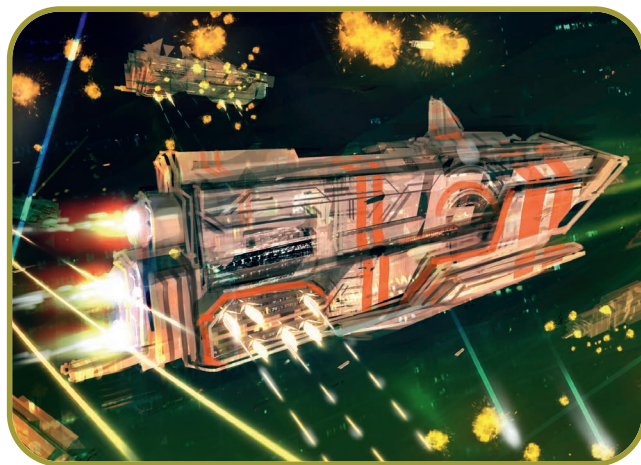
Expansion Phase

As neutral planets recover from the civil war that ravaged the galaxy, they signal their willingness to unite with the new empires. Your ambassadors may visit these worlds freely and even attempt to annex them to your realm, but these worlds must receive durable pledges of security or wealth before they will agree to join you. Competition for these worlds may lead to open conflict among the empires for the first time in a generation.

During the Expansion Phase, your ambassadors may attempt to annex Neutral Worlds and other Contested Worlds throughout the galaxy. A **Contested World** is defined as any Neutral World OR an Imperial World that is linked to an event that allows it to be contested. You cannot attempt to annex another empire's world unless an event specifically allows you to do so. Ra can never be annexed.

Each empire in Turn Order may initiate an **annexation** at a Contested World where at least one of its ambassadors is present. Each Contested World can only be chosen once per round; once a Contested World's annexation has been resolved, that world cannot be chosen again by any empire until the following round. When an annexation is initiated at a Contested World, *all* empires present can attempt to increase their Military Strengths or damage the units of rival empires present at that world. Follow the steps below carefully during every annexation attempt.

1. Choose Commanders: Each empire in Turn Order chooses 1 ambassador at the Contested World to become the **commander** of all the empire's Unit Tokens, Unit Cards, and Tactic Cards that are present at that world. Your commander may freely use the Unit Tokens and non-Hero cards of your other ambassadors who are there, but only the commander's Military Strength is used during the steps that follow.



2. Battle Actions: Each commander may, in Turn Order, perform 1 Battle Action or pass. A commander who passes may choose to act again later during this step. Only after all commanders have passed consecutively does play proceed to step 3. The three possible Battle Actions include the following:

- **Roll 1 Battle Die:** Once during the Battle Actions step, if your commander has an escort, you may target another commander's escort and roll 1 Battle Die. You can only roll the Battle Die once at each world, even if several rival commanders are present there. After you roll the Battle Die, you must accept the results, even if the outcome is negative for your own forces. Because of this, you should not roll the Battle Die unless you deem it necessary for success. The possible die results include:



Raise / Lower Military Strength: Your total Military Strength (the combination of your Fleet and Ground Strengths) is raised or lowered by the number indicated.



Damage Rival Unit: The rival empire must choose any 1 of its undamaged Unit Tokens and flip it over to its red **damaged** side. This will lower the unit's Military Strength and may even lead to its destruction (see step 3 on next page).



Damage Friendly Unit: You must choose 1 of your own undamaged Unit Tokens and flip it over to its red **damaged** side. This will lower the unit's Military Strength and may even lead to its destruction (see step 3 on next page).

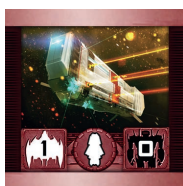
- **Play Unit Card & Mobilize Units:** You can use a Battle Action to play a Unit Card (see page 8) as long as at least one of your involved Unit Tokens has the same Unit Icon as the one at the bottom center of the card. You must then pay the listed Mobilization Cost to place one of your matching Unit Tokens on top of the Unit Card. The mobilized Unit Token *immediately* activates the special ability and the strength bonuses (if any) listed on the Unit Card. *In the example at right, you can only play the Goliath Warships Unit Card if you have at least 1 Capital Ship Unit Token at the Contested World. You may then pay 4 Energy to place 1 Capital Ship Unit Token on top of this card. That Unit Token immediately gains +4 Fleet Strength and immediately forces 1 rival empire of your choice to damage one of its Starfighters, Cruisers, or Capital Ships.*



Unique Units: If the Unit Card has a yellow Unique Icon on the top bar (see right), then you can only mobilize 1 Unit Token when playing this card. If the Unit Card does not have a Unique Icon, then you may pay the Mobilization Cost multiple times to mobilize multiple Unit Tokens of the listed type and stack them on top of the Unit Card. You must mobilize all desired Unit Tokens during the same Battle Action; you cannot return to this Unit Card later in this same step to mobilize additional units. *Because the Goliath Warships card does not feature a Unique Icon, you can mobilize additional Capital Ship Unit Tokens at a cost of 4 Energy each. Each time you do so, you may force a rival empire of your choice to damage one of the listed Unit Types (see “Damaging Unit Tokens” below).*

You may spend a future Battle Action to play another Unit Card and mobilize additional Unit Tokens, but when you do so you cannot re-mobilize any of your already mobilized Unit Tokens.

- **Play Tactic Card:** You can use a Battle Action to play a Tactic Card that specifies that it can be played “as a Battle Action.” If there is more than 1 rival empire present, you must choose which rival is affected. You may spend a future Battle Action to play another Tactic Card if you wish.



**DAMAGED
CRUISER**

Damaging Unit Tokens: Whenever you are able to damage a rival’s Unit Token, either by mobilizing certain units or by playing a Tactic Card, you choose one rival at the battle. That rival must immediately choose one of its own undamaged Unit Tokens of the specified type(s) and then flips the unit over to its red damaged side. If the rival no longer possesses an undamaged unit of the specified type, then it ignores your damage ability. Keep in mind that, unless a special ability specifies otherwise, the targeted rival always gets to choose which of its own units to damage.

3. Target & Destroy Damaged Unit Tokens: After all empires have consecutively passed during the Battle Actions step, each commander in Turn Order chooses one rival commander, targets half of the commander’s damaged Unit Tokens (round up), and **destroys** them. All destroyed Unit Tokens are immediately returned to the reserve. Each commander’s units can only be chosen once during this step.

It is important to note that, even though commanders typically get to choose which of their own units are damaged by special abilities, they do *not* get to choose which of their own damaged units are destroyed. This means that it is important for a commander to have lighter forces, such as infantry and starfighters, at a battle to soak up damage so that they do not lose their heavier forces during this step.

4. Determine Military Dominance: Each empire adds up the combined Fleet Strengths and Ground Strengths of all its remaining Units Tokens (including those on Unit Cards) to determine its total Military Strength. Remember to add or subtract the number rolled on the Battle Die, if relevant. The empire with the highest total Military Strength at that world is considered to have **Military Dominance** there. If two or more empires are tied, then roll the Galactic Order Die. The tied empire that has the highest rank in that Galactic Order claims Military Dominance. If none of the tied empires have any ranks in that Galactic Order, then the annexation ends in a stalemate and no one can annex the Contested World (proceed to step 6). In any case, return the Galactic Order Die to the Galactic Order Chart with its new face showing.

5. **Annex World:** The commander with Military Dominance has the first opportunity to annex the Contested World, and may choose either a Military Annexation or a Diplomatic Annexation (see below). If the dominant commander cannot or will not follow through with annexing the Contested World, then the commander with the next highest Military Strength may do so. It is important to note that Military Dominance only provides the first opportunity to annex a world; it does not allow a dominant commander to block other empires from annexing the world if the commander chooses not to. If there is a tie for which remaining commander has the next highest Military Strength, then roll the Galactic Order Die in the same way as was done in step 4 to determine who gets the next choice.

NOTE: If the Contested World was already part of the dominant commander's empire (for example, if an event allowed the world to be contested), establishing Military Dominance is sufficient to retain control of the world. An empire does not need to perform a Military or Diplomatic Annexation on its own world.

- **Military Annexation:** To perform a Military Annexation, the commander must discard enough Unit Tokens into the reserve to equal or exceed the Military Requirements listed on the Contested World's card. Unlike declaring Military Dominance, which is only concerned with the total Military Strengths of the commander's units, performing a Military Annexation requires the prescribed amount of separate Fleet Strength *and* Ground Strength to annex the world. Any Unit Tokens that were mobilized by Unit Cards contribute their modified Fleet and Ground Strengths to this total. If you rolled the Battle Die and received a bonus or penalty to your total Military Strength, it will have no effect on these totals because the Battle Die does not provide a specific type of Military Strength.

Your commander's personal Fleet and Ground Strength ratings (but not those of your other ambassadors at that world) reduce the total Fleet and Ground Strengths required to annex the world. However, you must discard at least 1 Unit Token, even if your commander's own Fleet and Ground Strengths cover the entire Military Requirements on their own. *In the example at right, Saudi III requires both a Fleet Strength of 2 and a Ground Strength of 2 to be annexed. Albrecht has a Fleet Strength of 2 and a Ground Strength of 1, so he only needs an additional Ground Strength of 1 to annex the world. His Vehicle Unit Token possesses a Ground Strength of 2, so Albrecht can discard it to annex the world (the excess Ground Strength is lost). Note that even if Albrecht had sufficient strength on his own to annex the world, he would still be required to discard at least 1 Unit Token to be successful.*



- **Diplomatic Annexation:** To perform a Diplomatic Annexation, you must pay any 2 of the 3 Diplomatic Requirements listed on the Contested World's card. This allows you to pay resources to annex the world without having to sacrifice any Unit Tokens. In fact, you may perform a Diplomatic Annexation even if you brought no units with you to the Contested World, assuming no other empire has arrived with enough Military Strength to claim Military Dominance over that world.

If you annex a world, place your Faction Token in its space on the Galaxy Map (replacing that of any other empire there) and place the corresponding World Card in your row of World Cards. Remove any Faction Token currently on the World Card and do *not* add your own Faction Token to the card.

6. **Repair Units and Discard:** Once the Contested World has been annexed (or if there is a stalemate), all remaining damaged Unit Tokens belonging to all empires are **repaired**; flip them back over to their silver undamaged sides. Remove all upgraded Unit Tokens from their Unit Cards and place them back with their owner's other Unit Tokens; those units are no longer considered upgraded. Finally, discard all Unit Cards and Tactic Cards that were played by all empires face down into their owners' Ambassador Discard Piles.

Once the entire annexation process is finished for the current Contested World, then the next empire in Turn Order may initiate an annexation at a different Contested World where that empire possesses an ambassador. Once all Contested Worlds have been resolved, proceed to the End Phase (see next page).

End Phase

The young emperors periodically recall their ambassadors home to their respective Core Worlds to sit in council and chart a new path forward toward galactic domination.

During the End Phase, your ambassadors return to your Core World to allocate units and other resources.

1. Remove Multiplier Tokens & Event Flag Tokens: Remove all Multiplier Tokens and Event Flag Tokens from all occupied worlds (worlds where an ambassador is present). Do *not* remove these tokens from open worlds (worlds without an ambassador). Removing an Event Flag ends that event immediately; this can be an effective way of ending a negative event that is targeting one of your Imperial Worlds.

2. Place new Multiplier Tokens: In Turn Order, each empire may place one “x2” Multiplier Token on one of its open worlds (worlds without an ambassador) if that world does not already possess a Multiplier Token. Alternatively, an empire may choose to flip one of its “x2” Multiplier Tokens over to its “x3” side.

3. Recall Ambassadors: Return all Ambassador Standees to their respective Ambassador Chambers. The ambassadors may also transport their personal escorts to the retinue space above their chambers.

4. Draw cards: Each empire views all the cards in its Ambassador Discard Pile and chooses half the cards (round up) to distribute to its ambassadors. The unchosen cards are returned face down to the discard pile.

5. Ambassadors exchange cards and units: Each empire may freely redistribute its ambassadors’ cards and Unit Tokens however it sees fit, although Hero Cards can only be placed with their corresponding ambassadors.

6. Flip Neutral Worlds Token (3 or 5 players): In a 3 or 5 player game, flip over the Neutral Worlds Token. This will change the number of Neutral Worlds that enter the game during the Event Phase (see page 15).

7. Determine New Turn Order: If an empire set itself up to change its position in the Turn Order while visiting Ra (see page 20), then perform the following actions in order. Otherwise, skip this step.



1. Remove the transitioning empire’s old Faction Token and place it on the left side of the Turn Order Chart.
2. Push the transitioning empire’s new Faction Token into its new position, bumping the rival Faction Token that was in that position temporarily from the chart.
3. If the transitioning empire just moved to the left on the chart, then move the bumped empire’s Faction Token to the right one space, bumping all others down the line until the empty place on the chart is filled.
4. If the transitioning empire just moved to the right on the chart, then move the bumped empire’s Faction Token to the left one space, bumping all others up the line until the empty place on the chart is filled.



Elona’s faction is prepared to move into position 3 on the chart.



First, remove Elona’s previous Faction Token.



Next, Elona temporarily bumps Augustus from the chart.



Augustus moves up into position 2, which bumps Banner into position 1.

After resolving the End Phase, if this was the final round of the game, proceed to final scoring (see next page). Otherwise, the next round begins with a new Event Phase (see page 14).

Epoch Progression

After the ascendance of the new empires, four epochs will pass until one emperor is declared the Champion of Ra.

Four great **epochs** will chart the passage of time from the end of the civil war that overthrew the Supreme Monarch until the glorious day that one of the young emperors dares to ascend the Throne of Ra.

The top face down card on the Master Events Stack reveals the current Epoch Number (1 - 4). As the epochs progress, Event Cards will either be seeded into the Future Events stack or will **fade** (be removed from the game). As the Master Events Stack diminishes, new ambassadors will enter play and Empire Point bonuses will be scored. The following circumstances may occur for a variety of reasons, either because the top Event Card was removed or seeded, or because a particular card was revealed while a player was researching the Event Deck. In all cases, follow the instructions below immediately.

1. **New Ambassadors:** At the start of Epoch II and Epoch III, one of the “New Ambassadors” cards will be revealed (see right). No matter how this card is revealed, every empire immediately receives the next ambassador from its Core World (Ambassador III or Ambassador IV). The corresponding Ambassador Standees and Ambassador Tokens are placed in their own chambers on the Empire Board. Afterwards, remove the “New Ambassadors” card from the game. **NOTE:** The “New Ambassadors” card does not count toward the total number of cards that were in the process of being seeded, removed or researched when it was revealed.



2. **Raven:** Certain Event Cards from Epoch III announce that “**Raven** enters play.” When this occurs, place the Raven World Token, which represents the hidden Core World of the Eidolon League, in an empty space in Sector V on the Galaxy Map. The Event Leader can immediately move an ambassador there, even if that ambassador is currently located at another world or advancement.

3. **Epoch IV Events:** All of the Epoch IV Events provide bonus Empire Points immediately when they are resolved. When the first Epoch IV card appears face down on top of the Master Events Stack, it is imperative that the empires begin researching and seeding the events that will most benefit their empires before they fade away. When each of these seeded events eventually resolves, place an Epoch IV Bonus Token on top of the corresponding space on the Epoch IV Bonus Chart as a reminder that these events will not score again.

NOTE: The “Unifier” Event counts the annexed worlds in each empire. Any World Cards without Faction Tokens on them qualify for this, including Starting Worlds that an empire lost and then regained.

4. **Champion of Ra:** When the “Champion of Ra” card appears, players should be aware that they are approaching the end of the game. The “Champion of Ra” card *never* leaves the bottom of the Master Events Stack under any circumstances. Once this is the only card left in the stack, it is no longer possible to seed new events, so the only effect of an Event Action is to trigger the top event of the Present Events stack.

Final Scoring & Victory

At the end of the ninth round, final scoring occurs as follows:

- Reveal and resolve all of the Epoch IV Event Cards that remain in the Present Events and Future Events stacks. Ignore any events from earlier epochs.
- Each empire adds all of the Empire Points in its Resource Bank to the total Empire Point value of all its worlds, including its remaining Starting Worlds. The emperor with the greatest number of Empire Points ascends the Throne of Ra and wins the game!
- In case of a tie, break ties in the following order: a) Most Worlds; b) Most Cards; and c) Most Total Resources (of any kind). If any empires are still tied, they become consuls of Ra and share the victory!

Solo Play Rules

The Solo Play Rules allow you to play *Core Worlds: Empires* against a Nemesis Empire whose influence on the galaxy is simulated through the Solo Deck. Shuffle the deck and place it face down beside the play area.

Set Up Changes

Nemesis Empire Board & Galactic Board: The Nemesis Empire receives one randomly chosen Nemesis Empire Board from among those that appear on the back of the normal Empire Boards. The Nemesis receives its starting RTs (3 Energy, 2 Materials, 1 Prestige) and 2 Unit Tokens (Infantry + Starfighter), but does not place Ambassador Standees, Ambassador Tokens, or any starting cards on its board. Give the Nemesis one set of Faction Tokens and use these to mark the Nemesis Empire's worlds on the Galaxy Map and information on the Galactic Board. You start the game going first on the Turn Order Chart.

Starting Worlds: The Nemesis starts with the Sector V World that matches the Core World on the reverse side of its Empire Board. Place 1 random Core World Function Token on its Core World Token on the map at the start of the game. You will draft Starting Worlds for both empires at the same time, but only at the end of the draft process will you know which Starting Worlds belong to which empire. Follow step 19 of the Set Up rules (see page 12) as if you are setting the game up for 2 players (3 World Cards from each sector from I - IV). For each sector, choose one World Card for "Empire 1" and one World Card for "Empire 2" and shuffle the third World Card back into its respective stack. After you are finished drafting all 4 World Cards for both empires, randomly determine which set of worlds belongs to you and which set belongs to the Nemesis. You choose which world in each empire begins with a "x2" Multiplier Token.

Starter Game: If this is your first game of *Core Worlds: Empires*, then instead of drafting worlds, randomly assign each empire one set of worlds from the "Solo / 2-Player" section of the Starter Game Set Up Chart on page 13. Assign yourself the leader associated with your column. The Nemesis does not have a leader.

Playing the Game

Whenever the Nemesis receives RTs, Unit Tokens, or cards, place them on its Empire Board. Place all cards face up in different stacks based on their card types so that you can count the number in each stack easily.

Event Phase: If the Nemesis needs to make a decision (for example, as the Event Leader), then you decide for the Nemesis. In this case, you must choose newly Contested Worlds from *your* empire, if possible.

Ambassador Phase: Remember to award 1 Empire Point to the Nemesis whenever you activate one of its worlds. Whenever it is the Nemesis Empire's turn, you must draw the top card of the Solo Deck and follow its instructions. Whenever a world is targeted by the Nemesis, place matching Event Flag Tokens on the Solo Card and the affected world for reference. You choose the targeted world if more than one qualifies.

Expansion Phase: When a Solo Card specifies that the Nemesis invades a Contested World, the card will tell you how to calculate the Nemesis' Military Strength based on the current Epoch Number. Whenever you are able to damage a rival's Unit Token, you can only damage the Unit Types shown on the bottom of the related Solo Card. You can only damage a maximum of 1 unit of each type shown; use RTs to mark which units you have damaged (see right). If one of your special abilities forces a rival to damage 1 Unit Token out of several types, damage the least powerful unit that has not yet been damaged among those that qualify. When any of the Nemesis' units are damaged, lower the Nemesis' total Military Strength by the amount shown beside the Unit Icon. If the Nemesis achieves Military Dominance at the Contested World, the Nemesis automatically annexes that world.



End Phase: Do *not* place a Multiplier Token on one of the Nemesis' worlds during this phase.

Final Scoring & Victory: Count the Nemesis' accrued resources, cards, units, etc. for Epoch IV scoring bonuses. You must defeat the Nemesis Empire's score to claim the Throne of Ra and win the game!

Light Speed Variant

The Light Speed Variant for 2 - 5 players allows you to play a relatively quicker version of *Core Worlds: Empires*. Only experienced *Core Worlds: Empires* players should use the Light Speed Variant; do **not** use this variant for your first game. This variant does not function with Solo Play.

Set Up: Remove 1 random Event Card from Epochs II, III, and IV and return the cards to the box without examining them. Each Empire begins with the following RTs on its Empire Board: 6 Energy, 4 Materials, 2 Prestige, and 1 Empire Point. The Round Track and Event Tracks are switched during this variant. Place the Round Token on space 0 of 5 on the new Round Track and the Event Fade Token on space 9 of the new Event Track. Each empire places "x2" Multiplier Tokens on *two* of its worlds during set up.

Event Phase: During the Event Phase, use the new Event Fade Rate to remove Event Cards from the game and then reset the Fade Rate to 9. Each round, seed 2 Future Events in a row, triggering a separate Present Event each time. Place new Neutral Worlds for *each* event that triggers during this phase.



End Phase: Each empire can place up to two "x2" Multiplier Tokens on its open worlds. An empire **cannot** place a "x2" Token and then flip it over to its "x3" side during the same phase.

Core Worlds Campaign Mode

Experienced players can play a **Core Worlds Campaign** that includes one session of the original *Core Worlds* card game followed by a session of *Core Worlds: Empires*. At the end of *Core Worlds*, every player receives **6 Campaign Points** that they can use to transfer heroes, worlds, units, tactics, advancements, and Galactic Order ranks from the first game into the second game.

1. At the end of *Core Worlds*, each player in order of final victory (first place to last place) chooses their desired position in the starting Turn Order for *Core Worlds: Empires*.

2. Each player receives the same Leader from the first game, and chooses one of their conquered Core Worlds (or a random Core World) as their starting Core World in *Core Worlds: Empires*.

3. Using the new Turn Order, each player takes a turn spending Campaign Points (CP) from their personal pool of 6 CPs to make one **transfer** from among those listed at right. Once every player has made one transfer, those with CPs remaining continue to take turns until they have either spent all their CPs or chosen to pass.

4. To start with a World, Hero Card, Advancement Card, Unit Card, or Tactic Card in the second game, the player must own the card with the same card title at the end of the first game. To claim Rank 2 in a Galactic Order, the player must be the leader (or tied for the lead) with 2+ Faction Tokens in that Order at the end of the first game. There are no prerequisites for resources or Empire Points.

5. Each player may only choose each particular transfer type **one time** during this process. In other words, a player cannot transfer more than one of each card type or more than one of each set of resources. Similarly, a player cannot acquire ranks in more than one Galactic Order or transfer **more than one world total**.

6. **Solo Play:** As a Solo Player, make your transfers as described above. The Nemesis Empire starts with 6 Empire Points. If you win the first game, you choose your starting position in the Turn Order.

CAMPAIGN MODE TRANSFERS

1 Campaign Point

- 3 Energy added to Resource Bank
- 2 Materials added to Resource Bank
- 1 Prestige added to Resource Bank

2 Campaign Points

- Sector I World added to Empire
- 1 Empire Point added to Resource Bank
- Rank 2 acquired in one Galactic Order
- Tactic Card added to 1 Ambassador hand

3 Campaign Points

- Sector II World added to Empire

4 Campaign Points

- Sector III World added to Empire
- Unit Card added to 1 Ambassador hand

5 Campaign Points

- Sector IV World added to Empire

6 Campaign Points

- Hero Card replaces 1 Starting Ambassador
- Advancement Card added to Empire Board

Round Overview

Event Phase

1. Advance Round Token.
2. Remove Event Cards equal to the Event Fade Rate (*skip on Round 1*).
3. Set the Event Fade Rate to 5.
4. Seed new Future Event Card.
5. Resolve Present Event Card:
 - Resolve Event Text.
 - Place Neutral World(s).

Ambassador Phase

Each empire in Turn Order moves one ready ambassador to a world or advancement.

1. Ambassador may choose to bring an escort.
 - Pay **1 Energy** per 2 Unit Tokens (round up).
2. Activate visited world or advancement.
 - Outside your empire, pay **1 Prestige** to the reserve if a rival ambassador is present.
 - After you activate a rival's Imperial World, that empire gains **1 Empire Point** from the reserve.

Expansion Phase

Do the following at each Contested World:

1. Choose commanders.
 - Roll 1 Battle Die.
 - Play Unit Cards + Mobilize Unit Tokens.
 - Play Tactic Cards.
3. Target and destroy damaged Unit Tokens (half).
4. Determine Military Dominance.
5. Annex Contested World.
 - Choose Military or Diplomatic Annexation.
6. Repair damaged Unit Tokens and discard cards.

End Phase

1. Remove Multiplier Tokens and Event Flag Tokens from occupied worlds.
2. Place Multiplier Tokens on open worlds.
3. Recall ambassadors.
4. Draw cards from Ambassador Discard Piles (half).
5. Ambassadors exchange cards and units.
6. Flip Neutral Worlds Token (3 or 5 players).
7. Determine new Turn Order.

Glossary

Annexed World: A world that was added to an empire during the Expansion Phase.

Contested World: Any Neutral World (except Ra or Raven) OR an Imperial World that has been targeted by an event that allows it to be contested. Only Contested Worlds can be annexed during the Expansion Phase.

Damaged Unit: A Unit Token flipped over to its red side.

Epoch Number: The number showing on the top face down Event Card on the Master Events Stack. This is considered "IV" if the "Champion of Ra" is showing.

Escort: Retinue Units that travel with an ambassador.

Function: An ability on an advancement, world, or card that produces a reward, either with or without a cost.

Imperial World: A world belonging to a player's empire.

Mobilize: A cost listed on a Unit Card that must be paid in order to place a Unit Token on top of that card.

Neutral World: A world that belongs to no empire. When placing Neutral Worlds, if no World Cards remain for a sector, ignore the remainder for that sector. If an Imperial World becomes Neutral, remove the Faction Tokens from its World Card and World Token, and place the World Card in the world's space on the Galaxy Map.

Occupied World: A world with at least one ambassador.

Open World: A world with no ambassadors present.

Retinue: The Unit Tokens that are connected to one particular ambassador.

RT: Resource Token - denominations of 1, 5, or 10.

Sector: One of the 5 concentric rings on the Galaxy Map.

Starting World: A world that started the game in an empire. A Starting World starts with 1 Faction Token on its World Card but loses the token if the world ever leaves that empire.

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