RED RISING™

designed by Jamey Stegmaier and Alexander Schmidt
art by Jacqui Davis, Miles Bensky, and Justin Wong

based on the novels by Pierce Brown

Enter the futuristic universe of Red Rising, based on the book series by Pierce Brown featuring a dystopian society divided into 14 castes. You represent a house attempting to rise to power as you piece together an assortment of followers. Will you break the chains of the Society or embrace the dominance of the Golds?

OVERVIEW AND GOAL

You begin each game with a hand of random characters from the Red Rising universe. You will manipulate this hand of cards throughout the game by deploying characters, activating abilities, and adding new characters to your hand. Whenever you acquire a new character, you will gain a special bonus based on the location from which you gained it.

When certain thresholds are reached, the game ends. Calculate your final score from the combination of character cards in your hand plus points for Helium, Sovereignty, the Fleet Track, and Influence.

COMPONENTS

60 Helium tokens (red gems)



60 Influence tokens
(10 tokens in 6 different colors)



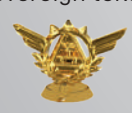
6 Fleet tokens (1 ship in 6 different colors)



1 first-player token (crescent moon)



1 Sovereign token



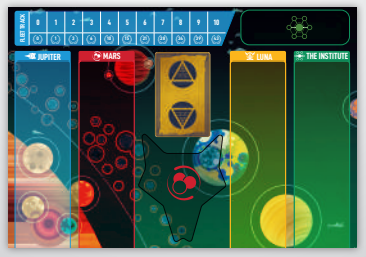
112 character cards



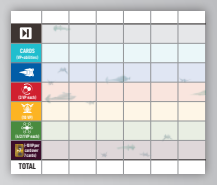
6 house tiles



1 game board



1 scorepad



1 custom Rising die



6 reference cards



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SETUP

1 Place the board on the table. Shuffle the deck of character cards and place it face down on the board. Place the Rising die next to the deck.

2 On each location (Jupiter, Mars, Luna, and The Institute), place 2 character cards from the deck face up. These cards overlap so only the core value, name, and color of the covered cards are exposed. (Note: Players may look at cards on locations at any time.)

3 Draw 5 character cards from the deck to form your starting hand. Your hand of cards is kept private throughout the game. Next, gain a random house tile. Gain the reference card, Fleet token, and Influence tokens of the matching color. Then set up the rest of the board as indicated here:

4 Place your house's Fleet token on the 0 space on the Fleet Track.

5 Place all Helium tokens in the designated spot below the deck to create the supply.

6 Place the Sovereign token nearby. This represents the leader of the Society.

7 Start with your house's 10 Influence tokens in your personal supply (you'll try to place them on the Institute during the game).

- *For 2-player games, place 3 Influence tokens of an unused house into The Institute. This represents a neutral house, making end-game scoring more competitive.*

8 If a player has House Apollo (yellow), give them the first-player token; otherwise, randomly select a player and give them the first-player token. They can proceed to take their first turn. The first-player token will remain in that player's possession throughout the game.



DESIGNER'S NOTE (FROM JAMEY): Red Rising is one of my favorite book series ever. Years ago I reached out to the author, Pierce Brown, to express my interest in the tabletop rights. They weren't available at the time, but that began a multi-year process of trying again, failing to design the game, accepting design submissions, and ultimately having a eureka moment while playing Fantasy Realms with Alex at my game night. A lot of design work with Alex, playtesting with the help of Stonemaier Ambassadors, and communications with Pierce and his team followed. This is my dream IP, and I'm incredibly excited to share this game with you.

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GAMEPLAY

On your turn, you must either use the Lead or the Scout action, resolving any effects or bonuses as described below.

LEAD:

Select a card from your hand and DEPLOY it face up on any location, covering all but the name, color, and core value of the topmost card at that location. If possible, trigger the deploy ability (⇧) of the card played, unless it gives you the option not to (e.g., "You may gain...").

DEPLOY ON A LOCATION



Then, to complete a Lead action, either:

a. Gain the top card of a location that you did not deploy to this turn, then gain that location's bonus.

b. Gain the top card of the deck, then roll the Rising die and gain the resulting bonus.

SCOUT:

Reveal the top card of the deck and place (not deploy) it on any location, covering all but the name, color, and core value of the topmost card at that location. Gain that location's bonus. *Players typically only choose to Scout if they are completely satisfied with their hand.*

PLACE ON LOCATION



The 4 locations in the game are Jupiter, Mars, Luna, and The Institute. The deck is not a location.

You may always look through the cards on each location, but they must remain in the same order.

Play continues clockwise until all players have had the same number of turns (and Apollo had their bonus turn) after the game end is triggered (see *Game End* and *Scoring* on page 6).

NOTES

- Unless otherwise specified, the bonuses gained from Leading and Scouting are only triggered when taking those actions. Do not gain a location's bonus if you gain a card through other means (e.g., if a character card says, "Gain the top card from Luna").
- The deploy abilities of some cards instruct you to "end your turn." This indicates that you may not proceed to gain the top card of a location or the deck and the corresponding bonus.
- The deploy abilities of some cards may move the card you've deployed to a different location. You are still considered to have deployed to the original location.
- Some deploy abilities mention "another location," referring to any other location than the one on which the card was deployed.
- The deploy ability of some cards may instruct you to deploy another card. As usual, deploy that card face up on any location and trigger its deploy ability (if any). This concludes the deployment. You may still perform the final step of the LEAD action only once.
- If it's not possible for you to use the deploy ability of a card, you may still deploy it and ignore the ability.
- If a card instructs you to move or place a card, it does not count as a deploy action.
- 0 is an even number (for cards that consider odd/even point values).
- Deploy actions that result in a trade of resources may only be taken once per turn (e.g., Sponsor, Stock Broker).

EDGE CASES

These situations are highly unlikely, but just in case you stumble upon them, here's what to do:

DECK RUNS OUT: If there are no cards in the deck, the deck simply ceases to be an option for players to draw from or interact with.

ZERO CARDS IN HAND: If you have no cards in your hand, you can still either Lead or Scout on your turn. If you Lead, skip the deploy portion of the Lead action (as you have no card in hand to deploy).

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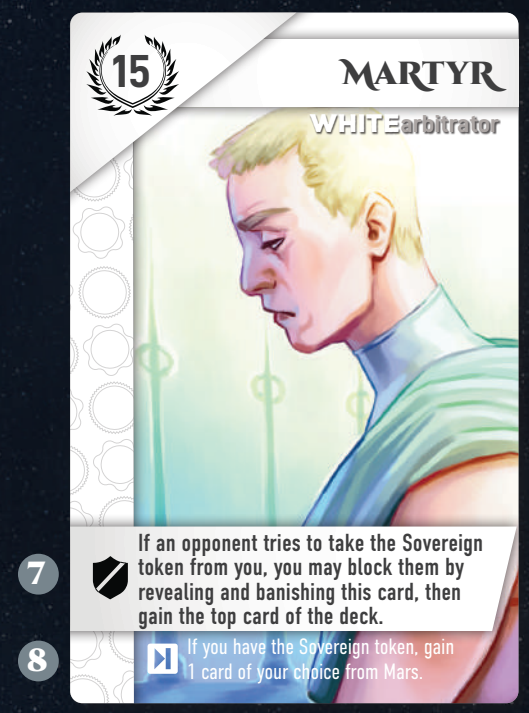
Anatomy of a Character Card

1. Name
2. Color
3. Core value (end-game points)
4. Characters this card wants (solid) and doesn't want (X) in hand. This is a visual reference for text on the bottom of the card.
5. Deploy ability ( ).
6. End-game points ( ). If a card refers to colors or specific characters (e.g., "if with a Red," "if with no Blues," "for each Gold"), it's referring to the other cards in your hand.
7. Block ability ( ). This is an optional ability that requires you to reveal a card to prevent an opponent's attempt to do something to you.
8. End-of-game ability ( ).

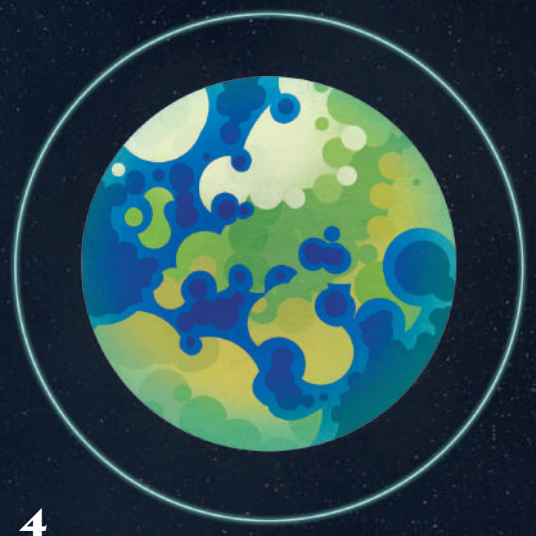


The color of a character card represents the caste of the character.

To BANISH a card means to remove it from the game (for now). There is an area near the board for banished cards (all face up and visible to players). Banished cards are in no particular order.



To REVEAL a card means to show it to all opponents. Unless otherwise instructed, the card returns to your hand.



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LOCATION BONUSES

After you gain a card from 1 of the 4 locations during the LEAD action or place a card from the deck on a location during the SCOUT action, you must also gain that location's bonus (if possible):

JUPITER: Advance once on the Fleet Track. *If you have reached the end of the Fleet Track, you may not advance further.*

MARS: Gain 1 Helium token. *There is no limit to Helium tokens. If the supply is empty, use a suitable replacement.*

LUNA: Gain (or keep) the Sovereign token. *This triggers the bonus on your house tile.*

THE INSTITUTE: Place 1 of your Influence tokens on the Institute. *If you've already placed all 10 of your tokens, you can't place more.*



THE DECK: The deck is not a location, but if you choose to draw a card from the deck instead of one of the four locations during the LEAD action, you roll the Rising die, which grants you a mandatory bonus. The bonuses follow the same restrictions/allowances as noted above.

RISING DIE BONUSES



Banish the top card of a location of your choice.	Reveal the top card of the deck and place (not deploy) it on any location.	Gain (or keep) the Sovereign token.
Gain 1 Helium token.	Advance once on the Fleet Track.	Place 1 Influence on The Institute.

HOUSE TILES AND THE SOVEREIGN TOKEN

Each house tile has an ability that is triggered whenever you gain the Sovereign token (even if you already have it). Typically this will happen by gaining a card from Luna, but it also applies to any card ability from which you would gain the Sovereign token, as well as rolling Luna on the Rising die. First gain the Sovereign token, then trigger the ability. These house abilities must be resolved if possible.











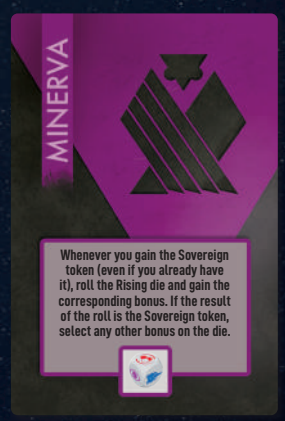

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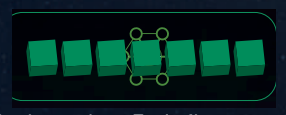
GAME END AND SCORING

The end of the game is triggered when all 3 of these conditions are met by any combination of players OR when any 2 conditions are met by the same player:



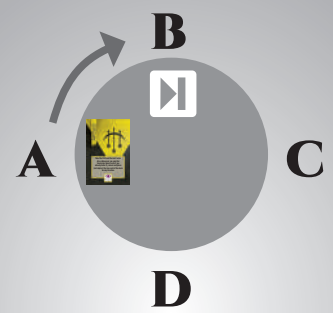
A player has 7+ Helium tokens



A player has 7+ Influence on the Institute



A player reaches or surpasses 7 on the Fleet Track



Example: There are players A, B, C, and D sitting in clockwise order. Player A is Apollo, so they took the first turn. Player B triggered the end of the game, so players C and D each get one more turn. Then, because of their ability to take the last turn, Apollo (player A) takes one last turn.

Finish taking turns until each player has taken the same number of turns in the game. If Apollo is an active house, they take the last turn (this is an extra turn).

Use the scorepad to tally each player's score step by step in this order:

"AT END OF GAME" ABILITIES (⏭): Starting with the first player, trigger all of your end-of-game abilities in an order of your choosing. Continue clockwise with the next player until all players have triggered these abilities.



"YOU MAY TREAT THIS CARD AS HAVING THE SAME NAME AS ANY SPECIFIC CHARACTER."

This text, seen on Orange cards, lets you change the name of the card to another character's name. All other aspects of the Orange card stay the same, and you do not score additional points for having multiple cards with the same name. *Example: If you have a card that scores points if it's with Darrow, but you don't have Darrow in your hand, you can rename an Orange card "Darrow" to score those points. If you do so, you don't also copy Darrow's color, points, abilities, etc.*



"YOU MAY TREAT THIS CARD AS IF IT IS ANY ONE OTHER COLOR (IN ADDITION TO GRAY)."

This text, seen on Gray cards, lets you treat each Gray card as an additional color (i.e., to score more points if a card needs or values another color).

⏭						
CARDS (VP+abilities)						
(3 VP each)						
(10 VP)						
(4/2/1 VP each)						
>7 (-10 VP per card over 7 cards)						
TOTAL						

On the scorepad, "VP" means "Victory Points," otherwise known simply as "points" in this rulebook.

CARDS (VP+abilities) CHARACTER CARDS (CORE VALUE & END-GAME BONUS POINTS): Look at the cards in your hand. Add together the core value of each card (upper left) and points gained or lost from end-game bonus points (bottom).



"FOR EACH"

This scores points for each card in hand of the listed types.

Example: If the card says "5 points for each Green, Yellow, and Blue" and you have 2 green cards, no yellow cards, and 1 blue card, you would score 15 points.



"IF WITH"/"IF WITH NO"

This scores points if you do or don't have a certain card color or character in hand. It's a binary condition. *Example: If it says "14 points if with a Silver," you score 14 points total if you have one or more Silvers.*



"FOR EACH [COLOR] ON ALL LOCATIONS"

Unlike most end-game scoring, these end-game bonuses look at cards remaining on locations on the board, not cards in your hand.



"BANISHED CARDS"

A few end-game bonuses refer to the pile of cards that were banished during the game. It doesn't matter which player banished these cards.

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FLEET TRACK: Score points based on your position on the Fleet Track (0-43 points).

FLEET TRACK	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	0	1	3	6	10	15	21	28	34	39	43

HELIUM: Gain 3 points per Helium token.



SOVEREIGNTY: Gain 10 points if you have the Sovereign token.



INFLUENCE: The player(s) with the most Influence at the Institute gain 4 points for each of their Influence there. The player(s) with the second most Influence at the Institute gain 2 points per Influence. All other players gain 1 point per Influence.

- Note that in a 2-player game, 3 non-player Influence tokens start on the Institute. The 2 players will include those 3 tokens in the end-game comparison as if they were the Influence of a third house.

Example: Jamey and Megan each have 10 Influence tokens on the Institute, Biddy has 5, and Walter has 2. Jamey and Megan would each gain 40 points, Biddy would gain 10 points, and Walter would gain 2 points.

Jamey: 10 x 4 = 40

Megan: 10 x 4 = 40

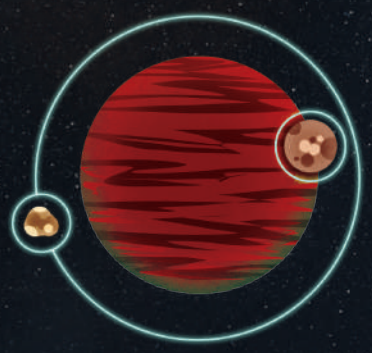
Biddy: 5 x 2 = 10

Walter: 2 x 1 = 2

EXCESS CARDS: For each card in your hand beyond the 7th card, lose 10 points. At this time you've already accounted for other points from these cards—those points are still valid. *This penalty represents the unwieldiness of managing a larger house and encourages players to focus on cards that work well together, not simply more cards.*

Example: If you have 9 cards in hand, you would lose 10 VP for the 8th card and 10 VP for the 9th card.





The player with the highest score wins the game! A great final score is 300+ points.
If there is a tie for first place, the tied player with the Sovereign token wins.
If no tied player has the Sovereign token, share the victory.

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The color-based societal structure of the dystopian Red Rising world is an allegory for the racial struggles of the past and present in the real world. It's a cautionary tale of what can happen when people are judged by the color of their skin instead of the content of their character.

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WANT TO EXPLORE THE WORLD OF RED RISING?

Pierce Brown's website is piercebrownbooks.com. We highly recommend this ongoing series.

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