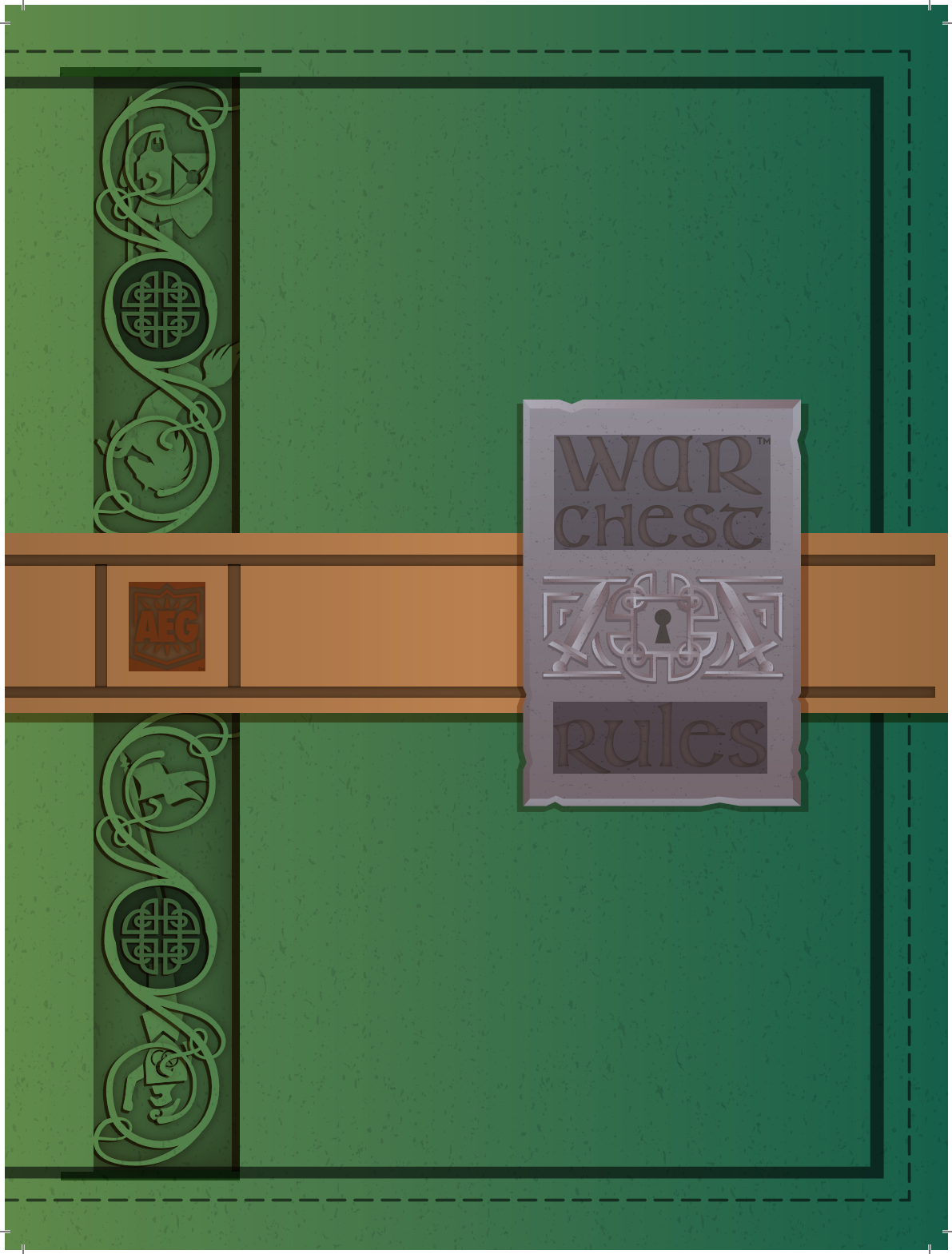

WAR CHEST™
Rules
AEG

A game by Trevor Benjamin & David Thompson for 2 or 4 players aged 14 and up.

IN WAR CHEST YOU TAKE ON THE ROLE OF MEDIEVAL BATTLEFIELD COMMANDERS, VYING TO GAIN CONTROL OF TACTICAL BATTLEFIELD LOCATIONS.

To succeed you must successfully manage not only your armies on the battlefield, but those that are waiting to be deployed. Each round you will draw 3 Unit Coins from your bag and then take turns using them to perform actions. Each coin shows a military unit on one side and can be used for one of several actions. The game ends when one player, or one team in the case of a four-player game, has placed all of their Control Markers. That player or team is the winner!

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Components

74 Unit Coins

4 Royal Coins

16 Unit Cards

16 Faction Control Markers

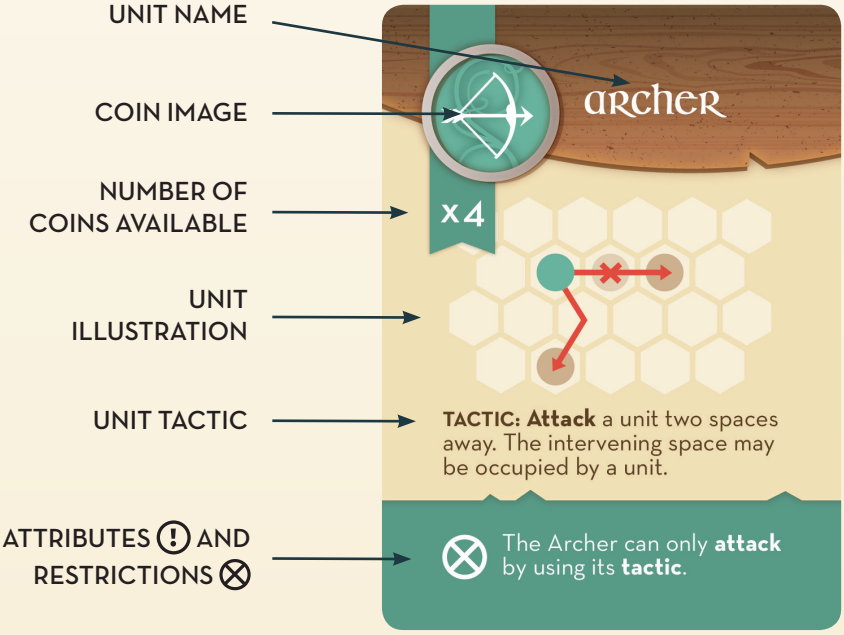
1 Double-sided Initiative Marker

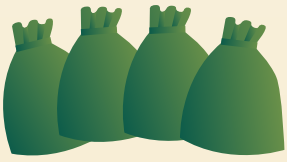
4 Bags

1 Board

If this copy of War Chest does not contain all of these components please contact customerservice@alderac.com.

UNIT CARD ANATOMY





BAGS



INITIATIVE MARKER



ROYAL COINS





UNIT CARDS



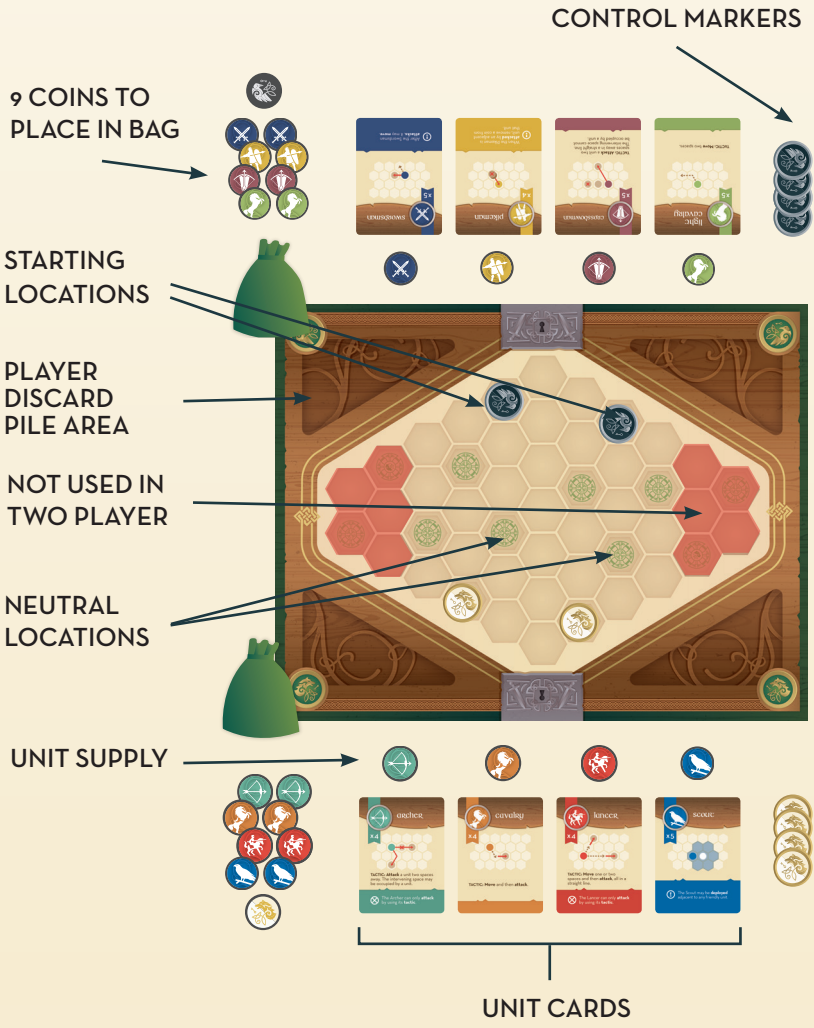
UNIT COINS



CONTROL MARKERS

set up

Place the board in the middle of the play area. For a two-player game each player chooses a faction and takes 1 matching bag, 1 Royal Coin, and 6 Control Markers. Put your faction's Royal Coin into your bag, and place one of your Control Markers onto each of the two matching starting locations on the board. The other locations are neutral at the start of the game. For the four-player set up see page 12.



For your first game we recommend you and your opponent use the Unit Cards shown in this picture rather than a random set. Player A starts with the Initiative Marker. If this is not your first game follow the set up described below.

PLAYER A:	PLAYER B:
 Swordsman	 Archer
 Pikeman	 Cavalry
 Crossbowman	 Lancer
 Light Cavalry	 Scout

Shuffle the 16 Unit Cards and deal 4 face-up in front of each player. These are the 4 units that player will have available this game.

Give each player the Unit Coins, matching their 4 Unit Cards. Put 2 Unit Coins of each type into your bag, together with the Royal Coin. Put the rest of your Unit Coins in piles next to the matching unit cards. These form your **supply**. Any unused Unit Coins should remain in the box.

Flip the Initiative Marker. The player whose faction matches the face-up side of the marker takes initiative (and the marker). You are now ready to begin.

Note: In a two-player game, you will not use the outer areas of the board indicated by the darker hexes (shown as red areas in the example). Place the Royal Coins, the bags, and the Control Markers that you are not using back into the box. These components are only used in the four-player game (see page 12 for four-player set up). A two-player set up will look like the example of the opposite page.

More pre-determined set ups can be found on page 14 “Set Ups Inspired by Famous Battles.” An advanced variant for drafting from random units can be found at the end of the rules.

how to play

GAME OVERVIEW

A game of War Chest is played over a series of rounds. Each round is divided into two phases:

1. **Draw Coins**
2. **Use Coins**

HOW TO WIN



The game continues until one player or one team has placed all of their Control Markers on locations. Locations are a special kind of hex, indicated on the board with green knotwork symbols.

The player or team to have all of their Control Markers placed on locations is the winner.

DRAW COINS

At the start of the round, each player draws 3 coins from their bag and puts them in their hand, hidden from their opponent. At any time that you need to draw coins and your bag is empty, refill it with the coins in your discard pile (see page 7). Then shuffle the coins in your bag and continue drawing until you have 3 coins in your hand.

NOT ENOUGH COINS?

In very rare circumstances you may have only one or two coins between your hand and discard pile. If this happens, draw the coins that you have. During the **Use Coins** phase this round, you will not perform the usual three actions. After you've played your last coin, your opponent continues to play coins and take actions until their hand is empty.

USE COINS

There are three kinds of **actions** that allow you to use coins drawn from your bag. Starting with the player with the Initiative Marker, you and your opponent now take turns taking **actions** using the coins in your hands, one at a time, until both your hands are empty. Each coin can used be used to perform a single action.

Note, each player will need to keep an area separate to their **supply** that will be their **discard pile**. It is from the discard pile that you refill your bag when you need more coins, not from the **supply**. There are nine possible actions, broken into three classes:

1. PLACEMENT ACTIONS:

Place a Unit Coin face-up onto the board to **deploy** or **bolster** a unit.

2. DISCARD A COIN FACEDOWN ACTIONS:

Discard a coin facedown into your discard pile to **claim initiative**, **recruit**, or **pass**.

3. DISCARD A COIN FACE-UP ACTIONS:

Discard a Unit Coin face-up into your discard pile to **maneuver** the matching unit on the board (this will either be a **move**, **attack**, **control**, or use of a unit's **tactic**).

THE ROYAL COIN

The Royal Coin does not have a matching unit. It can only be used to perform facedown **actions** (or the **tactic** on the Royal Guard unit.)





PLACEMENT ACTIONS

Deploy
You may deploy a coin to the board, creating the unit of that type.

- Choose a coin from your hand and place it face-up into an empty location that you control.
- You cannot deploy a unit if all locations you control are occupied.
- You cannot perform a **bolster**, **move**, **attack**, **control**, or **tactic** action with a unit until it has been deployed.
- **You may only have one unit of each type on the board at a time.** This means you cannot deploy a unit if you already have a unit of that type on the board.
- If the last coin of a unit is removed from the board following an attack (see below), you may later re-deploy a new unit of that type.

Bolster
You may place a coin to **bolster** the matching unit already on the board, making it harder to remove following an attack.

- Choose a coin from your hand and add it face-up on top of the matching unit on the board.
- A unit may be bolstered any number of times. There is no limit to the height of a unit stack.
- All coins in the stack belong to the unit. If the unit is moved, for instance, move the entire stack.

DISCARD A COIN FACEDOWN ACTIONS

The facedown discard actions play a significant role in the game. Knowing when to recruit and when to maintain your bag at a level that keeps your maneuvering options consistent is a key decision point.








Claim Initiative
You may discard any coin facedown to your discard pile to take the Initiative Marker from your opponent. This means you will go first during the next round.

- Choose a coin from your hand and put it facedown into your discard pile (do not show it to your opponent).
- Take the Initiative Marker and put it in front of you.
- If you already have the Initiative Marker, or had it earlier this round, you may not perform this action. The Initiative Marker may only transfer between players once per round.

Recruit
You may discard any coin facedown to your discard pile to recruit a new coin from the supply.

- Choose a coin from your hand and put it facedown into your discard pile (Do not show it to your opponent).
- Take any one coin from your supply, show it to your opponent, and put it face-up into your discard pile.
- This coin will be shuffled into your bag in a later round.
- The Unit Coin you recruit does not need to match the coin you spent to recruit it.

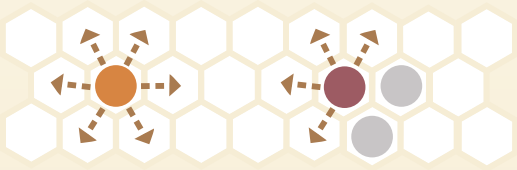
Pass
You may discard any coin facedown into your discard pile and pass. If you pass, you are not required to pass with subsequent coins. You may use any remaining coins as normal.

DISCARD A COIN FACE-UP ACTIONS

Collectively all **actions** that involve discarding a coin face-up are known as **maneuvers**. **Maneuvers** are at the heart of the game. Maneuvering your units correctly and at the correct time is one of the critical aspects of game play.

Move
You may discard any coin face-up into your discard pile to **move** the matching unit on the board.

- Choose a coin from your hand and put it face-up into your discard pile.
- **Move** the matching unit one space on the board, into an adjacent, empty space.



- If all of the spaces adjacent to a unit are occupied, it cannot move.

Control
You may discard any coin face-up into your discard pile to have the matching unit **control** the location it occupies.

- Choose a coin from your hand and put it face-up into your discard pile.
- If the matching unit occupies a neutral location, place one of your Control Markers onto that location.
- If the matching unit occupies a location controlled by your opponent, return their Control Marker to them and replace it with one of your Control Markers.
- You may not control a location you already control. Each location can contain only one control marker.
- If you place your last control marker onto the board, you win.

Attack
You may discard any coin face-up into your discard pile to have the matching unit **attack** an adjacent enemy unit.

- Choose a coin from your hand and put it face-up into your discard pile. The unit matching this coin is the attacker.
- Choose an enemy unit, which is adjacent to the attacker. This unit is the target.
- Remove one coin from the target and put it back in the box, even if it is the only coin in the unit stack (note: the coin goes into box not back into the supply or discard pile).
- This means that if the target was not **bolstered** (i.e. it was a single coin rather than a stack), the unit is no longer **deployed** on the board (it is destroyed). You may use another coin later to re-**deploy** another unit of the same type.

Tactic

Some units have **tactics**, indicated by text on the card. For example, Cavalry's **tactic** allows it to move and then attack. You may discard any coin face-up into your discard pile to have the matching unit perform its tactic.



- Choose a coin from your hand and place it face up into your discard pile.
- Execute the tactic described on the matching unit's unit card.

ATTRIBUTES AND RESTRICTIONS

In addition to **tactics** (indicated by **TACTIC** on the Unit Card) some units have special **attributes** (indicated by ⓘ) and/or **restrictions** (indicated by ⊗). Attributes and restrictions do not need to be executed like tactics, but instead describe additional things that the unit can or cannot do in other circumstances. For example, the Footman can have two units deployed (an attribute) and the Archer cannot attack other than using its tactic, i.e. it cannot attack adjacent units (a restriction).

Coins that are discarded face-up remain face-up and visible to an opponent until the point at which they are reshuffled into the bag. An awareness of which coins an opponent has discarded is an important tactical consideration in War Chest.

Advanced Set Up

For experienced players we recommend drafting Unit Cards rather than having them dealt randomly. During set up, deal 8 random unit cards face up in the middle of the play area. Flip the Initiative Marker to see which player will draft first. The first player chooses and takes a Unit Card, then the second player takes two Unit Cards, then the first player takes two, and so on, until the first player is left with the last card. The player who chose second takes the Initiative Coin to begin the game. This variant allows players to try to develop a style of army with distinct strategies based on unit interactions.

Four-Player Set Up

In the four-player variant of the game, two teams of two players each face off. Each team chooses a faction, and then each player on a team takes a bag and 1 Royal Coin. Teams share 8 Control Markers. Each player places their Royal Coin into their bag, and the team places Control Markers onto each of the 3 matching location spaces on the board. The other 8 locations are neutral.

Shuffle the 16 Unit Cards then give each player 3, either randomly (if playing the standard game) or by drafting (if playing with the advanced drafting rules, see page 13). These are the 3 units that player will have available this game.

Give each player the coins matching their 3 unit cards. Put 2 coins of each type into your bag, and the rest into piles next to the matching Unit Cards. These coins form your **supply**.

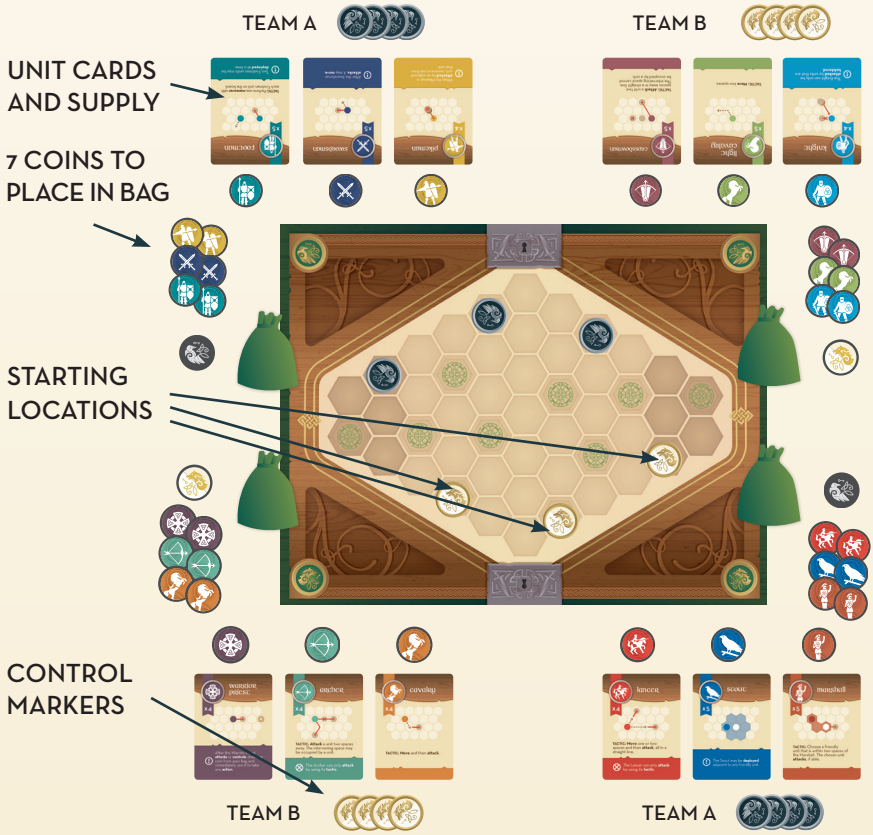
Flip the Initiative Marker. One player whose faction matches the face-up side of the coin takes has initiative. You are now ready to begin.

FLOW OF THE GAME

Players should sit so that team members are sitting opposite each other, with the other team players to their left and right (so that teams have alternate opportunities to act throughout the game). The player with initiative will take the first action in a round, followed by the player to their left. Play continues in a clockwise direction until all coins have been used. A player cannot use the Claim Initiative action to take the Initiative Marker from their teammate.

TEAM INTERACTION

Each team shares control of their locations. Either teammate may deploy a unit into an unoccupied, controlled location. Units in a team are considered friendly for the purposes of **tactics**. A player may not use a recruit action to recruit a unit for their teammate. All communication between teammates must be open.



ENDING THE GAME

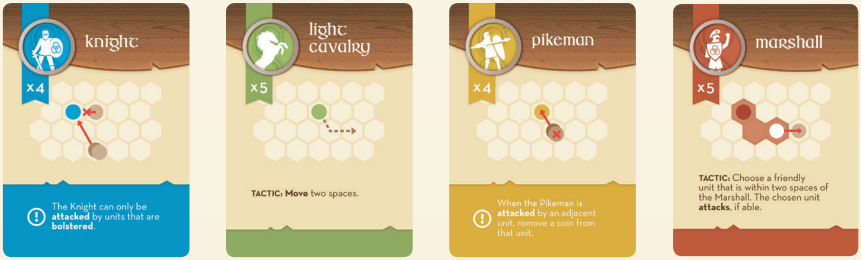
The game ends as soon as one team places their last Control Marker. The team that placed the Control Marker wins.

DRAFTING IN THE FOUR-PLAYER GAME

During set up, deal 12 random Unit Cards face-up in the middle of the play area. Determine which team will draft first by flipping the Initiative Marker. The team members decide which one of them will draft first. The first player drafts a Unit Card, followed by the next player to their left. This continues clockwise until the fourth player is reached. The fourth player then picks 2 Unit Cards, and the drafting then switches to counter-clockwise, with each player drafting one card until the first player is reached. After the first player has drafted their second card, the second player (to the left of the first player) drafts their third card, and this continues around the table clockwise until the first player takes the last remaining card.

Set Ups Inspired by Famous Battles

One of the interesting features of War Chest is to have set ups that are inspired by famous battles. Here are some good starting set ups that allow players to jump straight into the game – and might just allow you to change the course of history!



BATTLE OF GAUGAMELA 331 BCE

Gaugemela was a decisive battle in the campaigns of Alexander the Great against the Persian Empire. The battle was fought on wide-open ground where the Persian forces hoped to use their superior numbers and small force of war chariots. However, this ground also suited the Macedonian phalanx, who advanced on the Persian center. The Greek left flank under command of Parmenion was hard-pressed, but held. Alexander was able to lure a large amount of the Persian cavalry out to his right flank with his own light cavalry, creating a gap in the Persian lines, into which the Greeks were able to launch a decisive attack at the Persian centre. This assault threatened to envelope and kill the Persian Emperor Darius, forcing him to flee the field - and his army followed.

Greek Units

- Knight, Light Cavalry, Pikeman, Marshall

Persian Units

- Cavalry, Footman, Mercenary, Royal Guard

BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN 1314 CE

Bannockburn is unusual for a medieval battle in that it actually went on for two days - though, much of the main action was on the second day. It was a decisive battle in the First Scottish War of Independence. The Scots, commanded by Robert the Bruce, emerged early on the 24th June, and after kneeling in prayer, attacked the English armies. An early charge by the Earl of Gloucester and a small cavalry force was thwarted by Scottish schiltrons and Scottish light cavalry dispersed the English archers that were trying to support the charge. The poor arrangement of the English camp was making it difficult for them to deploy their heavy cavalry and archers, and the Scottish attack pressed home, driving the English forces into the Bannock Burn, where many drowned. With the fighting at its thickest, apprentices and followers from the Scottish baggage train charged into the fray, causing the English to rout.

English Units

- Archer, Cavalry, Lancer, Footman

Scottish Units

- Light Cavalry, Pikeman, Warrior Priest, Swordsman

BATTLE OF CRÉCY 1346 CE

Crécy took place on 26th August, and was one of three critical English victories in the Hundred Years War. Edward III deployed his armies effectively, using slopes and neighboring features to both reduce the effectiveness of the French heavy cavalry and to prevent his army from being flanked. His main strength was his archers, equipped with longbows. Edward also ordered his knights to dismount and fight on foot. A sudden rain storm began as the French armies advanced, and caused problems for their Genoese crossbowmen, and created sodden ground for the French cavalry. Despite many gallant, repeated charges from French mounted knights late into the evening, they could not break the English position, and after having two horses killed beneath him, Phillipe, the French king, conceded the battlefield.

English Units

- Archer, Ensign, Knight, Royal Guard

French Units

- Cavalry, Crossbowman, Lancer, Scout

Frequently asked questions

ARCHER

Can the Archer attack an adjacent unit?
No, the Archer cannot **attack** using the normal attack action. It can only attack using its **tactic**, which specifies that the target of the **attack** is two spaces away.

BERSERKER

When I take consecutive maneuvers with a Berserker, do I need to also discard a coin from my hand for each one, as well as removing a coin from the unit?
No, you only need to discard one coin to execute the Berserker's **tactic**. The consecutive actions are specifically paid for by the removal of coins from the unit.

CROSSBOWMAN

Can the Crossbowman attack an adjacent unit?
Yes. It may use its tactic, which specifies a unit that is two spaces away, in a straight line with no intervening units, but it has no restriction on making a normal **attack** instead of using its **tactic**.

ENSIGN

Can the Ensign move a unit to any other space that is within two spaces of the Ensign, regardless of distance?
No, it only gives the other unit a normal **move** action (i.e. it can move one space that is also within two spaces of the Ensign).

Does the attribute of the Berserker trigger after a move granted by the Ensign?
Yes, it does.

FOOTMAN

When I use the Footman's tactic, can the maneuver actions performed by the two separate Footman units be different?
Yes, they can. You could for example discard a Footman coin to **control** a location with one unit, and **move** another.

LANCER

Can the Lancer use its tactic to move two spaces in a straight line and then choose not to attack?
No, the Lancer must have a target it can legally **attack** at the point at which you choose to use its **tactic**. For example, a non-bolstered Lancer could not be moved two spaces ending adjacent to a knight, because it cannot **attack** the Knight at the point that you wish to use its **tactic**.

Can the Lancer attack an adjacent unit?
No, it may only attack using its **tactic**, which specifies it must both **move** and **attack**.

LIGHT CAVALRY

Can the Light Cavalry move just one space?
Yes, it may use either a normal **move** (one space) or its **tactic** (two spaces).

MARSHALL

Can the Marshall grant a normal attack to any unit within range, or allow a unit to carry out an attack using its tactic?
No. The unit has to be able to make a normal **attack**, so the Marshall cannot give an **attack** to Archers or Lancers, nor does it allow any other kind of special attack criteria granted by a **tactic**.

Do the attributes of the War Priest, Berserker and Swordsman trigger after an attack granted by the Marshall?
Yes, they do.

MERCENARY

What happens if the Mercenary unit is not on the board when I recruit a Mercenary coin?
The Mercenary's attribute is only of use if the Mercenary unit is already on the board when you recruit the coin. The attribute gives the Mercenary unit a free **maneuver** specifically, not a free action of another kind. You cannot, for instance, use the attribute to **deploy** the Mercenary or to **recruit** a coin.

PIKEMAN

Does the Pikeman's ability trigger if it only has one coin in its stack, and what happens if the attacking unit only has one coin in its stack?
The Pikeman's attribute happens at the same time as the **attack**. In other words it happens regardless of the outcome for either unit. It is also important to note that Pikeman's ability is not an **attack**, so it will also affect an attacking Knight.

WARRIOR PRIEST

What happens if I cannot use the coin drawn with the warrior Priest after it controls or attacks?
You can always use a coin, as you could simply discard it to pass. The coin has to be used, and used immediately, but can be used for any of the three **action** types.

STARTING LOCATIONS

Can I take control of another player's starting locations?
Yes, starting locations can be captured in the same way as any other location controlled by another player.



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player action summary

PLACEMENT ACTIONS USING UNIT COINS

Deploy: You may deploy a coin to the board, creating the unit of that type.

Bolster: You may place a coin to bolster the matching unit already on the board, making it harder to remove following an attack.

DISCARD FACEDOWN COIN ACTIONS

Claim Initiative: You may discard any coin facedown to your discard pile to take the Initiative Marker from your opponent. This means you will go first during the next round

Recruit: You may discard any coin facedown to your discard pile to recruit a new coin from the supply.

Pass: You may discard any coin facedown into your discard pile and pass. If you pass, you are not required to pass with subsequent coins. You may use any remaining coins as normal.

DISCARD FACE-UP COIN ACTIONS (COLLECTIVELY CALLED MANEUVERS)

Move: You may discard any coin face-up into your discard pile to move the matching unit on the board.

Control: You may discard any coin face-up into your discard pile to have the matching unit control the location it currently occupies.

Attack: You may discard any coin face-up into your discard pile to have the matching unit attack an adjacent enemy unit.

Tactic: Some units have tactics, indicated by text on the card. For example, Cavalry's tactic allows it to move and then attack. You may discard any coin face-up into your discard pile to have the matching unit perform its tactic.

ATTRIBUTES AND RESTRICTIONS

In addition to tactics some units have special attributes and/or restrictions. Attributes and restrictions do not need to be executed like tactics, but instead describe additional things that the unit can or cannot do in other circumstances.

WINNING

The first player (or team) to place all of their Control Markers wins the game).