ASCENSION™

STORM OF SOULS

GAME RULES

GARY GAMES



INTRODUCTION

The shadow of Deofol still looms over Vigil. Samael has fallen, but his actions have forever scarred the foundation of the realms. His surviving minions are scattered and hidden, plotting evil. Yet, even as the Vigil gathers itself against this remaining enemy, it is beset by a new darkness. Specters now haunt the people of the land, their arrival hinting at a greater threat.

The visitors from Arha say that the afterlife itself is in turmoil. Gatekeeper Kythis, who since Time's Dawn had admitted the damned to their final resting place, stands watch no more. Now, a restless and tormented mass of wills churns beneath all existence, welling up between the worlds.

Where is the Gatekeeper? It was Samael that freed Kythis of his duty. Now he is missing, a rebel godling hidden even from his creators, and not eager to return to his eternal task. In the skies, the constellations twist and turn, protesting his absence.

The children in the capital dream restlessly of an endless beast, outpouring from the clouds, large enough to cast a shadow over all the land. They describe a sky serpent that bellows in a million voices, an extinguisher of realms. Cultists and fanatics are again making sacrifice, foretelling that a reckoning will come. They call it the *Storm of Souls*.

Vigil is overrun by the first winds of this coming storm of undeath. The call again rises for a hero to unite the realms against the many forces that seek to bury everything in despair. The cult must be put down. Samael's remnants must be destroyed before they encroach. The ghostly tide must be quelled, and the forces of all the worlds must form a coalition, before the reckoning arrives.

The storm looms. Who among you will stand before it?

OVERVIEW

In *Ascension: Storm of Souls*, players take on the role of great leaders struggling to unite a realm in turmoil. Each turn, you will play cards from your hand to gain Runes, Power, or other effects (like drawing cards). You can spend Runes to acquire new cards for your deck. Power is used to defeat Monsters, which earns you Honor and other rewards. The cards you can acquire and Monsters you can fight are constantly changing, so you always have different decisions to make!

CONTENTS / SETUP

- **1 Game Board**
- **50 Beads**:
  - 25 Small 1 Honor clear tokens
  - 25 Large 5 Honor red tokens
- **200 Cards**:
  - 4 Personal starting decks, each containing 8 Apprentice and 2 Militia cards
  - 59 "Always Available" cards:
    - 1 Cultist
    - 6 Fanatics
    - 26 Mystics
    - 26 Heavy Infantry
  - 101 Center Deck cards

Ascension: Storm of Souls can be played with 1-4 players on its own and can support up to 6 players when combined with previous Ascension sets. To play Storm of Souls by itself, simply follow the instructions below. To play the combined game, shuffle the center decks from each set together before you begin.

Each player has a personal deck consisting of eight Apprentice and two Militia cards.

Each player shuffles his or her deck and draws five cards (leaving five cards in his or her deck).

Take the Heavy Infantry, Mystic, Fanatic, and Cultist cards and set them to the side in reach of all players. These cards represent characters in your kingdom and are always available to be acquired or defeated on your turn.

Shuffle all of the other cards face down to form the Center Deck.

From the Center Deck, flip six cards face up in a row between all players. This forms the Center Row.

Place the Center Deck on one side of the Center Row.

Reserve space on the other side of the Center Row for the Void. When a Monster in the Center Row is defeated or any other card is banished, it goes to the Void.

Place 30 Honor tokens on the table for each player. Large red Honor tokens are worth 5 points. Small clear Honor tokens are worth 1 point. For games with three or more players, higher Honor totals are used than in *Ascension: Chronicle of the Godslayer.*

2 Players = 60 Honor
3 Players = 90 Honor
4 Players = 120 Honor
5 Players = 150 Honor
6 Players = 180 Honor

Randomly determine which player goes first.

LAYOUT



Honor Tokens

Event (reserved)

Mystic, Heavy Infantry, Cultist, and Fanatic









Center Deck



Center Row



Void (reserved)

Starting Hand (5 cards)



Personal Deck

(10 cards:
8 Apprentice, 2 Militia)

Personal Deck (remaining 5 cards)



HEROES & CONSTRUCTS



FACTION
There are four different factions in Ascension - Mechana, Void, Lifebound, and Enlightened - each representing one of the worlds coming to your aid in battle.

EFFECT
What the Hero does when you play it.

HONOR
How much Honor this card is worth. At the end of the game the player with the most total Honor from their cards and tokens wins the game.

Heroes are the champions you acquire to aid you in your quest to save the realm of Vigil. You can play any number of Hero cards from your hand each turn. When you play a Hero from your hand, you gain the effect listed on the card. It stays in front of you until the end of the turn, and then it goes to your discard pile.

Constructs are the many weapons, magical items, and fantastical devices you may acquire to use in your battles. Unlike Heroes, when you play a Construct, it stays in play and continues to help you turn after turn. You can play any number of Construct cards from your hand each turn. You can use a Construct's effect only on your turn, including the turn you play it.



COST
Number of Runes you must spend to acquire this card.

FLAVOR TEXT
Each faction has its own style of flavor text. Flavor text has no game effect.

EXPANSION SYMBOL
The color of the symbol tells you how many copies of the card are in the deck.

- UNIQUE
- TWO COPIES
- THREE COPIES
- FOUR COPIES

MONSTERS & EVENTS

Monsters in Storm of Souls include former minions of Samael who have gone mad since their leader's demise and mysterious spirits that have begun appearing throughout Vigil.

Defeating Monsters gives you rewards, including Honor, which is the victory condition of Ascension. When you earn Honor for defeating a Monster, simply collect the appropriate number of Honor tokens and place them in front of you.



POWER
How much power you must spend to defeat this Monster.

REWARD
What you get and/or penalties your opponents suffer when you defeat this Monster.

FACTION
What Faction has grown in power during this Event.



EFFECT
What rules this Event applies to all players.

Event cards represent global effects that change the power structure of the world. When an Event card flips into the Center Row, immediately move it to the Event Zone on the board, and then replace it in the Center Row. There may only be one Event in the Event Zone at any time, and while an Event is there it is considered the current Event.

If a new Event flips, the old Event immediately goes to the Void and the new Event becomes the current Event. Events alter the rules of the game, and the current Event's game text applies to every player. Some cards have additional effects based on the Faction of the current Event. These bonus effects are indicated with that faction's symbol in the card's text box.

Example: Hedron Rising says "All Constructs are also Mechana Constructs". While Hedron Rising is in the Event Zone, all Constructs that players control and all Constructs in the center row are also considered Mechana Constructs. Once another Event card flips, and Hedron Rising leaves the Event Zone, its effect ends.

GAMEPLAY

General Rules

At any time, if your personal deck is empty and you need to draw a card or reveal a card from the top of your deck, reshuffle the discard pile to replenish your deck. If the Center Deck runs out, reshuffle the Void to replenish it.

Hero cards played during your turn go into the discard pile at the end of your turn. (In other words, don't reshuffle Hero cards you've played this turn if you need to reshuffle your discard pile in the middle of your turn.)

Cards you acquire during your turn are placed in your discard pile.

Whenever a card leaves the Center Row, replace it immediately from the Center Deck. This happens before anything else occurs. Any time a player is making a decision, there should be six cards in the Center Row.

Some cards have effects when they enter the Center Row. The effects of these cards occur immediately, including at the start of the game when the Center Row is first dealt. These are called Fate cards, and their effects are written in white text within a black textbox, labeled with the Fate keyword.

Many cards will have text that contradicts these rules. If card text ever contradicts the rules, follow the card text instead.

Turn Breakdown

1. Play cards from your hand to gain Runes, Power, and Honor ★. Acquire Heroes and Constructs and put them in your discard pile for future turns. Defeat Monsters for rewards and Honor.

2. Place played Hero cards in your discard pile after you are done acquiring and defeating cards.

3. Draw five cards from your personal deck.

To play a Hero card from your hand, simply place the card face up in front of you, announce its effect, and follow the instructions on the card. Any or gained remain available until the end of the turn unless spent. You do not have to pay any costs to play Heroes from your hand.

Example: Brazer Drone says "Gain . You may return a Construct from your discard pile to your hand." When you play the card, you must immediately decide which Construct you want to return, but you can wait until later of the turn to use the generated.

Constructs are played just like Heroes, except Constructs remain in play and can be used every turn. If a Construct has multiple abilities, each one may be used once per turn.

Example: Canopic Jar says "Once per turn, gain . Once per turn, when you defeat a Monster in the Center Row, gain ". You may use the Construct to produce Power and later in the turn use its second ability to produce a Runes.

Acquiring Heroes and Constructs

You need Runes (△) to acquire Heroes and Constructs. Runes come from Heroes played from your hand or from Constructs you have in play. You may acquire any number of cards as long as you have enough Runes. To find out how many Runes you get from a card, look in the text box of the card. If a card provides Runes, there will be a Rune symbol with a number.



Honey Siren costs four Runes to acquire.



You can get two Runes from playing it.

You may acquire any Hero or Construct in the Center Row as well as Mystics and Heavy Infantry, which are Always Available. When you acquire a card, place it in your discard pile and replace the card in the Center Row.

Defeating Monsters

To defeat a Monster, a player must have enough Power (generated by cards with ⚔ in their text box — e.g., Heavy Infantry). A card's Power is found in its game text box. Cards that generate Power will have a Power Icon with a number.

The Defeat Cost of a Monster is listed in the upper-right corner of the card. This cost has a Power Icon behind it.

When you defeat a Monster, you gain a Reward. Most rewards include Honor, and how much Honor you gain is equal to the number indicated on the Honor symbol (★). If the Monster has another effect as part of its reward, that effect occurs immediately after the card is replaced in the Center Row.

After defeating a Monster, place it in the Void and replace it in the Center Row. You may defeat any number of Monsters as long as you have enough Power.



Trophy: Some Monsters in Storm of Souls have a new kind of reward called Trophy. When you defeat a Trophy Monster, you gain the Honor portion of its Reward immediately, and then instead of banishing the monster you place it in play face-up on the table in front of you. At any time during your turn, you may banish a Trophy you control to gain the indicated effect. You can use a Trophy the turn you get it or save it for a future turn.

Example: Unchained Fates says "Reward: 5. Trophy: You may banish this to draw two cards." When you defeat Unchained Fates, you gain 5 Honor immediately and put the card face-up in front of you. You can banish it immediately to draw two cards, or you can wait to use it at a later time.

The Cultist is Always Available to defeat and is never banished to the Void. There is no limit to how many times you can defeat the Cultist in one turn.

Fanatic: The Fanatic is a new Always Available Monster in Storm of Souls. The Fanatic is a Trophy Monster with a variable reward based on the current Event called an Event Trophy. You may have no more than one Fanatic Trophy at any time. If you defeat a Fanatic while you already have a Trophy from one, you gain the Honor reward but do not get another Trophy. Fanatic is returned to the Always Available Zone when banished. It never goes to the Void.

Ending Your Turn

After you are done playing cards from your hand, acquiring Heroes and Constructs, and defeating Monsters, place any remaining cards in your hand and any Heroes played during your turn into your discard pile. You lose all unspent and .

Draw five cards to replenish your hand. If you run out of cards in your deck and need to draw more, simply reshuffle your discard pile into your deck. When you end your turn, play passes clockwise around the table.

Game End

The game ends when a certain amount of Honor has been earned, depending on the number of players.

Two Players = 60 Honor
Three Players = 90 Honor
Four Players = 120 Honor
Five Players = 150 Honor
Six Players = 180 Honor

Set this much Honor aside in Honor tokens before starting the game. When the final Honor token is earned, the game ends at the end of the current round (after the last player to start the game takes a turn). Thus, each player will play the same number of turns during the course of the game . Players can still gain Honor even when the set number of Honor tokens is gone. Use additional Honor tokens left over to track any Honor earned by players before the game ends.

Cards in each player's deck are also worth Honor, indicated by the number in the Honor symbol ()on the bottom, left-hand corner of the card. When the game is over, count the Honor from Heroes and Constructs (this includes your hand, deck, discard pile, and played Constructs), along with all Honor tokens acquired during the game. The player with the most total Honor is the winner!

If multiple players have the same number of Honor Points, the last player to start wins (i.e., the starting player loses all ties, the second player loses to third and fourth, etc.).

NEW IN STORM OF SOULS

Events

Event cards represent global effects that change the power structure of the world. When an Event flips from the Portal Deck, it is put into the Event Zone instead of the Center Row. The card is then replaced in the Center Row as normal. There may only be one Event in the Event Zone at any given time. While an Event is there it is considered the current Event. If a new Event flips, the old Event immediately goes to the Void and the new Event becomes the current Event. Events alter the rules of the game, and the current Event's game text applies to every player.

Example: Hedron Rising says "All Constructs are also Mechana Constructs". While Hedron Rising is in the Event Zone, all Constructs that players control and all Constructs in the Center Row are also considered Mechana Constructs. Once another Event card flips, and Hedron Rising leaves the Event Zone, its effect ends.

Trophy

Some Monsters in Storm of Souls have a new kind of reward called Trophy. When you defeat a Trophy Monster, you gain the Honor portion of its reward immediately, and then instead of banishing the Monster you place it in play face-up on the table in front of you. At any time during your turn, you may banish a Trophy you control to gain the indicated effect. You can use a Trophy the turn you get it or save it for a future turn.

Example: Unchained Fates says "Reward: 5. Trophy: You may banish this to draw two cards." When you defeat Unchained Fates, you gain 5 Honor immediately and put the card face-up in front of you. You can banish it immediately to draw two cards, or you can wait to use it at a later time.

Fanatic

The Fanatic is a new Always Available Monster in Storm of Souls. The Fanatic is a Trophy Monster with a variable reward based on the current Event called an Event Trophy. You may have no more than one Fanatic Trophy at any time. If you defeat a Fanatic while you already have a Trophy from one, you gain the Honor reward but do not get another Trophy.

Fanatic is returned to the Always Available Zone when banished. It never goes to the Void.

Destroy

Destroy is a new game term introduced in Storm of Souls. Destroy means to put into your discard pile from play and generally refers to Constructs. Any effect in a previous Ascension set which put a Construct into the discard pile from play is now considered to destroy that Construct.

Example: Corrosive Widow from ***Chronicle of the Godslayer*** *says "Each opponent chooses a Construct they control and puts it into their discard pile". If you have a Fanatic Trophy and Hedron Rising is the active event, you may use the Trophy reward to prevent your Construct from being destroyed.*

GAMEPLAY VARIANTS

Team Play

Number of Players: 4 or 6 (in teams of 2)

Rules:

- Set aside 30 Honor tokens per player.
- Teammates sit across from one other.
- Your teammate is not harmed by the rewards from any Monsters you defeat (e.g. if you kill a Noxious Soul, your teammate does not have to discard a card at random)
- You may spend one additional  when you acquire a card to add that card to your teammate's deck instead of yours.
- At the end of the game, combine your Honor total with that of your teammate's to determine the winning team!

Solitaire

Number of Players: 1

Rules:

- Set aside 50 Honor tokens.
- Lay out the Center Row as normal, but whenever a card leaves the Center Row, the replacement card always enters on the left-hand side and the remaining cards slide over to the right.
- You take the first turn of the game. At the end of each of your turns, Nemesis is considered to acquire or defeat the two cards furthest to the right in the Center Row.
- All cards acquired by Nemesis are set aside and only used to determine its Honor total at the end of the game.
- Any Monsters defeated go to the Void, and Nemesis receives any Honor from their reward. All other effects are ignored.
- Continue playing this way until the last Honor token is gone, then compare your score to the total Honor earned by Nemesis. If you have more Honor, you win!

GLOSSARY

Heroes: Heroes are the champions you can acquire to aid you in your quest to save the realm of Vigil. When you play a Hero from your hand, you gain the effect listed on the card, and then it goes to your discard pile at the end of your turn.

Constructs: Constructs are the many weapons, magical items, and fantastical devices you may acquire to use in your battles. After you play a Construct from your hand, you can gain an effect from it every turn it remains in play.

Monsters: Monsters are the minions of the Fallen One that are trying to break through and destroy your world. Defeating Monsters gives you rewards, including Honor that wins you the game.

Runes ( ): Runes are one of the two main resources in the world of Ascension. Runes are used to acquire Heroes and Constructs so you can add them to your deck.

Power ( ): Power is the second resource in Ascension. Power is used to defeat Monsters and earn rewards.

Honor ( ): Honor is the key to victory in Ascension. Whoever earns the most Honor wins the game.

Banish: When a card is banished, it is placed in the Void pile. Defeated Monsters are also banished to the Void. Players cannot interact with anything in the Void unless they have cards that allow them to do so. Banishing weaker cards like Apprentices and Militia from your personal deck can increase your chances of drawing more powerful cards that you acquire during the game.

Always Available cards and starting deck cards do not go to the Void when banished. Starting deck cards are set aside outside the game and always available cards are put back in their appropriate Always Available zone when banished

Event: Events represent global effects that change the power structure of the world, and change the rules of the game for all players for as long as they remain in play.

Destroy: Destroy means to put into the discard pile from play and generally refers to Constructs.

Trophy: Trophy is an additional reward on some Monsters. When you defeat a Monster with Trophy, gain the Honor reward immediately and put it face-up in play in front of you. You may banish it for its effect immediately or save it for a future turn.

Have questions about Ascension strategies and gameplay? Wondering what happens if Nook Hound enters the Center Row when you have no deck?

Check out the official Ascension F.A.Q. at **www.AscensionGame.com/FAQ**

ASCENSION F.A.Q

General Rules Questions

What happens if I play Avatar of Aiyana, and then play an Aiyana's Messenger in the same turn?

When you acquire a Hero with Avatar of Aiyana, you may choose to pay Runes equal to its Honor value instead of its Rune cost. Aiyana's Messenger will still reduce the amount you pay by 1. For example – You play Avatar of Aiyana, then Aiyana's Messenger and wish to acquire Lionheart. You may pay 2.

What happens if an effect makes me discard a card on another player's turn while Arha Rising is the current event?

You still have to discard a card. Arha Rising only affects players during their turn.

If I've used the effect of a Construct, then returned it to my hand later that turn, can I use the effect again?

Yes. If a Construct leaves play and then returns to play, its effects can be reused.

Am I allowed to banish the Fanatic to get the Event Trophy from Hedron Rising on another player's turn?

Yes. When a Construct you control would be destroyed, if Hedron Rising is still the active Event, you may banish the Fanatic to prevent your Construct from being destroyed. (If a new Event replaces Hedron Rising when a Monster that would destroy your Construct is defeated, you won't have an opportunity to banish the Fanatic. Hedron Rising must be in the Event area when your Construct would be destroyed.)

Can I banish the Fanatic to prevent my Construct from being destroyed by my own effects (such as Scrap Flinger or Autobuilder 5.0)?

No. If a cost requires you to destroy a Construct, you only get the effect if you successfully pay the cost by destroying that Construct.

If I kill Nemesis, can I return a Fanatic from the Void if I don't already have one?

No. Fanatics are never put in the Void. When you banish a Fanatic, it's put back in the Always Available zone.

If I have no deck, and Nook Hound enters the Center Row, what happens?

If you have no deck and a card asks you to look at the top of your deck, you reshuffle and reveal the top card. In the case of Nook Hound, it says you may look at the top card, so you may choose whether or not to reshuffle.

If Ogo Rising flips in the middle of my turn, does it apply its effect to the first Hero I played that turn?

No. Ogo Rising will apply its effect (making the next Hero you play Lifebound) to the first Hero it "sees". After Ogo Rising becomes the current Event, the next Hero you play will be Lifebound (in addition to any of its other factions.)

If I play Shadowcaster and choose not to banish a card from my hand, may I still banish a card in my discard pile if the current event is Void Rising?

Yes, you may banish a card in your discard pile even if you choose not to banish a card in your hand.

With regard to Vandal Soul, who chooses which Construct is destroyed in the case of a tie?

The player who controls the Construct being destroyed chooses which one to destroy.

If I defeat a Monster in the Center Row and Void Rising becomes the current event, do I still get the Honor from Void Rising?

No. Void Rising must already be the current event when the Monster is defeated in order to trigger the effect. In fact, if it was the current event when you defeated a Monster and another event replaces Void Rising, you still get Void Rising's effect.

Timing

When multiple things are supposed to happen "immediately", in what order do they happen?

Effects resolve in the following order:

- The Center Row card is acquired and goes to your discard pile, or defeated and put in the Void.
- Replace cards in the Center Row until there are 6 cards in the Center Row from the Center Deck moving outward. Remember: Any Event revealed goes to the Event Zone and becomes the current Event. Any Event that was in the Event Zone is put in the Void.
- Get Monster rewards.
- Resolve anything that triggered off of defeating or acquiring the card/cards in the Center Row. (ie Voidthirster)
- Resolve any Fate triggers in the order they appeared in the Center Row.

Banishing

If I banish a card from my hand, may I still use it to gain its effect?

No. You get a card's effect when you play that card. Once you play it, it's no longer in your hand.

Where do Always Available and starting deck cards go when they're banished from my deck?

Always Available cards (Mystic, Heavy Infantry, Fanatic, Cultist) go back to the Always Available Zone when they are banished. When you banish cards from your starting deck, remove those cards from the game. They don't get shuffled into the Void.

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