# IMPERIUM

A GAME BY

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## RULEBOOK



**Formidable adversaries are arrayed against you.**
**Your people stand ready. History beckons.**

In your hands lies the destiny of one of the most storied peoples of history. Under constant threat of attack, you must conquer new lands, preside over dramatic scientific and cultural advances, and lead your people into the era of empire. Expand too rapidly and unrest will bring your civilisation to its knees; build up too slowly and you might find yourself a mere footnote in the annals of history.

## CLASSICS VS LEGENDS

**Whether you are playing Imperium: Classics or Imperium: Legends, the rules are the same.**

This rulebook contains all the rules for playing with either box, so there may be references to nations or keywords that don't appear in the box you're using.

If you own both boxes, you can combine them – the only difference is in the setup, as described on page 6.

## HISTORICAL NOTE

*Imperium* is a game that is based heavily in history of nations and empires from all across the world in the time period 3100 BCE – 1066 CE. But while historical accuracy has been a core value throughout development of this game, it has consistently given way to the needs of the game. Indeed, the very mechanic of deck-building is inherently abstract, and the notion of a linear and inexorable rise of nations into empires is a knowing misrepresentation of actual events.

Moreover, some of the game terms used, such as 'barbarian,' 'empire,' and 'uncivilised,' are very crude for the purposes of historical study, but serve as useful shorthand for the purposes of the game. In particular, the use of the term 'nation' in these rules do not accurately denote real-world nations. Utopians, Atlanteans, and Arthurians are obviously fictitious nations. The Minoans, the Greeks, and the Macedonians all represent different, and sometimes overlapping, subgroups of Ancient Greeks. The Qin covers not only the Qin dynasty of Chinese history, but also the Zhou dynasty and the Warring States Period. Every single deck in this game will fall short of capturing the richness and complexity of the peoples depicted in it.



# COMPONENTS




## CLASSICS

23 Carthaginians cards
28 Celts cards
23 Greeks cards
23 Macedonians cards
23 Persians cards
23 Romans cards
24 Scythians cards
26 Vikings cards
83 commons cards

## LEGENDS

29 Arthurians cards
22 Atlanteans cards
23 Egyptians cards
24 Mauryans cards
23 Minoans cards
26 Olmecs cards
25 Qin cards
21 Utopians cards
83 commons cards




## CLASSICS & LEGENDS




4 state cards



1 market board in three parts



1 solstice card



21 exhaustion tokens



18 action tokens




6 slot markers



1 six-sided die



39 materials tokens



39 population tokens



39 progress tokens




1: Classics
2: Legends

1CIV6/15

#/#: card reference

FAM: fame cards
UNR: unrest cards
UNC: uncivilised cards
CIV: civilised cards
REG: region cards
TRI: tributary cards

ART: Arthurians
ATL: Atlanteans
CAR: Carthaginians
CEL: Celts
EGY: Egyptians
GRE: Greeks
MAC: Macedonians
MAU: Mauryans

MIN: Minoans
OLM: Olmecs
PER: Persians
QIN: Qin
ROM: Romans
SCY: Scythians
UTO: Utopians
VIK: Vikings



## CARD BREAKDOWN

1. **Card name**: the name of the card.
2. **Banner**: the banner colour indicates the card's suit (also shown at the bottom of the card – see 9). Cards without a suit have a grey banner.
3. **Pinned/Attack**: pinned cards remain in play. Attack cards affect other players.
4. **State**: many cards have either a barbarian icon or an empire icon. You cannot play cards showing a different icon from the one on your state card.
5. **Card type**: some cards have a , , , , or icon. These have no effect but may be referenced by other cards.
6. **Region type**: many cards have one or more , , or icons. These have no effect but may be referenced by other cards.
7. **Effect**: indicates what the card does when it is used.
8. **Development cost**: most development cards have a development cost, which is the number of , , and tokens you have to spend to develop it.
9. **Suit**: many cards have a , , , , , or . These have no effect outside the setup but may be referenced by other cards.

   A card's suit is also shown by the colour of its banner.

   *Some cards have both an and a . These are considered to be cards for the purposes of setup. During the game they are considered to be of both suits.*

   - **Power**: the nation you are playing as.
   - **Region**: areas under your nation's control.
   - **Uncivilised**: ancient technological and cultural developments.
   - **Civilised**: modern technological and cultural developments.
   - **Tributary**: peoples under your nation's control.
   - **Fame**: memorable deeds of your nation.
   - **Unrest**: internal strife and disorder in your nation.

10. **Nation**: the colour of the corner indicates the nation the card belongs to (if any).
11. **Starting location**: indicates where the card starts during setup:

    In play : in your play area (all cards are double-sided)
    Nation : in the nation deck
    Accession : at the bottom of the nation deck
    Development : in the development area
    Supply : in the unrest pile
12. **Player count**: cards with a 3+ aren't used in a solo or two-player game. Cards with a 4 aren't used in a solo game or a two- or three-player game.
13. **Card number**: a number reference for the card. If the first digit of the reference is a 1, the card is from the *Classics* box. If it's a 2, it is from the *Legends* box.
14. **Victory points**: how many victory points the card is worth at the end of the game, if any. Cards with a icon are worth X points. Cards with a or icon are worth a variable number of victory points, as specified on the card. Cards with a icon are worth -X points.

# SETUP

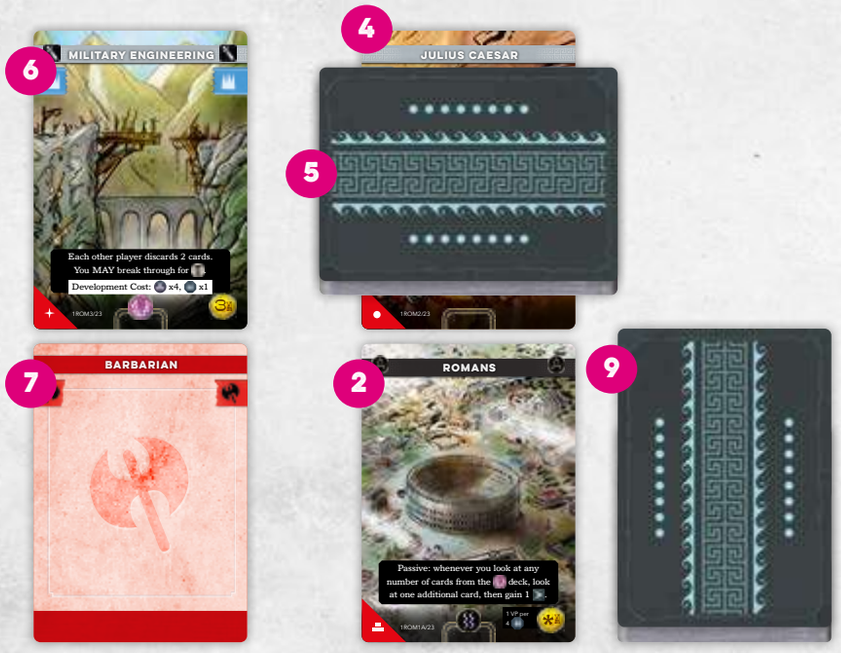
## COMBINING CLASSICS AND LEGENDS

If you have both *Imperium: Classics* and *Imperium: Legends*, make the following changes to setup:

1. You can play as any of the 16 available nations.

2. When you perform the commons setup, use the commons cards from either box. Check if any of the cards have the same name as one of the players' chosen nations. For each card that does, replace it with a random card from the commons cards in the other box. If the new card shows a 4 or a 3+ and you're playing with fewer than the indicated number of players, or if it has the same name as one of the players' chosen nations, draw a different replacement card instead.

## PLAYER SETUP




Each player takes the following steps:

1. Choose a nation and take all the associated cards, as indicated by the colour in the bottom left corner.

> Before choosing a nation, you should look at the 'Nations' section on page 20 for an overview of the different decks.



2. Place your card in front of you, to the left of your play area. You can place it either side up, but you cannot change this later in the game. This is your **power card**.

> For new players, we recommend playing with the B side up.

3. Place any other cards below your power card, if you have any.

> Only the Arthurians and Utopians have additional cards.
> If you're playing as the Arthurians, place *King Arthur's Court* face up below your power card.
> If you're playing as the Utopians, put *Visons of Shangri-La* on top of *Gates of Shangri-La* and place them below your power card. The top card in this pile is your **journey card**.

4. Place the card face up above the power card.

> For most nations, the card is your **accession card**.
> For the Vikings, this is your **zenith card**.
> For the Arthurians, this is your **nadir card**.
> The Atlanteans and Utopians don't have an card.

5. Shuffle the cards into a face-down deck and place it on top of the card, perpendicular to it. This is your **nation deck**.
6. Place all the cards face up to the left of your nation deck. This is your **development area**.

> For most nations, the cards are your **development cards**.
> For the Arthurians, these are your **quest cards**. When quest cards are in the development area, they are considered to be your **impending quests** in your **quest area**.
> The Atlanteans do not have a nation deck.
> The Utopians do not have a nation deck or any development cards.

7. Place a **state card** with the side up to the left of your card area.

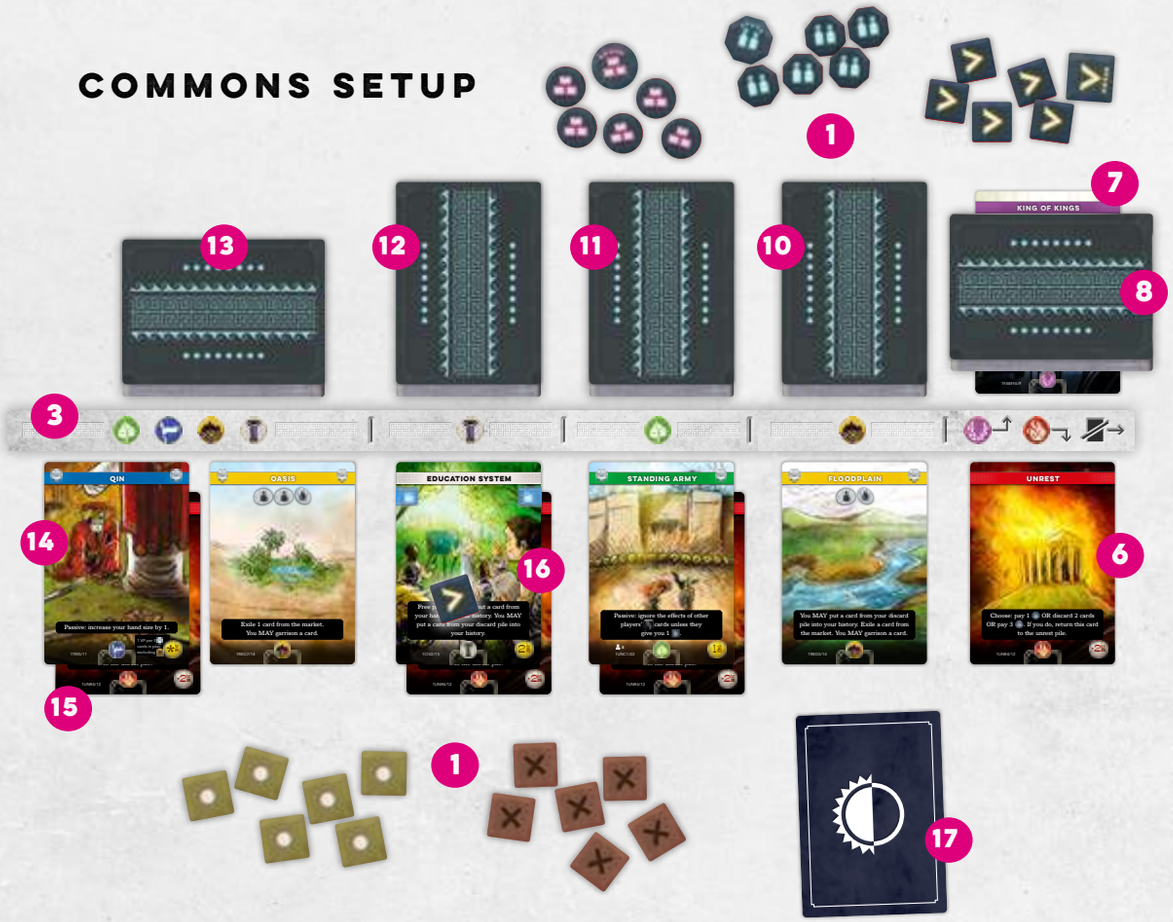
> If you're playing as the Atlanteans, instead place your state card with the side up.

8. Add any cards to the commons cards.

> Only the Arthurians, Celts, Olmecs, Qin, Utopians, and Vikings have cards. All cards are cards. Some cards might be removed from the game during step 5 of commons setup.

9. Shuffle all remaining cards into a face down deck and place it to the right of your power card. This is your **draw deck**.
10. Draw five cards from your draw deck to form your starting hand.

# COMMONS SETUP




1. Place all the , , , , and tokens on the table, easily accessible to all players. This is the **supply**.
2. Give each player 3 , 2 , 1 , 5 , and 3 tokens. Each player should place their and tokens on their state card.

> If there is a Utopian player, only give them 3 tokens instead of 5.

3. Place the **market board** face up in the middle of the table, easily accessible to all players.
4. Sort all the commons cards by suit: , , , , , and . These can also be distinguished by the colour of their banner.

> Some cards have both the and icons. For setup, these count as cards.

5. If you are playing with three players, remove all commons cards with a 4 from the game.

   If you are playing with two players, remove all commons cards with a 3+ or a 4 from the game.
6. Place all the cards face up, below the icon on the market board. This is the **unrest pile**.
7. Place the card *King of Kings* face up (the A side up), above the icon on the market board.



8. Shuffle the remaining cards into a face-down deck and place it on top of the *King of Kings* card, perpendicular to it. This is the **fame deck**.
9. If you are playing with three players, remove the top card of the fame deck from the game (without looking at it).

   If you are playing with two players, remove the top two cards of the fame deck from the game (without looking at them).
10. Shuffle the cards. Place the appropriate number of cards in a face-down deck above the icon on the market board. This is the **region deck**.
11. Shuffle the cards. Place the appropriate number of cards in a face-down deck above the icon on the market board. This is the **uncivilised deck**.
12. Shuffle the cards. Place the appropriate number of cards in a face-down deck above the icon on the market board. This is the **civilised deck**.

> When creating the region deck, uncivilised deck, and civilised deck, the number of cards in each depends on the number of players:
> 2 players – 6 cards
> 3 players – 7 cards
> 4 players – 8 cards

13. Shuffle all the remaining , , and cards together with the cards and place them above where it shows on the market board. This is the **main deck**.
14. Draw one card from each of the region, uncivilised, and civilised decks and place each card face up, opposite its respective deck below the market board. Draw two cards from the main deck and place them face up side-by-side opposite it, below the market board. These cards form the **market**.
15. Tuck an card from the unrest pile underneath each , , and card in the market.
16. Place a token on each card in the market that doesn't have an icon.
17. Randomly place the **solstice card** between two players. The player to the left of the solstice card is the **starting player**.

# HOW TO PLAY

The game is played in a series of rounds. Each round starts with the player to the left of the solstice card taking their turn and then turn order proceeds clockwise. Play continues until either **scoring** or **collapse** is triggered, which ends the game.

On each turn, you will:

ACTIVATE OR INNOVATE OR REVOLT

Once you have finished resolving one of the above, you will **clean up**.

After you have cleaned up, the player to your left takes their turn. If the solstice card is between you and the player to your left, the round ends and all players must resolve the **solstice** keyword before beginning the next round.

## ACTIVATE

When you activate, you can take actions and use exhaust abilities in any order and in any combination. When you cannot or no longer want to take actions or use exhaust abilities, you will move on to clean up.

### TAKING ACTIONS

To take an action, first remove an token from your state card. If you have no tokens on your state card, you may not take an action.

Then play a card from your hand into your play area and resolve the effect indicated.

Finally, place the card in your discard pile, unless the card indicates otherwise. If a card has a icon, it remains in your play area after you play it.

**If a card has a or an , you can only play it if your state card shows the same icon.**

Many cards have **keywords**. These are explained on pages 14–18.

The effects of all cards played must be resolved as much as possible.

> COMMON KEYWORDS
>
> Here are some common keywords that appear on cards to pay attention to as you're playing: abandon, acquire, break through, choose, exhaust, free play, gain, history, passive, and solstice.

### USING EXHAUST ABILITIES

To use an exhaust ability, choose a card with the **exhaust** keyword that does not have an token on it. This can be a card in your play area or it can be your power card. Move an token from your state card onto that card. If you have no tokens on your state card, you may not use an exhaust ability.

Then fully resolve the effect indicated after the exhaust keyword. Some exhaust abilities specify a cost. If you cannot pay the specified cost, you may not use the exhaust ability.

If a card already has an token on it, you may not use the exhaust ability shown on that card.



You may use an exhaust ability on a card in your play area with a or an icon, regardless of which icon is showing on your state card.

You can only use an exhaust ability on your own turn and when you activate, unless the card specifies otherwise.

## INNOVATE

First, place all the cards in your hand in your discard pile.

Then, **break through for** , , or , as described on page 15.

Then move on to clean up.

**You cannot take actions or use exhaust abilities if you innovate.**

## REVOLT

Return any number of cards from your hand to the unrest pile.

Then move on to clean up.

**You cannot take actions or use exhaust abilities if you revolt.**

## CLEAN UP

First, add 1 from the supply to any card in the market.

> If you're playing as the Carthaginians, add 1 or 2 tokens instead, as indicated on your power card.
> If you're playing as the Qin, add 1 token instead, as indicated on your power card.

**Once you've placed a token on a card in the market, the next player can start their turn while you complete the rest of the clean-up.**

Next, remove all and tokens from your state card and from all of the following: all cards in your play area, your nation deck, all cards in your development area and your power card. **Then place 3 tokens and 5 tokens on your state card.**

> If you're playing as the Utopians, only place 3 tokens.

Next, you may discard any number of cards from your hand into your discard pile.

Finally, draw cards from your draw deck **up to your hand size of five**. If you already hold cards equal to or exceeding your hand size, don't draw any cards. Some card effects might increase your hand size.

> As cycling through your deck is your main way of gaining access to your nation's , , and cards and become an empire (see overleaf), it's often a good idea to discard leftover cards at the end of your turn.

## RESHUFFLING YOUR DRAW DECK

If your draw deck is empty **and** you need to draw a card, first check your state card:

**If your state card shows :**

1. If there are no tokens on your nation deck **and** you have one or more tokens on your state card, place the top card of your nation deck in your discard pile. Then move an token from your state card to your nation deck.

   If there is already an token on your nation deck, or if you have none on your state card, skip this step.

   **If you place your ● card in your discard pile, immediately flip your state card to its side.**
2. Shuffle your discard pile into a new draw deck.
3. Keep drawing cards as normal.

> If you're playing as the Arthurians, the ● card is your nadir card. Instead of placing it in your discard pile, immediately place it in your play area. Do **not** flip your state card.
> If you're playing as the Vikings, the ● card is your zenith card. When you place it in your discard pile, it will trigger the end of the game! Do **not** flip your state card.
> If you're playing as the Utopians, you have no nation deck so you must skip step 1.

**If your state card shows :**

1. If there are no tokens in your development area **and** you have one or more tokens on your state card, you may pay the development cost shown on one of your development cards to **develop** it. Place that card in your discard pile. Then move an token from your state card into your development area. If there is already an token in your development area, or you have none on your state card, skip this step.

> If you are playing as the Utopians, you have no development area so you must skip step 1.

2. Shuffle your discard pile into a new draw deck.
3. Keep drawing cards as normal.

**Resolve this immediately when triggered, even on another player's turn.**

Some cards state 'draw the top card of the deck if able'. If your draw deck is empty, do not draw a card and do not reshuffle your deck.

## SOLSTICE

The round ends when the player to the right of the solstice card finishes their turn.

Before the next player takes their turn, each player should resolve all **solstice** keywords in their play area and on their power card. These effects can be resolved simultaneously by all players.

**Solstice keywords must be resolved as much as possible unless the card specifies that it is optional.**

If you have multiple cards with solstice keywords activate them in the order you choose.

Once all players have resolved all their solstice keywords, the next player takes their turn as normal to start the next round.



# GAME END

The game ends when either **scoring** or **collapse** is triggered.

Scoring is triggered if **one** of the following conditions is met:

1. There are no more cards in the main deck
2. A player develops the last card in their development area

   *This does not trigger if the Arthurians move the last ✦ card from their quest area.*
3. The *King of Kings* card is flipped face down (see page 19)
4. The Viking player places their *Harald Hardrada* ● card into their discard pile
5. The Arthurian player plays their *Graal* ✦ card
6. The Utopian player has at least 24 tokens and triggers the solstice keyword on their *Shangri-La* journey card.

Collapse is triggered if there are ever no cards left in the unrest pile.

If collapse is triggered after scoring has already been triggered, a collapse is resolved.

## SCORING

When scoring is triggered, complete the current round as normal. **Then, play one final round,** including resolving the solstice keyword after all players have taken their turn.

Then, all players add up their victory points.

**Leave cards where they were when the game ended** as you score, as some cards and cards score differently depending on their location.

- Every in front of you is worth 1 victory point.

Score for every card in your hand, play area, draw deck, discard pile and history (or flooded pile), as well as for your power card. Do not score for cards in your nation deck or your development area.

- A card with an or scores victory points equal to the number indicated.
- A card with a scores the number of victory points indicated if the condition specified has been met. Otherwise, it scores no points.
- A card with a scores a variable number of victory points, as specified on the card.

  **You can never score more than 10 points from a card.**

If you have multiple cards that score for having certain card types or resources, these can all score for the same cards or resources.

**The player with the most victory points wins.**

In the case of a tie, the tied players share the victory.

## COLLAPSE

When collapse is triggered, **the game ends immediately**, without even completing the current action.

Count the number of cards in your hand, play area, draw deck, discard pile, and history. **The player with the fewest cards wins.**

In the case of a tie, the tied players should proceed to scoring.

# KEYWORDS

## ALL PLAYERS / ALL OTHER PLAYERS

Cards that refer to 'all players' or 'each player' include you as well.

Cards that refer to 'all other players' or 'each other player' do not include you.

## ABANDON

Only cards in play can be abandoned. To abandon a card, place it in your discard pile.

If the card has a **garrisoned** card underneath it, the garrisoned card is also abandoned.

Some cards let you abandon garrisoned cards. If you do, the garrisoning card remains in play.

## ACQUIRE / / /

Select a card from the market of the indicated suit and add it to your hand. Only take one card, even if there are multiple suits indicated, unless specified otherwise. Gain any , , and tokens on that card. If there is an card underneath it, add that card to your hand as well.

Then draw a new card from the appropriate deck (or the main deck, if the appropriate deck is depleted) to replace it and tuck an card from the unrest pile underneath it if it's an , , or card.

If a card allows you to acquire multiple cards, fully resolve the above for each card you acquire. You may acquire newly drawn cards if they are of the indicated suit.

## ACTION

When a card effect lets you gain an action, place an token on your state card, even if that would take you above 3 tokens on your state card.

When a card effect requires you to spend a number of actions, remove that many tokens from your state card. If you are unable to do so, you cannot resolve that card effect.

## ATTACK

When you play a card with an icon, it will have a detrimental effect on all other players. If you are unable to resolve this effect in full, resolve it as much as possible.

Some cards protect players against cards. They let the player choose to ignore some or all of the effects of an card.

## BARBARIAN

You can only play cards if your state card is showing the icon.

You can have a card in your play area and use its exhaust ability, even if your state card is showing the icon.

When a card refers to 'if ', that effect can only be resolved if your state card is showing the icon.

> If you're playing as the Atlanteans your state card starts on its side, so you can never play cards.



## BREAK THROUGH FOR / / /

If more than one suit is listed, first declare which one of them you will break through for. Then do **one of the following**:

**Option 1:** *Select any card of that suit from the market* and add it to your hand. If you choose this option, you will gain all , , and tokens on that card. If there is an card underneath the card you selected, return it to the unrest pile. Then draw a new card from the appropriate deck (or the main deck, if the appropriate deck is depleted) to replace the card you have taken. If it's an , , or card, tuck an card from the unrest pile underneath it.

**Option 2:** *If breaking through for* , take the top card of the uncivilised deck and add it to your hand.

**Option 3:** *If breaking through for* , take the top card of the civilised deck and add it to your hand.

**Option 4:** *If breaking through for* , take the top card of the region deck and add it to your hand.

**Option 5:** *If breaking through for* ***or*** *for a suit where the appropriate deck is empty*, reveal cards one by one from the top of the main deck until you find a card of your declared suit. Take that card and add it to your hand, and then shuffle all the other revealed cards into the main deck. If you do not find a card of the declared suit, gain 2 .

## CITY

Some cards are cards and may be referenced by other cards.

## CHOOSE

Resolve **one** of the options following this keyword.

## DEVELOP

Pay the development cost shown on a card in your development area and add it to your discard pile.

When this keyword appears as a card effect, you may resolve it even if there is an token in your development area. Resolving it does not require you to place an token in your development area.

The Arthurians, Utopians, and Vikings have no development area and may never develop.

## DISCARD

Place the card in your discard pile.

## DRAW CARD(S)

Draw the indicated number of cards from your draw deck. If you need to draw more cards than you have left in your draw deck, draw as many as you can. Then reshuffle your draw deck (following the procedure on page 12) and continue drawing cards.

Some cards state 'draw the top card of the deck if able' or 'draw up to X cards if able.' You may not draw more cards than are left in your deck. If your draw deck is empty, do not draw any cards.

## EMPIRE

You can only play cards if your state card is showing the icon.

You can **acquire** and **break through** for cards, even if your state card is showing the icon.

When a card refers to 'if ', that effect can only be resolved if your state card is showing the icon.

> If you're playing as the Vikings or the Arthurians, who can never flip their state card, you can use your *Combs* or *Guennuvar* card to play cards.

## EXILE

Choose an eligible card and place it in an **exile pile**, next to the symbol on the market board.

If you exile a card from the market, return any cards underneath it to the unrest pile. Then draw a new card from the appropriate deck (or the main deck, if the appropriate deck is depleted) to replace it. If it's an , , or card, tuck an card from the unrest pile underneath it.

**You may never exile a card with one or more tokens on it unless you are swapping it (see below).**

Some cards let you swap cards between the market and the exile pile. To do so, **exile** a card as normal, but instead of drawing a new card to replace it, use a card from the exile pile. If the replacement is an , , or card, tuck an card from the unrest pile underneath it.

If you swap an exiled card with a card that has one or more tokens on it, put those tokens on the card placed in the market.

Some cards let you **acquire** or **break through** for cards in the exile pile. If you acquire an , , or card in this way, also take an card from the unrest pile.

## FIND

Search, in this order, the following areas for the card(s) specified: your hand, your discard pile, your draw deck, and your nation deck. Some cards may instruct you to search in certain areas only.

If you do not find the specified card, nothing happens. If you find the specified card, stop searching and reveal it. The card will tell you where you should place it.

If the card indicates a choice (for example, 'find a '), you may search all the areas and choose one eligible card to reveal. Return the other cards to the places where you found them.

**Whenever you finish searching your draw deck or your nation deck, you must shuffle it.** When shuffling your nation deck, leave the ● card at the bottom of the deck.

## FLOODED

Instead of a **history**, the Atlanteans have a **flooded pile**. Cards underneath their power card are considered flooded and are out of play. Flooded cards cannot be interacted with unless a card effect specifies otherwise. However, they still score victory points. You may always look at the cards in your flooded pile, but other players may not.

Any card that would have interacted with your history **does not** interact with your flooded pile. cards that score for being in your history do not score for being in your flooded pile.

Cards are added to the flooded pile through the **sink** keyword.

## FREE PLAY

Do not remove an token from your state card to play this card.

You can take an action to play this card even if you have no tokens left on your state card.

## GAIN ACTION

Place an token on your state card.

This can take you above 3 tokens.

## GAIN / /

Take the indicated number of tokens of the specified type from the supply.

, , and tokens are not meant to be limited.

## GARRISON

Take another card from your hand and place it face up underneath the card with the **garrison** keyword. The card underneath is now considered garrisoned. A card can have multiple cards garrisoned underneath it. Some cards might specify the type of card that can be garrisoned.



A garrisoned card is not considered to be in your play area, though they will still score you points at the end of the game. You cannot discard or play a garrisoned card, and you cannot use its exhaust or solstice abilities.

If a garrisoned card is underneath a card that is **abandoned**, **recalled**, **exiled**, **put into history**, or **sunk**, do the same to the garrisoned card. However, if the garrisoned card is specifically targeted, the garrisoning card remains in play.

Some cards let you garrison them or other cards under cards already in play. To do so, place it underneath that card as normal.

Garrisoned cards are public information.

## HISTORY

All cards placed underneath your power card are considered your **history**.

Cards in your history are out of play, and they cannot be interacted with unless a card effect specifies otherwise. However, they still score victory points. You may always look at the cards in your history, but other players may not.

The Atlanteans and the Vikings do not have a history. If a card would be placed in their history, it is discarded instead.

## KNIGHT

Some cards are cards and may be referenced by other cards.

## LOOK

Pick up and examine the indicated card or cards without showing other players. Unless instructed otherwise, return the cards you looked at to their original location. If you are instructed to look at multiple cards and there are fewer eligible cards available to look at, look at as many as possible.
If you look at multiple cards, return them to their original location in any order.

If you look at cards, never look at *King of Kings* unless it's the only card in the fame deck.

## MASK

Some cards are cards and may be referenced by other cards.

## METROPOLIS

Some cards are cards and may be referenced by other cards.

## NATION DECK

If a card effect lets you in any way manipulate cards in your nation deck, your ● card will always remain on the bottom. Never place a ❨ card underneath your ● card or shuffle your ● card into your nation deck.

## PASSIVE

As long as a card is in your play area, its passive ability is in effect.

The passive ability of a power card is in effect for the entire game.

## PAY / /

Return the indicated number of tokens of the specified type to the supply. If you are unable to do so, you may not take that action or use that exhaust ability. If the action or ability has multiple options, you must choose another option instead.

When paying , you may spend any amount of as if each were 1 .

When paying , you may spend any amount of as if each were 2 . No change is given when you do so.

**You cannot convert into or .**

## PINNED

When you play a card, it stays in your play area until it is removed by another action or an exhaust ability.

## REGION TYPES

Some cards have one or more , , or icons and may be referenced by other cards.

### PUT INTO YOUR HISTORY

Place the specified cards underneath your power card. They are now considered to be in your **history**.

The Atlanteans and the Vikings do not have a history. If a card would have gone into their history, it is discarded instead.

### RECALL

Only cards can be recalled. When one of these cards is recalled, return it to your hand.

If the card has a **garrisoned** card, the garrisoned card is also returned to your hand.

### RETURN AN

Take an card from your hand and add it to the unrest pile.

Some cards allow you to return an card from your discard. To do so, take the card from your discard pile and add it to the unrest pile.

### SINK

Place the specified cards underneath your power card. They are now considered to be **flooded**.

If a player other than the Atlanteans would trigger this keyword, they instead discard the specified cards.

### SOLSTICE

At the end of the round, you must resolve all solstice keywords in your play area and on your power card in the order you choose.

### SCROLL

Some cards are cards and may be referenced by other cards.

### STEAL / /

Take the indicated number of tokens of the specified type from the specified players.

If you are unable to resolve this effect in full, resolve it as much as possible.

### TAKE

Take an card from the unrest pile and add it to your hand.

## CARD-SPECIFIC NOTES

### ACCLAIMED

When you **break through** for a card, follow the normal rules for breaking through, but either choose a card from the market or reveal cards from the main deck.

### DOMESTICATION

On your turn, you can exhaust this card when a card in play is used to gain , whether through its own or another card's effect (even if the is not relevant to that effect).

This is most likely to trigger when you use *Prosperity*, *Nomads*, or similar cards that generate from cards and one of the cards also has a icon. However, it can also be triggered from cards such as *Water Mill* or *Trading Ships*.

### EMBALMING

The **passive** ability is triggered whenever you **pay** during an action, exhaust ability, or solstice ability, or while developing.

It is **not** triggered if the cost is entirely paid by spending instead.

### GRAND TRUNK ROAD

This card counts as 2 cards for the purposes of other card effects, such the *Mauryans* card, *Glory*, and the *Macedonians* card.

### INDIAN ELEPHANTS

There are two copies of this card. Only one has the icon.



### KING OF KINGS

**This card cannot be drawn as long as there is at least one face-down card.**

If you would look at more cards than there are face-down cards in the deck, simply look at all the remaining cards.

If you would look at one or more cards and there are no face-down cards in the deck, resolve *King of Kings* instead. Once you have resolved it, flip it face down. **This triggers the end of the game.**

If you would look at or draw one or more cards and *King of Kings* is face down, resolve its face-down effect but leave the card as it is.

**You cannot trigger *King of Kings* (either side) more than once per game.**

### NOMADS

There are two copies of this card. Only one has the icon.

### SHADUF

On your turn, you can exhaust this card when a card in play is used to gain , whether through its own or another card's effect (even if the is not relevant to that effect).

This is most likely to trigger when you use *Prosperity*, *Nomads*, or similar cards that generate from cards and one of them also has a icon. However, it can also be triggered from cards such as *Boats* or *Port*.

### SUMERIANS

At the end of the game, return up to 2 cards from your hand, play area, discard pile, draw deck, or history.

**This effect is triggered before determining a winner through scoring or collapse.**

If you trigger this ability after a collapse, it does not prevent the game ending.

## NATION-SPECIFIC NOTES

### ARTHURIANS AND THEIR QUESTS

As the Arthurians, you cannot become an empire and start developing cards. Instead, the cards in your development area are your **impending quests**. By using the solstice keyword on *King Arthur's Court*, you may garrison an impending quest, which then becomes your **active quest**. You can only ever have one active quest.

By using *Morigena* or *Myrddin Wyllt*, you may gain the active quest into either your hand or your discard pile. When you have done this, it is no longer considered the active quest.

***Graal* can become the active quest only if there are no other impending quests.**

### UTOPIANS AND THEIR JOURNEY

As the Utopians, you are not so concerned about becoming an empire and conquering territory. Instead, you are on a journey towards Utopia, represented by your two double-sided journey cards. These are always stacked, and only the face-up side of the topmost card is considered to be in play. Your journey card functions like an additional power card with a potent **exhaust** or **passive** ability, as well as a **solstice** ability that will let you progress on to the next step of your journey. Your journey card cannot leave play except for through its solstice keyword.

The passive ability of the *Utopians* card is triggered as soon as your draw deck is empty, even if you are not reshuffling. If cards are added to the deck and you empty it again, you must trigger the ability again.

# NATIONS

You don't need to read this section to learn how to play, but reading your nation's entry will give you a sense of the key cards in your deck.

When you play with a nation for the first time, take a moment before completing the player setup to look through its pool of cards. Each nation is unique, so it is worth familiarising yourself with the cards that will come up from your nation deck, and the development cards that will become available once you become an empire. You will always have multiple routes to victory, but an awareness of your nation's strengths and weaknesses will help you form a strategy and identify cards in the market that will help your game plan.

Each nation has a difficulty rating, ranging from ★☆☆☆☆ (straightforward) to ★★★★★ (very challenging).

Some nations also list specific entries worth reading before playing the game. The number in parentheses is the page reference.

## CLASSICS

### CARTHAGINIANS

Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

As the Carthaginians, your main concern is trade and the acquisition of . Use your unique power alongside your *caravans* and *trading ships* to manipulate the market in your favour. Once an empire, continue your expansion with your famous *elephants* led by *Hannibal*, or dominate trade using a *monopoly* to export unrest and other unwanted cards to your opponents.

### CELTS

Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

As the Celts, you will want to adopt an aggressive playstyle, concentrating on acquiring cards and spreading unrest through your powerful *Druids*. Without the *prosperity* available to other nations, you will need to collect using *cattle raids* and grow your population with your *druids* and the *Cauldron of Cerridwen*.

### GREEKS

Difficulty: ★★★★☆

As the Greeks, your main advantages are your cities and technology, and you will want to lean into those strengths. In the early game, your *settlers* and *Greek mercenaries* are powerful cards of expansion, while as an empire *science* will enable you to continue to *advance* and the *Olympic Games* will keep your nation manageable. Your *lighthouse* will let you manipulate exiled cards, so it may be worth bearing in mind which cards you exile during the game.

### MACEDONIANS

Difficulty: ★☆☆☆☆

The Macedonians, more than any other nation, are focused on expansion, so cards are likely to form a central role in your game plan. With *Alexander* and his *companion cavalry* you can keep conquering as an empire, and using your new territories to garrison cards and go for *glory* can be a winning strategy, especially when paired with a powerful Macedonian *phalanxes*.



### PERSIANS

Difficulty: ★☆☆☆☆

As the Persians, you will want to subjugate other nations to your will and use them to your advantage. *Conquer* as many cards as you can and expand your territories. Once an empire, you can start striking your opponents with your mighty *battering ram* and spreading unrest with your *Persian gold*.

### ROMANS

Difficulty: ★☆☆☆☆

As the Romans, your path to dominance will likely be through rapid expansion. *Conquer* cards and use them to declare your *glory* and earn fame. With your mighty *legion*, your *conquest* can continue well into your accession to empire.

### SCYTHIANS

Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

As the Scythians, you will want to focus on expanding your territory and grabbing cards that you can exploit for their . As *nomads*, you'll be making use of *tents* for shelter and *mounted archers* for protection, but your true *glory* won't be recognised until you become an empire.

See: *Nomads* (19)

### VIKINGS

Difficulty: ★★★☆☆

The Vikings never become an empire and have no history, which confers its own advantages and challenges. Your nation deck will keep providing you with cards at no cost, but you won't be able to control the order in which they enter your deck. Use *Gothja* and other cards to help you adapt, and make full use of your ability to keep playing cards that would normally go into your history. To keep your deck under control, remember to garrison cards using your cards and your sagas.

See: nation deck (17)

## LEGENDS

### ARTHURIANS

Difficulty: ★★★★★

The Arthurians never become an empire, instead pursuing quests and chasing after the legendary *Graal*. Your knights are vital, granting powerful boons as they are garrisoned. Send them on quests for *Myrddin Wyllt* or take a darker path and use *Morigena's* powers. Looming over you is the Battle of Camlann, *Gwaith Camlan*, which will see your knights fall and your kingdom suffer mounting unrest.

See: knight (17), Arthurians and their Quests (19)

### ATLANTEANS

Difficulty: ★★★☆☆

As the Atlanteans, you begin as an empire, which means you can use the powerful cards from the start of the game. However, it also means you have to ensure a constant supply of , , and to develop further. Atlantis is under the constant threat of *floods*, and you'll need to prioritise finding new or risk your nation sinking entirely. But with the rising waters come rewards, which if used wisely will see your nation become true *myths and legends*.

See: flooded (16), sink (18)

## EGYPTIANS

Difficulty: ★★★☆☆

As the Egyptians, you are empire builders. With so many opportunities for development, you'll want to consider carefully the best order in which to expand your deck. With your infrastructure located around Egypt's famous river, the frequent *flood of the Nile* can bring new opportunities for growth, and you'll want to keep an eye out for key cards in the market.

See: *Embalming* (18)

## MAURYANS

Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

As the Mauryans, you will want to open with aggressive tactics as you expand your nation with and cards, using the mighty *Indian elephants* you have at your disposal. As you become an empire, you'll need to choose whether to keep expanding and seeking *glory,* or to follow *Ashoka* instead and take a peaceful path to victory.

See: *Grand Trunk Road* (18), *Indian Elephants* (18)

## MINOANS

Difficulty: ★★★☆☆

As the Minoans, you will probably focus on , as you will need it to develop. Carefully manage your supply of to create beautiful *pottery*, but beware of its icon – if you abandon it after you become an empire, you won't be able to play it again. Keep your nation running efficiently with a discerning eye for important cards, and use your *writing systems* to consign unimportant cards to history.

## OLMECS

Difficulty: ★★★★☆

As the Olmecs, your game will look different from that of most of the other players. You won't find any *prosperity*, *conquer*, *advance*, or *glory* cards in your deck; instead, you'll need to rely on your *stone masks*. Masks are a tricky resource – they let you draw more cards and power your cards, but they score you points only when they are in your history. Managing them carefully will be key to your success.

## QIN

Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

Playing as the Qin is a game of challenging decisions. Powerful leaders must rule with the *mandate of heaven*, but is that leadership worth the burden it brings? How will you choose between the competing systems of *Confucianism* and *Legalism*? And as an empire, will you invest the time needed to construct *long walls* or focus on other goals?

## UTOPIANS

Difficulty: ★★★★★

The Utopians are unlike any other nation – everything about them is different. You have no nation deck and no development cards, and you won't want to go through your deck quickly. Instead, you will be realising your *visions of Shangri-La* and spending your to advance towards the fabled city of *Shangri-La* itself. Study your cards – and your opponents – carefully, as you'll need to decide which will serve you and which will hinder you on your path to Utopia.

See: Utopians and their Journey (19)



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# QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

## TURN STRUCTURE

ACTIVATE OR INNOVATE OR REVOLT

THEN

CLEAN UP

**Activate:** take up to 3 actions and use up to 5 exhaust abilities.
**Innovate:** discard hand, then break through for , , , or .
**Revolt:** return any cards in hand to unrest pile.

### CLEAN UP

1. Add 1 to market
2. Clear and tokens
3. Discard any number of cards
4. Draw up to hand size of 5

### RESHUFFLING

**If :** add top card of nation deck to discard pile, then shuffle discard into deck and exhaust nation pile.
If card added is ●, flip state card to .

**If :** pay development cost to develop card. Add that card to discard pile, then shuffle discard into deck and exhaust development area.

### COLLAPSE

If unrest pile is empty, game ends immediately. Player with fewest wins.

### SCORING

Game ends if one of the following is true:

1. Main deck is empty
2. One player's development area is empty
3. *King of Kings* is flipped face down
4. Vikings take *Harald Hardrada* ●
5. Arthurians play *Graal* ✦
6. Utopians trigger *Shangri-La* with 24+

Complete the current round and play one final round.

**Player with most points wins:**

= 1 victory point

= X victory points

= scores victory points as specified if the indicated condition is met

= variable points as specified, **up to 10**