WARHAMMER 40,000

FORBIDDEN STARS



LEARN TO PLAY

NO PEACE AMONG THE STARS

Distant stars and lost planets seemed to hang motionless in the void before Ulixes Ithanos, but he knew better. The machinery of the galaxy churned ever onward, inexorable and eternal. In his mind's eye, the Rogue Trader could see the expanse before him filled with barges bursting with conscripted labourers, shrine-ships gilded with icons of the Imperial Creed, and grand cruisers of the naval battle fleets.

Now that the Warp Storms had abated, the sector populations and resources were to be returned to their rightful service of the Imperium–inevitably that would mean conflict.

Ulixes knew that, surely, word of this long-forgotten sector would soon reach xenos and heretics alike, if it had not reached them already. Horrors would descend upon the realm, each sowing only death and destruction in their wake, each seeking to turn the benighted worlds to their own ends. War was coming to the once-lost Herakon Cluster, and Ulixes Ithanos knew that the price for these forbidden stars would be paid in blood.

GAME OVERVIEW

Forbidden Stars is a game of galactic warfare set in the *Warhammer 40,000* universe. Two to four players command the Space Marines, Orks, Eldar, or Chaos Space Marines. Each faction seeks to reclaim lost relics and sites of power that are vital to their survival. To accomplish this, they must harvest resources, upgrade their forces, and conquer the worlds of the long-lost Herakon Cluster.

USING THIS BOOKLET

This Learn to Play booklet is designed to teach new players how to play *Forbidden Stars*. In an effort to teach the game quickly and simply, this booklet omits many rules exceptions and complex game interactions due to the wealth of unit types and combat cards. Players should use the included Rules Reference to resolve these situations.



FACTIONS

Four of the main factions from the *Warhammer 40,000* universe are represented in *Forbidden Stars*. Each faction has faction-specific components that are distinguished by their colour or their faction symbol. Players use these colours and faction symbols to identify which components belong to which players.

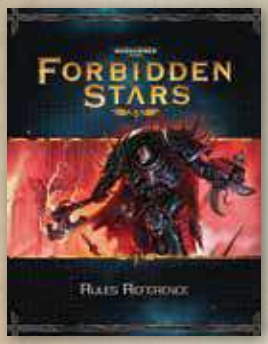
The Ultramarines: The Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes are the finest soldiers ever created by mankind. Each is a genehanced post-human clad in ceramite and adamantium power armour and wielding the most advanced weapons produced by the Adeptus Mechanicus. They are the Angels of Death, and they know no fear. The Ultramarines, the Space Marines who owe their genetic heritage to Primarch Roboute Guilleman, are known throughout the galaxy for their loyalty, their honour, and their unwavering dedication to their duty to safeguard the Imperium of Mankind.

World Eaters Chaos Space Marines: Ten-thousand years ago, during the darkness of the Horus Heresy, half of the Space Marine legions turned their backs on the Imperium of Man, profaned their oaths to the Emperor of Mankind, and joined the vile gods of Chaos. These traitorous Space Marines nearly brought the Imperium to its knees, and have spent the millennia since that dark time plaguing humanity, seeking the ruination of all that has been built in the name of the God-Emperor. The warriors of the World Eaters Chaos Space Marines are bloodthirsty berserkers, even by the standards of their foul brethren, having submitted themselves to the murderous urges inspired by Khorne, the Blood God.

Craftworld Iyanden Eldar: The Eldar are cunning and mysterious beings, xenos who ruled the stars since before mankind could comprehend its own existence. They are seers and warriors, mystics and patient hunters who combated the horrors of the galaxy for aeons without end. Their methods are inscrutable and their goals are unknowable. The ghost warriors of Iyanden know well the price of hubris and have suffered much for it, yet they fight on, plying the stars aboard their massive Craftworld.

Evil Sunz Orks: The savage green-skinned xenos known as the Orks are a species of brutish, barbaric warriors whose only desire is the thrill of battle. Gathering together in teeming hordes with numbers beyond counting, the greenskins work themselves into frenzies of savage violence and unquenchable rage, boiling from one planet to the next across the galaxy in a green tide of war, or "Waaagh!" as the Orks call it. The Orks of the Evil Sunz howl "Waaagh!" from the seats of smoke-belching bikes or packed into ramshackle trukks, their love of bloodshed surpassed only by their lust for break-neck speed.

COMPONENT LIST



1 Rules Reference



112 Combat Cards (28 per faction)



32 Event Cards (8 per faction)



20 Order Upgrade Cards (5 per faction)



24 Objective Tokens (6 per faction)



36 Structure Control Tokens (9 per faction)



32 Order Tokens (8 per faction)



4 Reference Cards



1 Round Track and 1 Round Marker



1 First Player Token



36 Asset Tokens (12 of each)



16 Custom Dice



12 Combat Tokens (front, back)



4 Materiel Dials



12 Double-Sided System Tiles



4 Faction Sheets



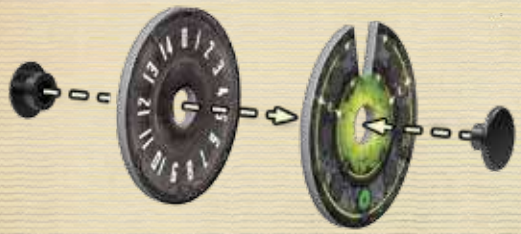
4 Warp Storm Tokens



35 Plastic Structures (10 Factories, 15 Cities, and 10 Bastions)

DIAL ASSEMBLY

Before playing *Forbidden Stars* for the first time, carefully assemble the four materiel dials as shown below.





105 Plastic Units (27 Space Marine, 24 Eldar, 27 Ork, 27 Chaos Space Marine), and 27 Plastic Stands

SHIP ASSEMBLY

Before playing *Forbidden Stars*, carefully insert a plastic stand into each ship as shown to the right.



SETUP

Before starting a game of *Forbidden Stars*, players must perform the following setup steps:

1. **Choose Factions:** Each player chooses one faction and gathers that faction's corresponding faction sheet, tokens, event cards, upgrade cards, combat cards, and units.

   For the first game **only**, if playing with fewer than four players, **exclude** the Orks and Eldar factions from a two-player game, and Eldar from a three-player game.

2. **Claim Starting Components:** Each player claims all components listed in the "Initial Forces" box on the back of his faction sheet. Then, he flips his faction sheet faceup and places these claimed components on top of it.

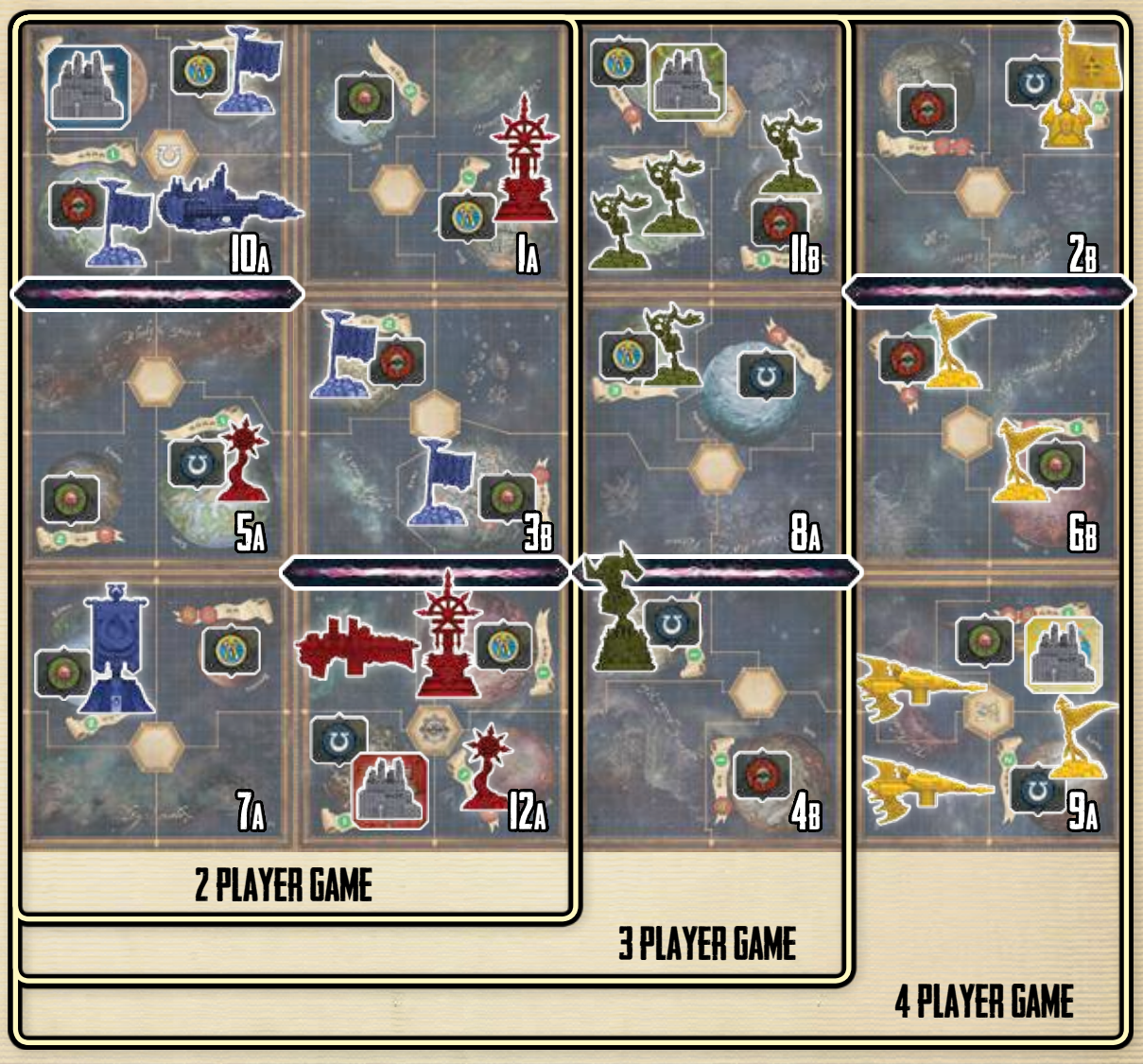
   Finally, he claims a materiel dial and sets the number at "6"—this value is also listed in the "Initial Forces" box on the back of his faction sheet.

3. **Determine First Player:** Mix one of each player's structure control markers in the box lid and draw one randomly. That player is assigned the first player token.

4. **Construct Game Board:** For the first game, arrange the necessary system tiles in the centre of the play area as depicted in the "Introductory Setup" diagram below—when playing with fewer than four players, part of the game board is excluded.

   Then, place the units, structures, structure control tokens, objective tokens, and Warp Storm tokens on the game board as indicated in the diagram. Do not place the tokens or units of the unused factions. The reinforcement token listed in the Ork's "Initial Forces" are not placed on the game board but remain near his faction sheet until used.

INTRODUCTORY SETUP



Note: After playing one game using the "Introductory Setup" diagram, players can set up a game using the "Constructing the Game Board" rules on page 16. Those rules allow players to create a unique game board for each game by choosing where to place system tiles, units, objective tokens, and Warp Storms.

5. **Create Event, Combat, and Upgrade Decks:** Each player shuffles his event cards and places them in a facedown deck in his play area.

   Then, each player finds the ten combat cards with his faction symbol printed on the upper-left corner and shuffles them to form his combat deck.



Faction Symbol on a Combat Card

   Finally, each player forms two upgrade decks using all of his faction's order upgrade cards and his remaining combat cards; these decks do not need shuffling. He places them **faceup** next to his faction sheet making sure not to mix them with his combat deck.

6. **Prepare Round Track:** Place the round track near the game board, and place the round marker on the "1" space on the track.

7. **Create Supply:** Separate all reinforcement tokens, cache tokens, forge tokens, dice, and plastic structures in piles and place them near the game board where all players can reach them.

After completing the setup steps, each player's components should be in his play area as displayed below. Then, players are ready to begin the first round of the game.



PLAYING THE GAME

Forbidden Stars is played over a series of game rounds. Each game round consists of three phases resolved in the following order:

1. **Planning Phase**: During this phase, players take turns placing order tokens on the game board.
2. **Operations Phase:** During this phase, players take turns resolving the order tokens they placed on the game board.
3. **Refresh Phase:** During this phase, players collect objectives, collect materiel, rally their routed units, move Warp Storms, and resolve event cards. Then, the first player passes the first player token and advances the round marker on the round track.

After resolving the Refresh Phase, players begin a new round starting with a new Planning Phase. They continue resolving game rounds until a player has won the game by collecting enough objective tokens (explained in detail later).

Phase I: Planning Phase

During the Planning Phase, players take turns placing order tokens facedown on the game board. Players reveal these tokens and resolve their effects during the Operations Phase.

To start the Planning Phase, the first player places one of his order tokens facedown on the order token box of a **system tile**. Then, proceeding clockwise, each other player places one order token on any system tile. Players repeat this process until each player has placed four order tokens on the game board.



Players place order tokens **facedown** so the type of order is hidden from other players. If a system already contains one or more order tokens, the player places his order token on top of the stack of existing order tokens. The order token on the top of the stack is always the order token that was placed in that system most recently.



Order tokens are placed facedown on the order token box.



Multiple order tokens can be placed on top of each other to form a stack.

Important: A player cannot place an order token in a system if he does not have a unit or structure either in or adjacent to that system. Each system is adjacent to the systems with which it shares an edge. If two systems share only a corner and not an edge, they are not adjacent.

ORDER TOKEN TYPES

Players use order tokens to perform *Forbidden Stars*' main actions such as moving units, attacking with units, and building new units and structures.

There are four types of order tokens. When a player reveals an order token, he resolves the effect corresponding to the type of token revealed.



Deploy: The player can spend his materiel to purchase new units and structures in the system.



Strategize: The player can purchase an order upgrade, a combat upgrade, or both. Then, he places the order token on top of his event deck which will allow him to draw an event card during the Refresh Phase.



Dominate: The player gains assets from each friendly world in the system. He can also use the special ability on his faction sheet.



Advance: The player can move his units to the system and start one combat.

The details for resolving each order type are described in detail later.

PHASE 2: OPERATIONS PHASE

During the Operations Phase, players take turns resolving the order tokens placed during the Planning Phase. Starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise, each player chooses one of his order tokens **on top of a stack**. He reveals the chosen order token, resolves its effect, then removes it from the game board. The Operations Phase ends when players have resolved all order tokens on the game board.

When the active player reveals an order token, he chooses to either resolve the token's effect or place the token faceup on the top of his event deck. Each token on his event deck allows him to draw one event card during the Refresh Phase.

Note: If a player does not have any order tokens on the top of any stack, he must skip his turn. He must resolve an order during his next turn if he has one on top of a stack at that time.

WHAT ARE UNITS & STRUCTURES?

Ground units and ships are types of **UNITS** represented by plastic pieces. Players move units, attack with them, and position them to control areas on the game board, which ultimately lets them collect their objective tokens. **STRUCTURES** provide players with combat boosts (bastions), allow players to purchase units (factories), and increase the player's command level (cities), which is necessary to acquire better units and upgrade cards. Thus, a careful balance of both structures and units is necessary for a player to achieve victory.

PHASE 3: REFRESH PHASE

During the Refresh Phase, each player collects materiel and objective tokens from **FRIENDLY** worlds—worlds that contain only his units or structures. Also during this phase, each player rallies his routed units so they are ready for the next game round.

During the Refresh Phase, each player resolves the following steps in order:

1. Collect Objectives
2. Collect Materiel
3. Rally Routed Units
4. Draw Events and Move Warp Storms
5. End of Round

After resolving this phase, players begin a new game round.

COLLECT OBJECTIVES

Each player collects any of **his objective** tokens that are on friendly worlds. He places the tokens on the "Objective Token" box of his faction sheet so that all players can easily see how many tokens he has collected.



The Eldar player collects an objective token from a friendly world.

A player wins the game if he collects a number of objective tokens equal to the number of players in the game (see "Winning the Game" later).

COLLECT MATERIEL

Most worlds have a **MATERIEL VALUE**, which is indicated by a number on a green materiel icon.

This world's materiel value is two.



During the Refresh Phase, each player gains materiel equal to the materiel value of each friendly world. When a player gains materiel, he increases his materiel dial by the appropriate amount.

This materiel dial is set to "4."



RALLY ROUTED UNITS

Each player **RALLIES** all of his **ROUTED** units. Units can become routed during combat and are placed on their side to denote this. A routed unit cannot move or be used to trigger combat card abilities. It also cannot contribute its dice or morale during a combat or orbital strike. To rally a unit, the player stands the unit back up to its unrouted state.



Unrouted Unit



Routed Unit

DRAW EVENTS AND MOVE WARP STORMS

Each player draws a number of cards from his event deck equal to the number of order tokens **on top of it**, returning the order tokens to his supply of unused order tokens. Order tokens are placed on top of this deck after resolving a Strategize Order (explained later).

Then, starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise, each player chooses one event card from among those he just drew. He moves one Warp Storm on the game board following the Warp Storm movement icon depicted on his chosen card (see "Moving Warp Storms" to the right). Then, he may resolve the event card's ability.

There are two types of event cards: **TACTICS** and **SCHEMES**.



Tactic Event Card



Scheme Event Card

After resolving a tactic event card, the player shuffles it back into his event deck. Scheme event cards remain faceup next to the player's faction sheet, and their effects can be used in the future as described on the card.

After a player resolves his event card, he shuffles all unchosen event cards from his hand back into his deck.

WHAT ARE WARP STORMS?

Beyond the fabric of reality exists an infinite, powerful, and unpredictable realm known as the Warp. Interstellar travel and psychic powers in the *Warhammer 40,000* universe are both made possible by the power of the Warp. Unfortunately, the Warp is volatile, unpredictable, and sometimes bleeds into our reality in the form of devastating Warp Storms. These rips in the universe can consume entire star systems and are almost impossible to navigate through.

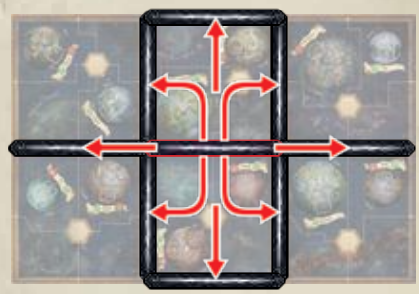
In *Forbidden Stars*, Warp Storm tokens are placed on the game board along the edge of some system tiles. **Units cannot move through Warp Storms.** Warp Storms move at the end of each game round, making the game board an ever-changing and unpredictable environment.

Moving Warp Storms

To move a Warp Storm, the player chooses one Warp Storm **that has not moved this phase**. Then, he moves the token in one of the two directions indicated by the Warp Storm movement icon on the right side of his event card.



Warp Storm Movement Icon



These are the eight directions in which a Warp Storm can move.

Players **cannot** move a Warp Storm token onto another Warp Storm.

When choosing both a Warp Storm and a direction to move it, the player must always make choices that result in a Warp Storm moving, if able.

Important: If a player did not draw any event cards, he must still move a Warp Storm. To do so, he reveals the top card of his event deck and moves one Warp Storm using the Warp Storm movement icon on that card as explained above. Then, he shuffles the event card back into his deck without resolving its ability.

END OF ROUND

The first player gives the first player token to the player to his left. Then, he advances the round marker one space on the round track. If the round marker would advance off the "8" space of the track, the game ends and the player with the most objective tokens wins the game.

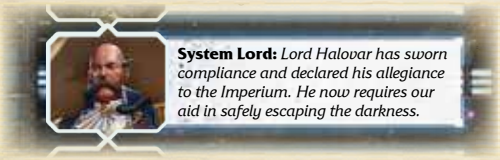
WINNING THE GAME

A player wins the game when he has collected a number of his objective tokens **equal to the number of players in the game**. For example, during a two player game, a player wins the game when he collects two of his objective tokens.

If no player has won the game by the end of the eighth game round, the game ends and the player that has collected the most objective tokens wins the game.

WHAT ARE OBJECTIVE TOKENS?

Objective tokens represent important objects, people, or places that are vital to a faction's survival. The back of each objective token displays what the objective token thematically represents. Although each token has a unique image, this is for theme only and **has no game play effect.** The back of each player's faction sheet has brief descriptions of the stories surrounding his objectives.



Objective Token Description

Objective tokens **always remain faceup** so that players can see the faction icon. This is important because a player cannot collect objective tokens belonging to other players. However, players may wish to place units on worlds containing enemy objective tokens so that they can prevent their opponents from achieving victory.



Faceup Objective Token



ORDERS IN DETAIL

Each faction has two tokens for each of the four orders. When a player resolves an order during the Operations Phase, the system tile on which the order was placed is the **ACTIVE SYSTEM**. This section describes how players resolve each of the four orders.

DEPLOY ORDER



Deploy Order Token

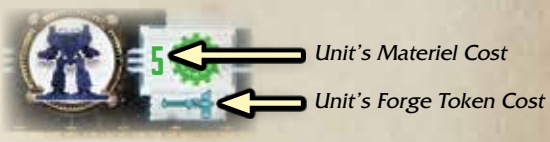
Players use Deploy Orders to place new units and structures on the game board. To resolve a Deploy Order, the active player follows these two steps **in order**:

1. **Purchase Units**: If the player has a factory in the active system, he may purchase units and place them on any friendly or uncontrolled (not containing any units or structures) areas in the system.
2. **Purchase Structure:** The player may purchase **one** structure and place it on any friendly world in the active system that does not already contain a structure.

PURCHASING UNITS

A player purchases a unit by spending an amount of materiel equal to the materiel cost for that unit as displayed on his faction sheet. To spend materiel, the player decreases his materiel dial by the appropriate amount. Then, he places the unit on any **friendly or uncontrolled** area in the active system.

Some units cost a forge token in addition to their materiel cost. To spend a forge token, a player takes a forge token from his play area and places it in the supply.



Players can only place ground units on worlds and ships on voids. In addition to these basic restrictions, a player must adhere to command level restrictions.

The maximum number of units that a player can purchase with one Deploy Order is dictated by his **DEPLOY LIMIT**. His deploy limit is equal to the unit capacity of the world in the active system where his factory is located. Unit capacity is shown as skulls on the world's banner.



This world's unit capacity is two.

COMMAND LEVEL

Each player has a **COMMAND LEVEL** that indicates which units and upgrades he can purchase. A player's command level is **equal to the number of cities he controls**.

Each unit and upgrade card has a command level requirement. A player can only purchase units and upgrades with a requirement equal to or less than his command level.

Unit's Command Level Requirement



PURCHASING STRUCTURES

A player purchases a structure (city, bastion, or factory) by spending an amount of materiel equal to the materiel cost for that structure as displayed on his faction sheet. Then, he places the plastic structure on any **friendly world** in the active system on top of one of his **STRUCTURE CONTROL TOKENS**. The token underneath each structure indicates who owns that structure.

Important: A player cannot place a structure on a world that already has a structure.



This structure is controlled by the Eldar player.

DOMINATE ORDER



Dominate Order Token

Players use Dominate Orders to gain assets from worlds and resolve their special faction abilities. To resolve a Dominate Order, the active player resolves the following steps in order:

1. **Gain Assets:** The player gains the assets granted by each friendly world in the active system. Assets are displayed on the right corner of a world's banner.

   The player takes the corresponding tokens from the supply and places it in his play area. If the world provides multiple assets, the player collects all of them.

2. **Resolve Faction Ability:** The player may resolve the special ability listed on his faction sheet.

ASSETS

Players can gain assets from friendly worlds by resolving a Dominate Order. Each asset has a unique effect, as described below:

Forge Tokens: Some units require the player to spend a forge token to purchase them. This is displayed on the faction sheet below the unit's materiel cost.

Alternatively, a player may spend a forge token when purchasing a unit to reduce its command level requirement by **one**. This allows him to purchase a unit he would normally be unable to purchase (see "Command Level" on the left).



This world provides one forge token.

Cache Tokens: When purchasing a unit or structure, a player can spend a cache token to reduce the materiel cost of that unit or structure by two.



This world provides one cache token.

Reinforcement Tokens: During the reinforce step of combat, the attacker and then the defender may place some of their reinforcement tokens into the contested area.

A reinforcement token remains for the duration of the combat and is treated as the corresponding faction's ground unit or ship at command level zero. While in an area, it follows all rules and restrictions that apply to units.

For example, each reinforcement token that the Ultramarines player places on a world is treated as a Scout unit.



This world provides one reinforcement token.

Prosperity: When a player gains this asset, he gains one asset token of his choice.



This world provides one asset of any type.

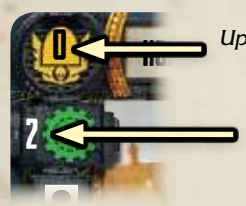
Strategize Order



Strategize Order Token

To resolve a Strategize Order, if the player **has a unit or structure in the active system**, he may look through all cards in his upgrade decks. Then, he may purchase one order upgrade and/or one combat upgrade if he meets each card's command level restrictions (see "Command Level" on page 9). After resolving this order, he places the order token **on top of his event deck**, which allows him to draw an event card during the Refresh Phase.

To purchase an upgrade, the player must spend an amount of materiel equal to the materiel cost displayed on the upper left of the upgrade card. To spend materiel, the player decreases his materiel dial by the appropriate amount.

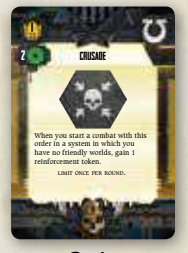


Upgrade Card's Required Command Level

Upgrade Card's Materiel Cost

There are two types of upgrades: **ORDER UPGRADES** and **COMBAT UPGRADES**, as follows:

- **Order Upgrades:** Order upgrades increase the functionality of order tokens. After purchasing an order upgrade, the player places it in his play area next to his faction sheet. Each order upgrade corresponds to one of the four orders (Deploy, Strategize, Dominate, Advance) and provides the player with a benefit when resolving the corresponding order.



Order Upgrade Card

- **Combat Upgrades:** Combat upgrades are more powerful combat cards that the player shuffles into his combat deck.



Combat Upgrade Card

Purchasing Combat Upgrades

A player purchases combat upgrades in pairs. When a player purchases one combat upgrade card, he receives **both copies of the card**.

When a player purchases a pair of combat cards, he must remove two copies of any other card from his combat deck and place them both into his combat upgrade deck. Then, he adds both copies of the purchased upgrade to his combat deck and shuffles the deck.

A combat deck always contains two copies of five cards for a total of ten cards.

Advance Order



Advance Order Token

Players use Advance Orders to move units and begin combats. To resolve an Advance Order, a player moves units **into the active system**. After moving units, the player resolves a combat if there is a **CONTESTED AREA**—an area that contains both friendly and enemy units or structures.

To resolve an Advance Order, the active player performs the following steps in order:

1. **Move Ships:** The active player may move his ships in the active system and **one** adjacent system to any voids in the active system.
2. **Move Ground Units:** The active player may move his ground units in the active system and **one** adjacent system to any worlds in the active system. If he moved ships from an adjacent system, he cannot move ground units from a different adjacent system.
3. **Resolve Combat:** The active player resolves a combat if there is a contested area (see "Combat" on page 12). If there is not a contested area, he may resolve an orbital strike instead (see "Orbital Strike" on page 11).

Important: Units **cannot move through Warp Storms,** and a player can create a **maximum of one** contested area while resolving an Advance Order. A player may move any number of units with a mobilize order, but a **maximum of five units** can end their movement in each area.

Moving Ships

When moving a ship, a player can move a ship from the void it currently occupies to any void in the active system, even if the two areas are not adjacent.

Moving Ground Units

When moving a ground unit, a player can move a unit from the world it currently occupies to any world in the active system connected via a **PATH**. A path is a series of contiguous, non-diagonal, friendly areas. A path can consist of worlds, voids, or a mix of both (see the "Advance Order Example" on page 11).

Ground units can move from one world to an adjacent world without the use of a ship. Thematically, they are using non-military transport ships or other mundane forms of travel that are not represented in the game.

There is no limit to the number of units that a player can move through a friendly area.

Unit Capacity



World's Unit Capacity

Each area has a **UNIT CAPACITY**. Voids have a unit capacity of three, and each world has a unit capacity equal to the number of skull icons presented on the world's banner. An area's unit capacity indicates the **maximum number of units** that can exist on an area after resolving an order.

After resolving an order, including any combat triggered by that order, a player must destroy any of his units that exceed an area's unit capacity.

ADVANCE ORDER EXAMPLE



1. It is the Ultramarines player's turn to resolve an order, so he reveals one of his Advance Orders by flipping it faceup.
2. He must move ships first. He has no ships in the active system, so he moves a Strike Cruiser from an adjacent system into the void in the active system.
3. Then, the player decides to move some of his ground units from an adjacent system into the active system. Now that he has a ship in the void area, he can move ground units through it. He moves his Space Marines through the void area to the world in the upper-right corner of the active system.
4. Then, the player moves his Scout through the void to the world in the lower-left corner of the active area.
5. Finally, the player decides to move his Scout that was already in the active system to the adjacent world in the lower-right corner.

ORBITAL STRIKE

After resolving an Advance Order, if there are no contested areas (and therefore no combat has been started), the active player may resolve an orbital strike.

To resolve an orbital strike, the player chooses an enemy world in the active system. Then, he chooses one void in the active system that is adjacent to this world. He rolls a number of dice equal to the combined combat value of all of his ships in that void.

Enemy units on the chosen world suffer an amount of damage equal to the number of offence icons (⚔) rolled. Combat values and suffering damage are both explained in detail later.

A player cannot resolve an orbital strike against a world containing a bastion structure. Bastions are described later.



COMBAT

After a player moves units using an Advance Order, he must resolve a combat if he has units on an area containing both friendly and enemy units or structures (i.e., a contested area). During combat, the player resolving the Advance Order is the **ATTACKER** and the other player is the **DEFENDER**.

Combat in *Forbidden Stars* uses a combination of both dice and cards. Players begin the combat by rolling a number of dice based on their units' combat values. Then, they play combat cards to trigger special abilities and gain combat icons, dice, and combat tokens. The player with the most morale (🦅) at the end of the combat is the winner and his opponent must retreat his units.

The specific steps of combat are as follows:

1. **Preparation:** Players prepare for combat by performing the following substeps:

   a. *Roll Dice:* Both the attacker and defender simultaneously roll a number of dice equal to the combined **COMBAT VALUE** of each of his unrouted units in the combat, as displayed on his faction sheet. For example, if the Ultramarines player has two Land Raiders in the combat, he rolls six dice.



Unit's Combat Value on a Faction Sheet

   Each player organizes his rolled dice into groups of identical icons so both he and his opponent can easily evaluate the results.

   b. *Draw Combat Cards*: Each player draws five combat cards from the top of his combat deck.

   c. *Reinforce Step:* First the attacker and then the defender have an opportunity to place some of their reinforcement tokens near their units in the contested area. The number of reinforcement tokens that a player can place is equal to the number of units he has in the combat (see "Assets" on page 9).

2. **Execution:** Players resolve up to three execution rounds by playing combat cards from their hands. During **each execution round**, players perform the following substeps:

   a. *Choose a Combat Card:* The attacker and defender simultaneously choose one combat card from their hands and place them facedown in the play area.

   b. *Resolve a Combat Card:* The attacker reveals and resolves his combat card. Then, the defender reveals and resolves his combat card as explained on page 13.

   c. *Assess Damage*: Starting with the attacker, both players must suffer damage equal to his opponent's total number of offence icons (🦅) from dice, combat tokens, and faceup combat cards. Each defence icon (🛡) that a player has (from dice, combat tokens and his faceup combat cards) reduces the amount of damage suffered by one. The rules for suffering damage are explained on page 13.



The Ultramarines player has a total of three offence (🦅) and four defence (🛡).

   After both players have suffered damage, if only one player has units and/or bastions remaining in the area, he wins the combat and proceeds to the "Capture Structures" substep of resolution as described below.

3. **Resolution:** After resolving the third execution round, players finish resolving the combat by following these substeps:

   a. *Determine Winner*: The player with the highest total morale value wins the combat (defender wins ties), and the enemy units must retreat (explained later).

   A player determines his total morale value by adding the number of his morale icons (🦅) on his dice and faceup combat cards as well as the number of morale on his faction sheet that corresponds to each of his bastions and unrouted units in the combat.



Unit's Morale Value on a Faction Sheet

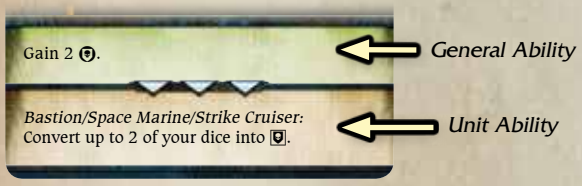
   b. *Capture Structures*: If the attacker wins the combat, he takes control of any structures on the world by removing his opponent's structure control tokens and replacing them with his own.

   c. *Clean Up*: Each player discards any reinforcement tokens he used to the supply and shuffles all of his combat cards back into his combat deck.

Resolving Combat Cards

All combat cards have one or two combat ability boxes. When resolving a combat card, the player first resolves all general abilities (green box), then resolves all unit abilities (brown box). He resolves each ability in the order in which it is listed, from top to bottom.

Unit abilities are always preceded by at least one unit name. To use a unit ability, the player must have at least one of the listed units in the combat, and that unit must be unrouted.



To use this unit ability, the player must have at least one Bastion, unrouted Space Marine, or unrouted Strike Cruiser in the combat.

Combat Card Icons

Most combat cards contain one or more combat icons (, ,) on the left side of the card. These icons function like the icons on dice and persist until the end of the combat.



Combat Dice

When a player gains a , , or from an ability, he takes one die from the supply of unused dice and places it by his other dice with the indicated icon faceup. When a player loses a die, he takes one of his dice with the matching icon and returns it to the supply.

If a game effect allows a player to gain a , he takes a die from the supply, rolls it, and places it with his other dice.

Important: The attacker and defender are each limited to **eight dice** during a combat.

Combat Tokens



Combat Tokens

Some combat card abilities provide players with combat tokens, represented by combat token icons (and). When a player gains a or , he takes a combat token from the supply and places it with the appropriate side faceup near his dice. When calculating offence or defence during combat, a player's combat tokens add to his final value.

All combat tokens are **temporary** and are returned to the supply at the end of the execution round in which they were gained.

Suffering Damage

When a player suffers damage, he must choose any one friendly unit on the area to suffer the damage. That unit must be unrouted unless all of his other units are routed. If the damage equals or exceeds the chosen unit's **Health Value**, that unit is **Destroyed** and removed from the game board.



Unit's Health Value on a Faction Sheet.

If the damage is lower than the health value of the chosen unit, that unit is routed. If the damage **exceeds** the health value of the chosen unit, any damage that exceeds the unit's health value must be applied to another friendly unit. The player repeats this process until either no more damage remains or no more units remain.

Important: When suffering damage during an orbital strike, any units that are not destroyed **do not become routed.**

Example: The Ultramarines player has two Scouts in a combat. During the first round, he must suffer three damage. He chooses one of his Scouts to suffer the damage first. He compares its two health to the three damage; because the Scout's health is equal to or less than the damage, it is destroyed. Then, the player assigns the one remaining damage to his other Scout. This unit is not destroyed but is routed instead, and the damage is ignored because the unit's health exceeds the damage.

Routed Units

Units can be **Routed** by combat card abilities, by retreating, or by suffering damage that is less than their health value. When a unit is routed, the plastic piece is placed on its side. If the unit is represented by a reinforcement token, that token is flipped to its routed side.

Routed units do not add their morale () when determining the winner of a combat and cannot be used to fulfil a unit requisite on a combat card. Additionally, a player **cannot assign damage** to a routed unit if he has one or more unrouted units or bastions in the area.

During the Refresh Phase, all routed units are rallied by standing the plastic pieces back up.

Bastions

Bastions are not units, but they do contribute dice and morale during a combat. Additionally, bastions can be chosen to suffer damage. If a bastion suffers damage equal to its health value, it is removed from the game board and returned to the supply. Bastions cannot be routed.

COMBAT EXAMPLE PART I



1. The Ultramarines player (blue) is resolving an Advance Order. After moving his units, he has two units on an area containing two Eldar units. The Ultramarines and Eldar players must now resolve a combat.
2. Players reference their faction sheets to determine how many dice their units provide. Both players simultaneously roll their dice.

   Then, each player draws five cards from his combat deck, and keeps these cards hidden from each other (not shown).

First Execution Round: Each player chooses a combat card from his hand and places it facedown in front of him (not shown). Then, the players resolve the following steps:

3. The Ultramarines player is the attacker, so he reveals and resolves his card first. First, he resolves the general ability in the green box, which gives him two defence combat tokens.
4. Then, he resolves the unit ability in the brown box. He has the Space Marine unit required to use this ability, so he chooses to convert one of his dice into a die.
5. The Eldar player reveals and resolves his card. First, he resolves the general ability in the green box, which gives him one die. He rolls the die and places it near his other dice.
6. Then, the Eldar player resolves the unit ability in the brown box. He has an Aspect Warrior, and chooses to spend a die to force his opponent to choose and rout one unit. The Ultramarines player chooses to rout one of his Scouts.

As the final step of this execution round, players must suffer damage. Each player totals the number of combat icons he has from his dice, his combat cards, and his combat tokens.

Neither player has more offence icons () than his opponent's defence icons (), so neither player suffers damage (not shown).

Players discard all combat tokens, then resolve the next execution round (see "Combat Example Part II" on page 15).

COMBAT EXAMPLE PART II







Second Execution Round: Each player chooses a combat card from his hand and places it facedown in front of him (not shown). Then, the players resolve the following steps:

7. The Ultramarines player reveals and resolves his card. First, he resolves the general ability in the green box, which gives him one die. He rolls the die and places it near his other dice.
8. Then, he resolves the unit ability in the brown box. He has the Space Marine unit required to use this ability, so he chooses to rally his Scout.
9. Then, the Eldar player reveals and resolves his card. First, he resolves the general ability in the green box, which gives him two offence combat tokens.
10. The Eldar player can now resolve the ability in the brown box, but he chooses not to.
11. Each player totals the number of offence icons (⚔) he has from his dice, his combat cards, and his combat tokens.

    The Eldar player is the only player that has more offence (⚔) icons than his opponent's defence (🛡) icons. He has six offence icons and his opponent has two defence icons, so his opponent suffers four damage.
12. The Ultramarines player chooses to first assign damage to the Scout unit. It has only two health and is destroyed. The remaining two damage is assigned to his other unit, which has three health. This is not enough damage to destroy it, so the unit is routed.

Players discard all combat tokens. Since both players have units remaining, they resolve one more execution round. If both players have a surviving unit, the player with the most morale at the end of that round wins the combat and his opponent must retreat all of his units (not shown).

RETREATING

Units must retreat when they lose a combat. Additionally, some combat card abilities can force units to retreat. After a unit retreats, it is routed.

Attacking and defending units follow different retreat rules, as follows:

ATTACKER RETREATS

When the attacker retreats, he must move all of his remaining units from the contested area to another area—ships must retreat to a void and ground units must retreat to a world along a legal movement path. All retreating units must move to the same area, and it **must** be an area that at least one unit in the combat moved from.

DEFENDER RETREATS

When the defender retreats, he must move all of his remaining units from the contested area to either a friendly or uncontrolled area in either the active system or an adjacent system—ships must retreat to a void and ground units must retreat to a world along a legal movement path. All retreating units must move to the same area.

If the defender is able to retreat to both a friendly and an uncontrolled area, he must retreat to the friendly area.

STOP!

You now know all the rules needed to play your first game. After playing with the introductory setup, you are ready to learn the additional rules on page 16.

Constructing the Game Board

After playing a game using the game board provided in the "Introductory Setup" diagram, players are ready to play by building a unique game board during game setup.

Constructing the game board is a strategic exercise in which players choose where to place system tiles and where to deploy their initial forces. During the "Construct Game Board" step of setup, players follow these steps:

1. **Distribute System Tiles:** Each player claims the system tile that has his faction icon on it. Then, the first player takes all system tiles that do not have faction icons on them, randomizes them by shuffling them under the table, and deals two to each player.
2. **Distribute Objective Tokens:** Each player gives two of his objective tokens to each other player and returns any remaining tokens to the game box.
3. **Build the Game Board:** Starting with the first player and proceeding **clockwise**, each player places one system tile in the play area as follows:
   - **a.** *Place a System Tile:* The player chooses one of his system tiles and places it adjacent to at least one other system tile (see "Tile Placement Example" to the right).
   - **b.** *Place Units and Structures:* The player may place any number of the components from his faction sheet (in the "Initial Forces" box) on the tile he just placed.
   - **c.** *Place Objective Tokens:* The player **must** place one of his opponent's objective tokens on **each objective token space** on the system tile he just placed, obeying the following restrictions:
     - A player cannot place two tokens from the same faction on the same system tile.
     - A player cannot place an objective token that belongs to one faction if he has more objective tokens that belong to another faction.
     - After he has placed all tokens received during step 2, he does not place any more objective tokens.

     
     Objective Token Space

   Players repeat this process until each player has placed all of his system tiles and all of his components listed in the "Initial Forces" box on his faction sheet.
4. **Place Warp Storms:** Starting with the player **who placed the last system** and proceeding **anticlockwise**, each player places one Warp Storm along any system tile edge; this may include the outer edges of the game board.

Placing System Tiles

When placing a system tile, a player can place either his faction tile or any of his other tiles. He can place the tile with either side faceup and in any orientation; however, after the first player places his first system tile, all other tiles must be placed **adjacent** to another tile.

A player **cannot place a tile** in such a way that it violates the maximum game board size. This size varies depending upon the number of players:

- **Two Players:** Three tiles by two tiles
- **Three Players:** Three tiles by three tiles
- **Four Players:** Three tiles by four tiles

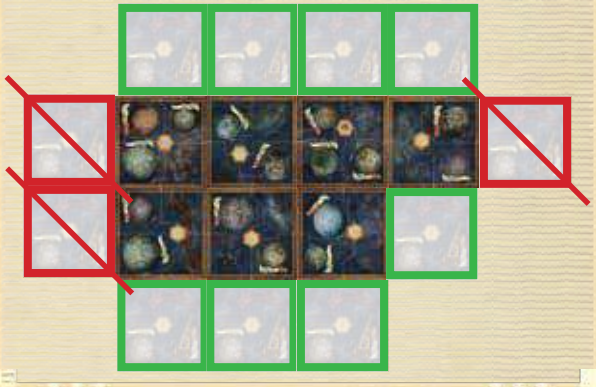
The orientation of the game board is not determined until the maximum number of tiles are placed in one row or column. For example, a four-player game could be either four tiles wide or four tiles high. This is determined as soon as the fourth tile is placed in a row or column.

Tile Placement Example

It is the Eldar player's turn to place a tile during a four-player game. He decides to place his faction tile.



He can place his faction tile in any one of eight possible places, outlined in green. He cannot place his tile on any of the three spaces on the ends because doing so would violate the maximum game board size allotted for a four-player game, which is three tiles by four tiles.





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