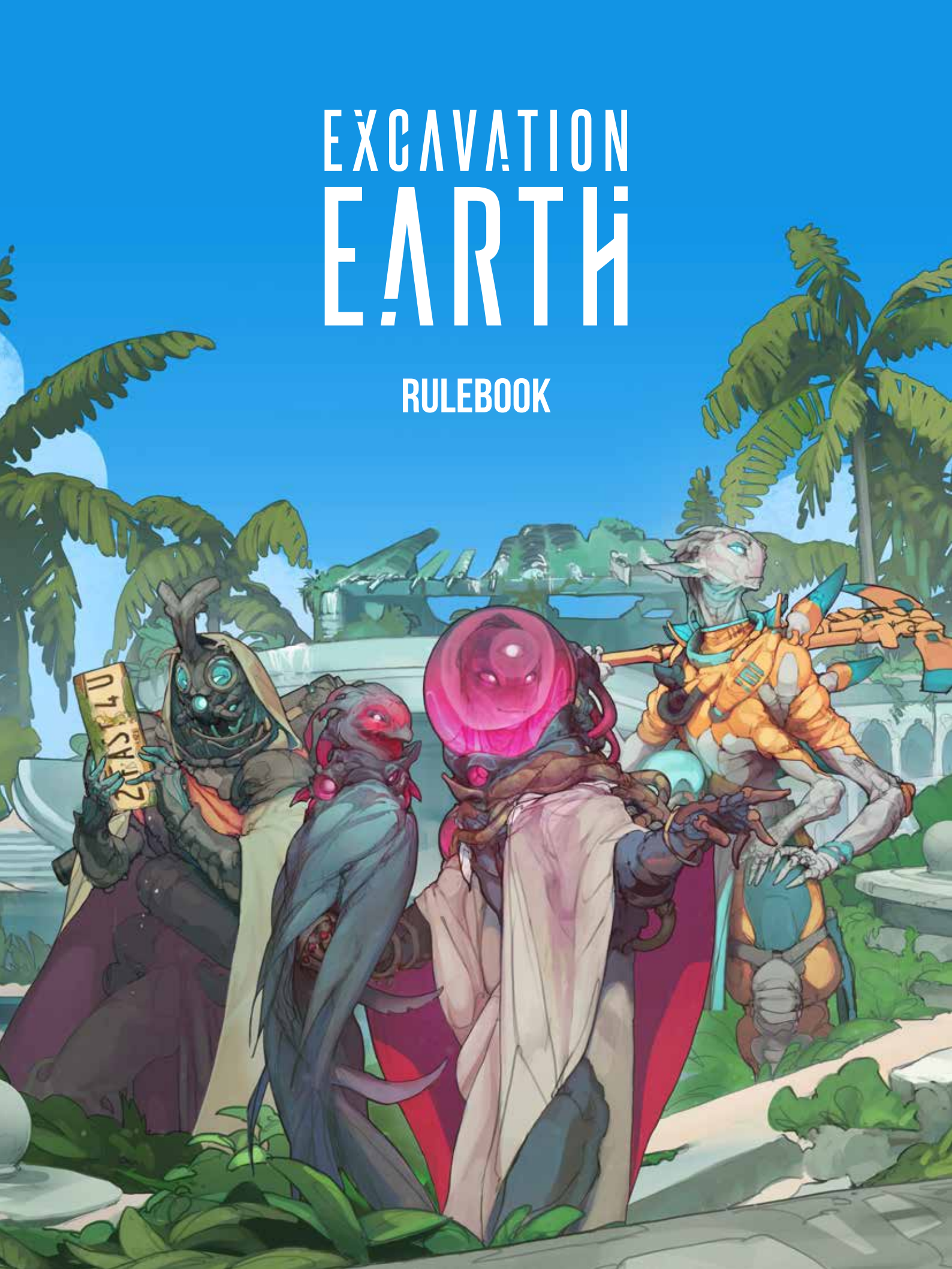
EXCAVATION EARTH

RULEBOOK



EXCAVATION EARTH

a game of market manipulation and set collection

by Dávid Turczi and Wai Yee
with Gordon Calleja

COMPONENTS

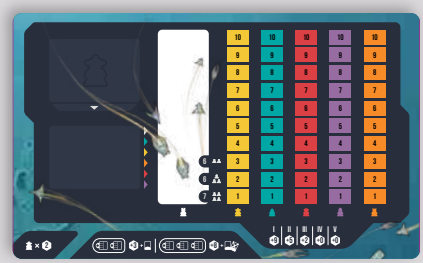
(additional components for solo mode shown on page 18)



1 Main Board



5 Faction Boards



1 Buyer Board



1 Mothership Board



90 Artefact Tiles



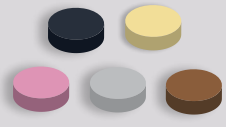
4 Initiative Tokens



15 Explorer Pawns



110 Crew Cubes



5 Turn Order Markers





50 Coloured Buyer Pawns
(10x each in five colours)



1 Round Marker



7 Wild Buyer Pawns



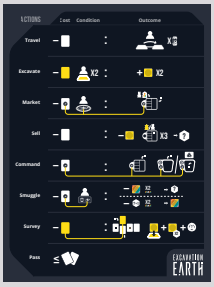
17 Buyer Cards



60 Action Cards



8 Command Cards



4 Player Aids



12 Travel Cards



Credit Tokens
(1s, 5s, 10s, and 50s)

GAME SETUP

1. Place the main board in the center of the table, then place the round marker on the first space of the round track at the bottom of the board.
2. Have each player choose a faction. Give them the matching faction board.
3. Have each player choose a colour. Give them the explorer pawns, crew cubes, and turn order marker in the matching colour.
4. Give each player eight credits. Place the remaining credits near the main board as the common supply.
5. Check the faction boards to determine each player's starting initiative. Place the turn order markers on the turn order track according to these values, from lowest number to highest number.
6. Place the mothership board and the buyer board next to the main board.
7. Shuffle the deck of action cards together.
8. Deal each player six action cards from the deck, face down, as their starting hand.

Note: *If a player is dealt four or more cards with the same colour or icon, they may discard any number of those cards, then draw back up to six.*

Note: *Experienced players can draft their starting hands, instead of dealing randomly, using the rules from Step 5 of the Preparation Phase.*

9. Give each player three travel cards: one of each fuel value (i.e., fuel x2, fuel x3, and fuel x4). These cards are added to the players' starting hands.
10. Reveal 3/4/5 action cards (for 2/3/4 players) from the top of the deck. Place them in a row next to the deck, face up, to form the surveyor forecast.
11. Place the initiative tokens in a supply next to the surveyor forecast.
12. Separate the artefact tiles into five groups by colour. Shuffle each group to form a face-down supply pile.





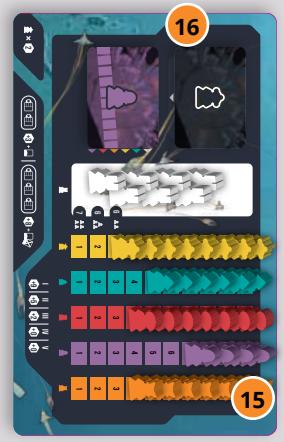
















13. Reveal 3/3/4 artefact tiles from each supply pile (for 2/3/4 players). Place each one in the matching dig site on the main board, face up.

14. Reveal 2/3/4 artefact tiles from each supply pile (for 2/3/4 players). Place them in matching face-up stacks in the black market area of the main board.

15. Place the buyer pawns on the buyer board. Wild buyers go in their own section, while coloured buyers go on the matching popularity tracks, one buyer per space. In games with fewer players, remove buyers from the lowest spaces and return them to the game box.

    - For a three-player game, remove one wild buyer and one buyer of each colour.
    - For a two-player game, remove one wild buyer and two buyers of each colour.

16. Shuffle the deck of buyer cards together. Place the deck on the buyer board. Remove the top two cards and place them face up in the discard pile.

17. Draw three buyer cards from the deck for each market. For each card drawn, add a matching buyer from the buyer board to the queue in that market. Always take from the lowest space of the matching popularity track and add to the back of the queue. Place each card in the discard pile after resolving it. When the deck runs out, reshuffle the discard pile, then continue drawing.

18. Shuffle the command cards and set them aside for now, white side up; they will be used later.

19. Each player places two of their explorers on the main board: one in the location of Market #1 and another in the location of Market #4.

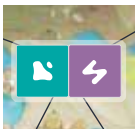
20. At the start of each player's first turn of the game, they will choose a starting location for their third explorer: market, dig site, or black market. However, this location cannot be either of the locations with their other two explorers.

GAME OVERVIEW

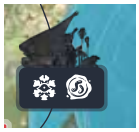
In *Excavation Earth*, the players are alien explorers, on a mission to recover artefacts from the now-uninhabited Earth. The main board shows a map of the planet, with 21 different locations. There are three types of locations: **markets**, **dig sites**, and **black markets**. Some locations count as both markets and dig sites.



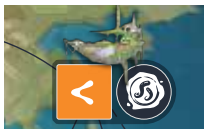
Market



Dig Site



Black Market



Market + Dig Site

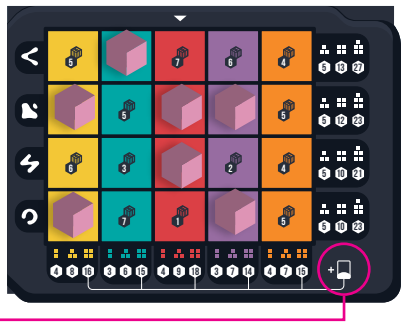
Artefacts can be excavated from the various dig sites. These artefacts are grouped into five different **regions**, which determines the locations where they might appear. Each region has an associated colour: yellow, green, red, purple, and orange. Each region has four types of artefacts, and each type has its own **icon**. The icons indicate which types of artefacts might appear at which dig sites.



Artefacts

Once you excavate artefacts, you can take **samples** of them to store in the **gallery** on your faction board, if you assign crew cubes as **security guards** to protect them. Collect samples in larger sets for larger credit payouts at the end of the game, based on the relative difficulty of getting those artefacts. Each artefact has a listed value; artefacts with higher values are more rare and thus harder to get.

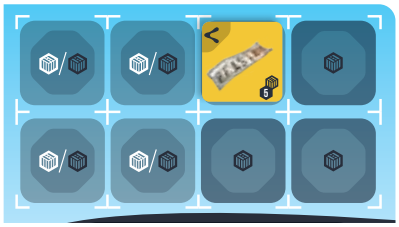
Note: *Each artefact's listed value is always equal to nine credits minus the number of possible copies of that artefact in the game. Therefore, you can deduce that an artefact with a listed value of six credits has three copies.*



Gallery with Security Guards

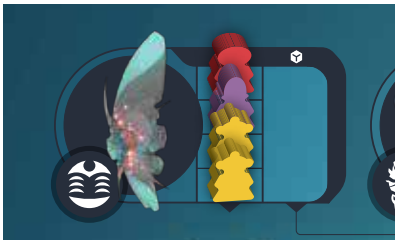
The first time that you fill each **column** of your gallery with samples, you immediately draw one action card and add it to your hand as a bonus. You may gain this bonus card only once per column.

The artefacts you excavate from dig sites go in your **cargo hold**. The artefacts you acquire from the black market by smuggling can go in your cargo hold or in your **hidden hold**. Artefacts in both your cargo hold and your hidden hold can be sold to interested buyers at the markets or offloaded to the black market by smuggling.



Cargo Hold (light) and Hidden Hold (dark)

Each **market** has its own queue of **buyers**, whose colours indicate which region's artefacts they are interested in. Wild buyers are interested in artefacts from all five regions. New buyers are always added to the back of the queue, and each queue has a limit of four buyers. When a buyer is added to a market with a queue that is already full, the buyer at the front of the queue is ejected and returned to the supply.



Market with Buyer Queue

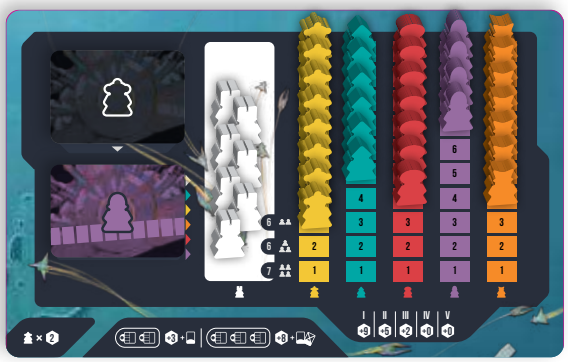
The buyer supply is organized on the **popularity tracks**, which are found on the buyer board. When a buyer is taken from the supply, it always comes from the lowest occupied space of the matching popularity track. When a buyer is returned to the supply, it always returns to the highest empty space of the matching popularity track.

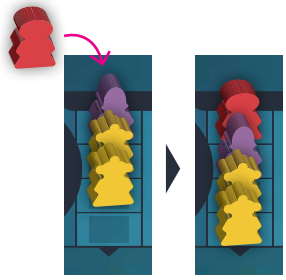
Each colour's current **popularity level** is always equal to the highest empty space of the matching popularity track. Wild buyers are kept in a separate pool, however; they are always taken from and returned to this pool.

You can also assign your crew cubes as **traders** in the markets, who will bring you a profit when you sell there. After you make a sale, one of your participating traders in each market gets promoted to an **envoy** and moves to the matching **command centre** on the mothership board. You earn extra credits during each round's Scoring Phase for having envoy majorities in the three command centres.

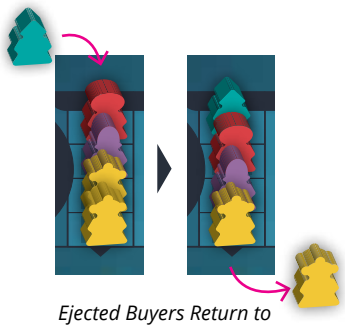
During the second and third rounds of the game, there will be **command cards** placed next to the command centres. You can recall your envoys from the command centres to activate the linked command abilities.

With the exception of the credit tokens, the **supply** of game components is meant to be limited to what is provided in the game box. Any game effect that instructs you to interact with a component when there are none remaining should be ignored (e.g., no more buyers of a certain colour left on the popularity track, no more artefacts of a certain colour in the matching supply pile, etc.).





New Buyers Added from Popularity Track



Ejected Buyers Return to Popularity Track



Traders in the Market

Envoys in the Command Centres



GAME FLOW

The game lasts three rounds and each round has three phases:

I. Preparation Phase (*skipped in round 1*)
II. Actions Phase
III. Scoring Phase

Once the third round is over, the game ends and players earn additional credits for the samples in their galleries. The player with the most total credits wins!



Command Abilities for Round 2

I. PREPARATION PHASE

1. **Enable Command Abilities:** In the second round, draw three command cards at random, then return the rest to the game box. Place one of these command cards next to each of the three command centres on the mothership board, white side up. In the third round, simply flip these three command cards yellow side up.

2. **Reset Buyer Queues:**

   - For each market where the queue has exactly four buyers, return the buyer from the front of the queue to the supply, then slide the remaining three buyers forward.
   - For each market where the queue has exactly three buyers, nothing happens.
   - For each market where the queue has two or fewer buyers, add buyers one at a time until there are three buyers. To add a buyer, draw the top card of the buyer deck, then move a matching buyer from the buyer board to the queue in that market. Always take from the lowest occupied space of the matching popularity track and add to the back of the queue. Place each card in the discard pile after resolving it. When the deck runs out, reshuffle the discard pile, then continue drawing.

Reset Buyer Queues Example:



4 Buyers: Return one to supply. *0–2 Buyers: Add until three buyers.* *3 Buyers: Nothing happens.*

3. **Resolve Surveyor Forecast:**

   - For each card in the surveyor forecast, draw three artefacts of the matching colour from the supply pile. Place the first two artefacts face up on the matching dig sites. Place the third artefact face up at the bottom of the matching black market stack.

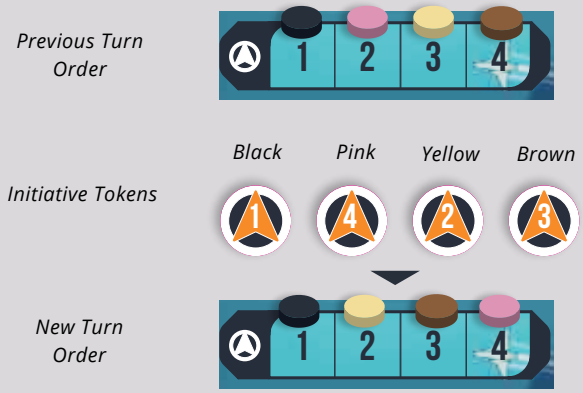
   - Remove all crew cubes from the surveyor forecast and return them to their respective owners. Remove all cards from the surveyor forecast and place them in the common discard pile. Then, if it is the second round, draw 3/4/5 new cards (for 2/3/4 players) from the action deck to form a new surveyor forecast.

Resolve Surveyor Forecast Example:



4. **Determine Turn Order:** Each player who has an initiative token sets their turn order marker in the matching position on the turn order track. Players who do not have an initiative token come after all other players in turn order, maintaining the same order relative to each other. Finally, return all initiative tokens to the supply.

Determine Turn Order Example:



5. **Refill Player Hands:**

   - Deal eight cards from the action deck to each player, which they must keep separate from the cards they carried over from the previous round (if any). If the action deck runs out, reshuffle the cards from the common discard pile to form a new deck, then continue dealing.

   - Simultaneously, each player looks at the cards they were dealt, selects two of them to add to their hand, then passes the remaining cards clockwise to the player on their left. Repeat this process twice more, selecting two cards at a time and passing the rest clockwise, until each player has selected six new cards. During the final selection, each player puts the two remaining cards that they did not select in the common discard pile.

   - Players can now retrieve the travel cards from their personal discard pile, which they used in the previous round, and add them to their hand again.

6. **Cycle Black Market:** Move the top artefact of each black market stack to the bottom of the same stack. Keep them face up to match the rest of the artefacts in the stacks.

Note: *Players are allowed to look through the black market stacks, without rearranging them, at any time. This is considered public information.*



II. ACTION PHASE

During the Action Phase, players take turns in the order indicated by the turn order track. Each player must take **two actions** on their turn, which can be two different actions or the same action twice.

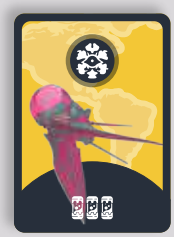
Players continue taking turns in this way, one at a time. Once a player has passed, their turns are skipped but the other players keep playing. Once all players have passed, proceed to the Scoring Phase.

There are eight unique actions:

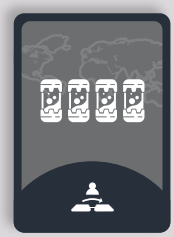
- **TRAVEL**
- **EXCAVATE**
- **MARKET**
- **SELL**
- **COMMAND**
- **SMUGGLE**
- **SURVEY**
- **PASS**

The following sections provide details for how to perform all of the possible actions.

Note: *Every action requires you to play or discard a card from hand, except the Pass action. If you have no cards left in hand, you must choose the Pass action.*



Action Card



Travel Card

When you discard an action card, place it in the common discard pile. When you discard a travel card, place it in your personal discard pile.

Travel cards are different from action cards because they do not have a region colour or market icon. In addition, they have a variable number of fuel icons (two, three, or four).

TRAVEL



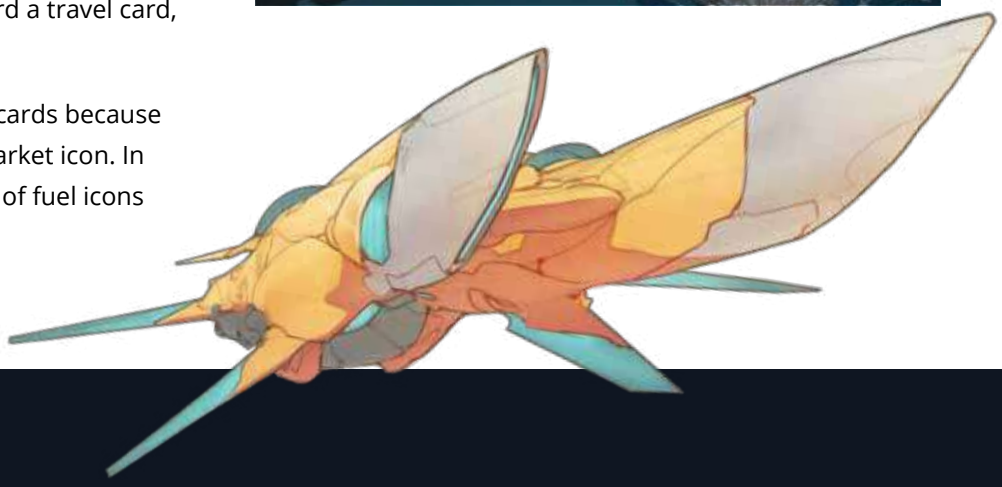
In order to travel, you must discard an action card or travel card from hand. You may then make up to as many moves with your explorers on the map as the **number of fuel icons** on the card you discarded. You may make these moves with any combination of your explorers.

Note: *All action cards have three fuel icons, while travel cards have two, three, or four.*

Each move with an explorer must be from their current location to an **adjacent location** that is connected by a line. During the action, your explorers may move through locations that contain other explorers. Your explorers may end the action in locations that contain opposing explorers, but they may not end in locations that contain your other explorers.

Note: *The yellow dig site in the southwest corner of the map is adjacent to the two locations on the eastern edge of the map: the orange dig site/Market #6 location and the eastern black market.*





EXCAVATE



In order to excavate, you must discard an action card from hand that matches the **colour of the region** where you wish to take this action.

You may then excavate **up to two artefacts** from the map, as long as each one meets the following criteria:

- The artefact must match the **colour** of the discarded action card.
- You must have an **explorer** present in the dig site that contains the artefact.
- You must have an **empty space** available in your cargo hold to store the artefact.

If you excavate two artefacts, they must come from two **different dig sites**, but both still within the same region. This means that you would need to have an explorer present in both dig sites and two empty spaces available in your cargo hold.

Store each excavated artefact face up in an empty space of your cargo hold (not your hidden hold).

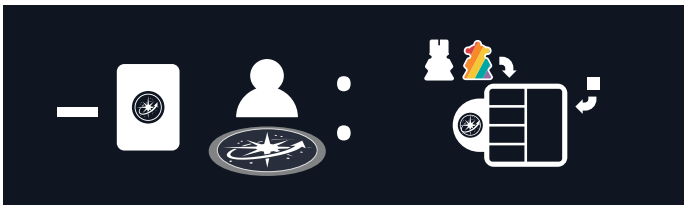
You may then **take samples** of any artefacts that you just excavated; this is the only opportunity you have to do so! To take an artefact sample, assign a crew cube to the matching space in your gallery as a security guard (if there's not one there already).

If you have no crew cubes available, you may reassign security guards from elsewhere in your gallery, but you cannot reassign your traders from the market or your envoys from the command centre.

Note: *The first time that you fill each column of your gallery with samples, you immediately draw one action card and add it to your hand as a bonus. You may gain this bonus card only once per column.*



MARKET



In order to market, you must discard an action card from hand that matches the **icon of the market** where you wish to take this action. You must also have an **explorer** present in that market. Then perform as many of the following steps as you wish once each (all are optional):

1. Assign one of your crew cubes to that market as a **trader**. If you have no crew cubes available, you may reassign a security guard from your gallery, but you cannot reassign a trader from the markets or an envoy from the command centres.
2. Add a **wild buyer** from the supply to the back of the queue in that market. If there are no wild buyers available in the supply, ignore this step.
3. Add a **coloured buyer** of your choice from the supply to the back of the queue in that market. This buyer must be added after the wild buyer from the previous step, if you chose to do so.

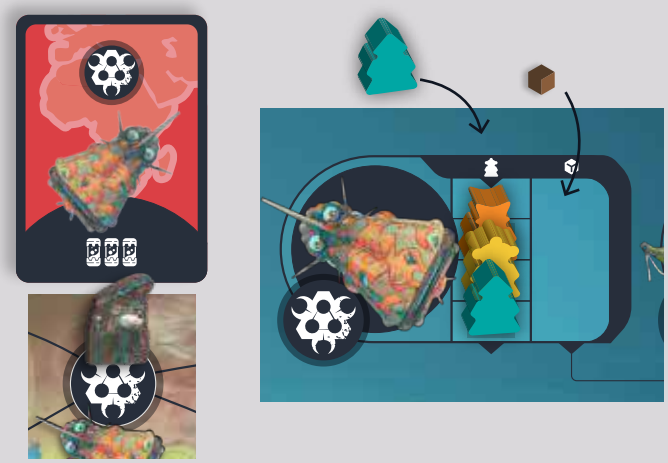


Market Example A:



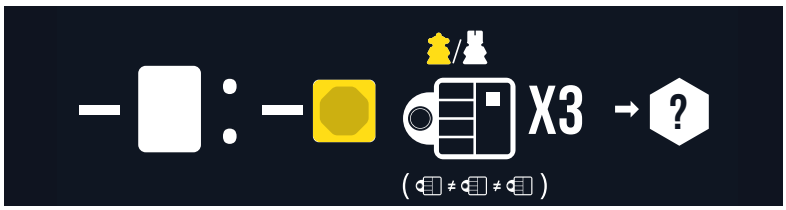
You assign a crew cube to this market as a trader. You add a wild buyer and an orange buyer to the back of the queue. This ejects a purple buyer and a yellow buyer from the front of the queue. They are returned to the supply. The result is a decrease in popularity for purple and yellow, and an increase in popularity for orange.

Market Example B:



You assign a crew cube to this market as a trader. You want to increase green's popularity, so you add a green buyer to the back of the queue. But you choose not to add the wild buyer first, since adding both the wild buyer and the green buyer would eject the green buyer from the front of the queue, resulting in no change to green's popularity.

SELL



In order to sell, you must discard an action card or travel card from hand. You must also choose a **region**. The region you choose does not have to match the colour of the discarded card.

Select **up to three markets** that meet the following criteria:

- Select one market for **each artefact** you wish to sell that matches the colour of the selected region (up to three).
- Each selected market must have at least **one buyer** in its queue that matches the colour of the selected region. This includes wild buyers!
- Each selected market must have at least **one of your traders** present there.

If there are no markets that meet all of the above criteria, then you cannot choose this action.





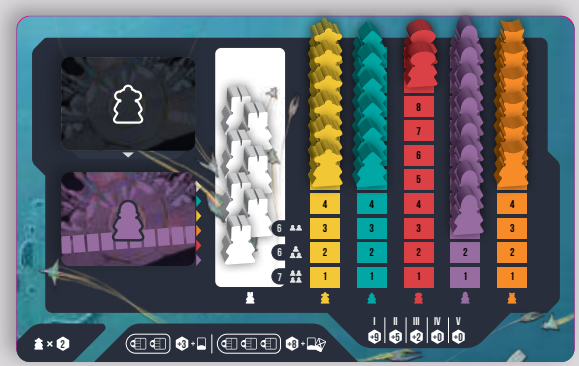
Then **earn credits** for the sale (not each artefact):

- Calculate where the chosen region ranks in **popularity level**. Earn credits according to the chart beneath the popularity tracks on the buyer board. If there is a tie for a given rank, the tied regions are worth the full credit value for that rank and the subsequent ranks are skipped.
- Earn two credits for each buyer at the selected markets that matches the **colour of the artefacts** in the sale. This includes wild buyers!
- If you use **multiple markets**, you earn additional credits! If you use two markets for the sale, you earn three additional credits. If you use three markets for the sale, you earn eight additional credits.

You also earn a **bonus card** for using multiple markets:

- If you use two markets for the sale, draw one action card from the deck and add it to your hand.
- If you use three markets for the sale, draw two action cards from the deck, then add one to your hand and put the other in the common discard pile.

Region Popularity Example:



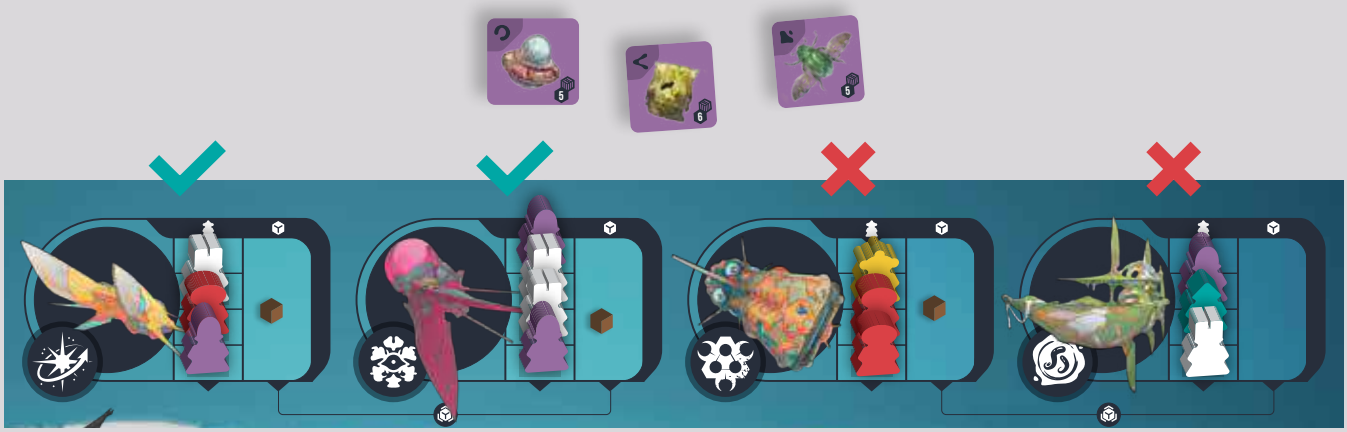
Right now, the red region is the most popular and is worth nine credits. Then the yellow, green, and orange regions are tied for second-most popular, so they are all worth five credits. Purple, the next-most popular region, is worth zero credits because it is the least popular. The credit payouts for the third and fourth ranks are skipped due to the three-way tie for second-most popular region.

Then move all buyers who participated in the current sale from their markets **to the mothership**. If there were any buyers already present on the mothership before this, return those buyers to the supply now.

Move one of your traders from each selected market to the corresponding command centre. These traders have now been **promoted to envoys**. They will help you earn credits during the Scoring Phase.

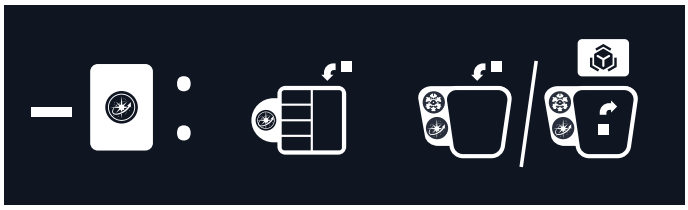
Discard all of the artefacts that you just sold in the sale. These artefacts have now been **removed from circulation**. You can return them to the game box.

Sell Example:



You have three purple artefacts, and you have traders in three different markets. Unfortunately, Market #3 does not have any buyers who are interested in purple artefacts. You cannot sell to Market #4 either, because you do not have a trader present there. So you sell two of your three purple artefacts, earning a total of 20 credits for the sale: 5 credits for region popularity, because purple is the second-most popular region currently; 12 credits from the six interested buyers; and 3 additional credits (plus a bonus card) because you used two markets for the sale. These buyers now move to the mothership and any buyers that were already there return to the supply. You then promote one of your traders from each selected market to become an envoy in the corresponding command centre.

COMMAND



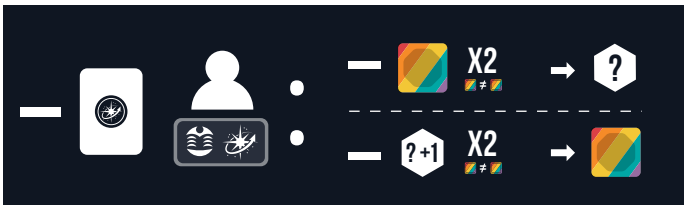
In order to command, you must discard an action card that matches the **icon of the market** and corresponding command centre where you wish to take this action. Then perform one or both of the following steps (both are optional):

- Assign one of your available crew cubes to the matching market as a **trader**.
- Either assign one of your available crew cubes to the matching command centre as an **envoy** -OR- recall one of your envoys from the corresponding command centre and return it to your supply. If you recall an envoy, you may use the **command ability** shown on the command card next to that command centre.

Note: *If you have no crew cubes available, you may reassign security guards from your gallery, but you cannot reassign traders from the markets or envoys from the command centres.*



SMUGGLE



In order to smuggle, you must discard an action card that matches the **icon of one of the black markets**. You must also have an **explorer** present in that same black market. Then choose one of the following two options:

- **Offload Artefacts** – Offload **up to two artefacts** of different regions from your possession to the black market. For each artefact you offload, earn credits equal to its listed value. Then place the offloaded artefact face up at the bottom of the matching black market stack.
- **Acquire Artefacts** – Acquire **up to two artefacts** of different regions from the tops of the black market stacks. For each artefact you acquire, spend credits equal to its listed value plus one. Then store the acquired artefact in an empty space in either your cargo hold or your hidden hold.

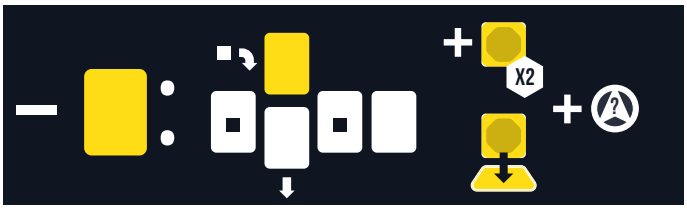
  If there are no empty spaces in either your cargo hold or hidden hold, then you may not acquire artefacts from the black market.

  You may then **take samples** of any new artefacts you just acquired; this is your only opportunity to do so! To take an artefact sample, assign a crew cube to the matching space in your gallery as a security guard (but only if there's not one there already).

  If you have no crew cubes available, you may reassign security guards from other spaces in your gallery, but you cannot reassign traders from the markets or envoys from the command centres.

Note: *The first time that you fill each column of your gallery with samples, you immediately draw one action card and add it to your hand as a bonus. You may gain this bonus card only once per column.*

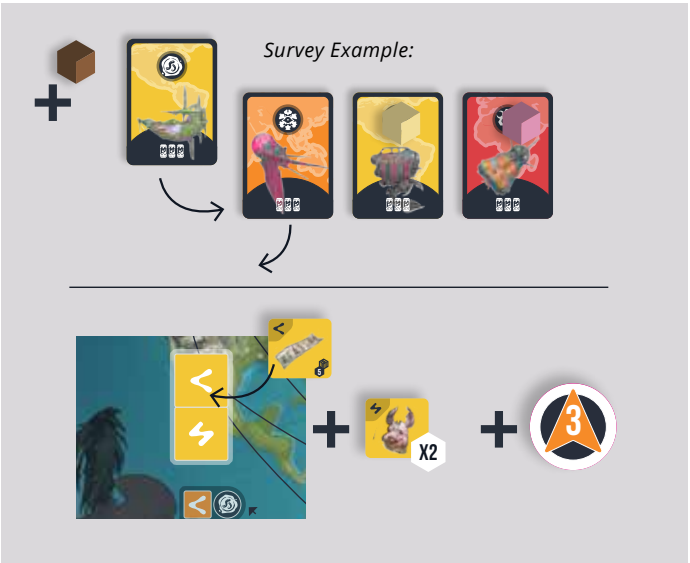
SURVEY



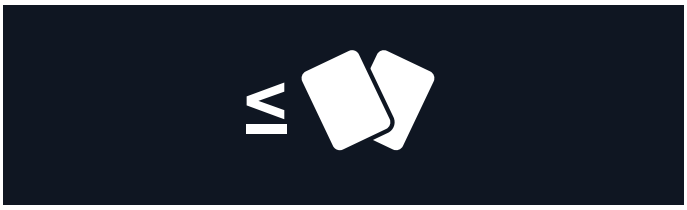
In order to survey, you must play an action card from your hand. There must also be at least one card in the surveyor forecast **without a crew cube** on it (rounds 1–2 only). Then perform the following three steps in order:

1. Choose a card from the surveyor forecast **without a crew cube** on it. **Discard that card** and put your played card in its place. Then place a crew cube from your supply on that card, if one is available.
2. If you have not claimed an initiative token yet this round, claim the **lowest initiative token** available (i.e., "1" is the lowest, "4" is the highest).
3. Draw **two artefacts** from the supply pile matching the colour of your played card. Place one of those artefacts on the matching dig site. The other artefact you may either shuffle back into the supply pile -OR- pay double its listed value to buy and store in your cargo hold. If you buy it, you may take a sample of it to put in your gallery (see Excavate).

Note: *During the third round, skip the first two steps. Simply discard your played card instead and proceed directly to the third step.*



PASS

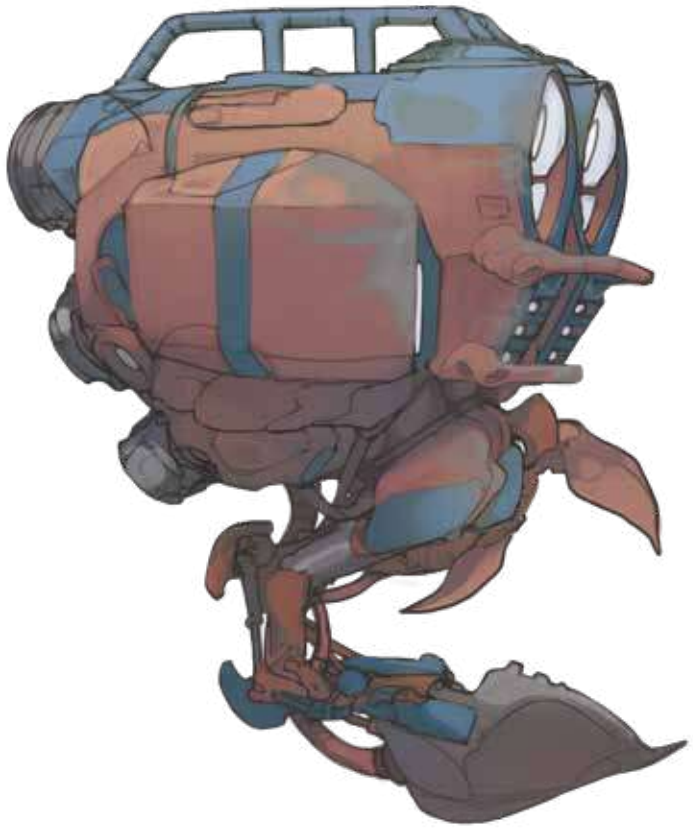


When you pass, you do not discard a card from hand.

If you pass while you still have cards left in hand, set aside all of your remaining travel cards for now; you will retrieve them during the next round's Preparation Phase. Then discard action cards from hand until you have no more than **two cards left** in hand.

Once you have passed, you will not take any more turns during the Action Phase this round.

If you pass with the first action of your turn, your second action of your turn is forfeited and the next player immediately begins their turn.



III. SCORING PHASE

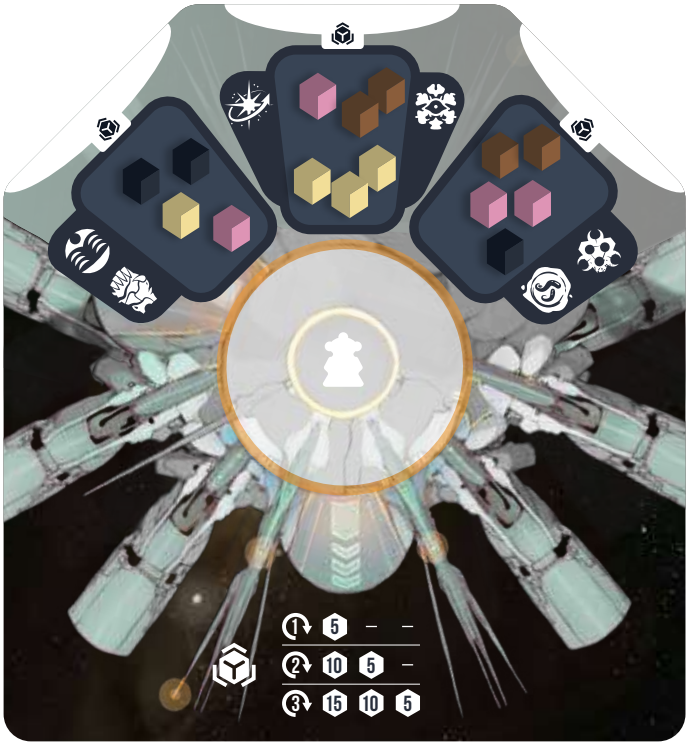
During this phase, the three command centres are scored based on **envoy majority** and credits are awarded accordingly. Score each command centre separately, ranking the players based on how many of their envoys are present in that command centre.

- **Round 1:** The player with the most envoys earns 5 credits. No credits are awarded for second place or third place.
- **Round 2:** The player with the most envoys earns 10 credits. The player with the second-most envoys earns 5 credits. No credits are awarded for third place.
- **Round 3:** The player with the most envoys earns 15 credits. The player with the second-most envoys earns 10 credits. The player with the third-most envoys earns 5 credits.

Note: *If you have no envoys present in a command centre, you cannot earn credits for it, no matter your rank.*

In the case of a tie between players, add together the credits for the tied places, then divide those credits as evenly as possible (rounding down) between the tied players. The next player is bumped down to the next available place accordingly.

Command Centre Scoring Example:



It's the third round of the game. In the left command centre, Black has first place (15 credits), while Pink and Yellow are tied for second place (7 credits each). In the middle command centre, Yellow has first place (15 credits), Brown has second place (10 credits), and Pink has third place (5 credits). In the right command centre, Brown and Pink are tied for first place (12 credits each) and Black is bumped down to third place (5 credits).

GAME END

The game ends once the third round is over. Then each player earns credits for the **samples in their gallery**, as indicated by the assigned security guards. Calculate the credit value of each row and column of the gallery separately, based on the scoring charts shown along the right and bottom edges of the gallery.

Note: *Artefacts left in players' cargo holds and hidden holds, which were not sold or offloaded during play, are not worth any credits at the end of the game.*

After all galleries have been scored, the player with the **most total credits** is the winner. In the case of a tie, the player with the most remaining artefacts is the winner. If the tie persists, the tied players share the victory.

Gallery Scoring Example:



You earn 13 credits for your samples in the first row, 4 credits for your samples in the first column, 9 credits for your samples in the third column, and 15 credits for your samples in the fifth column. Your other rows and columns do not earn you any credits. You earn a total of 41 credits for the samples in your gallery.

FACTION ABILITIES



GUL CARTEL

The Smugglers

When you take the Sell action, you may first acquire one artefact from the black market at its listed value (instead of +1). You must have an explorer in one of the black markets to do so. You may sell this artefact during the same action.



IS'SISINUI

The Psychics

When you take the Survey action, draw one extra artefact. You may store one of the three drawn artefacts in your cargo hold for free. You may still buy one of the other two by paying double.



DAL-HARRAII CORP

The Pilots

At the start of each of your turns, you may move one of your explorers for free to an adjacent location that does not already contain one of your explorers.



AQULLA COLLECTIVE

The Merchants

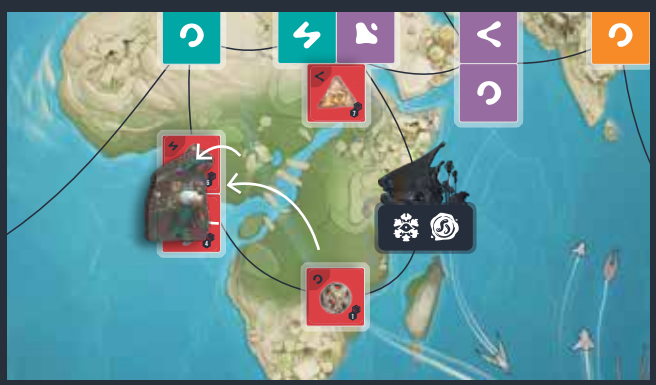
When you take the Sell action, you may sell to the market that matches the card you discarded for the action, even if you do not have a trader there.



KUTI KUTI UNION

The Excavators

When you take the Excavate action with a single explorer, you may excavate a second artefact of the same colour, either from the same dig site or from an adjacent dig site.



Kuti Kuti Union Example:

When you excavate at this dig site with your explorer, you may choose to excavate both red artefacts from this dig site or one from this dig site and one from the adjacent dig site. You do not need to have a second explorer present.

SOLO MODE

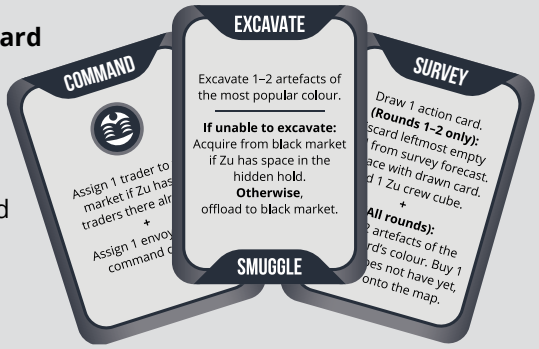
You are competing against a powerful corporation that works in the shadows of the artefact industry. The company is made up entirely of clones of the CEO. The company, the CEO, and the clones are collectively known by a single moniker: "Zu." While the clones can identify each other, they are virtually indistinguishable to anyone outside of the company. Zu is everywhere and nowhere; the full extent of its connections are unknown. Its ability to manage its crew and broker trade deals is unmatched, allowing it to bypass the regulations and taxes imposed on the collection and sale of Earth artefacts. Be wary — Zu has many tricks up its sleeves!

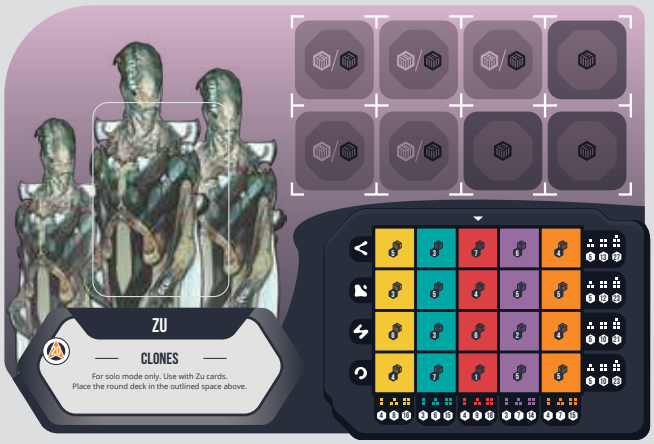
SOLO COMPONENTS

Zu Faction Board

24 Zu Cards

- 8x Excavate
- 2x Market
- 6x Command
- 4x Sell
- 2x Snipe
- 2x Survey





GAME SETUP

Note: *Throughout these rules, "you" refers to the lone human player, while "Zu" and "it" refers to the automated opponent.*

Set up for a two-player game with the following changes:

1. Give Zu its own special faction board.
2. Do not give Zu any explorers. Zu does not place or move explorers on the map.
3. Do not give Zu any travel cards and do not deal Zu a starting hand of action cards.
4. The drafting variant for starting hands, which uses the rules from Step 5 of the Preparation Phase, is not compatible with solo mode.
5. Give Zu a full set of crew cubes in an unused colour. Keep another set of crew cubes nearby in case Zu runs out of the first set during play.
6. Give Zu eight credits and set its turn order based on the starting initiative shown on its faction board.
7. Sort Zu's cards into six piles by type. Shuffle each pile separately. Without looking at them, take cards from these piles to form three face-down decks, one for each round, as follows.

ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
3x Excavate	3x Excavate	2x Excavate
2x Market	2x Command	3x Command
1x Command	1x Sell	2x Sell
1x Sell	1x Survey	
2x Snipe		
1x Survey		

8. Shuffle each round's deck separately. Place the shuffled Round 1 deck onto Zu's faction board. Place the remaining two shuffled decks next to Zu's faction board, in round order.

ZU'S GALLERY AND CREW

Zu uses its **gallery** like a human player does: assigning security guards to show which artefacts it takes samples of during the game. Zu scores the samples in its gallery at the end of the game like a human player does.

However, unlike a human player, Zu will never reassign security guards that it has assigned to its gallery.

Zu has an **unlimited supply** of crew cubes. If Zu ever runs out of crew cubes in its colour, it will use crew cubes of a secondary colour instead.



ZU'S PRIORITY SYSTEMS

Zu follows set priority systems for two game concepts: biggest influence swing and most lucrative market. The following sections explain these concepts in detail.

Biggest Influence Swing

When given a choice, Zu will prioritise the command center that will cause the biggest influence swing. In other words, the command centre where the difference in envoy count between you and Zu is the smallest. In order to determine which command centre will cause the biggest influence swing, Zu follows this priority system:

- a command centre where there are no envoys at all
- a command centre where placing an envoy will tie you for envoy majority
- a command centre where placing an envoy will break a tie in its favour
- a command centre where placing an envoy will reduce your lead
- a command centre where placing an envoy will increase its own lead
- random choice between the tied command centres

Most Lucrative Market

When given a choice, Zu will prioritise the most lucrative market. In order to determine which market is the most lucrative, Zu follows this priority system:

- the market with the most buyers (including wild buyers!) interested in artefacts of the most popular colour that Zu has available to sell
- the market with the most of your traders, as long as Zu also has at least one trader there
- the market which would cause the biggest influence swing in the corresponding command centre if Zu's traders in that market get promoted to envoys
- random choice between the tied markets

GAMEPLAY

I. PREPARATION PHASE

Carry out the Preparation Phase in the second and third rounds as per the core rules, with the following changes:

Prepare Zu's new round deck:

- Flip Zu's discard pile from the previous round face down and shuffle it.
- Take three random cards from the previous round's discard pile and shuffle them into Zu's new round deck. Remove the rest of the cards in the discard pile from the game, without revealing them.
- Place the new round deck onto Zu's faction board.

Deal yourself nine new cards from the action deck (instead of eight). Do not deal cards to Zu. Then draft your new hand as follows:

- Choose two cards to keep.
- Shuffle the remainder, then discard two at random.
- Choose two more cards to keep.
- Shuffle the remainder, then discard one at random.
- Keep the final two cards.

II. ACTION PHASE

Carry out the Action Phase as per the core rules, with you and Zu taking alternating turns. The rules for your own turns are unchanged.

On each of Zu's turns, it takes two actions. For each action, reveal the top card of Zu's round deck. Carry out the action depicted on that card, then place the card face up in Zu's discard pile.

Zu will keep taking turns in the usual turn order until its round deck is empty. When there are no more cards left in its deck, Zu passes with its next action.

ZU'S ACTIONS

EXCAVATE

Each of Zu's Excavate cards specifies one of two options:

- Excavate one or two artefacts of the more popular of the two colours depicted on the card.
- Excavate one or two artefacts of the colour that is most popular overall. If there are no artefacts of the most popular colour available in any dig sites, go to the next most popular colour, and so on, until you find a colour that is available.

If Zu ever has to choose between multiple colours that are tied for the same level of popularity, Zu follows this priority system:

- a colour for which Zu can excavate two artefacts (instead of only one) as long as it currently has room available to store both artefacts in its cargo hold
- a colour for which Zu does not currently have any artefacts
- a colour for which you have the fewest artefacts
- random choice between the tied colours

Zu always excavates two artefacts from dig sites in the matching region, if possible. Otherwise, Zu excavates only one artefact.

Check the following conditions to determine whether Zu can legally excavate artefacts, based on the current capacity of its holds. If not, then Zu will take a different action instead.

- If Zu's cargo hold and hidden hold are both full at the start of this action, Zu offloads to the black market instead (see Smuggle).
- If Zu's cargo hold is full but its hidden hold is not at the start of this action, Zu acquires from the black market instead (see Smuggle).

Zu attempts to excavate artefacts of the desired colour, ignoring any artefacts that it already has samples or copies of. It chooses which artefacts to excavate according to this priority system:

- artefacts of the desired colour that you do not have samples of
- artefacts of the desired colour with the fewest copies present on the map currently
- artefacts of the desired colour with the highest listed value
- random choice between the tied artefacts

If Zu is unable to excavate any artefacts of the desired colour (i.e., no artefacts of that colour available or all available artefacts of that colour it already has samples or copies of), Zu acquires from the black market instead (see Smuggle).

If Zu excavates any artefacts, it places them in its cargo hold. Then Zu immediately takes samples of these artefacts by assigning crew cubes as security guards to the matching spaces in its gallery.

SMUGGLE

Zu only takes a Smuggle action when unable to excavate an artefact during an Excavate action. Which Smuggle action Zu takes is determined by what exactly Zu failed to do during the Excavate action (see Excavate).

A. Acquire from Black Market

When Zu acquires from the black market, it chooses only one artefact. The colour of artefact that Zu desires is the same colour that Zu eventually chose during the Excavate action (even if different from Zu's first choice).

To acquire an artefact, Zu spends credits equal to the artefact's listed value plus one, as per the core rules.

These restrictions govern which artefact Zu acquires:

- The desired artefact must be one that Zu does not already have a sample or copy of.
- Zu must have enough credits available to pay for the desired artefact.

If there is no valid artefact of the desired colour available in the black market, Zu chooses the next available colour in the black market (moving through the black market from left to right, and wrapping back around if necessary, until a valid artefact is found).

If there is no valid artefact of any colour in the black market, Zu will offload to the black market instead.

If Zu acquires an artefact from the black market, it places the artefact in its hidden hold. If the hidden hold is full, it places the artefact in its cargo hold instead. Either way, Zu then takes a sample by assigning a crew cube as a security guard to the matching space in its gallery.

B. Offload to Black Market

If Zu has no artefacts to offload when attempting to do so, Zu takes a failed action instead.

Otherwise, when Zu offloads to the black market, it offloads two artefacts of different colours, always choosing the most valuable pair possible. If Zu only has one artefact available, it offloads just that one artefact.

If there is a tie for artefact value, Zu chooses which artefacts to offload with the following priority system:

- artefacts from the cargo hold before artefacts from the hidden hold
- artefacts in ascending order of colour popularity (lowest to highest)
- random choice between the tied artefacts

MARKET

If Zu has at least one trader in every market already, Zu takes a failed action instead.

Otherwise, Zu assigns one or two crew cubes as traders (two if possible, one if not) to different markets where it does not have any traders yet.

If there are multiple eligible markets, Zu follows this priority system:

- the market with the most interested buyers (including wild buyers!) for artefacts of the most popular colour that Zu has available to sell
- the market that would result in the largest influence swing if the trader assigned there is eventually promoted to an envoy
- random choice between the tied markets

Zu then adds one wild buyer (if available) and one coloured buyer (if available) to each of the markets where it just assigned traders.

To determine which colour of colored buyers to add, Zu chooses according to this priority system:

- the most popular colour for which Zu has at least one artefact available to sell
- the colour for which Zu has the most artefacts available to sell
- random choice between the tied colours

COMMAND

Each of Zu's Command cards specifies a market and corresponding command centre. Zu assigns crew cubes to them as follows:

- If Zu has no traders in the specified market, it assigns one trader there.
- Zu assigns one envoy to the specified command centre.

SELL

If Zu has no artefacts available to sell, or if there are no interested buyers in any of the markets where it has traders, Zu takes a failed action instead.

Otherwise, Zu chooses artefacts of the colour that it can sell to the most markets (up to the maximum of three), as long as it has at least one trader in each of those markets. If there are multiple valid markets, Zu always chooses the most lucrative markets.

Zu sells its chosen artefacts, and promotes its traders from the chosen markets to envoys, as per the core Sell action rules. If Zu sells at multiple markets, it earns the bonus credits, but never gains the bonus card.

If Zu has to choose between multiple artefacts of the chosen colour, it sells those with lowest listed values. If there is a tie for listed values, it chooses randomly between the tied artefacts.

SNIPE (MARKET + SELL)

If Zu has no artefacts available to sell, or if there are no interested buyers in any of the markets, Zu takes a failed action instead.

Otherwise, Zu sells one artefact. If there is a tie between colours, Zu chooses the colour with highest popularity; if still tied, Zu chooses randomly. If there is a tie between artefacts, Zu chooses the artefact with lowest value.

Zu always chooses the market with the most interested buyers for artefacts of the colour Zu has the fewest of, as long as Zu has at least one of that colour. If there is a tie between markets, Zu chooses the most lucrative market.

Then Zu makes the sale:

- If Zu has no traders in the chosen market, it first assigns one trader there.
- Zu sells its chosen artefact, and promotes a trader from the chosen market to an envoy, as per the core Sell action rules.

SURVEY

Zu draws a card from the action deck.

Rounds 1–2 Only: Zu discards the leftmost card without a crew cube on it from the surveyor forecast, then replaces it with the drawn card. Zu places one of its own crew cubes on that card.

All Rounds: Zu draws two artefacts from the supply pile matching the colour of the drawn card. Zu then resolves the two artefacts as follows:

- If it can, Zu buys one of the artefacts, which it does not already have a sample or copy of, for twice its listed value, storing it in its cargo hold. If Zu still needs both artefacts, it buys the one it can afford; if it can afford both, it buys the one with the higher listed value; if tied for value, it buys one at random.
- Zu places the other artefact onto the map in the matching dig site. If Zu didn't buy an artefact, it picks one at random to place onto the map, then shuffles the other back into the supply pile.

FAILED ACTION

When Zu is unable to perform the action listed on the revealed card, that is a failed action and Zu gains 10 credits instead.

III. SCORING PHASE

Perform the Scoring Phase as per the core rules.

GAME END

Score your gallery and Zu's gallery as per the core rules.

Then total the listed values of all artefacts remaining in Zu's cargo hold and hidden hold. Add that total to Zu's score before your compare final scores.

You win if your final score is higher than Zu's final score.

DIFFICULTY LEVELS

The solo mode is medium difficulty by default. If you wish to adjust the difficulty to make it easier or harder, try any combination of the following adjustments:

Decreasing the Difficulty

- Zu starts the game with zero credits.
- Zu gains no credits from failed actions.
- During a Market action, Zu places wild buyers but not coloured buyers, into the selected markets.
- When Zu takes a Snipe, Survey, or Excavate (Most Popular) action, it then discards the next card from its round deck. This means that Zu might take fewer than five turns in a round, and might take only one action on its final turn of the round.
- Zu does not get extra crew cubes of a second colour. If Zu does not have enough crew cubes available for a Market, Command, or Snipe action, Zu takes a failed action instead.

Increasing the Difficulty

- When Zu takes an Excavate action which specifies two colours, it excavates one artefact of each colour specified on the card.
- When Zu takes a failed action, it gains 15 credits (instead of 10).
- Zu can always store artefacts in either its cargo hold or its hidden hold, no matter how those artefacts were gained.
- At the end of the game, if you have any artefacts left in your cargo hold and hidden hold, you lose credits equal to their listed values.
- When Zu acquires an artefact from the black market, it then acquires the most valuable artefact available in the black market that it does not already have a sample or copy of (ties broken in left-to-right order). If Zu already has a sample or copy of all artefacts available in the black market, this effect is ignored.

QUICK REFERENCE

I. PREPARATION PHASE

(*skipped in round 1*)

1. Enable Command Abilities
2. Reset Buyer Queues
3. Resolve Surveyor Forecast
4. Determine Turn Order
5. Refill Player Hands
6. Cycle Black Market

II. ACTION PHASE

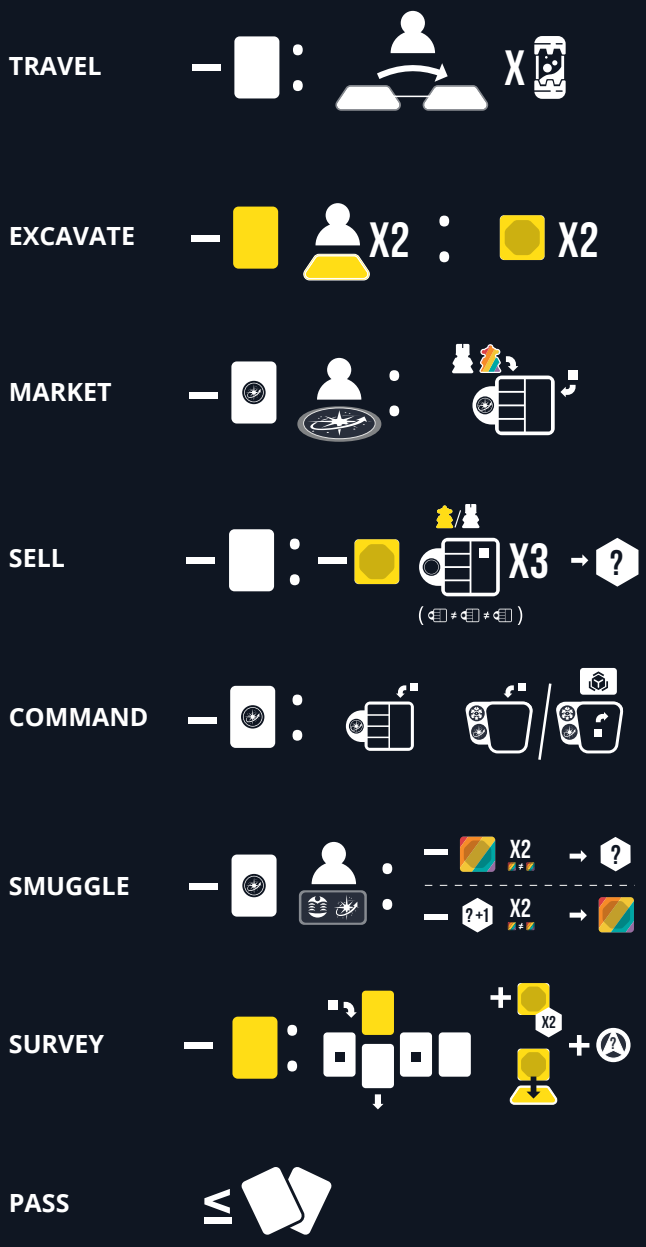
III. SCORING PHASE

Score each command centre based on envoy majority.

- **ROUND 1:** 5 credits
- **ROUND 2:** 10 credits, 5 credits
- **ROUND 3:** 15 credits, 10 credits, 5 credits

GAME END

After three rounds are over, players earn additional credits for the protected samples in their galleries. The player with the most total credits wins!



CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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