

Introduction

The Galaxy is vast, bountiful, and open to every species able to overcome the gravity of their home world and spread out across space. Nine elder races stand ready to take the stars and planets for themselves.

In the future, all of these proud races will be small parts of a great Empire spanning thousands of parsecs. Everyone will have their place, but only one race will become the founder and sovereign of the Galactic Empire.

Here and now, unfolds the great struggle to determine who will be the Master of the Galaxy. And for this great purpose, any means are justified.







9 species cards



4 reference cards



9 black hole tokens



4 cloth bags





Game board

Game Setup

1) Place the game board in the center of the playing area.

- 2) Separate the cards into seven decks:
 - 3 politics decks (leader, conflict, government)
 - 3 development decks (expansion, commerce, progress)
 - 1 species deck

Shuffle each deck separately and place them face down next to the board.

- 3) Each player takes a bag and fills it with 25 resources (five of each color: red, blue, yellow, green and black). Place the unused cubes into a common reserve next to the board. Each player takes nine space bases (round pieces) of their chosen color.
- 4) Determine the first player in any way you like. The first player draws one non-black cube and finds starting system of the same color on the board. All starting systems are located in the corners of the game board and contain three planets. Rotate the board so that this system faces the first player. He places one of his bases on the system and returns the cube to his bag. After that, each other player places one of their bases on their starting system as follows:
 - In a two-player game, the second player starts in the opposite corner of the game board.
 - In a three-player game, the second player starts in the corner to the left of the first player, and the third player chooses between two remaining corners.
 - In a four-player game, the second player starts in the corner to the left of the first player, and so on, clockwise around the board.
- 5) In games with fewer than four players, there will be unoccupied corners. The starting system in each of these corners and the two systems closest to it are out of the game. Cover all these systems with black hole tokens, as pictured.
- 6) Flip the species deck face up. Each player, starting with the first player and continuing clockwise, draws a species card according to the drawing rules (see "Drawing Cards" page 5). Players place these cards face up in front of themselves. Note that there is no hand of cards in the game. Everything you draw is placed face up on the table.

7) After all players have chosen their species, flip all other decks face up.



Sample board setup in a two-player game.



Sample board setup in a three-player game.



Drawing Cards

Whenever you need to draw a card of any type, take two cards from the top of the appropriate deck. Then, you may either:

- 1. Keep one card and put the other to the bottom of the deck.
- 2. Put both cards to the bottom of the deck and take the top card from the same deck.

Some card effects will instruct you to draw a random card from the deck. To do that, take the appropriate deck, shuffle it, take one card at random, then return the deck to its place. If an effect instructs you to choose any card from the deck, you must reshuffle the deck afterwards.

Place all your cards face up in front of you, next to your species card, so that all players can see them. At the end of your turn, you may have no more than seven cards, including your species card. (see "Phase 3. Discard Cards" page 16).

Please note: some abilities are triggered when you gain a card of a certain type. You gain a card when you draw it, as well as when take it from another player by another effect. In other words, you gain a card whenever you come to possession of it, no matter how you do so.

Black Holes

Systems covered by black hole tokens are out of the game. Players cannot place space bases on any covered system, settle its planets, declare a conflict against it, establish a route to the system or gain supremacy symbols linked to it. Consider such systems to be non-existent, as well as all tracks, green or red lines connecting to them.



If a neutral system is devoured by a black hole during the game, discard all resources from its planets and return all resources and conflict cards from the connected tracks to their owners. Players also lose all supremacy symbols linked to the system. If a black hole token is removed from a system, it becomes a neutral system again.

Goal of the Game

The first player to achieve galactic supremacy is the winner of the game. There are three ways to achieve this:

- **Expansion** place all nine bases of your color on the game board.
- **Domination** collect five identical supremacy symbols on your cards and systems.
- **Conquest** capture a second starting system by establishing your base on it.

As soon as a player fulfills either of these victory conditions, the game immediately ends and they are declared the winner.

Supremacy Symbols

There are five different supremacy symbols in the game:



These symbols appear on the game board and on various cards. See page 18 ("Supremacy Symbols") for an explanation on how you gain them. Please note that leader cards don't provide supremacy symbols, but need them to power their abilities.

Playing the Game

Players take turns in clockwise order, starting with the first player. Each player's turn consists of three phases, conducted in this order:

- 1. Gain resources draw three cubes from your bag.
- 2. Allocate resources distribute drawn cubes between your projects.
- 3. Discard and use your cards.

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When a player finishes his turn, the player to his left takes their turn and so on.

Phase 1. Gain Resources

Draw three cubes at random from your bag. These are the resources you can distribute between your projects this turn. If there are not enough cubes in your bag, draw as many as you can.

Resource Types

There are five types of resources in the game, each represented by cubes of a certain color.

Scientific resources (blue cubes) are your scholars and engineers, research institutes and laboratories. A lack of scientific resources hinders you from researching new technologies, leading to technological backwardness.

Economic resources (yellow cubes) are your financial centers, trade and transportation hubs, stock exchanges, banks, police and customs services. A lack of economic resources leads to social instability, delaying construction of space bases and hindering exploration of new systems.

Industrial resources (green cubes) are your workers and farmers, mining facilities, industrial hives, plants and factories. A lack of industrial resources creates a threats of hunger, public discontent and a decline in population.

Military resources (red cubes) are your armies, weapon factories, armories and supply lines. A lack of military resources makes you vulnerable in conflicts, which may cause you to lose systems.

Administrative resources (black cubes) are your officials, bureaucrats, courts, secret services and even organized crime. An imbalance of administrative resources leads to management failures, infrastructure decay and loss of control of your situation.

At the start of the game there are 25 resource cubes in your bag (five of each type). During the game you will distribute these resources between your civilization's various projects, for example exploring star systems or developing new technologies. You gain new resources when you settle planets and discard cards, as explained below. Try to fill your bag with resources that are most suitable for your chosen strategy.

You may look inside your bag at any time, except when drawing resources. If you look in your bag just before drawing cubes, you should shake your bag to mix up cubes.

Adventurer Rule

In the rare case where your bag is empty at the start of your turn, gain a random leader card and then return all black resources from your projects back into your bag. Then you continue your turn as usual.

Phase 2. Allocate Resources

After drawing resource cubes from your bag, you may distribute them between your projects. The projects available to you appear on your cards and on the game board. Each project requires certain resources, as indicated by slots of different colors. The color of each slot shows the type of resource required. The project is complete as soon as all of its slots are filled with the appropriate resource cubes. At the end of this phase you receive rewards for projects you have completed during this phase.

Your civilization may carry out any number of projects at the same time. You don't have to complete one project before initiating another. The main types of projects in the game are:

- Settle a planet
- Establish a route
- Construct a space base
- Receive a card
- Implement a development card
- Steal a resource
- Fulfill a species agenda
- Take part in a conflict

You may fill the slots of any project (except establishing routes) in any order you like. You don't have to distribute all drawn cubes between projects. If you cannot allocate some resources (or do not want to), just return them to your bag.

You cannot place resources on your opponents' projects.

Black resources are used to cancel projects. If you draw a black cube, you may use it to return all resources from one of your projects. Put the black cube and all resources from the canceled project (except for irretrievable losses — see page 12) into your bag. You may only cancel a project by using a black cube.

At the end of this phase, you receive rewards for all of the projects that you have completed this turn. You do this immediately after you have used all your drawn resources (by allocating them or returning them to your bag). If you have completed several projects this turn, receive the rewards for all of them, in any order you like. Depending on the type of the completed project, used resources either stay on the slots, or are returned to your bag (irretrievable losses are put into the common reserve).



One of the projects from a species card. Fill the slots with the five indicated resources to draw a development card.

Settle a Planet

In each star system, there are one, two, or three planets. You may settle a planet in a system where you have a space base (a round piece of your color). To settle, place any non-black resource you've drawn this turn onto the planet. As a reward, at the end of the phase you gain two or three cubes of the same resource you've used to settle a planet as follows:

- Three cubes if you've used the resource of the same color as the system.
- Two cubes if you've used the resource of a different color to the system.

Take these cubes from the reserve and put them into your bag. If there are not enough cubes of the required color in the reserve, take as many as you can.

Each planet may be settled only once in the game. Resources placed on planets stay on the game board until the end of the game. Unlike other projects, you cannot remove these resources using black cubes or by any other means apart from black hole tokens.

Green star system (place your space base here).



A planet in the system (settle it using one of the drawn resources).



Establish a Route

Star systems on the game board are connected by tracks made of square slots. In order to gain access to a neutral system, you must first establish a route from one of your systems to the target system by filling the track between these systems with the resource cubes. All these cubes have to be of the same color, corresponding either to the color of the "departure" system, or to the color of the neutral "destination" system. You choose between these colors when you start to establish a route, and you cannot change your decision until the route is completed or canceled. The slots must be filled in order, one by one, starting with the slot closest to your system. If you have to remove resources from the route, this is done in reverse order, starting from the furthest slot from the "departure" system. A track is considered a route as soon as at least one of its slots has a resource on it.

To establish this route you need to fill the slots with either four red resources, or four blue resources. The route is completed as soon as you fill the last slot of the track. If you have a constructed base, you may place it on the "destination" system at the end of the phase. The resource cubes used to establish the route remain on the game board. In the following turns you may use a black resource to return cubes from the route to your bag. You do not have to keep established routes between your systems, but you cannot place a second or third base in a "disconnected" system (see "Space Base» page 11).

You can establish a route between two systems you already own. You cannot establish a route between your system and an opponent's system, or between your system and a neutral system that you are in conflict with. If several players establish a route to the same neutral system, the first player to place their base in the system keeps their route, while each other player must return to their bag all resources from their route(s) to the system, whether completed or not.

If you lose a system in a conflict or for another reason (in other words, if you remove your last space base from a system), immediately return to your bag all cubes from all of your routes to or from the system, whether completed or not.

Construct a Space Base

Space bases allow you to take control of star systems and gain politics cards. Furthermore, as soon as a player places their last (ninth) base on the game board, that player immediately wins the game.

The space base construction project appears on your species card. At the end of the phase, if the project is completed (all of its slots are filled with the appropriate resources), return all cubes from the project to your bag and place one of your unused space bases on the round symbol in the top right corner of your species card. This is a constructed base and it remains on the species card until you place it on the game board. You may start construction of another base before you place the previous one, but there can be only one constructed base on a single card. In other words, if you already have a space base in the top right of your species card when you complete this project, all resources from this project are returned to your bag without constructing another base.

Besides species cards, the space base construction project appears on government cards. If you have an appropriate government card you are able to carry out two separate space base construction projects and have two constructed bases available at the same time.



Space base construction project on a species card. Fill the slots with the four indicated resources to construct a base.

Placing a Space Base

You can place your constructed bases at the end of resource allocation phase, provided that you have a legal system to do so. You can place your base either in a neutral system to take control of it, or in a system you already control in order to reinforce your authority. After the base is placed, the base construction slot is considered empty and can hold another base the next turn.

To place a base in a **neutral system**, you must have completed a route to this system from one of your own. When the route is completed, you may place constructed base in the system. If you have completed the route but have not constructed a base yet, you may place a base as soon as you finish its construction, provided that no other player has claimed the system ahead of you. If you don't control any systems, you may place your constructed base in any neutral system and draw a leader card, as usual. You may also gain a base in a system after you win a conflict against it (see "Take Part in Conflicts").

by an established route to any other system (yours or neutral). You cannot reinforce your authority in a system that has no established routes. Moreover, the total number of bases in the system cannot exceed the number of planets in it (whether or not the planets are settled). Thus, you may place a second base in any system with two or three planets, but not in a system with only one planet, and you may only place a third base in a system with three planets. Place the new base on top of any previous one, forming a stack. Immediately after placing your base in a system, draw a politics card:

- If you have placed your first base in the system, draw a **leader** card.
- If you have placed your second base in the system, draw a **conflict** card.
- If you have placed your third base in the system, draw a **government** card.

To place your second or third base in a system you already control, you should make sure that the system is connected

Your bases in certain systems give you access to supremacy symbols on the game board, as explained later.

Receive a Card

As with base construction, this type of project appears on your species card (and on your government cards, if you have any). At the end of the phase in which this project is completed (all its slots are filled with the appropriate resources), return all cubes from the project to your bag and draw a card (or sometimes multiple cards) from the specified deck(s).







Progress

card



Any development card

Fill the 2 slots in the top left with yellow resources to draw from the commerce deck, or fill the 4 slots in the middle with blue resources to draw from any development deck.



When you implement a development card, take an extra turn after this one, drawing 2 more resources on that turn.

Implement a Development Card

Development cards give you unique abilities as well as supremacy symbols, but to gain all of the benefits of the development cards, you must implement it first. The implementation requirements appear on the development card. After you complete the project, all cubes remain on the card. If you lose any resource from a development card, all of its effects are cancelled immediately.

Remember, until you implement a development card, it is useless. Consider its text field as blank, with no supremacy symbols. Even if the card's ability is activated by discarding it, you must fill the slots with the required resources first.

You can implement up to three development cards of each type (commerce, expansion, or progress). When you complete the implementation of a development, you immediately draw a politics card:

- if this is your first implemented card of that type, draw a leader card;
- if you now have two implemented cards of that type, draw a conflict card;
- if you now have **three implemented cards** of that type, draw a **government** card.

If one of your implemented cards loses any resources, you can implement it again. You will gain a politics card on completion, as usual.

Irretrievable Losses

Certain resource slots are marked with a black star. These slots are filled with resources as usual. However, when you remove a cube from a marked slot, you discard it to the common reserve instead of returning it to your bag.

This does not prevent resources from being stolen. Whenever player steals a resource, they put it in their bag even if it was taken from the marked slot.



The project to implement the Space Exchange card.

Fulfill an Agenda

The agenda project appears at the bottom of your species card. Complete this project to gain the supremacy symbols shown on the card. All resources used to fulfill the agenda stay on the card. You may use a black cube to return them to your bag, but if any resource from your agenda is removed, you lose all of its supremacy symbols. Should this happen, you will have to refill the empty slots on the agenda to regain the symbols.

Steal a Resource

Your leaders will lend you their special talents and run covert operations. You draw a leader card whenever you place your space base in a neutral system or implement the first development card of a particular type (commerce, progress or expansion). You may have any number of leader cards, but they count towards the seven card limit at the end of your turn.

Most leader cards feature a covert operation project. At the end of the phase, if the project is complete (all its slots are filled with the appropriate resources), return all cubes from the project to your bag, then take a resource cube of the specified color from any opponent's project (except for a settled planet) and put it into your bag as well.

You can never steal black resources, neither with covert operations projects, nor with any other card effect.

Special Abilities of Governments and Leaders

All government cards have a special ability, that might work passively or trigger in a specific situation. These abilities don't have any prerequisites and can be used as long as the player has the card.

Every leader also has their own special ability, that either works passively or is activated by discarding the leader. These abilities are powered by supremacy symbols. If you don't have the symbols that appear on a leader card, you cannot use its ability - treat the text field as blank. Remember that leaders don't provide supremacy symbols themselves and you can always use the covert operation project, regardless of the supremacy symbols you have.



Agenda on a species card. Fill the slots with five indicated resources to gain three supremacy symbols.



Covert operation project on a leader card. Fill the slots with the indicated resources to steal a red cube from any opponent's project.

Take Part in Conflict

Conflicts are special types of projects because each conflict affects two opposing sides, usually players. Therefore, there are two projects on each conflict card, one for either opponent in this conflict. During the Phase 3 of your turn, you may place any number of conflict cards.

If you are involved in a conflict, you may allocate resources you've drawn this phase to your side of the conflict card.

When a player has more resources allocated on their side of a conflict than their opponent, they gain the supremacy symbol listed on the card. The symbol is lost when their opponent allocates more resources to their side of the conflict or when the conflict is finished.

If you completely fill your side of the conflict card with suitable resources before your opponent, you will win that conflict. At the end of the Phase when this happens, you and your opponent remove cubes from their side of the completed conflicts. Irretrievable losses are discarded to the common reserve, while all other resources are returned to their owner's bag. After that, the winner of the conflict receives their rewards:

- The winner takes the completed conflict card for later use.
- The winner chooses and removes the number of resources indicated at the bottom of the conflict card from any of the losing player's projects (except for resources on planets and conflicts). They put the cubes into their own bag, even if these resources were on the irretrievable loss slots.
- The winner gains the conflict's **objective** indicated on the opposite side of the conflict card.

Usually the objective of the conflict is capturing your opponent's system involved in this conflict. In this case the losing player must immediately remove all of their bases from the system and return to their bag all of the resources from all connected routes. The winner immediately places one of their unused bases in the conquered system. Note that this placement does not require a constructed base or an established route. You can, however, use one of your constructed bases if you don't have any unused bases left.

If you cannot or do not want to place your base, the system becomes neutral. You will have to establish a route to this system in order to claim it on a later turn.

Different conflict objectives may include kidnapping or killing opponent's leaders, as well as capturing or destroying their developments, government, or other conflict cards.



If you start the conflict against a neutral system, you essentially cannot lose it, but you will still **get the rewards** once you complete it. You cannot take or destroy any cards, but will keep the conflict itself, place your base in the system, and get a number of resources indicated at the bottom of the card from the common reserve.

Conflict Cancellation

In some cases, a conflict can end before its completion. This can happen in the following cases:

- One of the leaders may cancel the conflict with his ability.
- Any of the systems involved in the conflict are claimed by any player, have a change of ownership, or become neutral.
- The owners of both systems involved in the conflict agree to stop (they may only do this during one of their turns).
- The conflict card is chosen as an objective of another finished conflict.

In the first three cases, the conflict card will either go to the player who was on the red side of the conflict, or go to the player who was on the red side of the conflict or, if the conflict was initiated against a neutral system, the card is discarded. In the fourth, it will go to the player who has chosen it as an objective.

In all cases, all of the cubes from the unresolved conflict card are returned to their owners' bags (except for irretrievable losses, which are put into the reserve). Neither player involved in the cancelled conflict receives any reward.



Phase 3. Discard Cards

After using all of the drawn resources and receiving rewards for your completed projects, you may do following things:

- place any number of conflicts on the game board
- discard any number of your cards

Some cards effects are triggered when they are discarded. You discard these cards to activate them and also to clear space for new cards. At the end of this Phase if you have more than seven cards, you must discard excess cards and/or place conflict cards on the board. You cannot have more than seven cards at the end of your turn.

Initiating a Conflict

When you place your second base in a system, you draw a conflict card. During Phase 3 of your turn, you may place any number of conflict cards you have onto the game board. These cards can be placed between your system and either an opponent's system or a neutral system that is connected to it by a track.

When you place a conflict card, you choose the orientation of it. When you start a conflict against either neutral or opponent's system, you may place it with the red side facing your system and the blue side facing opposing system, or vice versa. The orientation of the card sets the victory conditions and rewards for each side of the conflict.

If you place a conflict card on a partially established track to a neutral system, return all resources from that track back into your bag. Starting with the next turn, players who control systems involved in a conflict will be able to allocate their resources to their side. Both projects on a conflict card follow the same rules as any other projects - you can steal resources from them during covert operations and you can cancel them with a black cube.

Players can participate in any number of conflicts. Conflict cards on the board do not count as player's cards at the end of the turn.

Remember that you cannot start filling your side of a conflict card on the same turn in which you placed it on the game board, because the card is placed during Phase 3 and you allocate resources during Phase 2.

Discarding Cards

While many card abilities have a permanent effect, or are triggered when a certain condition is met, some of them are preceded by the discard symbol: 🔍 . To use such an ability, you must discard the card during Phase 3 of your turn. If the card is discarded at any other time (for instance, when you lose a conflict), its ability is not triggered.

Once an ability is triggered, you must carry out all its effects completely. Some abilities let you choose between different options. For example, if the text says you may do something, it's up to you whether to do it or not. Remember that you may only use abilities from your development cards that have been implemented.

When you discard a card, return all of the cubes from the card to your bag (except for irretrievable losses, which are put into reserve).

Gaining Resources

At the end of the phase, you gain new resources depending on how many cards you have discarded during this phase (you gain cubes in addition to any other effects):

- If you have discarded one card, put any one resource from the reserve into your bag.
- If you have discarded two cards, put three resources of any colors from the reserve into your bag.
- If you have discarded three or more cards, put five resources of any colors from the reserve into your bag.

Black resources may not be taken from the reserve by any means.

Please note:

- You may discard any of your cards, with or without a discard symbol.
- You gain resources depending on the total number of cards discarded during this phase, no matter whether or not their abilities were triggered.
- When you finish discarding and using your cards your turn is over. The player to your left now takes their turn.

Additional and skipped turns

Some cards will give players the ability to take an extra turn. Player cannot take more than two extra turns in a row. Other cards cause players to skip their turns. In this case, for every turn a player skips, put a black hole marker on their species card. If a player has to skip multiple turns, place multiple markers. Whenever it is that player's turn again, they remove the marker and play passes to the player to their left.



Supremacy Symbols

You gain supremacy symbols when you fulfill your species agenda, implement development cards or have advantage in ongoing conflicts. In addition, several supremacy symbols appear on the game board. They are acquired in the following ways:

- If the supremacy symbol is linked to your starting system **by a blue line**, you gain this symbol at the start of the game.
- If the supremacy symbol is linked to two systems by a green arrow, you gain this symbol if you have bases in both linked systems.
- If the supremacy symbol is linked to two systems by a red arrow, you gain this symbol if you have your base in one (and only one) of these systems. The other system may be neutral, a black hole or occupied by another player (in the latter case, both players gain the symbol in question). You lose the symbol if you claim both these systems, or if you lose your linked system.

The End of the Game

The game ends immediately after any player fulfills any of the following victory conditions:

- The player places the ninth space base of their color on the game board.
- The player collects five identical supremacy symbols from their cards and systems.
- The player successfully conquers a second starting system, placing his base there.

This player is the winner and founder of the Galactic Empire.

Advanced Drafting Variant

Once you're familiar with the basic flow of the game, you may want to try an advanced variant for species and starting system selection. When using this variant, instead of step 4 of the default setup, do the following:

- 1. Determine the first player in any way you like.
- Reveal a number of species cards equal the number of players plus two. So, you will reveal 4 cards in a two-player game,
 5 in a three-player game, and 6 in a four-player game. These cards should be visible to all players.
- 3. Starting with the first player and continuing clockwise, each player takes one species card. Shuffle the unused species cards back into the species deck.
- Next, starting with the last player and proceeding counterclockwise, each player selects their starting system and puts one of their bases on it.

Thus, when choosing their starting systems, players can see other species that will be in this game and take their capabilities into account.

Projects Table

Project type	Appears on	Required resources	Reward	After completing	Is it possible to remove resources?	Page
Settle a planet	The game board	Any one non-black cube	Gain two or three resources	The used resource remains on the planet	No	9
Establish a route	The game board	Either of two colors, in the indicated amount	You may place your base in the system	The used resources remain on the track	Yes	9
Construct a space base	Species cards and government cards	As indicated on the card	You construct a base	The used resources return to your bag	Yes	10
Receive cards	Species cards and government cards	As indicated on the card	Draw card(s) of the specified type(s)	The used resources return to your bag	Yes	11
Implement a development card	Development card	As indicated on the card	As indicated on the card	The used resources remain on the card	Yes (but you lose the ability of the card)	12
Fulfill an agenda	Species cards and government cards	As indicated on the card	Supremacy symbols	The used resources remain on the card	Yes (but you lose the symbols)	13
Steal a resource	Leader cards	As indicated on the card	Take one resource from an opponent's project	The stolen resource returns to your bag	Yes	13
Take part in a conflict	Your side of the conflict card	As indicated on the card	As indicated on the card	The used resources return to your bag (except for irretrievable losses)	Yes	14