

Comprehensive Rules Reference

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Welcome to The Spoils™ Comprehensive Rules Reference! This reference is intended to offer a definitive answer for every possible rules question. It is not designed to teach you how to play. If you are a beginner, please refer to the Basic Rules available in the latest Pre-Constructed Decks and Competition Packs. You can also find the Basic Rules on our website at www.thespoils.com/rules.

If you cannot find the answer to your question after using this reference, you can try to find an answer on our message boards at www.thespoils.com/forums.

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Section 1 - General Rules

101 The Most Important Rule

101.1 If a card directly contradicts the rules, the card always takes precedence.

102 Object of the Game

102.1 The object of the game is to reduce the influence score of your opponent's faction to 0. If at any time a faction's influence score is 0, the owner of that faction immediately loses the game.

102.1a You do not lose the game if your deck runs out of cards; you simply cannot draw any more.

102.2 If both players lose the game at the same time, the game is a draw.

103 Deck Construction

103.1 Constructed decks must meet the following criteria:

103.1a Utilize only one faction card.

103.1b A minimum of 75 cards must be included, not including your faction card. There is no maximum deck size.

103.1c No more than 4 copies of any card with the same name may be included. However, staple resources are exempt from this rule.

103.1d No cards that are banned in the format being played may be included. The current banned list for all formats can be found in the official Tournament Rules, available online at www.thespoils.com/rules.

103.2 Limited decks must meet the following criteria:

103.2a Utilize only one faction card.

103.2b A minimum of 45 cards must be included, not including your faction card. There is no maximum deck size.

103.2c There is no restriction on the number of copies of a card that can be included. It is limited only by your card pool.

103.2d Unless the Tournament Rules have specifically banned a card in Limited play, any cards banned from Constructed play may be included.

104 Tournaments

- 104.1 This document only discusses the rules of play. For detailed information about tournaments, please refer to the official Tournament Rules, available online at www.thespoils.com/rules.

105 Errata

- 105.1 All cards must be played as though they were the most recent version of the card. The current wording for all cards can be found online at www.thespoils.com/rules.

Section 2 - Card Types

201 Parts of a Card

201.1 Name

201.1a A card's name is written at the top in large letters. Just below you'll find the subtitle, a descriptive line of text related to the card's overall theme.

201.1b A card's name is what uniquely identifies it. Cards with the same name are considered to be the same card even if their other characteristics are different.

201.2 Cost Number

201.2a A card's cost number appears in the upper left corner. It represents the number of [resources](#) needed to [play the card](#).

201.3 Threshold Icons

201.3a A card's [threshold](#) consists of [resource icons](#) in the upper left corner, just below its [cost number](#). It represents the resource icons you must [control](#) in order to [play the card](#).

201.4 Type Line

201.4a A card's type line appears in the middle, just below the artwork. Written on this line are its trade, type, and subtypes (*which are located after the dash*).

201.4b Subtypes are descriptive words or phrases that sometimes interact with other cards during the game. Not every card has subtypes.

If an effect refers to a subtype, it always appears between quotation marks. For example, a card might say “This card gains 1 strength and 1 life for each ‘dragon’ card you control.”

201.5 Rules Text

- 201.5a A card’s rules text appears on the bottom half, just below the [type line](#). This text explains what the card can do during the game.
- 201.5b Unless otherwise stated, a card’s rules text is only active while it’s [in play](#).
- 201.5c [Abilities](#) appear in rules text. They each have a center-justified name and a labeled *cost* and *effect* section. Dividing lines help to separate abilities from the rest of the rules text.
- 201.5d Some paragraphs of rules text begin with [threshold](#) icons. These paragraphs are only active while you are meeting that threshold. (405.4)
- 201.5e Any text written in italics is not part of the rules text. It’s either a descriptive paragraph relating to the card’s overall theme or a reminder to help answer a commonly asked question about the card.

201.6 Collector Info

- 201.6a A card’s collector info appears at the bottom, just below the [rules text](#).
- 201.6b The set icon identifies which set this card belongs to.
- 201.6c The rarity is *common*, *uncommon*, *rare*, or *ultra rare* and it defines how often you’ll find the card in a pack.
- 201.6d The collector number helps you organize your cards. For example, if it says “196/220” it’s the 196th card in a set of 220 cards. Collector numbers are sorted alphabetically by trade and card name.

201.7 Battle Stats

- 201.7a Only [characters](#) have battle stats.
- 201.7b A card’s battle stats appear in the upper right corner, consisting of [strength](#) (*STR*), [life](#) (*LIFE*), and [speed](#) (*SPD*).

201.7c Some [items](#) (usually referred to as “gear”) affect a [character's](#) battle stats. Those adjustments are conveniently represented in the item’s upper right corner, preceded by a “+” or “-” symbol.

201.8 Structure

201.8a Only [locations](#) have structure.

201.8b A [location's](#) structure appears in the upper right corner instead of [battle stats](#). It represents the amount of [damage](#) it takes to [destroy](#) the location.

202 Factions

202.1 You are only allowed to use one faction card per [deck](#). (103.1a, 103.2a)

202.2 Your faction starts the game [in play](#). (601.1a)

202.3 Your faction’s influence is used as the score during the game. Once the influence runs out, you lose the game. (102.1)

202.3a Every faction has a unique starting influence. This number is defined at the top of the card, just below the [name](#).

202.4 If [damage](#) is inflicted to your faction, it loses an equal amount of [influence](#). (408.3)

202.5 Every faction has a *Starting Resources* section in its [rules text](#). This section explains which [resources](#) from your [deck](#) start the game [in play](#).

202.6 Every faction has a *Starting Draw* section in its [rules text](#). This section explains how many cards you [draw](#) in your opening [hand](#). This number is usually different if you are going first as opposed to second.

202.7 Every faction has a *Restore Rule* section in its [rules text](#). It helps replenish your cards and [resources](#) every [turn](#).

202.8 Every faction has a *Develop Rule* section in its [rules text](#). It usually allows you to [draw](#) cards or [play resources](#) each [turn](#).

202.9 A faction is not affected by [effects](#) unless they specifically say that they apply to factions.

202.9a This means you cannot [pick](#) a faction unless explicitly instructed to.

203 Resources

- 203.1 You can only [play a resource](#) when an [effect](#) instructs you to do so.
- 203.1a The most common [effects](#) that allow you to [play resources](#) are generated by your [faction](#).
- 203.2 When you [play a resource](#), you decide if you are going to play it face-up or [face-down](#). Any card can be played face-down, but only actual resource cards can be played face-up.
- 203.2a A [face-down](#) card's [controller](#) can look at its front face at any time. (411.2)
- 203.3 If you are instructed to [pay](#) a [number](#), you [attach](#) that number of resources to your [faction](#). (309.1)
- 203.3a You can only [attach](#) resources that are currently not attached to anything.
- 203.4 Most resource cards [provide](#) resource icons. These icons are clearly indicated in the card's [rules text](#) area. Resource icons correspond with [threshold](#) icons.
- 203.5 Staple resources are the most common kind of resource. They are clearly labeled with the word “staple” on their [type line](#).
- 203.5a The five staple resources are named *Obsession*, *Greed*, *Elitism*, *Deception*, and *Rage*.
- 203.5b You are allowed to include any number of staple resource cards in your Constructed decks. (103.1c)
- 203.5c Each staple resource [provides](#) one [resource icon](#) of its type.
- 203.6 Resources should be oriented sideways while they are [in play](#).
- 203.7 Resources never [deplete](#). When they are used, they are [attached](#) to your [faction](#).

204 Characters

- 204.1 You mainly play characters during your [turn](#), but certain [effects](#) allow you to play them during your opponent's turn.
- Example – If an effect says “play a card” or “play a character” you may do it when the effect resolves, regardless of whose turn it is.*
- 204.2 When a character resolves, put it into play.

- 204.3 Your characters can attack and block while they're [in play](#). However, a character cannot [attack](#) unless it started the [turn](#) in play under your [control](#).
- 204.3a However, characters can use any of their abilities the first turn they are in play under your control.
- 204.3b A character that is put into play by an [effect](#) that happened at the start of the [turn](#) cannot [attack](#) this turn because it wasn't technically [in play](#) at the moment the turn actually started.
- 204.4 Each character has three [battle stats](#): strength, life, and speed.
- 204.4a A character's strength represents how much [damage](#) it can inflict in battle.
- 204.4b A character's life represents how much [damage](#) it takes to [destroy](#) it.
- 204.4c A character's speed defines when its [damage](#) is inflicted.
- 204.5 If the [damage](#) a character receives in a single [turn](#) is ever equal to or greater than its life, [destroy](#) it immediately. (408.4)

205 Tactics

- 205.1 Tactics can be played during your turn. They can also be played in [response](#) to your opponent's actions, even if it isn't your [turn](#). There are also [special times during battles](#) when you can play tactics.
- 205.2 When a tactic resolves, follow its instructions and put it into its owner's [discard pile](#).

206 Items

- 206.1 You mainly play items during your [turn](#), but certain [effects](#) allow you to play them during your opponent's turn.

Example – If an effect says “play a card” or “play an item” you may do it when the effect resolves, regardless of whose turn it is.

- 206.2 When an item resolves, put it into play.

207 Locations

- 207.1 You mainly play locations during your [turn](#), but certain [effects](#) allow you to play them during your opponent's turn.

Example – If an effect says “play a card” or “play a location” you may do it when the effect resolves, regardless of whose turn it is.

- 207.2 When a location resolves, put it into play.
- 207.3 Your opponent can [attack](#) your locations.
- 207.4 Each location has a [structure](#) value. It defines how much [damage](#) it takes to [destroy](#) the location.
- 207.5 If the [damage](#) a location has received during the entire game is ever equal to or greater than its [structure](#) value, [destroy](#) it immediately. (408.5)
 - 207.5a It’s best to keep track of a location’s [damage](#) with pen and paper or by using a six-sided die.
- 207.6 If an [effect](#) *removes* [damage](#) from a location, adjust the total damage it has received this game accordingly.

208 Changing Card Types

- 208.1 A card is allowed to have more than one type at the same time.
 - 208.1a Certain [effects](#) might say the card “gains” a type. If it does, it still has its other types in addition to the new type.
- 208.2 If the [effect](#) of a card refers to a specific card type, but the card it is trying to affect is no longer that type, then the card is not affected by that effect.
- 208.3 If a card with the [character](#) type loses that type, it forgets all [damage](#) it received this [turn](#).

Example – If an item becomes a character, receives damage, stops being a character, then later that turn becomes a character again, the damage it received earlier is not remembered.

- 208.4 If a card with the [character](#) type loses that type [during a battle](#), the card is [removed from the battle](#) immediately.

Section 3 - Key Terminology

301 Attach & Detach

- 301.1 To attach one card to another, arrange the attaching card so it overlaps the target card.

- 301.2 When you attach a card to something, it is simultaneously detached from anything else it is already attached to.
- 301.3 An attaching card can only be attached to one target at a time. However, target cards can have any number of cards attached to them at once.
- 301.4 If a target card leaves play, all cards attached to it leave play in the same way.
 - 301.4a This refers to any possible way of leaving play, including being [destroyed](#), removed from the game, put into [owner's hand](#), or [shuffled](#) into owner's [deck](#).

302 Battle Terms

- 302.1 *Target of the attack* – The [faction](#) or [location](#) being attacked during the current battle.
- 302.2 *Being attacked* – A player is being attacked during any battle in which a [faction](#) or [location](#) they [control](#) is the target of the attack.
- 302.3 *Attacking player* – The player that started the current battle.
- 302.4 *Defending player* – The player being attacked during the current battle.
- 302.5 *Battle party* – A group of characters working together in a battle.
- 302.6 *Attacking party* – The battle party under the attacking player's [control](#) during a battle.
- 302.7 *Blocking party* – The battle party under the defending player's [control](#) during a battle.
- 302.8 *During a battle* – A battle is the period of time from the moment an [attack is announced](#), lasting until the [battle is fully resolved](#).
- 302.9 *In a battle* – A [character](#) is considered to be in a battle while it is a member of an attacking party or blocking party.
- 302.10 *Opposing party* – The battle party under your opponent's [control](#) during a battle.
- 302.11 *Covert party* – An attacking party containing only [characters](#) with [covert](#).
 - 302.11a If any member of a covert party loses [covert](#) during the battle, the party immediately isn't covert anymore.

302.11b If the status of a covert party changes during a battle, it doesn't affect any blocks that have already been made.

302.12 *Attacking Character* – A [character](#) is considered to be attacking while it's a member of an attacking party.

302.13 *Blocking Character* – A [character](#) is considered to be blocking while it's a member of a blocking party.

302.14 *In a party with* – If a [character](#) refers to another character that is in a party with it, any member of that party meets this criterion, even the character doing the check. For example, if a card says “pick a character in a party with this card” then you could [pick](#) the card itself.

302.15 *Removed from battle* – If a [character](#) is removed from battle it is no longer part of its battle party. Any [battle damage](#) assigned to the character is not inflicted.

303 Deplete & Restore

303.1 You deplete some cards to indicate they have been used for the [turn](#). If you're instructed to deplete a card, you can indicate it's depleted however you want as long as it's clear to your opponent.

303.2 You can only deplete a card if it isn't depleted already.

303.3 To restore a card, undo whatever you did to deplete it.

304 Destroy

304.1 To destroy a card means to remove it from play and put it into its [owner's discard pile](#).

305 Discard

305.1 To discard a card means to take it from its [owner's hand](#) and put it into their [discard pile](#).

306 Draw

306.1 To draw a card is to put the top card of a [deck](#) into its [owner's hand](#).

306.2 If you run out of cards in your [deck](#) to draw you don't lose the game, you just fail to draw the remaining cards. (102.1a)

306.3 Cards are always drawn as a group. For example, if a card says “draw 2 cards” then you put them into your [hand](#) at the same time, instead of 2 separate “draw a card” events.

306.4 A draw is also the term for a game that has no winner. If both players lose the game at the same time, the game is a draw (102.2).

307 Duplicate

307.1 If you are instructed to duplicate a [tactic](#), an invisible copy is created. Its [cost number](#) is considered to be 0 and you don't need to meet its [threshold](#). The copy has all the [rules text](#) of the original, so you must still satisfy all its [extra costs](#). If you can't, the duplicate is [terminated](#).

307.2 If a card's [rules text](#) has several labeled options, you can choose a new option for the duplicate.

307.3 If an [effect](#) restricts you from playing [tactics](#), any duplicates created while that restriction is active are [terminated](#) immediately.

308 Free

308.1 If an [effect](#) lets you [play a card](#) for *free* then its [cost number](#) is considered to be 0 while you play it.

308.1a You still need to meet its [threshold](#) and satisfy its [extra costs](#).

309 Pay

309.1 If you are instructed to pay a number, you must [attach](#) that number of [resources](#) to your [faction](#).

309.1a You can only [attach](#) resources that are currently not attached to anything.

309.1b The word *pay* is never used to refer to your [faction](#) losing [influence](#).

310 Pick

310.1 The word *pick* is a special term used when an [effect](#) needs to specifically refer to a card. The usage of the specific word is important because picking is considered a distinct action.

Example – If a card says “you cannot pick this card” then you cannot follow any instruction that says “pick” that card. You could, however, select the card in other ways that don't specifically use the word pick.

311 Provides

311.1 If a card says it *provides* [resource icons](#), those icons count towards meeting the [thresholds](#) of your cards.

311.2 By default, every [staple resource](#) card provides one icon of the appropriate type. (203.5c)

312 Search

312.1 If a [deck](#) is searched, its [owner](#) must [shuffle](#) it afterwards.

312.2 You are allowed to fail in finding any card that must match specific search criteria. You may choose to fail even if there are valid cards available to find.

Example – If a card says “search your deck for an item” then you can fail to find it either because the deck contains no items or because you choose to fail. However, if a card says “search your deck for a card” you must find a card (unless the deck contains no cards).

313 Shuffle

313.1 To shuffle a [deck](#) is to sufficiently randomize it.

313.2 If you are instructed to shuffle cards into a [deck](#), you only perform the shuffle if more than 0 cards are being added to the deck.

314 Terminate

314.1 To terminate a card or ability is to stop it before it resolves. You must cease following any instructions associated with the card or ability immediately. If it’s a card, put it into its [owner's discard pile](#).

314.2 To terminate an effect is to stop it from having its impact on the game. You must not complete any of the effect’s instructions.

Section 4 - Game Concepts

401 Costs

401.1 A cost is any action a player must take to fulfill a card’s needs. Most costs involve [paying numbers](#) and following simple instructions, but a cost might also have restrictions on when it can be satisfied.

401.1a The term *cost* is also used as part of the *cost* and *effect* relationship on some cards and [abilities](#). In this context, the words are used out of convenience. Technically, costs can exist in any part of a card’s [rules text](#). However, the only type of cost that can exist outside of the *cost* section of a card or ability is a [pay](#) instruction.

401.2 If you cannot complete all instructions and meet all restrictions of a cost, then you cannot satisfy that cost. This means you cannot take the action associated with it.

401.2a If you are trying to satisfy a cost *as though you were your opponent*, you can only do so with the knowledge you currently have about the game state. For example, if you must satisfy a cost that says “discard a character” you can only do so if your opponent’s hand is currently revealed by an ongoing effect.

401.3 An extra cost is any instruction listed in the cost section of a card or [ability's rules text](#). Extra costs must always be completed in the order they are listed. If you come to a step that you cannot complete, then the whole action is illegal and you must undo everything you’ve done so far to take the action.

401.3a Some extra costs take the form of restrictions. Restrictions define criteria for satisfying the cost. For example, a cost might say “use this only during your turn.” Each restriction must be satisfied like any other cost.

401.3b If an extra cost requires a card to *lose* something, it cannot be satisfied unless the card has that thing.

402 Effects

402.1 An effect is anything a card’s [rules text](#) does that affects the game in some way. An effect is generated when a player follows an instruction in a card’s rules text.

402.1a To be clear, the rules don’t generate effects; only cards do.

402.1b The term *effect* is also used as part of the *cost* and *effect* relationship on some cards and [abilities](#). In this context, the words are used out of convenience. Technically, effects can be generated by any part of a card’s [rules text](#), including the [cost](#).

402.2 If an effect instructs both players to do something at the same time, the [active player](#) takes the action first.

402.3 If a card does not specify the [game area](#) it affects, it affects only the [in play](#) game area.

402.3a This includes [picking](#). For example, if a card says “pick a character” you can only pick [characters in play](#) since the area it affects was not specified.

402.4 If a card moves from one [game area](#) to another, any unresolved effects that were going to impact it in the old area lose track of it.

Example – If an effect would put a character into your hand from play when it resolves, but that character is destroyed in response, you don't get to put the character into your hand from your discard pile.

402.5 If you are unable to complete all of an effect's instructions, you must follow as many of the instructions as you can and ignore the rest.

402.5a Effects never "fizzle" if the thing they were trying to affect leaves play before they resolve.

402.5b If an instruction is dependant on another instruction that you ignored, you can't follow the dependant instruction. It is considered dependant if it refers specifically to an element within the previous instruction, or if it refers to information or choices made during the previous instruction.

402.6 If an ongoing effect says a card *gains* something but another ongoing effect says the card *loses* that thing, the *lose* effect always takes precedence.

402.7 If an effect says something *can* happen but another effect says it *cannot*, the *cannot* effect always takes precedence.

402.7a There's a difference between saying you *can* do something and being instructed to actually *do* that thing. For example, if a card says "characters cannot be destroyed" then all "destroy a character" effects are ignored.

402.8 If an effect *puts* a card into play, it is not the same as *playing* that card.

402.8a Anything that [triggers](#) when a card is played doesn't trigger when a card is *put* into play.

402.9 A [faction](#) is not affected by effects unless they specifically say that they apply to factions (202.9).

403 Game Areas

403.1 Deck

403.1a This is the pile of cards you brought to the game, excluding your [faction](#). No one is allowed to look through your deck or [shuffle](#) it unless instructed to do so.

403.1b The term *deck* is also used to describe your overall selection of cards used in a tournament, including your [faction](#). This usage is for discussing your cards outside of the context of a game.

403.2 Hand

403.2a This is the group of cards that you currently have access to. Keep the front face of the cards in your hand hidden from your opponent.

403.2b There is no limit to the number of cards you can have in your hand.

403.3 Being Played

403.3a This is where a non-[resource](#) card goes when you [play it](#) from your [hand](#). It stays in this area until your opponent is done [responding](#) and it resolves.

403.4 In Play

403.4a This is the place on the table where you put the cards you've played. Most cards can't do anything until they're in play.

403.5 Discard Pile

403.5a This is where you put your cards when they are [discarded](#) or [destroyed](#). You should keep this pile face-up next to your [deck](#).

403.5b The specific order of cards in your discard pile does not need to be maintained.

403.6 Out of Game

403.6a This is where a card goes when it is removed from the game. You should set the card aside face-up for the rest of the game.

404 Rule Not Found

405 Threshold

405.1 Certain elements in the game have a threshold associated with them. The threshold is represented visually with [resource icons](#). In order to meet it, you must [control](#) cards that [provide](#) the proper resource icons.

405.2 If you cannot meet a card's threshold, you cannot [play the card](#).

- 405.3 Some [abilities](#) have thresholds, located directly after the ability name in the card's [rules text](#). If you cannot meet an ability's threshold, you cannot [use that ability](#).
- 405.4 Certain paragraphs of [rules text](#) have a threshold listed at the beginning. These paragraphs are only active while their [controller](#) is currently meeting that threshold.
- 405.5 [Resource icons](#) share the same name as the [staple resources](#). Each staple resource [provides](#) its corresponding icon. (203.5c)

406 Numeric Cost

- 406.1 The numeric cost of a card that is not currently [being played](#) is equal to its [cost number](#), located in its upper-left corner.
- 406.2 If a card doesn't have a [cost number](#), its numeric cost is 0.
- 406.3 While a card is [being played](#), its numeric cost is handled differently. You must calculate it by keeping a running total of cost additions, [increases](#), and [reductions](#).

A card's running total starts as its [cost number](#). Then, you satisfy its [extra costs](#). If an extra cost says "[pay](#)" a number, you don't pay it right away. Instead, you add that [number](#) to the running total.

Once all the extra costs are satisfied, you apply all cost increases to the running total in any order you want, followed by all cost reductions in any order you want. The overall total is the card's numeric cost while it's being played. Finally, you pay that amount.

- 406.3a This means you always [pay](#) numeric costs last.
- 406.4 An [ability's](#) numeric cost is handled in the same way as a card's numeric cost. But since abilities don't have a [cost number](#), any ability without a [pay](#) instruction in its cost section is considered to not have a numeric cost at all.
- 406.5 If an [effect](#) says "[pay](#)" a [number](#), it is considered a numeric cost.
 - 406.5a Therefore, any applicable numeric cost [reduction effects](#) would apply to the [number](#).
 - 406.5b This kind of [effect](#)-based numeric cost is not the same as the numeric cost of the card while it's [being played](#). This means that any cost [reduction effects](#) that specifically work on that type of card won't work on the effect-based numeric cost.

Example – If an effect says “the numeric cost of your items is reduced by 1” and an item leaves play that says “when this card leaves play, you may pay 4...” then that effect is not considered to be an “item’s numeric cost” and is therefore not reduced. However, any generalized reduction effects, such as “reduce the next numeric cost you pay this turn by 1” would apply to that cost.

- 406.6 Numeric costs can never go below 0. If an [effect](#) tries to reduce a [number](#) below 0, that number stays at 0 (410.4).
- 406.7 To determine the numeric cost of a card played with [Flip Up](#), you keep the same running total as you would with a regularly played card (406.3). However, the running total begins once the Flip Up cost has been paid with an initial value of the card’s Flip Up cost.

Then, you satisfy the card’s [extra costs](#). Cost additions are applied as normal. Once you’ve finished satisfying the extra costs and all cost [increases](#) and [reductions](#) have been applied as normal, you must [pay](#) the balance of the numeric cost. To do this, take the final numeric cost and subtract the card’s Flip Up cost (*since you already paid it*). Then, pay that amount.

407 Control & Ownership

- 407.1 You control the cards you play, and the [effects](#) generated by cards you control.
- 407.1a This means if a card’s [ability](#) is used and in [response](#) you gain control of that card, the [effects](#) generated by that ability’s [rules text](#) are controlled by you.
- 407.2 The terms *you* and *your* in a card’s [rules text](#) always refer to the card’s current controller.
- 407.3 If an [effect](#) causes a player to take control of a card, unless otherwise stated that player retains control of the card until it leaves play, or until another effect takes control of it.
- 407.3a If two ongoing [effects](#) take control of a card, the most recent effect always takes precedence.
- 407.4 If the controller of a [character](#) changes [during a battle](#), the character is [removed from the battle](#) immediately.
- 407.4a This means it is no longer part of its [battle party](#). Any [battle damage](#) assigned to the [character](#) is not inflicted. (302.15)

- 407.5 If the [target of an attack](#) is a [location](#) and its controller changes [during the battle](#), the location stops being the target of the attack.
- 407.5a This means that if the attackers try to assign their [battle damage](#) to the [location](#), they don't actually do anything but are still considered to have assigned their battle damage for the purposes of ending the [resolution loop](#). (608.2)
- 407.6 If an [effect](#) tries to add a [character](#) you do not control to a [battle party](#) you do control, that effect is [terminated](#).
- 407.7 You own any card that started the game as a part of your [deck](#), regardless of who currently controls it.
- 407.7a This includes your [faction](#) card.
- 407.8 Ownership of a card cannot change during a game.

408 Damage

- 408.1 If something tries to inflict 0 damage, then no damage is actually inflicted.
- 408.1a This means nothing that would [trigger](#) as a result of damage being inflicted happens.
- 408.1b If it was battle damage, the source [character](#) is considered to have inflicted its damage for the purposes of ending the [resolution loop](#).
- 408.2 If damage greater than 0 is inflicted, damage [increase](#) and [reduction effects](#) are applied but nothing else that should [trigger](#) happens yet.
- 408.2a If the final adjusted amount of damage is 0, nothing further happens. However, if it was battle damage, the source [character](#) is considered to have inflicted its damage for the purposes of ending the [resolution loop](#).
- 408.2b If the final adjusted amount is greater than 0, all appropriate [triggers](#) now occur.
- 408.3 If damage is inflicted to your [faction](#), it loses an equal amount of [influence](#).
- 408.3a Once your faction has 0 [influence](#), you lose the game. (102.1)

408.3b If a [faction](#) loses [influence](#) it's not the same as receiving damage, so anything that would affect damage doesn't affect the loss of influence.

Example – A card might say “your opponent’s faction loses 2 influence” while another card says “if damage is inflicted to a faction, reduce the amount by 1.” Your opponent’s faction would still lose 2 influence because the other effect only reduces damage.

408.4 If the damage a [character](#) receives in a single [turn](#) is ever equal to or greater than its [life](#), [destroy](#) it immediately.

408.4a You only need to keep track of the current [turn's](#) damage because that's all that will ever matter. Although there is no official step when a [character's](#) damage for the turn is “healed” that's essentially what happens when a new turn begins.

408.5 If the damage a [location](#) has received during the entire game is ever equal to or greater than its [structure](#), [destroy](#) it immediately.

408.5a It's best to keep track of a [location's](#) damage with pen and paper or by using a six-sided die.

408.5b Certain [effects](#) can remove the damage from a [location](#). If this happens, adjust the total damage the location has received this game accordingly. (207.6)

408.6 The term *battle damage* applies to the damage inflicted as part of the [steps of resolving a battle](#).

408.6a Battle damage works the same way as regular damage, except certain rules and cards interact specifically with battle damage.

408.7 If a card instructs you to inflict damage, then that card is considered the source of that damage. For battle damage, the source is the [character](#) which assigned it.

408.8 A card is considered to have been [destroyed](#) by any damage that put it over its limit.

Example – Let's say a character with 4 life has received 3 damage this turn. If that character then receives 1 more damage this turn, it would be considered to have been destroyed by that damage.

409 Tokens

- 409.1 A token is a bead, coin, or other object placed on a card [in play](#). Tokens have no inherent meaning, so a card always explains how it uses tokens in its [rules text](#).
- 409.2 If a card leaves play, any tokens on it disappear.
- 409.3 Micromajig Token
 - 409.3a Micromajig Tokens are considered Gearsmith [character](#) cards with 1 [strength](#), 1 [life](#), 3 [speed](#), and the “majig” [subtype](#).
 - 409.3b If a Micromajig Token leaves play, it disappears.
 - 409.3c The [owner](#) of a Micromajig Token is the player who [controlled](#) the [effect](#) that created it.

410 Numbers

- 410.1 An even number is any number that is a multiple of 2.
 - 410.1a This includes the number 0.
- 410.2 Cards with variable numbers fully explain how those variables are used in their [rules text](#). If you are instructed to choose a number for a variable, you must choose a whole number (*e.g. 2 is fine, but not -1 or 3½*).
- 410.2a We consider 0 to be a whole number.
- 410.3 If a number is increased and/or reduced by more than one [effect](#) at the same time, apply all increases in any order you want followed by all reductions in any order you want.
- 410.4 If an [effect](#) tries to reduce a number below 0, that number stays at 0.
- 410.5 If a number is reduced to *a minimum of* some number, that restriction doesn't apply if the thing was already less than the minimum.

Example – If a numeric cost of 0 is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1, then that numeric cost is still 0.

411 Face-Down Cards

- 411.1 Every face-down card [in play](#) is considered to be a [resource](#).
- 411.2 The [controller](#) of a face-down card may look at its front face at any time.

411.3 If a face-down card is flipped face-up, it stops being a [resource](#) and it is considered to have left play. If applicable, its face-up version is considered to have entered play as a completely new card.

411.4 If a face-up card is flipped face-down, it is considered to have left play. It becomes a face-down [resource](#) and that resource is considered to have entered play as though it were a completely new card.

412 Unblockability

412.1 If an [effect](#) says a [character](#) “cannot be blocked” then it only cannot be blocked while it is a member of a [battle party](#) containing only unblockable characters.

413 Bidding

413.1 If an [effect](#) instructs players to *bid*, they take turns choosing a [number](#). Each number chosen must be higher than the last. The bidding ends when one player refuses to bid again. That player loses the bidding and their opponent wins it.

413.1a Unless otherwise stated, bidding always begins with the [active player](#).

414 Action Loops

414.1 If a series of [effects](#) form an infinitely repeating loop that cannot be voluntarily ended by either player, the game ends as a [draw](#).

414.1a Keep in mind that the rules don’t generate [effects](#), so this rule only applies to things that cards do.

414.2 You can have a series of voluntary actions repeat automatically. To do this, follow these steps:

414.2a Demonstrate the series of actions.

414.2b Choose a [number](#) of times to repeat the series. Infinity is not a valid choice.

414.2c Your opponent can interrupt the loop at any point if they want to [respond](#). For example, they could interrupt the loop by saying “after 15 times, I respond to that ability by playing a card.” After the response, the loop continues until it is complete (*unless your opponent decides to interrupt it again*).

- 414.3 If an action loop involves the voluntary actions of both players, you must follow these steps:
- 414.3a You both must demonstrate the loop. The loop is complete when the next action a player would take is identical to their first action.
 - 414.3b The [active player](#) chooses a [number](#), followed by their opponent. The loop is repeated the lesser number of times. If 0 is chosen, no repetitions occur.
 - 414.3c During the last repetition of the loop, the [active player](#) may choose any point in the loop at which to stop. This means it is valid to take all, some, or none of the actions in the last repetition if the active player chooses.

Section 5 - Types of Rules Text

501 Italic Text

- 501.1 Italic text is not considered part of a card's [rules text](#). It is either a descriptive paragraph relating to the card's overall theme, or a reminder to help answer a common question about the card.

502 Abilities

- 502.1 Many cards have abilities in their [rules text](#). Every ability has a center-justified name and a clearly labeled *cost* and *effect* section.
- 502.2 Some abilities have [threshold](#) icons next to their name. You can't use an ability unless you've met its threshold and can satisfy all its [costs](#). (405.3)
- 502.3 Just like [tactics](#), abilities can be used in [response](#) to your opponent's actions even if it isn't your [turn](#). There are also [special times during battles](#) when you can [use abilities](#).
- 502.4 When an ability resolves, follow its [rules text](#) as it was written when you first used it, even if its rules text has since changed or the ability's source has since left play.

503 Triggers

- 503.1 Triggers begin with the words *if*, *when*, or *at* and are followed by a trigger condition. If the trigger condition happens, you must immediately follow the instructions of the trigger as they were written when it happened, even if you are in the middle of resolving something else or the source of the trigger has left play.

- 503.2 Players cannot [respond](#) to triggers.
- 503.3 If a trigger happens while a player is satisfying the costs of a card or [ability](#), it waits until after the costs are completely satisfied before it actually resolves.
- 503.4 Sometimes multiple triggers happen at the same time. If all the triggers originated from cards under one player's [control](#), that player decides the order in which they happen. However, if the triggers originated from cards under both players' control then the [active player](#) decides the order in which they happen.
- 503.4a The order does not have to be decided ahead of time; the deciding player lets one trigger happen, then afterwards decides which trigger happens next.

504 Conditionals

- 504.1 Conditionals use the word *while* followed by a condition to define [rules text](#) that is only active while the condition is true.

Example – A card might say “while your opponent controls a character, this card gains 1 strength and 1 life.” This effect immediately ceases if your opponent ever stops controlling a character.

505 Requirements

- 505.1 Requirements use the word *must* to define something you are required to do. If you can't meet the requirements for an action then you can't take that action.

Example – A card might say “your opponent must pay 2 for each attacking party they form.” In that case, your opponent could not form a new attacking party unless they could meet the requirement by paying 2.

- 505.2 Sometimes multiple requirements exist for the same action. In these cases, you must satisfy as many of the requirements as you can. If it is impossible to fulfill them all, you must make the decision that would satisfy the greatest number of requirements.

505.2a If you do not have enough available [resources](#) to [pay](#) a requirement [cost](#), it is not considered impossible to fulfill.

505.2b If more than one decision would satisfy the same number of requirements, you can choose which decision to make.

Example – A card might say “anything that could pick this card must pick it.” If there are two copies of this card in play, you decide which of the two cards you must pick.

However, if there are two copies of a card in play that says “you must pay 2 for each attacking party you form” then they must both be fulfilled; to attack, you must pay 4.

- 505.2c If a player is trying to take an action that has multiple requirements, they must satisfy at least one of them (*and more if possible*). It is invalid to reason that “not taking the action in the first place satisfies all the requirements; therefore I cannot take the action.” This logic is circular and incorrect.

506 Replacements

- 506.1 Replacements use the word *instead* to define one thing that completely replaces another.

Example – A card might say “if this card is put into your discard pile from play, remove it from the game instead.” In that case, the card would never go to the discard pile; going to the discard pile is completely replaced with removing it from the game.

- 506.2 Replacements don’t apply to [extra costs](#). If the thing to be replaced is part of an extra cost, it isn’t replaced.

- 506.3 Certain replacements say “the next” to define something that could be replaced in the future. These are called *delayed replacements*. They wait until whatever they are trying to replace happens.

- 506.4 Sometimes multiple replacements try to replace something at the same time. If all the replacements originated from cards under one player's [control](#), that player chooses one to apply and the rest are ignored. However, if the replacements originated from cards under both players' control, then the [active player](#) chooses one to apply and the rest are ignored.

[Delayed replacements](#) are an exception; if a delayed replacement is not chosen, it is not ignored. Instead, it continues waiting for another instance of whatever it is trying to replace.

- 506.5 Under rare circumstances, a series of replacements might try to create infinite recursion. However, this is prevented because each replacement can only be applied to the same thing once.

Example – If one card says “if a card is destroyed, put it into its owner’s hand instead” while another card says “if a card is put it its owner’s

hand from play, destroy it instead.” These two replacements could theoretically replace each other infinitely.

However, each replacement can only be applied to the same thing once. Therefore if a card is destroyed, that destruction is replaced by being put into its owner’s hand which in turn is replaced by being destroyed. This is the end of the replacement cycle because you cannot replace the “destroy” with “put into owner’s hand” again for this particular instance since you’ve already done that once.

If in the above example there were two copies of the card that says “if a card is destroyed, put it into its owner’s hand instead” then the replacement cycle would be handled differently. Each replacement gets to be applied once, even if it’s identical to another replacement. Therefore, you’d actually apply that replacement twice since there are two copies of it.

507 Keywords

507.1 Keywords are used to describe a set of complex behaviors that would take up too much room to explain on a card.

507.2 Attach to [Type]

507.2a When you [play the card](#), you must [pick](#) a target card of the appropriate type as the first [extra cost](#). When the attaching card resolves, it enters play [attached](#) to the target card.

507.2b If the attaching card is put into play by something that does not specify a target for it, you must [pick](#) a target card as the attaching card enters play.

507.2c If there is no valid target card to [pick](#) or the attaching card’s target is no longer [in play](#) when the attaching card tries to enter play, put the attaching card into its [owner’s discard pile](#) instead. If it was already in the discard pile, it just stays there.

507.2d If the attaching card is put into play at the same time as another card, the other card can be selected as a target for the attaching card.

507.2e If the target card stops being the appropriate type, [destroy](#) the attaching card immediately.

507.3 Covert

507.3a If all members of an [attacking party](#) have the covert keyword, that party is considered a [covert party](#).

- 507.3b Only covert [characters](#) can block a [covert party](#).
- 507.3c Covert [characters](#) can only block [covert parties](#).
- 507.3d If an [effect](#) says a [character](#) “gains covert” then the character is considered to actually have the covert keyword in its [rules text](#). (508.2)
- 507.3e A card cannot have more than one instance of the covert keyword. Therefore, if a [character](#) with covert “gains covert” or gains [temporary rules text](#) containing the covert keyword, the extra instances of the keyword disappear.

507.4 Flip Up

- 507.4a If a card with Flip Up is currently [in play](#) under your [control](#) as a [face-down resource](#), you may [play the card](#) as though it were in your [hand](#) by [paying](#) its Flip Up cost and [flipping](#) it face-up. To play it, you must also meet its Flip Up [threshold](#), listed next to the keyword.
- 507.4b You [pay](#) the Flip Up cost before you actually [flip](#) the card over, so you can use the card to pay for its own Flip Up cost.
- 507.4c If the card has any Flip Up [extra costs](#), they must be satisfied directly before its regular extra costs.
- 507.4d Flip Up does not change when you are allowed to play certain types of cards. For example, you can still only play a [character](#) during your [turn](#). However, if the card says in its [rules text](#) that it can be played at other times, you can play it with Flip Up at those times too.
- 507.4e For information on determining the numeric cost of a card played with Flip Up, see its entry under [Numeric Cost](#) (406.7).

507.5 Unique [Identifier]

- 507.5a If you ever [control](#) more than one card that says “unique” followed by the same identifier, you must choose one to keep and [destroy](#) the rest. This restriction only applies to your cards, so your opponent is allowed to have their own single copy of a unique card [in play](#) as well.
- 507.5b If the destruction of an extra copy of a card is prevented by an [effect](#), the unique keyword doesn’t try to [destroy](#) the card again until the prevention effect ends.

508 Temporary Rules Text

- 508.1 Some [effects](#) add temporary rules text to a card. This text exists on the card until it enters another [game area](#).
- 508.1a Therefore, if a card has temporary rules text that says “if this card leaves play, draw a card” it would actually [trigger](#) when the card leaves play.
- 508.2 If an [effect](#) says that a card “gains” a [keyword](#), that card is considered to have the keyword as temporary rules text.
- 508.3 If a card gains temporary rules text while it has the [character](#) type but later loses that type, the temporary rules text gained while it was a character is removed.

Section 6 - Playing the Game

601 Starting a Game

- 601.1 At the start of each game, follow these steps:
 - 601.1a [Faction](#) cards start the game [in play](#). Write down the starting [influence](#) of both factions on a piece of paper so you can keep track of it.
 - 601.1b Both players [search](#) their [deck](#) for the appropriate [resources](#) listed under their [faction's Starting Resources](#) entry. These resources are put into play face-down.
 - 601.1c Randomly determine which player will decide who takes the first [turn](#) of the game. That player chooses who goes first.
 - 601.1d The first player flips their starting [resources](#) face-up.
 - 601.1e The first player [draws](#) the appropriate [number](#) of cards according to their [faction's Starting Draw](#) entry. The number of cards drawn is usually different if you are going first as opposed to second.
 - 601.1f The first player may *mulligan* by selecting any number of cards in their [hand](#) and placing them on the bottom of their [deck](#) in any order. Then, they [draw](#) an equal [number](#) of cards. This can be done only once.
 - 601.1g The second player follows steps D through F.
 - 601.1h The first [turn](#) of the game begins.

602 During a Turn

- 602.1 The *active player* is the player taking the current turn.
- 602.2 During a turn, the [active player](#) may take the following actions in any order and as many times as they want:
 - 602.2a [Play a Card](#)
 - 602.2b [Use an Ability](#)
 - 602.2c [Attack](#)
 - 602.2d [End the Turn](#) (*this can only be done once*)

603 Playing a Card

- 603.1 To play a non-[resource](#) card, follow these steps:
 - 603.1a *Selection* – Choose a non-[resource](#) card in your [hand](#).
 - 603.1b *Threshold* – Check if you have met the card's [threshold](#). If you have not, you cannot play the card. (405.2)
 - 603.1c *Play* – Put the card onto the playing surface face-up. The card is now in the [being played](#) area.
 - 603.1d *Costs* – Satisfy all the card's [costs](#). This includes its [numeric cost](#) and any [extra costs](#) listed in its [rules text](#). Any [triggers](#) that occur wait until after the costs have been fully satisfied instead of resolving immediately (503.3).
 - 603.1e *Legality* – If you are unable to satisfy all of the card's [costs](#) then playing that card was illegal. You must undo all actions you've taken so far to play the card. Any [triggers](#) that occurred while you were playing the card are [terminated](#).
 - 603.1f *Triggers* – Any pending [triggers](#) that occurred while the card was [being played](#) happen simultaneously. (503.3)
 - 603.1g *Responses* – Wait for your opponent to [respond](#) to the card.
 - 603.1h *Resolution* – The card resolves. If it is a [character](#), [item](#), or [location](#) put it into play under your [control](#). If it's a [tactic](#), follow its instructions and put it into its [owner's discard pile](#).
- 603.2 If an [effect](#) lets you *play a card*, you can only play a non-[resource](#) card. You do this by following the steps listed above. If an effect lets

you *play a resource*, instead follow the [steps for playing a resource](#) (604).

604 Playing a Resource

604.1 If you are instructed to play a [resource](#), follow these steps:

604.1a *Selection* – Choose any card in your [hand](#).

604.1b *Facing* – Decide if you are going to play a face-up or face-down [resource](#). Any card can be played [face-down](#), but only actual resource cards can be played face-up. (203.2)

604.1c *Play* – Put the selected card from your [hand](#) into play either face-up or [face-down](#), depending on what you have chosen.

604.2 If an effect lets you *play a card*, you can only play a non-resource card. You're only allowed to play resources if an effect specifically says so (603.2).

605 Using an Ability

605.1 To use an [ability](#), follow these steps:

605.1a *Selection* – Choose an [ability](#) on a card you [control](#) (*or in special cases, on a card you own that isn't in play*).

605.1b *Threshold* – Check if you have met the [ability's threshold](#) (*if it has one*). If it has a threshold and you have not met it, you cannot use the ability. (405.3)

605.1c *Costs* – Satisfy all the [ability's costs](#). This includes its [numeric cost](#) (*if any*) and any [extra costs](#) listed in its [rules text](#). Any [triggers](#) that occur wait until after the costs have been fully satisfied instead of resolving immediately (503.3).

605.1d *Legality* – If you are unable to satisfy all of the [ability's costs](#) then using that ability was illegal. You must undo all actions you've taken so far to use the ability. Any [triggers](#) that occurred while you were using the ability are [terminated](#).

605.1e *Triggers* – Any pending [triggers](#) that occurred while the [ability's cost](#) was being satisfied happen simultaneously. (503.3)

605.1f *Responses* – Wait for your opponent to [respond](#) to the [ability](#).

605.1g *Resolution* – The [ability](#) resolves. Follow its [effect](#) instructions as they were written when you used the ability (502.4).

606 Responding to Actions

606.1 You can respond to your opponent whenever they [play a card](#), [use an ability](#), or [end their turn](#). You cannot respond to your own actions.

606.2 When you have the chance to respond, you may [play a tactic](#) or [use an ability](#). Once this response resolves, you may make another response. You may repeat this any number of times. Once you are finished making responses, the original action resolves.

606.2a Keep in mind that your opponent can respond to your responses. For example, if you respond to your opponent by [playing a tactic](#), your opponent has a chance to respond to that [tactic](#) with their own. A series of responses can go back and forth between players indefinitely.

606.2b Because you cannot respond to your own actions, there is no need for a “priority passing” system that many other games use. You simply make a series of responses to your opponent, resolving each one before moving to the next. Each of your responses can be responded to by your opponent in the same way. Although the variations that can occur with this system are many, the rules governing the system are simple.

606.2c Technically, there is no stack in The Spoils™ like there is in other card games. While it’s true that the response system can behave in a similar fashion (*e.g. actions resolve last in, first out*) we don’t maintain the concept of a stack formally in the rules. This is important because many things that would use the stack in other games can’t be responded to in The Spoils™, such as [triggers](#).

607 Attacking

607.1 To attack, follow these steps:

607.1a *Announcement* – Choose a [faction](#) or [location](#) you don’t [control](#) and announce you are attacking it. If you forget to choose a [target](#), by default you’re attacking your opponent’s faction.

You can only validly announce an attack under the right circumstances. If you have no potential attackers or if an [effect](#) is preventing an attack, the battle ends immediately at this step

before anything has a chance to [trigger](#) as a result of the attack.

- 607.1b *Attackers* – Choose one or more [characters](#) you [control](#) that can attack. A character can attack if it is not [depleted](#) and if you have controlled it since the start of the [turn](#). Deplete these characters. They form the [attacking party](#).
- 607.1c *Tactics & Abilities* – You may [play tactics](#) and [use abilities](#) as many times as you want. Then, your opponent may do the same.

If an effect causes any number of characters to become members of the blocking party during this step, the blocking party isn't actually formed yet. The characters should be added to the blocking party after it's formed during the next step. If no blocking party is formed during the next step, the characters become the blocking party. However, effects that apply to the formation of a battle party don't happen since a battle party wasn't technically formed in this case.

- 607.1d *Blockers* – The [defending player](#) may choose one or more [characters](#) they [control](#) that are not [depleted](#). If they do, those characters form the [blocking party](#). Otherwise, there is no blocking party during this battle.
- 607.1e *Resolution* – [Resolve the battle](#).

608 Resolving a Battle

608.1 To resolve a battle, follow these steps:

- 608.1a *Tactics & Abilities* – The [attacking player](#) may [play tactics](#) and [use abilities](#) as many times as they want. Then, the [defending player](#) may do the same.
- 608.1b *Speed Level* – Find the highest [speed](#) among [characters](#) that have not yet assigned [battle damage](#) during this battle. X is that speed.
- 608.1c *Assign Attacker's Damage* – All [attacking characters](#) with X [speed](#) that have not yet assigned [battle damage](#) during this battle assign [damage](#) equal to their [strength](#) divided however the [attacking player](#) wants to the [blocking party](#). If there are no members left in the blocking party, the attacking characters assign their battle damage to the [target of the attack](#) instead.

- 608.1d *Assign Blocker's Damage* – All [blocking characters](#) with X [speed](#) that have not yet assigned [battle damage](#) during this battle assign [damage](#) equal to their [strength](#) divided however the [defending player](#) wants to the [attacking party](#).
- 608.1e *Tactics & Abilities* – The [attacking player](#) may [play tactics](#) and [use abilities](#) as many times as they want. Then, the [defending player](#) may do the same.
- 608.1f *Damage Infliction* – All assigned [battle damage](#) is inflicted simultaneously. If more than one [character](#) inflicts damage to the same thing during this step, the sum of the damage is inflicted as a single amount.
- 608.1g *Repeat* – Repeat steps A through F until all [characters](#) in the battle have either assigned their [battle damage](#) or are no longer [in play](#).
- 608.1h *End* – [Deplete](#) all surviving [characters](#) in the battle.

- 608.2 If there is nothing left for a [character](#) to assign its [battle damage](#) to, the character doesn't actually do anything but it is still considered to have assigned its battle damage for the purposes of ending the [resolution loop](#).

Example – An attacking party featuring characters with many different speeds is targeting a location. If the first wave of characters destroys the location, the remaining characters don't assign any damage. However, they are considered to have assigned damage for the purposes of ending the battle (i.e. the battle resolution doesn't just infinitely repeat).

609 Ending a Turn

- 609.1 When the [active player](#) announces that they are ending their turn, the [turn](#) doesn't actually end until their opponent has had a chance to [respond](#). Once the opponent's responses are complete, the turn ends.
- 609.1a End of turn triggers happen after your opponent has made all their responses, at the moment the turn actually ends.

Section 7 - Game Flow

701 Coming Soon

- 701.1 This section is still going to be so cool. I know I've left you hanging for a while, and to be honest, I don't even really remember what I was going to put here...but once it comes to me...boy, you're in for a

treat! I can conservatively say it will be the single greatest piece of writing that has ever graced your soggy eyeballs.