

TCGName: Quick Start Guide

An intergalactic war rages across space, with civilizations, machines, and factions caught in the mix.

Players take on the roles as part of the Invading or Defending forces, using cards to deploy forces, build technology, and secure objectives.

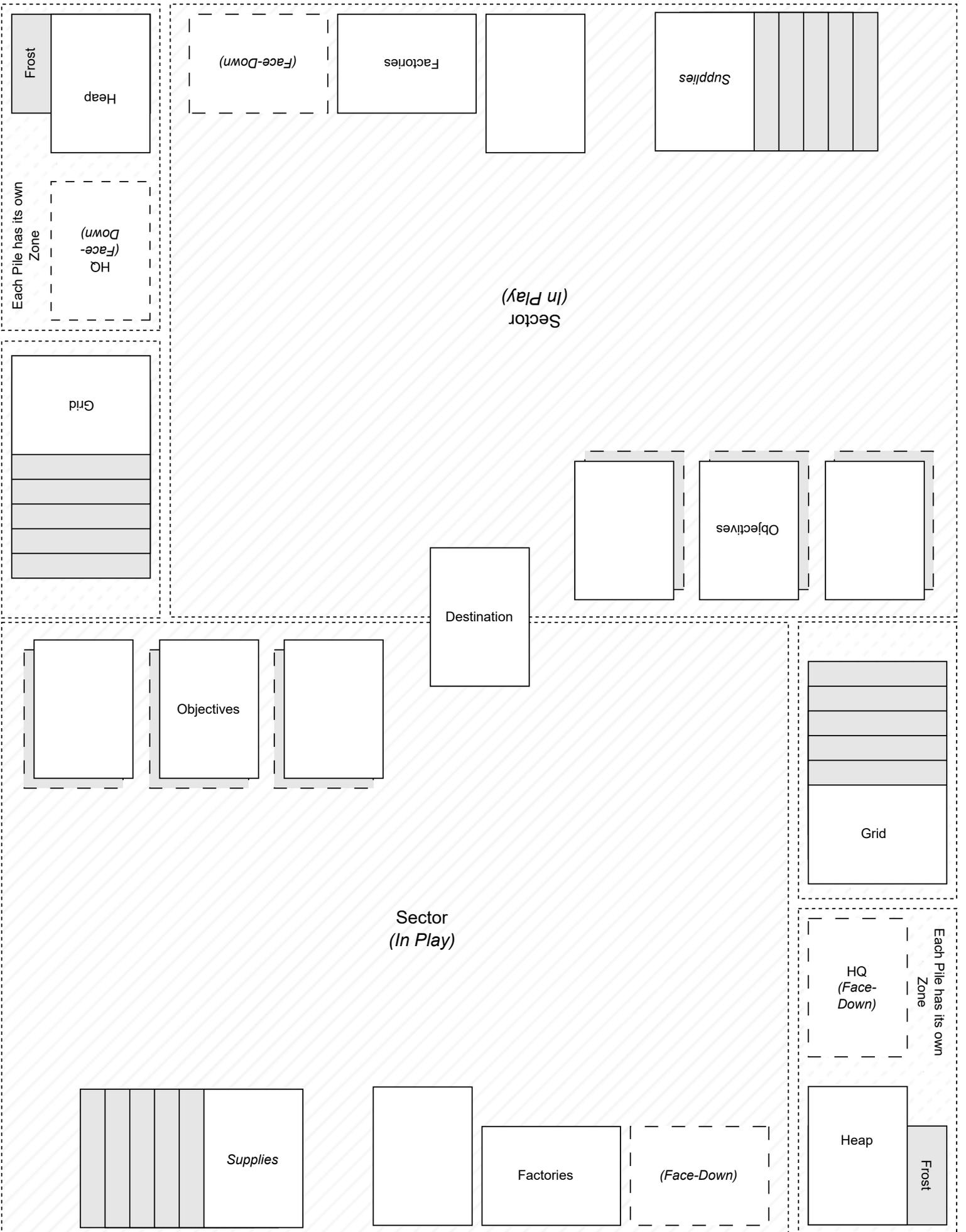
The fate of each Destination is decided by earning victory points or overwhelming the opposition.

Goal

To win, a player must do at least one of the following:

- Earn *Victory Points (VPs)* equal to, or greater than, the Destination's goal
- Have an opponent runs out of their selected Objectives
- Have an opponent runs out of cards in their HQ (main deck).





Common Zones

- 1) **HQ:** Your personal library of cards. Cards are drawn from here into your **Hand**. If you run out of cards in **HQ**, you lose the game.
 - 2) **Hand:** Cards you hold privately. Only you can look at your **Hand** unless a card effect reveals them. Cards in **Hand** can be played as Operations during your **Dispatch**.
 - 3) **Sector:** The location of **Permanents** entering play. Cards may be face-up or face-down and upright or sideways. A player may look at face-down permanents in their **Sector** at any time.
 - 4) **Heap:** A discard pile for non-permanent cards and permanent cards that have been defeated or forfeited this turn. Some effects may allow you to interact with your Heap (returning cards, exiling cards, etc.).
 - 5) **Frost:** A more inaccessible discard pile, much like the **Heap**. The most common way for cards to move to the **Frost Zone** is from the **Heap** at end of turn. Some card effects may send cards to **Frost** directly.
 - 6) **Grid:** Cards may be initiated from **Grid**, in the same way as from **Hand**. Some Cards may be sent to the **Grid** instead.
- Only cards you own may be in your **HQ, Hand, Heap, or Frost Zones**. Cards may be in your **Grid** or **Sector**, whether you own them or not.

Special Zones

- 7) **Stack:** A temporary zone where Operations and Abilities wait to resolve (more on this later).
- 8) **Reserves:** Unspent **ARCs** are "stored" in your **Reserves** until end of turn.

Setup

1. Determine who Invades and who Defends (i.e., coin flip, die roll, etc.)
2. The Defender chooses two Destinations. The Invader selects one of them. Put this card in the middle with Defend towards the Defender
Invade towards the Invader.
3. Each player chooses and reveals 6 Objectives, then shuffles and places them face-down into 3 piles (two cards each).
4. Players reveal their Factories, placing:
 - One face-up and upright (Ready)
 - One face-up and sideways (Exhausted)
 - One face-down and sideways (Depleted)
5. Each player shuffles their HQ and draws 4 cards. Each player may put up to two cards on the bottom of their HQ, then draw until they have 6 total cards in Hand.
6. Each Player reveals their 3 top Objectives (one for each pile).

Destinations

- **Destinations** have a Goal on the side, which is the number of VPs needed to win the game.
- **Destinations** are in *both* player **Sectors**.

Divided (Left): Two different effects: 1) one for the Invader, and 2) one for the Defender that last the duration of the game.

Shared (Right): One effects for both players that last the duration of the game.

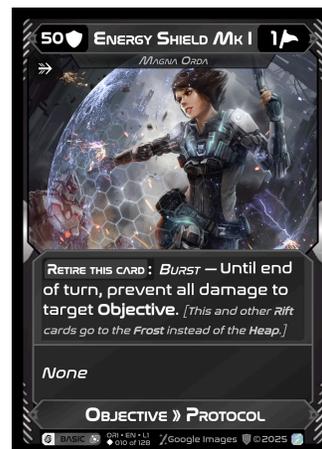


Objectives

- **Objectives** are the main way to gain VPs.
- Each **Objective** has a Defense Score (top left), which is the amount of damage it can sustain before being captured.
- When an **Objective** is captured, it awards the capturing player the number of VPs indicated (top right). Some **Objectives** have an effect when captured (bottom).

Sites (Left): Have Abilities while in play and are generally worth more VPs when captured.

Protocols (Right): Can be forfeited for an effect. This awards the VPs to your opponent and triggers the captured effect. **Protocols** often give fewer VPs than **Sites** when captured.





Factory

- Is a **Permanent**.
- Consistent source of producing **ARCs** to pay **Rank**, **Prepare**, and **Ability** costs.
- If a **Factory** leaves your **Sector** for any reason, return it to your **Sector Readied** (face-up and upright) during your next **Dispatch**.



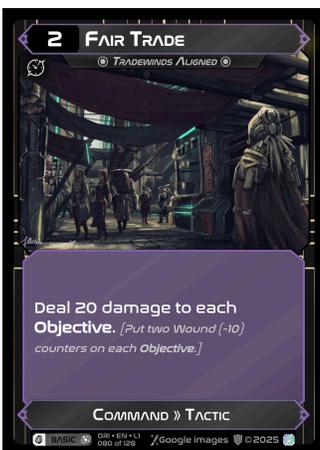
Unit

- Is a **Permanent**.
- Any card with **Impact** is a **Unit**.
- Its **Impact** (bottom left) is how much damage it can deal and sustain before being defeated.
- **Lifeforms**  and **Mechanoids**  are common **Unit** types.
- May have different types of effects.



Tech

- Is a **Permanent**.
- Cards with various "In Play" effects.



Command

- Is **NOT** a **Permanent**.
- Has a one-time effect on resolution.



Supply

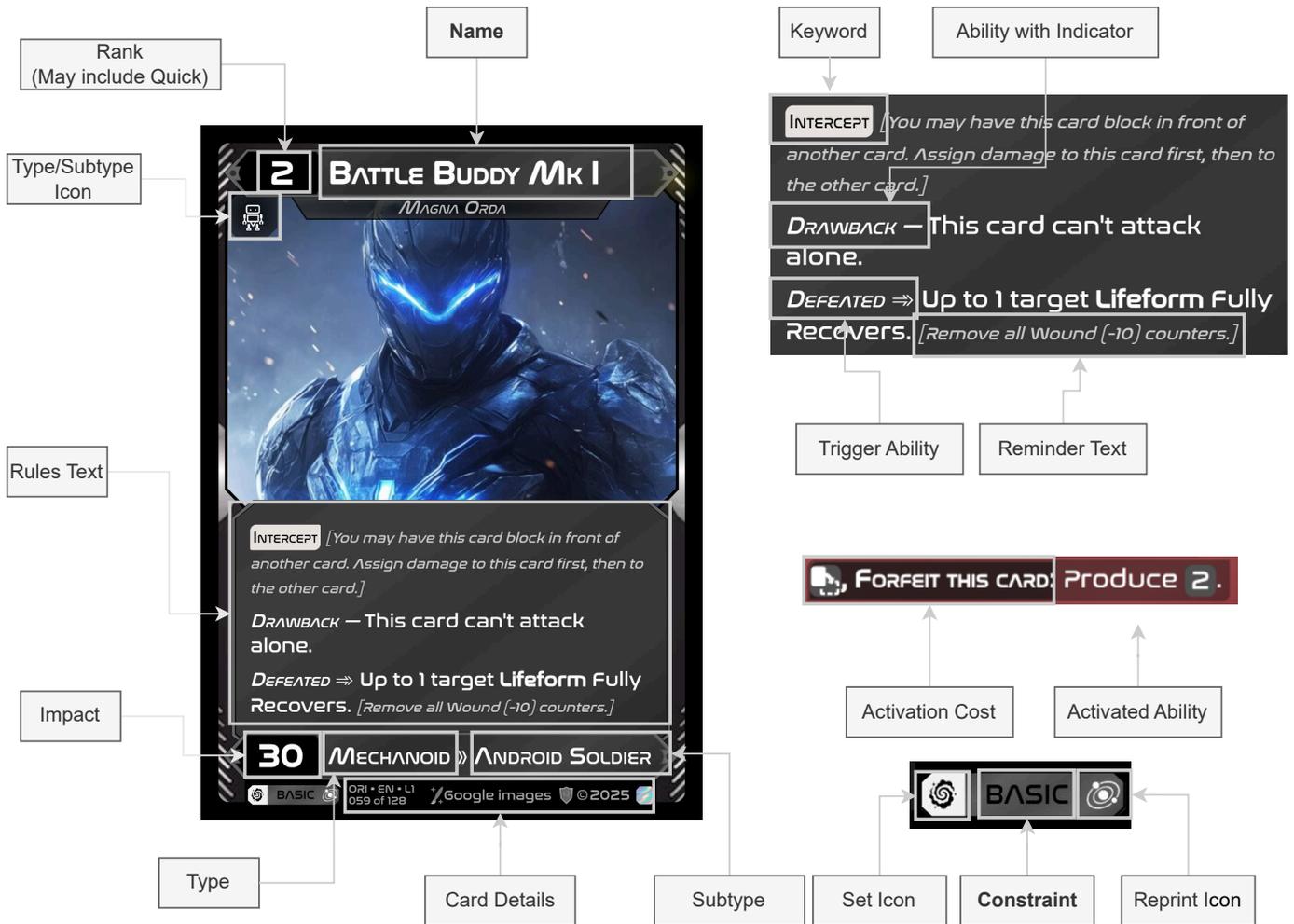
- Is a **Permanent**.
- May produce **ARCs** to pay **Rank**, **Prepare**, and **Ability** costs.
- May have different types of effects.



Token

- Is a **Permanent**.
- Stored in your **Extras** until it is created by another card.
- Enters with your choice of side.
- Enters with X +10 counters according to card that creates it.

Reading Cards



Symbols

- Quick:** Can be initiated at any time.
- Exhaust:** Turn the card sideways. Can only be used if that card is Ready (upright).
- Down:** Flip the card face-down.
- Once:** Can only be used once per turn.
- Slow:** Can only be used during your **Dispatch**.
- Any:** Can be used by any player.



Operations

Operations are any card you prepare.

1. When you prepare an **Operation**, it goes on the **Stack**.
2. If it resolves, it becomes a **Permanent** in play or creates an effect and moves to the **Heap**.
3. **Operations** are the main way you introduce new cards and effects into the game.

Abilities

1. Activated

- Activated abilities require you to pay a Cost and are followed by a colon.
- Once paid, the ability goes on the Stack and can be responded to.
- Example: *Exhaust: Produce 2.*

2. Triggered

- Triggered abilities are put on the **Stack** automatically when a certain event occurs.
- Example: *Whenever you deploy a Lifeform, add 1 Insight.*

3. Static

- A continuous effect (always "on") as long as its card is in the proper **Zone**.
- Often change rules, grant bonuses, or impose restrictions.
- They don't cost anything to use, and they don't need to be announced.
- Example: *This card gains +10 Impact if another Lifeform is in your Sector.*

4. Linked

- Some cards create effects that connect an initial action to a future effect.
- Example: *When this card is deployed, turn a card face-down. When this card leaves, turn that card face-up.*

Shorthand

Shorthand is used to keep cards clean and easy to read by replacing common phrases. Abilities are written in specific ways so players can recognize it at a glance.

1. Keywords

- Written as a single word, or phrase, without punctuation.
- Example: *Shield 10. Shield 10 means: Whenever this card takes combat damage, reduce that damage by 10.*

2. Triggers

- Written with an event verb followed by an arrow (\Rightarrow).
- Best read as "When [some action] do ..."
- Example: *Deployed \Rightarrow Add 1 Insight.*

3. Signals

- Written with a noun followed by a dash (—).
- Best read as "If [some condition] ..."
- **Signals** have no rules meaning, acting as a grouping for related abilities.
- Example: *Strike — [An ability related to dealing damage]*

Preparing a Card

When you **prepare a card**, it becomes an **Operation** and goes onto the **Stack**. Here's the process:

1. Choose and announce a card as an **Operation**.

2. Choose any Modes and Targets.

3. Pay **Rank and Costs**

- o **Rank**

- Pay for the **Rank** if one is listed.
- Some cards have no listed **Rank** (called **Rankless**). You can prepare one **Rankless** card per turn during your **Dispatch**.

- o **Additional Costs**

- Some cards require you to take an additional action to prepare the card.
Example: A card may say, "To prepare this card, return a Unit from your Sector to Hand."
- Some **Additional Costs** are optional, usually granting an additional or improved effect when paid.

- o **Alternate Costs**

- Some cards can be played in a different way than usual. This is called an **Alternate Cost**.
Example: A card may say, "You may send a card from your Heap to your Lost instead of paying this card's Command Cost."
- If you choose an alternate cost, you do NOT pay the normal cost.

- o **Reactions**

- Some cards have the Reaction Subtype and a Free React condition, such as "Free React if an opponent prepares a Unit."
- With Free React, a **Reaction** can be prepared without paying its **Prepare Cost** until another card effect resolves.
- With Free React, a **Reaction** is Abrupt.

4. **Resolution**

- o Once all players are done adding to the Stack, the top Command resolves.



The Stack

The **Stack** is where **Operation** and **Abilities** wait before their effect happen (resolve). It works like a queue of actions that must resolve in order.

1. When you prepare an **Operation** or **Ability**, it goes on top of the **Stack**.

2. Priority

- o After something is added, the opposing player always gets the first chance to respond.
- o Then, the player who initiated the **Command** or **Ability** gets a chance.
- o If both players pass, the top item on the **Stack** resolves.
- o After resolution, the **Role Player (Invader or Defender)** regains **Priority**. The **Role Player** is based on the current **Phase** of the game.

3. The Stack resolves in last-in, first-out (LIFO) order. The most recent effect happens first, then the next one down, and so on.

Adding to the Stack

1. Any card or **Activated Ability** can be prepared and added to an empty **Stack**.

2. **Quick** cards and **Abilities** can be added when that player has **Priority**.

3. **Instant** cards, and **Abilities**, resolve *before* passing **Priority**, preventing other **Operations** and **Abilities** from being added.

4. **Abrupt** cards, and **Abilities**, prevent other **Operations** from being added. **Abilities** can be added as normal.

5. **Triggered Abilities** are automatically added when triggered.

Example

1. During the **Invader's Dispatch**, they prepare a Mechanoid as an **Operation**, putting it on the **Stack**.

2. The **Defender** gains **Priority** and may respond, choosing to prepare a **Command** as an **Operation**.

3. The **Invader** gains **Priority** and may respond, choosing to pass instead.

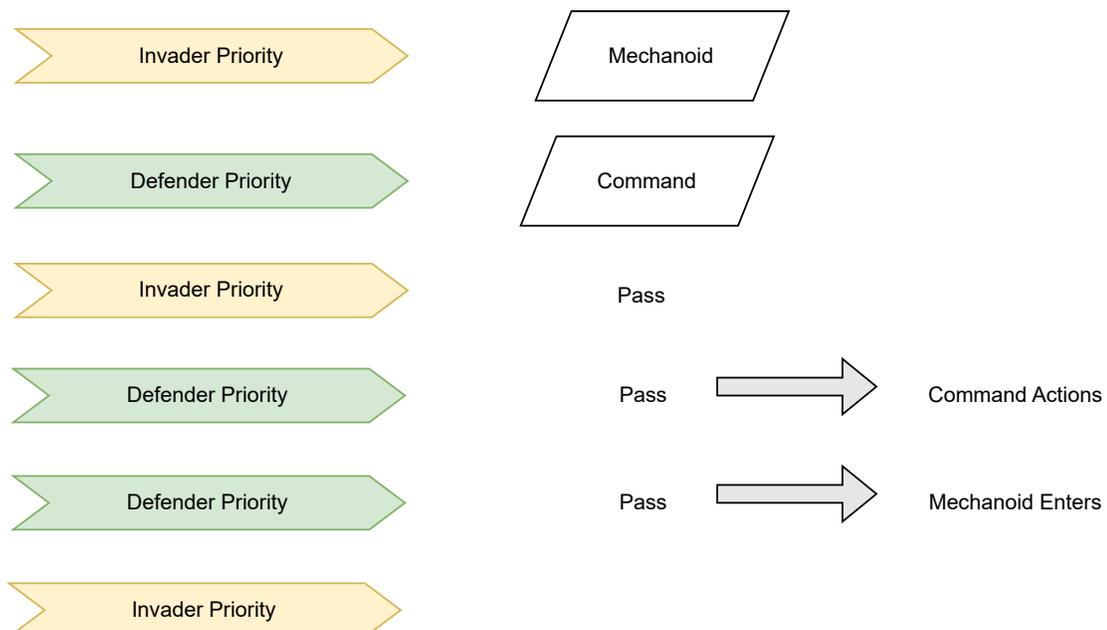
4. The **Defender** gains **Priority** again and may respond, choosing to pass instead.

5. The top **Operation** resolves and exits the **Stack**. The **Defender** takes the actions of their **Command** and puts the card into their **Heap**.

6. The **Invader** (the **Role Player**) regains **Priority** and passes again.

7. The next **Operation** resolves and exits the **Stack**. The Mechanoid enters the **Invader's Sector**.

8. The **Invader** regains **Priority** again.



The Turn

1. Regroup

- o Both players **Mobilize** each permanent in their **Sector**.
 - Turn the card from sideways to upright, or
 - Flip the card face up.

2. Defender Start

- o **Plan:** Look at and arrange the top 2 HQ cards.
- o **Gather:** Draw a card.

3. Defender Main

- o **Dispatch:** Prepare **Operations**.

4. Invader Start

- o Same as **Defender Start**

5. Invader Main

- o Same as **Defender Main**

6. Invader Combat

- o **Commit:** Choose to Engage. You may Engage twice per turn.
- o **Engage:** Players choose attackers and blockers (see Combat Basics)
- o **Damage:** Permanents are dealt damage (see Combat Basics). Return to **Commit**.

7. Defender Combat

- o Same as **Invader Combat**

8. End of Turn

- o End of turn effects stop and ARCs "fade" (are gone)
- o Put cards from your **Grid** and **Hand** into your **Heap** until each of those zones has no more than 6 cards.
- o **Heap** cards move to **Frost** (turn 90 degree).

Players gain **Priority** between each **Step** and **Phase**, starting with the player with the **Active Role**.

Players do not have **Priority** during **Regroup** or **End of Turn**.

Combat Basics

1. Attacking and Blocking

- o During a player's **Combat**, they will choose any number of **Units** to attack (by **Exhausting** them) and which **Objective(s)** they will be attacking.
- o Then, the other player can choose to up to one **Unit** to block each attacker (*without Exhausting* them).
- o A **Unit** can only attack *once* in a turn.
- o A **Unit** can block *twice* in a turn (once per Engage).
- o There is no **Priority** between choosing attackers and blockers.

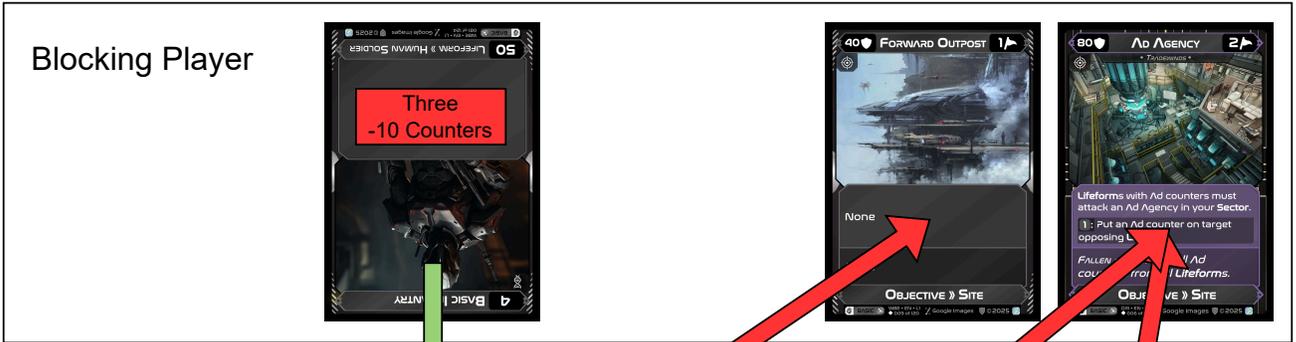
2. Damaging

- o Attackers and defenders deal damage at the same time.
- o If a Lifeform or Mechanoid has less **Impact**, it is defeated and goes to the **Heap**.
- o If a Lifeform or Mechanoid is already Wounded (has damage marked on it), it *falls* and goes to the **Heap**.
- o A **Lifeform**, **Mechanoid**, or **Objective** gains a Wound (-10) counter for each 10 damage dealt (marking damage).

Combat Example

1st Engage

Blocking Player



Attacking Player



Three
-10 Counters

None

Lifeforms with Ad counters must attack an Ad Agency in your Sector.
1: Put an Ad counter on target opposing Lifeforms.
Fallen Lifeforms destroy Ad counters on Lifeforms.

Overpower (Can't be blocked by Wounded cards)

Reconnaimed Drone (This card draws 1 card from the top of the deck.)

Basic Infantry

Forward Outpost

Ad Agency

Advanced Infantry

Reconnaimed Drone

Gummenguard

Basic Infantry

Attacking Player

2nd Engage

Blocking Player



Attacking Player



Three
-10 Counters

None

+2 VPs

Overpower (Can't be blocked by Wounded cards)

Advanced Infantry

Basic Infantry

Forward Outpost

Two
-10 Counters

Basic Infantry

Gummenguard

Basic Infantry

Attacking Player

What to Bring

1. Deck Building

- **HQ:** This is your Main deck and must be at least 55 cards and contain no “Rift” cards.
- **Rift:** This is a collection of exactly 20 cards, including:
 - 12 Objectives
 - 5 Destinations
 - 3 Factories
- **Extra:** This is for additional cards brought into to the game later. You can have no more than 20 Extra cards, including Tokens.

2. Restrictions

- Your list, which includes **HQ**, **Rift**, and **Extra**, CANNOT have:
 - More than 4 copies of any card with the same name
 - More than 1 copy of a **Unique Constraint** card with the same name
 - More than 15 total **Power Constraint** cards
- Your list, may include:
 - **Neutral** cards (Black with no Faction)
 - **Non-Aligned** Faction cards, if *at least 1* of your Factories is for that Faction
 - **Aligned** Faction cards, if *at least 2* of your Factories is for that Faction

3. Tokens

- Any Tokens that can be created by cards in your list.
- Generic cards or other object to represent Token copies

4. Dice

- A number of 6-sided dice, preferably in 3 colors to mark:
 - Damage
 - Impact increases
 - Other general effects

Golden Rules

- If the text of a card contradicts the rules, follow the rules of the card.
- Cards with “can’t” effects always supersede other effects.
- If something isn’t covered, come to the best logical interpretation and use that.

FAQs

- **Face-Down Cards**

- A face-down card has no characteristics except its Type (if known) and what rules or effects assign.
- If a face-down card is unknown then it is treated as a **Unit**.
- Face-down **Units** have 0 Impact.

- **Information**

- A player's **HQ** is hidden from both players.
- A player's **Hand** is hidden from the opposing player.
- All other **Zones** are visible to all players.
- Face-down cards are only visible to the player of that **Zone**.

- **Ties**

- If both players would win at the same time, the player with the most *VPs* wins.
- If no player has more *VPs*, then the game is a draw.

- **Targeting**

- Choosing a specific card when you play a Command or ability. You can't play it if no legal target exists.
- If a target becomes illegal before resolution the effect fails and does nothing.
- If there are multiple targets, the effect still works on the ones that are legal. If all are illegal, the effect fails completely.

- **Tokens**

- When creating a Token a player may:
 - Create a token copy of an existing Token card in their Sector with the same name, or
 - Put a Token card from their Extra deck in their Sector (deploy) with X +10 counters according to the card that created it.
- Token cards have a Command Cost and Impact of 0 when played (not created).
- An existing Token copy becomes a Token card if the Token card would leave your Sector instead.

- **Fall vs Defeat vs Retire**

- A card *falls* if it sent to the **Heap** by being dealt lethal combat damage.
- A card *retires* if it sent to the **Heap** by a card effect using the retire phrasing.
- A card is *defeated* if it sent to the **Heap** for any other reason.

- **Attaching Cards**

- Attached cards are placed under the card it is being attached to.
- If a card that has an attached card with an attach effect leaves play, the attached card goes to the **Heap**.
- If a card has an attach effect and has a card attached to it *falls*, is *defeated*, or *retires*, deploy the attached card. If the attached card is a **Unit**, it enters Exhausted.