

INFLUENCE

INFLUENCE is a tactical card game where players attempt to gain the most Power. By playing Influence cards – symbolizing military, political, and economic influence – players conquer Castles and gain a base of Power. Maintaining control of these Castles grants additional Power, as well as influence over neighboring Castles!

Each player has an identical set of Faction cards. With these, players will leverage Influence over Castles, alter the game board, and sabotage opponents' strongholds. At the end of six Rounds, whoever has the most Power wins!

Components

The game box includes:

16 Castle cards

5 Setup cards

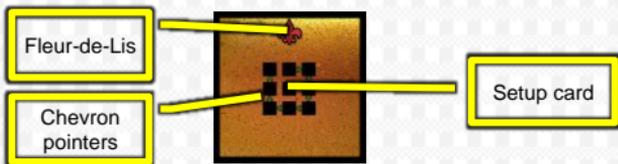
And six Faction decks, which each consist of:

- 6 Influence cards,
- 2 Swap cards,
- 1 Saboteur card,
- 1 Delay card, and
- 2 Faction ID cards

Castle cards have eight Influence Circles, a Name Banner, and a Power value. In the example below, the Castle's name is *Albion*, and it is worth 3 Power.



Setup cards have a Fleur-de-Lis, and a pattern of small black squares. This pattern indicates how the game will be set up, where the Setup card is the center black square. The other black squares represent how the Castle cards will be laid out in relation to this Setup card. Green chevron pointers between black squares indicates the path used when examining Castles.



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The six Faction decks are defined by six symbols, as shown below.



Each Faction deck contains the following twelve cards:



Six Influence cards (values of 2, 2, 3, 3, 5, 6) – played on a Castle in an attempt to control it.



One Delay card – played to change position in turn order.



One Saboteur card – played to hinder an opponent for one Round.



Two Swap cards – played to switch Influence cards, or rotate a Castle card or the Setup card.



Two Faction ID cards – one is a reference so players can see who is playing each Faction; the other is used in determining turn order each Attack Phase.

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Game Setup

Step 1: Determine if you are playing a Team game or a Free-For-All game, where each player plays for themselves.

If playing a Free-For-All game, each player selects their Faction. Then proceed to Step 2.

If playing a Team game, determine which players are on each team. There must be an equal number of Factions per team, but it's possible for one player to play multiple Factions within one team to ensure that the Faction numbers are equal. It's also possible to play 2 or 3 player games in the Team game format, where each player controls multiple Factions.

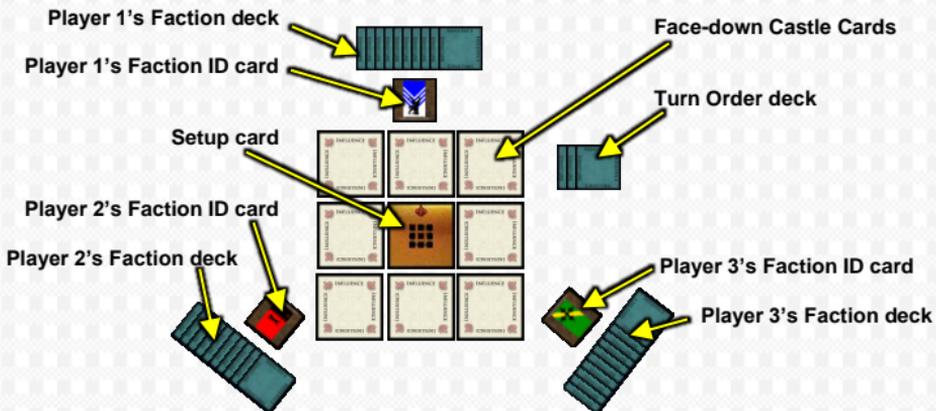
Players now select their Faction (or Factions).

Step 2: Each player takes their Faction deck and places one of their Faction ID cards face-up in front of them so that everyone knows which Faction they are playing. Players who are playing with multiple Factions do this for each of their Faction decks. Return unused Faction decks to the box.

Step 3: Gather the second Faction ID card from each Faction deck in play, and shuffle them into a new deck, called the Turn Order deck.

Step 4: Select a Setup card – you may choose one or draw one at random – and place it face-up in the middle of the table. Shuffle all of the Castle cards and place them face-down around the Setup card, forming the pattern shown on the Setup card (be sure that the Setup card remains in the middle). Return the unused Castle cards to the box.

The game is now fully set up, and will look roughly like this for a 3-player game:



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Playing the Game

The game is played over six Rounds, with each Round divided into three Phases. The three Phases in a Round are, in order:

Attack Phase – *Players, one at a time, attack Castles using their Influence cards.*

Swap Phase – *Resolve any Swap cards played during the Attack Phase.*

Conquer Phase – *Reveal Influence cards played during the Attack Phase, determine the Conqueror of each Castle, and score Power.*

The player/team with the most Power at the end of the sixth Round wins. In a tie, the winner is whichever tied player/team was the first to play their 6th and final Influence card.

ATTACK PHASE

Each Faction will perform one Attack, in order, as determined by the Turn Order deck.

Shuffle the Turn Order deck. Reveal the top card. The player controlling the revealed Faction now performs an Attack with that Faction. Once done, this process repeats – reveal a new Faction ID card, the revealed Faction performs their Attack – until the Turn Order deck is empty and the last Attack is completed, at which point the Attack Phase ends.

Note: When performing an Attack with a Faction, a player can only play cards from that Faction, not from any other Factions the player may control.

At the start of the Attack, determine whether to play the Delay card. If played, the Delay card returns the current Faction ID card to the bottom of the Turn Order deck, ending the current Faction's Attack, to be resumed later in the Round when the Faction ID card is drawn again. The Delay card is then removed from the game.

If the Delay card is *not* used, the player:

- *Must* play one Influence card, face-down, next to a Castle card.
- *May* play any number of their Swap cards and/or their Saboteur card. These cards cannot be played in the first Round, and each card can only be played once in the game.

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LEGAL CARD PLACEMENT, PART 1

Influence cards

- In the First Round, a player can only place their Influence card at a Castle that has not had an Influence card played on it yet.
- During the other Rounds, a player can play their Influence card on a Castle:
 - where the player (or their teammate) has an Influence card, or
 - adjacent to a Castle that the player/team controls (see Conquer Phase for details).

Adjacent is defined as the first card immediately horizontal, vertical, or diagonal from the Castle card. *Example: the green Castles are adjacent to the black Castle, but the red Castles are not (the grey square is the Setup card).*



LEGAL CARD PLACEMENT, PART 2

A **Swap card** can be played, face-up, on:

- the Setup card if there isn't a Swap card on it already,
- a Castle card that the Faction controls (i.e., has a face-up Influence card belonging to that Faction) but does not have a Swap or Saboteur card already played on it,
- one of the Faction's Influence cards, including the face-down Influence card played during the Attack.

The **Saboteur card** can be played, face-up, on any Castle card that does not already have a Swap or Saboteur card on it. The player declares which Influence Circle on the Castle card is targeted. That Influence Circle will contribute no Influence during the upcoming Conquer Phase.



Influence cards should be played in a line extending away from the Setup card, through the Castle card, to indicate which Castle an Influence card has been played upon. The example shows cards at the start of the third Round.

 controls the top-left Castle, as shown by the Influence card overlapping the Castle, and has played Influence cards on the top-left and top-middle Castles.

 controls the top-right Castle, and has played Influence cards on the top-middle and top-right Castles.

Neither Faction controls the top-middle Castle.

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SWAP PHASE

The Swap Phase resolves all Swap cards played in the Attack Phase. If played on the Setup card, a player changes the order in which Castles will be resolved (which can affect results in the Conquer Phase). Swap cards played on a Castle or on an Influence card allows a player to alter the Influence they'll bring to upcoming Castle conflicts.

If there is a Swap card on the Setup card, the player who played the Swap card may rotate the Setup card by 90, 180, or 270 degrees, or leave it as is, their choice.



Starting with the closest card North of the Setup card – as indicated by the Fleur-de-Lis - examine each Castle card, one at a time, in the order indicated by the green arrows on the Setup card:

- If there is a Swap card on the Castle, the player who owns the Castle may rotate it by 90, 180, or 270 degrees, or leave it as is.
- If there is a Swap card on an Influence card played on the Castle, the player who is playing that Faction must swap the Influence card with another played Influence card belonging to that Faction. The swapped-in card will now apply its Influence towards this Castle, and the swapped-out card will apply its Influence towards the Castle that the swapped-in card came from. If a Swap card is played on a face-down Influence card from the current Round's Attack Phase, flip that Influence card face-up when switching its location.

CONQUER PHASE

Starting with the closest Castle card North of the Setup card – as indicated by the Fleur-de-Lis – examine each Castle in the order indicated by the green chevrons on the Setup card.

When examining a Castle, perform the following steps:

1. If the Castle is face-down, reveal it. The initial orientation of the Castle should be such that the Name Banner is North of the Power value, per the setting of North as indicated by the Fleur-de-Lis on the Setup card.
2. Reveal all Influence cards played on the Castle.
3. Determine the Influence of each player/team on the current Castle. Influence is the sum of:
 - the player/team's Influence cards played on the Castle (including any Influence card currently controlling the Castle).
 - the value of the Influence Circle of adjacent Castles the player/team controls, provided that the Influence Circle has not been targeted by a Saboteur card this Round.

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4. The player/team with the most Influence conquers the Castle and is the Conqueror. If there is a tie, there is no Conqueror.

If the Conqueror **didn't** control the Castle at the start of this Attack phase, the Conqueror:

- scores 1 Power (recorded separately as you go).
- chooses one of the Conqueror's Influence cards played at the Castle to be the new controlling card, placing it so that it overlaps the Castle card.

If the Conqueror **did** control the Castle at the start of this Attack phase, the Conqueror:

- scores Power equal to the Castle's Power value.
- chooses one of the Conqueror's Influence cards played at the Castle to be the new controlling card (it can be the same or different to the one they had previously), placing it so that it overlaps the Castle card.

If there is no Conqueror:

- no one scores Power from this Castle during this Round.
- no controlling card can be overlapping this Castle during this Round.

All Influence cards played at the Castle remain in play at the Castle – they'll count in future Conquer Phases. Any ex-controlling card remains at the Castle, but is moved so that it no longer overlaps the Castle card - there can only ever be one controlling card at a Castle.

NOTES:

-- Power is cumulative throughout the game.

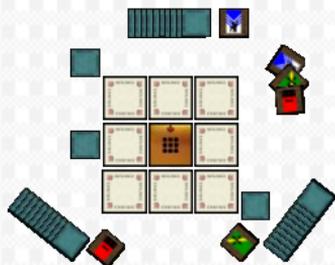
Example: If a player conquers a Castle with 3 Power value on the first Round [scores 1 Power], and maintains control of it during the second Round [scores 3 power], that player has 4 Power. If that player loses control of that Castle in the third Round, the player still has 4 Power.

-- To conquer a Castle, a player/team *must* have at least one of their Influence cards at that Castle. This means that a player/team cannot conquer a Castle simply by controlling a neighboring Castle.

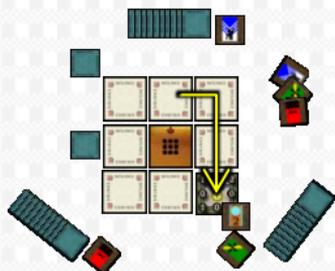
-- Castles are only examined once per Round. Conquering a Castle *does not* alter the outcome of Castles that have already been examined during this Round!

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Example 1 Game setup and the first Round's Attack and Conquer Phases



- went first and played on the top-left Castle.
- went second and played on the bottom-right Castle.
- went last and played on the middle-left Castle.



Following the path shown on the Setup card (highlighted here by the yellow arrow), each Castle is examined for Swap cards. With none played, each Castle is examined during the Conquer Phase.

's Influence card is the first encountered, thus that is the first Castle revealed. With 2 Influence and no competition, conquers the Castle and scores 1 Power.



The remaining Castles are examined in the order shown on the Setup card (highlighted again by the yellow arrow). As it is the first Round, and will automatically conquer their chosen Castles and score 1 Power each.

This ends the First Round. All three players have conquered a Castle and the score is:

1 to 1 to 1

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Example 2 Saboteur card, second Round Attack and Conquer Phases

In this example, the first three Castles conquered were the top-center, bottom-left, and middle-right Castles by , , and  respectively, each scoring 1 Power. At the end of the first Round, the score is:

 1 to  1 to  1

At the end of the Attack Phase, Influence cards have been played on the middle-left and top-center Castles, and  has played the Saboteur card on the middle-right Castle.

With no Swap cards in play, the Swap phase is skipped.



The Fleur-de-Lis indicates that North is Up.

The top-center Castle is examined first.

 has 8 total Influence, all from Influence Cards.

 has 6 total Influence because the Castle that  controls does not provide Influence this Round due to 's Saboteur card.  maintains control of the Castle and scores 3 Power. The  Saboteur card is now removed from the game.

The middle-right Castle is examined next.

With no Influence card played on the Castle, 's Influence from the top-center Castle is ignored. The Castle remains in 's control.  scores 2 Power.

The bottom-left Castle is examined next.

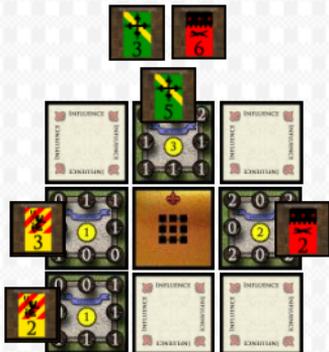
 has the only Influence at the Castle, maintains control, and scores 2 Power.

The middle-left Castle is the last Castle to be examined this Round (with no Influence cards on the top-left Castle, it remains hidden).

 has 3 Influence from Influence cards, and again  Influence from the top-center Castle is ignored.  scores 1 Power for conquering the Castle.

At the end of the second Round, the score is:

 3 to  4 to  3



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Example 3 Implications of the Swap card

This example shows a continuation of Example 2 at the end of the next Attack Phase. The new Influence cards are face-up for demonstration purposes only.

played a Swap card on the Setup card. The current North would cause to lose control of the top-center Castle:

has 8 Influence, all from Influence cards

has 8 Influence, 6 from an Influence card, two from the middle-right Castle – the Influence circle is highlighted in Black and Red for this example.



chose to rotate the Setup card to point to the Left.

scores 1 Power for the middle-left Castle. scores 1 Power for the top-left Castle.

For the top-center Castle, has 10 Influence: 8 Influence from Influence cards, and 2 from the neighboring Castle (highlighted in Green and Yellow).

has 8 Influence: 6 from an Influence card, and 2 from the neighboring Castle (still highlighted in Black and Red).

maintains control and scores 3 Power.



conquers the top-right Castle and scores 1 Power, maintains the middle-right Castle and scores 2 Power.

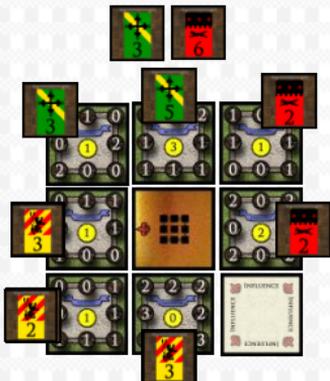
conquers the bottom-center Castle and scores 1 Power, maintains the bottom-left Castle and scores 1 Power.

The score at the end of the third Round is:

6 to 3 to 6

If the Setup card had stayed pointing Up, the top-center Castle would result in a tie, and the score would have been:

6 to 5 to 6



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BASIC STRATEGY GUIDE

-- Going first during the Attack Phase is beneficial if you want to Swap the Setup card. Going last in the Attack Phase is beneficial because you know how your enemies have played! The Delay card is very useful for this!

-- If you Swap the Setup card to face a direction that allows you to conquer a Castle before your opponent(s), your new Castle will be able to provide Influence toward all neighboring Castles, including defending your other Castles!

-- Remember that the Influence numbers on a Castle only provide Influence toward a *neighboring* Castle. They do not help defend themselves.

-- In a 2- or 3- player game, stay near your opponent(s) so you have the ability to attack them if they get a high-value Castle.

-- Your first Castle is essentially free, as no other player is allowed to play on that Castle during the first Round. Depending on where you start, you may be able to get a second and third Castle without conflict.

-- You don't need to declare how you are going to rotate the Setup card or a Castle card until the Swap Phase. The same is true for switching Influence cards: you play the Swap card on one of your Influence cards, and you must switch that card, but you do not need to declare the other Influence card that it will switch with until the Swap Phase.

-- You may play your Swap card on the Influence card that you play during your Attack. Doing this prevents your opponent(s) from knowing the Influence value of either card that you are switching.

Visit our website for videos on setup and gameplay, the Print-and-Play version of the game, and the latest rules FAQ and game news! <http://www.TwoMonkeyStudios.com>

These will all be hosted on BoardGameGeek as well – <http://www.boardgamegeek.com> (BGG)

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