



A detailed illustration of an ancient Egyptian temple interior. The scene is viewed through a jagged, torn-paper-like opening. In the center, a large, eight-pointed star symbol is mounted on a wall. Below the star, a set of stairs leads up to a platform where a row of statues is visible. The walls are covered in hieroglyphs and have a textured, aged appearance. The overall color palette is warm, with browns, oranges, and yellows.

RULEBOOK



GENERAL HISTORY

Welcome to Mesopotamia, the land between rivers, where empires are born from clay and collapse by blood. From 5000 to 1000 BC, this cradle of civilization pulses with ambition, faith, and fire, and the world as we know it is just beginning to wake. Here, mighty city-states rise along the fertile banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. Choose your people. Lead them from humble beginnings to towering greatness in the world's earliest and most volatile cradle of power.

Will you guide the Sumerians, pioneers of urban life and innovation, masters of writing, bureaucracy, and the delicate art of irrigation? Or will you rally the Akkadians, fierce unifiers of the city-states, forging history's first empire through conquest, tribute, and ruthless ambition?

Will you command the Babylonians, champions of law and astronomy, whose ziggurats rise with purpose and whose legal codes outlive kings? Or perhaps you'll march with the Assyrians, whose iron discipline and unmatched military prowess strike terror into all who oppose them.

Lead the Elamites, secretive and ancient, lurking beyond the Zagros with knowledge and cunning passed down through millennia. Or rule as the Eblaites, meticulous record-keepers and cultural diplomats, weaving alliances and trade routes from behind palace walls.

Unite the Mari, masters of negotiation and strategy, balancing warfare with diplomacy in the delicate game of survival. Or command the Hittites, fierce chariot warriors and masters of iron, whose resourcefulness and devotion to the gods fuel their rise from the Anatolian highlands.

But aspiring leader, do not be misled; this is no peaceful golden age. Famine stalks the fields. Rivers flood or vanish without warning. Raiders descend from the hills. And even the greatest empire can be brought low in an instant. This is your chance to reshape history, or to be forgotten by it.

**Choose your civilization. Build your empire. Command your armies.
History is yours for the making.**

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COMPONENTS



COMPONENTS



SETUP

SETUP



GAME SET UP

1 Game Board: Place the main game board at the center of the table, within easy reach of all players.

2 Event track: Players advance their Empire Seal on the Event Track by interacting with Events. A higher position grants greater control during combat.

3 Empire Seal on Event track: Place all Empire Seals on position 1 of the Event Track. The initial order from highest to lowest is: Acadians, Elamites, Sumerians, Babylonians.

4 Trade token: Shuffle all Trade Tokens face down. For each section, place 3 random tokens of the appropriate level, then flip them face up.

5 Section level: Each section has a level indicator. Only Trade Tokens matching the section's level should be placed there.

6 Amphora slot: When performing a Trade action, place your Amphora token on this designated slot.

7 Slot for triangular Event token: Shuffle all triangular Event Tokens face down. Place one random token in each triangular slot.

8 Starting area for Empires: Follow the Empire selection rules and place each Empire in the starting area you select on the board.

9 Slot for square Event token: Shuffle all square Event Tokens face down. Place one random token in each square slot.

10 Slot for circular Event token: Shuffle all circular Event Tokens face down. Place one random token in each circular slot.

11 Icon for Blocker tokens and Neutral Tribes: Icons on the board indicate where to place Blocker Tokens in 2- or 3-player games, and where to place Neutral Tribes.

12 Resource Icon: These icons show which resource a unit will gather from an area when using the Gather action.

13 Neutral Tribes: Place Neutral Tribe miniatures as indicated by the board icons. Neutral Tribes guard Event locations.

14 Population track: Advance your Empire Seal on the Population Track by using the Grow action. Higher levels increase your unit capacity, determine turn order, and allow construction of higher Ziggurat levels.

15 Empire Seal on Population track: Place the Babylonian Seal on position 2. All other Seals start at position 1. The initial order from highest to lowest is: Sumerians, Elamites, Acadians.

16 Hanging Gardens Tokens: Randomly select one Hanging Gardens Token from each of the five levels and place them face down. Flip the last token (level 1) face up.

17 Event Deck: Keep the Event Deck face down. Use it to draw the Event card indicated by a revealed Event Token.

18 Quest Deck: Shuffle the Quest Deck and deal 4 random Quest cards to each player. Each player selects 3 cards to keep. The deck is not used again unless triggered by an Event.

19 Combat Decks: Keep all Combat Decks face down. During combat, draw one Combat Card per unit involved.

20 Resources: Place all game resources in a shared supply accessible to all players. Resources are drawn from here when gathered and returned here when consumed.

SETUP

SETUP



Empire Selection

In a four-player game, players are assigned roles from Player A to Player D. These roles determine the order in which players choose their Empires and Starting Areas.

As players arrive at the gaming table, they select which role they wish to take—Player A, B, C, or D—in the order they arrive. The first player to arrive chooses any available role, followed by the second, third, and fourth players.

Once all roles have been assigned, players select their Empires in the following order: Player A chooses first, followed by Player B, then Player C, and finally Player D.

After all Empires have been chosen, players select their Starting Areas in reverse order: Player D chooses first, followed by Player C, then Player B, and finally Player A.

There are four possible Starting Areas on the board (1 to 4). Each player selects one of these areas during their turn in the Starting Area selection phase.

Place a Ziggurat token on areas 5 and 6 so the number is facing down.

Empire Unique Setup

All Empires begin the game with the following standard resources and units:

- 1 Stone, 1 Wood, 1 Clay, 1 Food
- 1 Spearman placed on their selected Starting Area

Each Empire also begins with unique advantages and setup elements as described:



Sumerian Empire

- Begins with the Level 2 Research Technology: Mathematics
- Starts with 1 Tablet resource
- Begins with the first level of their Ziggurat already constructed and thus Receives 1 Dingir die



Babylonian Empire

- Begins with the Level 2 Grow Technology: Irrigation
- Starts with their Seal placed on Level 2 of the Population Track



Akkadian Empire

- Begins with the Level 2 Warfare Technology: Archery
- Starts with 1 Knucklebone resource
- Begins with an Archer on their Starting Area instead of a Spearman



Elamite Empire

- Begins with the Level 2 Gather Technology: Weights and Measures
- May place 1 Settlement and 1 Wall on a single area adjacent to their Starting Area
- The Event in that area is not revealed

SET UP PLAYER AREA

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Standard of Ur | 10 Archer Miniatures |
| 2 Stone Wall Miniatures | 11 Dingir dice Slots |
| 3 Battering Ram Miniatures | 12 Empire starting resources |
| 4 Chariot Miniatures | 13 Amphora Wooden Components |
| 5 Ziggurat (6 Pieces) Miniature | 14 Dingir dice |
| 6 Settlement Miniatures | 15 Event dice |
| 7 Horseman Miniatures | 16 Player Board |
| 8 Ship Miniatures | 17 Civilization Cards |
| 9 Spearman Miniatures | 18 Quest Cards |
| | 19 Reference Card |

SETUP

THREE AND TWO PLAYER SETUP

When playing with fewer than four players, the setup is adjusted as follows:

Trade Tokens

- In a three-player game, only 9 Trade Tokens are used.
- In a two-player game, only 6 Trade Tokens are used.

Three-Player Setup:

Shuffle all available Trade Tokens face down. Then, randomly select:

- 2 tokens from each level (Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4)
- 1 token from Level 4

Place the selected tokens face up in the designated Trade sections as shown in the reference image.

Two-Player Setup:

Shuffle all available Trade Tokens face down. Then, randomly select:

- 1 token from each level (Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4)
- 1 additional token from Level 2
- 1 additional token from Level 4



2-Player Setup



3-Player Setup

Blockers

Blockers are placed in order to negate some areas from the map. In the areas where there is a Blocker, no action can be made. Events are not revealed, gathering may not occur and settlements or walls can not be placed. Units can only move or combat through such a territory.

In a three player game place a total of 4 tokens in the areas indicated by the Icon 3.

In a two player game place a total of 8 tokens in the areas indicated by either the Icon 3 or the Icon 2.

Blocker Tokens are used to restrict utility to certain areas of the map, simulating inactive regions.

When a Blocker Token is placed in an area:

- Events in that area are not revealed
- Gathering actions cannot be performed
- Settlements and Walls cannot be placed
- Units may move through or engage in combat in the area.

Placement by Player Count

- In a three-player game, place 4 Blocker Tokens in areas marked with the 3 icon.
- In a two-player game, place 8 Blocker Tokens in areas marked with either the 3 or 2 icons.



SETUP

ROUNDS, PHASES, AND TURNS

The game is played over a series of Rounds, and each Round is divided into two distinct Phases:

1. Action Phase
2. Combat Phase

The game continues in Rounds until the Hanging Gardens are fully constructed. Once the Round in which this occurs concludes, the game ends.

Action Phase

During the Action Phase, all players take their turns in Population Track order—starting with the player highest on the track and proceeding in descending order. On their turn, each player may perform as many different actions as they are able, following the standard Action Rules.

Although Dingir Dice are officially rolled at the start of a player's turn, it is acceptable—and often encouraged—for players to roll them at the end of their turn. This allows for better planning and helps maintain a smooth pace of play. Once all players have completed their turns, the Action Phase ends.

HINT

Playing first can mean the difference between winning and losing the game. Always try to be first on the Population track.

Combat Phase

After the Action Phase, the Combat Phase begins. Players check all River Sections and Areas where units from different Empires are present. Combat occurs in each of these contested areas.

The player who is highest on the Event Track chooses the order in which combats are resolved, allowing them to act in their strategic interest. Once all combats have been resolved, the Combat Phase ends.

End of Round

At the end of each Round:

- Events that progress over multiple Rounds (e.g., 6-round Events) advance to their next step.
- All Event Dice are rotated to the next number, potentially triggering the resolution of certain Events.

After these steps are completed, the Round ends and a new Round begins.

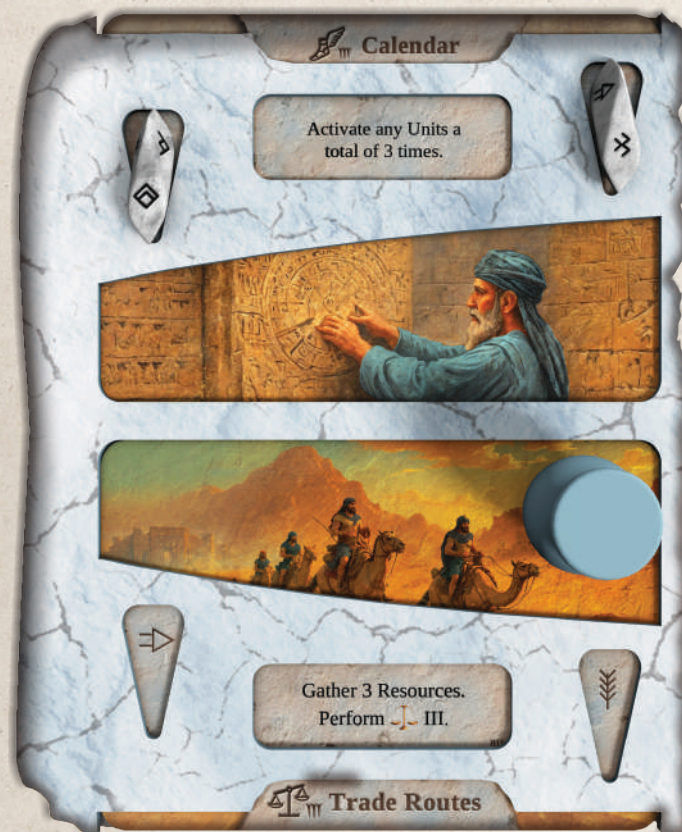


SETUP

WHAT ARE ACTIONS IN MESOPOTAMIA

Mesopotamia is an action selection game, meaning that on your turn, you choose one or more actions to perform. Each turn, you are guaranteed to select at least one action. You just place your Amphora on top of the Action you want to activate.

Additionally, your Dingir Dice—which roughly translates to “Divine Dice” in cuneiform—may allow you to perform extra actions through a dice allocation mechanic.



Action Rules

- A player may perform as many different actions as possible during their turn, depending on available resources and conditions.
- The same action type may not be performed more than once in a single turn. You can not perform two Research actions even when you use your first action to upgrade the research action to another one.
- Players may perform one action to gain resources, and then immediately use those resources to perform a different action within the same turn.
- It is permitted to upgrade a Technology as one action, and then use the new action as a second action in the same turn.

Types of Action

There are six types of actions available to all players. These actions are inspired by ancient Mesopotamian technologies and are accessible to every Civilization from the beginning of the game.

For example, if you want to move your units across the map, you'll use the Explore action. The level 1 Explore action is represented by the ancient technology Mapmaking, which all Civilizations know at the start of the game. This means any Civilization can use this action to move their units.

The Six Available type of Actions:

- Explore — Move your units across the map.
- Build — Construct buildings, structures, and other developments.
- Research — Discover advanced technologies to upgrade your actions.
- Gather and Trade — Collect resources from the map and trade them.
- Warfare — Train military units and strengthen your army.
- Grow — Increase your population.



SETUP

Each action is associated with four levels of technology. Higher-level technologies enhance the effects of the previous ones. For instance, the level 1 Explore action (Mapmaking) allows you to activate one unit. When upgraded to level 2 (Astronomy), you can activate any units twice.

Because each Civilization is unique, the technologies they access and how they perform actions can vary. For example, the Sumerians, known for their scientific prowess, excel at upgrading technologies during the Research action, outperforming other Civilizations in this area.

This uniqueness is also reflected in starting technologies—some Civilizations begin the game with certain actions already at level 2.

The Dingir Dice

Religion played a central role in Ancient Mesopotamian life. In the game, this is represented by the Dingir Dice, which are gained through the construction of the Ziggurat.

- For each level of the Ziggurat you build, you gain 1 Dingir Die, up to a maximum of 6 dice.
- When rolled, each Dingir Die displays a cuneiform symbol.

These symbols correspond to those found on your Action Cards. To activate an action using a Dingir Die:

1. Identify the symbol on the Action Card you wish to use.
2. Move a Dingir Die showing the matching symbol to the Dingir Slot on that Action Card.
3. You may now activate the action.

Technology and Symbol Complexity

- Level 1 Technologies require only one symbol to activate.
- Higher-level Technologies require two symbols, and the symbols become increasingly rare as the level increases.
- This reflects the balance between power and difficulty—higher-level Technologies are stronger but harder to activate.

The Star Symbol

Each Dingir Die has one face showing a star symbol. This symbol is wild and may be used as any symbol when activating an action.

Rerolling Dingir Dice

- You may reroll any number of your Dingir Dice by spending 1 Tablet.
- You may reroll up to three times per turn and no more than three rerolls are allowed during a single turn.

HINT

To speed up gameplay and plan ahead, it is recommended to roll your Dingir Dice at the end of your turn. This allows you to prepare your next actions in advance and helps maintain a smooth flow for all players.



ACTIONS

EXPLORE ACTION

When a player chooses the Explore action , they may activate Units to move across the map. Each activated Unit may move a number of times equal to its Speed.

Unit	Icon	Speed
Spearman		1
Archer		1
Horseman		2
Chariot		2
Ship		3

The map is divided into distinct Areas, separated by white borders. A Unit moves by traveling from its current Area to an adjacent one. For example, a Unit with Speed 2 may move into one adjacent Area, then continue into another.

Explore action Technologies

The Explore action  can be enhanced by advancing through the following Technologies:

Level	Technology
1	Map Making
2	Astronomy
3	Calendar
4	Sailing

Explore action Definition



“Activate any Units a total of 2 times.”

is allows the player to:

- Activate two different Units once each, or
- Activate the same Unit twice

Examples:

- A Spearman  activated twice may move 2 times (1 Speed × 2 activations)
- A Horseman  activated twice may move 4 times (2 Speed × 2 activations)
- A Spearman  and a Horseman  activated once may move 1 time and 2 times respectively



ACTIONS

SHIPS

Ship Placement

Ships  are not placed within Areas. Instead, they are positioned on river sections, which are represented by the white border lines dividing two adjacent Areas. For all gameplay purposes, a Ship  is considered to occupy both Areas that the river section separates.

This means a Ship  may:

- Gather Resources from either adjacent Area.
- Participate in Combat occurring in either adjacent Area.

Ship Movement

Ships  move along the river network by traveling from one river section (white border line) to another. The river network is divided into sections by nodes, which are points where multiple white border lines intersect (typically where vertical and horizontal borders meet).

A Ship  is considered to have moved when it crosses a node from one river section to another, as illustrated in the following image.



Why Explore?

Exploration is a fundamental action that enables players to:

- **Secure Resources:** Move Units into Areas containing Resources to collect them later using the Gather action .
- **Initiate Combat:** Enter enemy-controlled Areas to trigger combat at the end of the round and potentially conquer those Areas. When a Unit enters an Area containing enemy Units, its movement may be interrupted. In such cases, the Unit cannot continue moving further during that activation. More on Pin an Enemy Unit on page 16.
- **Discover Events:** If a Unit ends its movement in an Area with an unexplored Event, that Event is immediately revealed and resolved. More on Events on page 36.



HINT

There are a finite number of Events. It's just as easy to lose victory points on the Event track as it is to gain them.

ACTIONS

PINNING

Pinning an Enemy Unit

When a Unit moves into an Area occupied by enemy Units, it is typically forced to stop. If, at the end of the round, opposing Units occupy the same Area, combat is triggered.

Pinning Rule

Before combat occurs, the Pinning rule determines whether Units may continue moving after entering an enemy-occupied Area.

Pinning works as follows:

- If a Unit enters an Area containing enemy Units, it must stop its movement immediately.
- **Exception:** If the number of friendly Units already present in the Area is equal to or greater than the number of enemy Units from all opposing empires, the entering Unit is not pinned and may continue moving.

Example: Pinning in Action



Two Sumerian Units move from an adjacent Area to attack three Babylonian Units.

- A Sumerian Horseman with Speed 2 enters the Area. Because the Sumerians are outnumbered (2 vs. 3), the Horseman is pinned and cannot make its second movement.

Later in the round, the Babylonian player activates their Horseman and Archer:

- The Babylonian player chooses which Unit to move first. The first Unit may move freely, as it is not yet pinned.
- The two Sumerian Units can pin up to two Babylonian Units. Therefore, the third Babylonian Unit is not pinned and may move freely.
- In this example, the Babylonian Horseman moves out of the Area. If the player then attempts to move the Archer, they cannot—because both remaining Babylonian Units are now pinned by the two Sumerians.

HINT

Pin your opponents before they pin you. Choose your battlefields wisely.

ACTIONS

BUILD ACTION

Taking the Build action allows a player to construct one of several available Structures or Units, provided they have the required Resources, which are consumed during construction.



At the beginning of the game, all players possess the Masonry technology. This grants the ability to construct:

- Stone Walls
- Ziggurat levels (starting from the base)

As players advance through the Build Technologies, they upgrade their Masonry knowledge to higher levels up until Architecture. Each new level unlocks additional construction options, expanding strategic possibilities throughout the game.

Level	Technology	Name	Icon	Resource
1	Masonry	Stone Wall		
1	Masonry	Ziggurat		
2	Wood Working	Battering Ram		
2	Wood Working	Ship		
3	Urbanization	Settlement		
4	Architecture	Hanging Gardens		

Construction Rules

Each constructible item has specific placement rules:

- **Stone Wall and Settlement**: May be built in any Area where you have at least one Unit. Cannot be built in your Starting Area.
- **Battering Ram**: May be built in your Starting Area or in any Settlement you control.
- **Ship**: May be built on any river section adjacent to your Starting Area or the area of any Settlement you control.
- **Ziggurat**: May only be built in your Empire's Starting Area. The Ziggurat consists of 6 levels, constructed from the base upward. Each time a level is built, you may gain one additional Dingir die of any color you do not already possess. If you already have all three colors, you may choose any color. Players may not construct a level of the Ziggurat that exceeds their current level on the Population Track. All players begin the game with Population Level 1, which allows them to construct the first level of the Ziggurat immediately. To build the second level, a player must first advance their Population Track to Level 2. This restriction continues for each subsequent level of the Ziggurat.

Build Technology Bonus

Some Empires possess advanced building capabilities. If an Empire's Technology card states "Build 2", that player may:

- Construct two different items, or
- Construct the same item twice



ACTIONS

BUILDING THE HANGING GARDENS

The true location—and even the existence—of the Hanging Gardens remains one of history's great enigmas. Long believed to be a magnificent wonder of Babylon, modern scholars now question this assumption. Many suggest that the Gardens may not have belonged to any of the well-known empires of the ancient world. Instead, they may have stood in a neutral or lesser-known region, their origins lost to time and myth.

In Mesopotamia, the Hanging Gardens are a unique Wonder that may be constructed collectively by any Empire. All players are eligible to contribute to its construction, and those who do are generously rewarded with Victory Points.

The Hanging Gardens consist of five parts. Each part may be built by any player—or by the same player multiple times—provided they meet the construction requirements.



Constructing the Hanging Gardens

The Hanging Gardens are composed of five unique Tokens, stacked in a hidden sequence. At the start of the game, only the bottom Token is revealed. As players construct each part, the next Token is revealed, showing the requirements for the following stage.

Building a Part

When a player builds a part of the Hanging Gardens, they:

- Consume the required Resources shown on the revealed Token.
- Claim the Token, keeping it as a reference for the Victory Points they will receive at the end of the game.

Some Tokens may include additional requirements, such as:

- A minimum Population Ranking.
- A minimum Event Ranking.
- A certain number of Settlements.

(Note: These conditions must be met but are not consumed.)

No player may contribute to the Hanging Gardens until they have discovered the **Architecture** technology.

Game End Condition

Once all five parts of the Hanging Gardens have been built, the current round is completed (allowing all players to finish their turns), and then the game immediately ends.

HINT

Never end the game unless you're sure victory is yours.

ACTIONS

RESEARCH ACTION

When a player selects the Research action, they may perform two key functions:

- Convert Clay into Tablets
- Upgrade a Technology on their player board

You may perform any one of the two or both. If both effects are performed, they must be executed in sequence, one immediately after the other, with no other actions taken in between.

The Research action is enhanced through the following technology levels:

Level	Technology
1	Cuneiform
2	Mathematics
3	Literature
4	Legal Codes



Converting Clay to Tablets

While Clay is a basic Resource gathered from the map, Tablets are Special Resources that can not be gathered. The primary method of acquiring Tablets is through conversion using the Research action. For example while early Cuneiform may convert 2 Clay to gain 1 Tablet, you may upgrade up to Legal Codes that will allow you to convert 2 Clay to 4 Tablets.

Tablets is the most valuable Resource as it allows you to make Discoveries but also to reroll any of your Dingir dice.

Making Discoveries

A Discovery represents a technological breakthrough. To make a Discovery, you must:

- Choose a Technology on your player board.
- Remove it from its slot.
- Replace it with the next level of the same Technology type.
- Spend 1 Tablet for each Technology you upgrade.

Example: If you upgrade Mathematics (Level 2), you must replace it with Literature (Level 3).

Discovery Rules

- You may upgrade any Technology on your board, including the one you are currently using to perform the Discovery.
- You may also upgrade a Technology first, then activate the new version later in the same turn—provided you have the required Dingir Dice or an available Amphorea to do so.
- You may discover a technology (e.g., Build Level 2) and then immediately discover its next level (e.g., Build Level 3).

Example:
You activate Literature (Level 3) using your Amphorea. Literature allows you to make up to two Discoveries.

- You have only 1 Tablet, so you choose to make one Discovery.
- You upgrade Literature to Legal Codes (Level 4), even though you are currently using Literature.



GATHER AND TRADE ACTION

When a player selects the Gather and Trade action, they may perform two key functions:

- Gather Resources from the map.
- Perform a Trade action.



You may perform any one of the two or both. If both effects are performed, they must be executed in sequence, one immediately after the other, with no other actions taken in between.

The Gather and Trade action is enhanced through the following technology levels:

Level	Technology
1	Resource Gathering
2	Weights and Measure
3	Trade Routes
4	Currency

HINT

Resources exist to be used. Don't hoard—spend them strategically.

GATHER ACTION

The Gather action allows you to collect Resources from the map, based on the instructions provided by your current Gather Technology.

For example, if your Technology states “Gather 1 Resource,” you may choose one Resource to collect and select one eligible source from which to gather it.

Available Resources

There are four standard Resources that can be gathered from the map:

- Stone
- Wood
- Clay
- Food

Special Resources such as Tablets and Knucklebones cannot be gathered from the map. They must be obtained through other actions or effects.

Valid Gathering Sources

There are four ways to gather Resources:

- Starting Location:**
 - Your Starting Area may be selected to provide one Resource of your choice (Stone, Wood, Clay, or Food).
- Settlements:**
 - If a Settlement is built in an Area with a printed Resource icon, you may gather that Resource from the Settlement.
- Units:**
 - Any Unit occupying an Area with a printed Resource icon may gather that Resource.
 - It does not matter if enemy Units are also present in the same Area.
- Ships:**
 - A Ship may gather a Resource from either of the two Areas adjacent to its river section.
 - This gives Ships more flexibility than land Units when gathering.

Gathering Limitations

- Each Starting Location, Settlement, Unit, or Ship may be selected only once per Gather Action.
- You cannot select the same Unit or Ship multiple times to gather the same Resource.
- However, if multiple Units occupy the same Area, each may be selected once to gather the Resource from that Area.



The Green player (Elamites) activates a Technology that grants them: “Gather 3 Resources.”

There are four ways to gather Resources:

- Spearman (Wood):** The Elamite player selects a Spearman located in an Area with a Wood icon.
 - Even though this Unit may later engage in combat with a Babylonian Spearman in the same Area, it can still gather normally.
- Ship (Wood or Food):** The Elamite Ship is positioned on a river section adjacent to:
 - One Area that produces Wood
 - One Area that produces Food
 - The player may choose either Resource to gather from these two Areas.
- Starting Location (Any Resource):** The Elamite player selects their Starting Location, which allows them to gather any one of the four standard Resources: Stone, Wood, Clay, or Food.



Trade Area

The upper part of the Board is Trade area. It is divided into four sections each representing one of the possible Trade levels. You can access each one of these sections provided

you are using a technology granting you the appropriate level. Therefore for example you must use the Currency technology (level 4) in order to access the right most part of the Trade area.



The trade area has slots for Trade tokens. Depending on the set up some slots might be occupied and some not. Some slots have an icon of a Ship under them. This means that accessing this Trade tokens requires you to have at least one Ship in the board.

On top of each Trade token there is a slot for any player to place one for their Amphorae. Place an Amphorea in top of a Trade token means that that player was the one who set up first this trade root.

HINT

Deploy your amphorae early to secure a steady stream of passive income from your rivals.

ACTIONS

TRADE ACTION

When a player selects the Trade action , they may interact with one of the available Trade Tokens. Each Trade Token represents a unique exchange opportunity and may offer Resources and Victory Points .

Accessing a Trade Token

To use a Trade Token, the following conditions must be met:

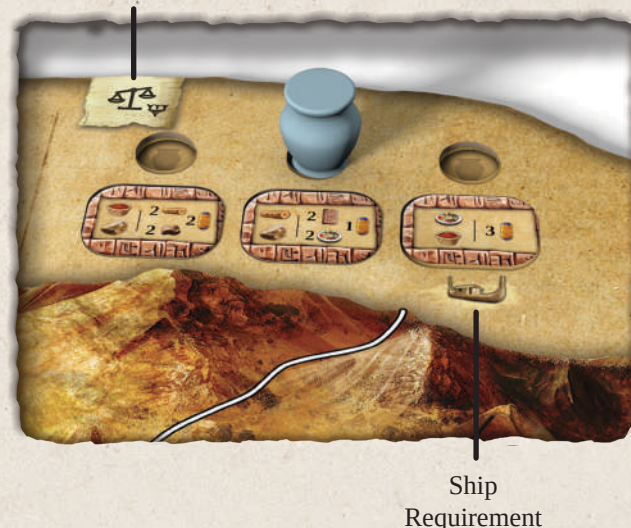
- **Trade Level Requirement:** You must be using a Technology with a Trade Level equal to or higher than the Trade Section where the Token is located.
- **Ship Requirement:** If the Trade Token has a Ship  icon beneath it, you must have at least one Ship  constructed on the board.

Using a Trade Token

There are two possible scenarios when interacting with a Trade Token:



Trade Level Requirement



1. **Token is Unclaimed or Claimed by You**
 - If there is no Amphora on the Token, or the Amphora present belongs to you:
 - ♦ Place one of your Amphora on the Token. (if you do not have one already)
 - ♦ Consume the Resources shown on the left side of the Token.
 - ♦ Gain the Resources shown on the right side.
 - ♦ If the Token shows Victory Points , you will receive them at the end of the game.
2. **Token is Claimed by Another Player**
 - If the Token already has an Amphora belonging to another player:
 - ♦ You do not consume the Resources on the left side.
 - ♦ Instead, you offer those Resources to the owner of the Amphora.
 - ♦ You still gain the Resources on the right side.
 - ♦ However, you will not receive any Victory Points  from this trade.



ACTIONS

WARFARE ACTION

When a player selects the Warfare action , they may perform two key functions:

- Gain Knucklebone 
- Create a Unit



You may perform any one of the two or both. If both effects are performed, they must be executed in sequence, one immediately after the other, with no other actions taken in between.

The Warfare action  is enhanced through the following technology levels:

Level	Technology	Unit	Icon	Number
1	Bronze Smelting	Spearman		3
2	Archery	Archer		3
3	Animal Husbandry	Horseman		2
4	Chariot Wheel	Chariot		2

Gain Knucklebone

When you take a Warfare action  that grants Knucklebones , you gain the number indicated on your Technology card.

Knucklebones  represent the military strength of your Empire. They are used to bid during combat, determining your ability to overpower opponents and defend your territories.

- Higher-level Military Technologies provide greater quantities of Knucklebones .

- Knucklebones  cannot be gathered from the map—they must be earned through the Warfare action  or trade.

Strategic Reminder:

Always maintain a strong supply of Knucklebones . Combat is frequent, and a weakened army invites aggression. If opponents sense you're running low, they may seize the opportunity to strike.

Create a Unit

To create a Unit, follow these steps:

- **Pay the Cost:** You must first consume 1 Wood  to create any Unit.
- **Select a Unit Type:** Choose a Unit that is available through your current Military Technology or any lower-level Military Technology.
- **The created unit** is placed either in your starting area or in an area where you have a settlement.

Example:

If you are using Animal Husbandry (Level 3), you may create a Horseman  (Level 3), or any Unit from lower levels, such as a Spearman  (Level 1) or Archer  (Level 2).

You cannot create a Chariot  (Level 4) unless you have unlocked the corresponding Technology.

For detailed descriptions of each Unit and their combat capabilities, see the Combat Chapter on page 25.



ACTIONS

GROW ACTION

The Grow action allows you to increase your Empire's Population.

To grow your Population, you must:

- **Consume Food**: Spend the amount of Food indicated on your current Grow Technology card.
- **Gain Population**: Upon paying the required Food, your Population increases by one level.



Higher-level Grow Technologies reduce the amount of Food required, making population growth more efficient as your civilization advances.

Level	Technology
1	Agriculture
2	Irrigation
3	Pottery
4	Brewing



COMBAT TIMING AND RESOLUTION ORDER

Combat Timing

At the end of each round, after all players have completed their turns, Combat occurs in every Area where Units from two or more Empires are present.

There may be multiple Areas on the map where combat is triggered. The order in which these battles are resolved is strategically important and is determined by the Event Track.

Resolution Order

- The player whose Empire is highest on the Event Track chooses the order in which all combats are resolved.
- This player may choose any sequence, regardless of which Empires are involved in each conflict.

Example: Strategic Combat Order

Suppose there is combat in two areas on the map, and the Elamites are involved in both.

- The Akkadians are involved in one of these battles and currently hold the top position on the Event Track.
- As the leading Empire, the Akkadian player chooses the order of combat resolution.
- They may decide that the Elamites must resolve their other battle first, potentially spending Knucklebones and weakening their forces.
- Then, the Akkadians face the now-weakened Elamites in the second battle, gaining a tactical advantage.

Combat Pairing in Multi-Empire Conflicts

In Areas where more than two Empires have Units present, multiple battles must be resolved sequentially until only one Empire remains in the Area.

- The Empire highest on the Event Track not only determines the order of combat resolution across the map, but also decides which two Empires will fight first in each multi-Empire conflict.
- After each battle, the losing Empire is removed from the Area.
- The process continues until only one Empire remains, who then claims control of the Area.

COMBAT

HOW COMBAT WORKS

Combat in Mesopotamia is resolved through a combination of Combat Cards, Bidding and Strength allocation. In the Event of a tie during any phase of combat the tie is resolved by referencing the Event Track. The Empire that is currently higher on the Event Track is considered the winner of the tied phase. This rule applies consistently across all combat resolution steps. We will explain the Combat Rules in detail through an example.



Lets assume that 3 Babylonian units attack 2 Summerian units.

HINT

Don't fight just because you can win—fight when there's something worth winning.



STEP 1: DRAW COMBAT CARDS

At the beginning of combat, each participating Unit draws one Combat Card that corresponds to its Unit type.

For example:

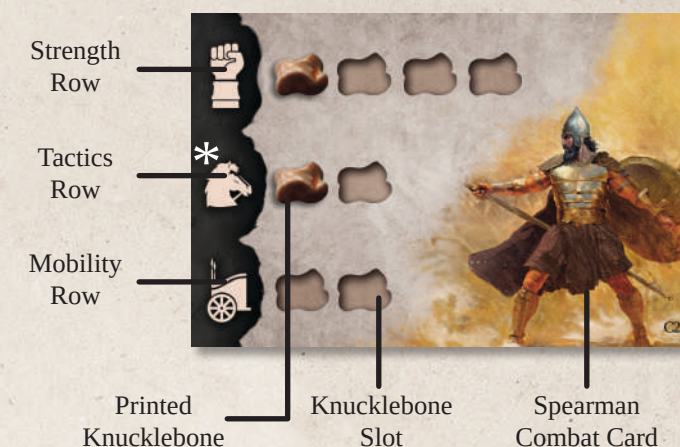
- A Spearman draws from the Spearman Combat Card deck.
- A Horseman draws from the Horseman deck, and so on.

Place each drawn card face up in front of the corresponding Unit, or arrange them in a clear layout on the table that mirrors the positioning of the opposing forces.



Each Combat Card may features:

- Illustration indicating its Unit type.
- Pre-printed Knucklebones: These represent the base combat value or tactical advantage the Unit brings into battle.
- Empty Knucklebone Slots: These are spaces where players may assign additional Knucklebones after the bidding to enhance the Unit's performance.



*The type of unit that this unit has advantage against

COMBAT

STEP 2: BID IN THE STANDARD OF UR

During the combat bidding phase, each player secretly allocates any number of their available Knucklebone from 0 to all.



There are three sections on the Standard of Ur



Strength: Bid here to empower your Units directly. The more Knucklebones placed in Strength, the more powerful your Units become in combat.



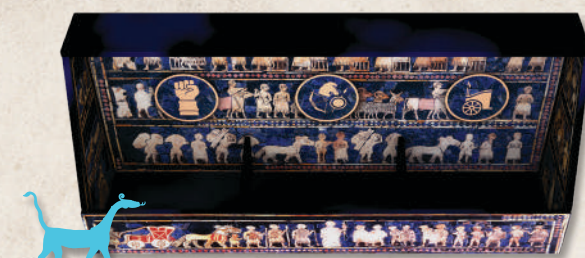
Tactics: Bid here to influence battle formation and gain unit-type advantages. Tactical superiority can shift the outcome even when raw strength is matched.



Mobility: Bid here to determine the outcome after the battle: Pursue and destroy fleeing enemy Units if you win or Escape and survive with your own Units if you lose.

HINT

Bait your opponent into overbidding.
Sacrifice a battle to secure the war.



In our Example lets Assume the Babylonians have 8 Knucklebones that they are willing to bid in the combat.



They decide to Bid 5 Knucklebones to Strength, 2 Knucklebones to Tactics and 1 Knucklebone to Mobility.



At the same time the Summerians are willing to bid no more than 6 Knucklebones



They decide to Bid half of them at Strength and half at Tactics.

COMBAT

STEP 3: RESOLVE STRENGTH

After both players reveal their bids, the Strength section of the Standard of Ur is resolved first.

Strength Comparison

- Babylonians bid 5 Knucklebones
- Sumerians bid 3 Knucklebones

The Babylonians win the Strength check.



Calculate the Strength Margin subtract the lower bid from the higher bid: $5 - 3 = 2$

This difference of 2 represents the number of bonus Knucklebones the winner may assign to their Units. Return Knucklebones to the Loser.

The losing player (Sumerians) returns half of their bid (rounded down) to their pool: $3 \div 2 = 1$

The Sumerians regain 1 Knucklebone for use in future combats. Assign Bonus Knucklebones

The winning player (Babylonians) now assigns the 2 bonus Knucklebones to their Units.



Example:

The Babylonian player places 1 Knucklebone on their Spearman and 1 Knucklebone on their Archer, using the Strength slots available on their Combat Cards.

STEP 4: RESOLVE TACTICS

After resolving Strength, proceed to the Tactics section of the Standard of Ur.

Tactics represent battlefield strategy, formation advantages. Winning the Tactics check can provide powerful bonuses or disrupt the opponent's plans.



Compare Tactics Bids:

- Babylonians: 2 Knucklebone
- Sumerians: 3 Knucklebone

Sumerians win the Tactics check.

Immediately the Winner gains to re arrange all friendly and enemy units in such an order that they see fit better. Opposing units will battle each other in their row.



Then Calculate the Tactics Margin:

- $3 - 2 = 1$

The Sumerians gain 1 Knucklebone in Tactics



Return Knucklebone to the Loser:

- The Babylonians recover half of their Tactics bid (rounded down): $2 \div 2 = 1$ Knucklebone returned to their pool.

Unit Type Advantages

Certain Units naturally counter others based on their battlefield roles and tactics. These relationships are reflected in the game through Tactical Advantage Icons and Tactics Row Bonuses on Combat Cards.

Unit Advantage Triangle

- Archer 🏹 has advantage over Spearman 🛡️ (Can strike from a distance before the Spearman closes in).
- Horseman 🐎 has advantage over Archer 🏹 (Can charge quickly and disrupt ranged attacks).
- Spearman 🛡️ has advantage over Horseman 🐎 (Can brace and strike against charging cavalry).
- Chariot has advantage against all other three units.

Combat Card Layout and Tactical Bonuses

Each Combat Card is divided into three key rows:

- **Strength Row:** This is where bonus Knucklebone 🎲 from the Strength phase are assigned. These Knucklebone 🎲 always apply, regardless of the opposing Unit.
- **Tactics Row:** This row displays Unit Type Icons indicating which enemy Unit this card has an advantage against. Players may assign Tactics Knucklebone 🎲 here, but they only apply if the opposing Unit matches the icon shown.

Example:

- A Sumerian Spearman 🛡️ card has a Horseman 🐎 icon on its Tactics Row.
- If this Spearman 🛡️ is matched against a Horseman 🐎, any printed or assigned Knucklebone 🎲 in the Tactics Row are activated.
- If matched against an Archer 🏹 or another Spearman 🛡️, the Tactics Row bonuses are ignored.

This system rewards strategic positioning and careful use of the Tactics phase to create favorable matchups.



STEP 5: RESOLVE MOBILITY

The final phase of combat is Mobility, which determines the fate of Units after the battle—whether they can pursue, escape, or are eliminated.

Compare Mobility Bids:

Each player reveals the number of Knucklebone 🎲 they assigned to the Mobility section of the Standard of Ur. The player with the higher Mobility bid wins this phase.



In our Example only the Babylonians has 1 Knucklebone 🎲 on Mobility.

Therefore they allocate it to the Horseman 🐎.



HINT

Retreat to deny your opponent the rewards of their victory, or pursue to make your own victory count. Either way—mobility is key.



Mobility Outcomes

- If you win the battle and win Mobility: You may pursue and destroy any enemy Units that are retreating. These Units are removed from play and considered eliminated.
- If you lose the battle but win Mobility: You may retreat safely, preserving your surviving Units for future engagements. This allows you to avoid further losses and reposition your forces.
- If you lose both the battle and Mobility: Your Units are considered defeated and captured or destroyed. They are removed from play and remain unavailable until rebuilt through game mechanics.

Retreat Rules:

The attacker selects an adjacent Area for the retreating Units. The chosen Area must not contain any enemy Units. If no valid Area is available, the retreating Units are destroyed and removed from play. If units are retreated to an area with an unexplored Event 🏹 they do not reveal it. They remain in the area unaware of the Event 🏹 until another unit, friendly or not ends its movement on the Area and reveals the Event 🏹.



Once Strength, Tactics and Mobility have been resolved and all Knucklebones 🎲 have been assigned, combat commences.

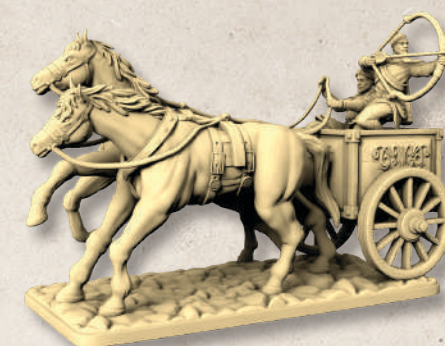
Determine Combat Outcome

For each pair of opposing Units:

1. Add the total Strength and applicable Tactics values for each Unit.
 - Strength includes pre-printed and assigned Knucklebone 🎲
 - Tactics only apply if the Unit has a type advantage against its opponent.
2. Compare the final combat values:
 - The Unit with the higher total wins the engagement.
 - If the totals are equal, the tie is broken by the Event 🏹 Track—the Empire higher on the track is considered the winner.

HINT

A lead on the Event Track can turn the tide of more battles than you might anticipate.



STEP 6: COMBAT ENGAGEMENT



Apply the Result

- The losing Unit must either retreat or is destroyed, depending on the outcome of the Mobility phase.
- If the winning player also won the Mobility check, the losing Unit is pursued and eliminated.
- If the losing player won Mobility, the Unit may retreat following the Retreat Rules.

Let's walk through the combat between the Sumerian Archer and the Babylonian Spearman in our example.

I. Evaluate Strength and Tactics

Sumerian Archer:

- Printed Strength: 2
- Tactics Advantage: Archers have advantage against Spearmen.
- Tactics Row: No printed or assigned Knucklebone.
- Total Combat Value: Strength (2) + Tactics (0) = 2

Babylonian Spearman:

- Printed Strength: 0
- Assigned Strength Knucklebone: 1
- Tactics Advantage: Spearmen do not have advantage against Archers.
- Printed Tactics Knucklebone: 1 (ignored due to no advantage)
- Total Combat Value: Strength (0 + 1) + Tactics (0) = 1

II. Determine the Winner

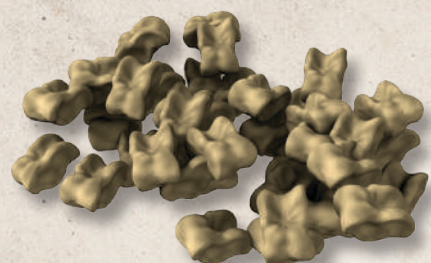
- The Sumerian Archer has a higher total (2 vs. 1) and wins the engagement.

III. Resolve Mobility

- Both Units have 0 Mobility.
- The tie is broken by the Event Track: The Sumerians are higher on the track and are therefore considered the winner.

Result:

The Babylonian Spearman is destroyed and removed from play.



STEP 7: MULTIPLE COMBATS

Combat within a row may involve more than one engagement. As soon as a combat between two Units concludes, the following sequence is applied:

1. Remove the Defeated Unit

- The losing Unit is immediately removed from the battlefield.

2. Apply Fatigue to the Victorious Unit

- The winning Unit becomes fatigued from battle.
- The controlling player must remove one assigned Knucklebone from that Unit.
- If no Knucklebone were assigned, nothing is removed.
- Printed Knucklebone are never affected by fatigue.

3. Advance the Next Unit

- If there is another Unit adjacent to the defeated one (in the same row), it moves forward to take its place.
- This new Unit now engages the fatigued victor in the next combat.

4. Repeat Until One Unit Remains

- Combat continues in this manner until only one Unit remains in any one row.

This system simulates the flow of battle, where Units must endure multiple engagements and strategic positioning becomes critical.

Following the previous engagement, the next combat occurs between the Sumerian Archer and the Babylonian Archer.

I. Evaluate Strength and Tactics

Sumerian Archer:

- Printed Strength: 2
- No Tactics advantage (both Units are Archers)
- Total Combat Value: 2

Babylonian Archer:

- Printed Strength: 2
- No Tactics advantage
- Total Combat Value: 2

II. Determine the Winner

- Both Units have equal combat values (2 vs. 2).
- The tie is resolved using the Event Track.
- The Sumerians are higher on the Event Track and are therefore considered the winner.

III. Resolve Mobility

- Both players have 0 Mobility.
- Again, the Event Track determines the outcome.
- The Sumerians win Mobility as well.

Result:

The Babylonian Archer is destroyed and removed from play.

The next engagement takes place in the second row between the Babylonian Horseman and the Sumerian Spearman.

I. Evaluate Strength and Tactics

Sumerian Spearman:

- Printed Strength: 1
- Printed Tactics: 1
- Assigned Tactics Knucklebone: 1
- Tactics Advantage: Spearmen have advantage against Horsemen.
- Total Combat Value: Strength (1) + Tactics (1 + 1) = 3

Babylonian Horseman:

- Printed Strength: 2
- Printed Tactics: 1 (not applied—no advantage against Spearman)
- Total Combat Value: Strength (2) + Tactics (0) = 2

II. Determine the Winner

- The Sumerian Spearman has a higher total combat value (3 vs. 2) and wins the engagement.

III. Resolve Mobility

- The Babylonian Horseman has 1 Knucklebone assigned to Mobility.
- The Sumerian Spearman has 0 Mobility.
- Therefore, the Babylonian player wins the Mobility phase.

COMBAT

Result:

The Babylonian Horseman is defeated but retreats safely due to winning Mobility.

The attacker (Babylonian player) selects an adjacent Area without enemy Units for the retreat.

If no such Area exists, the Unit would be destroyed instead.



This is how the result of the combat looks like.

No two battles are ever the same.

A single Knucklebone bid on the Standard of Ur, or a carefully placed Knucklebone on a Unit's Combat Card, can shift the balance of power in unexpected ways. What may seem like a minor decision can become the turning point of a battle.

Victory does not always belong to the strongest army—but to the most cunning commander. Wits, foresight, and deep strategic thinking are the true weapons of war.



SHIPS IN COMBAT

Naval Support in Land Combat

Ships are not limited to river control—they can play a crucial role in land battles as well.

Supporting Combat with Ships

- Any Ship adjacent to a combat Area owned by an Empire that participates in combat may support that combat.
- For each supporting Ship, the player gains 1 additional Knucklebone to use during the bidding phase on the Standard of Ur.
- This bonus Knucklebone is received immediately before bidding and must be spent during that bid.



Example:

An Elamite Spearman is engaged in combat with a Babylonian Spearman. An Elamite Ship is positioned adjacent to the combat Area. The Elamite player receives 1 bonus Knucklebone before bidding and is required to assign it to one of the three sections on the Standard of Ur.

Do not underestimate the power of river fleets. Their presence in nearby waters can decisively shift the tide of battle on land. In the wars of ancient Mesopotamia, naval support mainly due to maintaining supply lines was often the hidden hand behind victory.

COMBAT

Naval Combat

While naval warfare was not a formalized practice in ancient Mesopotamia, river control was a vital strategic element. Ships were not attacked from land, but they were highly vulnerable to other Ships operating on the same river.

Combat Between Ships

- Ships cannot be attacked by land Units or through any means other than other Ships.
- If two Ships from different Empires occupy the same river section at the end of a Round, they are destroyed at the start of the Combat Phase before they can contribute Knucklebones.
- This destruction occurs before any Area combat is resolved.

This rule reflects the fragile nature of river vessels and the sudden, decisive nature of naval skirmishes.

Pinning in Rivers

Unlike land Units, Ships do not pin each other.

- Multiple Ships may pass through the same river section during movement without restriction.
- If movement ends with two opposing Ships in the same section, both are destroyed as per naval combat rules.

This allows for fluid river navigation while still enforcing the strategic importance of river control.



NEUTRAL TRIBES

Neutral Tribes: Guardians of the Unknown

In Mesopotamia, climbing the Event Track early is a powerful strategic move. Each Event you uncover not only advances your position but also denies your opponents the same opportunity. However, not all Events are freely accessible—some are guarded by Neutral Tribes.



What Are Neutral Tribes?

Neutral Tribes are non-player forces that occupy specific Areas on the map. They act as guardians, preventing players from revealing the Event in that Area until they are defeated.

- When a player ends their movement in an Area guarded by a Neutral Tribe, they must engage in combat with the Tribe.
- The Event is not revealed until the Neutral Tribe is removed from the Area.



COMBAT

How Neutral Tribe Combat Works

Combat against a Neutral Tribe follows the same rules as combat against another player, with one key difference:

The Neutral Tribe is controlled by another player:

- If you are not last on the Event  Track, the player directly below you controls the Tribe.
- If you are last, the player directly above you takes control.

The controlling player makes all decisions for the Neutral Tribe:

- Bidding on the Standard of Ur
- Assigning Knucklebones  to Combat Cards

Determining Neutral Tribe Strength

To calculate how many Knucklebones  the Neutral Tribe has available for bidding:

- Roll a number of Event Dice equal to the number of Tribe Units in combat.
- Add the total value of the dice.
- This sum is the number of Knucklebones  the Neutral Tribe receives for the combat.

Important:

Neutral Tribes always bid ALL available Knucklebones  during combat. Neutral Tribes add a layer of tension and unpredictability to exploration. They slow down aggressive expansion and force players to weigh the risks of early advancement against the rewards of the Event  Track.

HINT

Strike first to reveal the Event. Hesitate, and your opponents will claim it instead.

Revealing Events after Neutral Tribe Combat

In case of multiple Neutral Tribe Combats, conclude all combats first. **Then** reveal any events in any order.

WALL AND BATTERING RAM

Walls : Fortifying an Area

Walls  represent defensive structures built to protect strategic locations.

- When you build a Wall  place it in any Area where you control a Unit or Settlement .
- From that point forward, enemy Units cannot enter the walled Area unless accompanied by a Battering Ram.

Walls  create powerful defensive positions, forcing opponents to prepare siege equipment before launching an assault.



Battering Rams: Breaking the Siege

Battering Rams are specialized siege Units designed to breach fortified Areas.

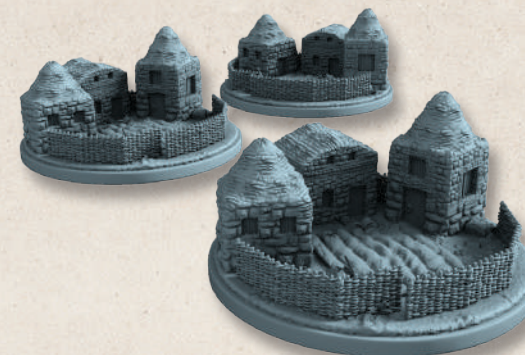
- When you build a Battering Ram, place it in any Area where you control a Unit.
- The Battering Ram is attached to that Unit and moves automatically with it.
- The Battering Ram can instantly switch its attached unit at any time.
 - ♦ It does not require activation.
 - ♦ It cannot move independently.
 - ♦ It moves at the same speed as the Unit it follows.

Function in Combat

- A Battering Ram allows:
 - ♦ The attached Unit, and
 - ♦ All other Units of the same Empire to enter Areas protected by Walls .
- At the end of the combat in a walled Area:
 - ♦ The Battering Ram is removed from play.
 - ♦ The Wall  is also destroyed, regardless of the outcome.

HINT

Walls can act as a deterrent—since the cost in actions and resources for a battering ram may drive your opponents to seek easier targets.



ATTACKING SETTLEMENTS

Settlements  represent established control over a region—but they are vulnerable when left unguarded.

Settlements Cannot Defend Themselves

- A Settlement  has no inherent means of defense.
- If an enemy Unit remains in an Area containing a Settlement  **at the end of the round**, after all combat has been resolved, the occupying player must choose one of two options:

1. Destroy the Settlement :

The player may choose to destroy the enemy Settlement . Remove the Settlement  from the board and return the miniature to its owner.

2. Conquer the Settlement :

The player may instead choose to conquer the Settlement . Replace the enemy Settlement  miniature with one of your own.



ATTACKING THE STARTING AREA

You cannot attack or move through another player's starting area.

ACHIEVING VICTORY

EVENTS IN MESOPOTAMIA

One of the most compelling features of Mesopotamia is its dynamic and unpredictable Event system, designed to bring the world to life and challenge players with meaningful decisions throughout the game.



Revealing an Event

Events are hidden across the map, waiting to be discovered. When a Unit explores an Area containing a face-down Event token, the mystery is unveiled.

How to Reveal an Event

- When any Unit ends its movement in an Area that contains a face-down Event token, the Event is immediately revealed.
- Flip the token face-up to reveal its symbol and number.
- If the Area contains Neutral Tribes, the Event cannot be revealed until those Tribes are defeated and removed.

Finding the Matching Event Card

- Each Event token corresponds to a unique Event Card.
- In your face-down Event Deck, search for the card that matches the symbol and number shown on the revealed token.
- Draw that Event Card and resolve it according to its instructions.



ID	Title
EVI	Village with Ancient Wisdom
Option 1	Protect the Village Gain 1 per Round from protecting the Village. After 6 Rounds, the Village joins your civilization as a settlement. You discover 1. Event Track Award of Option 1
Option 2	Raid the Village Gain 1 per Round from enslaving the Village. After 6 Rounds, the Village is destroyed and you gain a Quest Card. Event Track Award of Option 2
Lore	"Deep in the desert, a village remains untouched by time. Its people, guardians of ancient wisdom, speak in whispers, their knowledge a silent force that stirs the air with untold power." Illustration

ACHIEVING VICTORY

Event card structure

Events are hidden across the map, waiting to be discovered. When a Unit explores an Area containing a face-down Event token, the mystery is unveiled.

When an Event card is revealed Read the following loud for all the players:

Resolving an Event

When an Event is revealed, it becomes a pivotal moment in the game. Each Event presents the discovering player with a meaningful choice that can shape their strategy and influence the world around them.

Reading the Event Aloud

When an Event Card is drawn, the revealing player must read the following aloud for all players:

1. The Title of the Event
2. [Optional but Encouraged] The Lore text
3. Option One and its Event Track reward
4. Option Two and its Event Track reward

Making a Decision

The Event Card is then offered to the player who revealed it. They must choose Option 1 or Option 2. The chosen option determines how the Event is processed.

Types of Event Options

1. **Instant Effect Option**
 - The Event is resolved immediately.
 - The player typically gains resources or bonuses.
 - The player advances on the Event Track by the amount shown (usually 1).
 - The Event Card is discarded and removed from the game.
 - The Event Token is removed from the board.

2. End Game Victory Points Option



- The Event is resolved immediately, granting resources or bonuses.
- The player advances on the Event Track by the amount shown (usually 2).
- The Event Card is discarded, but the Event Token remains on the board face-up.
- At the end of the game, the player who controls this Area gains the Victory Points shown on the token.

Strategic Note: Choosing this option marks the Area as valuable. Expect conflict. Fortify it with Walls and Units—others will come for it.

3. Control This Event for 6 Rounds



The Event is resolved over time, not immediately.

- The player takes the Event Card and places it in front of them.
- Place one of your Event Dice next to the Event Token, showing 1.
- At the end of each Round, rotate the die to the next number and resolve the effect listed for that round.

ACHIEVING VICTORY

Example: Protect the Village

- At the end of Round 1, gain 1 Tablets .
- Rotate the die to show 2 .
- Repeat this process each round.
- At the end of Round 6:
 - Gain the final reward (e.g., 1 Settlement  and a Research Discovery).
 - Remove the Event Card and Token from the game.
 - Advance on the Event Track  by the amount shown (usually 3 ).

Losing Control

- If another Empire takes control of the Area during the 6 rounds:
 - The Event resets.
 - The Event card is passed to the new owner.
 - The new controller chooses one of the two Event Options.
 - If they choose the 6-round option, they place their own Event Die starting at 1 .
- If the original player retakes the Area, the Event resets to Round 1.

Events Granting Technologies

Some Events grant Technological Discoveries, marked by an Action Type Icon , , , , , .

When this occurs, the player gains the next available level of the indicated Technology.

If the player already has the maximum level, they may choose any one Technology to upgrade instead.

Events Granting Units

Some Events grant Units (e.g., Spearmen , Archers .

If the player cannot place the Unit due to population limits or lack of miniatures: They instead gain 1 Knucklebone .



THE TWO TRACKS

The Two Tracks

In Mesopotamia, two primary tracks influence gameplay and end-game scoring: the Event Track  and the **Population Track**. Each governs distinct aspects of the game and offers strategic opportunities for advancement and Victory Points .

Event Track

The Event Track  advances when players resolve Events. Each Event presents choices, and selecting an option grants between 1 to 3 steps on the track.

This track primarily governs warfare and conflict-related mechanics:

- Tiebreaker:** In the case of ties in combat, the player highest on the Event Track  breaks the tie.
- Combat Order:** The leading player on the Event Track  determines the order in which battles are resolved across different regions, or within a single region involving multiple players.
- Neutral Tribe Control:** The Event Track  also determines which player controls the actions of Neutral Tribes during combat.

Population Track

The Population Track  increases through the Grow action , which requires the consumption of Food . Each Grow action  typically advances the track by one step.

Population influences two critical aspects of gameplay:

- Order of Play:** During the Action Phase, players take turns based on their position on the Population Track, starting with the player who has the highest Population Level. The turn order is determined at the beginning of each Round and remains fixed for that Round. Any changes to Population Levels during the Round will affect the turn order in the following Round.
- Ziggurat  Construction:** Players may not build more levels of their Ziggurat  than their current Population level. All players begin with Population Level 1, allowing them to construct the first Ziggurat  level. To build the second level and unlock the second Dingir Die, a player must reach Population Level 2. When unlocking a Dingir Die, you may take any Dingir Die, regardless of its color.

ACHIEVING VICTORY

3. Unit Limit:

Population also determines the maximum number of Units a player may have on the board.

- Units include all movable plastic miniatures (e.g., Ships , Battering Rams, Spearmen .
- Structures such as Ziggurats , Settlements , and Walls  are not considered Units.
- The Unit limit is displayed next to each Population level. For example, at Level 1, players may have up to 2 Units. Reaching Level 2 increases this limit to 4 Units.

4. Tiebreaker:

In the event of a tie, the player who is higher on the Population Track wins the game.

Advancing on the Tracks

At the start of the game, players place their Empire Seals on the lowest position of each track, as indicated during setup. As players progress, they move their Seal to the next available position above.



- If the next position is already occupied, the advancing player places their Seal **on top** of the existing one.
- The player whose Seal is **on top** is considered **higher** on the track.

Example:

If both you and an opponent are at Population Level 1 and your opponent advances to Level 2 first, they place their Seal on that level. When you later reach Level 2, you place your Seal on top of theirs, becoming the new leader on the track.

Locking the Highest Position

The **topmost position** on each track can only hold one Seal. Once a player reaches this position, it becomes locked, and no other player may advance to it.

This mechanic introduces strategic tension:

- Players must decide whether to race for the top or tactically position themselves just below it.
- Multiple players may occupy the second-to-last position, but only one can claim the top.

End-Game Scoring

At the end of the game, players earn Victory Points  based on their final positions on both tracks:

- 1st Place:** 9 Victory Points 
- 2nd Place:** 6 Victory Points 
- 3rd Place:** 3 Victory Points 

HINT

Games are often won by a handful of points. Every point counts—don't leave any behind.



ACHIEVING VICTORY

QUEST CARDS

Quest Cards

At the beginning of the game, each player selects 3 Quest Cards. These cards present specific objectives that, if fulfilled by the end of the game, reward the player with Victory Points.

Completing Quests

To score the Victory Points from a Quest Card, a player must meet all listed requirements on that card. Each completed Quest is worth 2 Victory Points, allowing for a maximum of 6 hidden points from Quests.



Examples of Quest Requirements:

- Control 3 Settlements and possess 1 Stone at the end of the game.
- Have researched the Level 3 Technologies Literature and Pottery, and own 2 Tablets.
- Reach Population Level 7 and possess 1 Food.



Overlapping Requirements

Some Quest Cards may share similar or identical requirements. In such cases, a single resource or condition can fulfill multiple Quests.

For example, if two Quest Cards each require 1 Stone, owning 1 Stone is sufficient to satisfy both.

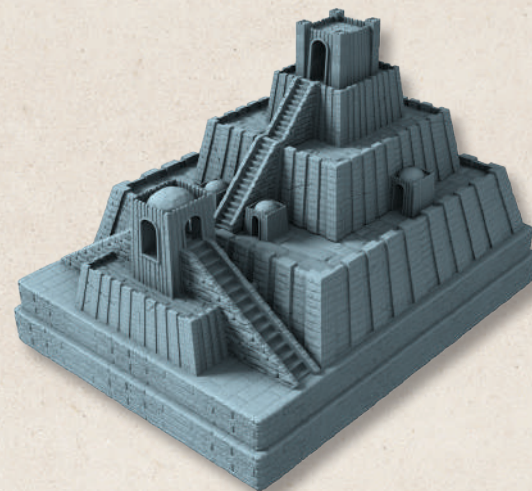
Technology Requirements

Certain Quests require players to have researched a Level 3 Technology of a specific Action type. If a player has researched a Level 4 Technology in that same action type, it is assumed they have already completed the Level 3 prerequisite.

For instance, if a Quest requires Literature (Level 3 Research), and the player has Legal Codes (Level 4 Research), the requirement is considered fulfilled.

HINT

Choose cards with overlapping requirements. You must complete all three of your quest cards—assume your opponent will too.



ACHIEVING VICTORY

FINAL SCORING

At the conclusion of the game, each player calculates their total Victory Points by summing all points earned from various sources. Victory Points are awarded for the following:

Event Track

Points based on final position:

- 1st place: 9 VP
- 2nd place: 6 VP
- 3rd place: 3 VP

Population Track

Points based on final position:

- 1st place: 9 VP
- 2nd place: 6 VP
- 3rd place: 3 VP

Hanging Gardens

Gain VP for each section of the Hanging Gardens you have constructed as indicated on the token you constructed.

HINT

Play for the joy of the game—because when you do, you've already won.



Trade Tokens

Gain VP for each of your Amphora placed on Trade Tokens that award Victory Points.

Event Tokens on the Map

Gain VP for each of Event token Token that grants Victory Points in an area controlled by any of your Units or Settlements.

Settlements

Each Settlement you control at the end of the game is worth 1 Victory Point.

Quest Cards

Reveal your completed Quest Cards. Each successfully fulfilled Quest grants 2 Victory Points.

Area Control

Gain Victory Points for each area you occupy, except your Starting Area.

Winning the Game

The player with the highest total Victory Points is declared the winner.

Tiebreaker

In the event of a tie, the player who is higher on the Population Track wins the game.



1. Exploration Mode

This mode simulates a standard competitive game by introducing an Automaton as a player. You can even include this Automaton in multiplayer games as one of the opponents, or team up with other players to play cooperatively against it.

2. Siege of Ur Mode

This mode presents a race against time. You will lead a siege against one of the most advanced and fortified cities of the Bronze Age. Meanwhile, the Automaton scrambles to secure precious resources, deprive you of events, and ultimately ascend the event and population tracks to defeat you.

3. Guardians of Assur Mode

This mode offers a castle defense experience. A relentless horde is approaching and you must face six brutal waves of enemies, each more vicious than the last. Spearmen march, horses gallop, chariots thunder, and battering rams strike your walls. Only a true leader will be able to hold the line.

Let's explore these modes in detail.

DUAL OF THE KINGS MODE

Overview

Playing Mesopotamia in solo mode is a challenging experience. It simulates a two-player competitive game, but with one player controlled by the game itself. This game-controlled player will be referred to as the Automaton.

You can also use the Automaton in multiplayer games. For example, you can play with three human players and one Automaton.

The human player plays the game as usual, just as they would against another player.

The Automaton is controlled by two decks of cards: Strategy Cards and Action Cards.

Let's examine how each deck functions.

Strategy Deck

The Strategy Deck consists of 10 basic Strategy cards and 2 civilization-specific cards. Each civilization-specific card replaces a basic card with the same name.

For example, the Sumerian "Progress" card replaces the basic "Progress" card.

To build the Strategy Deck:

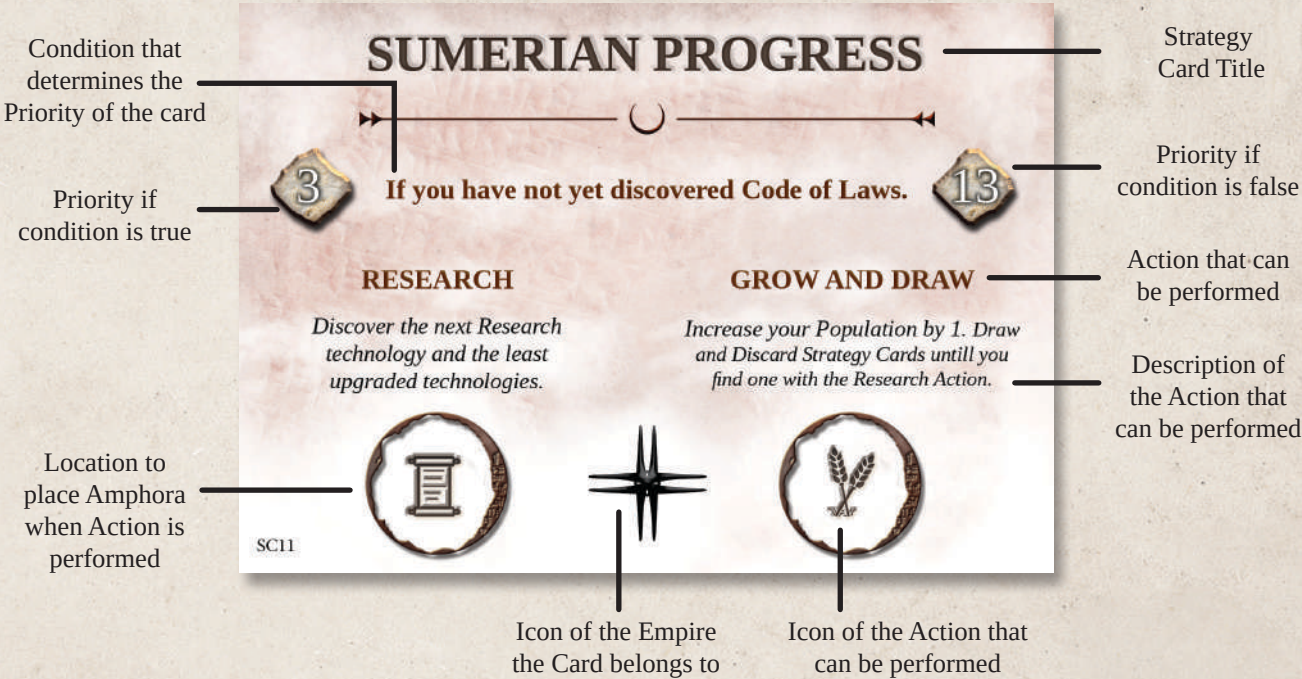
- Use 8 basic Strategy cards.
- Add the 2 civilization-specific cards from the civilization you are playing against.

Place the 10 Strategy cards near you.

How Strategy Cards Work

During the Automaton's turn:

1. Draw 3 Strategy Cards and place them face up.
2. Each Strategy Card has an Priority Condition.
 - If the condition is met, the card receives its High Priority value.
 - If not, it receives its Low Priority value.
3. Arrange the three cards in order from highest to lowest priority based on the priority values. This system allows the Automaton to prioritize tactics based on the current game state.



Example: Strategy – Sumerian Progress

- Condition: "If you have not yet discovered Code of Laws"
- If true → High Priority: 3
- If false → Low Priority: 13

This means the Automaton checks if it's falling behind in technology and, if so, prioritizes research. When resolved, this card allows the Automaton to discover the next Research Technology. It then performs the Grow and Draw Action, increasing its population, and finally draws cards until it finds the next Strategy Card with a Research Action.

Action Cards

Action Cards represent the Automaton's ability to perform the action the Strategy cards Require. These can be loosely compared to the Dingir Dice rolled by players. Sometimes the icons will match Technologies, sometimes they won't, and occasionally you'll draw a Star Card that can be used for any action.



How Action Cards Work

The number of Action Cards drawn depends on the Automaton's Ziggurat level:

Emperor - Easy

Ziggurat Level	Action Cards Drawn + Highest Priority Action
0	0 + Highest Priority Action
1	0 + Highest Priority Action
2	1 + Highest Priority Action
3	1 + Highest Priority Action
4	2 + Highest Priority Action
5	2 + Highest Priority Action
6	3 + Highest Priority Action

Igigi – Medium Difficulty

Ziggurat Level	Action Cards Drawn + Highest Priority Action
0	0 + Highest Priority Action
1	1+ Highest Priority Action
2	1+ Highest Priority Action
3	2+ Highest Priority Action
4	2+ Highest Priority Action
5	3+ Highest Priority Action
6	4+ Highest Priority Action

Anunnaki – Hard Difficulty

Ziggurat Level	Action Cards Drawn + Highest Priority Action
0	0 + Highest Priority Action
1	1+ Highest Priority Action
2	2+ Highest Priority Action
3	2+ Highest Priority Action
4	3+ Highest Priority Action
5	3+ Highest Priority Action
6	4+ Highest Priority Action

The Automaton draws the specified number of Action Cards and attempts to perform the actions, if able.

When drawing an Action Card:

- If the Action matches one on a face-up Strategy Card:
 - Place an Amphora (from any unused player color) on that Action slot.
 - Perform the Action on the Automaton's Player Board.
- If the Action does not match any Action that the Automaton could take in a Strategy Card then the Action is lost, similar to a player rolling unusable Dingir Dice.
- If multiple Strategy Cards contain the same action, resolve them in order from highest to lowest priority.
- The Automaton can never perform the same action twice in the same turn.

After all Action Cards are drawn, place them next to their matching Strategy Cards, arranging the Strategy Cards in order from highest to lowest priority. Then, the Automaton performs one additional action: the leftmost unresolved action on the highest-priority Strategy Card.

The Star Action Card acts as a wildcard and can perform any action on a Strategy Card. It is always the last Action Card to be assigned and is placed on the leftmost unresolved action of a Strategy Card, following priority order from highest to lowest. This occurs before the Automaton performs its additional action.

CONCLUDING THE TURN

1. Discard Used Strategy Cards
 - Any Strategy Card with both actions completed (both slots have Amphorae) is discarded face up in a separate pile.
2. Draw New Strategy Cards
 - Draw until there are 3 face-up Strategy Cards in play.
 - Recalculate and reorder them by priority.
 - If the Strategy Deck is empty, reshuffle the discard pile to form a new deck.
3. Reshuffle Action Cards

Shuffle all used Action Cards back into the Action Deck

Example:



In the example above, the Automaton has not yet discovered Code of Laws, has not built 2 Settlements, and the player does not occupy any Events or Settlements. This means the Sumerian Progress Strategy Card has a priority of 3, the Development Action Card a priority of 8, and the Attack a priority of 19. The Automaton will arrange them from top to bottom as shown in the image.

Next, the Automaton draws two Action Cards. They happen to be the Research and Gather and Trade Cards. It first assigns the Research Action Card to the Sumerian Progress Strategy Card, as it has the highest priority. Then it assigns the Gather and Trade Action Card to the Development Strategy Card, which is next in priority. Finally, the Automaton performs its additional standard action, which is Grow and Draw from the Sumerian Progress Strategy Card, as it is the leftmost unresolved action on the highest priority card.

CONCLUDING THE TURN

Combat in solo mode is different. There is no bidding in solo battles and the Automaton uses a few different rules:

Follow these steps:

1. Draw 1 random Combat Card face up for each of your units.
2. Place any number of Knucklebones into the available slots on your Combat Cards.
3. Draw for the Automata. Draw 1 random Combat Card face down for each of the Automata's units, then reveal them.
4. Assign Units to Battle
 - You choose which units fight and in what order.

For each combat:

- A. If the Automata has enough Knucklebones to win, it assigns them to Tactics and Strength. Prioritizing Tactics only if it has unit-type advantage against all units in the same row.
- B. If it has extra Knucklebones after bidding Tactics and Strength, it assigns them to Mobility. Only do this, if the Automaton has enough Knucklebones to destroy your unit.
- C. If it can't win, it will never assign nucklebones to Tactics and Strength.
- D. If it can't win but can escape, it assigns Knucklebones to Mobility, after Tactics and Strength have been resolved to determine the winner, in order to retreat
- E. If it can't retreat, it doesn't assign any Knucklebones to Mobility, instead it discards 1 Knucklebone and its unit is defeated.

The Automata always tries to make the most optimal use of its Knucklebones and will never waste Knucklebones if it can't win.

Repeat this process for all units in the battle. Combat ends when either you or the Automata wins.

After the Battle

- You lose all Knucklebones you placed during combat.
- Then, for each category you lost (Power, Tactics, or Mobility), return 1 Knucklebone per card, but only if you placed one there.

Example

- The player controls 1 Archer and 1 Spearman and has 7 Knucklebones available.
- The player is ahead of the Automaton on the Event Track.
- The Automaton controls 1 Archer and 1 Spearman and has 4 Knucklebones available.



- The player bids 6 Knucklebones, assigning them to their units as shown in the image.



**The Archer has 3 Strength, 2 Tactics, and 1 Mobility.*

** The Spearman has 4 Strength, and 1 Tactics.*

- The Automaton reveals its Combat Cards.
- The player chooses the combat pairings.
- They decide their Archer will fight first against the Automaton's Spearman.



Fight 1: Player's Archer vs. Automaton's Spearman

- Player's Archer: Total Combat Value = 3 Strength + 2 Tactics = 5
- Automaton's Spearman: Theoretical Maximum Combat Value = 4

The Automaton places 0 Knucklebones on Strength or Tactics as it can never win. But the Automaton can escape so it places 1 Knucklebone on Mobility to retreat.



The Spearman successfully retreats and the player exhausts 1 Knucklebone from Tactics.

Fight 2: Player's Archer vs. Automaton's Archer



- Player's Archer: Total Combat Value = 3 Strength
- The Automaton places 2 Knucklebones on Strength to win the fight.



- With only 1 Knucklebone remaining the Automaton cannot place enough additional Knucklebones on Mobility, so the player's Archer can retreat.
- The Automaton's Archer loses 1 Knucklebone from Strength due to exhaustion.

Fight 3: Player's Spearman vs. Automaton's Archer

- Player's Spearman: Total Combat Value = 4 Strength
- Automaton's Archer: Total Combat Value = 3 Strength



- Automaton:
 - ◆ Has 1 Knucklebone remaining.
 - ◆ The player is ahead on the Event Track.
 - ◆ Even if the Automaton bids the last Knucklebone to Tactics, it cannot win the tie.
 - ◆ Instead, it bids the Knucklebone to Mobility and retreats.

Result:

The player wins the combat and gains control of the area. The player discards all 6 of the used Knucklebones. If the Automaton had been ahead on the Event Track or had one additional Knucklebone, it would have used it to win the fight against the Spearman.



SIEGE OF UR MODE

In this solo game mode, you take on the role of a general leading your civilization in a daring attempt to conquer the great city of Ur. Your objective is to break through the city's defenses and claim victory over a powerful enemy force.

You may use any civilization to represent the Defenders of Ur; however, ignore all standard setup rules for that civilization. Instead, follow the specific setup and gameplay instructions outlined in this solo mode.

Goal:

Reach the Defenders of Ur's Ziggurat in area 𐎶 with at least one Battering Ram before the Defenders of Ur reach position 𐎶 on either the Event Track or the Population Track.

If you manage to reach the city of Ur you immediately win and count your score.

You Will Lose If:

If the Defenders of Ur reach position 𐎶 on either the Event Track or the Population Track, you immediately lose the siege.

The Defenders can reach position 𐎶 on either Track even if you occupy that position.

How to Set-Up your Empire:

1. Select your Empire.
2. Begin the game from area 𐎶.
3. Follow the rules for your Empire's unique setup as described in its Empire Unique Setup section.
4. Your Empire's Seal always starts on top of the Defenders of Ur Seal.
5. Draw 3 Objective Cards and chose 2 to keep.

How to Set-Up the city of Ur

1. Shuffle all Event cards and place them face down on the map in their appropriate areas, except for areas 𐎶 and 𐎶.
2. Place the completed enemy Ziggurat in area 𐎶.
3. Place the Defenders of Ur Empire Seal on the first position of the Event Track.
4. Place the other Defenders of Ur Empire Seal on the first position of the Population Track.
5. Create the Action Deck using the following Action cards: Gather and Trade, Warfare, Explore, Grow, and Star.
6. Place the Spearman miniatures next to the first slot of the Population Track.
7. Place the Archer miniatures next to the third slot of the Population Track.
8. Place the Horseman miniatures next to the fifth slot of the Population Track.
9. Place the Chariot miniatures next to the seventh slot of the Population Track.
10. Place 3 Walls, 3 Settlements, 2 Ships, 1 Spearmen, 1 Archer, and 1 Horseman as shown on the Map:



Turn Order and Gameplay

1. Just like in a standard game of Mesopotamia, the player occupying the highest position on the Population Track takes the first turn.
2. On your turn, roll your Dingir Dice (if any) and take actions as you would in a normal multiplayer game.
3. During the Defenders of Ur's turn, reveal two Action Cards from the Action Deck and perform the corresponding actions. Then, shuffle the revealed cards back into the Action Deck.
4. When both you and the Defenders of Ur have taken a turn, resolve any battles on the board using the Solo Combat rules.
5. Continue alternating turns until either:
 - You reach the city of Ur or
 - The Defenders of Ur reach position Ⅶ on either the Event Track or the Population Track.

How to Use the Action Cards

Gather and Trade: The Defenders of Ur place an Amphora in the rightmost available location of the Trade Sector. They may place their Amphora in a sector that is up to one level higher than your level in the Gather and Trade technology.

You cannot select a trade option that is occupied by a Defenders of Ur Amphora.

Warfare: The Defenders of Ur gain Knucklebones equal to their position on the Population Track divided by 3 (always rounded up). Then, they place one available unit whose type matches the same or a lower position on the Population Track. Selecting the highest that they have access to.

- Spearmen are placed in areas with Settlements.
- Archers are placed in areas with Walls.
- Horsemen and Chariots are placed in the rightmost area of the map adjacent to enemy units, blocking the path to the City of Ur.

Example: The Defenders of Ur are on position Ⅶ of the Population track and have one Chariot available. They gain 3 Strength ($7 \div 3 = 2.3$, rounded up to 3), then place a Chariot miniature on the map in the rightmost area adjacent to enemy units.

Explore: The Defenders of Ur attempt to explore Events. See the Exploration and Events paragraph for movement and exploration rules.

Grow: The Defenders of Ur advance one position on the Population Track.

Star: The Defenders of Ur take no action.

Exploration and Events

The Defenders of Ur want to explore Events, but do not want to spread out. They focus on defending their ground and exploring nearby events.

When they take the Explore action, follow these steps:

1. Check for Events in an Area with a Defender of Ur unit. If a Defender of Ur unit is in an area with an unexplored event, they explore it. They prioritize Events starting with the area closest to one of your units. If there's a tie, choose the Event from left to right and top to bottom on the map.
2. If no Events are in the Same Area as one of their units, then move a Defender unit to an adjacent area with an unexplored event. Choose the area that is topmost and then furthest to the left.
3. They will never move next to your starting area, even if an event is there.
4. If All Events Are Explored Move one of their units toward the city of Ur (area Ⅶ).



GUARDIANS OF ASSUR MODE

Objective: Survive 6 waves of enemy attacks.

Each time a wave is defeated, mark it by claiming the next Hanging Garden Token. When the sixth wave is defeated, you win and count Victory Points.

Defeat:

You lose if one or more enemy units enter your Ziggurat area and you have no defending units present.



HINT

It is wise to kite and delay the early waves, as this gives you time to build your empire and prepare for the much harder waves later on.

Set-Up

- Set-Up the, Blockers, Events and the Neutral Tribes like a 2-player game.
- Place your Ziggurat on Area Ⅶ.
- Place the enemy Ziggurat on Area Ⅶ. All units controlled by the Enemy start from this Area.
- Select your empire and set up following the usual instructions for your Empire's Unique Setup.
- Draw 3 objective cards and select two to keep.
- The enemy ignores all instructions for their Empire's Unique Setup, takes no actions, and produces units and gains Knucklebones at the start of each wave, as described below.



SOLO MODE

Enemy Rules:

- Starts at position 6 on the event track and does not track population.
- The enemy always acts after you, moving its units according to the Movement rules.
- During combat, if there's a tie, the enemy wins the tie as long as it is ahead of you on the event track.

Movement

Enemy troops move one area closer to your city each round, avoiding neutral tribes, if able. It will only avoid walls if it does not have a Battering Ram.

If multiple paths are available at equal distance:

- Prioritize paths with an active 6-round event.
- If there are no 6-round events, prioritize based on unit type:
 - ♦ **Archers & Spearmen:** Top to bottom of the map
 - ♦ **Chariots & Horsemen:** Bottom to top of the map
 - ♦ **Battering Rams:** Always choose the closest path to a wall and must move attached to another unit.

If all paths are blocked by walls or Neutral Tribes and the enemy has no Battering Rams, the enemy units will pass through Neutral Tribes, immediately winning the battle, removing the Neutral Tribe without a fight, and destroying the event.

Event Interaction:

- The enemy cannot explore events. Leave the event unexplored if an enemy unit passes through an area containing an unexplored event.
- If the enemy passes through an active 6-round event you control, they destroy it. Remove both the event and the corresponding dice counter from the Map.
- If the enemy passes through a Neutral Tibe area they destroy both the Neutral Tibe and the Event.

Knucklebones and Waves:

- At the start of each wave, the enemy gains Knucklebones equal to 2 + Wave number. At first wave it will have 3 Knucklebones, at the second wave it will have 4 knucklebones and so on.
- When the enemy has 0 Knucklebones remaining or all enemy units have been defeated, proceed to the next wave.
- Remaining Knucklebones carry over between waves.

Wave Structure (All waves spawn from Area 𐎶)

Waves	Spearmen	Archers	Battering Rams	Horsemen	Chariot Wheels
1	1	1	-	-	-
2	2	1	1	-	-
3	2	2	1	-	-
4	2	2	1	1	-
5	2	2	2	1	1
6	2	2	2	2	2

Combat & Misc. Rules

- Combat functions the same as in the Automaton Solo mode, except for the following change: The enemy will not use Mobility to retreat; it will always let its unit be destroyed if it loses.
- Any rules not specifically mentioned here follow the standard Multiplayer Mesopotamia rules.

