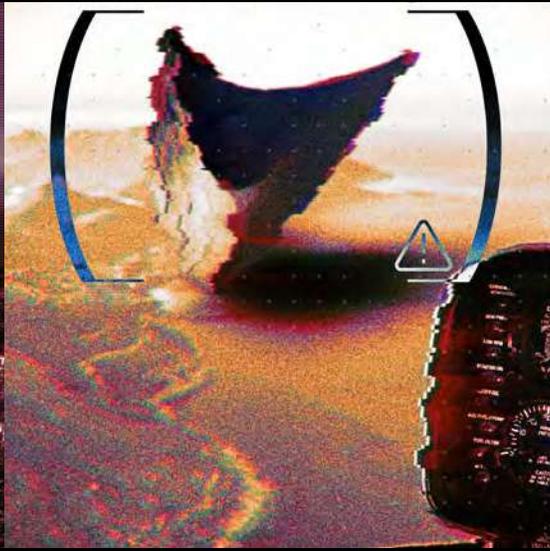




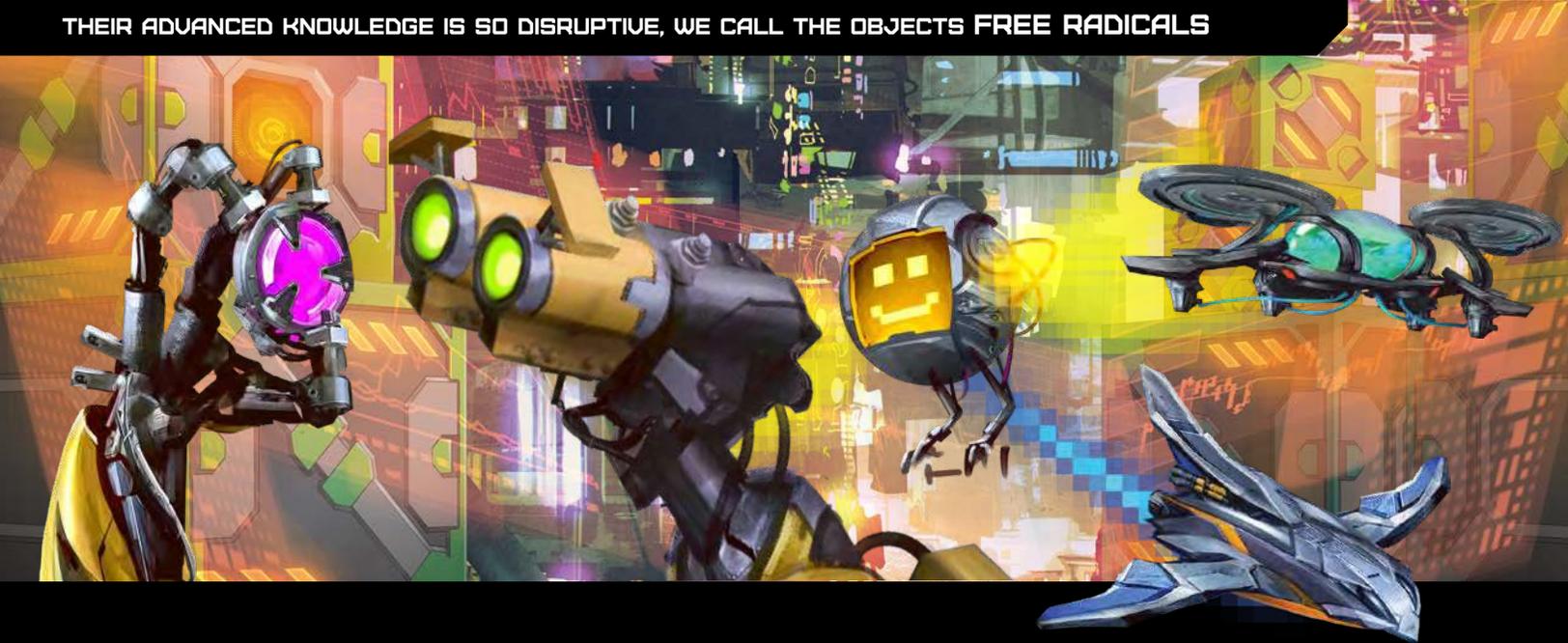
FREE RADICALS

RULEBOOK

MYSTERIOUS OBJECTS APPEAR IN SKY ALL OVER THE WORLD, TRANSMITTING CENTURIES OF DATA.



THEIR ADVANCED KNOWLEDGE IS SO DISRUPTIVE, WE CALL THE OBJECTS FREE RADICALS



WE STUDY, AWAKEN, AND EXPLOIT THE FREE RADICALS TO SUPPORT OUR OWN AGENDAS...



...BECAUSE THERE IS ALWAYS MORE KNOWLEDGE TO GAIN!

INTRODUCTION



It has been just a few years since the Free Radicals forever changed the world. Their tech allowed us to produce and distribute nearly infinite energy, food, and resources, turning Earth into a utopia. In the absence of scarcity and suffering, people began to do anything their hearts truly desired.

The Free Radical known as the Sphere appeared above the uninhabited Atacama Desert, west of the Andes

Mountains, and a community quickly sprang up around it. In less than a decade, Sphere City has become a great megalopolis, a hub of culture, entertainment, knowledge, and freedom.

Still, the Sphere has secrets left to give. Many Factions seek to decode the true meaning behind the Free Radical's cryptic transmissions in order to advance their own agendas.

But in what many suspect is part of the Free Radicals' plan, none can unlock the Sphere's knowledge alone. Co-operation and mutual aid is required in order to gain the Sphere's knowledge.

Which faction will be the one to gain understanding of the Sphere's mysteries, Awaken architectural marvels, and rise to prominence in Sphere City?

Welcome to the world of Free Radicals!

OVERVIEW

Free Radicals is a dramatically asymmetric game with **10 unique Factions** that each have their own rules and objectives. Although all Factions ultimately want to score the most **Victory Points** 🏆, their means of doing so vary wildly – from hand management, to tile-laying, to pick-up and delivery.

Over **12 rounds** of play, players gather **Resources**, **Credits**, and **Data**, advancing their **Knowledge**, gaining **Favor** with rival Factions, and **Awakening** the Free Radicals. Whoever plays their Faction most effectively will earn the capricious favor of the Free Radicals and win the game!

HOW TO USE THIS RULEBOOK

This rulebook focuses on **General Gameplay** with an overview of the game and shared game concepts for all Factions.

Each **Player Aid** sheet covers the rules for one of the 10 Factions.

To play your first game, we recommend you read the General Gameplay section and the Faction Rules for the specific Factions your players have selected. You do not need to learn the rules for Factions that are not being used by players in your game.

GENERAL COMPONENTS

1 Main board



45 Credits: 30 "1" and 15 "5" Credits



1 Prestige token



50 Data cards

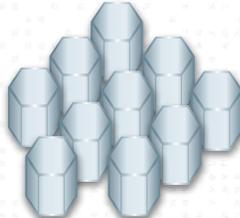
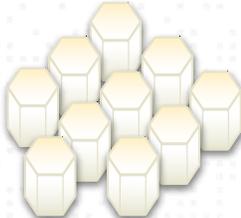
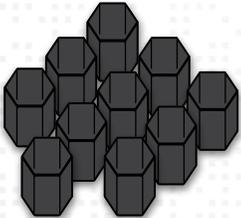


60 Resources

20 Carbon

20 Hydrogen

20 Titanium



Each color has 40 Favor cubes, 1 board with a different faction on each side, and 2 Player Aids with faction-specific rules.



FACTION-SPECIFIC COMPONENTS

ADVENTURER

5 Standees

50 Map tiles



ARTISANS

(No special components)

COURIER

18 Contract mini-cards

3 Drone tokens

12 cost tokens

16 Goods tokens



ENTERTAINER

12 Entertainer mini-cards

5 Prediction mini-cards



MERCHANTS

1 Merchant standee

5 Stalls

PALADIN

5 Paladin disks

8 Quest mini-cards



EXECUTIVES

10 Asset tokens

10 Project tokens



UNDERGROUND

18 Character mini-cards

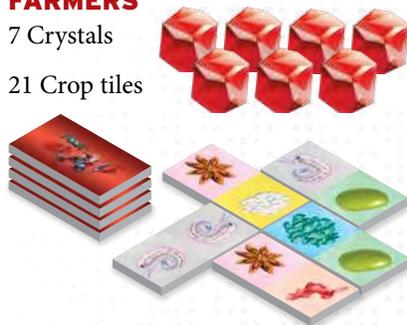
9 Character upgrade markers



FARMERS

7 Crystals

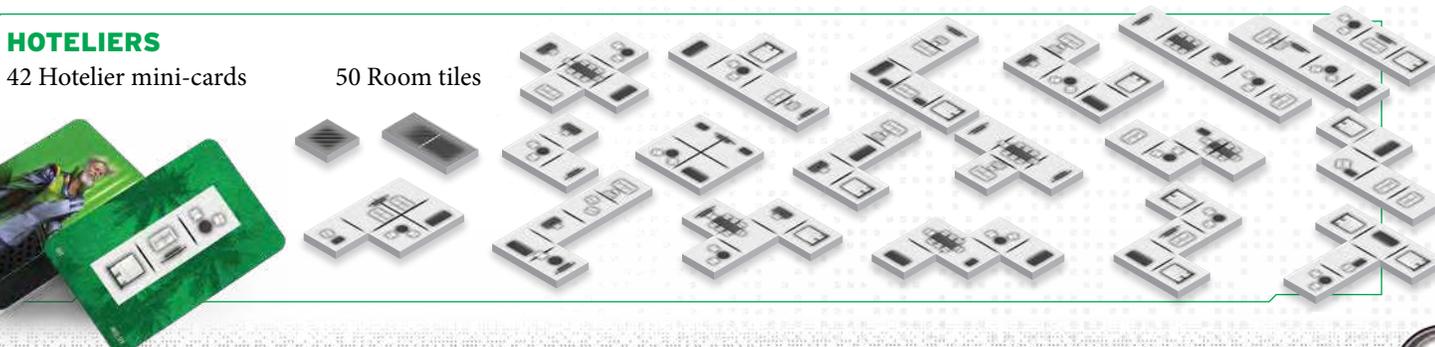
21 Crop tiles



HOTELIERS

42 Hotelier mini-cards

50 Room tiles



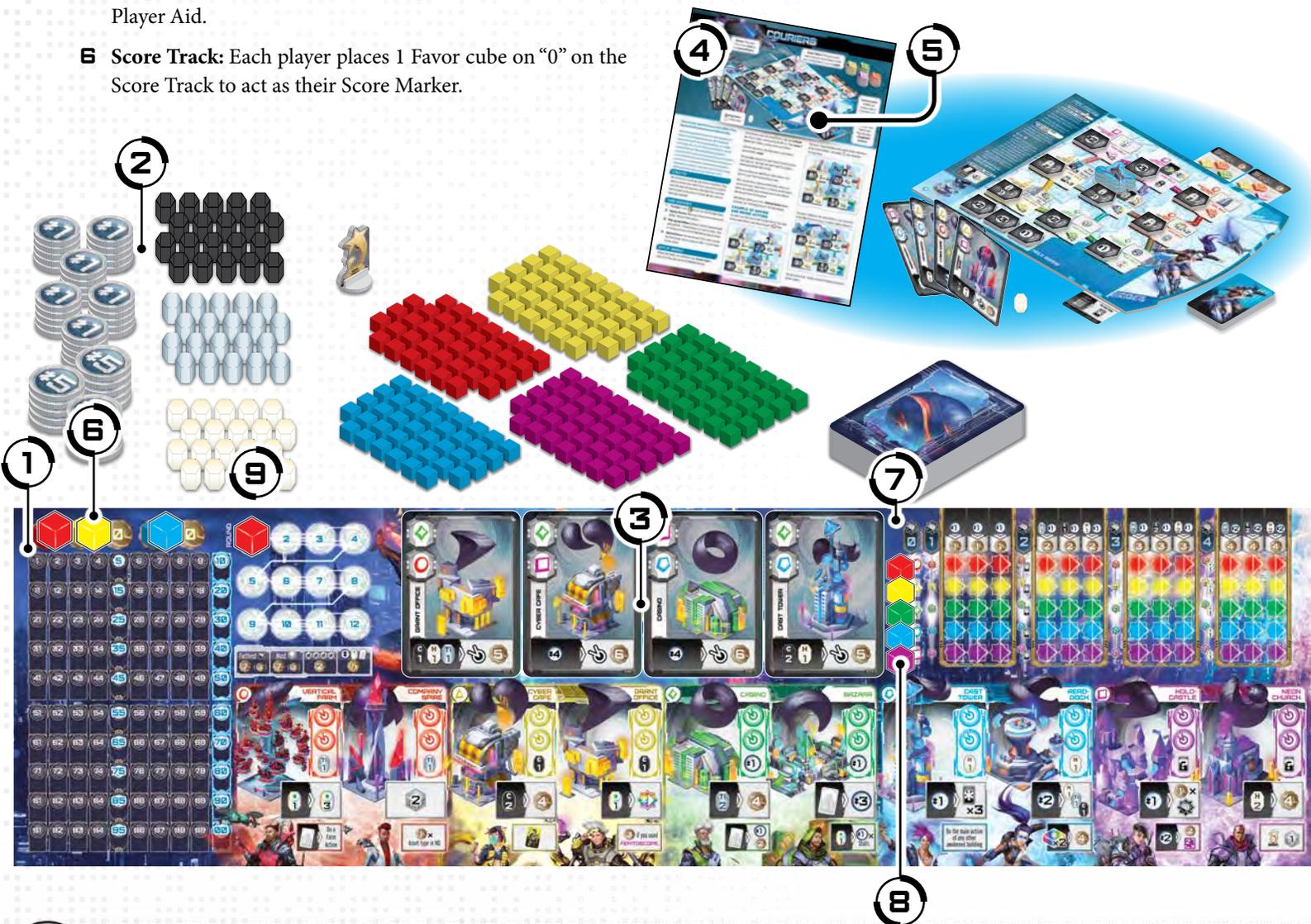
GENERAL SETUP

- 1 Main board:** Place the Main board in the center of the table.
- 2 Supply:** Place all Resources and Credits in a general supply accessible to all players. Place the Prestige token nearby.
- 3 Data cards display:** Shuffle the Data cards. Reveal 4 cards and display them in a row on the Main board. Place the rest of the deck facedown beside the Main board.
- 4 Factions:** Each player chooses a Faction color and chooses one of the 2 Factions of that color. (See overview on the right for details of how each Faction feels to play.) Gather all game pieces of that Faction.
 - ◆ Faction board
 - ◆ 40 Favor cubes
 - ◆ All Unique Faction components
 - ◆ Faction Player Aid
- 5 Unique Faction Setup:** Each Faction has a unique set of starting Items. Refer to your Faction Player Aid to see which items your Faction starts with. Each player follows the unique setup instructions for their Faction printed on their Faction Player Aid.
- 6 Score Track:** Each player places 1 Favor cube on “0” on the Score Track to act as their Score Marker.

- 7 Knowledge Tracks:** Each player places 1 Favor cube on “0” on the Knowledge Track of *their color* to act as their Knowledge marker.
- 8 Non-Player Factions:** Also place 1 Favor cube of each *unplayed* color on the “0” of the matching color Knowledge Track. Place all remaining Favor cubes of these colors near the Resource supply.
- 9 First player:** Choose a random first player. They place 1 Favor cube on the “1” space of the Round Track to act as the Round marker. The first player is responsible for advancing the Round marker at the *start* of their turn (skipped on the first turn).

NON-PLAYER FACTIONS

There are always 5 Factions in each game. If you are playing with fewer than 5 players, the player colors that are not used become **non-player Factions**. These Factions don't have turns or score points, but can gain Knowledge through player actions, and will reward players with Favor.





FARMERS

Farmers use Free Radicals to grow healthier, more sustainable crops.

A slow-Building domino-based Faction that does few actions in the early game then **ramps up** toward the end, making the Farmers great for beginners and players that like saving up for big gains.



EXECUTIVES

Executives forecast the future using Free Radical algorithms.

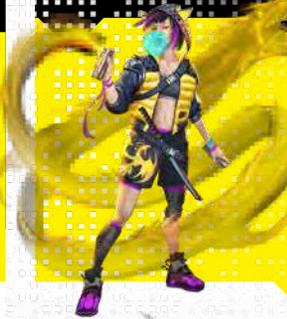
The Executives are for the player that wants **control**. This Mancala-based Faction has very few random elements, but can be unforgiving to mistakes.



ARTISANS

Artisans inspire whole new genres of art using hardlight technology from Free Radicals.

Hand management fans will feel right at home with this Faction. The Artisans are a great Faction for those that like multi-use cards.



UNDERGROUND

The Underground are a clandestine group sharing the latest findings of Free Radical research.

Deck-leveling is the key to playing The Underground. Those that enjoy customization will appreciate powering-up the different characters of The Underground.



MERCHANTS

Merchants seize the opportunity to sell bits and pieces of Free Radicals for a profit.

Players who pay attention to their opponents and the true state of the game will do well. This Faction is also good for those that like **Resource-conversion** engines.



HOTELIERS

Hoteliers develop real estate for tourists who want to see the Free Radicals.

The Hoteliers are a great choice for the player that likes **puzzles**. However, this Faction can sometimes put players into difficult positions.



COURIERS

Couriers are needed to securely deliver Free Radical tech to labs around Sphere City.

Players that like to plan ahead will like The Couriers, along with players who like **pick-up and deliver** mechanisms.



ENTERTAINERS

Entertainers broadcast live performances on, near, or about the Free Radicals.

This Faction is all about tactics and **optimizing randomness**. Players interested in making the best of a random draw each round will want to play The Entertainers.



ADVENTURERS

Adventurers explore the new urban environments growing Building around Free Radicals.

This Faction is great for **exploration**. Players who enjoy discovering different routes to victory each game will like The Adventurers.



PALADINS

Paladins want to ensure Free Radical tech is used for the greater good.

This Faction employs a **programming** mechanism and is also good for beginners. Players who want to plan ahead and don't mind being locked in to their actions will want to play The Paladins.

HOW TO PLAY

OBJECTIVE

The player that earns the most **Victory Points** (🏆) at the end of the game wins. All Factions can earn Victory Points by spending Resources to **Awaken Buildings**, advancing on the **Knowledge Track**, and collecting **Favor** from other Factions. Each Faction also has various unique actions and goals to score Victory Points.

GAME ROUNDS

The game lasts **12 rounds**.

Each round, each player takes **1 turn**. Turns start with the first player and proceed in *clockwise* order around the play area.

To signal the start of each new round, the first player must advance the Round marker each time they start their turn (except for the first turn of the game).

END OF GAME

If the Round marker is already on “12” when the first player would advance it, the **game ends** (see “*Game End & Final Scoring*” on page 15).

TAKING YOUR TURN

Your Faction has a unique **Turn Sequence** printed on its Faction board. This is also detailed in your Faction’s Player Aid.

On your turn, perform each step in your Turn Sequence in order.

After you complete the last step in your Turn Sequence, your turn is over, and play passes to the next player.

During the game, you and the other Factions will play very differently, but you will all interact with some common components.

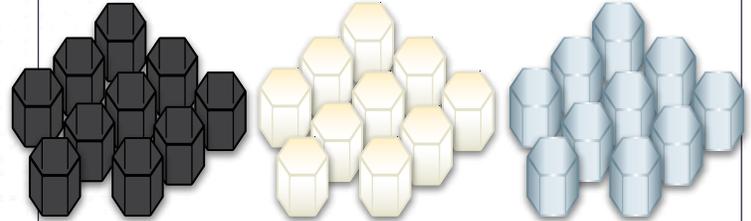
- ◆ You might gain and spend **Items** like **Hydrogen**, **Carbon**, **Titanium**, **Credits**, and **Data cards**.
- ◆ You might also trade **Favor cubes** between yourself and the other Factions. Some Factions also use their own Favor cubes as markers on tracks of their Faction board.
- ◆ You might take the **Prestige token**, which represents the highest esteem of the entire world. Only one Faction may possess the Prestige token, so it will change hands often.
- ◆ You might **Awaken Buildings** on the main board by using Data cards and Items.
- ◆ You might **Visit Awakened Buildings** on the main board to gain more Items or to activate your Faction-specific abilities when you **Visit** a particular Building.



ITEMS

The following components, collectively referred to as **Items**, are used by every Faction:

Resources: The 3 Resource types are **Hydrogen** (H), **Carbon** (C), and **Titanium** (Ti). An icon means **your choice** of these 3 Resources. If you gain or spend more than 1 at once, you may choose different Resources.



CARBON

HYDROGEN

TITANIUM

Credits (1): Credits are *not* considered a Resource. When you gain or spend Resources, you may *not* choose Credits.



Data cards: (See “*Data cards*” on page 10 for details.)



When you spend or discard Items to do an action or pay the cost of a card, they are always returned to the supply.

Players can only exchange Items when an action specifically instructs them to do so.

The supply of Credits and Resources is unlimited. If you run out of Credits or any Resource, use substitute components.

Note: *Favor cubes and Faction-specific components (such as the Couriers’ Goods tokens) are not considered Items.*

FAVOR

Favor cubes represent your standing with the other Factions in the game. Favor you collect from other Factions (including non-player Factions) are a key source of Victory Points at the end of the game (see “*Game End & Final Scoring*” on page 15). Your own Favor have no value to you, and exist solely to be given to other Factions.

Various actions can earn you Favor during the game:



Specific Color: When you earn Favor of a specific color, the **Faction** of that color must *give them to you* from their supply. (Players can never decline to give Favor to a Faction that has earned them.) When you earn Favor from a **non-player Faction**, gain them from the **general supply**.

Any Color: When you earn Favor of any color, you may gain them from *any* other Faction or Factions (including non-player Factions). You can never earn your own Favor.



Favor you have earned from other Factions **cannot be lost or given away** by any means. Whenever you must **give Favor** to another Faction (for example, when you **Visit** a Building), you must give them Favor of **your color** from your supply (**not** Favor of other colors you have earned).

Important: Each player has an unlimited number of Favor to give out. If a player runs out of Favor cubes, use substitute components.

THE PRESTIGE TOKEN

The Prestige token represents the esteem and gratitude of the populace.

- ◆ If you hold the Prestige token at the start of your turn, you score **1**.
- ◆ When an action lets you gain the Prestige token:
 - » If you do not have the Prestige token, take it from another player and score **1**.
 - » If you hold the Prestige token, instead immediately score **2**.

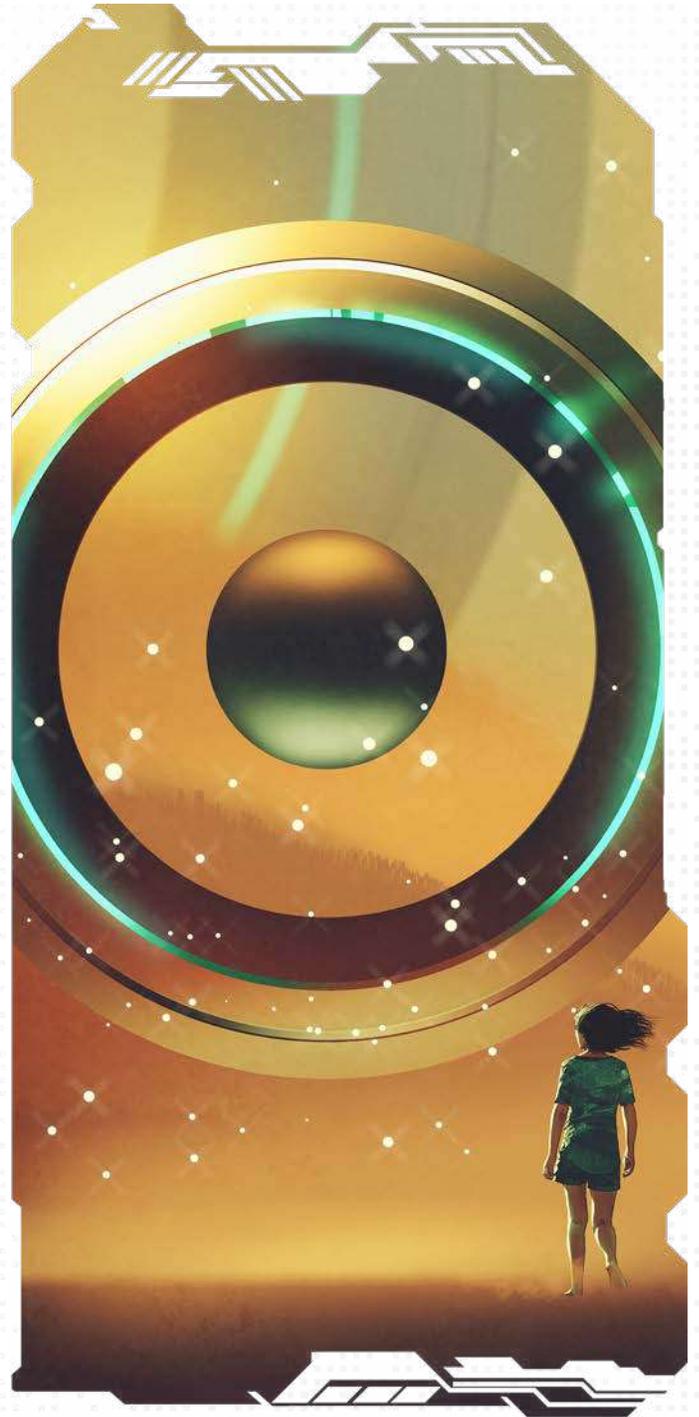


Tip: Remember to score **1** if you have the Prestige token at the start of your turn, as this is an important way for your Faction to earn Victory Points.

AWAKENING A BUILDING

There are 10 Buildings on the Main board, which acquire unique powers once their connection to the Sphere has been **Awakened**.

Once a Building has been Awakened at least once, **any player** can **Visit** the Building to use its unique power. When they do, the player (or players) who Awakened it receive **rewards**.



DATA CARDS

Before you can Awaken a Building, you must first acquire a **Data card** for the Building that has a **Data icon** (△/○/◇/□) matching your **Faction color**.

You can hold *any number* of Data cards in your hand. There are many ways to **acquire** them:



This icon means you may *choose* a Data card from either the display *or* the top of the deck. Whenever you gain a Data card from the display, *immediately* replace it with a new card from the deck.



This icon means you must draw a *random* Data card from the deck (you may *not* choose one from the display).

Important: If playing with 3 or fewer players, some Data cards will have Data icons that do not match any player Faction. Whenever a card is revealed in the public display that can't be used by any player, immediately discard it and draw a new card. Note: This does not include blind draws, only the public display.

USING DATA CARDS TO AWAKEN BUILDINGS

You can use Data cards that *don't* match your Faction color for various other purposes, but you *can't* Awaken Buildings with them.

Whenever you **discard** a Data card, place it faceup in the general Data card **discard pile** next to the Draw Pile. If the Draw Pile is ever empty, shuffle the **discard pile** to create a new Draw Pile.



VICTORY POINTS FROM AWAKENING

Awakening a Building scores you **Victory Points** (●) and makes the Building available for all players to **Visit** it.

CONTROLLING A BUILDING

Each time you Awaken a Building, you place a **Favor cube** in one of its **control slots** on the Main board to show that it is Awakened and you **control** it.

Each Building has **2 control slots**, meaning up to **2 players** can **share control** of it. A single player can occupy *both* slots, in which case they gain *double* the reward when other players **Visit**.



STEPS OF AWAKENING A BUILDING

When an action lets you **Awaken a Building**, follow these steps:

- 1 Play Data card:** Reveal 1 Data card from your *hand* that has a **Data icon** (△/○/◇/□) matching your **Faction color**.



- 2 Pay cost:** Pay the card's **Resource cost** or **Credit cost** to the supply.



- 3 Place Favor:** Place **1 Favor** from your supply in an *empty* control slot on the Building space on the Main board. (If there are no empty slots, skip this step.)



- 4 Score Victory Points:** Score the **Victory Points** (●) on the **Data card**.



- 5 Discard:** Place the Data card in the general **discard pile**.



Note: Once *both* of a Building's control slots are **full**, players can still Awaken that Building to score Victory Points, but are no longer able to **gain control** of it.

VISITING AWAKENED BUILDINGS

Once a Building is **Awakened** (i.e. there is a cube in at least one control slot), *any* player may **Visit** that Building to use its unique power.

When an action lets you **Visit an Awakened Building**, follow the steps below.

1 Give Favor: Place 1 Favor from your supply on the Building for *each* control slot occupied by a player other than yourself.

Example: The Executives Visit the Holo-Castle, which is controlled by the Artisans and Paladins. The Executives must place 2 (red) Favor from their supply.



2 Use Power: Use the Building's power, paying any cost it has to the supply. (If it has a bonus power for your Faction, you may activate this power instead; see Faction Bonus Powers.)

The Executives then spend 1 to score 1 per their Knowledge Level. Their Knowledge is Level 3 so they score 3.



3 Control Rewards: For each control slot occupied by a player other than you, that player gains 1 of the **Favor** you placed AND 1 copy of the Building's **Item reward** from the supply. (If a single player controls both slots, they gain both Favor and 2x the Item reward.)



If the Artisans controlled both slots, they would instead gain both Red Favor and 2 random Data cards.



Important:

- ◆ Each Awakened Building can only be **Visited** once each turn.
- ◆ If you are able to **Visit** multiple Buildings in a single turn, you must **Visit** a different Building each time.
- ◆ The cost associated with a Building's unique power is always paid to the supply, not the controlling player(s).
- ◆ You do not gain any control rewards when **Visiting** Buildings you control.

FACTION BONUS POWERS

Each of the 10 Buildings has a **bonus power** that can be used by a **specific Faction**.

When that Faction **Visits** the Building, they can choose to use its bonus power *instead* of its main power (even if they do not control the Building).

If other players control the Building, they receive rewards as normal.

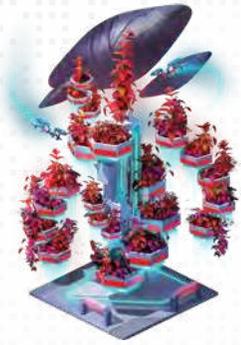
Example: The Paladins Visit the Neon Church, which they alone control, so they do not have to give any Favor. They use their Faction's bonus power to take the Prestige token (score 1) and gain 1 Favor from another Faction of their choice.

Note: Though the Paladins control this Building, they don't gain any control rewards for Visiting it themselves.



OVERVIEW OF BUILDINGS

There are 10 Buildings on the Main board, which acquire unique powers once the Free Radicals hovering above them have been Awakened.



VERTICAL FARM



When you **Visit**, pay 1 Resource of your choice and receive 3 Resources of your choice.

FARMER POWER



Farmers may instead discard 1 Data card to do a Farm Action.



CYBER CAFE



When you **Visit**, pay 2 Carbon to receive 4 Victory Points

UNDERGROUND POWER



Underground may instead draw 1 Scoundrel Card.



CASINO



When you **Visit**, pay 2 Titanium to receive 4 Victory Points.

HOTELIER POWER



Hoteliers may instead discard 1 Data card to receive 2 Victory Points and 1 Credit.

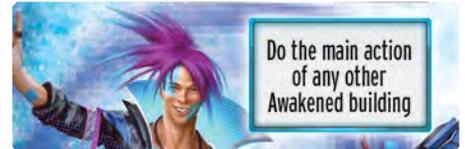


CAST TOWER



When you **Visit**, pay 1 Credit to receive 3 Data cards. (Choose from display or random.)

ENTERTAINER POWER



Entertainers may instead use the power of any other Awakened Building.



HOLD-CASTLE



When you **Visit**, pay 1 Credit to receive 1 Victory Point for each Level of your Faction's Knowledge.

ADVENTURER POWER



Adventurers may instead pay 2 Credits to receive 2 Victory Points and 2 Action Points.

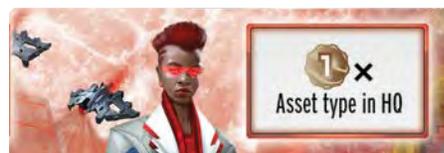


COMPANY SPIRE



When you **Visit**, you receive 2 Favor of your choice.

EXECUTIVE POWER



Executives may instead score 1 Victory Point per different type of Asset in Headquarters.



GRANT OFFICE



When you **Visit**, pay 1 Resource of your choice and advance the Knowledge of any Faction.

ARTISAN POWER



Artisans may instead receive 3 Victory Points if they used the Femtoscope that turn.



BAZAAR



When you **Visit**, discard 1 Data card to receive 3 Credits.

MERCHANT POWER



Merchants may instead pay 1 Resource of their choice to receive 1 Credit for each Stall they built.



AERO-DOCK



When you **Visit**, pay 2 Credits for 1 Carbon, 1 Titanium, and 1 Hydrogen.

COURIER POWER



Couriers may instead pay 2 Goods to receive 4 Victory Points.



NEON CHURCH



When you **Visit**, pay 2 Hydrogen to receive 4 Victory Points.

PALADIN POWER



Paladins may instead take 1 Favor of their choice and the Prestige token.

GAME END & FINAL SCORING

The game ends at the end of the 12th round. Before determining the winner, players add the following end-game Victory Points to their score.

KNOWLEDGE TRACK

The player that has advanced *furthest* on the Knowledge Track scores **7**.

The player that has advanced *2nd-furthest* scores **3**.

If there is a tie for most Knowledge, all 1st-place players score **7**, and no one scores **3**.

If there is a tie for 2nd-most Knowledge (and no tie for most), then all 2nd-place players score **3**.

Note: Non-player Factions are included in the rankings, but do not score. For example, if a non-player Faction is further than any player on the Knowledge track, the second-furthest player will score **3**, and no one will score **7**.

MOST FAVOR

The player with the most total Favor cubes from *other* Factions scores **7**.

The player with the 2nd-most total Favor scores **3**.

Do *not* count leftover Favor of your own color.

If there is a tie for most Favor, all 1st-place players score **7**, and no one scores **3**.

If there is a tie for 2nd-most Favor (and no tie for most) then all 2nd-place players score **3**.

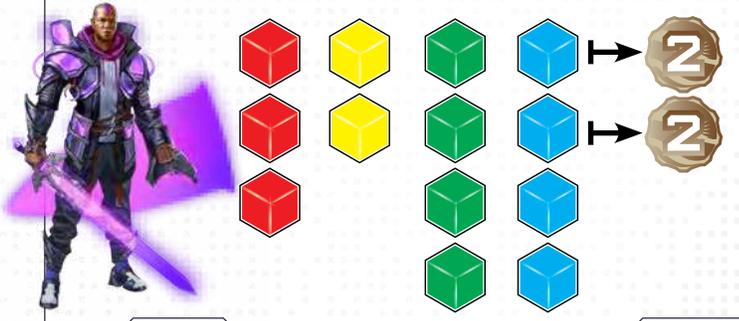


FAVOR SETS

Each player scores **2** for each complete set of all 4 other Factions' Favor.

This includes non-player Faction colors. It does not include your own Faction color.

Example: The Paladins score 2 Victory Points for each set of 1 Blue, 1 Red, 1 Yellow, and 1 Green Favor they collect. They do not count their own leftover Purple Favor. They have 3 Red, 2 Yellow, 4 Green, 4 Blue. That makes a total of 2 complete sets. They score a total of 4 Victory Points.



ITEMS

Each player scores **1** for every 3 Items they have remaining (rounded down). Items are **Resources**, **Credits**, and **Data cards**.

Note: Faction-specific Items such as Underground cards are not counted.

Example: If you have 1 Hydrogen, 4 Credits, and 1 Data card left, you score 2 Victory Points for 6 Items total.



VICTORY

After adding in the end-game Victory Points, the player with the most Victory Points wins.

- ◆ If players are tied for most Victory Points, the tied player with most total Credits and Data cards wins.
- ◆ If still tied, the tied player with most total Titanium, Hydrogen, and Carbon wins.

If there is still a tie, then all tied players share the victory.

SUMMARY

On your turn, perform each step in your Turn Sequence in order.

After you complete the last step in your Turn Sequence, your turn is over, and play passes to the next player.

The game ends at the end of the 12th round.

Add the following end-game Victory Points to your score.

- ◆ Furthest on the Knowledge Track: **7**
- ◆ 2nd-furthest on the Knowledge Track: **3**
- ◆ Most total Favor cubes from *other* Factions: **7**
- ◆ 2nd-most total Favor: **3**
- ◆ Each complete set of all 4 other Factions' Favor: **2**
- ◆ Every 3 Items, rounded down (Items are **Resources, Credits, and Data cards**): **1**

The player with the most Victory Points wins.

- ◆ If players are tied for most Victory Points, the tied player with most total Titanium, Hydrogen, and Carbon wins.
- ◆ If still tied, the tied player with most total Credits and Data cards wins.

If there is still a tie, then all tied players share the victory.

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ICON OVERVIEW

COLORS



Red Yellow Green Blue Purple

KNOWLEDGE LEVEL



Knowledge Level ranges from 0 to 4

FAVOR CUBES



1 Favor of your choice 1 Red Favor 1 Yellow Favor 1 Green Favor 1 Blue Favor 1 Purple Favor

ACTIONS

Spend the Items shown here. If there is no black background, the action is free.



Gain the rewards or do the actions shown here.



Visit an Awakened Building



Awaken a Building, paying its cost



Advance Knowledge of your choice by 1 increment



Gain 1 Victory Point



Gain the Prestige token

Reminder: Gain 1 Victory Point when you gain the Prestige token or start your turn with it.

ITEMS

Note: Favor cubes and Faction-specific components (such as the Couriers' Goods tokens) are not considered Items.



1 Resource of your Choice



1 Titanium



1 Carbon



1 Hydrogen



1 Credit



Data card from your hand



Your choice of Data card from the deck or the display



Random Data card from the top of the deck