

EMPIRES OF THE VOID

Game and Art by Ryan Laukat

The galaxy is at war. The Pyrious Empire is struggling to maintain power, and a few young alien races see this as a long-awaited opportunity to become the next galactic superpower. Shipyards in every world are ramping up starship production, and arguments and accusations at the galactic council grow more and more heated. The tension across lightyears is palpable. Even now, secret alliances are underway and the sentient races are quickly taking sides.

In Empires of the Void, two to four players compete to expand their empire in a vast, diverse galaxy. Each time a player reaches a new planet, he must decide whether to conquer it and strip the land of its resources, or befriend the natives and obtain their special ability. Players earn victory points by expanding their empires, through technological growth, and by controlling the galactic council. The player with the most victory points after three scoring rounds wins the game and becomes the next ruler of the galaxy!

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Components

- A Player Board (8)
- B Technologies (4 sets of 19)
- C 12 Starfighters, 8 Centipedes, 3 Diplomats, 10 Starcruisers, 4 Sunhammers, 11 ally tokens (4 sets)
- D Credit Tokens
- E Victory Point Tokens
- F Neutral Ships- 6 Moths, 6 Tempests, 6 Black Holes, 6 Firebugs, 6 Shooting Stars, (3 Infestors)
- G Planet Cards (15)
- H Diplomacy Cards
- I Event Cards
- J Home Planet Tokens (12)
- K Galactic Council Board
- L 7 Galaxy Hexagons, 4 Home Planet Boards
- M Other Tokens (Worm Hole, Rebellion, Distress Call, Pirates, Event, Infestor Tokens)
- N Dice (6)

Setup

1. Place the board hexagon with the planet Pyrious in the center of the table. Place the six remaining hexagons randomly around the center hexagon. (Note: This is for a four-player game. Please see the two-player or three-player game sections at the end of this rulebook for alternate setup and rules if you have two or three players.)
2. Place the credit tokens, victory point tokens, planet cards, and neutral ships (those with an empty, starry background) in an easily accessible place next to the board.
3. Shuffle the diplomacy cards and place the deck facedown next to the board.
4. Set up the event deck. Take the three score cards and place them face down in three separate piles, A, B, and C. Shuffle the remaining event cards. On the A score card place 4 event cards, on the B score card place 3 event cards, and on the C score card place 2 event cards, all face down. Stack the A stack onto the B stack, then place both onto the C stack. This is the event deck. Place it next to the board.
5. Roll the dice to decide the first player.
6. Starting with the first player, each player chooses an alien race and places the appropriate player board in front of him. Each player takes the home world of the race he chooses, along with a set of technology tokens, starships and ally tokens of one color, and starting credits. (Starting credits are equal to the amount of credits indicated on the top right corner of the player board.) For ease of play, it is best for players to separate their technologies that do not have a trade goods requirement from those that do.

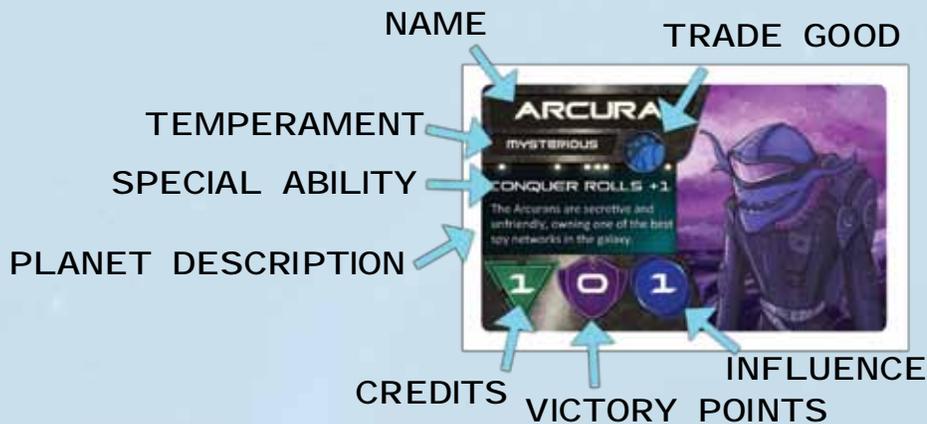
7. The first player places his home world in one of the corners of the board. The second player must then place his home world in the next available corner, in a clockwise direction. The third player skips one corner and places his home world in the next corner, and the fourth player places his home world in the next corner, in a clockwise direction. (A “corner” refers to one of the six open spaces where players may fit a home-planet board.)

8. Starting with the third player and going in clockwise order, each player may choose to rotate one board hexagon. The hexagon must be adjacent to the player’s home world, and must not have been previously rotated by any other player.

9. All players draw two diplomacy cards. The starting hand-limit for diplomacy cards is three, but may be increased by researching certain technologies.

You are now ready to play.

Player Board and Planet Card



Note: Ships with a star are available to every race (with the appropriate tech). To have access to other ships, you must be allied with a specific planet.

Overview

Gain the most victory points by the end of 11 rounds of play by controlling planets, owning technologies, and influencing the galactic council.

An important source of victory points is the expansion of your star empire through the acquisition of new planets. Planets may be obtained either through conquest or by diplomacy. If you successfully use diplomacy, you place one of your ally tokens on the planet to show that you are now allies for the rest of the game. Also place an ally token on the card. Allied planets give their credits, victory points, influence, trade goods and special abilities to your empire. If, on the other hand, you successfully conquer a planet, the native inhabitants are uncooperative. The planet gives you credits, victory points, and trade goods, but you do not have access to the influence or special ability. If you conquer a planet, put one of your enemy tokens on the planet.

If a player conquers a planet allied with another player, he places his enemy token on top of the allied player's token on the planet on the board. There will be two tokens on the planet at the same time. The conquering player takes the planet card and puts his own token on it (the allied player doesn't need to keep his token on the card, just the planet).

A player is considered to "own" or "control" a planet whether he be a conqueror or an ally. Controlling a planet will often give the player access to a trade good. There are five trade good types (metals, crystals, life forms, gas, and artifacts), and they are important for researching certain technologies (which also reward players with victory points).

Events and Rounds

The game takes place over 11 rounds. At the beginning of every round, all players build ships and research one technology in the PRE-ROUND PHASE. Players do both actions simultaneously, in any order.

In the PRE-ROUND PHASE players may do the following:



BUILD

You may build as many ships as you can afford. Discard the required number of credits equal to the cost of the ships and place the ships on your home world. The number of ships a player may own is limited by the number of starship tokens. Players may save credits and carry them over from turn to turn.



RESEARCH TECHNOLOGY

Research one new technology. Technologies add perpetual effects that advance your space empire and grant new abilities. You must pay the credit cost (listed on the card), have the prerequisite technology (in yellow text on the bottom), and, in some cases, you must also control the appropriate trade good. Some technologies require no trade good to research. When you purchase a tech with a trade good requirement, you do not "pay" trade goods; you simply have to control a planet that has the trade good. There are five trade good types: metals, crystals, life forms, gas, and artifacts. If you do not control a planet with the trade good you need, you may negotiate and barter with other players in order to gain their permission to "use" a trade good they control. You may trade cards, credits, etc. in return for this favor. You may never trade victory points or planet cards.

Once you have researched the technology, take the token and place it on your player board. NOTE: This action may only be performed once per round.

Designer's Note: The pre-round phase is intended to keep the game fast and action-packed. For this reason, turn order does not change during the game. If you would like to take turns building during the pre-round phase and also play with changing turn order, please see the Advanced Rules section near the end of this rulebook.

Event Cards

When all players have finished the PRE-ROUND PHASE, the first player draws a card from the event deck, reads the card, and follows the directions. Some events remain active until the event is resolved, and some events are a one-time effect. Note: The three scoring event cards say "Score" on the back. This allows players to have advance warning that the next round's event will be a scoring event and to prepare accordingly.

Short Game Variant: If you would like to play a shorter game, end the game after the second scoring event. This will reduce play time by thirty to sixty minutes.

Actions

On your turn, you have **3** actions to split between the following options. Actions may be performed more than (once unless otherwise noted) and in any order.



MOVE

Move one of your ships along the lines connecting the planets up to as many spaces as the ship's move value. Each planet on the board and each light circle is considered to be a "space" for the sake of movement.

On the board are also three types of obstacles: asteroids, mines, and ancient defenses (space monsters). You may not move ships through obstacles unless you have the necessary technology or special ability to do so. Obstacles do not count as spaces, except for the three spaces with asteroids on the center hexagon with the planet Pyrious.

The same ship may move multiple times in a turn using multiple MOVE actions.



ATTACK

Initiate combat on one space where you have ships. You may target a planet or an opponent's ships. When you initiate an attack, indicate the player you are attacking. (Spaces may have ships from multiple players.) All ships on both sides roll an attack in ship initiative order, from right to left on the player board. (ie. From initiative 1 to 5.) All ships roll one die and take one hit to destroy unless otherwise noted. For a ship to make a successful hit, you must roll at or above its attack number (the center number next to the ship, with no icon behind it). Casualties are taken after each initiative level has rolled. Players choose which of their own ships to remove as casualties. To achieve a "win a battle" result, you must destroy all of an opponent's ships on one space.

EXAMPLE: Bob has a Sunhammer and a Starcruiser. Alex has a Starcruiser and two Starfighters. Bob rolls two dice for the Sunhammer first because it has the highest initiative. He rolls a two and a three,

only scoring one hit. Alex decides to lose one of his two Starfighters. The next ships in initiative order are the Starcruisers. Bob rolls for his one Starcruiser and misses, while Alex rolls a successful hit with one of his Starcruisers. Bob decides to lose his only Starcruiser. That leaves him with the Sunhammer. The next ship in initiative order is Alex's one remaining Starfighter. He rolls and misses, and the battle ends with Bob keeping his Sunhammer and Alex keeping his Starcruiser and one Starfighter.

If you are successful in an attack involving a planet, put one of your enemy tokens on the planet. Take the planet card. Conquered planets only give you their victory points, credits, and trade good (not their special ability or influence).

If an opponent controls the planet, targeting his ships in that space includes targeting the planet. If you successfully destroy all of that player's ships you may take control of the planet, regardless of whether or not any other players currently have any ships on that planet space. If the player has no ships but controls the planet, you must still use an attack action to take the planet from him (without having to make an actual attack roll).

When taking control of a planet, several scenarios can arise:

1. The planet was controlled by another player

a) That player had conquered the planet, in which case the new conqueror can:

1 - Conquer the planet

2 - Liberate the planet

b) That player had allied with the planet

2. The planet was a neutral planet

1. a) When you take control of a planet that was previously conquered by an opponent, you may either **1** - keep it (in which case you are considered a "conqueror"), or **2** - set it free (in which case you are a "liberator").

1. a) 1 - If a player becomes a new conqueror, the previous conqueror removes his enemy token from the planet and the new conqueror places his enemy token on the planet and takes the planet card.

1. a) 2 - If you choose to liberate the planet instead, the previous conqueror removes his enemy tokens from the planet and the planet card and it becomes neutral again. You may use diplomacy to try to befriend it with a separate diplomacy action, however if you have one diplomacy card of the planet type, you may spend the card as soon as you liberate the planet in order to befriend it and become allies. (This does not require an action.) You may not liberate a planet that already has an ally. If one of your allied planets is conquered, you are still allied with the planet. However, you lose control of it and all its benefits and resources until you regain control of the planet, at which point you instantly regain all benefits.

1. b) If a player conquers a planet that is allied with another player, he places his enemy token on top of the allied player's token on the planet. There will thus be two tokens on the planet at the same time. The conquering player takes the planet card and puts his own enemy token on it. (The allied player only needs to keep his ally token on the planet, not the planet card.)

2. If the planet is neutral, you may choose to target the planet in order to conquer it. To successfully gain control of a neutral planet, you only need to roll one successful hit.

Invading a player's home planet works just like invading any other planet that the player owns. If you conquer another player's home planet, you gain an additional 2 victory points for as long as you control it. That player still collects the credits listed at the top right corner on his player board, and may continue to build ships at his home planet.

If you are unsuccessful at conquering a planet or removing opposing ships from a space, you may spend additional actions to try again. (ie. You may initiate an attack on the same space multiple times per turn using multiple ATTACK actions.)



CULTURE

Draw a card from the diplomacy deck. These cards are necessary in order to perform the diplomacy action. Your hand limit for diplomacy cards when the game starts is 3, but this can be increased by researching certain technologies. There are five diplomacy card types: Militaristic, Capitalistic, Scholarly, Mysterious, and Peaceful. The five card types coincide with the five different alien temperaments. Diplomacy cards may be traded between players at any time. (Trading when it is not your turn will save time and speed the game along.)

Diplomacy cards also include special Tactics abilities that may be used instead of the diplomacy function. The number of cards required to use the ability precedes the ability description. The cards must be of the same diplomacy type, but do not have to contain the same Tactics ability. When you use the ability, discard the cards. A Tactics ability does not require an action to use, and you may use it at any time (except if it only applies during your turn, such as when it gives you an additional action). Hint: This can be important later in the game when there are fewer planets to befriend.



MINE

Spend an action to collect 1 credit. NOTE: This action may only be performed once per turn.



DIPLOMACY

Attempt to befriend a planet and have it become your ally. In order to attempt diplomacy, you must have a Diplomat ship at the planet you are trying to befriend and the planet must be neutral/uncontrolled. You must also have at least one card of the same type as the temperament of the planet you are trying to befriend, and all cards played must be of this temperament. Roll three dice. The amount you must roll to be successful is determined by the number of diplomacy cards you play, as is shown on the player boards. If you have one card, you must roll a 17 or higher to befriend the planet. If you have two cards, you must roll a 13 or higher. If you have three cards, you must roll an 8 or higher. If you have four cards, you must roll a 4 or higher.

If you succeed, discard the diplomacy cards played, place one of your ally tokens on the planet, take the planet card, and also place one of your ally tokens on the card so you remember that the planet is giving you its special ability and influence. If you fail, you do not discard any diplomacy cards and may try again by spending another action. Planets that are your ally give your empire their credits, victory points, influence, trade good, and special ability. Once a planet is allied with you, no other player may use diplomacy on that planet.

End of Turn

At the end of your turn, collect a number of credits equal to the sum of the amount at the top right corner of your player board plus those given by any planets you control (indicated by the green credits symbol on the planet cards).

Scoring

The events at rounds 5, 9, and the end of round 11 are scoring events, thus allowing players to collect victory point tokens three times during the game. Players collect victory points for these three areas: PLANETS, TECHNOLOGIES, and the GALACTIC COUNCIL. Players should keep their victory point tokens face down and secret.

PLANETS: The number of victory points a player receives for each planet he controls is indicated by the purple victory points symbol on each planet card.

TECHNOLOGIES: The number of victory points a player receives for each technology he has researched is indicated by the purple victory points symbol on each technology token.

The GALACTIC COUNCIL: Players add up their influence from all allied planets (indicated by the blue influence symbol on the planet cards) and mark their positions on the Galactic Council Board. The player with the highest influence number gains the higher victory point amount listed on the score card, while the player with the next highest influence number gains the lower victory point amount listed. If players are tied for first, add the two victory point totals together and split them evenly. If players are tied for second, split the second number evenly (rounding up). Players may not score on the GALACTIC COUNCIL if they do not have any influence, even if the number of players with influence is only one or none. The players' influence number is recalculated with each scoring round. (ie. The scores on the Galactic Council Board are not "carried over" to the next scoring round.)

GAME END

The game is over at the end of round 11. Players draw the last event card (the twelfth card) as soon as the eleventh round ends and score for the third and final time. The player with the most victory points is the winner and is the new dominant empire in the galaxy!

Tiebreaker: If players are tied, the player with the most planets is the winner. If players are still tied, the player with the most influence is the winner, then most technologies, then most unspent credits.

Advanced Rules

In the advanced rules, the turn order changes at the beginning of each round before the pre-round phase begins. The player with control of the most planets goes first, the player with the second most goes second, etc. In case of ties, the player with the lower number of influence goes first. If players are still tied, the player with the higher amount of unspent credits goes first. If players are still tied, use the turn order from the previous round.

Instead building and researching technology simultaneously in the pre-round phase, players build ships and research in turn order.

Ship Clarifications

Diplomat: May carry with it any one ship of initiative 4 or 5 when it moves.

Fire Bug: Gets one free attack roll before the battle begins against any opposing Starfighters that are involved in the battle.

Moth: Takes two hits to destroy. (Keep track of damage with a victory point token.) A Moth ship cannot be repaired. Thus, the damage remains until it is destroyed. The Moth ignores all board obstacles during movement.

Shooting Star: Rolls three dice and hits on 4+ but must pay a credit to fire.

Sunhammer: Rolls two dice and hits on 3+.

Technology Clarifications

Cloaking: If your ship has cloaking and that ship makes a successful hit, you may choose the casualty instead of your opponent. If your opponent has any ships with the detection ability, this negates your cloaking ability.

Detection: Negates any opposing ships' cloaking abilities in the space.

Docking Bay: Allows the Diplomat to carry four additional Starfighters.

Space Port: When you research the Space Port technology, immediately place one of the space port tokens on a planet you control. When building ships, you may now place one of them per round on the planet with the space port. If an opponent takes control of this planet, destroy the space port and lose the technology. You may research the technology again if this happens.

Tractor Beam: If your ship has the tractor beam ability, your opponent may not move ships away from your tractor beam without your permission unless they destroy the ship. This also applies if an opponent is just "passing through" the space.

Warp Gate: Allows players to move all their ships at a cost of two actions. Players may not move ships between different Diplomats in the same "move all ships" action. During the "move all ships" action, if a ship is carried by a Diplomat, it may not make a separate individual movement. (ie. It cannot move before or after the move with the Diplomat, or with another Diplomat.) It could, however, be picked up or dropped off along the way.

Race Clarifications

Bindok II: A player that is allied with Bindok II has access to the "Retreat" ability. Any time the player is attacked by another player, before any dice are rolled the player may choose to pay one credit to move all his ships on the contested space to the nearest planet that player controls. (The player may choose one if the distance is equal.)

The Mystics of Siri: This race may, as an action, use their "Mind Control" ability to move any one ship belonging to an opponent located in a space where the Siri player has at least one ship. The Siri

player can move the ship as far as its move value. The Siri player may only perform this action once per turn.

The Nomads of Earth: When the game begins, give the player that chose the Nomads of Earth the additional technology “Terraforming”. When the player researches this technology, replace Earth with New Earth.

The Parasites of Sreech: This race has their own ship: the Infestor. The Infestor requires no technology to build. The ship has a unique action: Infest. As an action, you may attempt to infest a planet at which an Infestor is located. You may infest planets that are neutral/uncontrolled and planets controlled by other players. To infest a planet, you must roll 3 or higher with one die. If successful, put an “infested” token on the planet. You have access to the special ability of any planet you infest. You may not infest planets that you control, and if you take control of a planet that is infested, it loses the “infested” status.

If an opponent takes control of a planet that is infested, the planet remains infested. The only way for other players to remove an infestation is by targeting the infestation with an attack action using one or more ships, and they must make at least two successful hits in one action to remove it. If an opponent is allied with a planet you have infested, he still has access to the special ability. (You both have it.) If two players are building the same specialized “neutral alien” ships, indicate ownership with an influence or enemy token.

The Parasites of Sreech also have a unique technology. During game setup, give the player that chooses the Parasites of Sreech the “Spore Pods” technology token.

Designer’s Note: It’s best if you’ve played at least one game before trying the Sreech. It is very easy to get distracted with infesting and lose sight of the goal of the game: victory points! Remember, infesting gives no points whatsoever, so make sure to use it sparingly. However, it can be very powerful if used wisely.

3-Player Game

When setting up for a 3-player game, leave an empty corner between each player so that all three home planets are spaced evenly. Each player must cover up any one of the planets in the adjacent hexagon to the right of their home planet with the opposite side of one of the unused Home Planet Tokens. It may be any planet in the hexagon. Treat this space as an empty space for the game.

When the first player chooses a corner in which to place his home planet, the next player skips one corner and places his home planet, and the next player does the same (as shown in the diagram).



Event Deck: Before creating the event deck, go through the event cards and take out all cards that apply to the planets that were covered. Put these cards in the box.

All other setup rules are the same.

2-Player Game

When setting up for a 2-player game, place the Pyrious hexagon in the center as normal, but place only three additional hexagons under it as indicated in the diagram. Position the two home planet corners as shown. The first player chooses a corner first, and the second player places his home planet in the one remaining corner. Neither may be adjacent to the Pyrious hexagon.



The hexagons the players may rotate prior to beginning the game are the hexagons directly above the players' home planets. The second player rotates his first, followed by the first player.

Event Deck: Before creating the event deck, go through the event cards and take out all cards that apply to the planets that are on hexagons not included on the board. Put these cards in the box.

In the 2-player game, shuffle the diplomacy cards as normal, then draw four and put them in a row face-up. Each turn a player may swap up to two of his diplomacy cards in his hand with the available diplomacy cards on the table at any time. This requires no actions.

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